TOLEDO POLICE DEPARTMENT

Annual Pursuit Analysis Report

2022

February 28, 2023

To: Chief of Police Michael Troendle

Through: A/Deputy Chief Jay Pachell
               Support and Administrative Services Division

               Captain Kellie Lenhardt
               Support Services Bureau

               Lieutenant David Wieczorek
               Planning, Research and Inspections Section

From: Lieutenant Michael Kurjan
               Accreditation Manager

Subject: Annual Pursuit Analysis – 2022

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The following is a pursuit analysis, which is required by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) on an annual basis. This report takes an in-depth look into all pursuits that occurred in 2022, with focus given to the reasons pursuits were initiated, terminated, and any violations of the pursuit policy that may have occurred. The main purpose of this analysis is to reveal patterns or trends that indicate training needs and/or policy changes. After the data is analyzed, recommendations will be made to the Chief of Police on ways to improve or enhance our current pursuit policy.

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Introduction

The Toledo Police Department recognizes the fact that pursuits can be inherently dangerous. For that reason, pursuits go through multiple layers of review to ensure that protocol is being followed and to identify officer safety issues, potential risks to the public, training needs and liability issues. All pursuits are subject to an after-action review which is completed by the pursuing officer's immediate supervisor and includes all officers involved. This is a crucial part of the review process for a number of reasons. It typically happens shortly after the pursuit, leaving it fresh in the minds of all involved. It also allows the officers a chance to be involved in the review process, giving them a better understanding of what is expected.

Pursuit reports are completed in the Benchmark Analytics system by supervisors. Completion of pursuit reports using this method began in October of 2020. Benchmark is then able to collect the data from each pursuit report and funnel it into an "analytics viewer." This data is vital to the accuracy of this annual analysis report and is useful in identifying any trends and patterns regarding pursuits.

The first section of this analysis will begin by examining the total number of vehicle pursuits that occurred in 2022. The research will look to compare the number of pursuits from the previous year with the goal being to explain any data trends.

Number of Pursuits

| Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Pursuits	84	72	94	132	171	170
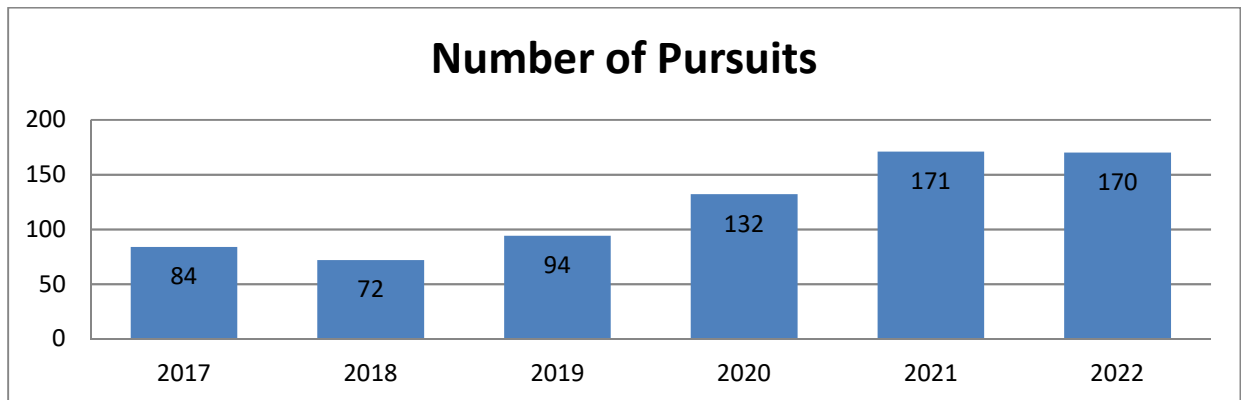
The above chart displays the total number of pursuits that have occurred over the past six years. A total of 170 pursuits occurred in 2022 compared to 171 in 2021. While admittedly small, the 0.6% decrease in pursuits observed from 2021 to 2022 is the first time since 2018 that our total pursuits for the year have decreased. It is encouraging that we did not see a dramatic increase in vehicle pursuits, as total traffic stops increased for the first time in the past three years. During 2022, 19,669 traffic stops were conducted by Toledo Police officers. This is a 17.7% increase compared to 2021 which had 16,713 total traffic stops.

An additional category that we began to track in 2021 is the total number of juveniles involved in vehicle pursuits. It was theorized that by establishing a baseline number as it pertained to a juvenile's involvement in vehicle pursuits, we might be able to determine if an increase in this category could lead to an increase in the total number of pursuits. Of the 170 pursuits that occurred in 2022, 26 of them of them involved a juvenile driver (15.3%). This is compared to 23 pursuits involving juveniles in 2021 (13.4% of all pursuits). There is potential for this number to be

even higher due to the fact that there were numerous pursuits during the year where the suspected driver of the pursued vehicle was never located. The youngest driver of a pursued vehicle in 2022 was 13 years and 53 days old and the average age of a fleeing juvenile suspect was 15 years old. A recent study titled *Heightened Adolescent Risk Taking? Insights from Lab Studies on Age Differences in Decision-Making* regarding adolescent risk taking (which defines adolescents as ages 11-19) concluded that "adolescents take more risks than adults in general, and especially on tasks with immediate outcome feedback on rewards and losses" (Defoe, Semon, Romer, 2019, pp. 56-63).

What this study helps to show in relation to vehicle pursuits is that if a juvenile is being pulled over by the police, and this juvenile is involved in a crime or some sort of criminal activity, their decision making to pull over and stop for the police may be impaired by their increased likelihood to take a risk and flee, especially compared to other age groups. Of the 26 pursuits featuring juvenile drivers, 20 involved a stolen vehicle, five involved reckless driving/traffic offenses and one involved the suspect fleeing after committing an armed robbery. It is anticipated that this category of data will need to be tracked for a few more additional years before we are able to tell if the amount of juveniles involved in pursuits truly impacts the total number of pursuits in any significant way.

Based on recent trends, it was predicted that we would have continued to see an increase in pursuits during this past year. The fact that the total number of pursuits from 2021 to 2022 remained virtually the same is quite remarkable.
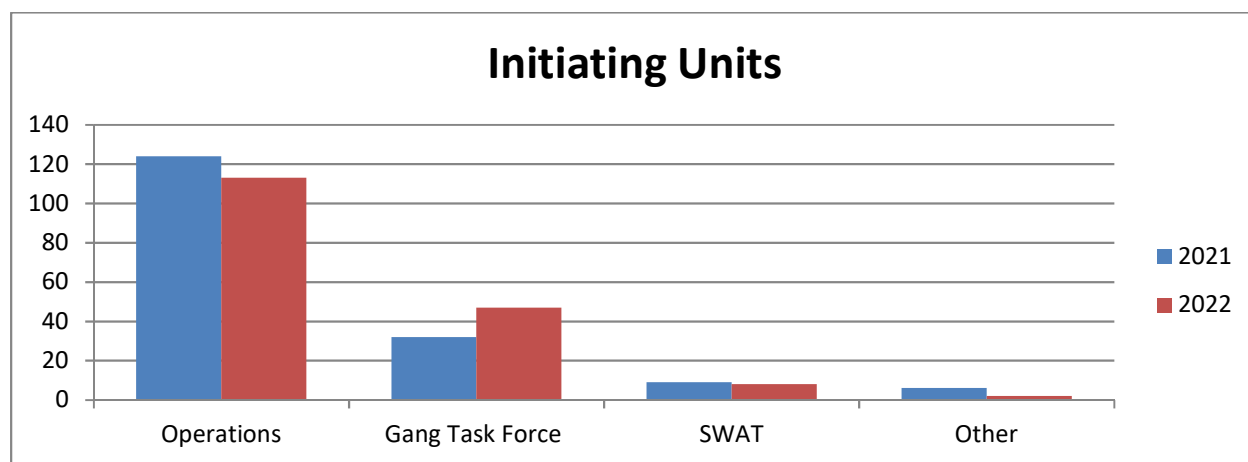

For statistical purposes, beginning in 2021 we began to track the number of pursuits initiated by certain areas of the department. This was done to identify any new trends or patterns relating to who is initiating the majority of the pursuits, while also establishing baseline numbers for future analysis reports. The above chart represents which function of the Toledo Police Department was responsible for initiating each pursuit: Operations officers initiated 113 pursuits (124 in 2021, 8.9% decrease), the Gang Task Force Section initiated 47 pursuits (32 in 2021, 46.9% increase), the SWAT Section initiated eight pursuits (nine in 2021, 11.1% decrease), and there were two pursuits (six in 2021) that were initiated from the "other" category. In that category, one pursuit was initiated by the Canine Unit and one was initiated by a member of the United States Marshals Task Force.

Reason Pursuit Initiated
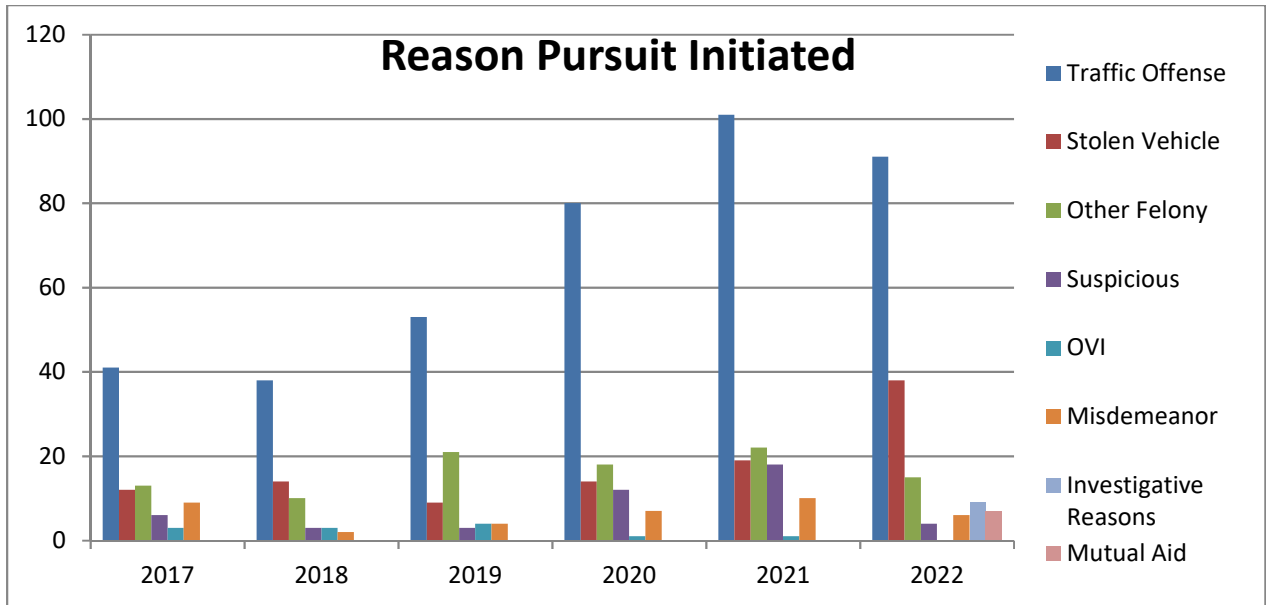
Suspects avoid apprehension for a multitude of reasons and given that numerous police contacts are initiated through traffic stops, it is clear to see why the potential for a vehicle pursuit is always possible. For the purpose of this analysis, only the initial reason for the pursuit was tracked, although it should be noted that pursuits can often times account for more than one initiation reason.

Traffic violations were the most frequent reason for the initiation, accounting for roughly 53.5% (slightly down from 59.1% in 2021) of the total number of pursuits. This was followed by stolen vehicles at 22.4% (up from 11.1% in 2021) felony violations at 8.8% (a decrease from 12.9% in 2021), and finally misdemeanor violations, suspicious vehicles, mutual aid, and investigative reasons accounting for the remaining 15.3 % (slightly down from 16.9% in 2021). For the first time in the past six years, no pursuits were documented with the reason for initiation being "OVI." It should also be noted that "investigative reasons" and "mutual aid" are new categories that are being tracked through the Benchmark Analytics System and have not been previously reported in past years.

Pursuits by Hour
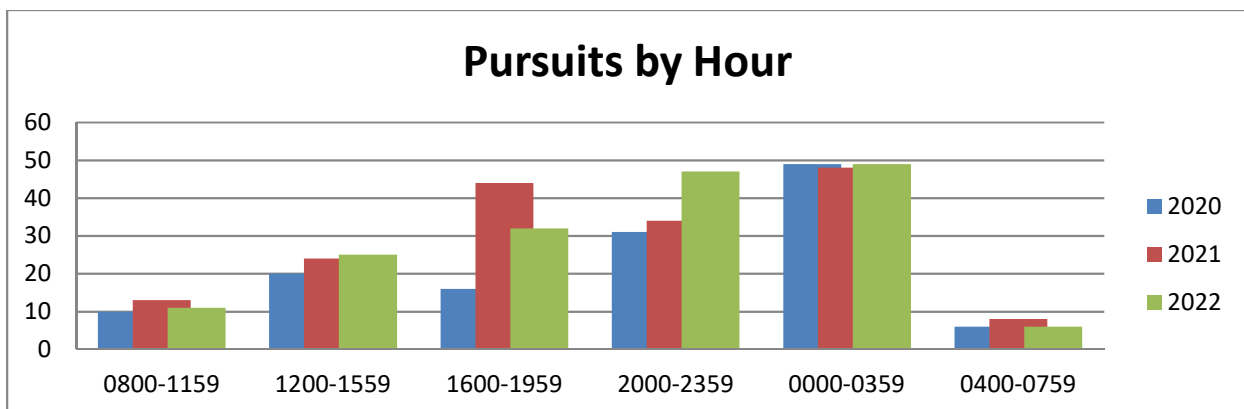
The hours between 0000 and 0359 had the highest percentage of pursuits at 28.8% (remarkably close to the 28.1% in 2021). Only 3.5% of the pursuits occurred between 0400 hours and 0759

hours (down slightly from the 4.7% that occurred in 2021). We observed that 56.5% of all pursuits occurred between 2000 hours and 0359 hours. This has increased from an average of 47.9% that occurred in 2021. The category that saw the biggest increase in pursuits was the hours between 2000 and 2359. 2020 and 2021 averaged 32.5 pursuits per year for this category while 2022 had 47 total pursuits (27.6% of all pursuits for a percentage increase of 38.2% from 2021).

**Pursuits by Day of the Week**
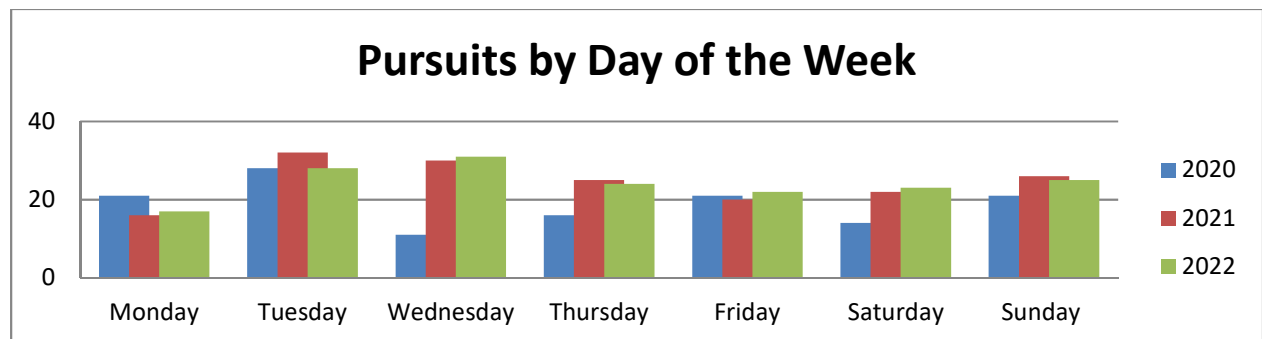
During 2022 we observed no large increase or decrease in pursuits for each day. Compared to 2021, the numbers remained strikingly similar. The largest increase in pursuits was observed on Friday's and that number only increased by two total pursuits (22 pursuits in 2022, 20 pursuits in 2021). Wednesday had the highest amount of pursuits with 31 (In 2021, Tuesday was the highest with 32 pursuits). For the second consecutive year, Monday had the least amount of pursuits with 17 (16 pursuits in 2021).

Pursuits by Month
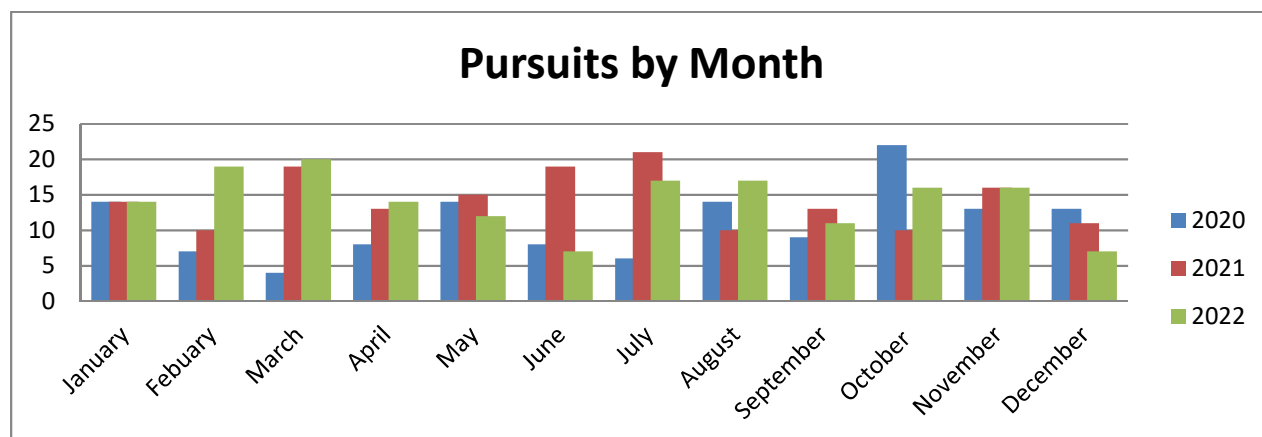
The month of March saw the highest number of pursuits with 20. For reference, the most pursuits that occurred in a month during 2021 were the 21 pursuits that took place in July of that year. February had the second highest month of pursuits with 19 in total. The months of June and December had the lowest number of pursuits with 7 each (The lowest amount observed in a month since 2020). A possible explanation for March having the highest amount of pursuits could come from the fact that during that particular month, three separate crime series were occurring throughout different parts of the city during different times of the day: A Commercial Breaking and Entering Series, a Robbery Series, and finally a Theft from Motor Vehicle Series were all issued in March. When a crime series is occurring, there is always a higher likelihood of increased police proactivity, thus leading to a greater potential for an incident such as a vehicle pursuit to occur.

Duration of Pursuit (Previous)

Duration of Pursuit (New)
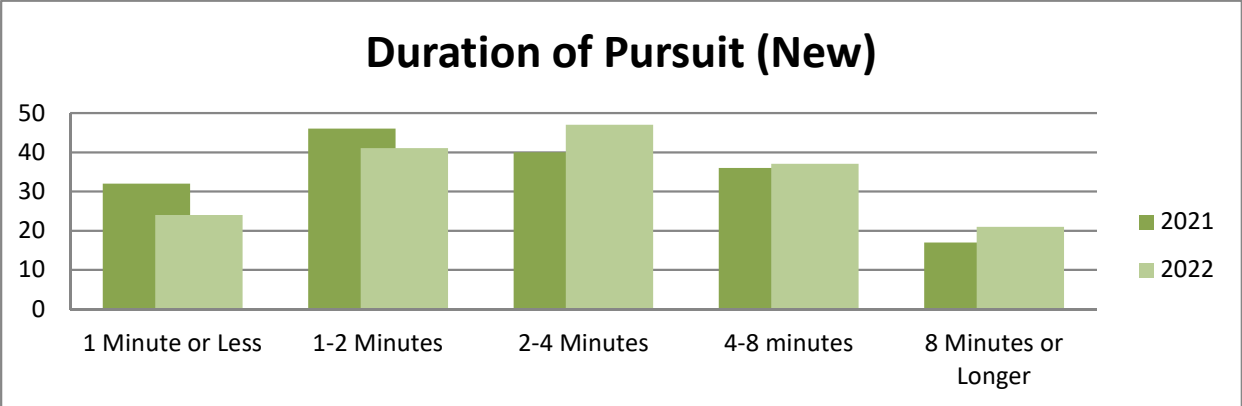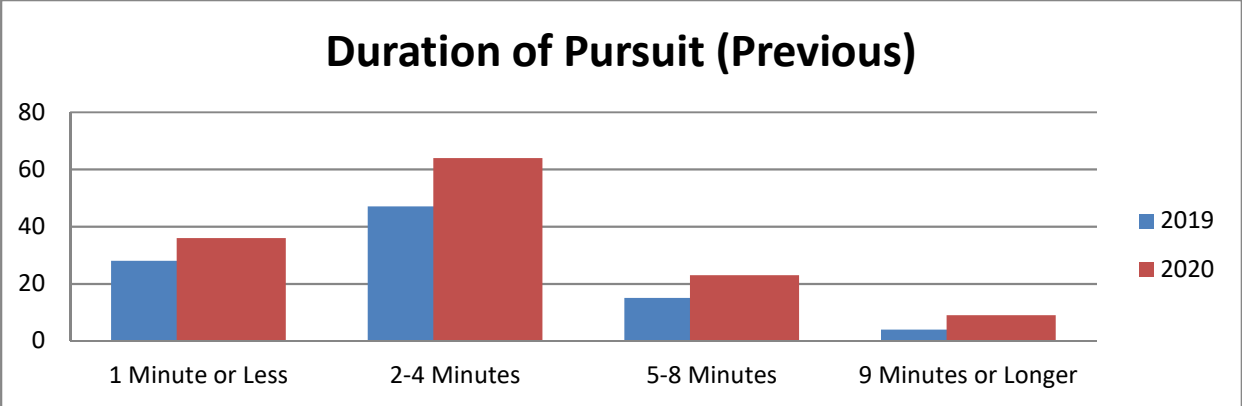
Duration of pursuit data tracked through Benchmark Analytics was re-defined in 2021 and is represented in the chart displaying 2021 and 2022 data (green). The chart showing previous years data is included for reference, however, since the data categories are slightly different, the results from 2021 and 2022 cannot accurately be compared to previous years. 2021 data established a baseline that can be referenced and compared to in future analysis reports. In 2022, 65.9% of vehicle pursuits initiated by a Toledo Police officer lasted less than four minutes in duration (69.0% in 2021). Additionally, 14.1% of all pursuits lasted one minute or less. The longest pursuit **(VP22-3-40)** was 27 minutes in duration and covered 17.7 miles (this pursuit is summarized later in this report).

Reason Pursuit Terminated
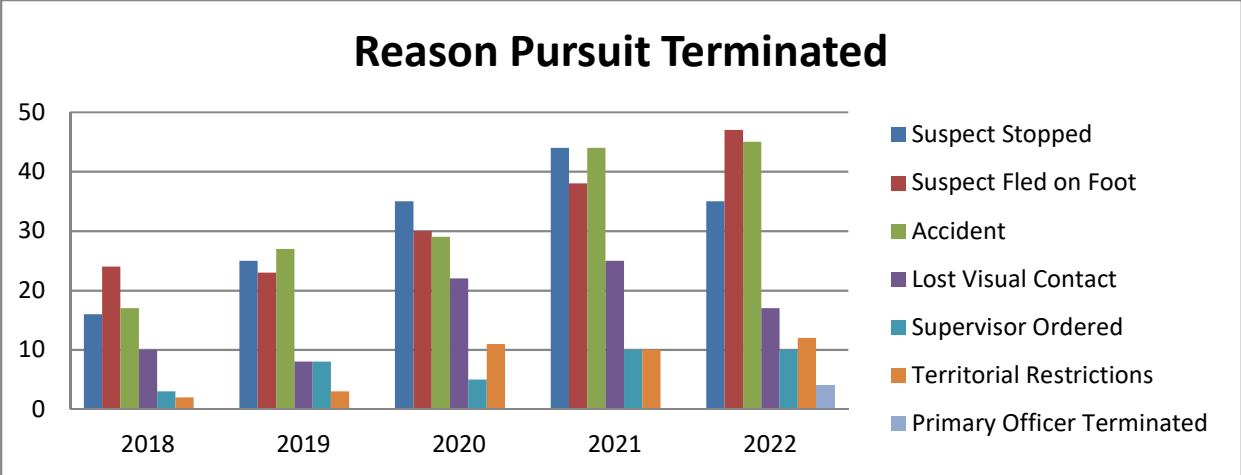
Pursuits ending due to a suspect fleeing on foot (47 total, 27.6%), accounted for the majority of all pursuits with pursuits ending in an accident following closely behind (45 total for 26.5%). In 35 of the pursuits, the suspect stopped their vehicle on their own accord (20.6%).Those pursuits ending because of a loss of visual contact, territorial restrictions, primary officer terminated and supervisor ordered amounted to 25.3% in total. This percentage has remained remarkably consistent from the previous year (26.4% in 2021). The steadiness of this number can most likely be attributed to the supervisors continuing to closely weigh the totality of the circumstances during a vehicle pursuit, and knowing when it is appropriate to terminate. This new category, "Primary Officer Terminated" is being tracked for the first time this year. There was no significant pattern identified from 2021 to 2022 and the data remained quite consistent from year to year.
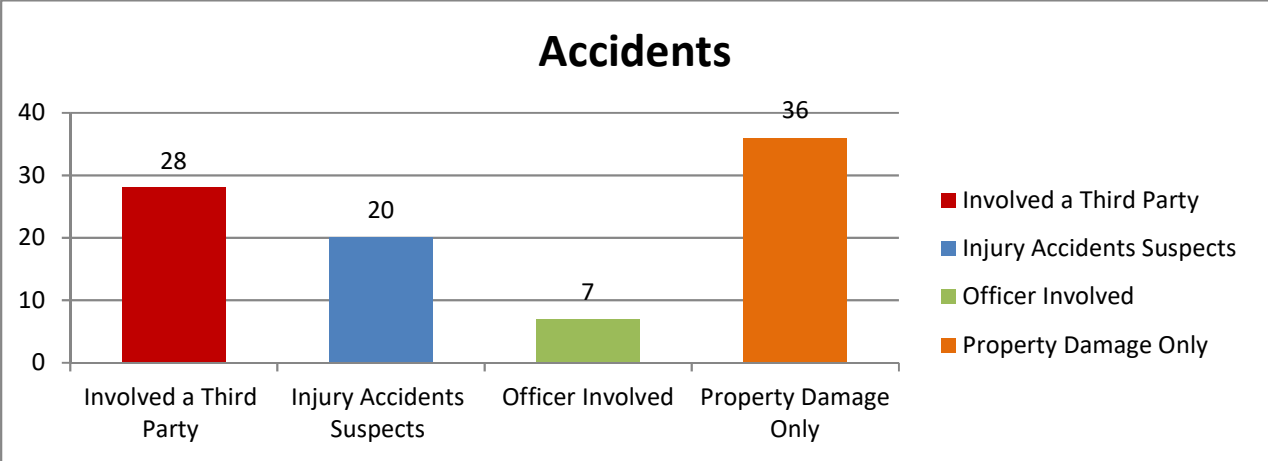
Accidents

A total of 62 pursuits that occurred in 2022 involved an accident (36.5% of all pursuits) compared to 55 in 2021 (a 12.7% increase). The above graph represents the breakdown of those incidents. Three pursuits occurred **(VP22-3-33, VP22-3-45, and VP22-11-184)** that involved an individual losing their life during the course of, or shortly after a vehicle pursuit. These incidents are summarized later in this report. There were an additional 18 pursuits that resulted in injury to the suspect. Most of the injuries were minor in nature. Toledo Police officers were involved in seven accidents and there were a total of 28 accidents involving a third party. It should be noted that a total of 29 accidents accounted for more than one above listed category (a total of 91 events are displayed in the above chart).

Pursuit Violations

A bar chart titled "Pursuit Violations" showing values for years 2018 through 2022. The y-axis ranges from 0 to 10.
- 2018: 5
- 2019: 5
- 2020: 6
- 2021: 6
- 2022: 8
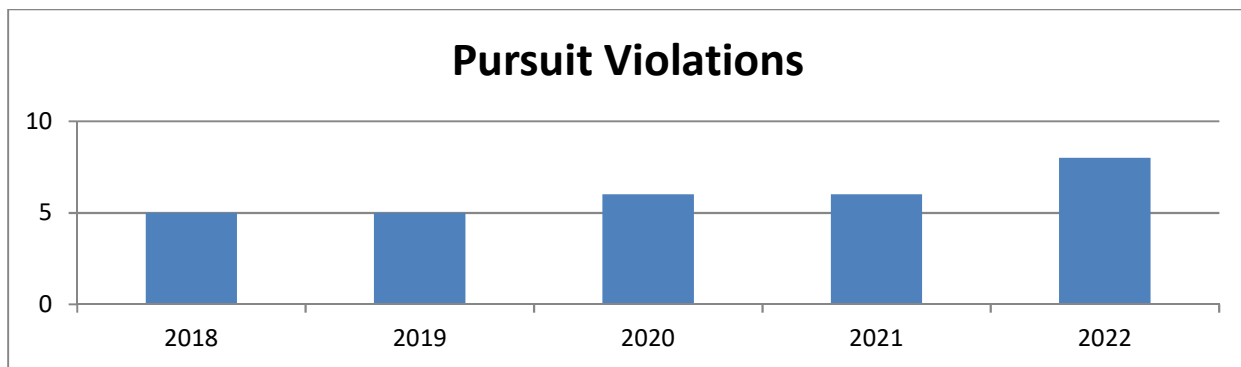
Per the Toledo Police Department Internal Affairs Section, in 2022 there were a total of eight pursuits where an officer or multiple officers were found to have committed a pursuit violation that lead to an internal investigation (2021 had six instances). This accounts for 4.7% of the pursuits that occurred in 2022. All of the violations were directly related to the pursuit policy, with seven of the violations being minor in nature and one incident being major. In all of the incidents, officers were either formally counseled or given a verbal reprimand. In addition to this, officers are also provided with instruction on proper procedure regarding the department's pursuit policy and advised on how to avoid future violations.

Forcible-Stop Devices Used in 2022

Incident Number	Date	Effective
VP22-1-12	01/19/2022	Yes
VP22-3-44	03/03/2022	Yes
VP22-4-58	03/26/2022	Yes
VP22-7-102	07/12/2022	Yes
VP22-9-150	09/13/2022	Yes
VP22-11-176	10/14/2022	Yes
VP22-11-185	11/26/2022	No
VP22-12-192	11/30/2022	Yes

Per the Toledo Police Department Manual, the use of road spike devices (forcible-stop device) shall be permitted in order to prevent or to terminate a vehicle pursuit for a misdemeanor or felony offense, under the training guidelines established. In 2022, there were eight instances where officers deployed a forcible stop device (road spikes) during vehicle pursuits (this is down from 13 deployments in 2021). Out of the eight deployments, seven were successful. In all of the incidents there were no injuries caused to the officers, suspects, or the public by deploying the forcible stop devices.

<u>**Review of 2022 Pursuits**</u>

Below is a summary of some of the pursuits that involved an accident, policy violation, were newsworthy, or had unusual circumstances.

- **VP22-3-33** – A Toledo Police Operations unit initiated a traffic stop for a traffic offense at W. Sylvania Ave and Willys Pkwy. After an initial investigation, the officers found that the suspect had multiple warrants out for their arrest. Upon learning this information, the officers re-approached the suspect's vehicle and advised him that he needed to step out of the vehicle. At this time the suspect fled from the traffic stop in his vehicle.

    The suspect led officers on a pursuit through numerous city streets that also included residential areas. Multiple Toledo Police units were involved in the pursuit and the suspect vehicle was ultimately lost in the area of W. Alexis Rd and Woodside Trail. At the time, officers observed W. Alexis Rd blocked off with barricades as Toledo Edison was actively working in that area. Shortly after losing visual contact with the vehicle, officers observed that the suspect's vehicle had driven through the barricades and crashed, with the suspect himself no longer in sight. While officers actively searched for the suspect, Toledo Edison workers informed officers that they had observed the suspect flee on foot, westbound on W. Alexis Rd and that the suspect had tried to flee in a semi-truck parked on scene. Officers were able to locate the suspect in the semi-truck and ordered him to remove himself from the vehicle. The suspect exited the vehicle and once again fled from the officers on foot, ultimately being caught and placed into custody by officers.

    Shortly after these events, officers on scene located a deceased pedestrian near where the suspect's vehicle had crashed. After an investigation, it was determined that the suspect had struck and killed the pedestrian with his vehicle. The suspect was ultimately charged with aggravated vehicular homicide, failure to comply, and failing to stop after an accident. The suspect was later sentenced to 9 to 12 years in prison.

    This pursuit occurred on February 27, 2022 at 2355 hours. The pursuit traveled approximately 9 miles and lasted approximately 8 minutes.

- **VP22-3-40** – Toledo Police Operations officers were dispatched to a weapons call at 3110 W. Central Ave. The call came from a victim who alleged that she had been assaulted and held at gunpoint by the suspect the night prior. When the call was placed, the victim was attending a medical appointment and away from the suspect who was waiting for the victim in a vehicle, outside of the location. Officers arrived on scene and observed the suspect vehicle leaving the location's parking lot. Officers attempted to stop the vehicle but the suspect continued to drive away, leading multiple police units on a pursuit through parking lots, city streets, and interstate highways. As the vehicle continued to flee from officers on I-75 North, a supervisor made the decision to order the pursuit terminated.

    Shortly after this termination, the primary police vehicle in the original portion of the pursuit re-engaged the suspect vehicle after the suspect had exited the

interstate. This portion of the pursuit involved the suspect fleeing officers by traversing city streets and briefly driving off road. The suspect vehicle at one point began traveling the wrong way down a road that had been designated as a construction zone. This action caused a supervisor to once again order the pursuit terminated.

As police units remained in the area, officers reacquired the suspect vehicle, parked on the street. The suspect was observed re-entering the vehicle and driving away. At this point, a Toledo Police Canine unit who had been patrolling the area located the suspect vehicle and attempted to initiate a traffic stop. The suspect refused to comply and once again began to flee. As the pursuit carried on, police units involved in the pursuit ultimately terminated their involvement due to either vehicle issues or excessive distance between themselves and the suspect vehicle. After the previous units exited, two additional Toledo Police Operations units entered the pursuit. These two units were joined by a Toledo Police Gang Task Force unit. The pursuit continued on city streets, finally coming to an end when the suspect vehicle struck a citizen's vehicle, causing a non-injury accident. Immediately following the accident, the suspect exited his vehicle and fled on foot. The suspect was quickly taken into custody by officers following a brief foot pursuit. A firearm was recovered by officers from inside the suspect's vehicle. The suspect was charged with kidnapping, having weapons while under disability, failure to comply, and driving while under suspension.

The pursuit occurred on March 8, 2022 at 1309 hours. The pursuit traveled approximately 17.7 miles and lasted approximately 27 minutes, making it the longest pursuit of 2022.

After review, it was determined that one of the officer's actions violated department policy regarding Pursuit Operations – Types and Numbers of Police Vehicles. This violation was found to be sustained and the officer was issued a counseling.

- **VP22-3-45** – While on patrol in the area of N. Detroit Ave and Phillips Ave, a Toledo Police Operations unit attempted to initiate a traffic stop on a vehicle whose registered owner had multiple warrants for their arrest. The suspect vehicle refused to stop and a pursuit began. As the pursuit continued, the suspect vehicle entered onto I-75 North and began traveling at a high rate of speed while making numerous lane changes and almost striking another vehicle on the roadway. At one point, the suspect vehicle reversed course near the Alexis Rd exit and began traveling southbound on I-75 North, heading the wrong direction on the interstate and into oncoming traffic. This action caused a supervisor, who was monitoring the pursuit over the radio, to terminate the police unit's involvement in the pursuit. The police unit followed the order and shortly after the pursuit was terminated, the suspect vehicle (while still traveling in the wrong direction) struck a semi-truck head on, causing a fiery crash. The driver of the suspect vehicle, along with a passenger, were both killed as a result of the crash. No other involved parties were injured.

  This pursuit occurred on March 10, 2022 at 0041 hours. The pursuit traveled approximately 4.9 miles and lasted approximately 4 minutes.

- **VP22-9-152** – A Toledo Police Operations unit responded to a call to assist Toledo Public Schools Police who were working security at the Bowsher High School Homecoming dance. The Toledo Police unit was advised that two individuals were observed in the school's parking lot, holding assault rifles. As the police unit responded to the area, a vehicle matching the description of the one that the suspects were alleged to be in passed the police unit, traveling in the opposite direction. The police unit quickly turned around on the suspect vehicle and attempted to initiate a traffic stop. The vehicle did not stop and a pursuit began. The suspect vehicle began increasing its speed while traveling on city streets, ultimately entering I-75 North. Eventually, the suspect vehicle exited the highway onto Stickney Ave. The police unit lost site of the vehicle and terminated their involvement in the pursuit.

  Shortly after this occurred, a Toledo Police Vice Detective observed the suspect vehicle in the 500 block of Pearl St. The detective was able to observe the suspects exit the vehicle and advised responding officers of their movements. A Toledo Police Operations unit was then able to locate and stop the suspects, taking them both into custody. A rifle and handgun were recovered during the investigation. The suspects were charged with failure to comply, improperly handling firearms in a motor vehicle, and illegal conveyance or possession of a deadly weapon on school premises.

  This pursuit occurred on September 24, 2022 at 2004 hours. The pursuit traveled approximately 10 miles and lasted approximately 6 minutes.

- **VP22-10-166** – A Toledo Police Gang Task Force unit conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle for a violation in the area of South Ave and the Anthony Wayne Trail. During the course of the stop, officers learned that the driver of the vehicle had a felony warrant from Wisconsin for child sexual assault. Once the warrant was verified and officers were advised that this warrant included national extradition, the officers re-approached the suspect vehicle to take the driver/suspect into custody. When officers advised the suspect to step out of the vehicle, the suspect placed the vehicle in drive and began fleeing from officers.

  The pursuit traveled through numerous city streets and involved multiple police units, both from the Gang Task Force and Operations Division. Eventually, the pursuit did leave the Toledo city limits, entering into Holland, OH. The decision was made to continue the pursuit until Toledo Police units could be relieved by a neighboring jurisdiction, based on the severity of the suspect's warrant and his likelihood of escape. Prior to an outside agency becoming involved in the pursuit, the pursuit ultimately ended when the suspect vehicle crashed into a fence located in the 200 block of Crissey Rd in Holland, OH. In addition to the warrant for his arrest, the suspect was charged with failure to comply.

  This pursuit occurred on October 14, 2022 at 0047 hours. The pursuit traveled approximately 11.5 miles and lasted approximately 7 minutes.

- **VP22-11-184** – Toledo Police Operations officers were dispatched to a call in the 4600 block of Clover Ln regarding an unwanted person. While enroute, officers were advised that the suspect had unverified warrants for his arrest. Once officers arrived on scene, they attempted to investigate the situation and speak with the suspect. During the course of the investigation, officers attempted to place the suspect into custody, however, the suspect was ultimately able to flee officers on foot and get into a vehicle, driving away from the scene.

  A responding police unit observed the suspect vehicle fleeing the scene and attempted to initiate a traffic stop. The suspect vehicle continued fleeing, traveling on city streets and running multiple red lights. The suspect created a substantial amount of distance between his vehicle and the pursuing officer's. Shortly after the pursuit began, the suspect vehicle ran a red light at the intersection of Monroe St and Talmadge Rd. This action caused the suspect vehicle to crash into a third party vehicle on the roadway as well as a parked, occupied vehicle in a parking lot near the intersection. The driver of the suspect vehicle was pronounced deceased on scene as a result of the crash. A third party individual who was involved in the accident sustained serious injuries as well.

  This pursuit occurred on November 23, 2022 at 0828 hours. This pursuit traveled approximately .5 miles and lasted less than 1 minute.

Conclusions

The Toledo Police Department strives to maintain a clear understanding of all potential risks associated with vehicle pursuits and due to this, a strict pursuit policy continues to be maintained, reviewed, and enforced. This pursuit policy incorporates numerous practical restrictions that are put into place to assist both officers and supervisors with their constant evaluation of the pursuit. These restrictions encompass categories such as the nature and seriousness of the offense, weather and roadway conditions, volume of vehicular and pedestrian traffic, speed of the pursuit, territorial restrictions, and the number of police vehicles allowed in a pursuit. Additionally, there are explicit guidelines that require the mandatory termination of the pursuit. These restrictions ensure a balance between the apprehension of the suspect and the protection of all persons from injury and unnecessary property loss. These current restrictions routinely produce a safe resolution to the vast majority of all vehicle pursuits.

It should also be noted that the department's pursuit policy clearly defines applicable code sections from the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) as well as the Toledo Municipal Code (TMC) that govern the emergency operation of a police vehicle. These codes are mentioned below:

- ORC 4511.03: Public safety vehicle to proceed cautiously past red or stop signal
- TMC 331.18: Emergency or public safety vehicles at stop signals or signs; turning movements
- ORC 4511.24: Public safety vehicle exempted from speed limits
- TMC 333.05: Speed exceptions for emergency or safety vehicles
- ORC 4511.37: Turning in roadway prohibited; exception
- ORC 4511.45: Right-of-way of public safety vehicles
- TMC 331.19: Right-of-way of public safety vehicles
- ORC 4511.45.2: Pedestrian yield right-of-way to public safety vehicle
- TMC 371.08: Yielding to public safety vehicle
- ORC 4513.21: Horns, sirens and warning devices

These ordinances place two major restrictions on police officers when operating a police vehicle under emergency or pursuit conditions: A public safety vehicle only gains the right-of-way when using both emergency lights and siren; and, the operator of the public safety vehicle must drive with due regard for the safety of all persons on or about the streets or roadways.

It is also important to mention that the Toledo Police Department's pursuit policy is also in compliance with the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) as well as the Ohio Collaborative Community-Police Advisory Board. These organizations recognize that vehicle pursuits pose a high risk to both officers and the community. Because of this, these organizations require an accredited agency to have explicit policies and procedures for vehicle pursuits in place. Furthermore, initial training and annual review of these policies and procedures is also necessary. Most recently, CALEA awarded the Toledo Police Department re-accreditation in March of 2022. The Toledo Police Department was also most recently certified by the Ohio Collaborative in their Vehicular Pursuit standard in July of 2020.

In CALEA standard 41.2.2 *Pursuit of Motor Vehicles*, an accredited agency is required to review their "reporting procedures." The Toledo Police Department has now been utilizing a new reporting platform, Benchmark Analytics, for over two years now. The utilization of their pursuit forms allows our department to pull data more quickly than in years past. Furthermore, their form allows for customization. This feature enables our department to identify categories of data that presently may not be available, but could ultimately be valuable as time goes on. The other

useful feature of Benchmark is that they have designed an "analytics viewer" that allows our department the ability to sort through the data more efficiently than in the past, thus creating a higher likelihood that a trend or pattern will be identified more expeditiously than in previous years.

In terms of trends or patterns that were observed in 2022 compared to the past, a few items were observed. As previously mentioned, the total number of pursuits remained consistent from the previous year. This is an encouraging sign considering the total number of traffic stops increased by 17.7% from 2021 to 2022. Traffic stops began rapidly decreasing the last few years (29,341 in 2019, 17,713 in 2020, and 16,713 in 2021) but are now increasing at the conclusion of 2022 (19,669 traffic stops). What was interesting the last few years was that vehicle pursuits were increasing at a rapid rate as traffic stops were drastically decreasing.

To try and determine why this pattern may be occurring, we began to look at total tracked crime. Total tracked crime is a benchmark used by the Toledo Police Criminal Intelligence Section that focuses on the most impactful crimes that are occurring throughout the city. Tracked crimes includes Homicides, Shootings, Robberies, Burglaries, Auto Thefts, and Thefts from a Motor Vehicle. These crimes were then looked at to see if they by chance had an impact on the total number of vehicle pursuits. We noticed a steady increase in total tracked crime from 2019 to 2021, correlating with the increase in pursuits. It was theorized that if crime is increasing, there is a higher probability that a vehicle pursuit may occur when an officer attempts to conduct a traffic stop, based on the fact that the fleeing driver has an increased likelihood of potentially being involved in one of the previously mentioned crime categories. In 2022 there were 6,497 total tracked crimes compared to 2021 which saw 6,978 total tracked crimes. This is the first decrease in total tracked crimes we have observed over the course of the last few years and while total pursuits only dropped slightly from the previous year, it does support the theory that total tracked crime can impact the amount of vehicle pursuits we see from year to year.

An additional trend that was observed deals with the reason why a pursuit was initiated. As previously mentioned, the reason for initiation categories consist of traffic offense, stolen vehicle, other felony offense, suspicious activity, OVI, misdemeanor offense, investigative reasons, and mutual aid. Of these categories, the one that showed the most notable change was "stolen vehicle." Over the course of the past five years, there has been an average of 13.6 pursuits each year that were initiated due to the suspect vehicle being stolen. In 2022 we observed 38 such incidents, double of what was reported in 2021 (19 incidents). Comparatively, total stolen motor vehicles remained remarkably similar in 2021 and 2022 (1,269 and 1,258 respectively). To comprehend the large increase in pursuits initiated due to a vehicle being reported stolen, the logical explanation is our department's access to the new FLOCK Safety technology, which involves the use of stationary license plate readers (LPRs) throughout the city. This technology can be used to locate stolen vehicles through automatic license plate recognition. This technology was implemented in May and it is fair to say that with an increased ability to identify and locate stolen motor vehicles, the odds of a pursuit being initiated because of this reason was likely to be higher than in previous years.

While the number of total pursuits still remains high, it is important to remember that out of every traffic stop that occurred in 2022, only 0.86% resulted in a vehicle pursuit.

Recommendations

When looking at what can be improved upon when discussing vehicle pursuits as a whole, a few items come to mind. The first item deals with how officers who are in need of additional vehicle pursuit related training are identified. Currently, per Toledo Police Department Manual Directive 103.11 *Early Intervention System*, officers who may qualify for the Early Intervention System (EIS) as it relates to vehicle pursuits are identified after "two or more violations of the Vehicle Pursuit Policy within a 12 month period."

Presently, the department is working on enhancing our EIS program through Benchmark Analytics. Beginning in July of 2022, the department began utilizing Benchmark's "First Sign Early Intervention System." While this system has not replaced the department's current EIS practices, it has been used to provide supplemental information regarding officer behavior. Per Benchmark, this system is "designed to serve as a tool to assist law enforcement agencies with information relating to how personnel are performing their policing functions." The goal of this system is to "measure levels of activity to determine officer risk. By focusing on behaviors, interventions can be designed to reduce negative outcomes." Ultimately the intention of this system is to support officers in developing better and more meaningful interactions with the communities they serve.

To this point, the First Sign system is currently only utilizing response to resistance reports within their algorithm to identify "at-risk" officers. It is recommended that the next phase of this system be to begin incorporating data from vehicle pursuit reports into the First Sign algorithm. The purpose of this new addition would be to more efficiently identify officers who may need additional training or guidance when it comes to their participation in vehicle pursuits.

The next recommendation also involves the Benchmark Analytics System. As we enter into our third full year of utilizing their system to document our vehicle pursuit reports, there is potential to begin collecting more data that may ultimately give us a clearer understanding of our officer's involvement in vehicle pursuits as a whole. For example, all of the above statistics that are represented in various charts and graphs comes from data pulled directly from Benchmark's "analytics viewer" which funnels data directly from each reported vehicle pursuit. In addition to what is already being documented in this report, we can begin collecting and analyzing additional data from vehicle pursuits such as what sectors of the city the majority of pursuits are occurring in, how much environmental factors play a role in the safe resolution of a vehicle pursuit, what the average top speed of a vehicle pursuit is for a given year, and so in. By honing in on some of these more detailed categories, we may be able to get a clearer picture on what improvements need to be made when it comes to our policies and training.

Regarding training, it is recommended that annual motor vehicle pursuit training continues and that during this training, officers are required to review and understand Toledo Police Department Manual Directive 401.1 *Pursuit Operations*. This is not only a requirement of CALEA Standard 41.2.2 *Pursuit of Motor Vehicles*, but also an excellent way to keep officers familiarized with the most up to date pursuit policies as well as any new methods that can assist with the safe resolution of vehicle pursuits. In 2023, this training is planned to be included within Benchmark's Learning Management System.

In relation to any policy recommendations, it appears that the current policies and procedures that are documented in 401.1 *Pursuit Operations* are providing officers with clear and explicit direction in terms of what should or should not occur during a vehicle pursuit. At this time, there does not appear to be a need to alter this current directive, however, it is critical that this

directive be reviewed each year to ensure that the department is maintaining a reasonable and viable pursuit policy, while also achieving the twin goals of protecting life and property and apprehending law violators.

Citations

Defoe, I., Semon Dubas, J., & Romer, D. (2019). Heightened Adolescent Risk Taking? Insights From Lab Studies on Age Differences in Decision-Making. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences Vol. 6*, 56-63. **https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/2372732218801037**