TACOMA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Intra-Departmental Memorandum



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| **TO:** | Michael Ake  Interim Chief of Police | **ASB #:** 21-004 |
| **FROM:** | Lieutenant Daniel Still  Internal Affairs Section | **DATE:** March 4, 2021 |
| **THROUGH:** | Captain Chris Karl  Support Services Division Commander  Assistant Chief Fred Scruggs  Administrative Services Bureau Commander | |
| **SUBJECT:** | **2020 PURSUIT ANALYSIS REPORT** | |

The Tacoma Police Department uses the IAPro/BlueTeam database to track all Department incidents, to include Vehicle Pursuits. Each vehicle pursuit is reviewed and evaluated – first by a field Supervisor, then by a Shift Commander, and finally by the respective Division Captain.

The Tacoma Police Department recognizes that under [RCW 46.61.035](http://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=46.61.035) (see RCW for legislative language in its entirety), Officers have the legal right and duty to apprehend offenders who flee from the police and present a threat to the public. However, Department members will only engage in pursuits when the necessity to apprehend the violator outweighs the danger posed to the public. Every Department member engaging in a pursuit must be able to articulate what conditions were present that justified the pursuit.

Tacoma Police policy defines a vehicle pursuit as an active attempt by an Officer to apprehend a suspect who willfully fails to immediately bring his or her vehicle to a stop, and drives in a reckless and evasive manner while attempting to elude a pursuing police vehicle.

The following analysis of the 2020 Vehicle Pursuits is based on information retrieved from the IAPro database.

| **Pursuits** | **2019** | **2020** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Total Pursuits | 12 | 9 |
| Number of officers involved | 21 | 19 |
| Most frequent hours 2001-0800 | 3 | 2 |
| Policy Compliant | 10 | 8 |
| Policy Non-Compliant | 2 | 1 |
| Pending | 0 | 0 |
| Accidents during pursuit | 5 | 3 |
| Injuries: Officer | 0 | 0 |
| **Pursuits (Continued)** | **2019** | **2020** |
| Injuries: Suspects | 0 | 0 |
| Injuries: Third Party | 0 | 0 |
| Felony – Person | 10 | 6 |
| Felony – Property | 1 | 1 |
| Traffic Offense – Criminal | 1 | 1 |
| Traffic Offense – Non-Criminal | 0 | 1 |

Nine pursuits took place within the City of Tacoma for 2020. Two of those pursuits were assisting two other agencies – the Pierce County Sheriff's Department and the Lakewood Police Department.

**Reason Initiated:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2019** | | **2020** | |
| Assist outside agency | 1 | 8% | 1 | 11% |
| Felony – Person | 10 | 74% | 7 | 78% |
| Felony – Property | 1 | 8% | 0 | 0% |
| Traffic – Criminal | 1 | 8% | 0 | 0% |
| Traffic – Non-Criminal | 0 | 0% | 1 | 11% |

All nine vehicle pursuits were entered into BlueTeam and reviewed by Department supervisors. Seven out of the nine TPD pursuits were deemed to be within Department policy. The two incidents that were not within Department guidelines were:

1. Officer continued with a pursuit on information not substantiated by any officer.
2. Officer pursued a vehicle northbound in the southbound lane of Interstate 5.

Seven of the nine vehicle pursuits (78%) took place on clear days/nights.

There was no in-car camera video available in any of the nine pursuits.

**Event that Concluded the Pursuit:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2019** | | **2020** | |
| Terminated/Canceled | 1 | 8% | 2 | 22% |
| PIT Maneuver | 2 | 17% | 3 | 33% |
| Suspect stopped vehicle | 4 | 33% | 1 | 11% |
| Suspect vehicle crashed | 4 | 33% | 2 | 22% |
| Suspect vehicle eluded pursuit | 1 | 8% | 1 | 11% |

Of the one vehicle pursuit (11%), the suspect stopped on their own accord. In three vehicle pursuits (33%), the officers used the PIT (Pursuit Intervention Technique) maneuver. Two suspect vehicles crashed (22%), and one suspect vehicle eluded the pursuit (11%).

**ANALYSIS**

In 2020, the number of pursuits the Department was involved in went down from the prior two years – 12 in 2018, 12 in 2019, and 9 in 2020.

Two of the pursuits in 2020 were terminated compared to one in 2019 and one in 2018.

Of the nine vehicle pursuits, one occurred during Day Shift hours; one occurred during the Day Shift/Swing Shift overlap hours; two occurred during Swing Shift hours; one occurred during the Swing Shift/Graveyard Shift overlap hours; and four occurred during the Graveyard Shift hours.

* Day Shift 0600-1600 hours
* Swing Shift 1300-2300 hours
* Graveyard Shift 2000-0600 hours

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Shift** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** |
| Day Shift | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Day/Swing Shift Overlap | \* | \* | 1 |
| Swing Shift | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Swing/Graveyard Shift overlap | 8 | 9 | 1 |
| Graveyard Shift | \* | \* | 4 |
| **Total** | **4** | **12** | **9** |

\*Data for Day/Swing Shift overlap and Swing/Graveyard Shift overlap began its reporting in 2020.

**Annual Review of the Department’s Vehicle Pursuit Policies and Reporting Procedures**

During the annual review of all vehicle pursuits, the Department’s current policies and procedures were reviewed to include the reporting procedures. At this time, the Department is in compliance and we have reviewed our pursuit policy and reporting procedures. All annual training needs have been addressed. There is no need to make changes at this time.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

In 2021, the Department will continue to provide departmental training that is required per CALEA. The Department will be providing EVOC training to Operations personnel. The Department will continue to monitor accidents involving on-duty police employees and address the current hazards of driving police vehicles.

DS:man