

# Sachse Police Department

2019



## Department Vehicle Pursuit Analysis

## **Vehicle Pursuit Analysis for 2019**

This analysis was conducted for the purpose of reviewing the Sachse Police Department's Vehicle Pursuits for calendar year 2019. Vehicle Pursuits are inherently dangerous to both the officers involved and the public. The Sachse Police Department takes its obligations seriously to provide the most effective and efficient police service with the least adverse impact on our citizens. The Sachse Police Department is committed to protecting our citizens but at the same time ensuring the manner in which we do so does not place the public at risk of greater harm. This process requires continuous evaluation of the risks and benefits of each action. This analysis is conducted each year to comply with Texas Law Enforcement Best Practice 7.14 and to attempt to identify methods for reducing the number of vehicle pursuits and the inherent risks involved.

Officers are trained by the department in pursuit tactics and emergency driving. However, as skilled as an officer might be in these situations, the vehicle being pursued may not have a competent driver and many times the driver may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

### **Vehicle Pursuit Reporting Requirements**

Texas Law Enforcement Best Practice 7.13 and Sachse Police Department General Order 648.00 Emergency and Routine Operation of Police Vehicles, requires a written report be completed anytime an officer pursues a vehicle. The decision to initiate a pursuit must be based on the pursuing officer's conclusion that the immediate danger to the officer and the public created by the pursuit is less than the immediate or potential danger to the public should the suspect remain at large. Unless a greater hazard would result, a pursuit should not be undertaken if the subject(s) can be identified with enough certainty that they can be apprehended at a later time.

Anytime an officer initiates a pursuit, department policy requires the dispatcher to immediately ensure that a Patrol Supervisor is aware of the pursuit. The supervisor is required to monitor the pursuit and act as an uninvolved decision maker regarding the danger of the pursuit. Both the officer and Supervisor are charged with continuously evaluating of the pursuit as it occurs and are required to terminate the pursuit when either believe the risks to the officer or public outweigh the need for immediate apprehension of the suspect.

Each individual Pursuit Report is immediately reviewed by the Officer's Supervisor, and through the Chain of Command to the Chief of Police. At the time of the incident, the Pursuit is reviewed to ensure the pursuit was appropriate and within the guidelines of Department Policy. If the officer initiated a pursuit inappropriately, a departmental investigation is required and the officer may receive additional training or in some cases discipline up to and including termination from employment. This annual analysis is not intended to determine if an officer

acted inappropriately, but to identify department wide trends that may suggest changes in policy, training, equipment or supervision.

The reviews are compiled by the Operations Commander and the data reviewed and published in this report.

## Vehicle Pursuit Comparison 2018/2019

There were a total of two Reported Vehicle Pursuits this year compared to five the previous year. This represents a difference of three, or a 37 percent decrease.

The reasons for initiating the pursuits are listed below by type with comparison to the previous year.

	2018	2019	Difference
Traffic Violation only	2	1	-1
Misdemeanor Offense	0	1	+1
Felony Offense	0	0	0
Outstanding Warrant	0	0	0
Suspicious Activity	2	0	-2
Suspected Intoxication	1	0	-1
Assist another agency	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-3</b>

### Individual Officer Analysis

Two officers initiated pursuits and these officer's activities and actions were reviewed immediately following the incident by the department for appropriateness. While each individual vehicle pursuit is reviewed immediately after the event to ensure it is in compliance with department policy and law, patterns of behavior can also indicate the need for additional training or supervision. Officers can be involved in pursuits at significantly different rates depending on the crime activity in the part of the city where they are assigned, their type of assignment, the time of day they work and their experience level.

Of the two pursuits, two different Officers initiated.

### Reasons for a Pursuit

In 2019, there was one vehicle pursuit initiated because the officer observed the driver commit a traffic violation and then failed to stop when signaled by the officer. Failure to stop for an officer is a separate violation and fleeing from an officer in a vehicle is a State Jail Felony. This number decreased by one from the two pursuits initiated for traffic violations last year.

In 2019, there was one vehicle pursuit initiated because the officer became aware the driver was involved in a Misdemeanor Offense and then the driver failed to stop when signaled by the officer. This number is up from zero the previous year.

In 2019, there were no vehicle pursuits initiated because the officer became aware the driver was wanted for a Felony Offense and then failed to stop when signaled by the officer.

In 2019, there were no vehicle pursuits initiated because the officer became aware that the driver was wanted on an outstanding Misdemeanor or Felony Warrant and then the driver failed to stop when signaled by the officer. This number remains the same as last year.

In 2019, there were no vehicle pursuit Initiated because the officer observed the driver in suspicious circumstances and then failed to stop when signaled by the officer. Officers have the authority to stop and question persons who are found in suspicious circumstances and the officer has reasonable suspicion to suspect criminal activity. This number is down from two pursuits initiated for suspicious activity last year.

In 2019, there were no vehicle pursuit initiated because the officer had reasonable suspicion to suspect the driver may be impaired due to alcohol or drugs and the driver then failed to stop when signaled by the officer. This number is down from the one pursuit initiated for possible intoxication last year.

## Pursuit Terminations

Pursuits can be terminated at any time by the pursuing officer or any Supervisor when they believe the danger posed to the citizens is greater than the need to apprehend the offender. This “voluntary termination” may better protect the citizens than the continuation of a dangerous pursuit for minor offenses. The table below provides information on how pursuits were terminated.

Type Termination	2018	2019	Difference
Voluntary Termination - Officer	2	0	-2
Voluntary Termination - Supervisor	1	0	-1
Stopped - Arrested	0	1	+1
Stopped – Not Arrested	1	0	-1
Stopped - Fled on foot - Escaped	1	0	-1
Stopped - Fled on foot - Captured	0	0	
Accident - Violator Involved in Accident	0	1	+1
Accident - Police Involved in Accident	0	0	
Spike Strips	0	0	
PIT Maneuver	0	0	
Rammed	0	0	

Firearm	0	0
Roadblock	0	0
Escaped - Not Located	0	0
Escaped - Captured Later	0	0

## **Damage and Injury**

In 2019, there was one pursuit that had some damage or injury associated with the incident as a result of the pursuit. In that case, the violator lost control and drove over the center median concrete curb, damaging only the car that he was driving.

## **Policy Violations**

The department policy on Pursuits is reviewed periodically with officers to ensure they are aware of when they should or should not pursue a vehicle. After each pursuit, the pursuit must be reported on the Pursuit Report Form which is forwarded through the officer's Supervisor, through the Chain of Command to the Chief. If a violation of policy is identified, the Chief may decide on an appropriate response, which may include additional training or even disciplinary actions if necessary.

In 2019, one policy violation was found. An officer drove with emergency lights only, no siren, as he attempted to catch the violator vehicle, driving through one stop sign controlled intersection. That officer was counseled for the violation.

## Summary and Recommendations

In summary, there was a 40% decrease in the number of pursuits; the overall number being 2, a relatively low number. There was one violation of policy, which, after being addressed, there have been no repeat offenses.

No changes are recommended at this point.

Compiled and submitted by:

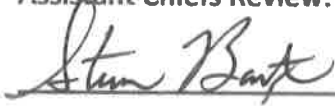


Martin Cassidy

March 18, 2020

Date

Assistant Chiefs Review:



Steven Baxter

April 23, 2020

Date

Chiefs Review:



Bryan Sylvester

4-23-2020

Date