StarChase Pursuit Management System Procedure

404.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This procedure provides direction and operational guidelines for the use of the StarChase Pursuit Managment System. The StarChase system allows an officer to remotely affix a GPS tracking device to a pursued (or about to be pursued) vehicle using an air pressure system to discharge the tracker from the front of the StarChase equipped patrol car. Once the tracker is affixed to the vehicle in question, its location can be tracked by an employee (StarChase Monitor) using a computer with an internet connection.

404.2 OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

- The StarChase system should be used in conjunction with all rules and guidelines as outlined in the SMPD Policy Manual.
- The StarChase system shall only be used in situations where it is reasonable to believe that a suspect has committed, is about to commit, or is threatening to commit either:
  - A felony or
  - A misdemeanor violation involving a weapon, violence, or risk of serious harm independent of a vehicle pursuit..
- For the purpose of clarity of communications, radio traffic should identify the device as "StarChase".
- StarChase equipment will only be operated by officers who have been trained in its use. StarChase equipped vehicles will not be assigned to officers who are not trained on its use, unless required by exigent circumstances.
- Officers shall receive permission from a supervisor prior to deploying the StarChase tag on a pursued vehicle.
- All safety decisions related to the discharge of a StarChase tag shall be evaluated by the operator prior to deployment. While supervisors may direct or approve the deployment of a StarChase equipped patrol car in a pursuit and/or the discharge of a tag, safety decisions related to passing other involved vehicles and the actual discharge of the device will be evaluated by the operator prior to deployment. In accordance with policy, the safety of officers, uninvolved persons, and persons inside the pursued vehicle shall be considered. The following decisions are specifically included:
  - (a) Whether the officer can safely maneuver close enough to the suspect vehicle to come within targeting range.
  - (b) Whether the officer can safely pass any other vehicle involved in the pursuit.
  - (c) Whether any circumstance would indicate the device would not work (e.g. weather conditions,suspect vehicle weaving, etc.)

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- StarChase equipped patrol cars, with approval from a supervisor, are authorized to respond Code 3 to join a pursuit for potential use of the device.
- Unless directed otherwise, the StarChase equipped vehicle will join the pursuit at the rear of authorized pursuing vehicles until cleared to pass.
- Once a StarChase equipped vehicle joins a pursuit, it becomes an authorized unit as it relates to the number of authorized pursuing vehicle.
- StarChase equipped vehicles may pass other pursuing vehicles only when deemed safe and only with specific permission from the unit to be passed. Permission is to be sought and acknowledged one passing at a time. Officers driving the StarChase equipped vehicle will identify which side of the overtaken vehicle they will pass.
- StarChase tags will be deployed in accordance with training.
- Once the StarChase tag has been successfully deployed, pursuing vehicles should normally drop back significantly from the suspect vehicle.
- The StarChase Monitor will be a Dispatcher or StarChase trained operator/supervisor.
- Officers will maintain constant communication with the StarChase Monitor for speed/ direction/location updates of the suspect vehicle.
- The Supervisor will coordinate with the StarChase Monitor to direct resources and officers to appropriate locations to apprehend the suspect. The patrol supervisor will dictate who the monitor is based on resources, 'know how', etc…
- **No officer who is driving a moving patrol car will access the StarChase Monitor data as this creates an unnecessary hazard.**

404.3 TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The StarChase tag will not normally be deployed in the following situations unless the suspect poses a substantial risk to the public:

- During heavy rain.
- While driving on exceptionally rough terrain.
- On a motorcycle.
- When pedestrians are between or very near the suspect vehicle and the StarChase equipped vehicle.

In addition to the normal pursuit reporting procedures required by policy, Officers who use the StarChase system will report all tag deployments.

404.4 DOCUMENTATION

All deployments of the StarChase system shall be appropriately documented by the officer in the incident report and/or supplemental narrative reports (to include selecting the "STARCHASER" special circumstance drop-down option in RIMS). The sergeant shall complete the StarChase Deployment Review Form. The form, with all supporting documentation, shall be forwarded to the Chief of Police for review and final approval. It will be retained by the Field Operation Division

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Administrative Assistant. The form will not be attached to any associated crime report, incident report, or documentation in RIMS.

404.5 PROGRAM OVERSIGHT

The StarChase Pursuit Management System program is managed by the Support Services Captain or their designee. The Support Services Captain, or their designee, should conduct annual audits of the program to assess its use, effectiveness, and potential improvements to the program and this procedure. Training on this program should be provided to appropriate personnel on an annual basis.

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