

# ARE YOU READY FOR YOUR SHIFT

Whether prepping for a high-visibility enforcement detail, or simply readying for a patrol shift, a law enforcement officer should perform the following routine vehicle inspection and inventory assessment to maximize safety on the road:

## PRE-SHIFT VEHICLE SAFETY INSPECTION

The officer should perform a routine check of the following:

### **TIRES**

Look for unusual or uneven wear, and, ensure that the vehicle is properly outfitted with winter tires and/or chains, if needed.

### **LIGHTING**

Make sure that all lights (and siren) are operational, including those on the vehicle, the light bar, and grill if present.

### **WIPER BLADES**

Degraded or broken windshield wipers can present a danger while driving in inclement weather. Ensure that vehicle blades are in good working order.

### **VEHICLE FLUIDS**

In addition to ensuring the gas tank is full before shift, it's also important to have extra oil, coolant, and wiper fluid available.

### **STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY**

A physical inspection of the vehicle should be done, being cognizant of any structural abnormalities, leaks, or other damage. Be sure to note previously unreported damage to the shift supervisor.

### **VEHICLE TECHNOLOGY**

Check to see that all in-vehicle and externally-mounted technology systems are working properly and are securely fixed such as an in-car camera. Detached cords are often the culprit with non-working systems.

### **COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

A properly functioning radio with the ability to both transmit and receive messages is imperative. It also important that cellular phones are fully charged and that a charger is present in the vehicle.

### **GUN RACK**

Operability and security of the gun rack, most notably when it's located inside of the vehicle.

### **VEHICLE FLEET TECHNOLOGY:**

Proper, manufacturer-recommended installation is important – systems need to be properly installed to ensure that devices do not become projectiles and/or officer safety hazards in the instance of a vehicular collision. These devices should also be positioned in the vehicle to minimize officer distractions. Installation protocol should regularly be revisited to account for routine equipment degradation. Also ensure technology is properly collecting, storing, preserving, and transferring digital evidence for evidentiary purposes.

## PRE-SHIFT EQUIPMENT INVENTORY CHECK

The officer should make sure to have the following personal equipment (either on-self or in-vehicle):

- Tactical/ballistic vest that is of proper fit and within its serviceable life
- Reflective vest
- Department-issued firearm, fully loaded with loaded ammo pouches
- Less-lethal device(s)
- Body-worn camera
- Checkpoint equipment (e.g. cones, flares)
- Special gear for inclement or extreme weather conditions (e.g. gloves, winter or rain jacket, hat, emergency blankets)
- Fire extinguisher (non-expired)
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- First aid kit and possibly a biohazard kit
- Search gloves
- Sufficient food and water in the event of a prolonged shift