

Operating Guideline # 405

Highway Traffic Act Exemptions

October 8, 2019



PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Operating Guideline (OG) is to establish guidelines for the safe and efficient driving of apparatus in order to facilitate firefighter and public safety.

ISSUE/RATIONALE:

Firefighters should exercise extreme caution operating a large fire emergency apparatus, the primary concern should be the safety of the passengers and public on the motorway.

GUIDELINE:

1. The Highway Traffic Act provides specific legal exemptions for emergency vehicles when being operated under emergency conditions/responding to an emergency. These include:
 - a. Exceeding the posted speed limit.
 - b. Proceeding through a controlled intersection after coming to a complete stop with all emergency warning devices sounding and lights activated and determining that all other traffic has yielded the right of way.
 - c. Travelling on a closed roadway.
 - d. Backing down a roadway.
 - e. Passing vehicles on the right on the non-travelled portion of the roadway.

2. While fire department vehicles are included in these exemptions, emergency vehicle operators (EVO's) must use common sense and care in operating fire department apparatus. The safety of fire department personnel and the public must always take precedence over the need to arrive at an incident quickly. All provisions of the HTA not addressed in these exemptions must be followed when fire department vehicles are operated. Personnel must also understand that the definition of an "emergency vehicle" does NOT include the personal vehicle of a volunteer firefighter.

3. Drive to suit the road conditions. On wet/snow covered roads please ensure you have calculated the stop distance and proceed with caution.

4. Ensure that you are not distracted when driving.

5. Always drive with a buddy to assist with lights, siren, radio and mapping.

6. Never use a cell phone and drive.

RESPONSIBILITY:

It is the responsibility of all Emergency Operations Division staff to comply with the provisions of this Operating Guideline.