

**POLICE PURSUITS:
FACTS, POLICIES AND TECHNOLOGIES**

**Kenneth A. Balinski
Eastern Michigan University
School of Police Staff and Command
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INTRODUCTION

Since the birth of law enforcement police officers have always had to pursue the bad guy. These pursuits started on foot, graduated to horseback and finally the automobile. Any one of these methods of pursuits of criminals can be dangerous, but with the birth of the automobile and man's need to go and do things faster and faster, high speed pursuits became deadlier.

In the profession of Law Enforcement, there are many inherent dangers that can cause injury or even death to police officers. New recruits train hours in the use of a handgun and defensive tactics. Yet when it comes to pursuit driving the new recruit receives minimal training in how to operate a motor vehicle at high speeds safely. Even departments that might give their recruits a substantial amount of pursuit drivers training the one thing you can not teach a new recruit is common sense.

On a daily basis, police officers enter their vehicle not knowing what that day will bring to them. They turn on the ignition and put their vehicle in gear and begin their routine patrol.

Such was the case for two officers to whom I personally worked with in the Detroit Police Department's Western Precinct Support Unit. Sergeant Earl White and Police Officer Lindora Smith began their tour of duty on August 26, 1997, much the same way every police officer throughout the United States does. They entered their vehicle, taking with them Cadet/Explorer Aaron Phillips, as an observer. They left the Second Precinct parking lot and began their tour of duty. As was always the case with Sergeant White, he never left a stone unturned when he was on patrol. As fate would

have it he spotted a vehicle that he suspected had narcotics in it and he wanted to pull it over for an investigation. The driver of the vehicle refused to stop and a high-speed pursuit began. What was to happen next would be horrifying. Another scout car driving perpendicular to Sergeant White hears the pursuit being broadcast and decided to become involved. At a high rate of speed, the officer driving this scout car approached an intersection and did not stop. He began to enter the intersection. As he did Sergeant White, along with Officer Smith and Cadet Phillips entered the intersection only to be broadsided and pushed into a utility pole. This high speed collision caused the vehicle occupied by Sergeant White, Officer Smith and Cadet Phillips, to be crushed, leaving only about a one foot or less space between the driver's and passenger's doors. Sergeant White and Officer Smith were killed instantly. Cadet Phillips had massive head trauma and passed away several days later. The police officer driving the other scout car was seriously injured and recovered fully from his injuries. The effects on the families and the Western Precinct Support Unit were devastating. Two hard working and dedicated police officers, along with a young man who was aspiring to be a police officer are dead.

That brings me to the point of what this research paper is about, police high-speed pursuits. In the following pages to come we will look at high-speed police pursuit statistics and then the policies of the following cities: Detroit, New York, Chicago, Boston, Baltimore, Dallas, and Los Angeles. By presenting these policies we will look at their similarities and differences. We will also look at new technology that is available to use during a high-speed pursuit that would assist in disabling or locating vehicles. After reviewing these items I will review high-speed pursuit policy and offer an opinion that would incorporate facets of the preceding information.

There is probably no foolproof way to conduct a safe high-speed police pursuit. Not one police officer may be better equipped than another to conduct a high-speed pursuit given all the possible circumstances that can take place during a high-speed pursuit. But hopefully by looking at the facts we can reach a conclusion that will help prevent the needless deaths of police officers and innocent bystanders.

CHAPTER ONE

FACTS SURROUNDING POLICE PURSUITS

"Throughout history, more than one hundred and forty (140) police officers have been killed in high speed chases" (NLEOMF, 1997, p.1). Considering that the birth of the automobile and especially one that travels at a high rate of speed does not span too many decades. Also the number dead only represents police officers, not innocent bystanders and perpetrators. When taking that into consideration the number of dead persons, as a result of high speed pursuits, a statistic that was not available, would be staggering.

Take into consideration what the perpetrator was running from and why the police were chasing them and you have to ask yourself is it worth dying over or killing an innocent bystander for the initial reason that the perpetrator is just fleeing the police for a traffic offense or a property crime. Of course, more often than not, the initial reason for the perpetrator to run from the police may not be fully known by the police. On the other hand the police may know exactly why they are running from them and have to make a snap judgement as to whether they should pursue this person at the risk of injury or killing themselves, an innocent bystander or the perpetrator. This becomes as important a decision as pulling the trigger on your gun, both can result in grave injury or even death.

When you consider that, "some of the incidents, the officers were pursuing armed and dangerous criminals. In others, the suspects were traffic violators who simply panicked and put innocent lives at risk" (NLEOMF, 1997, p.1). That seems to be where

police officers sometimes fail to exercise due care and caution when they enter into a high-speed pursuit. There is a definite difference in pursuing someone for a homicide versus chasing him or her because they rolled through a stop sign. Although a case can certainly be made as to the necessity of causing injury or death to effect the arrest of a criminal or traffic violator.

In 1996, forty percent (40%) of all law enforcement pursuits ended in collisions, and of those collisions approximately 290 deaths occurred (NLEOMF, 1997 p. 2). When you consider the number of deaths your curiosity has to ask you of those collisions how many people lost a limb, became paralyzed or were debilitated in some way shape or form, as result of a high speed pursuit. Also ask yourself how many millions or possibly billions of dollars were paid out in civil litigation or in medical bills? How many families of the victims were effected mentally and financially? It makes you also want to ask the question is any high-speed pursuit worth the possibility of any of the previous mentioned situations occurring worth it? What value do we place on another person's life, as well as, the value we place on our own lives? These statistics, although limited in their scope causes concern as how to handle the issue of high-speed police pursuits.

Although the statistics are alarming, a federal study indicated that some of the continued causes of these situations are that, "officers may not be receiving meaningful discipline for problem pursuits" and "training devoted to when -or why- to pursue appears to [be] minimal or non-existent" (NLEOMF, 1997, p. 2). Departments poled, in general, only took, "limited steps to train their officer skills and procedures regarding pursuits." It further goes on to say that of "four hundred and thirty six (436) law enforcement agencies surveyed for the study, only sixty percent (60%) reported providing

even entry-level driver training at their academies" (NLEOMF, 1997, p. 2). These types of comments and statistics in the area of high-speed pursuits indicate the need for training personnel in the techniques, as well as, the need to know and understand departmental policy governing high-speed pursuits. Also there should be a certainty of punishment or discipline should an officer violate policy or fail to use due care and caution in the high-speed pursuit of an individual. The other side of the sword is that, "too many restrictions placed on police use of pursuit could place the public at risk from dangerous individuals escaping apprehension"(NLEOMF, 1997, p. 2).

Of all the research that I came across the following are facts and statistics; "The officers who have died in high speed pursuits all learned a tragic lesson that was confirmed in the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) study. The only person involved in the chase who does not worry about the officer's safety or anyone else's is the fleeing suspect". It went on to say, "the NIJ study surveyed one hundred and fifty (150) jailed suspects who were involved in pursuits, fifty three percent (53%) were willing to run at all costs from the police in a pursuit and sixty four percent (64%) believed they would not be caught"(NLEOMF, 1997, p. 3). So it tells you the mind frame of those that a police officer would be pursuing. The suspect doesn't seem to care about anything, as long as, they don't get caught. So not even the thought of the death of themselves, the police officer or an innocent bystander passes through the mind of most criminals that get involved in high-speed pursuits.

In 1993, Police Officer Todd Stone, of the Clinton City Police Department in Iowa was killed in a high-speed pursuit. A local newspaper columnist summed up the difficult choices an officer has to make. He stated it this way; "Young [police] men

and women face the risk daily, accepting it as part of the job. There is no way a traffic violation or even a major crime is worth a young officer's life. But we all sleep easier in our beds this night knowing there are those who daily accept the risk to guarantee the peace and tranquility" (NLEOMF, 1997, p. 3).

So in closing this chapter there is no perfect answer as to how to handle high-speed pursuits. We know that they can cause injury and even death and police departments themselves are not in the forefront of training police officers on how to deal with these decisions.

CHAPTER TWO

SELECTED CITIES PURSUIT POLICYS

In researching police high-speed pursuit policies I chose cities that are larger and then somewhat smaller than Detroit to make a comparison. The purpose for this comparison was to see if the size of the city and department made a difference in the departments writing and implementing of their policy. The departments I selected were New York City, Chicago, Boston, Baltimore, Dallas and Los Angeles. Each department sent me a copy of their present high-speed pursuit policy. These policies ranged from just a few pages to numerous pages that spelled out their individual department's high-speed pursuit policy. For the purpose of this paper I have attempted to brief each policy, picking out the different points, from the Detroit Police Department's policy, that allow the high-speed chase to be conducted and what rules and regulations need to be followed from its inception to conclusion. In order to begin to compare we will start with the Detroit Police Department's policy on high-speed pursuits as spelled out in their department's manual.

DETROIT POLICE DEPARMENT

The manual starts out by giving the following definition of a vehicular pursuit:

- "Pursuit shall mean an active attempt by an officer operating a department vehicle to apprehend the operator and/or occupants of a motor vehicle who, having been given an audible and visual signal by

the officer directing the operator to bring the vehicle to a stop, resists apprehension.”

- “Resisting apprehension may include but is not limited to maintaining or increasing speed, disobeying traffic laws, or making some other overt action intended to avoid arrest.”
- “Routine traffic stops or other instances in which officers activate their emergency lights and sirens and the vehicle operator complies by coming to a stop in reasonably short distance will not be considered a vehicle pursuit” (Detroit, 1993, III-15-15.1).

However, the manual indicates that the department places the highest value on the lives and the safety of its officers and the public at large. It indicates that “officers should make every reasonable attempt to apprehend an escaping vehicle”. But it goes on further to say “vehicle pursuits shall not be conducted in such a manner as to recklessly endanger the lives of other innocent citizens or the officers themselves” (Detroit, 1993, III-15-15.2).

The procedure for conducting a pursuit is specific as to the duties that an officer must perform when implementing the pursuit:

- Activate the oscillating rooflight and flashers.
- Direct by visual or audible signal for car to stop.
- Activate the headlights and siren.
- Officers shall not initiate a pursuit unless all emergency equipment is functional (Detroit, 1993, III-15-15.2).

After the above has been done and the vehicle does not stop and the decision to continue the pursuit is made the officer must then consider:

- Nature of the violation.
- Time of day.
- Weather conditions.
- Geographic location.
- Population density.
- Familiarity with the area.
- Police vehicle capability.
- Speed required to maintain the pursuit.
- Proximity to school areas during school hours.

The preceding, are only guidelines and intended for guidance and are not meant to be all-inclusive (Detroit, 1993, III-15-15.2).

The officer must also consider that state law indicates that although they may be exempt from obeying certain state and city vehicle codes while in the performance of their duty, in emergency situations, it does not exempt them from the reckless disregard for the safety of others (Detroit, 1993, III-15-15.2).

Once the decision to commit to the pursuit is made the zone dispatcher needs to be notified and given the:

- Reason for the pursuit.
- Location and direction.
- Description of the vehicle, including license number, if known.
- Description of the occupants (Detroit, 1993, III-15-15.3).

Upon completing that task the zone dispatcher will then:

- Determine the primary and secondary units.
- Assign a patrol supervisor to monitor the pursuit.
- Advise members to buckle seatbelts.
- Advise to activate emergency equipment.
- Alert aviation.
- Check the license plate of the suspect vehicle.
- Alert neighboring communities if necessary.
- Coordinate the pursuit (Detroit, 1993, III-15-15.3).

The monitoring supervisor shall consider the following:

- Location.
- Traffic density.
- Weather and road conditions.
- Driver's training and experience.
- Length and speed of the pursuit.
- The possibility of capture at a later date.
- Make a determination to continue or discontinue the pursuit (Detroit, 1993, III-15-15.6).

At the end of the pursuit the monitoring supervisor shall make the final destination point to gather facts and cause an after action report to be prepared. This report will document the pursuit and cause the supervisor to make a finding as to whether the pursuit was conducted properly and whether there is a need for discipline of the

officer for any violation of department rules and regulations. Included in this report is a copy of the communications tape of the pursuit in question.

At anytime during the pursuit the monitoring supervisor, communications supervisor or a person of higher rank may end the pursuit. Keeping in mind that safety is first and the potential liability involved the supervisor has tremendous responsibility to assure the safety of all involved in the pursuit, as well as, potential incident bystanders who may fall victim to the pursuit.

In comparing the Detroit Police Department's high-speed pursuit policy to New York City, Chicago, Boston, Baltimore, Dallas and Los Angeles; I noted that the majority of the these policies mirrored that of the Detroit Police Department. In continuing looking at these policies I will only highlight the differences that these pursuit policies have with the City of Detroit Police Department's policy.

NEW YORK POLICE DEPARTMENT

The New York City Police Department's vehicle pursuit policy does not differ from Detroit's policy that much. I found it interesting that in using the radio they state:

- “Do not use the ‘constant’ position on siren, since it tends to distort transmissions and blot out the sound of approaching vehicles” (NYPD, 2000, P. 1).

Besides this the policy is basically the same as Detroit's.

I do want to note that in their policy they also give emphasis to safety. It states:

- “*Department policy requires that a vehicle pursuit be terminated whenever the risks to uniformed members of the service and the public outweigh the danger to the community if suspect is not immediately apprehended*” (NYPD, 2000, p. 1).

It should also be noted that an after action report is required. Also they did not have an in-depth definition for a vehicle pursuit.

CHICAGO POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Chicago Police Department defines a vehicular pursuit, as follows:

- **‘Motor Vehicle Pursuit** – An active attempt by a sworn member operating an authorized emergency vehicle to apprehend any driver or operator of a motor vehicle who, having been given a visual and audible signal by the officer directing such driver or operator to bring his vehicle to a stop, fails or refuses to obey such direction, increases or maintains his speed, extinguishes his lights, or other wise flees or attempts to elude the officer” (Chicago, 1997, G.O. 97-3, p. 2).
- Officers must justify their actions when involved in a vehicle pursuit.
- Officers will not use the activity of “following as a subterfuge for a vehicular pursuit” (Chicago, 1997, Addendum #2,G.O. 97-3, p. 1).

Illinois State law, as does Michigan’s, allows officers to set aside common traffic laws in the performance of their duties. It also indicates that the law does, “not relieve the driver of an authorized emergency vehicle from the duty of driving with due regard for the safety of all persons, nor do such provisions protect the driver from the consequences of his reckless disregard for the safety of others” (Chicago, 1997, Addendum #1,G.O. 97-3, p. 1).

It should be noted that the Chicago Police Department also requires a supervisor to conduct an after action report of a vehicular pursuit.

BOSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Boston Police Department of all of the policies discussed is by far the most stringent. Although the policy surrounding the conducting of a pursuit is basically the same as the previously mentioned departments, it starts its policy with the following statement:

- “Generally, pursuit driving is not justified and I prohibited unless the occupants of the vehicle are known to be wanted for the commission or the attempted commission of a violent or life threatening felony **or** the vehicle is being operated in an erratic or dangerous manner which poses a threat of harm to the public if it is not stopped. The commission of a minor motor vehicle violation and/or operating a stolen motor vehicle are **not** sufficient to meet the above criteria” (Boston, 1999, Rule 301, p. 1).

The other major difference is noted in Massachusetts General Law.

- An emergency vehicle may operate,” in excess of the applicable speed limit if he exercises caution and due regard under the circumstances for the safety of persons and property, and may drive such vehicle through an intersection of ways contrary to any traffic signs or signals regulating traffic at such intersection he **first brings such vehicle to a full stop**” (Boston, 1999, Rule 301, p. 5).

The Boston Police Department, also requires their supervisors to produce an after action pursuit report.

BALTIMORE POLICE DEPARTMENT

As with the other previously mentioned police departments, the Baltimore Police Department adheres too much of the same rules and regulations pertaining to vehicle pursuits. The two major differences are as follows:

- **“NO DEPARTMENTAL VEHICLE UTILIZING EMERGENCY WARNING DEVICES (ELECTRIC SIREN AND ROOF MOUNTED EMERGENCY LIGHTS) SHALL BE OPERATED AT A SPEED GREATER THAN TEN (10) MILES PER HOUR IN EXCESS OF THE POSTED SPEED LIMIT”**
(Baltimore, 1999, G.O. 11-90, p. 2).
- “Pass a red signal, a stop sign, or yield sign, but only after stopping to ensure safe passage of other vehicles and pedestrians” (Baltimore, 1999, G.O. 11-90, p. 2).

The only other difference different than all the other departments are that they do not cite the need to produce an after action report, as a result of a high-speed police pursuit.

DALLAS POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Dallas Police Department also maintains many of the standards that the others do, regarding their pursuit policies. One item did stand out as different and specific:

- “In cases of pursuits initiated for traffic violations and for other Class C offenses, officer will immediately stop the pursuit when it becomes apparent that the violator will do whatever is necessary to evade the officer” (Dallas, 1998, Rule 301.7, A-3).

Although this gives the officer latitude to conduct pursuits for minor offenses, it makes it clear that should a vehicle fail to stop within a reasonable period of time the officer must break off the pursuit.

The Dallas Police Department requires a supervisor to prepare an after action report on all high-speed pursuits.

LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Los Angeles Police Department’s pursuit policy is much like that of Detroit. It hits on the same items of conducting a high-speed pursuit.

The following is the definition used by the Los Angeles Police Department for a vehicle pursuit:

- “The California Highway Patrol defines a vehicle pursuit as, ‘An event involving one or more law enforcement officers attempting to apprehend a suspect operating a motor vehicle while the suspect is attempting to avoid arrest (or detention) by using high speed driving or other evasive tactics, such as driving off a highway, turning suddenly, or driving in a legal manner but **willfully failing to yield** to the officer’s signal to stop’ (emphasis added)” (LAPD, 1998, S.O. #24, Sec. II).

Regarding after action reports the Los Angeles Police Department is also required to prepare a California Highway Patrol pursuit report, well as their own departments.

That concludes a look at some vehicle pursuit policies from large city police departments. In doing my research I noted that all the departments had very similar, if not alike, policies. The Boston Police Department's and the Baltimore Police Department's, however, stood out for Boston's policy on when you can pursue and Baltimore's policy on how fast a car can go and the need to stop at all intersections with traffic control devices.

It should further be noted, that all the preceding police department's state law made it very clear, that although they are giving you permission to conduct a high-speed vehicular pursuit, they caution that the ultimate responsibility lies with the police officer, supervisor and department for the safety of lives and property. Not one of the states gave police officers or police departments Carte Blanche, to disregard safety, for the sake of apprehending a person who flees from them.

CHAPTER THREE

DEVICES THAT CAN BE USED TO ASSIST IN ENDING

A HIGH-SPEED PURSUIT

In the age of high technology one would ask why don't we have devices that can stop a pursued vehicle before tragedy strikes? In my research I found a few of these items and thought I would take use of this chapter to list them.

The first is more of a training device than a tool to stop a pursuit. It is a high-speed pursuit simulator (NLECTC, 1996, p. 1). The simulator allows officers to be trained in high-speed pursuits much like they are trained at the pistol range. The simulator has numerous scenarios that it can put the officer through. This teaches driving discipline and trains the officer to hone the skills of pursuit driving, thus reducing the risk injury or death.

The next is a retractable spiked barrier strip (NLECTC, 1996, p. 5). This device is laid across a road to which the high-speed pursuit will be passing through. Once the vehicle comes in contact with the strip the multiple spikes attached to it causes all of the tires of the pursued vehicle to deflate. The escape of air, however, is gradual allowing the vehicle to come to a controlled stop.

The Auto Arrestor System, is technology that deploys a short pulse of electric current that disrupts parts of critical electronic components that keep an automobile running (NLECTC, 1996, p. 5). This is effective in today's modern vehicles. Once activated and the damage is done the vehicle will coast to a stop. Most electronic ignition parts that are damaged by this system can usually be replaced at minimal cost.

The Road Patriot is an automatically guided rocket powered projectile that is mounted to the bottom of a scout car. When fired by a scout car it will follow the street service at twenty miles per hour faster than the vehicle being pursued and can be launched up to seven car lengths away from the vehicle being pursued. As it reaches the target vehicle it emits an electromagnetic energy pulse that shuts down the pursued vehicle. However, the article does not say when the rocket will stop (NLECTC, 1996, p. 6).

The Road Sentry has essentially the same electromagnetic energy pulse as the Road Patriot. The difference comes in the way it is deployed. The Road Sentry is built into key traffic areas in the concrete of the road. Should the pursuit go to that particular area the Road Sentry can be activated and the vehicle passing over it would receive the electromagnetic energy pulse, thus disabling the vehicle. However, you would need numerous intersections mined with the Road Sentry to make it effective (NLECTC, 1996, p. 6).

The Fleeing Vehicle Tagging System allows a polymer projectile, with a radio transmitter in it, to be launched and attach itself to a fleeing vehicle so that the vehicle can be followed by radio signal instead of a speeding vehicle. Should these projectiles miss their target they are billed as “less than lethal”? Sounds like a nice idea, but what does less than lethal mean (NLECTC, 1996, p. 7).

These are just some of the upcoming ideas for reducing the need for high-speed pursuits. Others are mentioned without explanation, because they are being developed.

They are:

- “Sensors installed along the highway for identifying stolen cars as they drive by”.
- “Paint darts for marking vehicle for later identification”.
- Radio transmitters attached to cars that would allow for predeploying of cruisers (NLECTC, 1996, p. 71).

Until all of these items are perfected law enforcement is still left with doing things the old fashioned way. The only way to protect the officer and general public in a pursuit situation is to have a stringent policy that is adhered to and a training program that preaches it.

CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In reviewing this presentation we began by talking about a pursuit situation that I was familiar with in the City of Detroit, involving Sgt. White, P.O. Smith and Cadet Phillips. This unfortunate situation can and will be repeated over the years without a change in how we conduct high-speed pursuits.

We went over the high-speed pursuit policies of Detroit, New York City, Chicago, Boston, Baltimore, Dallas and Los Angeles. We noted that these policies in most respects mirror each other. Although, Boston and Baltimore seemed to have more stringent rules on when a pursuit may be conducted. All the cities basically follow the same format when it comes to pursuing a motor vehicle in a high-speed pursuit.

We then took a look at the possibilities of gadgets, objects and technology that might help in reducing high-speed police pursuits. These included spiked strips, to electronic disabling of vehicles, to marking them with radio transmitters and paintballs for future identification.

One thing is for sure, we will always have criminals and there will always be police to catch them. As long as we have automobiles we must continue to develop policies and technologies to safeguard lives and property from high-speed pursuits.

In conclusion, I believe that policy, training and technology are the tools that we need to use to combat the ever-present dangers of high-speed pursuits.

Departments need to ask themselves what is the most important outcome of a pursuit and do we pursue persons in high-speed pursuits at all costs? Determinations need to be made as to how stringent a policy a police department must have. Should this policy take into consideration the cost of civil litigation over the need to capture someone? The policy should be to the point with little or no room to circumvent it, but it should not completely take away the prerogative of the supervisor or officer involved in the high-speed pursuit. The policies in this paper sum up the prior statement. But departments still need strong decision-makers at the first line supervisory level to make them work as they are intended. No department or city sets out to do harm to its personnel or the general public, yet let the unthinkable happen, such as an injury or death, due to a high-speed pursuit, everyone's decisions will be put out into the arena of public opinion. That is why from the police officer to the monitoring supervisor, the decision to pursue should be based on some type of crime against a person, (i.e.: Felonious Assault, Murder, etc.) and in no way should a lengthy, potentially lethal, high-speed pursuit take place for a civil infraction or a misdemeanor. Great thought also needs to be given to pursuing felons who have committed a property crime. No grave physical harm can come from some a person with a stolen car but put that stolen car into a high-speed pursuit it becomes as lethal as the sidearm a police officer wears. I believe that the exception to that would be a vehicle wanted in a Robbery Armed/Unlawful Driving Away an Automobile. That person may have already shot or killed someone to get the

car. But still every attempt should be made to positively identify the person driving the vehicle as the perpetrator of the crime.

It all sounds real easy, but when Metro-Dade Police Department adopted a “violent felony only” pursuit policy in 1992, their high-speed pursuits went down by 82% (Alpert, NCJRS, 1997, p.6). Commensurately, the number of accidents, injury and deaths, as a result of high-speed pursuits would drop.

The opposite effect took place in Omaha, Nebraska, in 1993. They changed their policy to allow their officers to enter into high-speed pursuits for offenses that they had previously stated that they could not pursue for and the rate of their high-speed pursuits increased 600% (Alpert, NCJRS, 1997, p.6). (34) The effect of this can be a commensurate increase of accidents, injury and deaths.

Lastly, regarding high-speed pursuit policy, there needs to a method of discipline for the violation of the policy, whether or not; the pursuit ended in an accident, injury or death. The certainty of discipline lays in an officer’s mind and makes that officer more cautious when make a decision that could result in time off or being fired.

Also, training is a must in order to better prepared officers to handle the weapon they use everyday, their scout car. They must learn of the consequences of a high-speed pursuit and how to handle themselves when they become involved in one. They need to be constantly briefed on the department’s high-speed pursuit policy so that the do’s and the don’ts become crystal clear. They also need to know there is nothing wrong with calling off a pursuit if they believe it could cause an accident, injury or death. In this arena police officers attempting to become accepted need to know a high-speed pursuit is

not the avenue that they should take, to gain that acceptance. Police Officers need to understand and accept that no high-speed pursuit to capture a criminal is worth another's; livelihood or life.

In conclusion, high speed pursuits for most police officers are a damned if you damned if you don't proposition. But when making that decision to pursue someone at a high rate of speed keep in mind all those officers and civilians that have died as a result of them and let your commonsense kick in as to whether to pursue or continue pursuit. It may be your last decision if it's the wrong decision.

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