

White Settlement Police Department 2022



Department Vehicle Pursuit Analysis

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Vehicle Pursuit Analysis for 2022

This analysis was conducted for the purpose of reviewing the White Settlement Police Department's Vehicle Pursuits for calendar year 2022. Vehicle Pursuits are inherently dangerous to both the officers involved and the public. The White Settlement Police Department is committed to protecting our citizens but at the same time ensuring the manner in which we do so does not place the public at risk of greater harm. This process requires continuous evaluation of the risks and benefits of each action. This analysis is conducted each year to comply with Texas Law Enforcement Best Practice 7.14 and to attempt to identify methods for reducing the number of vehicle pursuits and the inherent risks involved.

Officers are trained by the department in pursuit tactics and emergency driving. However, as skilled as an officer might be in these situations, the vehicle being pursued may not have a competent driver and many times the driver may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Vehicle Pursuit Reporting Requirements

Texas Law Enforcement Best Practice 7.13 and White Settlement Police Department General Order 504.00, requires a written report be completed anytime an officer pursues a vehicle. The Department allows pursuits to be initiated for the following reasons: (1) To apprehend suspects involved in a felony; (2) To apprehend suspects who are or have immediately been involved in a violent misdemeanor where an assault has occurred; (3) To apprehend suspected D.W.I.'s that display erratic or reckless driving that endangers the public; or (4) To apprehend hazardous moving traffic violations that endangers the public.

Any time an officer calls a pursuit, department policy requires a Supervisor be immediately notified by the Dispatch center. The supervisor is required to monitor the pursuit and act as a decision maker regarding the danger of the pursuit. Both the officer and Supervisor are charged with continuous evaluation of the pursuit as it occurs and are required to call off the pursuit when wither believe the risks to the officer or public outweigh the need for immediate capture of the suspect.

Each individual Pursuit Report is reviewed by the Officer's Supervisor, and through the Chain of Command to the Chief of Police. At the time of the incident, the Pursuit is reviewed to ensure the use was appropriate and within the guidelines of Department Policy. If the officer initiated a pursuit inappropriately, a departmental investigation is required and the officer may receive additional training or in some cases discipline up to and including termination from employment. Reports are then maintained by the Administrative Assistant and sorted by year to assist in the annual analysis.

This annual analysis is not intended to determine if an officer acted inappropriately, but to identify department wide trends that may suggest changes in policy, training, equipment or supervision.

Vehicle Pursuit Comparison

In comparison of the last four years we have had a total of seventeen (17) pursuits in 2022. The reasons for Pursuit initiation are listed below by type with comparison to the previous year.

	2019	2020	2021	2022
Traffic Violation only	5	3	9	5
Misdemeanor Offense	0	0	1	1
Felony Offense	1	1	5	6
Outstanding Warrant	0	1	0	0
Suspicious Activity	2	0	4	5
Suspected Intoxication	1	0	2	0
Total	9	5	21	17

Individual Officer Analysis

While each individual vehicle pursuit is reviewed immediately after the event to ensure it is in compliance with department policy and law, patterns of behavior can also indicate the need for additional training or supervision. Officers can be involved in pursuits at significantly different rates depending on the crime activity in the part of the city where they are assigned, their type of assignment, the time of day they work and their experience level.

The reporting year of 2019 logged nine (9) pursuits. There was a decrease in the number of pursuits from 2019 (9) compared to the five (5) pursuits in 2020. The number of vehicle pursuits drastically increased from the five (5) in 2020 to twenty-one (21) in 2021. This signified an increase of 320% from 2020 to 2021. The number of pursuits decreased from twenty-one in 2021 to seventeen (17) in 2022 indicating a decrease of 19%.

Of the seventeen (17) pursuits in 2022, one of the pursuits consisted of four officers, two of the pursuits consisted of three officers, nine of the pursuits consisted of two officers and five of the pursuits consisted of one officer. All officers that were involved with pursuits were driving marked police vehicles. One officer was involved in 4 total pursuits; 3 as the primary officer and 1 as an assist officer. Another officer was involved in 4 total pursuits; 1 as the primary and 3 as an assist unit. One officer was involved in 3 total pursuits; 2 as a primary unit and 1 as an assist unit. Another officer was also involved in pursuits; 1 as a primary unit and 2 as an assist. Five officers were involved in two total pursuits either as the primary unit or as an assist unit. Nine officers were involved in one pursuit either as the primary or the assist unit. During 2022 a shift supervisor initiated five pursuits.

All of the pursuits were reviewed by the supervisor on shift and the command staff. All seventeen (17) of the pursuits were consistent with departmental policy and standards during this reporting period (100%).

Reasons for a Pursuit

During the 2019 reporting period, there were a total of nine (9) pursuits. Four (4) of the pursuits were initiated for a traffic violation, all for speeding. There were three (3) pursuits initiated for investigative purposes. One investigation was for prior knowledge of a suspended driver's license, one was for a narcotics investigation and the third one was a detective attempting to speak with burglary suspects at their residence. There was one (1) pursuit initiated for a suspected intoxicated driver and the final pursuit was initiated after the officer received a stolen vehicle return.

All five (5) pursuits during the 2020 reporting period were reviewed and fell within the department guidelines and standards. Three off the pursuits were initiated for minor traffic violations. The minor traffic violations included speeding and defective equipment/lights. One pursuit was due to the driver being told he had a TCIC/NCIC warrant and he sped off. The last pursuit was a result of a felony incident where an individual in the vehicle had been shot by a third party.

During the 2021 reporting period, there were twenty one (21) pursuits that were officer initiated for various reason. One pursuit was to assist another agency who pursued a vehicle through the City of White Settlement. Officers disengaged from that pursuit once the suspect left out jurisdiction. Nine of the pursuits were for traffic violations. Five pursuits were initiated for felony reasons, like the vehicle being stolen, leaving the area where gun shots were reported, or after driving off from the officer after he made initial contact with the driver. Four pursuits were initiated after suspicious activity and two were initiated for suspicion on DWI. One pursuit was initiated due to a family violence suspect was leaving a scene of a domestic disturbance.

During the 2022 reporting period, there were 17 pursuits. After review of these reported pursuits, there were no policy violations notated. The pursuits were initiated for different reasons. Five pursuits were initiated for traffic violations, one was initiated for a misdemeanor offense involving a prowler call, and five were initiated for suspicious activity. Six pursuits were initiated for felony reasons. All six of the felony reasons were for Flock Safety alerts officers received. These flock hits indicated vehicles that entered into the city limits of White Settlement that either had either been reported stolen, had stolen plates, or had felony warrants attached to the license plate.

Pursuit Terminations

Pursuits can be terminated at any time by the pursuing officer or any Supervisor when they believe the danger posed to the citizens is greater than the need to apprehend the offender. This “voluntary termination” may better protect the citizens than the continuation of a dangerous pursuit for minor offenses. The table below provides information on how pursuits were terminated.

Type Termination	2019	2020	2021	2022
Voluntary Termination - Officer	3		4	4
Voluntary Termination - Supervisor	1	1	2	2
Stopped - Arrested	2	2	3	3
Stopped - Fled on foot - Escaped	0	1	0	0
Stopped - Fled on foot - Captured	0	0	5	0
Accident - Violator Involved in Accident	3	1	5	3
Accident - Police Involved in Accident	0	0	0	0
Escaped - Not Located	0	0	1	5
Escaped - Captured Later	0	0	1	0

In 2019 three of the pursuits were terminated by the initiating officer. All three of these pursuits were terminated when the initiating officer lost sight of the suspect vehicle. Three of the pursuits were terminated when the suspect vehicle crashed. One of the pursuits there were three occupants who fled on foot from the suspect vehicle, the driver of this vehicle was apprehended by officers and there were no reported injuries. The second pursuit that ended in a vehicle crash had two suspects who fled from the vehicle and both subjects were apprehended with no injuries reported. The third pursuit that ended in the suspect vehicle crashing and one of the occupants fleeing on foot. There was a female passenger who was taken into custody and eventually officers were able to apprehend the male subject who fled on foot. Two of the pursuits ended when the suspect vehicle stopped and the occupants were taken into custody without incident. The final pursuit ended when the supervisor, and initiator, of the pursuit when it became dangerous for the public due to speed and traffic congestion.

In 2020, two pursuits end when the suspect stopped and officers apprehended the suspect. One pursuit ended when the suspect stopped, and while the officers were treating a shooting victim, the suspect ran on foot. Charges were to be filed at a later date on the driver. One pursuit ended when the suspect was involved in a traffic accident. The suspect attempted to run on foot after the accident but was apprehended by officers. The last pursuit was terminated at the direction of the supervisor due to the traffic conditions and the reason for the pursuit was minor traffic violations.

In the 2021 reporting period, pursuits ended in several different ways. The pursuit ended five different times due to the suspect stopping the vehicle and then ran on foot. In each of those instances the suspect was subsequently caught. Five other pursuits ended by the violator crashing. The suspect was caught in four of five incidents and charges were filed. Four pursuits by the officer voluntarily disengaging from the pursuit and twice as the pursuit was called off by the shift supervisor. In three instances, the driver of suspect vehicle stopped on their own and had charges filed against them. There were two incidents where the suspect were able to get away, however one was later captured and charges were filed.

During 2022 there were five various reasons pursuits were ended. In four of those pursuits, officers voluntarily terminated the pursuit either due to traffic hazards or losing sight of the suspect vehicle. Two pursuits were terminated by the pursuit supervisor and three pursuits ended and resulted in the arrest of the driver. Three pursuits ended in the suspect vehicle being involved in a vehicle crash and the driver being arrested at a later date once a warrant was issued. Unfortunately five pursuits ended in the suspect eluding police and the suspect identity was unknown for a later prosecution.

Damage and Injury

During the 2019 reporting period, there were three pursuits that ended with property damage or injuries. One pursuit ended when the vehicle crashed and knocked down a street sign, both occupants of the suspect vehicle were treated by Med-Star at the scene and released. The driver was arrested and transported to jail for evading arrest/detention. The second pursuit ended in an apartment complex. Two occupants fled from the vehicle and were not apprehended. The driver of the vehicle attempted to flee and left the vehicle in gear. The vehicle ran into an iron security fence that surrounded the apartment complex. The driver was apprehended and transported to jail for evading arrest/detention along with narcotic charges. There were no reported injuries. The third pursuit ended in the suspect vehicle crashing into the rear of another vehicle sitting at a red light. The suspect vehicle then went off the road and struck a mailbox causing damage. There was one person, from the victim's vehicle, transported to the hospital by Med-Star with unknown injuries. The other occupant in the victim's vehicle and the two occupants in the suspect vehicle were all checked out by Med-Star and released on the scene. The suspect was arrested and transported to jail for Evading Arrest/Detention and narcotics charges.

During 2020, there were two pursuits that resulted in property damage or injuries. One pursuit resulted in property damage when the suspect vehicle ran over two different mailboxes when trying to evade the police. The second pursuit involved both property damage and injuries. The damage occurred the suspect vehicle ran a red light and struck another vehicle causing major damage to both vehicles. There were injuries sustained by occupants of both vehicles involved. No injuries were life threatening.

In 2021 there were five (5) pursuits that ended in an accident or property damage occurred. None of these incidents involved damage to a police vehicle. There was one incident where a suspect motorcycle bumped into a patrol unit's bumper guard. In another incident, the suspect drove through a barb-wired fence. One incident involved the suspect driver colliding with a concrete barrier. One suspect who was attempting to elude the police was on a motorcycle and wrecked. He was transported to the hospital for injuries and charges were later filed. One pursuit involved the suspect vehicle colliding with an innocent bystander's vehicle causing damage to the vehicle. No officers or innocent members of the public were hurt during any of the pursuits.

During 2022 three pursuits ended in the suspect vehicle being involved in a vehicle crash. In one pursuit, the suspect driver lost control of the vehicle struck a tree and was ejected from his vehicle. The driver sustained fatal injuries and was reported deceased on scene by medical personnel. This accident was worked by Fort Worth PD and an internal affairs investigation was conducted. The officer was cleared of any wrong doing or policy violations. Another pursuit involved the suspect driver losing control of the vehicle and struck the steel cable guard rail. Occupants of the suspect vehicle were transported and treated by medical personnel. The third pursuit that resulted in a vehicle crash that resulted after officers had disengaged in the pursuit. Officers pursued a vehicle westbound on Interstate 30 towards Weatherford, Texas. After officers lost sight of the suspect vehicle, they deactivated their emergency lights and sirens but had to continue driving west in order to exit the freeway to turn around. About a mile or two later, the officer exited and pulled on the suspect vehicle he was pursuing and it had been involved in a serious vehicle crash. All occupants of the suspect and victim's vehicle were transported to medical facilities. Warrants for the suspect were issued at a later date.

Policy Violations

The department policy on Pursuits is reviewed annually with officers and dispatchers to ensure they are aware of when they should or should not pursue a vehicle. The officers and dispatchers are then tested on the policy. After each pursuit, the pursuit must be reported on the Pursuit Report Form which is forwarded through the officer's Supervisor, through the Chain of Command to the Chief. If a violation of policy is identified, the Chief may decide on an appropriate response, which may include additional training or even disciplinary actions if necessary.

There was a decrease in pursuits from 2018 to 2019. All the pursuits were reviewed and there were three policy violations noted during this reporting period. One of the violations included an officer who drove his vehicle off road when the suspect fled on foot. One violation was officers extended a pursuit beyond the 2 mile radius of the city for traffic violations and the third violation included an officer driving the wrong way on a service road. All three violations included different officers and all officers received counseling from their supervisor along with policy review.

The 2020 reporting period observed another decrease in the number of pursuits from the previous year. There were five (5) pursuits in 2020, down from the nine (9) reported in 2019, indicating a reduction of about 56%.

As stated previously there was a significant increase in pursuits from five in 2020, to twenty one in 2021. All the pursuits were reviewed for policy violations. There were some policy infractions that resulted in officers being verbally counseled about the department standards and policy on pursuits. Excessive speed was noted in two separate pursuits involving two different officers.

There were seventeen (17) reported pursuits in 2022, which is a decrease from the twenty-one (21) in 2021. All pursuits are view by the shift supervisor as well as the Patrol Lieutenant. There were no reported policy violations during this reporting period.

Summary and Recommendations

Of the nine (9) pursuits in 2019, the night shift (2200-0600) had the most pursuits with five separate pursuits. The evening shift (1400-2200) had three (3) separate pursuits and there was one (1) pursuit initiated on the Day shift (0600-1400). Of the pursuits, two pursuits lasted about two minutes, two pursuits lasted about three minutes, two pursuits lasted about four minutes, two pursuits lasted about seven minutes and one pursuit lasted about 12 minutes.

Four out of the five pursuits in 2020 occurred on the night shift (2200-0600 hours). The other pursuit occurred during the day shift (0600-1400 hours). The longest pursuit lasted 12 minutes and the shortest lasted two minutes. The other three pursuits lasted 8 minutes, 7 minutes, and three minutes. The shortest pursuit occurred during the day shift and it terminated when the suspect vehicle struck another vehicle.

Majority of the pursuits in 2021 (57.14%) were initiated during the night shift (2200-0600 hours). The evening shift (1400-2200 hours) represented 23.81% of pursuits initiated followed by the day shift (0600-1400 hours) at 19.05%.

During 2022, the majority of the pursuits (58.82%) were initiated during the night shift (10) at 58.82% compared to the day shift (7) at 41.18%. When comparing the two day shifts, Days Shift A had two (2) pursuits while Day Shift C had five (5). Comparing the two night shifts, Night Shift B had seven (7) pursuits and Night Shift D had three (3).

I would recommend that the department continue the annual review of the policy and continue an Emergency Vehicle Operation Course for each officer.

Command Review:

Any Actions to be taken: *(The Chief should order any actions to be taken in writing here with personnel assigned for follow-up.)*



Chief of Police



Date