

AUBURN POLICE DEPARTMENT

Pursuit Analysis 2020



This document is to report 2020 pursuit information, conduct a comparative analysis against recent years on a variety of pursuit aspects, offer suggestions on how to improve decision-making during pursuit driving by Auburn Officers, and to identify areas where EVOC training can be enhanced.

[Commander Mike Hirman](#)

AUBURN POLICE DEPARTMENT

2020 Pursuit Analysis

The information in this analysis was obtained from Spillman Incident Reports, CAD dispatch printouts, Supervisor's Reports of Pursuits, along with their corresponding Pursuit Critiques.

The current procedure for collecting data on pursuits is outlined below and in the Auburn Police Department Policy Manual, Chapter 307.

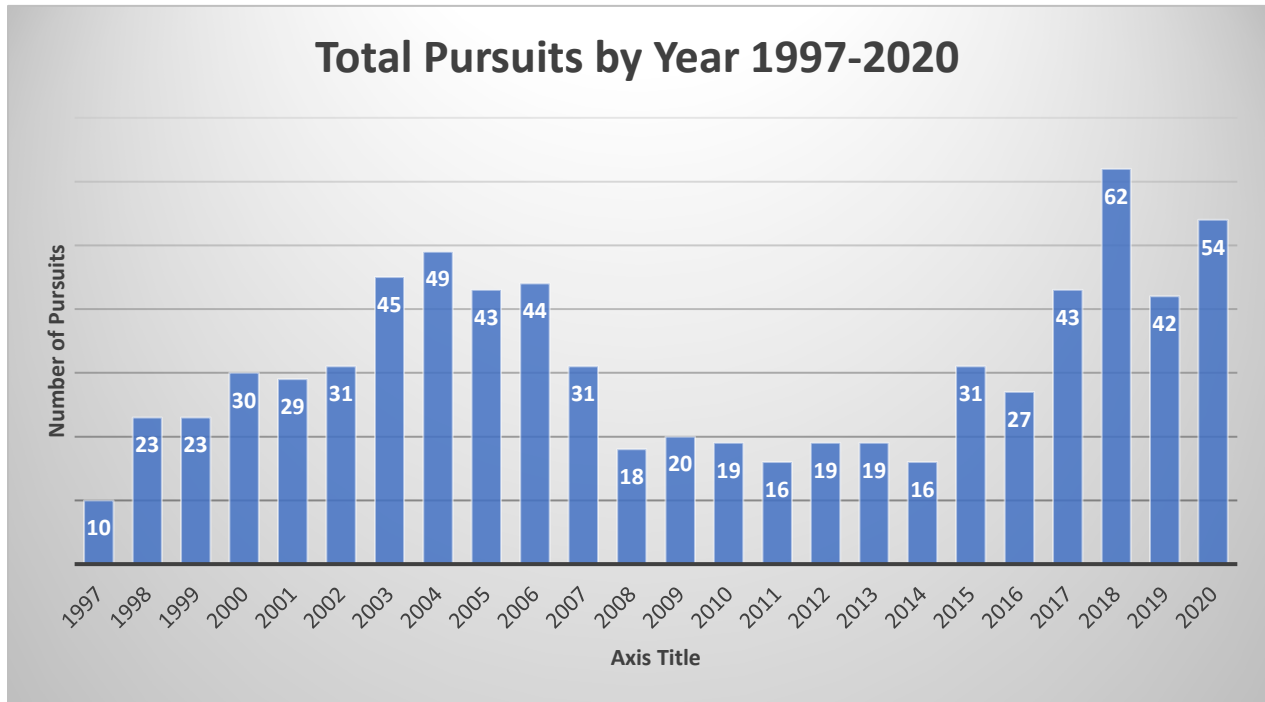
Vehicle Pursuit Reporting

1. Immediately following pursuits, patrol supervisors are responsible for completing a *Supervisory Report of Pursuit* through Blue Team. This report is forwarded through the chain of command to the Chief of Police. All pursuits are documented in this manner and reviewed for this analysis.
2. Once the Office of Inspectional Services logs the report, it is then available to the EVOC coordinator for the purposes of data collection, annual analysis, evaluating and/or recommending changes to the pursuit policy, and identifying potential training opportunities.
3. Following the pursuit, typically the next day or next opportunity to gather those involved in the pursuit, the patrol supervisor conducts a *Pursuit Critique* and forwards it through the same channels as the *Supervisor's Report of Pursuit*. The purpose of the critique is to identify those aspects of the pursuit that went well and those that could be improved. It is also designed to determine whether the pursuit met the policy manual guidelines, or whether it deviated outside the guidelines. If the pursuit deviated outside of policy, a determination should be made as to whether this deviation was acceptable. If it was acceptable, the EVOC coordinator can then determine whether or not a policy modification is in order, or to leave the policy as is.

2020 Pursuit and Comparative Analysis

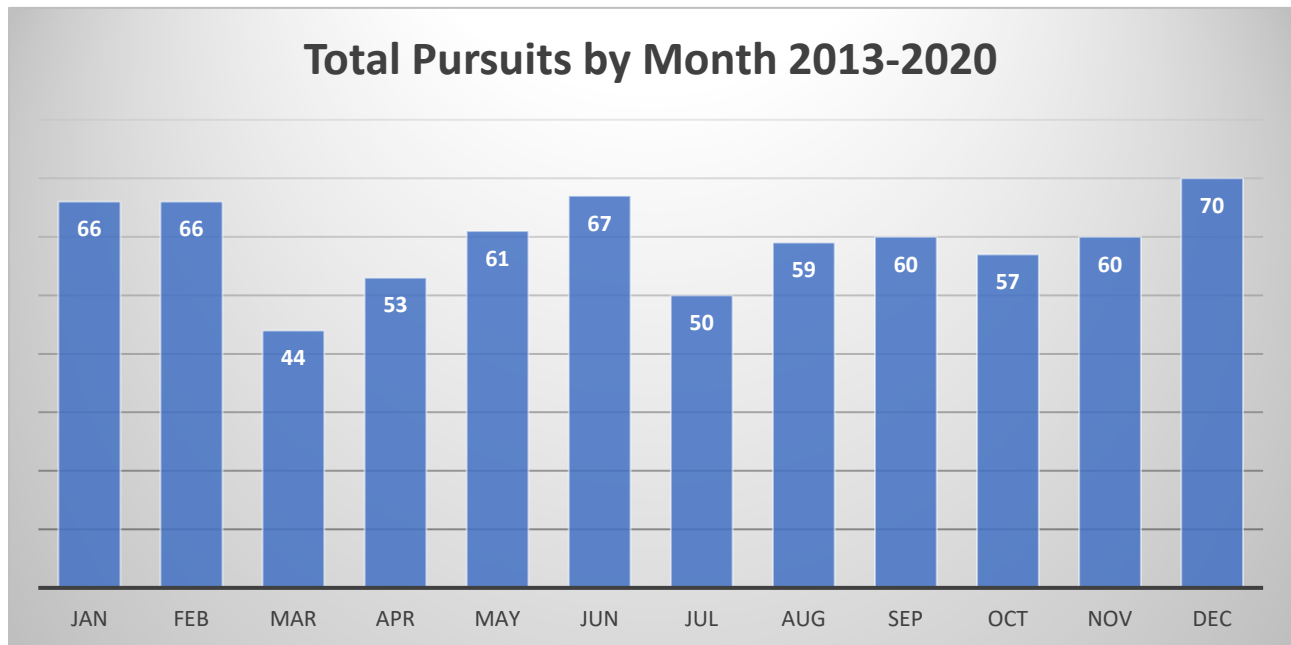
Following is a collection of key charts and tables that cover vehicle pursuits by type, time of day, tactical intervention and more. In addition, key observations for each category are provided.

Chart 1. Total Pursuits by Year



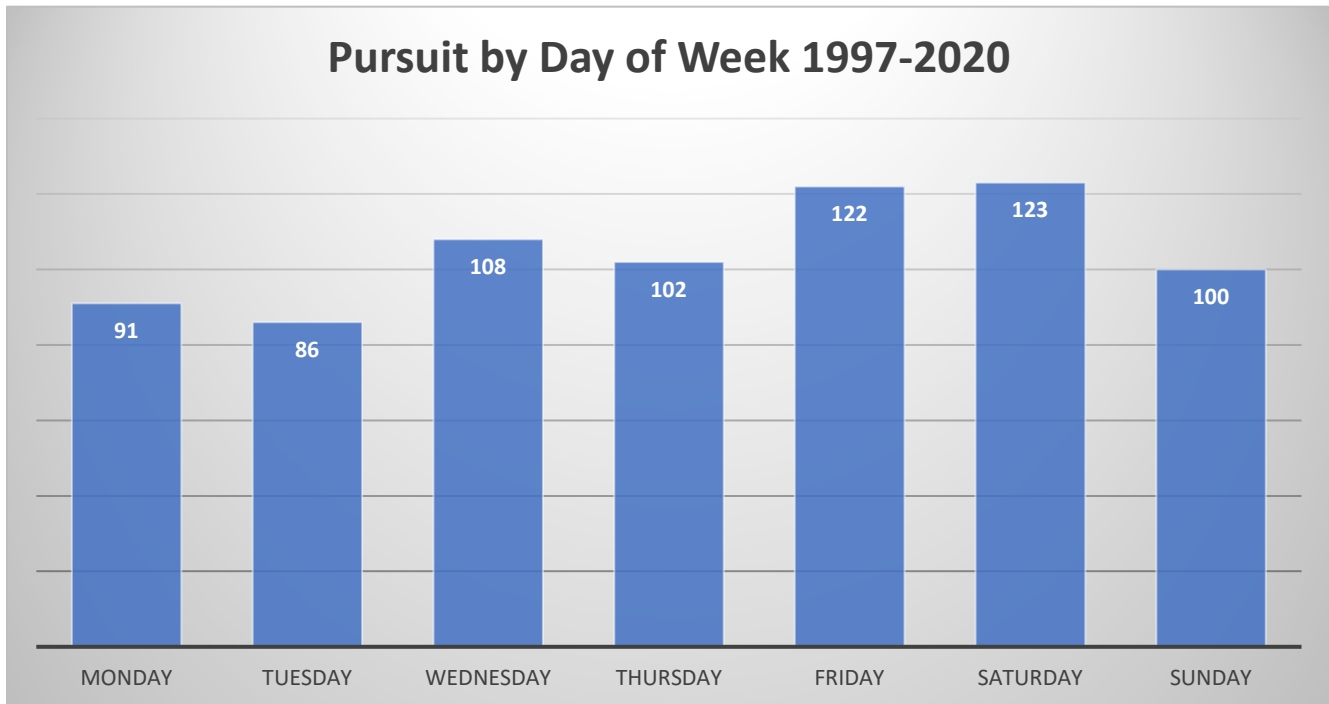
Observations: There was a 29% increase in the number of pursuits from 2019.

Chart 2. Pursuits by Month 1997-2020



Observations: There is no significant trend in the number of pursuits by month. January, February, June and December have the highest number of pursuits. The months with the lowest number of pursuits are March, April and July.

Chart 3. Pursuits by Day of the Week 1997-2020

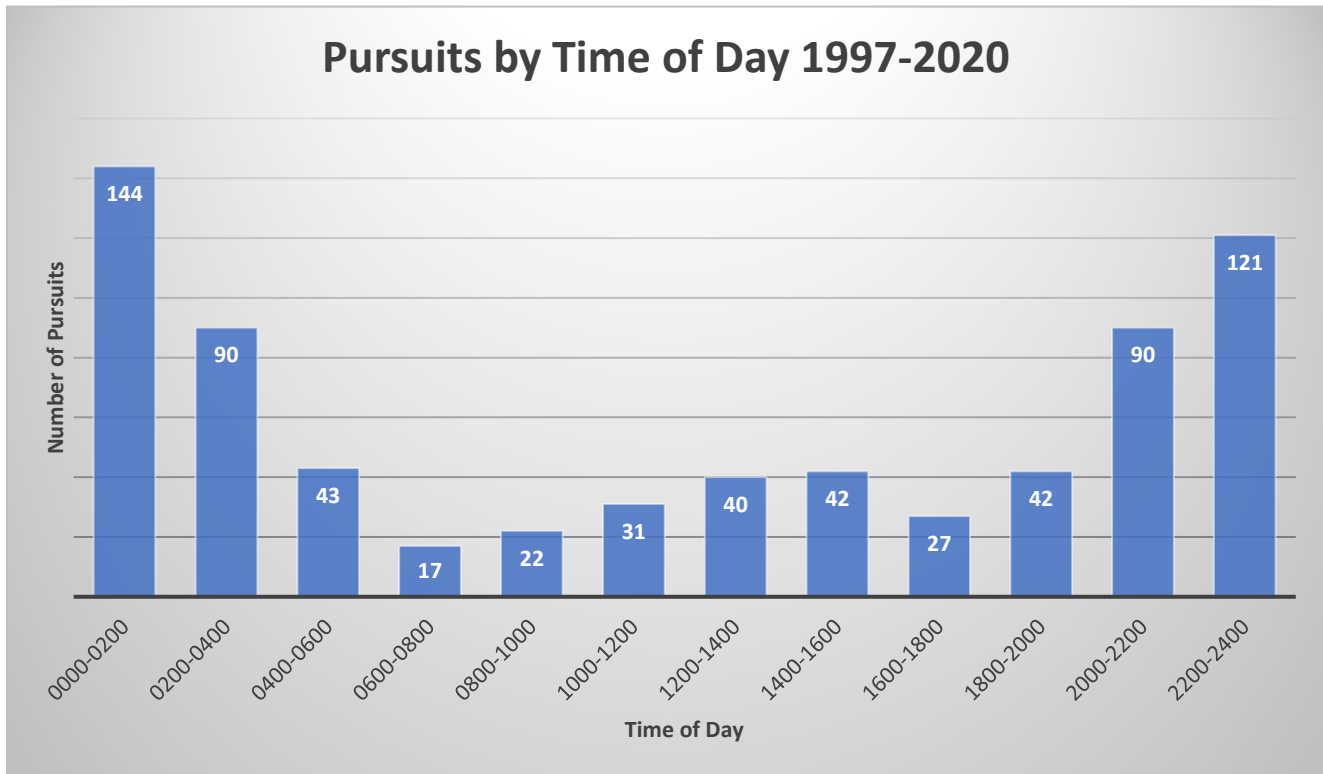


Observations:

- ❖ Weekends typically have more pursuits.
- ❖ This year Wednesday had the fewest number of pursuits (4) and Saturday had the highest number of pursuits (12).



Chart 4. Pursuits by Time of Day (1997-2020)

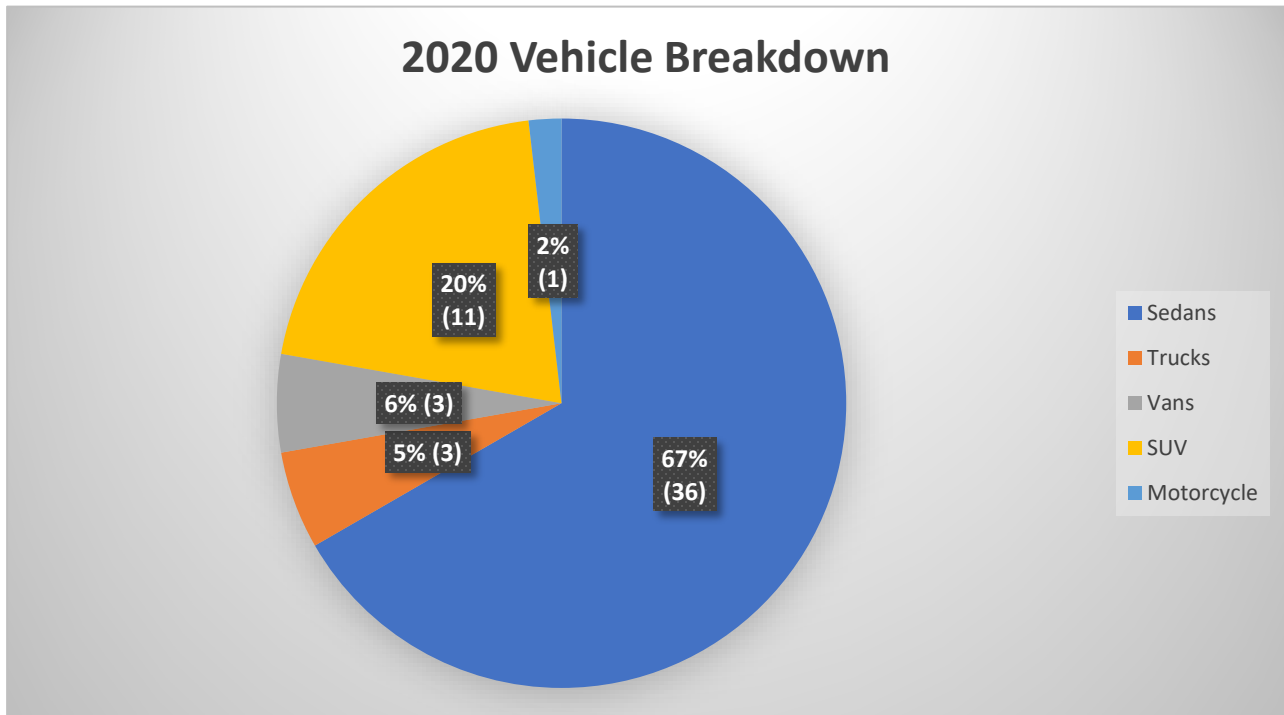


Observations:

Pursuits in Auburn primarily occur between 2000 hours and 0400 hours. The time period between the hours of Midnight and 0200 has the highest frequency of pursuits. There are several possible explanations for this. During this time there are favorable traffic conditions. The ratio of officers versus citizens on the road is greatest at this time, and Auburn crime data indicate the criminal element is more active between these hours. With the exception of the afternoon rush hour, this is reflective of the APD workload and staffing distribution. Patrol staffing deployment between these hours is increased as this period correlates with the hours of the highest calls for service.



Chart 5. Pursuits by Vehicle Type



Observations: Sedans make up the vast majority of cars initiating pursuits.

Chart 6.

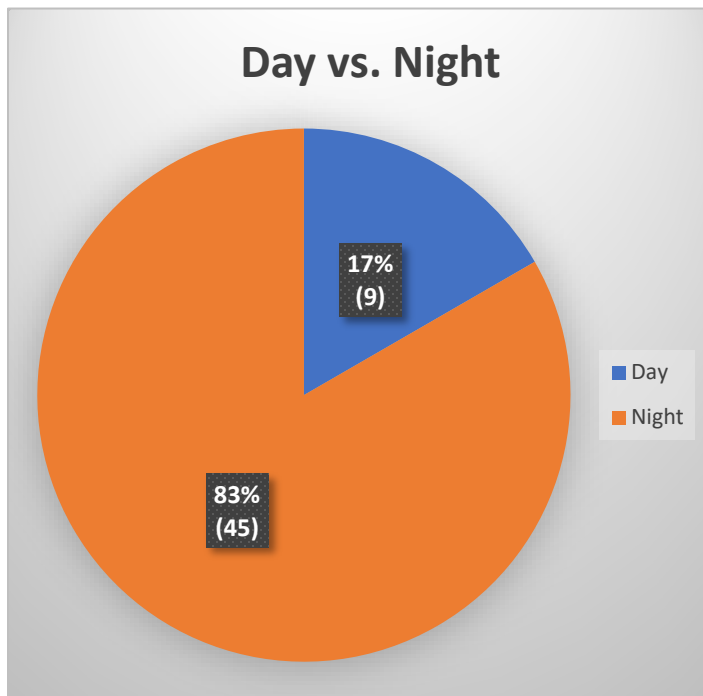
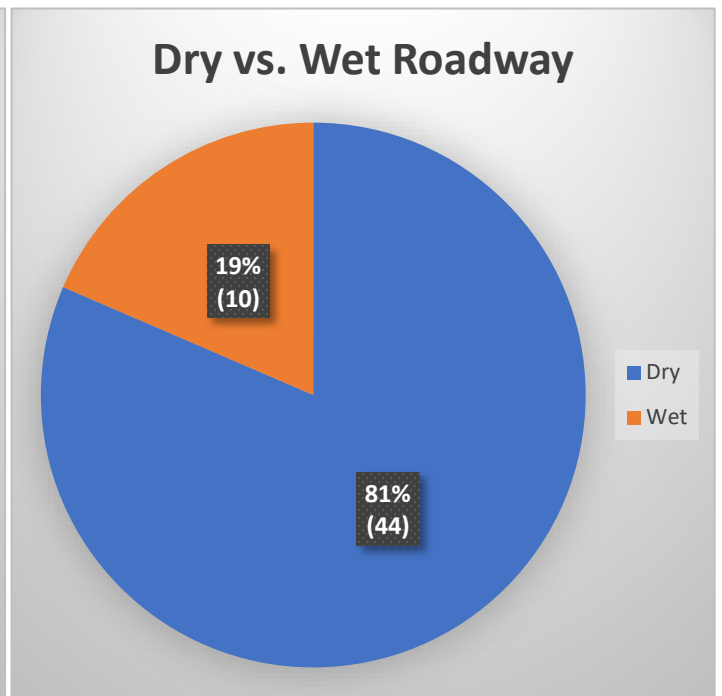
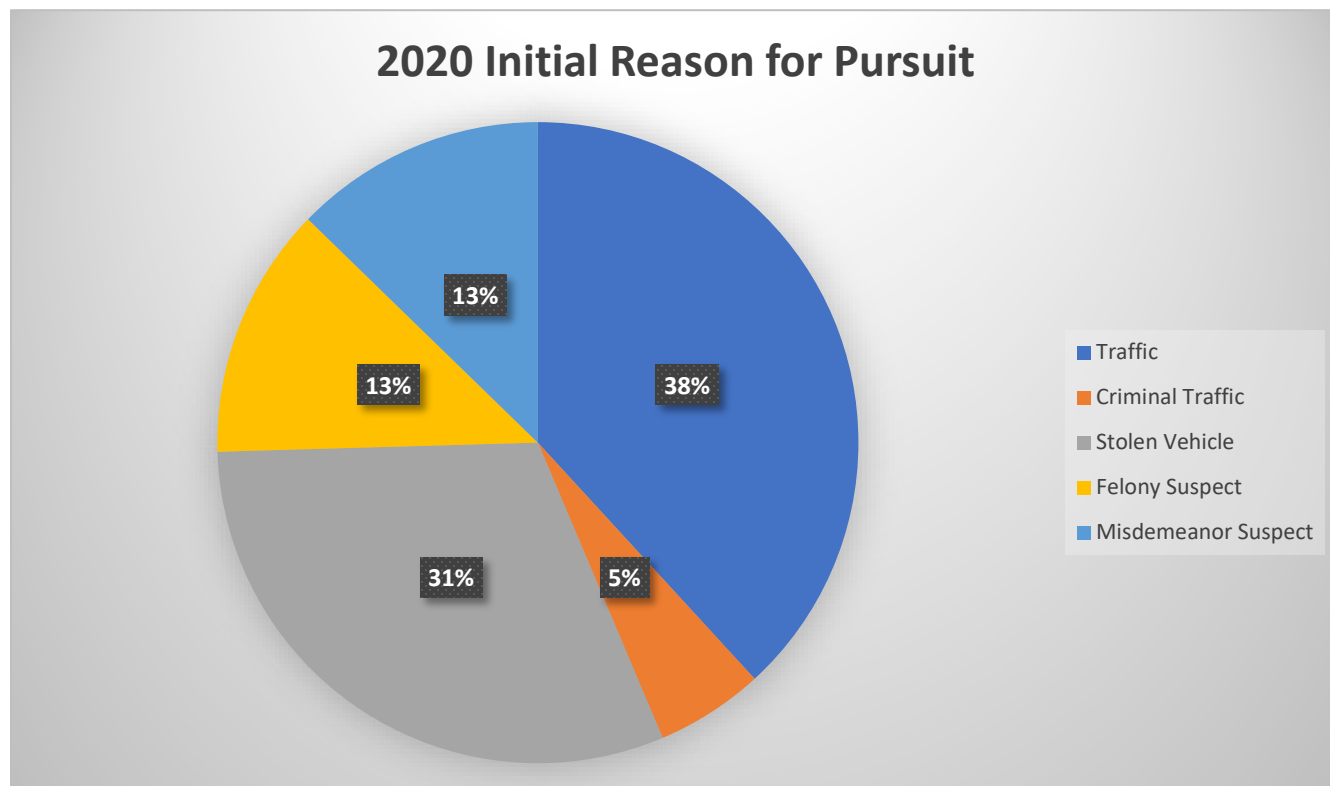


Chart 7.



Observations: Most pursuits happen at night on dry roadways. Historically, this is a stable trend for pursuits in Auburn.

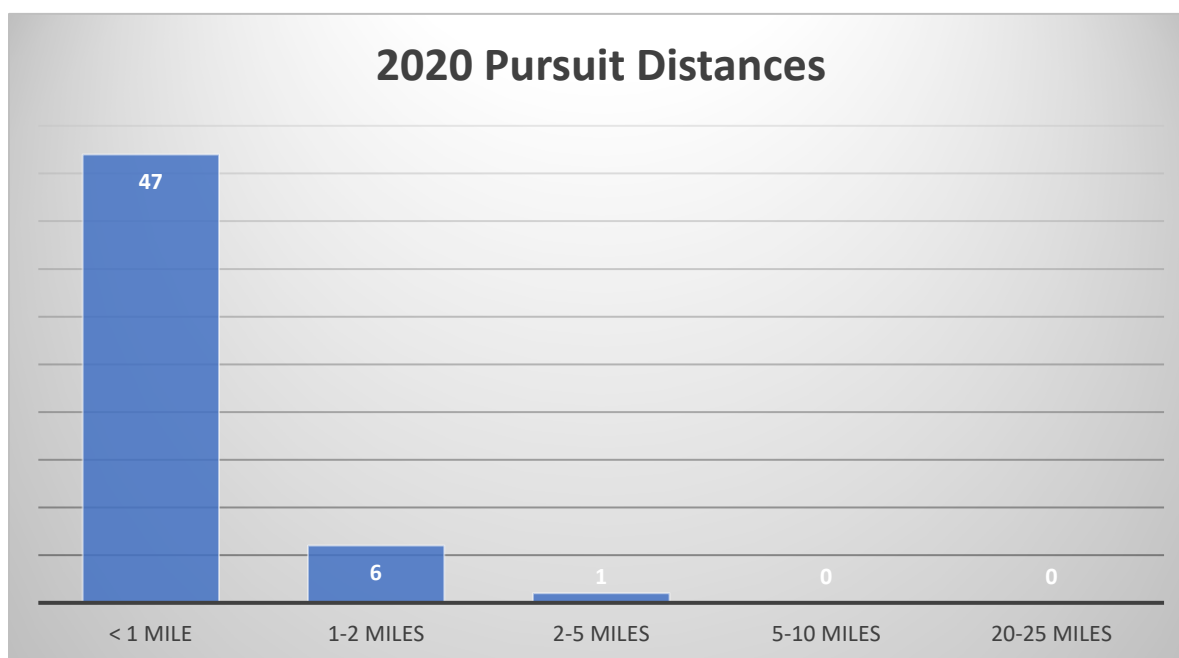
Chart 8. *Initial Reason for Pursuits*



Observations:

- ❖ Definition: The *Initial Reason for Pursuit* refers to the crime or infraction observed by the officer that provided probable cause for the initial stop. The purpose for collecting this data is to show that officers often have only limited knowledge as to the underlying reasons that suspects are fleeing from them.
- ❖ In 2020, 38% of pursuits were initiated for traffic infractions. In 2019, 45% of pursuits fit this category.
- ❖ In 2020, although other crimes may have been present, nearly half the time, 44%, officers knew they were chasing felony suspects for crimes other than eluding (stolen vehicle and felony suspects/warrants).

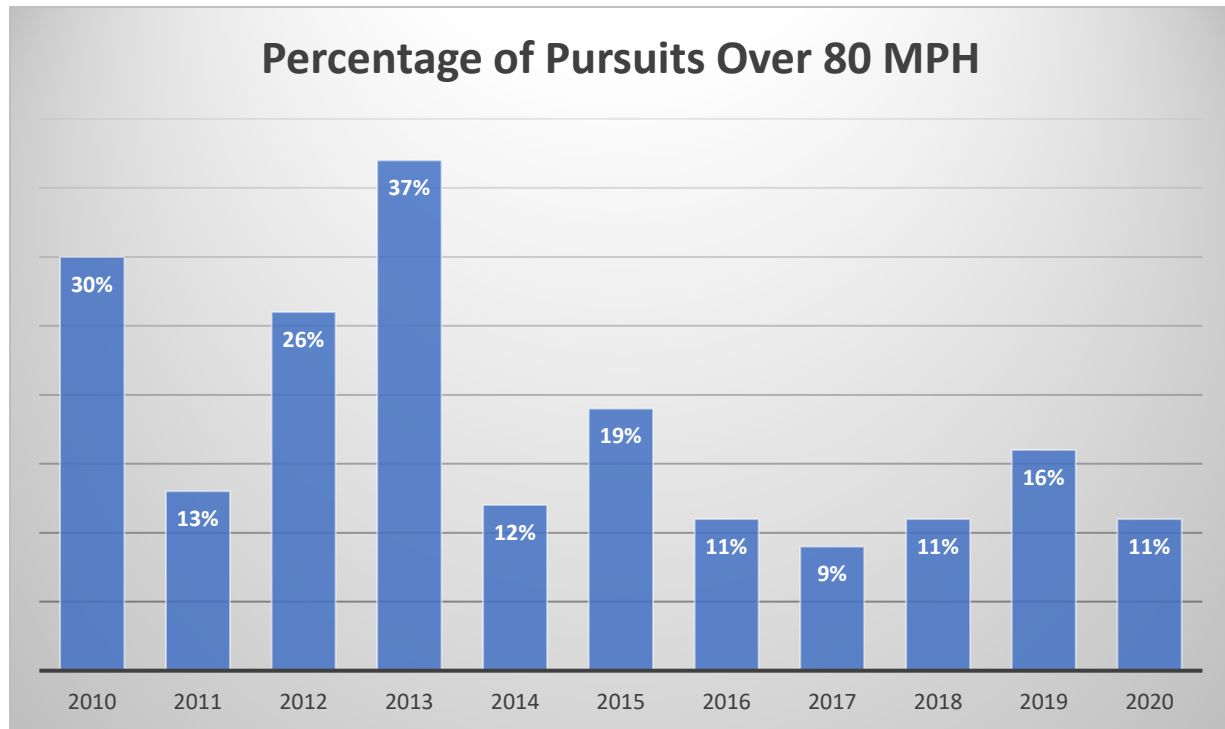
Chart 9. Pursuit Distances



Observations:

- ❖ Chart 9 depicts the categorical distance of the 54 pursuits in 2020.
- ❖ In previous years, officers were reporting exact distances of pursuits. That changed in recent years when nearly all reports of pursuits were entered into Blue Team. This program only reports the distance by category. However, a rough estimate was still available. The hope is to reduce the length of pursuits such as in 2017. When average pursuit was less than one mile (0.94).
- ❖ In 2020 the total number of miles Auburn Officers pursued suspects was 32.153 miles, averaging 0.59 miles per pursuit. This is the lowest recorded average distance.
- ❖ Also, in 2020 the shortest pursuit was 190 feet while the longest pursuit was 3.5 miles long.

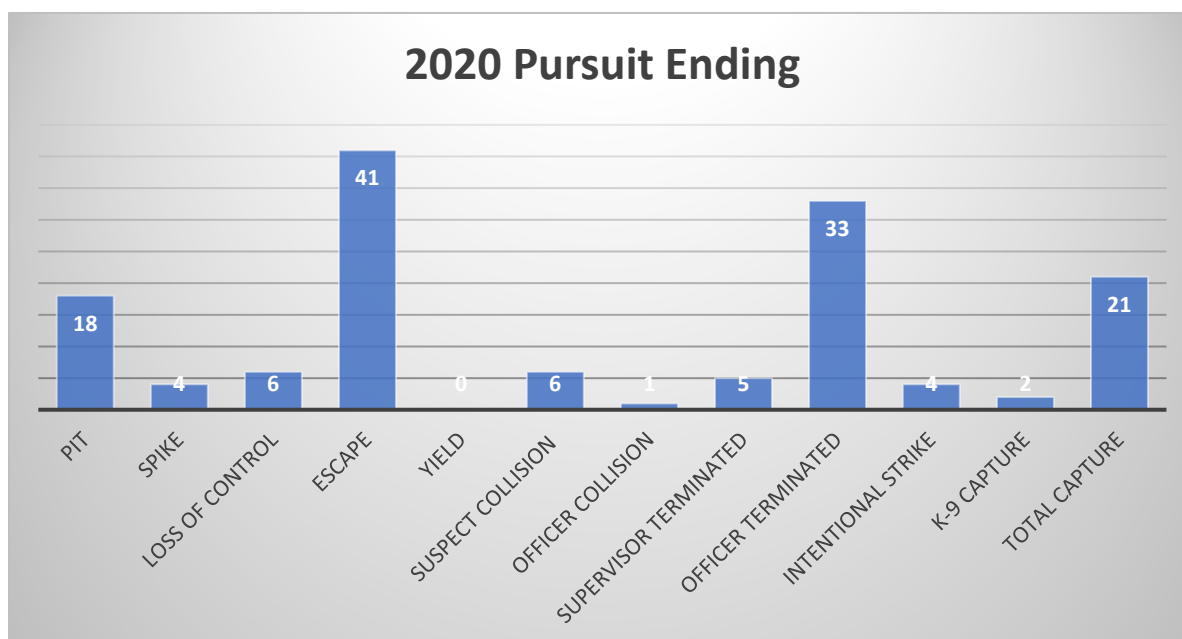
Chart 10. Pursuit Speeds (2010-2020)



Observations:

- ❖ Of significance to note is the percentage of pursuits during each year that sustained speeds at 80 MPH or greater. The reason for selecting this range of speeds is so officers understand the importance of ending pursuits as soon as possible. Furthermore, there is a correlation between high speeds, prolonged distance, and pursuits that end in a collision. The above chart shows the percentage of pursuits between 2012 and 2020 that were classified at speeds greater than 80 MPH. All years prior to 2014 combined averages of 32.5% over 80 MPH.
- ❖ Auburn Police pursuits over 80 MPH in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2020 consisted of an average of under 12%.

Chart 11. Pursuit Ending



Observations:

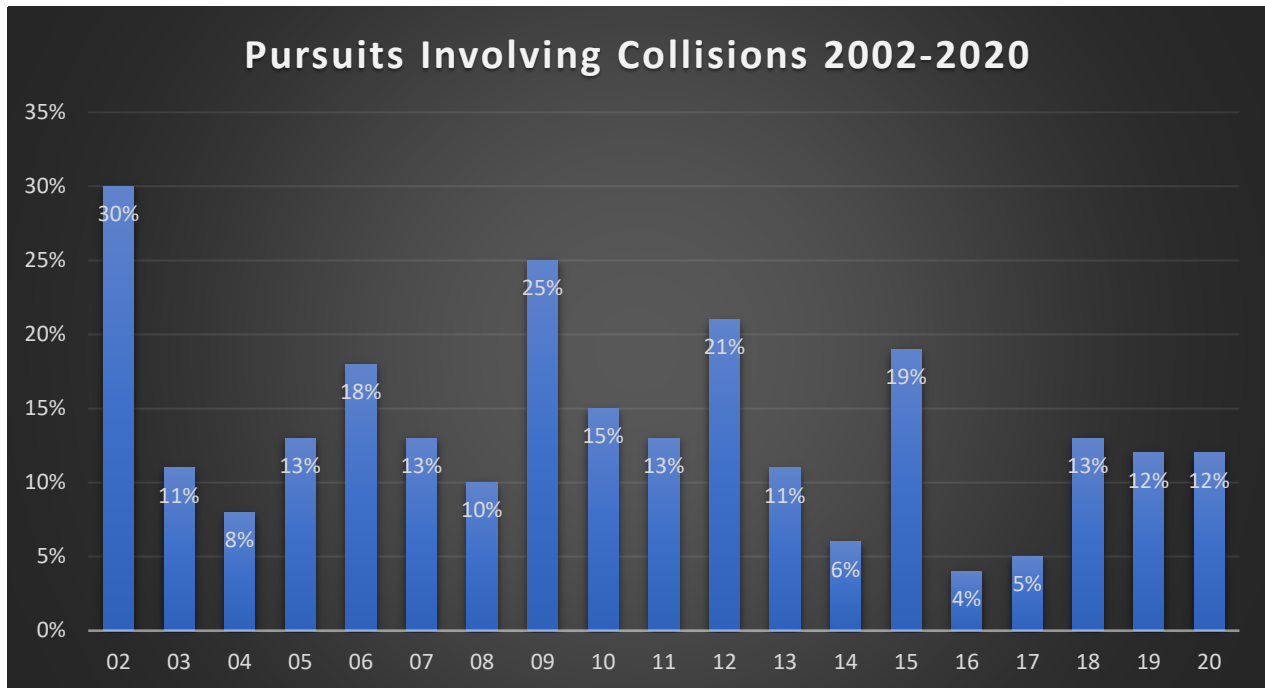
- ❖ The above chart reflects how 2020 pursuits ended. Some pursuits are represented by more than one category. For example, whereas 41 suspects escaped, some of them are represented under PIT and Officer Terminated. Of note, in 2019, 33 pursuits were terminated, representing 78% of the total pursuits. However, in 2020, 38 pursuits were terminated, representing 70% of the total.
- ❖ The PIT maneuver was used 18 times. During some pursuits, PIT was performed more than once, after the suspect continued to flee.
- ❖ Spike stripes were utilized on 4 occasions in 2020.
- ❖ Of the 54 pursuits in 2020, 21 pursuits ended in a capture of the suspect. This is the highest number of captures for pursuits for any given year by Auburn Officers.

Chart 12. Officer Frequency 2020

Observations:

For training purposes, it is helpful to monitor the number of pursuits that individual officers initiate. For example, in years past, an officer who initiated far more pursuits than other officers prompted a review of the officer's practice. It was determined that this officer made a habit of turning on emergency equipment from long distances behind motorists. This possibly instilled confidence in the motorist to flee. After training, the following year when the officer turned on the equipment directly behind the motorists, the frequency of pursuit was significantly reduced. In 2020, of the 54 pursuits, 18 officers initiated one pursuit, 6 officers initiated two pursuits, 5 officers initiated three pursuits, 1 officer initiated four pursuits and 1 officer initiated five pursuits. These averages fall within an acceptable range.

Chart 13. Pursuits Involving Collisions 2002-2020

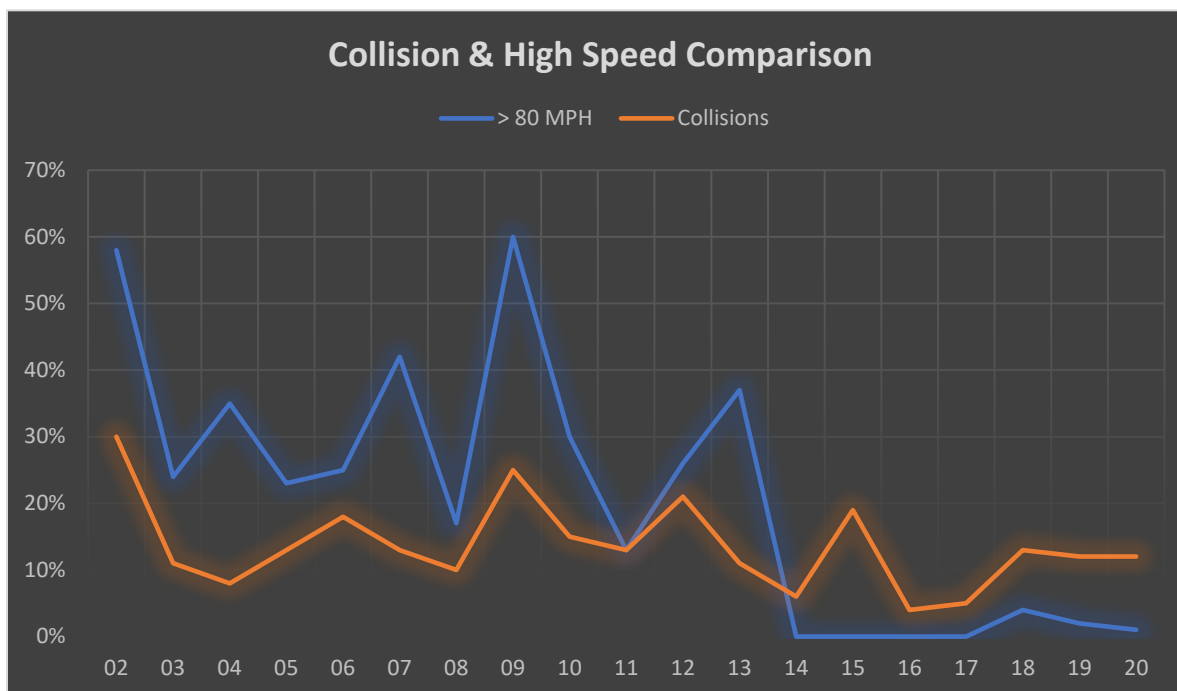


Observations:

- ❖ In 2019, there were seven collisions, six (6) by suspects and one (1) by an Officer. In 2020, the number of pursuits involving collisions remained stable at seven. Six (6) by suspect and one (1) by an Officer.



Chart 14. Collisions Vs. High-Speed Pursuits 2002-2020



Observations:

This chart depicts a possible correlation between the incidence of collisions and pursuits at speeds greater than 80 MPH, at least for most of the years shown. It is interesting to note that in years 2014-2017, there were no reported collisions involving speeds over 80 MPH. The minor collisions that did occur were at slower speeds. In 2019, there was only one collision in a pursuit where speeds reached 80 MPH. However, the collision occurred at a slower speed when the suspect collided with two police cars.

In 2020, there were six pursuits at speeds greater than 80 MPH. Of those, only one pursuit ended in a collision after the suspect crashed into a ditch.

Chart 15. Suspect Gender

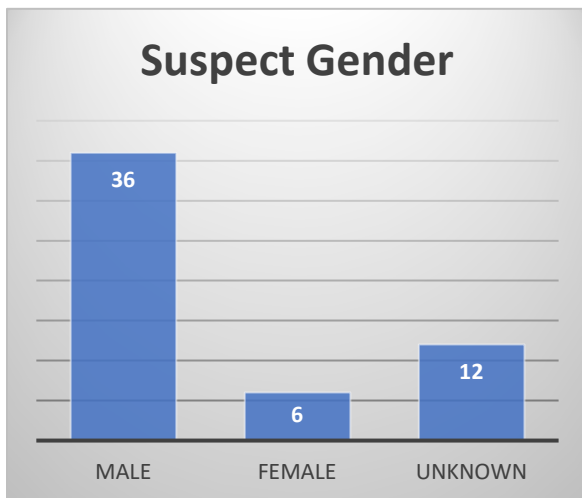


Chart 16. Suspect Age

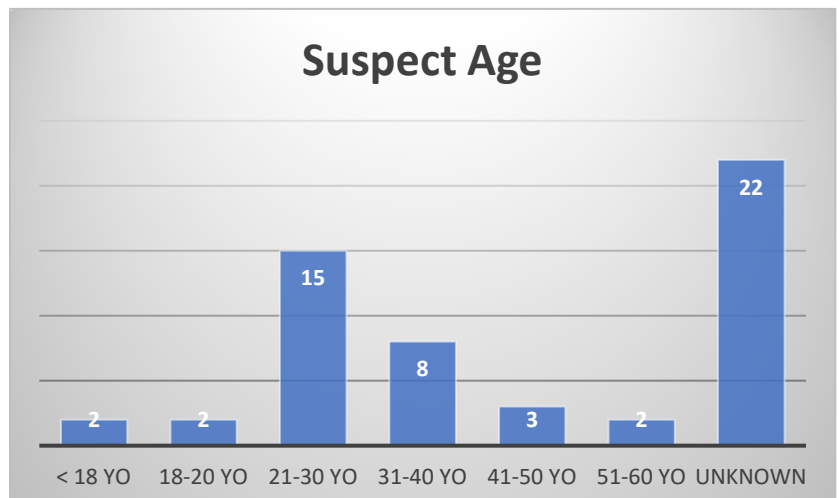
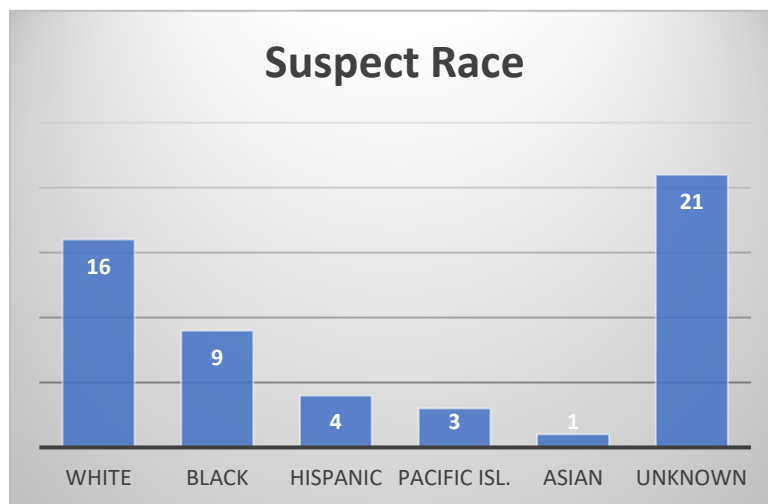


Chart 17. Suspect Race



Observations:

- ❖ Suspects in pursuits are primarily white males between the ages of 21-30 years old.
- ❖ Not all suspects are identified or captured. Due to the higher probability of pursuits occurring at night, it is difficult for Officers to obtain these characteristics.

Summary:

- 1) The number of pursuits in the City of Auburn tends to fluctuate like other crimes reported. 2008-2014 were recorded as low years with averages in the teens. The next five years (2015-2019) had a significant increase in the number of pursuits. 2020 has the second most pursuits recorded in a year, and the highest recorded captures of any prior year.
- 2) The average length of pursuits has drastically declined. This was due to a change in the department pursuit policy of not engaging in pursuits for minor crimes. In addition to this change, this has likely contributed to the increase in the number of pursuits as many suspects are aware of the “No Chase Policy”.
- 3) In terms of what the officers knew at the time the pursuit was initiated, nearly half of all pursuits in 2020 were initiated for felony violations: stolen vehicles, or other felony suspect actions.
- 4) The Auburn Police Department has a highly efficient method of capturing pursuit data for subsequent analysis and training.
- 5) There are ongoing discussions pertaining to the modification of the pursuit policy to allow for greater discretion of officers and supervisors on pursuits for minor crimes. There are always underlying reasons why suspects flee from the police. We do know there are other reasons for motorists to flee, such as warrants, weapons violations, and other felonies.
- 6) Supervisors appear to be involved in monitoring the 2020 pursuits but will need to be more engaged if the pursuit policy is modified. This year 38 of 54 pursuits were terminated by the Officer or supervisor. 33 pursuits were terminated by Officers, the highest recorded number over the last eight years. While only five pursuits were terminated by supervisors, the lowest recorded number since 2012. This is commendable for both supervisors and Officers.

Training

For many years, EVOC training consisted of eight hours for each officer, every three years. During the eight hours, the officer received training in the Pursuit Policy, vehicle placement, auto-cross, high speed tactical driving, pursuit scenarios, and the Pursuit Immobilization Technique (PIT).

Recently, there was a slight change. In order to capture officer attention, EVOC training was shortened to four hours of intensive high speed, PIT, and scenario-based training. At least one third of all commissioned officers received pursuit driving and pursuit scenario training. They also received refresher training in the Pursuit Immobilization Technique. EVOC instructors have the officers continue to perform high speed training and the PIT maneuver until both the officer and instructor are confident that the officer is thoroughly familiar with these techniques. The intent of training at Pacific Raceways is to get more officers through this critical high risk – low frequency training, and on a more frequent basis.

The EVOC coordinator and several instructors review department pursuits and collisions. A determination is made to consider additional training for the officers that are found to be involved in preventable collisions.

There is currently a push to provide basic EVOC training to new recruits to provide them with this important training prior to annual training in October. During April 2020, we were able to provide eight recruits introductory EVOC Training.

In the event the pursuit policy is modified, supervisors will need to prioritize EVOC training during patrol briefings, and to ensure they closely monitor each pursuit.

