

# AN ANALYSIS OF 2017 USE OF FORCE INCIDENTS IN THE MILWAUKEE POLICE DEPARTMENT



## REPORT OF THE FIRE AND POLICE COMMISSION

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## 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, 2017 to December 31, 2017. 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 information on use of force incidents 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 metrics and (2) situational characteristics of use of force incidents. The report concludes with a summary of the findings.

The data analyzed here are based on “Use of Force Reports” completed by supervisory officers when an MPD officer uses force. The “Use of Force Reports” provide descriptive details on each use of force incident. The data relate 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) involved in the incident. These data are contained in the MPD Administrative Investigation Management (AIM) system. For this report, the data were manually converted to Excel and then to the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis.<sup>1</sup>

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 narratives provide a written description of the incident. They are based on information obtained from the officers involved as well as the subject and other witnesses, if available. These narratives are stored in the AIM system. In preparing this report, these narratives were reviewed and used to verify and, in some cases, supplement the AIM system data. Additional

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<sup>1</sup> These conversions were performed by David Gelting of the Fire and Police Commission. The data were obtained from the MPD on March 12, 2018.

data on the number of arrests, traffic stops, and subject stops made by officers in 2017 were obtained separately from the MPD.

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. Prior to this policy, incidents that involved “bodily force only” without injury or complaint of injury from the subject were not required to be documented, now they are. As a result of this policy change, some of the data from 2013 through 2017 are not comparable to the data analyzed in 2009 to 2012. Only when appropriate is pre-2013 data compared to post-2013 data.

#### Frequency of Use of Force Incidents: Summary Metrics

From January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017, there were 704 use of force incidents recorded by the MPD. Of these 704 incidents, twelve were accidental<sup>2</sup> and eight involved euthanizing an injured or diseased animal.<sup>3</sup> As these 20 incidents are fundamentally different from other use of force incidents in the purpose and intent of the force, these incidents are

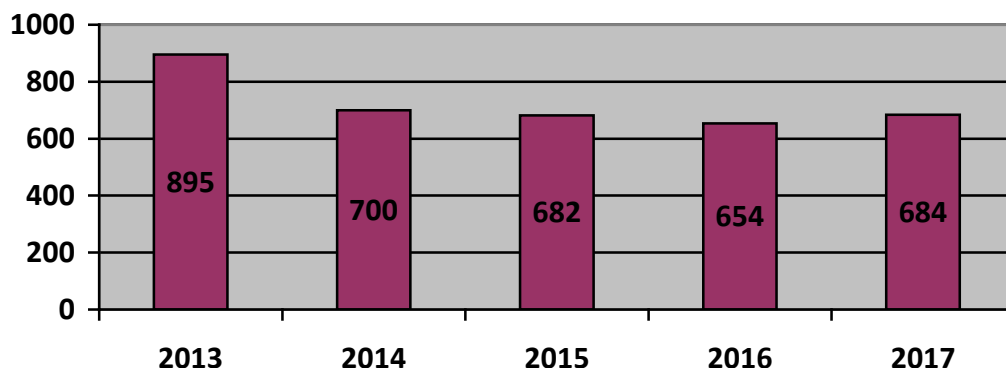
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<sup>2</sup> Ten of these incidents involved the accidental discharge of an Electronic Control Device (ECD; Taser) and two involved a police canine biting a citizen. One of the ECD incidents involved an injury to a police aide. No other incidents involved a subject or injuries.

<sup>3</sup> Seven of these incidents involved deer and one incident involved an opossum. All of the incidents involved the use of a firearm.

excluded from all subsequent analysis. Accordingly, 684 incidents are analyzed in this report (a 23.6% decline since 2013; see Figure 1).

**Figure 1.**  
**Number of Use of Force Incidents**



In addition, of the 684 incidents, 11 involved force being used exclusively against one or more dogs. These incidents are included in most of the aggregate totals analyzed in this report and they are also analyzed separately (see p.17).

On the basis of the AIM system and other departmental data, several comparison metrics 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.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The metrics used here have been calculated in other police departments as well; however, comparing use of force metrics 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.

*Metric 1: Use of Force by Day/Month*

With 684 incidents occurring from January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017, there was an average of approximately 1.87 use of force incidents per day (57 per month). Table 1 provides a breakdown of the incidents by month.

Table 1. Month of Incident

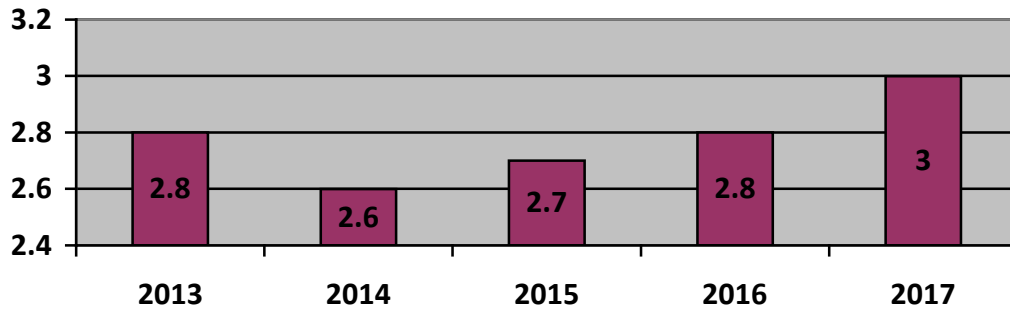
Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
43	47	55	60	56	61	83	70	76	53	45	35	684

As seen in Table 1, July, August, and September had the largest number of incidents, December the fewest. In most previous years, May, June, and July had the greatest number of incidents, December the fewest.

*Metric 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 2017 there were 684 use of force incidents. Of these 684 incidents, 673 involved a person who could have potentially been arrested (11 incidents involved a dog only). Of these 673 incidents where someone could have been arrested, in 630 of them a subject was arrested. Also during this period, MPD officers made a total of 21,022 arrests (for felonies, misdemeanors, and ordinance violations). Accordingly, for each arrest where force was used, there were approximately 33 arrests where force was not used ( $21,022 / 630 = 33.4$ ). Overall, in 2017, an average of 3.00 percent of all arrests involved the use of force ( $630 / 21,022 * 100 = 3.00$  (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2.**  
**Percent of Arrests**  
**that Involved the Use of Force**



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 ( $r = .80$ ; see Table 2). In other words, one can reasonably (but not perfectly) predict the number of force incidents each month based on the total number of arrests that were made each month. In short, more arrests translate into more use of force incidents, fewer arrests translate into fewer use of force incidents.

Table 2. 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	42	37	55	62	64	54	56	36	41	43	48	35	573
Total Number of Arrests Made	1524	1674	1793	1654	1782	1875	1851	1986	1854	1815	1679	1535	21022

### *Metric 3: Use of Force and Traffic Stops*

The third metric is a comparison of 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 the traffic stop tallies are not independent of the arrest statistics discussed in Metric 2.

In 2017, MPD officers made 150,616 traffic stops and 47 of them involved the use of force. In total, there were approximately 3,205 traffic stops for each traffic stop that involved the use of force ( $150,616 / 47 = 3,204.6$ ). Overall, an average of approximately .03 percent of traffic stops involved the use of force ( $47 / 150,616 * 100 = .03$ ). This percentage is similar to previous years.

### *Metric 4: Use of Force and Field Interviews*

The fourth metric is a comparison of 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. Therefore, once again, the field interview figures are not independent of the arrest statistics discussed in Metric 2.

In 2017, MPD officers conducted 13,475 subject stops and 94 of them involved the use of force. There were, on average, 143 subject stops for each stop that involved the use of force ( $13,475 / 94 = 143.4$ ). Overall, an average of approximately .69 percent of subject stops involved the use of force ( $94 / 13,475 * 100 = .69$ ). Although this percentage figure is quite low, it is substantially larger than last year (.24%). This is primarily due to the reduction in the number of subject stops made by officers (27,534 in 2016). Based on these data, one can



conclude that use of force in subject stops is a rare event, and the use of force in traffic stops is even more uncommon.

*Metric 5: Officers Involved in Use of Force Incidents*

The 684 use of force incidents that occurred in 2017 involved 408 different MPD officers. In 2017, the MPD employed 1,883 sworn officers. As such, approximately 22 percent of all MPD officers ( $408 / 1,883 * 100 = 21.7$ ) were involved in at least one use of force incident in 2017. In other words, approximately 78 percent of all sworn officers were *not* involved in any use of force incidents in 2017. This percentage is similar to previous years.

*Metric 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 684 use of force incidents in relation to the population of the city, there was approximately one incident for every 870 Milwaukee residents in 2017. This figure is similar to previous years.

*Metric 7: Use of Force and Geographic Location of Incidents*

Two variables are related to the geographic location of the incidents: aldermanic district (Table 3) and police district (Table 4). Aldermanic District 6 had the largest share of use of force incidents (13.9%), while District 11 had the smallest share of incidents (1.5%) (See Table 3, p. 8).

Table 4 (p. 9) shows the number of force incidents for each police district from 2013 to 2017. Five aspects of Table 4 are noteworthy. First, in 2013 to 2015, District 7 accounted for the greatest share of force incidents; however, in 2016 and 2017 District 7 is indistinguishable from Districts 3 or 5 in this regard. Second, and relatedly, the decline in use of force incidents in

District 7 from 2013 to 2017 is remarkable – from 242 incidents to 134 incidents, a decline of 44.6 percent. Third, from 2013 to 2017, the number of use of force incidents declined in each police district except for District 1. Fourth, District 1 and District 5 had noticeable increases in use of force incidents from 2016 to 2017. This may warrant further monitoring. Finally, and similar to previous years, Districts 3, 5, and 7 accounted for a large majority of use of force incidents in the city (62.4% in 2017, 60.6% in 2016, 60.2% in 2015, 59.8% in 2014, and 64.7% in 2013).

Table 3. Location of Use of Force Incidents: Aldermanic District

Aldermanic District	Frequency	Percentage
1	63	9.4
2	51	7.6
3	22	3.3
4	67	10.0
5	11	1.6
6	93	13.9
7	77	11.5
8	36	5.4
9	27	4.0
10	39	5.8
11	10	1.5
12	49	7.3
13	19	2.8
14	31	4.6
15	76	11.3
Total	671	100.0

Note: 13 cases are excluded due to unknown district.

Table 4. Location of Use of Force Incidents: Police District 2013-2017

Police District	2013 (1)		2014 (2)		2015 (3)		2016 (4)		2017 (5)	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
1	33	3.7	58	8.4	48	7.1	39	6.0	52	7.7
2	138	15.6	79	11.5	101	15.0	84	13.0	89	13.2
3	174	19.6	126	18.3	129	19.2	135	20.8	133	19.7
4	84	9.5	77	1.2	66	9.8	87	13.4	63	9.3
5	158	17.8	123	17.9	124	18.4	124	19.1	154	22.8
6	58	6.5	62	9.0	53	7.9	45	6.9	49	7.3
7	242	27.3	162	23.6	152	22.6	134	20.7	134	19.9
Total	887	100.0	687	99.9	673	100.0	648	99.9	674	99.9

Notes: (1) 8 cases are excluded due to unknown district; (2) 13 cases are excluded due to unknown district, percentage does not total 100 due to rounding; (3) 9 cases are excluded due to unknown district; (4) 6 cases are excluded due to unknown district, percentage does not total 100 due to rounding; (5) 10 cases are excluded due to unknown district; percentage does not total 100 due to rounding.

Given the variation in the number of use of force incidents across police district, it may be useful to explore possible corresponding variation in the frequency of force in relation to arrests and population across districts (Table 5 and Table 6, respectively). Table 5 (p. 10) shows the total number of arrests, the number of arrests that involved force, and the percentage of arrests that involved use of force for each district (use of force incidents / total arrests \* 100 = percent of arrests that involved force).

Table 5. Percent of Arrests that Involved Use of Force, by Police District

Police District	Total Arrests Made (1)	Number of Use of Force Incidents That Involved an Arrest (2)	Percent of Arrests that Involved Use of Force
1	1,139	51	4.48
2	3,413	83	2.43
3	4,179	122	2.92
4	2,598	59	2.27
5	3,095	140	4.52
6	1,683	42	2.50
7	3,859	123	3.19

Notes: (1) 1,056 arrests excluded because the arrest could not be placed in a district due to the address of the arrest being unknown or out of the city; (2) 10 missing cases (unknown district).

The analyses provided in Table 5 show that, in each district, a small proportion of arrests involve the use of force; the percentage of arrests that involve the use of force ranges from 2.27 percent in District 4 to 4.52 percent in District 5. District 5 and District 1 appear as outliers compared to the other districts.

Table 6 (p. 11) shows the total number of force incidents, the population of each police district, and the number of residents for each use of force incident, across each district (population / use of force incidents = number of residents for each use of force incident).

Table 6. Frequency of Force and Population, by Police District

Police District	Total Number of Use of Force Incidents (1)	Population (2)	Number of Residents for Each Use of Force Incident (3)
1	52	47,807	919
2	89	85,671	963
3	133	82,030	617
4	63	94,295	1,497
5	154	67,841	441
6	49	114,117	2,329
7	134	102,336	764

Notes: (1) 10 missing cases (unknown district); (2) 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; (3) figures are rounded.

Table 6 shows that, in relation to the population of the district, use of force is least common in District 6 (2,529 residents for each use of force incident) and most common in District 5 (441 residents for each use of force incident). However, District 5 is not substantially different from District 3 or District 7 in this regard. Overall, it is seen from Table 5 and Table 6 that in an absolute and relative sense, the use of force is a very uncommon event, even in Districts 3, 5, and 7.

#### Situational Characteristics of Use of Force Incidents

Along with providing metrics on the 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 684 use of force incidents involved 408 MPD officers. Similar to previous years, most incidents (391 out of 684; 57.2%) involved one officer, 218 incidents (31.9%) involved two officers, and 75 incidents (11.0%) involved three or more officers. With regard to the number of officers involved in the incidents, 264 officers (of the 408 officers; 64.7%) were involved in just one incident in 2017 and 17 officers (4.2%) were involved in five or more incidents. In 2017, the most incidents an officer was involved in was 13. Previous research studies 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 other words, officers who make more arrests are more likely to be involved in force incidents. However, given the data available and analyzed here, it is not known how many arrests were made by each officer.

In 98 percent of the incidents,<sup>5</sup> the first officer involved was male, in 74 percent the officer was white, in 96 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 81 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 nine years. In 19 percent of the incidents, the first officer involved in the incident was injured. These characteristics are similar to previous years.

Most incidents (97.2%; 654 out of 673) involved just one subject, 19 of 673 incidents (2.8%) involved two or more subjects.<sup>6</sup> In 86 percent of the incidents the first subject involved was male, in 76 percent the subject was Black, in 34 percent the subject was under the influence

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<sup>5</sup> Due to the structure of the data, most descriptive statements regarding the officers and subjects relate only to the first officer or subject involved.

<sup>6</sup> Excluded from these analyses are the incidents that involved a dog only.

of alcohol and/or drugs. The average age of the first subject was 28 years (with a range of 10 to 76; 9% of subjects were under the age of 18 and less than 1% were 60 or older). In 61 percent of incidents the subject was injured, with the greatest proportion (73%) of injuries classified as “minor.” In two incidents the injuries sustained by the subject were fatal (both firearm-related; another subject died at a hospital from unspecified/undetermined reasons). In 17 percent of incidents the subject was armed with a weapon (not including personal weapons such as fists or feet); most often a firearm (66%). In 87 percent of incidents, the officer noted that the subject resisted arrest. These characteristics are similar to those in previous years.

*Type of Force Used by Officers*

With regard to the type of force used by the officer(s) in the incident, it is seen in Table 7 that the majority of incidents (68.1%) involved “bodily force only.”

Table 7. Type of Force Used

Type of Forced Used	Frequency	Percentage
Bodily Force Only	466	68.1
ECD Only	66	9.6
Chemical Agent Only (OC)	25	3.7
Firearm Only	8	1.2
Baton Only	4	.6
Police Canine Only	1	.1
Bodily Force and OC	24	3.5
Bodily Force and ECD	53	7.7
Bodily Force and Baton	3	.4
Bodily Force and Canine	2	.3
Bodily Force and Handcuffing	12	1.8
Firearm, ECD, OC	1	.1
Other Combination (no firearm)	19	2.8
Total	684	99.9

Note: Percentage does not total 100 due to rounding; ECD refers to Electronic Control Device (Taser), OC refers to Oleoresin Capsicum spray.

In total, nine incidents (1.3%) involved the use of a firearm alone or in combination with another form of force<sup>7</sup> and, as discussed in more detail below, four of these nine 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.

Additional analyses were performed to examine patterns in the types of force used over time (Table 8). These analyses are limited to incidents that involved the use of a chemical agent (OC Spray), an ECD (Taser), or a firearm.<sup>8</sup> First, it is seen that there has been a steady, and in 2017 a dramatic, decline in police use of firearms over time. Of the nine years under examination, 2009 to 2017, 2017 had by far 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, declined from 2012 to 2015, dramatically increased in 2016, and then declined again in 2017. Finally, with regard to the use of OC spray, there was a steady decline from 2009 to 2016, with a slight increase in 2017. Overall, 2017 shows a large decrease in the use of ECDs and a small increase in the use of OC spray compared to 2016.

Table 8. Type of Force Used, by Year (Number of Incidents)

Type of Force Used	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Firearm Alone or with Other	53	46	51	40	40	30	27	26	9
ECD Alone or with Other (not with firearm)	85	125	144	101	85	77	65	169	128
OC Alone or with Other (not with ECD or firearm)	150	154	137	115	89	74	82	49	53

<sup>7</sup> Pointing or aiming a firearm (or ECD) without discharging the weapon was not a reportable use of force category.

<sup>8</sup> The 2013 use of force reporting policy change does not preclude an analysis of weapon use (OC Spray, Taser, or firearm) across years but it does preclude an analysis of “bodily force only” incidents. Prior to the policy change of January 1, 2013, all incidents that involved the use of OC spray, a Taser, or a firearm were required to be reported, but bodily force incidents that did not result in a citizen injury, or a complaint of an injury, were not required to be reported.



It is important to note that certain forms of force were more likely than others to lead to “major” or fatal injuries to subjects. Approximately 40 percent of the time a firearm was used against a subject it led to major or fatal injuries (2 of 5 incidents). As noted, bodily force is by far the most common type of force used against subjects. In approximately 46 percent (216 of 466) of the incidents when bodily force was used alone a subject was not injured. In an additional 50 percent (233 of 466) of the incidents, injuries to the subject were classified as “minor.” No fatal injuries were sustained as a result of bodily force.

Analyses also reveal that certain forms of force were more likely than others to lead to *officer* injuries. Specifically, officers were most likely to be injured when using bodily force. There are two ways to look at this issue: (1) 70 percent of the time that officers were injured it was during “bodily force only” incidents and (2) 19 percent of “bodily force only” incidents resulted in injury to officers.

Table 9 shows how firearms were used in force incidents. In the rare instance that a firearm was used, almost half of the time (44.4%) it was used to neutralizing a dog.

Table 9. Incidents Where the Force Used was a Firearm

Subject of Firearm	Frequency	Percentage	Result
Dog(s)	4	44.4	5 dogs struck
Subject	5	55.6	3 subjects struck
Total Number of Incidents	9	100.0	--

Of the five incidents that involved the use of a firearm against a subject, two involved fatal injuries, one involved non-fatal injuries, and two resulted in no gunshot injuries (i.e., a subject was shot at but not struck). In four of the five incidents, the subject was armed (with a gun). These five incidents involved a variety of situations including armed robbery, subject with gun, stolen auto traffic stop, and drug investigation. All of the incidents involved on-duty officers.

Table 10 shows the frequency of incidents where dogs and subjects were the focus of the firearm from 2009 to 2017. It is seen that there has been an uneven decline in incidents that involve firearm force against a person (with a low of 5 incidents in 2017 and a nine year mean of 10.7 incidents) and a steady and significant decline in the number of firearm incidents that involve a dog (with a low of 4 incidents in 2017 and a nine year mean of 25.1 incidents).

Table 10. Subject of Police Use of a Firearm, by Year (Number of Incidents)

Target of Firearm	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Person	14	12	15	9	14	8	12	7	5
Dog	39	34	36	31	26	22	15	19	4

#### *Other Characteristics of Use of Force Incidents*

Along with the situational characteristics of use of force incidents that have already been discussed, two additional characteristics are worthy of mention (Table 11). First, approximately equal proportions of use of force incidents occurred at night as during daylight. Second, most incidents occurred outdoors. These findings are similar to those of previous years.

Table 11. Other Characteristics of Use of Force Incidents

Characteristic	Frequency	%
Time/Lighting of Incident	684	100.0
Dark/Night	303	44.3
Light/Daytime	318	46.5
Dusk/Dawn	63	9.2
Location of Incident	684	100.0
Indoors	166	24.3
Outdoors	517	75.6
Indoors and Outdoors	1	.1

### *Force Used Against Dogs*

Of the 684 use of force incidents that occurred in 2017, eleven involved force being used against at least one dog.<sup>9</sup> Four incidents involved the use of a Taser, one involved the use of OC spray, one involved the use of a Taser and OC spray, one involved a firearm, OC spray, and a Taser, one involved a police canine, and three involved the use of a firearm. These eleven incidents involved 13 dogs. Five of the dogs were struck by gunfire. In one incident, an officer was accidentally struck by gunfire, resulting in a gunshot wound to his hand. In total, of the 13 dogs upon which force was used, 2 were confirmed at the scene to have sustained fatal injuries.

Of the 13 dogs, 12 (92.3%) were pit bulls. The most common circumstances in which force was used against dogs was when officers were dealing with a loose dog (Table 12).

Table 12. Circumstance of Incidents Where Force was used against Dogs

Circumstance	Frequency	Percentage
Loose Dog During Investigation	5	45.5
Loose Dog - Patrol	3	27.3
Loose Dog – Foot Pursuit	1	9.1
Other	2	18.2
TOTALS	11	100.1

Note: Percentage does not total 100 due to rounding.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to put these dog-related incidents into perspective as no reliable estimates of the number of dogs, by breed, in Milwaukee were located, nor are there

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<sup>9</sup> Note that Table 9 and Table 10 (p. 15, 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 2016 there were 25 use of force incidents that involved at least one dog. In 2015 there were 16 incidents that involved at least one dog. In 2014 there were 26 incidents that involved at least one dog. 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.

statistics that indicate the number of dogs that are confronted by MPD officers but upon which force is not used.

### Summary

This report is part of a continuing effort on the part of the City of Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission 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, 2017 and December 31, 2017, the following summary statements can be made:

- There were 684 use of force incidents in 2017 which represents an increase of 4.6 percent from 2016 but a decrease of 23.6 percent from 2013.
- There was an average of 1.87 use of force incidents per day in 2017.
- There were 33 arrests for every one arrest that involved the use of force.
- Approximately three percent of arrests involved the use of force in 2017, compared to 2.8 percent in 2016.
- There were 3,205 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 143 subject stops for each subject stop that involved force.
- Approximately .69 percent of subject stops involved the use of force.
- Approximately 22 percent of MPD sworn officers were involved in at least one use of force incident in 2017. Approximately 65 percent of these officers were involved in just one incident; approximately four percent were involved in five or more incidents.
- There was one incident of force for every 870 persons in Milwaukee in 2017.

- Police districts 3, 5, and 7 had roughly equal number of use of force incidents in 2017 and combined accounted for approximately 62 percent of all force incidents in the city in 2017.
- From 2013 to 2017, the number of use of force incidents declined in every police district except District 1. District 7 showed the largest decline in use of force incidents during these years.
- In relation to use of force and arrests made, Districts 1 and 5 had the highest rates of use of force in 2017 and District 2 had the lowest rate. In relation to use of force and population size, District 5 had the highest rate of use of force and District 6 the lowest rate. On an absolute basis, use of force was a rare event in all districts.
- The most common type of force used by officers was “bodily force only” (68.1% of all incidents) followed by “ECD Only” (9.6%).
- Since 2009, the use of a firearm has declined substantially. In 2009 there were 53 such incidents, in 2017 there were nine incidents. The decline is evident with incidents that involved a dog as well as incidents that involved a subject.
- In 2017, five of the nine firearm incidents involved shooting at a subject (2 fatalities); four of the nine incidents involved shooting at a dog (2 fatalities).
- Since 2009, the use of a chemical agent has declined in frequency with a small increase from 2016 to 2017. The use of an ECD increased from 2009 to 2011, declined from 2012 to 2015, significantly increased in 2016, and declined in 2017.
- Approximately two percent of force incidents (11 of 684) involved any force being used against one or more dogs (usually via a firearm or a Taser). 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 in 2017:

- Involved one uniformed police officer and one subject. The officer was a white male, 36 years old, with nine years of service. The officer used “bodily force only” in the incident. The officer was not injured. The subject was a Black male, 28 years old. The subject resisted arrest and sustained “minor” injuries as a result of the incident. The subject was not armed with a weapon. The incident occurred outdoors and in daylight.

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 monitor use of force incidents over time.