

2021 Pursuit Analysis

PURPOSE

This report presented to Command to provide information relating to motor vehicle pursuits for the calendar year 2021. The data and analysis presented is intended to identify potential trends and provide information as to the circumstances under which pursuits, and the decisions therein, occur. This report is intended to present information that is useful in determining if the pursuits are meeting organizational objectives and Command intent, while recognizing these events are of significant interest to the community.

DATA ANALYZED

Each pursuit was analyzed for multiple criteria including length of pursuit, time of day of pursuit, reason for the pursuit, how the pursuit was terminated, collisions related to pursuit and how many pursuits resulted in injury to any party.

It should be noted that this year's data should be contextualized with the Washington State Legislature's passing of police reforms over the summer. These reforms require a significantly higher threshold to be met before a pursuit can be initiated and without doubt impacted several data points in this report when comparing year-over-year numbers.

FINDINGS

Total Vehicle Pursuits for Kent Police officers in 2021 was 50. For reference there were 116 pursuits in 2020 and 118 in 2019. This is clearly a significant decline in overall pursuit numbers and indicates that Kent's officers are clearly following the new law by not initiating pursuits for lower-level crimes as the new law directs.

Reason for Pursuit

The statistics initially indicate that the majority of pursuits for the year were initiated for relatively minor offenses as the new laws requiring probable cause for a serious violent crime or reasonable suspicion for a DUI took effect on 7/25/21. Being that the report is providing information over two distinct statutory periods these numbers are only included to provide historical information. The below table and supporting data collection efforts of pursuit forms and databases, will require an update for future reports. This update should not be undertaken until the 2022 legislative session is complete to ensure an additional set of law changes does not invalidate the update.

REASON		
TRAF INF	6	12%
TRAF MISD	10	20%
TRAF FEL	2	4%
CRIM MISD	6	12%
CRIM FEL PROP	13	26%
CRIM FEL PERS	11	22%
SUSP CIRCUM	2	4%

Time of Day

In addition to legislative changes altering likely outcomes the patrol division also changed their hours of work significantly late in 2021. The impact from this is unknown given the short time period to analyze but seemingly indicates we should use caution in analyzing any time-of-day information until more time has elapsed. At the outset the data shows day/night pursuits fairly evenly split with 54% of pursuits occurring between 0600-1800 and 46% occurring the remaining 12 hours. As compared to the prior year, this is a significant change, with 2020 showing 42% being daytime pursuits and 58% being nighttime pursuits. This is likely due to a more even distribution of personnel across the hours of the day but again, more time needs to elapse before the impact should be assessed. There are many factors that impact pursuits including volume of traffic, types of crimes being committed, special emphasis patrols that tend to occur at night, and weather conditions that should be considered.

0000-0600=15 (30%)

0600-1200=20 (20%)

1200-1800=17 (34%)

1800-0000=8 (16%)

Terminations

In 2020 69 (59%) pursuits were discontinued by Officers or Supervisors with officers self-terminating 43% of the time. This is an increase in self-terminated pursuits from 2019 when it was 32% of the time, or an 11% increase in self-terminations.

In 2021, officers made the decision to discontinue 32% of the time. Additionally, supervisors directed termination of pursuits 28% of the time for a total of 60% of pursuits being discontinued. This is likely a further indicator of discretion being used due to heightened requirement for pursuits to continue.

Officer discontinued	16	32%
Supervisor discontinued	14	28%
Suspect Gave Up	2	4%
Collision	8	16%
PIT	4	8%

Collisions

The total number of pursuits involving a collision was 14 (28%) which is a slight increase from 2020 when 25% of pursuits resulted in a collision.

Injuries

No Injuries Involved= 42 (84%)

Injuries Involved = 8 (16%)

The breakdown of those injuries by involvement:

Injuries to Officer= 2

Injuries to suspects= 4

Injuries to 3rd parties= 2

A significant majority of pursuits did not involve a collision or any injury. Although collisions went up injuries fell from 21% to 16%.

Length of Pursuit

27 pursuits, or 54 %, were 2 miles long, or less. 41 pursuits, or 82 % were 4 miles long, or less. It is a generally accepted fact that the longer the pursuit the higher the potential for a collision to occur. The average length of a Kent pursuit involving a collision was 4.35 miles for 2021.

Less than .3 miles	3
.3 to .5 miles	9
.6 to 1 mile	5
1.1 to 2 miles	10
2.1 to 4 miles	14
Over 4 miles	9
Total	50

Longest distance pursuit= 12

Shortest distance pursuit= .1 miles

Average distance of pursuit= 2.56

Items of Note

There were six pursuits that were deemed to have violated policy in 2021. Discipline was levied in one of those instances.

Training Completed- During 2021 the EVOC instructors provided training at Pacific Raceways focusing on vehicle dynamics using the high-speed driving course as well as a lower speed auto cross course that emphasized vehicle placement. This training was completed on officer's days off and was approximately 3-4 hours in length in their assigned vehicle.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion a training analysis is provided to determine if there are training opportunities that could be used to ensure officer actions and trends in pursuits are in keeping with organizational objectives and Command intent. In addition, an administrative analysis is provided to determine if the report is providing relevant data as well identifying potential policy or procedure revisions, that are in keeping with organizational objectives and Command intent.

Training analysis

The 2021 EVOC training was conducted at the same facility the trainers received updated instructor training on earlier in the year. Although training generally has a portion oriented on pursuit driving due to law changes the EVOC team instead emphasized improving high-speed driving skills related to emergency driving response to calls given recent legislative changes. Many of these skills would transfer to pursuit driving but given the frequency of real-world emergency driving a focus on vehicle dynamics and placement was deemed to be of more value.

The City Risk Management department has been key to offsetting these costs and in 2021 this was evidenced by funding an instructor update class at Pacific Raceways. The skills learned at this update were very useful to the instructor cadre given the perishable nature of any psychomotor task.

The EVOC cadre will be undertaking an in depth look at the data in this report to support Command Intent with training going forward. It is still advisable that a 4-5 year training strategy for EVOC be developed. There is scheduled personnel turbulence in the EVOC cadre that will have to be mitigated in 2022 to maintain the level of training that has occurred over the past few years. Command level

oversight of the EVOC program is encouraged to establish how Command Intent is being met and for effective feedback to be provided to the cadre as they develop training.

Administrative analysis

As stated last year, collision data directly related to pursuits is captured in this document however, other driving related behavior regarding most collisions is left to separate review processes. It may be worthwhile to expand the scope of this document and its review parameters to capture other driving behaviors as there are likely corollaries in the data relating to vehicle operations that would aid Command in identifying trends.

With legislative changes that occurred in the middle of 2021 we revised large portions of the pursuit policy with the input from the EVOC cadre and Command. Additionally, we have identified potential deficiencies in the documents and parts of the revised policy that are on track to be revised in the 1st quarter of 2022. Given there are further legislative changes on the horizon a subsequent analysis of the pursuit and forcible stopping policies, the supporting documents associated and, a review of our experience and training under the new laws needs to be completed midway through 2022. This review should aim to ensure our policy can be executed as written and our business practices remain within the law and Command Intent.

Please feel free to forward questions or input with the foregoing to the undersigned.

Respectfully Submitted,

CMDR Matt Stansfield

X Rafael R. Padilla
Chief Rafael Padilla

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Date

