

January 31, 2019

To: Chief of Police George Kral

Through: Deputy Chief Cheryl Hunt *CH*
Support and Administrative Services Division

Captain Tom Morelli *TM-2112*
Support Services Bureau

Lieutenant David Wieczorek *DW*
Planning, Research & Inspections Section

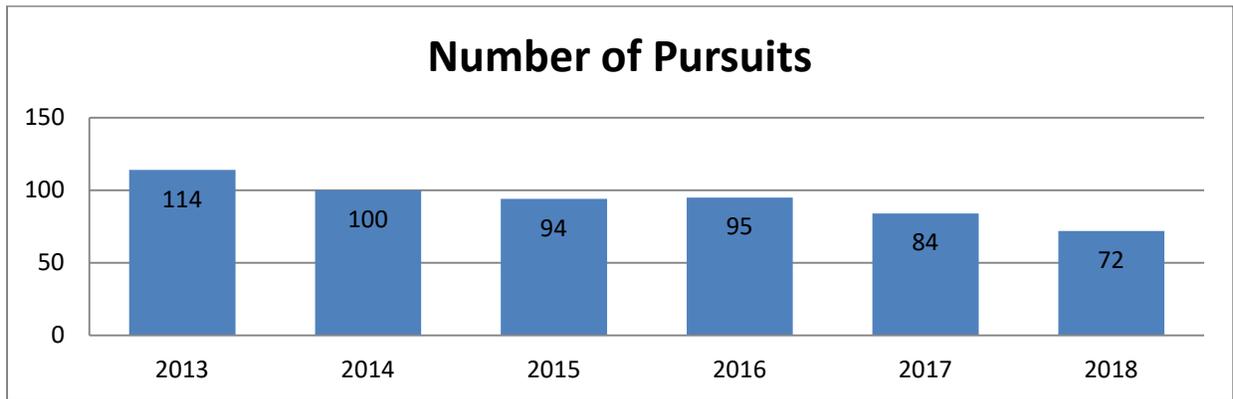
From: Sergeant Jill Mannebach *JM*
Accreditation Manager

Subject: Annual Pursuit Analysis – 2018

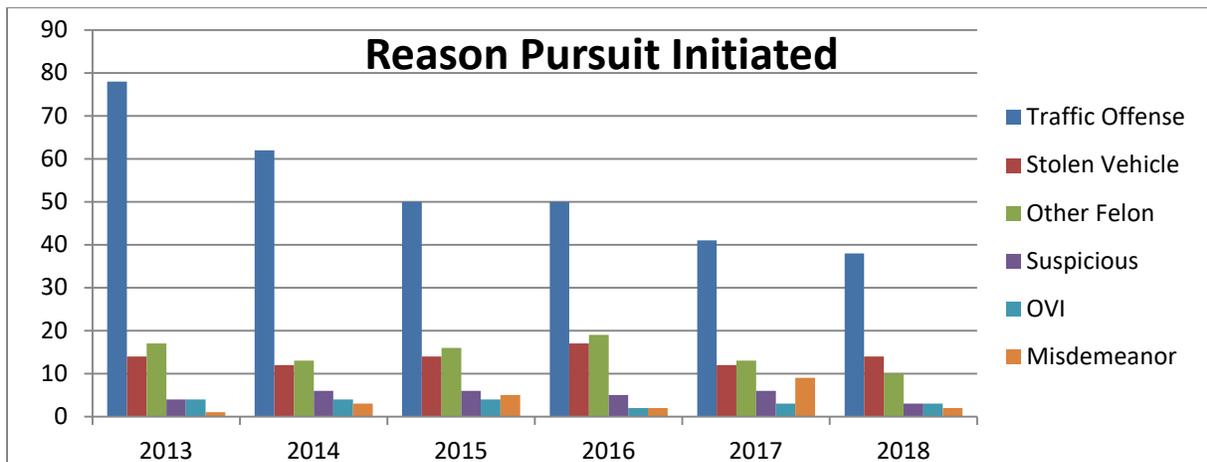
The following is a pursuit analysis, which is required by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) on an annual basis. This report takes an in-depth look into all pursuits that occurred in 2018, with focus given to the reasons pursuits are initiated, terminated, and any violations of the pursuit policy that may have occurred. The main purpose of this analysis is to reveal patterns or trends that indicate training needs and/or policy changes. After the data is analyzed, recommendations will be made to the chief of police on ways to improve or enhance our current pursuit policy.

The Toledo Police Department recognizes the fact that pursuits can be inherently dangerous. For that reason, pursuits go through multiple layers of review to ensure that protocol is being followed and to identify officer safety issues, potential risks to the public, training needs and liability issues. All pursuits are subject to an after-action review which is completed by the pursuing officer's immediate supervisor and includes all officers involved. This is a crucial part of the review process for a couple of reasons. It typically happens shortly after the pursuit, leaving it fresh in the minds of all involved. It also allows the officers a chance to be involved with the review process, giving them a better understanding of what is expected.

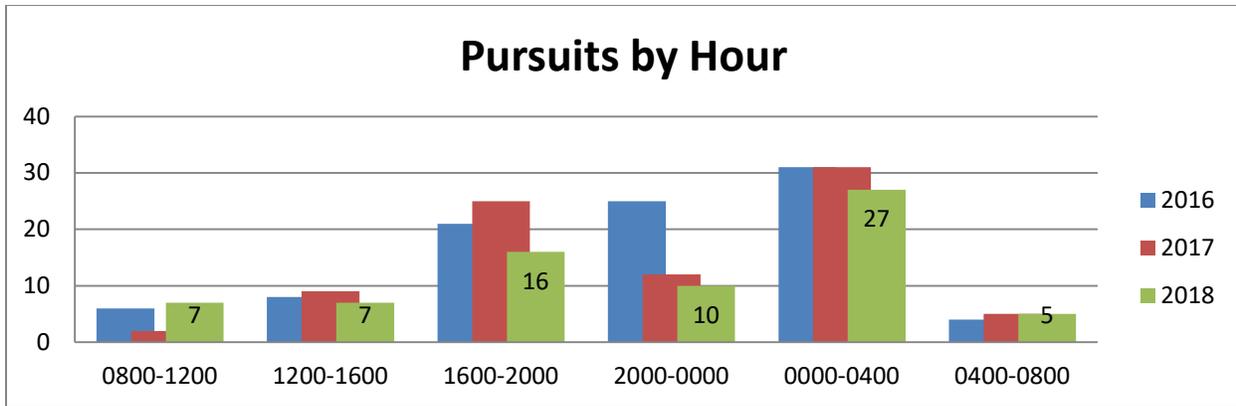
A Pursuit Review Committee meets quarterly to serve as another layer of review. This committee better ensures consistency and continuity to the review process and makes recommendations to the chief of police regarding policy and training issues.



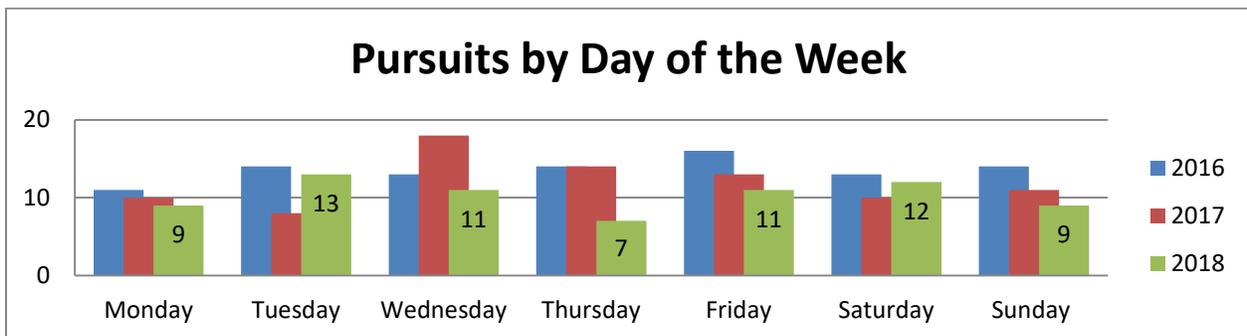
The above chart displays the number of pursuits which have occurred over the past six years. A total of 72 pursuits occurred in 2018 following the downward trend we have been seeing since 2013.



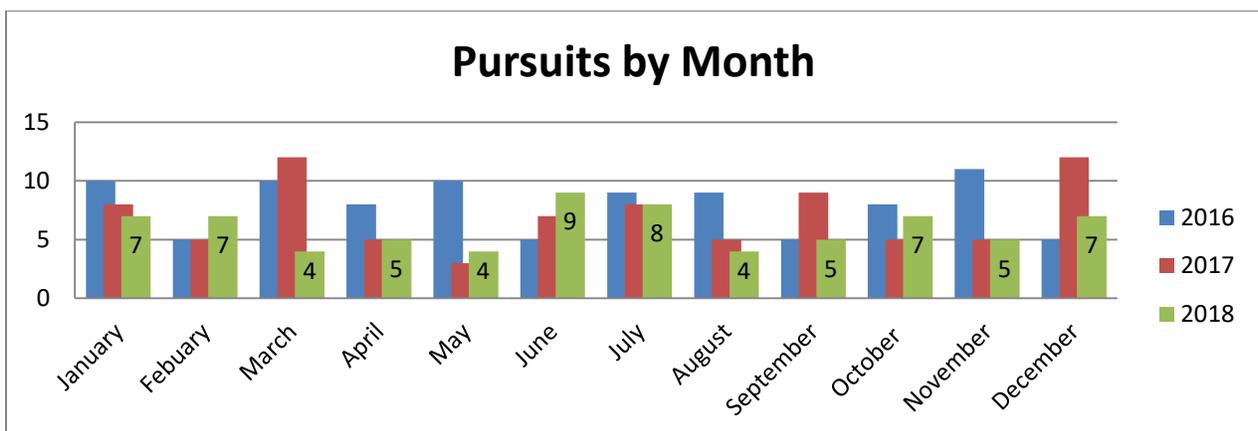
Suspects avoid apprehension for a multitude of reasons and given that numerous police contacts are initiated through traffic stops, it is clear to see why vehicle pursuits transpire. For purposes of this analysis, only the initial reason for the pursuit was tracked. Traffic violations were the most frequent reason for the initiation, accounting for roughly 52% of the total number of pursuits, followed by stolen vehicles at 19%, felony violations at 14%, and misdemeanor violations, suspicious vehicles and OVI violations accounted for the remaining 11%. There were also two pursuits that were not accounted for in the above chart because they were initiated by Ohio State Patrol officers with Toledo Police Department officers assisting in the apprehension of the suspects.



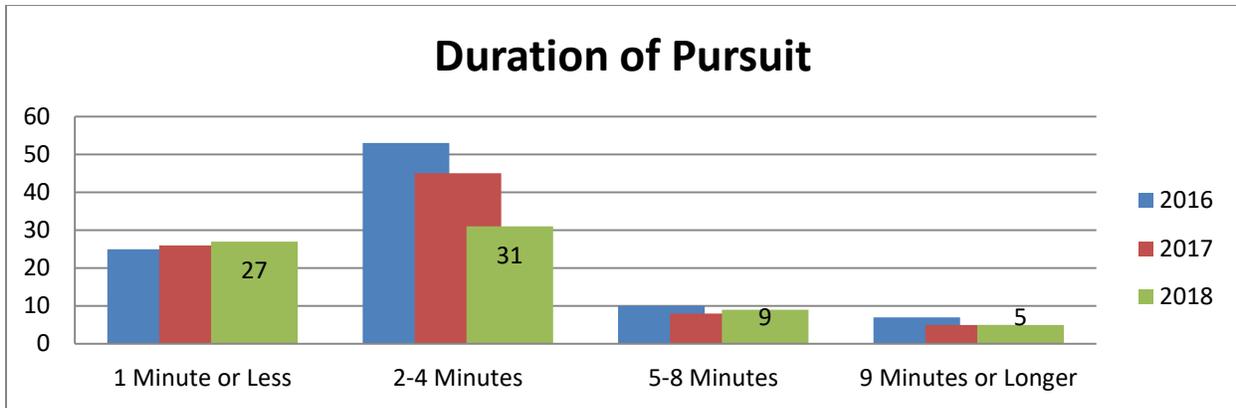
The hours between 0000 and 0400 had the highest percentage of pursuits at 37%. Only 17% of the pursuits occurred between 0400 hours and 1200 hours. This information is consistent with previous years.



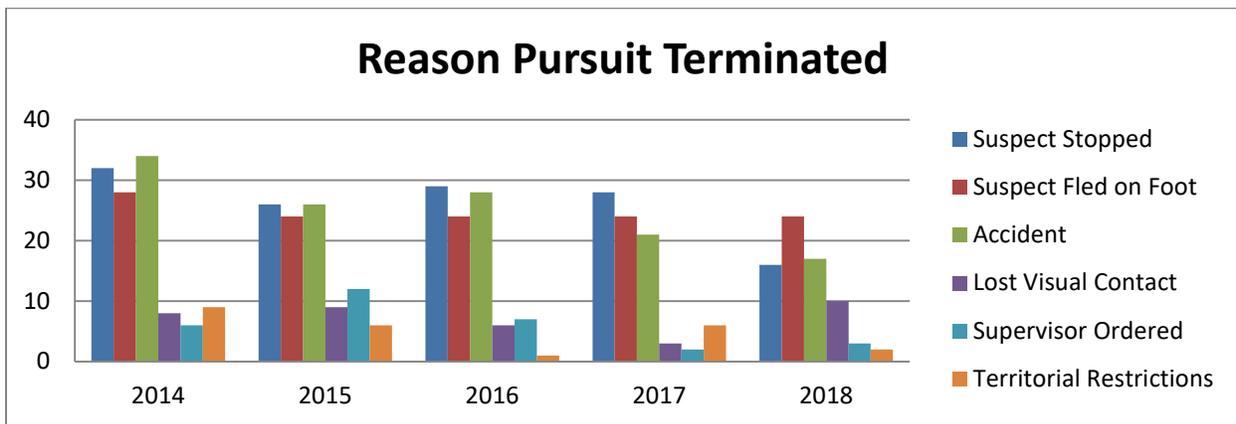
Most of the days of the week were consistent with each other. Tuesdays had the highest total of 13 pursuits and Thursdays had the least with seven.



The month of June saw the highest number of pursuits with nine, followed by July with eight. The months of March, May, and August had the lowest number of pursuits at four. There does not appear to be any real clear pattern regarding pursuits and the months that they occur.



In 2018, the average vehicle pursuit initiated by a Toledo Police officer lasted just over three minutes in duration. Additionally, 38% of all pursuits lasted one minute or less. The longest pursuit in 2018 was 14 minutes in duration and is summarized later in this report.



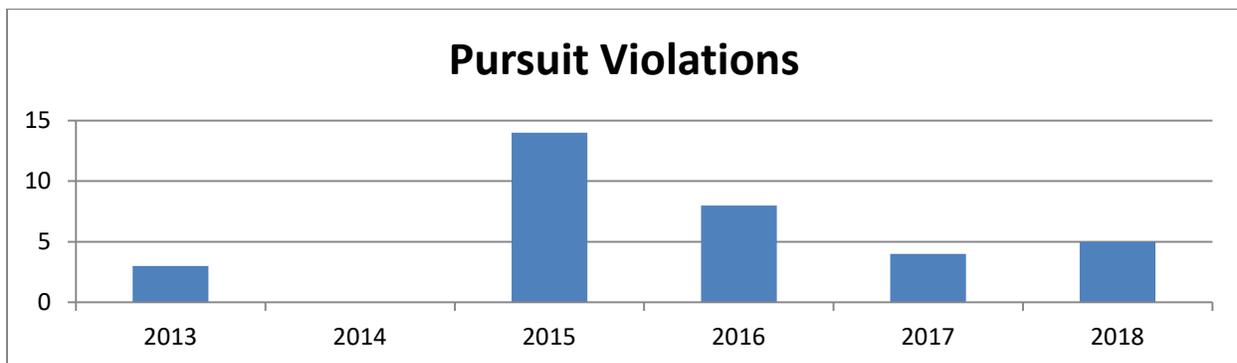
The majority of vehicle pursuits, 56% to be exact, were terminated because the suspect either stopped or abandoned the vehicle and fled on foot. Additionally, 23% of vehicle pursuits were terminated because the suspect vehicle was involved in an accident, usually with a fixed object. This percentage represents the lowest total of accidents over the past five years. In 13% of the pursuits, officers lost visual contact with the suspect vehicle and ended the pursuit. The remaining pursuits, seven percent, were terminated for one of the following reasons: the supervisor ordered it terminated, the suspect crossed jurisdictional lines, and/or the officer determined environmental conditions were unsafe. Supervisor ordered terminations and territorial restrictions often go hand-in-hand because the supervisor will advise units to cancel the pursuit at the jurisdictional line.

Accidents



There were a total of 28 incidents that occurred in 2018 that involved an accident, which is consistent with the previous year. The above graph represents the breakdown of those incidents. There was one fatal pursuit this year which resulted in the suspect losing their life, the incident is summarized later in this report. There were an additional five pursuits that resulted in injury to the suspect. Most of the injuries were minor in nature. Toledo Police officers were involved in two accidents that resulted in property damage only. There were a total of five accidents involving a third party, one of which resulted in minor injuries. Fifty-four percent of the accidents were property damage accidents caused by the suspect.

Pursuit Violations



In 2018, there were a total of five pursuits where an officer was found to have committed a violation. All of the violations were directly related to the pursuit policy and were minor in nature.

Forcible Stop Devices Used	Were they Effective
2018-VP-00013	No
2018-VP-00014	No
2018-VP-00037	Yes
2018-VP-00042	No
2018-VP-00050	No
2018-VP-00061	No

There were six instances where officers deployed a forcible stop device during vehicle pursuits in 2018. One of the six deployments was successful. In this case, the suspect vehicle struck the device and deflated three of the tires. As a result, the suspect vehicle stopped and the suspect was apprehended. In the remaining incidents, a forcible stop device was deployed but was not struck by the suspect vehicle. In all of the incidents, there were no injuries caused to the officers or the suspects by deploying the forcible stop devices.

Review of 2018 Incidents

Below is a summary of some of the pursuits that involved an accident, policy violation or had unusual circumstances.

- 2018-VP-00013 – A police unit, while on patrol, attempted to stop a vehicle for a traffic violation. The driver refused to comply and fled, leading officers on an eleven mile pursuit. Police units attempted to deploy stop sticks on two separate occasions, both deployments were unsuccessful. The driver eventually came to a stop, abandoned the vehicle, and fled on foot. After a brief foot pursuit, the driver was taken into custody and found to have outstanding felony warrants. During the post pursuit debriefing there were a number of issues discussed such as clearing the roadway, the primary unit simultaneously driving and calling the pursuit and driving left of a divided roadway. The crews involved were counseled. This pursuit occurred on February 28, 2018, at 1018 hours and lasted approximately 14 minutes.

Although, some of the officers' actions were not within the agency's policy, it does not appear that a change in policy or training would have produced a different outcome.

- 2018-VP-00032 – As a result of an investigation regarding a stolen license plate complaint, a uniformed crew attempted to stop a possible stolen vehicle. The driver of the vehicle refused to comply and fled, leading officers on a six mile chase. The pursuit came to an end when the suspect drove over railroad tracks at a high rate of speed, struck a utility pole, careened through a fence, and rolled over several times before coming to rest. The driver of the vehicle was ejected and pronounced dead at the scene. The passenger was transported to the hospital for non-life threatening issues. At one point, four police vehicles were engaged in the pursuit. This was in excess of the number of patrol vehicles allowed to participate in a pursuit and resulted in officers being counseled for violating department policy. This pursuit occurred on June 6, 2018 at 0040 hours and lasted approximately five minutes.

Although, some of the officers' actions violated department policy, it does not appear that a change in policy or training would have produced a different outcome.

- 2018-VP-00021 – A police unit attempted to make a traffic stop by initiating lights and sirens. Initially, the suspect complied and pulled the vehicle to the side of the road, however, once the officers began exiting their police vehicle the suspect rapidly accelerated and fled. The pursuit continued for several miles until the suspect vehicle struck a pedestrian island and veered into a vehicle that was stopped at a red light. The suspect fled on foot before quickly being apprehended. The suspect and the involved third party were treated on scene for minor injuries. This pursuit occurred on April 23, 2018, at 1605 hours and lasted approximately two minutes.

After review, all officers' actions were determined to be within agency policy and it does not appear that a change in policy or training would have produced a different outcome.

- 2018-VP-00042 – Officers were responding to gunshots heard when they observed a vehicle pull away from the curb without headlights illuminated. When officers initiated a traffic stop, the driver refused to comply and fled. The pursuit continued on for 14.6 miles, making it the longest pursuit in 2018. Police units attempted to deploy stop sticks on two separate occasions but both deployments were unsuccessful. During the pursuit, the driver side passenger opened the door and pointed a handgun at pursuing officers. The suspect vehicle lost control while attempting to make a turn, striking a tree and disabling the vehicle. All occupants then fled on foot, but were apprehended a few minutes later. Two firearms were removed from the vehicle and no injuries occurred as a result of the pursuit. This pursuit occurred on July 24, 2018 at 0125 hours and lasted approximately 14 minutes.

After review, all officers' actions were determined to be within agency policy and it does not appear that a change in policy or training would have produced a different outcome.

Conclusions

In researching pursuit policies from other police departments, it appears that the trend for many departments is moving towards a more restrictive pursuit policy, i.e. only allowing officers to pursue when certain criteria is met (e.g. fleeing felon). Currently, the Toledo Police Department's pursuit policy allows pursuits with practical restrictions. The department closely monitors pursuits and terminates them when necessary. It is the department's stance that this is the best option for both the department and the community it serves.

Understanding the risks and liabilities that are associated with pursuits is an important aspect to being able to critically review them. Review should not just come from the supervisory level but also from the officers involved. The review process allows for officers to recognize their own mistakes and assists supervisors in ensuring accountability and transparency. At a time when officer's actions are closely scrutinized, it is important to consider the importance of regular training as it pertains to pursuits. Department policy and training in this area should constantly be reviewed and adjusted when necessary.

Recommendations

The Toledo Police Department's supervisors appear to be doing an excellent job of actively monitoring pursuits and reviewing them after the incident has concluded. It is my recommendation that all review and monitoring procedures stay in place. Reviewing the footage from body and in-car cameras is a great tool for both the officers involved and supervisors alike. Officers should continue to be aware of the environmental conditions such as road conditions, traffic, time of day, and speed. All of these factors play an important role in determining whether to pursue a subject. Oftentimes, supervisors are not fully aware of these factors in real time because they are not participating in the pursuit. That is why the multi-layered review process, coupled with officer and supervisory review of body camera and in-car video footage is vital.

Currently, the Pursuit Review Committee meets quarterly, but given the amount of review and post pursuit debriefings that now occur, bi-annual meetings will be more than enough to meet the needs of the department.

One of last year's recommendations was to closely monitor incidents where a forcible stop device was deployed. There was only one incident in 2017 where officers deployed a forcible stop device but that number has since increased to six. While only one of those incidents had a successful deployment the need to have officers carry them is still great. The timing and location of a successfully deployed forcible stop device has to be almost perfect, which is why there are so many unsuccessful deployments, but when the suspect vehicle strikes the forcible stop device it usually works as designed. There were numerous pursuits this year that tried multiple times to deploy a forcible stop device during the same pursuit. At this time the recommendation would be to continue to have as many officers as possible carry the forcible stop devices in their vehicles allowing for a greater chance of success.