

# ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

R. Scott Freeman, Ph.D.  
*Chief of Police*

Justin D. Gregory  
*Deputy Chief*

**DATE:** January 17, 2018  
**TO:** Justin D. Gregory  
Deputy Chief of Police  
**FROM:** Lt. Don Eckert  
**RE:** 2017 Pursuit Review

## A. Pursuit Review Overview

- A review and analysis of pursuits that took place during calendar year 2017 has been completed. A total of forty (40) pursuits were identified and reviewed. Six (6) third party vehicles were struck during pursuits. No road blocks were used. The average speed was sixty nine (69) mph; the highest speed was one hundred and four (104) mph; the slowest was thirty eight (38) mph.

## B. Pursuit Length

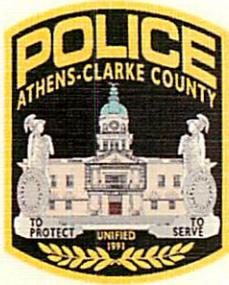
- The average pursuit lasted three (3.2) minutes; the longest was almost sixteen (15.8) minutes; the shortest was thirty (30) seconds.
- The average distance was two and half (2.5) miles; longest thirteen (13.6) miles; shortest 2/10 of a mile.

## C. Pursuit Termination

- Supervisors terminated five (5) pursuits: 17-03-0003, 17-03-0004, 17-05-1027, 17-09-1656, & 17-11-0894.
- Officers self-terminated five (5) pursuits: 17-02-0794, 17-08-1341, 17-11-0832, 11-1979, & 17-12-0152.
- Self-Terminated, but later crashed – one (1): 17-11-1979.
- Suspect injured – three (3): 17-10-0064, 17-11-0363, & 17-11-1979
- Stop stick deployment - five (5): 17-04-1295 (4 tires), 17-06-0085 (2 tires), 17-09-1656 (no effect), 17-10-0341 (1 tire), 17-10-0604 (2 tires).
- Suspect vehicle involved in collision – eleven (11) / 28%:
  - 17-05-1790 (struck citizen vehicle)
  - 17-08-0003 (ran off road)
  - 17-08-0873 (stuck a tree)

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- 17-08-1288 (struck power pole & overturned)
- 17-10-0064 (struck power pole)
- 17-10-0341 (struck 3<sup>rd</sup> party vehicle and police vehicle)
- 17-10-1327 (abandoned car rolled into tree)
- 17-11-0363 (struck utility pole)
- 17-11-1141 (struck four parked cars & sign)
- 17-11-1979 (ran off road & overturned)
- 17-12-0230 (struck curb & ditch).
- Third party vehicle struck – six (6) / 15%: 17-05-1790, 17-10-0341, 17-11-1141 (Four (4), 3<sup>rd</sup> party vehicles struck).
- One citizen was injured in a collision: 17-05-1790.
- Police vehicle involved in collision – four (4) / 10%: 17-04-1295, 17-05-1790, 17-06-1410, & 17-10-0341.
- Twenty eight (28) / 70% ended with the suspect arrested.
- Twelve (12) / 30% of pursuits the suspect was not captured.

#### **D. Policy Violations**

- Four (4) / 8% of pursuits were documented as having a policy violation: 17-03-0975 (Speed), 17-04-1295 (Passed pursued vehicle), 17-05-1027 (Speed), & 17-10-0064 (Speed).

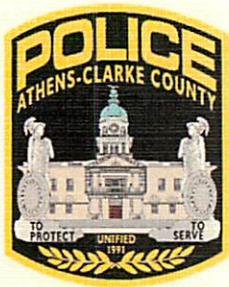
#### **E. Initial Violation & Suspect Statistics**

- Felony initiated pursuits: six (6) / 15%.
- Misdemeanor initiated pursuits: thirty (30) / 75 %.
- Warrant (arrest or search) initiated pursuits: four (4) / 10%.
- Male suspects: thirty seven (37) / 93%.
- Female suspects: two (2) / 5%.
- Unknown gender: one (1) / 3%.
- Average suspect age was twenty eight (28).
  - Youngest - seventeen (17).
  - Oldest – forty eight (48).



#### **F. Officer Statistics**

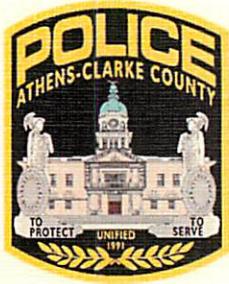
- Average age – twenty nine (29)
  - Youngest - twenty two (22)
  - Oldest - fifty four (54)
- Average years of experience – three and a half (3.5)
  - Least experienced - six (6) months.
  - Most experienced - eighteen (18) years.



## G. Pursuits by Violation

Initial Violation	
Agency Assist	1
Agg. Assault	1
Armed Robbery	1
Burglary	1
DUI	1
Equipment Violation	1
Expired Tag	3
Headlight Violation	5
Hit & Run	1
Lane Violation	3
No Insurance	1
Reckless Driving	1
Red Light Violation	2
Speeding	2
Stolen Vehicle	3
Stop Sign	4
Suspended Registration	1
Tag Light / Tag Violation	3
Taillight Violation	1
Warrants	4





## H. Pursuits by Shift / Unit

Pursuits by Unit	
Day West	0
Evening West	6
Morning West	11
Day East	2
Evening East	5
Morning East	11
Downtown	0
CSU	2
Traffic	3
CID	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>

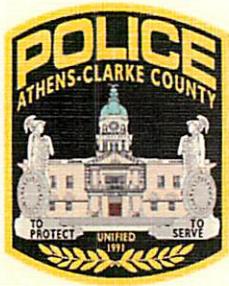
## I. Training

- Training in the area of vehicle pursuits involve one (1) hour each year for all sworn employees. Officers in the mandate academy also receive a sixteen (16) hour course in Emergency Vehicle Operations (EVOC). While attending the in house New Officer Basic Training (NOBC) at ACCPD officers also receive an additional four (4) hours of vehicle pursuit training.

## J. Training / Equipment Opportunities

- **Boxing-in:** Surrounding a violator's vehicle with law enforcement vehicles that are then slowed to a stop, forcing the violator's vehicle to do likewise.
- **Precision Immobilization Technique (PIT) Maneuver:** The intentional act of using a law enforcement vehicle to physically force a fleeing vehicle from a course of travel in order to stop it. The PIT maneuver is a specific, technical maneuver which requires advanced practical training prior to use. When executed by properly trained members under reasonable and prudent circumstances, the PIT maneuver does not constitute deadly force. In other circumstances, the PIT maneuver may constitute deadly force and only may be used when authorized by law.
- **Rolling Roadblock:** The placement of one or more law enforcement vehicles in the path of the violator's vehicle, in order to cause it to slow and/or stop.





- **StarChase System:** A pursuit reduction technology containing a miniature GPS module encased in a tracking projectile/tag that is deployed from a fixed launcher mounted on a law enforcement vehicle.
- **New Officer Training:** During 2017, one new recruit failed EVOC training in August and was later terminated.

## K. Recommendations

- The following in italics was the recommendation from the 2016 pursuit review. ACCPD policy was changed October 23, 2017.  
*It is the goal of the ACCPD to reduce high risk police activities such as pursuits. The highest number of pursuits originated during traffic stops for misdemeanor violations. In the area of reducing the number of pursuits, it is recommended to no longer allow misdemeanor offenses, traffic or civil infractions. In making these changes would require policy modifications.*

## L. Detailed Statistics

- A statistical breakdown is attached within a spreadsheet identifying officers and supervisor involved in each pursuit along with data that is submitted to *Pursuits* include General Pursuit Information (date, time, etc.), Environment/Conditions during each pursuit (Traffic and Road conditions, Maximum speed, etc.), Termination (How the pursuit terminated, Distance, Arrest/Charges, etc.), Officer/Suspect Information, and Injury/Fatality.



Pursuits by Month		Pursuits by Unit	
January	0	Day West	0
February	4	Evening West	6
March	5	Morning West	11
April	3	Day East	2
May	3	Evening East	5
June	3	Morning East	11
July	3	Downtown	0
August	5	CSU	2
September	2	Traffic	3
October	5	CID	0
November	5	Total	40
December	2		
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>		

#### Duration of Pursuit

Measurement	Avg	Longest	Shortest
Seconds	192.1	948	30
Minutes	3.2	15.8	0.5
Distance	2.5	0.17	13.6

#### Initial Violation

Agency Assist	1	Felony	6	15%
Agg. Assault	1	Misd	30	75%
Armed Robbery	1	Warrant	4	10%
Burglary	1	Road Blocks	0	0%
DUI	1	Policy Violations	3	8%
Equipment Violation	1			
Expired Tag	3			
Headlight Violation	5	Total	40	
Hit & Run	1			
Lane Violation	3			
No Insurance	1			
Reckless Driving	1			
Red Light Violation	2			
Speeding	2			
Stolen Vehicle	3			
Stop Sign	4			
Suspended Registration	1			
Tag Light / Tag Violation	3			
Taillight Violation	1			
Warrants	4			

#### Apprehended

Yes	28	70%
No	12	30%
Male	37	93%
Female	2	5%
Unknown	1	3%

#### Suspect Vehicle Speed

Average	69
Highest	104
Lowest	38

#### Collision / Injuries

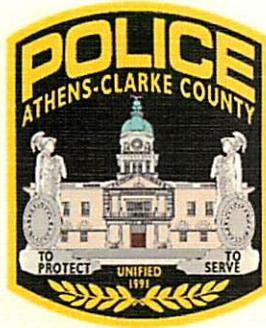
Suspect Vehicle Collision	11	28%
Police Vehicle Collision	4	10%
3rd Party Collision	6	15%
Suspect Injuries	3	8%
Police Injuries	1	3%
3rd Party Injuries	1	3%

#### Pursuit Termination

Collision	11	28%
Arrest	28	70%
Not Apprehended	12	30%
Stop Sticks	5	13%
Officer Terminated	5	13%
Supervisor Terminated	5	13%

#### Officer Stats

Average Age	29
Average Years of Experience	3.5



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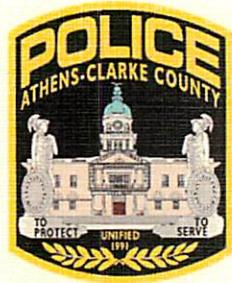
DATE: January 29, 2018  
TO: R. Scott Freeman, Ph.D.  
Chief of Police  
FROM: Justin D. Gregory  
Deputy Chief of Police  
RE: 2017 Pursuit Review

I have reviewed the information provided by Lt. Eckert regarding vehicle pursuits in 2017. I feel compelled to address the policy change conducted in October of 2017, the decision making of officers, and training regarding vehicle pursuits.

As indicated, the 2016 review recommended policy change. While I consider this a success for the year, it did come late and did not have a great impact on the results for 2017. This resulted in most of the 2017 decision making being based on the previous policy. I think it is very important to note that there are major differences in that policy and the current version. The first major difference is how a pursuit is defined in the old policy. A vehicle that was obeying the law and simply not stopping, was considered a pursuit and treated as such in reporting. Additionally, the new policy states that we will not pursue misdemeanor traffic violations. These two changes alone would have theoretically changed the number of pursuits from 40 to 15 pursuits in 2017.

There were several "policy violations" noted in the Lieutenant's review. I think it is important to recognize that those issues were minor and were addressed quickly by the related officer's leadership and chain of command. I personally insured that counseling, training, or discipline selected by leadership to address any issues were documented and attached to the related pursuit forms. In most cases, the violation was simply the lack of self-termination. There were incidents, one in which a rolling road block was used to end a pursuit headed to a crowded area and another in which a lieutenant continued to authorize what began as a "non-hazardous" pursuit that suddenly turned the wrong direction on the GA 10 loop, that by definition were listed as policy violations. In both cases, the policy did not fit the situation and the officers exercised outstanding judgement and articulated a decision making process that was focused on protecting the lives of those we serve.





However, we are improving. In 2017 we increased the number of driver instructors and sent officers to GPSTC to attend advanced EVOC, high center of gravity vehicle driver training, and began allowing officers to attend PIT certification. This has all been emphasized to lay the ground work for future practical driver training when funding permits for a driver training facility as well as providing the body of knowledge to implement the tools allocated in the new policy such as the PIT maneuver to end the danger of high speed pursuits within our community when they do occur.

To gain the maximum benefit from the change in policy, I have instructed the Career Development and Training Unit to emphasize pursuit training as their first in-service goal of 2018. They will re-inforce the new principles, particularly decision making as it applies to misdemeanor traffic offenses. Based on full implementation of the policy and additional training in 2018, we should see a significant decrease in vehicle related pursuits in 2018.

