AN ANALYSIS OF 2014 USE OF FORCE INCIDENTS IN THE MILWAUKEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

REPORT OF THE
FIRE AND POLICE COMMISSION

200 East Wells Street
City Hall, Room 706A
Milwaukee, WI 53202
(414) 286-5000

Website: http://www.milwaukee.gov/fpc

October 22, 2015

Prepared by:

Steven G. Brandl, Ph.D.
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Criminal Justice Department

Table of Contents

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to provide an analysis of use of force incidents recorded by

the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) from January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014. This

report is part of a continuing systematic effort that began in 2009 to provide an understanding of

the nature, frequency, and circumstances of use of force incidents in the MPD. One of the

objectives of this study is to provide baseline statistics on use of force incidents in order to allow

one to monitor changes in patterns, trends, and frequency of use of force incidents over time.

The report is divided into two main sections: (1) summary baselines and (2) situational

characteristics of use of force incidents. The report concludes with data recommendations and a

summary of the findings.

The data analyzed here were obtained from the MPD Administrative Investigation

Management (AIM) system database. The AIM system contains a comprehensive list of

variables on each use of force incident recorded by the MPD. The data relate directly to the

incident (e.g., date of incident, district of incident, types of force used in the incident) as well as

the officers (e.g., officer age, officer rank) and subjects (e.g., subject age, race, charge) involved

in the incident. There are separate variables for each officer and each subject involved in the

incident. The data were manually converted to Excel and then to the Statistical Package for the

Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis.[1]

Along with the entry of data into the AIM system for each use of force incident, narrative

descriptions of each incident were also written by supervisory officers at the time of the incident.

These reports contained information obtained from the officers involved as well as the subject

and other witnesses, if available. In preparing this report, these narratives were reviewed and

used to verify and, in some cases, supplement the AIM system data. The narratives for 2014

---

[1] These conversions were performed by Sgt. Michelle Pagan of the Police Department and
Bridget Winters of the Fire and Police Commission.

comprised 1,310 pages of text. Additional data on the number of arrests, traffic stops, and subject stops made by officers in 2014 were obtained in a separate report from the MPD.

As noted, the data in the AIM system are based on "Use of Force Reports" completed by supervisory officers when a use of force incident occurs. According to MPD Use of Force policy 460.35:

> The *Use of Force Report* shall be completed by a supervisory officer when a Department member discharges a firearm; uses a baton in the line of duty; discharges an irritant, chemical, or inflammatory agent; deploys an Electronic Control Device, to include non-contact spark display, contact stun, and probe deployment; Department canine bites a person; forcible blood draws requiring use of force to obtain a sample where a subject claims injury or is injured as a result of police action; uses bodily force that involves focused strikes, diffused strikes, or decentralizations to the ground; uses any type of force in which a person is injured or claims injury, whether or not the injury is immediately visible.

This policy was put into place January 1, 2013. Under this policy, incidents that involved "bodily force only" without injury or complaint of injury from the subject are now required to be documented, where previously they were not. As a result of this policy change, some of the data from 2013 and 2014 are not comparable to the data analyzed prior to 2013. Only when appropriate is pre-2013 data compared to post-2013 data.

Frequency of Use of Force Incidents: Summary Baselines

From January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014, there were 728 use of force incidents recorded by the MPD. Of these 728 incidents, six were accidental[2] and 22 were for the purpose of euthanizing an injured or diseased animal.[3] As these 28 incidents are fundamentally different

---

[2] Three of these incidents involved the accidental discharge of a firearm, 1 involved an accidental discharge of an Electronic Control Device (ECD; Taser), and 2 involved other unintentional circumstances. None of the firearm or ECD incidents involved a subject.

[3] Seventeen of these incidents involved deer and 5 involved a raccoon. All of these incidents involved the use of a firearm.

from other use of force incidents in the purpose and intent of the force, these incidents are excluded from all subsequent analysis. Accordingly, 700 incidents are analyzed in this report (compared to 895 in 2013; a 21.8% decline). In addition, of the 700 incidents, 25 involved force being used exclusively against one or more dogs (one additional incident involved force being used against a dog and a subject). These incidents are included in most of the aggregate totals analyzed in this report and they are also analyzed separately (see p.18).

On the basis of the AIM system and other departmental data, several baseline measures were computed and are discussed here: (1) number of incidents per day and per month, (2) number of incidents in relation to number of arrests, (3) number of incidents in relation to number of traffic stops, (4) number of incidents in relation to number of subject stops, (5) number of incidents in relation to city population, and (6) number of incidents in each police district and aldermanic district. Each is discussed below.[4]

Baseline 1: Use of Force by Day/Month

With 700 incidents occurring from January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014, there was an average of approximately 1.92 use of force incidents per day (58.3 per month). Table 1 provides a breakdown of the incidents by month.

Table 1. Month of Incident

Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
53	49	66	67	90	73	77	57	49	50	34	35	700

---

[4] The baseline measures used here have been calculated in other police departments as well; however, comparing use of force baselines across departments is hazardous because practices of defining and recording use of force incidents (as well as arrests, traffic stops, etc.) are not standard across police departments.

As seen in Table 1, May, June, and July had the largest number of incidents. There was also a notable decline in incidents beginning in September and continuing through the end of the year. This pattern is similar to 2013.

Given the decline in use of force incidents during the months of September through December, additional analyses were conducted to see if this same pattern existed across each of the seven police districts. Table 2 shows the number of use of force incidents by month and by district.

Table 2. Use of Force Incidents per Month, by District

Month	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	Total
Jan	7	5	8	7	10	4	11	52
Feb	2	11	8	5	6	7	9	48
March	7	3	13	14	8	6	14	65
April	4	8	12	5	14	5	17	65
May	13	8	19	8	17	7	15	87
June	5	10	12	8	10	7	20	72
July	3	10	18	4	13	5	24	77
Aug	6	7	11	6	12	5	10	57
Sept	1	5	5	9	18	2	18	48
Oct	6	5	9	4	18	4	14	50
Nov	3	5	8	5	14	2	5	32
Dec	1	2	3	2	3	8	15	34
Total	58	79	126	77	123	62	162	687

Note: In 13 cases, the district was unknown; these cases are not included in the table.

Indeed, inspection of Table 2 shows that there were, on average, fewer use of force incidents per month from September through December, compared to January through August, in each police district.

Baseline 2: Use of Force and Arrests

Because most use of force incidents occur during arrests, it is necessary to consider the number of use of force incidents in relation to the number of arrests made. Further, in this calculation, it is important to include only the use of force incidents that also involved an arrest. Again, in 2014 there were 700 use of force incidents. Of these 700 incidents, 675 involved a person who could have potentially been arrested (25 incidents involved only a dog; 1 incident involved a subject and a dog). Of these 675 incidents where someone could have been arrested, in 656 of them a subject was actually arrested. Also during this period, MPD officers made a total of 25,193 arrests (for felonies, misdemeanors, and ordinance violations). Accordingly, for each arrest where force was used, there were approximately 38 arrests where force was not used (25,193/656 = 38.4). Overall, in 2014, an average of 2.60 percent of all arrests involved the use of force (656/25,193 * 100 = 2.60) compared to 2.79 percent in 2013.

Interestingly, and as expected, there is a strong correlation between the number of force incidents that involved an arrest and the total number of arrests, by month (r = .75; see Table 3). In essence, one can reasonably (but not perfectly) predict the number of force incidents that involved an arrest based on the total number of arrests that were made. In other words, more arrests translate into more use of force incidents, fewer arrests translate into fewer use of force incidents. Not only were there, on average, fewer force incidents in the last quarter of the year (Tables 1 and 2), but also fewer arrests, especially in December (Table 3).

Table 3. Use of Force Arrest Incidents and Total Number of Arrests Made, by Month

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Number of Use of Force Incidents That Involved an Arrest	49	45	64	60	86	69	71	73	46	49	32	32	656
Total Number of Arrests Made	2,079	2,086	2,323	2,285	2,312	2,037	2,315	2,362	2,114	1,912	1,723	1,645	25,193

Baseline 3: Use of Force and Traffic Stops

The third baseline compares the number of use of force incidents that resulted from traffic stops to the total number of traffic stops made by officers. As the overwhelming majority of traffic stops that involved force also involved at least one arrest, it must be understood that these traffic stop tallies are not independent of the arrest statistics discussed in Baseline 2.

In 2014, MPD officers made 172,723 traffic stops and 51 of them involved the use of force. In total, there were approximately 3,387 traffic stops for each traffic stop that involved the use of force (172,723 / 51 = 3,386.7). Overall, an average of approximately .03 percent of traffic stops involved the use of force (51 / 172,723 *100 = .03).

Baseline 4: Use of Force and Field Interviews

The fourth baseline compares the number of field interviews (subject stops) where force was used to the total number of field interviews conducted by officers. As with traffic stops, the overwhelming majority of field interviews that involved force also involved at least one arrest. As a result, once again, these field interview figures are not independent of the arrest statistics discussed in Baseline 2.

In 2014, MPD officers conducted 45,966 subject stops and 79 of them involved the use of force. There were, on average, 582 subject stops for each stop that involved the use of force (45,966 / 79 = 581.8). Overall, an average of approximately .17 percent of subject stops involved the use of force (79 / 45,966 * 100 = .17). Based on these data, it is reasonable to conclude that use of force in subject stops is an extremely rare event, and the use of force in traffic stops is even more uncommon.

Baseline 5: Officers Involved in Use of Force Incidents

The 700 use of force incidents that occurred in 2014 involved 436 different MPD officers. In 2014, the MPD employed 1,915 sworn officers. As such, approximately 23 percent of all MPD officers (436 / 1915 * 100 = 22.8) were involved in at least one use of force incident in 2014. In other words, approximately 77 percent of all sworn officers were *not* involved in any use of force incidents in 2014.

Baseline 6: Use of Force and City Population

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the City of Milwaukee had a population of 594,833. Considering the 700 use of force incidents in relation to the population of the city, there was approximately one incident for every 850 Milwaukee residents in 2014.

Baseline 7: Use of Force and Geographic Location of Incidents

Two variables are related to the geographic location of the incidents: aldermanic district (Table 4) and police district (Table 5). Aldermanic District 7 had the largest share of use of force incidents (15.2%), while District 11 had the smallest share of incidents (2.3%) (see Table 4).

Table 4. Location of Use of Force Incidents: Aldermanic District

Aldermanic District	Frequency	Percentage
1	43	6.3
2	49	7.2
3	24	3.5
4	71	10.4
5	23	3.4
6	72	10.5
7	104	15.2
8	24	3.5
9	29	4.2
10	40	5.8
11	15	2.2
12	50	7.3
13	23	3.4
14	31	4.5
15	87	12.7
Total	685	100.1

Note: Missing data (15 cases) are excluded from the analyses due to unknown district; percentage does not total 100 due to rounding.

As for police district, as seen in Table 5 (p. 9) and as noted earlier, there was substantial variation in the number of use of force incidents across police district. Similar to previous years, the largest proportion of use of force incidents occurred in Police District 7 (23.6%); however, from 2013, there was a substantial decline in use of force incidents in District 7; from 242 to 162, a 33 percent decline (Table 5).

As noted, department-wide, there was a decline in use of force incidents from 887 in 2013 to 687 in 2014, a difference of 200 incidents. Police District 7 alone accounted for 80 of these incidents. Therefore, the department-wide decline in use of force incidents from 2013 to 2014 largely reflects the decline in incidents in District 7; 40 percent (80 of 200) of the overall decline in force incidents is attributable to District 7.

Table 5. Location of Use of Force Incidents in 2013 and 2014: Police District

Police District	2014 Frequency(1)	2014 Percentage	2013 Frequency(2)	Percent Increase or (Decrease) from 2013
1	58	8.4	33	75.8
2	79	11.5	138	(42.8)
3	126	18.3	174	(27.6)
4	77	1.2	84	(9.1)
5	123	17.9	158	(22.2)
6	62	9.0	58	6.9
7	162	23.6	242	(33.1)
Total	687	99.9	887	--

Note: (1) Missing data (13 cases) are excluded from the analyses due to unknown district; (2) Missing data (8 cases) are excluded from the analyses due to unknown district.

Given the wide variation in the number of use of force incidents across police district, it may be useful to explore possible corresponding variation in population and arrests across districts. Table 6 shows the total number of arrests, the number of arrests that involved force, the total number of force incidents, and the population of each police district. From these figures, the "number of arrests for each use of force arrest" and the "number of residents for each use of force incident" is calculated.

Table 6. Arrests, Population, and Use of Force by Police District

Police District	Total Arrests Made (a)	Number of Use of Force Incidents That Involved an Arrest (b)	Number of Arrests for Each Use of Force Arrest	Total Number of Use of Force Incidents (c)	Population (d)	Number of Residents for Each Use of Force Incident (e)
1	1,079	55	19.6	58	47,807	824
2	3,948	71	55.6	79	85,671	1,084
3	5,361	122	43.9	126	82,030	651
4	2,992	73	41.0	77	94,295	1,225
5	4,348	114	38.1	123	67,841	552
6	2,203	60	36.7	62	114,117	1,841
7	4,055	149	27.2	162	102,336	632
Total	23,986	644	--	687	594,097	--

Notes: (a) Total arrests made excludes 1207 arrests because the arrest could not be placed in a district due to the address of the arrest being unknown or unmatched; (b) 12 missing cases (unknown district); (c) 13 missing cases (unknown district); (d) Population based on 2010 U.S. Census data as reported in the "Milwaukee Police District Statistics" web site; however, the total district population does not equal the city population reported by the 2010 U.S. Census; (e) figures are rounded.

If use of force incidents were simply and completely a function of arrests made and the size of the population served, one would expect there to be minimal variation across districts in the total number of arrests for each use of force arrest, as well as minimal variation in the number of residents for each use of force incident (i.e., police districts that have more arrests would also have more use of force incidents; police districts that have more population would have more use of force incidents). As shown in Table 6, this is not the case; there is variation across police districts in the number of arrests for each use of force arrest, and the number of residents for each use of force incident. In previous years, the figures for Police District 7 clearly stood out from the other districts; in District 7, the "number of arrests for each use of force arrest" and the "number of residents for each use of force incident" was substantially higher than in the other districts. However, in the present analyses it is seen that District 7

metrics are not substantially different from those of Districts 3 and 5. Nevertheless, in an absolute and relative sense, the use of force in arrest situations is a very uncommon event, even in Districts 3, 5, and 7.

To further explore this issue, additional analyses were conducted. Table 7 shows the number of traffic stops, field interviews, total police-citizen contacts (traffic stops and field interviews combined), the number of use of force incidents, and the calculated rate of use of force incidents per 1,000 police-citizen contacts (i.e., number of use of force incidents / total police-citizen contacts x 1,000).

Table 7. Use of Force Incidents and Police-Citizen Contacts by Police District

Police District	Traffic Stops (a)	Field Interviews (b)	Total Number of Police-Citizen Contacts	Total Number of Use of Force Incidents (c)	Use of Force Incidents per 1,000 Police-Citizen Contacts
1	14,137	7,570	21,707	58	2.67
2	19,689	5,813	25,502	79	3.10
3	31,368	8,979	40,347	126	3.12
4	20,341	6,083	26,424	77	2.91
5	32,185	7,721	39,906	123	3.08
6	20,101	4,547	24,648	62	2.52
7	33,445	4,847	38,292	162	4.23
Total	171,266	45,560	216,826	687	3.17 (mean)

Notes: (a) 1,457 missing cases (the stop could not be placed in a district due to the address of the stop being unknown or unmatched); (b) 406 missing cases (the interview could not be placed in a district due to the address of the stop being unknown or unmatched); (c) 13 missing cases (unknown district).

Table 7 shows that, with regard to traffic stops and field interviews, use of force is generally similar across police districts, with District 7 having the highest rate with 4.23 incidents per 1,000 police-citizen contacts. Overall, use of force in traffic stops and field interviews is very uncommon across all seven districts.

Situational Characteristics of Use of Force Incidents

Along with providing baseline measures of use of force, the other purpose of this study is to provide an understanding of the circumstances of use of force incidents. The following characteristics of use of force incidents are discussed here: (1) characteristics of officers and subjects involved in use of force incidents, (2) types of force used, (3) other characteristics of use of force incidents, and (4) frequency of force used against dogs.

Characteristics of Officers and Subjects Involved in Use of Force Incidents

The 700 use of force incidents involved 436 MPD officers. Most incidents (407 out of 700; 58.1%) involved one officer, 215 incidents (30.7%) involved two officers, and 78 incidents (11.1%) involved three or more officers. With regard to the number of officers involved in the incidents, 280 officers (of the 436 officers; 64.2%) were involved in just one incident in 2014, 90 officers (20.6%) were involved in two incidents, 37 officers (8.5%) were involved in three incidents, and 29 officers (6.7%) were involved in more than three incidents. The most incidents an officer was involved in was seven. Previous analyses show that the best predictor of the number of use of force incidents an officer is involved in is the number of arrests made by that officer.

In 94 percent of the incidents, the first officer[5] involved was male, in 75 percent the officer was white, in 97 percent of incidents the officer was in uniform, in 99 percent of the incidents the officer was on duty, in 95 percent of incidents the officer was the rank of police officer, and in 84 percent of incidents the officer was assigned to squad patrol. The average (mean) age of the first officer was 36 and the average length of service was 9 years. In 16

---

[5] Due to the structure of the data, most descriptive statements regarding the officers and subjects relate only to the first officer or subject involved.

percent of the incidents, an officer involved in the incident was injured. These characteristics are similar to previous years.

The 675 incidents involved 665 different subjects.[6] Most incidents (97.0%; 654 out of 674) involved just one subject, 20 of 674 incidents (3.0%) involved two or more subjects. Eleven subjects were involved in multiple incidents in 2014.

In 85 percent of the incidents, the first subject involved was male, in 73 percent the subject was Black, in 39 percent the subject was under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, the average age of the first subject was 30 years (with a range of 13 to 69), and in 63 percent of incidents the subject was injured, with the greatest proportion (52%) of these injuries classified as "minor." In two incidents, the injuries sustained by the subject were fatal. In three percent of incidents the subject was armed with a weapon (not including personal weapons such as fists or feet). In 74 percent of the incidents the subject had a previous criminal record. In 86 percent of incidents, the officer noted that the subject resisted arrest. These characteristics are similar to those in previous years except that the percentage of subjects armed with a weapon substantially declined in 2014 from 2013.

Type of Force Used by Officers

With regard to the type of force used, it is seen in Table 8 that the majority of incidents (69.6%) involved "bodily force only."

---

[6] In 1 case the name of the subject was unknown or not provided. Excluded from these analyses are the 25 incidents that only involved a dog.

Table 8. Type of Force Used

Type of Forced Used	Frequency	Percentage
Bodily Force Only	487	69.6
ECD Only	46	6.6
Chemical Agent Only (OC)	30	4.3
Firearm Only	26	3.7
Baton Only	1	.1
Bodily Force and OC	41	5.9
Bodily Force and ECD	23	3.3
Bodily Force, OC, Baton	2	.3
Police Canine	2	.3
Bodily Force, ECD, OC	4	.6
Bodily Force and Baton	4	.6
Firearm and OC	1	.1
Firearm, Bodily Force, Baton	1	.1
Firearm and Bodily Force	2	.3
Other Combination (no firearm)	30	1.8
Total	700	100.1

Note: Percentage does not total 100 due to rounding.

In total, 30 incidents (4.3%) involved the use of a firearm alone or in combination with another form of force[7] and, as discussed in more detail below, 22 of these incidents involved a dog only. Clearly, in a relative and absolute sense, the use of a firearm in a use of force incident was an uncommon event.

A large share of the decline in use of force incidents from 2013 to 2014 is attributable to a decline in the use of bodily force; of the 200 incident decline, 171 was as a result of the less frequent use of bodily force only. Additional analyses were performed to examine patterns in the types of force used over time (Table 9). These analyses are limited to incidents that involved the use of a chemical agent (OC Spray), an ECD (Taser), or a firearm.[8] First, it is seen that there has

---

[7] Pointing or aiming a firearm (or ECD) without discharging the weapon was not a reportable use of force category.

[8] The 2013 use of force reporting policy change does not preclude an analysis of weapon use across years but it does preclude an analysis of "bodily force only" incidents. Prior to the policy

been a steady decline in police use of firearms over time. Of the six years under examination, years 2009 to 2014, 2014 had the fewest number of incidents that involved the police discharge of a firearm (either at a person or a dog). Second, police use of an ECD increased in frequency to 2011, and has declined since 2012. This is a clear pattern but has no obvious explanation. Finally, with regard to the use of OC spray, another clear pattern is evident: a rather steady decline from 2009 to 2014.

Table 9. Type of Force Used, by Year

Type of Force Used	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Firearm Alone or with Other	53	46	51	40	40	30
ECD Alone or with Other (not with firearm)	85	125	144	101	85	77
OC Alone or with Other (not with ECD or firearm)	150	154	137	115	89	74

It is important to note that certain forms of force were more likely than others to lead to "major" or fatal injuries to subjects. In total, there were six incidents that involved "major" or fatal injuries to subjects: two involved a subject being stuck by gunfire and four involved bodily force. In other words, 25 percent of the time a firearm was used against a subject it led to major or fatal injuries (2 of 8 incidents) and .7 percent of the time bodily force was used against a subject it led to major injuries (4 of 570 incidents; in no instances was bodily force fatal). As noted, bodily force is by far the most common type of force used against subjects. Most of the time (335 of 570 incidents; 58.7%) it resulted in at least minor injuries to subjects.

Analyses also reveal that certain forms of force were more likely than others to lead to officer injuries. Specifically, officers were more likely to be injured when using bodily force

change of January 1, 2013, all incidents that involved the use of a weapon were required to be reported, but only bodily force incidents that resulted in a citizen injury, or a complaint of an injury, were required to be reported.

than when using a chemical agent or an ECD. There are two ways to look at this issue: (1) 92.6 percent of officers' injuries occurred during the use of bodily force and (2) 17 percent of bodily force incidents resulted in injury to officers.

Table 10 shows how firearms were used in force incidents. In the rare instance that a firearm was used, it was most commonly used for the purpose of neutralizing a dog.

Table 10. Incidents Where the Force Used was a Firearm

Subject of Firearm	Frequency	Percentage	Result
Dog(s)	22	73.3	23 dogs hit
Subject	8	26.7	3 subjects hit
Total Number of Incidents	30	100.0	--

Of the eight incidents that involved the use of a firearm against a subject, two involved fatal injuries, one involved non-fatal injuries, and five resulted in no gunshot injuries (a subject was shot at but not struck). Six incidents involved a subject who was armed (4 with a gun, 1 with a vehicle, 1 with an officer's baton). These eight incidents involved a variety of situations; most commonly it was robbery-related. All of the incidents involved on-duty officers.

Table 11 shows the frequency of incidents where dogs and subjects were the focus of the firearm from 2009 to 2014. It is seen that there has been an uneven decline in incidents that involve firearm force against a person and a steady decline in the number of firearm incidents that involve a dog.

Table 11. Subject of Police Use of a Firearm, by Year (Incidents)

Target of Firearm	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Person	14	12	15	9	14	8
Dog	39	34	36	31	26	22

Other Characteristics of Use of Force Incidents

Along with the situational characteristics of use of force incidents that have already been discussed, three additional characteristics are worthy of mention. First, as seen in Table 12, most often use of force incidents occurred as a result of officers conducting investigations or while at calls for service, followed by subject stops and traffic stops. Much of the "other" category was simply identified in the database as "effecting arrest." As discussed earlier, given the absolute volume of police-citizen contacts in these and other situations, the relative rarity of use of force incidents is significant. In addition, approximately equal proportions of use of force incidents occurred at night as during daylight. Finally, most incidents occurred outdoors. These findings are similar to those of previous years.

Table 12. Other Characteristics of Use of Force Incidents

Characteristic	freq	%
Activity That Led to Incident	700	100.0
Investigation/Call for Service	274	39.1
Subject Stop	79	11.3
Traffic Stop	51	7.3
Other	296	42.3
Time/Lighting of Incident	700	100.0
Dark/Night	332	47.4
Light/Daytime	327	46.7
Dusk/Dawn	41	5.9
Location of Incident	700	100.0
Indoors	215	30.7
Outdoors	485	69.3

Force Used Against Dogs

Of the 700 use of force incidents that occurred in 2014, 26 involved force being used against at least one dog.[9] One incident involved the use of an ECD, three involved the use of OC spray, one involved the use of OC spray and a firearm, and 21 incidents involved the use of a firearm only. One of these incidents also involved force being used against a subject. These 26 incidents involved 28 dogs (2 incidents involved 2 dogs). Twenty-three of the dogs were struck by gunfire; one was shot at but not hit. In total, of the 28 dogs upon which force was used, 16 died.

Of the 28 dogs, 25 (89.3%) were pit bulls and 3 (10.7%) were other breeds. The most common circumstances in which force was used against dogs was when officers were dealing with a loose dog, either while on patrol or as a result of a call for service (see Table 13). In one of the 26 incidents, two officers were bit by the dog prior to force being used against the dog (in each instance the officer was bit in the lower leg).

Table 13. Circumstance of Incidents Where Force was Used against Dogs

Circumstance	Frequency	Percentage
Search Warrant	6	23.1
Loose Dog, While on Patrol	5	19.2
Loose Dog, Call for Service	4	15.4
Call for Service, Animal Bite	3	11.5
Call for Service, Animal Cruelty	2	7.7
Other or Not Specified	6	23.1
TOTALS	26	100.0

---

[9] Note that Table 10 and Table 11 (p. 16) only include those incidents where a firearm was used against a dog; the analyses reported here include any type of force used against a dog. For comparison, in 2013 there were 26 incidents that involved at least one dog. In 2012 there were 32 incidents that involved at least one dog. In 2011, there were 38 such incidents, in 2010, there were 35 such incidents, and in 2009 there were 43 such incidents.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to put these incidents into perspective as no reliable estimates of the number of dogs, by breed, in Milwaukee were located, nor are there statistics that indicate the number of dogs that are confronted by MPD officers but are not shot.

Data Recommendations

The Use of Force Reports and the AIM system provide a good method for recording and storing details on use of force incidents. Since 2009, and as recommended, numerous significant improvements have been made that enhance the value and utility of these data. In particular, the data appear complete and the narratives associated with the reports are much improved. However, the AIM system is not particularly well suited for the analysis of data. The process of converting the AIM system data to a format for statistical analyses is labor intensive and time consuming.

In addition, several additional items of information regarding use of force incidents should be captured and coded in order to better understand the effects of force. In particular:

- During the incident, was an officer assaulted (i.e., was an officer intentionally hit, kicked, bit, shot, stabbed, or spat upon)? (0) no, (1) yes.

- If an officer was injured as a result of the incident, what was the nature of those injuries?

- If an officer was injured as a result of the incident, did the officer receive medical treatment at or before the time of the use of force report was completed? (0) no, (1) yes.

- If injured, did the subject receive medical treatment at or before the time of the use of force report was completed? (0) no, (1) yes

These improvements may allow for a more complete understanding of use of force incidents in the MPD.

Summary

This report is part of a continuing effort to better understand use of force incidents in the Milwaukee Police Department. Based on an analysis of the reportable incidents that occurred between January 1, 2014 and December 31, 2014, the following summary statements can be made:

- There were 700 use of force incidents in 2014, a decrease of 21.8% from 2013.

- There was an average of 1.92 use of force incidents per day in 2014.

- There were 38 arrests for every one arrest that involved the use of force.

- Approximately 2.60 percent of arrests involved the use of force in 2014.

- There were 3,387 traffic stops for each traffic stop that involved the use of force.

- Approximately .03 percent of traffic stops involved the use of force.

- There were 582 subject stops for each subject stop that involved force.

- Approximately .17 percent of subject stops involved the use of force.

- Approximately 23 percent of MPD sworn officers (436 of 1,915) were involved in at least one use of force incident in 2014. Approximately 64 percent of these 436 officers were involved in just one incident; approximately seven percent of the officers were involved in more than three incidents.

- There was one incident of force for every 850 persons in Milwaukee in 2014.

- The largest proportion of use of force incidents in 2014 occurred in Police District 7 (23.6%) and in Aldermanic District 7 (15.2%).

- Similar to previous years, there was variation across police districts in the number of arrests for each use of force arrest, in the number of residents for each use of force incident, and in the number of use of force incidents per 1,000 police-citizen contacts

(traffic stops and field interviews). In spite of this variation, use of force was a rare event in all districts.

- The most common type of force was "bodily force only" (69.6%) followed by "ECD only" (6.6%). Since 2009, the use of a chemical agent has steadily declined in frequency; the use of an ECD increased to 2011 and then declined; the use of a firearm has also declined from 2009 to 2014.

- Thirty incidents (4.3%) involved a firearm; in 22 of these incidents (73.3%) the firearm was used to shoot (or shoot at) a dog.

- The number of incidents where a subject was shot, or shot at, has declined compared to previous years (2009-2013). The number of incidents where a dog was shot, or shot at, has also declined compared to previous years.

- Approximately four percent of incidents (26 of 700) involved force being used against one or more dogs (usually via a firearm but also OC spray and ECD). Most of the dogs were pit bulls and the largest proportion these incidents related to a loose dog.

Based on the analyses conducted here, and similar to previous years, the typical use of force incident:

- Involved one uniformed police officer and one subject. The officer was a white male, 36 years old, with 9 years of service. The officer was not injured as a result of the incident. The subject was a Black male with a previous criminal record. The subject was not armed with a weapon. The subject resisted arrest and sustained "minor" injuries as a result of the incident. The incident most likely involved the officer using "bodily force only" against the subject.

This study provides information for understanding and interpreting the nature, frequency, and circumstances of use of force incidents in the MPD. The study also provides useful information on data collection practices concerning use of force incidents. These data can be used to compare baseline metrics to monitor use of force incidents.