

# HISTORY

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department first implemented its police vehicle testing program in 1974. Since that time, our Department has become nationally recognized as a major source of information relative to police vehicles and their use. It is our goal to provide law enforcement agencies with the information they require to successfully evaluate those vehicles currently being offered for police service.

Since the inception of our vehicle testing program in 1974, we have continually refined our efforts in this area in order to provide the law enforcement community with the most current information available. During the 1997 model year testing, the Sheriff's Department expanded its existing test criteria to include an urban or "city street" pursuit course. This course consists of multiple city block distances punctuated by the various types of turns normally found in most inner city environments. The "city street" course is designed to simulate the conditions encountered by most officers working in typical urban communities. This test is only conducted on vehicles offered with a factory "Police Package." Since many law enforcement agencies buy "non-pursuit" vehicles, we also test vehicles offered in a "Special Service" configuration when offered by the manufacturers. These vehicles are tested in a similar fashion as "Police Package" vehicles however we do not subject them to the city street pursuit course.

This booklet is not intended as a recommendation for any specific vehicle contained within. The Sheriff's Department conducts our vehicle testing program in order to accomplish two primary goals. To provide law enforcement agencies with the data necessary to assist them in the vehicle selection process, and to provide the various vehicle manufacturers with the input necessary to better meet the needs of law enforcement. We recognize the fact that individual agency needs can be influenced by cost, operational considerations and other factors.

Our testing process is designed to address the law enforcement officers operational requirements in terms of vehicle performance, vehicle safety, and comfort. The fleet maintenance interest is addressed by performing an extensive mechanical evaluation on each vehicle submitted for certification.

Each test is designed and executed to simulate actual patrol and emergency operations which the law enforcement officer may encounter in the field. During the test, the vehicles being tested are driven on city streets and freeways, as well as the performance track, by law enforcement personnel.

Interpretation of test results is the responsibility of each agency. The importance with which each individual test phase is weighted is a subjective decision which should be made by each agency based upon that agency's needs.