

Henderson Police Department 2019



Department Vehicle Pursuit Analysis 2019

This analysis was conducted for the purpose of reviewing the Police Department's Vehicle Pursuits for the calendar year 2019. Vehicle pursuits are inherently dangerous to both the officers involved and the public. The Henderson Police Department takes its obligations seriously to provide the most effective and efficient police service with the least adverse impact on our citizens. The Henderson 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 to greater harm. This process requires continuous evaluation of the risks and benefits of each action. This analysis is conducted each year to comply with the 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 skilled an officer might be, the vehicle being pursued may not have a competent driver, may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or have impaired mental status.

Vehicle Pursuit Reporting Requirements

Texas Law Enforcement Best Practice 7.13 and Henderson Police Department Policy 7.15 (v) requires a written report be completed anytime an officer pursues a vehicle.

An officer, while in an authorized emergency vehicle, may initiate a vehicular pursuit when the suspect exhibits the intention to avoid apprehension by refusing to stop when directed to do so. A pursuit may also be initiated if the officer believes that the suspect, if allowed to escape, would pose a danger to human life or cause serious injury.

The on-duty supervisor will ensure that all officers involved in a pursuit complete a PURSUIT REVIEW REPORT. The report will be completed before the end of the officer's tour of duty.

Any time an officer initiates a pursuit, department policy requires a supervisor be immediately notified by the dispatch center. The on-duty supervisor will retain authority over the pursuing officers of the department for the duration of the pursuit, and shall

order the pursuit to be discontinued should the risks outweigh the benefits of apprehending the offender. Both the on-duty supervisor and the initiating officer are charged with continuous evaluation of the pursuit as it occurs.

Each individual PURSUIT REVIEW REPORT is immediately reviewed by the officer's supervisor, and through the chain of command up to the Chief of Police. At the time of the incident, the pursuit is reviewed to ensure the use 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. In some cases, disciplinary action may be taken. This annual analysis is not intended to determine if an officer acted inappropriately, but to identify department wide trends that may suggest needed or necessary changes in policy, training, equipment, or supervision.

All pursuit reports will be attached to a copy of the Offense Report for review up the chain of command. Once the Chief of Police signs the report, it will then be given to the Patrol Commander to retain for records.

Vehicle Pursuit Comparison 2018 to 2019

There were a total of 7 reported vehicle pursuits in 2019 and will be compared to 1 reported vehicle pursuits from 2018. This represents a 600 % change in number of pursuits from 2018 to 2019.

Reason for contact	2018	2019	Difference
Traffic violation only	0	4	+4
Misdemeanor Offenses	0	1	+1
Felony Offense	0	1	+1
Outstanding Warrant	0		0
Suspicious Activity	1	1	1
Suspected Intoxication	0		0
Total	1	7	6

Individual Officer Analysis

There is no analysis provided for this report.

Reasons for a Pursuit

In 2019, there were 4 vehicle pursuits 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. 1) On 2-21-2019, an Officer observed a suspect driving a motor vehicle with other adults and juveniles in the car and said suspect failed to stop for a stop sign. The officer attempted to stop the suspect, who initially stopped, but the suspect then drove away and a pursuit ensued at low speed. The suspect continued for about a ¼ mile over surface streets before finally stopping and the driver was taken into custody. 2) On 10--26-19, an Officer observed a suspect driving a motor vehicle with the license plate light out. The Officer attempted to stop the vehicle and when it sped up and refused to stop, a pursuit ensued a number of miles into the County before the suspect finally stopped and attempted to flee on foot. The Officer subsequently was able to capture and take the suspect into custody. 3) On 03-13-19, Officers responded to a report of a 4-wheeler doing donuts in the roadway. Upon arrival, the Officer observed the suspect and the suspect immediately fled the area at a high rate of speed. The Officer pursued as the suspect dangerously ran stop signs and was almost struck by another vehicle. After the pursuit had gone a number of blocks and the safety of the suspect and the public became paramount, the Officer ended the pursuit. 4) On 06-08-19, our Officer observed the suspect on a motorcycle "popping wheelies" on the highway and when he attempted to stop the suspect, a dangerous high speed pursuit ensued in which the suspect weaved in and out of traffic and sped down numerous surface streets in an attempt to elude the Officer. The suspect continued to flee for a number of blocks but finally wrecked out in a church parking lot that he was attempting to cut through. The Officer was subsequently able to take the suspect into custody without further incident.

In 2019, there were 1 vehicle pursuits initiated because the officer became aware the driver was wanted for a misdemeanor offense, and then the driver failed to stop when signaled by the officer. 1) On 11-21-19, an assault took place out in the County and the suspect fled the location before Deputies could arrive. Our officer observed a vehicle in town fitting the description of the suspect vehicle and stopped the vehicle. While the Officer investigated and interviewed the driver, the suspect suddenly drove away and fled the area at a high rate of speed. The Officer pursued and the suspect switched directions multiple times. The suspect continued on through town approximately ¼ mile over various surface streets before attempting to hide his car behind a City building. Officers located the suspect and after a brief scuffle, the suspect was taken into custody.

In 2019, there were 1 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. On 3-4-19, Officers became aware of the location of a stolen vehicle that was at a residence a few houses outside the City Limits. The Sheriffs Dept was notified and

routed to the location but before they could arrive, the stolen vehicle began to leave the residence. Our Officer, forced to take action, attempted to stop the vehicle but a pursuit immediately ensued into the County at a high rate of speed. The suspect switched directions on the Officer a couple of times and at one point, there was contact between the vehicles as the pursuit continued. The suspect fled at a high rate of speed back into the City and after going through a number of neighborhoods, the suspect jumped out of his still rolling vehicle and fled into nearby woods on foot. The Officer pursued and was subsequently able to capture and take the suspect into custody.

In 2019, there were 0 vehicle pursuits initiated because the officer became aware the driver was wanted on an outstanding misdemeanor offense warrant and then failed to stop when signaled by the officer.

In 2019, there was 1 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. 1) On 4-23-19, an Officer was called out on a suspicious, erratic acting pedestrian near a bank in town. The Officer spoke with the female and though she indeed seemed erratic and odd acting, she was committing no known criminal offenses and she posed no immediate danger to herself or others, so the Officer allowed her to leave. The suspect then entered a vehicle and sped from the location at a high rate of speed, prompting the officer to initiate a pursuit that ended about a ¼ mile away in a neighborhood at the suspects father’s residence.

In 2019, there were 0 vehicle pursuits initiated because the officer had reasonable suspicion to suspect the driver may be impaired due to alcohol or drugs and the driver failed to stop when signaled by the officer

In 2019, there were 0 vehicle pursuits initiated because the officer joined a pursuit which was already in progress.

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 the manner in which pursuits were terminated.

Type of Termination	2018	2019
Voluntary by Officer	0	1
Voluntary by Supervisor	0	0
Stopped by Arrest	1	4

Stopped-Fled on foot Escaped	0	0
Stopped- Fled on foot Captured	0	2
Accident-Violator involved in crash	0	0
Accident-Police involved in crash	0	0
Firearm discharged	0	0
Escaped-Not Captured	0	0
Escaped-Captured later	0	0

Damage and Injury

In 2019, there were 1 pursuits which had some damage or injury associated with the incident as a result of the pursuit. 1) In the 3-4-19 Pursuit listed above, there was damage done to a Patrol unit when contact was made between the suspect vehicle and the pursuing Patrol car. The suspect vehicle also sustained damage during the pursuit from the suspect driving erratically through ditches and culverts. 2) In the 6-8-19 Pursuit listed above, the suspect wrecked out his motorcycle in a parking lot and sustained minor scrapes and abrasions, which were looked at by EMS at the scene and the subject was cleared medically before being transported to Jail.

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, a PURSUIT REVIEW REPORT is forwarded through the chain of command to the Chief of Police. If a violation of policy is identified, the Chief may decide on an appropriate response, which may include additional training or disciplinary actions if necessary.

In 2019, there were 0 policy violations identified in regards to pursuit initiation or termination.

Summary and Recommendations

In 2019, there were 2 cases of evading on foot after the Pursuit, and 7 total events of Evading with a vehicle. There were 7 pursuit reports completed for 2019. The officers of the Henderson Police Department involved with these reports were justified in their actions and each incident was investigated through the chain of command for compliance with policy and procedures.

Command Review- Actions to be taken:

Chief of Police

Date