

**GENERAL ORDER 61.6.1**

**Traffic Direction and Control**

**GENERAL ORDER CROSS-REFERENCE: None.**

**SUMMARY**

Establishes guidelines for traffic control and direction.

**DISCUSSION**

The Patrol Division is responsible for ensuring safe and efficient movement of vehicular and pedestrian traffic by providing manual traffic control on an as-needed basis. Authority for this Order is provided by ORS 810.400, 810.410, 811.535.

**POLICY**

**I**

The following situations may require traffic control:

1. Traffic accident scenes.
2. Emergency conditions (fires, evacuations).
3. Special events (parades, sporting events, etc.).
4. Inclement weather conditions.
5. Signal light failures.
6. Stalled vehicles.

Except in emergencies, non-uniformed personnel shall not be used for manual traffic direction.

**II**

The Patrol Division Commander shall examine all scheduled special events and evaluate the need for appropriate traffic control at those events. Consideration should be given to the following:

1. Time of day and day of week.
2. Route and/or location.
3. Duration of event.
4. Anticipated attendance.
5. Parking availability.
6. Spectator control
7. Emergency vehicle access.
8. Ingress and egress of vehicles and pedestrians.
9. Public transportation.
10. Provisions for relief of personnel assigned to traffic control duties.
11. News media access
12. Alternate routes for through traffic.
13. Portable traffic control devices and signs.

If traffic control is to be provided by a private organization, when informed, the Division Commander will advise the private organization of the above criteria to assist them.

It shall be the responsibility of the Patrol Division Commander to coordinate with the Public Works Department the appropriate utilization of traffic cones, barricades and signs/signals, and to ensure assignment of adequate personnel for traffic control as may be necessary at any scheduled special event to ensure the safe and orderly flow of traffic.

### **III**

The Department provides high visibility vests to all field personnel. Personnel shall wear high visibility vests in addition to the prescribed uniform whenever conducting traffic direction and control, except in emergencies when such clothing is not available.

In addition to their high visibility vests, personnel assigned to provide traffic control shall use any or all of the following as appropriate:

1. Flares.
2. Traffic cones.
3. A whistle.
4. Warning signs and/or barricades.
5. Marked patrol unit with emergency equipment activated.
6. Traffic wand or flashlight.

### **IV**

To manually operate traffic signal lights open the small access door provided on each traffic control signal box. Follow the instructions for manual operation listed inside the signal box. The key for the box is kept in the watch commanders' office. This may be necessary in the case of:

1. Signal malfunction,
2. To facilitate movement at traffic accidents,
3. To provide thoroughfare for motorcades,
4. To alleviate rush hour or special event congestion.

Any use of manual traffic signal light control shall be reported to dispatch. If manual use is due to a malfunctioning traffic signal, dispatch shall notify the Public Works Traffic Division.

## V

Personnel assigned to provide manual traffic control shall utilize the following traffic control signals and gestures:

### Hand Signals:

1. Stop Signal -- The basic signal to stop is an upraised hand at the end of an extended arm raised to at or above shoulder level, with the palm of the hand clearly facing the approaching driver for whom the signal is intended.
2. Start Signal -- The signal for a stopped vehicle to start moving begins with the officer extending his arm, at shoulder level, toward the stopped vehicle (pointing) and waving the car onward by bending his arm at the elbow and drawing his hand towards his chest. Once traffic in one direction starts to move, the officer turns and faces opposing traffic and delivers the same signal.
3. Left Turn -- Once it is safe for the motorist to complete the turn, opposing traffic should be stopped using the standard stop signal. The officer then motions to the turning vehicle with a starting signal and points in the direction the driver intends to go.

Right turning traffic requires little traffic direction unless the turning movement is crossing a heavily traveled crosswalk or has to merge into heavy vehicular traffic. Natural gaps are best used for turning vehicles.

### Whistle Signals:

1. Stop - signal long blast.
2. Start - two short blasts.
3. Emergency Stop - three or more short blasts.

## Flashlight Signals:

A flashlight may be used to halt traffic. To stop traffic slowly swing the flashlight across the path of oncoming traffic. The beam from the flashlight strikes the pavement as an elongated spot of light. After the driver has stopped hand signals may be given in the usual manner, the vehicles' headlights providing illumination.

## **VI**

Officers assigned to traffic control at fire scenes are responsible for assuring that roadways in the area are accessible to all emergency vehicles. Officers may close roads as necessary to facilitate the expeditious response of emergency vehicles. Officers assigned to traffic control at fire scenes shall continue traffic control until the conclusion of the incident or until properly relieved by another officer or released from traffic control duties by the on-site fire department commander.

## **VII**

Officers shall direct traffic in emergency situations created by adverse road or weather conditions. Safety of the officer and prevention of further hazard are the primary concerns. The following actions are recommended:

### **A: IMPAIRED VISIBILITY - FOG, SMOKE OR SMOG OR LIMITED LIGHTING:**

- 1) When possible the officer shall place his patrol car (emergency lights activated) outside of the limited visibility area.
- 2) Flare patterns, traffic cones and high visibility barricades should be utilized to warn traffic of potential problems, and to direct the traffic flow.
- 3) Officers shall wear reflective vests and recommended they wear helmets to improve visibility and safety. Use of flashlight is also recommended as an additional tool for promoting visibility.

### **B: SNOW, ICE:**

- 1) When possible the officer shall place his patrol car (emergency lights and flashers activated) inside of the flare pattern if direction is necessary from the roadway. The flare pattern should be placed a safe distance from the vehicle allowing traffic to recognize the potential problem in time to react appropriately. Traffic direction, when necessary, should be conducted from far enough in front of the patrol car to allow for clear visibility of the officer. The patrol car should be utilized to leave a safety pocket for the officer to escape into, if necessary.

2) Flare patterns, traffic cones and high visibility barricades should be utilized to warn traffic and to direct the traffic flow.

3) Officers shall wear reflective vests and recommended they wear helmets to improve visibility and safety. Use of flashlight is recommended as an additional tool for promoting visibility.

4) The appropriate highway or street department shall be notified so sanding, shoveling or other necessary measures can be taken.

3: DOWNED POWER LINES:

1) Officers shall prevent traffic/pedestrians from being allowed around downed power lines due to the potential of electrocution. The officer shall remain at such a distance so as to protect his safety and the safety of the public. The officer shall use the emergency lights on the patrol vehicle as a warning device. Entry/approach shall be prohibited by use of flares, barricades, cones or verbal direction.

2) Springfield Utility Board shall then be notified so the power line can be repaired

4: ROAD CONSTRUCTION:

1) Any time an officer becomes aware of a safety problem at a construction site the officer shall take such safety measures as are necessary to abate any hazard. Such measures may include traffic direction, notification of public works to establish appropriate detours, or closure of streets (State highways may only be closed by the State.)

2) The responsible agency shall be notified so the safety issue can be resolved.

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