

## Pursuit Accident

### INCIDENT DETAILS

A Patrol Officer was pursuing a vehicle to apprehend the driver, who was wanted for a misdemeanor warrant. The weather conditions were poor and the street surface was covered by snow and ice. The suspect vehicle crossed a main artery, with the officer close behind. The suspect made it through the intersection; however, the Officer's vehicle was struck and run over by a semi-truck and trailer. The officer's car was crushed. Fortunately, the officer was able to move within the car to avoid being injured.

### RISK ANALYSIS

The Officer failed to stop at a stop sign, slid into an intersection, and his car was struck and crushed by a large truck. The suspect was not apprehended. The pursuit and collision potentially put the community and other Officers at risk.

### LIABILITY

State of Connecticut Police Officers must adhere to the Connecticut Uniform Pursuit Policy which clearly outlines when a pursuit is warranted. The officer engaged in a pursuit for a misdemeanor warrant during in climate weather and failed to maintain his vehicle in accordance with 14-218(a) and 14-283- continue to drive with the safety and due regard of others and endangered life and property in doing. In this case liability would rest with the officer and the department.

**Sec. 14-283a-4. Procedures (a) Initiation of Pursuit. (1)** The decision to initiate a pursuit shall be based on the pursuing Police Officer's conclusion that the immediate danger to the Police Officer and the public created by the pursuit is less than the immediate or potential danger to the public should the occupants of such vehicle remain at large. (2) In deciding whether to initiate a pursuit, the Police Officer shall take the following factors into consideration:

- A. Road, weather and environmental conditions;
- B. Population density and vehicular and pedestrian traffic;
- C. Whether the identity of the occupants is known and immediate apprehension is not necessary to protect the public or police officers and apprehension at a later time is feasible.

### LESSONS LEARNED

The Officer should have conducted a risk assessment regarding immediate apprehension versus the danger caused by pursuing.

### CHANGES AS A RESULT OF THAT EXPERIENCE

Police Officers should continuously review the pursuit policies of the State and their own Department. Pursuits for minor offenses are not advised. In this case the subject's identity was known; therefore it would be possible to plan and apprehend them at a later date.

Questions? Ask your Supervisor or contact your CIRMA Risk Management Consultant at (203) 946-3700.