

| | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------|---|
|  | Operational General Order | 12.10 Traffic Escorts | PAGE 1 OF 2 |
| | SUBJECT | | EFFECTIVE DATE |
| | Virginia Beach Police Department General Order Chapter 12 – Traffic Operations | | 08/23/2018 |
| | | | ORIGINATOR/REVIEW |
| DISTRIBUTION | | CALEA: 61.3.3 | Special Operations |
| ALL | | | |
| BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE: | | |  |

Purpose

To specify the situations in which police vehicles may be used to provide law enforcement escort services and how they are to be managed.

Policy (CALEA 61.3.3)

The Virginia Beach Police Department may provide law enforcement escort services on a limited basis. Special Operations personnel, when notified in advance, provide most escort services. There are occasions where the responsibility for an escort may shift to marked precinct units.

Officers shall not provide emergency vehicle escorts of private vehicles transporting an injured person, medical supplies, or other medical emergencies. In such cases, transportation shall be provided by either a emergency medical services or police vehicle.

Funerals

Funeral homes requesting a police escort should make the request at least one hour prior to the time of the escort. This allows for Emergency Communications to determine if there is appropriate staffing by the Special Operations Motor Unit, or the request should be forwarded to the precinct wherein the funeral procession will culminate. Upon arrival, the assigned Special Operations Motor Officer, respective precinct officer should contact the person in charge with the funeral home and determine the following:

- The final destination of the escort
- The route of the escort
- The number of vehicles involved

The officer assigned to the escort should assess the escort size, route, time of day, traffic conditions, and weather conditions. After doing so, the assigned officer can make a request via E911 Emergency Communications Division for additional officers if necessary. Officers are authorized to refuse escort services during inclement weather conditions.

Officers should be flexible in providing the escort services requested, but are authorized to clear the call for service if the escort has not started within 15 minutes of the proposed start time. Officers shall notify the funeral home coordinator that the time has elapsed and that they are clearing the call. Officers should also notify the respective supervisor should they clear an escort due to the reaching the 15 minute time limit.

The primary officer assigned the escort will complete the escort all the way to the cemetery, and are authorized to enter other precincts in order to complete the escort. For escorts that travel into neighboring cities or on the interstate, the primary officer assigned to the escort should ask the funeral home coordinator if they have made contact with the respective law enforcement agency within that city, or Virginia State

Police. Funeral escorts that travel into other cities will be turned over to neighboring police departments at the city limit if they are present. If they are not present, the primary officer and any assisting officers will discontinue the escort safely and within a reasonable distance after crossing the city line.

Unmarked units should not be assigned escort responsibilities for obvious safety reasons.

Escorting officers shall not lead a funeral procession through a red light. Lead escorting vehicles should turn off their emergency equipment when approaching a controlled intersection where the signal is or is about to turn red. Once the light turns green, the escort vehicle can reactivate their emergency equipment. However, once a procession has entered a controlled intersection, escorting officers should take reasonable steps to allow the entire procession to navigate the intersection, even if it must do so against the traffic light. This usually requires a marked unit, with emergency lights activated, to remain in the intersection until the procession has cleared the intersection.

Escorts of a preplanned nature such as public safety funerals or dignitary funerals shall be coordinated through the Special Operations Bureau. The Special Operations Bureau will be responsible for the planning of the escort and assignment of personnel needed for the escort. During escorts of such processions, exceptions to the guidelines provided above, as deemed appropriate by the supervisor assigned, are authorized due to the requirement for advance planning.

Dignitary Motorcades

The Special Operations Commanding Officer or his designee will review all requests for dignitary escorts and determine whether to approve the escort. The Special Operations Commanding Officer will assign a Special Operations Sergeant to the escort for the responsibility of preplanning. The Special Operations Sergeant shall use Special Operations personnel for the escort and may also use precinct units to assist with the escorts when appropriate.

Once assigned to this type of escort, the Special Operations Sergeant in charge will contact the appropriate person in charge of the dignitary protection to determine the following:

- The route to be taken, the lanes to be used, and a speed appropriate for this escort. Consideration should be given to the time of day, density of traffic, roadwork, escort route, number of traffic lights, time of travel, and number of vehicles to be escorted.
- All due consideration should be given to safety and traffic laws when escorting dignitaries.
- The use of any emergency equipment during dignitary escorts is prohibited

Oversize Loads and Hazardous Materials

The Virginia Beach Police Department requires that all oversize loads adhere to the laws of the Federal Highway Administration, Virginia State Transportation Board, and City of Virginia Beach Codes, as well as the City of Virginia Beach Hauling Manual that govern the movement of oversize loads and hazardous materials. The Special Operations Division will provide escorts to oversize vehicles when a private escort is unavailable. This escort must be arranged prior to the date of the needed escort. An officer of the Motor Carrier Safety Unit will arrange the escort, and that officer will verify that all necessary permits are in place.

The Virginia Beach Police Department will not provide escorts to hazardous materials, unless an emergency situation is involved. The nature of hazardous materials escorts calls for specially trained escort drivers with knowledge on the material being carried and the response to an incident with the hazardous material.