

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

2021 Annual Use of Force & Assault on Sworn Officer Report



AMAL E. AWAD

Prepared by the Staff Inspections Unit



Anne Arundel County Police

Staff Inspections Unit

Annual Use of Force Report / Assault on Sworn Officer Review 2021

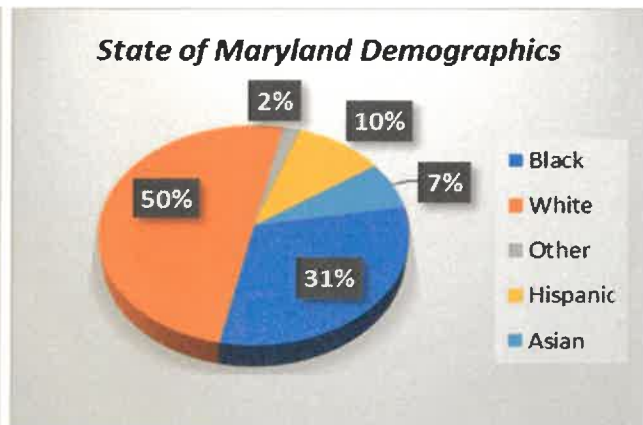
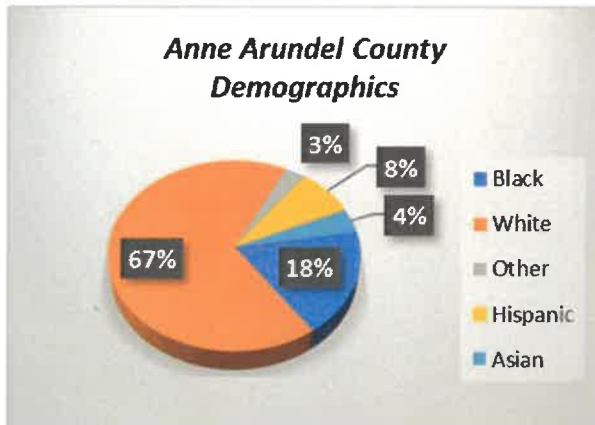
CALEA Standard 4.2.4 & 4.2.5

March 16, 2022

Assigned SIU # 2022-009

The following review is an analysis of all documented Use of Force incidents involving officers from the Anne Arundel County Police Department during the year 2021. The Staff Inspections Unit is responsible for collecting and reviewing all Use of Force reports and data throughout the year, which is the initial step in the review process. Upon collecting the year end data, an annual review and analysis is conducted of the incidents with the purpose of monitoring any patterns or trends which could indicate training needs, equipment upgrades and/or policy modifications.

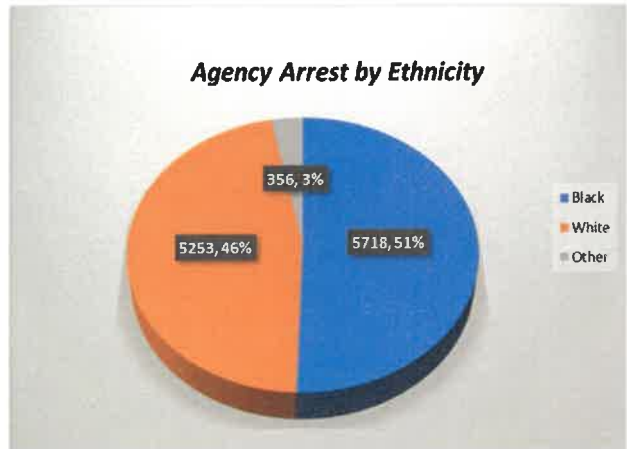
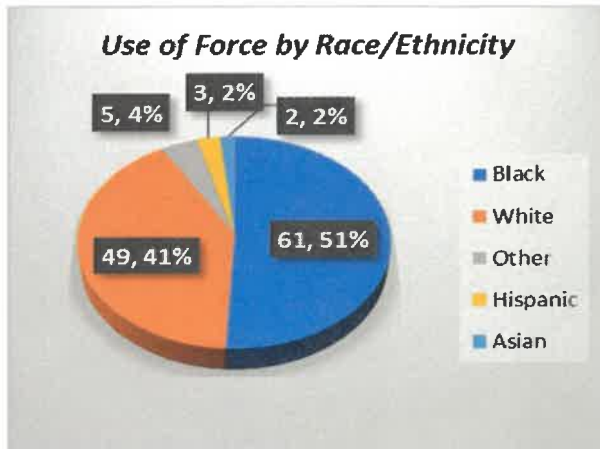
Demographics: US Census Bureau Data:*



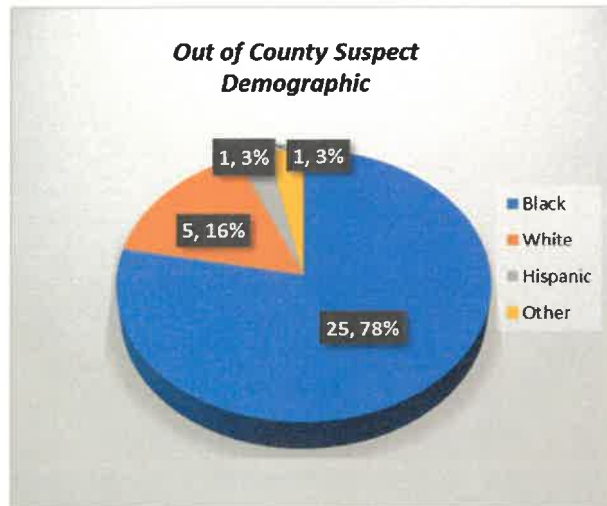
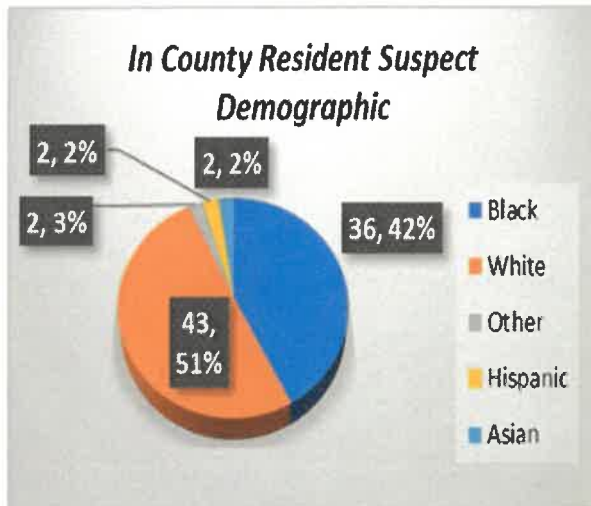
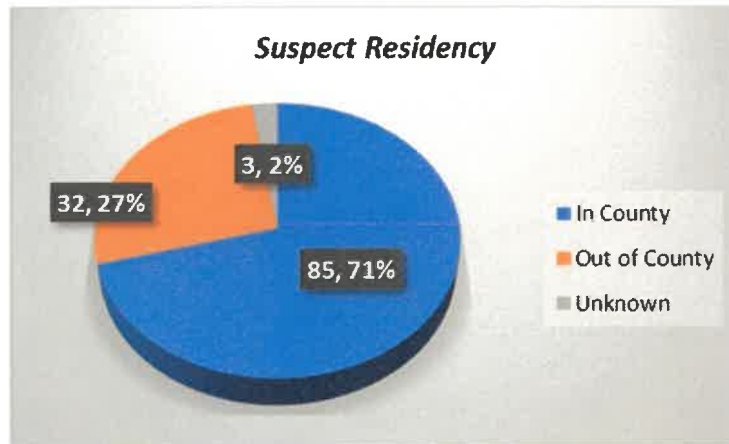
Use of Force reports are continually reviewed by the Staff Inspections Unit to ensure there are no use of force trends indicating that sex, age, race or any other discriminatory element are factors in the application of force.

In 2021, there were a total of one hundred and twenty Use of Force incidents. Eighty-five (85) Use of Force incidents involved suspects who reside in the county, thirty-two (32) incidents involved suspects who reside out of the county or out of state and three (3) incidents involved individuals whose residence could not be determined. One hundred (100) incidents involved male suspects, nineteen (19) incidents involved female suspects and one (1) involved a subject of unknown gender. There were sixty-one (61) incidents involving Black suspects, forty-nine (49) incidents involving White suspects, three (3) incidents involving Hispanic suspects, and seven (7) incident involving “Other” or Unknown Race/Ethnicity entries.

*US Census Data estimates for AACo did not change from 2020 to 2021



Use of Force by Residency Demographics:



Index Code 401, Use of Force:

The Blue Team reporting system is used to enter and track Use of Force incidents from the initial report through all phases of the Chain of Command review and the final review by the Staff Inspections Unit. The data for this review was acquired from the Blue Team Use of Force entries submitted to the Staff Inspections Unit (SIU) in accordance with **Index Code 401, Use of Force**.

The purpose of **Index Code 401** is “to provide officers with guidelines on the use of force, including deadly, less-lethal and non-lethal force. A reverence and respect for the dignity of all persons and the sanctity of human life shall guide all training, leadership, and procedures, as well as guide officers in the use of force.” **Section III** states, “Officers shall use only the degree of force that is objectively reasonable, necessary under the circumstances and proportional to the threat or resistance of a subject.”

A Use of Force report entered into Blue Team is required whenever:

1. An employee discharges a firearm, except in the following circumstances:
 - a. The firearm was discharged for training purposes.
 - b. The firearm was discharged for recreational purposes.
 - c. The firearm was discharged for destroying an aggressive or seriously injured animal
 - d. The firearm was unintentionally discharged;
2. An employee takes an action that results in (or is alleged to have resulted) any injury or death of another person;
3. An employee applies force through the use of a lethal, less-lethal, non-lethal, personal weapon (i.e., punches, elbow strikes, knee strikes, kicks), or a weapon of opportunity.
4. A departmental canine bites or inflicts injury to an individual.

A Use of Force report is not required in those instances where a firearm is displayed to assure officer safety or when using weaponless, hand-to-hand control techniques that have little or no chance of producing injuries when gaining control over, or subduing, non-compliant or resisting persons.

Overview:

The population estimate for Anne Arundel County in 2021 (2020 Census estimate) was 588,261 individuals, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. In 2021, officers generated and responded to 339,368 incidents* and made 11,327 arrests*. Force was only used in 120 of these incidents. This translates to force being used in approximately 0.04% of the total incidents and 1.06% of all arrest situations. The data reflects that for the majority of calls for service and arrest situations officers are rarely required to use force to resolve the incident.

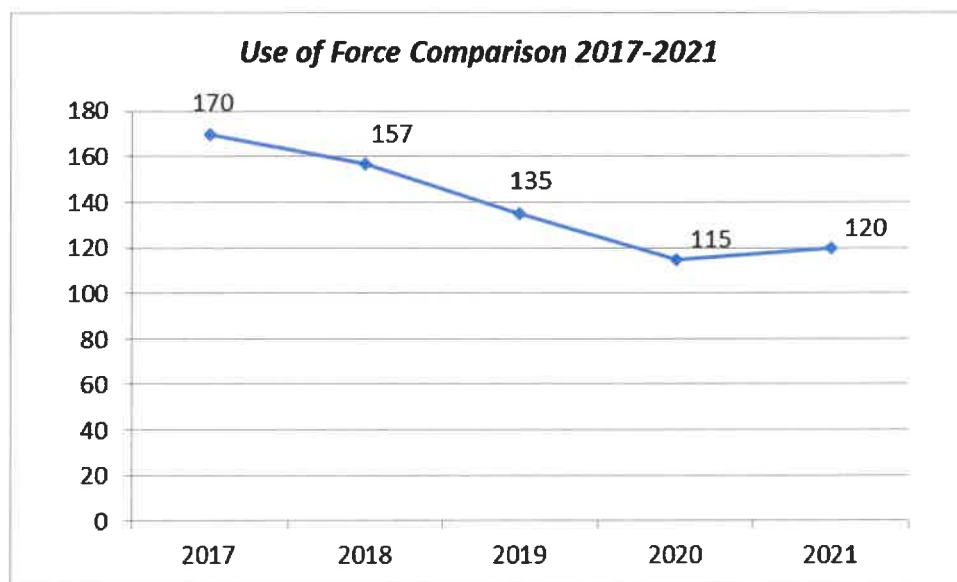
Our Use of Force policy requires one Use of Force Blue Team entry (report) for each individual whom force was used upon in an incident, instead of an entry by each individual officer involved. The report will capture all involved officers within the report for data collection and

**these numbers are affected daily based on personnel, data and record updates, as well as record and arrest expungements.*

analysis. Each involved officer will submit a report or supplement to document their force justification for the incident. Each individual use of force is then determined to be in or out of policy.

The chart and graph shown below indicates the number of Use of Force reports submitted over the past five years, including 2021, and the year to year changes.

Year	Use of Force Reports	Change from Previous Year
2017	170	5%
2018	157	-8%
2019	135	-14%
2020	115	-15%
2021	120	4%

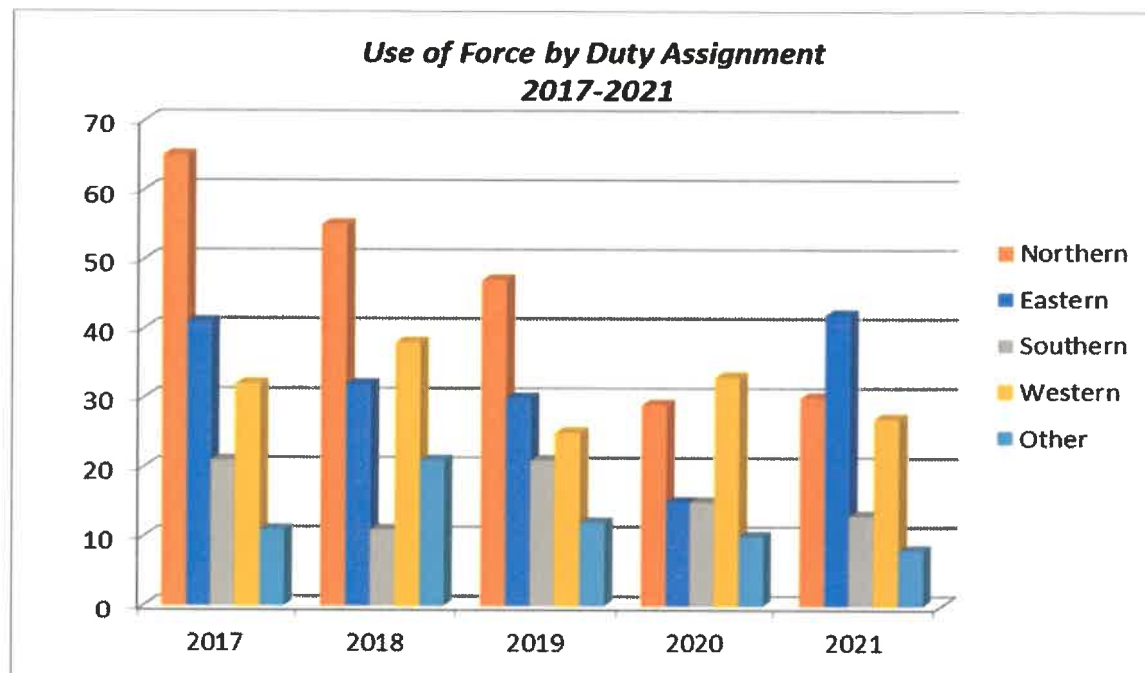


Use of Force by Assignment:

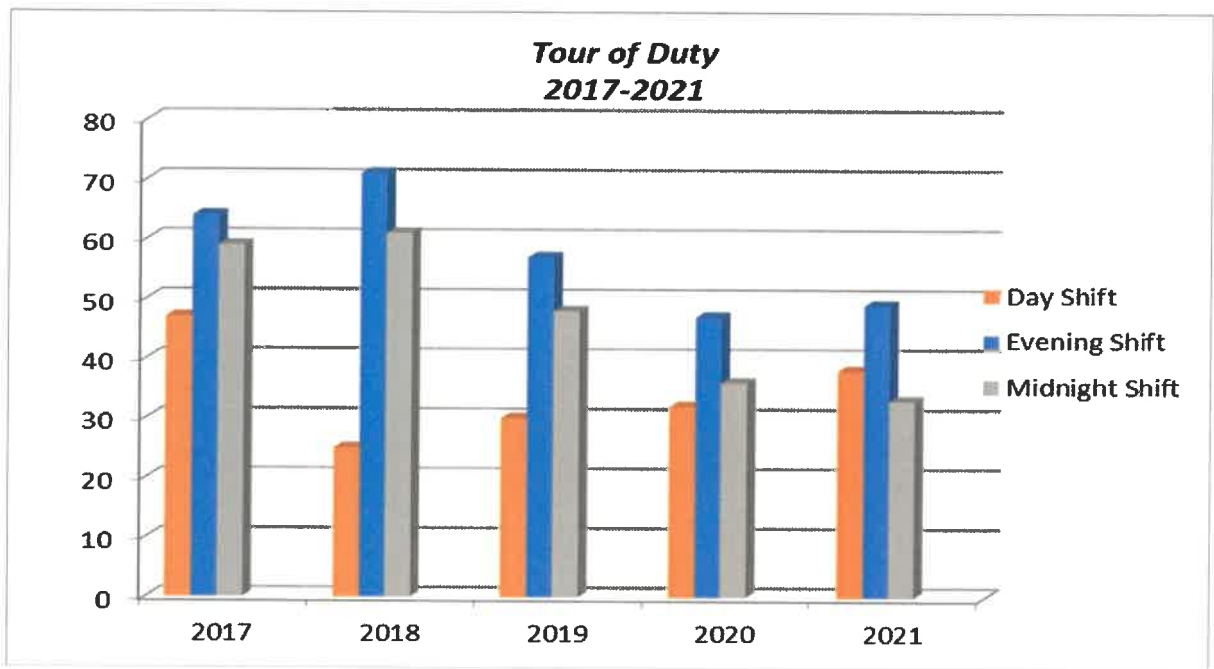
Use of Force reports in 2021 were submitted by officers from Units in seven (7) different Division assignments, including the four (4) Districts. The average Use of Force reports submitted by assignment for 2017-2021 were as follows: Northern District averaged forty-five (45.2) reports, Eastern District averaged thirty-two (32) reports, Southern District averaged sixteen (16.2) reports and Western District averaged thirty-one (31) reports. The other units including the Community Relations, Criminal Investigation Division, and Special Operations averaged twelve (12.2) Use of Force reports.

The Use of Force breakdown shows the totals by assignment for 2021 and the five-year average.

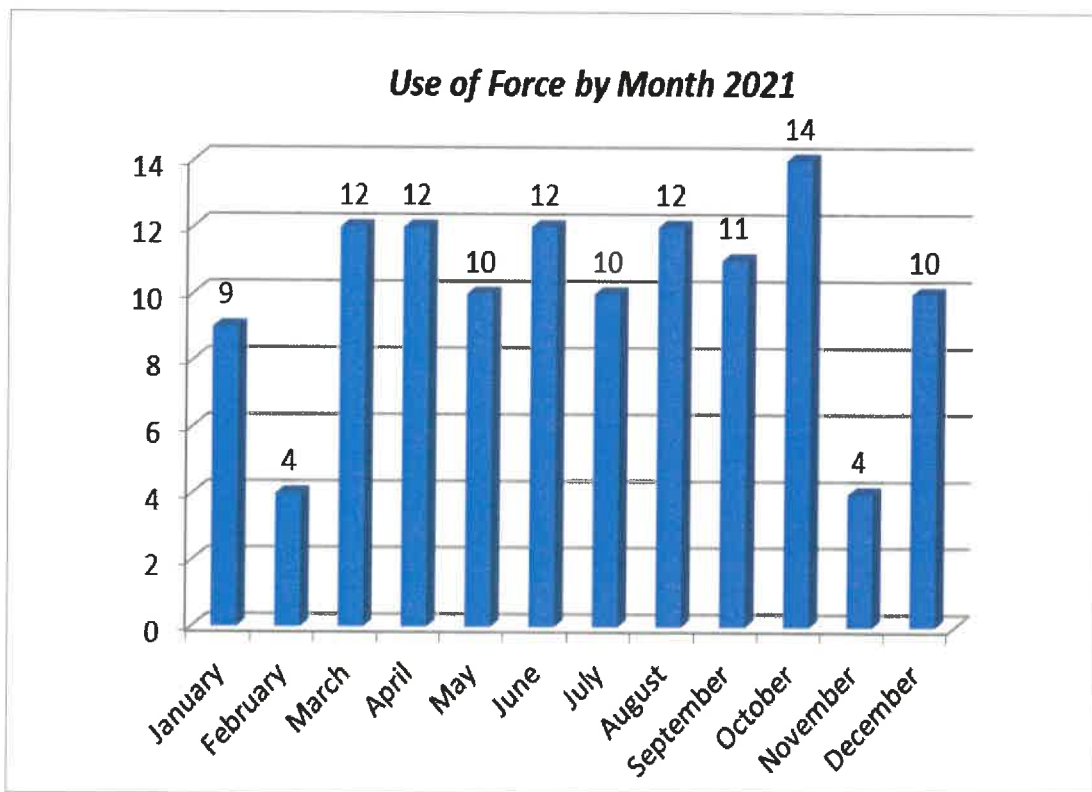
Duty Assignment	Total Incidents for 2021	Five Year Average
Northern	30	45
Eastern	42	32
Southern	13	16
Western	27	31
Other Units	8	12



Use of Force incidents for the day shift increased from thirty-two (32) in 2020 to thirty-eight (38) in 2021. The evening shift increased from forty-seven (47) in 2020 to Forty-nine (49) in 2021. The midnight shift decreased from thirty-six (36) in 2020 to thirty-three (33) in 2021.



While conducting the analysis, it was found that the number of Use of Force incidents per month averaged ten (10), with October being the largest spike at fourteen (14), while February and November were the lowest at four (4) each.



Force / Weapon Type Definitions:

Deadly Force:

- A. A police officer may use deadly force when the officer reasonably believes that the action is in defense of human life, including the officer's own life, or in defense of any person who is in immediate danger of serious physical injury.
- B. A police officer may use deadly force to prevent the escape of a suspect fleeing from a felony of violence that the officer has probable cause to believe will pose an immediate threat to human life should escape occur.
- C. A police officer may not use an intentional chokehold, neck hold, stranglehold, lateral vascular neck restraint, carotid restraint or any other use of physical force that restricts oxygen or blood flow to the head or neck, except in the case of the use of deadly force in the defense of human life.
- D. The circumstances surrounding every use of deadly force will be highly examined during post-incident review.

Less-Lethal Force:

Less-lethal weapons are designed to provide officers with options during use of force incidents. Less-lethal weapons may be used to resolve incidents in a less-lethal manner, to protect officers and other persons from harm, to protect a suspect/subject from self-inflicted injury, or to end incidents involving combative, or violent suspects. Officers shall not interpret this policy to mean that a less-lethal weapon replaces the use of deadly force when deadly force is justified. During situations where less-lethal weapons are deployed and deadly force is justifiable, lethal cover must be provided for the less-lethal weapon operator.

Non-Lethal Force:

Police officers are authorized to use department approved non-lethal force techniques/personal weapons to protect themselves or others from physical harm, to restrain or subdue a resistant individual, and to bring an unlawful situation safely and effectively under control. This does not authorize the use of non-lethal force/personal weapons because a subject is resistant through mere non-compliance unless the subject's actions present an obvious safety threat.

Less-Lethal Weapon:

The less-lethal weapons authorized for use by all trained officers of this department are the less-lethal bean bag shotgun, Conducted Electrical Weapon (CEW) such as the TASER, defensive impact weapons, and defensive aerosol sprays. SOS/QRT personnel are allowed various other less-lethal weapons as specified in Index Code 402.2, Section XV.C.2.

Personal Weapon:

Hands, arms, legs, feet when used as a weapon (i.e. punches, elbow strikes, knee strikes & kicks).

Weapon of Opportunity:

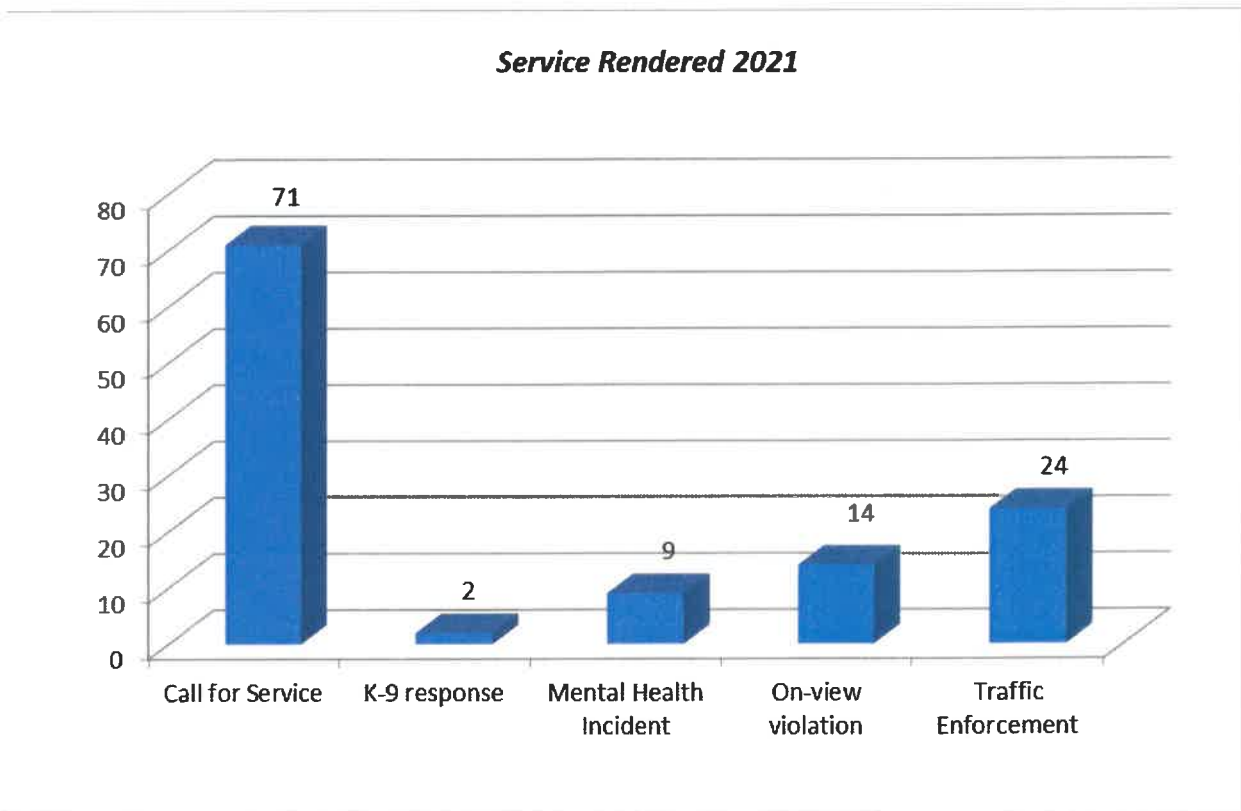
Any other object that an officer uses to apply force to another individual. Examples of weapons of opportunity are handcuffs, portable radios, and flashlights.

Service / Offense Types and Weapons:

The next section of the analysis focuses on police response, suspect activity and/or the weapon(s) used by officers and/or suspects at the time of the Use of Force incidents.

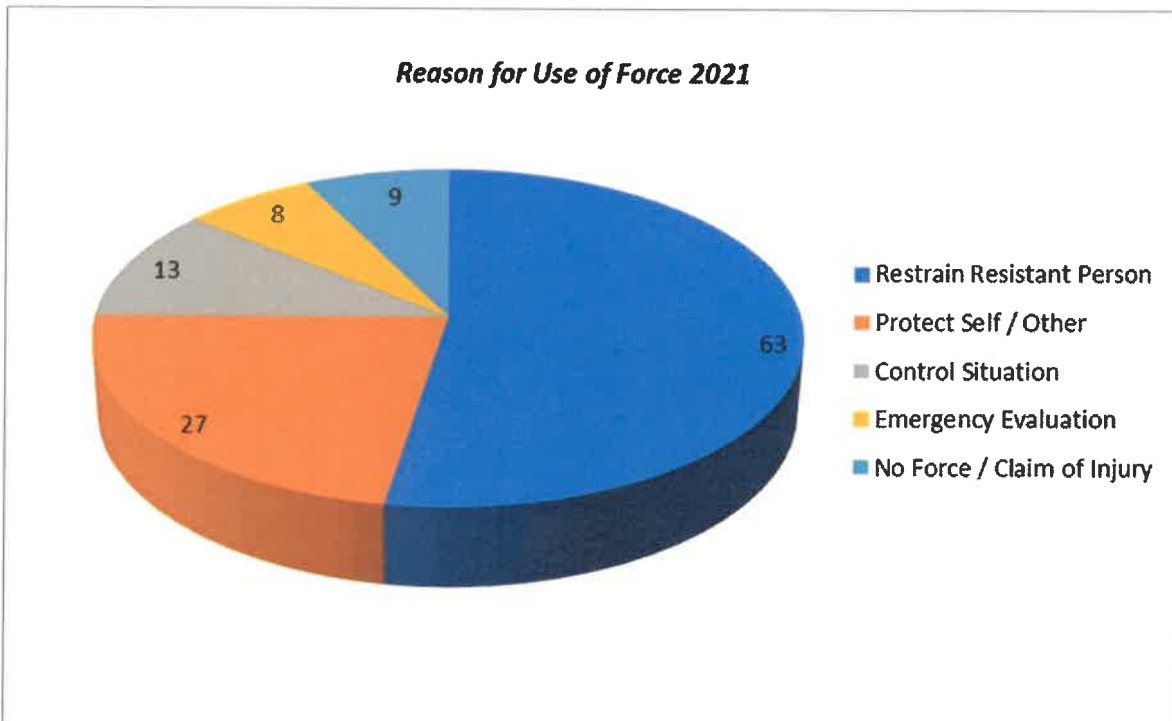
Index Code 401, Section IX. Only weapons and ammunition meeting department specifications may be used by police officers carrying out law enforcement responsibilities, both on or off duty.

Below is a breakdown of the Service being rendered by officers at the time force was used. Officers used force while responding to a routine “Call for Service” seventy-one (71) times. In addition, force was used two (2) times during a K-9 response, nine (9) times while responding to a Mental Health incident, fourteen (14) times during an On-View Violation, and twenty-four (24) times during a Traffic Stop.



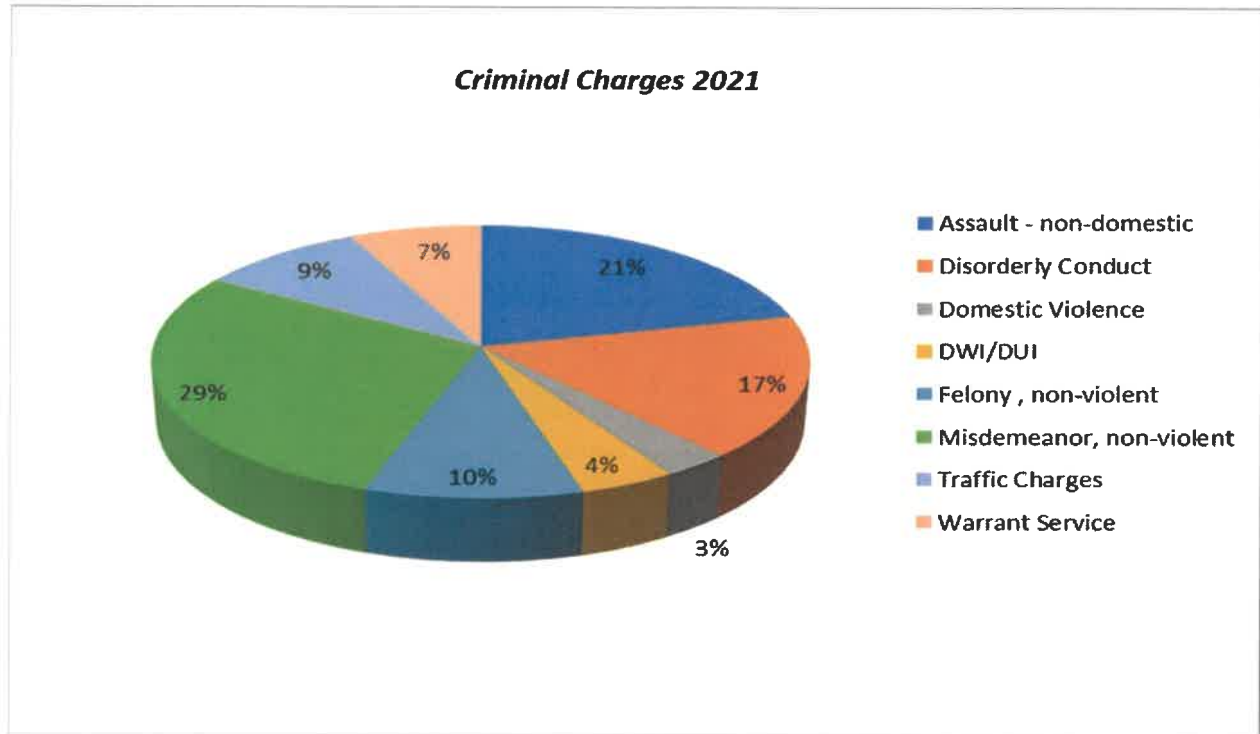
Below is a breakdown of the five “Reason” classifications for Use of Force, as collected by Blue Team. “Restrain Resistant Person” was the primary reason for Use of Force incidents in 2021, accounting for sixty-three (63) of the one-hundred and twenty (120) incidents. Protecting “Self or Others” from harm accounts for twenty-seven (27) of the incidents, “Controlling Situation” accounts for thirteen (13) incidents, “Emergency Evaluation” calls accounts for eight (8) incidents and “No Force/Claim of Injury” accounts for nine (9) incidents.

2021	TOTALS
Restrain resistant person	63
Protect self or other	27
Control Situation	13
Emergency Evaluation	8
No Force/Claim of Injury	9



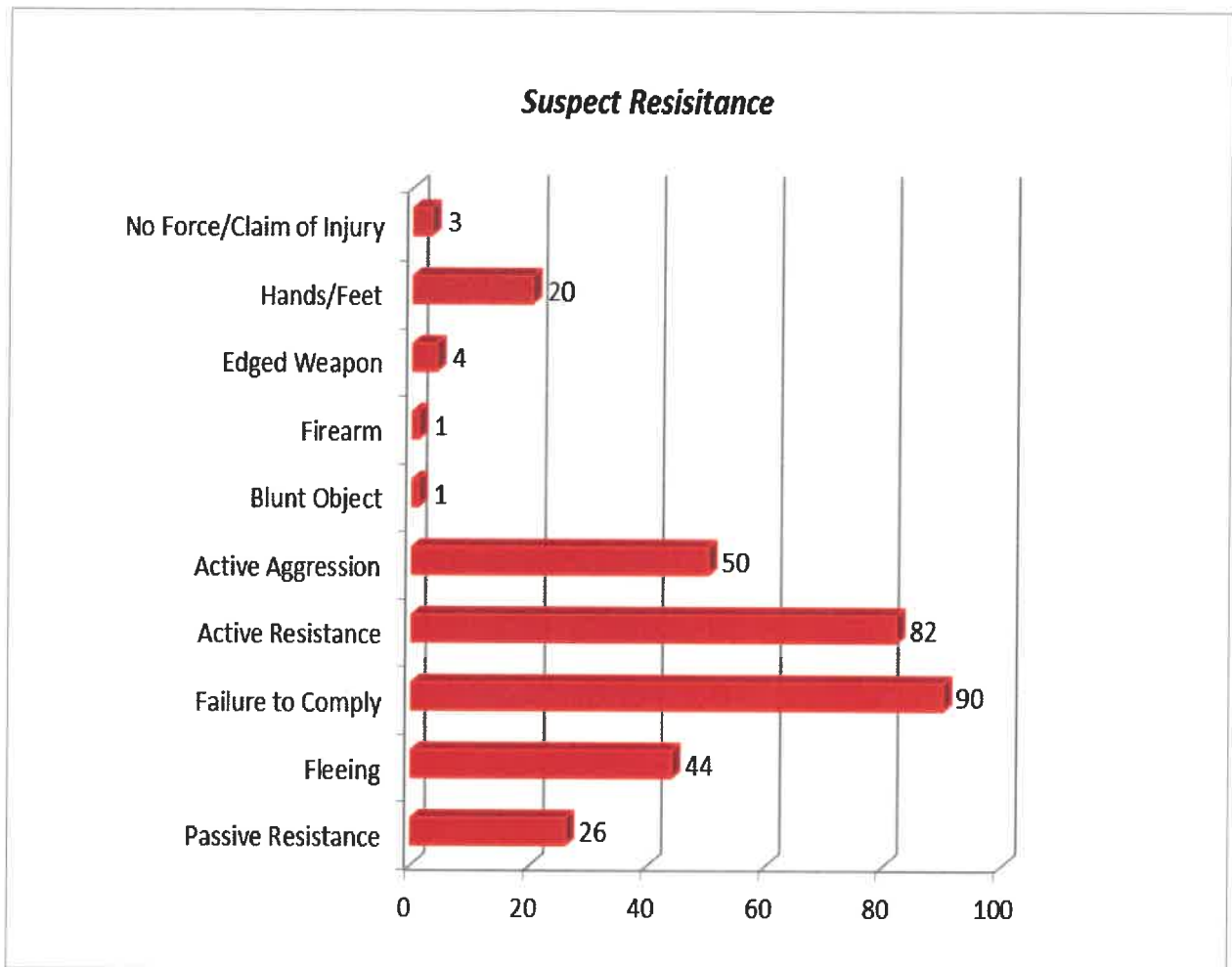
Blue Team collected criminal activity data, divided into eight (8) categories, for individuals charged with a crime during the 120 use of force incidents in 2021. Non-violent Misdemeanor

and Non-domestic Assault crimes account for the majority of criminal activity at 29 % and 21%, while Disorderly Conduct accounted for another 17% of criminal charges.



Multiple types of resistance and/or weapons are often utilized by a single suspect, during a single incident. Upon review of the resistance and/or weapons used by suspects in the 120 incidents of Use of Force in 2021, there were a total of three hundred and twenty-one (321) entries, indicating a form of resistance. Officers reported hands/feet as the weapon used by suspects in twenty (20) incidents. Suspects used a firearm in one (1) incident, an edged weapon in four (4) incidents and blunt object in one (1) incident.

In addition to the use of a weapon, additional non-weapon resistance was recorded in the Blue Team Use of Force Reports, including No Force/Claim of Injury (3), Active Aggression (50), Active Resistance (82), Failure to Comply (90), Fleeing (44) and Passive Resistance (26). There were a total of 295 instances of Non-Weapon resistance reported in the 120 Use of Force incidents.

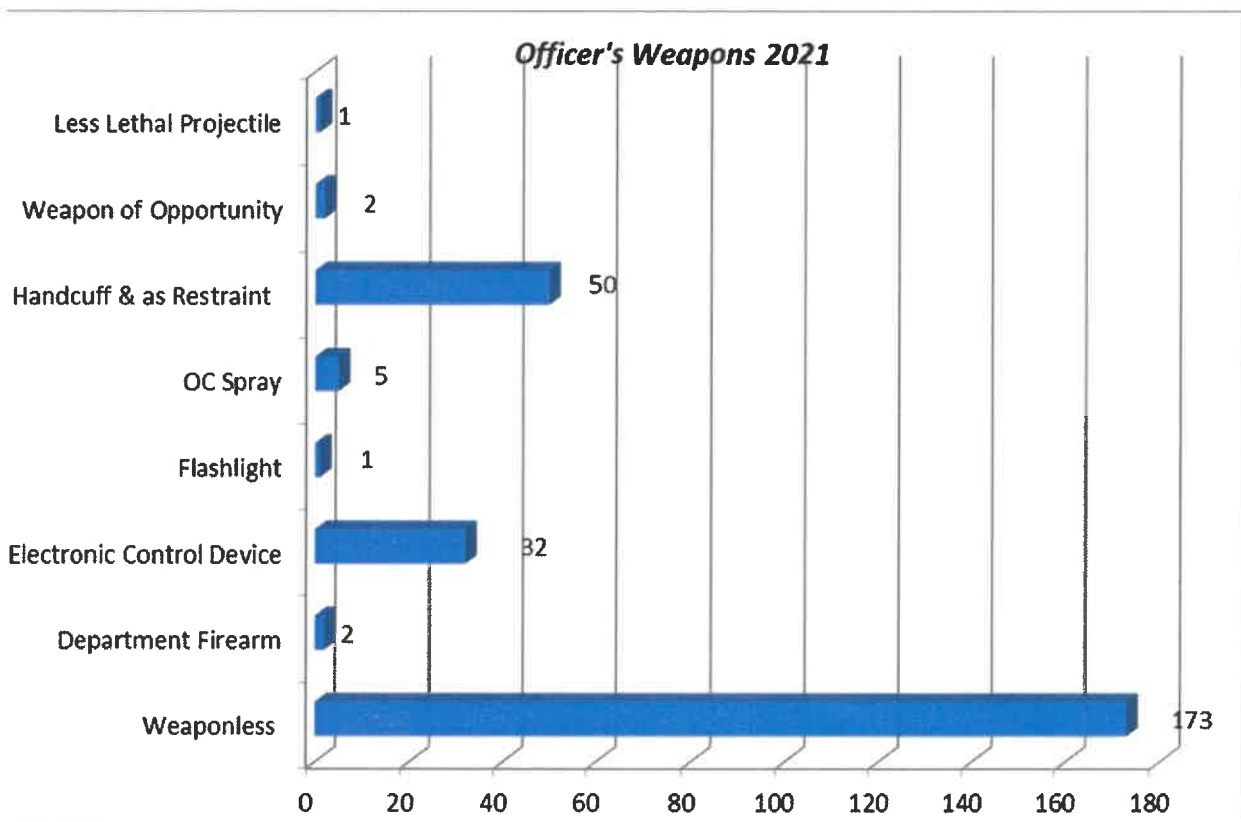


In July of 2021, Blue Team was updated to include several more weapon types; this was done to clarify misleading weaponless data. Previously, Hands/Feet was the only weaponless, hand to hand type weapon choice officers had when report weaponless contact resulted in injury or claim of injury. Hand/Arm as Restraint, Foot/Leg as Restraint, Handcuff as Restraint, Arm Bar/Wrist Lock, Leg Sweep, Strike-Elbow, Strike-Foot, Strike-Hand, Strike-Knee and Tackle were all added to the list of options.

In 2021, officers used force a total of two hundred and sixty-six (266) times, in 120 incidents. Officers used one of the weaponless, hand to hand control techniques in one hundred and seventy-three (173) of the total reportable uses of force (266). Handcuffs and Handcuffs as Restraint were used fifty (50) times, Electronic Control Devices (Taser) were used twenty-five (25) times, a Baton was used four (4) times, a Departmental K-9 was used two (2) times, a Less Lethal Projectile was used one (1) time, OC spray was used five (5) times, and a weapon of opportunity was used two (2) time. Department issued firearms were used in two (2) incidents.

Officers often listed handcuffs as the weapon causing injury when a suspect complains of wrist pain and/or injury after an arrest/transport. Our department policy requires Officers to complete a Use of Force report anytime a suspect alleges an injury during contact with an officer.

Handcuffing is required for transporting an arrestee. Although handcuffs were not utilized as an intended weapon, Officers are reporting the handcuff as a weapon as a result of a complaint of injury caused by the handcuff. This would account for the high number of Handcuffs listed as a weapon (Handcuffs as a Restraint was added to the list of weapons to help clarify these numbers).



Injuries:

Index Code 401, Section VIII. Medical Aid requires police officers to obtain medical aid for individuals who complain of, or show signs of injury as a result of any use of force.

The majority of injuries reported by suspects are minor in nature including bruises, lacerations, scrapes and abrasions, OC exposure, Taser probe impacts, and complaints of pain. In 2021, two (2) suspects sustained gunshot wounds. Departmental canine bites (2) accounted for 1 % percent of all Use of Force Incidents in 2021. Pre-existing injuries reported upon contact included a dog bite and neck/back injury.

Officer's injuries consisted of blood exposure, bruises, lacerations, scrapes/abrasions, OC exposure, bites (human) and complaints of pain.

Assault on Officer:

Assaults on law enforcement officers are critical events that significantly impact the safety and wellbeing of sworn officers. By tracking these incidents, the agency can monitor any trends and patterns in real time to make any necessary operational adjustments as needed. In compliance with CALEA Standard 4.2.5 requirements, the agency is required to complete an annual review of incidents involving assaults on sworn law enforcement officers with the purpose of identifying any patterns which can be used in determining actions the agency may take to enhance officer safety, maintain training curriculums that are predicated on real data from field-based events, and complete a review of best policy and practices. The data for these incidents is collected by the Central Records Section, which monitors all police reports. The data is then utilized in completing monthly FBI UCR reporting for law enforcement officers killed or assaulted. The Staff Inspections Unit also monitors daily commander's reports, and Use of Force reports for cases involving assaults on sworn officers.

During the course of 2021, the agency reported two hundred (200) incidents where a sworn officer was assaulted. Of those cases, officers suffered injury in fifty-three (53) incidents, there were no officers killed in the line of duty. In the majority of the incidents (175), officers were assaulted with a weapon described as "hands, fists, feet, etc." The officer activity type which accounted for the most assaults against officers was "Other", accounting for forty-nine incidents, closely followed by "Responding to disturbance calls" (domestic disturbances, person with firearm, etc.) which accounted for forty-seven incidents (47). The majority of the assault incidents occurred during the evening hours. Ninety (90) occurred between 1600-2400 hours, forty-one (41) incidents occurred between 0001-0800 hours, and sixty-nine (69) incidents occurred between 0800-1600 hours. Our agency reported no incidents involving officers being ambushed without warning.

In reviewing the Assault on Officer data, there are no areas identified as requiring immediate attention or alteration of agency policies, practices or training.

Internal Affairs Review:

Index Code 303.1, Internal Affairs, states "the goal of Internal Affairs is to ensure that the department's integrity is maintained through a system that provides an objective and fair investigation and review of complaints against department employees." Complaints of excessive force are recorded, registered, investigated and reviewed by Internal Affairs.

A review of Internal Affairs records indicates there were twelve (12) allegations of excessive Use of Force in 2021. Investigations may be closed by several different dispositions.

Dispositions of 2021 complaints:

- Exonerated (3)
- Open / Suspended pending Excessive Force Packet return -366 days (8)
- Unfounded (1)

Personnel Early Warning System:

Index Code 303.5, Personnel Early Warning System (PEWS), states, “It is the policy of the Anne Arundel County Police Department to establish and maintain a system for tracking and reviewing incidents of potential risk to the public, the Department, and involved employees.” (PEWS) is activated if an employee has six (6) or more documented use of force incidents within a twelve month period.

In 2021, the PEWS system was not activated by employees of the Department in regards to Use of Force incidents.

Conclusion:

In accordance with **Index Code 401** and **CALEA Standard 1.3.13**, the Staff Inspections Unit maintains record of all Use of Force Reports and prepares an annual analysis of reportable uses of force by agency personnel for agency wide and public review. Each Use of Force report is reviewed by the chain of command ending with the involved officer’s Division Commander to ensure accountability and adherence to departmental policy with a final review completed by the Staff Inspections Unit.

Departmental policy, training and equipment practices are continuously reviewed throughout the year and updated as necessary to ensure compliance with all laws and best law enforcement practices. Use of Force policy and procedure are covered annually at in-service training for all departmental personnel in order to maintain a training curriculum of best practices and annual review.

In 2021, the Anne Arundel County Police Department began working to implement a public facing Dashboard, which would provide citizens the ability to view a variety of statistics, including Complaints, Use of Force and Arrest data; however, these plans were delayed. The Agency is still working toward implementing a public facing Dashboard to allow citizens to view Use of Force and Arrest data, as well as Internal and Citizen Complaint data.

In the Summer of 2021, the Anne Arundel County Police Department conducted an upgrade to the current IAPro and BlueTeam programs, which allowed better analysis of Use of Force, Internal and Citizen Complaint data, as well as other statistical information related to the Agency and personnel.

In the Spring of 2022 CI-Technologies (provider of IAPro, BlueTeam, and EIPro), will release a new program called Public Portal. Public Portal is a public access, internet-based program, which will allow the Agency to comply with new Maryland Law, as it relates to how we receive, process and respond to Citizen Complaints. This program will also provide a complainant the ability to track the progress of their complaint, even if it was made anonymously. The Department is working closely with CI-Technologies to be one of the first Agencies to implement Public Portal in the Spring of 2022.

After a complete review and analysis of all uses of force and subsequent data, no further modifications to training, equipment and/or policy are recommended at this time.

Report prepared by:



Michael Birdsell # 3644
Inspection Specialist, Staff Inspections Unit

Report approved by:



Sergeant Erin Brandt, # 1553
Supervisor, Staff Inspections Unit