



CHEVY CHASE
VILLAGE
POLICE
DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER: 5-50.4; BAIT CAR

DATE: 11/18/2016 Pages: 2 ◇ New ◇ Amended ◆ Rescinds—5-50.4

Police Chief: John Fitzgerald

I. POLICY

The purpose of the Bait Car Program *is* to reduce the frequency of thefts from auto in the Village. The Bait Car will be deployed in areas where thefts from auto have occurred. The program will utilize a covert vehicle equipped to immediately notify Communications when a theft or attempt theft from the vehicle occurs and to record the activity of the suspect(s).

II. ANTI-THEFT VEHICLE SYSTEM

A. Bait Car Basics; The Covert Nature of the Vehicle

1. The covert vehicle used for this purpose will be equipped with sensors that detect doors opening, and/or motion within and near the passenger compartment. Upon activation, interior cameras and a microphone will record activity within the vehicle and the system will send streaming audio and video to a designated computer in Communications.
2. Officers and dispatchers will receive practical training on the operation of the bait car, and they will receive a copy of this General Order prior to the deployment of the bait car.
3. The bait car is considered a covert vehicle. The maintenance and deployment of the bait car will be the responsibility of the Lieutenant. The vehicle will only be deployed and otherwise driven/operated by employees wearing civilian attire. Officers will not operate the bait car while in uniform without authorization from a supervisor. Personnel may discuss the program with the public as an example of the department's proactive approach to theft reduction, however, personnel shall not reveal the vehicle's description, deployment locations or other information that may compromise the vehicle's covert status.

B. Deployment and Operational Guidelines

1. The computer in Communications which is designated to receive bait car activation signals

must be monitored by the dispatcher at all times while in the Communications Center. Whenever a dispatcher must step away from Communications, the dispatcher must notify on-duty officers over the radio.

2. Upon deployment, the Lieutenant will send a high-priority email to all Police Department personnel. The Lieutenant will also make an appropriate entry on the MCPD Roll Call Web Board. The email and Web Board entry will include:

- Location of Deployment
- Vehicle make, model, color and license plate number
- A detailed list of the 'bait' property (if any) located within the vehicle and any identifiable features of the property.
- Expected duration of deployment

C. Bait Car Activation

1. Upon activation of the bait car system,
 - Communications will notify and dispatch Village patrol units immediately to the location of the bait car.
 - While en route, officers will use the radio (channel A2) to notify MCPD that they are responding to a bait car activation and request back up units and K9; the radio message will include the location of the bait car, and the description and number of any suspects, if known (based on the streaming video).
2. The first responding unit will determine if a crime has been committed and take the appropriate action based upon the known circumstances at the time. The initial unit(s) will provide a status report via radio at the earliest practical time. As appropriate, first responding officers should:
 - Request additional units, if needed;
 - Broadcast a lookout of any suspects or

- vehicles believed to be involved;
- Make on-scene arrests and complete charging documents;
- Complete a thorough on-scene investigation;
- Complete an incident report; and
- Notify their supervisor, BIS, and the Chief of Police.

3. Follow-up investigations will be conducted by the MCPD's 2nd District Investigative Section.

III. EVIDENCE

A. Bait Items as Evidence

1. Serialized (or specifically marked) 'bait' items may be placed inside the bait car during deployments. Images of those items—and their serial numbers—will be circulated by email to all officers and dispatchers simultaneous with each deployment.
2. If bait items are in the possession of a suspect and are seized directly from a suspect during an arrest, officers must check the number on the item to confirm that it is a bait item. Details of the seizure (which suspect had the item; specific location—hand, pocket, etc.—where the item was found, etc.) must be captured in the report.
3. If bait items are not actually possessed by a suspect but are located nearby (but outside of the car), officers will handle the bait items using latex gloves, they will process the items for latent fingerprints and they will photograph the location and document details surrounding the found item.

B. Digital Evidence and Data Retention

1. The Lieutenant and the Chief are the only individuals authorized to handle the original digital evidence.
2. Video evidence will be downloaded and entered into CODY's evidence component by the Lieutenant at the earliest practical time following an activation where a crime was verified—whether or not an arrest is made.
3. Digital evidence will be retained until all trials and appeals have been exhausted.
4. Any recorded data that is not evidence will be deleted at least every six months.

IV. MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR

- A. Mechanical maintenance and repair (as well as fueling) for the vehicle will be accomplished through Montgomery County facilities (Seven Locks garage; County fueling sites) as we do with other vehicles in the Department's fleet.
- B. Problems with the bait car's electronics must be brought to the Lieutenant's attention by the employee discovering the problem; such repairs will be arranged by the Lieutenant as needed.

This directive voids the previous version dated 5/28/2013.