

CHAPTER 2
DEFINITIONS AND CLASSIFICATIONS OF CRASHES

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CHAPTER 2

DEFINITIONS AND CLASSIFICATIONS OF CRASHES

1. INTRODUCTION TO DEFINITIONS. The following definitions and classifications of crashes are generally in accordance with the standards set forth in the *American National Standard Manual on Classification of Motor Vehicle Traffic Crashes*, published by the National Safety Council, and the *Model Minimum Uniform Crash Criteria Guideline*, published by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. However, some of the following definitions, interpretations, classifications, and examples have been adapted for use in reporting traffic crashes in California.

2. AREA OF IMPACT. An Area of Impact (AOI) is the area(s) at which damage or injury occurs as the result of a crash (e.g., where involved parties come into contact with one another, another object, and/or surface). The AOI(s) is/are illustrated in the sketch with the appropriate symbol and described in the narrative.

3. AUXILIARY LANE. An auxiliary lane is a connector road that joins an acceleration lane and a deceleration lane, often where the on-ramp of one interchange is closely followed by the off-ramp of another interchange. Auxiliary lanes allow on- and off-ramp traffic to accelerate or decelerate before merging with mainline traffic, or simply to provide more opportunity to merge.

4. AUTONOMOUS VEHICLE. Any vehicle equipped with autonomous technology that has been integrated into that vehicle. An autonomous vehicle does not include a vehicle that is equipped with one or more crash avoidance systems, including, but not limited to, electronic blind spot assistance, automated emergency braking systems, park assist, adaptive cruise control, lane keep assist, lane departure warning, traffic jam and queuing assist, or other similar systems that enhance safety or provide driver assistance, but are not capable, collectively or singularly, of driving the vehicle without the active control or monitoring of a human operator.

5. BICYCLE. A bicycle, as defined in California Vehicle Code (CVC) Section 231, is a device upon which any person may ride, propelled exclusively by human power through a belt, chain, or gears, and having one or more wheels. Persons riding bicycles are subject to the provisions specified in CVC Sections 21200 and 21200.5. The operator of a unicycle or tricycle that is involved in a crash will be considered a bicyclist only if the cycle meets the definition of a bicycle.

6. BIKEWAY FACILITY. Any road, path, or way that is specifically designated as being open to bicycle travel, regardless of whether such facilities are designated for the exclusive use of bicycles or are shared with other transportation modes.

7. BRIDGE RAIL. A bridge rail is a barrier located on the side of a bridge (including a freeway overcrossing) designed to stop a vehicle from leaving the elevated surface or roadway. It may be constructed of concrete, steel, wood, or stone. The concrete curb is considered part of the bridge rail. Do not refer to a bridge rail as a guardrail even if it is made of guardrail material.

8. CHAIN REACTION CRASH. Occasionally, in the same area within a short period of time, several vehicles may be involved in crashes under adverse driving conditions. Examples may include a damaged roadway or collapsed bridge, or crashes where visibility is drastically reduced due to fog, dust storms, heavy rain, etc. In such chain reaction crashes, it may be difficult to determine whether each impact was one continuous event without stabilization or whether several separate crashes occurred, with the situation stabilizing between each crash. Consequently, for purposes of uniformity, a chain reaction crash should be considered a single crash. (Refer to paragraph 10.)

9. CLASSIFICATION OF REPORTING. There are two levels of crash reporting: an Investigation and a Report. These terms refer to the format of documentation and not the report form itself.

10. CRASHES AFTER STABILIZED SITUATIONS. A stabilized situation marks the end of an unstabilized event. An unstabilized event is an event or series of events beginning at loss of control and ending when control is regained or when all involved persons, vehicles, and property have come to rest. Stabilization may be brief, but when a discernable period of time separates the end of one event from the beginning of another event, each subsequent injury or damage-producing event should be documented as a separate crash. The following examples are illustrative of stabilized situations:

a. As a result of a crash, live electric wires fell on the involved vehicle, but no injury was sustained from the electric current because the occupants remained inside the motor vehicle. Any subsequent injury resulting from occupants attempting to leave the motor vehicle or rescue attempts by others would not be part of the original motor vehicle crash.

b. As a result of a crash, objects were loosened which remained in place until all occupants were removed from the area of risk. Any subsequent injury or damage

attributable to the fall or roll of the loosened objects would not be part of the original motor vehicle crash.

c. Following a motor vehicle crash, the driver regained control of the vehicle prior to or after coming to rest and fled the scene. In the driver's haste to flee, the driver and/or vehicle was involved in a subsequent crash. In this case, the first crash stabilized once the driver regained control of the vehicle. Since the decision to flee resulted in a subsequent crash, it would be considered a separate event and not part of the original motor vehicle crash.

d. The driver of a motor vehicle, while being pursued by police, collided with numerous other parked and/or moving motor vehicles. Following each crash, the pursued driver was able to regain control and continue driving until eventually being halted. In this case, a stabilized situation was reached each time the driver regained control of the vehicle following a crash. Each set of stabilized events would be considered a separate crash and reported on separate forms.

e. A vehicle caught fire during a noninjury motor vehicle crash. The driver exited the vehicle and ran toward the shoulder in an attempt to escape the fire. If during the driver's attempt to escape, the vehicle exploded causing injury to the driver, the original vehicle crash and driver's injuries would be considered one unstabilized situation. If the driver was able to reach the shoulder where no additional danger was expected or foreseeable and a subsequent explosion caused additional injury, the event would be considered a separate situation.

f. Following a crash, the vehicle came to rest within the traffic lanes of a freeway and the driver remained in the vehicle. This crash became stabilized once any additional crashes were no longer imminent and the driver and vehicle came to rest. An imminent crash would involve an approaching vehicle already out of control due to the movement of the original crash. Any event thereafter resulting in damage or injury would be considered a separate event and not part of the original motor vehicle crash.

NOTE: If a thorough investigation fails to establish whether the crash involved one or more unstabilized situations, the crash should be considered a single event and documented as a single crash.

11. CONNECTOR ROAD. A connector road is a roadway that joins two different highways.

12. COUNTER REPORT. A Counter Report is a property-damage only crash reported by an involved party in person at an office of the California Highway Patrol (CHP) or local law enforcement agency.

(Refer to Chapter 9, Instructions for Completing the CHP 555-03, Traffic Crash Report – Property Damage Only.) If the individual is reporting a crash involving an injury or fatality, refer to Chapter 5, Instructions for Completing the CHP 555, Page 3, Injured/Witness/Passengers.

- a. Counter Reports are to be completed by the involved party or with the assistance of a peace officer.
- b. Counter Reports are not processed through the Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System database files.

13. COURTESY REPORT. A Courtesy Report is the documentation of a traffic crash by an officer of a law enforcement agency or CHP Area other than the law enforcement agency or CHP Area having jurisdiction where the crash occurred.

14. CRASH. A crash is an unintended event that produces damage or injury, involving a motor vehicle in-transport. The word injury includes fatal injury. The term “crash” includes both collision and noncollision events (Refer to Chapter 4, Instructions for Completing the CHP 555, Page 2, Traffic Crash Coding). Although the terms “crash,” “collision,” and “accident” are often considered synonymous, the word “crash” shall be used to describe the event.

15. DRIVER. A driver is a person who is in actual physical control of a vehicle. For an out-of-control vehicle, the driver is the occupant who was in control until control was lost.

- a. A driver includes:
 - (1) A person driving a noncontact-involved vehicle. (Refer to paragraph 54.)
 - (2) A person who was driving a motor vehicle, but lost control of the vehicle because of a vehicle malfunction. This person will be considered a driver if they remained in the vehicle or leaped from the moving vehicle to avoid an imminent crash.
 - (3) A person who had physical control of a moving vehicle and by choice, jumped from, fled, or otherwise exited the vehicle before it was safely stopped or parked.
 - (4) An individual seated in the driver’s seat of a vehicle stopped or otherwise disabled within a traffic lane. The vehicle is considered to be in-transport and the occupant a driver.

(5) An operator who takes actual physical control of the dynamic driving task of an autonomous vehicle (which must be equipped with a steering wheel, a brake pedal, and an accelerator) prior to the crash.

b. Parked Vehicles. A person who parked a vehicle or permitted it to stand on a highway without effectively setting the parking brake, blocking the wheels, or otherwise failing to prevent movement of the vehicle should be considered the driver of that vehicle.

(1) Circumstances may exist relieving the person of being a driver. Considerations in determining a person to be a driver are the amount of time that has elapsed between the person parking the vehicle and the vehicle being involved in a crash, and the person's proximity to the vehicle when the crash occurred.

NOTE: A person who parked a vehicle which becomes a runaway vehicle and involved in a crash shall comply with notification and reporting requirements pursuant to CVC Section 20002(b).

c. Pushed or Towed Vehicles. The following should be considered in determining whether or not a person operating a pushed or towed vehicle, or operating a vehicle pushing or towing a motor vehicle, is a driver:

(1) A person walking alongside a pushed or towed vehicle while in the act of steering through an opened window or door should be considered a driver.

(2) A person seated behind the steering wheel while the vehicle is being pushed (manually or by another vehicle), towed (by other than a rigid tow bar or tow truck), or coasting should be considered a driver if they had control of the portion of the vehicle which caused the crash (e.g., steering, braking).

(3) A person operating a motor vehicle pushing another motor vehicle should be considered a driver if they caused or directly contributed to the crash. A person operating a pushing vehicle determined not to be a direct contributing factor to the crash should be considered a witness.

(4) A person operating a motor vehicle towing another vehicle with a rigid tow bar will be considered the driver of the vehicles in combination.

d. A Driver, for purposes of the CHP 555, Page 1, Traffic Crash Report, includes the operator of any motor vehicle requiring a driver license or permit to operate. This includes:

(1) The operator of a motorcycle, motor-driven cycle, motorized bicycle, moped, and motorized scooter, whether or not the engine is running.

e. A Driver does not include the operator of a motor vehicle which does not require a driver license or permit to operate (e.g., motorized skateboard, miniature motorcycle [pocket bike]). The operator of such vehicles will be documented as Other on the CHP 555, Page 1.

f. Additionally, a driver does not include the following:

(1) The rider of a bicycle, unicycle, or tricycle that does not meet the definition of a bicycle, skateboard, roller skates, sled, skis, scooter, baby carriage, or wheeled toys. (Refer to paragraph 5.)

(2) The tillerman or other person who, in an auxiliary capacity, assists the driver in the steering or operation of any articulated fire-fighting apparatus. (Refer to CVC Section 305.)

(3) A person who is not in actual control of a vehicle, but merely interferes with a driver or driver's mechanism (CVC Section 21701). The act of grabbing the steering wheel may or may not be considered control of the vehicle. The degree of influence the action has relative to the cause of the crash should be considered.

(4) A person operating an electric personal assistive mobility device or a physically disabled person operating a self-propelled wheelchair, motorized tricycle, or quadricycle. These persons should be documented as a pedestrian. (Refer to paragraph 59.)

(5) An infant or child who accidentally or intentionally sets a motor vehicle in motion, who by their obvious limited capabilities could not be in control of the motor vehicle.

(6) An operator of an autonomous vehicle while engaged in autonomous mode. (Refer to paragraph 24.g. in Chapter 3, Instructions for Completing the CHP 555, Page 1, Traffic Crash Report.)

16. DRIVERLESS VEHICLE. A driverless vehicle is a vehicle in-transport without a driver, or a vehicle set in motion by other than a driver. Examples of a driverless vehicle include:

a. A parked vehicle set in motion by a child who accidentally or intentionally released the parking brake or pushed the transmission out of gear.

b. A driver failed to effectively set the parking brake, block the wheels, or otherwise failed to prevent movement of the vehicle; however, due to an extended

time lapse and/or proximity of the driver to the crash, the person is no longer considered the driver.

c. A stopped vehicle within the roadway which, due to an extended time lapse and/or proximity of the driver, the person is no longer considered the driver.

d. A parked or stopped vehicle moved from its point of rest due to a cataclysmic event.

e. An autonomous vehicle while engaged or being operated in autonomous mode only.

17. EDGE LINE. Edge lines are painted lines on the roadway surface used to delineate the edge of the roadway and provide a visual reference. They are also used to reduce driving on paved shoulders or refuge areas of lesser structural strength than adjacent pavement. Edge lines are generally not continued through intersections and normally are not broken for driveways. Edge lines are used on all state highways, except urban-type streets with curbs, and may be used on streets and highways under local jurisdiction.

18. ELECTRIC BICYCLE (CLASS 1, 2, 3). Electric bicycles are bicycles equipped with operable pedals and assisted by an electric motor of less than 750 watts. A “class 1 electric bicycle” provides electric assistance only when the rider is pedaling, but ceases to provide assistance when the electric bicycle reaches 20 miles per hour (MPH). A “class 2 electric bicycle” may be run solely off the electric motor, but ceases to provide power when the electric bicycle reaches 20 MPH. A “class 3 electric bicycle” provides electric assistance only when the rider is pedaling, but ceases to provide assistance when the electric bicycle reaches 28 MPH (CVC Section 312.5).

19. ELECTRICALLY MOTORIZED BOARD. An electrically motorized board is any wheeled device with a floorboard designed to be stood upon when riding, that is not greater than 60 inches deep and 18 inches wide, is designed to transport only one person, and has an electric propulsion system averaging less than 1000 watts and a maximum speed of 20 MPH. The device may be designed to also be powered by human propulsion (CVC Section 313.5).

20. EMBANKMENT. An embankment is a raised structure (as of earth) to hold back water or carry a roadway.

21. EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES RUN NUMBER. A procedurally generated number created by an emergency medical services agency transporting a person requiring medical care to a medical facility. The number is then given to the facility and used to coordinate patient care.

22. ENCROACHMENT. An encroachment is the intrusion of highway right-of-way by nonhighway structures or objects of any kind or character beyond the proper or prescribed limits.

23. EXPRESS LANES. Express Toll Lanes (ETL) and High Occupancy/Toll lanes (HOT) are referred to as Express Lanes and are signed as such. Express Lanes are accessible only by those who pay a toll to travel in ETLs and HOTs.

24. EXPRESSWAY. An expressway is an arterial highway, established by a county, with partial or full control of access, which may or may not be divided or have grade separations at intersections.

25. FARM LABOR TRANSPORTER. A farm labor transporter is any motor vehicle, other than a farm labor vehicle, used for the transportation of eight or less farm workers in addition to the driver, to or from a place of employment or employment-related activities. A farm labor transporter includes a passenger vehicle transporting farm workers.

26. FARM LABOR VEHICLE. A farm labor vehicle is any motor vehicle designed, used, or maintained for the transportation of nine or more farm workers in addition to the driver, to or from a place of employment or employment-related activities (CVC Section 322a). The driver of a farm labor vehicle is required to be certified pursuant to CVC Section 12519(a). A farm labor vehicle does not include a vehicle carrying only members of the immediate family of the owner or driver thereof.

27. FARM WORKER. A farm worker is any person engaged in rendering personal services for hire or compensation in connection with the production or harvesting of farm products, including forestry laborers (CVC Section 322b).

28. FREEWAY. A freeway is a divided arterial highway with full control of access and with grade separations at intersections.

29. FRONTAGE ROAD. A frontage road is a highway generally paralleling an arterial highway designed to provide access to traffic desiring to cross or enter the arterial highway, or to access abutting property that would otherwise be isolated from the arterial highway.

30. GLARE SCREEN. A glare screen is an object designed to screen out the headlight glare of opposing traffic. Glare screens are typically installed in special problem areas such as along frontage roads or at entrance and exit ramps.

31. GORE. A gore is an area of land, generally triangular, between the main traffic lanes of a freeway and the freeway on- or off-ramp. The gore is often bound by the edge lines of the traffic lanes at the point the roadway diverges or converges.

32. GUARDRAIL. A guardrail is a barrier located at the edge of a shoulder to prevent a vehicle from hitting an object or going over an embankment. Guardrails are usually constructed of steel rails and wood or steel posts. This includes a guardrail connected to the end of bridge rails.

33. HAZARDOUS MATERIAL INCIDENT-INVOLVED CRASH. As defined in CVC Section 353, a hazardous material is any substance, material, or device posing an unreasonable risk to health, safety, or property during transportation, as defined by regulations adopted pursuant to CVC Section 2402.7. Hazardous material includes explosives and hazardous waste or substances, as defined by regulations adopted pursuant to Section 25141 of the Health and Safety Code (H&S), and medical waste, as defined in H&S Section 117690. A hazardous material incident-involved crash is a crash involving a "Hazardous Material Incident," as defined in Highway Patrol Manual 84.2, Hazardous Materials Transportation and Incident Management.

34. HIGHWAY. A highway is a way or place of whatever nature, publicly maintained, and open to the use of the public for purposes of vehicular travel. The terms highway and street are synonymous. The term trafficway is a federal term and is also synonymous with highway.

a. The term highway includes shoulders and sidewalks (property line to property line). (Refer to CVC Section 360 and Annex A.)

b. A portion of the highway that is closed to vehicular travel, such as construction and repair zones, does not meet the definition of a highway. Consequently, a crash occurring solely within these areas would be considered a motor vehicle nontraffic crash. (Refer to paragraph 52.)

35. IMPACT ENERGY ATTENUATORS. Impact energy attenuators (crash cushions) are intended to protect a motorist from the consequences of a crash with a fixed object that cannot be removed or where other protective systems are not suitable.

- a. Types currently available include sand-filled plastic drums, water-filled tubs, and lightweight concrete.
- b. Attenuators are generally installed at gore point-fixed objects that cannot be economically removed or made to breakaway when struck. Attenuators may also be installed at other fixed objects where a guardrail is inappropriate.

36. INJURY. Injuries are classified in Chapter 5.

37. INTENTIONAL ACT. An intentional act or omission of an act which, directly or indirectly, causes damage to property or injury to any person. Consequences of the intentional act(s) should have been reasonably foreseen and a result of an aggravated, reckless, or flagrantly negligent act, not the result of inattention or mistaken judgment.

NOTE: The California Supreme Court ruled a person may be held criminally responsible not only for the crime they intended to commit (target offense), but also for any other crime (nontarget offense) that is the “natural and probable consequence” of the original crime, *People v. Prettyman* (1996) 14 Cal. 4th 248. A natural and probable consequence is one that a reasonable person would know is likely to happen if nothing unusual intervenes. In deciding whether a consequence is natural and probable, consider all of the circumstances established by the evidence (2007 California Jury Instructions, Natural and Probable Consequences Doctrine).

a. Although a motor vehicle may be associated with a subsequent injury or damage-causing event, the following examples are not motor vehicle traffic crashes:

(1) Suicide or Self-Inflicting Injury.

- (a) A person intentionally ran into traffic or jumped from a freeway overcrossing and prior to a stabilizing situation was subsequently struck by a vehicle. Intent should be determined by the coroner’s investigation.
- (b) A driver, attempting to cause self-injury, intentionally drove a motor vehicle against a fixed object, into a body of water, or similarly misused a motor vehicle. Intent should be determined by the coroner’s investigation.

(2) Homicide, Injury, or Damage Purposely Inflicted.

(a) A person deliberately intended to cause death, injury, or damage by driving a motor vehicle against persons, vehicles, or property.

(b) A person fired a gun into a motor vehicle that was traveling along a highway. The driver was struck and subsequently lost control of the vehicle. The vehicle traveled off the roadway resulting in a traffic crash. Although the shooter did not have specific intent to cause a traffic crash, the subsequent crash was a natural and probable consequence of firing a gun into a vehicle traveling on a highway.

(c) A passenger grabbed the steering wheel of a vehicle with the intent to harm themselves and/or the driver. The vehicle crossed into the opposing lane of traffic and struck another vehicle. Although the passenger did not have specific intent to cause the other vehicle's involvement, the crash was a natural and probable consequence of the passenger's actions. The passenger may be determined to be the driver of the vehicle at the time of the crash depending on the magnitude of their influence.

(3) Throwing Substances at Vehicle.

(a) A person intentionally threw a rock onto a highway or dropped an object from an overpass that struck a vehicle. This action caused the driver to lose control resulting in a crash. Although the act was not directed toward a specific person or vehicle, the intentional act resulted in injury or damage. Additionally, although the person that threw the object may not have intended to cause a crash, the resulting event was a natural and probable consequence of the act.

(4) Staged Traffic Crash. (Refer to paragraph 68.)

(5) Legal Intervention. (Refer to paragraph 44.)

38. INTERCHANGE. A system of interconnecting roadways in conjunction with one or more grade separations providing for the interchange of traffic between two or more roadways on different levels.

39. IN-TRANSPORT. This describes the state or condition of a vehicle when it is in use primarily for moving persons or property (including the vehicle itself) from one place to another, while in motion or on a roadway.

a. Motor vehicles are considered in-transport when in the roadway, whether moving, stopped, stalled, disabled, or abandoned.

- b. Motor vehicles in designated parking stalls, shoulders, or off the highway are considered in-transport only when they are moving.
- c. A vehicle is considered to be within a roadway when any portion of the vehicle's primary outline (excludes extended side-view mirrors) or load is in the roadway and might be struck by a vehicle that is moving entirely on the roadway.
- d. The following are considered not in-transport:
 - (1) A vehicle parked in compliance with CVC Section 22502(a), Curb Parking.
 - (a) A parked vehicle includes a vehicle stopped curbside and the driver opens their door into the traffic lane.
 - (2) A portion of the highway that is closed to vehicular travel due to construction, maintenance, or temporarily closed by signage, cones, and/or flares during a crash investigation or police activity does not meet the definition of a highway. Consequently, a vehicle stopped within the closed area is not in-transport.
 - (3) A motor vehicle meeting the definition of a working motor vehicle (refer to paragraph 75.) at the time of the crash, whether moving or not, is not in-transport.

40. INTERSECTION. An intersection is the area located within the prolongations of the lateral curb lines, or, if none, the lateral boundary lines of the roadways of two highways that join one another at approximately right angles. It is also the area within which vehicles traveling upon different highways joining at any other angle may come in conflict. When the distance along a roadway between two areas meeting these criteria is less than 10 meters (33 feet), the two areas and the roadway connecting them are considered to be parts of a single intersection. (Refer to CVC Section 365 and Annex B.)

41. LANE NUMBERING. On a multilane roadway, traffic lanes for traffic traveling in the same direction are numbered from left to right when facing in the direction of traffic flow. (Refer to Annex C.)

- a. An intermittent High Occupancy Vehicle/Express lane(s) will only be numbered as part of the adjacent mixed traffic flow lanes during the hours of nonoperation. During the designated hours of operation, the High Occupancy Vehicle/Express lane(s) will not be numbered as part of the adjacent mixed traffic flow lanes, and will be coded as a separate beat

b. A High Occupancy Vehicle/Express lane(s) physically separated from a roadway, operated as a permanent High Occupancy Vehicle/Express lane(s) on a 24-hour basis, as defined in CVC Section 21655.5, is not numbered as part of the adjacent mixed traffic flow lanes.

NOTE: Lane numbering does not apply to Auxiliary Lanes, such as acceleration and deceleration lanes.

42. LANE SPLITTING. Lane Splitting means driving a motorcycle between rows of stopped or moving vehicles in the same lane, including on both divided and undivided streets, roads, or highways. (Refer to CVC Section 21658.1.)

43. LATE-REPORTED CRASH. A Late-Reported crash is a fatal or injury crash where involved vehicles and parties are no longer at the scene and documentation is requested at a location away from the crash scene. Investigating officers shall determine if the crash was reported after the first opportunity to make such a report before determining Late-Reported crash status.

a. Any Late-Reported fatal crash shall be documented as an Investigation.

b. Any Late-Reported injury crash should be documented as a Report unless the local commander or Area commander determines that an Investigation should be conducted.

c. Late-reported crashes may be reported at any time up to one year from the date of occurrence. However, the ability to conduct a comprehensive investigation may be compromised by excessively delayed notifications.

d. Timeliness and the circumstances surrounding the crash should be considered in determining whether to document the traffic crash as a Late-Reported crash. An important consideration would be whether the crash was reported after the first reasonable opportunity to make such notification. Consider the following:

(1) Involved vehicles and parties who moved away from the crash scene on a freeway to an immediately adjacent location (e.g., a service station at the bottom of a freeway ramp) would not qualify the crash as a Late-Reported crash.

(2) A crash that occurred on a remote highway where a means of notifying a law enforcement agency was not available, and the involved parties made notification within a reasonable period, would not qualify as a Late-Reported crash.

44. LEGAL INTERVENTION. Legal intervention is an intentional act, in which injury or damage is caused by law enforcement intervention, usually resulting in apprehension or an attempt to apprehend. Legal intervention which results in injury or damage is not a motor vehicle crash insofar as the enforcing agency and violator relationship is concerned. If intentional acts are committed that result in injury or damage beyond that which is reasonably expected, the subsequent event(s) should be documented as a motor vehicle crash. The following examples are provided to help distinguish between legal intervention and a motor vehicle crash:

a. Legal Intervention:

(1) A roadblock was set up to stop a suspect. The suspect collided into it, either intentionally or unintentionally.

(2) A police officer intentionally caused their vehicle to collide with a pursued vehicle in an attempt to terminate the pursuit.

(3) A police officer fired bullets into a moving suspect vehicle. The driver subsequently lost control and collided into another vehicle or object.

b. Motor Vehicle Crash:

(1) A driver, other than the intended suspect, unintentionally collided into a roadblock.

(2) A suspect, while eluding the police, lost control of their vehicle and collided into another vehicle.

(3) While pursuing a suspect, a police officer lost control of their vehicle and collided into another vehicle or object.

(4) While in pursuit of a violator, a police officer unintentionally collided with the suspect's vehicle.

45. MEDIAN. A median is the portion of a divided highway separating the roadways for traffic in opposite directions. The median includes the median shoulders. (Refer to Annex A.)

46. MEDIAN BARRIER. A median barrier is a physical object located in the median of a highway to prevent a vehicle from crossing over into oncoming traffic. Median barriers may consist of cable barriers (a longitudinal cable with steel posts), metal beam barriers (steel rails with wood or steel posts), or concrete barriers (solid concrete with the safety

shape). Concrete curbs and walls of concrete or wood, such as sound walls on the outside edges of the highway, are not considered median barriers.

47. MILEPOST MARKER. Milepost markers indicate the route number, county, and post miles of the location. The mileage indicated on the milepost marker reflects the distance from either the south or west county line, depending on the general direction of the highway, to that location. For example, milepost marker 5 LA 92.51 marks a point along Interstate 5 within Los Angeles County and 92.51 miles north of the south edge of the Los Angeles County line. Milepost markers are used by officers, traffic engineers, maintenance personnel, and others to locate specific incidents or features.

48. MOTORCYCLE OR MOTOR-DRIVEN CYCLE. A motorcycle is a vehicle whose motor displaces more than 150 cubic centimeters, has a seat or saddle for the use of the rider, and is designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground. (Refer to CVC Section 400.) A motor-driven cycle is a motorcycle whose motor displaces less than 150 cubic centimeters. (Refer to CVC Section 405.)

49. MOTORIZED BICYCLE OR MOPED. A motorized bicycle or moped is either:

a. Any two- or three-wheeled device having fully operative pedals for propulsion by human power, or having no pedals if powered solely by electrical energy, equipped with an automatic transmission and motor which produces less than four gross brake horsepower and a maximum speed of not more than 30 MPH on level ground. A motorized bicycle is subject to applicable rules of the road and crash reporting requirements. (Refer to CVC Section 406[a].)

OR

b. A device that has fully operative pedals for propulsion by human power and has an electric motor that has a power output of not more than 1000 watts, a maximum speed of not more than 20 MPH on level ground, and is incapable of further increasing the speed of the device when human power is used to propel the device faster than 20 MPH. (Refer to CVC Section 406[b].)

50. MOTORIZED SCOOTER. A motorized scooter is any two-wheeled device that has handlebars, a floorboard that is designed to be stood upon while riding, may have a seat, and is powered by an electric motor (or any other type of motor) that is capable of propelling the device with or without human propulsion. (Refer to CVC Section 407.5.)

51. MOTOR VEHICLE. A motor vehicle is any motorized vehicle not operated on rails. For purposes of classification, a trailer, coaster, sled or wagon, or other equipment being towed or pushed by a motor vehicle is considered part of the motor vehicle, including such equipment when detached while in motion. For crash reporting purposes, a motorized bicycle, moped, or motorized scooter shall be considered a motor vehicle, whether the motor is operating or not. Motor vehicle does not include a self-propelled wheelchair, motorized tricycle or quadricycle, if operated by a person who, by reason of physical disability, is otherwise unable to move about as a pedestrian. (Refer to CVC Section 415.)

52. MOTOR VEHICLE NONTRAFFIC CRASH. A motor vehicle nontraffic crash is any crash involving a motor vehicle in-transport occurring entirely at a place other than a highway.

- a. This includes crashes involving a motor vehicle in-transport occurring off-highway on public or private property.
- b. Off-highway crashes not involving a motor vehicle in-transport and events that do not meet the definition of a motor vehicle crash, such as airplane crashes on highways or train crashes, are the responsibility of the sheriff, police department, coroner, Workers' Compensation Appeals Board, or appropriate federal authority.
- c. Excludes:
 - (1) Property damage, personal injury, or death resulting from any organized racetrack or drag strip event.
 - (2) Property damage, personal injury, or death resulting from an activity on a designated parade route.
 - (3) Property damage, personal injury, or death sustained during an actual agricultural operation.
 - (4) Property damage, personal injury, or death resulting from operation of a forklift vehicle within an industrial plant or other building.
 - (5) Property damage, personal injury, or death sustained during a sanctioned bicycle race on the authorized closed course. The closed course must involve an actual highway closure.

53. MOTOR VEHICLE TRAFFIC CRASH. A motor vehicle traffic crash is any crash involving a motor vehicle in-transport that occurs on a highway or a crash which occurs after the motor vehicle runs off the highway but before events become stabilized.

- a. This includes crashes occurring on a highway involving:
 - (1) A motor vehicle in-transport that set an object in motion without the motor vehicle itself doing the actual striking. For example: The vehicle's load or parts fell from the motor vehicle and the load or parts were struck by another motor vehicle.
 - (2) A motor vehicle in-transport involved in a noncollision event. For example: Accidental poisoning from carbon monoxide generated by a motor vehicle; injury or damage sustained from a motor vehicle fire; occupants falling from a motor vehicle; occupants jumping from a motor vehicle prior to an imminent crash; damage only to a truck that jackknifes; damage to pushed or towed vehicles that collide with one another; or injury to an occupant of a motor vehicle due to the motion of the vehicle.
 - (3) A school bus transporting students struck a bump in the roadway causing a student to strike their face on a seat, injuring the student.
- b. Excludes:
 - (1) Cataclysmic events such as earthquakes, flash floods, lightning, etc.
 - (2) Motor vehicles that are actively engaged in highway construction or maintenance operations. (Refer to paragraph 75.) These vehicles are not in-transport because they are not being used primarily for moving persons or property. This only applies when actually engaged in operations, not traveling to and from the operation(s).
 - (3) Crashes involving only the participants of a sanctioned on-highway bicycle event.
 - (4) A vehicle fire occurring while the vehicle is not in-transport.

54. NONCONTACT-INVOLVED PARTY. The driver of a noncontact vehicle, a bicyclist, pedestrian, or other person(s) not making actual physical contact should be considered an involved party when:

- a. A driver, bicyclist, pedestrian, or other person(s) commits a traffic or other violation that causes, or directly contributes to, another party to become involved in a crash; and,
- b. The violation is corroborated by a disinterested witness, physical evidence, or statements of the noncontact party.

c. Examples:

(1) A pedestrian ran across the street in front of a moving motor vehicle, violating CVC Section 21950(b), as corroborated by evidence or statements. The driver of the motor vehicle applied the brakes and avoided striking the pedestrian, but the motor vehicle skidded into a parked motor vehicle. The pedestrian would be considered a noncontact-involved party and will be listed as an involved party on the CHP 555.

(2) A person used a vehicle to evade arrest and committed a moving violation, which caused another person to become involved in a crash. The actions of the pursued suspect should be listed as an involved party on the CHP 555.

NOTE: A person attempting to evade arrest is not considered a "Noncontact-Involved Party" unless there is a clear violation, other than evading, which caused, or directly contributed to, another party to become involved in a crash. The mere fact that a person is being pursued in itself is not sufficient to make a person a party in the crash.

(3) A large truck and tractor made an unsafe lane change, causing a vehicle traveling in an adjacent lane to run off the road and strike a cement median barrier. Independent witnesses corroborated the sequence of events and provided identifying information. In this case, the driver of the truck should be listed as an involved party.

(4) A vehicle ran off the road and collided with a tree. The driver claimed another vehicle forced him off the road; however, there are no witnesses or physical evidence to corroborate the existence of the second vehicle. The other vehicle is not a noncontact-involved party. In this case, mark the "Uninvolved Vehicle" box under "Other Associated Factor(s)," on the CHP 555, Page 2, Traffic Crash Coding. The information relating to the second vehicle should be documented in the narrative portion and the crash should be documented as a solo vehicle crash.

NOTE: If the investigating officer is provided with identifying information involving the claimed noncontact-involved party or associated vehicle, the investigating officer should conduct adequate follow-up to prove or disprove the involvement of the party.

55. ON-DUTY EMERGENCY VEHICLE CRASH. To qualify a crash as an On-Duty Emergency Vehicle crash, the following must apply:

a. The driver of the vehicle must be a peace officer, as defined in Chapter 4.5 (commencing with Section 830) of Part 2 of Title 3 of the California Penal Code, or a firefighter, while in the performance of their duty during the hours of employment.

AND

b. The driver must be operating one of the following vehicles:

(1) An authorized emergency vehicle as described in subdivision (a), (b), or (f) of CVC Section 165.

(2) Any employer-leased or employer-rented vehicle.

(3) The employee's privately owned passenger vehicle at the request or direction of their employer.

(a) A "private passenger motor vehicle" is defined as a motor vehicle insured by an individual or individuals residing in the same household, but does not include a vehicle with less than four wheels.

c. This provision also applies to federal officers and federal customs agents while operating an official government vehicle in the performance of their duty during the hours of employment.

d. The Department of Motor Vehicles will note the on-duty emergency vehicle crash on the officer's driving record. The crash must be identified by the reporting officer as occurring while on-duty by the notation "On-Duty Emergency Vehicle" written in the upper right hand corner of the "Name" box and in the "Special Conditions" box. (Refer to Chapter 3.)

(1) The purpose of the notation is to alert insurance companies that the driver of the involved authorized emergency vehicle is to be provided the protection pursuant to Insurance Code Sections 488.5, 557.5, and 669.5.

(2) It is important to understand that this provision applies only to a qualified individual operating a publicly owned, rented, or leased authorized emergency vehicle, or an on-duty officer operating their privately owned vehicle in the performance of their duty.

(3) A privately owned ambulance not issued a permit under the provisions of CVC Section 165(f) is not considered an authorized emergency vehicle by definition.

e. The following are examples of crashes which do not meet the definition of an On-Duty Emergency Vehicle crash:

(1) A paramedic driving a privately owned and properly licensed ambulance during the course of their duty was responding to an emergency with lights and siren activated. The paramedic was subsequently involved in a crash. This crash will not be classified as an On-Duty Emergency Vehicle crash because the driver of the ambulance was not a peace officer or firefighter.

(2) A uniformed peace officer stopped their patrol vehicle on the shoulder of a highway for a disabled vehicle. The officer exited the patrol vehicle and contacted the disabled party. A vehicle subsequently collided with the parked patrol vehicle. The officer was not a driver at the time of the crash; therefore, the officer will not be listed on the CHP 555, Page 1. Consequently, this crash will not be classified as an On-Duty Emergency Vehicle crash.

(3) A uniformed peace officer while driving a suspect's vehicle off the freeway collides with another vehicle or object. This crash will not be classified as an On-Duty Emergency Vehicle crash because the peace officer was operating a nongovernment-owned or rented vehicle and the vehicle was not owned by the officer or a member of their household.

56. OPERATOR. In an autonomous vehicle only, this is the person who is seated on the driver's seat, or, if there is no person in the driver's seat, causes the autonomous technology to engage.

NOTE: The driver's seat is the occupant seat for the driver. Additionally, driver means the occupant of a motor vehicle seated immediately behind the steering control system.

57. PARTY. A party is any pedestrian or any person who operates a vehicle, motor vehicle, or a bicycle, which is involved in or causes a crash.

58. PASSENGER. A passenger is any person inside or upon a vehicle, excluding the driver. A passenger includes a person behind the wheel of a parked motor vehicle not in-transport.

59. PEDESTRIAN. A pedestrian is any person who is afoot or using a means of conveyance propelled by human power other than a bicycle.

a. Pedestrian includes:

(1) Any person riding a device propelled by human power other than a bicycle, or the rider of a unicycle or tricycle that does not meet the definition of a bicycle.

(2) Any person operating a pedestrian conveyance such as a skateboard, roller skates, sled, skis, scooter, baby carriage, or wheeled toys.

(3) Any person who is operating a self-propelled wheelchair, motorized tricycle or quadricycle, if operated by a person who, by reason of physical disability, is otherwise unable to move about as a pedestrian. (Refer to CVC Section 467.)

(4) Any person operating an electric personal assistive mobility device. (Refer to CVC Section 313.)

60. RAILROAD CRASH. A railroad crash is any crash involving a train and a motor vehicle in-transport and shall be documented as a motor vehicle traffic crash. For further guidance in the documentation and investigation of railroad crashes, refer to Chapter 13, Guidelines for the Investigation and Documentation of Specific Crashes.

NOTE: Section 7663 of the Public Utilities Code requires the CHP or a designated local public safety agency that responds to a railroad crash, runaway train, or any other uncontrolled train movement that threatens public health and safety to promptly notify the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services.

61. RAMP. An on- or off-ramp is a connecting road between two intersecting highways, one of which is an arterial highway (freeway or expressway) and the other a highway with partial or no control of access. An on- or off-ramp may also include that portion of a connecting road outside of the mainline traffic lanes of an arterial highway, such as an acceleration lane, deceleration lane, or auxiliary lane.

62. ROAD. A road is any existing vehicle route established before January 1, 1979, with significant evidence of prior regular travel by vehicles subject to registration, or a route where there is evidence of periodic use, and not necessarily publicly or privately maintained (CVC Section 527). The term "road" may also be defined as the area of a highway that includes any shoulder alongside the roadway and designated parking areas on a roadway or between the roadway and the curb.

63. ROADWAY. A roadway is that portion of a highway improved, designed, or ordinarily used for vehicular travel (CVC Section 530). In the event a highway includes two or more separate roadways, the term roadway refers to any such roadway separately but not to all such roadways collectively. (Refer to Annex A.)

64. RUNAWAY VEHICLE. A runaway vehicle is a vehicle that has a driver; however, the driver is no longer in control of the vehicle due to mechanical failure or other condition that would cause the vehicle to continue out of control. Examples of a runaway vehicle include:

- a. A vehicle traveling with inoperative brakes, stuck throttle, or no steering.
- b. A stopped or parked vehicle that rolls from its point of rest due to failed parking brakes or a driver that neglects to adequately set the parking brake.
- c. A vehicle that continues in motion after the driver leaped from the vehicle.

65. SCHOOL BUS CRASH.

a. The CHP shall investigate all school bus crashes as defined in CVC Section 12517.1, with the exception of crashes occurring entirely on private property, involving property damage only and that do not involve a CVC violation (e.g., Sections 20002, 23152). Private property does not include "Public Grounds" as described in CVC Section 21113. A school bus crash, by definition, involves one or more of the following vehicles:

(1) School bus, as defined in CVC Section 545(a), while transporting any school pupil at or below the 12th grade level to or from a public or private school or to or from school activities.

(2) Youth bus, as defined in CVC Section 680, is any bus, other than a school bus, designed for and when actually carrying not more than 16 persons and the driver, used to transport children at or below the 12th grade level directly from a public or private school to an organized nonschool-related youth activity within 25 miles of the school.

(3) A school pupil activity bus (SPAB), as defined in CVC Section 546, is operated by a common carrier, or by and under the exclusive jurisdiction of a publicly owned or operated transit system, or by a passenger charter-party carrier under contractual agreement between a school and carrier when actually carrying school pupils at or below the 12th grade level to or from public or private school activity, or to residential schools.

(4) A general public paratransit vehicle (GPPV), as defined in CVC Section 336, is designed for carrying not more than 24 passengers and the driver, and provides local transportation to the general public, including carrying pupils at or below 12th grade level to or from a public or private school or school activity.

b. A crash between a vehicle and pupil or school bus driver while the pupil or driver was approaching or leaving the school bus and the school bus flashing red signal lamps were in operation pursuant to CVC Section 22112, or when the school bus is stopped for the purpose of loading or unloading pupils, will be documented as a school bus crash.

c. Injuries sustained to pupils while boarding or alighting from a stopped school bus, youth bus, SPAB, or GPPV are not considered motor vehicle traffic crashes.

d. Injury to a pupil inside a school bus resulting from acceleration, deceleration, or other movement of the vehicle will be documented as a school bus crash.

e. All crashes that meet the definition of a school bus crash shall be documented as an Investigation. When a crash does not meet the definition of a school bus crash, the crash may be documented as a Report.

f. A school bus crash with pupils on board which occurs entirely on private property resulting in property damage only and where no applicable CVC violation has occurred need not be documented. Private property does not include those areas described in CVC Section 21113.

g. A crash involving a school bus, youth bus, SPAB, or GPPV, that occurs within city limits and no pupils were on board at the time of the crash, does not meet the definition of a school bus crash and investigative responsibility rests with the local law enforcement agency.

h. For further guidance in the documentation of a school bus crash, refer to Chapter 15, Instructions for Completing the CHP 555E, School Bus Crash Supplemental Report, and Chapter 13, Guidelines for the Investigation and Documentation of Specific Crashes.

NOTE: The provision of drivers' training, the inspection of drivers' records, and the processing of applications for certification to drive a school bus, youth bus, SPAB, and GPPV are responsibilities of the CHP. The investigation of school bus crashes is essential to the CHP's commitment to the School Pupil Safety Program and proper crash documentation should be completed to ensure the safe transportation of all pupils.

66. SHOULDER. A shoulder is that portion of the highway, paved or unpaved, contiguous with the roadway and used for accommodation of stopped vehicles, for emergency stops, and for lateral support of the roadway structure. (Refer to Annex A.)

- a. The line between the roadway and the shoulder may be a painted edge line, a change in surface color or material, or a curb (e.g., a concrete drainage curb on a freeway).
- b. On one-way roadways, there may be surfaced shoulders on both sides.
- c. A paved shoulder remains a paved shoulder even when a bicycle lane is superimposed upon it.

67. SIDEWALK. A sidewalk is the portion of a highway, other than the road, set apart by curbs, barriers, markings, or other delineation for pedestrian travel. (Refer to CVC Section 555 and Annex A.)

68. STAGED TRAFFIC CRASH. A staged traffic crash is a crash intentionally planned or contrived for fraudulent purposes. When there are indicators a traffic crash has been staged, forward a copy of the report to the California Department of Insurance. (For additional information on the documentation and investigation of a staged crash, refer to Chapter 13.)

69. TOW AWAY. A tow away is a crash resulting in property damage to at least one vehicle to the extent that it cannot be driven from the crash scene or driven onto a trailer after simple repairs. Simple repairs include bending a fender away from a tire with a crowbar, changing a flat tire, or cutting a fan belt. A tow away excludes:

- a. A vehicle towed away because the driver is incapacitated (sick or emotionally disturbed).
- b. Inoperative parts not essential to the vehicle being driven away, such as inoperative doors, hoods, truck lids, or minor radiator damage.
- c. A vehicle towed away because of an illegal condition due to the crash.
- d. A vehicle towed back onto the roadway or turned upright which can be driven away.
- e. A vehicle towed away because of a vehicle fire.

70. TRANSITION ROAD. A transition road is a connector road that joins two arterial highways (freeways or expressways), generally at a tangent section of the highway and with grade separations at the highway intersection.

71. TRIBAL LAND. An area of land reserved for a tribe or tribes under treaty or other agreement with the United States, executive order, federal statute, or administrative action as permanent tribal homelands. This includes reservations and rancherias.

72. UNINVOLVED PARTY. An uninvolved party is one which an involved party claims contributed to the occurrence or crash, but:

- a. Sustained no damage or injury.
- b. There is no evidence to indicate the uninvolved party committed a violation that would cause the crash.
- c. There is no corroboration by a disinterested witness or the uninvolved party.
- d. The uninvolved party box on Page 2 of the CHP 555 should be marked when:
 - (1) A driver was stopped at a crosswalk to allow a pedestrian to cross the road. A second driver approached the stopped vehicle from behind, swerved to avoid the stopped vehicle, and collided with anything other than the stopped vehicle. The driver of the involved vehicle claimed the stopped vehicle contributed to the crash.
 - (2) A driver was traveling at the legal speed limit when an overtaking vehicle lost control and collided with anything other than the vehicle proceeding at the legal speed limit. The driver of the overtaking vehicle claimed the vehicle contributed to the crash.
 - (3) A vehicle allegedly set a rock or debris in motion, which struck another vehicle. The driver of the vehicle which set the object in motion denied involvement and there were no witness statements or physical evidence to corroborate the claim.

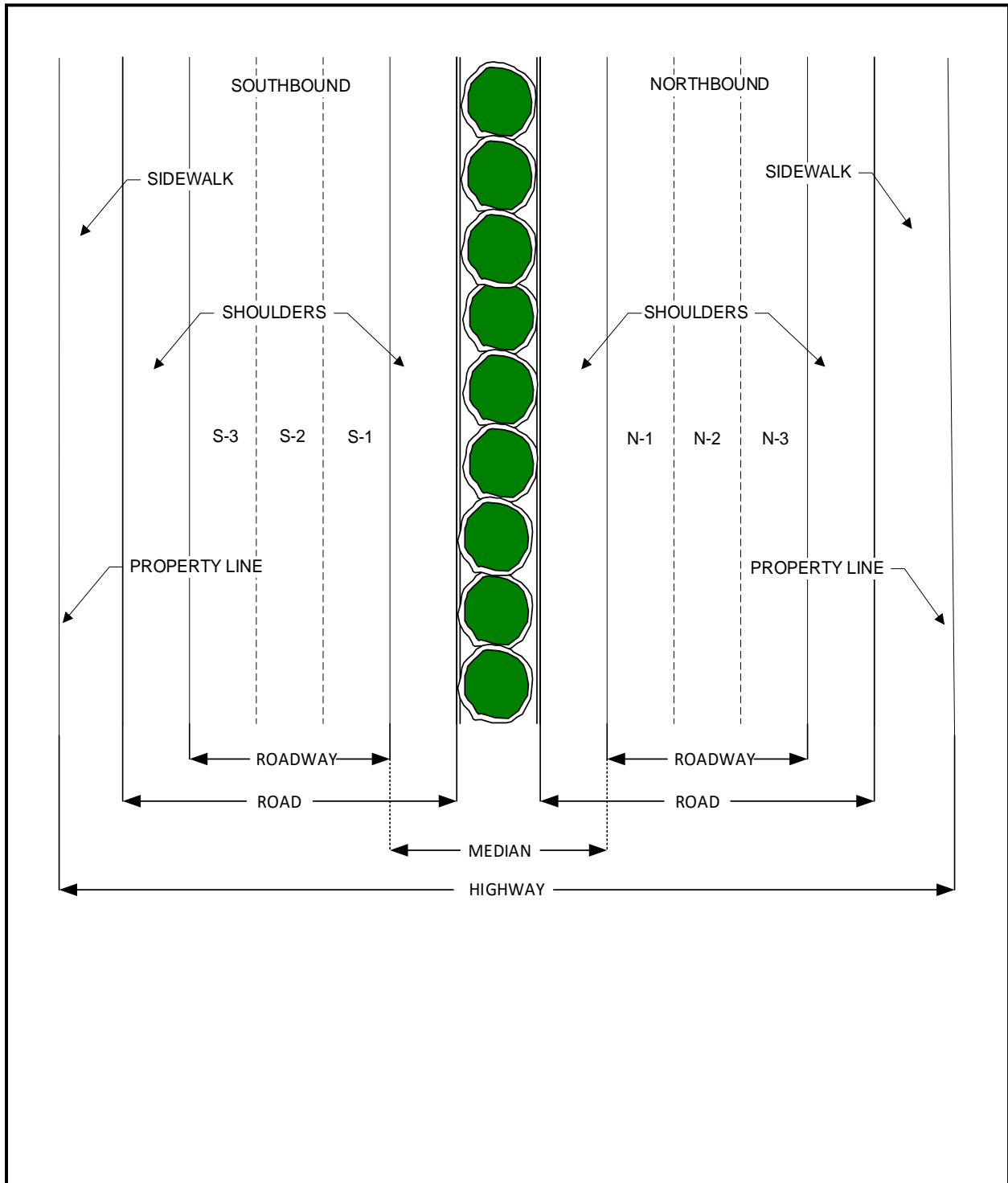
73. VEHICLE. A vehicle is a device by which any person or property may be propelled, moved, or drawn upon a highway, excepting a device moved exclusively by human power or used exclusively upon stationary rails or tracks. (Refer to CVC Section 670.)

74. WITNESS. A witness is a person, other than an involved party or a passenger, who can provide information relevant to the crash. This includes a person who observed the crash or who observed pertinent details before or after a crash (e.g., a person who can testify to a party's intoxication, either before or after the crash).

75. WORKING MOTOR VEHICLE. A working motor vehicle is a motor vehicle in the act of performing construction, maintenance, or utility work related to the highway. The work being done may be located within an open or closed portion of the highway and may be stationary or mobile.

- a. A motor vehicle that is being operated as a working motor vehicle is not in-transport.
- b. Includes:
 - (1) A motor vehicle at work in a marked construction/maintenance zone.
 - (2) A construction/maintenance zone-enhanced enforcement program detail.
 - (3) A patrol vehicle which is strictly participating in a stationary or mobile construction or maintenance activity as a traffic control or visual presence.
 - (4) A snow removal vehicle plowing or removing snow as part of a highway maintenance activity.
- c. Excludes:
 - (1) A motor vehicle performing private construction or maintenance.
 - (2) A construction or maintenance motor vehicle moving from one site to another.
 - (3) A garbage truck, tow truck, delivery truck, taxi, emergency vehicle, etc.
 - (4) A private party using their vehicle to remove snow from the roadway (not a highway maintenance activity).
 - (5) A law enforcement vehicle performing other work activities, such as traffic stops, crash investigation, patrolling, and traffic control, which is not related to construction, maintenance, or utility work on the highway.

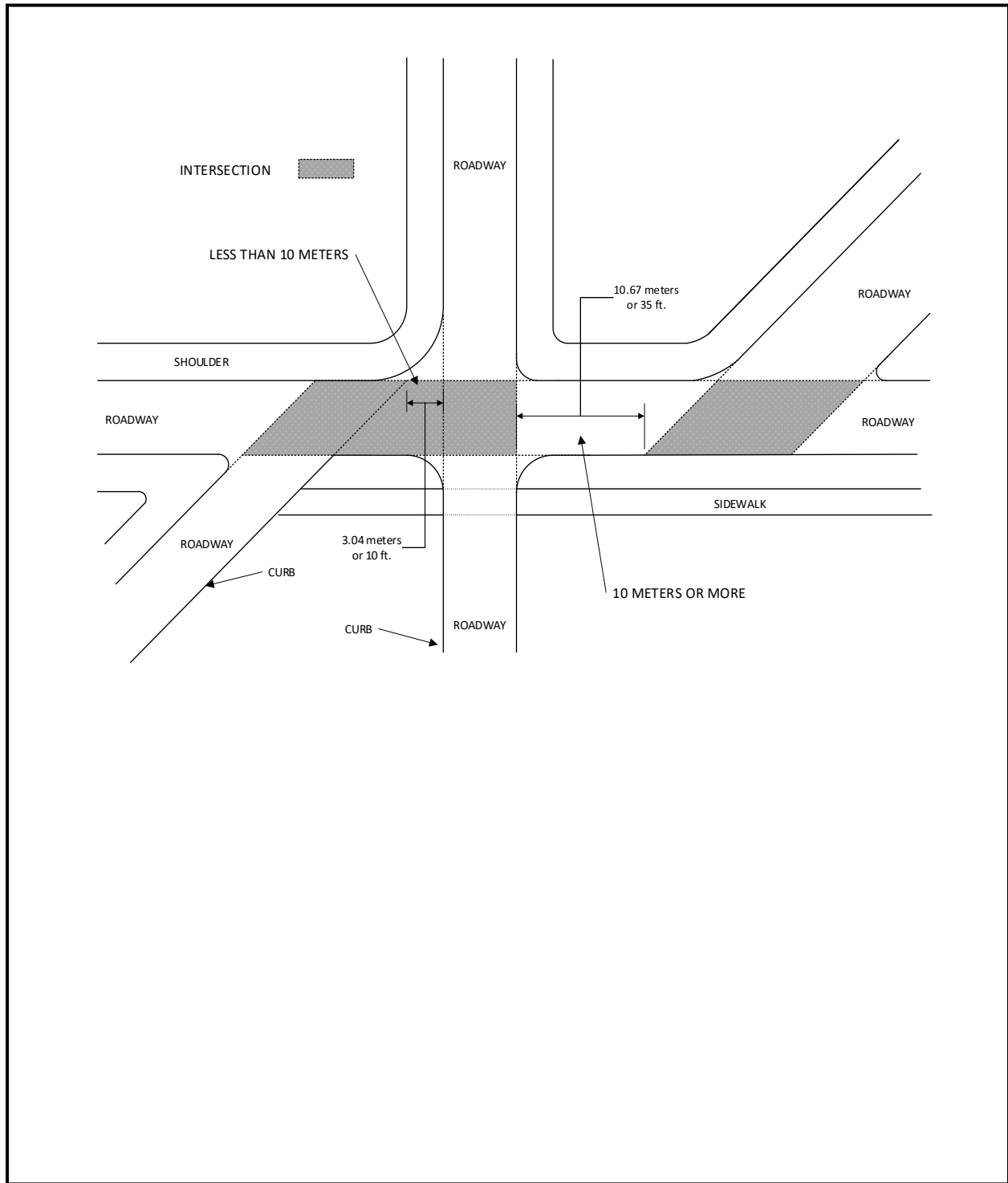
ANNEX A
HIGHWAY EXAMPLE



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ANNEX B

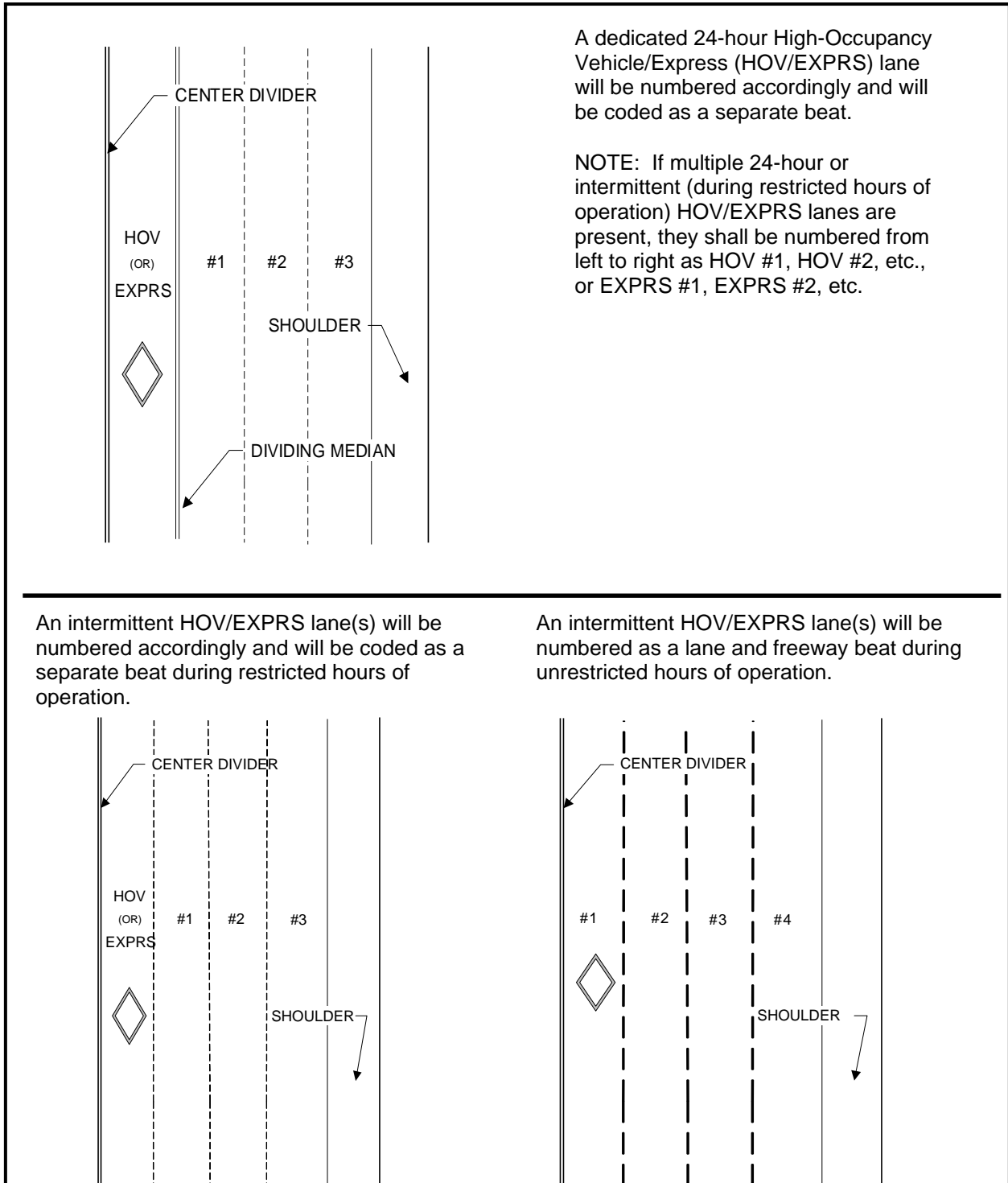
INTERSECTION EXAMPLE



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ANNEX C

LANE NUMBERING EXAMPLE



ANNEX C

LANE NUMBERING EXAMPLE *(continued)*

