PALM BEACH GARDENS POLICE DEPARTMENT

SPEED MEASURING DEVICES (RADAR/LASER)

POLICY AND PROCEDURE 4.2.3.9

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PURPOSE: To establish guidelines for the operation of the Department's speed enforcement measuring devices (radar / laser).

SCOPE: This policy and procedure applies to all officers.

REVIEW RESPONSIBILITY: Patrol Operations Bureau Commander and Traffic Sergeant

POLICY: The Department will utilize speed monitoring devices in high or potentially high crash locations when speed is a factor; in areas where speed limit violations are prevalent; in response to citizen complaints concerning speeding motorists; and to conduct traffic volume and speed percentile studies and street surveys. Radar and/or Laser speed measuring devices will be deployed with the safety of the officer in mind at all times. The policy of this department is that the operation of radar/laser is an effective tool for speed control and traffic safety.

1. RADAR /LASER SPECIFICATIONS

- a. The effective use of speed measuring devices and their acceptance is dependent upon the operators understanding of the specific limitations of radar/laser devices, adequate training and certification. All operators shall maintain certifications in accordance with state guidelines and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).
- b. All radar/laser units utilized by this Department shall meet or exceed the specifications of the NHTSA. No radar/laser device shall be used unless certified for use by the State of Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. The certificate for use must accompany the device used.

2. OPERATOR TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

- a. In accordance with Florida State Statutes 943.14, to be certified as an operator of the radar device, an officer must attend a forty (40) hour training program administered by a qualified instructor.
- b. To be certified as a laser operator an officer, after successful completion of the Basic Radar Operators Course (40 hours) must attend an additional twelve (12) hour training program administered by a qualified instructor.
- c. Upon completion of the training program(s) the Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission (CJSTC) will issue a certificate of compliance to the individual officer, a copy of which will be placed in the officer's training and personnel file.
- d. The Patrol Operations Bureau Commander or Traffic Sergeant will ensure that all radar/laser operators maintain their operator certificates with any continued training that may be required by state guidelines.

Sergeants shall ensure that radar/laser devices are utilized only by certified operators in accordance with the Department's policies of enforcement.

3. RADAR/LASER OPERATIONS PROCEDURE

- a. When radar/laser devices are powered on, officers will perform the necessary calibration and light checks that are a mandatory function before a radar/laser is used as a traffic enforcement tool. If any one of three checks is incorrect, the problem will be noted and the radar/laser will be turned in to the traffic unit for service. The three checks consist of:
 - i. Internal Calibration Test When the internal calibration test button is activated, the radar/laser should read a digital speed which is determined by the manufacturer and may vary with the make and model of the device. Internal calibration speed may be found in each manufacturer's operational manual.
 - ii. Light Test Upon activating the light display button, all lights should appear on the display window of the device. If all the lights do not appear, the radar/laser unit will be turned into the traffic unit for service. Results of the test will be noted on the officer's radar/laser log.
 - iii. External Calibration Test The device will be tested with two tuning forks. The tuning forks used will be the ones assigned to the specific device. If the test is within the plus (+) or minus (-) one mile per hour tolerance, the test will be noted as correct on the officer's radar/laser log. Any reading other than the exact tuning fork speed, plus or minus one (1) mph, shall be noted and the device turned into the traffic unit for service.
- b. If all radar/laser tests are performed and correct, the officer may proceed with the use of the device. The officer should operate the device in locations that by traffic data are high in crashes due to speed related factors; citizen's complaints of speeding vehicles, or is high in speed violations. The chosen location should be one that provides for safe operation of the device. The location should be one that allows the officer an unobstructed view traffic and to maintain a tracking history that consists of the following three elements:
 - i. Visual Estimation The officer shall make a visual estimation of the vehicles speed.
 - ii. Audio Tracking (Radar) this is an audio representation of the Doppler sound. It will have a lower pitch at lower speeds and higher pitch for higher speeds. (Laser) This audio representation will be indicated by a "chirp" while acquiring a target and a steady, solid tone when the device is locked on to a target. The audio representations of the laser unit are not affected by varied speeds.
 - iii. Target Speed Display This is shown in the digital readout window of the device. This readout confirms the first two perceptions. Immediately after the use of the device (to assist in the prosecution of a speeding citation) the officer shall perform the internal and external calibration checks on the device, and note this information on the radar/laser log. The officer should at this time make a note on his/her citation the specific radar/laser unit used.
- c. The officer will maintain a radar/laser log each time the device is used. The log will contain:
 - i. Time started and ended.
 - ii. Date.
 - iii. Radar/laser unit number.

4. MAINTENANCE AND RECORDS

- a. All officers with an assigned radar/laser device shall be responsible for the safe storage of such device. All other radars/lasers will be stored in the Traffic Unit. Each officer assigned a radar/laser unit will be responsible for the semi-annual certification of the radar/laser unit and the units' tuning forks. Prior to the units' certification expiration date, the officer shall inform the Traffic Unit Sergeant of the needed service. The Traffic Sergeant will then ensure the necessary service is performed to maintain the units' certification. All service records and calibration records will be maintained in a Traffic Unit file for each individual radar/laser device.
- b. Copies of service and calibration records for two radar/laser devices should be forwarded to the Accreditation Manager randomly after each recertification.

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- RADAR
- LASER

RESPONSIBILITY INDEX

- PATROL OPERATIONS BUREAU COMMANDER
- TRAFFIC UNIT SERGEANT
- PATROL SERGEANTS
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APPROVED:

10/28/2011

Stephen J. Stepp Chief of Police

Date