STANDING ORDER ON HANDLING ROAD ACCIDENT VICTIMS

INTRODUCTION

Road accidents cause human suffering in terms of injuries and untimely deaths. This suffering could be mitigated by prompt and professional approach of the first responders i.e. the police officials who reach the spot. The primary duty of any police officer after reaching the accident site is to remove the victim immediately to the nearest hospital for medical treatment. This is important for saving human life and further protecting the accident victim from getting more harm due to the injuries caused in road accidents. The first hour after the trauma is called "Golden Hour". If a road accident victim is provided first aid immediately without any loss of time there are greater chances of their survival and reduction in severity of their injuries.

OBJECTIVE AND GUIDELINES

There are guidelines issued by the Apex Court relating to the subject of extending help to road accident victims. Besides that there are instructions issued by Govt. of India on the same subject which are briefly given below:

(1). Hon'ble Supreme Court has issued guidelines on this subject i.e. "Helping Road accident victims" in the case of Pt. Parmanand Katara Vs. Union of India, CWP No. 270 of 1988, and the relevant extract is as under:-

1. "Every injured citizen brought for medical treatment should instantaneously be given medical aid to preserve life and thereafter the procedural criminal law should be allowed to operate in order to avoid negligent death. There is no legal impediment for a medical professional when he is called upon or requested to attend to an injured person needing his medical assistance immediately. The effort to save the person should be the top priority not only of the medical professional but even of the police or any other citizen who happens to be connected with that matter or who happens to police such an incident or a situation".

2. "There can be no second opinion that preservation of human life is of paramount importance. This is so on account of the fact that once life is lost, the status quo ante cannot be restored, as resurrection is beyond the capacity of man.

(2). Similarly, a circular was issued by Joint Secretary to the Government of India (Department of Road Transport and Highways) to Director General of police of all States/U.Ts, Vide No.RT-
25028/2/2003-RSC dated the 9th September-2004. Para 4, of the Circular mentions that

"at times the district staff and the PCR vans also delay the removal of the injured to the hospital on account of various jurisdictional formalities or other duties regarding photographs etc. instructions, therefore, need to be reiterated once again that even a minor delay can mean a question of life or death for the injured. Without waiting for the photographer etc. the injured has to be removed to the hospital by quickest means. Even in case of fatal accidents the first effort should be to take the injured to the hospital rather than declaring him dead on the spot by the PCR or the district staff.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF DIFFERENT UNITS:-

Keeping in view the objectives and guidelines on the subject, the role and responsibility of different wings of Chandigarh Police namely, Communication, PCR, Local Police, Traffic, Training Branch has been formulated. The primary duties of different units of Chandigarh Police in handling road accident cases are as under:-

COMMUNICATION WING -

Whenever an information about road accident is received in the control room, the following action shall be taken:-

- The information received about an accident shall be promptly passed on to the PCR Net, District Net, Police Station Net, SHO concerned, Inspector/PCR, Inspector/Traffic of the area where the accident has occurred.

- The information shall be simultaneously entered in the log book giving time, date, place of occurrence, name of informer etc.

- In case of serious road accident the communication unit will send two PCR vans immediately for rescuing the victims, preserving the scene of incident and handling the crowd assembled at the spot.

- In case of serious road accident, the information will be passed immediately to SDPO, DSP/Traffic, Inspector/Traffic, for visiting the spot of incident. The information will also be passed on to DSP/Comm, DSP/PCR and SSP/UT for appropriate supervision and necessary action at their level.

- Besides that the nearest hospital should be informed by communication wing to send the ambulance immediately for rescuing the road accident victim. The telephone numbers of the medical officer
to be informed should be available with the Control Room, Shift Incharge PCR, Duty Officer, SHOs and Traffic inspectors for prompt communication in this regard.

- In case of an accident where the victim is trapped in the vehicle an information should be sent to the Fire Department to send their respective vehicle for rescuing the victim as the huge cutters used for this purpose are available only with them. The traffic police should also be directed to send their cranes to the spot of incident for disentangling the vehicles involved at the spot.

- In case of road accident involving one or more injured persons, the Control Room will also inform the Medical Superintendent/Director Health Services, Chandigarh for immediately taking action regarding rescue and medical aid to the victims at the spot of accident and at the hospital where they are removed for treatment.

- In case of large gathering at the spot of incident, the communication unit will take approval of SSP/UT or DIG/UT for sending their reserve force to the spot of incident for handling the crowd tactfully and effectively so that the no law and order situation arises as a reaction to the road accident.

POLICE CONTROL ROOM:

- On receipt of information from the Control Room or otherwise, the PCR vehicles will remove the injured immediately from the spot of incident to the nearest hospital.

- The PCR vehicle on arrival at the scene of incident will inform the control room giving complete details about the accident, the condition of the victims, the gathering of crowd and any other important details regarding the site of accident.

- The PCR vehicle will be fully equipped with stretcher, first aid box, blanket, white cloth, water camper, torch, red tape for cordonning, traffic cones and tow chain.

- It shall be ensured that the police personnel handling the road accident victim are fully trained and equipped for safe removal of the accident victim from the site to the nearest hospital.
- PCR vehicle which is removing the victim to the hospital will note down all the details of the injured persons, family members and their telephone numbers so that they are also informed immediately about the accident.

- In case of serious road accident, the PCR field shift Inspector will also visit the spot of accident immediately.

**LOCAL POLICE:-**

- Utmost emphasis will be given by the duty officer and SHO in responding to road accident call without any loss of time. In case of serious road accident, SHO of the concerned police station must visit the site of accident immediately and supervise the happenings at the place of incident and ensure that the victim gets immediate medical aid and other steps about investigation at the site of incident are properly followed up.

- In case of a serious road accident, DSP of the area should also visit the spot and inform his senior officers about the situation.

**TRAFFIC:-**

- Every incident of road accident, particularly the serious one or fatal in nature must be attended/visited by Inspector and DSP/Traffic of the concerned area.

- They will assess the cause of road accident and plan preventive/remedial measures for avoiding such incidents in future. The traffic staff will also assess the role of defective signals, lack of road signages, and other defects in road engineering which could be the cause for road accident.

- Traffic police after ascertaining the cause of road accident must initiate corrective measures in consultation with traffic experts and engineering department.

**TRAINING:-**

- A specialized course in handling of road accident victims would be organized for all the staff of Police Control Room, Local Police and Traffic unit to start with. However, in due course every policemen in Chandigarh should be mandated to undergo this training in due course of time in the larger interest of handling accident victims professionally.
CHECKLIST AND AUDIT:

For implementing any systemic change, it is important that the instructions issued in the Standing Orders are subject to regular and stringent audit at the level of Supervisory Officer. Towards that end a checklist of all the duties to be performed by Communication, PCR, Local Police & Traffic would be prepared by concerned DSP's. All officers visiting the site of road accident from any unit will fill up the checklist proforma and concerned supervisory DSP's will ensure that all steps required to be taken in handling road accident victims have been meticulously adhered to.

(R.P. UPADHYAYA, IPS)
Inspector General of Police,
Union Territory, Chandigarh

No. 28872-98
Copy to: [Signature]

All concerned.
STANDING ORDER NO 58/2013

STANDING ORDER ON HANDLING ROAD ACCIDENT VICTIMS:
CORRIGENDUM

In partial modification of the office standing order on handling of road accident victims issued vide No. 28872-98/UT/E-6, dated 14.6.2013, the role and responsibility of the traffic wing officials is as under:-

1. For every incident of road accident, particularly the accidents which are serious or fatal in nature, and happening between 8.30 AM to 9.00 PM, the Police Control Room shall immediately inform the Incharge Accident Analysis Cell, the concerned Zonal Traffic Inspector and the Zonal Traffic DSP.

2. The Zonal Traffic DSP, Zonal Traffic Inspector and Incharge Accident Analysis Cell shall reach the spot of accident at the same time in co-ordination with each other and shall study all the possible engineering defects in the existing road structure and condition, automatic traffic control lights, road signages, road dividers, grills present on the road sides and dividers, street lights, need for trees’ pruning and other existing issues related to road engineering which could have some role to play in causing the road accident.

3. The Incharge Accident Analysis Cell shall prepare a detailed report under the guidance of the Zonal Traffic DSP suggesting corrective measures on road engineering aspects for onward submission to SSP, Traffic & Security through DSP/Traffic (South, R&D and Road Safety).

4. For the road accidents happening between 9.00 PM to 8.30 AM in the morning, the Police Control Room shall immediately inform the Incharge Accident Analysis Cell, the Night Duty Officer of Traffic Police and the night checking GO (deputed every night as per the monthly roster issued by the office of SSP, UT Chandigarh). On receipt of this information, all of the above three officers shall immediately reach the accident spot.
and undertake analysis as indicated in Point No. 2. Further, the concerned Zonal Inspector Traffic and Zonal Traffic DSP shall be informed by the Police Control Room about this accident around 8.30 AM the next morning. Then, both of them along with Incharge Accident Analysis Cell shall reach the accident spot at the same time in coordination with each other and undertake analysis as indicated in Point No. 2. The Zonal Traffic DSP shall also take inputs from the night checking GO and shall get accommodated his observations, if suitable, in the report to be prepared by the Incharge Accident Analysis Cell.

4. Further, the information of serious and fatal road accidents received shall be immediately shared with each other by the Police Control Room and Traffic Police Control Room, so that there is no communication gap.

(R.P. Upadhyaya, IPS)
Inspector General of Police
Union Territory, Chandigarh

No. 29569-90 /UT/E-6, dated Chandigarh the; 14/08/13

Copy to:

All concerned

Rd / ssf / Mr. 4 See.

AAD 057, 2 p.h. to Addl. & Mr. 45) Addl. Analysis Cell