
	Ithaca Police Department 120 East Clinton Street Ithaca, New York 14850	
	General Order Number: 593	Title: Utility Terrain Vehicle
Issuing Authority: Chief Pete Tyler 		Effective Date: July 15, 2018
Rescinds/Supersedes: All previously issued directives		Review Date: July 1, 2020
Applicable NYSLEA Standards: 42.1 42.4 42.3		Number of Pages: 6

I. Purpose

- A. The Utility Terrain Vehicle (UTV) is a highly mobile unit capable of rapidly deploying to remote areas. The unit can be deployed in accordance with operational needs to enhance overall enforcement strategy in areas where other enforcement measures would be impractical. This policy is designed to set standards for the use, operation, training and maintenance of the UTV.
- B. These guidelines are set forth to insure the safety of our officers as well as the general public, and to insure that UTV is operated to its fullest potential and maintained to the department’s high standards. It is expected that all personnel assigned to the UTV will use common sense and professionalism at all times to dictate their actions.

II. Policy

It shall be the policy of the Ithaca Police Department that all assigned officers to the UTV be familiar with and understand the proper procedures, use and restrictions associated its operation.

III. Definitions

- A. UTV – shall mean Utility Terrain Vehicle, any self-propelled vehicle, which is manufactured for sale for operation primarily on off-highway trails, but not limited to operation on public highways providing that such vehicle is used in the capacity as an Authorized Emergency Vehicle as set forth in the NYVTL under section 1104. (sec F)
- B. Snowmobile – shall mean any self-propelled vehicle designed for travel on snow or ice, steered by skis or runners and supported by one or more skis, belts, or cleats.

- C. Emergency Operation – shall mean the operation or parking, of an authorized emergency vehicle, as defined by New York State Vehicle and Traffic (V & T) Law Section 101, when such vehicle is engaged in transporting a sick or injured person, transporting a prisoner, pursuing and actual or suspected violator of the law, or responding to or working at the scene of an accident, disaster, police call, fire, actual or potential release of hazardous materials or other emergency.
- D. Emergency Response – shall mean a response by an officer to a possible life-threatening situation or serious crime in progress, or an unusual incident/event that requires an immediate response by an officer.
- E. Pursuit Driving – shall mean attempted apprehension by a police officer operating an emergency equipped police vehicle of occupant(s) of another motor vehicle, whose operator refuses to comply with a lawful directive to stop and attempts to flee.
- F. Emergency Vehicles – shall mean police vehicles and other vehicles exercising the privileges set forth in V&T Section 1104.
- G. Liability of the Operator – shall mean, under the provisions of V&T Section 1104, the driver of an authorized emergency vehicle is not relieved from the duty to drive with due regard for the safety of all persons, nor shall such provisions protect the driver from the consequences of their reckless disregard for the safety of others.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection process to choose candidates for UTV training will include, but not be limited to the following:

1. Applying officers must have completed their initial hire probationary period with the Ithaca Police Department. Lateral hires are exempt from this restriction.
2. Letter of interest for being an authorized driver of the UTV.

B. REQUIRED TRAINING

1. UTV
 - a. Department approved UTV Safety Course
2. SNOWMOBILE (one of the following) In the event of a snow emergency, officers who are selected to operate the machines will be given preference if they have completed any of the following courses. If the County roads are closed due to said emergency, the Chief can authorize any sworn Police Officer to operate same.

- a. Parks & Recreation Snowmobile Basic/Advanced Course
- b. Snowmobile Safety Institute Program
- c. Department approved snowmobile safety course

C. EQUIPMENT (Required for UTV's and Snowmobiles)

- All UTV and/or Snowmobile operators must wear the following safety equipment:

UTV

1. Visible Police Uniform
2. Ballistic Vest as issued by the department
3. Portable Radio
4. Seatbelt during any operation when practical to do so

Snowmobile

1. Department issued safety helmet
2. Eye protection (goggles or glasses)
3. Above the ankle leather boots (ATV) and/or pack boots (snowmobile)
4. Riding gloves/snowmobile mittens
5. Department issued ballistic vest
6. Portable radio

D. UNIFORM

- The ATV uniform will consist of the IPD Class B uniform as set forth in the IPD Uniform policy.

E. UTV OPERATIONS

The Ithaca Police Department currently has one (1) UTV. The respective UTV's will use the radio call sign of **Ranger 1**. In the event a snowmobile is utilized during a snow, it will use the radio call sign of **POLAR 1**. Currently the Ithaca Police does not have a snowmobile in its inventory. The UTV will work with marked patrol units whenever possible. Trail checks will be staged near that unit when practical. The patrol unit will enable quick access for prisoner transport, back up, or serve as a base for emergency operations.

1. Officers will operate only Department owned and approved recreational vehicles while on duty, unless specifically authorized by the Chief of Police or his designee.
2. If such authorization is made, Officers will properly familiarize themselves with the recreational vehicles prior to operation. This will include reading and understanding the operator's manual for the model of recreational vehicle to be ridden, and a pre-operation inspection to all controls function correctly and that the recreational vehicle is safe to ride. Any appropriate safety gear will also be worn prior to operation.

3. A T-CLOC inspection will be performed prior to any operation

T- Tires and Wheels (Check for cuts, wear, and air pressure).

C – Cables and Controls (Check for free movement and no leakages).

L – Check and insure all lights and electrical features are working including emergency lighting.

O – Inspect all fluid levels, including fuel.

C – Inspect Chassis and drive shaft components.

4. UTV officers will properly wear all safety equipment at all times when the UTV is in motion
5. Any passengers are strictly prohibited unless authorized by a supervisor or in the event of an immediate emergency operation
6. Operators of snowmobiles on snow-covered trails must be cautious of rocks, logs and stumps as the machines pack down a new trail. Slow speed operation to match trail conditions.

1. UTV will be assigned in pairs whenever possible for the purpose of safety.

2. When operating a recreational vehicle, **SAFETY** is always to be the primary concern. Officers will comply with this at all times by riding in a safe and cautious manner. Any reckless behavior will result in the immediate removal from the UTV unit, and a ban from any further on duty UTV and snowmobile use. The UTV Supervisor or IPD Staff may also recommend disciplinary action as appropriate.

- PROHIBITED PRACTICES (not limited to)

- Excessive Speed
- Purposely popping the front wheels off the ground (wheelies)
- Jumping
- Operating recreational vehicles without proper safety equipment in effect
- Officers are prohibited from patrol on frozen lakes, waterways, and ponds

3. Officers shall use caution not to cause unnecessary damage to landscaping or foliage and to the maximum extent possible operate the vehicle only on established roads and pathways.

4. Other than on highways approved and marked as snowmobile routes or when there is a snow emergency, traveling on an open roadway is not approved for departmental snowmobiles except in an emergency and only when both headlight and emergency lights are on an only for the distance necessary to address the emergency.

5. Officers shall use extreme caution when operating in or near park and residential areas

6. Crossing public roadways must be done at right angles. Prior to crossing, the vehicle's emergency lights must be activated.

7. When passing other recreational vehicles or cutting in and out of traffic, emergency lights and headlights may be used if they would add to the safety of the maneuver.
8. Following the use of the recreational vehicle, the operator will thoroughly inspect and clean the vehicle. Any deficiencies will be immediately reported to the UTV Supervisor.
9. A licensed repair shop designated by the UTV Supervisor to annually inspect the departments UTV.
10. The Ithaca Police Department UTV and transport trailer may be loaned to other departments within the City of Ithaca on a temporary basis provided that it does not conflict with the needs of the Police Department and is not a public operation. In circumstances where the City employee is determined to be fully capable, through training and experience, in the operation and maintenance of the UTV or transport trailer. An UTV certified IPD Officer need not accompany and operate said vehicle. Any damage to loaned UTV will be the responsibility of the borrowing party. The Chief of Police will approve such loans of UTV equipment in advance, with notification made to the UTV Supervisor.

F. PATROL TACTICS

1. All emergency lights will be operated during vehicle stops.
2. Whenever possible, vehicle stops should be done along a straightaway.
3. When making a stop, the Department machine will be placed in an offset angle and behind the target vehicle.
4. The officer will order the operator of the target vehicle to shut off his/her vehicle, and remain seated.
5. Operators should be instructed to call for an available marked patrol unit to respond to stop.
6. Although well equipped with emergency lighting, whenever possible, conduct interviews off the main roadway to ensure the safety of all involved.
7. Members of the UTV **will not engage in high-speed pursuits** when operating an UTV or snowmobile.
8. Tactical operations will include patrol vehicles positioned ahead of target vehicles to prevent an escape. Road units can be utilized to block fleeing subjects. Recreational vehicles cannot make sudden stops. Allowances need to be made so that a recreational vehicle can be brought to a safe stop. Leave an out in the roadblock for machines that are operated at an excessive speed to avoid collision with the roadblock.

G. TRAILERING

Care will be given to securing and protecting the UTV from damage during transporting.

1. LOADING and UNLOADING

- a. Loading operator will be wearing all safety gear.
- b. The trailer will be properly hitched to the transport vehicle using proper ball size and/or the use of stabilizer jacks.
- c. Safety chains will be crossed to form a cradle in event the tongue drops.
- d. Lighting system will be attached and inspected
- e. Use all safety devices or tie downs as outlined by the trailer manufacturer.
- f. The officer will drive UTV onto the trailer only in low range gear at the lowest speed.
- g. The UTV's gear selector will be left in the park position when secured to the trailer
- h. The parking brake will be locked on.
- i. Fuel lines must be shut off and keys removed from the UTV or snowmobile.
- j. The UTV will be anchored in the front and rear via ratchet straps prior to transport.
- k. The trailer will be secured by lock pin and safety pin.

2 TRAILER MAINTENANCE

- a. The UTV Supervisor will cause the trailer to be inspected annually.
- b. The assigned officer will inspect the trailer before every operation and the commencement of loading operations.
- c. The interior and exterior of the trailer be cleaned after every use.
- d. Any problems will be immediately reported to the Operations Sergeant followed by a written report.
- e. Storage of the trailer, UTV will be at IPD in garage 4 or if approved by the Chief on a temporary basis at an officers residence during training or out of operational convenience.