

MESA POLICE Department Policy Manual	Stolen Vehicle & Stolen Vehicle Recoveries	DPM 3.1.90 Effective 11/27/2012 Revised 11/28/2023
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1. PURPOSE

This policy provides Mesa Police Department (MPD) members with guidelines when handling stolen vehicle investigations and stolen vehicle recoveries. **This policy does not apply to security interest vehicles.**

2. MESA STOLEN VEHICLES

2.1 Reports

- A. When reporting party (RP) of theft is other than the registered owner (RO), do not enter the vehicle into NCIC/ACIC until RO is contacted.
- B. If RP has not registered the vehicle into their name at the time of the report they must show some valid proof of purchase and/or ownership. Dealers will fax in their proof of ownership.
- C. Proof of purchase and/or ownership includes one or more of the following:
 1. Financial contract or sales documents from the dealership the vehicle was purchased to include a contact telephone number for confirmation.
 2. Motor Vehicle Department (MVD) title or registration including the vehicle information and the reporting party's name that can be confirmed through an NCIC/ACIC inquiry.
 3. Signed and notarized title listing the RP as the buyer and listing the vehicle information.
- D. Contact the Criminal Justice Information Division (CJID) to enter the vehicle into NCIC/ACIC within one hour, or as soon as possible, after the above listed proof of purchase and/or ownership requirements have been met.
- E. In all cases, advise the RP/RO that if they see their stolen vehicle they should:
 1. Call the police immediately.
 2. Try to stay in visual contact of the vehicle, but out of danger.
 3. Give their exact location and any activity near their vehicle.
- F. Do not touch the vehicle or drive the vehicle (for safety and evidentiary purposes).
- G. Complete an RMS initial report using the Stolen Vehicle template in accordance with current reporting writing policy.
- H. Important details to include in report:
 1. Last time vehicle was seen.
 2. Condition of the vehicle.
 3. The contents of the vehicle at time of theft.
 4. Anyone else have vehicle access (keys)?
 5. Is vehicle leased or owned?

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2.2 In-Person Reports

- A. Provide the RP/RO with [DPM 3.1.90F7 MPD Stolen Vehicle Agreement \(English\)](#) or [DPM 3.1.90F8 MPD Stolen Vehicle Agreement \(Spanish\)](#) and cover memo. Explain the agreement must be completed and signed. Members shall make every effort to have the agreement completed by RP/RO at the time of the initial report.
- B. If the RP/RO signs the agreement [DPM 3.1.90F7 MPD Stolen Vehicle Agreement \(English\)](#) or [DPM 3.1.90F8 MPD Stolen Vehicle Agreement \(Spanish\)](#), the vehicle **WILL** be entered into NCIC/ACIC.
- C. If the RP/RO refuses to sign the agreement or refuses to initial the conditions of the agreement on [DPM 3.1.90F7 MPD Stolen Vehicle Agreement \(English\)](#) or [DPM 3.1.90F8 MPD Stolen Vehicle Agreement \(Spanish\)](#), the vehicle **WILL NOT** be entered into NCIC/ACIC.
- D. Note in stolen vehicle report the RP's/RO's refusal to sign the agreement and that the vehicle was not entered into NCIC/ACIC. The vehicle must still be entered as stolen in the RMS Vehicle Module.
- E. If a signed agreement was received from the RP/RO, check the appropriate box under the Selections/Search tab in the original RMS Incident Module. Forward the agreement to CJID to be scanned into DMS.

2.3 Phone Reports

- A. The following will be explained to the RP/RO:
 1. The vehicle **WILL** be entered into NCIC/ACIC as stolen and a [DPM 3.1.90F7 MPD Stolen Vehicle Agreement \(English\)](#) or [DPM 3.1.90F8 MPD Stolen Vehicle Agreement \(Spanish\)](#) will be mailed to them.
 2. The agreement must be completed, notarized and returned to the MPD within seven days of receipt.
 3. An audit is conducted every 30 days and the vehicle **WILL** be removed from NCIC/ACIC if the Stolen Vehicle Agreement is not received.
- B. Mail stolen vehicle agreement and cover letter to the RP.
- C. **DO NOT CHECK** the appropriate box under the Selections/Search tab in the original RMS Incident Module. Note in the departmental report (GO) that the agreement was mailed.

2.4 CJID Section

- A. Upon receipt of the Stolen Vehicle Agreement after the initial report has been completed, scan the agreement into DMS under index code "SVA." Review RMS to ensure that a supplement has been completed documenting receipt and that the appropriate box under the Selections/Search tab has been checked.

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- B. If no supplement has been completed and the box is not checked, forward original agreement to appropriate district detective/sergeant for follow-up.

2.5 Station Records Specialist

- A. Upon receipt of Stolen Vehicle Agreement when included as an attachment to the initial report, scan into DMS under index code "SVA." Review RMS to ensure that the appropriate box under the Selections/Search tab has been checked.
- B. If an agreement has been received but the box is not checked return agreement to the submitting officer for correction.

2.6 Criminal Investigations Unit (CIU) Sergeant

- A. CIU Sergeant will refer cases to assigned detective for follow-up to indicate either:
1. An agreement has been received; or
 2. If no agreement is received, remove the vehicle out of NCIC/ACIC.

2.7 Assigned Detective

- A. Run daily report to identify cases where no Stolen Vehicle Agreement has been received.

2.8 If Over 30 Days

- A. Review DMS to verify whether a Stolen Vehicle Agreement has been received.
- B. Conduct stolen vehicle check to determine if vehicle has been recovered and already removed from NCIC/ACIC.

2.9 If a Stolen Vehicle Agreement is Received

- A. Check the appropriate box under the Selections/Search tab in the original RMS Incident Module noting receipt of the Stolen Vehicle Agreement.
- B. Complete a supplement in RMS indicating the agreement was received.

2.10 If No Stolen Vehicle Agreement Has Been Received in 30 Days

- A. Contact the victim to verify whether a vehicle pay-off occurred on their vehicle from an insurance company.
1. If victim status has not changed, remove from NCIC/ACIC.
 2. If vehicle pay-off occurred, the insurance company is also a victim.
- B. Contact the victim insurance company and provide affidavit information and 30-day return process explanation.
- C. Notify CJID:

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1. To either leave vehicle in NCIC/ACIC or re-enter vehicle into NCIC/ACIC for another 30 days while awaiting Stolen Vehicle Agreement from the victim insurance company.
2. If Agreement is not returned from victim insurance company within 30 days, remove vehicle from ACIC/NCIC.

2.11 Complete Supplemental Report in RMS

- A. A "Stolen Vehicle No Agreement Code" supplement documenting details on status of Stolen Vehicle Agreement form.
- B. An "Investigation Supplement" documenting new victim information and details, including entering the insurance company in the RMS Name Module as an additional victim.

3. MESA STOLEN VEHICLES RECOVERED IN MESA

3.1 Patrol Responsibilities

- A. Ensure that every vehicle is processed for evidence. Items of evidentiary value relating to DNA and latent fingerprints shall be processed or seized and placed into property in accordance with current evidence procedures.
- B. Request Communications contact RP/RO advising recovery of vehicle and ask them to respond to retrieve vehicle.
- C. Complete [DPM 3.1.90F1 Mesa PD Tow Form](#) or Mesa PD Vehicle Tow Form generated from RMS.
- D. Conduct a complete inventory of the recovered vehicle's contents. Currency, jewelry, electronics and other items containing serial numbers shall be seized and placed into property as evidence.

3.2 Reports

- A. If the vehicle was stolen from Mesa and a theft report was previously written, an RMS supplemental report must be completed to document the recovery of the vehicle and the vehicle must be listed as recovered in the vehicle module. Use the GO number from the original report.
- B. If stolen in Mesa and recovered prior to victim reporting the vehicle as stolen, follow procedures for taking stolen vehicle reports. The vehicle must be listed as stolen and recovered in the vehicle module.
- C. Important details to include in the report:
 1. Circumstances of the recovery.
 2. Condition of the vehicle.
 3. Evidence collected.
 4. Disposition of vehicle.
 5. Released to RP/RO or agent.

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6. Name of towing and/or storage company.
- D. Prior to end of shift, either deliver the Vehicle Recovery/Towing Sheet to CJID at Police Headquarters or fax a copy to CJID. If the form is faxed, attach a copy of the fax transmittal form and original Vehicle Recovery/Towing Sheet to [DPM 3.3.35F4 Incident Attachments](#) and send via interoffice mail to CJID.

3.3 Owner Notification

- A. Notify the RP/RO after verifying the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN).
- B. Messages left on an answering machine or with people other than the RP/RO do NOT serve as notice.
- C. Member must still complete and send the notification card as outlined below.
 1. If unable to notify the RP/RO by the end of shift, send [DPM 3.1.90F9 Towing Postcard](#) before going off duty. Attach a copy of the completed postcard to [DPM 3.3.35F4 Incident Attachments](#) and send via interoffice mail to CJID. Document the details of the notification in the GO.

3.4 No Police Hold

- A. Release to RP/RO or agent.
- B. If the RP/RO cannot be contacted or cannot respond to retrieve the vehicle, release to the contract tow company or a tow company called by the RP/RO.
- C. Do not place a police hold on vehicles released to a tow company for storage.**

3.5 Police Hold

- A. Impound at the MPD Vehicle Impound Storage Facility using the contract towing company.
- B. Reasons for a police hold:
 1. Ownership is unclear (proof of ownership).
 2. The VIN has been removed, altered or defaced.
 3. The vehicle is evidence of a crime, such as a hit and run.
 4. If directed by a supervisor.
- C. Conduct a complete inventory of the recovered vehicle's contents as listed above in Patrol Responsibilities.
- D. Follow evidence guidelines for submitting vehicles to the Vehicle Impound Storage Facility.
- E. A CIU detective will be responsible for releasing vehicles impounded at the Vehicle Impound Storage Facility.

4. VEHICLES STOLEN FROM OTHER JURISDICTION (FOJ) AND RECOVERED IN MESA

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4.1 Patrol Responsibilities

- A. FOJ recovered stolen vehicles will be processed in accordance with [FSQA-M2-7.12 Forensic Services Case Acceptance Criteria](#).
- B. Ensure Mesa felony charge of [ARS 13-1814A.5](#) is included in GO, whether an occupied or unoccupied recovered stolen vehicle.
- C. Conduct a complete inventory of the recovered vehicle's contents. Currency, jewelry, electronics, and other items containing serial numbers for identification purposes shall be seized and placed into property as evidence.
- D. Complete [DPM 3.1.90F1 Mesa PD Tow Form](#) or Mesa PD Vehicle Two Form generated from RMS.
 1. Check the "FOJ" box.
 2. Include the ORI# (Originating agency number).
 3. Include the OCA# (Originating agency case number).
 4. Include the address stolen from.
- E. The "NCIC" block on the Vehicle Recovery/Towing Sheet is for CJID use only. **Prior to the end of shift**, either deliver the Vehicle Recovery/Towing Sheet to CJID at Police Headquarters or fax a copy to CJID.
- F. If the sheet is faxed, attach a copy of the fax transmittal form and the original Vehicle Recovery/Towing Sheet and send via interoffice mail to CJID.

4.2 Reports

- A. Create an initial RMS incident report for offense 00-5091, Property Recovered Vehicle – FOJ. The vehicle must be entered as "Recovered" using "Offense" code "R24" in the RMS vehicle module.
- B. If suspect has been identified, whether charged or not, the initial RMS incident report will remain under offense 00-5091, Property Recovered Vehicle - FOJ. Additional applicable offense codes should be entered as well (e.g., Theft of Means of Transportation, Knowingly Possess).
- C. Important details to include in the report:
 1. Circumstances of the recovery.
 2. Condition of the vehicle.
 3. Evidence collected.
 4. Disposition of vehicle.
 5. Release to RP/RO or agent.
 6. Name of the towing and/or storage company.

4.3 Owner Notification

- A. Notify the originating agency of the recovery. They are responsible for contacting the RP/RO.
- B. Note the other agency contact name in the GO.

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4.4 No Police Hold

- A. Release to RP/RO or agent under normal circumstances.
- B. If the RP/RO cannot be contacted or cannot respond to retrieve the vehicle, release to the contract tow company or a tow company called by the RP/RO.
- C. Do not place a police hold on vehicles released to a tow company for storage.**

4.5 Police Holds

- A. Reasons for a police hold:
 - 1. Ownership is unclear (proof of ownership).
 - 2. The VIN has been removed, altered or defaced.
 - 3. There is a possibility of seizure or forfeiture.
 - 4. The vehicle is evidence of a crime, such as a hit and run.
 - 5. If directed by a supervisor.
- B. Conduct a complete inventory of the recovered vehicle's contents as listed above in Patrol Responsibilities.
- C. Impounded vehicles shall be transported to the MPD Vehicle Impound Storage Facility by the contract towing company.
- D. Follow evidence guidelines for submitting vehicles to the Vehicle Impound Storage Facility.
- E. A CIU detective will be responsible for releasing vehicles impounded at the Vehicle Impound Storage Facility.

5. VEHICLES STOLEN FROM MESA AND RECOVERED IN ANOTHER JURISDICTION – TELESERVE RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Notification by Other Agencies

- A. The CJID will take all information regarding a vehicle recovery.
- B. The CJID will provide Teleserve with all the information regarding the vehicle
- C. recovery.
- D. Teleserve will complete an RMS supplemental report documenting the recovery of the vehicle. The vehicle must be listed as recovered in the vehicle module. Use the GO number from the original report.
- E. Whenever possible, include in report:
 - 1. Circumstances of the recovery.
 - 2. Suspect identification and/or charging information.
 - 3. Condition of the vehicle.
 - 4. Evidence collected.
- F. Disposition of vehicle:
 - 1. Released to RP/RO or agent.

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2. Name of the towing and/or storage company.

5.2 Owner Notification

- A. Notify the RP/RO after verifying the VIN.
- B. Messages left on an answering machine or with people other than the RP/RO do NOT serve as notice. Member must still complete and send the notification card as outlined below.
 1. If unable to notify the RP/RO by the end of shift, send [DPM 3.1.90F9 Towing Postcard](#) before going off duty. Attach a copy of the completed form [DPM 3.3.35F4 Incident Attachments](#).
 2. Document the details of the notification in the GO.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE TELETYPE ADVISING OF A MEXICO RECOVERY

- A. **Receiving Member Responsibilities**
 1. **Do not** remove the vehicle from NCIC/ACIC; this is not a "locate." The vehicle remains in NCIC/ACIC until it is returned to the United States.
 2. **Do not** complete a Vehicle Tow/Recovery Form.
 3. Contact the Metro Resources Special Property Unit Investigator during normal working hours. The Auto Theft unit will arrange the recovery of the vehicle.

7. CJID SECTION RESPONSIBILITIES FOR RECOVERED STOLEN VEHICLES

7.1 Faxed Copies of Vehicle Tow/Recovery Forms

- A. Immediately place them in the Impound/Property basket.

7.2 Vehicle Tow/Recovery Forms from Officers

- B. Sign the form acknowledging receipt.
- C. Immediately place the yellow copy in the Impound/Property basket.

7.3 Vehicle Tow/Recovery Form & Outside Agency Warrant Confirmation Checklist

- A. Place a "locate" on the vehicle in NCIC/ACIC. Send a teletype to the originating agency with **60 minutes** from the time the forms were received.
- B. Include this information in the teletype:
 1. Date/time of recovery.
 2. Vehicle description, including VIN.
 3. Any suspect information.
 4. Tow company's name, phone number and address.

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5. Vehicle condition.
6. Owner/Victim notification.

REFERENCES

- [DPM 3.1.90F1 Mesa PD Tow Form](#)
- [DPM 3.1.90F7 MPD Stolen Vehicle Agreement \(English\)](#)
- [DPM 3.1.90F8 MPD Stolen Vehicle Agreement \(Spanish\)](#)
- [DPM 3.1.90F9 Towing Postcard](#)
- [DPM 3.3.35F4 Incident Attachments](#)
- [FSQA-M2-7.12 Forensic Services Case Acceptance Criteria](#)
- [ARS 13-1814A.5](#)