

2022 Police Pursuits

Analysis and Recommendations

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Operations Division

Accreditation

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I. Introduction

In accordance with the Woonsocket Police Department (WPD) Policy 320.01, this report presents an annual analysis of all reported Police Pursuits. This report is intended to provide an overview of the incidents involving Police Pursuit, as well as to identify trends or training issues that should be addressed.

The information in this report was obtained from all officers who completed Vehicle Pursuits (VP) Reporting Forms for the calendar year of 2022. According to policy (WPD 320.01), a Police Pursuit reporting form is required whenever a police pursuit is initiated.

The Woonsocket Police Department used a police vehicle pursuit platform company, Lefta Systems Shield, for the documentation and data collection.

List of all documented police pursuits and their associated police report case number from the departments Records Management System (RMS), IMC.

Lefta Safety VP Number	Associated RMS Case Number
VP-22-001	22-14-AR
VP-22-002	22-72-OF
VP-22-003	22-271-OF
VP-22-004	22-150-AR
VP-22-005	22-486-AR
VP-22-006	22-492-OF
VP-22-007	22-840-OF
VP-22-008	22-924-OF
VP-22-009	22-1009-OF
VP-22-010	22-1057-OF
VP-22-011	22-1225-OF
VP-22-013	22-1422-OF
VP-22-015	22-1578-OF
VP-22-016	22-523-AR
VP-22-017	22-1832-OF
VP-22-018	22-631-AR
VP-22-019	22-2384-OF
VP-22-020	22-2613-OF

VP-22-021	22-883-AR
VP-22-022	22-3267-OF
VP-22-023	22-3331-OF
VP-22-024	22-3481-OF
VP-22-025	22-3472-OF
VP-22-026	22-3765-OF
VP-22-027	22-4149-OF
VP-22-028	22-1269-AR
VP-22-030	22-5610-OF
VP-22-031	22-1587-AR*
VP-22-032	22-5885-OF
VP-22-033	22-1587-AR*
VP-22-035	22-1687-AR
VP-22-036	22-6303-OF
VP-22-037	22-1742-AR
VP-22-038	22-1745-AR
VP-22-039	22-6531-OF
VP-22-040	22-1760-AR
VP-22-041	22-1868-AR
VP22-042	22-7196-OF
VP 22-043	22-7211-OF

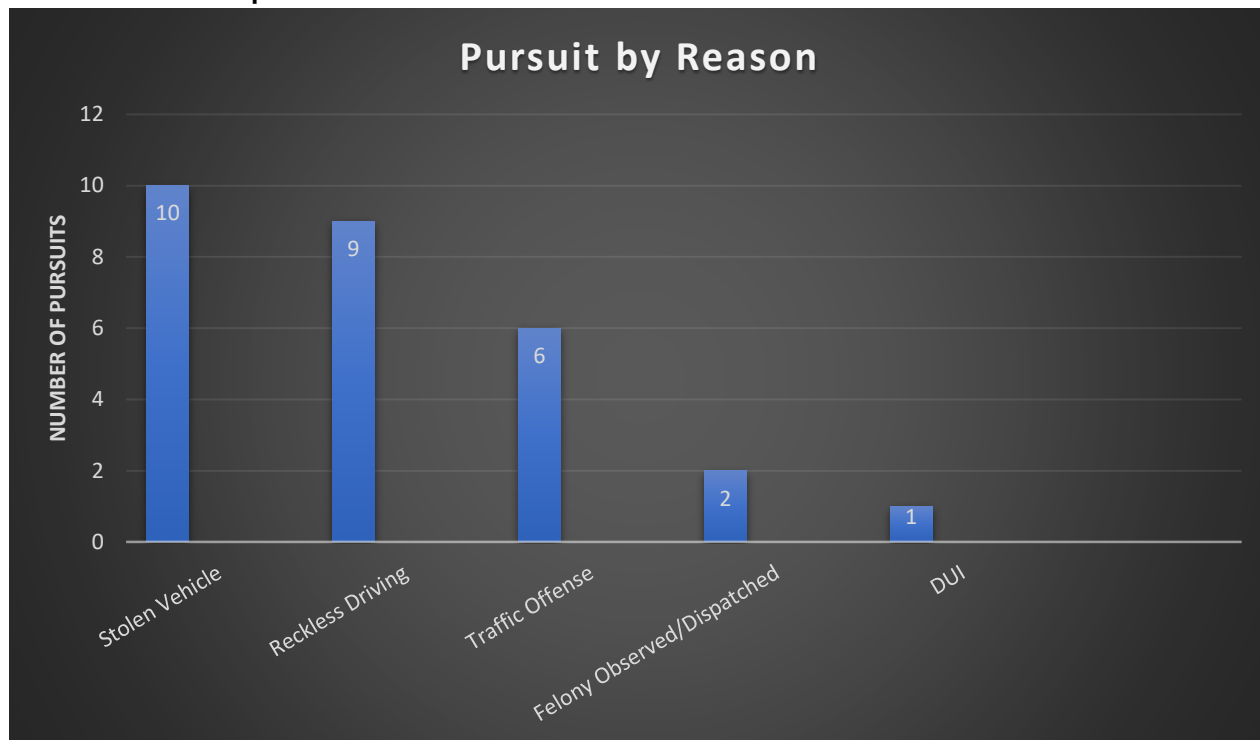
II. The Rate of Vehicle Pursuits in relation to Officer/ Contact/ MV Contacts

In the reporting year, Officers contact with citizens totaled 55,691. Out of the 55,691 contacts, there were 5716 motor vehicle related interactions. These motor vehicle interactions for 10.26% of the total department contacts. From these contacts there were 39 pursuits. These pursuits account for 0.68% of all the motor vehicle related interactions.

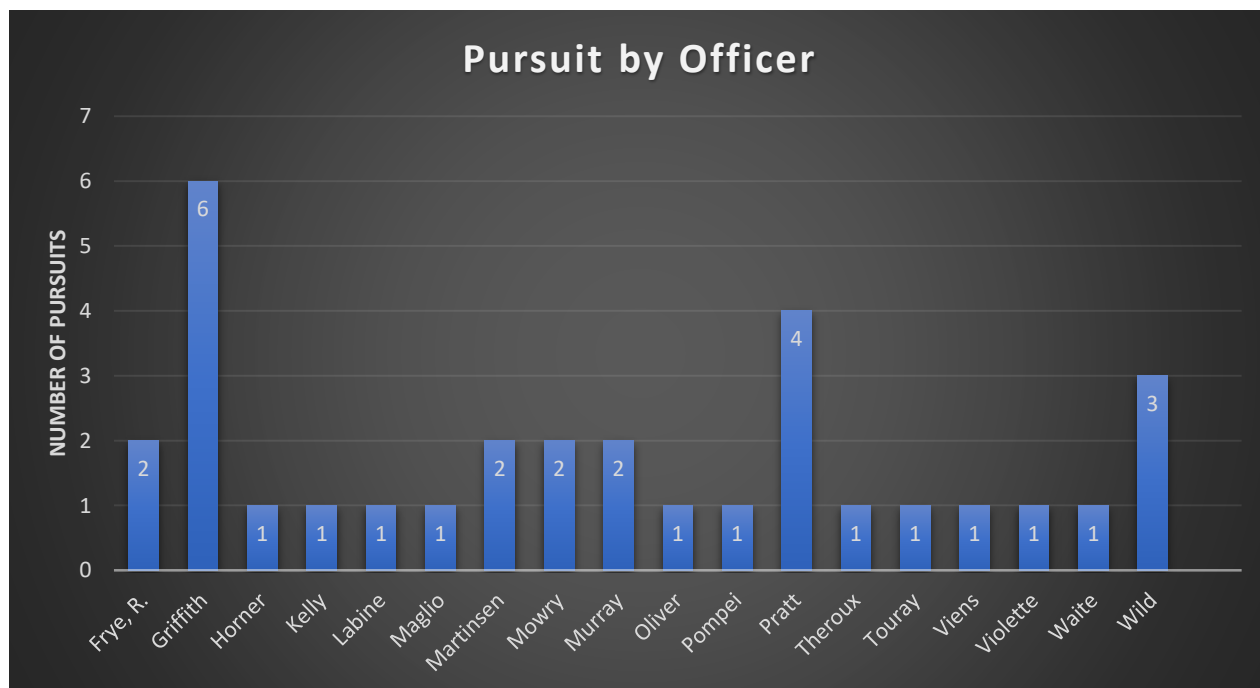
III. Reasons reported for Police Pursuits

Police pursuits take place for a variety of reasons. For example, officers may know the operator is wanted or officers locate a stolen motor vehicle. In an attempt to perform a motor vehicle stop, the vehicle flees. Below is a graph depicting the reason for the pursuit and the total number of each category.

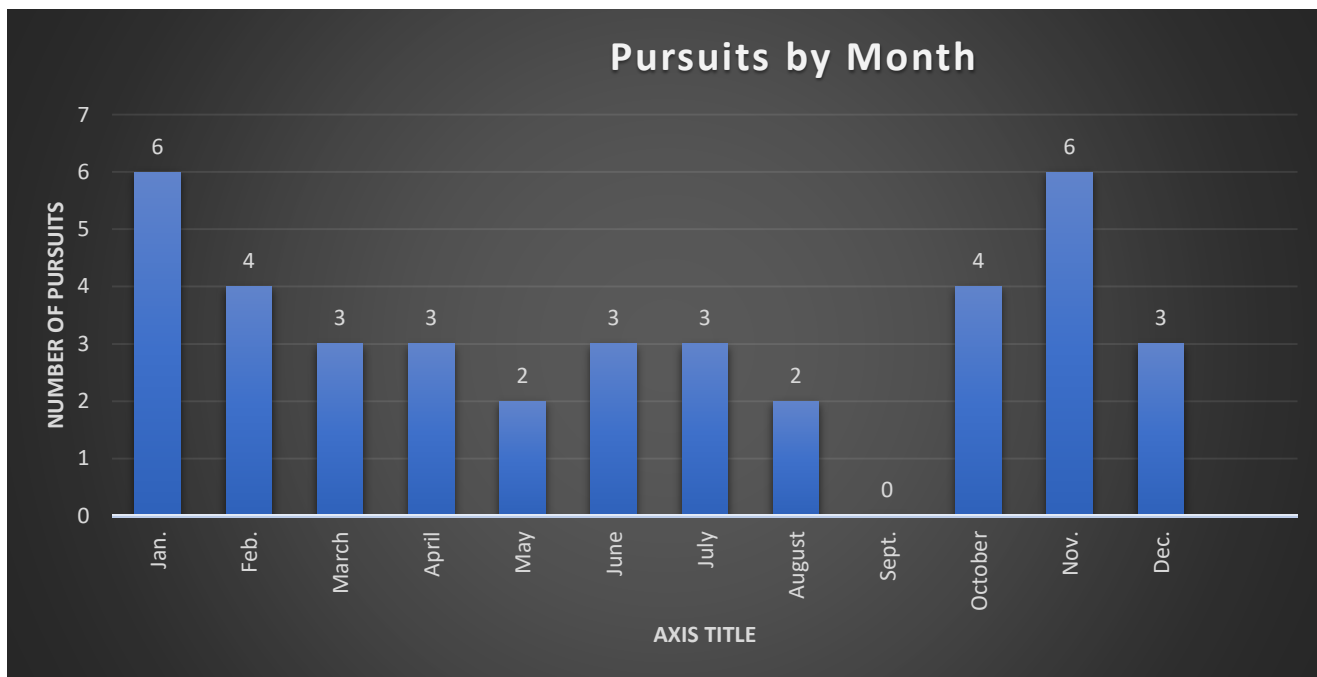
Reasons reported for Police Pursuits



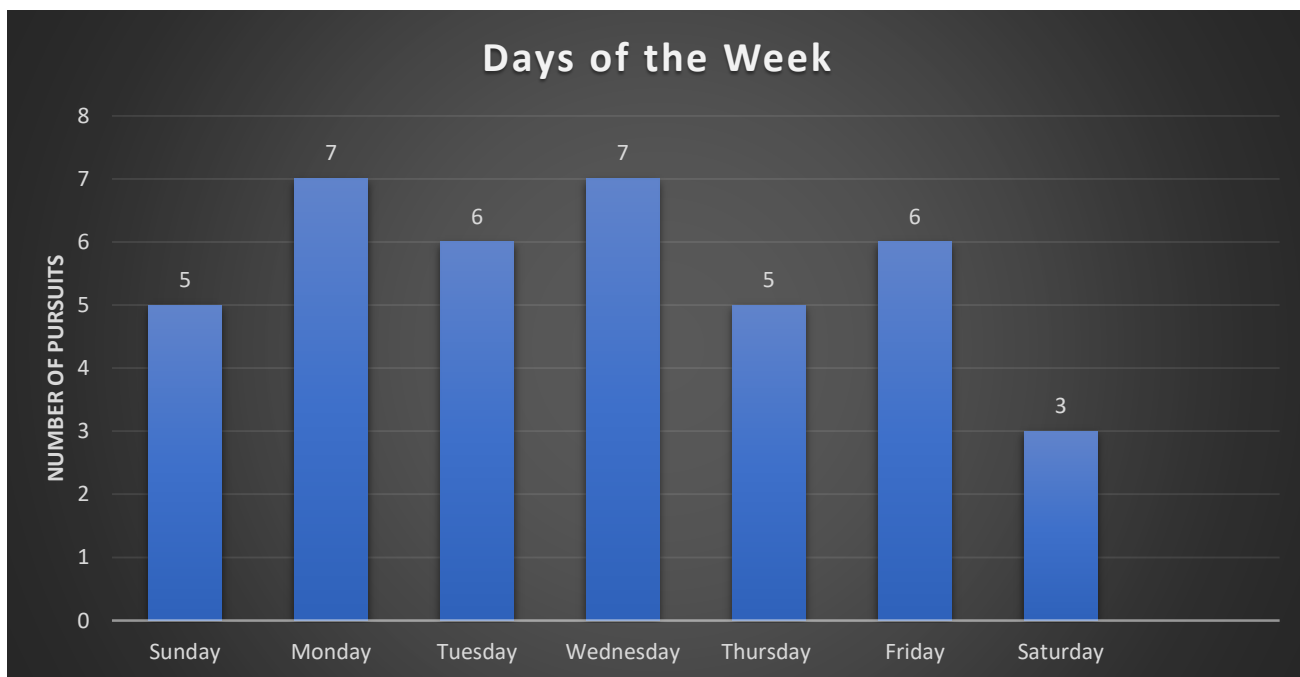
IV Pursuit Totals by Individual Officer



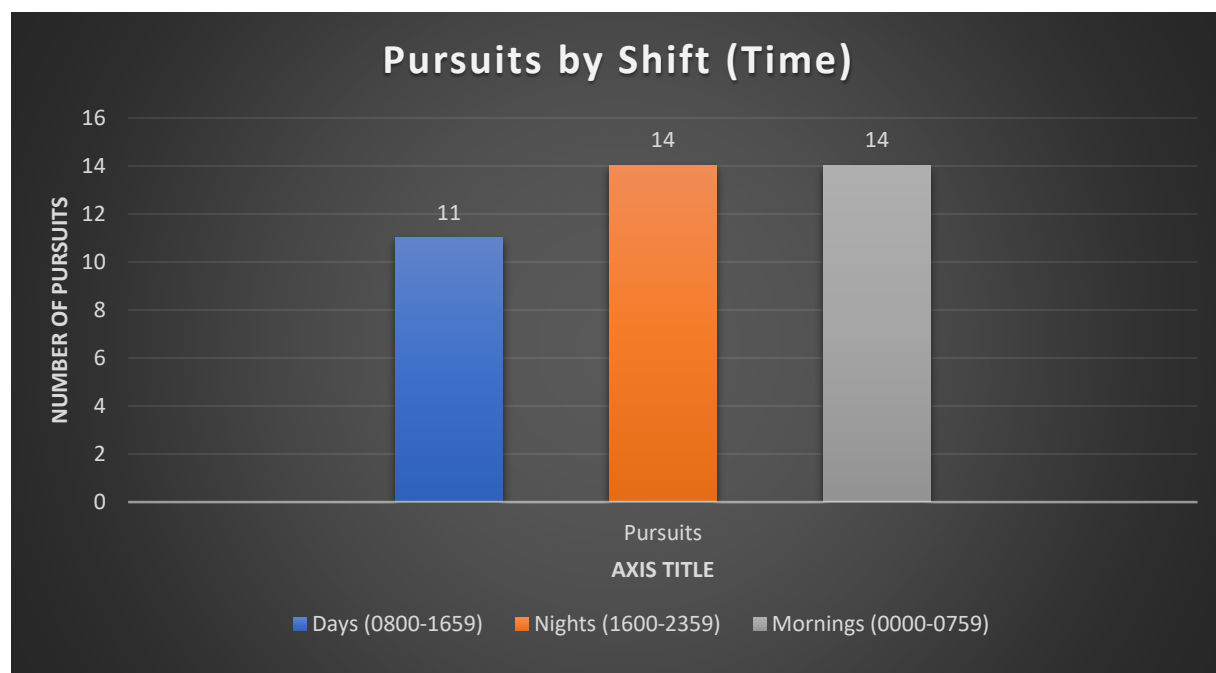
V Pursuits by Month



VI Pursuits By Day of the Week

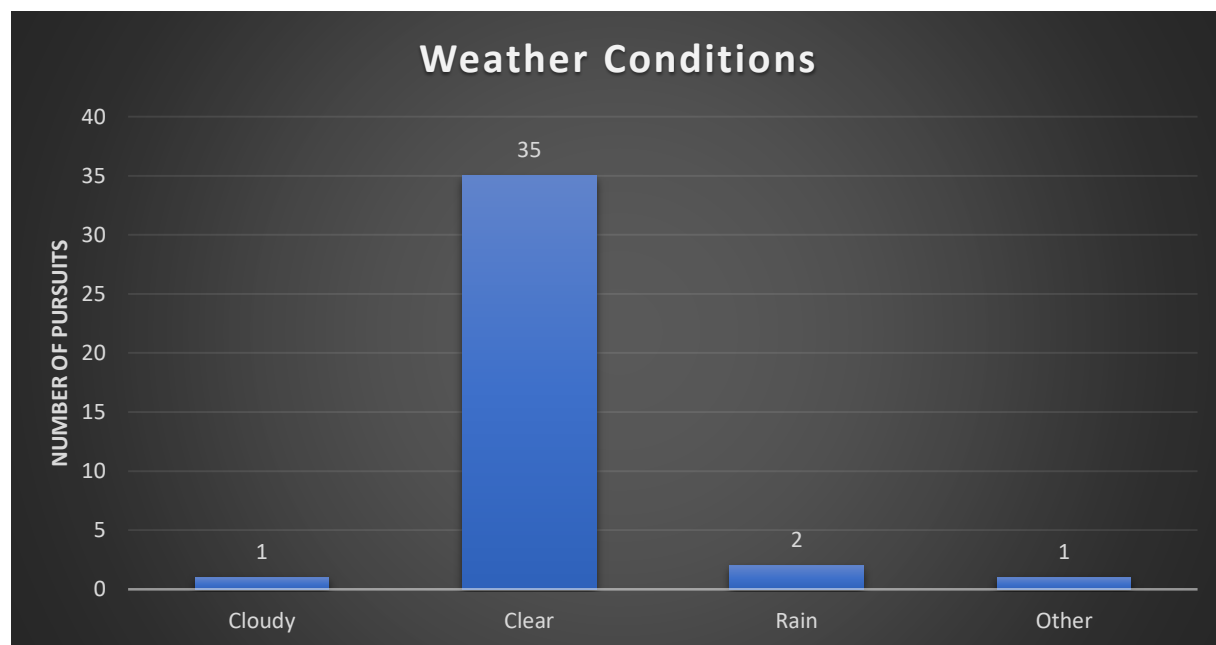


VII Pursuit by Time (Shifts)

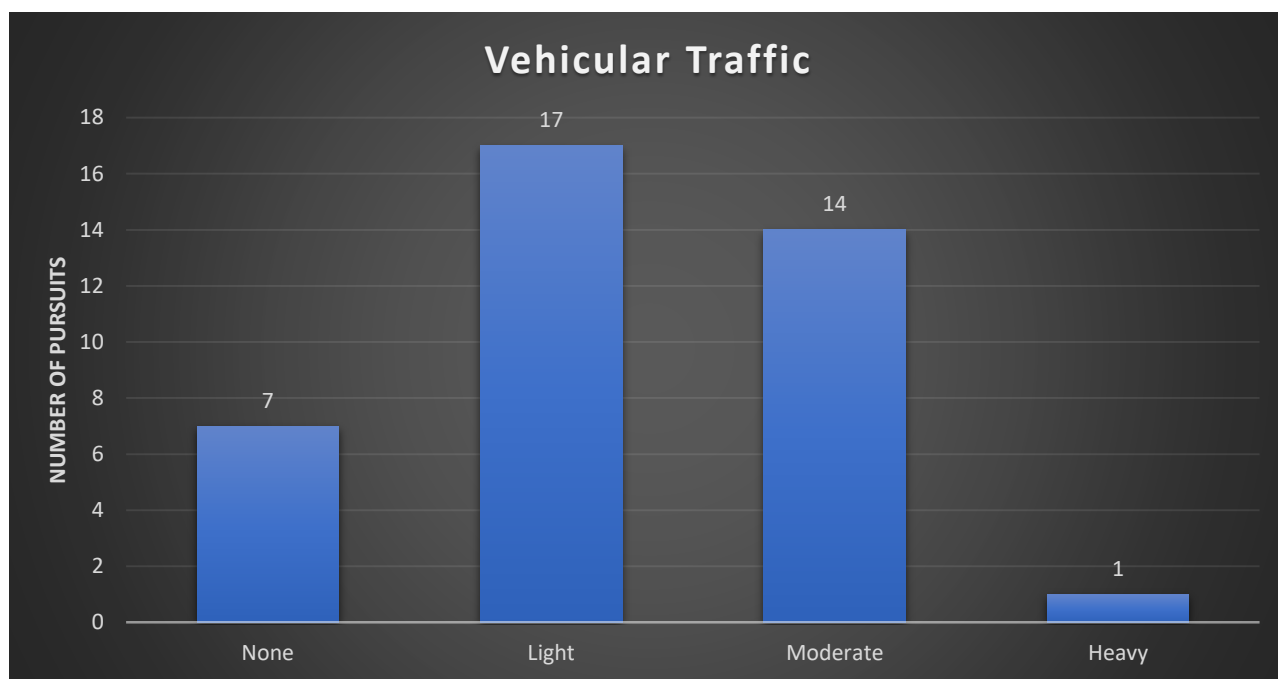


VIII Conditions During Pursuits

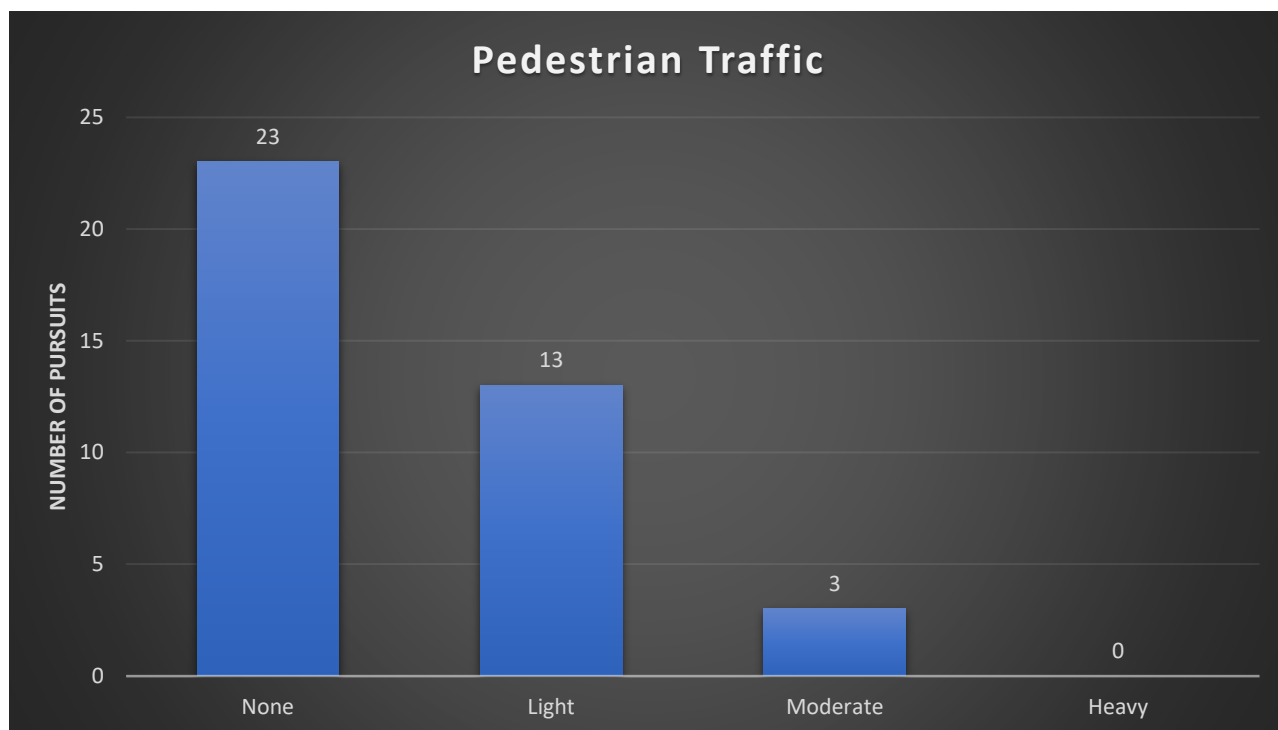
A. Weather Conditions



B. Vehicular Traffic at Time of Pursuit

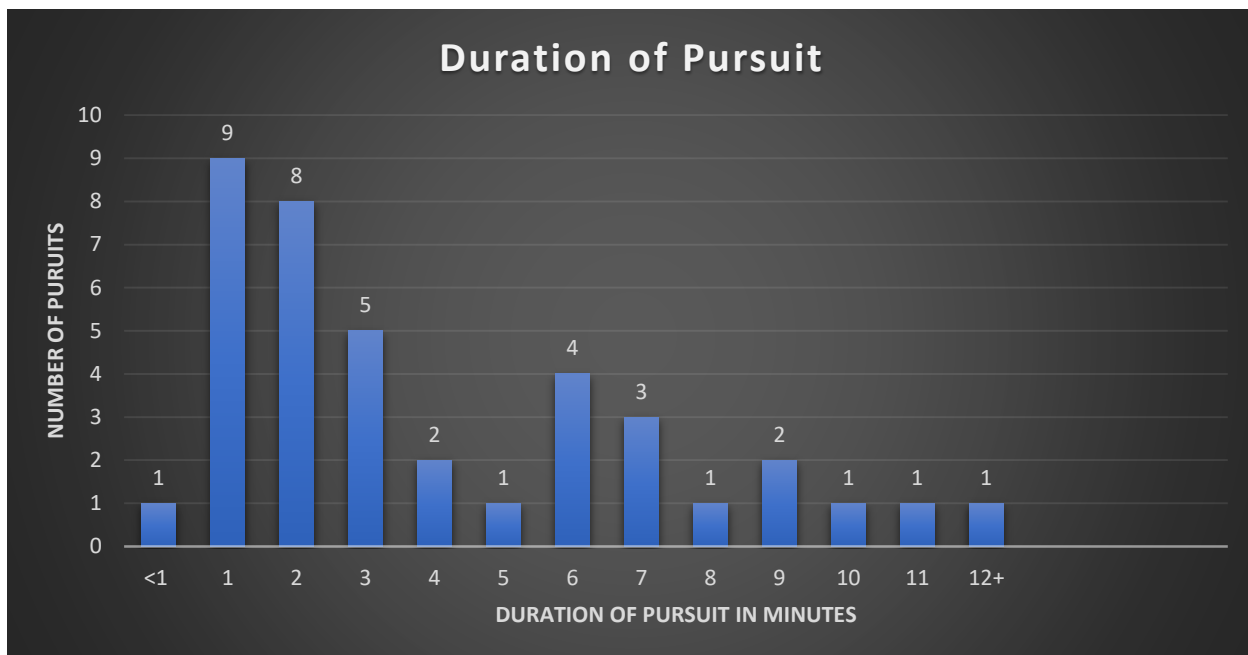


C. Pedestrian Traffic at Time of Pursuit

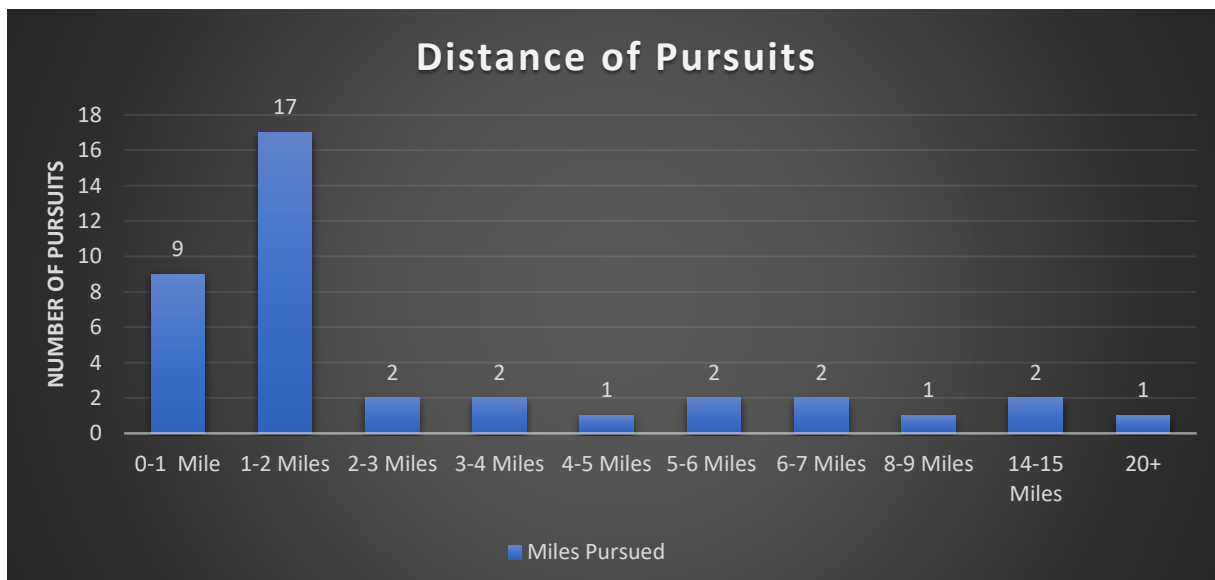


IX Duration of Pursuits

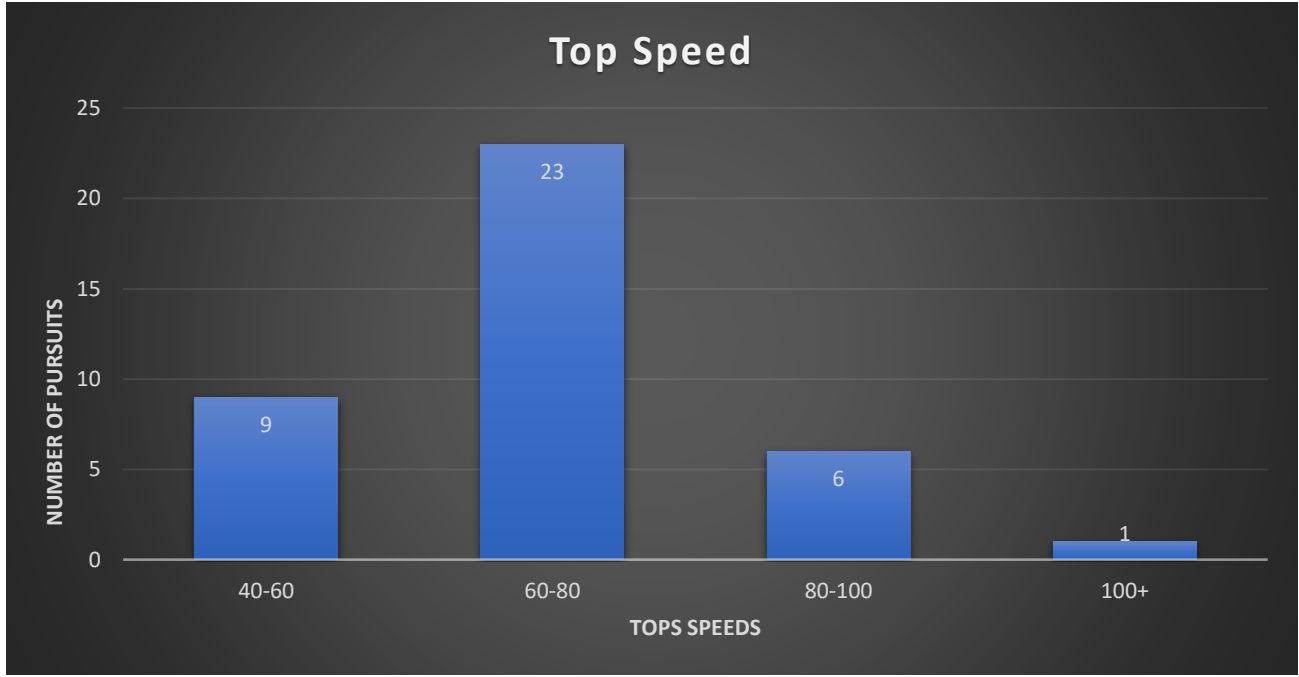
A. Duration of Pursuit



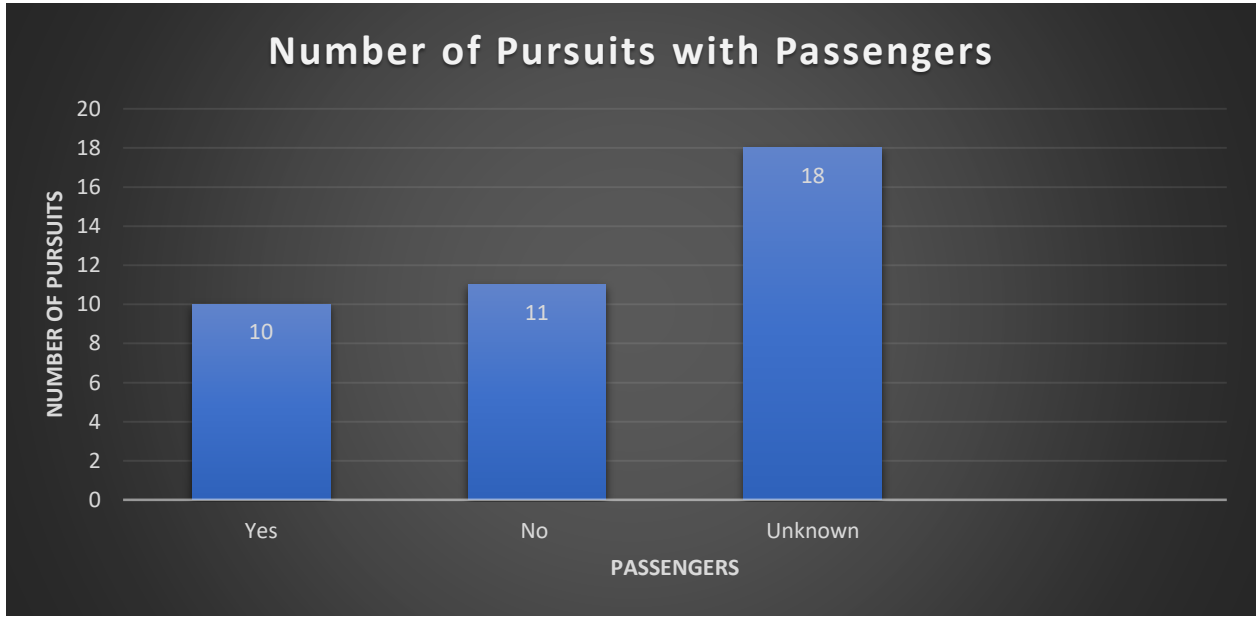
B. Miles Travelled



X. Highest Speeds of Pursuits

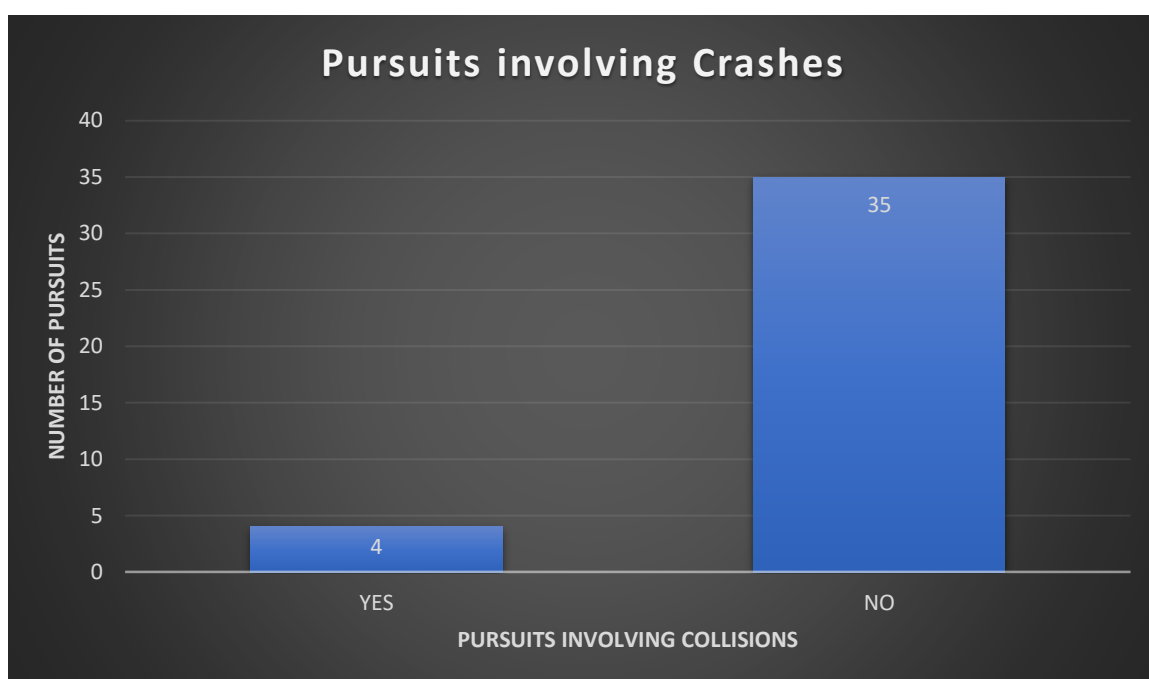


XI Pursuits with or without Passengers

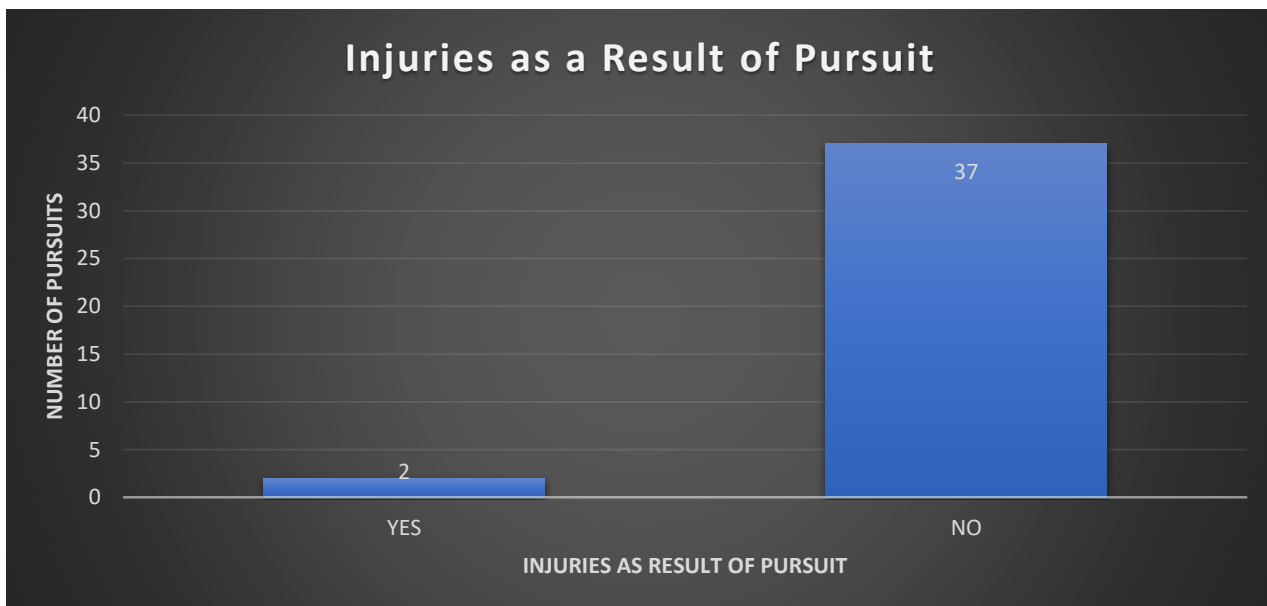


- Unknown passengers were due to the evasion of suspect and/ or termination of pursuits. There were a few incidents where officers actually reported seeing passengers prior to the eluding or termination.

XII Pursuits Involving Crashes with/ without Injuries



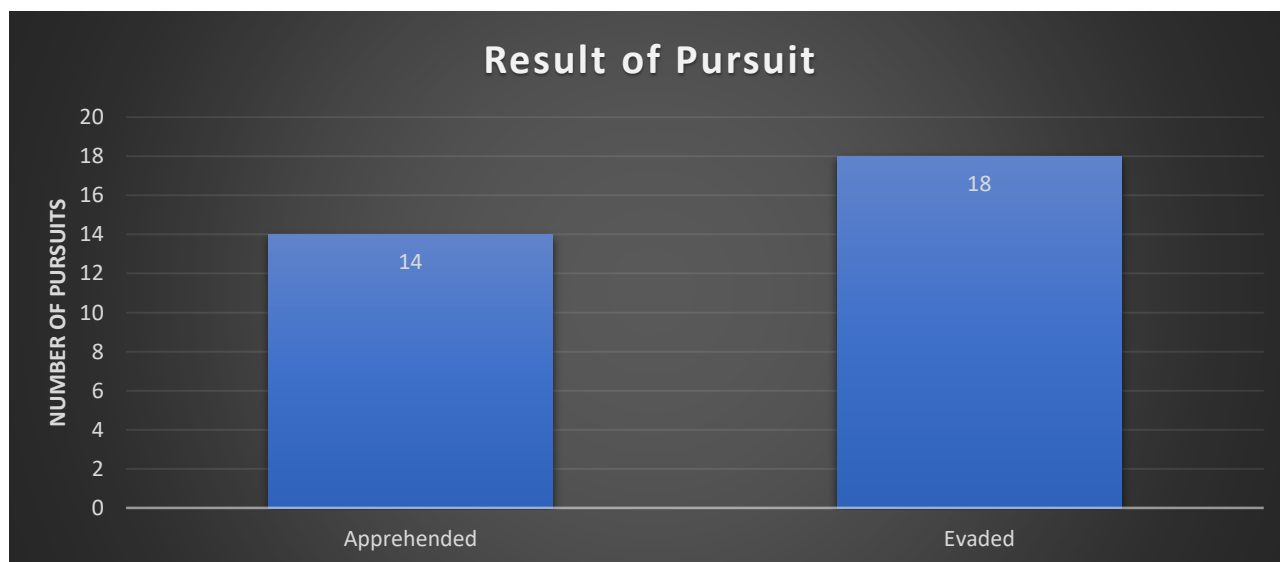
XIII Injuries



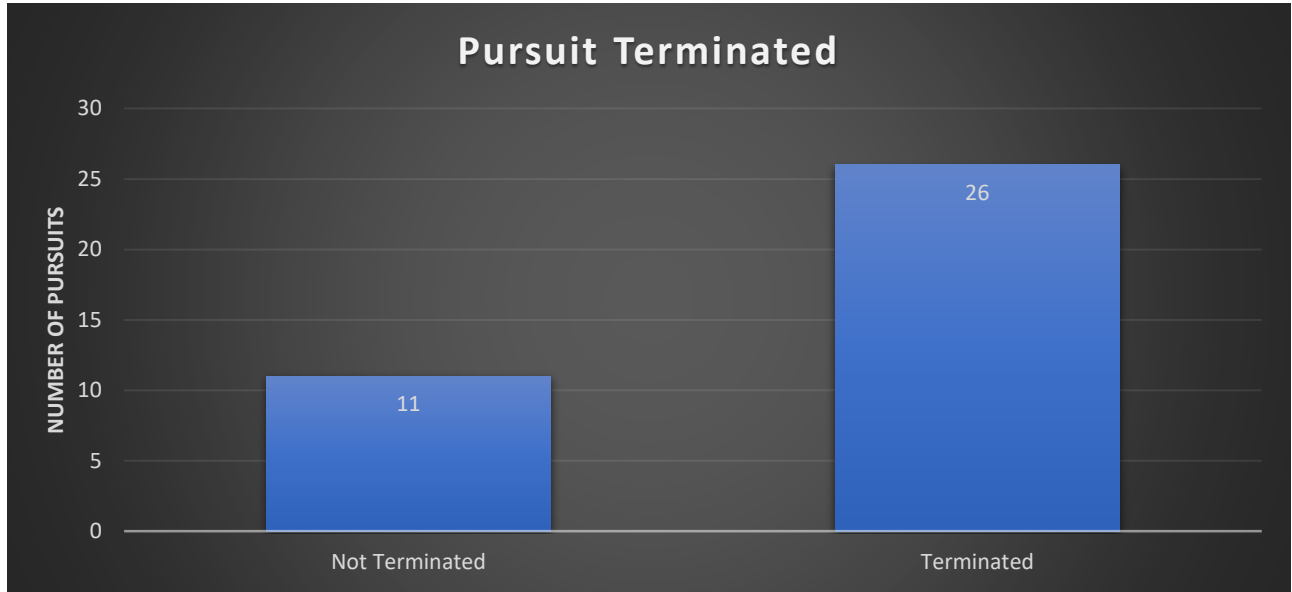
- **There were no fatalities associated with pursuits for the year of 2022.**

XIV Result of Pursuit

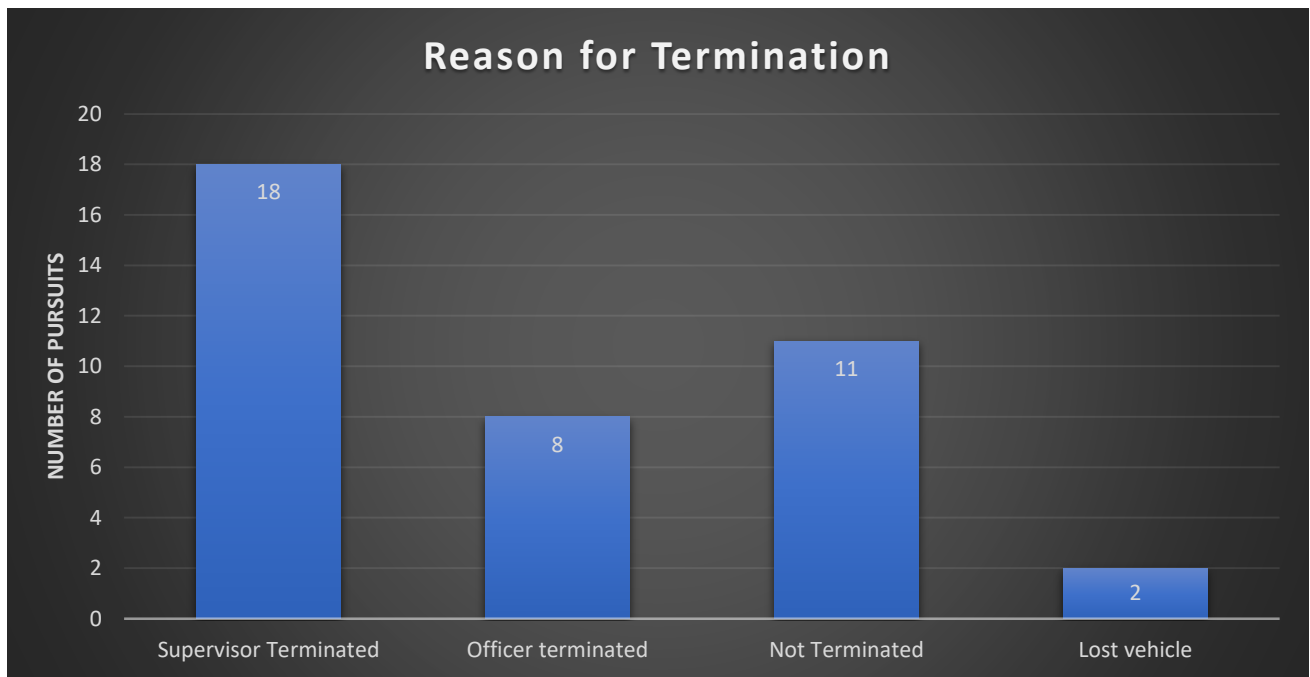
A. Suspect Evade Apprehension.



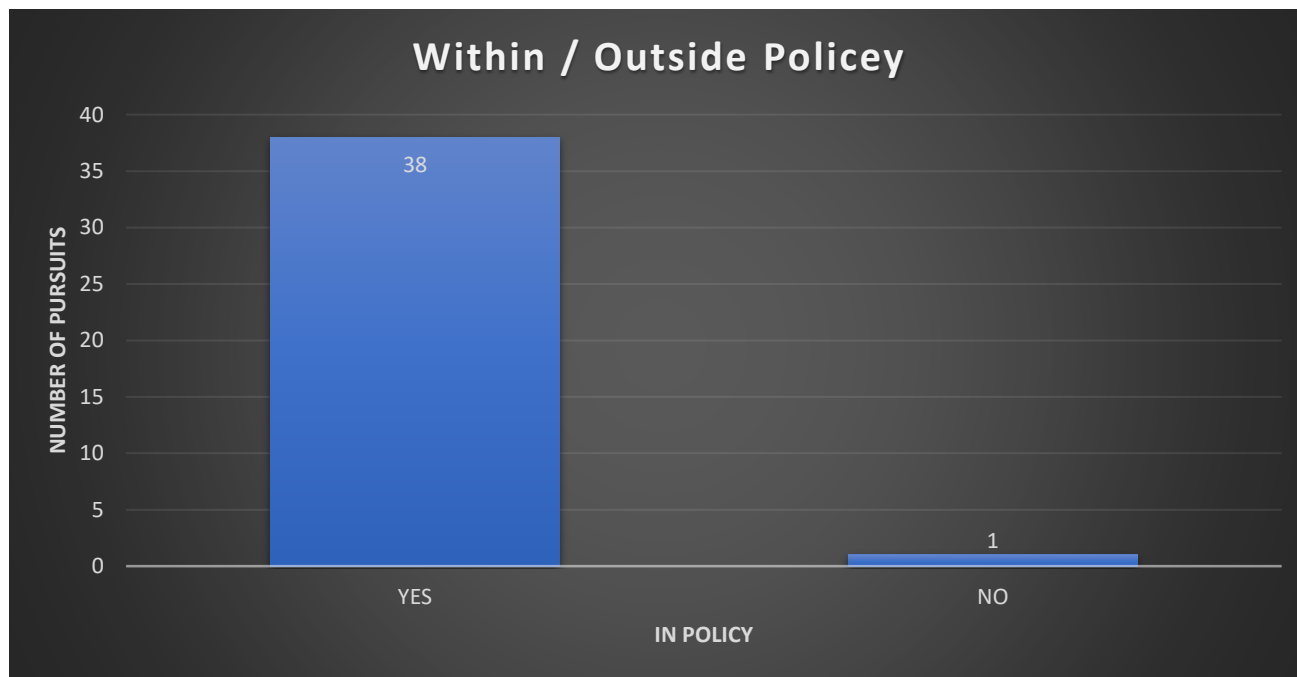
B. Pursuit Terminated or Continued



C. Reason for Termination



XV Within/ Outside Policy



XVI Analysis

After analysis, research, and comparison to the 2021 pursuit review, I can provide many takeaways. There was a slight increase in pursuits since last year, from 35 (2021) to 39 (2022). Upon further study, there was a significant increase since 2020, where we had 24 pursuits. Another notable statistic is there were 18 officers involved in pursuits in 2022 compared to 26 officers to the prior year in 2021. When reviewing total police contacts, there had been a notable increase from 48,361(2021) to 55,691(2022), an increase of 7,330 contacts from 2021.

From reviewing 2022's reports and statistics, I noted that both supervisors and officers had good judgement when it came continuing or termination of a pursuit. Documentation showed that 26 of the 39 pursuits were terminated. In all other pursuits, an arrest was made, or the vehicle had eluded officers. Only 1 of the 39 pursuits was in heavy traffic, all others were in moderate to no traffic. The one pursuit involving heavy traffic involved a stolen vehicle. The pursuit lasted for less than a minute and the officer travelled approximately 0.10 miles. The supervisor terminated the pursuit mainly due to safety (high speeds and traffic conditions).

Also, 35 of the 39 pursuits were in clear weather. All others were in cloudy, rain or other conditions. A look into the pedestrian traffic was analyzed. Of the 39 pursuits, 36 had taken place in "No" or "Light"

pedestrian traffic. Three pursuits took place around “moderate” pedestrian traffic. There were NO documented pursuits in heavy pedestrian traffic.

Further in my research, I noticed some potential reasons for an increase in the amount of police pursuits compared to last year, as well as the year before. There was a surge in motor vehicles thefts, not only in Woonsocket, but also in neighboring areas. We particularly had an issue with juveniles stealing vehicles that were unlocked. Many vehicle owners left their keys in the interior, making it simple to take them. In addition, TikTok and YouTube videos called the “Kia Challenge” played a role in motor vehicle thefts. The videos showed people breaking into Kia vehicles and instructing viewers on how to start them with a USB cable. A good number of vehicles were stolen in this manner.

Another factor in the increase of pursuits would be the Flock (ALPR) camera system the Woonsocket Police Department adopted over a year ago. The license plate reader system receives data from NCIC (National Crime Information Center). NCIC provides vehicle information tied to stolen vehicles, wanted subjects, Amber alerts, missing persons and so on. Over the past year, the Woonsocket Police Department had received countless hits on stolen vehicle as well as wanted subjects. Many of the vehicles were located; however, several the suspects fled on officers. Supervision of these pursuits were monitored, and many terminated.

The Office of Professional Standards (OPS) which consists of Internal Affairs, Training and Accreditation evaluated all pursuits in the past year. Although immediate supervisors review the pursuits, this cadre examines every pursuit to confirm whether these pursuits follow WPD policies and procedures as well as Rhode Island General Laws. After review, it was determined that one pursuit of the 39 was out of policy. The officer involved in this one pursuit was counselled by his supervisor. In addition, the Training Lieutenant also followed up with the officer and discussed where his error took place. Through the Lefta Shield platform, the department is able to retrieve Real-Time statistics to determine trends or training issues that may need to be addressed. This platform incorporates pursuits, use of force, internal affairs investigations, training and police vehicle accidents. All of which is tracked and will yield Early Intervention Warnings in which the OPS group monitors daily.

XVII. Recommendations

Pursuits are rare if you take in consideration the number of police contacts each year. The Woonsocket Police Department takes vehicle pursuits seriously and strives to keep the public safe. The basic dilemma associated with high-speed police pursuits of fleeing individuals is deciding whether the benefits of potential apprehension outweigh the risks to police officers, the public, and the violator. The Department has shown it continues to follow this concept and kept the public out of harm.

Recommendations:

- Continue annual trainings on vehicle pursuit policy, pursuit best practices and safe driving techniques.
- Annual trainings and reviews on the Lefta Shield Police Vehicle Pursuit (VP)Reporting Forms to make sure there is uniformity in documentation.

- Additional training for patrol officers in the use and implementation of the tire deflation devices also known as spike strips. The department had removed the devices from the vehicles due to the lack of training with current patrol officers.
- During rollcalls, Supervisors/ OIC's should frequently discuss recent incidents involving local law enforcement such as pursuits. The supervisors and patrol officers should exchange thoughts and recommendations on how each incident was handled and how our department can possibly do better.