



Poulsbo Police Department

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Dan Schoonmaker, Chief of Police

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chief Dan Schoonmaker
FROM: Deputy Chief Matt Brown
SUBJECT: 2018 Use of Force/ Vehicle Pursuit Analysis
DATE: January 18th, 2019

Use of Force

In 2018, the Poulsbo Police Department documented 21 incidents requiring officers to use force.¹ Two incidents involved multiple subjects, and one incident involved two types of force. All uses of force are reviewed by first level supervisors and command staff to ensure they hold true to current law, policy, and best practice. In 2018, all uses of force were found to be within department policy.

Use of Force: Type of Force	
Display of a weapon (Taser, firearm)	6
Physical Control	12
Taser: Probe deployment	1
Taser: Contact deployment	0
OC / Chemical	2
Impact weapons (batons)	0
Personal Weapons/Strikes	1
Impact Munitions	0
Vascular Neck Restraint	0
Firearm	0
Total	22

Use of Force by Race	
Caucasian - alone	20
African American	1
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0
Asian	1
Hispanic	0
Unknown/Other	1
Total	23

¹ Poulsbo Police Department Policy – Chapter 300 (Use of Force)



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Use of Force by Gender	
Male	20
Female	3

Use of Force – Aggravating Factors	
Intoxicated/Drugs	6
Mental Health	6
Domestic Violence	0

Use of Force Injuries		Treatment		
		Injuries (visible or complaint of)	On-scene by Aid	Hospital
Suspect	3	2	1	3 ²
Officer	0			

Notes / Trends

- Total Incidents where officers used force: 21
- Total Incidents for 2018: 12,449³
- % of 2018 incidents in which force was used: 0.17%

Analysis – Use of Force

An analysis of use of force incidents determined that force was only used 21 times out of 12,449 calls for service (0.17%). In 2017, force was used only 12 times out of 12,818 calls for service (0.09%). Although this an increase in use of force incidents over the previous year, it does not appear to be statistically significant.

This year saw increased training in the areas of: policy reviews, legal updates, defensive tactics, firearms training and qualifications, as well as less lethal training (Taser, less-lethal shotgun and/or 40mm). Poulsbo officers appear to be exercising good judgement in their decisions to use of force. Most incidents involve the display of a weapon to gain compliance, or lower level force techniques that do not require strikes or specialized implements. There is no evidence of a racial disparity in the use of force. Over half of the incidents involve subjects in crisis where attempts to de-escalate were unsuccessful.

Based upon the information above, I conclude there is no concerning trend with respect to the use of force by Poulsbo police officers in 2018.

² These incidents involved a transport by ambulance for a mental health evaluation. There were no injuries related to the use of force.

³ Kitsap 911 – 2018 Law Enforcement Activity Report



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Vehicle Pursuits

RCW 46.61.024 – Attempting to elude a police vehicle

Any driver of a motor vehicle who willfully fails or refuses to immediately bring his or her vehicle to a stop and who drives his or her vehicle in a reckless manner while attempting to elude a pursuing police vehicle, after being given a visual or audible signal to bring the vehicle to a stop, shall be guilty of a class C felony. The signal given by the police officer may be by hand, voice, emergency light, or siren. The officer giving such a signal shall be in uniform and the vehicle shall be equipped with lights and sirens.

Policy 307 – Vehicle Pursuits

An event involving one or more law enforcement officers attempting to apprehend a suspect, who is attempting to avoid arrest while operating a vehicle by using high-speed driving or other evasive tactics, such as driving off a highway, turning suddenly or driving in a legal manner but willfully failing to yield to an officer's emergency signal to stop.

Our policy allows officers to initiate a pursuit when it is reasonable to believe that a suspect, who has been given an appropriate signal to stop by a law enforcement officer, is attempting to evade arrest or detention by fleeing in a vehicle. There are numerous factors for the officer and supervisors to consider such as the risk to community safety should the suspect escape, and whether other methods would be safer and more effective.

All pursuits are reviewed by first level supervisors and command staff to ensure they hold true to the law, policy, and best practice.

Pursuit Statistics	2018
Total number of pursuits	8
Day pursuits	1
Night pursuits	7
Pursuits ruled "Within Policy"	8
Pursuits ruled "Outside of Policy"	0

Concluding Events	2018
Pursuits discontinued by officer	3
Pursuits discontinued by sergeant	2
Collision with a fixed object	1
Stop Stick	1
Vehicle voluntarily stopped	1

Notes / Trends

- There were 8 pursuits in 2018 by the Poulsbo Police Department as compared to 12 pursuits in 2017.
- 6 pursuits were initiated based upon traffic violations. 1 pursuit was an assist to an outside agency. 1 pursuit was initiated for a felony property crime.
- No officers or suspects were injured. No damage to non-suspect property.



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Analysis – Vehicle Pursuits

The analysis of pursuit data shows a 33.3% decrease in pursuits over the previous year. All pursuits were reviewed and found to be within policy. Poulsbo officers and sergeants appear to be exercising good judgement in knowing when to initiate a pursuit, and when to discontinue. Most pursuits were initiated during the hours of darkness and with minimal traffic; officers are examining all risk factors and discontinuing based upon the totality of circumstances. It is recommended the department maintain its regular training on: policy review, pursuit driving, and slow-speed skills. These trainings should be conducted in the classroom and at the driving range.

Based upon my analysis, and the fact that all pursuits were found to be within policy, I conclude that our current vehicle pursuit policy is effective, Poulsbo officers understand it, and are strictly abiding by it.

Reviewed by Dan Schoonmaker, Chief

1/23/19

Date