



**Florida Law Enforcement Driving Task Force
Public Statement
May 17, 2012**

Police departments across Florida use emergency vehicles to identify themselves to the public, deter crime, and when in emergency operation, warn motorists about potential danger. Florida law allows officers to disregard parts of the motor vehicle code in the performance of their duty, provided they do so in a safe manner. When not in emergency operation, there is an expectation that these vehicles will set the example through compliance with traffic laws for other motorists to follow.

Florida law enforcement, represented by the Florida Highway Patrol, the Florida Police Chiefs Association, and the Florida Sheriffs Association, recognize the need for consistent and responsible operation of law enforcement vehicles. To further this objective, the organizations have formed a task force to examine law enforcement driving, in the interest of promoting safety for all users of the roadways as well as officers.

The focus of the task force is derived from traffic crash data that characterize enforcement vehicle crashes, as well as anecdotal information that describes aberrant driving behaviors by police, such as unnecessary speeding. Operators of law enforcement vehicles are prone to the same driving errors as the general population, but because of their legal authority, have the added risks associated with the performance of their duties. When law enforcement officers abuse their authority through improper and unwarranted driving, the danger to the public is elevated unnecessarily, and public confidence is eroded.

To promote safe and responsible operation of law enforcement vehicles, the task force seeks to examine officer training, agency policy, and individual ethics. The expected outcomes are recommendations for Florida's law enforcement agencies that will improve safety and promote public confidence.

Public involvement is welcome through our web site <http://www.flhsmv.gov/LEDTaskForce/>.

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