

ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Cleveland Spruill, Sr.
Chief of Police

MEMORANDUM

Date: June 22, 2021

To: Cleveland L. Spruill, Sr.
Chief of Police

From: Lieutenant Stewart Heard
Office of Professional Standards

Subject: 2020 Annual Use-of-Force Report and Assault on Sworn Officer Review

The purpose of this memorandum is to report the annual review and analysis of use-of-force (*also referred to as UOF*) activities in 2020 for the Athens-Clarke-County Police Department (*hereinafter referred to as ACCPD or Department*). This review will begin with an introduction and summary before presenting a breakdown of current and historical UOF data. Review of current training and equipment, policies, and reporting practices will follow. The report will conclude with an analysis of any identified UOF trends, patterns, or areas of concern, and recommendations from the Office of Professional Standards (OPS).

A. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

The ACCPD has an authorized strength of 255 sworn positions, 74 non-sworn positions, and 33 school crossing guards. It is the primary policing agency for Athens-Clarke County (ACC) Georgia, which has an estimated population of 126,913 citizens. ACC is also home to the University of Georgia (estimated 37,283 students). Additionally, ACC's median household income is \$38,311, and nearly 29.9% of the ACC population lives at or beneath the poverty line.

[https://www.census.gov/search-results.html?searchType=web&cssp=SERP&q=Athens-Clarke%20County%20unified%20government%20\(balance\),%20GA](https://www.census.gov/search-results.html?searchType=web&cssp=SERP&q=Athens-Clarke%20County%20unified%20government%20(balance),%20GA)

The Reporting period for this annual review is January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020. During this period, the Department reported involvement in 89,061 incidents, which averaged 244 incidents per day. Of the total incidents for 2020, officers reported 17,993 case reports. This year was marked with significant change, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, and the implementation of restrictions.

In order to conduct this review and analysis, information was gathered from a variety of quantitative and qualitative sources. Following are the primary sources of information:

1. Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) data;
2. 2020 Use-of-Force Reports;
3. Career Development and Training Unit records; and
4. Use-of-Force Policy

B. USE-OF-FORCE

The following section contains a breakdown of the reported use-of-force data for the department in 2020. This includes 1) an overall view of the 2020 data compared to the most recent four years; 2) demographics of officers involved in use-of-force incidents; 3) demographics of citizens/subjects involved in use-of-force incidents; and 4) a look at complaints received alleging excessive force.

1. Use-of-Force Data

Officers reported 204 use-of-force incidents in 2020¹ Officers were required to use force in only about 0.2% of their citizen contacts.

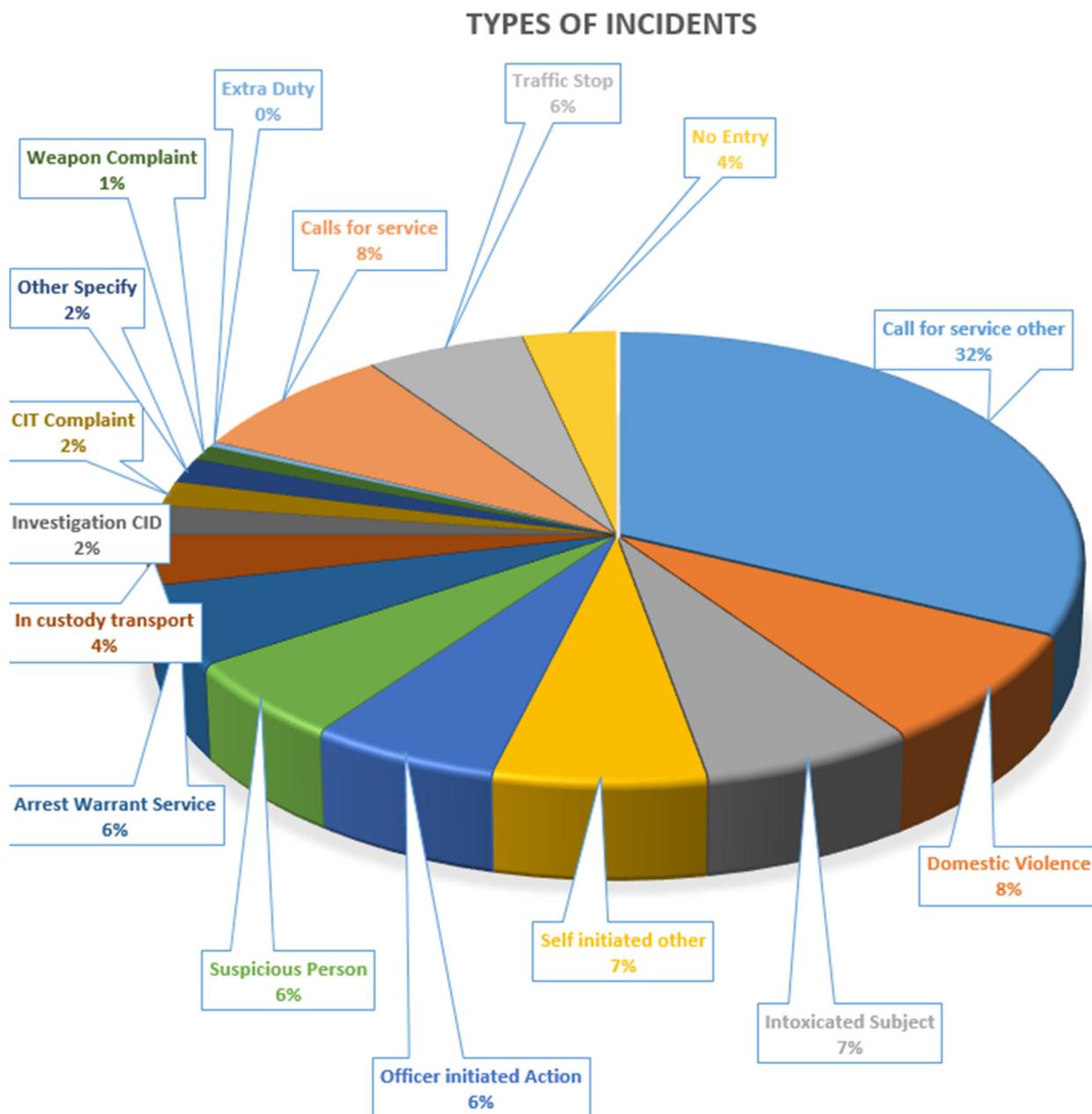
ACCPD	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total UOF Incidents	268	264	298	283	204
Soft Control/Empty Hands	142	155	365	183	147

¹This data is from January 1, 2020 – November 2020. Some UOF data was lost due to an unexpected and catastrophic failure of data storage hardware maintained by the Athens-Clarke County Information Technology Department. ACCPD was one of several county departments that sustained data loss.

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Compliance Tools	38	23	12	7	99
Hard Control/Strikes (hands)	7	17	0	7	7
Impact Weapons/Baton	1	1	3	0	12
Taser (CEW) Deployment/Presentation	17	37D/58P	39D/66P	39D/41P	54D/29P
Firearm Presentation	56	86	214	105	339
Lethal Force	1	1	0	14	0
Stop Stick Deployment	2	9	6	1	5

Each use-of-force report indicates the type of incident/situation that resulted in the application of force. A complete breakdown of the reported incident types are as follows in the below chart:

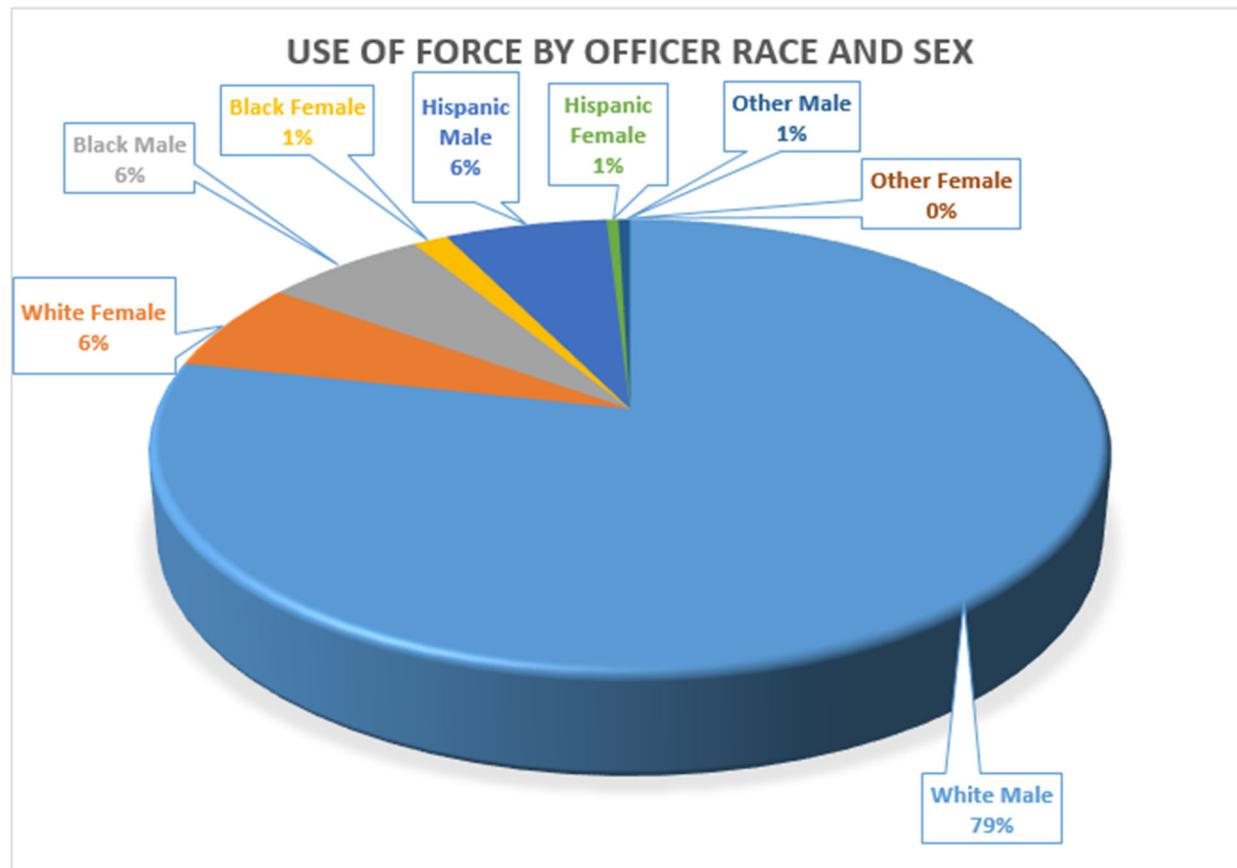


2. Officer Data

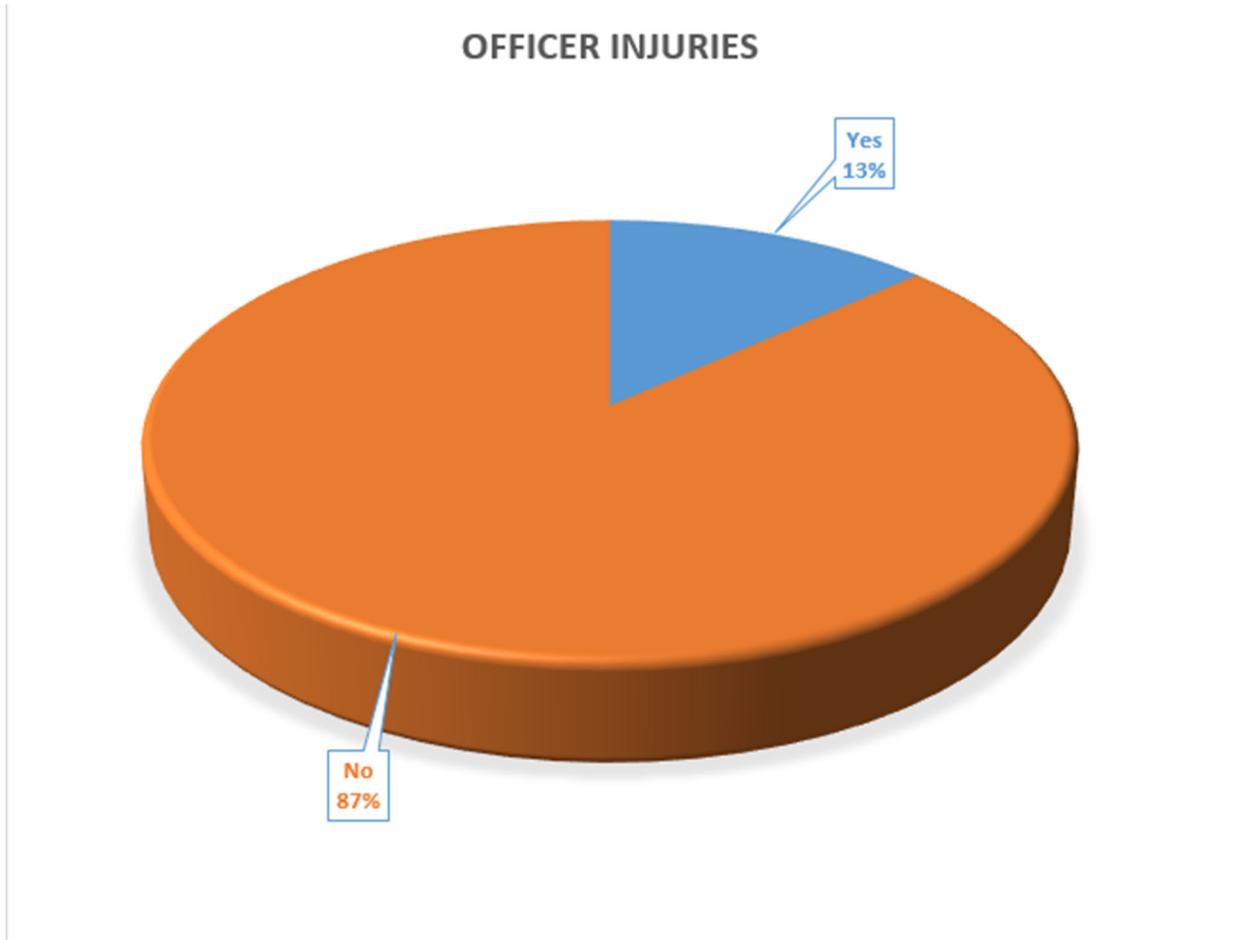
In 2020, 205 officers reported being involved in at least one use-of-force incident.

White/Male officers engaged in (156) use-of-force incidents. White/Female officers engaged in fourteen (15) use-of-force incidents. Black/Male officers engaged in fourteen (14) use-of-force incidents. Black/Female officers engaged in three (3) use-of-force incidents.

Hispanic/Male officers engaged in fourteen (13) use-of-force incidents. Hispanic/Female officers engaged in one (1) use-of-force incident. Asian/Other male and female (2) use-of-force incidents. A complete breakdown of the reported officer data are as follows in the below chart:



There were twenty-seven (27) use-of-force incidents where it was reported that at least one (1) officer was injured as a result of the incident. This represented 13% of the reported incidents. A complete breakdown of the reported injuries of officers are as follows in the below chart:

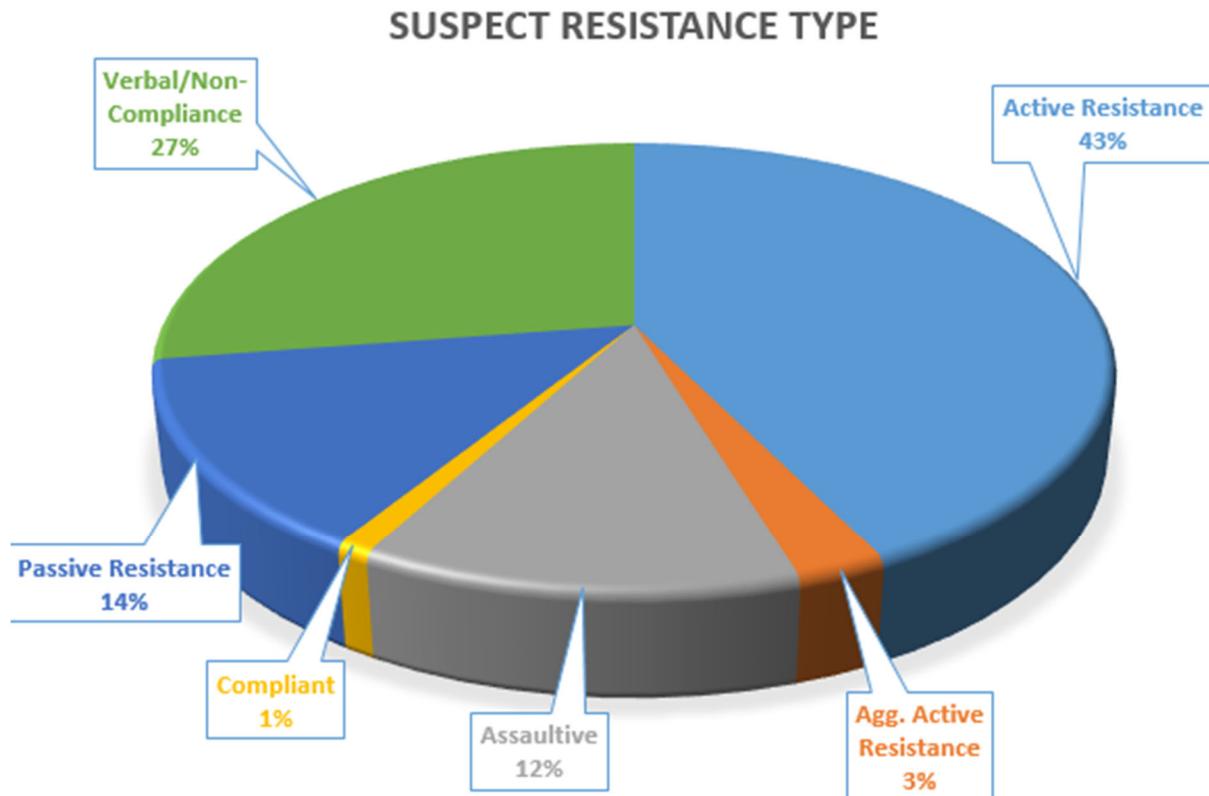


3. Subject Data

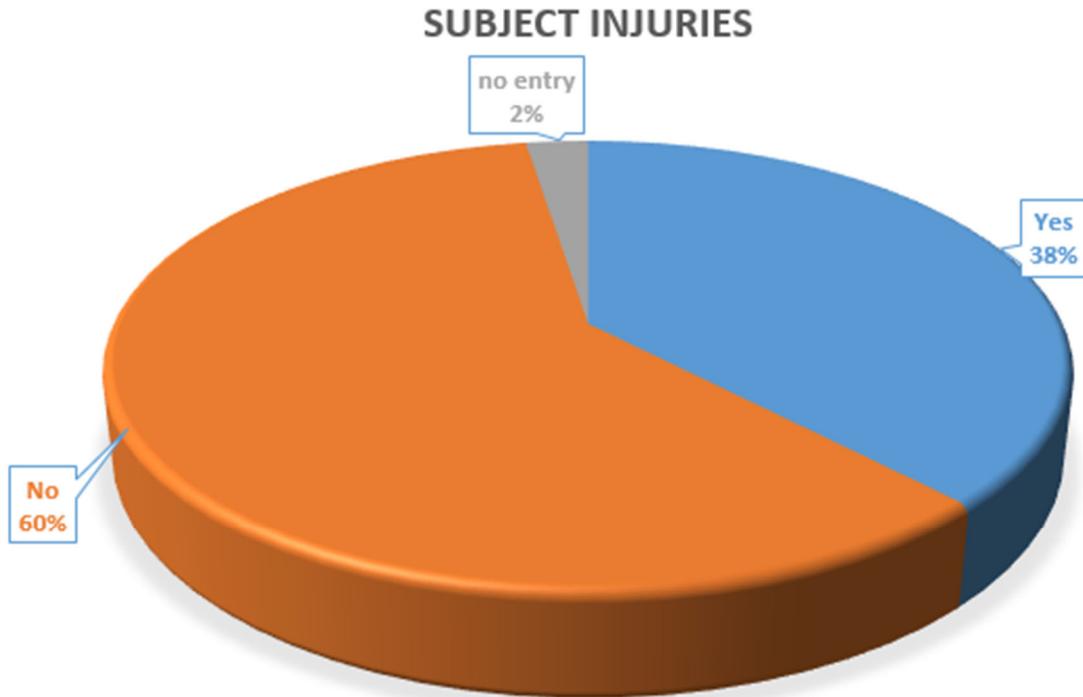
Subject data and information was also reported by officers as part of documenting use-of-force incidents. The data and information include whether or not an arrest occurred. A complete breakdown of the subject data is as follows in the below chart:



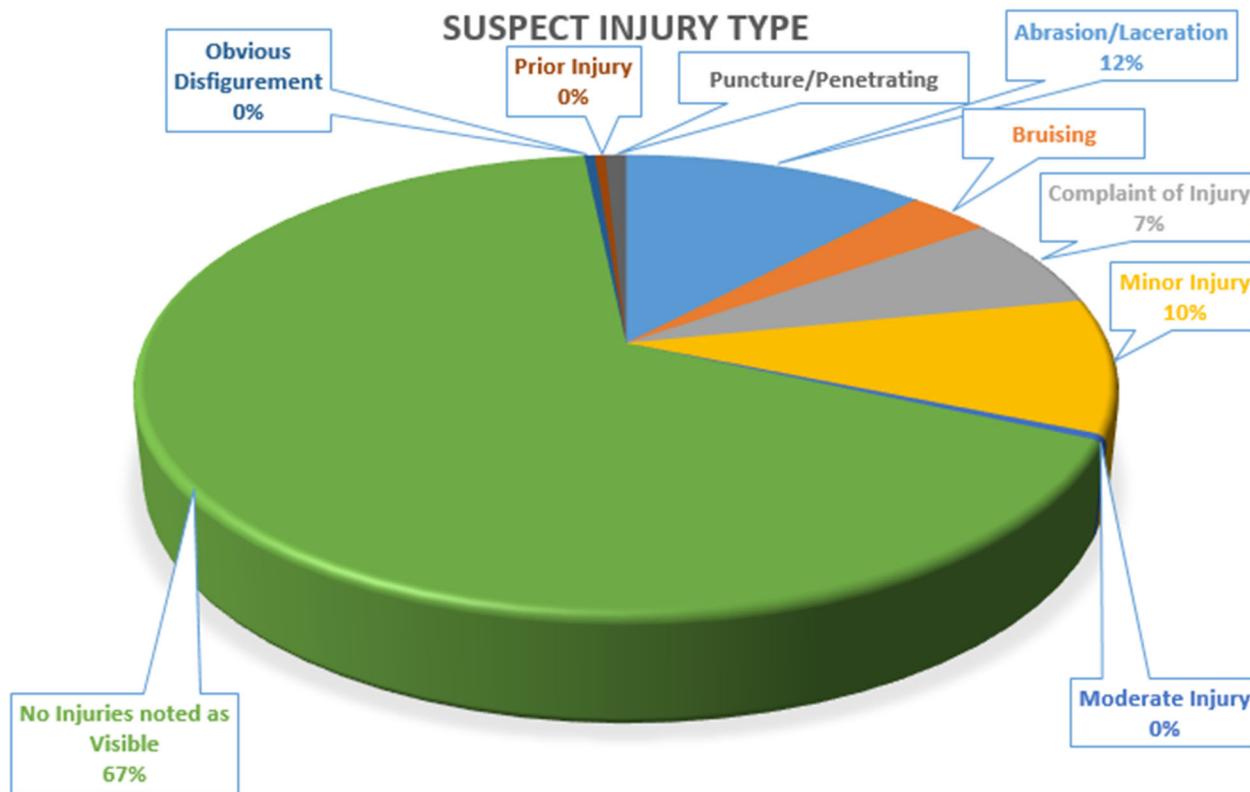
Types of resistance offered by the subject. A complete breakdown of the reported resistance type are as follows in the below chart:



Officers reported that injuries were documented in 38% of all use-of-force incidents. A complete breakdown of the reported injuries are as follows in the below chart:



In the few cases where a suspect injury was reported, minor injuries, such as, abrasion or laceration were most often reported. A complete breakdown of the reported injury types are as follows in the below chart:



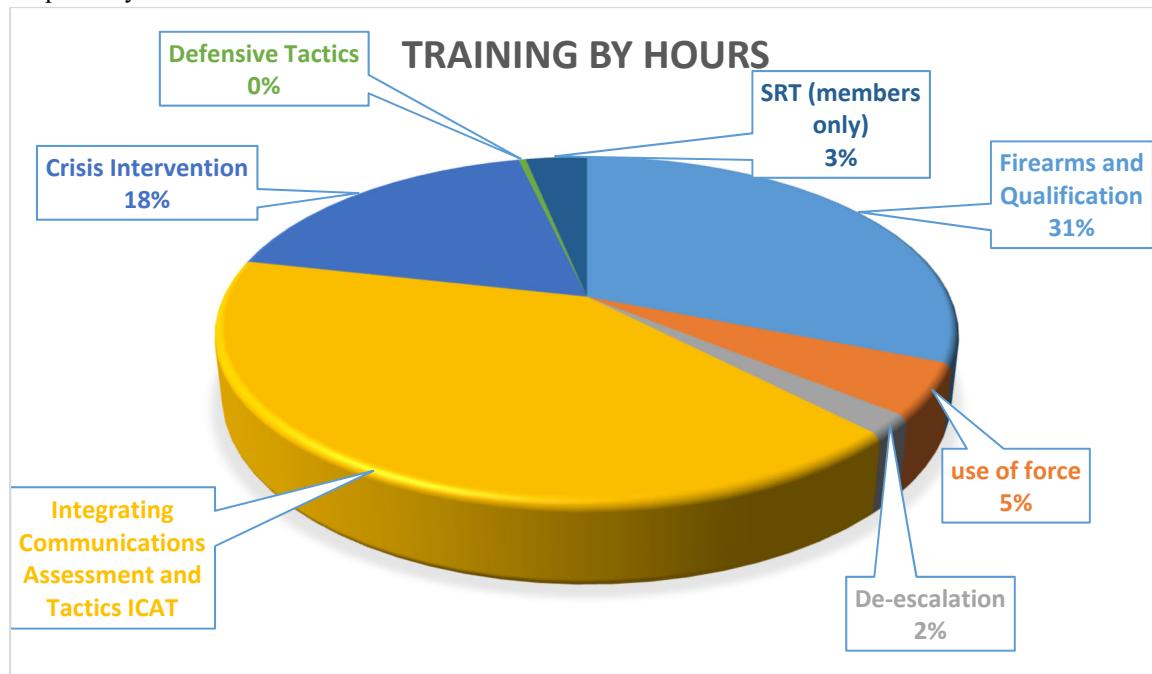
C. TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT

The following section is a review of training and equipment issues relevant to use-of-force. The information was obtained through CDTU records, GA P.O.S.T records, Power DMS, and discussion with the Department Quartermaster. The year 2020 was difficult for the Training Unit, due to the Covid-19 restrictions that were in place for much of the year. However, the CDTU still moved forward during the pandemic on multiple levels, and the unit conducted training for the agency to ensure all state mandates were covered.

1. Training Hours Offered by ACCPD in 2020

The amount and type of training offered by the Department is currently adequate given the needs and resources available. The Department offered its officers a total of 6,332 hours of training related to Use-of-Force, Firearms, De-escalation, Community Policing, and Lethal Force. A complete breakdown of the reported training hours are as follows below:

- Firearms – 1967 Hours
- Defensive Tactics – 24 Hours
- Integrating Communications Assessment and Tactics (ICAT) – 2580 Hours
- Crisis Intervention Training – 1134 Hours
- Use of Force – 307 Hours
- SRT (SRT Members only) – 203
- De-escalation - 117



2. Effectiveness of Current Training

In 2020, CDTU was understaffed. The unit was two instructors short and only had one instructor to handle all firearms training and qualifications. As a result, an additional Firearms and Use-of-Force instructor were reassigned to the CDTU in an effort to enhance the effectiveness and quality of training offered. Due to risks posed by COVID-19, all defensive tactics training ceased in 2020. The training provided by the CDTU is still effective and the unit is constantly working to implement new and improved efforts in officer development.

3. Suggestions for Improvement

- Replace the turning target system at the range. The current system has reached the end of its life cycle and no longer functions properly. The ACCPD anticipates funding this needed replacement during FY22.
- Purchase steel targets to replace those that are broken.
- Purchase more medical training supplies like fake wounds and wound packing devices to aid in realism of training when treating shooting victims using the medical supplies provided in the Buddy Kits.

- Purchase Virtual Reality headsets from Axon to replace the static simulator, which is outdated. Virtual Reality Training is the future for Law Enforcement and it can be used for training on de-escalation, dealing with mental health consumers, use-of-force decision-making, and duty-to-intervene training.
- Increase the training hours in NOBC so that officers can receive in-house training in defensive tactics, handcuffing, and weapon retention. When NOBC was shortened, this particular training was eliminated.
- Hold a week-long mandatory in-service training for all officers. In that week, officers would receive their mandatory training on all high-liability topics and any refresher training that is required annually.
- The department should transition to the Gen 5 Glock 17 MOS handguns. This offers additionally opportunity for officers to use newly available miniature red dot sight technology on their handguns for duty use. These sights are expected to improve safety by increasing offers speed of target acquisition, improving accuracy, reducing potential of collateral impact during an officer-involved-shooting incident, and reducing the threat of mistake-of-fact (i.e., incorrectly perceiving a weapon) shooting incidents.
- The department should purchase and deploy Pepper Ball for SRT and Mobile Field Force to expand less-lethal force options during critical incidents.

4. New/Additional Training Equipment Implemented

- 23 new patrol rifles issued to officers.
- 76 new High Lumen Weapon Lights (replacements).
- Purchase of ten (10) 40mm Less Lethal Launchers for patrol. These 40mm Launchers provide patrol officers with another less-lethal option during critical incidents. Previously, only SRT members were trained in their use. Miniature Red Dot Sights (MRDS) on handguns were tested for carry by ACCPD officers. The MRDS system provides many benefits over iron sights.

5. Future Needs

- Reality-based training facility for building clearing and large open area Virtual Reality Training.
- Design and build a driving track for Emergency Vehicle Operator Course (EVOC) training and advanced EVOC training for all officers. Additional

EVOC training will enhance safety and reduce preventable collisions and liability, as well as budgetary coast to replace damaged vehicles.

D. POLICIES AND REPORTING

The following section is a review of the departmental Use-of-Force policies and reporting practices. During 2020, use-of-force policy was covered under Directive 6.01. There were three updates to the policy. These updates were implemented in March, July, and October respectively. The updates cancelled out previous policy: A1/02/04, A3/01/01, A3/02/02, A3/02/03, A3/03/06, A3/03/07, A3/03/08, A3/03/0312, B1/05/03, B1/08/03, C4/07/09, General Order 3.01, and General Order 3.08. Significant enhancements of prior use-of-force policy included emphasis on de-escalation tactics such as slowing down or calming an incident to allow officers more time, space, flexibility, resources, or options to reduce the potential need to use force or minimize the level of force necessary.

Another significant change in de-escalation was the implementation of staging prior to arriving on scene, and requesting additional resources, and additional communication requirements. Additionally, there were no significant changes in State or Federal laws last year that appeared to impact use-of-force policy within the Department.

E. Analysis

- Deficiencies – The largest deficiency in 2020 was the lack of Defensive Tactics Training offered for officers, due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- Taser 7 purchase was delayed, which pushed the transition to 2021.
- No policy failures were observed for this period.