



TOWN OF VERNON
DEPARTMENT OF POLICE
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TO: Chief James Kenny

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Roll Call

FROM: Captain John Kelley

DATE: January 21, 2021

SUBJECT: 2020 Annual Use of Force Review

Overview

The 2020 Annual Use of Force Review was completed using the Vernon Police Department's use of force database. In 2020, the Vernon Police Department responded to 16,446 calls for service with 34 incidents requiring the use of force on 39 individuals. All use of force is reviewed to ensure compliance with Vernon Police Department Standard Operating Procedure #1 (Use of Force) and Connecticut General Statutes.

In 2020, Vernon officers submitted 94 individual use of force reports which documented their actions in cases where a level of force was necessary to effect an arrest, control a subject, or protect themselves, or a third person from harm. In many cases, a single officer was able to bring the subject under control. However, there were cases when more than one officer was needed and each officer is required to submit an individual use of force report. Each officer's actions are reviewed and judged independently.

It is the policy of the Vernon Police Department that officers may use only the force that reasonably appears necessary to accomplish lawful objectives and effectively bring an incident under control while protecting the lives of the officer and others. The reports are also used to identify individual officer and department training needs.

Upon review of the use of force data, it showed officers of the Vernon Police Department used a level of force in **3.49 %** of arrests (28 of 803 arrests). Last year officers used force in 3.89% of all arrests (43 of 1103 arrests). In 2020 there were 6 incidents when officers used force to control an emotionally disturbed person (EDP). In 3 of those cases the EDP was also arrested. The other 3 cases when force was used on an EDP, those individuals were brought to the hospital for an emergency examination.

The race/sex of individuals Vernon officers used force against is as follows:

| White males | White females | Black males | Black females | Hispanic males | Hispanic females | Asian male |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|------------|
| 8 | 8 | 12 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 |

Officer’s use of force based on sex/race is as follows:

- Use of force against males: 25 (64%)
- Use of force against females: 14 (36%)

- Use of force against whites: 16 (41 %)
- Use of force against blacks: 15 (38 %)
- Use of force against Hispanics: 5 (13 %)
- Use of force against Asians: 3 (8 %)

The age of the individuals Vernon officers used force against is as follows:

| Age | 14-19 | 20-29 | 30-39 | 40-49 | 50-59 | 60-69 | 70-79 |
|------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| # of individuals | 5 | 11 | 10 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 0 |

Use of force by month is as follows:

| | | | | | |
|--------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| January 1 | February 3 | March 5 | April 2 | May 1 | June 4 |
| July 3 | August 3 | September 1 | October 3 | November 3 | December 5 |

Use of force by shift is as follows:

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1 st Shift 0700-1500 hrs. 6 | 2 nd Shift 1500-2300 hrs. 22 | 3 rd shift 2300-0700 hrs. 6 |
|---|--|---|

In 2020, as depicted by the table below (**level of force used in a 4-year comparison**) officers resorted to physical means 59 times when dealing with uncooperative and/or combative subjects. Officers fired a Taser one time. The Taser policy classifies aiming a Taser or activating the laser, even if it is not aimed at the subject as a use of force. The result is seen in the table below in the Taser-Display field. A Taser's laser was activated or it was aimed at a subject 9 times.

A Vernon officer who aims a firearm at a person is required to complete a use of force report. Officers aimed their firearms 26 times at individuals in 14 separate incidents.

**LEVEL OF FORCE USED TO OVERCOME SUBJECT RESISTANCE
4-Year Comparison**

| Level of Force Used | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Physical Means | 70 | 51 | 59 | 52 |
| Firearm - aimed | 29 | 20 | 26 | 26 |
| Firearm- Discharged | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Taser - Display | 12 | 8 | 17 | 9 |
| Taser Fired/Drive Stun | 5 | 5 | 5 | 1 |
| OC | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Baton | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Impact Munition | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Police K-9 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Restraint use in cell | 3 | 3 | 5 | 5 |
| TOTAL REPORTS | 121 | 89 | 113 | 94 |

Incident Types

Individual use of force reports were written for the following incident types.

| Incident Type | Number of incidents | Number of reports submitted |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Domestic Disputes | 14 | 33 |
| Disorderly complaints | 8 | 27 |
| EDP | 5 | 12 |
| Burglary | 2 | 6 |

| Incident Type | Number of Incidents | Number of reports |
|----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Stolen vehicle | 1 | 5 |
| Traffic stop | 1 | 4 |
| Narcotics | 1 | 3 |
| Suspicious Situation | 1 | 3 |
| D.U.I | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 34 | 94 |

Injuries

Of the 34 use of force incidents in 2020, suspects were injured in seven incidents. The eight subjects received minor injuries. Five were treated at a hospital and released. One was treated for injuries caused by Taser probes. Two individuals refused treatment.

Five officers were injured during use of force events. The officers sustained abrasions and one bite wound

Conclusion and Training Recommendations

We will continue to review all use of force reports to ensure compliance with state law and Vernon Police Department Standard Operating Procedures. There were no complaints against Vernon officers alleging excessive use of force in 2020. Officers have been trained to the new standard in the Police Accountability Bill. We will continue to revise our policy on use of force and train accordingly to any future changes.