



OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY
CY2022 ANNUAL VEHICLE AND FOOT
PURSUIT REPORT

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

By their nature, vehicular and foot pursuits are dangerous and can result in injury or death. Consequently, the Department has a policy to restrict and monitor these actions, while balancing the need to apprehend criminals and maintain the community's safety.

It is the policy of the United States Capitol Police to permit officers to engage in a vehicle or foot pursuit when it is reasonably necessary to effectively accomplish their lawful objectives (bring a subject under control), while protecting the lives of officers, the public, and others.

Department members are required to report and document all pursuits enacted. The Office of Professional Responsibility is the central repository for all Pursuit Analysis reports and is responsible to conduct a review of all submitted information to ensure compliance with the Department's pursuit policy.

The Office of Professional Responsibility's review ensures that the pursuit as reported was not prohibitive in nature; appropriate diligence was enacted during the pursuit; and the pursuit was consistent with applicable law, rule, regulation, and policy.

Based upon the Office of Professional Responsibility's review and if circumstances warrant, the Office of Professional Responsibility will either initiate an investigation or maintain the information on file for historical record.

This review and process prioritizes the community's safety, showcases transparency in an officer's decision-making authority, provides accountability of expectations, and enhances the public's trust in our operations.



Inspector Michael A. Spochart
Commander, Office of
Professional Responsibility

PURSUIT POLICY:

The Department's Vehicle Pursuit policy defines a vehicle pursuit as:

The pursuit of a vehicle, including motorcycles, by a sworn employee using an authorized USCP pursuit vehicle to apprehend an individual whom the sworn employee has probable cause to believe has committed a felony involving violence or threatened violence against another person – or involving serious physical injury or the threat of serious physical injury, or death – and the sworn employee reasonably believes that the person to be apprehended will pose an immediate threat of death to the sworn employee or others if apprehension is delayed.

The Department's Vehicle Pursuit policy dictates:

USCP sworn employees may only engage in vehicular pursuits when operating an authorized USCP pursuit vehicle with emergency devices activated in the following instances:

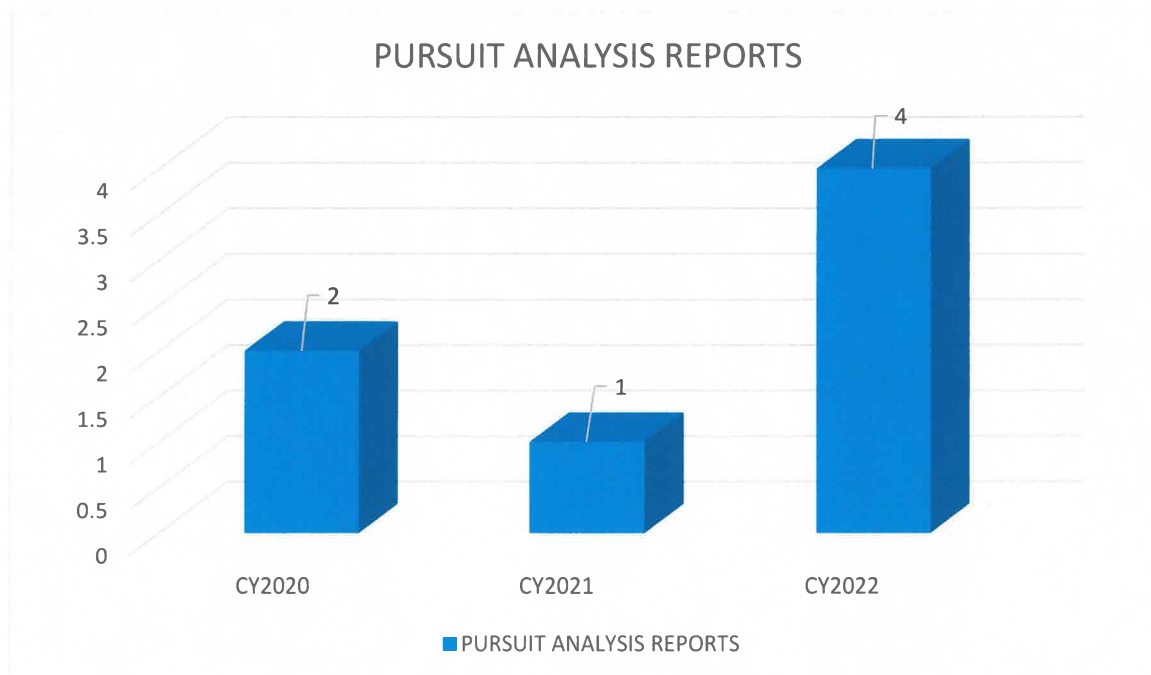
- 1. To affect the arrest or prevent the escape of a person who has committed a violent felony or has attempted to commit a violent felony in the sworn employee's presence; or*
- 2. When a violent felony has been committed and the sworn employee has probable cause to believe the person they are attempting to apprehend has committed the violent felony. The violent felony must involve an actual or threatened attack that the sworn employee has probable cause to believe could result in death or serious bodily injury to another; or*
- 3. The sworn employee reasonably believes that the person to be arrested or apprehended will pose an imminent threat of death or serious physical injury to the sworn employee or others if apprehension is delayed.*

Analysis

During calendar year 2022, the Office of Professional Responsibility reviewed four Vehicle Pursuit Analysis reports and conducted a thorough administrative review of each incident.

Figure 17.

Pursuit Analysis reports by calendar year



The above chart shows that two Pursuit Analysis reports were reviewed in calendar year 2020, one Pursuit Analysis report was reviewed in calendar year 2021, and four Pursuit Analysis reports were reviewed in calendar year 2022.

The chart reflects an upward trend of pursuits conducted in a three-year comparison, however, it should be noted that the COVID pandemic occurred during CY2020 and the agency experienced heightened security perimeters in CY2021 after the January 6, 2021 Insurrection, which restricted vehicle traffic throughout and around the Capitol campus.

The Office of Professional Responsibility has reviewed all four of the vehicle pursuit forms submitted in 2022 and have conducted a thorough review to ensure that all of the reported vehicle pursuits were conducted in accordance with the Department's Vehicle Pursuits policy.

1. On January 18, 2022, at approximately 1235 hours, a Special Operations Division (SOD) officer initiated a vehicle pursuit of an armed carjacking with two suspects in the vehicle. The pursuit commenced at 300 F Street, N.E. when the SOD officer observed the vehicle being operated in the wrong direction on a one-way street and passing through several traffic lights and stop signs. The SOD officer initiated pursuit with emergency lights and siren activated. The suspect vehicle crashed at the intersection of Second and East Capitol Street, S.E. and the driver and a passenger fled on foot eastbound in the 200 block of East Capitol Street. The SOD officer pursued the passenger eastbound in the 200 block of East Capitol Street and the passenger then climbed the construction fence surrounding the Library of Congress Adams Building. The SOD officer withdrew their Department-issued firearm and pointed it at the suspect while giving loud verbal commands for the suspect to raise his hands and lay flat on his stomach. Both occupants of the vehicle were successfully apprehended and arrested for multiple felonies.
2. On August 2, 2022, at approximately 1649 hours, a Special Operations Division (SOD) officer was alerted by a License Plate Reader at Third and Independence Avenue, S.W. that identified a vehicle as stolen and the occupants were considered armed and dangerous. The vehicle was last observed eastbound on Independence Avenue, S.E. The SOD officer located the vehicle along Independence Avenue, S.E. and it fled unprovoked. The SOD officer initiated pursuit with emergency lights and siren activated. The pursued vehicle operated in a reckless manner throughout the southeast sector while disregarding numerous traffic lights and stop signs. The vehicle crashed at 12th and Independence Avenue, S.E. A gun was found underneath the driver's leg resulting in an arrest for a weapon-related offense. Driver and passenger were both arrested for Unlawful Use of a Vehicle.
3. On August 11, 2022, at approximately 1620 hours, a Senate Division (SD) officer initiated the pursuit of a fleeing vehicle after they witnessed it strike another vehicle and cause property damage in the Unit Block D Street, N.W. The SD officer initiated pursuit with emergency lights and siren activated. The SD officer then continued to pursue the fleeing vehicle until it crashed into a marked U.S. Capitol Police cruiser at the intersection of Second Street and Constitution Avenue, N.E. The occupant was apprehended and arrested for Fleeing.¹

¹ The Office of Professional Responsibility conducted a thorough review of the August 11, 2022, vehicle pursuit and determined that the SD officer violated the Vehicle Pursuit policy when they initiated pursuit of a vehicle after it was involved in a misdemeanor offense, continued to pursue the vehicle during a time of day with heavy traffic, and the pursuit ended with damage to a Departmental marked police vehicle that was struck by the fleeing vehicle. The Office of Professional Responsibility thoroughly investigated the matter and the officer received appropriate disciplinary action for their actions during the incident.

4. On September 5, 2022, at approximately 0057 hours, while traveling southbound on South Capitol Street, a Special Operations Division (SOD) officer requested a rolling tag check of a vehicle driving without its lights activated. The SOD officer attempted a traffic stop on the vehicle at South Capitol and I Street, S.E., but the vehicle continued to drive at or below the speed limit and did not stop. The SOD officer activated his siren, but the vehicle continued driving at the same speed without stopping as it crossed the South Capitol Street Bridge. The SOD officer followed the vehicle across the bridge, then deactivated his emergency lights and siren, and began to turn his vehicle around and return to the Department's jurisdiction. At that time, USCP Communications broadcasted the tag return as 10-30 F (felony) and the SOD officer re-engaged in pursuit of the vehicle and successfully stopped the vehicle at 1300 Howard Road, S.E. where one adult male fled the scene (not apprehended) and four juveniles were apprehended. All four juveniles were released to their parents and the vehicle (confirmed stolen) was recovered.

CONCLUSION:

The Office of Professional Responsibility has determined that three of the reported vehicle pursuits (cited as 1, 2, and 4 above) were conducted within compliance of the Department's Vehicle Pursuit policy and did not violate the Department's restrictions for a pursuit. Further, the tactics used were conducted in a safe and prudent manner. In addition, the following guidelines were adhered to:

- The pursuit was initiated when a USCP sworn employee observed a vehicle involved in a known violent felony.
- The pursuit was initiated within the USCP jurisdiction.
- The pursuit was conducted with an authorized USCP pursuit vehicle with emergency devices activated.
- The agency having primary jurisdiction was notified when USCP pursuing employees entered the neighboring jurisdiction.
- USCP Watch Commander and Field Commander were notified during the pursuit.
- The pursuit was terminated by the Field Commander when USCP employees lost sight of the vehicle and/or it was no longer safe to continue the pursuit.
- The pursuit initiated was consistent with the Department's Use of Force policy.