

PUSH BUMPERS

14.01 PURPOSE

The purpose of this regulation is to establish uniform guidelines and procedures for the safe and effective utilization of Department patrol vehicles equipped with push bumpers.

14.02 POLICY

It is the policy of the Department to keep the highways of the Commonwealth open to vehicular traffic whenever possible, and to quickly restore the normal flow of traffic when it has been disrupted from crashes or disabled vehicles. The use of push bumpers to remove vehicles from the roadway shall be limited to emergency situations.

14.03 GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- A. Push bumpers mounted on the front of patrol vehicles may be used for the purpose of removing disabled vehicles from the traveled portion of the roadway ONLY when a hazard to the motoring public exists that constitutes an emergency.
- B. The use of push bumpers is not intended to replace the use of an appropriate emergency towing service, as defined in FR 6-2, Highway Assistance. Vehicles should only be pushed out of the travel portion of the roadway, and the distance required to push a vehicle shall be kept to a minimum.
- C. No vehicle shall be pushed at a speed greater than 10 miles per hour.
- D. Only passenger vehicles and light trucks equipped with bumpers which do not exceed 24 inches in height may be pushed by a push bumper-equipped patrol vehicle.
- E. Push bumpers are only to be used for pushing disabled vehicles. They are not to be used as an anchor point for chains or ropes in order to pull disabled vehicles.

- F. Push bumpers shall not be used as a method of push-starting a vehicle.
- G. Patrol vehicles equipped with push bumpers may be used for pursuits, in accordance with FR 6-10, Police Pursuits, Legal Intervention, Roadblocks, Pennsylvania Police Pursuit Reporting System, and Pursuit Analysis. Members are reminded that legal intervention involving ramming of a vehicle constitutes deadly force.
- H. When pushing a disabled vehicle, all emergency lights and the Mobile Video/Audio Recording (MVR) equipment shall be utilized.

14.04 PROCEDURES

- A. Prior to pushing another vehicle, members shall advise the driver of the disabled vehicle of the process to be used for pushing, and that the steering and braking abilities of the disabled vehicle will be reduced. Members shall then request verbal consent of the driver.
 - 1. If consent is not provided, members shall have the vehicle removed in accordance with FR 6-2.
 - 2. Persons with injuries, including complaints of pain, shall not be permitted to steer or drive a pushed vehicle.
 - 3. Members shall ensure that the driver of the disabled vehicle is physically capable of maintaining proper control of the vehicle during the pushing procedure.
 - 4. Members shall indicate to the driver of the disabled vehicle the location off of the roadway where the disabled vehicle should be driven.
- B. Members shall advise the driver that once contact between vehicles is made, they must place the gear selection lever in neutral and release both the parking brake and the foot brake.
- C. Members shall place the push bumper-equipped patrol vehicle's transmission in the lowest range possible. The patrol vehicle shall be slowly moved forward until contact is made with the disabled vehicle. Once contact is made, members shall signal to the driver of the disabled vehicle that pushing will

begin. Signals may be made with the radio's public address system.

- D. Contact between vehicles shall be maintained at all times. If bumper contact is lost, the disabled vehicle must be completely stopped before the pushing procedure is resumed.

14.05 DAMAGE

- A. Any pre-existing damage to a pushed vehicle and any damage caused as a result of pushing shall be noted in the narrative section of the applicable report used to document the incident.
- B. Damage to a disabled vehicle resulting from pushing is NOT a crash as defined in FR 6-4, Vehicle Crashes, unless the damage is the result of actions by the driver of the pushed vehicle.
- C. Any damage to the push bumper which prohibits it from being used properly shall require notification to the Transportation Division, Bureau of Staff Services. Patrol vehicles with damaged push bumpers shall not be utilized for pushing a disabled vehicle until the push bumper is either repaired or replaced.