

## Chapter 6: Law Enforcement Usage

### 6.1 Introduction

We all associate law enforcement officers with protecting the public, maintaining order, preventing and detecting crime, and enforcing traffic laws and criminal laws. Law enforcement officers have earned our trust and respect because of their professionalism in regards to public safety.

Because of this trust and respect, they have been a useful resource in other traffic-related functions. They are regularly used to help direct traffic during major sporting events, visits from dignitaries, unexpected roadway incidents that disrupt normal traffic flow, and similar special events.

Additionally, law enforcement officers may also be used to direct traffic during roadway construction activities where their presence has more impact than that of a contractor flagman (flagger) or used to assist in speed compliance.

### 6.2 Definitions & Abbreviations

**Law Enforcement** – The governmental department charged with the regulation and control of the affairs of a community, established to maintain order, enforce the law, and prevent and detect crime.

### 6.3 Policies

The Work Zone Traffic Control Section currently has no set policy on when and when not to use law enforcement officers in regards to construction activities. It is at the discretion of the designer to recommend whether to use a flagger or law enforcement officer for a particular construction operation. Law enforcement is primarily used for 3 purposes in work zones. The first is to patrol work zones during lane closure activities to maintain safer speeds during active work times. The second is to direct/control/pace traffic during lane closures, traffic switches, road closures, and work operations through signalized intersections. The third purpose is mainly to provide a “presence” for night time activities by using their blue lights to regulate/control speeds.



### HAWKS (Help All Work Zones Keep Safe) Program

This program is through the State Highway Patrol and is already funded by NCDOT. No additional compensation in terms of a contract pay item is necessary. The off duty patrolmen serve as speed enforcement for work zones that qualify for this program. Potential Hawks projects are scored based on 4 or 5 criteria. If you believe you have a project that would benefit from HAWKS, let your supervisor and the State Work Zone Operations & Programs Engineer know so it can be assessed.

## 6.4 Design Issues

The Traffic Control Plan designer should analyze all of the construction activities on the project to determine if the use of law enforcement officer might be better suited for a particular construction operation. The following are some construction situations, which the designer might want to consider using law enforcement:

- At the road closure and/or detour point/s when installing bridge girders over a travelway
- When construction affects traffic at a signalized intersection
- When relocating or installing a new traffic signal under traffic
- Bringing traffic to a halt on a major roadway
- Directing traffic through an interchange ramp
- Pacing traffic
- Patrolling to ensure speed compliance

The use of law enforcement during roadway construction activities is only a supplement to the traffic control design for the particular operation. The Traffic Control Plan designer needs to design or refer to the appropriate Roadway Standard Drawing in the Traffic Control Phasing for the operation which law enforcement presence is deemed necessary. Additionally, the designer should show the suggested location of the law enforcement presence on the detail sheet that shows the construction activity.

## 6.5 Design Criteria

The recommended use of law enforcement for a particular construction activity is at the discretion of the designer.

“Law Enforcement” is a Traffic Control contract pay item and is paid for in the number of hours law enforcement usage is deemed necessary for a given project. The designer will have to calculate the number of hours that law enforcement officers are needed on the project and include this value in the estimate.

## 6.6 Design Resources

The following are good resources for helping to determine whether or not law enforcement should be used for a particular construction activity:

- Traffic Control Project Design Engineer
- Traffic Control Project Engineer
- Division Construction Engineer
- Resident Engineer