



**Office of Professional Standards**

**2024 Annual Report**

**Published March 17, 2025**



# INTRODUCTION



Chief John R. Batiste

The Office of Professional Standards (OPS) provides oversight for the agency's complaint and disciplinary procedures. OPS is supported by the Internal Affairs (IA) Section, which investigates all allegations of serious misconduct and/or serious performance allegations involving Washington State Patrol (WSP) employees. OPS ensures investigations are consistent and thorough, and standardized discipline is imposed. OPS continues to meet the public's expectations for accountability and transparency by conducting fair and impartial administrative investigations.

OPS is comprised of one captain, one lieutenant, five detective sergeants, one civil service investigator and five professional staff. We work collaboratively with Districts and Divisions to facilitate informed decisions throughout the administrative investigation process and provide follow-up to help prevent future occurrences. Accordingly, our entire staff must be knowledgeable about all aspects of administrative investigations to ensure meaningful, timely, and insightful guidance is provided. In addition to agency internal investigations, other local, county or state agencies can contract with OPS on a case-by-case basis for IA to conduct administrative investigations.

***We, the Office of Professional Standards, acting with integrity,  
are committed to public employee accountability while respecting and  
protecting the rights of all individuals.***

OPS takes a proactive approach to educating Appointing Authorities, managers, and supervisors regarding agency guidelines for initiating and conducting administrative investigations. Supervisors are encouraged to attend cross training with OPS where they become fully engaged in the administrative investigation process. In addition, OPS provided training to one Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Officer Basic Training Class, one Lateral Hire Trooper Class, two Trooper Basic Training Classes at the WSP Academy, and three Supervisor Basic Trainings in 2024.

OPS also provides oversight for the completion, review, and approval of Fleet Incidents/Collisions, Lost/Damaged Equipment, Uses of Force, and Pursuits/PIT (FLUPs). This prompts continual interaction between our team and managers, supervisors, and administrative staff in the field.

OPS employs a Data Consultant (vacant since November 2024) who is responsible for providing timely and relevant data to help identify potential trends, which can be utilized to mitigate risk and identify training opportunities to promote professionalism. This is accomplished through quarterly reports provided to Districts/Divisions, the Annual Report, the Strategic Advancement Forum, and individual data requests. The OPS Forms and Records Analyst completes public disclosure requests to facilitate public trust and accountability.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction..... 2

WSP Staffing..... 4

Administrative Investigations Overview..... 5

Complaints..... 6

Preliminary Investigations..... 8

OPS and District/Division Outcomes..... 9

FLUP Overview..... 11

Fleet Collisions and Incidents..... 12

Loss/Damage of Equipment..... 15

Use of Force..... 16

- Unintentional Discharge..... 24
- Use of Lethal Force..... 25

Pursuits..... 27

Biased Based Policing..... 31

Early Identification System..... 34

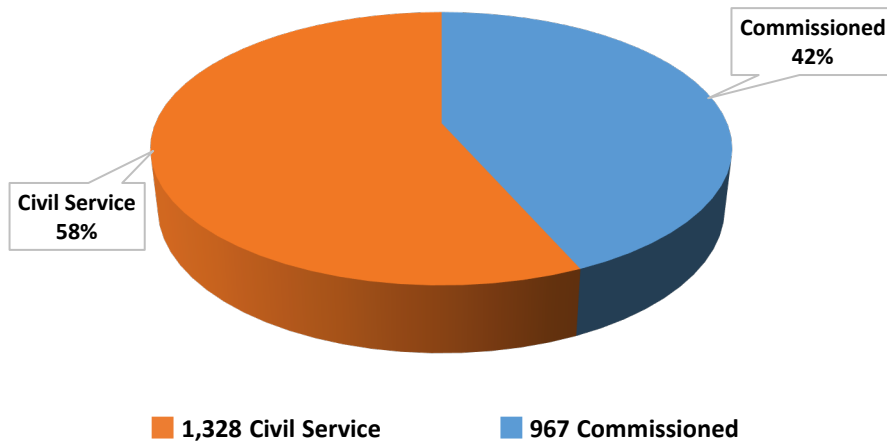
Changes to Administrative Review Process/Policies..... 36

Closing..... 38

Appendix..... 39

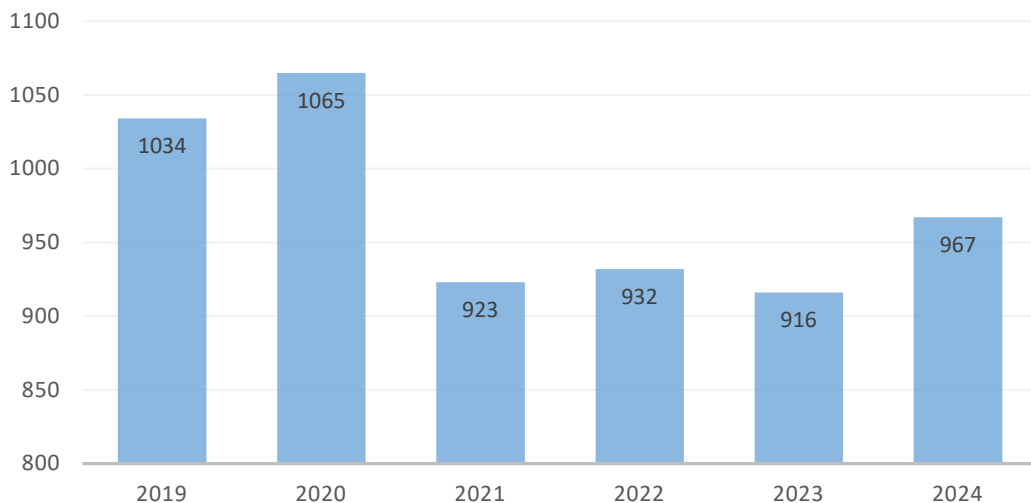


## WSP Average Total Employees – 2,295



In 2024, the agency averaged 2,295 employees. Commissioned Troopers represented 42% of this total, with 967 employees, and Civil Service the remaining 58% with 1,328 employees. While the commissioned employees represent less than half the workforce, they account for 80% of the total case numbers generated. Commissioned employees are responsible for all case reviews generated by pursuits and uses of force, and the greatest number of citizen complaints. Civil service case numbers generally relate to lost/damaged equipment, fleet incidents/collisions, and Minor courtesy complaints.

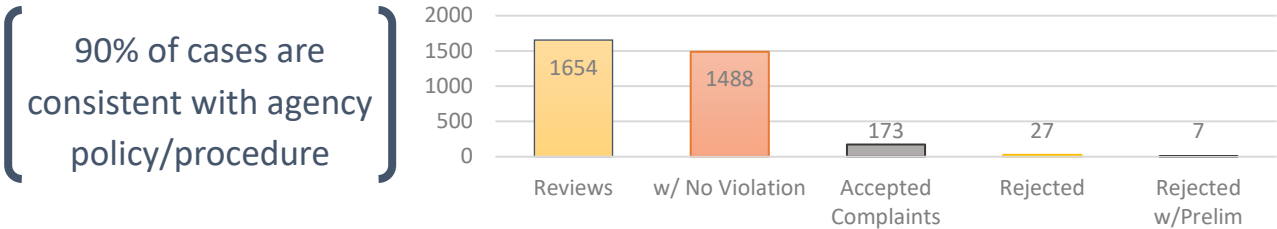
## Commissioned Employees



# ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATIONS OVERVIEW

In 2024, OPS generated 1654 case numbers prompting reviews of the actions of our employees. Of the 1654 cases reviewed, 90% were found to be consistent with agency policy/procedure and no additional action was taken. The agency addressed a total of 207 complaints against employees. Of those complaints, 173 were investigated, 27 were rejected after initial review by the Appointing Authority, and 7 were rejected after a preliminary investigation. The 207 total complaints represent a 21% increase compared to 2023, when the agency reviewed 171 total complaints.

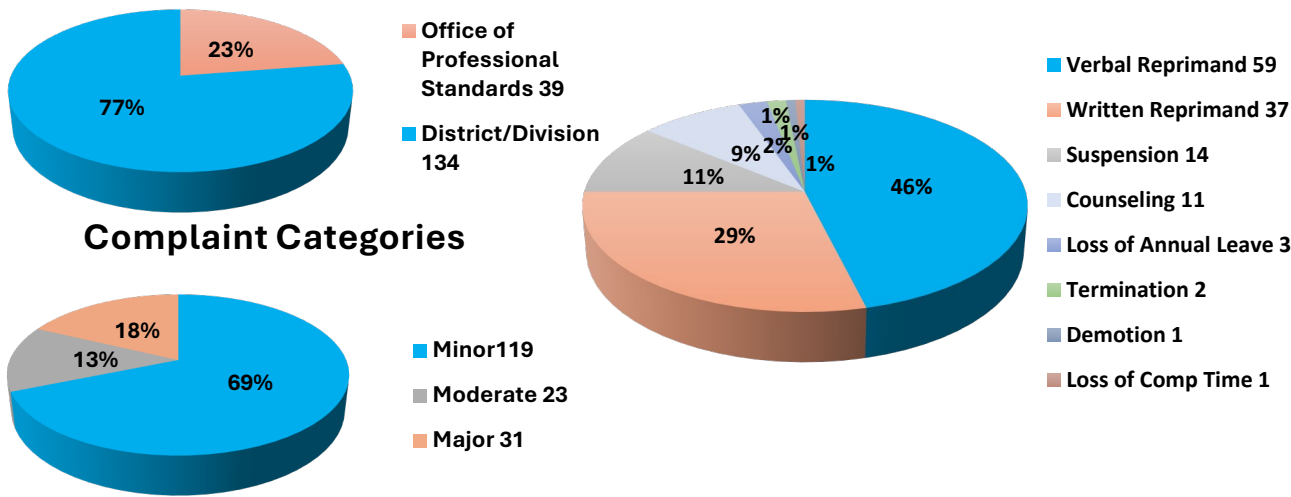
Total Investigations/Reviews



Of the 173 complaints investigated, 69% were categorized as Minor, 13% as Moderate, and 18% as Major. The Districts/Divisions completed 77% of the internal investigations, while OPS completed 23%. These investigations concluded with 75% resulting in proven findings. Of the sanctions imposed, 8% employee counseling, 44% verbal reprimands, 28% were written reprimands, 10% suspensions, 1% demotions, 2% loss of annual leave, 1% terminations and no transfers, or resignations in lieu. OPS received and processed 30 Non-Investigative Matter (NIM) reports in 2024.

Investigative Responsibility

Sanctions Imposed



A Settlement Agreement is a tool which streamlines the agency’s administrative process, allowing an accused employee to acknowledge their mistake(s) and work toward an appropriate and agreed upon sanction. In 2024, OPS coordinated with District and Division Commanders to complete 22 Settlement Agreements, a 27% decrease from 2023. In 2024, OPS conducted 39 investigations, with 9 of those cases (23%) resulting in a Settlement Agreement.

(CALEA 26.2.1)



# COMPLAINTS

A complaint can come from an external or internal source, and a complaint may be given in person, by telephone, email, or by letter. All complaints are referred to OPS for a thorough and impartial review, followed by an administrative investigation when appropriate. At the conclusion of an administrative investigation the complainant and employee receive letters advising them of the outcome to promote transparency and foster trust.

Complaints alleging serious misconduct or serious performance deficiencies are almost solely investigated by Internal Affairs. Other complaints, such as Moderate or Minor, are typically assigned back to the appropriate District or Division in which the allegation occurred. Complaint categories include:

## Major

Major investigations are the most serious and are generally investigated by OPS. A Major investigation is an act or omission that, if proven true, would constitute willful or wanton disregard for WSP policies and procedures.

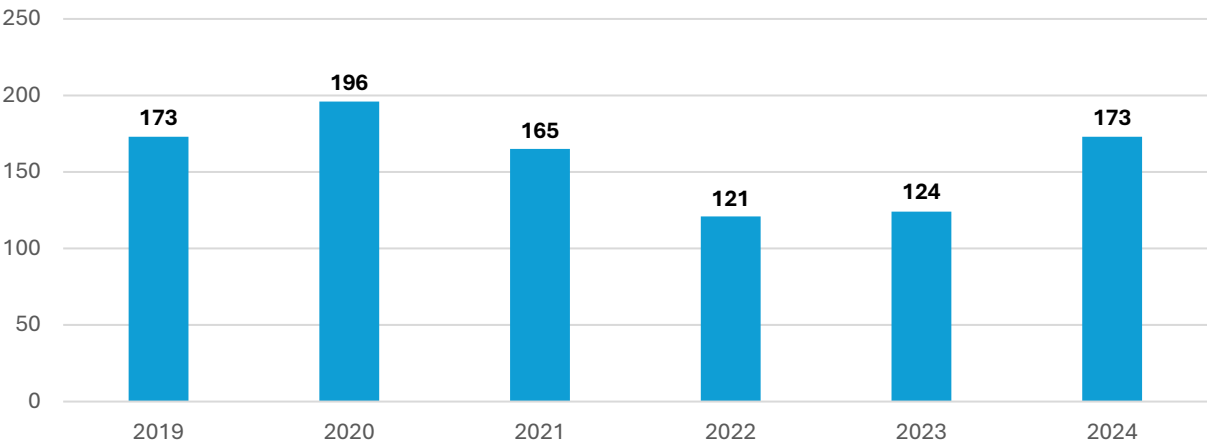
## Moderate

Moderate investigations are actions or behavior by an employee in disregard of agency policies and procedures.

## Minor

Minor investigations are those against agency employees that may involve perceptual differences and possible violations of agency policies, procedures, or service.

Total Cases Investigated



In 2024, OPS closed 39 of the 173 cases investigated, which was a 22% increase from the previous year when 32 were closed.

(CALEA 26.3.1)



# COMPLAINTS

## DISTRICT/DIVISION MODERATE COMPLAINTS

OPS works collaboratively with the Districts and Divisions to have Moderate complaints investigated at the District/Division level. This has had an ancillary benefit of developing supervisor's skills in the agency's administrative process.

In 2024, there were 17 Moderate complaints investigated at the District or Division level, which is a 12% decrease from 2023 where 19 moderate complaints were investigated. In 2024, OPS assumed investigative responsibility for 6 Moderate cases. Of the Moderate cases investigated by the Districts/Divisions, 35% resulted in a settlement agreement prior to the completion of the investigation.

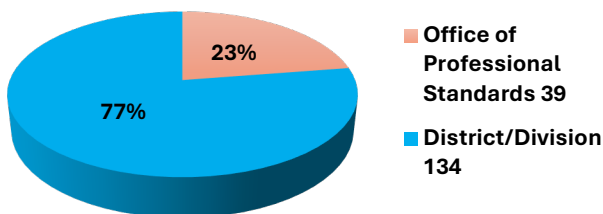
## DISTRICT/DIVISION MINOR COMPLAINTS

Minor complaints address allegations which, if proven true, would result in counseling or verbal/written reprimands. They are generally assigned to the Districts/Divisions for investigation. In 2024, there were 119 Minor complaints investigated at the District or Division level, a 65% increase from 2023.

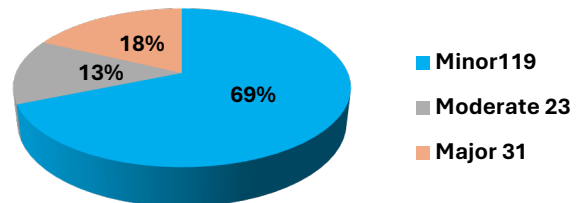
Minor investigations tend to be less involved, which contributes to a timely investigation and finding by the Appointing Authority. Often the allegations involve Minor collisions or courtesy complaints and are reviewed using on-scene reports and/or dash camera video if available.

(CALEA 26.2.1, & 26.3.1)

### Investigative Responsibility



### Complaint Categories



NOTE: In 2023, significant changes were made to WSP's FLUP review process, impacting the processing and closure of reports not only for 2023, but also retroactively for previous reporting years. These changes resulted in minor deviations from previously reported statistics but will ultimately lead to more accurate data due to improved review processes. While the 2023 reporting year experienced the largest impact, no corrections are necessary for 2023. Moving forward, these process changes will enhance the accuracy of future annual reports.



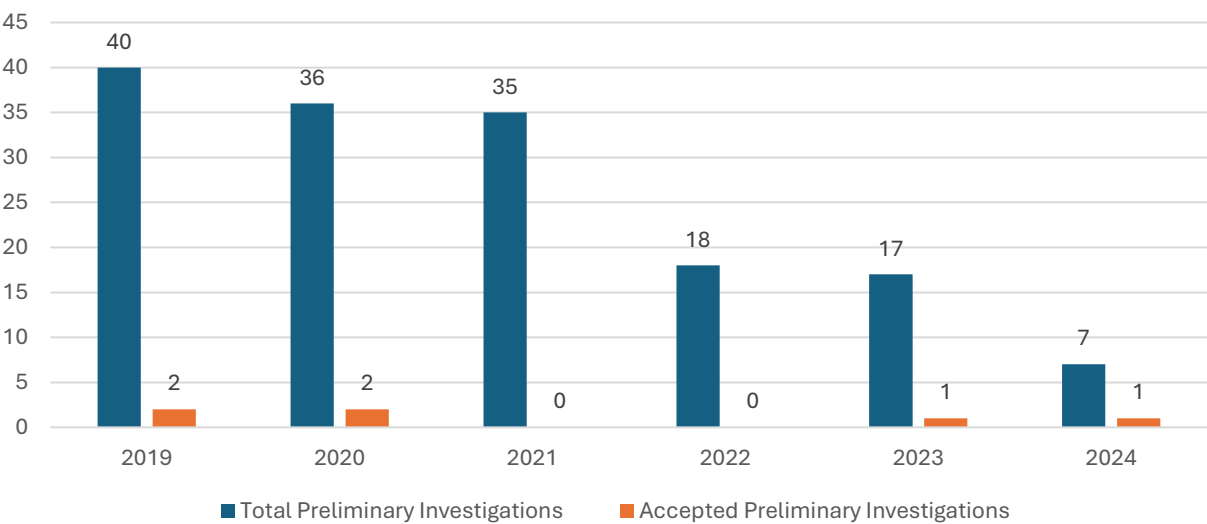
# PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIONS

A preliminary investigation may be initiated before an administrative investigation in certain circumstances. A preliminary investigation is used to determine if factual information exists indicating a violation of policy occurred and/or the alleged misconduct involved a WSP employee.

Each preliminary investigation must result in one or more of the following determinations:

- No factual information of a violation of policy exists
- Factual information of a violation exists
- The allegation(s) does not constitute a complaint
- Criminal misconduct is involved

## Preliminary Investigations



In 2024, the agency experienced a 59% decrease in the number of preliminary investigations compared to 2023. Citizen complaints accounted for 86% of the preliminary investigations in 2024, which is an 8% decrease from 2023.



# OPS AND DISTRICT/DIVISION OUTCOMES

## PERSONNEL ACTIONS

The focus of the administrative investigation process is to protect and preserve the integrity of the public, the agency, and its employees. Determining the appropriate finding at the conclusion of an administrative investigation is critical. The finding affects not only the involved employee(s) and citizen(s), but the reputation of the agency. The conclusions made about cases in which discipline is imposed must involve careful review and analysis of the specific facts and circumstances of the incident. Each separate allegation must be individually determined.

The burden of proof in administrative investigations is a preponderance of the evidence. Preponderance of the evidence is defined as evidence that is more convincing to a reasonable person than the opposing evidence (more likely than not). This decision is based on the totality of the circumstances and the credibility of the evidence presented and does not rest solely on the number of witnesses involved. Decisions are achieved by a preponderance of the evidence when adequately supported by fact to lead an ordinary, reasonable, and prudent person to reach the same conclusion after reviewing the same information.

In 2024 the agency completed 173 administrative investigations, a 41% increase from the previous year when 123 cases were completed. Of the total investigations, 128 resulted in proven findings with sanctions imposed. Seven investigations involved a missed timeline with no sanctions imposed. Training was provided following three of the five investigations involving fleet collisions where the two who did not receive retraining were Civil Service employees. When the Appointing Authority administers discipline, the disciplinary matrix is consulted to determine the range of sanctions. If an investigation ends in a Settlement Agreement, the Appointing Authority may operate outside of the matrix.

Level	1 <sup>st</sup> Offense	2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense	3 <sup>rd</sup> Offense
Minor	Counseling Written Reprimand	Counseling Written Reprimand	Written Reprimand
Moderate	Written Reprimand – 2 Working day Suspension	1 Working day Suspension – 5 Working day Suspension	3 Working day Suspension – 10 Working day Suspension
Major	3 Working day Suspension – Termination	6 Working day Suspension – Termination	11 Working day Suspension – Termination

The sanctions imposed in 2024 included 11 counseling documents, 96 written/verbal reprimands, 18 suspensions (to include loss of annual leave, compensatory days, or reduction in pay), 1 demotion and 2 terminations. The discipline is reflective of the types of cases investigated, with 69% being Minor, 13% being Moderate, and 18% being Major.

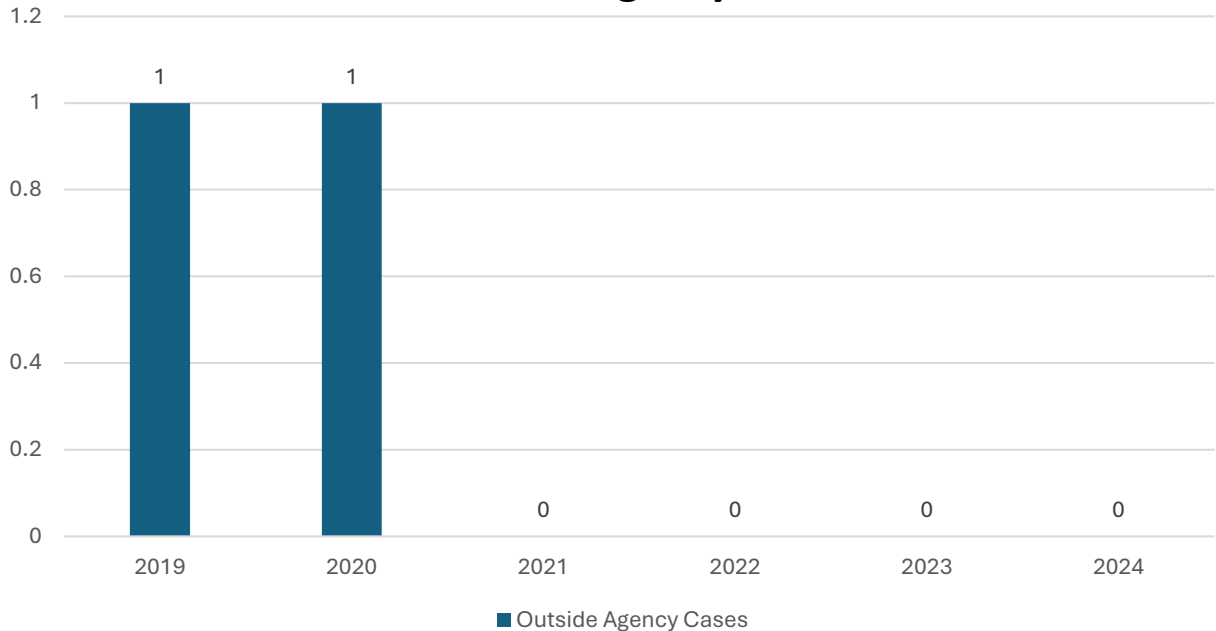


# OPS AND DISTRICT/DIVISION OUTCOMES

## OUTSIDE AGENCY CASES

With the Chief’s approval, OPS conducts administrative investigations for city, county, and state agencies on a contractual basis. OPS initiates contact with the outside agency to establish the scope of the investigation, investigative authority, and timelines. The investigation begins once investigative protocols are established and a contract for services is completed.

### Outside Agency Cases



Once a case is completed, it is delivered to the Appointing Authority of the outside agency. The investigator and OPS Commander provide a brief overview of the case to the Appointing Authority, answer any questions, and provide follow-up if requested. When the final case file is delivered to the agency, OPS involvement is complete. The Appointing Authority of the outside agency determines the finding and sanctions.

OPS did not complete any outside agency administrative investigations in 2024.



# FLUP OVERVIEW

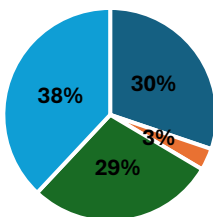
The Administrative Investigation Manual (AIM) and WSP Regulation Manual are written directives utilized by all employees of the agency. The AIM identifies processes and requirements for administrative investigations, and the Regulation Manual defines policy and procedure. The agency complies with the Collective Bargaining Agreements of the six bargaining units which represent our employees.

An electronic records management system is used to complete timely and thorough reviews of all Fleet Events, Lost/Damaged Equipment, Use of Force, and Pursuits (FLUPs). This system aids reviewers in identifying violations of policy, training opportunities, individual/agency successes, and ensures equity when corrective measures are taken. It is also used to compile statistical data which is analyzed and reported to the District/Division Commanders to identify trends and mitigate risk.

When a potential policy violation is identified, the supervisor conducts an initial review of the incident and notifies their chain of command. If appropriate, the District/Division will complete an Internal Incident Report (IIR) to begin the administrative process.

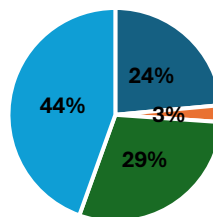
In 2024, there were 1,381 events, resulting in 1,835 FLUPs. Multiple employees may be involved in one event, and the FLUP process ensures the actions of each employee are reviewed for compliance with policy and expectations. It was determined employees acted within policy in 90% of the FLUPS reviewed. The 1,835 FLUPS generated in 2024 was a 92% increase compared to 2023, when there were 955 FLUPs.

## Total Events = 1381



■ FLEET 417 ■ LOSS 46 ■ UOF 393 ■ PURSUIT 525

## Total FLUPs = 1835



■ FLEET 432 ■ LOSS 47 ■ UOF 539 ■ PURSUIT 817

Employees with 5 years or less tenure accounted for the highest number of complaints in all FLUP categories listed above, except for loss/damage equipment. Employees with 6–10 years of tenure led that category in 2024. This is a continuing trend from years past where the least tenured employees have led the agency in FLUP generating events. Commissioned employees with 5 years tenure or less, represent 32% of all commissioned employees – the largest commissioned group in the agency.

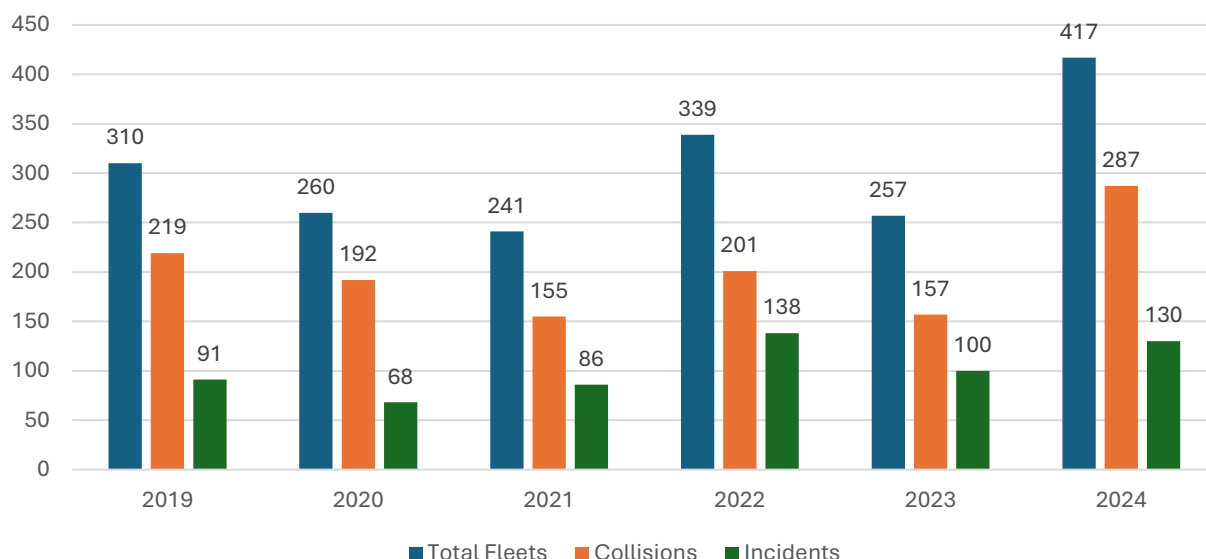


# FLEET COLLISIONS AND INCIDENTS

Fleet events consist of collisions and incidents. An incident can be defined as damage done to an agency vehicle by natural disaster, damage by road hazard, non-collision push bar damage (either vehicle), prisoners, non-collision dents/scratches by a known or unknown source, or vandalism. A collision is damage done to an agency vehicle in any way other than described as an incident.

A fleet investigation will occur when any agency vehicle is damaged as a result of an incident or collision. If a supervisor determines the employee may have violated policy, an Internal Incident Report shall be completed by the employee's supervisor after consultation with the Appointing Authority. Upon completion of the administrative investigation, the Appointing Authority will determine if the employee is at fault.

## Fleet Collisions/Incidents



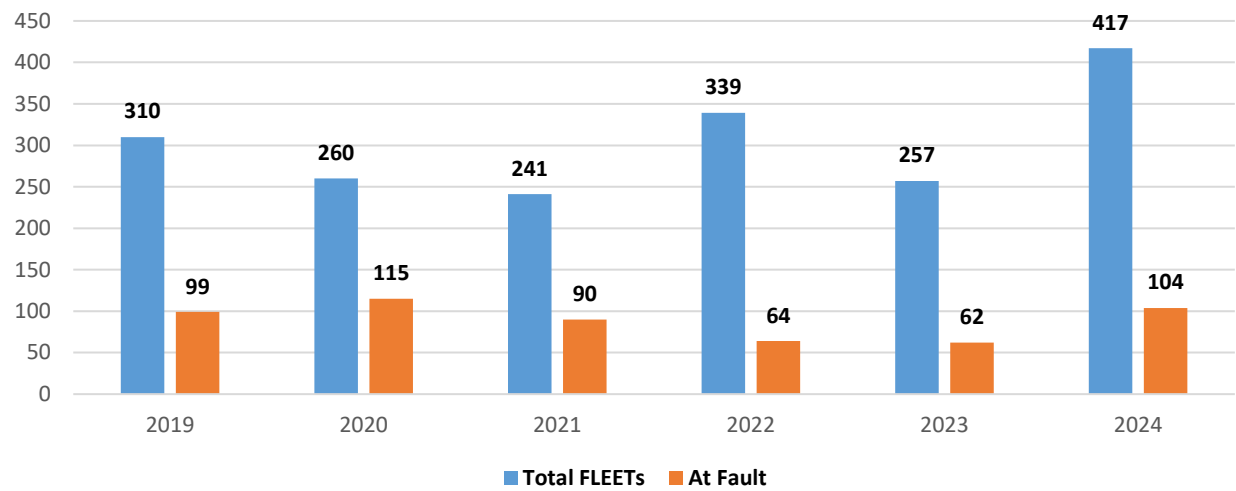
In 2024, there were 417 fleet events, a 62% increase compared to 257 in 2023. Fleet collisions increased 83% from 157 in 2023 to 287 in 2024. Fleet incidents increased 30% from 100 in 2023 to 130 in 2024.



# FLEET COLLISIONS AND INCIDENTS

Discipline was administered when Appointing Authorities determined a policy violation occurred. Of the 417 total fleet events in 2024, 104 (25%) were determined to be in violation of department policy, with the most common being “improper backing” and second most common being “speed to fast for conditions”. This represents a 1% increase compared to 2023 statistics where 62 (24%) of the 257 total fleet events were found to be policy violations.

## FLEET Events - At-Fault



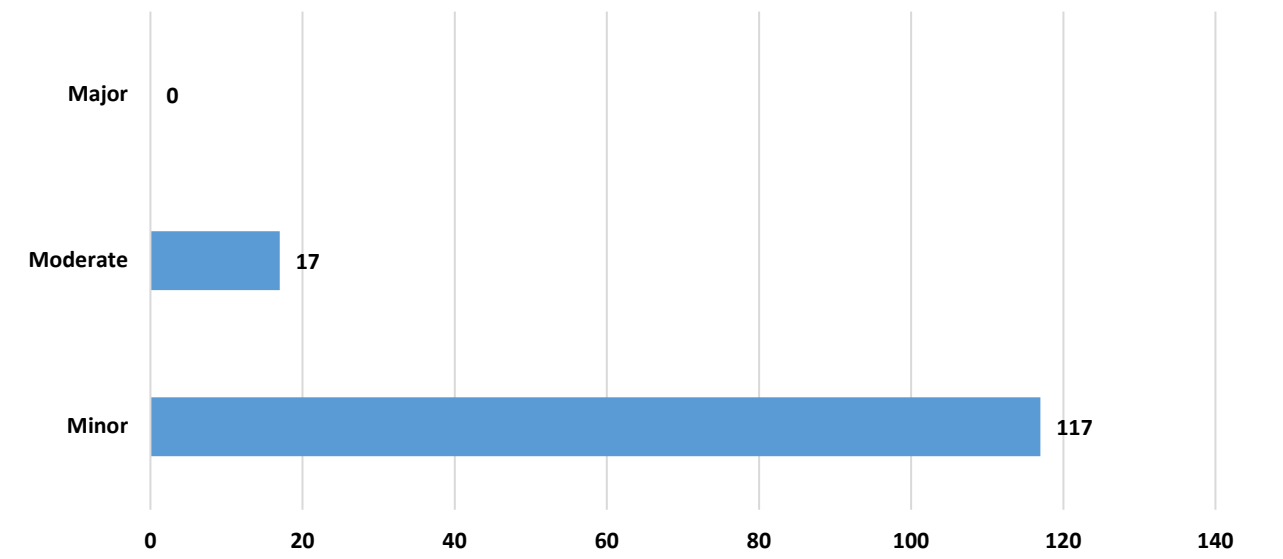
Training was a consistent component for employees involved in a collision with a proven policy violation. This training was completed at the academy or through the employee’s local Emergency Vehicle Operation Course (EVOC) instructor and was in addition to standard in-service training for commissioned personnel.



# FLEET COLLISIONS AND INCIDENTS

In 2024, collisions generated 134 fleet investigations, 117 of those cases were classified as minor, 17 were classified as moderate, and 0 were classified as major. Only 2 fleet investigation resulted in the discipline of a suspension or higher while the remainder resulted in a written reprimand or less. There were 3 fleet investigations which did not result in a proven finding of a policy violation.

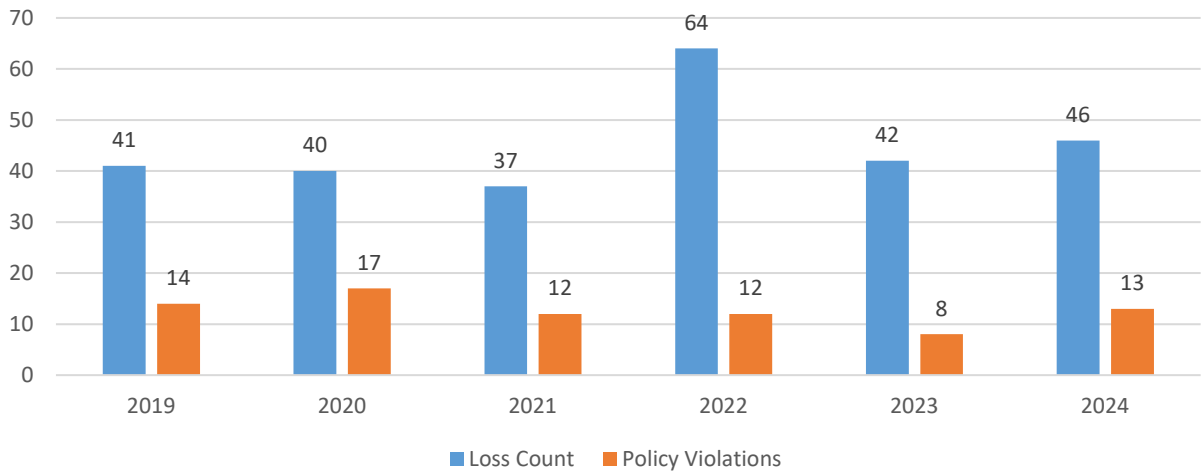
2024 Collision Discipline Classifications



## LOSS/DAMAGE OF EQUIPMENT

A supervisor is notified when agency equipment or property is either damaged or lost, which results in a review of the incident to determine if a policy violation occurred.

### Loss/Damage of Equipment



In 2024, the loss or damage of equipment was 10% more than when compared to 2023. Of the 46 items identified as lost or damaged in 2024, 28% were found to be proven policy violations, whereas in 2023, 19% were determined to be proven. In 2024, proximity cards were the most common item lost, followed by lost or damaged department issued cell phones and then lost or damaged badges. This is similar to 2023, where keys, damaged badges, and department issued cell phones were the most common lost or damaged items.



# USE OF FORCE

The WSP consistently reviews all use of force incidents for the benefit of the public and our employees. In 2022, the agency updated use of force policies to align with statutory changes and requirements. The WSP Regulation Manual defines use of force as *"Power dynamically considered, that is, in motion or in action; constraining power; compulsion; strength directed at an end. Force may be applied through the use of a person's body, weapons, equipment, and/or other instruments. For the purpose of this policy, use of force includes but is not limited to physical force."*

Physical force is defined as *"Any act reasonably likely to cause physical pain or injury or any other act exerted upon a person's body to compel, control, constrain, or restrain the person's movement. "Physical force" does not include pat-downs, incidental touching, verbal commands, or compliant handcuffing where there is no physical pain or injury.*

Law enforcement encounters rapidly evolve and are not static. Thus, officers must continuously assess the necessity and effectiveness of their actions, including their tactical positioning, to decrease the likelihood of needing to use physical force. Only reasonable physical force to lawfully perform an officer's duties in accordance with policy and applicable laws shall be used.

Reportable uses of force include:

- Physical take-downs, leg sweeps, or any technique which forcibly requires the subject to end up on the ground from means other than his/her own.
- Hobble Restraint Strap, if used to overcome an assaultive person.
- Use of OC-10.
- Use of an electronic control weapon (e.g. TASER).
- Striking with personal weapons (e.g., hand, fist, elbow, knee or foot).
- Any use of an impact tool, whether designed for that function or not.
- Any action that results in a complaint of injury and/or any form of visible injury to a subject.
- Use of the Pursuit Immobilization Technique at 40 miles per hour or higher.
- Use of a vehicle in an act of intentional intervention.
- Use of any firearm, including unintentional discharge.
- Pointing a firearm at a person.

NOTE: Underlined language denotes updates effective December 1, 2022.



## USE OF FORCE

When a use of force incident occurs, the supervisor investigates the incident and documents their findings in the Use of Force electronic FLUP. The completed FLUP is forwarded through the District/Division chain of command for review and approval. Any potential policy violations result in an Internal Incident Report, prompting an administrative investigation. If no policy violations are identified, the FLUP is closed with the District/Division Commander being the final reviewer. If there is a concern that an action was unauthorized or WSP procedures were not followed, the FLUP would proceed beyond the District/Division and OPS would complete a two-pronged review of the incident. Those FLUPs would be closed after the OPS Commander or Lieutenant completed a final review for concurrence. If the use of force involves death, substantial bodily harm, or great bodily harm, the WSP Criminal Investigation Division (CID) is notified. CID will then serve as the agency liaison with the Independent Investigation Team (IIT) or the Office of Independent Investigations (OII).

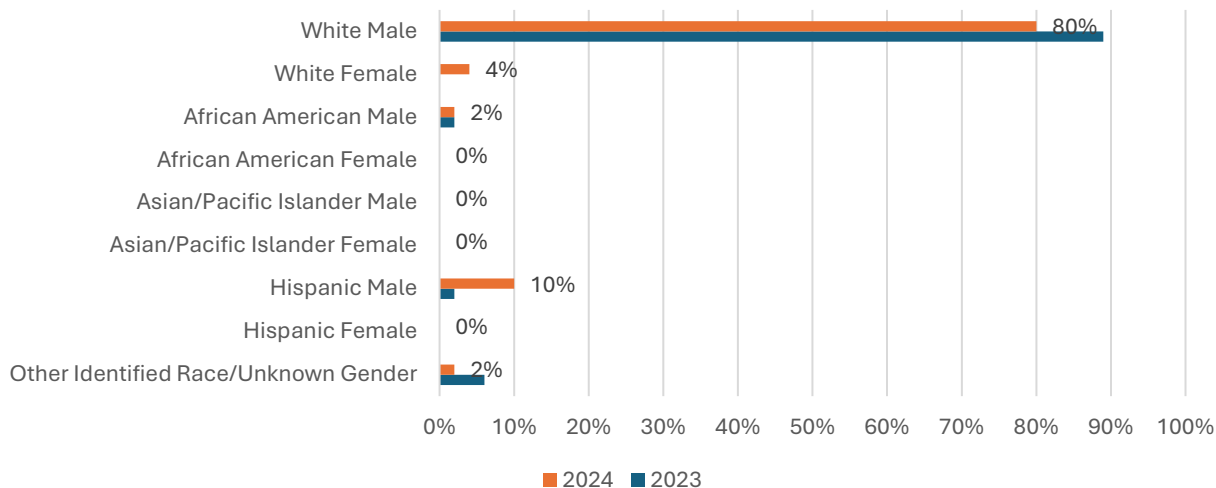
In 2024, WSP Troopers used force to gain compliance during 393 arrests, which is a 73% increase compared to 2023, when there were 227 arrests with a use of force, and is 69% above the average of 232 over the previous 5 years. Self-initiated contacts and calls for service accounted for 88% of these uses of force during an arrest which is a 3% increase from 2023.



## USE OF FORCE

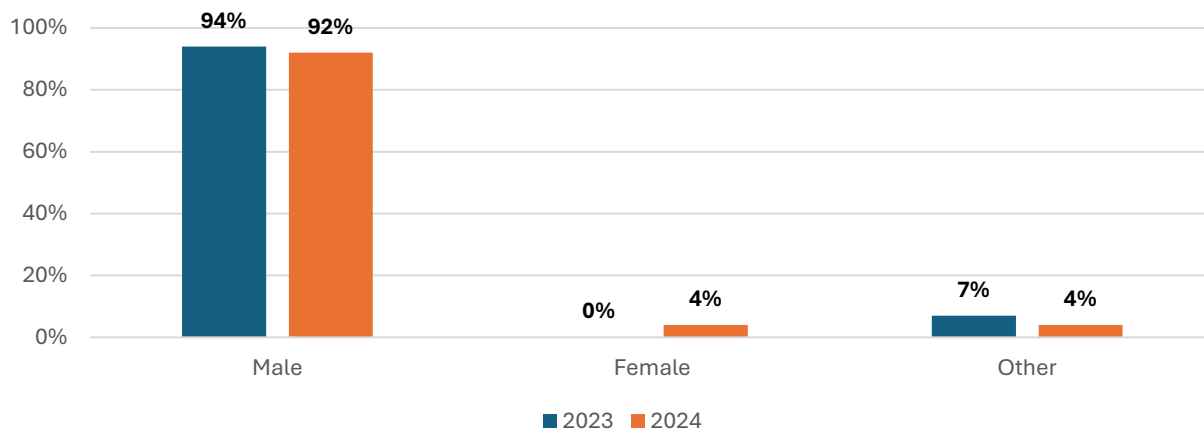
In 2024, 50 uses of force resulted in injuries to officers. White male officers accounted for 80% of these uses of force, White females 4%, Black males 2%, Hispanic males 10%, and 2% other identified race males. In 2024, the average age of an officer sustaining an injury was 32 years old versus 2023, where the average age was 33 years old. Based on previous 5-year trends, the average age and tenure of officers has trended downwards, which remained the trend in 2024.

### Officers Injured by Race



White male officers continue to be the front runner for injured personnel during uses of force in 2024, although the percentage did drop by 9% compared to the 2023 data. Hispanic males injured in uses of force increased by 8% from 2023, to 2024. Female officers injured during a use of force increased by 4% from 2023, to 2024. As diversity and equity in hiring increases, and inclusion efforts within the agency evolve, injuries to officers may become less skewed towards one demographic as we are slowly starting to see over the course of the last year.

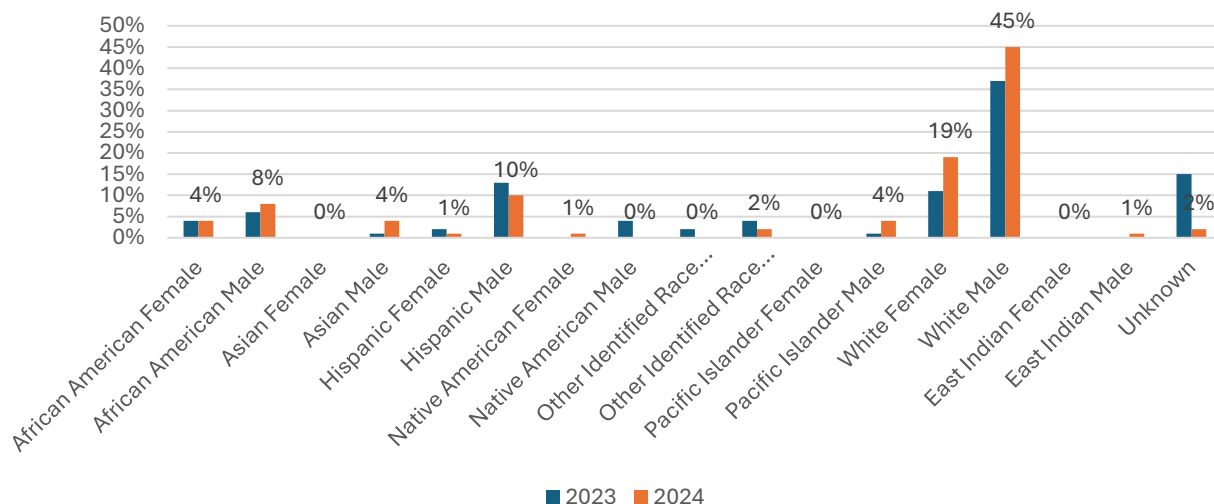
### Officers Injured by Gender



## USE OF FORCE

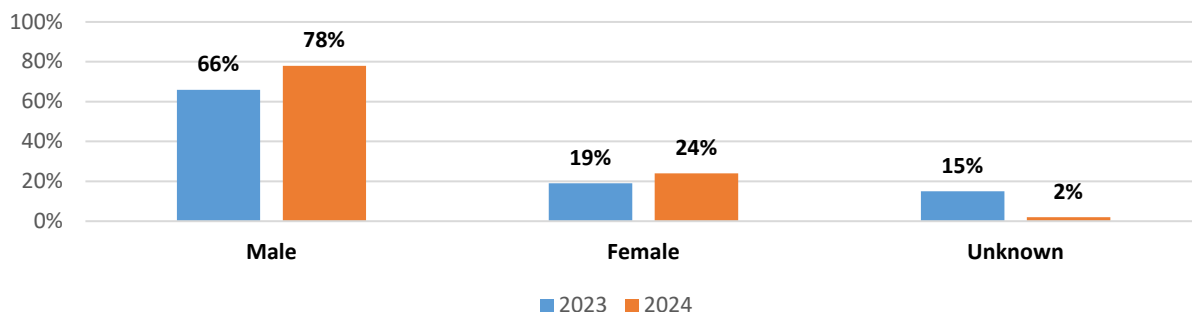
In 2024, the average age of subjects reporting an injury due to a use of force was 38 years old. This was a 3-year age increase versus the 2023 data, which showed the average age as 35 years old. This is counter to the previous five-year trend which showed continual decreases in subject's ages who were involved in uses of force.

### Race of Subjects Reporting an Injury



In 2024, the following trends were observed for subjects reporting an injury after a use of force incident in relation to 2023: African American males increased 2%, Asian males increased 3%, Hispanic Males decreased 3%, Hispanic females decreased 1%, Native American males decreased 4%, Native American females increased 1%, Pacific Islander males increased by 3%, White males increased 8%, White females increased 8%, East Indian males increased by 1% and Other Identified Race males and females decreased 2%. The percentage of unknown subject race decreased by 13%.

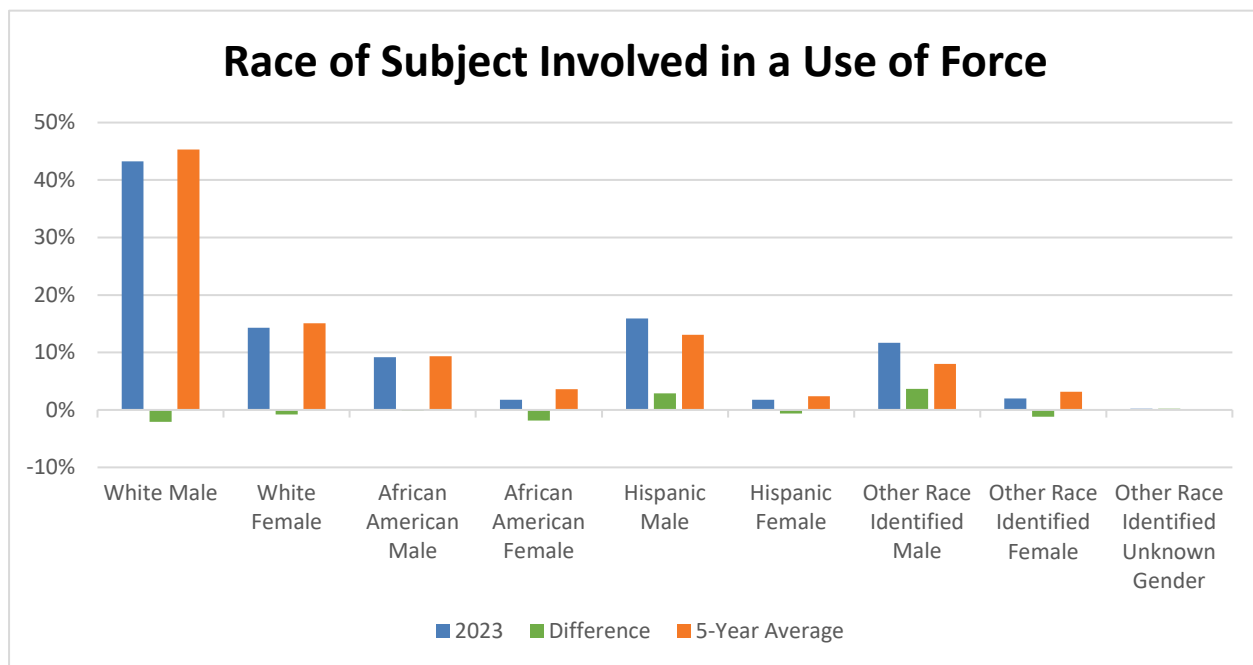
### Gender of Subjects Reporting Injury



During 2024, there was a 12% increase in males, a 5% increase in females, and a 13% decrease in unknown from 2023, regarding the gender of subjects reporting an injury during a use of force incident. Race and gender identification by subjects to the WSP is voluntary.



## USE OF FORCE



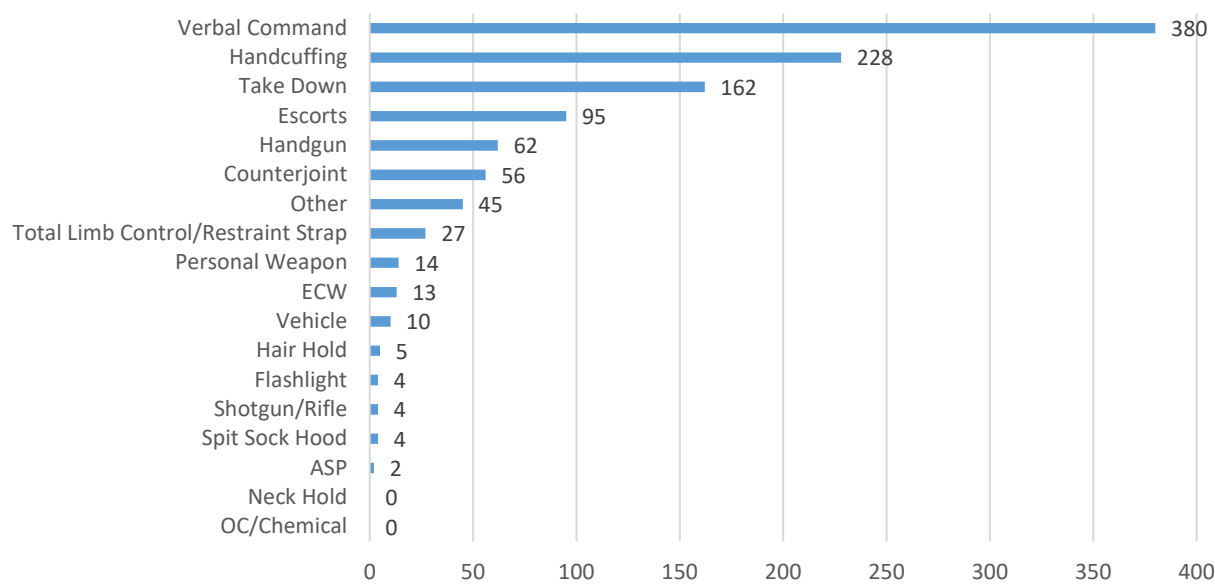
The graph above shows the data from 2023 along with the five-year trend data for the changes in the races of subjects who are involved in uses of force. \*Due to the vacancy of the OPS Data Consultant 1 position, the 2024 data for the report was not captured.



# USE OF FORCE

The 731 use of force tools deployed in 2024 is a 3% decrease compared to 2023 when there were 750 use of force tools deployed. Of the arrests with a use of force, 49% involved personal weapons, while 12% involved belt weapons. The remaining 39% is largely accounted for by handcuffing. Due to changes in policy, handgun uses of force increased from 6 in 2023 up to 62 in 2024. This is attributed to the change in policy where pointing a firearm is now a reportable use of force. In 2024, pointing a firearm accounted for 87% of the reportable handgun uses of force.

## 2024 Use of Force Tools Deployed



In 2024, the most commonly used methods of personal weapons applied were take downs, escorts, counterjoints, and total limb control.

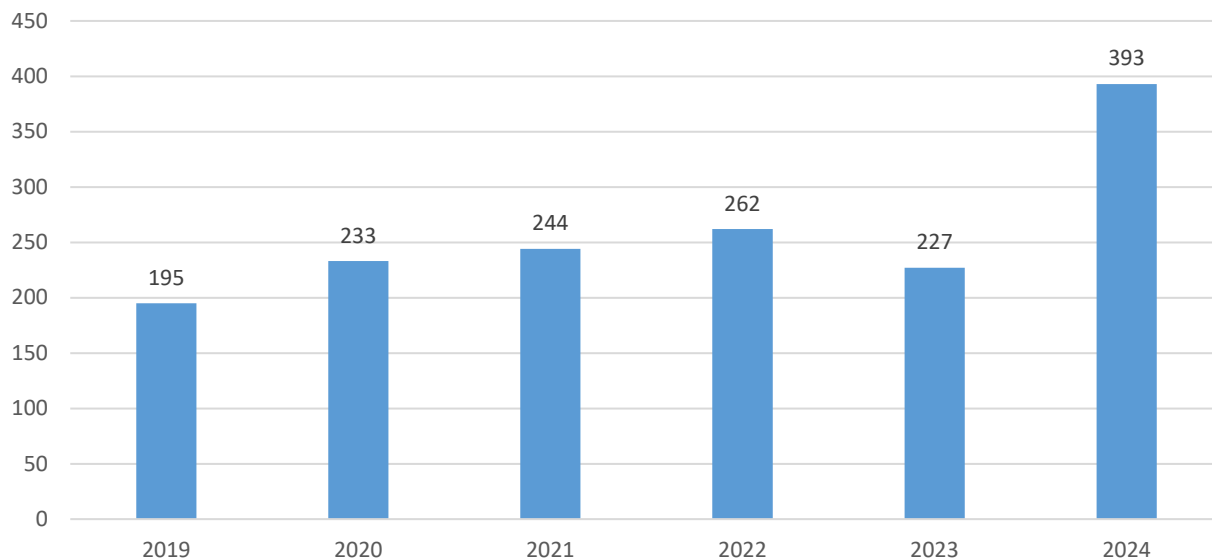
There were three incidents involving a total of three less lethal shotgun deployments in 2023. Two of the incidents occurred after troopers made contact with uncooperative subjects who refused to get out of a vehicle or advanced towards law enforcement after claiming to have a firearm. The third incident occurred during an allied agency assist with a subject experiencing mental health issues. The subject displayed a knife, would not comply with commands to drop the knife, and began advancing towards law enforcement with the knife in hand.



## USE OF FORCE

Commissioned officers participate in Crisis Intervention Training (CIT), which educates them on tools and resources available to them when responding to individuals experiencing emotional, mental, physical, behavioral, or chemical dependency crisis, distress, or other problems. CIT is designed to increase the safety of both law enforcement and individuals in crisis by helping officers identify individuals suffering from mental issues. The CIT training also helps officers identify appropriate de-escalation techniques. The WSP is nearing 100% compliance with the training requirement.

### Use of Force - Arrests

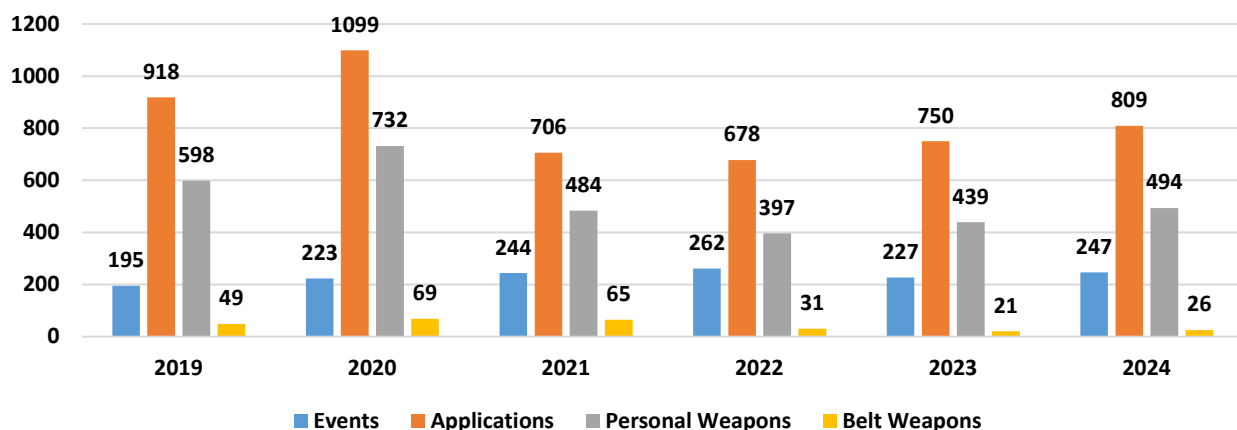


In 2024, UOF arrests were up 9% from 2023 and were up 6% from the 5-year average. One event may involve multiple officers and/or multiple uses of force, such as an electronic control weapon application, followed by joint manipulation and handcuffing. When multiple officers are involved, the actions of each officer and each use of force are reviewed for compliance with policy, procedure and training.



# USE OF FORCE

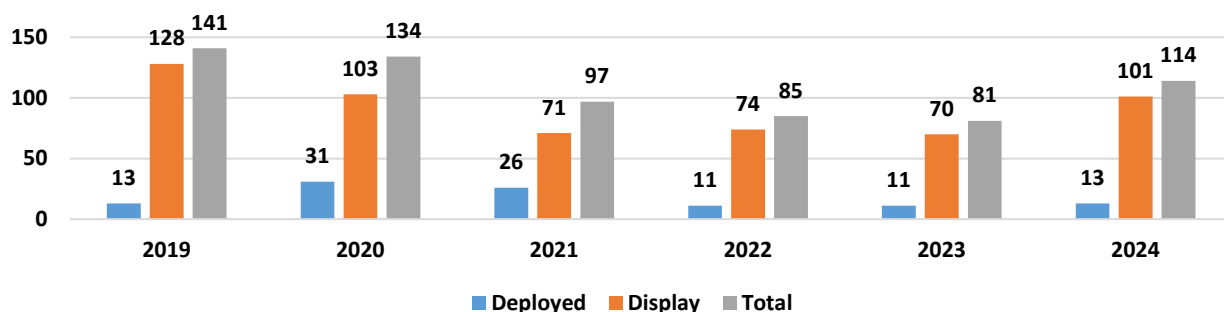
## Use of Force - Breakdown



Regarding the above graph, “Personal Weapons” applies to uses of force which do not involve the use of a belt weapon or tool, such as a counterjoint, take down, or a strike with a hand/fist or foot. This line also includes the use of handcuffs/restraints *only* when a complaint of injury is made by the subject. “Belt Weapons” accounts for the use of every other tool available to the officer, such as the ASP baton, electronic control weapon (ECW), flashlight, and OC-10.

In 2024, the most commonly used belt weapon was the ECW with 13 deployments. In 2024, ECW deployment increased by 18% compared to 2023, where there were 11 deployments. ECW display increased 44% in 2024 to 101 displays from the 70 recorded in 2023. ECW use, including display-only and deployment, had an average reported effectiveness of 2.1 on a scale from 1 to 5 for 2024, which is down nearly an entire point compared to the 5-year average reported effectiveness of 3.

## Electronic Control Weapons



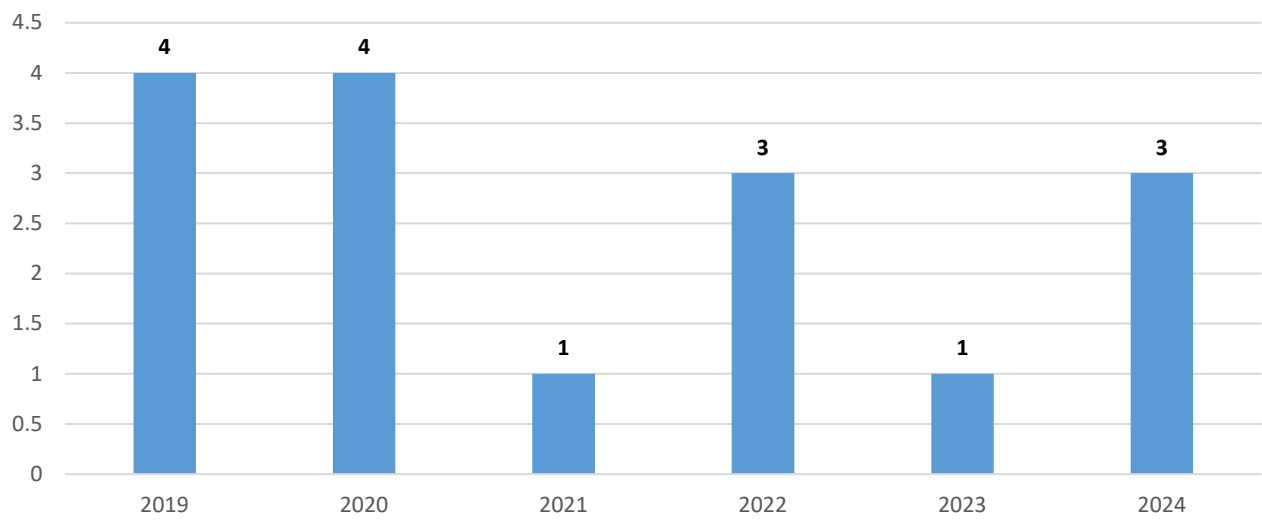
In 2024, there was one unauthorized use of the ECW. Unauthorized uses of force result in discipline, training with the employee, and a review of the training curriculum. Training emphasizes the importance of considering the totality of the circumstances, including the immediacy of the threat, the actions of the person against whom force is used, the actions of the officer, and the seriousness of the law enforcement purpose.



# UNINTENTIONAL DISCHARGE

When an officer discharges a firearm or less-lethal firearm, except for target practice, qualification shooting, sporting events, or ballistic examinations, the officer is required to notify their immediate supervisor. The supervisor initiates an investigation, notifying the WSP Criminal Investigation Division when the incident involves death, serious injury or there is a need for investigative expertise beyond the supervisor’s capabilities. All unintentional discharges result in retraining with the involved employee, and a review of the incident by the District/Division Commander, OPS, and the Training Division.

Unintentional Discharges



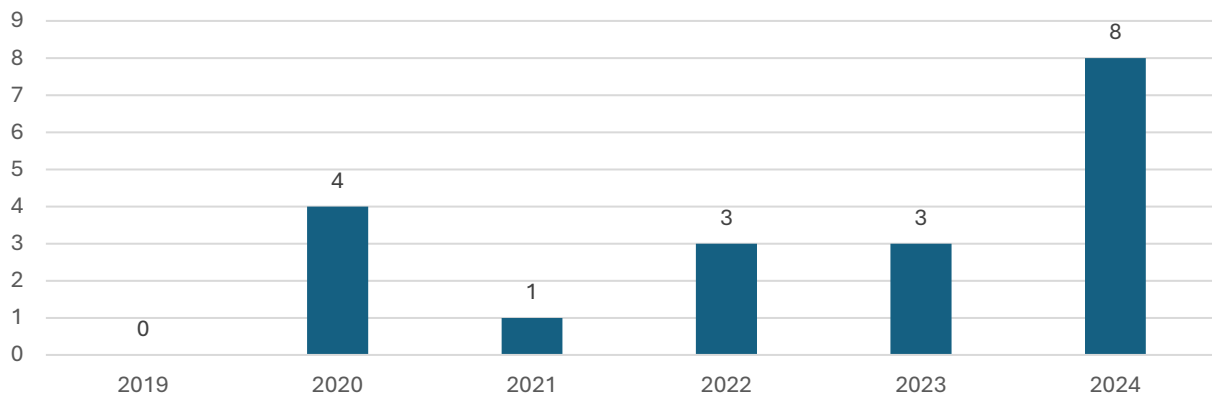
In 2024, three unintentional discharges of a firearm occurred, which is a 15% increase from the five-year average. All three unintentional discharges occurred while handling the less-lethal shotgun. One unintentional discharge occurred when an employee was attempting to conduct a functions check, another occurred while cleaning the weapon, and the third occurred at a range session when no live firing was supposed to be taking place.



# USE OF DEADLY FORCE

When an incident involves death, substantial bodily harm, or great bodily harm the WSP Criminal Investigation Division (CID) is notified. CID then serves as the agency liaison with the Independent Investigation Team (IIT) or the Office of Independent Investigations. In instances where an administrative investigation is required, it will not typically be initiated until the conclusion of the criminal investigation and receipt of a charging decline from the prosecutor.

## Use of Deadly Force - Firearm



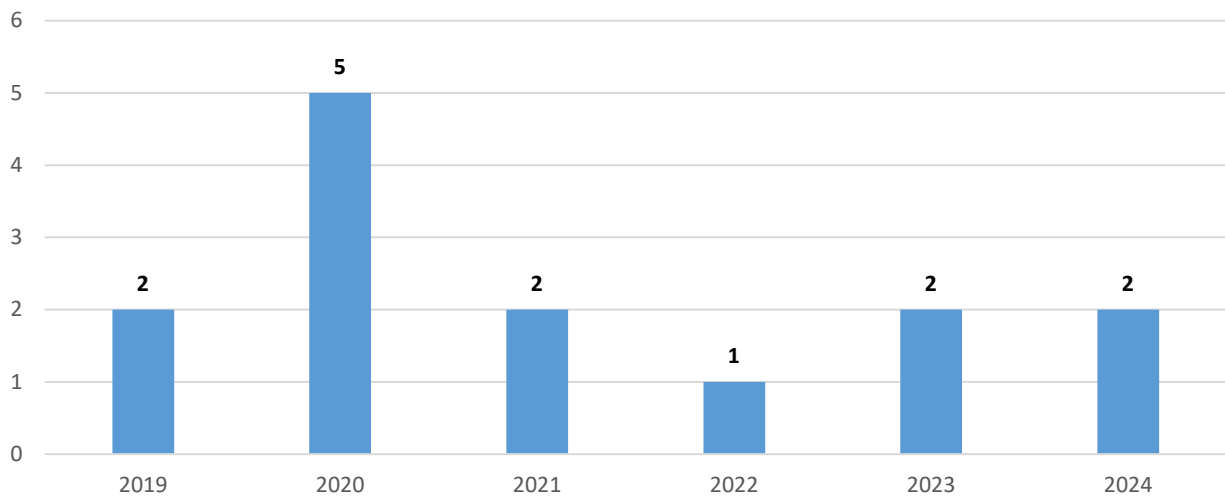
Over the previous five years, the WSP has averaged 2.2 deadly uses of force per year. Two of the incidents indicated above for 2024, occurred in 2023, and four in 2022, but all are captured in the 2024, data due to the date the cases were closed. Each of these uses of deadly force were determined to be justified following IIT and/or administrative reviews. Additional information can be found in the 2023 Annual Report.

In 2024, there were 3 uses of lethal force, all of which involved a firearm. 2 of those 3 are captured in the graph above, while 1 has not been captured in the graph as it is still under IIT investigation. The two incidents captured in the graph above are from a SWAT call. The suspect was barricaded in his garage with a hostage. Troopers, along with allied agency personnel engaged with the suspect in the garage and the suspect was fatally wounded. After IIT and prosecutor review, no charges or policy violations were filed against either trooper. The third incident, not captured above, involved a trooper who had responded to a shots fired call after the suspect opened fire on another officer who had tried to conduct a traffic stop on the suspect. The trooper engaged in utilizing his rifle to shoot at the suspect while driving as well as when the suspect stopped in a cul-de-sac at the end of a residential street. The suspect sustained fatal injuries and the incident is being investigated by an IIT.



# USE OF LETHAL FORCE

## Use of Force - Intentional Intervention



Intentional intervention (ramming) of a vehicle is the deliberate act of hitting another vehicle with a patrol vehicle(s) for the purpose of functionally damaging or forcing the other vehicle off the road. Intentional intervention is considered use of deadly force by our policy, and shall be used to effect an apprehension only as a last resort and only when the officer knows or has reasonable grounds to believe the occupant(s) has committed or is attempting to commit a crime that poses a threat of death or serious bodily injury.

There were two intentional interventions in 2024. One involved a wrong way driver on a state route and was determined to be authorized with no injuries reported. The other incident involved a motorcycle which had been driving recklessly and attempted to flee a traffic stop. The incident resulted in a severe injury for the motorcycle rider and no injuries for the involved WSP employee. An IIT conducted an investigation, and no criminal charges were filed. After WSP review of the incident, the use of force was found to be unauthorized and there was an adverse finding, with suspension, following the administrative investigation.

Over the last 5 years, the WSP has averaged 2.4 intentional interventions per year.

The WSP will continue to track, monitor, and analyze use of force reports to address violations of policy, improve training, and identify trends to protect the public and our employees.

(CALEA 4.2.1, 4.2.2 and 4.2.4)



# PURSUIITS

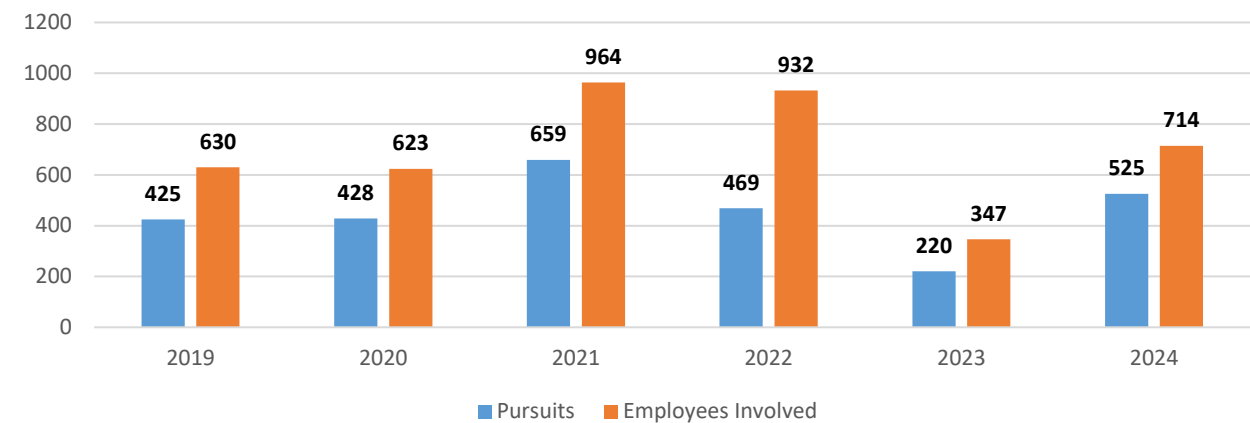
After a pursuit or an application of a Pursuit Immobilization Technique (PIT), to include roadblocks or forcible stops, department policy mandates that a supervisor conduct a thorough review to determine compliance with policy and training. If the pursuit/PIT results in a collision, a supervisor shall respond. If the collision involves moderate to severe injury, a supervisor shall request a Criminal Investigation Division response to help assist with the collision investigation.

In those instances where a pursuit/PIT crosses District boundaries, a determination shall be made by the respective District Commanders whether joint reporting or single District reporting will occur. In the case of allied agency involvement, a determination will be made by the District Commander, in consultation with the OPS Commander, to determine the proper reporting procedure.

If the investigation reveals there is no policy violation, the supervisor then completes the Pursuit FLUP and a supervisor case log. The FLUP is forwarded through the chain of command to the District/Division Commander for review and final approval.

OPS staff reviews all FLUPs where a District/Division Commander has concern that the Pursuit was unauthorized or that WSP procedures were not followed. OPS reviews the pursuit FLUP to ensure they are complete and works with the appropriate District/Division to satisfy any discrepancies found. The final review is then completed by the OPS Commander to ensure concurrence with the Appointing Authority’s findings.

Pursuits



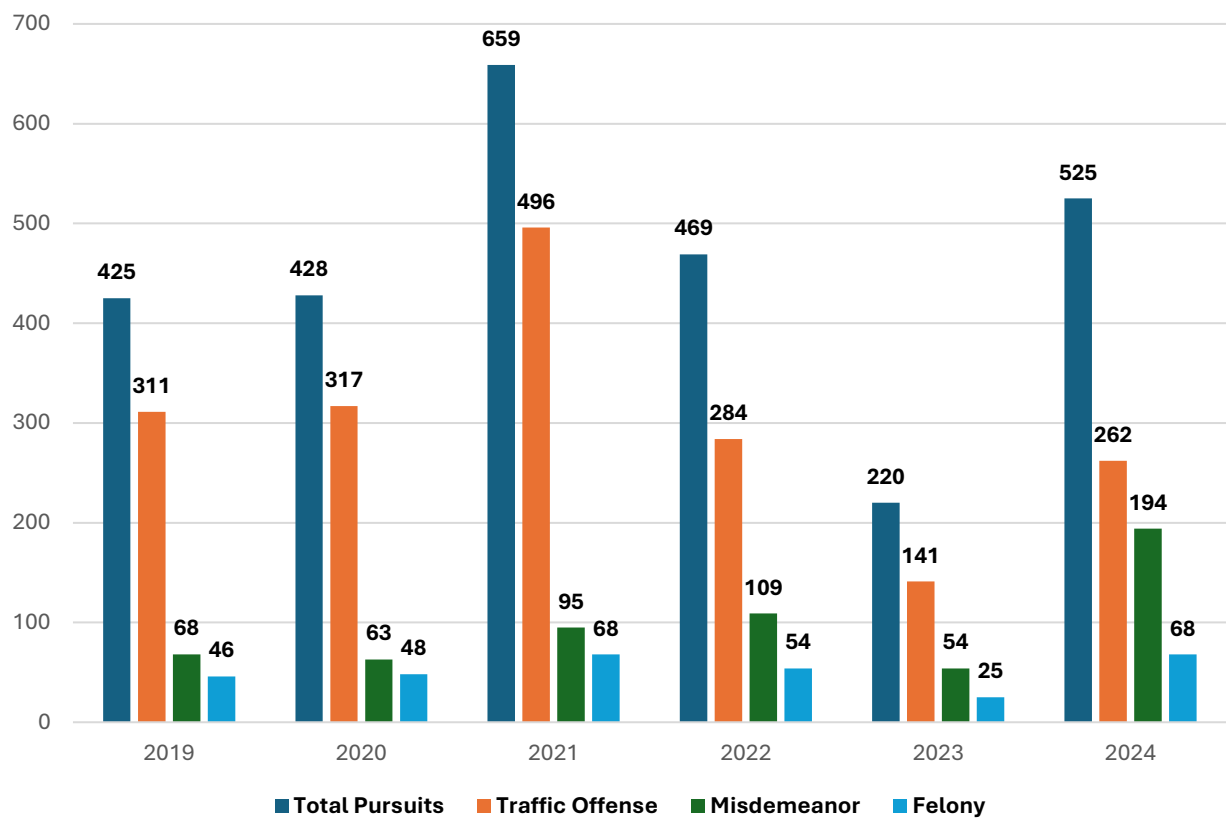
In 2024, 714 officers were involved in 525 total pursuits, which is a 2% increase from the five-year average. There were four unauthorized pursuits in 2024, which is up from an average of 2.4 unauthorized pursuits per year over the previous five years.



# PURSUIITS

In 2024 there were 42 pursuits that were authorized where procedures were not followed. This is a decrease of 5% from 2023 where 44 pursuits were authorized, but procedures were not followed. During the review process, Appointing Authorities may determine specific procedures were not followed, even if the pursuit was authorized. Examples of this include improper driving protocols, inconsistent utilization of emergency equipment, or inadequate communications. Upon these findings, employees are provided with additional training.

## Reason For Pursuit



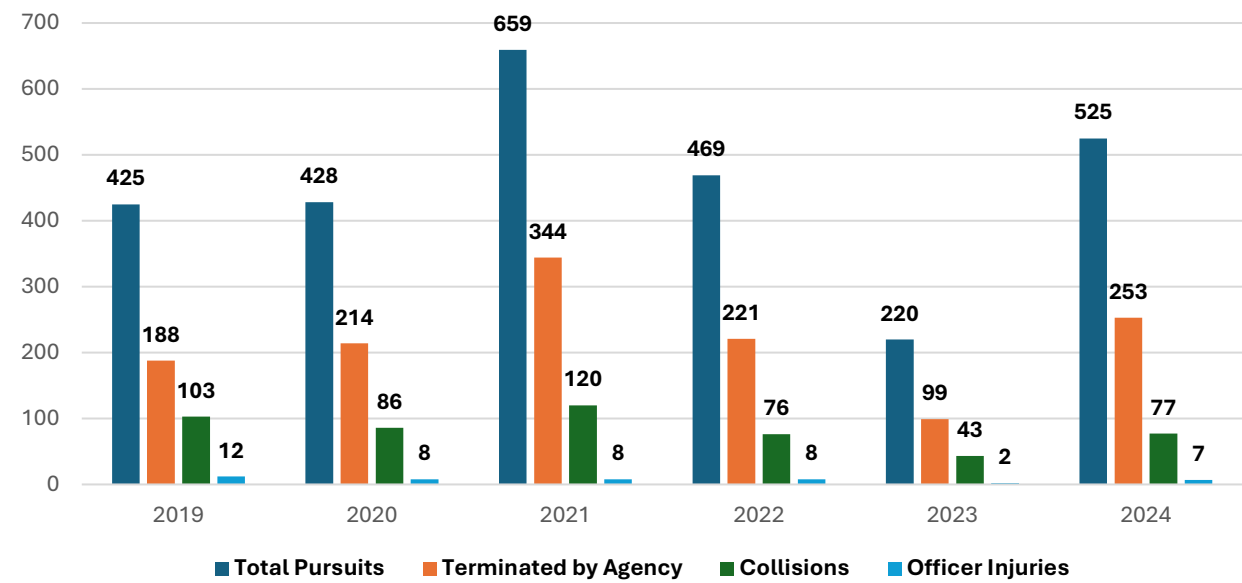
In 2024, the average pursuit lasted approximately 13.69 minutes which is an increase of 82% from 7.51 minutes in 2023

Traffic offenses continued to be the primary reason for initiating a pursuit. Misdemeanor crimes were the second highest reason a pursuit was initiated, followed by felonious crimes. This remains consistent with trends from the previous five years for each offense category. Stolen vehicles were involved in 35 of the pursuits during 2024, which was a 350% increase from 2023.



PURSUIITS

Pursuit Outcomes



Pursuits involving a collision in 2024 decreased by 11% compared to the 5-year average. The number of suspects apprehended at the conclusion of the pursuit decreased 6% compared to 2023. In 2024, 48% of all pursuits were terminated by the agency, which matched the 5-year average and represented a 3% increase from 2023.

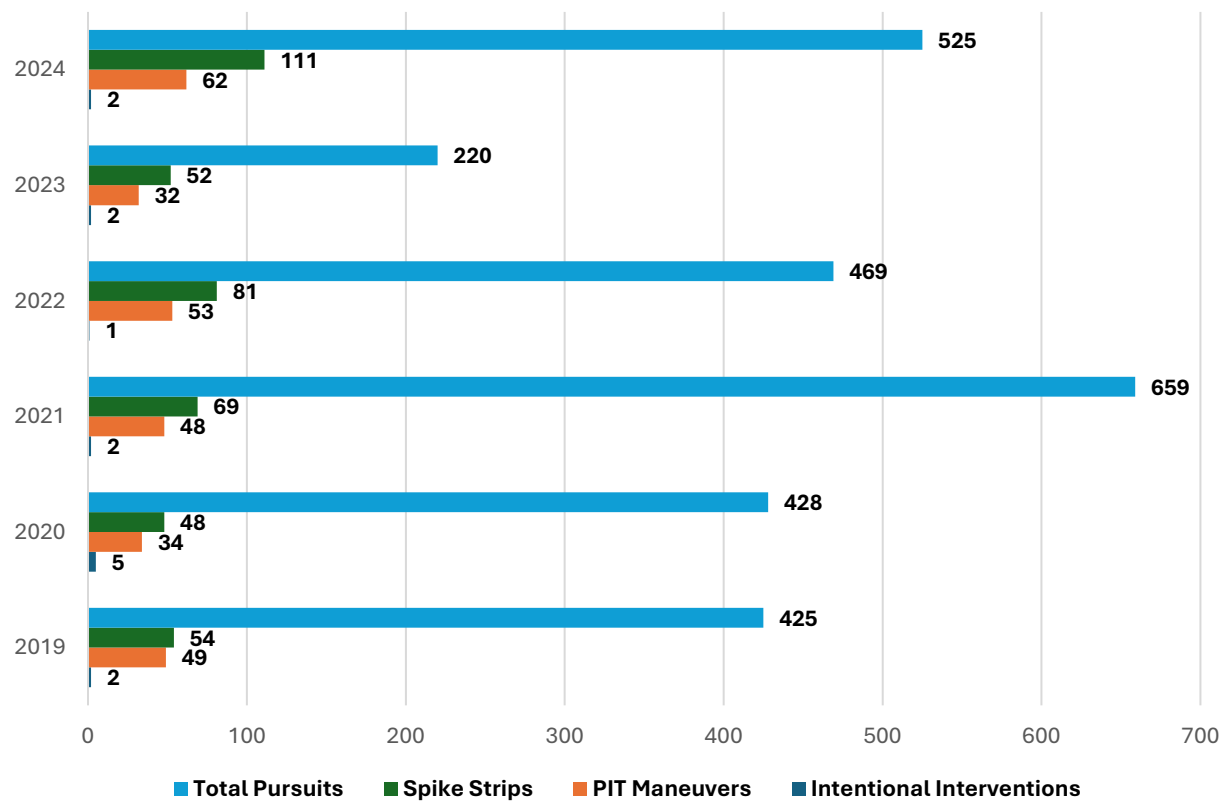
The number of pursuits resulting in officer injuries increased from 2 in 2023 to 7 in 2024. Officers sustained 22% of the total number of injuries with 69% of the injuries identified for the suspects and 9% for third parties.



# PURSUIITS

In 2024, the WSP authorized four methods of a forcible stop: intentional intervention, roadblocks, hollow spike strips, and the Pursuit Immobilization Technique (PIT). Hollow spike strips continued to be the most utilized method of forcible stop used in 2024. Spike strip use increased 83% compared to the average of the previous five years. PIT increased 44% when compared to the average of the previous five years. There were 2 intentional interventions in 2024, which was comparable to the five-year average of 2.4.

### Methods of Forcible Stopping



Officers continue to receive ongoing training regarding pursuits. A Job Performance Appraisal (JPA) Quiz is completed annually to review officers’ knowledge of applicable laws, policies, and procedures. Within the quiz are questions to gauge an officer’s knowledge and understanding of pursuit requirements.

(CALEA 41.2.3e , and 41.2.21)

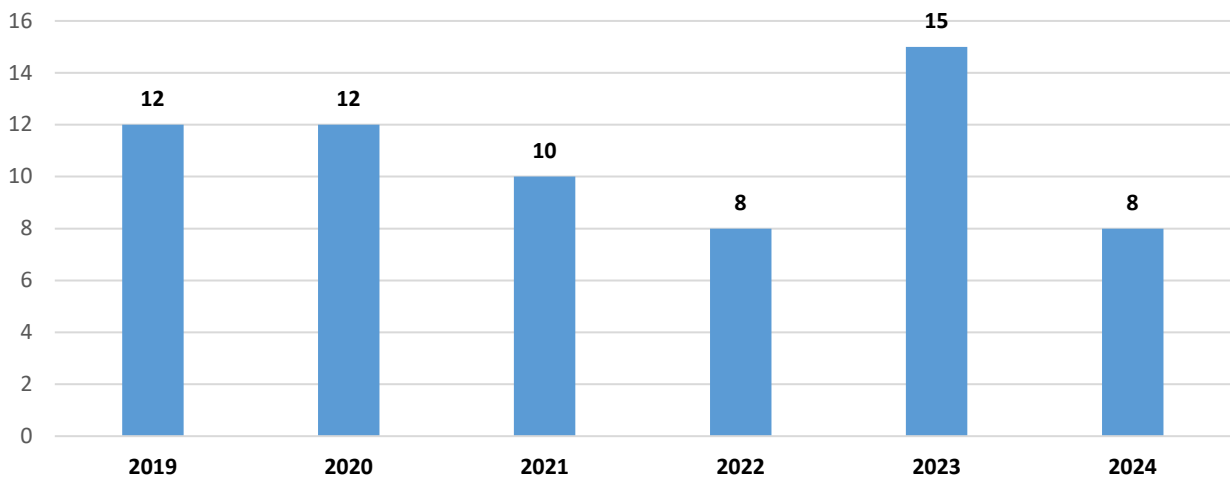


## BIASED BASED POLICING

The WSP is committed to reviewing and/or investigating all allegations of Biased Based Policing. OPS ensures appropriate corrective measures are taken when an investigation results in a proven finding. This process includes a comprehensive review of the completed investigation by the Appointing Authority and the OPS Commander.

WSP Regulation 8.00.260 Unbiased Policing references biased based profiling to initiate traffic stops and other field contacts. WSP Regulations 8.00.250 Code of Ethics – Officers (C) Performance of the Duties of an Officer and 8.00.240 Code of Ethics – Employees (B) Performance of the Duties reference biased based policing after the initial stop and/or during a field contact. The WSP began examining both regulations on the same level of review.

### Allegations of Biased Based Policing



In 2024, the WSP received 8 biased based policing allegations, which if proven true, would constitute a violation of policy. There were no proven findings of this policy in 2024.

Following is a summary of the allegations and the findings of administrative investigations involving 8.00.260 Unbiased Policing:

- *It is alleged Trooper stopped the complainant due to their race. – Rejected following a preliminary investigation.*
- *It is alleged Trooper took enforcement action based on the race of an individual. – Rejected following a review of the contact.*
- *It is alleged Trooper wrongfully arrested the complainant for DUI. It is further alleged the trooper was bias in his determination of impairment.*



## BIASED BASED POLICING

- *It is alleged that Trooper racially profiled the complainant and stopped her solely based on her race. – Rejected following a review of the contact.*
- *It is alleged Trooper arrested the complainant due to his race. It is further alleged Trooper was rude and/or disrespectful during her contact with the complainant. – Unfounded following an internal investigation.*
- *It is alleged Trooper stopped the complainant due to their race. – Rejected following a review of the contact.*
- *It is alleged Trooper stopped the complainant due to his race. It is also alleged the trooper violated the complainant's right of free speech. It is also alleged the trooper was unprofessional in his behavior and/or threatening in his tone towards the complainant. – Rejected following a review of the contact.*
- *It is alleged Trooper arrested the complainant for driving while under the influence due to her race. – Rejected following a review of the contact.*



## BIASED BASED POLICING

In 2024, the WSP received 6 Code of Ethics - Officers (C) Performance of the Duties of an Officer allegations, which if proven true, would constitute a violation of policy. An active investigation including an allegation of Code of Ethics – Officer (C ) Performance of the Duties of an Officer from 2023, was also completed and closed in 2024. There was 1 proven finding of this policy in 2024, which was a result of the 2023 investigation.

Following is a summary of the allegations and the findings of administrative investigations involving 8.00.250 Code of Ethics – Officers (C) Performance of the Duties of an Officer:

- *It is alleged Sergeant failed to remain impartial and/or acted in an inappropriate manner following a collision involving a trooper he supervised. It is further alleged Sergeant made inappropriate and/or willfully disrespectful statements regarding WSP personnel. – Proven finding following an administrative investigation with discipline being demotion\*.*

*\*This was the case initiated in 2023 and completed in 2024. The employee retired prior to the completion of the case. The case was ultimately completed and the contemplated discipline for the case was demotion.*

- *It is alleged Trooper treated the complainant differently and/or conducted his investigation in a biased manner due to the complainant's race. – Rejected following a preliminary investigation.*
- *It is alleged Trooper treated the complainant differently during a collision investigation due to her ethnicity. – Rejected following a review of the contact.*
- *It is alleged the sergeant's inaction in initiating a report was due to the complainant's disability. – Rejected following a review of the contact.*
- *It is alleged that Trooper issued an infraction based solely on the race of a violator. – Rejected following a review of the contact.*
- *It is alleged Trooper acted in a harassing manner towards 24 Hour Roadside Assistance due to the race of an owner of the company. It is further alleged Trooper received money in exchange for filing false complaints against the company. – Unfounded following a review of the contact.*
- *It is alleged Trooper arrested the complainant for driving while under the influence due to her race. – Rejected following a review of the contact.*

In 2024, the WSP did not receive any allegations which, if proven true, would constitute a violation of 8.00.250 Code of Ethics - Officer (C) Performance of Duties of an Officer involving an asset forfeiture.

In 2024, the WSP did not receive any allegations which, if proven true, would constitute a violation of 8.00.240 Code of Ethics - Employees (B) Performance of the Duties.

(CALEA 1.2.9 c)



# EARLY IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM

In the course of one's career, an employee may experience situations which impact their performance, attendance, or conduct. The Washington State Patrol is committed to helping employees prevent or resolve problems to promote employee wellness, which contributes to the resilience of the officer, agency, and the communities we serve.

The Office of Professional Standards (OPS) provides oversight of the agency's Early Identification System (EIS), which is designed to detect and address "out-of-the-ordinary" patterns of behavior or performance issues at the earliest stage. EIS seeks to correct issues through non-punitive and timely intervention, emphasizing training and reaffirmation of agency regulations. It is a tool for supervisors and managers to address problems and render tailored assistance to the employee to correct unacceptable behavior. The following are primary elements considered for early identification:

- Misconduct
- Unauthorized Use of Force
- Unauthorized Pursuits
- Serious collisions or a pattern of vehicle incidents/collisions

When an employee is identified as a candidate for EIS, their commander will personally meet with the employee to discuss concerns. The commander then prepares an IOC outlining the results of the discussion, the employee's response to the concerns shared, and the recommended course of action. Any action taken is communicated with OPS and included in the employee's file.

An OPS History lists all proven policy violations registered against an employee, showing the date, allegation, finding, and sanction imposed. When new findings are entered into the OPS database, an Early Identification notice is generated if any of the below occurred over the previous twelve months;

- Two proven or undetermined complaints
- Two unauthorized uses of force
- Two unauthorized pursuits
- Two chargeable collisions, incidents, or lost/damaged equipment

OPS can generate a report showing all employee interventions upon request.



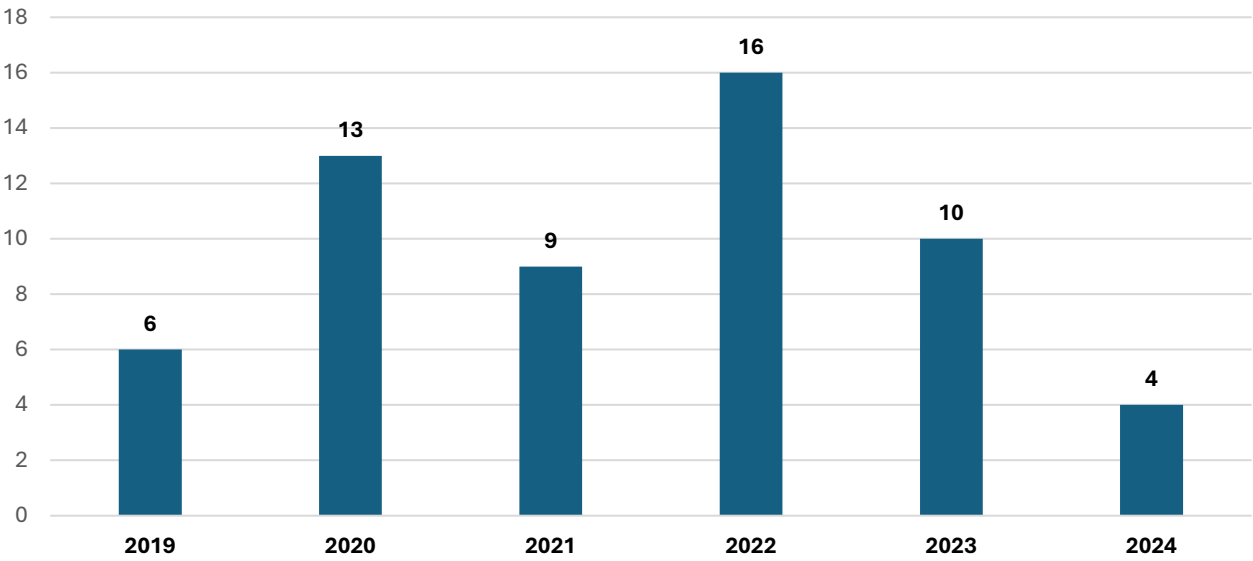
# EARLY IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM

In 2024, the Early Identification System was utilized for 4 employees through notices to commanders for follow-up and referral. Of the 4 employees identified: 1 was commissioned male, 1 was commissioned female, 1 was civil service female, and 1 was civil service male.

3 of the 4 early intervention behaviors were fleet incidents relating to vehicle operation. In each of these cases, the involved employees were counseled and received written reprimands. 2 of the 3 completed training with a driving instructor. 1 of the 4 early interventions resulted from a loss of equipment.

(CALEA 35.1.9)

Early Identification - 5 Year Trend



# CHANGES TO ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW PROCESS/POLICIES

The agency conducts a Strategic Advancement Forum (SAF) on a quarterly basis. This is a public forum where Commanders present their efforts and activities supporting the WSP Strategic Plan. The SAF elicits input from all Commanders, Assistant Chiefs, Bureau Directors, and the Chief while providing an opportunity to identify process improvements, training needs, and policy/regulation changes. Some of the topics OPS presented during SAF in 2024 included:

- 2023 Annual Report Review / Debrief
- FLUP Process Change / Improvement
- Upcoming transition from current Remedy case tracking to a new AXON Standards Records Management System
- FLUP Audit Process
- Converting the Administrative Investigation Manual (AIM) to a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) format
- Strategic objectives and goals
- The OPS cross-training program

OPS is committed to providing strong leadership and resources to foster a safe, ethical, innovative, knowledgeable, and diverse workforce. Continual analysis of agency practices is a direct reflection of this commitment. OPS completes an annual review of our investigative processes involving citizen complaints, biased based policing, fleet incidents, uses of force, pursuits/PITs, and lost or damaged equipment.

The WSP's investigative process is outlined in the Administrative Investigation Manual (AIM). The AIM is currently being reviewed and will be converted to a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) format.



# CHANGES TO ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW PROCESS/POLICIES

Throughout each year OPS reviews regulations in order to comply with emerging case laws, reconcile inconsistent practices, or address newly identified patterns of misconduct. During 2024, OPS reviewed, and when appropriate, recommended updates to the following agency regulations:

- 6.01.065 Disclosures to Prosecuting Attorneys and Judiciary
- 8.00.070 Use of Alcohol or Drugs
- 8.00.150 Truthfulness
- 8.00.160 Court Case Disposition – Recommendation
- 8.00.250 Code of Ethics – Officers
- 11.24.010 Search of Department Property
- 18.00.010 Care, Use, and Exchange of Equipment or Property
- 18.00.060 Loss or Damage of Department Property and Equipment

OPS conducts bi-weekly briefings with the Executive Staff (Assistant Chiefs, Bureau Directors, Labor and Policy Advisor, and the Human Resource Commander) on all complaints being investigated by OPS, and cases involving potential impeachment and/or peace officer certification material. These briefings are designed to provide a forum for agency executives to receive a case status report, discuss the investigation, and address procedural issues, training needs, risk mitigation, and discipline.

(CALEA 1.2.9d and 26.2.5)



## CLOSING

A relationship of trust and confidence between law enforcement and the communities we serve is essential. OPS will continue to strive to meet the public's expectations for accountability and transparency by conducting fair and impartial administrative investigations. We will also continue to collaborate with Districts and Divisions to facilitate informed decisions throughout the administrative investigation process and provide follow-up to mitigate future occurrences.



# APPENDIX

## Appointing Authority

Designated by the Chief, the person given the authority to review and adjudicate administrative investigations and take disciplinary action on employees.

## Complaints

Complaints involve reports of alleged employee misconduct that violates WSP regulations. Examples might include a citizen's courtesy complaint or an employee's insubordination to a supervisor. These complaints do not include fleet (incident/collisions), loss/damage of equipment, use of force, pursuits, or discrimination and harassment.

\*When evaluating a complaint, the Appointing Authority may reject the complaint.

**Rejected:** After review of the complaint, the Appointing Authority concluded that either no factual information of a policy violation exists, or the allegation does not constitute a complaint.

Investigations of **Complaints** can result in one of six findings:

- **Proven:** There exists, by a preponderance of the evidence, sufficient proof to find the accused employee committed the violation
- **Undetermined:** There is insufficient evidence to provide or disprove the allegation
- **Unfounded:** There exists sufficient evidence to conclude that the accused employee did not commit the allegation.
- **Exonerated:** There is sufficient evidence to find that the accused employee committed the act they were accused of, but that the employee's actions were consistent with policy and training.
- **Unintentional Error:** This would be a Minor allegation where there is sufficient evidence to support the claim, as well as equal evidence which shows the act was purely inadvertent.
- **Departmental Error:** The investigation indicates the complaint is against the actions of an employee who was following agency policy or procedures which were in error. The employee was in compliance with those policies or procedures and is therefore not personally at fault. As a result, the error in policy would have to be corrected.

## Fleet (Incidents/Collisions)

Fleet investigations occur when an agency vehicle is damaged as a result of an incident or collision. Findings are either *policy violation*, fault of the employee; or *no policy violation*, not the fault of the employee

*Incident – damage done to an agency vehicle by natural disaster; damage by road hazard, non-collision push bar damage (either vehicle), prisoners, non-collision dents/scratches by a known or unknown source, vandalism.*

## Loss/Damage to Equipment

Similar to fleet investigations, the findings under loss of equipment are either *policy violation* or *no policy violation*.



# APPENDIX

## Pursuits

As defined by the WSP Regulation Manual: An attempt by a uniformed (commissioned officer) in an officially marked patrol vehicle to stop a moving vehicle where the driver of such vehicle...is resisting to stop. Pursuits are found to be either *authorized* or *unauthorized*.

## Settlement Agreements

This is an efficiency tool that streamlines the agency's administrative process; often allowing an accused employee to acknowledge their mistake(s) early on and work toward an appropriate and agreed upon discipline.

## Standards Officer

The OPS Commander is the OPS Captain and who has oversight authority on all administrative investigations.

## Use of Force

As defined by the WSP Regulation Manual: Power dynamically considered, that is, in motion or in action; constraining power, compulsion; strength directed at an end. Force may be applied through the use of a person's body, weapons, equipment, and/or other instruments. For the purpose of this policy, use of force includes but is not limited to physical force. Use of force cases are found to be either *authorized* or *unauthorized*.

## Physical Force

As defined by the WSP Regulation Manual: Any act reasonably likely to cause physical pain or injury or any other act exerted upon a person's body to compel, control, constrain, or restrain the person's movement. "Physical force" does not include pat-downs, incidental touching, verbal commands, or compliant handcuffing where there is no physical pain or injury.

