



# Rhode Island State Police

## General Order - 55B

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| <i>Section:</i>              | <b>Law Enforcement Operations - Field Operations</b> |
| <i>Article:</i>              | <b>55 - Communications</b>                           |
| <i>Title:</i>                | <b>Call Response Priorities</b>                      |
| <i>Special Instructions:</i> |  |

### I. PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for the dispatch of patrol units based on the seriousness of the call.

### II. DEFINITIONS

- [41.3.1](#)
- A. **MARKED DIVISION VEHICLES** - Division owned motor vehicles equipped with bold lettering, externally mounted emergency lighting and siren, and primarily designed for patrol function.
  - B. **UNMARKED DIVISION VEHICLES** - Division owned motor vehicles primarily used for covert traffic enforcement, administrative or investigative functions although equipped with siren, internal red light and other emergency lights with the exception of vehicles utilized in undercover operations.

### III. POLICY

- A. It is the policy of the Division to dispatch and respond to all calls for service in a timely, direct manner. Certain calls for service, whether by telephone, radio, or personal contact, may require an expedited response. This expedited response will take place only when the timeliness of a Division member's arrival is necessary for the preservation of life/health or in response to certain crimes while in progress.

### IV. PROCEDURES

- [41.2.1](#)
- A. **Types of Response Levels**
    - 1. **Priority One** - classes of events that requires a sworn member's immediate presence to save life, or prevent or contain serious bodily injury. Examples are:
      - a. Life threatening and very serious calls for service;
      - b. Felony in progress in which the suspect, while thought to still be at or near the scene involved, poses a threat of violence;
      - c. Member or officer needs assistance calls;
      - d. Incomplete calls by a complainant where the seriousness of the call was unable to be determined
      - e. Vehicular pursuits; and,

- f. Serious motor vehicle accidents with serious injury involved.
2. Priority Two - classes of events that are of a serious nature but not life threatening. Examples are:
    - a. Non-violent crimes in progress with no reported violence or threat of violence;
    - b. Motor vehicle accidents with minor or no injury involved;
    - c. Alarm calls; and,
    - d. Felony crimes in which the suspect has left the scene.
  3. Priority Three - class of events that are non-serious and do not require emergency response. Examples are:
    - a. Non-serious crimes;
    - b. Suspicious individuals; and,
    - c. Dog bites complaints.

#### B. Response Tactics

1. Priority One response will require siren and all emergency lighting activation. Vehicle speed may exceed twenty (20) miles per hour over the posted speed limit within the strict guidelines of Rhode Island General Law 31-12-6 through 31-12-9 and the vehicular pursuit policy.
2. Priority Two response will require siren and all emergency lighting activation. Vehicle speed may not exceed twenty (20) miles per hour over the posted speed limit within the strict guidelines of Rhode Island General Law 31-12-6 through 31-12-9.
3. Priority Three response will prohibit response in excess of the posted speed limit with the use of the siren and emergency lights at the discretion of the responding member(s).

#### C. Communication Personnel Responsibility

1. It is the responsibility of the dispatching member to obtain accurate information regarding a call for service and accurately convey that information to the assigned member(s).
2. If the dispatching member has determined relevant factors that were drawn or concluded without necessarily being stated by a complainant, the dispatching member shall inform the responding member(s) to upgrade the response priority.

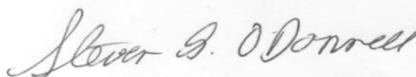
D. Assigned Responding Member(s) Responsibilities

1. Based on the information presented by the Communications Personnel, the assigned member shall determine the appropriate response priority.
2. When responding on a Priority One or Priority Two call, emergency devices may be deactivated at a distance to be determined by the operator so as not to alert suspects.
3. The assigned responding member will respond accordingly, unless the member observes facts to warrant a change in priority in accordance with this policy. In this instance, the communications center will be advised of:
  - a. The nature of situation and/or conditions warranting a higher priority; and,
  - b. The current location and destination.

V. PROVISIONS

- A. There are some calls to which the audible, imminent arrival of police will serve to assist control of a situation, such as a brawl. It is left to the discretion of the responding sworn member/s to use sound judgement in the employ of the siren.
- B. It is the responsibility of the first member on the scene of a Priority One and Priority Two call to determine the status and need for additional responder/s to continue arrival in these modes. If the situation has stabilized, notice will be made to the dispatch site to diminish the hazard that Priority One and Two responses can pose.
- C. Nothing in the policy prohibits a supervisor and/or responding member(s) from downgrading the priority response due to traffic conditions, weather, the distance to the scene or other relevant factors.
- D. Members responding in unmarked vehicles shall exhibit greater care and diligence due to the vehicles' limited distinguishable marks.

By Order of Colonel O'Donnell



Steven G. O'Donnell  
Colonel  
Superintendent

