PROCEDURES FOR ROLLING ROADBLOCKS
Objectives

- Review the need for safety
- Identify applications
- Establish planning and resource requirements
- Outline procedures
• Fall of 2008
• SR 9A – Jacksonville
• Conclusion of an interchange project – overhead sign replacement
• Nighttime detour of all SB lanes in place
• JSO officers and MOT exiting all traffic to detour
• Tractor Trailer carrying signs was parked on travel lanes
• At approximately 3am, an on-duty JSO enters the work area in a marked patrol car
Lesson Learned

- Allowing traffic on closed roadways
- Communication with workers
- Driving on closed roadways carries unique risks
• Spring of 2004 – 5:50 am
• SB I-95 – Jacksonville
• Interchange and widening project
• Rolling roadblock of SB lanes to break down MOT
• FHP trooper and JSO officer handling a domestic violence call near same location
• Off-duty JSO officers initiate a rolling roadblock without knowledge of stopped officers
• Officers leave the scene not knowing the roadway was closed
Lesson Learned

- Off-Duty Officers Communication with 911 center and other LE agencies
- The need for a “Lead Car” to sweep the road
- Turning your back on traffic – Even when it isn’t there!
PROCEDURES FOR ROLLING ROADBLOCKS

- Applications
- Pacing (slowing) versus Stopping
- Planning and Communication
- Resource Requirements
- Design
- Execution
APPLICAITONS

- Advantages of rolling roadblocks
- Limited formal procedures
  - FDOT Design Index 655 (2010)
  - Maryland State Highway Administration
- Work Zone MOT changes
- Power lines and utility work
- Moving or setting up equipment
- Short-term activities requiring all lanes
- Other activities
PACING VERSUS STOPPING

- Duration of the activity
- Time of day
- Degree of certainty activity will be completed

Note "rolling roadblocks" is also a police pursuit term – there is a difference
PLANNING / COMMUNICATION

- Contractors and law enforcement
- Advanced planning meeting
- Day of activity planning meeting
- Communication between parties
- Communications with media
- Communications with 911 / Other agencies
RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

- Advanced warning signs
- Variable messaging
  - General warning to more specific warning
- Marked law enforcement vehicles
  - Lead, one for each lane, one approaching
- Communications
  - Involved personnel, dispatch, media
- Changeable message sign Placement
- Week prior “Expect Delays On - mm/dd time”
- Day of “Roadwork Tonight – Expect Periodic Delays”
- During Operation “Slow Traffic Ahead – Be Prepared to Stop”
All on-ramps are accounted for in the area between the start and stop of the detail.

One patrol car for each travel lane

One lead and one car at the beginning

If only a “pacing” detail, use index formula for computing the distance and time required.
  Maximum 10 miles and 30 minutes

Failsafe “stop points” for pacing
Stage One

- Minimum 4 police vehicles upstream
- Top lights “off”
Stage Two

- Traffic Control Officer order begin
- Last 3 turn “on” top lights
- Form block behind lead vehicle which has lights “off”
Stage Three
- Pacing vehicles slow to 20 mph
- Lead matches speed of last vehicle to 500’ before work area
- Lead stops on shoulder
- Lead notifies TCO that roadway is clear
Stage Four

- Pacing vehicles maintain communication with Traffic Control Officer
- Workers clear on approach (pace)
- Stop is made with favorable sight dist
EXECUTION

- Successive rolling roadblocks should not be started until roadway is cleared from prior
- Preferably done during non-peak or nighttime hours
- Stops should be short in duration (<15 min)
- Mind the back of the queue!
CONCLUSIONS

- Rolling roadblocks are necessary for safety, particularly in freeway applications
- Appropriate number of officers is important
- Communications is essential!!!
- Planning should be done by BOTH engineering and law enforcement
- Appropriate warning for motorists is a must (Signs, blue lights, minding the back of the queue)