

TOLEDO POLICE DEPARTMENT



Annual Pursuit Analysis Report 2023

July 22, 2024

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Subject: Annual Pursuit Analysis – 2023

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 2023, 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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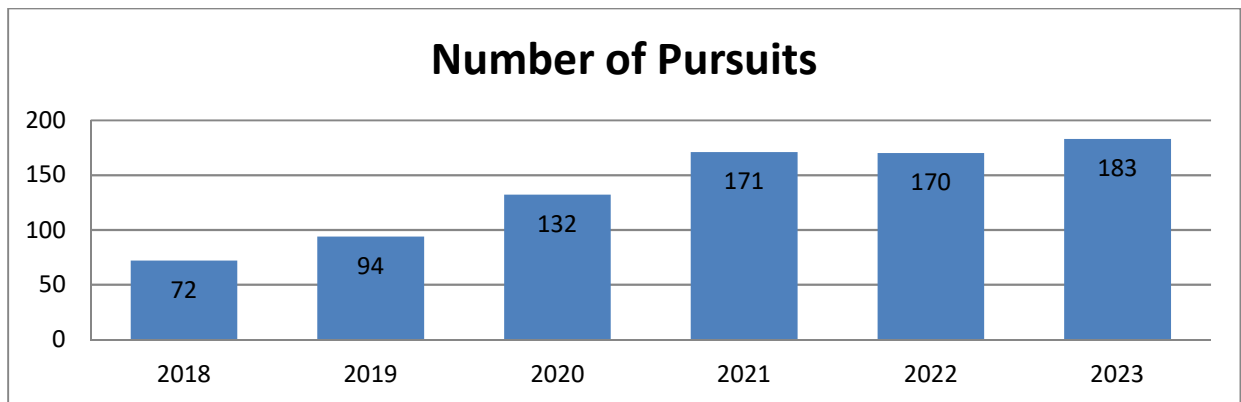
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Introduction

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 the event 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.

For the bulk of 2023, pursuit reports were completed in the Benchmark Analytics system by supervisors. As of November 1st, 2023, a new system called Blue Team is being utilized for the completion of pursuit reports. The data from each report can then be collected and analyzed using the IA Pro system that syncs with Blue Team. The data is vital to the accuracy of the 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 2023. The research will compare the number of pursuits from the previous year with the goal of explaining any data trends.

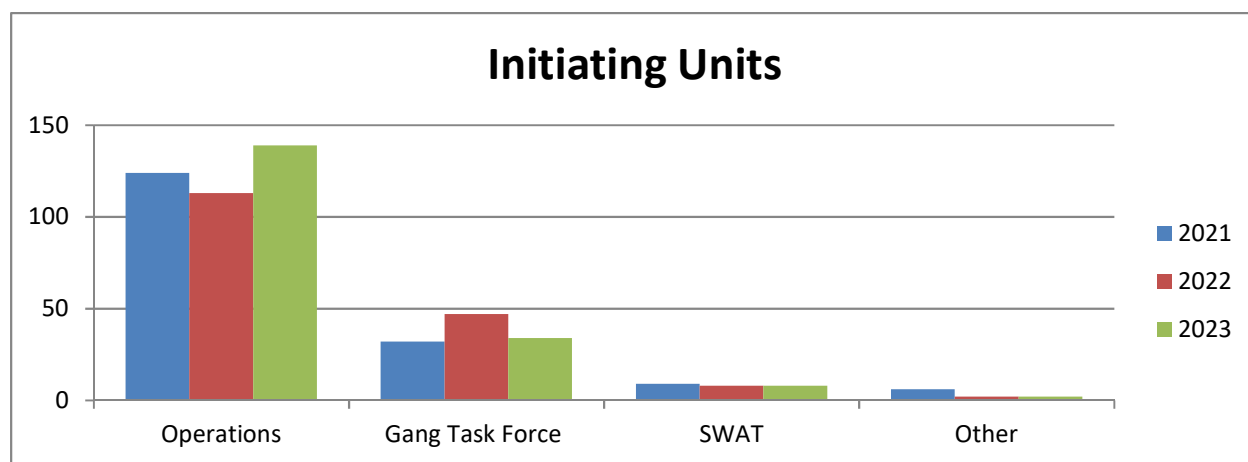


The above chart displays the total number of pursuits that have occurred over the past six years. A total of 183 pursuits occurred in 2023 compared to 170 in 2022. This is an increase of 8% from 2022. With the exception of the one pursuit decrease from 2021 to 2022, this is the smallest increase since 2018. It is encouraging that we did not see a dramatic increase in vehicle pursuits, as total traffic stops increased by 29% from 2022 with 19,669 stops compared to 2023 with 25,348 stops.

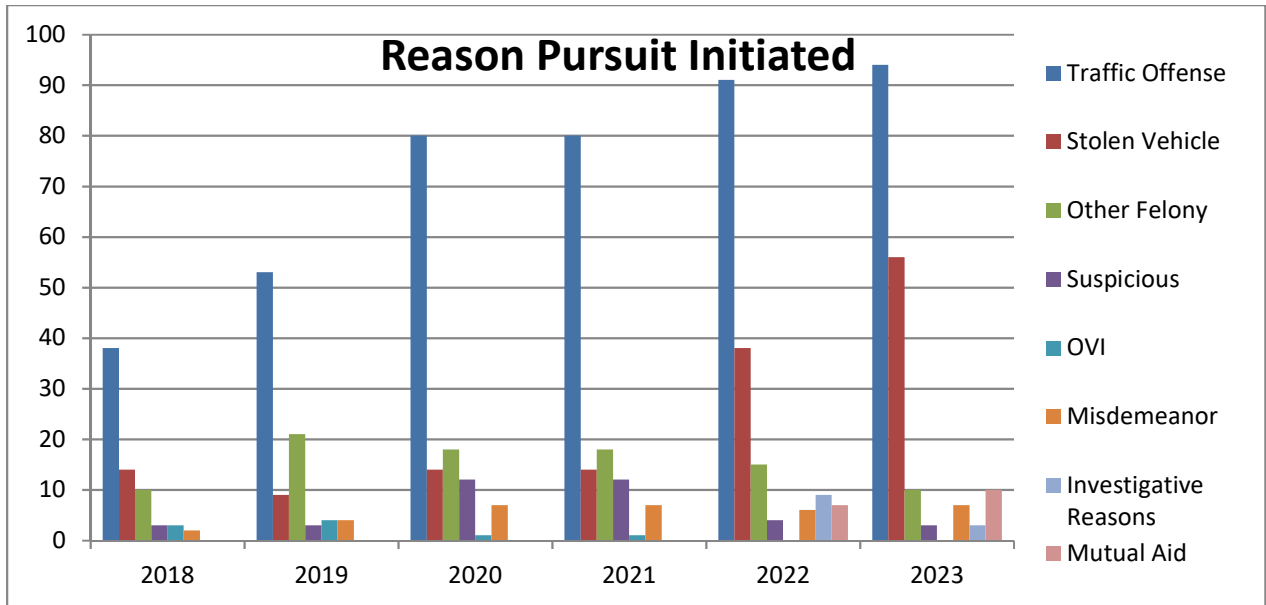
An additional category that we began to track in 2021 is the total number of juveniles involved in vehicle pursuits. It was theorized that by establishing a baseline number as it pertained to a juvenile's involvement in vehicle pursuits, we might be able to determine if an increase in this category could lead to an increase in the total number of pursuits. Of the 183 pursuits that occurred in 2023, 28 of them or 15.3% involved a juvenile driver. This is compared to 26 pursuits involving juveniles in 2022, still 15.3%. There is potential for this number to be even higher due to the fact that there were numerous pursuits during the year where the driver of the pursued vehicle was never located. The youngest driver of a pursued vehicle in 2023 was 14 years old and the average age of a fleeing juvenile suspect was 16 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).

This study helps to show that if a juvenile is being pulled over by the police, and the juvenile is involved in a crime or some sort of criminal activity, their decision to pull over for the police may be impaired by the increased likelihood to take a risk, and flee. This is in contrast to other age groups. Of the 28 pursuits involving juvenile drivers, 18 involved a stolen vehicle, 8 involved reckless driving/traffic offenses 1 involved a felony weapons offense and 1 involved a felony theft offense. We anticipate that the data will need to be tracked for a few more years before we are able to determine if the number of juveniles involved in pursuits impacts the total number of pursuits in any significant way.

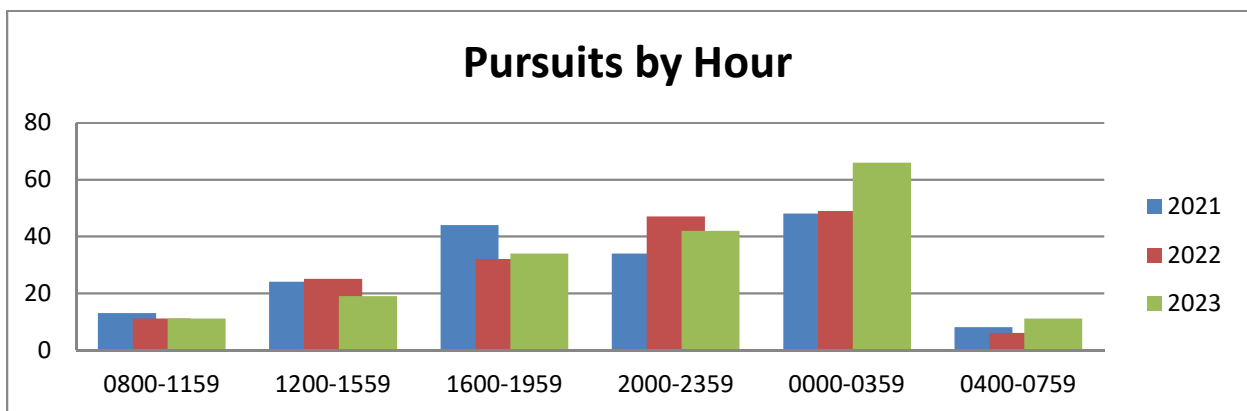


For statistical purposes, beginning in 2021 we began to track the number of pursuits initiated by units in different sections of the department. This was done to identify any new trends or patterns relating to who is initiating the majority of the pursuits, while also establishing baseline numbers for future analysis reports. The above chart represents which function of the Toledo Police Department was responsible for initiating each pursuit. In 2023, Operations officers initiated 139 pursuits compared to 113 pursuits in 2022, a 23% increase. The Gang Task Force Section initiated 34 pursuits in 2023 and 47 pursuits in 2022, a 28% decrease. The SWAT Section initiated 8 pursuits in both 2023 and 2022. There were 2 pursuits in both 2023 and 2022 that were initiated by “other” units. In 2023, one pursuit listed as being initiated by an “other” unit was initiated by the Canine Unit and one was initiated by a member of the Ohio Interdiction Task Force.



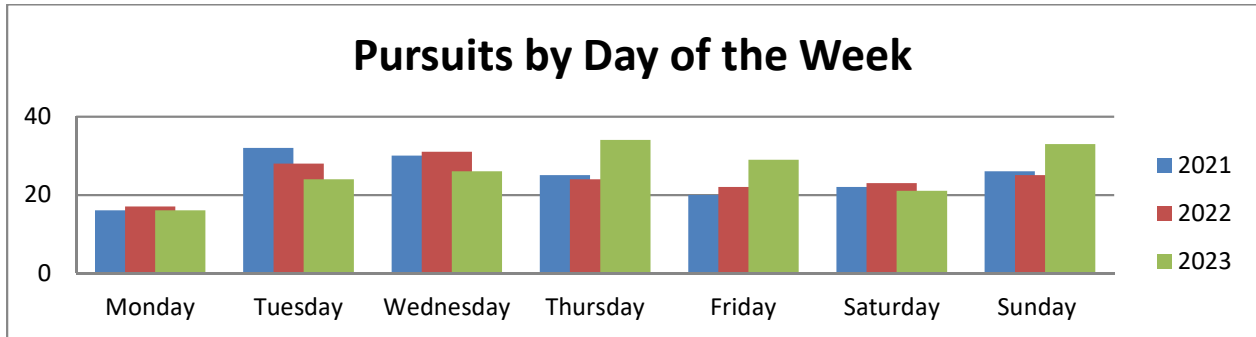
Suspects avoid apprehension for a multitude of reasons. Given that numerous police contacts are initiated through traffic stops, it is clear to see why the potential for a vehicle pursuit is always possible. For the purpose of this analysis, only the initial reason for the pursuit was tracked. Although, pursuits can often be attributed to more than one initiation reason.

Traffic violations were the most frequent reason for the initiation, accounting for roughly 51.3%, down slightly from 53.5% in 2022. This was followed by stolen vehicles at 30.6%, up from 22.4% in 2022. Next was felony violations at 5.4%, a decrease from 8.8% in 2022. Misdemeanor violations, suspicious vehicles, mutual aid, and investigative reasons accounting for the remaining 12.6%, down from 15.3% in 2022. For the second time in the past six years, no pursuits were documented with the reason for initiation of “OVI.” “Investigative reasons” and “mutual aid” are newer categories that the department began tracking in 2021 and had not been reported in prior years.

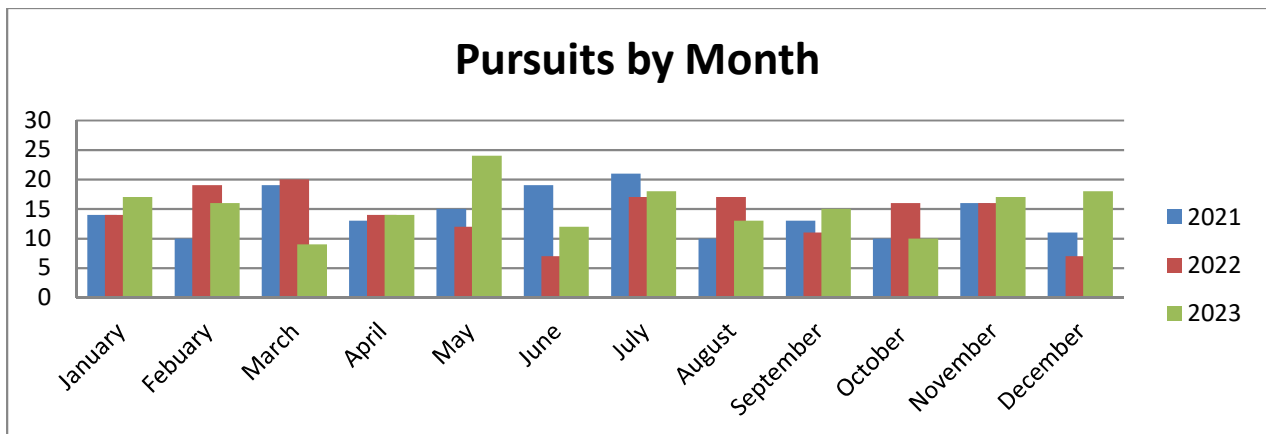


The hours between 0000 and 0359 hours had the highest percentage of pursuits at 36%, up from 28.8% in 2022. Only 6% of the pursuits occurred between 0400 and 0759 hours, up from the 3.5% that occurred in 2022. Another 6% occurred between 0800 and 1159 hours, remaining unchanged from 2022. We observed that 22.9% of all pursuits occurred between 2000 and 2359 hours. This

has decreased from 27.6% in 2022. The category that saw the biggest increase in pursuits was the hours between 0000 and 0359 hours. Years 2021 and 2022 averaged 48.5 pursuits for this category while 2023 had 66 total pursuits. That equates to 36% of all pursuits for a percentage increase of 35% from 2022.

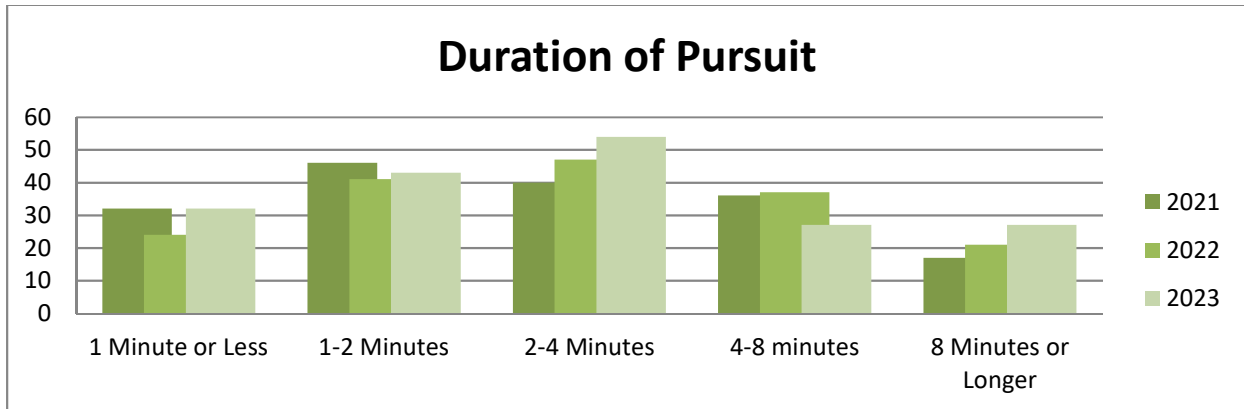


During 2023 we observed a decrease in the number of pursuits over four days of the week, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday, totaling a combined 12 fewer pursuits. Thursday, Friday and Sunday saw an increase in 2023, totaling 26 additional pursuits those days. The largest day of the week increase in 2023 was Thursdays with an increase of 10 pursuits on that day. The largest day of the week decrease in 2023 was Wednesdays with 5 less pursuits on that day. Thursdays had the highest number of pursuits in 2023 with 34, while Wednesdays had the highest number of pursuits in 2022 with 31. Monday continues to be the day of the week with the lowest and most consistent number of pursuits for the third consecutive year with 16, 17 and 16 respectively from 2021 thru 2023.

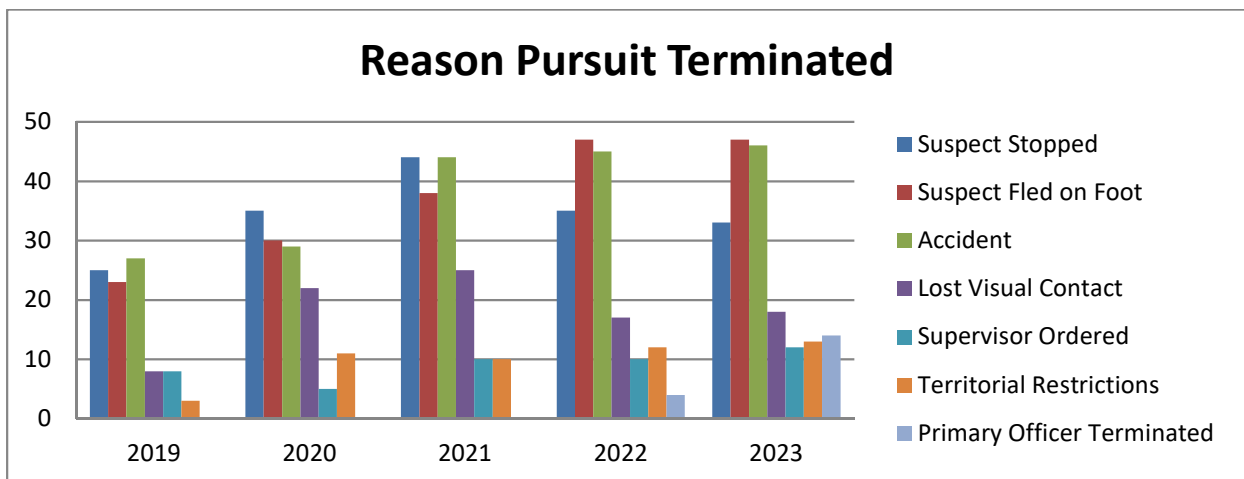


The month of May saw the highest number of pursuits with 24. For reference, the most pursuits that occurred in a month during 2022 were the 20 pursuits that took place in March of that year. July and December tied for the second highest months of pursuits with 18 each. The month of March went from the highest in 2022 to the lowest in 2023 with 9 pursuits. A possible explanation for May having the highest amount of pursuits could come from the fact that during that particular month, four separate crime series were occurring throughout different parts of the city during different times of the day: Three Burglary Series and a Theft of Motor Vehicle Series were all issued in May. The Theft of Motor Vehicle Series stemmed from a Tik Tok video which showed how to steal Kias and Hyundais. Not surprisingly, May represented the most stolen vehicle

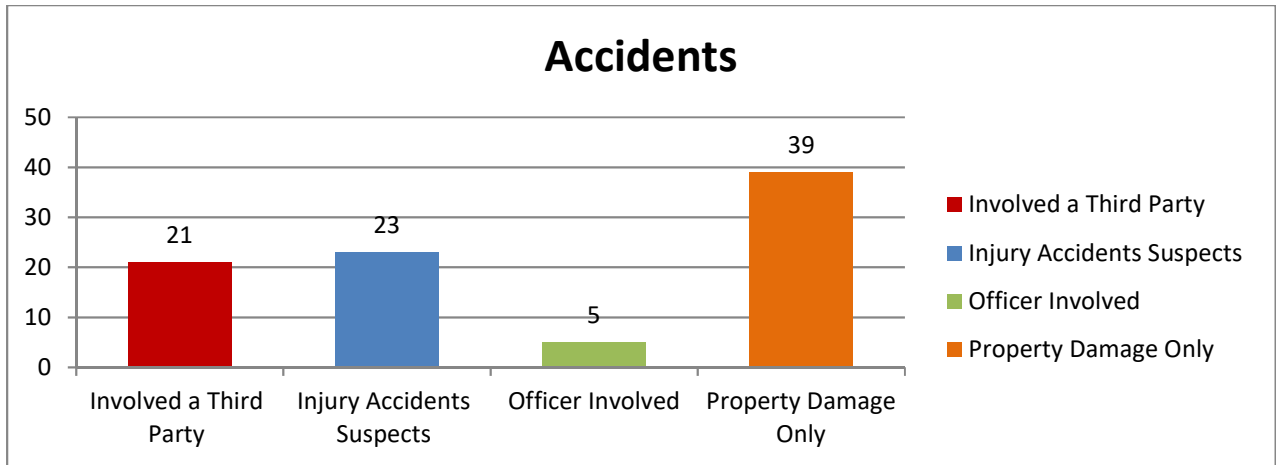
pursuits for the year, with 9. When a crime series is occurring, there is always a higher likelihood of increased police proactivity, and a greater potential for a vehicle pursuit to occur.



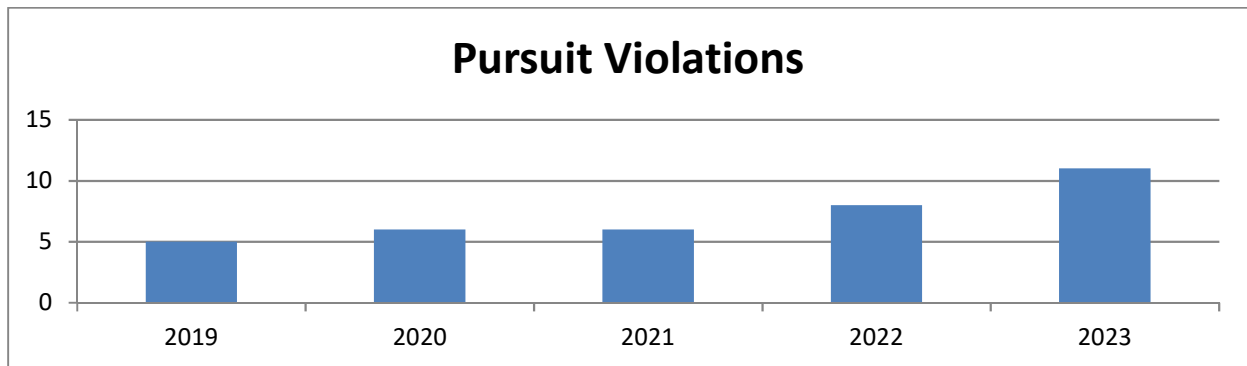
Duration of pursuit data was re-defined in 2021 and established a baseline that can be referenced and compared to in future analysis reports. In 2021, 69% of vehicle pursuits initiated by a Toledo Police officer lasted less than four minutes, compared to 66% in 2022, and 70% in 2023. Additionally, 17% of all pursuits in 2023 lasted one minute or less. The longest pursuit in 2023 (VP23-0005) was thirty-five minutes in duration and covered 27 miles. This pursuit is summarized later in this report.



In 2023, the most common cause of the end of a pursuit was a suspect fleeing on foot, 47 total or 25.6%, of all pursuits. Pursuits ending in an accident followed closely behind at 46 or 25.1%. In 33 of the pursuits, the suspect stopped their vehicle on their own accord equaling 18% of pursuits. Pursuits ending because of a loss of visual contact, territorial restrictions, primary officer terminated, and supervisor ordered amounted to 57 or 31.1% in total. This percentage has increased from the previous year, 22.9% in 2022. The increase of this number can most likely be attributed to officers and supervisors continuing to closely weigh the totality of the circumstances during a vehicle pursuit, and knowing when it is appropriate to terminate.



A total of 66 pursuits that occurred in 2023 involved an accident, 36% of all pursuits. That is compared to 62 pursuits involving accidents in 2022, a 9.7% increase. The above graph represents the breakdown of pursuits involving accidents in 2023. Three pursuits occurred in 2023 that involved an individual losing their life as a result of a vehicle pursuit: VP23-0088, 2023PUR-9013 and 2023PUR-2029. These incidents are summarized later in this report. There were 23 pursuits that resulted in injury to the suspect. Most of the injuries were minor in nature. Toledo Police officers were involved in 5 accidents resulting from pursuits. There were a total of 21 accidents involving a third party and 39 accidents that resulted in property damage only. A total of 12 accidents accounted for more than one of the above listed categories resulting in 88 events that are displayed in the above chart.



In 2023 there were a total of 11 pursuits where an officer or multiple officers were charged with a pursuit violation that lead to an internal investigation, 2022 had 8 instances. This accounts for 6% of the pursuits that occurred in 2023. All of the violations were directly related to the pursuit policy, with all 11 of the violations being minor in nature. In 10 of the incidents the officers were either formally counseled or given a verbal reprimand and 1 incident resulted in an informal verbal counseling. 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 2023

Incident Number	Date	Effective
VP23-0005	01/06/2023	No
VP23-0019	01/25/2023	Yes
VP23-0028	02/12/2023	Yes
VP23-0033	02/21/2023	No
VP23-0066	05/04/2023	Yes
VP23-0095	05/28/2023	Yes
VP23-0092	05/30/2023	Yes
VP23-0093	06/02/2023	Yes
VP23-0105	06/13/2023	Yes
VP23-0113	07/13/2023	Yes
VP23-0138	08/26/2023	No
VP23-0151	09/22/2023	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 established training guidelines. In 2023, there were 12 instances where officers deployed a forcible stop device (road spikes) during vehicle pursuits (this is up from 8 deployments in 2022). Out of the 12 deployments, 9 were successful. In all of the incidents there were no injuries caused to suspects, or the public by deploying the forcible stop devices. There was one where an officer sustained an injury to his fingers requiring stitches.

Review of 2023 Pursuits

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

- **VP23-0088** – A Toledo Police Gang Unit observed an occupied stolen vehicle at the intersection of Cherry and Bancroft streets. The officers activated their overhead lights and siren, attempting to conduct a stop of the vehicle. The suspect ignored the signals and accelerated at a high rate of speed, heading northbound on Cherry, attempting to elude the officers. The vehicle continued on Cherry at a high rate of speed, running the red light at Central. While on Cherry, still at a high rate of speed, the vehicle approached the roundabout at Cherry and Manhattan where the suspect lost control and struck an island median. The vehicle continued out of control through the median portion of the roundabout where it struck a decorative metal sculpture in the middle of the roundabout before finally coming to rest in a grassy area of the roundabout.

As the pursuing officers reached the accident scene they observed the suspect unconscious in the driver's seat and requested emergency medical services to the scene. The suspect was removed from the vehicle and laid on the ground. Upon the arrival of medical, the suspect was transported to St. Vincent Medical Center where further life saving measures were rendered, however the suspect

succumbed to his injuries and was pronounced deceased by medical personnel two hours later.

This pursuit occurred on May 18, 2023 at 00:23 hours. The pursuit traveled approximately 1.2 miles and lasted less than one minute.

- **VP23-0113** – A Toledo Police Operations units overheard on the radio that a Lucas County Sheriff's Deputy was in pursuit of a vehicle that was heading towards the city limits. Dispatch advised that the suspect attempted to strike a Deputy with the vehicle, as he fled. At Bancroft and Auburn, Toledo police Operations units joined in the pursuit. The suspect led officers on a lengthy pursuit through numerous city streets that also included residential areas.

During the pursuit the suspect threw multiple items out the windows of the vehicle one of which was later recovered and found to be a prescription pill bottle containing cocaine. At roughly twenty-two minutes into the pursuit, the suspect called 911 and told the call taker he had a gun and would shoot out from his window and also that he intended to shoot himself. The suspect continued to call 911 throughout the pursuit. When the suspect called again, he said he was a drug addict. During a subsequent call, the suspect reiterated that he had a gun and would kill himself. He also said he would not allow the pursuit to end without him dying and him hurting other people in the process. The suspect later stated he would crash head-on into another vehicle at 60 mph. Throughout the pursuit, the suspect crossed left-of-center multiple times, driving toward opposing traffic as if he would hit them head on. Numerous vehicles had to make split-second maneuvers to avoid crashes, one motorist rapidly backing onto a side street, others driving up onto curbs to avoid being struck.

Stop sticks were deployed successfully four times during the pursuit which flattened multiple tires on the suspect's vehicle. Despite this, the suspect refused to stop and continued to flee. On one such occasion an officer sustained lacerations on two fingers as a result of the stop stick cord. The injuries subsequently required twenty-two stitches. Due to the suspect's violent actions and statements and with the interest of community safety in mind, additional units were authorized by the supervisor to participate in the pursuit. After the suspect veered at oncoming traffic numerous times, causing near-miss accidents, the supervisor then gave authorization for the primary unit to forcibly stop the suspect vehicle in order to end the pursuit and the ongoing threat to public safety. The primary unit successfully stopped the vehicle and the suspect, after a brief struggle with officers, was taken into custody in the 4500 block of Dorr Street. The suspect was charged with multiple felony and misdemeanor charges and ultimately sentenced to 24 months in prison.

This pursuit occurred on July 13, 2023 at 01:03 hours. The pursuit traveled approximately 24.6 miles and lasted approximately 52 minutes, making this pursuit the longest pursuit of 2023.

After review, it was determined that two supervisors' and two officers' actions violated department policy regarding Pursuit Operations. These violations were found to be sustained. The officers and one of the supervisors were issued no penalty. The second supervisor was issued a counseling.

- **2023PUR-9013** – A Toledo Police Gang Unit observed the suspect operating a vehicle with no visible license plate turn from Artis to Earl, cutting off another vehicle as it did so. The officers activated their overhead lights and siren attempting to conduct a traffic stop. The suspect stopped the vehicle on Oak and once stopped, the suspect exited the vehicle in a hurried manner, as if he was going to flee on foot. The officers ordered him back into the vehicle. The suspect complied but immediately put the vehicle gear and fled at a high rate of speed.

The officers initiated a pursuit with the suspect fleeing northbound on Oak. The suspect ran a red light at Oak and Woodville, almost striking another vehicle traveling eastbound on Woodville. As the suspect swerved to avoid the collision, he lost control of the vehicle and it began to fishtail. The vehicle left the roadway and struck a commercial building at 515 Oak. The vehicle then spun across the roadway then coming to rest. As the officers approached they observed the suspect to be unconscious and critically injured. The officers also observed the back seat of the vehicle to be occupied by an adult female and two children, ages 2 and 4. Emergency medical services were summoned and officers evacuated the occupants of the vehicle as it began to catch fire.

Medical personnel arrived on scene and began to treat all occupants. The suspect was transported to St. Vincent Medical Center by life squad. The female and her two children were transported to the same hospital. The adult female and the 4 year old sustained minor injuries and the 2 year old was uninjured. The suspect ultimately succumbed to his injuries approximately a half hour later.

This pursuit occurred on November 17, 2023 at 23:22 hours. The pursuit traveled approximately 1/2 mile and lasted less than one minute.

- **2023PUR-9029** – A Toledo Police Operations unit was dispatched to the Best Buy retail location at 4505 Monroe on a theft complaint. Upon arrival, the manager advised that the suspects were exiting the store. The suspects, a male and female, observed the police vehicle and began walking quickly through the parking lot towards a gold vehicle. The officer pulled close to the vehicle and attempted to give verbal commands. The suspects entered the vehicle, shut the doors, and did not respond to the officer. The male suspect driver then fled the parking lot, towards Monroe, with no lights, at a high rate of speed.

The vehicle fled eastbound on Monroe. Another Operations unit took primary position in the pursuit as the initial unit that encountered the suspects in the parking lot took secondary position. As the vehicle approached the intersection of Monroe and Douglas, it ran the red light and collided with a red SUV. The secondary officer called for emergency medical services and observed the red SUV come to rest in the lot of a BP gas station. The suspect vehicle continued down Monroe on the sidewalk for several hundred feet. As the suspect vehicle continued it collided with an unoccupied vehicle in the BP lot. This collision caused the female suspect in the passenger seat to be ejected from the vehicle. The impact also pushed the

unoccupied vehicle into an individual attempting to put air in the vehicle's tires, causing serious injury.

The primary officer checked on the male suspect in the vehicle while the secondary officer attempted to aid the female suspect. She was pronounced deceased on scene by emergency medical personnel at 19:58 hours. The driver of the red SUV sustained moderate injuries and was transported to the Toledo Hospital and later released. The suspect sustained moderate injuries as well. He was taken into custody, transported to the Toledo Hospital where he was admitted. The suspect was released from the hospital the following day, and booked into the Lucas County Jail. The suspect was charged with numerous felony violations including fleeing and eluding, aggravated vehicular assault and aggravated vehicular homicide. The criminal cases are still pending in Lucas County Common Pleas Court.

This pursuit occurred on November 19, 2023 at 19:46 hours. The pursuit traveled approximately 1 mile and lasted approximately one minute.

Conclusions

The Toledo Police Department strives to maintain a clear understanding of all potential risks associated with vehicle pursuits. Due to this, a strict pursuit policy is maintained, reviewed, and enforced. The 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. The current restrictions routinely produce a safe resolution to the vast majority of all vehicle pursuits.

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 state ordinances and municipal codes 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.

The Toledo Police Department's pursuit policy is 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. Initial training and annual review of these policies and procedures are required to maintain certification with each organization. Most recently, CALEA awarded the Toledo Police Department re-accreditation in March of 2022. The Toledo Police Department was recently re-certified by the Ohio Collaborative in their Vehicular Pursuit standard in March of 2024.

In CALEA standard 41.2.2 *Pursuit of Motor Vehicles*, an accredited agency is required to review their "reporting procedures." The Toledo Police Department had been utilizing the Benchmark Analytics system since 2020 to accomplish this. On November 1st of 2023, the department transitioned to a new system, Blue Team, for the completion of pursuit reports. The data from each report can be collected and analyzed using the IA Pro system that syncs with Blue Team. The utilization of both Benchmark Analytics, and now Blue Team/IA Pro, allows the department to pull data more quickly than in years past. That allows our department the ability to sort through the data more efficiently, creating a higher likelihood that a trend or pattern will be identified more expeditiously than in previous years. This aids in review and revisions to the pursuit policy if necessary.

A few of trends or patterns were found in 2023 compared to past years. With the exception of 2021 to 2022, the total number of pursuits has increased over the last five years. In 2023 the department saw 13 more pursuits than 2022. While the overall increase is 8%, it works out to roughly 1.1 additional pursuits per month. Considering the total number of traffic stops increased by 29% from 2022 to 2023, it stands to reason that the number of pursuits would increase as well. Traffic stops decreased from 2020 to 2021, most likely as a result of the Covid pandemic but have since been on the increase as the pandemic waned. While traffic violations account for the reason most vehicle pursuits are initiated, obviously they are not the only initiating factor.

With technology being utilized by the department such as Flock cameras, FUSUS and Shotspotter, officers are able to respond to certain dispatched crimes quicker or identify criminal activity while on proactive patrol with more accurate and detailed information. FLOCK cameras detect automobiles and take a picture of the vehicle and license plate. The system then searches law enforcement data bases to determine if the car is stolen, involved in crimes, reported being driven by a wanted person for a serious crime such as burglary, armed robbery, murder, etc. FUSUS is a camera integration platform that allows the monitoring of video feeds from multiple public and privately-owned sources in real time. Shotspotter is an acoustic gunshot detection system. The information available to officers from these systems increases the likelihood that they would encounter a suspect that would attempt to flee.

Another aspect to consider beyond stops for traffic violations is total tracked crime. Total tracked crime data is collected by the Toledo Police Criminal Intelligence Section for a number of analytical purposes. The section focus 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 looked at to see if there was a correlation

between the total number of tracked crimes and vehicle pursuits. It was reasoned 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. This is based on the fact that the fleeing driver has an increased likelihood of being involved in one of the tracked crimes. The tracked crime number increased consistently for three years between 2020 and 2022. The number of pursuits also increased, indicating that there is a correlation between the two. However, tracked crime declined in 2023 with a total of 7,153 total tracked crimes compared to 2022 which had 7,765, a decrease of 8%. As previously mentioned, vehicle pursuits increased by the same percentage over the same time period, 8%. While tracked crimes can undoubtedly impact the amount of vehicle pursuits from year to year, it is unclear if a direct correlation between them exists. In order to make that determination, a longer time span would need to be examined in addition to accounting for other variables.

While the number of total pursuits is generally increasing, it is important to remember that out of every traffic stop that occurred in 2023, very few, 0.72% resulted in a vehicle pursuit. That percentage is down from 2022 when 0.86% of all traffic stops resulted in a vehicle pursuit.

Recommendations

There were three instances where a vehicle pursuit resulted in the loss of human life in 2023. Because of these three incidents, two of them occurring only a day apart in November, a pursuit review committee was convened to take an in-depth look at the department's pursuit policy, beyond the annual review. The committee's purpose was to make recommendations on needed revisions to the policy. The committee consisted of several sworn command officers from Deputy Chief to Sergeant from various areas of the department including Operations Division, Special Operations Bureau, Gang Task Force, Training and Operational Support and Planning. The diversity of the committee allowed for input from different perspectives. An in-depth review of the entire pursuit policy was conducted and recommendations were made that have been instituted in to the revised policy.

While some recommendations were minor in nature such as clerical changes to the wording contained within the policy itself, the more significant and substantial recommendations and rationale behind them are as follows:

- Modifying the definition of Caravanning from "more than three" to "more than the authorized number of police vehicles actively involved in the pursuit."
- Allowing police wagons and dual-purpose vehicles to maintain their positions when authorized by the sworn supervisor for the pursuit.
- If the sworn supervisor authorizes additional units in the pursuit to safely affect the arrest of the suspect, they must indicate the additional number and type of units.
- Police units outside the immediate area of the pursuit that involves both a primary and secondary unit shall not enter the pursuit unless specifically directed to do so by a sworn supervisor in authority.

The above recommendations were adopted as a result of each pursuit being unique based on the situation and circumstances involved. Allowing flexibility in how the pursuit is conducted and supervised allows for better tailoring of police involvement based on those unique factors.

- Paralleling units shall operate with emergency lights and sirens.

Having additional units not directly involved in the pursuit, but in the area paralleling the pursuit with emergency lights and sirens activated increases the likelihood that uninvolved motorists and citizens in the area will be alert and thus, decrease the chances of a collision at intersections through which the pursuit may travel. It also affords additional units that may be ahead of the pursuit the opportunity to restrict access to those intersections or residential streets in an attempt to minimize the danger to motorists and citizens.

- Upon anticipation of a pursuit, or no later than the actual initiation of a pursuit, the primary unit shall notify Communications via radio of the current speed of the pursuit and shall give updates as to speed and direction regularly.

Pursuits often reach high speeds which increases the likelihood of accidents. The direction a pursuit is heading is an important factor as well. The supervisor responsible for monitoring the pursuit isn't necessarily involved in the pursuit itself. Having officers involved in the pursuit provide regular updates as to the speed and direction, better allows the supervisor to order the pursuit to be terminated if the danger created by the pursuit outweighs the immediate consequences of the suspect's escape.

- In addition to the supervisor, any officer in the primary or secondary unit has the authority to terminate a vehicle pursuit.

Pursuits can be extremely intense and stressful for the officers involved. The officer operating the primary unit may be overly focused on apprehending the suspect and experience tunnel vision and lose the overall perspective or situational awareness. Giving other involved officers who may have a more objective perspective of the circumstances and potential dangers the ability to terminate the pursuit reduces the likelihood that a pursuit will continue under unnecessarily dangerous conditions.

- When a pursuit is terminated, all involved vehicles, including the supervisory unit, shall, as soon as practicable: deactivate their emergency lights and sirens. Notify communications that the pursuit has been terminated and pull to the side of the road and stop or make the next available turn.

Completely disengaging from a pursuit is meant to be obvious to the fleeing suspect with the desired result of them ceasing to operate their vehicle in a reckless or dangerous manner.

These revisions to the pursuit policy have been distributed to all sworn personnel. It is essential that everyone, both officers and supervisors be properly trained and understand the policy in order to achieve the goals of protecting life and property, as well as apprehending law violators. The Training Section has implemented a training program to accomplish this goal.

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.
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