



MARYLAND STATE POLICE OPERATIONS DIRECTIVE



Vehicle Pursuits

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.01 Purpose

To establish procedures for troopers who engage in vehicle pursuits.

.02 Policy

Troopers may pursue suspects who are attempting to evade apprehension in a vehicle, when warranted by the totality of the circumstances, in conformance with this policy.

.03 CALEA Standards

LE: 41.2.2 41.2.3 **TA:** N/A **CM:** N/A

.04 References

See Appendix B.

.05 Definitions

EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT: audible and visual signal equipment as defined in [TRANSP. §22-218](#) that is mounted on or displayed by an emergency vehicle.

IMMINENT THREAT: conduct of the fleeing driver or occupants of the fleeing vehicle results in a reasonable belief that failure to immediately pursue may result in serious injury or death to any person.

POLICE PURSUIT VEHICLE: vehicle designated by the Motor Vehicle Division via special order as a pursuit vehicle that is customarily used for patrol by the MSP and is equipped with a radio, and audible and visual emergency equipment as defined in [TRANSP. §21-106](#).

PRIMARY PURSUIT VEHICLE: the police pursuit vehicle that initiates the pursuit or assumes control of the pursuit; generally the primary pursuit vehicle is closest to the suspect.

PURSUIT SUPERVISOR: supervisor responsible for authorizing, overseeing and monitoring the pursuit.

ROADBLOCK: during a pursuit, any obstruction (including a vehicle) that is deliberately placed in the path of the pursued vehicle for the purpose of stopping that vehicle.

SECONDARY PURSUIT VEHICLES: any police pursuit vehicles that are involved in a vehicle pursuit and are not the primary pursuit police pursuit vehicle.

SPECIAL USE VEHICLES: MSP vehicles that are not equipped with emergency equipment (e.g., covert vehicles used by drug and criminal investigators; service vehicles).

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SUPERVISOR: a trooper holding the rank of corporal or above.

VISUAL AND AUDIBLE SIGNALS: lights AND siren.

VEHICLE PURSUIT: the actions taken by a trooper to apprehend a suspect in a vehicle who is knowingly failing to stop in response to a trooper's visual and audible signals; includes following a vehicle that is refusing to stop and similar phrases.

.06 Procedures

A. General Considerations

1. This policy is intended for internal use and nothing in this policy should be construed as imposing a higher duty of care on troopers than what is required under existing legal principles.
2. When a trooper pursues a violator or suspected violator of the law in a scenario where there is no reason to believe the person is seeking to avoid apprehension (e.g. catching up to a speeder, pacing a vehicle), such actions are not governed by this policy.
3. Troopers who are engaged in a vehicle pursuit are given a qualified privilege from observing certain traffic laws while operating an emergency vehicle and using emergency equipment.
4. Even when entitled to disregard certain traffic laws, troopers must drive with due regard for the safety of all persons and exercise reasonable care and diligence under the circumstances of the pursuit.

B. Decision to Initiate a Pursuit

1. The decision regarding whether to initiate a pursuit occurs at the point when a trooper has a reasonable belief that the driver of the subject vehicle is knowingly failing to stop in response to a trooper's visual and audible signals.
2. Troopers and pursuit supervisors will use a three-step process to determine if a pursuit is warranted.
 - a. STEP 1: determine the level of the offense (the degree of seriousness of the offense and threat posed by the fleeing suspect);
 - b. STEP 2: determine the level of risk (associated with the pursuit); and
 - c. STEP 3: use the Balance Test to determine whether to initiate a pursuit and to constantly assess whether to continue the pursuit.

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C. STEP 1: Determine the Level Of Offense

1. The seriousness of the offense and the threat posed by the fleeing suspect must be assessed when determining whether to initiate or continue a vehicle pursuit.
2. The Step 1 table categorizes offenses into three levels.
3. The determination of the degree of seriousness must be based upon the facts known or perceived by the trooper at that time the pursuit is initiated.
4. Any level 1 or 2 offense can become a level 3 offense when an imminent threat exists.
 - a. For example, although DUI is considered a level 1 offense, if the driver's conduct creates an imminent threat of serious injury or death, it becomes a level 3 offense.
 - b. If the imminent threat is caused by the driver's threatening driving actions, those actions must have been present BEFORE the traffic stop/pursuit was initiated, not as a result of the driver attempting to elude the police.

STEP 1 – DETERMINE THE LEVEL OF THE OFFENSE		
Level	Description	Suspect is Wanted for...
3	VIOLENT FELONY INVOLVING THE USE OR THREATENED USE OF DEADLY FORCE IMMINENT THREAT Failure to pursue may result in serious injury or death	Felony involving violence, the suspect is a serious threat to another person, and all of the following conditions exist: (1) the perpetrator is a known felon or the trooper has probable cause to believe the perpetrator committed a felony; (2) the perpetrator actually used or threatened to use deadly force in the commission of the felony; and (3) troopers have reason to believe the perpetrator poses a significant threat of using deadly force against a trooper or others if not immediately apprehended. OR Suspect is wanted for any reason and poses an imminent threat (failure to pursue may result in serious injury or death).
2	FELONY	Felony
1	MISDEMEANOR; TRAFFIC VIOLATION	Misdemeanor OR Traffic violation

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D. STEP 2: Determine the Level of Risk Associated with the Pursuit

1. Once the level of the offense is determined, troopers and supervisors will determine the level of risk associated with the pursuit by considering the criteria in the Step 2 Table below.
2. The overall level of risk is established by the:
 - a. two highest primary risk factors present, if they are the same level (e.g., two high primary risk factors will result in the pursuit being classified as high risk); or
 - b. lower of the two highest primary risk factors present, if they are different levels (e.g., one high and one elevated risk factor will result in the pursuit being classified as elevated risk).

STEP 2 – DETERMINE THE LEVEL OF RISK			
THE LEVEL OF RISK IS ESTABLISHED BY THE LOWER OF THE TWO HIGHEST PRIMARY RISK FACTORS			
Primary Risk Factors	Low	Elevated	High
Driving Behavior of Suspect	Normal	Negligent	Reckless
Speed of Pursuit	< 30 mph over speed limit	> 30 mph over speed limit	Twice speed limit or > 100 mph
Number of Intersecting Streets	None	Few	Many
Roadway Conditions	Dry with good visibility	Wet or limited visibility	Precipitation, ice or fog
Traffic Volume	Low	Moderate	Congested
Pedestrians	None	Few	Many; residential
Other Hazards	None	Some	School, mall

2. When applicable, troopers and supervisors should consider the following circumstances in evaluating the risks involved in the pursuit and have the discretion to raise, but not lower, the risk level based on their assessment:
 - a. Passengers in pursued vehicle (known suspects, unknown involvement, children).
 - b. Type of roadway (controlled access, major roadway, undivided roadway).
 - c. Availability of other resources (helicopter or back-up).
 - d. Familiarity with area by trooper and/or pursuit supervisor.
 - e. Number of pursuit vehicles (fewer creates less hazardous conditions on the roadway).
 - f. Quality of radio communications.
 - g. Roadway curves or other road hazards.
 - h. Type and capability of MSP vehicles (marked police pursuit vehicle, unmarked police pursuit vehicle, motorcycle).
 - i. Type of vehicle being pursued (sedan, SUV, motorcycle, commercial vehicle).
 - j. Duration of pursuit.
3. The level of risk may increase or decrease depending on the circumstances of the pursuit.

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E. STEP 3: The Balance Test ^{1,2}

1. The Balance Test or Step 3 Table (below) considers the importance of protecting the public and balancing the known or reasonably suspected offense and the apparent need for immediate capture against the risks to troopers, innocent motorists and others.
2. These procedures must be followed unless the circumstances clearly require other prudent and reasonable action.

STEP 3 – BALANCE TEST				
		Decision Threshold – Risk Levels		
Level	Description	Low	Elevated	High
3	<b style="color: red;">VIOLENT FELONY INVOLVING THE USE OR THREATENED USE OF DEADLY FORCE <b style="color: red;">IMMINENT THREAT Failure to pursue may result in serious injury or death	May pursue; reassess.	May pursue; reassess.	May pursue; reassess; discontinue if risks exceed known threat.
2	<b style="color: red;">FELONY	May pursue; reassess.	May pursue; reassess; discontinue if risks exceed known threat.	Do Not Pursue or discontinue
1	<b style="color: red;">MISDEMEANOR; TRAFFIC VIOLATION	May pursue; reassess; consider terminating if suspect is identified.	Do Not Pursue or discontinue	Do Not Pursue or discontinue

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¹ LE: 41.2.2(a) TA: N/A CM: N/A
² LE: 41.2.2(g) TA: N/A CM: N/A

F. Pre-Planning

1. Absent extenuating circumstances, a trooper should not immediately attempt to stop a vehicle if he has reason to believe that the driver will fail to yield to his emergency equipment (e.g., driver has previously fled, vehicle is stolen, driver is known to be wanted).
2. If a trooper has reason to believe that the driver will fail to yield, he should:
 - a. not attempt to stop the vehicle until at least one additional police unit (trooper or allied officer) has arrived at his location; and
 - b. request additional resources (e.g., Aviation Command, K-9, Stop Sticks[®]) and ensure those resources, if available, are in place prior to initiating the traffic stop.

G. Responsibilities of the Pursuing Troopers ³

1. Any trooper involved in a pursuit will:
 - a. activate his emergency equipment (lights AND siren) for the duration of the pursuit;
 - b. advise the barrack with responsibility for the geographical area of the pursuit;
 - c. ensure, if so equipped, the vehicle's mobile video recorder (including microphone) is activated to record the response; and
 - d. activate RADAR, if so equipped, in moving mode.
2. Upon announcing that he is involved in a pursuit, a trooper should expect to be notified that:
 - a. "the pursuit is authorized," in which case he may continue;
 - b. "terminate the pursuit," in which case he will discontinue the pursuit; or
 - c. "no pursuit supervisor is available," in which case he will discontinue the pursuit;
3. If a trooper is not notified as expected, he will specifically request authorization.
4. If a trooper is not specifically authorized to engage in a pursuit after he requests authorization, he will discontinue the pursuit immediately.
5. If only one trooper is engaged in a pursuit, he will be responsible for radio communications.
6. If a secondary unit is involved in a pursuit, he will generally be responsible for all radio communications unless the primary unit must provide information only he can observe.⁴
7. The unit that is responsible for communications will regularly update the barrack with the location, direction of travel, turns and other relevant information.

H. Pursuit Supervisor Must Monitor the Pursuit

1. A pursuit will not be continued if a pursuit supervisor is:
 - a. not available to monitor the pursuit; or
 - b. absent from the communications area and unable to respond immediately to oversee the pursuit.

³ LE: 41.2.2(b) TA: N/A CM: N/A

⁴ LE: 41.2.2(c) TA: N/A CM: N/A

2. If a trooper announces via radio that he is involved in a pursuit or that he is following a vehicle that is refusing to yield to his emergency equipment and a supervisor is unavailable, the:
 - a. police communications operator (PCO) will advise the trooper “no pursuit supervisor is available”; and
 - b. trooper will immediately acknowledge the PCO and terminate the pursuit.

I. Responsibilities of the Pursuit Supervisor ⁵

1. Pursuit supervisors will direct, coordinate and continuously monitor vehicle pursuits while keeping in mind the safety of the public, troopers and suspects.
2. It is customary for the PCO to work as part of a team with the pursuit supervisor and perform the tasks below; however, the responsibility for the pursuit remains with the pursuit supervisor.
3. If a trooper announces via radio that he is involved in a pursuit, the pursuit supervisor will:
 - a. determine the reason for the pursuit and vehicle description;
 - b. if the vehicle and occupants are unknown, request that the PCO check the vehicle registration (if available) via METERS / NCIC to determine if the vehicle is stolen or the registered owner is wanted;
 - c. request additional pertinent information (e.g., location, speed, traffic conditions); and
 - d. evaluate the pursuit using the criteria in this policy.
4. Once the pursuit supervisor has evaluated the pursuit using the criteria in this policy, he will direct the PCO to advise the trooper via radio:
 - a. “the pursuit is authorized;” or
 - b. “terminate the pursuit.”
5. Once a pursuit has been authorized, the pursuit supervisor will not leave the communications area until the pursuit has concluded or been terminated.
6. The pursuit supervisor will ensure that Syscom or an allied law enforcement agency is immediately notified so a helicopter can be launched as described in subsection M, below.
7. During the pursuit, the pursuit supervisor will ensure that all available resources (e.g., allied agencies, canine, Stop Sticks[®]) are identified, requested and effectively managed.
8. The pursuit supervisor should notify adjoining barracks and allied agencies early in the pursuit so those barracks and agencies may monitor the progress of the pursuit.
9. When it becomes apparent that a pursuit will be leaving the pursuit supervisor’s geographic area of responsibility, he should notify the barrack or agency with responsibility for the new area to ensure all relevant information is provided (to a supervisor whenever possible).
10. The supervisor in the new area assumes responsibility for the pursuit when it enters his geographic area of responsibility.

⁵ LE: 41.2.2(f) TA: N/A CM: N/A

11. Upon conclusion of the pursuit, the pursuit supervisor will ensure that:
 - a. the barrack command staff is notified via telephone and email;
 - b. any other required notifications are completed; and
 - c. all required paperwork is completed per [OPS 09.04](#).

J. Responsibilities of the Police Communications Operator ⁶

1. In addition to following the direction provided by the pursuit supervisor, the PCO will:
 - a. advise all units on the radio channel that a pursuit is in progress;
 - b. advise all units to stop transmitting unless involved in the pursuit; and
 - c. open an incident and document the required information in the CAD.
2. During the pursuit, repeat, or echo, all radio transmissions from the pursuing units to verify the accuracy of the transmission and to make the pursuit supervisor aware of all events.
3. The PCO will check on pursuing units regularly if they are not providing updates as expected.

K. Number of Pursuing Vehicles

1. The likelihood of a collision and injury to the public increases as the number of police vehicles actively participating in a pursuit increases.
2. The units involved in a pursuit should ordinarily be limited to a primary and secondary unit.
3. Troopers in the primary or secondary units may request additional units to be involved in a pursuit if it appears that the troopers involved would not be sufficient to safely effect the arrest of the suspect at the conclusion of the pursuit.
4. Variables of each pursuit (e.g., nature of the crime, number of suspects, aviation and canine involvement, allied agencies) will dictate the number of units involved.
5. Troopers who are not authorized to participate in the pursuit should:
 - a. operate in routine mode (i.e., without lights and siren) and not attempt to trail or parallel the pursuit, unless otherwise directed by a pursuit supervisor; and
 - b. monitor the pursuit and be ready to respond to the termination point or provide traffic breaks at intersections.

L. Types of Pursuing Vehicles ⁷

1. Only Police Pursuit Vehicles are authorized to engage in pursuits, Special Use Vehicles are prohibited from engaging in pursuits.
2. If a pursuit is initiated by a police motorcycle or unmarked police pursuit vehicle, that unit will:
 - a. move to the secondary position upon arrival of a marked MSP police pursuit vehicle; and
 - b. discontinue involvement in the pursuit upon the arrival of a second marked MSP police emergency vehicle, unless authorized to remain in the pursuit by a pursuit supervisor.

⁶ LE: 41.2.2(e) TA: N/A CM: N/A

⁷ LE: 41.2.2(d) TA: N/A CM: N/A

M. Aviation Support

1. The pursuit supervisor will immediately contact Syscom to request aviation support anytime a pursuit is authorized or when a pursuit is likely to occur as described in (D)(2)(b), above.
2. Barracks in areas that typically have allied law enforcement helicopters available may contact those agencies directly and will notify Syscom if an allied agency helicopter responds.
3. When available, aviation support will respond to a vehicle pursuit.
4. The pursuit should be recorded if the helicopter is equipped with video recording equipment.
5. Once the helicopter has made radio contact with the pursuing patrol vehicles, tactics will be coordinated between the flight crew, the pursuing patrol vehicles and pursuit supervisor.
6. The pursuit supervisor should consider terminating the pursuit by patrol vehicles and allowing the helicopter crew to observe the actions of the pursued vehicle and direct ground units to take appropriate action.

N. Pursuit Techniques

1. Blocking Controlled-Access Highway Exit and Access Ramps
 - a. Blocking techniques may be used during any pursuit that has been authorized.⁸
 - b. Blocking is not considered a roadblock.
 - c. The blocking of access ramps to controlled access highways by troopers not actively involved in the pursuit to prevent citizens from inadvertently driving into the path of a vehicle pursuit is permitted.
 - d. The blocking of exit ramps from controlled access highways by troopers not actively involved in the pursuit to keep the pursued vehicle from returning to congested surface streets is permitted.
 - e. Blocking does not constitute the use of deadly force but should be used with caution.⁹
 - f. Only State-owned vehicles or property will be used.
 - g. Signs, flares, or other lightweight barricade devices which, if struck, cause little or no damage may be used for blocking.
2. Tire Deflating Devices (Stop Sticks®)
 - a. Stop Sticks® may be used during any pursuit that has been authorized.¹⁰
 - b. Only personnel who have received specific training from the Education & Training Division on the proper use of Stop Sticks® may employ them.¹¹
 - c. Deployment of Stop Sticks® will be in accordance with the training provided by the Education & Training Division.
 - d. Only MSP-issued or approved tire deflation devices will be used.
 - e. Prior to deploying a Stop Sticks®, the trooper will notify the pursuit supervisor responsible for the pursuit of his intent to use them.¹²

⁸ LE: 41.2.3(a) TA: N/A CM: N/A

⁹ LE: 41.2.3(a) TA: N/A CM: N/A

¹⁰ LE: 41.2.3(a) TA: N/A CM: N/A

¹¹ LE: 41.2.3(c) TA: N/A CM: N/A

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- f. Whenever possible, measures should be taken to divert other traffic from the area where Stop Sticks[®] are to be used to prevent unnecessary damage to other vehicles.
- g. The exact location, to include lane of deployment, will be communicated to the pursuit supervisor and all pursuing vehicles.
- h. Use of Stop Sticks[®] on vehicles does not constitute the use of deadly force, but should be used with caution.
- i. Stop Sticks[®] will not be used when a pursuit involves a motorcycle or a vehicle that is transporting hazardous materials unless deadly force is authorized; in such cases troopers must weigh the potential hazard created and the potential to involve and negatively impact other motorists or pedestrians in the immediate vicinity when determining whether to apply deadly force in this manner.

O. Pursuit Techniques Requiring Pursuit Supervisor Approval ¹³

1. Roadblocks

a. Fixed – Class A

- (1) Uses heavy material, vehicles or equipment on a roadway to stop or disable an approaching vehicle on impact.¹⁴
- (2) May only be employed when the use of deadly force is justified and must comply with OPS 10.03.¹⁵
- (3) Must be positioned to afford the vehicle being pursued adequate time and distance to avoid striking the roadblock by stopping or turning around.
- (4) Only State-owned vehicles or property will be used; vehicles will be unoccupied.

b. Fixed – Class B

- (1) May be used during any pursuit that has been authorized.¹⁶
- (2) Uses signs, flares, or other lightweight barricade devices which, if struck, cause little or no damage.¹⁷
- (3) Does not constitute the use of deadly force but should be used with caution.¹⁸

c. Roadblocks in General

- (1) Before authorizing a roadblock, the pursuit supervisor will determine if a roadblock is appropriate considering the imminent threat to the personal safety of the public, police and violator.¹⁹
- (2) A patrol supervisor will, if possible, respond to and command a roadblock.²⁰

¹² LE: 41.2.3(d) TA: N/A CM: N/A
¹³ LE: 41.2.3(d) TA: N/A CM: N/A
¹⁴ LE: 41.2.3(b) TA: N/A CM: N/A
¹⁵ LE: 41.2.3(a) TA: N/A CM: N/A
¹⁶ LE: 41.2.3(a) TA: N/A CM: N/A
¹⁷ LE: 41.2.3(b) TA: N/A CM: N/A
¹⁸ LE: 41.2.3(a) TA: N/A CM: N/A
¹⁹ LE: 41.2.3(d) TA: N/A CM: N/A
²⁰ LE: 41.2.3(d) TA: N/A CM: N/A

2. Blocking or “Boxing In”

- a. Blocking or boxing in may be used during any pursuit that has been authorized.²¹
- b. Stops a suspect’s vehicle by surrounding it with police vehicles and/or fixed objects (e.g., Jersey wall, guardrail) and intentionally slowing all vehicles to a stop.²²
- c. May only be done when the suspect’s vehicle is traveling at speeds of 35 miles per hour or lower, or when the suspect’s vehicle has come to a stop (e.g., suspect is unable to proceed through stopped traffic at an intersection).²³

P. Pursuits Initiated by Allied Law Enforcement Agencies²⁴

1. Troopers may participate in a vehicle pursuit initiated by an allied law enforcement agency when a specific request has been received from that agency and the trooper has obtained approval from his supervisor.
2. If a trooper becomes aware of a pursuit before the request for assistance is received from the initiating agency, he will notify his supervisor and receive approval prior to participating.
3. The pursuit supervisor will determine the level of assistance to the initiating agency after obtaining the information necessary to conduct the Balance Test as required by this directive.
4. If the pursuit supervisor authorizes participation in the pursuit, he will follow the procedures in subsection (I), above.
5. The pursuit supervisor should coordinate the use of MSP resources (e.g., helicopter, canine, Stop Sticks[®]) with the initiating agency.
6. The pursuit supervisor will not leave the communications area until the pursuit has concluded or until he issues an order for the MSP to cease participation in the pursuit.

Q. Vehicle Pursuits Crossing State or Federal Jurisdictional Boundaries²⁵

Procedures for pursuits crossing state or federal jurisdictional boundaries are located in [OPS 09.03](#).

R. Prohibitions

A trooper will not:

1. intentionally use his vehicle to impact or ram a suspect’s vehicle in order to cause the vehicle to a stop unless:
 - a. all other reasonable means to stop the vehicle have failed;
 - b. deadly force has been authorized by the pursuit supervisor; and
 - c. the trooper has weighed the potential hazard created by a deploying airbag in any vehicle and the potential to involve other motorists or pedestrians.
2. initiate a pursuit with a passenger in his vehicle who is not an MSP employee or law enforcement officer;

²¹ LE: 41.2.3(a) TA: N/A CM: N/A

²² LE: 41.2.3(b) TA: N/A CM: N/A

²³ LE: 41.2.3(b) TA: N/A CM: N/A

²⁴ LE: 41.2.2(h) TA: N/A CM: N/A

²⁵ LE: 41.2.2(h) TA: N/A CM: N/A

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3. initiate or continue a pursuit in a direction opposite to the flow of traffic on a divided highway (a trooper may respond to and attempt to stop a vehicle that is operating against the flow of traffic on a divided highway);
4. attempt to overtake or pass the suspect vehicle during the pursuit unless authorized by a pursuit supervisor or when boxing in a suspect as described in (P)(2), above;
5. continually drive alongside the pursued vehicle during the pursuit (vehicle paralleling); or
6. continually drive with his emergency equipment activated on a street that is parallel to the street on which a pursuit is occurring (street paralleling).

S. Termination of Pursuit

When the decision is made by either the pursuing trooper or the supervisor to terminate the pursuit, troopers operating pursuit vehicles will:

1. reduce their speed to the posted speed limit and obey all traffic laws; and
2. turn off all emergency equipment; and
3. confirm via radio that they have terminated the pursuit.

T. Violations of this Policy

1. The seriousness of an underlying offense does not lessen the requirement that a trooper drive with due regard for the safety of all persons, including himself, other law enforcement officers and the public.
2. Inappropriate vehicle pursuits and improper or ineffective supervision of vehicle pursuits, regardless of the crimes for which the violator is pursued will result in disciplinary action in accordance with MSP policy.

Approved:

Colonel Marcus L. Brown
Superintendent 07/01/2014

Appendix A: Vehicle Pursuit Reference Guide

STEP 1 – DETERMINE THE LEVEL OF THE OFFENSE

Level	Description	Suspect is Wanted for...
3	<p>VIOLENT FELONY INVOLVING THE USE OR THREATENED USE OF DEADLY FORCE</p> <p>IMMINENT THREAT Failure to pursue may result in serious injury or death</p>	<p>Felony involving violence, the suspect is a serious threat to another person, and all of the following conditions exist:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (4) the perpetrator is a known felon or the trooper has probable cause to believe the perpetrator committed a felony; (5) the perpetrator actually used or threatened to use deadly force in the commission of the felony; and (6) troopers have reason to believe the perpetrator poses a significant threat of using deadly force against a trooper or others if not immediately apprehended. <p>OR</p> <p>Suspect is wanted for any reason and poses an imminent threat (failure to pursue may result in serious injury or death).</p>
2	FELONY	Felony
1	MISDEMEANOR; TRAFFIC VIOLATION	Misdemeanor OR Traffic violation

STEP 2 – DETERMINE THE LEVEL OF RISK

THE LEVEL OF RISK IS ESTABLISHED BY THE LOWER OF THE TWO HIGHEST PRIMARY RISK FACTORS

Primary Risk Factors	Low	Elevated	High
Driving Behavior of Suspect	Normal	Negligent	Reckless
Speed of Pursuit	< 30 mph over speed limit	> 30 mph over speed limit	Twice speed limit or > 100 mph
Number of Intersecting Streets	None	Few	Many
Roadway Conditions	Dry with good visibility	Wet or limited visibility	Precipitation, ice or fog
Traffic Volume	Low	Moderate	Congested
Pedestrians	None	Few	Many; residential
Other Hazards	None	Some	School, mall

Also consider: passengers in pursued vehicle, type of roadway, availability of resources, familiarity with area by trooper / supervisor, number of pursuit vehicles, radio communications, road hazards, type of MSP vehicle, type of pursued vehicle, duration of pursuit.

STEP 3 – BALANCE TEST

Decision Threshold – Risk Levels				
Level	Description	Low	Elevated	High
3	<p>VIOLENT FELONY INVOLVING THE USE OR THREATENED USE OF DEADLY FORCE</p> <p>IMMINENT THREAT Failure to pursue may result in serious injury or death</p>	May pursue; reassess.	May pursue; reassess.	May pursue; reassess; discontinue if risks exceed known threat.
2	FELONY	May pursue; reassess.	May pursue; reassess; discontinue if risks exceed known threat.	Do Not Pursue or discontinue
1	MISDEMEANOR; TRAFFIC VIOLATION	May pursue; reassess; consider terminating if suspect is identified.	Do Not Pursue or discontinue	Do Not Pursue or discontinue

Appendix B: References

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- VEHICLE PURSUITS & EMERGENCY OPERATION (State of Virginia, 2011).