



Use of Force Analysis 2020

Overview

This analysis was conducted for the purpose of reviewing the Bellaire Police Department's Use of Force incidents for calendar year 2020. The Bellaire Police Department takes seriously its obligations to provide the most effective and efficient police service with the least adverse impact on our community. The Bellaire Police Department is committed to protecting the rights of all persons and in using force only when necessary, and to the extent necessary, to achieve legal objectives. This analysis is conducted each year to comply with Texas Law Enforcement Best Practice 6.10 and to attempt to identify methods for reducing the number of incidents and the inherent risks involved.

Officers are trained by the department to use only the level of force necessary to bring a person under control and complete a legal objective. Police/citizen encounters can, however, change in an instant and officers may be required to react quickly in using force to bring a resisting subject under control. While officers prefer to escalate their level of force in an orderly the response of a subject may limit that ability and force officers to use whatever level of force is immediately necessary to protect themselves and the public.

Use of Force Reporting Requirements

Texas Law Enforcement Best Practice 6.03 and Bellaire Police Department General Order 6.1, Use of Force, requires a written report be completed anytime an officer uses force. Supervisors are required to submit a use of force reporting form any time, during the course of their duties, an officer employs physical force other than the routine use of handcuffs or use of a firm grip to direct the movements of a subject. Reports are also required for the use of an impact, electrical, or chemical weapon as well as the discharge of any firearm.

Each individual Use of Force Report is completed by the involved officer's supervisor and forwarded through the Chain of Command to the Assistant Chief of Police. At the time of the incident, the Use of Force is reviewed to ensure the use was appropriate and within the guidelines of Department Policy and Law. If the officer used force inappropriately, a departmental investigation is required and the officer may receive additional training or in some cases discipline up to and including termination from employment. This analysis is not intended to determine if an officer acted inappropriately, but to identify department wide trends that may suggest changes in policy, training, equipment, or supervision.

Data for this report is submitted via a Use of Force reporting form and logged on a spreadsheet maintained by the Assistant Chief of Police.

Types of Force Reported

The department allows for the reporting of ten types of force. They are:

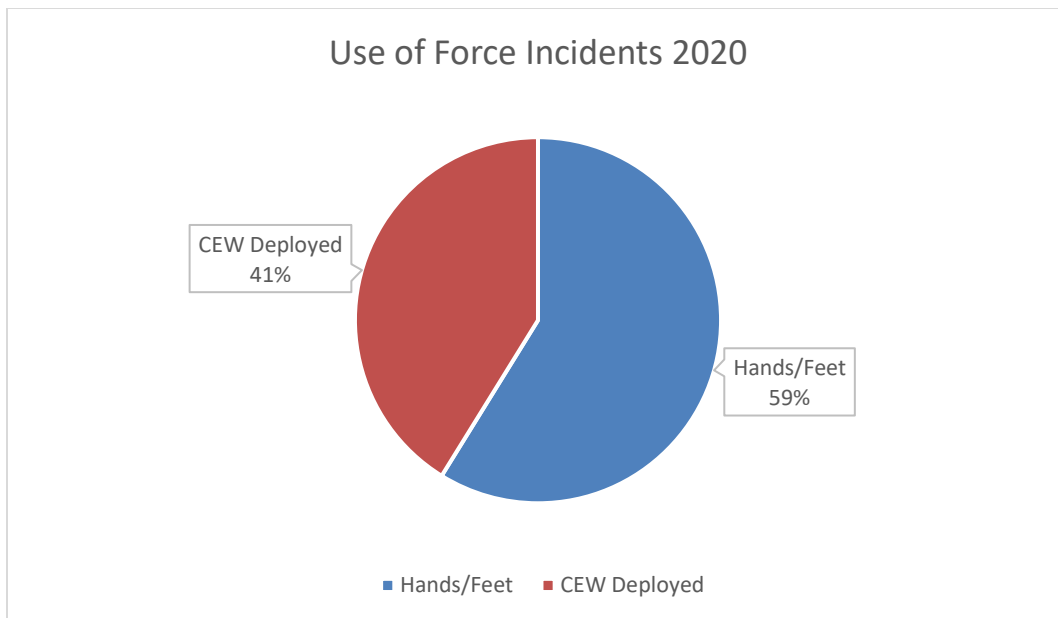
1. Baton
2. CEW Exhibited
3. CEW Deployed
4. Firearm Exhibited
5. Firearm Deployed
6. Defensive Technique
7. Escort Technique
8. Take Down
9. Hands/Feet
10. Other

In calendar year 2020 two types of force were used: Hands/Feet; and Conducted Energy Weapon Deployed.

Hands/Feet

Hands/Feet identifies instances when physical control of a subject was required. These are instances where officers place their hands on a subject and use more force than simply a strong grip, must forcibly handcuff a person, the use of pressure point control tactics or other soft hand techniques.

Hands/Feet was the most commonly used primary type of force and accounted for 10 of the 17 reported uses of force.



CEW Deployed

Conducted Energy Weapons (CEW), commonly called Tasers, are pistol type devices that fire two small darts that are designed to imbed themselves in the skin or clothing of a resisting or combative suspect. The darts are connected to the device by small flexible wires which transmit a short 5-second high voltage/low amperage charge through the darts. This causes disruption of muscle activity which most often temporarily disables the individual. There are usually no long-term side effects of the use of the device on healthy individuals.

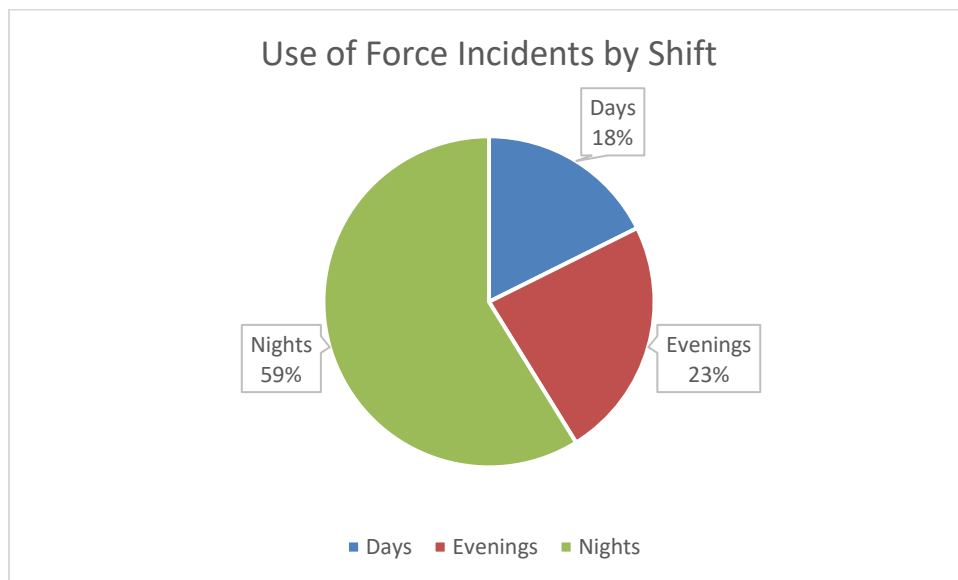
The Bellaire Police Department trains their officers in the proper and appropriate use of Conducted Energy Weapons and has policies designed to only allow its use against active aggression toward officers and not in cases of passive non-compliance or as punishment of any kind.

In two cases when the primary method of hands/feet was unsuccessful officers deployed a secondary type of force, the conducted energy weapon (CEW), to gain control of the suspect.

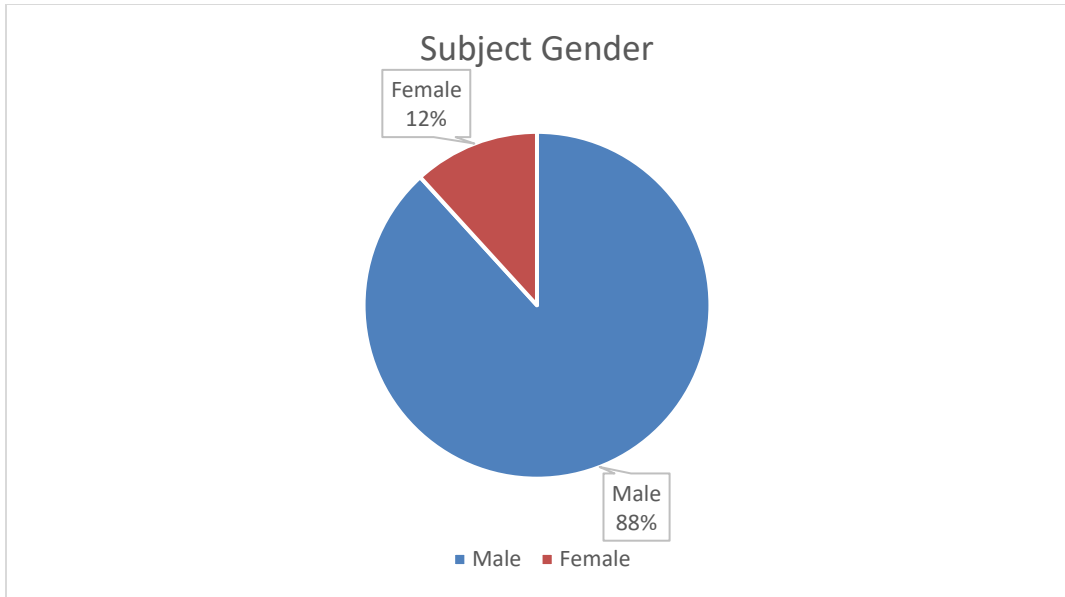
Counting both primary and secondary uses of force, a CEW was deployed nine times.

Data Analysis

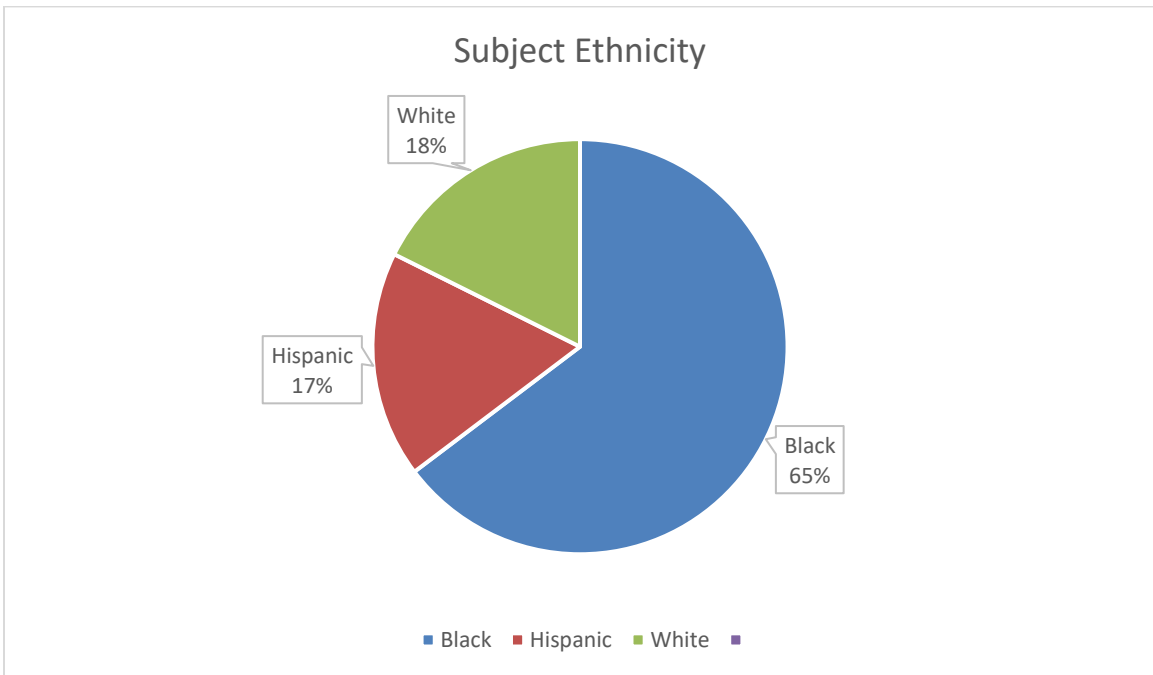
The following charts provide an overview of the 17 reported incidents.



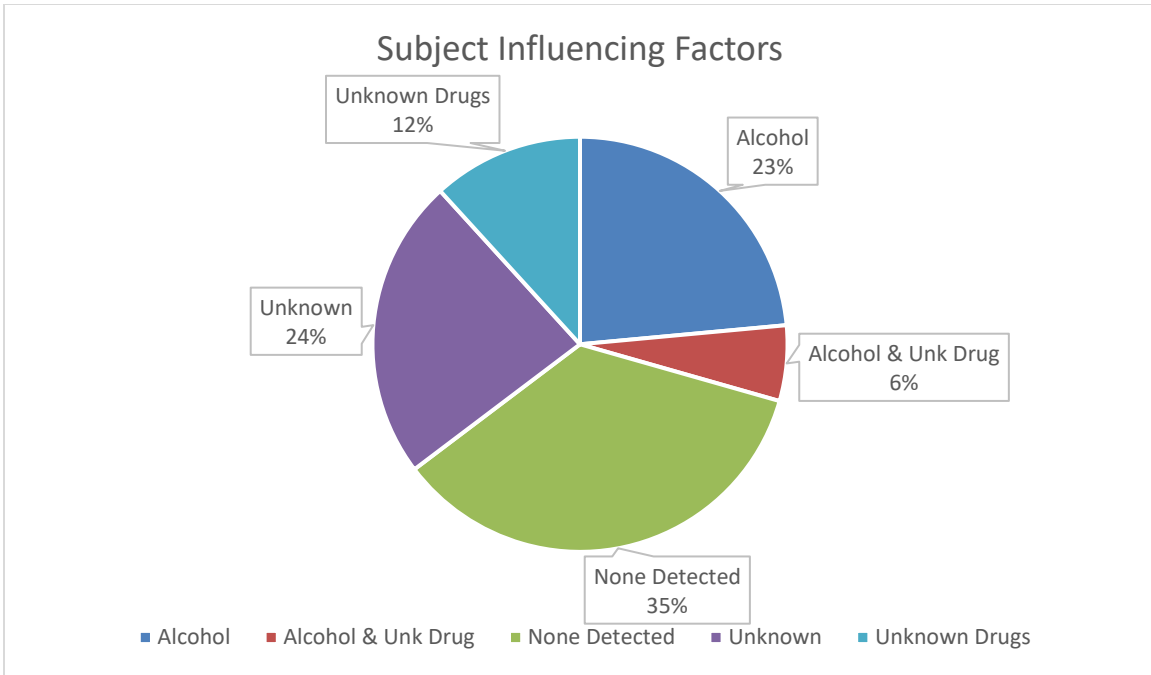
Day Shift reported three incidents; Evening Shift four; and Night Shift ten.



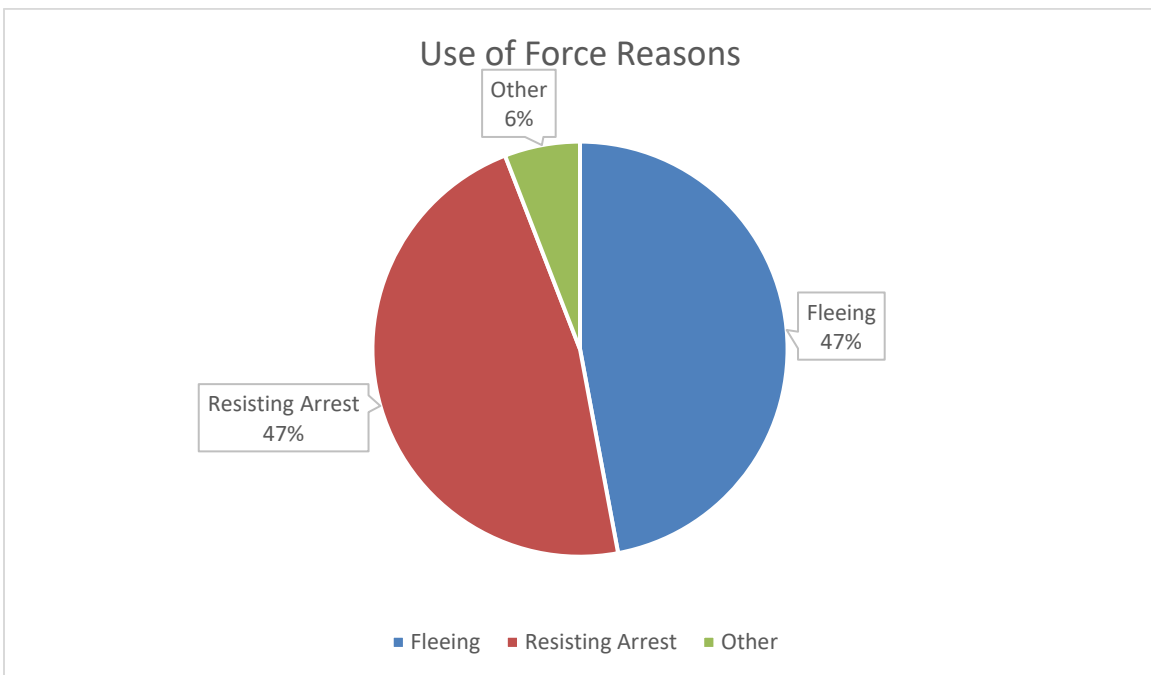
Male subjects accounted for the majority of incidents (15).



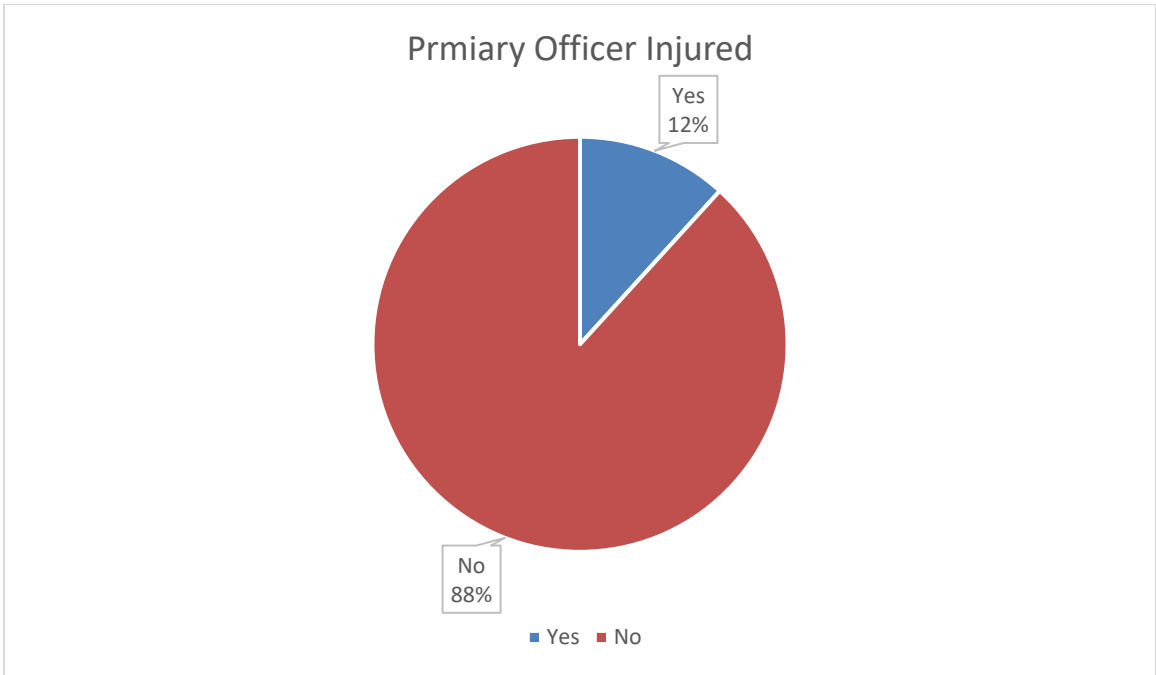
Out of the 17 incidents reported, White Males accounted for three; Hispanic males accounted for 3; Black Males – 9; and Black Females - 2.



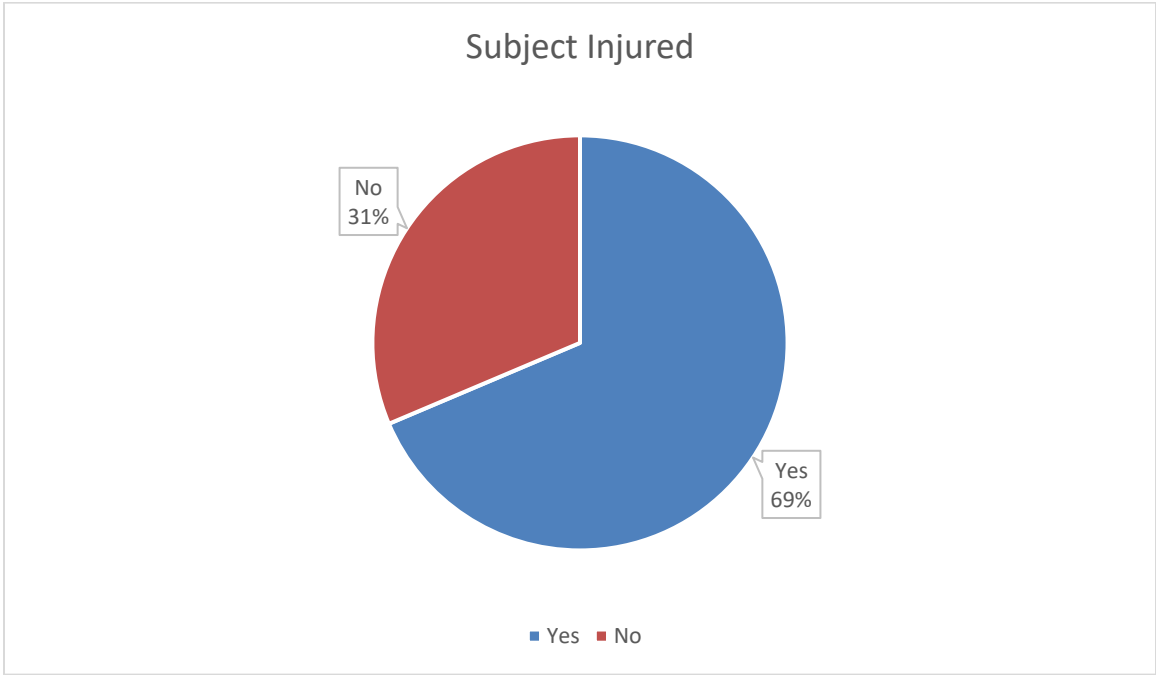
The reporting form asks for judgement on factors that may have influenced the involved subject's behavior. Alcohol was suspected in four cases; alcohol and unknown drugs in one; no impairment detected in 6 cases; unknown influences in four; and unknown drugs in 2 cases.



The reasons force was used was evenly split between resisting arrest (8) and fleeing (8). In only one case was the reason 'Other' due to a subject resisting booking/processing.



The primary officer was injured in two of the seventeen incidents.



Involved subjects were injured in seven incidents. In only two instances was the subject hospitalized; however, in neither case were the injuries severe. Underlying issues such as drug use or pre-existing conditions are what required care.

General Observations

In all Use of Force cases the involved subject was charged with a criminal offense. The following summarizes the charges filed in connection with use of force incidents:

Subject Arrest Charges
Assault Class B
Evading Arrest / BMV
DOC, PI, Traffic related offenses
Interfering w/Public Servant
Burg Habit/ Evading in Vehicle
Evading / PCS / Poss. ID Info
Evading/Poss w-Intent/Felon firearm
Resisting Arrest/Evading
Criminal Mischief/Evading
UUMV, Evading
UUMV, BMV, UCW, Assault PO
Evading
Evading/BMV
DWI
Resisting Arrest/HCSO Warrants
Evading-Enhanced/Felon w/Firearm
Interfering w/Public Servant

In 2020 the Bellaire Police Department arrested 472 individuals. The 17 use of force incidents accounted for only 3.6% of arrest cases.

Conclusions

Data reported does not suggest Bellaire Police Officers are using more force than is objectively reasonable. Even so, in 2020 the department mandated that all officers undergo a four-hour block of de-escalation training consisting of two hours of classroom instruction and two hours of simulator training. The intent is to increase officer safety, reduce reliance on force to achieve law enforcement objectives, and reduce the possibility of subject injuries in force encounters.