

Bowie Police Department - General Orders



TITLE: SPEED MEASURING DEVICES	NUMBER: 507
EFFECTIVE DATE: 2/23/12	REVIEW DATE:
<input type="checkbox"/> NEW <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AMENDS <input type="checkbox"/> RESCINDS	DATE: 5/9/16

AUTHORITY Chief John K. Nesky	ACCREDITATIONS STANDARDS CALEA STANDARDS: 61.1.9	TOTAL PAGES 4
---	---	----------------------

I. PURPOSE

To establish procedures for training, use and accountability of certain speed enforcement devices, specifically speedometer, RADAR, LIDAR, and Speed Camera units.

II. POLICY

It will be the policy of the City of Bowie Police Department to use speed-measuring devices to enforce Maryland State traffic laws concerning speed, reduce the number of speed-related crashes, acting quickly and decisively in areas where speed violations cause hazardous conditions, and help promote public relations through police presence.

- A. The effective use of speed measuring devices and their acceptance is dependent upon the operator's understanding of the specific limitations of the speed measuring device itself. Adequate training and certification combined with periodic re-certification to show operator competence is mandated. The purpose of this General Order is to provide guidance in the proper use of speed measuring devices in traffic enforcement.
- B. Procedures for the Bowie Police Department have been established to ensure that:
 - 1. Officers are certified to use speed measuring devices;
 - 2. Adequate maintenance, calibration, and operational record systems (suitable for introduction as evidence in court) are developed and maintained; and,
 - 3. Speed measuring devices utilizing radar or laser are certified every 12 months.

III. EQUIPMENT

- A. Equipment specifications for radar speed measuring devices shall meet or exceed National Highway Traffic Safety Administration standards.
- B. All radar and laser speed measuring devices will be inspected and calibrated by an authorized testing facility annually with the documented results maintained in files. Suggested and required maintenance will be performed by the manufacturer or a qualified service facility.
- C. The Sergeant will coordinate dates for speed measuring device repair and/or calibration. (CALEA 61.1.9.a)
 - 1. Upon coordination of repair dates, the device in need of repair will be packaged and delivered to an appropriate commercial carrier for shipment. Upon return of the repaired speed measuring device, the Sergeant will place the device back into service.
 - 2. Calibration will be shipped out to a certified technician.
- D. All documentation including repair work orders, equipment calibration certificates and a list of device specifications and serial numbers will be retained in the files.
- E. The speed measuring devices shall be kept dry at all times and when not in use, **they shall be securely stored in their cushioned carrying case**. The radar or laser unit shall never be placed in a position so that its face is down and its antenna is against metal.

IV. TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION (CALEA 61.1.9.e)

- A. The certification course for speed measuring device operators consists of classroom instruction and practical field application of speed measuring equipment set forth by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).
- B. Each Officer successfully completing the course will be authorized and certified by the Bowie Police Department to operate speed measuring devices.

V. EQUIPMENT CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE

- A. The Community Service Section will maintain original copies of the RADAR/LASER certifications. The equipment manufacturer will perform calibration, inspection, and repair on speed-measuring equipment annually. Certification and tuning forks will be maintained by the Community Service Section. (CALEA 61.1.9.d)
- B. Each operator will receive photocopies of the speed-measurement device and tuning fork certifications. (CALEA 61.1.9.d)
- C. While in the custodial care of an individual operator, care and maintenance on individual RADAR/LIDAR units is the responsibility of the operator. Operators will report RADAR/LIDAR unit malfunctions or damage via

memorandum to the Community Service Section, specifically stating the nature of the malfunction or damage. (CALEA 61.1.9.c)

- D. The operator will test the unit for use prior to, during, and at the conclusion of each use. Internal and external tests will be done to ensure the device is true and accurate. (CALEA 61.1.9.b)
- E. If an incorrect reading is obtained either during the test or while the unit is in use, the operator will immediately place the unit out of service. The broken unit shall be delivered to the Community Service Section or the unit may be left outside the Community Service Section's office. A memorandum as described in section C will be forwarded to the Community Service Section and a copy of the memorandum shall be left in the broken units carrying case. (CALEA 61.1.9.c)
- F. Speed-measuring equipment and operational instructions are provided to all officers during certification training. Each certified officer will maintain a copy of this material and certifications in their personal files.

VI. SPEED MEASURING DEVICE USAGE

The precise method for using a speed measuring device and the enforcement of laws applying to speed will vary according to the type of speed measuring device used. Generally, the following procedures are applicable: (CALEA 61.1.9.b)

- A. The speed measuring device must be properly installed and connected to the appropriate power supply.
- B. The effective range of the particular speed measuring device must be thoroughly understood by the operator to ensure that visual observations can support the speed readings.
- C. The operator must choose an appropriate location that is conducive to the effective and safe operation of the speed measuring device.
- D. The speed measuring device will be properly tested to ensure accuracy in calibrating speed. Most manufacturers recommend specific methods of checking calibration. These should be followed without exception.
- E. At a minimum, speed measuring devices should be tested for accuracy:
 - 1. At the beginning of the operator's tour of duty;
 - 2. Each time a site location is changed if radar is used; and,
 - 3. At the end of the operator's tour of duty.

VII. COMMUNITY SERVICE SECTION'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Ensure assigned radar speed measuring equipment is calibrated annually and repaired as needed by the authorized testing facility.
- B. Retain all documentation including repair work orders and equipment calibration certificates.

- C. Ensure that a maintenance log is kept for the speed measuring units.

VIII. OPERATOR PROCEDURES

- A. Certified operators shall use only speed measuring equipment on which they have received training and certification.

NOTE: An Officer who is assigned only to stop vehicles and issue citations is not required to be certified in speed measuring device operation.

- B. Radar or laser operators who wish to use the portable radar or laser unit will sign out the unit on a log established by the Sergeant who will maintain the records for a period of 3 years. Operators will be held responsible for the loss or damage of the unit.
- C. The speed measuring device operator will be responsible for the care and upkeep of the speed measuring devices used. This includes taking the device out of service if it does not meet calibration checks or otherwise is inoperable. The operator shall place the device out of service and write a memorandum to the Sergeant outlining the problems associated with the device.
- D. Officers on foot who issue citations will only be deployed during daylight hours. A distance not greater than 300 feet will separate the speed measuring device operator and the stopping Officers, allowing the operator to maintain constant visual contact.
- E. Police vehicles may be used at any time to stop violators with safety for the public, working personnel and equipment being primary considerations.
- F. Whenever the hand-held speed measuring device is connected to a power source, it should be held in the hands of the operator or secured in a safe location where the device cannot be damaged from abrupt movement. When the device is not connected to a power source, it will be properly stored.
- G. A radar operator shall, when requested by a violator, provide available information on the radar equipment, unless the request interferes with on-going enforcement activities or officer/violator safety, at which time the person inquiring will be referred to the Sergeant.
- H. The following elements must be established by the Officer for court presentation when speed measuring device speed charges are placed:
 - 1. The time, place, and location of the vehicle that was checked, the identity of the operator, the speed of the vehicle, and the visual and speed measuring speed checks;
 - 2. An overview of Officer qualifications and training in the use of speed measuring devices;
 - 3. That the speed measuring device was operated properly;
 - 4. That the device was tested for accuracy before use and after use by an approved method;

5. The identity of the vehicle, coordinated with visual and audible tracking history to establish approximate speed;
6. The speed limit in the zone in which the Officer was operating and where the speed limit signs were posted.

IX. SAFETY/HEALTH PRECAUTIONS

Speed measuring devices are of such limited range and power that the risks due to exposure to microwave radiation are almost negligible. The issue of long-term use of speed measuring devices being linked to cancer has been debated for years with no conclusive data ever presented substantiating the theory that speed measuring device usage poses a threat to users. Nevertheless, the following common sense precautions should be followed to reduce the possibility of exposure to microwave radiation:

- A. Officers should not place activated speed measuring devices on their laps or between their legs.
- B. With the models of speed measuring devices that are equipped with a holding mechanism, the hold mechanism should be used so that the signal will not continuously operate.
- C. An operator should never hold onto the antenna or hold the antenna closer than six inches to his/her body.
- D. Use the windshield mount for moving RADAR, pointing the antenna out of the windshield.
- E. Never use an inside rear antenna mount where the antenna points forward or the beams point toward the operator.
- F. When the unit is on, try to avoid pointing the device toward metal surfaces inside the cruiser, such as the floor or door, to avoid reflection.
- G. Do not expose body parts to the activated beam area of the antenna for extended periods of time and turn off a hand held unit when it is not in use.