

6/28/23

AUBURN POLICE DEPARTMENT



Pursuit Analysis 2022

This document is to report 2022 pursuit information, conduct a comparative analysis against recent years on a variety of pursuit aspects, offer suggestions on how to improve decision-making during pursuit driving by Auburn Officers, and to identify areas where EVOC training can be enhanced.

Commander Todd Byers

AUBURN POLICE DEPARTMENT

2022 PURSUIT ANALYSIS

The information in this analysis was obtained from Spillman Incident Reports, CAD dispatch, Supervisors' Reports of Pursuits which includes the Supervisors Critique of the pursuit.

The current procedure for collecting data on pursuits is outlined below and in the Auburn Police Department Policy Manual, Chapter 307.

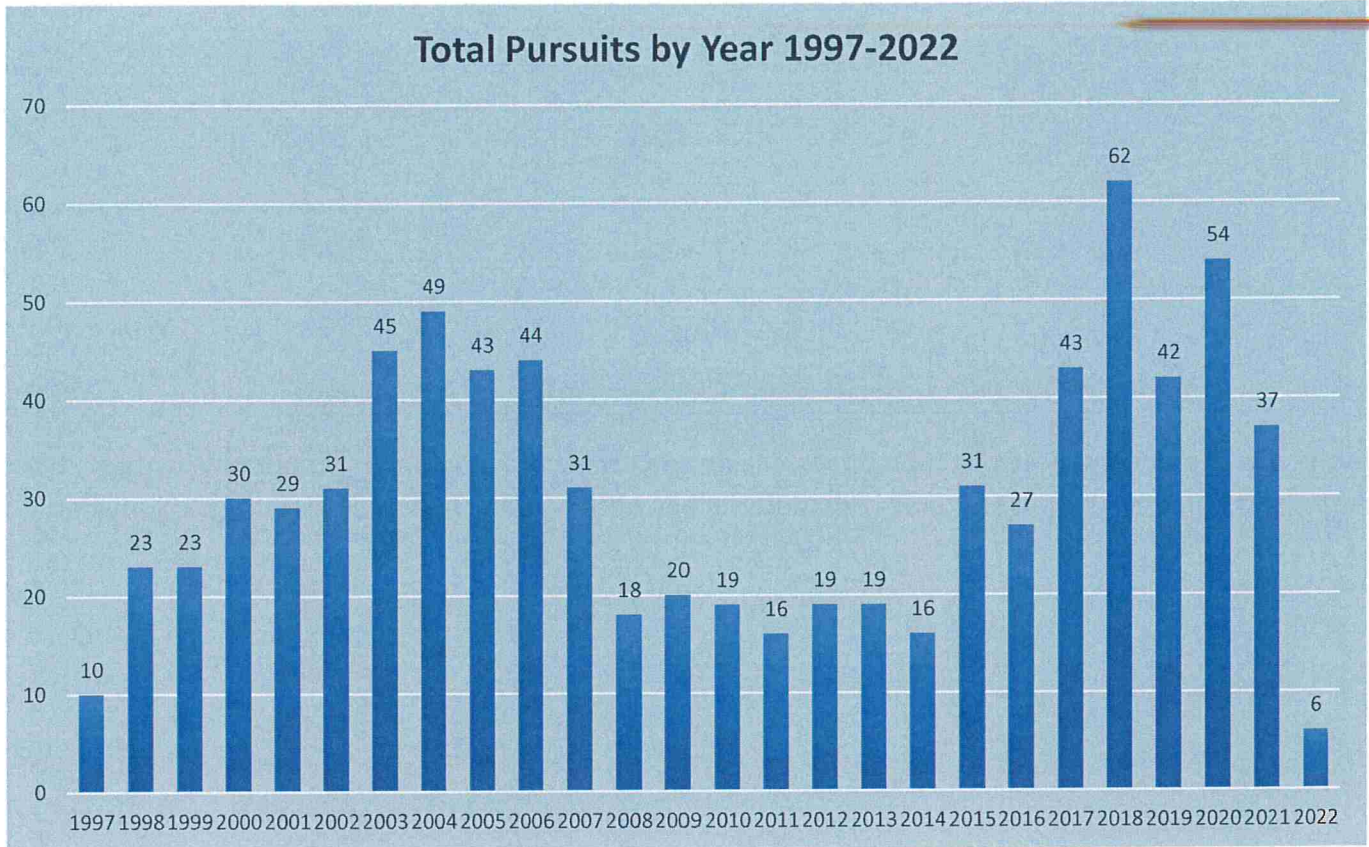
Vehicle Pursuit Reporting

1. Immediately following pursuits, patrol supervisors are responsible for completing a *Supervisory Report of Pursuit* through Blue Team. This report has been changed to include the Supervisors critique of the pursuit. This report is forwarded through the chain of command to the Chief of Police. The Division Commander has the option of providing additional critiques for any pursuit, for training purposes. All pursuits are documented in this manner and reviewed for this analysis. The report is then forwarded to Inspectional Services.
2. Following the pursuit, at the next opportunity, the patrol supervisor completes the *Supervisors Report of Pursuit*. Oftentimes, this occurs immediately following the pursuit. The first line supervisor will interview the involved officer(s) and review all available in-car and body worn camera video, prior to completing this report. The purpose of this report and critique is to identify those aspects of the pursuit that went well and those that could be improved upon. It is also designed to determine whether the pursuit met the policy manual guidelines, or whether it deviated from the guidelines. If the pursuit deviated from policy, a determination should be made as to whether this deviation was acceptable. If it was acceptable, the EVOC coordinator can then determine whether a policy modification is in order.
3. Once the Office of Inspectional Services logs the report, it is then available to the EVOC coordinator for the purposes of data collection, annual analysis, evaluating and/or recommending changes to the pursuit policy, as well as identifying potential training opportunities.

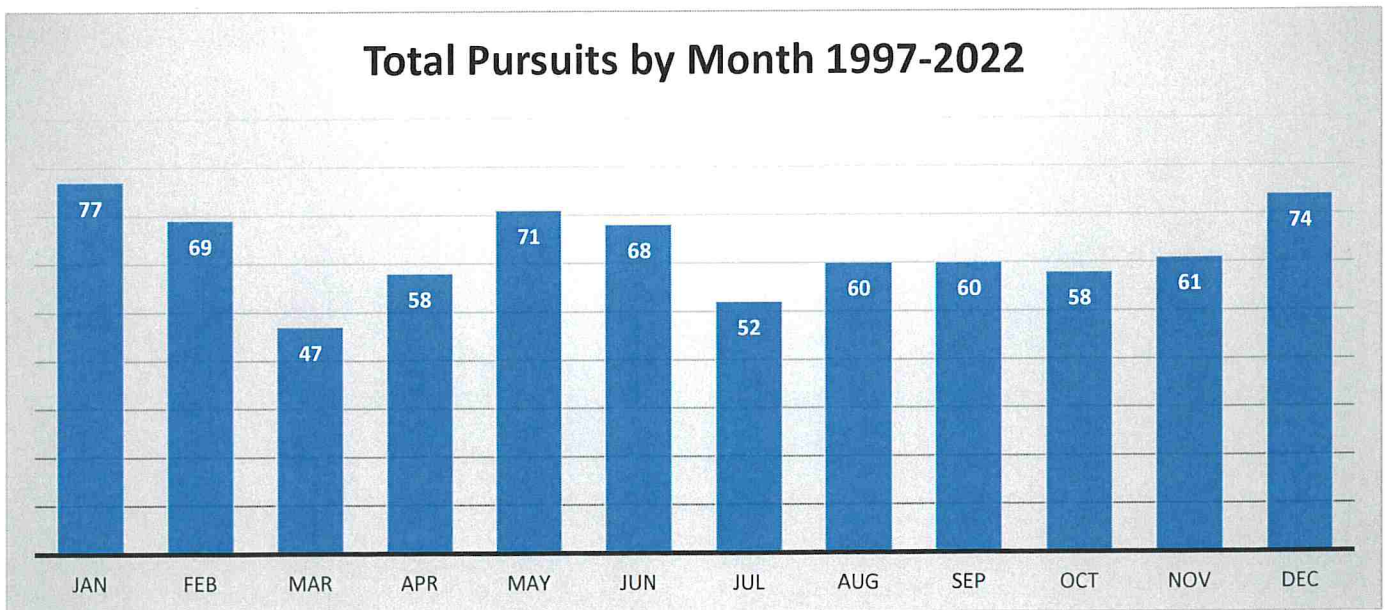
2022 Pursuit and Comparative Analysis

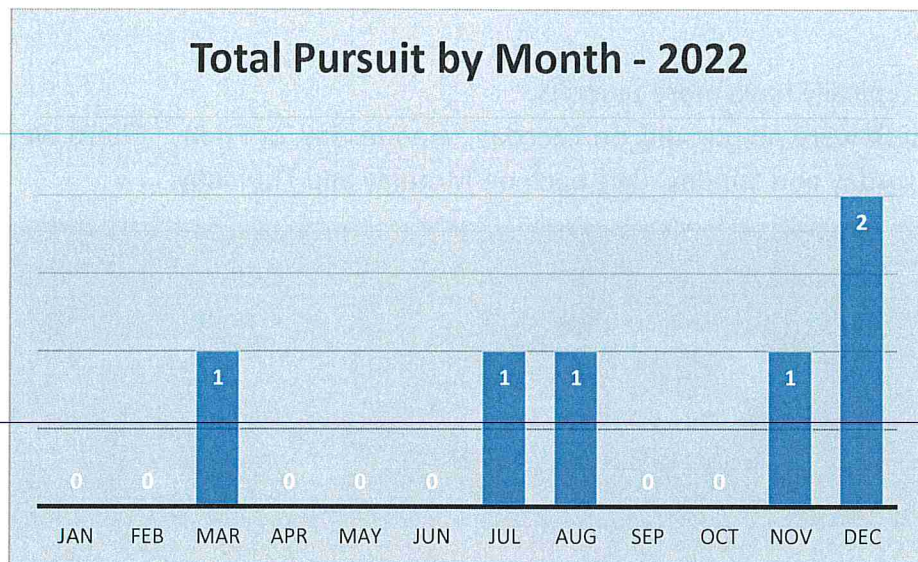
On the pages following is a collection of key charts and tables that cover vehicle pursuits by type, time of day, tactical intervention and more. In addition, key observations for each category are provided.

Chart 1. Total Pursuits by Year



Observations: There was an 84% decrease in the number of pursuits from 2021.



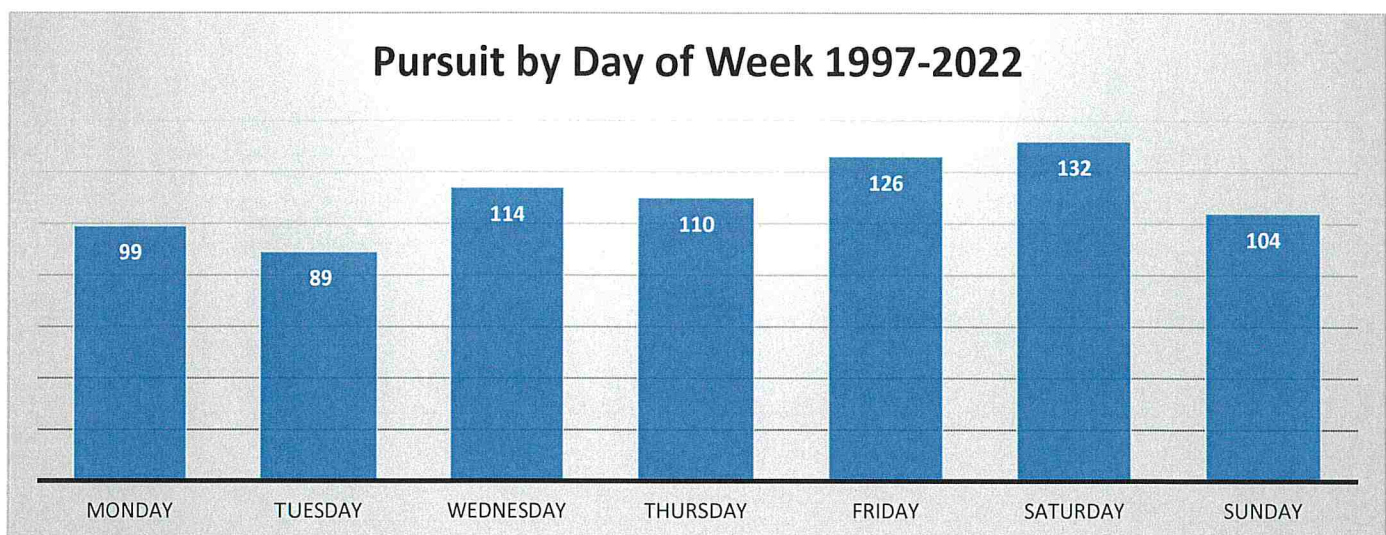


Observations: Chart 2: There is no significant trend in the cumulative number of pursuits by month. December has the highest number of pursuits for 2022. There was one pursuit each in the months of March, July, August, and November.

Chart 3: Due to legislation and policy changes in 2021, there was a significant decrease in the number of total pursuits in 2022. The total number of pursuits for the entire year 2022 was six.

Officers were limited by legislation to pursuing violent felons, sexual offenders, and drivers that the officer had a reasonable belief were DUI, by either alcohol or drugs.

Chart 4. Pursuits by Day of the Week 1997-2022

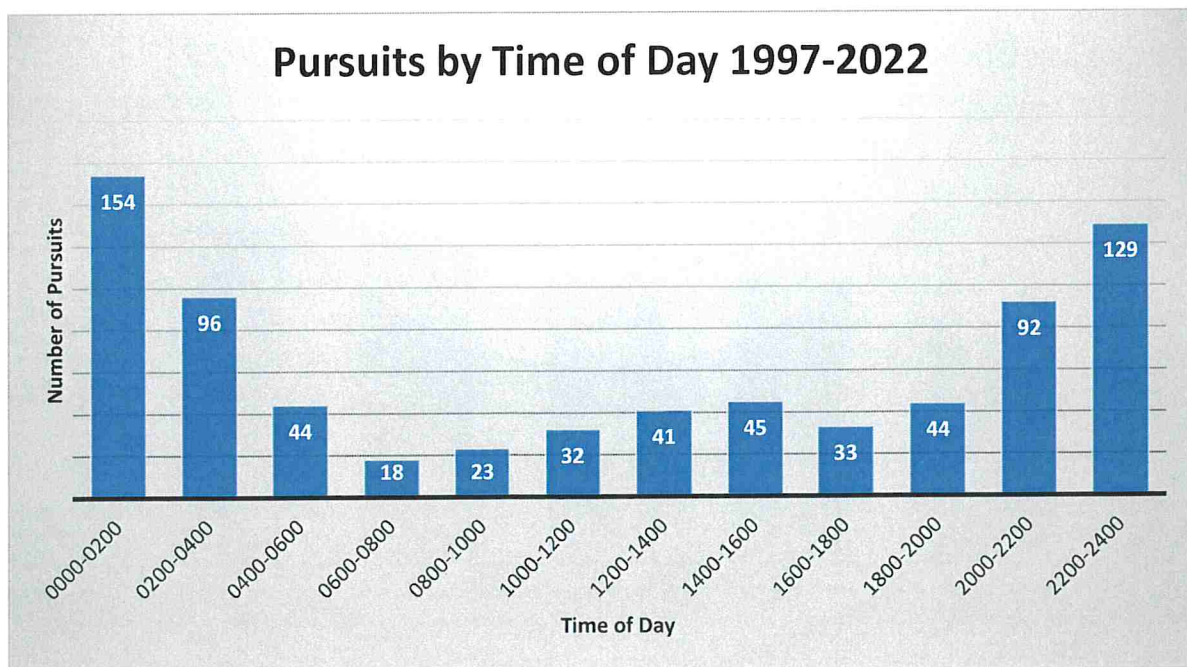


Observations:

- ❖ Weekends typically have more pursuits.
- ❖ In 2022, There were no pursuits on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Friday. There were two pursuits each on Saturday and Sunday. One each on Monday and Thursday.



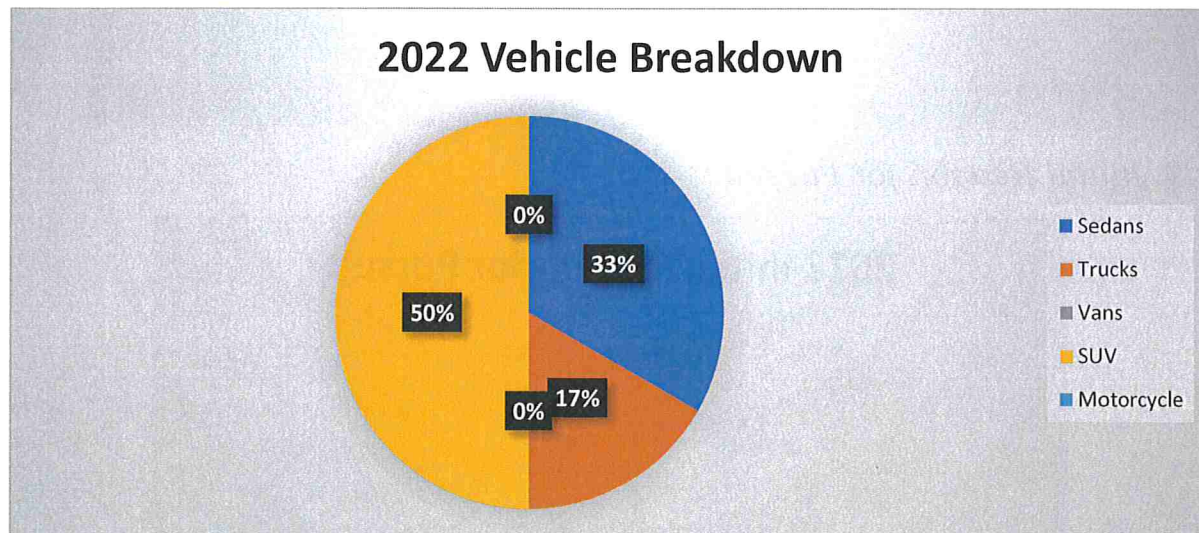
Chart 5. Pursuits by Time of Day (1997-2022)



Observations:

Pursuits in Auburn primarily occur between 2000 hours and 0400 hours. The time period between the hours of Midnight and 0200 has the highest frequency of pursuits. There are several possible explanations for this. During this time there are favorable traffic conditions. The ratio of officers versus citizens on the road is greatest at this time, and Auburn crime data indicates the criminal element is more active between these hours. Except for the afternoon rush hour, this is reflective of the APD workload and staffing distribution. Patrol staffing deployment between these hours is increased as this period correlates with the hours of the highest calls for service.

Chart 6. Pursuits by Vehicle Type



Observations:

Sedans traditionally make up the vast majority of cars initiating pursuits. In 2022 3 pursuits involved SUVs as the suspect vehicle. This was 50% of the total number of pursuits.

Chart 7.

Chart 8.

Observations: Most pursuits occur at night and on dry roadways. Historically, this is a stable trend for pursuits in Auburn.

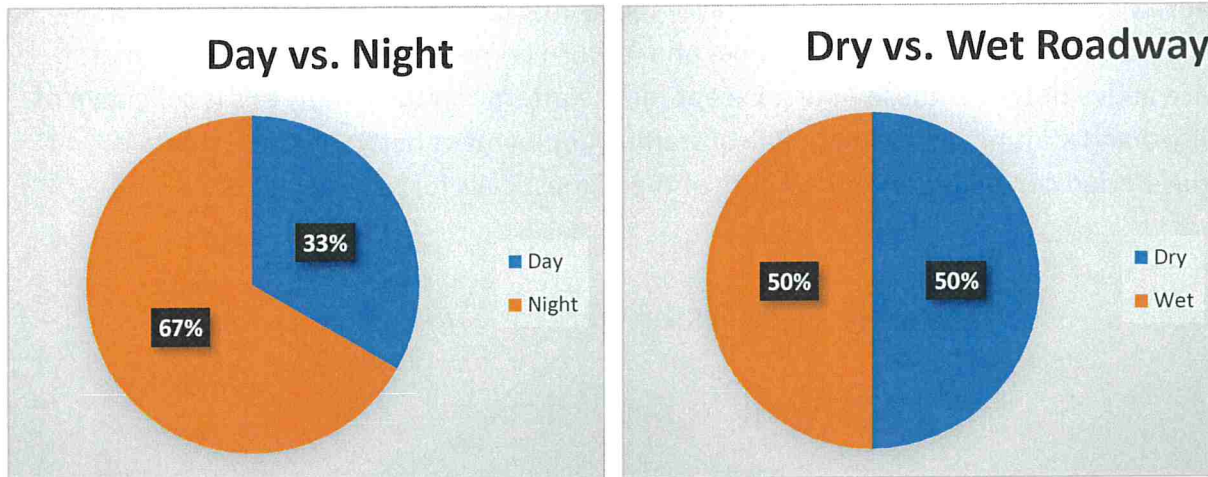
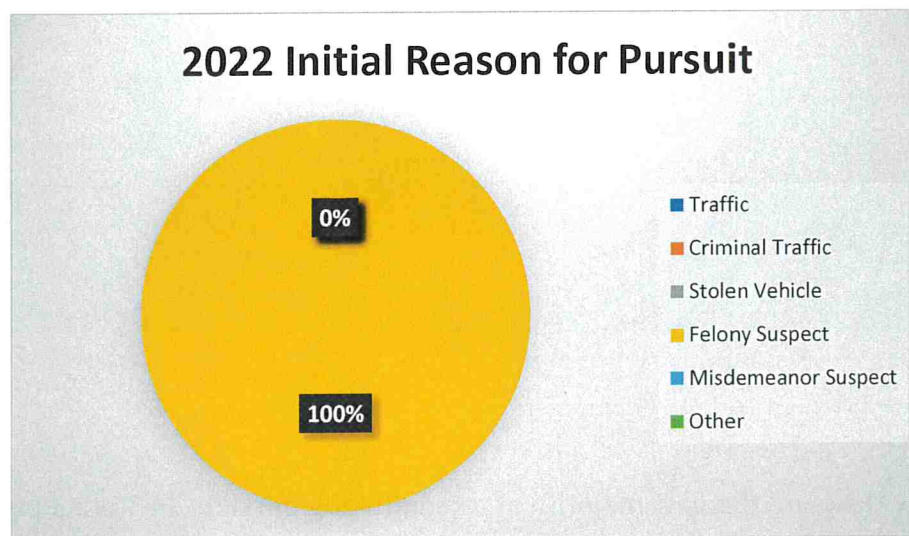


Chart 9. Initial Reason for Pursuits

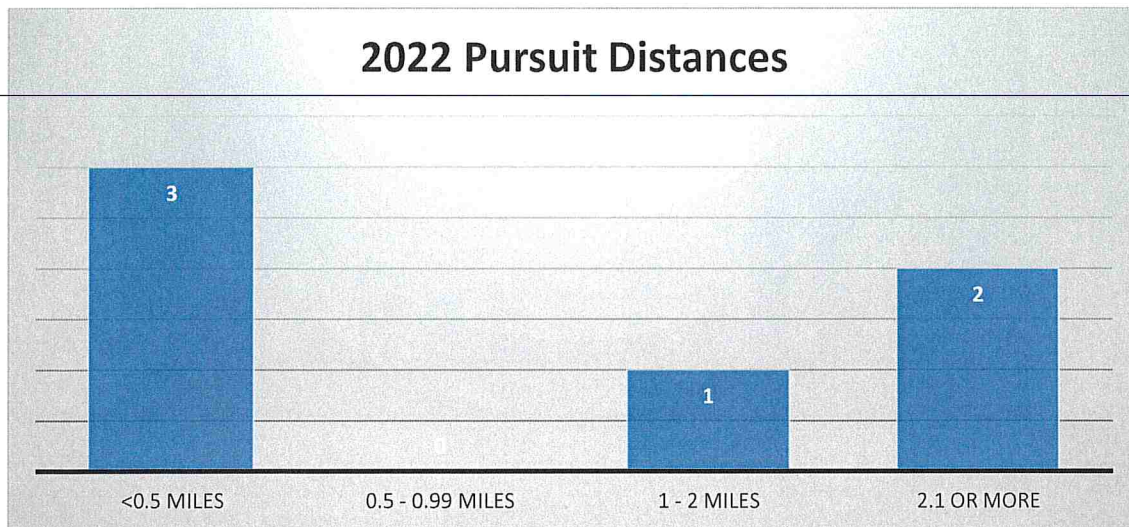


Observations:

- ❖ Definition: The *Initial Reason for Pursuit* refers to the crime or infraction observed by the officer that provided probable cause for the initial stop. The purpose for collecting this data is to show that officers often have only limited knowledge as to the underlying reasons why suspects are fleeing from them.
- ❖ In 2022, 100% of pursuits were initiated for violent felonies. This was due to legislative requirement.

- ❖ In 2022, although other crimes may have been present, in all cases officers knew they were chasing felony suspects for crimes other than eluding (stolen vehicle and felony suspects/warrants). In 2021, this category represented 65% of the pursuits.

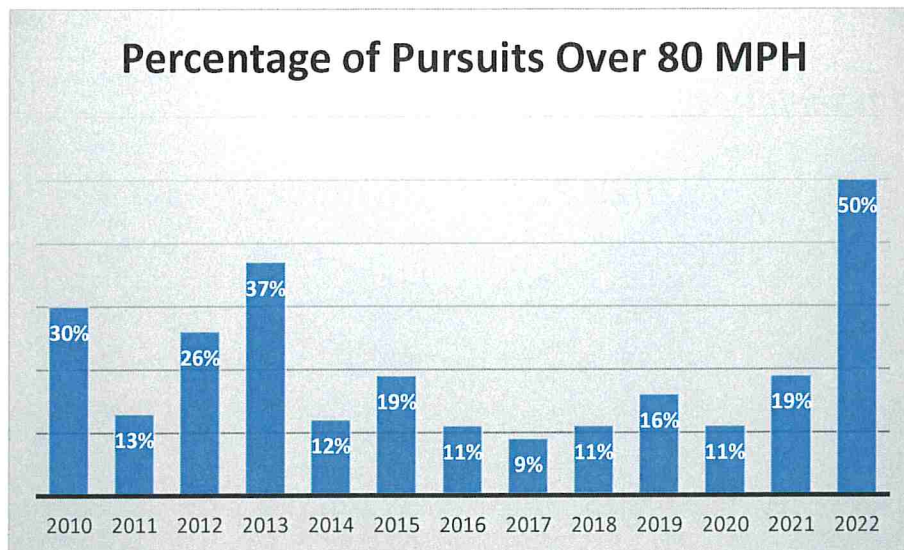
Chart 10. Pursuit Distances



Observations:

- ❖ Chart 10 depicts the categorical distance of the six pursuits in 2022.
- ❖ In previous years, officers were reporting exact distances of pursuits. That changed in recent years when nearly all reports of pursuits were entered into Blue Team. This program only reports the distance by category. However, a rough estimate was still available. The hope is to reduce the length of pursuits such as in 2017, When average pursuit was less than one mile (0.94).
- ❖ In 2022 the total number of miles Auburn Officers pursued suspects was 11.8 miles, versus 24.52 miles in 2021. This was an average of 1.96 miles for the six pursuits, whereas in 2021 the 54 reported pursuits averaged 0.59 miles per pursuit. In 2022 the distance was higher due to one pursuit which lasted 7.4 miles. (This anomaly was involving a K9 Officer that was involved in a track and subsequent pursuit of a serial robbery suspect). The pursuit was on I-5 with very minimal traffic.
- ❖ Also, in 2022 the shortest pursuit was (aside from those pursuits that were immediately terminated) was less than .25 miles, while the longest pursuit was 7.4 miles.

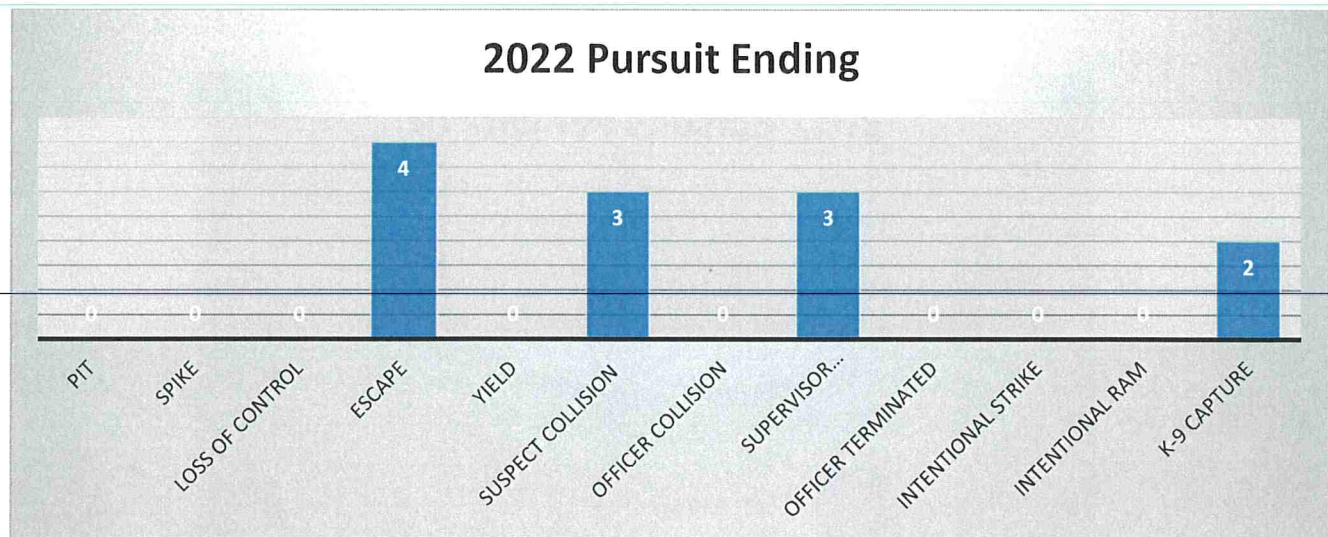
Chart 11. Pursuit Speeds (2010-2022)



Observations:

- ❖ Of significance to note is the percentage of pursuits during each year with sustained speeds at 80 MPH or greater. The reason for selecting this range of speeds is so officers understand the importance of ending pursuits as soon as possible. Furthermore, there is a correlation between high speeds, prolonged distance, and pursuits that end in a collision. The above chart shows the percentage of pursuits between 2012 and 2022 that were classified at speeds greater than 80 MPH. All years prior to 2014 combined averages of 32.5% over 80 MPH.
- ❖ The reason for this increase is the fact that the officers are pursuing the most violent suspects that are more willing to use almost any means to escape. This is a significant statistical increase as the percentage of pursuits over 80 MPH in 2021 was 19%.

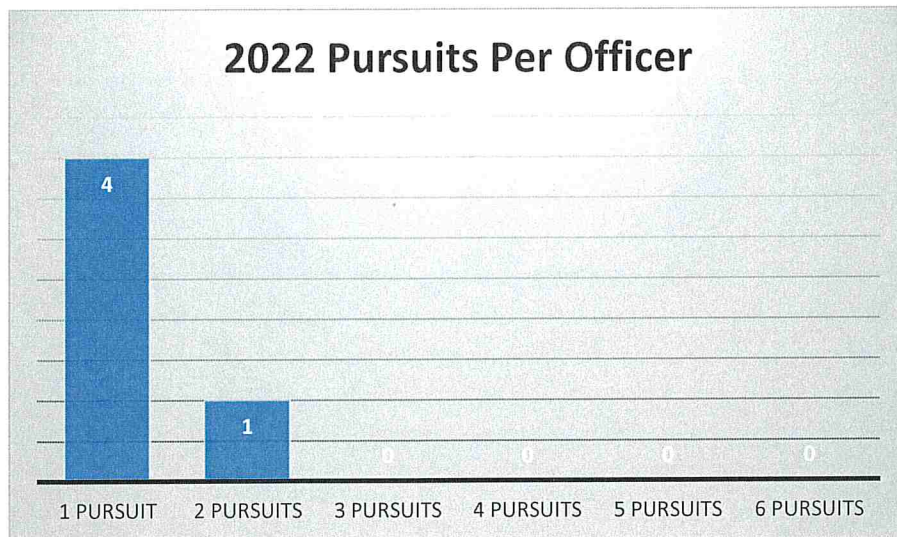
Chart 12. Pursuit Ending



Observations:

- ❖ The above chart reflects how 2022 pursuits concluded. Some pursuits are represented by more than one category. For example, whereas 4 suspects escaped, some of them are represented under suspect collision and terminated. Of note, in 2022 50% (3) of the 6 pursuits were terminated by the supervisor. This demonstrates that the Sergeants were closely monitoring their Officers involved in the pursuits and the circumstances of the pursuit. They were compelled to terminate the pursuit when the hazards created by it was greater than the danger posed by the suspect.
- ❖ Officers did not have opportunities to use spike stripes in 2022. This is most likely because nearly all pursuits were terminated or ended after a very short distance.
- ❖ Of the 6 pursuits in 2022, two (2) pursuits ended in the capture of the suspect.

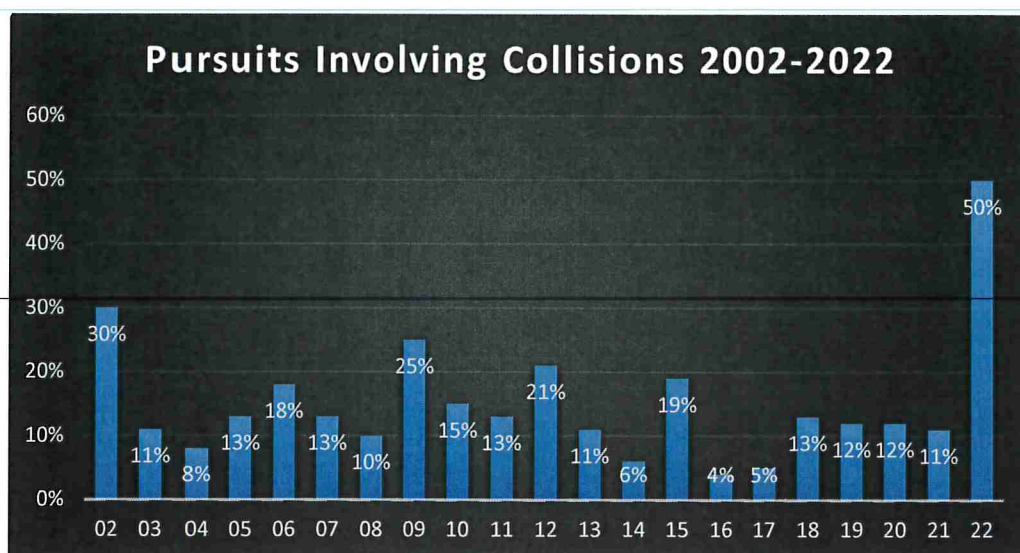
Chart 13. Officer Frequency 2022



Observations:

For training purposes, it is helpful to monitor the number of pursuits that individual officers initiate. For example, in years past, an officer who initiated far more pursuits than other officers prompted a review of the officer's practice. It was determined that this officer made a habit of turning on emergency equipment from long distances behind motorists. This possibly instilled confidence in the motorist to flee. After training, the following year when that officer turned on the emergency equipment directly behind the motorists, the frequency of pursuit was significantly reduced. In 2022, of the 6 pursuits, 4 officers initiated one pursuit, and 1 officer initiated two pursuits.

Chart 14. Pursuits Involving Collisions 2002-2022

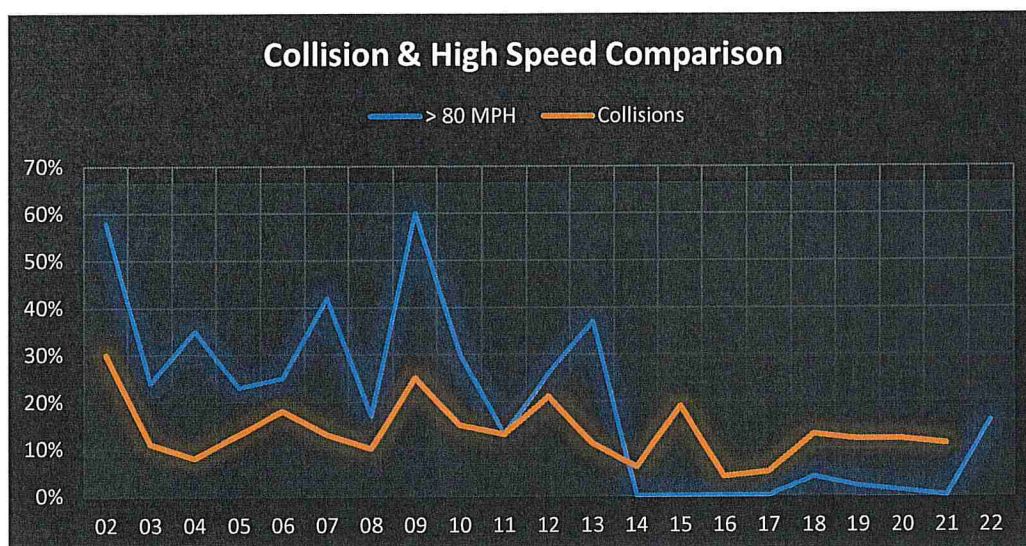


Observations:

- ❖ In 2022, there were three (3) collisions by suspects and none (0) by an Officer associated with a suspect collision. Injuries were minor in one collision. This was due to a suspect vehicle involved in a rollover by their own actions. This was a single vehicle collision and no one other than the violator, (whose injuries were minor), suffered any injuries.



Chart 15. Collisions Vs. High-Speed Pursuits 2002-2022



Observations:

This chart depicts a possible correlation between the incidence of collisions and pursuits at speeds greater than 80 MPH, at least for most of the years shown. It is interesting to note that in years 2014-2017, there were no reported collisions involving speeds over 80 MPH. The minor collisions that did occur were at slower speeds. In 2019, there was only one collision in a pursuit where speeds reached 80 MPH. However, the collision occurred at a slower speed when the suspect collided with two police cars.

In 2022, again there were no collisions involved in pursuits with speeds greater than 80 MPH. The one minor injury collision involving a suspect vehicle was at approximately 40 MPH and was caused by the suspect striking a jersey barrier and rolling the vehicle.

Even though legislative changes significantly reduced the number of pursuits, officers are still responsible to constantly weigh the risk of the pursuit against the seriousness of the crime involved. This statistic points to the fact that Officers and Sergeants are very cognizant of this and are terminating pursuits appropriately.

Chart 16. Suspect Gender

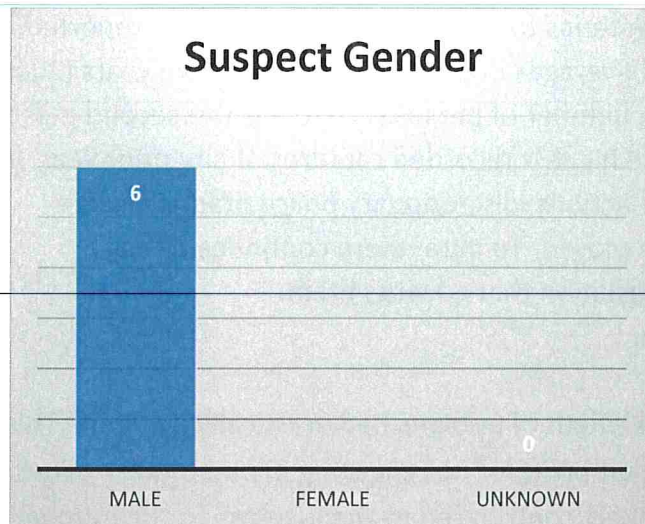


Chart 17. Suspect Age

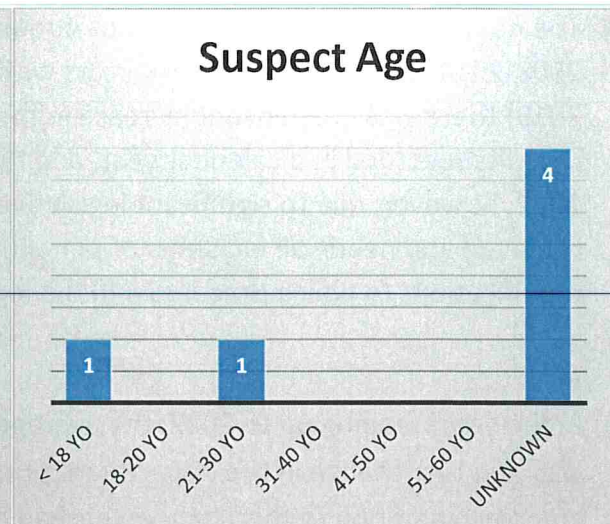
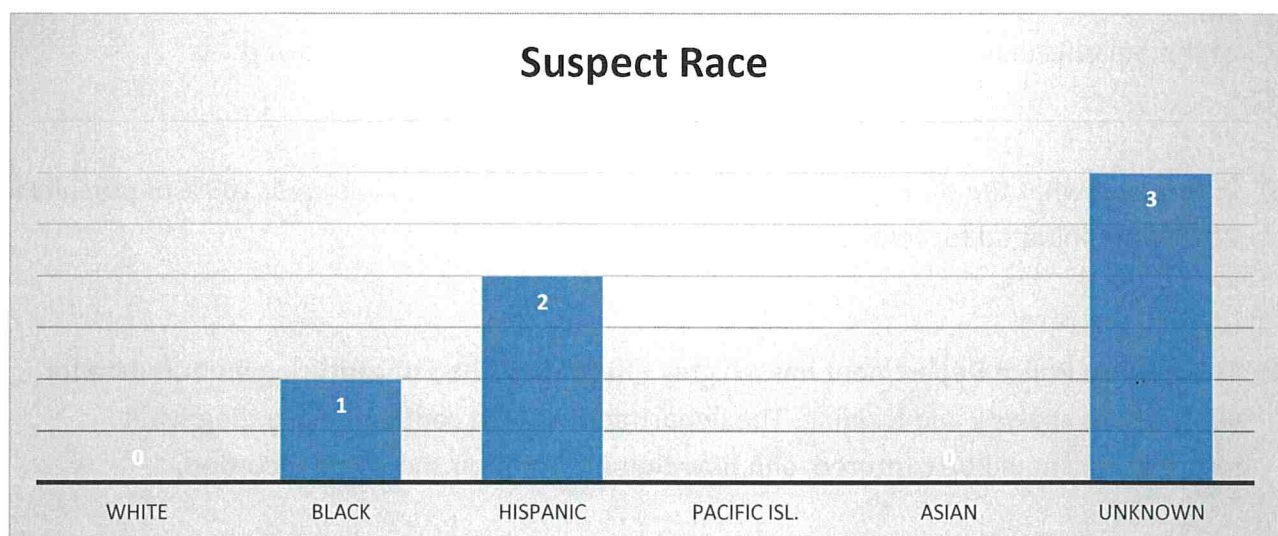


Chart 18. Suspect Race



Observations:

- ❖ Of the known suspects in 2022 pursuits, all were male. Two suspects were Hispanic while one was African American. One identified suspect was 17 (seventeen), while the other was 28 (twenty-eight)
- ❖ Not all suspects are identified or captured. Due to the higher probability of pursuits occurring at night, and the fact that most pursuits are terminated, it is difficult for officers to obtain these characteristics.

Summary:

- 1) The number of pursuits in the City of Auburn tends to fluctuate like other crimes reported. 2008-2014 were recorded as low years with averages in the teens. The next five years (2015-2019) there was a significant increase in the number of pursuits. 2020 has the second most pursuits recorded in a calendar year, and the highest recorded captures of any prior year. In 2022, however, due to significant legislative actions, discretionary police practices were removed and nearly all incidents of pursuits ceased. To date, there continues to be modifications to police practices and the legislation that governs them.
- 2) In the years leading up to 2022, the average length of pursuits had drastically declined. This was due to a change in the department pursuit policy of not engaging in pursuits for minor crimes. In addition to this change, this had likely contributed to the increase in the number of pursuits as many suspects are aware of the “No Chase Policy”. Again, in 2022, considerable legislative changes prevented officers from pursuing nearly all violators. However, the distance of the pursuits increased slightly due to the severity of the crimes involved.
- 3) In terms of what the officers knew at the time each pursuit was initiated, 100% of pursuits in 2022 were initiated for felony violations.
- 4) The Auburn Police Department has a highly efficient method of capturing pursuit data for subsequent analysis and training. The department should continue evaluating what information should be captured, and how that information should be recorded.
- 5) There are ongoing discussions pertaining to the modification of the pursuit policy to allow for greater discretion for officers and supervisors on pursuits for crimes that are less severe. There are always underlying reasons why suspects flee from the police. We do not know the extent of the reasons for motorists to flee, such as warrants, weapons violations, and other felonies. As mentioned in #4 (above), the “real” reasons suspects are fleeing should be recorded on those suspects who are captured and are willing to speak.

- 6) Supervisors were very involved in monitoring the 2022 pursuits. This year, 3 of 6 pursuits (50%) were terminated by the first line supervisor after approval had initially been given to pursue. Officers have noted several times that they would have pursued under previous legislation and have made the correct decision not to do so. This is commendable for both supervisors and Officers as it shows that they have adjusted to the legislative changes.
- 7) No pursuit in 2022 fell outside of policy. One instance which was not classified as a pursuit due to the officer's distance from the violator, was deemed to be out of policy. The involved officer was disciplined for the policy violation.

Training

For many years, EVOC training consisted of eight hours for each officer, every three years. During the eight hours, the officer received training in the Pursuit Policy, vehicle placement, auto-cross, high speed tactical driving, pursuit scenarios, and the Pursuit Immobilization Technique (PIT).

For the past three years, there was a slight change. To capture officer attention, EVOC training was shortened to four hours of intensive high speed, PIT, and scenario-based training. At least one third of all commissioned officers received pursuit driving and pursuit scenario training. (This is approaching 50% of the officers receiving training every other year). The officers also received refresher training in the PIT maneuver. EVOC instructors have the officers continue to perform high speed training and the PIT maneuver until both the officer and instructor are confident that the officer is thoroughly familiar with these techniques. The intent of training at Pacific Raceways is to get more officers through this critical high risk – low frequency training, and on a more frequent basis. This is even more important now that this critical task is less frequent.

The EVOC coordinator and several instructors review department pursuits and collisions. A determination is made to consider additional training for the officers that are found to be involved in preventable collisions.

There is currently a push to provide basic EVOC training to new recruits to give them this important training prior to annual training in October or November. This is problematic at times as finding a location that will allow the training is challenging.

We have been sending our new hires to EVOC training prior to the academy if they are in that period between being hired and attending the academy.

In the event the pursuit policy is modified by legislation, supervisors will prioritize EVOC training during patrol briefings, and ensure that they continue to closely monitor each pursuit. EVOC training will then be tailored to match the existing legislation.

