



NEW ORLEANS POLICE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS MANUAL

CHAPTER: 17.2

TITLE: DEPARTMENT VEHICLE USE AND MAINTENANCE

EFFECTIVE:

REVISED: Replaces Policy/Procedure 704

PURPOSE

This Chapter provides guidelines for department vehicle use and assigns to members the responsibility for assisting in maintaining department vehicles so that they are properly equipped, maintained, and refueled and present a clean appearance.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. Vehicles operated by the New Orleans Police Department shall not be altered or reconfigured other than by a technician designated by the City of New Orleans and with the written approval of the Superintendent of Police or his/her designee.
2. No vehicle owned or leased by the City of New Orleans or the New Orleans Police Department shall be used for a purpose other than designed.
3. All commissioned members of the New Orleans Police Department are required to successfully complete the defensive driving course administered by the Education and Training Division and recertify on the training cycle set by the Education & Training Division.
4. All civilian members of the New Orleans Police Department are required to successfully complete the driver safety training designated by the City's Risk Management Division per **CAO Policy Memorandum 5 (R)** and administered by the MSB - Risk Management Director if they use or operate any City vehicles.
5. For specialized equipment vehicles such as ATVs, boats, motorcycles, scooters, and bikes, operators shall use appropriate safety equipment (e.g., helmets, life vests, safety harnesses, etc.) and keep that equipment in the same clean, functioning, and safe order as the vehicles themselves.

DEFINITIONS

All-Terrain Vehicle—Any vehicle which is designed and built to be able to negotiate multiple terrains without modification to the vehicle. The purpose of these vehicles is to provide the department with equipment capable of performing on multiple terrains.

Crash—Refers to a motor vehicle crash as defined by the State of Louisiana and NOPD regulations. More commonly, “the unintended collision of one motor vehicle with another, a stationary object, or person, resulting in injuries, death and/or loss of property.”

Marked Police Vehicle—A conspicuously marked authorized emergency vehicle readily identified as law enforcement vehicle and routinely used as a district patrol vehicle or enforcement vehicle. Marked police vehicles do not include those vehicles which may be marked differently from patrol vehicles, or various support vehicles operated by NOPD for non-patrol functions (e.g., vehicles customarily used by support units such as trucks and vans).

Special Purpose Vehicle—A vehicle the use of which is based on considerations of weather, terrain, or the need for inconspicuous appearance, quiet, storage, or special operational needs and conditions.

INOPERABLE OR UNSAFE VEHICLES

6. When a Department vehicle becomes inoperable or in need of a repair that directly affects the safe operation of the vehicle, that vehicle shall be removed from service immediately for repair. Necessary documentation describing the unsafe condition shall be completed by the member and/or supervisor who becomes aware of the unsafe condition.
7. The member shall immediately notify his/her supervisor of the unsafe condition. The supervisor shall promptly forward the reporting documentation to MSB - Risk Management for the required vehicle maintenance or repair.

SUSPECTED DAMAGE OR POOR PERFORMANCE

8. Vehicles that may have suffered damage, are performing poorly or whose control or safety features have been diminished shall be removed from service immediately.
9. Each operator of a department vehicle shall promptly report to his/her supervisor any malfunction or damage to the vehicle or its equipment which may have occurred during his/her tour of duty. A member who fails to report damage or malfunction of the vehicle or its equipment shall be subject to disciplinary action and held accountable for the damage or malfunction.
10. Each member assigned the use of a department vehicle shall check the vehicle for body damage and malfunctioning equipment at the beginning and end of his/her daily assignment.
11. If a member observes damage to or a malfunction of the vehicle during his/her inspection of the vehicle or at any time during his/her shift, the member shall immediately notify his/her supervisor. The member is required to record any damage or malfunction on the **NOPD Pre-Trip Vehicle Inspection Report** section of the Officer's Daily Activity Report.
12. The notifying member's supervisor shall conduct a preliminary on-scene administrative investigation of all incidents involving damage to or a malfunction of a department vehicle or equipment and shall ensure it is documented in:
 - (a) An administrative investigation (EPR) if not traffic related; or
 - (b) A Crash report if traffic related; and/or
 - (c) A Supervisor's Report of Crash.

SEVERE USE INSPECTION

13. Vehicles operated under severe use conditions, which include operations for which the vehicle is not designed or operations that **exceed** the manufacturer's use parameters, shall be removed from service and subjected to a safety inspection as determined by the Director of Risk Management as soon as practicable. Severe conditions **may include**, but are not limited to, rough roadway or off-road operation, hard or extended braking, vehicle pursuits or prolonged high-speed operation.

REMOVAL OF WEAPONS

14. All weapons (firearms, CEW, less than lethal weapons and kinetic impact weapons) **shall be removed** and properly secured prior to the vehicle being released for maintenance, service or repair.

MARKED VEHICLE STENCILS AND EQUIPMENT

15. All marked police vehicles shall be marked in a similar manner and color as designated by the MSB Fleet Manager after approval by the Superintendent of Police.
16. The stencils and lettering on marked police vehicles shall be made of reflective material decals that meet the most current requirements of the U.S. Department of Transportation.
17. Marked police vehicles assigned to district patrol duties shall be equipped with a safety screen separating the driver's compartment from the rear seating area. Exceptions may be granted to district patrol vehicles used and numerically designated as supervisory vehicles or staff vehicles only. (See **Chapter 71.1 – Prisoner Transportation and Guarding**).

VEHICLE INSPECTION REPORT

18. The New Orleans Police Department **Pre-Trip Vehicle Inspection Report** section of the Officer's Daily Activity Report shall be completed by the operator at the beginning of each shift/duty assignment for all members that utilize a Daily Activity Report. Nothing in the Operations Manual prohibits Commanders from implementing the use of this form in assignments that do not normally utilize a Daily Activity Report.

VEHICLE REFUELING

19. Absent exigent circumstances (emergency conditions) or prior supervisory approval, members operating patrol vehicles shall not place a vehicle in service (10-8) that has less than one-quarter ($\frac{1}{4}$) of a tank of fuel as indicated by a functioning fuel gage without first re-fueling the vehicle.
20. Vehicles should be fully fueled when placed into service and refueled before the fuel gage level falls below one-quarter ($\frac{1}{4}$) of a tank. Vehicles shall only be fueled at a departmentally authorized location.

VEHICLE CLEANLINESS

21. Vehicles shall be kept clean at all times and, weather conditions permitting, shall be washed as necessary to maintain their appearance.
22. Officers on patrol shall obtain permission from his/her supervisor before relocating to a

car wash. Communications Services will be advised when the unit is at the car wash and unavailable for service.

23. Members shall remove all trash or debris from their assigned unit(s) prior to going into service and prior to the end of their shift.
24. Confidential documents or documents which may contain personally identifiable information and which are being discarded should be placed in a designated receptacle provided for the shredding of this material prior to concluding the shift.

CIVILIAN MEMBERS

25. Civilian members shall not use a marked police vehicle unless specifically directed by his/her supervisor.

SPECIAL PURPOSE VEHICLES

26. Department special purpose vehicles include, but are not limited to:
 - (a) SWAT trucks
 - (b) Bomb disposal vehicles
 - (c) Mobile command posts
 - (d) All-terrain vehicles
 - (e) Boats
 - (f) Motorcycles
 - (g) Scooters
 - (h) Bicycles
 - (i) Buses
27. Special purpose vehicles assist members of the New Orleans Police Department in the performance of their duties and are used to render aid and assistance in the event of a natural or man-made disaster. **Special purpose vehicles shall not be used for personal and/or recreational use.**
28. Operators of special purpose vehicles shall be trained, demonstrate and maintain proficiency in the operation of the vehicle prior to being authorized to operate the vehicle. The unit Commander shall be responsible for ensuring training proficiency testing of all authorized members utilizing special purpose vehicles under his/her command. All training records shall be maintained by the Education & Training Division, in PowerDMS and the individual member's Personnel Jacket. (See: **Chapter 13.3 – Personnel Files**).
29. Proficiency testing for members on the operation of special purpose vehicles shall be performed on the same cycle as the department's defensive driver training unless the original certification requirements specify otherwise.
30. Operators of special purposes vehicles shall be responsible for acquiring and maintaining any licensing required by the State of Louisiana, City of New Orleans, Federal Government, or agency thereof.
31. Members of the New Orleans Police Department shall not operate special purpose vehicles without the appropriate licensing other than for training purposes unless exigent circumstances exist and they have been specifically authorized to do so by their supervisor. Proof of licensing shall be maintained by the Education & Training Division, in PowerDMS and the individual member's Personnel Jacket. (See: **Chapter 13.3 – Personnel Files**).

32. Unless directed otherwise in the Chapter, maintenance and upkeep of all special purpose vehicles shall be the responsibility of the Fleet Manager and the Unit where the vehicle is assigned.

OPERATOR MAINTENANCE

33. A member assigned to operate a city vehicle shall ensure all equipment is functioning at the beginning of the shift/duty assignment. Each member assigned a department vehicle shall be responsible for inspecting:
- (a) Fluid levels (oil, transmission, steering, brake, coolant);
 - (b) Tires/brakes (pressure, condition, spare tire availability);
 - (c) Hoses and belts (engine and seat belts);
 - (d) Electrical (lights, horn, battery, turn signals);
 - (e) Police emergency equipment (radio, siren, spotlights, flashing lights, safety screen); and
 - (f) Overall vehicle cleanliness (interior and exterior).
34. The vehicle operator shall monitor the operation of the vehicle during the shift for any reductions in vehicle performance, unusual noise, or equipment failure that might require corrective maintenance or repair. Any required inspection, repair or corrective action shall be coordinated through the member's supervisor, the Fleet Manager and the City of New Orleans Equipment Maintenance Division.

SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

35. Bureau, Division/District, Section and Unit commanders are responsible for the appearance and mechanical function of all vehicles under their supervision.
36. Supervisory members shall inspect all vehicles used by subordinate members to insure proper operation.

DAMAGE TO VEHICLES OR EQUIPMENT OCCURRING OUTSIDE ORLEANS PARISH

37. If a department vehicle or its equipment is damaged in an incident / Crash outside of Orleans Parish, the operator of the vehicle shall promptly report the incident / Crash to the law enforcement agency of that jurisdiction and request an incident / Crash report.
38. The operator shall immediately notify Communications Services of the incident / Crash, and provide the following:
- (a) Operator's name, badge number and place of assignment;
 - (b) His/her immediate supervisor or supervisor within his/her chain of command;
 - (c) The unit and A-number involved;
 - (d) The reporting agency's item number of the incident / Crash;
 - (e) The name of the investigator from the reporting agency and a contact number;
 - (f) The location of the incident / Crash;
 - (g) If injuries are involved;
 - (h) If the vehicle can be safely driven back to Orleans Parish; and
 - (i) The approximate travel time from Orleans Parish to the scene of the incident / Crash.
39. On all vehicle incident / Crashes occurring outside of Orleans Parish, Communications Services shall:
- (a) Generate an NOPD item number for the incident / Crash, supplying all relayed information within the item number;

- (b) Contact an on duty supervisor from within the operator's chain of command, supplying him/her with the relayed information;
- (c) If a supervisor within the operator's chain of command is not available, contact a supervisory officer from the SOD - Traffic Division supplying him/her with the relayed information; and
- (d) The notified supervisor will arrange with the Director of Risk Management / Fleet Manager to arrange for towing of the vehicle back to Orleans Parish, if it is determined the vehicle is inoperable.

NOTE: It shall be the responsibility of all on-duty supervisory personnel to investigate crashes involving city-owned vehicles, where the operator of the vehicle is under their supervision.

- 40. Only supervisors assigned to SOD - Traffic and designated by the SOD Traffic Division Commander shall respond to departmental vehicle incidents or Crashes occurring outside of Orleans Parish.
- 41. SOD Traffic investigators assigned to investigate departmental vehicle incidents or Crashes occurring outside of Orleans Parish shall determine the travel time to and from the scene of the Crash. If, in the opinion of the investigator, travel time is excessive, he/she shall contact his/her Commander for instructions.
- 42. The SOD Traffic investigator shall adhere to all provisions of the departmental regulation relating to drug and alcohol testing when a member is involved in a departmental vehicle incidents or an auto Crash. The investigator shall include a copy of the completed S.A.T. 4 Form (NOPD.org under Forms), copy of the Crash report conducted by the agency with jurisdiction, and his/her comments on the investigation in the packet sent to the Crash Review Board (CRB), the MSB Risk Manager and the involved member's Bureau Deputy Chief. (See; **Chapter 13.21 – Alcohol and Drug Testing**).
- 43. Members shall not interfere with an investigation being conducted outside of Orleans Parish or by another law enforcement agency.

CRASH AND ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS WITH DEPARTMENT VEHICLES

- 44. When an operator of a department vehicle is involved in a Crash, he/she shall immediately notify Communications Services and his/her supervisor or an on-duty supervisor from his/her place of assignment.
- 45. Communications Services shall notify the assigned Departmental Vehicle Crash Investigator from the approved list but not assigned to the same command as the vehicle operator. The assigned investigator is responsible for completing the Crash report.
- 46. The operator's supervisor shall complete a Supervisor's Report of Crash and Report of Occupational Injury if necessary and shall adhere to all provisions of the departmental regulation relating to drug and alcohol testing when a member is involved in a departmental vehicle incidents or an auto Crash.
- 47. These reports shall be completed within 72 hours of the original incident.
- 48. The operator's supervisor shall send copies of the Supervisor's Report of Crash and Report of Occupational Injury, if any, through the chain of command to the Deputy Chief of the Bureau to which the vehicle operator is assigned and the assigned Departmental Vehicle Traffic Investigator.

49. The original Crash report shall be forwarded to the Commander of the SOD Traffic Section for review and approval, not the Departmental Vehicle Traffic Investigator's supervisor.
50. After review and approval by the Commander of the SOD Traffic Section, the original Crash report shall be processed in the same manner as all Crash reports.
51. The Commander of the SOD Traffic Section shall forward copies of all Crash and related reports to the Crash Review Board within seven (7) working days of approval.
52. The Commander of the SOD Traffic Section shall maintain a database of all departmental Crashes. The contents of the database shall be determined by the MSB Fleet Manager, MSB Risk Manager, the Deputy Chief of FOB and the Deputy Chief of MSB.

INSPECTION OF DAMAGE

53. Unless the Departmental vehicle has been impounded as part of an investigation, within 48 hours of the incident or Crash, excluding weekends and holidays, the City of New Orleans, Equipment Maintenance Division, shall be provided with an opportunity to inspect ALL department vehicles sustaining damage.
54. Following the incident, the involved member's supervisor shall send damaged but operable vehicles, for an inspection of the damage by a professional adjuster for the City when notified by the Fleet manager or Risk Manager.
55. The Departmental Vehicle Traffic Investigator and/or involved member's supervisor shall have departmental vehicles which are obviously unsafe or inoperable towed to the Equipment Maintenance Division as soon as possible after the incident.

VEHICLE INVENTORY REPORTING

56. To regulate and account for the department's vehicle inventory, any change in vehicle status (e.g., changes in assigned driver, budget code, marked or unmarked status, take-home status) shall be reported to the Fleet Manager utilizing the **Vehicle Inventory Reporting Form** (Form 106).
57. Commanders are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of his/her assigned vehicle inventory.
58. Proper entry of take-home vehicle Personal Use Charges in the payroll system are the responsibility of the member's unit Commander.

SPECIAL PURPOSE VEHICLE REQUEST FOR USE

59. District/Divisions, Sections, and/or Units desiring the use of a Special Purpose Vehicle not under direct control of their Bureau Chief shall submit a request through their chain of command to the Bureau Chief in control of the equipment outlining date(s), time(s), and circumstance(s) for which the vehicle is needed. If approved, the Division requesting the use of the vehicle shall supply the qualified personnel needed for the operation of the equipment. If the requesting Division has no qualified personnel to operate the equipment, the Bureau Chief where the vehicle is assigned shall supply the qualified personnel for operational purposes only.
60. Due to the uniqueness of each special purpose vehicle, each Bureau Chief will ensure a

list is kept outlining supplies and equipment to be kept on each vehicle. Periodic inspection of all special purpose vehicles will be made to ensure all supplies and equipment are accounted for and in proper working condition.

SWAT EQUIPMENT VEHICLE

61. The SWAT equipment vehicle shall be used for the transport of special equipment to and from SWAT scenes. Use of the vehicle shall be limited to SWAT roll response as authorized by the Superintendent of Police.
62. Operators of the SWAT equipment vehicle shall be department members assigned to the Special Operations Division and trained in the operation of a large truck.
63. Care and maintenance of the SWAT equipment vehicle is the responsibility of the members assigned to the SOD Armory Unit.
64. The equipment required to be included in the SWAT equipment vehicle shall be SWAT equipment and gear as deemed appropriate by the Commander of the Special Operations Division. (See: **Chapter 46.2.3 – CRU SWAT Equipment and Storage**).

TOTAL CONTAINMENT VEHICLE (BOMB POD)

65. The Bomb Pod transportation vehicle is designed for the transportation of the Bomb Pod. The Bomb Pod shall be used only for the transfer of hazardous devices and explosives from the scene of an incident to a disposal area.
66. Operators of the Bomb Pod transportation vehicle shall be members of the Special Operations Division Bomb Unit. Care and maintenance of the Bomb Pod transportation vehicle is the responsibility of the Bomb Unit.
67. The Bomb Pod transportation unit shall be escorted by marked police vehicles at the front, rear and side positions when transporting hazardous devices. The appropriate distance maintained between the Bomb Pod, all escort units and any other vehicular traffic will be determined by the senior supervisory member of the Bomb Unit and/or the Commander of SOD. Overhead lights and sirens shall be utilized at all times during the transport. Except in exigent circumstances, advanced notification shall be made with all law enforcement jurisdictions thru which the convoy will travel. Traffic control and regulation will be coordinated by the escort unit's supervisor and the local jurisdiction's units.

MOBILE COMMAND POST

68. The Deputy Chief of the Field Operations Bureau shall maintain a Mobile Command Post vehicle for the purpose of housing command and control services for law enforcement activities at locations other than NOPD headquarters. The Mobile Command Post may be utilized in field locations at events such as natural disasters, hazardous material situations, festivals, special events, parades, etc. The Mobile Command Post may provide a base of operations for supervisors at such locations to coordinate activities.
69. Authorization for the deployment of the Mobile Command Post shall be made by the Deputy Chief of the Field Operations Bureau, or his/her designee.
70. Operators of the Mobile Command Post shall be assigned by the Deputy Chief of the Field Operations Bureau, or his/her designee. The designated individuals must possess

the proper licensing as required by the City of New Orleans, State of Louisiana, or Federal Government to operate the vehicle

71. The Special Operations Division Commander and the Fleet Manager are responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the Mobile Command Post.

ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLES

72. The Special Operations Division Commander and the Fleet Manager shall maintain any all-terrain vehicles utilized by the New Orleans Police Department. These vehicles shall be used at the direction of the Deputy Chief of the Field Operations Bureau, or his/her designee.
73. Requests to use an all-terrain vehicle shall be directed to the Commander of the Special Operations Division.
74. Operators of all-terrain vehicles shall be commissioned members of the New Orleans Police Department and attached to the Special Operations Division.
75. Operators of all-terrain vehicles shall receive training commensurate with the vehicle manufacturer's requirements, in addition to any governmental licensing that may be required.

MARINE UNIT AND ALL DEPARTMENT BOATS

76. The purpose of the Special Operations Division - Marine Unit is to provide water-born support for any police actions requiring such support. Authorization for use of boats shall be by the Deputy Chief of the Field Operations Bureau or his/her designee.
77. All boats operated by the New Orleans Police Department shall be under the control and supervision of the Special Operations Division - Marine Unit.
78. Boats shall only be operated by Special Operations Division - Marine Unit members unless express permission is obtained, in advance, from the Deputy Chief of the Field Operations Bureau, or the Commander of the Special Operations Division.
79. All Special Operations Division - Marine Unit members shall be trained in boating safety and laws pertaining to the operation of motor vessels on local waterways. No boat shall be operated without the required safety equipment on board or sufficient personal flotation devices for every passenger and crew member.
80. Boats shall only be used in situations where water depth is adequate for the safe operation of the particular boat and the conditions are deemed safe by the Special Operations Division - Marine Unit member operating the boat.
81. The Special Operations Division - Marine Unit Equipment Officer shall be responsible for the care and maintenance of the equipment assigned to the boat. It is the responsibility of the operator of the boat to inspect for proper function prior to its operation. The Special Operations Division - Marine Unit Equipment Officer shall be immediately notified of any malfunction or damage to the boat or its equipment.

MOTORCYCLES

82. Motorcycles provide officers with an efficient means of conducting traffic operations. This could include traffic enforcement, traffic control, or traffic escorts.

83. Only members specifically trained by the Special Operations Traffic Section in the operation of department motorcycles shall be allowed to operate motorcycles owned or leased by the New Orleans Police Department. Operators shall maintain all governmental licensing that may be required.
84. New Orleans Police Department motorcycles shall be equipped with windshields, police decals, and operable emergency lights and sirens.
85. Motorcycles shall be maintained by the Special Operations Traffic Section. Repairs and maintenance of motorcycles shall be performed as necessary, and in conjunction with the Management Services Bureau Fleet Manager.
86. The Special Operations Traffic Section and the Education & Training Division shall maintain a list of all members trained by the NOPD in the operation of police motorcycles.

POLICE SCOOTERS

87. Scooters may be used to provide transportation for members in situations which may prove difficult for automobiles.
88. Districts/Divisions which have scooters in their fleet shall use scooters in whatever capacity provides the best tactical advantage. Scooters shall not be used when it is deemed by the supervisor to be dangerous to the member due to inclement weather, road conditions, etc. The Deputy Chief of the Field Operations Bureau may approve the use of scooters by a division, section, or unit.
89. Scooter operators must complete NOPD approved scooter training prior to being allowed or assigned to operate a scooter. This training will be coordinated by the Field Operations Bureau Special Operations Division Traffic Section. Operators shall maintain any governmental licensing that may be required.
90. Scooter maintenance shall be the responsibility of the District/Division/Section/Unit to which the scooters are assigned.
91. The Field Operations Bureau and the Education & Training Division shall be responsible for maintaining a list of all members qualified to operate scooters.

POLICE BICYCLES

92. Bicycles may be used to provide transportation for members in situations which may prove difficult for automobiles. Additionally, bicycles provide members with the opportunity to interact more closely with the citizenry.
93. Divisions which have bicycles in their fleet shall use them in whatever capacity provides the best tactical advantage. Bicycles shall not be used when it is deemed by the supervisor to be dangerous to the member due to inclement weather, road conditions, etc.
94. The Deputy Chief of the Field Operations Bureau may approve the use of bicycles by a division, section, or unit.
95. Bicycle operators must complete police bicycle training prior to being allowed or assigned to operate a bicycle. This training will be coordinated by the Field Operations

Bureau in conjunction with the Education & Training Division.

96. Bicycle maintenance shall be the responsibility of the District/Division/Section/Unit to which the bicycles are assigned.
97. The Field Operations Bureau and Education & Training Division shall be responsible for maintaining a list of all members qualified to operate bicycles.

BUSES

98. Buses may be used by the New Orleans Police Department for the transportation of members to and from training, transportation of members to and from work during periods of inclement weather, if appropriate, and the transportation of citizens and visitors to approved police department functions.
99. Buses may be used when authorized by the Deputy Chief of the Management Services Bureau. Any requests for use of buses should be directed to the Deputy Chief of the Management Services Bureau.
100. Buses shall only be operated by individuals approved by the Management Services Bureau who possess the proper governmental licenses.
101. Department-owned buses shall be maintained by the Fleet Manager of the Management Services Bureau.
102. A list of persons authorized to operate the buses shall be maintained by the Fleet Manager and the Education & Training Division of the Management Services Bureau.

TOW TRUCKS

103. Tow trucks owned or leased by the City of New Orleans shall be used for the purpose of towing evidentiary vehicles and police vehicles and can be contacted and requested thru Communications Services or on the appropriate assigned communications channel as Unit 7200. (See: **Chapter 61.22 – Impoundment of Motor Vehicle Involved in Criminal Activity.**)
104. With the approval and direction of an SOD supervisor, tow trucks may further be used to gain entry into secured properties for the execution of search/arrest warrants.
105. The Fleet Manager and the Education & Training Division shall maintain a list of all Department members authorized to operate the tow trucks owned or leased by the City of New Orleans or the Police Department.