§ 361. Traffic control. 1. (a) In addition to the powers conferred by the vehicle and traffic law, the authority is hereby authorized to promulgate such rules and regulations for the use and occupancy of the thruway as may be necessary and proper for the public safety and convenience, for the preservation of its property and for the collection of tolls and provided further that the authority, in consultation with the departments of environmental conservation and transportation, is hereby authorized to promulgate rules and regulations necessary to implement a heavy duty vehicle roadside inspection program pursuant to section 19-0320 of the environmental conservation law.

(b) Notwithstanding any inconsistent provisions of any general, special or local law, the thruway authority shall mark, with appropriate directional signs, the exits nearest to any state owned unique natural attraction within forty miles of the thruway which lies wholly or partially within the state of New York, such as, lakes more than ten miles in length, excepting Lake Ontario and Lake Erie, and mountains more than five thousand feet in height.

(c) Notwithstanding any inconsistent provisions of the general business law or of any other law, general, special or local, the landing and take-off of planes on the thruway system shall be governed by rules and regulations promulgated by the thruway authority.

(d) The violation of any such rule or regulation promulgated pursuant to this section shall be an offense and a first conviction thereof shall be punishable by a fine of not more than fifty dollars or by imprisonment for not more than fifteen days or by both such fine and imprisonment; a second such conviction within eighteen months thereafter shall be punishable by a fine of not more than one hundred dollars or by imprisonment for not more than forty-five days or by both such fine and imprisonment; and a third or subsequent conviction within eighteen months after the first conviction shall be punishable by a fine of not more than two hundred fifty dollars or by imprisonment for not more than ninety days or by both such fine and imprisonment; provided, however, that the violation of any such rule or regulation relating to the transportation of explosives class a or class b shall be a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine not exceeding twenty-five hundred dollars or by imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year or by both such fine and imprisonment.

(e) For the purpose of conferring jurisdiction upon courts and judicial officers generally, violations of those rules and regulations of the authority which are herein defined as offenses shall nevertheless be deemed misdemeanors for the sole purpose of making applicable all procedural provisions of law relating to misdemeanors, and courts of special sessions outside the city of New York and in the city of New York, the criminal court of the city of New York, in the first instance, shall have exclusive jurisdiction to hear and determine charges of such violations and provided, further, that no jury trial shall be allowed for such violations.

2. Enforcement of the rules and regulations of the thruway authority and of those provisions of the vehicle and traffic law applicable to the thruway shall be by authority forces, provided however, that at the request of the authority, such enforcement shall be the duty of the division of state police. Violators shall be apprehended and prosecuted in the same manner as provided for the apprehension and prosecution of violators of the vehicle and traffic law who commit violations thereof upon the state highway system. Authority forces specifically employed for the enforcement of such rules and regulations, during the term of such employment, shall be uniformed, shall have the powers of peace officers, as set forth in section 2.20 of the criminal procedure law, and shall have, within the limits of any municipality within which any portion of the thruway system under the jurisdiction of the authority shall be located, all the powers of a peace officer in the execution of criminal processes; and criminal process issued by any court or magistrate of a municipality within which any portion of the thruway system under the jurisdiction of the authority shall be located, may be directed to and executed by any such employee notwithstanding the provisions of any local or special law, ordinance or regulation.