

# EMERGENCY SIGNALING DEVICES IN DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY VEHICLES

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## I. Purpose

This Directive establishes Department of Homeland Security (DHS) policy for approval of the installation and use of audio and visual emergency signaling devices in DHS-owned or -leased motor vehicles used by DHS personnel other than law enforcement, fire, or Emergency Medical Services (EMS) employees (see [Appendix A](#) for the definitions of terms).

## II. Scope

- A. This Directive applies throughout DHS.
- B. DHS Management Directive 11015, "Emergency Signaling Devices in DHS Vehicles," is hereby superseded.

## III. Authorities

- A. Title 41, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 102-34, "Motor Vehicle Management"
- B. DHS Delegation 00002, "Delegation to the Under Secretary for Management"
- C. DHS Delegation 12000, "Delegation for Security Operations within the Department of Homeland Security"
- D. DHS Delegation 00500, "Delegation to the Chief Readiness Support Officer"

## IV. Responsibilities

- A. The **Under Secretary for Management** is responsible for establishing policies related to the use of emergency signaling devices at DHS.

- B. The **Chief Readiness Support Officer** ensures accountability of vehicles with emergency signaling devices installed.
- C. The **Chief Security Officer** monitors compliance with this Directive and approves or denies requests from Support Components for the installation of emergency signaling devices in non-law enforcement designated vehicles.
- D. The **DHS Operational Component Head or Designee**:
1. Approves or denies requests from their Component for the installation of emergency signaling devices in non-law enforcement designated vehicles; and
  2. Submits a copy of approved packages to the DHS Chief Security Officer ([CSOEXECSEC@HQ.DHS.GOV](mailto:CSOEXECSEC@HQ.DHS.GOV)).

## V. Policy and Requirements

- A. **Policy**:
1. DHS personnel use emergency signaling devices only when required for the safe execution of their official duties in circumstances where the need to protect public safety or other employees requires increased visibility for vehicle operation.
  2. At a minimum, personnel authorized to use emergency signaling devices must receive training that meets the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers' (FLETC) baseline standards ([Appendix B](#)) prior to use of emergency signaling devices.
  3. Installation and use of emergency signaling devices for non-law enforcement designated vehicles requires prior written approval from the Component Head (or their designee) for Operational Components or the DHS Chief Security Officer for Support Components.
  4. Use of emergency signaling devices is sanctioned by authorized personnel only when necessary to meet legitimate needs for emergency response capabilities; equipment and use in non-law enforcement, fire, or EMS vehicles is kept to a minimum and allowed under limited circumstances.

B. **Requirements:**

1. Installation of emergency signaling devices in non-law enforcement, fire, or Emergency Medical Services (EMS) vehicles requires written approval from either the Component Head (or their designee) for Operational Components or the DHS Chief Security Officer for Support Components ([CSOEXECSEC@HQ.DHS.GOV](mailto:CSOEXECSEC@HQ.DHS.GOV)). The installation of emergency signaling devices does not by itself constitute authority for their use. Users of emergency signaling devices must complete training requirements outlined in B.2 below. The approval request includes:

- a. A detailed justification describing the operational requirement to support installation of emergency signaling devices in specific vehicles;
- b. The category and operational affiliation of vehicles for which authorization is sought;
- c. The type of emergency signaling equipment planned to be installed and how the equipment will be utilized [as fixed installation or mobile plug-in (strobes, etc.)];
- d. Identity and contact information for the company that will do the installation of the emergency signaling equipment;
- e. The name and title of the employee for whom authorization is sought or the category of employee for which authorization is sought;
- f. The anticipated situations and expected scenarios, which are anticipated to require emergency response, and the frequency with which these situations are likely to occur;
- g. A detailed justification describing the reasons that a specific category of employee requires the use of emergency signaling devices; and

h. A description of the non-law enforcement Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC) meeting the FLETC baseline standards at Appendix B for EVOC certification and a statement affirming that all such employees will complete and document approved EVOC training prior to using emergency signaling devices. In addition to the EVOC training established for basic law enforcement students, FLETC offers EVOC training applicable to non-law enforcement personnel. For questions about FLETC EVOC training standards, please contact FLETC's Protocol and Communications Office at (912) 267-2447 or [fletc-pco@fletc.dhs.gov](mailto:fletc-pco@fletc.dhs.gov).

2. Authorized employees are trained to operate vehicles with emergency signaling devices through successful completion of an appropriate in-residence EVOC that meets the FLETC baseline standards ([Appendix B](#));

3. Authorized personnel entrusted with the use of emergency signaling devices in government-owned or -leased vehicles are responsible for exercising due regard for the safety of others when using these devices and adhering to the very limited circumstances under which they are permitted to do so; and

4. Records of approved requests are maintained by the Operational Component for Component-approved requests and by Support Components for CSO-approved requests. The records must clearly document the requirements established in V.B.1.a through h. The records must also identify employees by name who are authorized to use emergency signaling devices and include documentation of their successful completion of EVOC training.

5. Operational Components and Support Components must provide the DHS Office of the Chief Security Officer (OCSO) with the designated office responsible for maintaining the records described above within 180 days of the publication of this Directive.

C. Law enforcement, fire, and EMS vehicles are authorized to have emergency signaling devices. Other vehicles may have emergency signaling devices only with approval as outlined in this Directive.

D. Operational and Support Component Heads review state and local laws and regulations regarding the installation and use of emergency signaling devices. Additionally, guidance from the Office of the General Counsel as well as state and local authorities should be sought to ensure, to the extent possible, use consistent with applicable laws and regulations.

E. Use of emergency signaling devices without due care or in an improper or illegal manner is considered improper use of a motor vehicle and may result in adverse personnel actions including removal as well as individual legal liability for the user.

F. Only DHS personnel, as determined pursuant to the below criteria, may operate a DHS vehicle with emergency signaling devices in use:

1. Sworn law enforcement officers, fire, and EMS personnel who have satisfied EVOC training that meets the FLETC baseline standards set forth in Appendix B are authorized to use emergency signaling devices. For purposes of this Directive, the term “sworn law enforcement officer” includes all U.S. Coast Guard military and civilian personnel qualified to exercise the authority of Title 14, United States Code (U.S.C.) § 89, § 93, or § 95, or 46 U.S.C. § 70117.

2. EVOC instructors and student drivers are authorized to use emergency signaling devices as part of their EVOC training.

3. All other non-law enforcement personnel must have authorization as outlined in this Directive and have completed EVOC training that meets the FLETC baseline standards set forth in Appendix B prior to using emergency signaling devices.

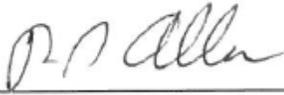
G. This Directive does not authorize DHS employees to use such devices in privately owned vehicles.

H. The Operational and Support Component-designated offices responsible for maintaining the records of approved requests will review approved requests annually and submit a list of approved vehicles used by DHS personnel with emergency signaling devices installed, other than those used for law enforcement, fire, or EMS. The list should include the make, model and year of each vehicle justification for use, and the specific DHS office or activity using them to the DHS Chief Security Officer ([CSOEXECSEC@HQ.DHS.GOV](mailto:CSOEXECSEC@HQ.DHS.GOV)) no later than November 15<sup>th</sup> of each year. The designated office will submit within 30 calendar days an addendum to an approved request when there is a change in justification regarding the use of emergency signaling devices installed in DHS-owned or -leased motor vehicles.

I. The DHS Office of the Chief Security Officer conducts security performance audits (SPAs) on a periodic basis to verify compliance with this Directive and in accordance with DHS Instruction 121-01-011, “Administrative Security Program.” Audits will review a representative sample of approvals, and training records sufficient to verify that the appropriate procedures are being followed and that records are maintained for authorized vehicles and personnel.

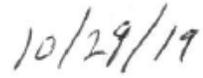
## VI. Questions

Address any questions or concerns regarding this Directive to the DHS Office of the Chief Security Officer, Executive Director, Strategic Operations, 202-447-5340.



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R. D. Alles  
Acting Under Secretary for Management



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Date

## Appendix A: Definitions

- A. **Emergency Signaling Devices**: All devices used to warn other drivers of an emergency vehicle's approach, including horns, whistles, bells, lights, and sirens.
- B. **Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC)**: A course designed to enhance safe vehicle operation by stressing theory and principles of defensive driving in both emergency and non-emergency situations. The class does not teach the student to drive, but rather explains how emergency driving differs from non-emergency driving.
- C. **Fire or Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Vehicle**: A motor vehicle primarily operated by fire or EMS personnel and routinely used to respond to fires and medical emergencies.
- D. **Law Enforcement (LE) Motor Vehicle**: A motor vehicle that is specifically approved in an agency's appropriation act for use in apprehension, surveillance, police or other law enforcement work, or specifically designed for use in law enforcement (See "LE1").
- E. **LE1**: A vehicle configured for apprehensions, arrests, law enforcement, police activities, or dignitary protection; and is used in that capacity at least 75 percent annually; and assigned to protection, pursuit, or off-road duties. These vehicles are to be equipped with heavy duty components to handle the stress of extreme maneuvers and have the horsepower required to achieve the speeds necessary to perform these functions (See Law Enforcement Motor Vehicle).
- F. **Motor Vehicle**: Any vehicle, self-propelled or drawn by mechanical power, designed and operated principally for highway transportation of property or passengers.

## EMERGENCY VEHICLE OPERATIONS COURSE (EVOC) TRAINING PROGRAM

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>STANDARD</b>
<b>LEGAL</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Training in operator legal and procedural responsibilities and liabilities when operating a vehicle in the emergency mode under State vehicle traffic codes.</li> <li>2. Training in operator "Due Regard" responsibilities and parent agency policy and procedural requirements.</li> </ol>
<b>EMERGENCY RESPONSE / EQUIPMENT</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Training in the effectiveness of both emergency lights and sirens.</li> <li>2. Training addressing the limitations and differences between braking systems as well as techniques recommended.</li> <li>3. Training in proper steering techniques.</li> <li>4. Training in performing safety inspections of critical vehicle components.</li> </ol>
<b>SKID CONTROL</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Training in recognition of skid hazards and avoidance.</li> <li>2. Training in skid recovery techniques.</li> </ol>
<b>EVASIVE</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Training in the techniques of obstacle avoidance.</li> <li>2. Training in the effect of changes in environment on vehicle maneuvering.</li> <li>3. Training in the vehicle's required overhead clearances.</li> </ol>