



POLICY RECOMMENDATION

TO: Chief Lisa Davis, Austin Police Department
FROM: Director Gail McCant, Office of Police Oversight
DATE: Thursday, July 3, 2025
SUBJECT: OPO Policy Recommendation: 214 VEHICLE PURSUITS

Dear Chief Davis:

This memorandum provides feedback and recommendations for improving the Austin Police Department's (APD) General Order (GO) 214 VEHICLE PURSUITS.

The specific policies reviewed in this memorandum are as follows:

- 214.6.4 LOW SPEED INTERVENTION

The policy analysis and subsequent recommendations examined the use of low-speed interventions (LSI) as a vehicle pursuit tactic and its classification as a Level 2 Response to Resistance within the Austin Police Department (APD). LSIs, like any other use of force tactic, must be evaluated for safety and alignment with modern policing standards. The purpose of these recommendations is to identify any opportunities for improvement to APD's policies and practices regarding LSIs. Since LSIs are considered a use of force, they require clear guidance and consistent application to ensure they are used responsibly, effectively, and transparently.

The OPO believes this APD policy can be improved and will benefit the City of Austin, APD, and community members. The OPO is committed to improving APD's policies to increase transparency, accountability, and public trust in law enforcement.

Sincerely,

Gail McCant
Director
Office of Police Oversight



POLICY RECOMMENDATION

214 VEHICLE PURSUITS

Recommendation #1:

OPO recommends that APD define “Low Speed Intervention.”

LSI (Low Speed Intervention) is currently the only pursuit tactic not defined under General Order (GO) 214.2 DEFINITIONS. To ensure consistency in the classification and understanding of all pursuit tactics and interventions, the Office of Police Oversight (OPO) recommends that APD include a clear definition of LSI in GO 214.2. Additionally, OPO recommends that APD explicitly define the term “low speed,” particularly as it relates to executing the intervention safely. The absence of a clear definition may lead to inconsistent interpretations among officers, increasing the risk of policy violations and unintended outcomes.

Recommendation #2:

OPO recommends that the APD require officers to receive appropriate training before executing LSIs.

The current version of GO 214.6.4 does not address the training requirements for the use and application of LSIs. Given that other vehicle pursuit tactics, such as PIT (Precision Immobilization Technique), require specific training standards, LSIs should also require training standards to align with APD policy and law enforcement best practices. Ensuring officers are adequately trained enhances safety, accountability, and the effective execution of these interventions.

Recommendation #3:

OPO recommends APD modify GO 214.6.4 to include Code 3 as a requirement for executing LSIs.

Absent an explanation for why LSI tactics should be uniquely exempt from Code 3 requirements, APD should adhere to its current policy of requiring Code 3 in all vehicle pursuit cases, including LSIs, as outlined in 214.4.