



2022

Use of Force Analysis



Tiverton Police Department

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TIVERTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

2021 Use of Force Analysis



Contents

.....	1
Executive Summary.....	3
Policy Information and Reporting Parameters	4
5-Year Review	5
Analysis and Discussion.....	6
Time Aspects of Force Application.....	7
Use of Force Demographics and Location	9
Force Methods (Tools and Types).....	10
Injuries as a Result of Force Application	10
Conclusion.....	10

TIVERTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

2021 Use of Force Analysis



Executive Summary

The Tiverton Police Department (TPD) has concluded its annual use of force analysis for the 2021 calendar year. This analysis was completed by Lieutenant Bryan M. Palagi who is in his 11th year of service as a Tiverton Police Officer and is currently assigned to the department's Planning and Training Division.

Lieutenant Palagi serves as the department's senior use of force instructor and force investigator. He has served as a lead use of force instructor for the Rhode Island Municipal Police Training Academy for over 9 years and in 2021, Lieutenant Palagi also served as a use of force instructor for the most recent class of the Providence Police Academy. Among his many use of force certifications, Lieutenant Palagi has also completed a course on Use of Force Analysis and Investigation for Police Leaders.

This report was compiled after the review of information from multiple sources. Throughout the entirety of the 2021 calendar year, the Tiverton Police Department utilized a cloud based software known as SHIELD for an array of purposes. The SHIELD suite contains a section referred to as FACTS which tracks the department's use of force information and even provides early warnings to supervisors regarding their officers' force applications.

Each time an officer is involved in a situation requiring the use of force, that officer logs onto his or her SHIELD account and creates a response to resistance report. Each report contains information for the officers involved, the suspect(s) involved, the location of incident, the types of force used, charges brought against the suspect (if necessary), injuries sustained (if any) and so forth.

Additionally, the Tiverton Police Department's Records Management System (RMS) and Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) systems were utilized to acquire the remainder of information concerning general department data/statistics.

In 2021, the officers of the Tiverton Police Department responded to **15,439 calls for service**. Officers made **870 arrests** during the calendar year and were involved in **15 applications of force**. It should be noted that calls / incidents, may have required more than one application of force depending on the number of suspects at a given scene and the officers present to control the situation. It should also be noted that **arrests only accounted for 13 of the 15 force applications, the other 2 applications were the result of incidents regarding mental health calls for service**. For the purposes of this report, conclusions drawn will regularly relate to the correlation between the application of force and the conducting of arrests by officers of the Tiverton Police Department. This is done due to the overwhelming number of force applications that occur during arrests as oppose to other incidents/call types.

TIVERTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

2021 Use of Force Analysis



In essence, the officers of the Tiverton Police Department **used force in approximately 0.1% of the calls for service they tended to, and approximately 1.5% of all arrests made in 2021**. Compared to the statistics from 2020, officer use of force **declined** from approximately 1.9% of all arrests made and saw virtually no difference in force used when measured against calls for service. This conclusion validates the training being taught to and received by officers of the Tiverton Police Department. Specifically, learned de-escalation tactics may have attributed to the decline of the already low percentage of force application.

The following analysis has been prepared to provide the reader with a more in-depth look into the many components and variables as they relate to the application of force within the Tiverton Police Department.

Policy Information and Reporting Parameters

Officers of the Tiverton Police Department complete response to resistance reports in accordance with **General Order 390.10, "Use of Force" (Updated 12/07/2020)** which defines a reportable use of force as any incident in which a sworn department member exercises his/her police powers and uses a force option except for those actions set forth below. Reportable uses of force also include:

- a. Drawing and pointing a firearm or Electronic Control Weapon (ECW) at a person for the purpose of obtaining and/or maintaining control of that person.
- b. Taking an action that results in, or is alleged to have resulted in, either injury to or the death of another person.

Exceptions to reportable force include:

- a. Command presence.
- b. Verbal commands.
- c. Physical skills which does not result in injury, the appearance of injury, or the complaint of pain (ex. soft empty-hand control techniques).
- d. Compliance handcuffing which does not result in injury, the appearance of injury, or the complaint of pain.

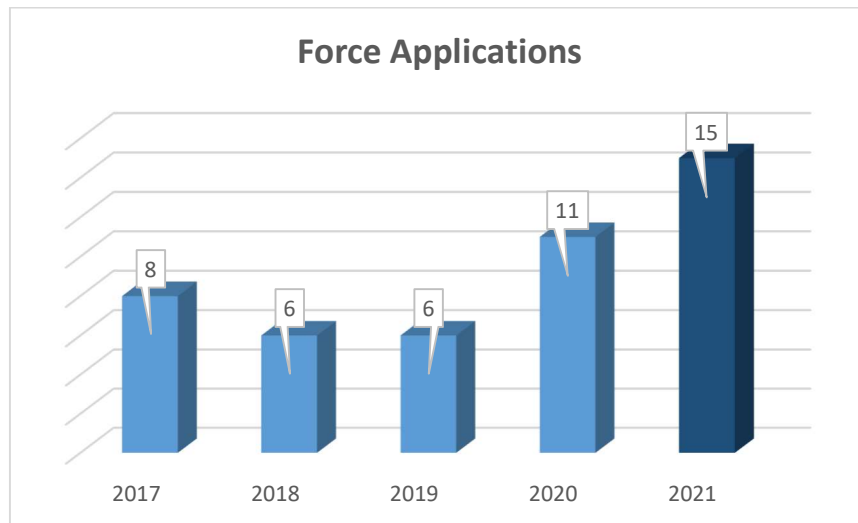
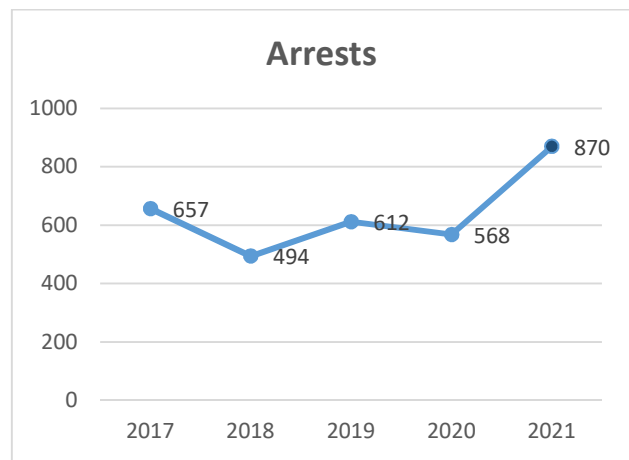
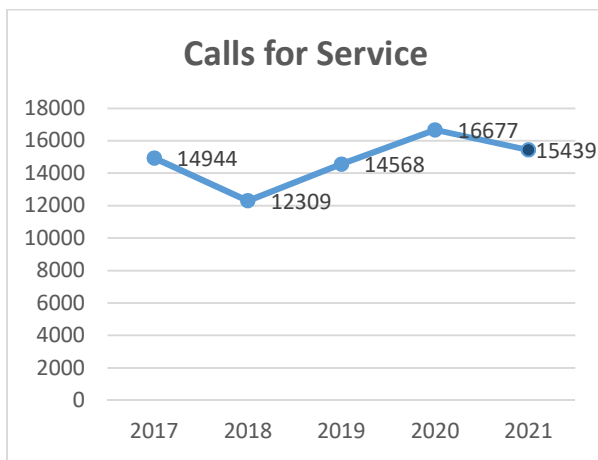
TIVERTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

2021 Use of Force Analysis



5-Year Review

In 2021, the Tiverton Police Department responded to 15,439 calls for service which is a decrease of 7.5% from the previous year (16,677 in 2020). This figure is still well above the 5-year average of 14,787 calls for service. However, the number of arrests conducted by the Tiverton Police Department in 2021 was 870, which was a 35% increase over the previous year (568 arrests in 2020) and well above the 5-year average of 640 arrests. Along with this increase, the number of force applications increased by 26% from 11 in 2020 to 15 in 2021.



TIVERTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

2021 Use of Force Analysis



Analysis and Discussion

Without comparing all the figures presented, the increase in force application would appear problematic. Despite the fact that it is merely a net increase of 4 total force applications over an entire calendar year, 26% on its own would not appear to be a relatively small increase. However, given that the Tiverton Police Department also saw an increase in the arrest rate of approximately 35% (568 arrests in 2020 to 870 arrests in 2021), the increase in force applications was only a total of 4 with an increase in arrests made of 302. This is evident in the percentile decline in force applications compared to arrests conducted (1.9% in 2020 to 1.5% in 2021).

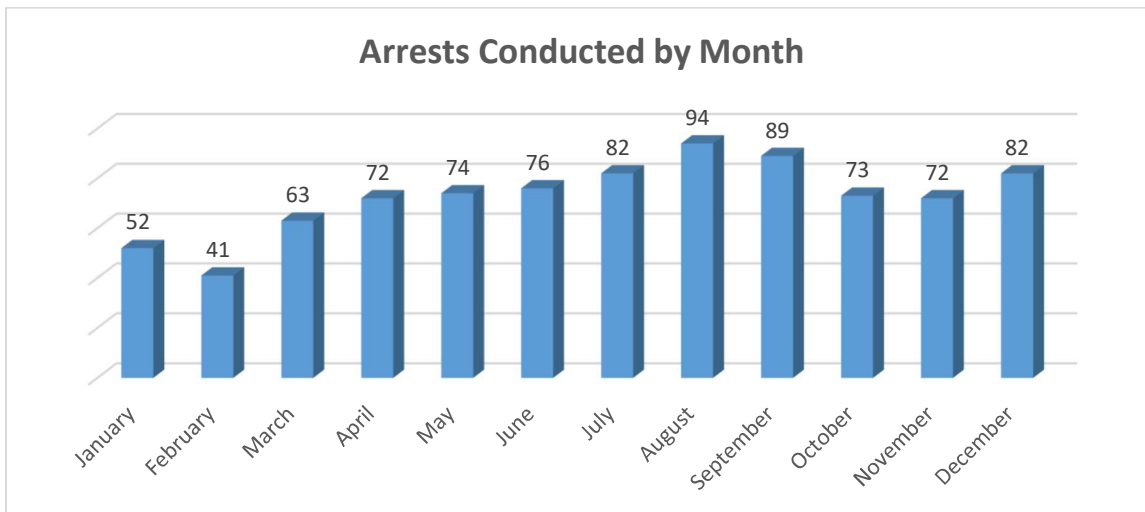
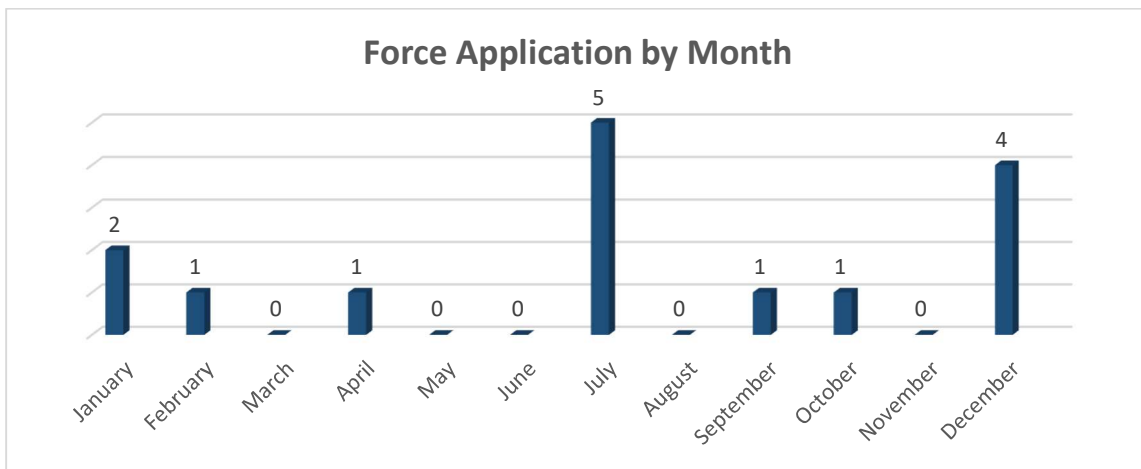
TIVERTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

2021 Use of Force Analysis



Time Aspects of Force Application

Depicted in the two exhibits below are the breakdowns of force application and the number of arrests made by month. Officers of the Tiverton Police Department used force in 7 of 12 months. There is normally and increase in call volume (both calls for service and proactivity) during the summer months for obvious weather-related reasons. Although there does not appear to be any rhyme nor reason to the application of force by month, there is a slight correlation between the number of arrests conducted and the use of force totals for that given month.

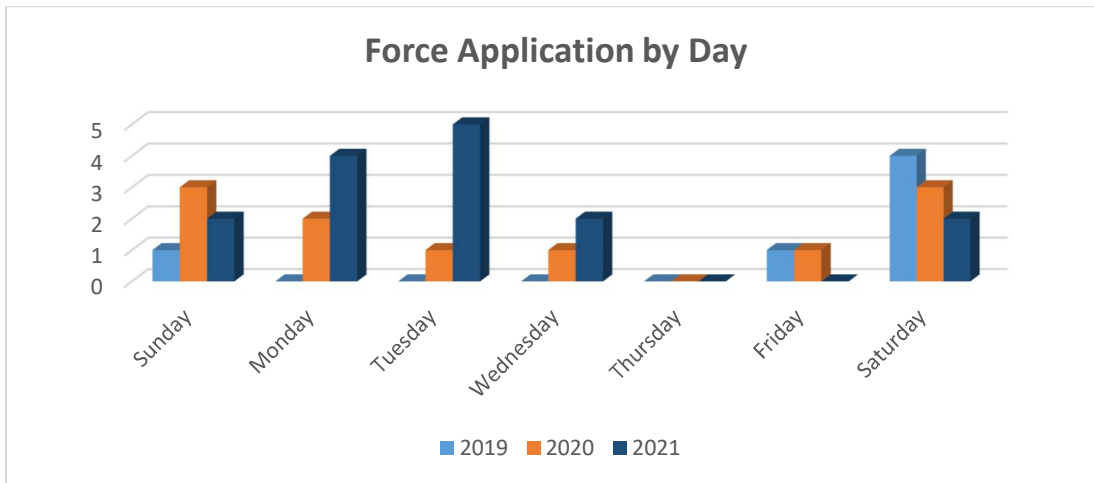


TIVERTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

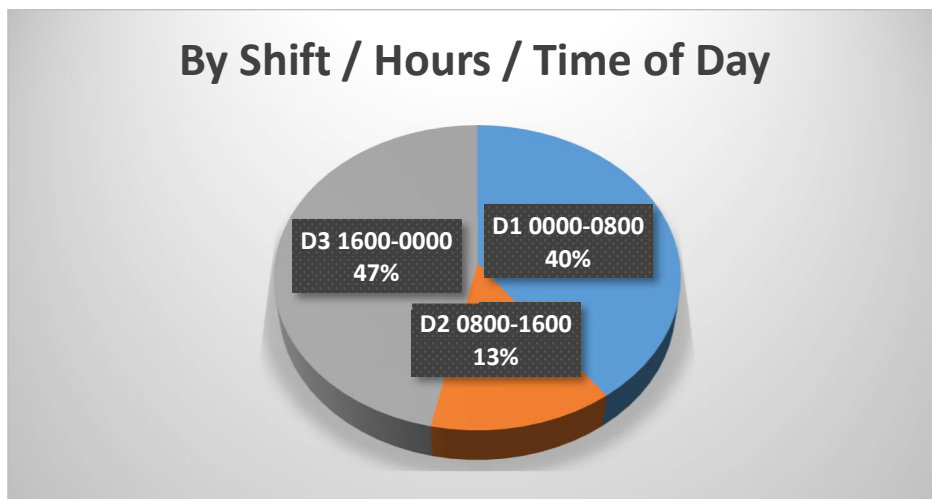
2021 Use of Force Analysis



In regard to force application by day of the week, there does not appear to be any correlation throughout the year 2021 or in regard to comparison with the previous two years. Given the fact that 27% of the Tiverton Police Department's entire force application took place at the Bally's Tiverton Casino, it could be inferred that the influx of patrons to the casino for holiday weekends could be the reasoning behind a majority of use of force incidents occurring Saturday through Tuesday. However, there is not enough data to definitively tie this reasoning to the statistics collected.



When force application is broken down by shift, a majority (87%) of use of force incidents are shown to occur during the evening and overnight hours (shifts D3 and D1; 1600-0800 hours). This finding is to be expected given the prevalence of intoxicating liquor and drugs during the mentioned hours.



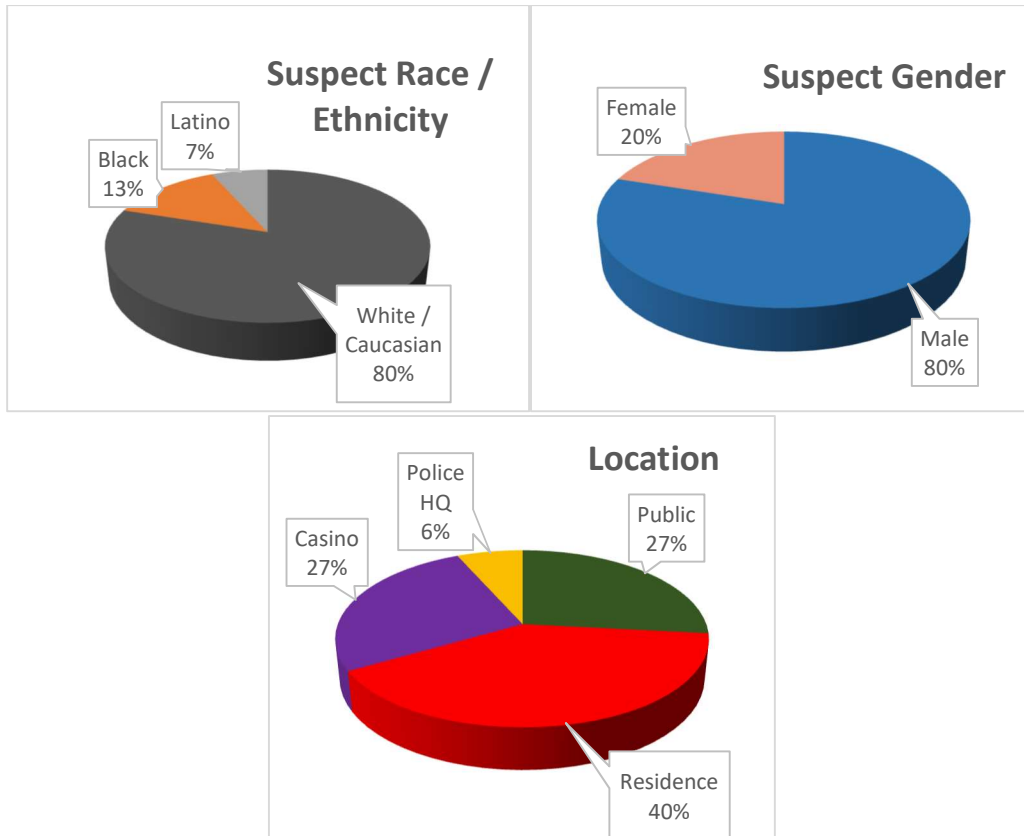
TIVERTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

2021 Use of Force Analysis



Use of Force Demographics and Location

It is important to recognize that when looking at the data included in this report to consider the fact that breaking down the actual force application is looking at only 15 data entries. As such, only general conclusions can be gathered by exploring this data.



Looking at suspect race and ethnicity for force applications, the 15 response to resistance reports indicated that 12 or 80% of the suspects involved were white/Caucasian. The remaining 20% is made up of suspects that identified as being black or Latino/Hispanic, 13% and 7% respectively.

With respect to gender, 12 out of the 15 instances (80%) where force was applied was involving male suspects. Only 3 instances or 20% of the use of force situations involved female suspects.

In regard to location, the majority of use of force incidents in 2021 took place in either a residence, public place or the casino. Bally's Tiverton Casino was listed in its own category due to the fact that 27% of the Tiverton Police Department's recorded use of force incidents took place at that location. This percentage matched all other public locations (27%) and was surpassed only by residences (40%). One instance occurred in the entire calendar year at police headquarters accounting for the remaining 6%.

TIVERTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

2021 Use of Force Analysis



Force Methods (Tools and Types)

When looking at the breakdown of data concerning force application for 2021, there was not a great deal of variety noted in terms different tools or types of force used. Before looking at the numbers, it is important to note that a single reportable use of force incident could consist of multiple force options being used. As such, the total number in this data set will not match the total number of force incidents reported.

In the overwhelming majority of force applications officers resorted to using a combination of hand techniques and takedowns. 10 use of force incidents of the 15 total reported were ended through the use of hand techniques. A total of 3 takedowns were reported (these are generally coupled with hand techniques). In 2021 there were 2 incidents where officers displayed their firearms and another 2 incidents where a Taser was displayed in order to gain compliance from a suspect or multiple suspects.

Injuries as a Result of Force Application

Each use of force incident reported in the SHIELD FACTS program also records injuries sustained by suspects and officers. Again, it's important to note that multiple officers and/or multiple suspects can be involved in a single reported use of force.

The 15 reported force applications in 2021 resulted in no serious bodily injury to suspects or officers. 22% of the incidents resulted in suspect injury in the form of minor complaints of pain. They were recorded as knee pain, elbow pain and minor abrasions. Only one officer recorded a minor injury and was taken for an x-ray with zero findings of any skeletal damage.

Conclusion

During 2021, the officers of the Tiverton Police Department appeared to show skill, intelligence and restraint when dealing with force applications. The percentage of use of force incidents in comparison to calls for service and arrests, is a testament to the skill level possessed by the men and women of this police force in regard to de-escalation tactics. These could range from being able to talk a suspect out of fighting or even stalling for backup to produce the numbers necessary to quell any type of resistance.

The overwhelming number of incidents where officers used their personal weapons (hands/feet) to control a situation instead of other tools (baton, OC, Taser, etc.) shows a confidence in their abilities to apply learned empty hand control techniques. As such, further training will revolve around furthering this skillset in both individual and team approaches.