



TOWN OF HARTFORD
POLICE DEPARTMENT
 &
Emergency Communications Center



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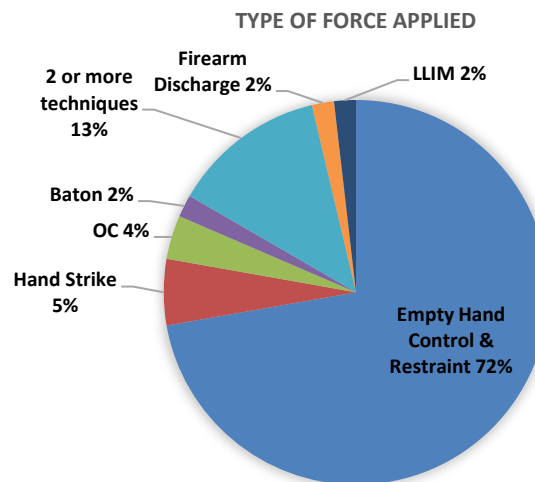
January 6, 2022

To: Interim Director Robert Cormier
From: Braedon S. Vail, Deputy Chief
Subject: **2021 Use of Force Analysis**

During 2021 there were forty-six (46) reported incidents where agency personnel used force in the performance of their duties. This is a decrease from forty-nine (49) incidents in 2020. Approximately 17% or eight (8) of the incidents involved juveniles under the age of 18. This is an increase over 2020 where five (5) incidents involved juveniles under the age of 18. The average age of the individual involved in a use of force incident was 33 years old. Approximately 26% or twelve (12) incidents involved subjects in the 31 to 40-year-old range. Twenty-seven (27) of the incidents involved a white male. Eleven (11) incidents involved a white female. Three (3) incidents involved a black male. Two (2) incidents involved a black female. One (1) incident involved an Asian male. One incident involved a Hispanic male. One incident involved a Hispanic female.

Analysis of Actions Taken

During calendar year 2021, all the incidents involving the use of force by an officer were during the course of making a lawful physical arrest of a resisting suspect for the commission of a crime, arrest on a warrant, an arrestable traffic offense, during the service of an Emergency Care Order, or dealing with individuals in mental crisis where no arrest resulted. In each incident officers employed one or more of the following defensive techniques: empty hand control and restraint techniques, body strikes to a muscle, firearm pointing, baton strike, oleoresin capsicum, or a combination of two or more techniques. There was one incident where less lethal impact munitions (LLIM) were utilized. There was one application of lethal force by firearm discharge with fatality in 2021. Of the six (6) incidents involving the pointing



of a firearm, four (4) were firearm pointing only, whereas no physical or other means of force were used. This is a decrease of firearm pointing only occurrences compared to 2020. Overall, firearm pointing decreased approximately 45% from 2020.

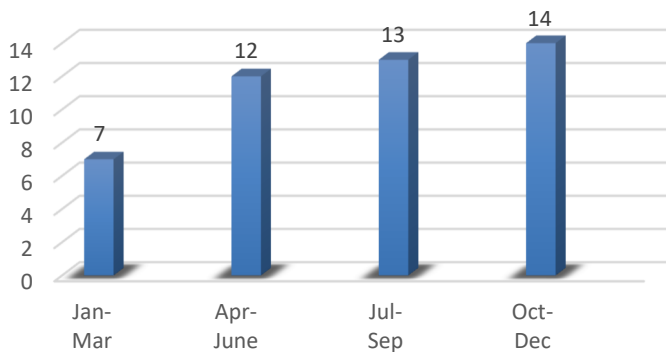
Twelve (12) subjects sustained minor injuries such as bruising, general soreness or small abrasions as a result of force applied by officers. In one incident a male in mental crisis was walking in the middle of the roadway and was confrontational with bystanders. He further was displaying a knife. The subject was non-compliant and was subsequently struck with less lethal impact munition sponge round and was struck in the abdomen. One subject was fatally wounded by the officer discharging his firearm. In this incident, the subject was attacking the officer by choking him and repeatedly punching him in the head.

Eight (8) officers applying force sustained injuries during seven separate uses of force incidents. Six (6) were minor injuries such as bruising, general soreness or small abrasions received while struggling to gain control of subjects. Two officers in two separate incidents sustained more serious injuries. In one incident a subject punched the officer in the head and knocking him to the ground, causing a potential concussion. In another incident, which ultimately resulted in an officer-involved shooting, the officer was choked and repeatedly punched in the head causing a severe concussion.

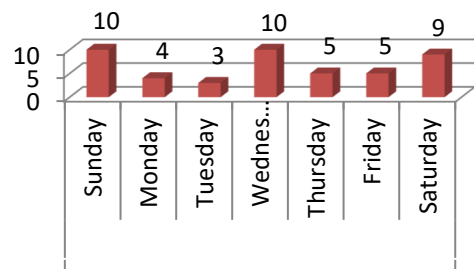
Distribution of Incidents

Analysis of the distribution of incidents for 2021 revealed the majority of incidents where force was applied occurred in the last three quarters, increasing each quarter. Oct through Dec had the highest rate where fourteen (14) incidents required the application of force. There were thirteen (13) incidents requiring the application of force in the third quarter, and twelve (12) in the second quarter. There appeared to be no particular pattern regarding the highest occurrences during any particular month as force was used between four (4) and six (6) times during seven out of the twelve months consistently. The months of Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr and Sep had between one (1) and three (3) occurrences. Over the past three-year period (2019-2021), the average highest rate of incidents by month requiring the application of force has been four (4) incidents.

Use of Force by Time of Year



Use of Force by Day of Week

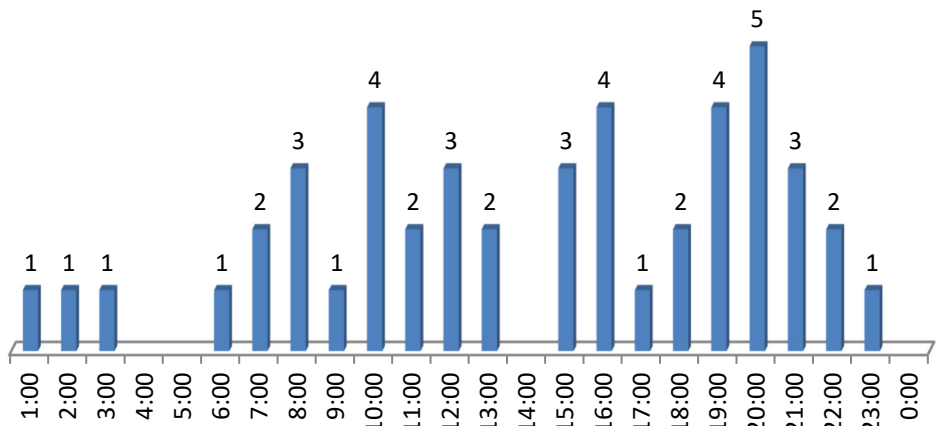


The months of May and Jul have seen the highest combined total amount of incidents over the same three-year period, where a total of fifteen (15) incidents required the application of force.

A daily pattern of force incidents revealed that the majority occurred on the weekends and midweek (Wednesday). The days of highest rate were Sunday and Wednesday, each having ten (10) incidents, followed by Saturday which had nine (9) incidents requiring the application of force. The days of lowest rate were Monday and Tuesday, having four (4) and three (3) incidents, respectively that required the application of force. Thursday and Friday had five (5) each.

The distribution of use of force incidents by time of day appears relatively consistent during the overnight period with four (4) incidents occurring from 0000-0600. From 0600-1000 the incidents steadily increase until peaking at four (4) incidents at the 1000 hour, prior to steadily decreasing through 1300 hours. The incidents again appear to steadily increase from 1500 hours until peaking at five (5) incidents at the 2000 hour, and then steadily decrease through 2300 hours. The majority of incidents were spread evenly occurring between the hours of 1500 and 2300, accounting for twenty-five (25) or 54% of all incidents. The hour of 2000 saw the highest rate, having 5 incidents, the most incidents during any given hour. There were four (4) incidents occurring at the 1000, 1600, and 1900 hours.

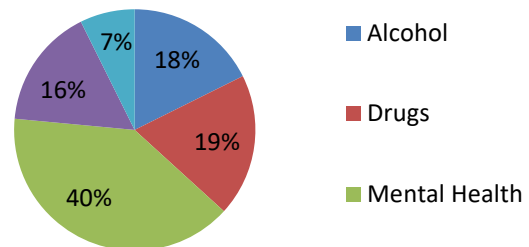
Use of Force by Time of Day



Factors Contributing to Suspect Behavior

An assessment of the subject’s actions, demeanor, and physical/emotional condition immediately prior to each use of force reveals one significant commonality; there is a strong correlation in that 93% of the subjects restrained by officers using elevated levels of physical force possessed a mental health issue or impairment, or were under the influence of alcoholic beverages, illicit drugs, or influenced by a combination of two or more of these

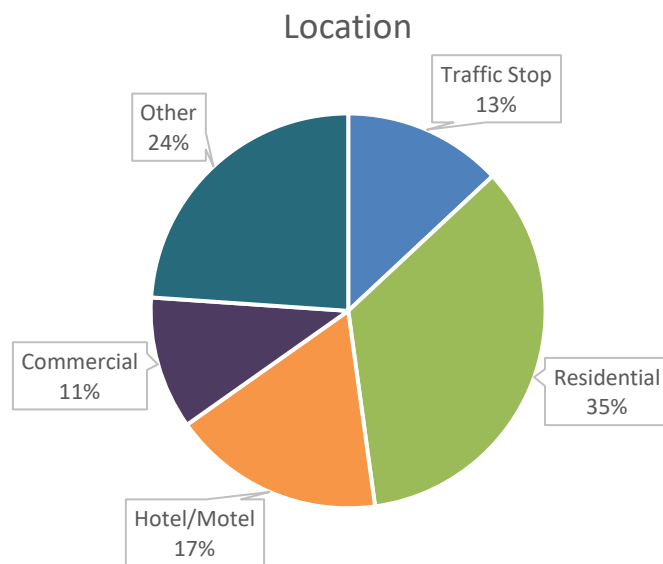
Suspect Factors During Use of Force



factors at the time of arrest. This is a 2% decrease from 2020. The prevalence of alcohol and drugs decreased from the prior year, accounting for 18% and 19%, respectively while the combination of two more contributing factors remained consistent at 16%. However, the prevalence of mental health issues in force incidents rose dramatically over the prior year, accounting for 40% compared to 26% in 2020. Force incidents with the presence of alcohol and resulting in arrest represent only four (4) of the arrests for driving impaired or under the influence of alcohol/drugs made by officers this past year.

Location Type

During 2021 the majority of incidents, sixteen (16), or 35% occurred at a residence. Six (6), or 13% occurred during an arrest-related traffic stop. It should be noted that the department conducted 2177 traffic stops during 2021. Eight (8), or 17% occurred at a hotel/motel, a significant decrease from 2020. This decrease is attributed to the State transitioning individuals out of the voucher program. However, most of those incidents involved drug, alcohol or mental health factors, or a combination thereof which was consistent with factors in those incidents in 2020. There were five (5) incidents occurring in a commercial setting. Eleven (11) incidents, or 24% classified as other either occurred in outdoor settings or settings not otherwise classified above.



Summary

In 2021, empty hand control and restraint techniques accounted for most of the force applied, remaining relatively consistent with that of 2020. The baton was utilized in one (1) of the 46 incidents. Oleoresin capsicum was utilized in two (2) incidents.

There were no external or internal complaints of excessive force being used by Hartford officers in the calendar year 2021. There was one fatal officer-involved shooting incident which followed the appropriate external and internal investigatory process. In this incident the use of lethal force was found to be justified and the officer was found to have followed all relative departmental policies. Use of force incidents have decreased by 3 over 2020. However, analysis of factors contributing to suspect behavior revealed encounters with persons experiencing a mental health issue at the time of the encounter increased by almost double from those of 2020. Those persons under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs slightly decreased. Incidents involving

juveniles increased from 5 to 8 incidents over 2020. Incidents where individuals did not display any contributing factors, or factors unknown such as alcohol, drugs, or mental health issues increased slightly from those of 2020. Most incidents occurring in a residential or hotel/motel setting in 2021 were a result of a individuals experiencing mental crisis or during the apprehension of a misdemeanor subject.

In October of 2021 a legislatively mandated use of force policy was adopted. This policy included very minor changes from the Hartford Police Department's prior policy, as the prior met national accreditation standards. Inasmuch, the adoption of the new policy had little impact upon the procedures followed by Hartford officers.