



JOHN BEL EDWARDS
GOVERNOR

LAMAR A. DAVIS
COLONEL DEPUTY SECRETARY

State of Louisiana
Department of Public Safety and Corrections
Public Safety Services

June 21, 2023
4750/0501/GWH/23-24017
HQ-01-871

Trooper First Class Cecil Montet
Troop I

VIA PERSONAL DELIVERY
IA#2300008

Re: 20 Hour Suspension

Trooper Montet:

Pursuant to the authority granted to me by State Police Commission (Commission) Rules 12.2 and 12.8, you are hereby notified that you are suspended from duty without pay and allowances for twenty (20) hours. Your suspension will be from 5:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on June 26, 2023, and from 5:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on June 27, 2023.

This suspension is based on your failure to comply with Louisiana State Police (LSP) policies and procedures, and Louisiana statutory law. Specifically, you have been found to have violated the following: Louisiana Revised Statutes 32:24, LSP Order 1112.7 and LSP P.O. 1117.

You are a Trooper First Class assigned to LSP Troop I in Lafayette, Louisiana. During your LSP Academy training, you were trained by Emergency Vehicle Operation Center Staff on the appropriate way to clear an intersection. In interviews, you have admitted that, on April 1, 2021, you operated your vehicle in a manner inconsistent with that training.

On April 1, 2021, the St. Martin Parish Sheriff's Office engaged in a pursuit in which you ultimately joined. While joining and participating in the pursuit, you engaged in driving tactics that were against the law, LSP policy, and your training as an LSP trooper. Specifically:

- You approached the intersection of E. Pont Des Mouton Road and Louisiana Highway (LA) 728-1 traveling approximately 91 mph with a red light displayed for your direction of travel. While you slowed down to approximately 46 mph to allow a vehicle to cross the intersection, you did not come to a complete stop. At this time, you were not directly involved in the pursuit.
- You approached the intersection of E. Pont Des Mouton Road and Louisiana Avenue traveling approximately 93 mph with a red light displayed for your

direction of travel. You slowed to approximately 66 mph, never came to a stop, and made a right turn onto Louisiana Avenue.

- You passed on the right shoulder while vehicles were stopped for a red light at the intersection of E. Pont Des Mouton Road and Interstate 49. While traveling on the shoulder and through the intersection, your unit was traveling approximately 40 mph.
- You approached the intersection of E. Pont Des Mouton Road and Interstate 49 with a red left turn signal displayed for your direction. You proceeded through the intersection, made a left turn while traveling approximately 53 mph, and drove over the white lines at the merge point.
- Your unit approached the intersection of W. Willow Street and Patterson Street with a red light displayed for your direction of travel while traveling approximately 50 mph, and slowed to approximately 33 mph.
- Your unit approached the intersection of W. Willow Street and North St. Antonie Street with a yellow light displayed for your direction of travel while traveling approximately 76 mph. The yellow light became a red light as you reached the intersection. You slowed to approximately 70 mph.
- Your unit approached the intersection of W. Willow Street and LA 182 with a red light displayed for your direction of travel while traveling approximately 83 mph. You proceeded through the intersection. An SUV with the green traffic signal traveling on LA 182 struck your vehicle on your unit's left side while you were traveling through the intersection.

During the pendency of the pursuit, your body-worn camera (BWC) remained inactive. Evidence has shown that your BWC had been powered off on March 18, 2021, and was not reactivated until April 9, 2021.

The Fleet Review Board convened on March 2, 2022, in regards to your crash. The Fleet Review Board concluded that the accident was "preventable," and recommended a letter of reprimand and 8 hours of remedial driver training.

On February 2, 2023, Lt. Colonel Chavez Cammon presented the recommendation by the Fleet Review Board to the Disciplinary Review Committee. After review, I ordered Internal Affairs (IA) to conduct an investigation. An IA investigation was opened on February 3, 2023.

On March 6, 2023, you were interviewed by IA investigators Polygraphist William Kirkland and Sergeant Richard Buckland. During the interview, you reviewed your ICC video and gave your statement for each of the intersection clearings. You admitted that you did not clear the intersections in accordance with your training. You further stated that you did not have an explanation for why you drove in a manner that was inconsistent with your training. You admitted that your BWC was not activated when you engaged in the pursuit.

The above described actions constitute one or more violations of the following statutes and orders:

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LA. R.S. 32:24. EMERGENCY VEHICLES; EXCEPTIONS

A. The driver or rider of an authorized emergency vehicle, when responding to an emergency call, or when in the pursuit of an actual or suspected violator of the law [...] may exercise the privileges set forth in this Section, but subject to the conditions herein stated.

B. The driver or rider of an authorized emergency vehicle may do any of the following:

...

- (2) Proceed past a red or stop signal or stop sign, but only after slowing down or stopping as may be necessary for safe operation.
- (3) Exceed the maximum speed limits so long as he does not endanger life or property.
- (4) Disregard regulations governing the direction of movement or turning in specified directions.

C. The exceptions herein granted to an authorized emergency vehicle shall apply only when such vehicle or bicycle is making use of audible or visual signals [...] sufficient to warn motorists of their approach, except that a police vehicle need not be equipped with or display a red light visible from in front of the vehicle.

D. The foregoing provisions shall not relieve the driver or rider of an authorized vehicle from the duty to drive or ride with due regard for the safety of all persons, nor shall such provisions protect the driver or rider from the consequences of his reckless disregard for the safety of others.

P.O. 1112.7 PURSUIT/ROADBLOCKS

- i) In accordance with the provisions of LRS 32:24, an officer engaged in a pursuit may suspend conformance with normal traffic laws only when making use of audible and/ or visual signals sufficient to warn others of his approach, but an emergency will not excuse an officer from a failure to exercise reasonable care given the situation at hand.

P.O. 1117. BODY WORN CAMERA & IN-CAR CAMERA SYSTEMS

5. ACTIVATION

...

- iii) Officers equipped with the BWC shall ensure their BWC is powered on, ready to record or receive a signal to record, during any tour of duty which required the use of the BWC in accordance with this policy, when the officer is subject to call.

...

- v) Officers equipped with a BWC and/or in-car camera system shall record all traffic stops, foot pursuits, vehicle pursuits, arrests, transportation of prisoners, incidents, and any emergency vehicle operations that require, or should require, the use of emergency lights and/or emergency lights and sirens...

For the above stated violations of law and policy, I am suspending you without pay for 20 hours. The suspension is from 5:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on June 26, 2023, and from 5:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on June 27, 2023. Any future violations of this or any other nature may result in more severe discipline, up to and including termination.

You have the right to appeal this action to the Louisiana State Police Commission. The time limits and procedure for appealing are contained in Chapter 13 of the State Police

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Commission Rules. A copy of Chapter 13 can be obtained from the Louisiana State Police Commission. The Commission's current mailing address is P.O. Box 66555, Baton Rouge, LA 70896-6555. Their current telephone number is (225) 925-7057 and their fax number is (225) 925-7058.

Sincerely,



Colonel Lamar A. Davis
Superintendent, Louisiana State Police

cc: Lt. Col. Chavez Cammon; Lt. Col. Jody Hasselbeck; Major Robert Hodges;
Captain Beau Comeaux; Internal Affairs; Office of Legal Affairs

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