

Police Department
City of Keene, New Hampshire

Date: January 24, 2019

To: Steven Russo – Police Chief *SR-140*

Through: Steven Stewart – Captain *SS #156*

Through: Todd Lawrence - Captain *TL #127*

From: Steven Tenney Jr. - Lieutenant *ST #142*

Subject: Annual Vehicle Operation Report, CY-2018

SECTION I - PURSUITS:

This section contains data compiled from Pursuit Reports (KPD Form 41-2) covering the time period as noted above, completed in accordance with Department Pursuit Policy 4104E, Section IX, Post Pursuit Actions.

Number of Pursuits:

Between the time period of January 2018 through December 2018, Keene Police Officers were involved in six pursuits. This is one more pursuit than was reported in CY 2017. Again this year, all of the reported pursuits were initiated by Keene Police officers and there were no pursuits that originated in other jurisdictions that entered the city.

Suspect vehicles of CY 2018 consisted of; 3 – motorcycles and 3 – passenger vehicles

Initial Contact/Terminated:

The reason/circumstances and how they were terminated for each pursuit vary; therefore they will be broken down individually for better clarity.

April 13th – An officer tried to stop a motorcycle for a speeding and misuse of power violation on Route 101 as it entered town from Marlborough. The motorcycle attempted to flee and the officer pursued it. The pursuit traveled Rt. 101 and then onto Winchester Street. As it went to Winchester Street, the initiating officer reported that they lost sight of the motorcycle. Another officer was on West Street when the officer lost sight of the motorcycle and observed it turning onto West Street from Island Street.

The second officer fell in behind the motorcycle and it continued to flee on West Street to Ashuelot Street. The motorcycle failed to negotiate the turn onto Ashuelot Street and went down to the ground. The driver immediately stood up and submitted to arrest by placing his hands in the air.

April 20th – Officers were sent to a suspicious vehicle behind the Aubuchon store on Brooklyn Way. Upon the first officer's arrival, they recognized the driver sleeping in the car and knew that there was a warrant for him. Upon making contact, the driver started the vehicle and drove off from the officer. Responding back up officers were able to fall in behind the vehicle and followed it as it looped the back lot and became blocked as it turned into a parking spot. The officers were then able to take the driver into custody without incident.

June 1st – An officer stopped a vehicle for speeding on Lower Main Street near Silent way. When the officer approached the car, the driver sped off and accelerated away from the officer. The officer pursued the vehicle onto Route 101 and then to Route 12 north. Ultimately the vehicle lost control on Route 12 in the area of Forge Street and went off the roadway into the woods. The driver then fled on foot from the scene. A subsequent search and K9 track yielded negative results in locating the driver.

August 21st – An officer was patrolling on Maple Ave when he observed an on/off road motorcycle speeding. Upon trying to stop the motorcycle, it accelerated and attempted to elude him by turning onto American Ave. The officer pursued the motorcycle onto Kennedy Drive and then Old Walpole Road. The motorcycle continued on Old Walpole Road into the town of Surry. The officer was able to pursue it until it turned onto Farm Road in Surry and then onto some off road trails. The motorcycle was later intercepted on London Road in Westmoreland by a KPD officer who had deployed there as a perimeter officer. The driver was taken into custody without incident.

August 31st – An officer was assisting with a hit and run accident complaint when he was given a BOLO for the suspect motorcycle. The officer located the motorcycle in the area of Marlboro Street and followed it onto Grove Street. When the officer attempted to initiate a stop of the motorcycle, it fled. The vehicle went to Water Street, Main Street and then onto Dunbar Street. When turning onto Dunbar Street, the motorcycle lost control and went to the ground. The operator was able to recover the motorcycle and fled again down Dunbar Street. The motorcycle then tried to negotiate the turn onto Crossfield Street it again failed and the motorcycle went to the ground. The driver then attempted to flee on foot when he was apprehended by the pursuing officer.

October 26th – Members of KPD Investigations were conducting a drug investigation when they solicited the help of the on duty patrol officers to stop a vehicle as it entered the city. It was known the type of vehicle and that the driver was currently suspended and operating as a habitual offender. Officers were positioned in different areas in an attempt to locate the vehicle as it entered the city. When this occurred, the sole KPD officer waited until other units were with him before he initiated a stop of the vehicle. When he did, the vehicle began to flee up Washington Street, to Route 9 where the driver of the vehicle extinguished his headlights. The vehicle then traveled up Route 12 north and against traffic on the on-ramp from Maple Ave. As the vehicle turned onto Maple Ave, it entered the parking lot of the Trinity Church and then proceeded back onto Maple Ave to Summit Road. The vehicle then traveled to the dead end of Summit Road where it then tried to negotiate a turn onto an uphill driveway. The vehicle failed to negotiate the turn and crashed into the woods. The driver was ultimately taken into custody after a short struggle.

Apprehension:

Of the six incidents reported above, the driver was arrested in all but one of the incidents. The one that was not arrested was the incident on June 1st when the driver fled on foot into the woods and was not located after a subsequent K9 search.

Number of Officers:

When we look at this piece of data, we're actually looking at two different items; number of officers actively involved in pursuing the offender, and the number of officers who assume tactical roles; such as the deployment of deflation devices. Our policy allows for two marked police units to be actively involved in the pursuit itself, but it allows any number of officers to assume peripheral roles in an attempt to help resolve it.

This year we find that five of the six incidents involved multiple officers who responded in support or perimeter roles that had a role in the successful termination of the pursuit(s). During the one pursuit that was reported to be a single officer event, I found that other officers were responding in support roles but due to the location of the pursuit, were not able to take an active role.

Annual review of our driving and pursuit policies remains effective in this area and officers are reacting and attempting to respond accordingly and effectively.

Distance:

The distances traveled during the six pursuits are approximate figures, and noted in miles as follows:

- 4.7 miles
- 0.1 mile
- 5.7 miles
- 6.0 miles
- 0.5 miles
- 6.0 miles

The average distance traveled was 3.83 miles. This is an increase from CY 2017 pursuits, which was 1.97 miles. The reason for the increase can be attributed to the location of the pursuits this year being primarily on highways as opposed to downtown/residential as in the previous year.

Speed:

Speeds being traveled during a pursuit are critical to their management and potential outcome.

In regards to safety and a deciding factor to terminate (or not), it would appear that speed was not a factor in any of this year's pursuits.

Weather/Pavement/Traffic:

In reviewing each incident reported in CY2018, it would appear that weather/pavement/traffic was not a factor in the eventual outcome in any of the incidents.

Other Data:

There remains no pattern as to where and when pursuits occur within our City; CY 2018 saw six incidents occur. Based on the low frequency of the pursuits and the varying times, and the unknown actions of individuals, it is not possible to predict or prevent a pursuit from occurring. Further, in reviewing the officer's reports and actions when deciding to stop the suspected vehicles, it appears that

they were using the appropriate techniques and decision making skills when deciding to initiate a stop or waiting for backup.

In all but one of the pursuits, the vehicles were committing common traffic violations and there was no known information at the time of the decision to stop that would cause the officer concern to wait for other units to stage or be in the area prior to making the stop. In the one case that the driver was known, the officers and shift supervisors took appropriate measures to attempt to avoid a pursuit from happening by positioning officers around the city. In this case, the driver took a route that was not covered due to staffing.

Policy Compliance:

All reported incidents in 2018 were within compliance of our General Order (GO 4104) Pursuits. Our policy remains effective in the safe conclusion of pursuit related incidents.

Decision Making:

It would appear that Officers are making good decisions relative to pursuits. Taking into consideration the environmental and traffic conditions, officers are continually evaluating the nature of the pursuits and making reasonable decisions concerning termination or continuation.

Pursuit Reporting:

It is currently the policy of the Keene Police Department that all pursuits shall be reported in an Offense or Arrest report and that no matter the length of the pursuit or was or how it was terminated, that a Pursuit Report (KPD form 41-2) be completed prior to the end of the officer's shift. These two methods have proven to be very effective in the collection of data and timeliness of the reporting.

Conclusions:

Officers are responding appropriately when faced with pursuit situations and are taking appropriate action as the circumstances may dictate. It can be reasonably concluded, that the established annual review of our pursuit policy is a reason why. The fact that the pursuit policy itself is drafted to a standard of reasonableness also plays a role.

In reviewing this year's reports and previous year's reports, it shows that officers are making sound decisions in regards to pursuits. It further shows that backup officers are deploying appropriately to assist in ensuring a successful resolution to a pursuit.

(Addendum A)

PURSUIT REPORT

Date:

Time Pursuit Reported:

Day of Week:

Location Where Pursuit Began:

Location Where Pursuit Ended:

Approximate distance traveled:

Initial Basis of Pursuit:

This report submitted by:

Road Conditions:

Pavement: ()Dry ()Wet ()Ice ()Snow

Traffic: ()Light ()Medium ()Heavy

Weather: ()Rain ()Snow ()Ice ()Fog ()Clear ()Cloudy

Call Number:

Offense Number, and/or:

Arrest Number, and/or:

Accident Number (if any):

Officer Initiating Pursuit:

On-Duty Supervisor:

Other Officers Involved in Pursuit:

Pursuit was terminated (check the most appropriate response)

- () At the discretion of the pursuing officer.
- () At the discretion of the supervisor.
- () When suspect vehicle stopped.
- () When pursuing officer lost sight of suspect vehicle.
- () Pursuit began and continued into another jurisdiction.
- () When suspect vehicle crashed.
- () When suspect vehicle ran over tire deflation device.
- () Other (explain)

Suspect Data (check the most appropriate response):

- () Suspect/Operator known to police when pursuit began.
- () Suspect/Operator unidentified.
- () Suspect developed not proven.
- () Investigation pending.
- () Suspect/Operator arrested at conclusion of pursuit.

If suspect was arrested list offenses charged.

List any damage to any vehicle or other property and any injury to any person that occurred as a result of this pursuit.

SECTION II – CRUISER ACCIDENTS:

This section contains data compiled from Keene Police Department collision reports (KPD Safety Report, commonly referred to G1's) involving police cruisers and unmarked police vehicles, covering the time period January 2018 through December 2018.

Number of Cruiser Involved Collisions:

Keene Police cruisers and unmarked vehicles were involved in eight collisions during CY 2018. This number is down from nine from CY2017. Furthermore all but one of the collisions were very minor in nature and did not require the city owned vehicle to be taken out of service.

This year showed that seven of the eight collisions involved marked cruisers and one collision involved a parking van that backed into their own garage door.

Actions Being Performed By Officers at Time of Collision:

1/4/18 – An officer was on uniformed patrol, stopped at a stop light when he was rear ended by another driver. Neither the officer or other driver were injured and there was no damage to either vehicle.

4/29/18 – An officer was attempting to turn his cruiser around to conduct a motor vehicle stop when he struck granite curbing. The tire had to be replaced.

5/16/18 – An officer was on patrol when he pulled off to the side of the roadway and struck a granite curb. As a result, the tire had to be replaced.

6/5/18 – An officer was pulling into the carport area behind the station. While doing so, he scraped the concrete pillar causing scratches to the left rear fender area.

6/22/18 – An officer was sitting stationary in the parking lot of Athens pizza when a woman backed out of a parking space and struck the parked cruiser. The cruiser sustained minor scrapes to the rear bumper area.

9/4/18 – An officer noted scrapes to the front bumper during his pre-shift cruiser inspection. The circumstances of how the scrapes were made are unknown and very minor in nature.

10/21/18 – An officer was responding code to an assault in progress call. While going through an intersection, another vehicle was also traveling through the intersection and the two vehicles collided. As the officer attempted to avoid the collision with the other vehicle, he also made contact with a fire hydrant. The cruiser sustained significant damage. The other vehicle was damaged but driven from the scene and the hydrant had to be repaired. No one was injured in this collision.

10/29/18 – A parking enforcement officer was backing a parking enforcement van out of the garage space at City Hall when they backed into the door, which had not completely opened. There was no damage to the van but the garage door required repairs.

Weather:

Weather did not have a factor in any of this year's reported incidents.

Policy Compliance

This year there was one noted violation of the General Order governing Operation of Police Vehicles (GO4103G). In this case, the officer was disciplined appropriately per this General Order. The other seven incidents were minor in nature and did not deviate from this General Order.

It is the policy of this Department to counsel or issue Letters of Guidance to Officers/Employees when they become involved in a preventable motor vehicle accident. This practice serves to reinforce accountability. By the same token, one must take a step back and balance the fact that Officers routinely spend much greater amount of time on the road and thus the odds of becoming involved in a collision, however minor in nature, increase greatly. To bring this more into perspective, I offer the following CY 2018 mileage figures for the Department’s fleet, as provided by the City’s fleet services division:

Total miles driven by all police department vehicles - 301,479 miles
Total miles driven by marked police cruisers only - 255,514 miles

SECTION III – CITIZEN COMPLAINTS

This section contains data compiled from citizen complaints pertaining to police vehicle operation, as articulated to the Department by telephone, correspondence, or third party.

Number and Nature of Complaints:

No complaints of driving or cruiser operation were fielded by the Keene Police Department for CY2018.

Methods of Reporting:

N/A

Location/Date/Time of Complaints:

N/A

Complaint Disposition:

N/A

Recommendations:

- Continue to post this annual document to the Department’s global information-sharing files for all officers to review and to the Department’s web page for viewing by all citizens.
- Periodic reminders, via roll call sessions, about the importance of driving safely and avoiding distractions. These reminders should include the importance of non-stress driving as well as emergency driving.
- In-house driving training utilizing our department’s driving instructors. We continue to have department wide driver training annually for all sworn members of the department. We continue to evaluate each accident and adjust the lesson plan of this annual training to adjust to the needs or issues seen during the previous years, as well as adjustments to state and national trends regarding operation of police vehicles. This year we will reinforce the General Order on code driving and the responsibilities that come with it.