

Amarillo Police Department

Use of Force Report

2011

The information contained in this report was obtained from the Use of Control reporting forms forwarded to this office and from verbal self reporting from specialized units. The information covers from January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2011.

USE OF FORCE REPORTED

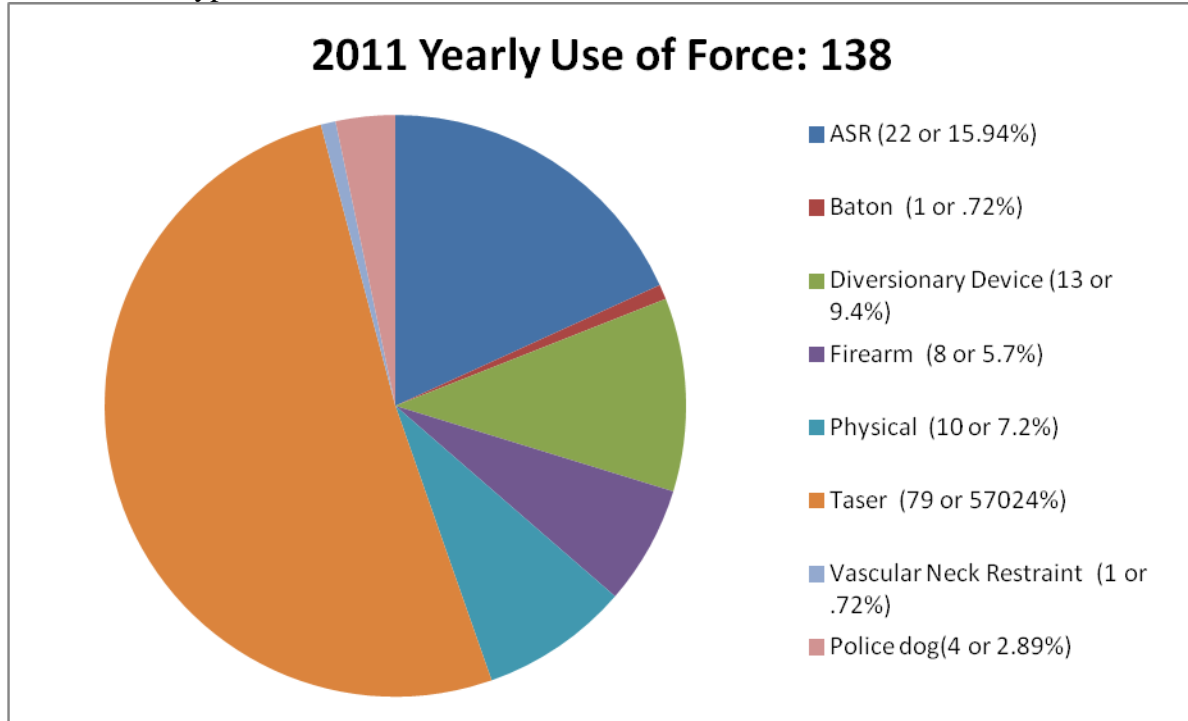
This department allows for the reporting of thirteen types or categories of force. These are,

- 1) ASR (Pepper Spray)
- 2) Baton
- 3) Chemical
- 4) Diversionary Device (Flash bang)
- 5) Firearm
- 6) Impact Round
- 7) Other
- 8) Physical
- 9) Sting Ball
- 10) Taser
- 11) Vascular Neck Restraint
- 12) Police dog
- 13) Pepper ball

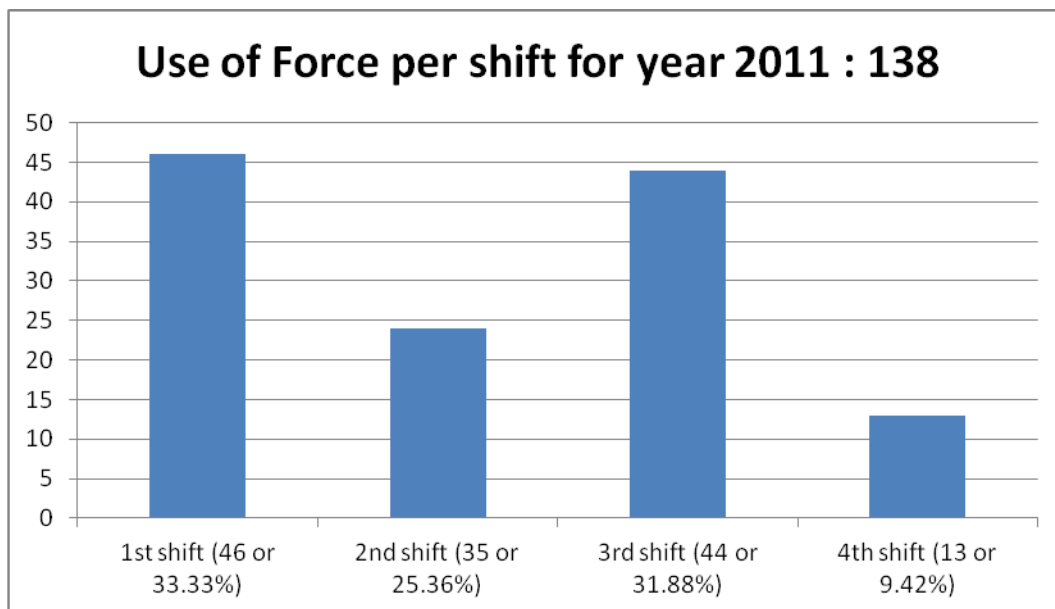
The most commonly used are the ASR, Baton, Physical, and Taser. Less commonly used are Firearm, Vascular Neck Restraint, and the Police Dog. The Diversionary Device is used exclusively by SWAT. The remaining are rarely used and are not generally available to the field officer.

TOTALS

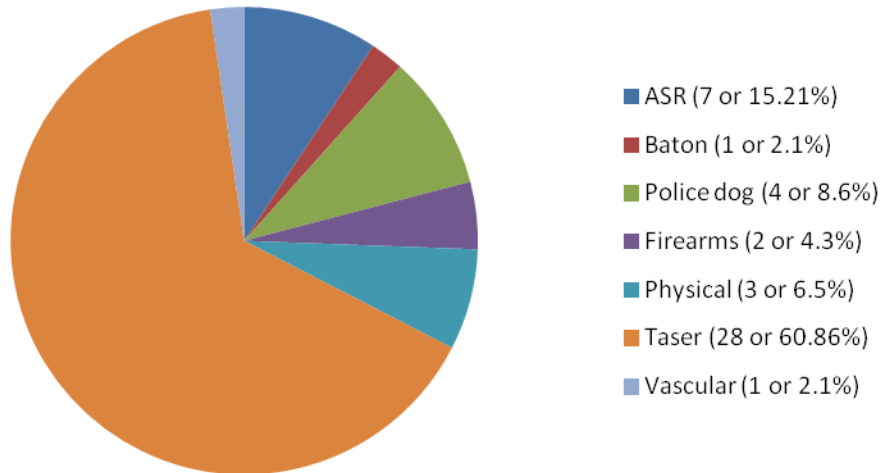
There were one hundred twenty-seven reported uses of force in 2011. The following chart illustrates the types and breakdown in numbers used.



These incidents are broken down per shift as follows. All data from SWAT and COPPS are included in 2nd shift.

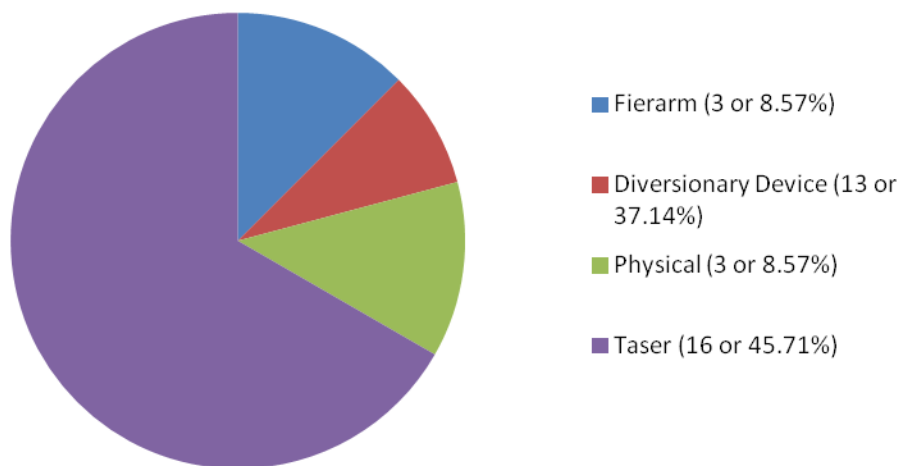


1st Shift Use of Force by Type : 46



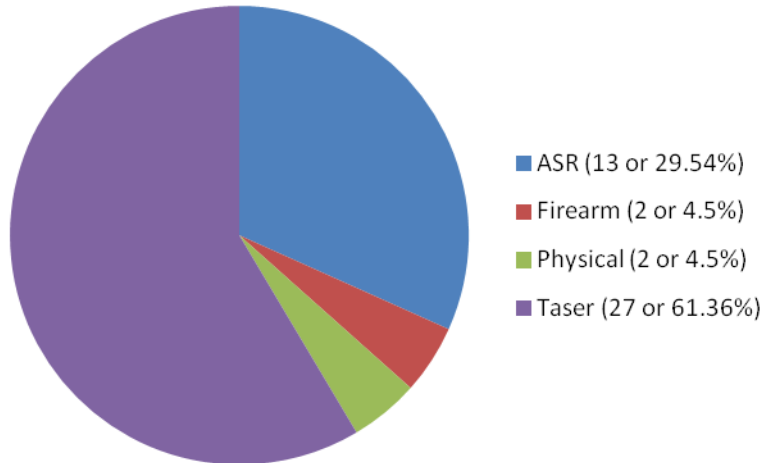
First Shift had the most total uses of force of all shifts and used seven types of force.

2nd shift Use of Force by type: 35 Total



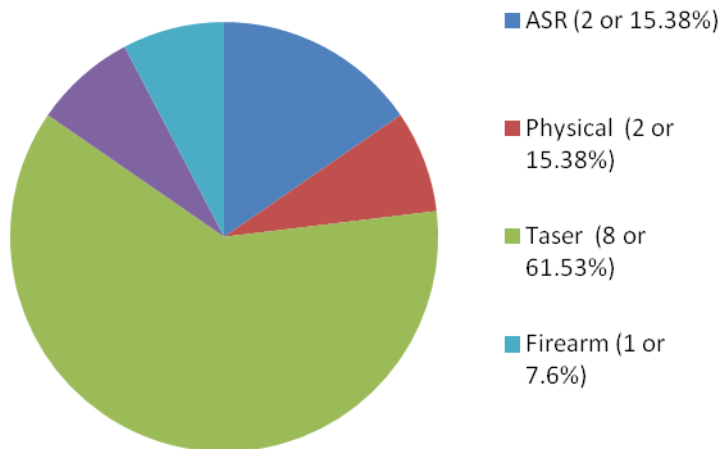
Second shift had the third highest total uses of force of all shifts. That is partially due to the inclusion of the SWAT and the COPPS units.

3rd shift Use of Force by type: 44 Total



Third Shift accounts for the second highest total uses of force for the year.

4th shift Use of Force by type: 13 Total



Forth shift has the least amount of uses reported.

WHAT WE USE

The Taser is the predominate type of force that we as a department use. Seventy-nine or roughly 62% of the yearly total uses of force involve the Taser. Recommendations for expanded training with the Taser were made on the 4th quarter Use of Control report. Since we rely on the Taser so much it only makes sense to expand the training on it. Generally we use this device on combative, non-compliant individuals, and to a slightly lesser extent on fleeing individuals. When used on fleeing individuals there appears to a slight increase in injuries due to falling harder when tased at a run. This device has also been used with great success on suicidal individuals some of whom have been armed with knives.

ASR was used twenty-two times in the year. I have noted that it is used often on handcuffed individuals who are still resisting and/or being combative. There have been no reports of injury from the use of ASR.

Physical force was used ten times this year. The Officers seem confused about the reporting requirements for this type of force. Rules and Regulations define physical control/force as, "Physical control, which results in an injury to a prisoner, complaint of injury or uses control beyond a control hold technique that requires medical treatment." Several use of control forms marked with Physical have not shown any injury or complaint of injury. Those reports were reviewed to ensure the form was not mis-marked and were either discounted or marked accordingly. Recommendations for corrective training were made on the 4th Quarter report. The type of physical force reported is usually closed fist strikes or knee strikes. Injury is usually caused by falling while grappling with a suspect.

Firearms were used eight times this year. Each incident involving an Officers use of the firearm was presented to the respective county Grand Jury for review.

The baton (expanding version) was used once.

The vascular neck restraint was used once.

The SWAT team deployed 13 diversionary devises.

TRENDS

I expect the Taser to remain the predominate type of force employed by our officers. It is quickly available, easy to use and generally very effective. Because of those qualities I wonder if officers, particularly those joining the department after the Taser was adopted, are not employing or are losing verbal skills in persuasion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Continued training on the Taser to include use on fleeing suspects and/or use while running. Continued training on personal self defense techniques. Officers reported numerous uses of physical force, eleven of which met reporting criteria, but all of which recount hands on engagement with a suspect. Roll call training on reporting requirements.