



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY
DIVISION OF STATE POLICE
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS OF CONDUCT



DIRECTIVE TITLE: AUTO THEFT UNIT / RECOVERY PROCEDURES

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CHAPTER 42-C
AUTO THEFT UNIT /
STOLEN VEHICLE RECOVERY PROCEDURES

42-C.1.0 Discussion:

An Auto Theft Unit shall be established within the Investigative Services Bureau and shall be comprised of members specially trained to assist all law enforcement agencies in investigating stolen motor vehicles.

42-C.1.1 Responsibilities of the Auto Theft Unit Commander

- A. To report as required to the Commander of the Investigative Services Bureau.
- B. To establish and conduct training programs for Auto Theft Unit members.
- C. To maintain records and reports of all aspects of auto theft.
- D. To gather and disseminate information in cooperation with other state, local and federal agencies.

42-C.1.2 Duties of Auto Theft Unit Members

- A. Investigating and apprehending persons responsible in all criminal aspects of auto theft, including, but not limited to:
 - 1. Chop Shops
 - 2. Insurance Frauds
 - 3. Theft of Heavy Equipment
 - 4. Theft of Recreational Vehicles

- B. Developing sources of information on stolen vehicle activity.
- C. Becoming familiar with junk yards, auto auctions and other vehicle sales and storage sites throughout the state.
- D. Keeping informed about:
 - 1. Vehicle identification.
 - 2. Supreme Court decisions relating to auto theft.
- E. Preparing all necessary reports concerning investigations.
- F. Ensuring all prosecutions are pursued properly.
- G. Performance of other related duties as assigned by the Investigative Services Bureau Commander.

42-C.2.1 Procedures for Recovery of Stolen Vehicles

- A. When any Division member recovers a stolen vehicle, he shall:
 - 1. Ensure that the reporting agency is contacted and
 - a. Told of the recovery, location of recovery, condition of vehicle and storage location of vehicle, and
 - b. Requested to notify the vehicle's owner and make appropriate NCIC, BOL, etc. cancellations.
 - 2. Convey to the applicable insurance company immediately by telephone, and follow up with a letter, the following information:
 - a. How the vehicle was found.
 - b. Damage and condition of vehicle.
 - c. Any arrests or suspects in the case.
 - d. Location of vehicle storage.
 - e. Any motions, to release or hold the vehicle, which have been filed.
 - f. That towing and storage fees are the responsibility of the insurance company except in cases where other parties request that the vehicle be held, in which cases the Court should be asked to make an order as to responsibility.
 - (1) In no case shall any vehicle be released except upon court order and payment of applicable bills.

- B. The Division member shall make a determination as to whether the vehicle should be processed for evidence.
 - 1. Enforcement Bulletin EB-84-4 gives guidance on vehicle search procedures.
 - 2. The search shall be photographed.
- C. A copy of the Division member's report shall be sent to the Auto Theft Unit.
 - 1. Reports of recovered stolen vehicles should include complete description of vehicle, owner's name and address, insurance companies involved and a list of any possible suspects, if known.
 - 2. A copy of the letter sent to the insurance company as outlined above shall be sent to the Auto Theft Unit.
- D. If court action is anticipated, the vehicle should not be released to the owner or an insurance company without a court order.
 - 1. The Division member responsible for prosecuting the case shall, when appropriate, submit a motion to the court requesting:
 - a. Permission to release the vehicle.
 - b. An order allowing introduction of photographs in lieu of physically presenting the vehicle at trial.
 - 2. Once such a motion has been granted, the vehicle shall be released as soon as possible.

SOURCES: NHSP EB-84-4

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