

Victoria Police Department

Annual Pursuit Review

MEMORANDUM

ADMIN
2012-26

Date: March 27, 2012

To: Chief J.J. Craig
Assistant Chief Roy Boyd
Lieutenant Kelly Price
Lieutenant Kenneth Jackson
Lieutenant Mike Tatum
Lieutenant Caleb Breshears
Lieutenant Ralph Buentello
Lieutenant Jason Cross

Reference: Annual Pursuit Review 2011

An annual review of pursuits involving Victoria Police officers for the calendar year 2011 has been conducted.

The review indicated that during 2011, VPD officers were involved in 22 pursuits compared to 20 for 2010. This is an increase of 2, which is a 10 % increase from the previous year.

Of the 22 pursuits, all complied with policy, which is a 100% compliance rate.

The analysis also revealed that none of the officers terminated a pursuit themselves. This equates to a 0 % self termination rate. Supervisors did not terminate any pursuits in 2011. This equates to a 0 % supervisor termination rate.

Seven (7) drivers involved in pursuits voluntarily stopped and surrendered to police. This equals 43 % compliance. Thirteen (13) drivers stopped their vehicle, but then evaded arrest on foot. This is a 62 % rate of drivers evading on foot after stopping their vehicle.

There were five (5) crashes (23%) during pursuits in 2011 out of a total of 22 pursuits, which did cause the termination of the vehicle pursuits.

Reasons for the pursuits were also reviewed and indicated the following:

- 9 of 22 pursuits were initiated due to traffic violations
- 3 of 22 pursuits were initiated due to the vehicle being stolen
- 1 of 22 pursuits was initiated due to assaults or assault investigations
- 4 of 22 pursuits were initiated due to felonies (not including Felony Evading in a vehicle)
- 2 of 22 pursuits were initiated as investigative stops
- 2 of 22 pursuits were initiated due to a disturbance call given by dispatch (fleeing suspect)
- 1 of 22 pursuits was initiated due to a City Ordinance violation

Frequency by Month/Day/Time

The analysis was also done by the month, day of the week, and time of the 22 pursuits. The results are listed below:

Month	Day of Week	Time
January	0	0
February	Thursday	2103
February	Friday	0305
March	Wednesday	2115
April	Friday	0033
April	Saturday	0036
April	Sunday	1759
May	Tuesday	2206
June	Wednesday	2351
June	Thursday	0234
June	Wednesday	0252
July	0	0
August	Saturday	2005
September	Tuesday	1034
September	Saturday	2338
September	Thursday	1252
October	Saturday	0123
November	Thursday	2117
December	Thursday	2150
December	Monday	2305
December	Monday	2036
December	Thursday	1331
December	Wednesday	0924
December	Wednesday	1109

Day	Frequency
Monday	2
Tuesday	2
Wednesday	5
Thursday	6
Friday	2
Saturday	4
Sunday	1

Numerical Data Analysis

The most prevalent day of the week for pursuits for 2011 was Thursday (6), with Wednesday (5) being the second most frequent, and Saturday (4) being the third most frequent day of the week for pursuits to occur.

The most prevalent time for pursuits for 2011 was 2100 - 2200 (4), with 2300 – 2400 (3), and 0001 - 0100 (3) being tied for the second most common times for pursuits.

The month with the most pursuits was December (6). There was a three-way tie for the months with the second most pursuits: April (3), June (3), and September (3).

All of the pursuits complied with policy. The number of vehicle pursuits increased by 10 % from 2010. There were five (5) pursuits involving a crash, although one of those five crashed in the county after the VCSO took over the pursuit from our officer who never caught up to the violator's vehicle. There were no serious injuries, and no officer was injured. There were no VPD vehicles wrecked during pursuits in 2011.

Pursuits involving crashes

Five of the twenty-two pursuits involved crashes. None involved serious injury.

1. Case #2011047073, Officer B. Allen, 12-23-11, violator ran a stop sign in a residential neighborhood at night, struck a vehicle in the intersection causing the other vehicle to roll over to its side. The violator then lost control at struck a pole which disabled his vehicle. The violator was arrested at the scene. The driver of the second vehicle sustained minor injuries.
2. Case #2011030786, Officer T. Brown, 6-30-11, robbery suspect was driving at a high rate of speed on a highway and left the city northbound on State Hwy 87 north. Officer Brown never actually caught up to the violator. The Sheriff's Office and Highway Patrol intercepted the violator north of Victoria in the county and initiated the pursuit. The violator crashed and fled on foot. The violator was not arrested on this evening.
3. Case #2011014858, Officer G. Cantu, 4-1-2011, violator struck a horse in the roadway while fleeing officer Cantu. After striking the horse, the offender fled on foot and was arrested by Cantu. The violator complained of pain to their leg from the crash (minor).
4. Case #2011024262, Officer S. Lang, 5-24-11, violator fled down a dead-end gravel private drive and tried to drive through a chain link. The fence did not allow the vehicle through and the violator was arrested at the crash scene.
5. Case #2011015354, Officer R. Swanson, 4-3-11, violator lost control of the vehicle while trying to make a turn at an intersection and drove into a residential yard and struck a tree in the front yard. The violator was arrested at the crash scene.

Pursuit Policy

There were no changes to the Victoria Police Department pursuit policy in 2011. The last modification or update was on 10-15-2010, at which time there were numerous changes to the policy. The majority of changes involved changing wording or adding more specific language. All of the pursuits in 2011 were terminated either by the offender voluntarily stopping, or by crashing their vehicle. All of the pursuits in 2011 complied with policy.

Supervisor Involvement

A review of pursuit reports and supplemental reports for the year revealed that there were no pursuits terminated by supervisors. The supervisors were very involved in monitoring each pursuit and did not terminate any pursuits because the conditions were acceptable, such as the time of day, weather, traffic present, speed/roadway, violator's driving mannerisms, and the officers properly relaying information about the pursuit conditions regularly so that the supervisor could continuously evaluate the situation. For these above listed reasons, the reduction in supervisor terminated pursuits does not appear to be indicative of a problem or negative trend.

Recommendations

1. Not every patrol vehicle is equipped with stop sticks. Only 7 of 20 patrol cars are equipped with Stop Sticks currently. This is very important in the city due to violators changing streets/direction frequently. In order to get a police vehicle in a position to utilize this valuable tool, most, if not all, of the patrol vehicles should be equipped with the stop sticks in order to make sure that any car in a position to utilize them will be so equipped.
2. The Patrol Division has not been trained in the use and proper employment of the stop sticks for several years. This is a perishable skill for veterans and there are many newer officers who have never received training in the deployment of the stop sticks. The newer officers have also never had the opportunity to practice throwing and pulling back the stop sticks, which takes some skill and timing. Officers who have not been trained in the use of the stop sticks are prohibited by policy from using them.

Excerpt from General Order 3.11, Emergency Driving:

V. Stop Sticks:

- 5.02 The safety of officers, citizens and suspects should be of the utmost concern, and careful planning and evaluation of a deployment location is essential.
 - A. Only department provided and authorized equipment will be used.
 - B. **Only those officers who have received training in the use of the equipment will deploy it.**
 - C. The deploying officer(s) shall deploy the equipment in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations/directions.

3. Emergency driving training has not been conducted on a regular basis over the past several years. This should be conducted at least every two years, if not yearly. In addition, some type of pursuit policy training should be conducted at least yearly. This could be as informal as roll call training, or as formal as a class facilitated by the Training Unit.

4. Changes to the Vehicle Pursuit Review Report need to be made.

a. The report needs to capture whether Stop Sticks were deployed or not, preferably with some type of check box.

b. Separate the combined line "Light and Weather" to two separate lines so officers/supervisors will not forget to annotate the weather conditions on the current form.

c. The second page needs a line for Captain/Assist. Chief to sign (one space that either could sign, like the Use of Force Report form), then a separate line/space for Chief's review and place to sign. Both signature areas should include the date/time signed.

d. A copy of the officer's case report should be attached to each Pursuit Review Report so that all the information related to the pursuit is readily available to reviewers and for use in conducting the annual review without having to look up each case.

Conclusion

Other than the frequency of pursuits, there was no discernable pattern or trend identified. Only one officer had more than one pursuit during 2011 (Officer Leet-3). For the number of pursuits that were initiated, it was a very safe year for the citizens of Victoria, officers, and violators in regards to police pursuits. The current policy appears to be working as intended, and if the recommendations listed above are enacted, it will work even more effectively.

Respectfully,



Kevin Sanderson
Captain, Patrol Division
Victoria Police Department