



COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT INTERNAL AFFAIRS UNIT

TO: CHIEF OF POLICE GEOFF JONES *[Signature]*
FROM: SGT. JULIE RAY, INTERNAL AFFAIRS *[Signature]*
REF: ANNUAL ANALYSIS OF MOTOR VEHICLE PURSUITS 2021
DATE: 01/14/2022

The following report was completed for compliance with the CALEA standards regarding Pursuits of Motor Vehicles (41.2.2). The CALEA standard is as follows:

A written directive governs pursuit of motor vehicles, to include:

- Evaluating the circumstances;
- Defining the criteria under which pursuit can be initiated;
- Initiating unit/personnel responsibilities;
- Designating secondary unit's responsibilities;
- Specifying roles and restrictions pertinent to marked, unmarked, or other types of police vehicle involvement in the pursuit;
- Assigning telecommunication's responsibilities;
- Describing supervisor's responsibilities;
- Specifying when to terminate pursuit;
- Specifying authority to terminate pursuit;
- Engaging in inter- and intra-jurisdictional pursuits involving personnel from the agency and/or other jurisdictions;
- Requiring a written report and an administrative review of each pursuit;
- Conducting a documented annual analysis of pursuit reports, to include a review of policy and reporting procedures, approved by the agency CEO;
- Documented initial training on the agency's pursuit policy; and
- Documented annual review of the pursuit policy by all sworn personnel.

This report will include a review of the Columbia Police Department's vehicle pursuit reporting procedures as well as the 56 vehicle pursuits that occurred in 2021.

Reporting:

Columbia Police Department Policy 314.9, Vehicle Pursuits, outlines the reporting requirements for members of the department after engaging in a vehicle pursuit. Vehicle pursuits are documented via Blue

Team software. After documentation is entered, vehicle pursuits undergo a three-level review. The department member's first-line supervisor, a Watch Commander, and a Bureau Commander will conduct a preliminary review of the pursuit and determine if the pursuit was "proper" or "improper" under policy. The Bureau Commander will determine if the facts surrounding the incident warrant further investigation. If the Bureau Commander requests an investigation, the incident is forwarded to the Internal Affairs Unit. If other violations of policy outside of 314 are discovered, they are included in the investigation.

If a pursuit is deemed proper in the preliminary review, no further action is taken on the incident. Generally, vehicle pursuits are reviewed independently of other aspects of an event such as use of force or citizen complaints. There is no reporting mechanism in place for involvement in the pursuits of other jurisdictions.

Due to this department's CALEA self-assessment process, Policy 314 was reviewed and revised to include the following CALEA standards requirements:

- A documented annual analysis of pursuit reports, to include a review of the pursuit policy and reporting procedures;
- Documented initial training in vehicle pursuits for all new hires; and
- A documented annual review of pursuit policy by all sworn personnel.

Because vehicle pursuits are inherently dangerous to all involved as well as the public, our pursuit policy exceeds these requirements and calls for biannual training which includes a review of the pursuit policy and a test to demonstrate the transfer of knowledge.

Analysis / Conclusion:

In 2021, Officers of the Columbia Police Department engaged in 56 motor vehicle pursuits. During 2021, 32 or 57.14% of the vehicle pursuits occurred between 2000 hrs and 0359 hrs (8:00 pm – 3:59 am.)

Of the 56 pursuits, Twenty-two (22) were terminated by the pursuing officer, six (6) were terminated by a supervisor, thirteen (13) concluded with the suspect stopping, four (4) concluded with the suspect eluding police, one (1) concluded by an officer using "Stop Sticks", zero (0) were transferred to another agency, zero (0) were terminated for public safety reasons and ten (10) resulted in the suspect vehicle crashing. Pursuits were initiated for both felonies, misdemeanors and ordinance violations. A total of twenty-two (22) pursuits ended with arrests and thirty-four (34) with no arrest.

Fifty-five (55) pursuits were initiated within the Columbia city limits and one (1) pursuit was started outside the Columbia city limits. Three (3) pursuits concluded outside of the Columbia city limits. Eight (8) pursuits resulted in property damage to uninvolved vehicles, suspect vehicles, patrol vehicles and/or other property. Three (3) pursuits resulted in the injuries to an occupant(s) of a suspect vehicle. No officers reported injuries as a result of the vehicle pursuits.

Thirty-eight (38) of the pursuits were found to be "proper" and fourteen (14) were found to be "improper". At the time of this report, three (3) pursuits were being reviewed or being investigated as an internal investigation. One (1) pursuit was marked as "no finding".

In analyzing the "improper" pursuits, the majority were terminated at the intervention and direction of a supervisor following the policy in place at the time. A short analysis of the "improper" pursuits follows:

<u>Tracking Number</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Reason Improper</u>	<u>Result</u>
VP2021-0001	01/03/2021	Nature of Call	Counseling
VP2021-0003	01/22/2021	Speed	Counseling
VP2021-0007	01/31/2021	Road conditions, Speed	Suspension
VP2021-0008	01/31/2021	Speed	Counseling
VP2021-0009	02/12/2021	Road conditions, Need to apprehend	Counseling
VP2021-00017	03/10/2021	Driving, Need to apprehend	Performance Log
VP2021-0022	04/25/2021	Speed	Performance log
VP2021-0027	05/27/2021	Driving, need to apprehend	Remedial Training
VP2021-0032	08/01/2021	Policy	Counseling
VP2021-0035	08/15/2021	Policy	Counseling
VP2021-0037	08/26/2021	Policy	Remedial Training
VP2021-0039	08/30/2021	Policy	Remedial Training
VP2021-0047	10/21/2021	Speed, Need to apprehend	Counseling
VP2021-0056	12/11/21	Driving	Remedial Training

Three (3) of the fourteen (14) improper pursuits (or 21.42%) were initiated for an ordinance or misdemeanor violation. These pursuits are highlighted. Eight (8) officers were involved in multiple pursuits that were found improper in 2021.

Motor vehicle pursuits by Columbia Police Department Officers in 2021 decreased 23.28% from the previous year. Thirty-one (31) or 55.36% of all pursuits were for misdemeanor or traffic violations, while twenty-five (25) or 44.64% were for felony charges. Officers must always weigh the need for apprehension against the safety of the public, the offender and themselves.

Motor vehicle pursuits are inherently dangerous. The risks of a vehicle pursuit can lead to unintended consequences for the general public, officers and occupants of vehicles involved in pursuits. In 2021, there were three (3) injuries during motor vehicle pursuits.

A majority of officers who were found improper, we found improper due to their driving behavior. The driving behavior of the officer is one that can be dictated by policy, training and discipline. Officers of this department should be held to a higher standard when operating their patrol vehicle in emergency and non-emergency situations. Proper supervision, training and discipline are effective in the decision making of officers, prevention of injuries to those involved in pursuits and apprehension of suspects. The discipline from the improper pursuits ranged from verbal counseling / coaching to suspension. The majority of the officers received a verbal counseling.