



Steven A. Hall
SHERIFF

Office of the Sheriff

St. Mary's County, Maryland

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An Internationally
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February 15, 2023

TO: Sheriff Steven A. Hall

SUBJECT: Analysis of Officer Use of Force for 2022

The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office recognizes and respects the value of all human life and dignity without prejudice to anyone. Vesting deputies with the authority to use reasonable force and to protect the public welfare requires monitoring, evaluation, and a careful balancing of all interests. In 2022, a new Use of Force Policy was released which included new Maryland statutes.

The following is an analysis of the use of force reported by deputy sheriffs of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office during the period of January 1 through December 31, 2022. Data for the analysis was derived from the collection of the Use of Force reports completed by deputies and reviewed by supervision. Policy and Maryland Law requires deputies immediately notify a supervisor when force is utilized and complete a Use of Force report by the end of their shift. Once the reports are reviewed by supervision, they are forwarded to the Office of Professional Responsibilities (OPR) for additional review and potential investigation where a determination is made if the force used by the deputy was justified.

Sheriff's Office Use of Force Policy 300.1.1 defines "Force" as *"The application of physical techniques or tactics, chemical agents, or weapons to another person. It is not a use of force when a person allows him/herself to be searched, escorted, handcuffed, or restrained."*

In 2022, the Sheriff's Office handled 66,468 calls for service of which, 316 involved a Use of Force incident by one or more deputies. This includes Show of Force incidents where the deputy pointed a firearm or Taser at a person without discharging the device and the person complied with the officer's commands. The above data equates to force being utilized once every 210 calls for service or .005%.

The percentages of the total Use of Force Incidents showing the most common reasons for deputies using force are as follows:

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
• Effect an Arrest	58%	63%	49%
• Emergency Petition	34%	34%	22%

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The percentages of the total Use of Force incidents where a citizen or officer was injured are as follows:

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
• Citizens Injured	4%	16%	30%
• Officer Injured	8%	10%	8%

The percentage of citizens injured decreased considerably in 2022, and this may be attributed to mandatory Use of Force training on the new Use of Force Policy to include the requirement for de-escalation tactics (if time permits). All deputies were required to complete the training during the 2022 calendar year.

In 2022 there were two (2) instances when the K-9 was deployed (released from their lead) in an attempt to apprehend a suspect. In one (1) instance the K-9 bit a suspect and in the other it did not bite the suspect or officer. Compared to 2021, with one (1) instance of a K-9 deployment in an attempt to apprehend a suspect and the K-9 did not bite the citizen or an officer.

In 2022 the Sheriff's Office implemented a system to categorize uses of force (for post force reporting only) on three different levels: Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3. Level 1 is the category used for minor uses of force (ie: wrist lock, escort hold, carry) which have the lowest risk of injury. Level 2 is for uses of force and less lethal options (ie: Knee strike, Baton strike, Taser, Chemical agents) with a higher risk of injury. Level 3 is for any force that results in death, has the risk of causing death, or the discharge of any firearms towards a person. In 2022, 89% of all uses of force were categorized as Level 1, 11% as Level 2, and <1% as Level 3.

There were two (2) Officer Involved Shooting (OIS) incidents during the year. The first resulted in a deputy firing his rifle towards an armed suspect but no one was injured. The second involved a deputy firing his handgun at an armed robbery suspect resulting in the suspect receiving non-fatal injuries. Both investigations are currently still open.

In April 2022, the following force type selections were removed from the Use of Force Report: *Arm Control*, *Take Down*, and *Vehicle Extraction*. These force type options were too general in describing the force and could more accurately be documented using other force types such as *Escort Hold*, *Hand Restrain*, *Secured Wrist*, *Arm Bar Takedown*, *Tackle* or *Grab Below the Neckline*.

The following statistics indicate the percentage of the total uses of force compared to the demographic breakdown of the citizens when force was applied by the deputies:

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
White Males	27%	26%	26%
White Females	14%	17%	12%
Black Males	33%	36%	41%
Black Females	22%	18%	11%

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	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
Hispanic Males	2%	2%	7%
Hispanic Females	1%	<1%	0%
Other Males	0	<1%	3%
Other Females	<1%	0%	0%

There were 952 force types reported by deputies in 2022. The following indicates the number and percentage of each type of force used by deputies. Each use of force incident (316 calls for service in 2022) may include more than one force type being used and more than one officer using force:

Force Type	Count	Percent of Total
Arm Bar	42	4.4%
Arm Bar Take Down	20	2.1%
Arm Control	12	1.2%
Asp/Baton	1	<1%
Carry	63	6.6%
Emergency Response Belt	2	<1%
Escort hold	164	7.2%
FN 303	1	<1%
Forearm Strike	1	6.8%
Grab – Below Neckline	65	<1%
Hand push	40	4.2%
Hand Restrain	114	11.9%
Hand Strike	1	<1%
Handgun Discharge	1	<1%
Handgun Pointed Only	73	7.6%
Head Control	27	2.8%
Kick	1	<1%
Knee Strike	2	<1%
Leg Sweep	7	<1%
OC Spray	2	<1%
Pressure Point	8	<1%
Punch	1	<1%
Restraint/Shoulders	28	2.9%
Rifle Discharge	1	<1%
Rifle Pointed Only	12	<1%
Sage	3	<1%
Secured Legs	49	5.1%
Secured wrist	125	13.1%
Tackle	22	2.3%
Taser Deployment	13	1.3%
Taser Pointed Only	9	<1%
Wrist Lock	42	4.4%
Total	952	

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Escort Holds, Secured Wrist, Hand Restrain, and Handgun Pointed Only were the most common types of force used in 2022 and the Taser was deployed thirteen (13) times. Compared to 2021, the most common types of force used were Arm Control, Escort Holds, Handgun Pointed Only, and Wrist Locks. The Taser was deployed twenty-two (22) times in 2021.



Thomas A. Hedderich
Lieutenant
Office of Professional Responsibilities

Agree

Yes () No, see indorsement.

Major:



Date 2-15-23

Yes () No, see indorsement.

Sheriff:



Date 2/15/23