

**NIAGARA FALLS POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
**GENERAL ORDER**

EFFECTIVE DATE: 10/22/2013	SUBJECT: <b>SPECIAL PURPOSE VEHICLES</b>	Number 345.00 (NYSLEAP O-42-4)
RESCINDS: 10/07/2013		Number of pages 4

**I. Purpose:**

- A. To identify and establish procedures for the use of special purpose vehicles, which are necessary to support various components of the Niagara Falls Police Department.

**II. Policy:**

- A. It shall be the policy of the Niagara Falls Police Department to acquire, maintain and provide special purpose vehicles for use by various units of the NFPD in support and enhance the efforts of those units having a need for such vehicles and to establish guidelines and responsibilities for the safe operation of such vehicles during routine, urgent or emergency pursuit.
- B. Emergency operation of NFPD vehicles is authorized only when the member is responding to an emergency call or is in pursuit of an actual or suspected violator.
  - 1. Under no circumstances shall the member be relieved of the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons; nor shall one's use of emergency procedures protect one from any consequences arising from a reckless disregard for the safety of others.
  - 2. It is incumbent upon all members operating NFPD vehicles to be familiar with the provisions of Section 1104 of the New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law.

**III. Procedures:**

- A. Divisions/Units Assigned Special Use Vehicles:
  - 1. The following divisions or special units will have designated special use vehicles at their disposal:
    - a. Emergency Response Team (ERT) Vehicle

1. The ERT vehicle is used to provide transportation of personnel and equipment to a location where it is to be used in support of a high-risk operation. It may also provide a mobile base for such operations.
2. The ERT vehicle is to be used only on those occasions when the ERT is deployed.
3. The ERT Commander must approve use of this vehicle.
4. ERT members are authorized to use the ERT vehicle when required for high-risk situations such as one involving a hostage, a barricaded person, VIP protection, quick entry in support of a search warrant, or as a stand-by when there is a potential for high risk.
5. Operation of the ERT vehicle shall be restricted to members designated as part of the ERT Team who have received the approval of the ERT Commander. No specialized training is required to operate the ERT vehicle.
6. Operators must be familiar with the equipment carried in the vehicle, its capabilities and must demonstrate an ability to operate the vehicle under adverse conditions.
7. The ERT Commander shall be responsible for maintenance of the ERT vehicle. ERT Commander shall insure that periodic inspections are made and that it is ready for use whenever needed.
8. Equipment to be carried in the ERT vehicle includes, but is not limited to:
  - a. Ballistic shields;
  - b. Door breaching equipment;
  - c. Gas masks;
  - d. Locking gun cabinets;
  - e. Mobile radio;

- f. Sledge hammer;
- 9. As noted above, operation of the ERT vehicle shall be members who have received the necessary training, are qualified to do so and have received the approval of the ERT Commander; however, in the event it becomes necessary for public or officer safety any member may be directed by the Superintendent of Police or designee to operate the vehicle.

b. Crime Scene Unit Vehicle:

- 1. The Crime Scene Unit will maintain a vehicle for the purpose of responding to crime scenes and other incidents. The vehicle will be so equipped as to assist members of the unit in the collection, photography and documentation of evidence from a crime scene or other incident.
- 2. No special training is required to operate the Crime Scene Unit vehicle, but operation is limited to members of the Crime Scene Unit unless directed by appropriate authority.

c. Traffic Division Vehicles:

- 1. The Traffic Division will maintain vehicles for the purpose of enforcement of traffic laws, responding to motor vehicle accidents and other incidents.
- 2. The vehicle may be so equipped as to assist members of the unit in the enforcement of vehicle infractions and investigations of motor vehicle accidents.
- 3. No special training is required to operate a Traffic Division vehicle, but operation is limited to members of the division unless directed by appropriate authority.

d. Mobile Command Center Vehicle:

- 1. The Deputy Superintendent of Police/OPS will maintain a vehicle for the purpose of establishing when needed, a Mobile Command Center.

2. This vehicle may also be used for community relations activities (parades, etc.) but its' first priority is for use in an emergency.
3. Special training is required to operate the Mobile Command Center vehicle; operation is limited (unless an emergency dictates otherwise) to members who through training and evaluation have demonstrated the ability to properly operate the vehicle.

e. Prisoner Wagon:

1. The Administrative Captain shall be responsible for maintaining a vehicle used for the purpose of transporting male and female prisoners to and from the Niagara County Jail.
2. This vehicle may also be used, at the discretion of the Shift Commander, for transportation of several arrestees from a specific scene.
3. No special training is required to operate the Prisoner Wagon, but operation is restricted to those who have demonstrated the ability to properly operate the vehicle.

B. Record Keeping and Maintenance

1. The Division Commander which maintains a special use vehicle will be responsible for the following:
  - a. Training, if needed, of personnel if they are to operate a special use vehicle.
  - b. Maintaining a written inventory of equipment assigned to the vehicle.
  - c. Arranging repairs as needed through the Traffic Division Commander.
  - d. Maintaining a written log of authorized operators to include qualifications and training of authorized operators, if necessary.