

# 2023

## Orangeburg Public Safety Annual Report



"Working today for a safer tomorrow."

**Orangeburg Department of Public Safety  
2023 Annual Report Table  
of Contents**

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<b><i>Introduction:</i></b>	<b><i>Page No.</i></b>
<b>Organizational Chart</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Department Profile</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Mission Statement</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>About Public Safety</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>What is Public Safety?</b>	<b>11</b>
<b><i>Divisions:</i></b>	
<b>Patrol Division</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Investigations Division</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Special Operations Division</b>	<b>13</b>
<b><i>2023 Annual Reports:</i></b>	
<b>Vehicle Pursuits</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Response to Resistance</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Assaults on Law Enforcement</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Disciplinary Investigations</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Employee Grievances</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Biased-Based Policing</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Victim's Services</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Selective Traffic Enforcement</b>	<b>28</b>

# **Orangeburg Department of Public Safety 2023 Annual Report**

## **Command Staff**

***Director of Public Safety Chief  
Charles P. Austin, Sr.***

***Special Operations Commander  
Lieutenant Colonel Edward Conner***

***Patrol Division Commander  
Captain Alfred Alexander***

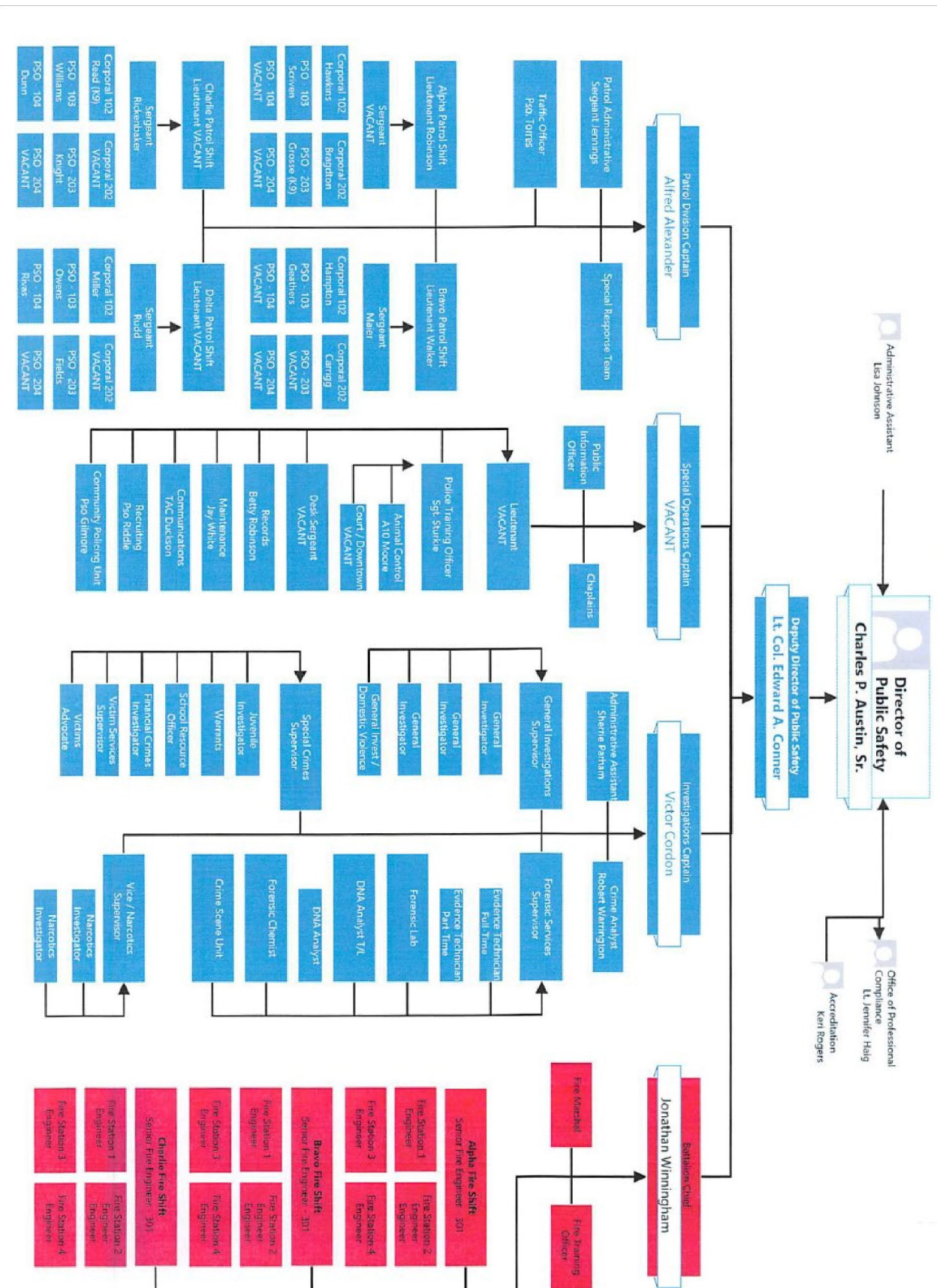
***Investigations Division Commander  
Captain Victor Cordon***

***Produced by the Orangeburg Department of Public Safety  
Planning & Research Unit***

***Crime Analyst  
Robert Warrington***

# Orangeburg Department of Public Safety

Proposed Organizational Chart – Year 1





## ***City of Orangeburg***

***Area:***

**8.30 square miles**

***Mayor:***

**Michael Butler**

***Population:***

**13,226 (2020 est)**

***Population by Race***

<b><i>Race</i></b>	<b><i>2020 Census</i></b>
<b><i>White</i></b>	<b><i>24%</i></b>
<b><i>Black</i></b>	<b><i>72%</i></b>
<b><i>Asian</i></b>	<b><i>&lt;1%</i></b>
<b><i>Hispanic</i></b>	<b><i>1.4%</i></b>
<b><i>Native American</i></b>	<b><i>&lt;1%</i></b>
<b><i>Other</i></b>	<b><i>&lt;1%</i></b>



# **Orangeburg Department of Public Safety Bio**

**Organized:  
1988**

**Sworn Officers:  
48**

**Civilian Personnel:  
31**

**Director:  
Charles P. Austin, Sr.**

**Headquarters:  
1320 Middleton St  
Orangeburg, SC 29115**

**2023 Total Calls for Service:  
38,606**

**Rank Structure:  
Director  
Deputy Director  
Captain  
Lieutenant  
Sergeant  
Corporal  
Public Safety Officer  
Engineer**

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Public Safety Headquarters / Orangeburg Municipal Court  
1320 Middleton St Orangeburg SC 29115

## Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Orangeburg Department of Public Safety to create and maintain an atmosphere of mutual cooperation with our community through innovative partnerships directed toward a common goal of protecting life and property through professional law enforcement and fire protection services.

We will remain pro-active and diligent in our efforts to enhance the quality of life in our community through professional development, supported by loyalty, courage, commitment, and integrity with equitable and dignified treatment for all citizens we serve.

## Vision Statement

The Orangeburg Department of Public Safety is dedicated to providing the highest level of law enforcement and fire protection services to all citizens in our community, incorporating professionalism, dignity and courtesy.

Furthermore, we understand the need for community support and feel compelled to develop and implement positive programs to foster mutual respect between all citizens and the department while preserving life, liberty, and property.

## Values

- **Loyalty:** Commitment to the agency and its organizational objectives above that of any individual.
- **Integrity:** Moral code of conduct that reflects honesty, accountability, and respect.
- **Trustworthy:** The agency must nurture community trust by performing its function in a professional and equitable manner.
- **Commitment:** Dedication to the community, department personnel, training, and professionalism.
- **Courage:** Meeting challenges and adversity without fear of scorn or ridicule recognizing the higher standards for which we are accountable.



- **Innovation:** Constantly searching to enhance the services provided to our community through improvised technology, personal development and training.

## About Public Safety

The Orangeburg Department of Public Safety is a nationally accredited law enforcement agency. It is comprised of over 100 employees that include: Sworn law enforcement officers, firefighters, and civilians. Public Safety is currently transitioning to a separate Law Enforcement Division and a Fire Division. Public Safety continues to employ cross trained personnel in both law enforcement and the fire service. Newly hired employees may join Public Safety as law enforcement officers or firefighters. However, employees may elect to become cross-trained at a later date. At Public Safety, all non-civilian employees are expected to obtain and maintain proficiency in both their roles as Public Safety Officers. Located in the city of Orangeburg, SC, the Department of Public Safety continues to provide the best law enforcement and fire protection services to the almost 13,000 citizens of Orangeburg.



## What is Public Safety?

Public Safety is a concept whereby firefighters and police officers of a given jurisdiction are cross trained in the fire service and law enforcement fields. In a fully integrated public safety department, all non-civilian employees perform the dual functions of fire suppression and law enforcement.



The formal public safety idea can be traced to departments in Glencoe, Illinois and Sunnyvale, California, as far back as the early 1950's.

In 1987, the Orangeburg city council voted to transform the traditional fire and police departments into a single, versatile Department of Public Safety.

## Patrol Division

The Patrol Division is led by Captain Alfred Alexander and is the largest division within the Orangeburg Department of Public Safety. Its primary responsibility is to provide uniformed law enforcement and fire suppression service to the City of Orangeburg and the citizens within its fire coverage area. Generally, a uniformed officer is the first contact a citizen has with the Department of Public Safety. With this initial interaction our goal is to leave the citizen with a permanent positive impression of this agency's professionalism.

Our Mission is to create and maintain an atmosphere of cooperation with our community. The Patrol Officer units handle the initial fire and police response to 911 calls. They deal with all types of calls for service and complete the initial report of fire and criminal activity. The Patrol Officer is the most visible Public Safety presence in the community.

The Patrol Division serves as a manpower pool to support the many specialized units and functions within the department. Personnel from the Patrol Division serve on the following units in addition to their regular duties:

- S.R.T. (Special Response Team)
- Canine Unit (Which includes two assigned canines.)
- Crime Prevention
- Public Education
- Gang Investigation
- Bike Officers
- Data Master B.A. Certified Officers
- Arson Investigation

This diversity allows the individual officer to provide a variety of expensive services at no additional cost to the taxpayer. Additionally, these skills strengthen the ability of the Patrol Division to manage highly complex and dangerous assignments daily.

# Investigations Division

The Investigations Division is led by Captain Victor Cordon. The Investigations Division is responsible for handling investigations of most felony crimes that are reported to the Orangeburg Department of Public Safety such as homicides, burglaries, robberies, frauds, juvenile crimes, and other miscellaneous crimes as needed..

The division consists of many specialized units and personnel:

- **General Investigations:** General Investigators are responsible for incident investigation and perform many of the vital functions for case solvability.
- **Juvenile Investigator:** Specializes in incidents involving juvenile suspects and victims and ensures juvenile rights are observed during investigations.
- **Victim Services:** Coordinates notification of victims and serves as a liaison between the Department, Municipal Court, and various victims' services.
- **Narcotics Unit:** Specializes in narcotics investigations and operations including surveillance, suspect identification or any incident which may primarily involve narcotics.
- The Forensic Laboratory is supervised by Lieutenant Danny Dantzler which consist of these areas:
  - **Forensic DNA analyst:** Responsible for analyzing and interpreting DNA evidence gathered from crime scenes. Their primary focus is on the identification, comparison, and evaluation of DNA samples to assist in criminal investigations and legal proceedings.
  - **Forensic Narcotic Chemist:** Responsible for analyzing and identifying controlled substances, narcotics, and drugs in various forms, such as powders, liquids, pills, and plant material; to support criminal investigations and legal proceedings.
  - **Crime Scene Investigator:** Responsible for collecting, analyzing, and preserving physical evidence from crime scenes. Their primary objective is to reconstruct events that took place during a crime and provide accurate, reliable evidence that can aid in solving cases.
  - **Evidence Technician:** Responsible for managing and maintaining the integrity of all evidentiary items collected by the agency, ensuring that evidence is properly documented, stored, and accounted for throughout its lifecycle.
  - **School Resource Officer:** Provides school administrators with law enforcement resources and expertise to maintain safety and order in the school environment while also reducing juvenile delinquency and promote positive behavior from students, mentoring and a positive role model to students.



- **Crime Analyst** Responsible for analyzing crime reports and statistics and developing predictive and projected trends of criminal offenders and of crimes in targeted geographical areas.

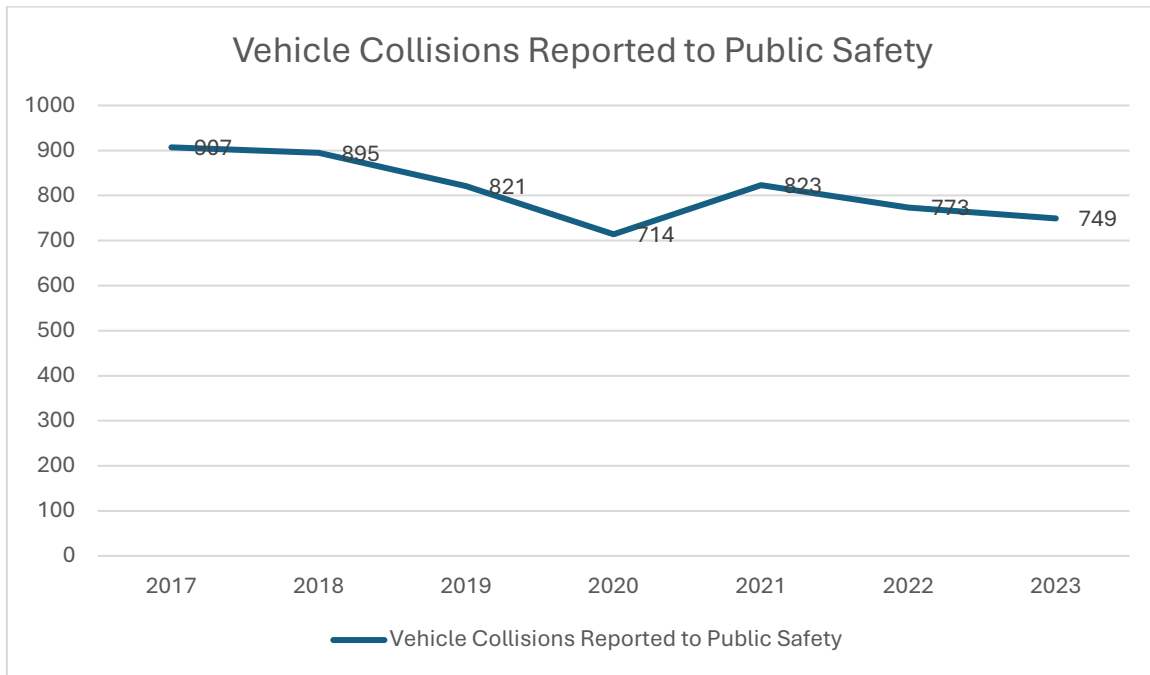
## Special Operations Division

The Special Operations Division is led by Deputy Director Colonel Ed Conner and serves as the support section of the Department of Public Safety. Special Operations is comprised of several specialized units that serve different functions within the department. Special Operations supports the other divisions of the department through providing the following services: law enforcement and fire service training, accreditation management, policy development, crime analysis, planning and research, grants management, fire inspections, records management, court security, recruiting, and animal control.

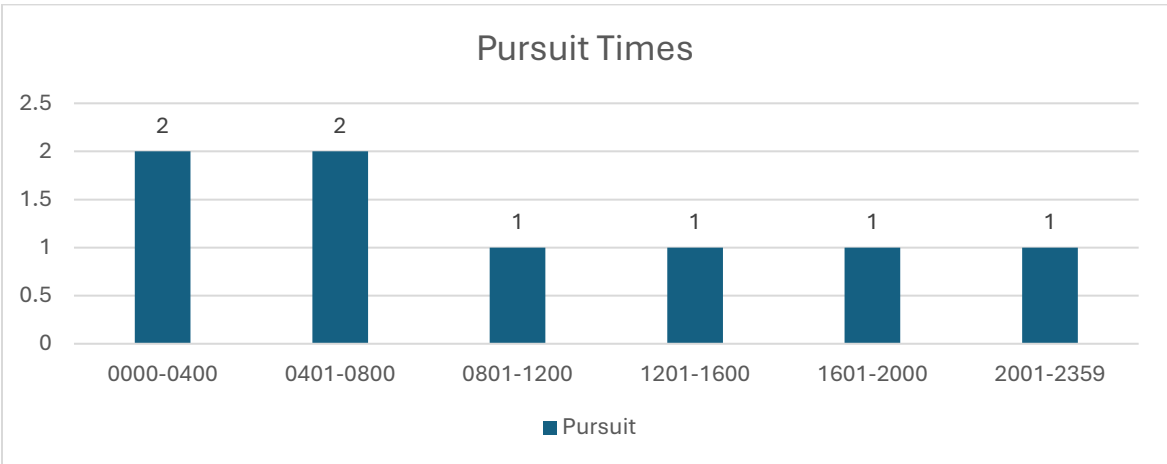
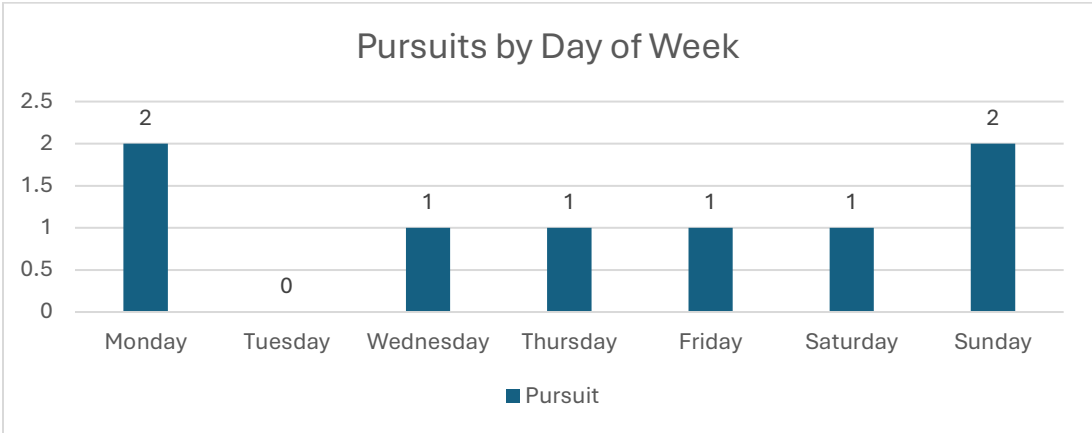
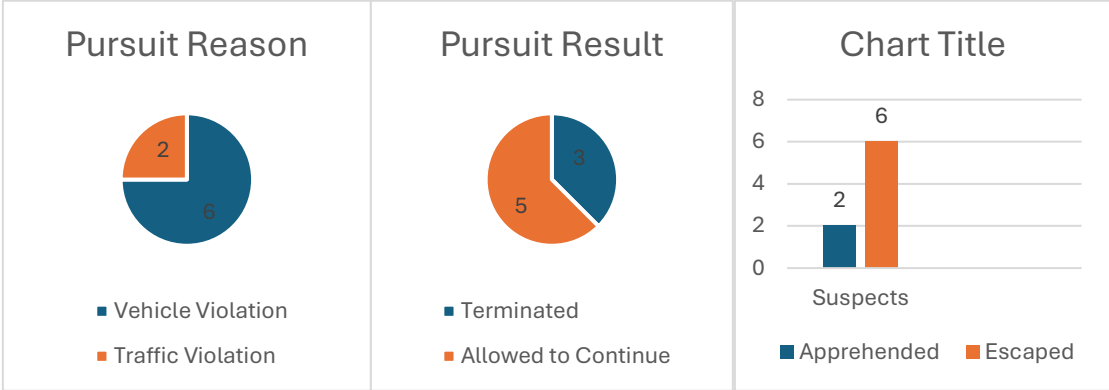
All of the above listed units or sections serve vital functions to the department in the following manner:

- **Training Office:** Encompasses all agency training in both law enforcement and fire service disciplines from new-recruit training to veteran in-service training.
- **F.T.O:** (Field Training Officer) for new officers who train officers recently graduated from the Academy on Department policy, procedures, and policing practices.
- **Fire Inspections and Arson Investigation:** Provide business fire systems inspections and arson investigations to incidents within the fire district.
- **Accreditation Office:** Manages the CALEA Accreditation process and works diligently to update policies and procedures. The department received recognition as an internationally accredited law enforcement agency in March 2003 through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc.
- **Recruitment Office:** Responsible for recruiting applicants to the department to fill various vacancies within the organization. This section performs all pre-employment screening, testing, and application processing.
- **Records Bureau:** Responsible for all agency records to include, but not limited to criminal case files, incident reports, booking reports, accident reports, etc.
- **Communications Operations:** Responsible for receiving and dispatching all calls for service from the general public to emergency personnel.
- **Animal Control Officer:** Responsible for handling all complaints associated with animals within the city.
- **Fire Engineer Unit:** Full-time fire engineer unit who serve as primary responders of the Department's fire apparatus, as well as 24-hour manning of all four fire stations.
- **Office of Community Outreach:** Serves as a liaison between the community and the Department through the position of the Community-Oriented Policing Officer.

# 2023 Vehicle Collisions Reported



# 2023 Vehicle Pursuits



**Department Policy:**

The pursuit of a fleeing suspect using Department law enforcement vehicles presents a high degree of risk to the general public, officers and suspects. Therefore, it will be the policy of this Department to provide for the safety of all people involved in such pursuits, to the greatest possible extent, when enforcing the law. In addition to this policy, the Department shoulders responsibility to assist officers in the safe performance of their duties. To fulfill these obligations, the Department will regulate the way vehicular pursuits are initiated and performed.

**Analysis of Pursuits:**

A review of the 2023 Vehicle Pursuit data found that department policy was followed on all pursuits and that the training and equipment provided satisfied the department's needs. During a review of policies and procedures, there were no changes recommended to any policies, procedures or training because of a vehicle pursuit. In pursuit of fleeing vehicles, officers exercised caution and followed safely behind the fleeing vehicle. In most cases of termination, the pursuing officer noticed conditions that would place the public in danger, thereby self-terminating the pursuit.

During 2022, there were 13 pursuits initiated by Public Safety, with only 8 occurring in 2023. During 2023, it was found that pursuits were less likely to be initiated after the initial identification of the vehicle. Officers in 2023 instead chose to obtain vehicle identification and then terminate the pursuit, leaving identification of the driver and further information to investigative efforts and warrants. Trying this as a department recommendation might reduce the risk to the public from the dangers that a pursuit could cause.

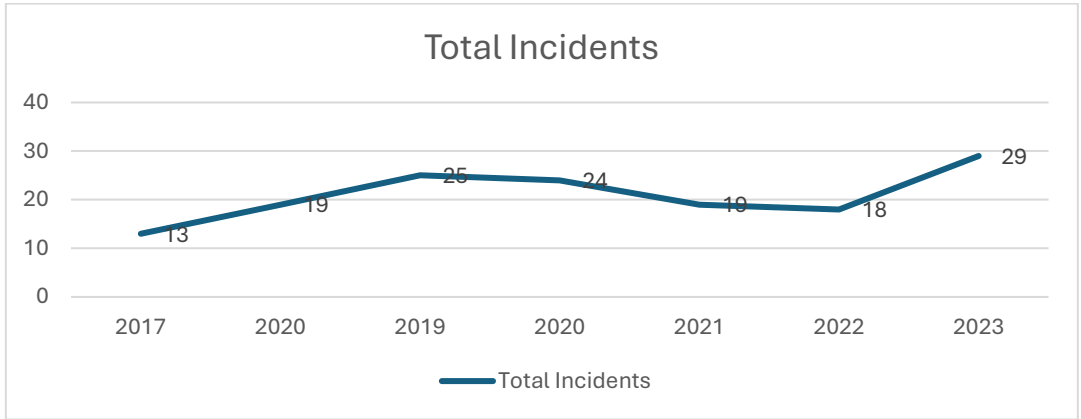
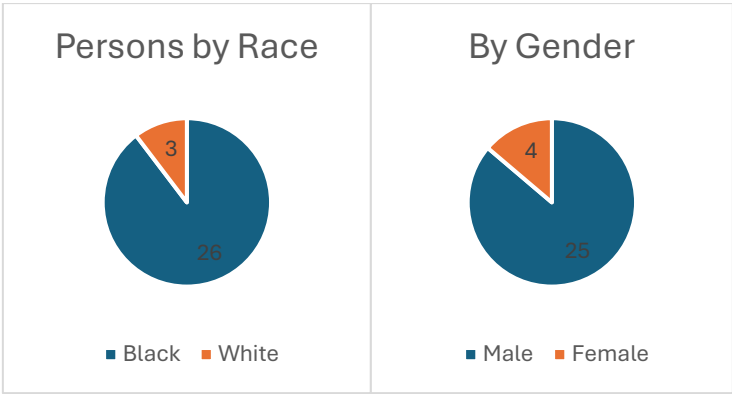
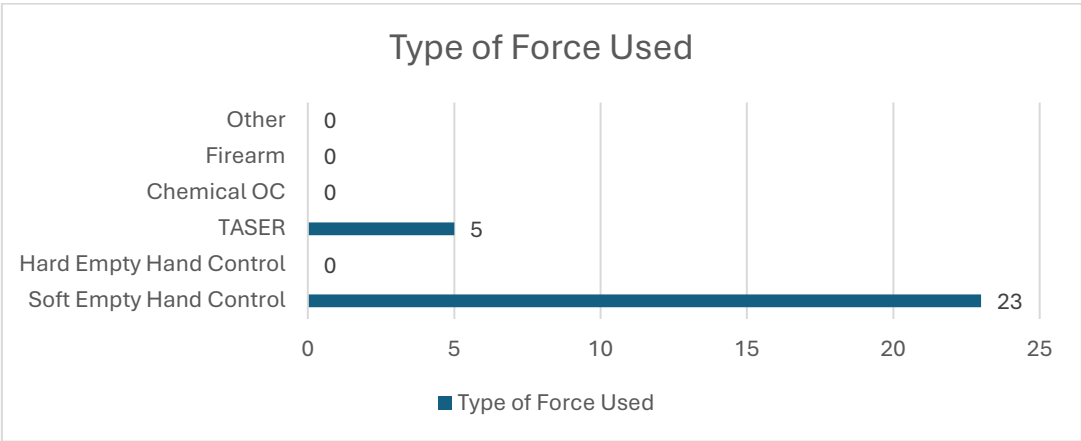
It was noted during the review, there was no specific day of the week that pursuits occurred. Pursuits that were terminated were not allowed to continue due to rain conditions and loss of sight of the vehicle due to traffic conditions.

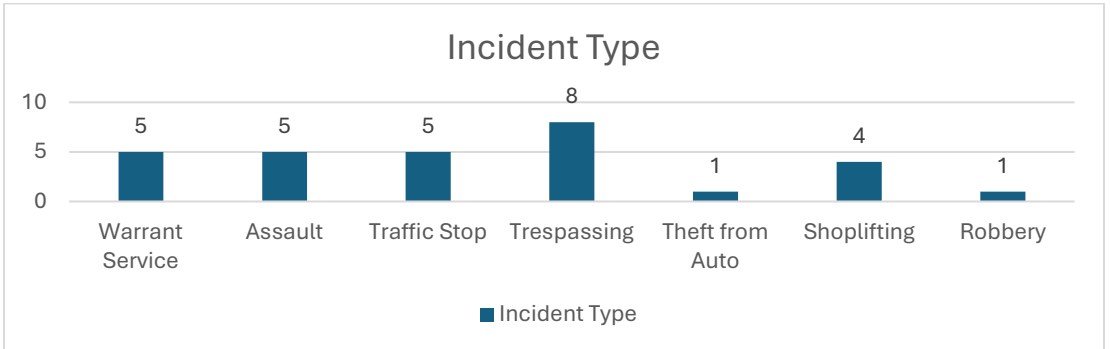
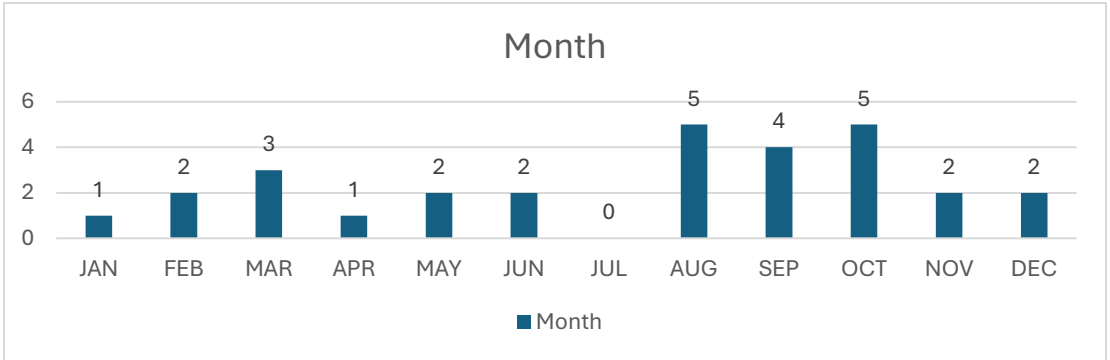
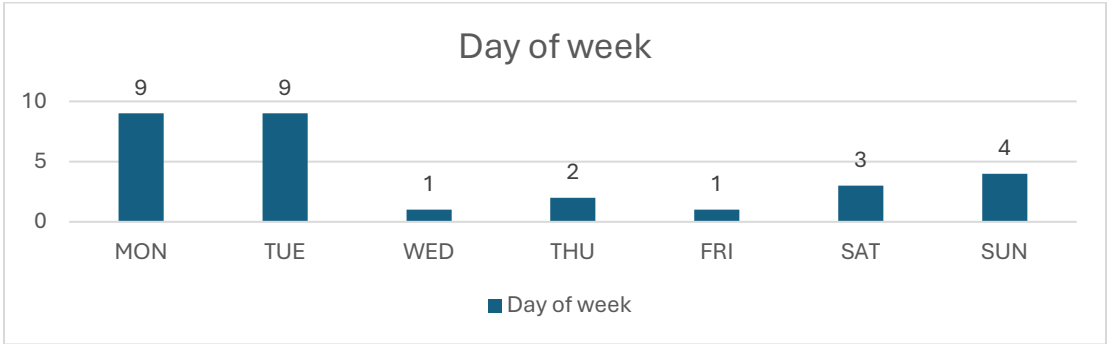
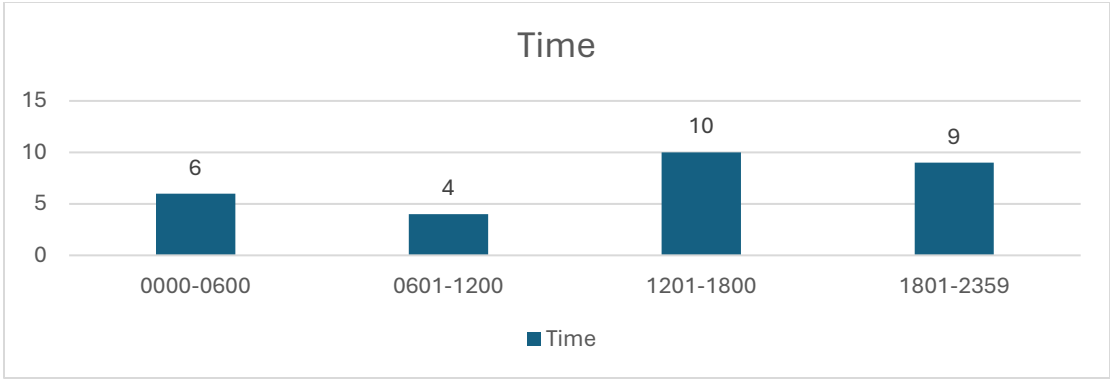
Pursuits also occurred mostly between the hours of midnight and eight a.m. There were also only two pursuits where damage to the suspect's vehicle was recorded; and both were because the vehicle was left in drive as the suspect fled on foot. There was only one recorded incident of property damage, due to a vehicle striking a tree on private property after being abandoned by the suspect. Damage in all recorded incidents was minor functional damage to the vehicle and minor property damage.

However, there were two officers with two pursuits each. It should be noted that these two officers are narcotics and traffic enforcement officers whose primary duties are to identify infractions or individuals or vehicles that warrant a lawful traffic stop.



# 2023 Response to Resistance





## **Department Policy:**

The Department recognizes and respects the value and special integrity of each human life. In vesting Public Safety Officers with lawful authority to use force to protect the public welfare, a careful balancing of all human interests is required. It is the policy of this Department that all officers use only the amount of force reasonably necessary to accomplish lawful objectives. Any force used must be in direct proportion to the resistance of the individual or suspect so that the officer can control the situation and prevent harm or injury to the individual, officer, and others. No Public Safety Officer may use excessive or unreasonable force toward any person, whether that person is a suspect or not.

## **Response to Resistance Analysis:**

A review of all Responses to Resistance in 2023 determined that in the 18 reported situations in which officers used force on an individual, proper training and policy were followed. In the 23 reports where empty hand control was used, all uses of force were efforts to effect an arrest or prevent evasion during the events leading to or resulting from an arrest. Officers in these reports used clear, loud verbal commands to ensure that the suspect received the least amount of force used to affect an arrest.

In instances where there were injuries to the suspect (7), all injuries were consistent with minor scrapes and scratches from being taken to the ground by soft empty hand control or falling to the ground as a result of being subjected to a TASER deployment. In one instance, the probes of a TASER deployed by an officer failed to properly make contact; resulting in the subject repeatedly trying to escape. In this instance the TASER was activated 3 times before contact was made and the subject could be effectively detained. This resulted in 3 use of force reports for one incident. No serious injuries were reported. The only trend in injuries to suspects were minor scrapes, scratches and abrasions. Interestingly, subjects were the victims of their own injury by falling during their attempts to escape during the detention process five (5) times. Officers were not injured during these responses other than three instances of minor scrapes during the detention process.

The ethnic, gender and age trends showed that most responses to resistance occurred when the suspect was a black male between the ages of 20 and 26. The ethnic majority of Orangeburg's population is similar to the suspects encountered when responses to resistance were reported.

Regarding the times and dates related to the incidents, responses to resistance appeared to be consistent despite the time of day with only slightly more responses occurring during the afternoon. Also, the day of the week that appeared most often was Tuesday. Looking at responses during this day, there were no identifiable patterns that could be discerned. However, August through October accounted for almost half of all responses; with the rest of the year maintaining a similar trend. Upon review, the officers and circumstances during this period did not produce any patterns that could be identified. Of note, one officer (female) who is less than 5 foot 5 inches tall was involved in three of the responses during this timeframe. It may be possible that the height and sex of the officer may have incited suspects to resist this officer's efforts to detain or arrest them.

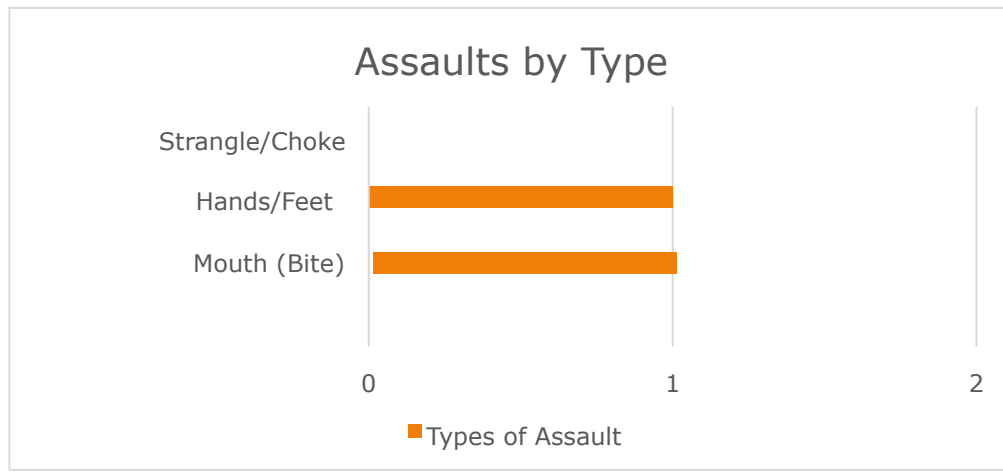
Officers who were responding to active warrants, assaults, and reports of trespass encountered the most resistance. Subjects with active warrants were often cooperative until a warrant was confirmed and the officer attempted to initiate the arrest. The same held true for traffic stops. Trespass suspects often knew the officer would arrest them on arrival due to the existence of a no-trespassing order; generally being uncooperative and attempting to initially evade the officer.

Officers also practiced good arrest procedures by having more than one officer present so that each officer used the minimum amount of force to gain compliance.

There were no reviews or changes to training or policy as a result of instances of response to aggression in 2023. In command reviews of each instance of response, it was determined that policy and training were followed correctly by officers. However, one (1) officer was counseled on the proper activation of their body camera because it was not activated in time to record the entire response incident.

Officers in all use of force reports show proper restraint and de-escalation procedures during the arrest procedure by ensuring the suspect is properly restrained and given loud, clear verbal commands from the officers. This ensures that the suspect in each report complies and is effectively arrested with the minimum amount of force used.

# Assaults on Law Enforcement Patrol Division



## **Analysis of Assaults on Law Enforcement:**

In 2023, there were two instances of an assault on a law enforcement officer employed at Public Safety. The primary action that led to the assault was the attempted detention of the subject.

The incident occurred during an effort to arrest a disorderly subject. During the encounter with officers, the subject shoved the officer in the chest. The officer was not injured and used soft empty hand control to effect the arrest. This incident occurred during the day.

In the other incident, the officer was bitten on the hand by the suspect while effecting an arrest relating to an assault. The officer was not seriously injured, and no medical attention was required for the officer or the subject. EMS responded to the scene and checked the officer's hand and determined that no treatment was needed as the bite did not break the skin. This incident occurred in the afternoon.

During 2023, there were only two total incidents of officers being assaulted. Since both occurred during the effect of an arrest, there are no trends that can be found. Two different officers were responding to two different incident types with two different offenders. Officers in both incidents attempted to safely detain the suspect when the suspect assaulted the officers. Officers in both incidents exercised proper restraint and did not escalate the incident after the assault. Based on the nature of the incidents and assaults, there are no recommendations or training that could further enhance the safety of officers.



## 2023 Disciplinary Investigations

During 2023, there were no listed disciplinary investigations. There were instances of officers being counseled for corrective actions and being reprimanded for simple violations of policy. However, no investigations into officers were initiated by Public Safety during 2023.

This is likely attributed to most infractions being minor in relation to simple policy violations that the officer could be correctively retrained or counseled. Major violations that would lead to an Internal Affairs investigation did not occur. An example is: two officers were found to not properly activate their body-worn cameras during traffic stops. After corrective training and oral counseling, both officers' compliance with departmental policies involving the use of body worn cameras continue to meet the department's standards.

Public Safety has a citizen complaint system in place as directed by Department Policy Chapter 26, which states:

There were four citizen complaints in 2023. These complaints were forwarded to the acting supervisor and after reviewing the body-worn camera footage, forwarded to the command staff for review. One complaint was sustained, one complaint was unfounded and two complaints were investigated and the officer(s) exonerated.

All citizen complaints pertaining to alleged violations of Department policy and procedures or employee misconduct will be documented and investigated by the Department. Complaints may be given in person, over the telephone, or in writing. Anonymous complaints, or complaints from individuals who want their names to be held in confidence, will be accepted for investigation.

## 2023 Employee Grievances

There were no grievances filed against Public Safety by any employee during 2023.

Public Safety maintains a transparent and fully accessible grievance policy where all employees are encouraged to report any instances of misconduct or negative treatment to the Human Resources department.

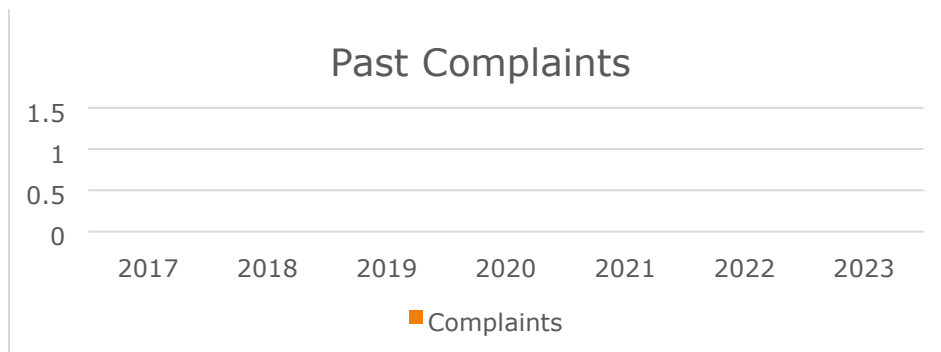
In a review of the department's climate, one practice stands out: Many opportunities are offered for employees within the department to solve problems at "the lowest possible level". This strategy enables direct-line supervisors to address problems an employee might have before sending the problem up to the Chain of Command. Supervisors are encouraged to keep direct and frequent communication with their subordinates to ensure that problems can be identified and resolved. In the event of a problem or grievance from one in a supervisory position, Command Staff make themselves available at all times to discuss the issues that an employee might have.

As a review of all grievances filed by any department, the policies and procedures of the grievance process were updated when reviewed and updates were made to the city's policies and procedures when needed and shared with all employees in an update to the City of Orangeburg's Employee Handbook in January of 2023.

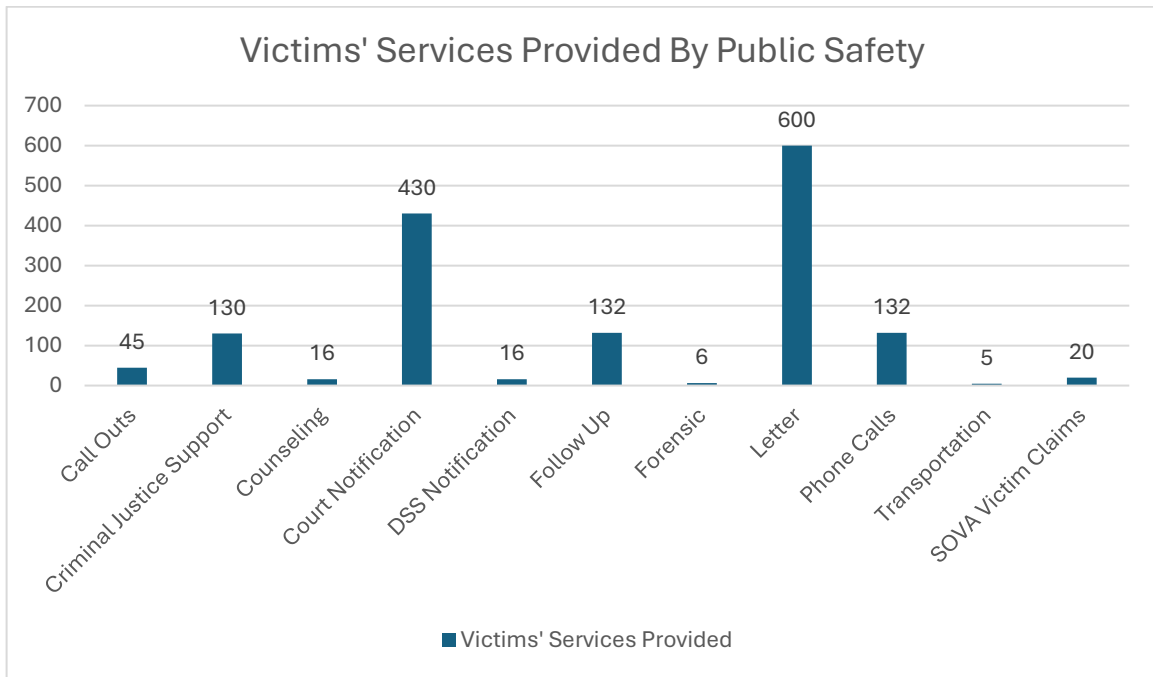
# Biased-Based Policing

There were no complaints of biased-based policing filed against Public Safety during 2023. Public Safety maintains a proactive approach to our community through trust and integrity and welcomes any feedback that may help us better perform our service to the community. Public Safety runs many partnership programs with the community, such as: Serve & Connect, Greg's Groceries, The Tiffany Grant Foundation,

Public Safety conducts an annual review of all traffic stops by service personnel and determined that there were no instances of biased-based policing actions that occurred. There were no recommended changes to training or operations in 2023.



## 2023 Victims' Services



Every two years, the department conducts a review of the services provided to our victims. A review established that there were certain areas that could be improved, such as enhanced counseling services and enhanced cooperation with the Department of Social Services. Faster and more frequent communication between the department and other service providers will enhance the services we provide our victims. One of the recommendations put forward suggested establishing a more comprehensive Chaplain's Corps. As for services offered such as transportation, counseling and Victim's Claims Services, it was found that the current needs of our victims are currently being met by the services that the department provides. Public Safety maintains a constant search for future funds and grants that will enable us to provide enhanced victims' services at a lower cost to the department and the City of Orangeburg.

ctive Traffic Enforcement

## Selective Traffic Enforcement / Activities

There are certain selective enforcement activities that are conducted by Public Safety on a recurring basis. The nature of these activities is directly related to crime patterns and trends that are observed and noted during weekly Crime Stat meetings.

Crime Stat meetings are held every week on Tuesday and include all crimes, patterns and trends and are presented to the Command Staff, all shift lieutenants and Investigators.

Decisions are made during these meetings by all personnel on where to direct enforcement or prevention efforts. Examples include Operation City Lights (an ongoing department-wide effort to reduce crime in pre-designated areas), Red Means Stop (an ongoing campaign to select intersections in the city with high volumes of motor vehicle collisions).

These campaigns are paired with selective enforcement and police presence in areas designated by findings presented in Crime Stat and collaboration between the Command Staff, shift lieutenants, and Investigators. These efforts are consistently reviewed during the week and findings and results are presented in the next weekly meeting on the effectiveness of these efforts. The recommendations, campaigns, and enforcement activities may be changed or continued based on reporting during the next Crime Stat meeting. Command Staff also have available Quarterly Traffic Analysis Reports on collisions that occur. A yearly analysis of all traffic collisions and efforts showed that in 2023, traffic efforts to reduce speeds on major roads were successful in the short-term during the time of enforcement. However, traffic enforcement at high-risk intersections proved unsuccessful. Since most collisions have occurred due to failure to yield, poor driver decision making could not be impacted by traffic enforcement efforts in 2023. Collisions and traffic data suggest that collision enforcement does not affect the recorded number of occurrences in the targeted area. These enforcement efforts were recommended to be discontinued. However, after a review of traffic enforcement, traffic patterns at two high-risk roads were affected. Recommendations during weekly meetings reflected changing areas to target new high-risk roads.

The recommendations and campaigns or enforcement efforts are recorded and disseminated to all department personnel after the Crime Stat meeting to ensure all department personnel are participating in the recommendations and procedures set forth during the meeting.