

Greer Police Department

General Order 510.6 Foot Pursuits

This order consists of the following numbered sections:

- I. POLICY
- II. DEFINITIONS
- III. PROCEDURE

July, 2008

Foot Pursuit

- I. **Policy:** Whenever an officer decides to engage, or continue a foot pursuit a quick and continuous risk assessment must take place. The officer must evaluate the risk involved to themselves, the suspect and the community versus the benefit of continuing the foot pursuit.

II. **Definitions:**

- A. **Foot Pursuit:** A situation in which an officer, on foot chases a suspect in an effort to detain or arrest that individual who he has a reasonable suspicion to believe is about to commit, is committing, or has committed a crime and who is resisting apprehension by fleeing from the officer.
- B. **Suspect:** Includes any individual who a police officer reasonably believes is about to commit, is committing or has committed an offense or poses an imminent threat to the safety of the public, other officers or themselves.
- C. **Contact/Cover:** A tactical practice of having two or more officers working together during a foot pursuit. The officers work as a team utilizing direct or indirect communication methods to coordinate their efforts, remain aware of the locations of officers and suspects, and keep abreast of the status of the pursuit.

III. **Procedure:**

- A. **Alternatives to Foot Pursuit:** To the extent that resources are available, officers should consider the following alternatives to a foot pursuit:
- a. Area Containment
 - b. Additional officers
 - c. Surveillance until additional resources become available
- B. **Factors to Consider in Conducting the Risk Assessment:**
- a. Whether the suspect is armed;
 - b. How serious is the suspect's offense i.e. does he or she pose a serious threat to the community if allowed to escape;
 - c. Officer acting alone
 - d. Backup is not available in a timely manner
 - e. Officer pursuing more than one suspect
 - f. Officer not in physical condition to pursue a subject on foot
 - g. Location:
 - i. Nature of area- (i.e. residential, commercial, freeway) which impacts the safety of all those who may be affected by the foot pursuit.
 - ii. Conditions of structures: abandoned and condemned.
 - iii. Environmental factors: weather conditions or darkness.
 - iv. Area of pursuit is hostile to law enforcement personnel
 - h. Ability to apprehend the subject at a later time. i.e. identity is known
 - i. Communications Issues:
 - i. Officer familiarity with location-able to identify subject's location with accuracy during pursuit.
 - ii. Radio frequency and coverage- Is officer in area where radio coverage may fail.

C. Pursuing Officer Responsibilities:

- a. The decision to initiate or continue a foot pursuit requires weighing the need to apprehend the suspect against the degree of risk to which the officer and others are exposed to as a result of the pursuit.
- b. Once an officer decides to engage in a foot pursuit, the officer must immediately relay the following information to communications:
 - i. Officer Unit Number
 - ii. Location (continuing responsibility)
 - iii. Direction of travel
 - iv. Description of suspect
 - v. Whether suspect is armed
 - vi. Reason for foot pursuit
 - vii. Coordinating with other officers to establish perimeter for containment.
- c. The primary officer should maintain sufficient tactical gap between him or herself and the suspect to allow time for maintaining cover and allow for the arrival of backup officers before engagement.
- d. An officer should not enter a building, structure or area of limited or no cover without a backup officer present.
- e. An officer should not continue a foot pursuit if the officer has lost their firearm.
- f. Officers should note that residents may mistake pursuing officers as prowlers; to the extent possible efforts should be made to notify area residents of the police presence. Officers or supervisors might consider notification to area residents
 - i. Reverse 911
 - ii. Backup officers' use of vehicle's P.A.
 - iii. Use of vehicle siren

D. Supervisor's responsibility:

- a. Monitor the pursuit and direct available resources to provide for the swift and safe apprehension of the suspect.
- b. Terminate any foot pursuit where the risk to the officer, the public, or the suspect outweighs the need for the foot pursuit.
- c. Consider the use of specialized units/personnel to aid in the apprehension i.e. canine, ERT following containment etc.

E. Communications Responsibility:

- a. Maintain open communications with involved officer.
- b. Notify a supervisor and provide relevant information (without compromising ability of involved officer in communicating ongoing information)

F. Termination of Foot Pursuits: Officers shall terminate a foot pursuit:

- a. If ordered by a Supervisor
- b. If the officer believe the danger to the pursuing officers or the public outweighs the necessity for the immediate apprehension of the suspect.

- c.** If the suspect's identity is known and he or she is not an imminent threat to the safety of the public or other officers, consider terminating the pursuit and apprehend at a later date.
- d.** After termination of a foot pursuit, the involved officers will notify communications of the last known location of the suspect or in cases of apprehension, the location of apprehension.