

**Police Department  
City of Keene, New Hampshire**

**Date:** January 28, 2020  
**To:** Steven Russo – Police Chief *SR-140*  
**Through:** Steven Stewart – Captain *SMS #156*  
**Through:** Todd Lawrence - Captain *TLL #123*  
**From:** Steven Tenney Jr. - Lieutenant *ST #142*  
**Subject:** Annual Vehicle Operation Report, CY-2019

**SECTION I - PURSUITS:**

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

**Number of Pursuits:**

Between the period of January 2019 through December 2019, Keene Police Officers were involved in five pursuits. This is one less pursuit than was reported in CY 2018. Of the five pursuits this year all of them were initiated in the City and were due to Keene Police investigations. All but one of the pursuits were initiated by Keene Officers. The one that was not, was initiated by a Cheshire County Sheriff's Deputy acting on a Keene PD BOLO (Be On the Look Out) and a Keene Officer was in the area with him and was able to quickly join the pursuit and serve as a backup officer. There were no pursuits that originated in other jurisdictions that entered the city.

Suspect vehicles of CY 2019 consisted of; 2 – motorcycles (one incident) and 4 – passenger vehicles

**Initial Contact/Terminated:**

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

**March 9th** – An officer was travelling on Route 9 when he passed a vehicle stolen earlier in the evening in Keene. The officer followed the vehicle onto Base Hill Road. As the vehicle travelled into the town of Swanzey, the officer attempted to initiate a motor vehicle stop. The driver failed to stop and accelerated onto Route 10 then onto Ash Hill Road, to Sawyer Crossing Road, back onto Route 10 and back into the City. The vehicle then went back onto Route 9 and then to Base Hill Road. A NHSP Trooper was able to position himself as a perimeter unit on Base Hill Rd. Upon seeing the Trooper, the driver of the vehicle pulled into a driveway and attempted to flee, he was immediately ordered to the ground by the officers and taken into custody without incident.

**May 4<sup>th</sup>** – An officer was on Main Street when he observed two motorcycles violating the misuse of power/noise ordinance and also traveling at a high rate of speed. The officer attempted to stop the motorcycles when they fled from him. They travelled down Marlboro Street, to Eastern Ave and then separated in the neighborhood of Bellevue Ave/Hillside Ave/Woodland Ave.

Officers responding were able to effectively spread out amongst this neighborhood and were able locate, stop and arrest both motorcycle operators without incident.

**September 8<sup>th</sup>** – An officer was on Key Road when he attempted to stop a vehicle for a traffic violation. The vehicle initially pulled over for the officer on the Key Road extension but as the officer was preparing to exit his vehicle, the driver took off in the vehicle and went out to the highway. The vehicle continued onto Route 101, to Route 12 north, to Maple Ave and then onto the Old Walpole Road. The vehicle continued up the Old Walpole Road until it lost control and spun into a tree. The driver immediately fled the vehicle and began to flee on foot. The officer was able to pursue the driver and take him into custody a short distance into the woods.

**September 10<sup>th</sup>** – A plain clothes detective was at Walmart when he was alerted to a possible woman being held in a vehicle against her will. The detective approached the vehicle and tried to investigate the claim in the parking lot. As he did, the driver fled from him in his vehicle and a BOLO was broadcast for the vehicle. During the search for the vehicle, a Cheshire County Sheriff Deputy located the vehicle on Maple Ave. A Keene Officer was nearby and as the Deputy followed behind it, the vehicle took off at a high rate of speed. The Keene Officer was able to get behind the Deputy and the two activated their lights with the Keene Officer taking the lead as the vehicle fled from them. The vehicle continued up Route 12 toward Westmoreland.

Another Keene Officer who had been looking for the vehicle was able to position himself over the Westmoreland town line on Route 12 and successfully deploy a spike mat to deflate the vehicles tires. The vehicle continued for a short distance before coming to a stop in the town of Westmoreland. Once stopped, the driver was taken into custody by the officers without incident.

**December 26<sup>th</sup>** – Officers responded to McDonalds for a report of a woman consuming narcotics in their bathroom. As the officers arrived, a vehicle was leaving the parking lot and the officers were alerted by employees that this was the woman in question. An officer followed the vehicle and attempted to initiate a motor vehicle stop as it exited the parking lot. The vehicle did not immediately stop so the officer followed it until it finally stopped in the intersection of Key Road and Winchester Street. As the officer exited to direct the driver to move to a safe location, the driver fled from the officer. The officer, and other original responding officer pursued the vehicle onto Route 101 and into the town of Marlborough.

Once in Marlborough, all Keene Officers were cancelled from the pursuit, with the exception of one, who was assigned by the supervisor to serve as a backup to a NHSP trooper who had taken over the pursuit at the request of our supervisor. The pursuit continued through the town of Marlborough, Jaffrey, Rindge and ended in the town of Fitzwilliam after the Trooper was able to get ahead of the suspect vehicle and deploy spikes. The driver was arrested without incident at the conclusion.

**Apprehension:**

The driver was arrested at the conclusion of each of the five reported pursuits.

**Number of Officers:**

When we look at this piece of data, we are 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 four of the five 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:

- 5.5 miles
- 1.6 miles
- 5.9 miles
- 6.3 miles
- 31.0 miles

The average distance traveled was 10.06 miles. This is an increase from CY 2018 pursuits, which was 3.83 miles. The reason for the increase can largely be attributed to the one pursuit being multi-jurisdictional with State Police taking over as the primary pursuing agency.

**Speed:**

Speeds 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 a factor in the outcome of one of the pursuits this year in which a vehicle spun out and hit a tree.

**Weather/Pavement/Traffic:**

In reviewing each incident reported in CY2019, 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 2019 saw five 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.

This year in the pursuits that were not minor traffic violations in nature, officers made appropriate decisions in regards as to when to stop the vehicle and waiting for other officers to be positioned. In two of this year's pursuits, the suspect drivers began to flee prior to the activation of emergency equipment.

**Policy Compliance:**

All reported incidents in 2019 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. We also saw this year that supervisors are paying attention during incidents as these and making appropriate decisions in regards to turning pursuits over to other agencies and cancelling multiple units.

## **PURSUIT REPORT**

Send this completed report to Captain.

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.

*Admin Section: (To be completed by command staff or designee)*

Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_

*I find the officer's actions during this incident to be consistent with KPD GO's 4104B and 4103A; Pursuit and Operation of Police Vehicles. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ (If no, incident will be reviewed and documented via internal memorandum)*

*I find that there is no cause to address policy, training, equipment or disciplinary issues. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ (If there is cause to address any of these issues the incident will be reviewed and documented via internal memorandum)*

## **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 period January 2019 through December 2019.

### **Number of Cruiser Involved Collisions:**

Keene Police cruisers were involved in four collisions during CY 2019. This number is down from eight in CY2018. Furthermore all of the collisions were minor in nature and did not require the city owned vehicle to be taken out of service until repairs could be scheduled.

This year showed that no unmarked or administrative vehicles were involved in motor vehicle collisions. This year there were no collisions that occurred during emergency, pursuit or stressful driving situations.

### **Actions Being Performed By Officers at Time of Collision:**

3/15/19 – An officer was driving, following the roadway when they struck a pothole and damaged the rim and tire to the cruiser.

3/22/19 – An officer was working a road detail when he was required to back his cruiser to stay with the construction package. While doing so, the officer struck a fire hydrant and caused minor damage to the rear bumper of the detail cruiser.

3/23/19 – An officer was about to move his cruiser in a parking lot when he drove forward and struck the front of the cruiser on a rock. This caused scraping in the paint to the front corner of the cruiser.

4/15/19 – An officer was following the roadway when he was struck head on by a distracted driver. This caused front end damage to the cruiser but it was driven from the scene. NHSP investigated the accident and issued the other driver a summons for distracted driving.

### **Weather:**

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

### **Policy Compliance**

This year there were no violations of the General Order governing Operation of Police Vehicles (GO4103G).

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 2019 mileage figures for the Department's fleet, as provided by the City's fleet services division:

Total miles driven by all police department vehicles - 275,158 miles  
Total miles driven by marked police cruisers only – 232,788 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 made against the Keene Police Department for CY2019. This is the second year in a row that we received no complaints for driving.

#### 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.