



DESCHUTES COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Policy Title: Vehicular Use of Force	Effective Date: June 29, 2016	Policy Number: 5.15	
Accreditation Reference:	Review Date: June 29, 2019	Supercedes: January 30, 2013	Pages: 4
Attachments: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Vehicular Use of Force Continuum (1 page)	L. Shane Nelson, Sheriff		

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance and direction to personnel in the vehicular use of force continuum and specific deployment criteria for those levels constituting physical control of a vehicle beyond that of traffic stop.

II. POLICY

The use of force by a deputy in accomplishing a lawful objective is a serious matter in every instance. This agency recognizes and respects the value and special integrity of each human life. The use of an object, such as a weapon or vehicle, in applying that force is even greater in its potential consequences and ultimate ramifications, thereby requiring additional procedures, training, incident review, and documentation.

It shall be the policy of the Sheriff's Office to afford deputies all reasonable means to accomplish a lawful objective, including the use of a vehicle as a means of force. Prior to the application of any vehicular use of force, deputies must be in compliance with [Policy 5.10 Vehicle Pursuit](#).

III. DEFINITIONS

Channelization is a temporarily constructed barrier on the roadway, the purpose of which is to channelize or direct the suspect to a specific location or to deny access to a certain direction(s).

Pursuit Immobilization Technique (PIT) is a method to reduce risks in bringing a pursuit to a conclusion. PIT is a forced rotational vehicle stop of a non-compliant suspect in an effort to end the suspect's flight.

Roadblock is a temporarily constructed barrier on the roadway, the purpose of which is to stop or keep a suspect from traveling in a certain direction.

Spike Strips are devices containing hollow spikes deployed in front of a vehicle which are designed to slowly deflate the vehicle's tires.

Use of Firearms will be consistent with [Policy 5.01 Use of Force](#).

Vehicular Ramming is the intentional vehicular contact, outside the parameters of the Pursuit Immobilization Technique, the purpose of which is to immediately stop the suspect vehicle.

[Vehicular Use of Force Continuum](#) is the current table outlining resistance to the stopping of a suspect vehicle, levels of force available and possible results of the force used.

IV. DEPLOYMENT

Deployment of techniques shall be consistent with the Vehicular Use of Force Continuum and other applicable procedures. Vehicular Use of Force techniques are prohibited unless or until the deputies have been trained and/or certified in the specific technique to be deployed.

A. Spike Strips

Spike strips are considered to be a level of force equivalent to a physical control technique.

B. Channelization

1. Channelization is considered to be a level of force equivalent to a physical control technique.
2. Channelization is a method to direct a suspect to/from a specific location. It may consist of vehicles, flares, traffic cones, or other objects, the purpose of which is to encourage the suspect to travel in a desired direction.
3. Channelization shall be utilized only when sufficient distance, visibility, and warning may be established to allow all vehicles to safely stop or avoid the temporary barrier and any related dangers.
4. Channelization shall always allow a route, lane, or path of travel through or around the temporary barrier in the event a vehicle does not stop or conform to the channelization effort.
5. Channelization may be coordinated with other vehicular use of force techniques.

C. Pursuit Immobilization Technique (PIT)

1. Pursuit Immobilization Technique may only be used by deputies who have been trained in and meet current DPSST certified standards in the technique.
2. PIT less than 40 miles per hour is considered to be a level of force equivalent to physical control. Though PIT may be executed at the discretion of the pursuing deputy to apprehend felony offenders whose actions indicate a disregard for the safety of the deputy, other deputies, or the public, attempts should be made to notify a supervisor prior to application if practical.
3. PIT at 40 miles per hour and over is considered to be a level of force equivalent to serious physical control and requires the approval of a supervisor and under the following conditions:
 - a. after less intrusive methods have been tried or considered and have been judged ineffective; or
 - b. when the totality of the circumstances presents an objective reasonable basis requiring immediate intervention to stop a fleeing suspect's vehicle.
4. In certain situations, such as the use of the PIT maneuver on SUVs or the use of PIT near bridge abutments, it is foreseeable the use of PIT may result in the use of deadly force and must be so justified on an objective reasonableness standard.
5. PIT shall not be used on any vehicle carrying hazardous materials, or a passenger bus carrying passengers, a school bus transporting pupils, or any vehicle that would pose an unusual risk to innocent parties unless there are significant factors justifying the risks of the technique, and then, only with the permission of a supervisor.
6. PIT shall never be used on a motorcycle, moped, or similar two wheeled vehicle, unless use of deadly force is justified and then, if practical, only with the permission of a supervisor.
7. Site assessment is crucial when considering the use of PIT. Prior to executing a PIT maneuver, deputies should consider features in the surrounding area, such as:
 - a. weather conditions

- b. blind curves or corners. PIT works best in curves but should not be executed when the deputy believes that visibility is significantly compromised.
- c. bridge abutments or median barrier/guard rail end caps
- d. major roadside or on road obstacles
- e. oncoming traffic
- f. pedestrians

8. Deputies shall not be disciplined for a decision against executing a PIT maneuver in a pursuit situation.

D. Vehicular Ramming

1. Use of vehicular ramming is considered to be equivalent to the use of deadly force.
2. Vehicular ramming must be considered only when all lesser means have failed and the deputy has an objectively reasonable basis to believe:
 - a. the use of deadly force is necessary to protect the deputy or any other person(s) from the use or threatened imminent use of deadly physical force.
 - b. the use of deadly physical force is necessary to protect the deputy or any other person from death or serious physical injury.
3. Deputies utilizing vehicular ramming must be cognizant of and consider the inherent danger in the use of vehicle ramming not only to themselves and the suspect, but also to any others in the vicinity.

E. Roadblocks

1. Roadblocks are considered to be equivalent to the use of deadly force and the conditions under D 2 above must be met.
2. A supervisor or higher-ranking authority must approve a roadblock.
3. The purpose of a roadblock is to stop a vehicle which constitutes a continuing threat of serious physical injury or death to the deputy or any citizen, and all lesser means have failed or are not possible.
4. Roadblocks may be constructed of vehicles, barriers, or objects sufficient to impede or stop the suspect vehicle.
5. The roadblock must be visible for a reasonable distance, allowing sufficient time for the suspect and all other vehicles to safely stop, taking into account speed, visibility, road conditions, traffic, weather, lighting, and any other factors then present.
6. If patrol cars are utilized to construct the roadblock, all emergency lights shall be illuminated.
7. No one shall be seated in any vehicle, (patrol or private), used in constructing the roadblock.
8. Due caution for the safety of other citizens and the surrounding area must be used when constructing the roadblock.
9. The existence and location of the roadblock shall be communicated to all other units involved in the incident.
10. Action must be taken to release or detour private vehicles not involved in the incident that reach the roadblock prior to the suspect's arrival out of the danger area.
11. The use of moving vehicles to box in or surround a fleeing vehicle is not defined as a roadblock and does not constitute deadly force. Use of moving vehicles to box in a suspect requires permission from a supervisor.

F. Firearms

1. Use of firearms to stop a vehicle is a use of deadly force.

2. Firearms will be used consistent with [Policy 5.01 Use of Force](#); however, it is the policy of the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office that firearms will not be discharged from a moving vehicle.

V. AFTER DEPLOYMENT

In any incident where a deputy exercises a vehicular use of force equivalent to physical control, serious physical control, or deadly force, as defined in this policy and the Vehicular Use of Force Continuum, a report by the initiating deputy shall be completed by the end of the current shift.

A [Use of Force Report](#) form must also be completed as per [Policy 5.01 Use of Force](#).

VEHICULAR USE OF FORCE CONTINUUM

RESISTANCE TO STOPPING	LEVEL OF FORCE (Method of force delivery to counter resistance of threat)	RESULT OF FORCE USED
NONE (Field interview or call for service)	PATROL VEHICLE PRESENCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No lights or siren 	No injury potential
NONE ("Routine" or unknown risk stop)	TRAFFIC STOP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lights and possibly siren 	No physical contact Little or no injury potential
DRIVER ATTEMPTS TO ELUDE (Pursuit)	PHYSICAL CONTROL CONTINUATION OF PURSUIT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lights and siren • Consider continuing pursuit or termination of pursuit. 	Possibility of injury to threat, deputies, and/or citizens
DRIVER CONTINUES TO ATTEMPT TO ELUDE (Pursuit) Threat to citizens	PHYSICAL CONTROL SPIKE STRIPS/PIT (under 40 mph) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deploy spike strips • Channelization 	Potential for physical contact of vehicles Physical contact with spike strips May lessen chance of injury to threat, deputies and/or citizens.
DRIVER CONTINUES TO ATTEMPT TO ELUDE (Pursuit) High threat to citizens	SERIOUS PHYSICAL CONTROL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursuit Immobilization Technique (PIT over 40 mph) 	Potential for physical contact of vehicles. Potential for physical injury to threat and deputies.
DRIVER CONTINUES TO ATTEMPT TO ELUDE (Pursuit) High threat to citizens if pursuit continues or nature of offense(s) justifies use of deadly force	DEADLY FORCE Any force which has the potential for serious physical injury or death. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIT (in certain situations) • Vehicle ramming • Roadblocks • Firearms 	Significant potential for serious physical injury or death of threat.

Due to the hazards of vehicle pursuits the continuation of the pursuit must be continually evaluated by the deputy at all levels of this continuum