

GENERAL ORDER

April 2016

Immediately

III-38

Distribution: All Employees

Subject: **TIRE DEFLATION DEVICES**

Index as:	Deployment, STOP STICK® Post Tire Deflation Device Deployment Reasonable Suspicion Stationary Placement	STOP STICK® Terminator Tire Deflation Device Tire Deflation Device Tire Deflation Device Reporting Form
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Accreditation Standards: 41.2.2, 41.2.3

Cross Reference: G.O. II-42, Use of Force

G.O. III-12, Police Vehicle Operation

G.O. III-17, Pursuit of a Vehicle or Boat

§316.072, §316.126, §776.08, §843.18 and §901.25, F.S.S.

Replaces: G.O. III-38, Stop Stick Tire Deflation Device (August 28, 2017)

This Order provides members with policy on the **Tire Deflation Devices**. It consists of the following:

- I. Policy
- II. Definitions
- III. Training, Storage, and Inspection of the Tire Deflation Devices
- IV. Use of the STOP STICK® Tire Deflation Device
- V. Deploying the STOP STICK® Tire Deflation Device
- VI. Use of the TERMINATOR Tire Deflation Device
- VII. Deploying the TERMINATOR Tire Deflation Device
- VIII. Post Tire Deflation Device Deployment

I. POLICY

A. It is the policy of this Department to attempt to safely and efficiently stop vehicles involved in pursuits, felony offenses, and those in which there is reasonable suspicion to believe contain wanted felony suspects.

B. The use of a Tire Deflation Device may be used as a means to safely immobilize a vehicle when an Officer has established reasonable suspicion that a felony offense has been committed or is being committed, and the operator of the suspect vehicle indicates by their actions the intent to elude or evade apprehension. The use of a Tire Deflation Device is not considered deadly force.

C. The Officer deploying the Tire Deflation Device shall complete a report detailing the reason for and the specifics of the deployment.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. Supervisor – A Sergeant or Lieutenant as used throughout this Order.

B. Officer – A Police Officer employed by the St. Petersburg Police Department who has successfully completed the Field Training Program.

C. Reasonable Suspicion – Suspicion that is more than a mere hunch but is based on a set of articulable facts and circumstances that would warrant a person of reasonable caution to believe that an infraction of the law has been committed, is about to be committed, or is in the process of being committed by the person or persons under suspicion. This can be based on the observations of a Police Officer combined with the Officer's training and experience and/or reliable information received from credible outside sources.

D. Stationary Placement – A positioning of the TIRE DEFLATION DEVICE ahead of the front tire, behind the rear tire, or between the front and rear tires of the stationary target vehicle.

E. STOP STICK® Tire Deflation Device – Equipment designed to puncture vehicle tires through the use of sleeved spikes, causing a controlled but rapid deflation of the tire(s).

F. TERMINATOR Tire Deflation Device – Equipment engineered to deflate tires without blowout; hollow, Teflon® - coated quills act as valves, releasing air at a safe, controlled rate.

G. Vehicle Stop – The actions taken by an Officer, while operating an emergency vehicle, to stop a vehicle suspected of a traffic violation or offense or for any other lawful purpose.

H. Wanted Felon – A subject in which an Officer has reasonable suspicion or probable cause to believe has committed a felony offense as defined by Florida State Statutes.

III. TRAINING, STORAGE, AND INSPECTION OF THE TIRE DEFLATION DEVICES

A. When not in use, the Tire Deflation Devices will be stored in the supplied nylon sleeve and secured in the carrying tray mounted to the underside of the police cruiser's trunk lid. The Tire Deflation Device is also designed to be transported within unmarked vehicles, Patrol SUVs, and other special vehicles, but not mounted to the underside of the trunk lid. In such vehicles, they will be safely stored in the supplied deployment bag.

1. Officers are required to perform periodic inspections of the Tire Deflation Devices to ensure they are undamaged and ready for deployment.

2. Supervisors will inspect the Tire Deflation Devices as a part of their required monthly inspections.

B. Sworn personnel who have received properly documented training are authorized to deploy the Tire Deflation Devices. All procedures used to deploy the Tire Deflation Devices will comply with the approved training provided by the Training Division.

IV. USE OF THE STOP STICK® TIRE DEFLATION DEVICE

A. The use of the STOP STICK® Tire Deflation Device is encouraged as a means to safely immobilize a vehicle:

1. When an Officer attempts to perform a vehicle stop and the operator of the suspect vehicle indicates by their actions intent to elude or evade apprehension, the Officer must determine if there is reasonable suspicion to believe the person(s) in the vehicle is committing, or has just committed, a felony offense as defined by Florida State Statutes.

2. As a means to safely terminate a pursuit.

3. If the suspect vehicle is stationary, and the Officer has reason to believe the suspect will attempt to evade apprehension when confronted by police, the use of the STOP STICK® Tire Deflation Device may be deployed prior to or at the time of contact with the suspect.

V. DEPLOYING THE STOP STICK® TIRE DEFLATION DEVICE

A. The STOP STICK® Tire Deflation Device will only be deployed:

1. After the Officer has established reasonable suspicion that a felony has been committed.
2. Using the full sleeve. The STOP STICK® sleeve will not be separated.
3. After consideration of the following factors:
 - a. The safety of the employee deploying the STOP STICK®,
 - b. The safety of the public,
 - c. The available time frame for deployment, and
 - d. Any traffic or environmental hazards that could affect a successful deployment.

B. The STOP STICK® Tire Deflation Device will only be deployed to deflate the tires of vehicles with four or more wheels and **will not** be deployed for the following:

1. Motorcycles or any vehicle with fewer than four wheels,
2. Any vehicle transporting hazardous materials,
3. Any passenger bus or large passenger van transporting passengers who are not involved in a crime, or
4. Any vehicle that would pose an unusual hazard to innocent persons.

C. For maximum effectiveness, the STOP STICK® should be deployed on dry, hard surfaces such as concrete or asphalt. The STOP STICK® may fail to puncture the tires of the suspect vehicle if deployed on soft, loose material such as dirt or gravel roads.

D. Officers should avoid deployment in locations or situations that limit the ability of the fleeing suspect to safely maneuver their vehicle to a controlled stop; for example, roadways that have:

1. Sharp curves;
2. Steep embankments;
3. Excessive vehicular traffic;
4. School bus stops;
5. Pedestrian zones or areas where pedestrians are present;
6. Road construction;
7. Wet surfaces, gravel, loose pavement; or
8. Obstacles that obstruct the deploying Officer's view of traffic and the approaching pursuit.

E. If used near an intersection, the STOP STICK® should be deployed on the roadway the suspect is traveling on in such a way that it will be encountered prior to the vehicle's entry into the intersection.

F. Sworn personnel who have received properly documented training will be authorized to deploy the STOP STICK®. All procedures used to deploy the STOP STICK® will comply with the approved training. The following steps will be utilized during deployment:

1. An Officer with the ability to place themselves in a position to deploy the STOP STICK® will advise the Emergency Communications Center of the desired location for deployment as soon as possible.

2. The Emergency Communications Center will broadcast the time, location, and units involved in the deployment of the STOP STICK®.

3. An Officer deploying the STOP STICK® will immediately notify the Emergency Communications Center when the deployment takes place and if the vehicle immobilization was effective.

4. Post deployment, the STOP STICK® will be removed immediately from the roadway and returned to the vehicle from which it was removed.

5. The STOP STICK® may also be used to prevent a stationary vehicle from fleeing a location, so as to prevent the escape of a wanted person.

G. Use of the Stop Stick® in a fashion not provided for in training, nor outlined in this Order, may result in discipline.

VI. USE OF THE TERMINATOR TIRE DEFLATION DEVICE

A. The Terminator Tire Deflation Device will be used when reasonable suspicion has been established that a felony offense has been committed or is being committed, and the operator of the suspect vehicle indicates by their actions the intent to elude or evade apprehension.

B. The Terminator will only be used by Officers trained in the deployment and post deployment of the Terminator Tire Deflation Device.

VII. DEPLOYING THE TERMINATOR TIRE DEFLATION DEVICE

A. The Officer will avoid deploying the Terminator Tire Deflation Device in locations or situations that limit the ability of the fleeing suspect to safely maneuver their vehicle.

B. It is recommended that the officer will not use the tire deflation device on standard passenger vehicles traveling at a speed in excess of 25 mph (40 Km/h).

C. Whenever possible, the officer will deploy the Terminator in a location which is isolated from or contains limited traffic.

D. The Officer will not deploy the Terminator with pedestrians in the immediate vicinity.

E. The TERMINATOR Tire Deflation Device will only be deployed to deflate the tires of vehicles with four or more wheels and **will not** be deployed for the following:

1. Motorcycles or any vehicle with fewer than four wheels,
2. Any vehicle transporting hazardous materials,
3. Any passenger bus or large passenger van transporting passengers who are not involved in a crime, or
4. Any vehicle that would pose an unusual hazard to innocent persons.

F. The Officer shall be aware that suspects have an increased risk of losing control of the vehicle if tires are deflated while driving at above normal highway speeds.

G. The deploying Officer will allow enough time to correctly deploy the sleeved Terminator and move to a safe location. Rushed deployments can be dangerous and may fail. The cord reel has 80 ft. (24m) of cord to allow the deploying Officer to move as far as possible from the road to avoid fleeing or pursuing vehicles. Officers will not wrap the cord around their hands or any portion of their body.

H. Officers WILL NOT enter the roadway before target and pursuing vehicles have passed. The Terminator should be handled carefully because it may break open and expose sharp spikes after being struck by a vehicle.

I. The deploying Officer must be able to safely observe the target vehicle and other traffic continuously throughout the deployment.

J. The Terminator may be used as a pursuit prevention measure for stationary vehicles or vehicles traveling less than 25 miles per hour in the following incidents:

1. DUI checkpoints,
2. Suspect surveillance,
3. Warrant Service, and
4. Other situations where the movement of a stationary vehicle must be prevented.

K. Procedures for Deploying the TERMINATOR Tire Deflation Device

1. An Officer with the ability to place themselves in a position to deploy the Terminator will advise the Emergency Communications Center of the desired location for deployment as soon as possible.

2. The Emergency Communications Center will broadcast the time, location, and units involved in the deployment of the Tire Deflation Device.

3. An Officer deploying the Tire Deflation Device will immediately notify the Emergency Communications Center when the deployment takes place and if the vehicle immobilization was effective.

4. The Terminator is designed to stop pursuits before they start, save lives, and reduce property damage.
 - a. The Terminator may be deployed on paved surfaces, soft ground, gravel, or sand surfaces.
 - b. There are two methods to deploy Terminator Tire Deflation Device.
 - 1) Stationary Placement
 - a) Place the Terminator between the front and rear tires of the stationary target vehicle.
 - b) Place the Terminator ahead of the front tire or behind the rear tire.
 - 2) Tactical Tossing – The Tactical Tossing method is used when the target vehicle cannot be safely approached.
 - a) Attach the cord reel to loop connector on the Terminator.
 - b) Unlock the cord reel.
 - c) Toss the Terminator into position between the front and rear tires.
 - d) Lock cord reel.
 - 1) If the Terminator has been thrown past the vehicle tire, pull the Terminator into the correct position.
 - 2) If the Terminator lands short of the target vehicle, retrieve the Terminator and redeploy it.
 - e) Do not use the cord reel to “reel- in” the Terminator. This could cause the line to bind inside the cord reel, which could prevent the line from being properly dispensed.
 - f) When deploying Terminator, always position yourself in a safe location, away from the point of contact between the target vehicle and the deployed Terminator.

VIII. POST TIRE DEFLATION DEVICE DEPLOYMENT

A. If possible, a backup or non-deploying Officer should physically take the suspect into custody.

B. A Supervisor shall respond to the location of the deployment and oversee the activities of all Officers present.

C. Anytime a Tire Deflation Device is deployed, the deploying Officer will complete a [J:\Forms\Tire Deflation Device Reporting Form.pdf](#) and turn it in to the Equipment Room. The incident will be administratively reviewed by the Supervisor.

D. Any time a Tire Deflation Device is damaged, the Officer will complete a [J:\Forms\Tire Deflation Device Reporting Form.pdf](#) and turn it in to the Equipment Room, along with the damaged Tire Deflation Device for replacement.

E. The use of the Tire Deflation Device will be tracked by the Uniform Support Division, Uniform Services Bureau.

F. The Tire Deflation Device use data will be provided to the Office of Professional Standards for inclusion in the annual report on vehicle pursuits.

G. The Chief of Police may direct the Office of Professional Standards to conduct additional investigation of a pursuit as deemed necessary.

Anthony Holloway
Chief of Police