

Massachusetts police joint operation cracks down on dirt bikes, ATVs on public streets

"A joint operation yesterday targeting illegal operation of dirt bikes and ATVs on Lawrence streets resulted in seven arrests, 10 other persons being summonsed to face criminal charges, and the seizure of nearly 20 vehicles.

The operation of off-road vehicles on city streets, often driven recklessly, causes a significant safety threat to motorists and pedestrians. Complaints of dirt bike and ATV operation on Lawrence streets have increased in recent years. Operating an off-road vehicle on a public way is a violation of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 90B, Section 25.



Massachusetts State Police photo.

Yesterday's operation was conducted by Lawrence Police, the Massachusetts State Police, Methuen Police, Andover Police, North Andover Police, Massachusetts Environmental Police, and the Essex County Sheriff's Department. Massachusetts State Police Troop A patrols as well as MSP investigative units, including the Gang Unit, participated in the operation.

Among the assets assisting in the operation was the Massachusetts State Police Air Wing. The flight crew of MSP helicopter Air 2 assisted in spotting several off-road vehicles being operated unlawfully on city streets. Using the helicopter's Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR) and color cameras, MSP Air 2 was able to provide continuous updates on their locations to ground units. Many times, the operators of the dirt bikes were driving throughout the city at high speeds and with no regard for traffic laws.



Massachusetts State Police photo.

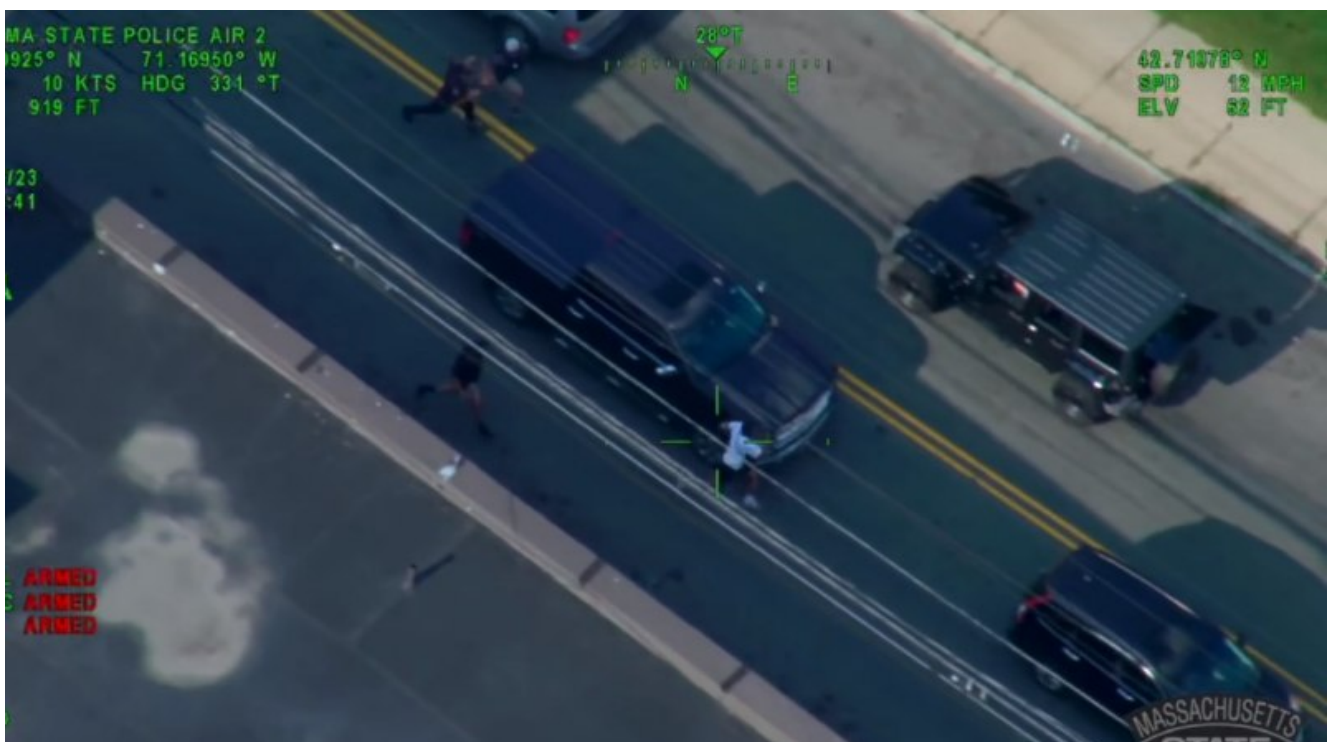
After fleeing MSP and local police ground units, some operators tried to conceal their vehicles at locations off the roadway. Other operators abandoned their bikes and fled on

foot. Using the helicopter's mapping system, the MSP flight crew provided location information allowing. responding cruisers to uncover and seize these vehicles and locate the operators.\

The operation resulted in the seizure of 18 off-road vehicles, arrests of seven suspects for various offenses including unlicensed operation, reckless operation, and receiving a stolen motor vehicle, and the issuance of 10 criminal summons and 50 citations. One stolen car was also located and seized. Some of the seized bikes are suspected of having been previously stolen.

Earlier this week, while assisting in patrols related to off-road vehicle complaints in Lawrence, and MSP Gang Unit Trooper was injured when he was assaulted by a male suspect. The male was arrested for assault and battery on a police officer.

Yesterday's operation follows similar successful enforcement efforts by MSP and local police in Springfield and Lawrence in 2021 and in Brockton in 2023."-Massachusetts State Police.



Massachusetts State Police photo.



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