

	Operational General Order	12.07 Traffic Safety Checkpoints	PAGE 1 OF 2
	SUBJECT		EFFECTIVE DATE
	Virginia Beach Police Department General Order Chapter 12 – Traffic Operations		05/22/2017
			ORIGINATOR/REVIEW
DISTRIBUTION		Special Operations	
ALL		CALEA: 61.1.6 D	
BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE:		<i>James A. Coonan</i>	

Purpose

To establish the procedures and guidelines for the implementation of traffic safety checkpoints.

Policy (CALEA 61.1.6.D)

The Virginia Beach Police Department supports the proactive enforcement of traffic laws. Traffic Safety Checkpoints provide a means for targeting traffic code violations and traffic safety concerns at times and locations that have been identified as problematic or unsafe for the community. The use of Traffic Safety Checkpoints is primarily intended to accomplish the enforcement of traffic code violations in response to the needs of the community, and/or the inspection of vehicles to ensure safe operation.

Procedures

All checkpoints shall be conducted in accordance with the Code of Virginia and the Virginia Beach City Code. To implement a Traffic Safety Checkpoint the following steps must be adhered to:

1. All checkpoints must be pre-planned and controlled by a supervisor. Prior to implementation, the plan must be documented on a PD-247. The plan shall be approved by a supervisor assigned to the respective precinct or bureau ranked Lieutenant or higher. Each plan must specify the sequence or interval in which vehicles will be stopped for inspection. It is preferred that the plan specifies that every vehicle will be checked.
2. Prior to its implementation, all officers assigned to conduct the checkpoint will be briefed on the purpose and their respective responsibilities during the operation. All officers shall wear a reflective traffic vest while conducting the checkpoint.
3. The supervisor in charge of the traffic safety checkpoint must be present at all times. A record of the location, date, times, number of vehicles checked, and total number of violations will be kept. This shall be documented on the PD-247 and retained at the precinct or bureau that conducts the checkpoint.
4. Physical checkpoint factors that must be considered include the following:
 - a. The location must not be so heavily traveled that it severely impedes traffic or presents a danger in a high-speed zone. A location as such may be utilized if approved by a Captain or Lieutenant.
 - b. Cones, flares, and barricades must be set up prior to the stopping point in order to ensure that vehicles may reduce their speed and stop safely. These temporary devices shall not be utilized unless an officer is present to manually direct traffic.

- c. There must be a minimum of one officers present in order to manually direct traffic for the entire duration of the checkpoint.
 - d. A safety zone must be established for the detained vehicles and implemented in a manner that traffic flow will not be inhibited. This is usually accomplished by directing all through traffic into a specific lane (if possible) and providing a safe shoulder or right lane for the detaining of the vehicles during the interview and inspection process.
 - e. A safe ingress/egress route must be provided for vehicles entering and leaving the detaining area such that the normal traffic pattern is not significantly disrupted.
 - f. There must be an emergency route readily available through or around the traffic checkpoint area so as to allow for the passage of emergency vehicles.
5. When checking vehicles, remember that NO VEHICLE MAY BE STOPPED AND DETAINED AT RANDOM. Ideally, every vehicle should be stopped and checked. However, a systematic approach may be utilized in stopping vehicles. If the plan calls for every third vehicle to be stopped and checked, then the plan must be strictly adhered to by pulling every third and only third vehicles, unless an obvious violation/defect is noted on a vehicle, which is not scheduled to be stopped for inspection (as delineated in the plan).
6. All traffic checks shall be performed as quickly and as safely as possible. Do not detain vehicles any longer than is absolutely necessary.