

# **Pampa Police Department**

**2023**



## **Use of Force Analysis**

## **Use of Force Analysis for 2023**

This analysis was conducted for the purpose of reviewing the Pampa Police Department's Use of Force for the 2023 reporting year. The Pampa Police Department takes its obligations seriously to provide the most effective and efficient police service with the least adverse impact on our citizens. The Pampa Police Department is committed to protecting the rights of all persons and to using force only when necessary, and to the extent necessary, to achieve legal objectives. This analysis is conducted each year to comply with Texas Law Enforcement Best Practice 6.10 and to attempt to identify methods for reducing the number of incidents and the inherent risks involved.

Officers are trained by the department to use only the level of force necessary to bring a person under control and complete a legal objective. Police/citizen encounters can, however, change instantly, and officers may be required to react quickly in using force to subdue a resisting subject. While officers prefer to de-escalate their level of force in an orderly manner to use the lowest level possible, the response of a subject may limit that ability and force officers to use whatever level of force is immediately available to protect themselves and the public.

## **Use of Force Reporting Requirements**

Texas Law Enforcement Best Practice 6.03 and Pampa Police Department Policy Manual Chapter 6.03, requires a written report be completed anytime an officer uses force that involves the use of a lethal or less-than-lethal weapon, or force that results in injuries, or is likely to cause or lead to an unforeseen injury, claim of injury, or allegations of excessive force. In addition, a written report is required when an officer points a firearm at a person, or discharges a firearm either accidentally, recklessly, or intentionally, except for in training or recreational situations.

Each individual Use of Force Report is immediately reviewed by the Officer's Supervisor, and through the Chain of Command to the Chief of Police. At the time of the incident, the Use of Force is reviewed to ensure the use was appropriate and within the guidelines of Department Policy and Law. If the officer used force inappropriately, a departmental investigation is required and the officer may receive additional training, or in some cases, discipline up to and including termination from employment, and/or criminal charges.

After the individual Use of Force Report has been reviewed through the Chain of Command, the report is placed on file by use of an annual binder stored within the Chief of Police's Office. At the conclusion of the reporting year of each year, the Chief of Police, or his/her designee, reviews the information and compiles the annual analysis of the data from the individual reports. This analysis is not intended to determine if an officer acted inappropriately, but to

identify department wide trends that may suggest changes in policy, training, equipment, or supervision.

## Use of Force Comparison for 2019 to 2023

There were 32 Use of Force reports compiled this year. This is down from 42 in 2022. There was a total of 17,500 citizen contacts this year (calls for service, arrests, citations, field interviews, and other contacts), which creates an index of one Use of Force per every 546 citizen contacts. This indicates a decrease from the previous year in the percentage of uses of force when compared to the total number of citizen contacts, and is on-par with the 5-year average. The chart below depicts a 5-year comparison and average.

Year	Use of Force reports	Citizen Contacts	Average
2019	39	21,838	1 per 560 contacts
2020	29	17,116	1 per 590 contacts
2021	27	17,596	1 per 652 contacts
2022	42	19,152	1 per 456 contacts
2023	32	17,500	1 per 546 contacts
5 Y. Avg	34	18,640	1 per 548 contacts

The Use of Force incidents are listed below by type with comparison to the previous year. Each type of force used in an incident is included with these numbers. In certain instances, more than one type of force is used and is included within one use-of-force report. Therefore, the total of these figures typically varies from the total number of reports compiled for the year.

	2023	2022	Difference
Physical Control	16	28	-12
Taser Energy Weapon	12	10	+2
Impact Weapon/Baton	0	0	0
Non/Less Lethal Weapon	0	0	0
Firearm Pointed	16	10	+6
Firearm Discharged	0	0	0
Total	44	48	-4

## **Individual Officer Use of Force**

The Pampa Police Department currently employs 30 sworn law enforcement officers. Of that, 20 Officers are assigned to Patrol duties, where most uses of force arise from. During the 2023 year, all uses of force were by an Officer assigned to the Patrol Division. From the 32 use of force reports completed for the year, this means the average assigned to Patrol used force 1.6 times during the year. Several officers used force more than the average and these officer's activities and actions were reviewed by the department for appropriateness. While each individual use of force is reviewed immediately after the event to ensure it is in compliance with department policy and law, patterns of behavior can also indicate the need for additional training or supervision. Officers can have significantly different rates in their use of force depending on the crime activity in the part of the city where they are assigned, their type of assignment, the time of day they work, and their experience level.

Individual officers in the department which had a significantly higher rate of using force were reviewed and found to be in compliance with department directives and their use of force appropriate under the circumstances.

## **Physical Control**

In the 2023 reporting period, Pampa Police Officers used physical control 16 times during incidents they were assigned to deal with.

Included in the category are all those incidents requiring physical force to complete handcuffing or bring a resisting subject under control. If physical control was insufficient to bring the individual under control and an alternate or higher level of force was used, each level of force used was reported in this report.

Included in this category are all those instances where simple use of or issuance of verbal commands was not sufficient or effective. It includes those instances where officers place their hands on a subject and use more force than simply a strong grip, must forcibly handcuff a person, the use of pressure point control tactics, or other soft or hard hand techniques. This category also includes taking the person to the ground in order to forcibly handcuff them.

## **OC Pepper Spray**

In this reporting period, the Pampa Police Departments had no reported use of OC Pepper Spray. OC Pepper Spray is no longer used in the force continuum of the Pampa Police Department.

## **Impact Weapons / Baton**

During the 2023 reporting period, Pampa Police Officers did not use any form of impact weapon during an arrest or other incident.

Impact weapons include the use of the department issued ASP Baton, the use of a closed fist or any other implement that was used to deliver a strike to a person.

The department authorizes carrying of and trains officers in the use of the ASP collapsible baton. Training is provided to instruct officers in the proper placement of strikes that will temporarily stun an opponent allowing the officer time to complete handcuffing. Baton tactics training provided by the department avoids the use of any strikes directed at the head of an individual. If an officer does not have the time or opportunity to deploy the ASP or other less-lethal options, officers may have to defend themselves with their bare hands. If closed fist strikes were required, then those instances are reported in this category.

## **Non/Less Lethal Weapon**

In the 2023 reporting period, Pampa Police Officers did not use department issued Non or less lethal Weapons during an arrest or other incident.

The department has a number of less lethal munitions available that can be fired from specially designed firearms that are designed to inflict surprise, pain or trauma that is less severe than the use of deadly force. These less lethal munitions include bean bag rounds, CS/CN gas, rubber pellets, wooden baton rounds, as well as pepper-ball munitions fired from guns similar to paintball guns. While these rounds are designed to be less lethal than regular firearms, they are still able to cause significant damage to an individual and as such are used only as a last resort when time and opportunity permit.

## **Taser Energy Weapon**

During the 2023 reporting period, Pampa Police Officers used a department issued Taser Energy Weapon (TEW) 12 times during an arrest or other incident.

Taser Energy Weapons are devices that fire two small probes that are designed to imbed themselves in the skin or clothing of a resisting or combative suspect. The probes are connected to the device by small flexible wires which transmit a short 5-second-high voltage/low amperage charge through the probes. This causes disruption of muscle activity (neuromuscular incapacitation) and is accompanied by pain which most often temporarily

disables the individual. There are usually no long-term side effects of the use of the device on healthy individuals.

The Pampa Police Department trains their officers in the proper and appropriate use of Taser Energy Weapons and has policies designed to only allow a discharge of the weapon against active aggression toward officers and not in cases of passive non-compliance or as punishment of any kind.

Included in the category are those incidents where the use of a TEW was the highest level of force needed to bring a subject under control. If the TEW was insufficient to bring the individual under control and an alternate or higher level of force was used, each level of force used is reported in the respective category of this report.

## **Firearms**

During the 2023 reporting period, Pampa Police Officers pointed or discharged their firearms 16 times during an arrest or other incident.

Firearms are by definition Deadly Force, and their use is very restricted. Officers must comply with not only their intensive training, but with the department's Deadly Force Policy and state law. When an officer fires their weapon in the line of duty, whether or not an individual is hit, a detailed investigation is undertaken to determine if that use was in compliance with both policy and law.

Included in the category are those incidents where Firearms were the highest level of force used to bring a resisting subject under control. If the use of a firearm, pointing or discharging, was insufficient to bring the individual under control and an alternate or higher level of force was used, each level of force used was reported within the respective category of this report.

This year there were no (ZERO) instances of an Officer discharging their firearm. All 16 instances reported involved only the threat of use or the pointing of the officer's firearm at the subject as an act of tactical advantage.

## **Citizen and Internal Complaints Regarding the Use of Force**

During this reporting period, the Pampa Police Department received zero complaints of unnecessary or inappropriate use of force.

## **General Observations**

During the 2023 reporting period, the number of uses of force incidents decreased by 10 from the previous year. During this same time, the number of citizen contacts went down by 1,652

over the previous year. These two factors combined indicate that officers used force less frequently this year than in previous year. This number of uses of force is within range of the department's 5-year average.

While the use of force is not discouraged when it is necessary, officers are encouraged and trained in how to deescalate situations by other means and only use force when it is necessary and justified.

The Department understands that most citizen encounters are friendly and casual in nature, but that officers must always have an alert and ready to act mentality. A casual encounter can change into a use of force situation at any second, and officers must always be prepared and properly trained to take the appropriate action.

In this period the category that saw the greatest change was physical control, which decreased by 12. It is further noted that the figure had increased in the 2022 year by 11. These types of use of force incidents typically occur as the result of the subject resisting arrest or detention or exhibiting aggressive behavior/actions towards the officer.

During this year, over 50% of the department's Officers attended a de-escalation techniques course. The remaining staff will receive that training in the following year. Also, this year each of the department's Officers attended training on firearms and the Taser 7 annual update course. These efforts continue our goal to ensure that our Officers are properly trained to handle the incidents they encounter.

## **Recommendations**

Training is an integral part of law enforcement. It is recommended that officers continue to receive training in how to deescalate dangerous situations. Continued training in areas such as responding to persons with a mental illness, defensive tactics refresher courses, Taser user courses, and verbal judo courses would be beneficial in deescalating potential use of force situations. The continuation of the weekly Vincible trainings started in 2019 will also be beneficial to ensuring that force is only used when necessary, as many of the topics cover this aspect of law enforcement.

The Pampa Police Department requires a use of force test be completed and passed by each officer during the firearms qualification test. This test is a compilation of department policy and state law. It is recommended that this procedure be continued.

The TEW policy was recently updated again this year with the release of Taser's Version 23 curriculum. No additional policy changes are being recommended for this reporting year as there are no areas of concern surrounding the policies already in place.

Prepared and compiled by:



Lt. Brian Massey

2/1/24

Date

## Command Review:

Any Actions to be taken:

No immediate action required. Continue with training as mentioned in the recommendation section of this report.



Chief of Police

2/1/24

Date