

Control, I Am In Pursuit...

These five little words create a whole chain of events. Officer's blood pressure begins to rise and thoughts of whether to pursue or not go through the mind. What do I say on the radio? Oh yeah - location, speed, direction of travel, description of vehicle, and number of occupants. Did I get everything? Oh and what's the crime? All going on in the first few seconds a pursuit is initiated.

The pursuit is over, or terminated, and you get back to the station and as always, **you complete your Blue Team Vehicle Pursuit Report.** No one ever forgets to do this! Well who really reviews this report, my Sergeant, Lieutenant even my Captain, but no one else looks at these right? Wrong.

The Office of Quality Assurance completes an annual Vehicle Pursuit review to satisfy a CALEA Accreditation requirement. What good is an annual report telling our agency about vehicle pursuits that happened 14 or 15 months ago? Why can't we get information to officers about pursuits that went well or bad to discuss in their briefings?

In 2010, there were fifty-three (53) pursuits, which was four less than the previous year. Policy changes and supervisor intervention in 2005 have dramatically reduced the number of annual pursuits from a high of 269 in 2004 to an average of 54 over the past five years.

However, the numbers do not tell the whole story. With pursuits being one of the more dangerous functions a police officer can be involved in, the need for review with an eye on training and awareness of emerging trends is undeniable.



Gordon Graham has said in the past, Train in Low Frequency, High Risk areas so officers are "adequately trained for those tasks that give us no time to think".

This thought has caused the Organizational Development Bureau to explore the creation of the Pursuit Review Committee (PRC). The PRC's goal is to ensure that what is happening in the field represents the best and safest practices possible. Training, awareness, and being proactive regarding predictable future issues is a mandate. PRC will collaborate with various committees and sections to ensure officer safety is not compromised.

As an example, the EVOC section is researching different vehicle body configurations to see if they can handle doing a "PIT" action. What EVOC determines may well require education, awareness and or training to be developed and institutionalized.

The PRC is being formed to handle three primary functions:

1. To ascertain training issues,
2. To identify emerging trends, issues, and developments

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3. To ensure procedures, both during and after the pursuit, reduce liability and promote officer safety.

The new PRC will place a strong emphasis on training and ensuring a strong emphasis on training and ensuring that our procedures are allowing officers to do their jobs without undue risk. Several observations can be made from last year's pursuit information:

- The number of pursuits has normalized around 54 pursuits a year.
- Over thirty percent of the pursuits were supervisor or officer terminated. This is higher than the previous four years.

- Seventy percent of the time, the initial reason for a pursuit was a felony.
- Seventy-nine percent of the pursuits concluded within the first five miles.
- Over forty percent lasted less than a mile when terminated. This could indicate quick decision-making regarding all the factors of the initial pursuit.
- Air Support has assisted on over forty percent of the pursuits in 2010. This is the highest percentage recorded since 2005.
- **Data indicates that the usage of stop sticks is increasing, with an improving success rate.**
- In almost twenty five percent of the arrests, the suspect was driving under the influence.

Vehicular Pursuits: 2004 through 2010							
Total Number of Pursuits							
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Pursuits	269	254	50	51	58	57	53
# of Policy Revisions	0	3	0	0	0	2*	0

Original Violation Observed



Authors



Quality Assurance



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