

Grapppler Police Bumper

345.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide trained and certified supervising officers with a tactical option to stop a driver who refuses to stop for officers. The Grapppler Police Bumper (hereafter "Grapppler device") may also be used in circumstances where a suspect is reasonably believed to be likely to flee when a traffic stop is initiated by officers and there is particularized suspicion to conduct a stop for a felony or violent misdemeanor. Officers may utilize the Grapppler Police Bumper when the facts and circumstances, coupled with their training, experience, and available equipment, justify the use of this device or technique.

Deployment of a Grapppler device on an occupied vehicle should be considered a seizure for 4th amendment purposes. As with any seizure, officers shall ensure that they have a legal basis for the seizure prior to utilizing the Grapppler Police Bumper.

345.2 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Grapppler Police Bumper(Grapppler device)– A device designed to entangle and seize the rear most driver or passenger side tire, axle, or suspension components of a moving vehicle with a lowered net attached to a vehicle. Once the net captures the tire, axle, or suspension component of the target vehicle, the Department vehicle applies braking to bring the target vehicle to a stop.

345.3 PROCEDURES

The use of the Grapppler device is a way to conclude or avoid pursuits, while minimizing potential danger to the suspect, public, and officers involved.

- (a) Deployment Considerations - Before deploying the device, the totality of the circumstances must be considered, including but not limited to:
 - 1. Whether reasonable suspicion exists to conduct a stop.
 - 2. The severity of the crime at issue.
 - 3. Whether the suspect poses an immediate threat to the safety of the officers or others.
 - 4. Whether the suspect is actively resisting arrest or attempting to evade arrest by flight.
 - 5.
 - 6. Environmental & location conditions.
 - 7. Target vehicle's driving behavior & speed.
 - 8. Traffic conditions.
 - 9. Lines of communication with additional officers.

Missoula Police Department

Policy Manual

Grappler Police Bumper

10. Location of additional officers.
- (b) Deployment should be avoided in the following circumstances:
 1. Vehicles with fewer than four (4) wheels, or vehicles where the driver is not enclosed in a secure passenger compartment (motorcycles/4-wheeler, etc.), unless the use of deadly force is justified.
 2. The size of the target vehicle is too large, such as Box trucks, Semi-tractor trailers, recreational vehicles (RV) or vehicles with deep-set rear axles far in front of the rear bumper.
 3. Vehicle speeds in excess of 75MPH, unless the use of deadly force is justified.

345.4 GRAPPLER DEPLOYMENT

- (a) Only supervisors who have completed departmental approved Grappler device training are authorized to deploy the device and the use must be within compliance of that training.
- (b)
- (c) Supervisors will consider all the facts and circumstances known at the time of the incident before deploying the Grappler device..
- (d) The Grappler device may be deployed on moving vehicles deemed to be a risk to public safety when there is particularized suspicion to stop the vehicle or to make a seizure and the vehicles have failed to yield to officers.
- (e) The Grappler device may also be used in circumstances where a suspect is reasonably believed to be likely to flee when a traffic stop is initiated by officers and there is particularized suspicion to conduct a stop for a felony or violent misdemeanor.
- (f) The best performance for the device is on a dry, hard surface such as asphalt or concrete.
- (g) Target vehicle speed needs to be at least 15 MPH, but less than 75 MPH, unless the use of deadly force is justified.
- (h) Support officers should be present at the time of deployment or close enough to assist post-deployment.
 1. The Grappler device deployment should be avoided without adequate support personnel.
 2. When possible, the use of a cover vehicle directly behind the suspect vehicle should be used. The cover vehicle's purpose is the shielding of the Grappler net deployment from the suspect's view.
 3. Once the Grappler net is deployed, the cover vehicle will move left or right to allow the Grappler vehicle to close and capture the suspect vehicle's tire.
- (i) Deployment of an MPD Grappler on an outside agency pursuit requires MPD supervisor approval.

Grappler Police Bumper

345.5 POST-DEPLOYMENT

- (a) When it is practicable, officers will advise if the deployment was successful or not.
- (b) After deployment, officers will not attempt to drive or move the suspect vehicle with the net still attached.
 - 1. Employees may request a contract tow company respond to assist with the removal of the effected tire from the vehicle.
 - 2. A Department employee will then remove the net from the tire, which will be placed back onto the vehicle by the tow company.
 - 3. After removal of the net, place the manufacturer supplied warning sticker on the inside of the windshield on the driver's side where it would be readily seen by an operator of the vehicle.

345.6 DOCUMENTATION

- (a) Any use of the Grappler Device, whether successful or unsuccessful, will be documented in a Supervisor's use of force report as a "Grappler Deployment," as well as in the deploying Officer's Case report.
- (b) Any use of the Grappler device requires MPD staff notification.
- (c) Vehicles which have deployed the Grappler Device should be removed from service until inspected by a city Mechanic.