

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

**Date:** February 2, 2021

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

**Through:** Steven Stewart – Captain *SMS #156*

**Through:** Todd Lawrence - Captain *TJ #123*

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

**Subject:** Annual Vehicle Operation Report, CY-2020

**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 2020 through December 2020, Keene Police Officers were involved in ten pursuits. This is a total of five more pursuits than were reported in CY 2019. Of the ten pursuits this year all of them were initiated in the City. All the pursuits were initiated by Keene Officers. However on two of the cases we had been given information in regards to previously terminated pursuits. See the incident descriptions below for information.

Suspect vehicles of CY 2020 consisted of; 2 motorcycles and 8 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 8<sup>th</sup>** – A Keene Police officer located a vehicle that had been reported as an Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle. The officer followed the vehicle until a backup unit arrived and they attempted to initiate a stop on Matthews Road. The vehicle fled and officers pursued the vehicle into Swanzey and then into Winchester on Route 32. Keene officers attempted to coordinate with Winchester Police in an effort to terminate the pursuit via a spike mat. When the officers reached the intersection of Rt. 32 and Rt. 119 in the town of Winchester, they terminated the pursuit and traveled at road speeds in an attempt to follow it.

They later learned that a Winchester officer continued the pursuit into Massachusetts where the vehicle crashed on a dead end road. The driver was ultimately identified and the investigating Keene officer

completed a warrant, charging the driver with; Habitual Offender, Disobeying an Officer, Reckless Operation, Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle and several traffic violations.

**April 23<sup>rd</sup>** – A Keene officer attempted to stop a vehicle on Rt. 101 for operation. The vehicle fled on Rt. 101 and the Officer pursued the vehicle through the towns of Marlborough and Dublin. As the vehicle entered into the town of Peterborough, coordination was made with Peterborough and New Hampshire State Police to attempt to lay a spike mat in an attempt to terminate the pursuit safely. Ultimately the Peterborough Police units fell into the pursuit and the Keene officer terminated his involvement completely. Peterborough Police were able to get the vehicle stopped and Keene Police were able to summons the driver of the vehicle for the Keene charges. The driver was charged with; Disobeying an Officer, Reckless Operation and several traffic violations.

**May 16<sup>th</sup>** – Keene Police received a BOLO from NHSP in regards to a stolen vehicle that had been reported stolen in a neighboring town. It was also reported that the occupants in the vehicle were armed and had committed Criminal Threatening with a handgun during the commission of the theft of the vehicle. A short time later a Keene officer located the vehicle in the area of Marlboro Street and initiated a stop of it in the area of the Markem parking lot. The vehicle fled and was pursued to the dead end of Marlboro Street. Once there the driver of the suspect vehicle attempted to further flee by backing into the pursuing officer's cruiser. The officer was able to keep the vehicle blocked into the dead end, causing the two occupants to flee on foot. Responding officers were able to effectively deploy around the area and both occupants were taken into custody within a short time.

**June 18<sup>th</sup>** – After receiving a complaint of operation of a vehicle, a Keene officer located it on Court Street. The officer observed several traffic violations and attempted to stop the vehicle. The vehicle fled from the officer and was pursued from Court Street to the town of Troy. As the vehicle entered Troy, the on duty Troy Police officer was able to deploy his spike mat. The vehicle stopped a short distance later and the driver was taken into custody. The driver was charged with Disobeying an Officer, Reckless Operation and several traffic violations.

**July 7<sup>th</sup>** – An officer attempted to stop a motorcycle on Emerald Street after observing speed and other operation violations. The motorcycle fled from the officer. The initial officer lost contact with the motorcycle but it was intercepted by another responding backup officer on Marlboro Street. The officer pursued the motorcycle down Marlboro Street to Eastern Ave where he terminated the pursuit due to the speed the motorcycle was traveling. A subsequent investigation by the officer revealed the identity of the driver and he was arrested on a warrant.

**July 11<sup>th</sup>** – Keene Police received a BOLO of a motor vehicle's operation. An officer on patrol observed the vehicle and attempted to stop it. The vehicle fled from the officer and was pursued from Route 10 to Route 101. The vehicle ultimately stopped and the driver was taken into custody. The driver was charged with DWI and Disobeying an Officer.

**August 7<sup>th</sup>** – An officer attempted to stop a motorcycle for a speeding violation when it fled from him on Winchester Street. The officer pursued the motorcycle until it stopped in the parking lot of an apartment complex on Maple Ave. As officers attempted to take the operator into custody, the motorcycle fled again to the dead end of Summit Rd. The motorcycle then drove down a long private driveway where officers again attempted to take him in custody. The motorcycle fled again and the driver lost control of the bike going back down the long driveway. The driver then fled on foot but was taken into custody a short time later by a back-up perimeter officer.

**September 8<sup>th</sup>** – Keene Police were alerted that Swanzey Police were pursuing a vehicle on Base Hill Road toward Keene. Ultimately, Swanzey Police terminated their pursuit and issued a BOLO for the vehicle. A Keene officer traveled on Route 101 toward Base Hill Road to check for the vehicle. As the officer approached the “T” intersection, he noted a vehicle stopped at the red light. The vehicle, upon seeing the cruiser, extinguished its lights and fled through the light. The vehicle continued on Route 101 to Lower Main Street. As the vehicle continued into the Town of Swanzey, NHSP took over the pursuit and Keene units fell as a backup role. The vehicle ultimately came to a stop on Mt. Huggins Drive in Swanzey and the driver fled on foot. He was later taken into custody by perimeter officers when he was found concealing himself in the bushes.

**December 3<sup>rd</sup>** – A Keene officer initiated a motor vehicle stop on Myrtle Street for an inspection violation. During the initial phase of the stop, the vehicle fled. The officer pursued the vehicle down Marlboro Street to Route 101, into the town of Marlborough. Once in the town of Marlborough, the driver of the vehicle fled on foot on McKinley Street. As he fled, he left the vehicle in gear and the vehicle rolled into a guardrail, coming to a stop. The driver was located and taken into custody by perimeter officers. He was charged with; Disobeying and Officer, False Report to Law Enforcement, Possession of Narcotics, Operating after Suspension and Fugitive from Justice (out of state felony warrant for weapons related charges).

**December 23<sup>rd</sup>** – A NHSP Trooper pursued a vehicle into the city of Keene until he terminated the pursuit. A short time later, a Keene officer located the vehicle and it fled at a high rate of speed. The officer attempted to stop the vehicle and pursued it. Other Keene officers responded to the area and attempted to position themselves to set up spike mats. The vehicle was lost several times during the pursuit and contact was made by different officers that were set up in different areas as perimeter roles. Ultimately officers were able to deploy a spike mat on Court Street. The vehicle stopped on Elm Street after running over the spike mat and the driver fled on foot. After a brief foot chase by a perimeter officer, the driver was taken into custody.

**Apprehension:**

The driver was arrested in all ten 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 I found that in nine of the ten pursuits, support or back-up officers played a role in the successful conclusion of each incident. In the tenth pursuit, the length was short in duration and the driver was taken into custody by the initiating officer when the vehicle stopped.

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:

10.2 miles

20 miles  
1 mile  
7.5 miles  
1.8 miles  
1.3 miles  
5.2 miles  
5 miles  
5 miles  
15.1 miles

The average distance traveled was 7.21 miles. This is a decrease from CY 2019 pursuits, which was 10.06 miles.

**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 in three of the pursuits this year in which the Keene officer determined to terminate the pursuit due to the speed traveled by the suspect vehicle.

**Weather/Pavement/Traffic:**

In reviewing each incident reported in CY2020, 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 2020 saw ten 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 two of this year's pursuits, two of the vehicles began to flee prior to the officer initiating a stop.

**Policy Compliance:**

All reported incidents in 2020 were within compliance of our General Order (GO 4104) Pursuits. Our policy remains effective in the safe conclusion of pursuit related incidents.

**Decision Making:**

The data shows 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 that supervisors continue to pay attention during incidents as these and are 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 2020 through December 2020.

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

Keene Police cruisers were involved in five collisions during CY 2020. This number is up one accident from CY2019 when there were four accidents. 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 was the second year in a row 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. There was, however, one accident that occurred when a suspect vehicle intentionally backed into a cruiser at the conclusion of a motor vehicle pursuit.

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

3/29/20 – An officer was leaving the station and as he pulled out of the parking area, he scraped the passenger side of his cruiser on a cement pillar. This caused damage to the passenger side rear door and wheel well.

3/22/20 – An officer was arriving at a non-emergency call when he pulled up too close to the granite curbing causing a damaged, flat tire.

5/16/20 – At the conclusion of a motor vehicle pursuit the suspect driver backed into the front of the pursuing cruiser in an attempt to continue to flee the area. The collision caused damage to the front end of the cruiser.

6/20/20 – An officer was arriving to back another officer at a call. As the officer parked his cruiser, he struck the granite curbing, causing damage to the tire.

12/11/20 – An officer was negotiating a turn from Marlboro Street to Optical Ave when it slid on a patch of ice, striking the stop sign and knocking it over. There was no damage to the vehicle.

### **Weather:**

Weather played a factor in one of this year's accident in which the vehicle slid on an icy section of roadway into a traffic sign.

### **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 a 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 2020 mileage figures for the Department's fleet, as provided by the City's fleet services division:

Total miles driven by all police department vehicles - 273,432 miles  
Total miles driven by marked police cruisers only – 223,716 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 CY2020. This is the third 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. As shown, this strategy appears to be working. When we analyze the accidents they typically are very minor and most times do not require repair.