

OBJECTIVE 2.17 Identify acceptable methods for the use of the communications radio

RADIO USE

An officer needs to know how to use the radio without losing control of the vehicle or creating a situation that would distract the driver's concentration.

If possible, the desirable time to use the radio is:

1. on straight roads, when steering skills are not needed - this will prevent the microphone cord from becoming wrapped around the steering wheel assembly.
2. on flat roads, rather than hilly
3. when stopped, rather than moving
4. when the driver is able to search forward and to the sides for changing conditions, rather than during moments when visibility is temporarily restricted by other vehicles or objects
5. during the slower speeds of an emergency response or pursuit

Some additional suggestions for increasing vehicle control include:

1. Avoid driving one-handed.
2. Find a consistent location to secure the microphone during non-emergency or emergency moments.
3. Keep the windows up to reduce sound distraction.
4. If available, have a partner use the radio.
5. Know the correct radio codes, language, street names and locations.
6. Speak clearly and efficiently; avoid time-consuming conversations.

SUMMARY

Proper utilization of the emergency vehicle's communication radio will minimize the possibility of a collision due to a lack of control of the steering wheel.

SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY**LECTURE WITH VISUAL AIDS**

Utilize an emergency vehicle with an installed communications radio. Present a video showing the problems with single hand control and utilizing the radio during turns.

SMALL GROUPS

Divide the class into pairs with each pair assigned to a vehicle and an instructor. Driving the vehicle at a slow speed, demonstrate the effects of proper and improper radio usage. Each student should be allowed the opportunity to experience proper and improper methods.

RESOURCES AND AIDS

1. Acceptable driver training textbooks and manuals
2. Video presentations on radio usage and placement

SUGGESTED EVALUATION METHODOLOGY**STUDENTS**

1. Visual observation of each student in a mock emergency response.
2. Observe proper placement of the microphone after each broadcast and ensure that the student does not hold the microphone while turning or during collision avoidance exercises.

COURSE

1. Observation of officers during routine and emergency radio communication tasks.
2. Review of agency officer crash/collision reports.