

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>STRATFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT</b></p> 	Type of Directive: <b>Policy and Procedure</b>	NEW: <b>03-13-2024</b>
	Title: <b>StarChase Pursuit System Use</b>	No. <b>7.3-A</b>
	Issuing Authority: <b>Chief Joseph McNeil</b>	Issued: <b>03-13-2024</b>
	Reference:	

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedures, requirements, and expectations for activating the StarChase Pursuit Management System.

**POLICY:**

It is the policy of the Stratford Police Department to activate the StarChase Pursuit Management System when sworn personnel are engaged in an authorized motor vehicle pursuit or when sworn personnel have probable cause to believe that the individual(s) has committed a felony crime, when an individual attempts to flee the scene of a lawful traffic stop.

StarChase equipment shall not be used to circumvent the pursuit policy. An officer must only engage in a pursuit to deploy the equipment if the pursuit meets the requirements of the State of Connecticut Pursuit Policy (SPD Policy 7.3 – Motor Vehicle Pursuits).

**DISCUSSION:**

The StarChase Pursuit Management System (StarChase) allows an Officer to remotely affix a GPS tracking device from an equipped police vehicle or handheld device onto a suspect vehicle. Once the tracker is affixed, its location can be tracked using a computer with an internet connection. Officers will have the ability to monitor the GPS tracking device location once it has been deployed.

StarChase equipment shall only be used by those Officers who have been trained in its proper use.

StarChase equipment shall only be utilized for legitimate law enforcement purposes.

Consistent with SPD Policy 13.5, Body Camera and In Car Camera Systems, Officers shall activate their body-worn and dashboard cameras for all pursuits and attempts to deploy the StarChase equipment.

StarChase equipment shall only be used when a vehicle is wanted in connection to a known felony crime (e.g., stolen vehicle, robbery, and burglary), or when the suspect vehicle attempts to leave the scene of a lawful traffic stop, only if the Officer is able to deploy in a manner that does not violate the pursuit policy.

Officers shall not deploy the StarChase equipment on an unoccupied vehicle that is not stolen or currently being used in the commission of a crime unless a search warrant has been obtained.

Officers shall not deploy StarChase equipment on two or three-wheeled vehicles.

Officers shall not deploy StarChase equipment while a prisoner or civilian rider is in the patrol vehicle.

Officers shall not deploy the StarChase equipment in the following situations unless the suspect poses a substantial risk to the public.

- During heavy rain
- While driving on exceptionally rough terrain
- When pedestrians are between or very near the suspect vehicle and the StarChase deployment equipment.

## **PROCEDURES**

Officers shall use their own judgement as to whether to affix a StarChase tag upon a pursued vehicle and do not need prior approval from a Supervisor.

The StarChase launcher can only be deployed from a stationary position, no deployments are authorized from a moving vehicle.

The Officer shall consider the following when deciding whether to deploy the StarChase tag;

- Is it safe to maneuver close enough to the suspect vehicle to come within targeting range?
- Whether any circumstances would indicate the device would not work (e.g., weather conditions, suspect vehicle weaving).

StarChase tags will be deployed in accordance with training.

- Once the StarChase tag has been successfully deployed, pursuing vehicles should significantly increase their following distance.
- The circumstances and conditions of the pursuit shall be evaluated to determine if the pursuit shall be terminated, and the vehicle shall be tracked by the StarChase tag.
- The Officer who deployed the tag shall indicate over the radio that there was an activation and provide a description of the vehicle and offender.
- Officers will utilize the StarChase monitoring software to provide speed, direction, and location updated of the fleeing vehicle.
- Officers shall not view the Coreview mapping system while operating the vehicle.
- The Supervisor shall coordinate and direct deployment to safely apprehend the suspect.
- The device must be removed from the vehicle when safe to do so at the termination of the pursuit or the apprehension location.

## **REPORTING**

Officers shall submit a report for all StarChase deployments prior to the conclusion of their tour of duty. The report shall include, but not limited to the following;

- The circumstances of the deployment, including the underlying crime committed

- Whether an apprehension was made
- Whether the vehicle was located
- Whether the tag was removed

### **SUPERVISORY REVIEW**

The Supervisor shall conduct a post deployment review to determine if applicable policy has been complied with and ensure that deficiencies are corrected through training. The body-worn and dash camera video shall be reviewed.

- Supervisor(s) will be responsible for completing a pursuit synopsis if required by policy;
- Supervisor(s) will be responsible to ensure that a use of force report is completed if required by policy;
- Supervisor(s) shall ensure that a police incident report is completed before the tour of duty is completed;
- Supervisor(s) shall ensure any StarChase GPS tracker deployment is appropriately documented in a Uniform Incident Report.