

2017



# University of Texas System Police Use of Force Report

BY: UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM POLICE ACADEMY STAFF  
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OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF POLICE | 210 West 7th Street, Austin, Texas 78701

## Summary

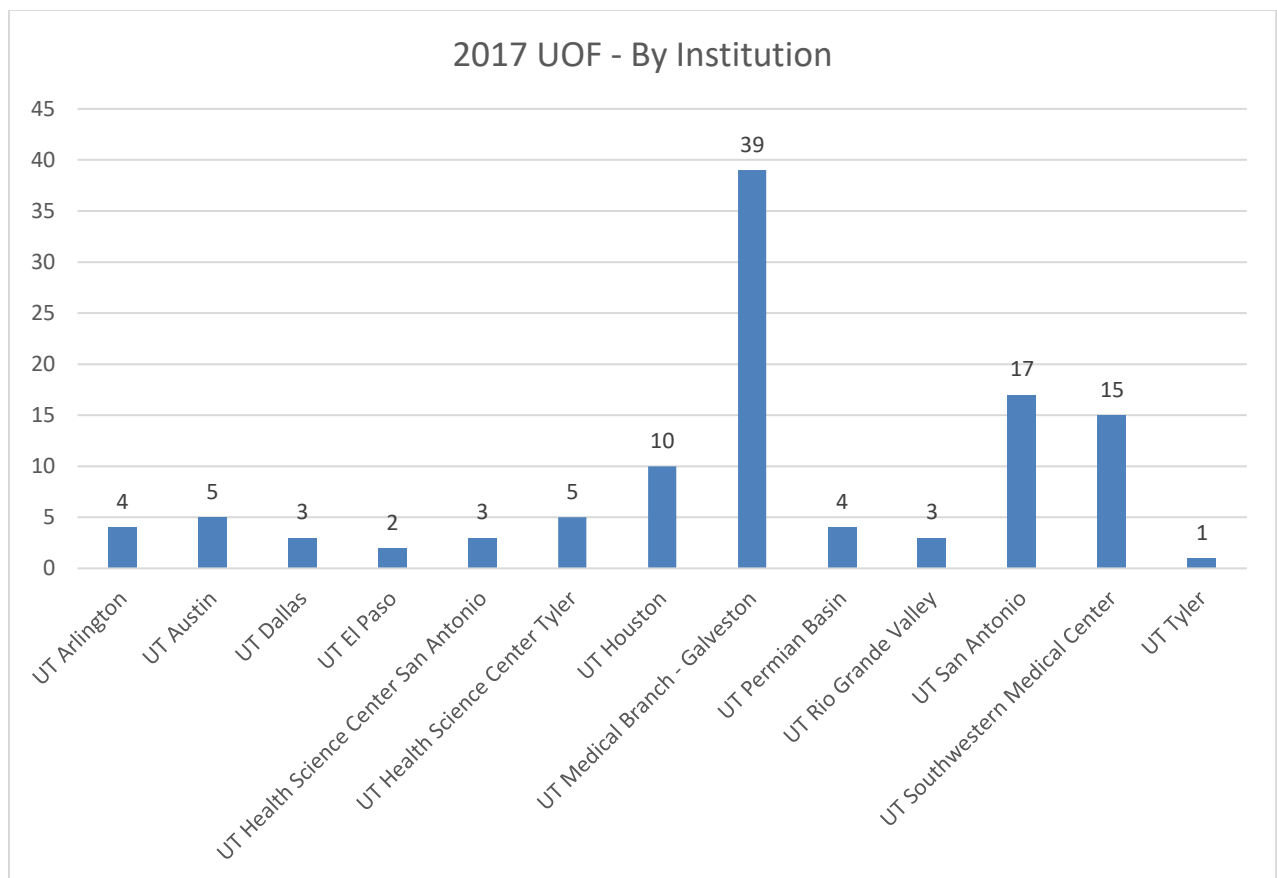
During the period of January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017, UT System Police Officers encountered 111 situations that required the use of force above the level of command presence, verbal commands and low level handcuffing techniques. This represents a 42% increase from the 2016 Use of Force Reports.

The 111 situations involved the uses of force against 130 individual subjects, a 43% increase from the 2016 report of 91 subjects. An average of 1.86 officers were involved in uses of force against an average of 1.17 subjects. The largest number of officers involved in one event was six, and the largest number of subjects involved was four. The average age of officers involved in uses of force events was 36.39 (versus 36.67 for 2016). The youngest officer was 21 years of age and the oldest was 58 years old. The average age of the subjects was 29.93 (versus 33.29 in 2016) with 78 years old as the oldest (In this incident, emergency staff activated a panic button in response to the patient physically assaulting them. Officers used passive control measures to assist emergency room staff). Five juveniles (one 8-year-old, one 10-year-old and three 16 year olds) were subjects of uses of force in disturbances in emergency rooms at medical institutions (The 8-year-old male patient was kicking emergency staff and attempted to escape out of the emergency room. Officers used passive control measures to assist emergency room staff. The 10-year-old male patient was assaulting staff and throwing items around the emergency room. Officers used soft control measures to assist emergency room staff. The first 16-year-old male patient was attempting to escape emergency room staff and officers used soft control measures to assist emergency room staff. The second 16-year-old male was a patient of a psychiatric center who had escaped and officers used soft control measures to assist the emergency room staff. The third 16-year-old was a passenger in a vehicle that was involved in a disturbance involving a firearm. Officers stopped the vehicle and conducted a high-risk stop). Sixteen percent of uses of force situations involved an Emergency Detention of the subject(s) (18 total in 2017) which is three more than the 2016 report.

	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Use of Force – Incidents	111	78	93	109	63
Taser Use or Exhibition	7	12	11	8	2
Pepper Spray Use of Exhibition	0	2	3	1	0
Baton Use or Exhibition	0	0	0	1	0
Empty Hand Tactics	67	48	47	78	54
Exhibit Firearm	26	17	26	20	6
Use of Firearm	0	1	0	1	1

## Institution

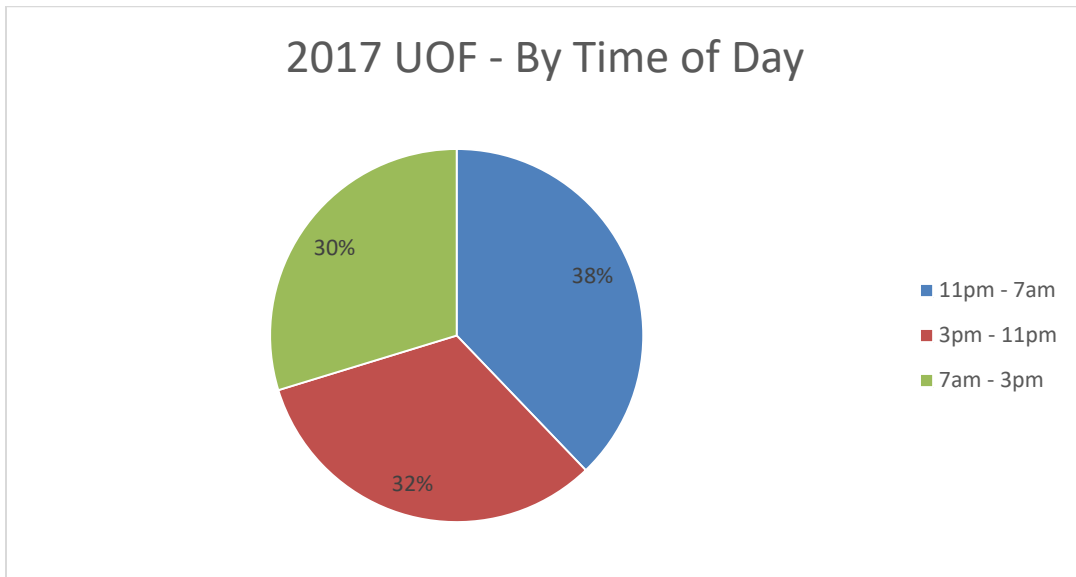
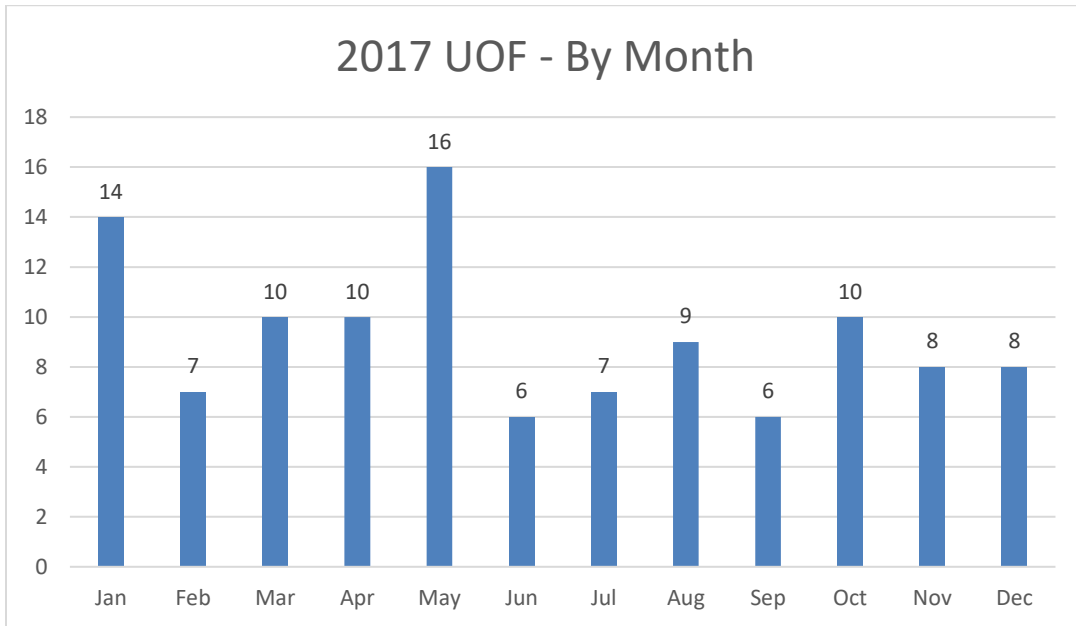
Demographically by campus, 35% of all uses of force occurred at UT Medical Branch - Galveston with 39 incidents. Sixty-four percent of the incidents at UTMB were officers using control measures to assist emergency room staff. UT San Antonio had seventeen use of force incidents and UT Southwestern had fifteen use of force incidents. UT Houston had ten use of force events, UT Austin had five and UT Health Science Center - Tyler had five. Of the 111 uses of force reports, 37% (41 incidents) occurred at medical facilities where officers used low level control measures to assist medical staff.



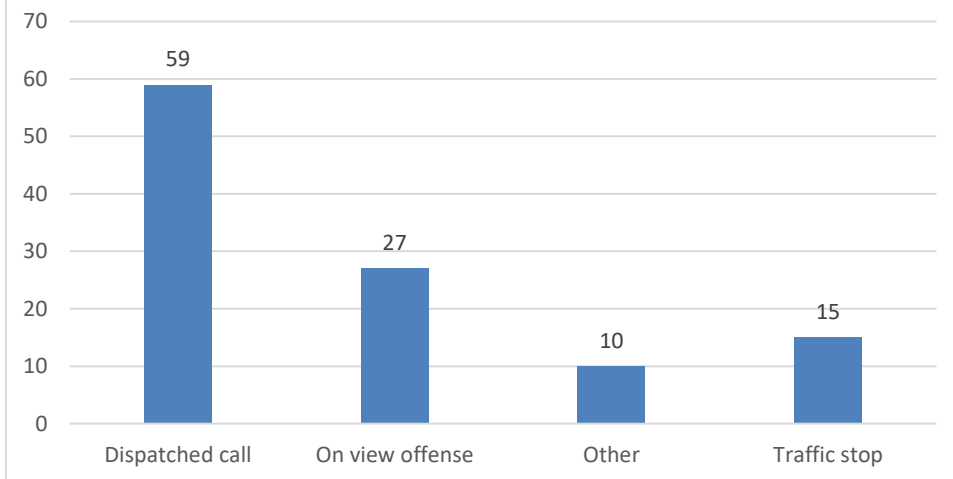
## Date & Time

The majority of uses of force by University of Texas System Police (UTSP) officers in 2017 occurred in May (total of 16) compared to November (total of 14) in 2016. January had the next most occurrences of uses of force with 14. The months of March, April and October had ten each of occurrences of uses of force.

The majority of uses of force occurred between the hours of 11pm to 7am at 38%, which is a 3% increase from the 2016 (38% in 2017 versus 35% in 2016). The 3pm to 11pm shift saw 32% of the uses of force (compared to 46% in 2016) followed by 30% for the hours between 7am to 3pm (compared to 20% in 2016).



## 2017 UOF - By Reason



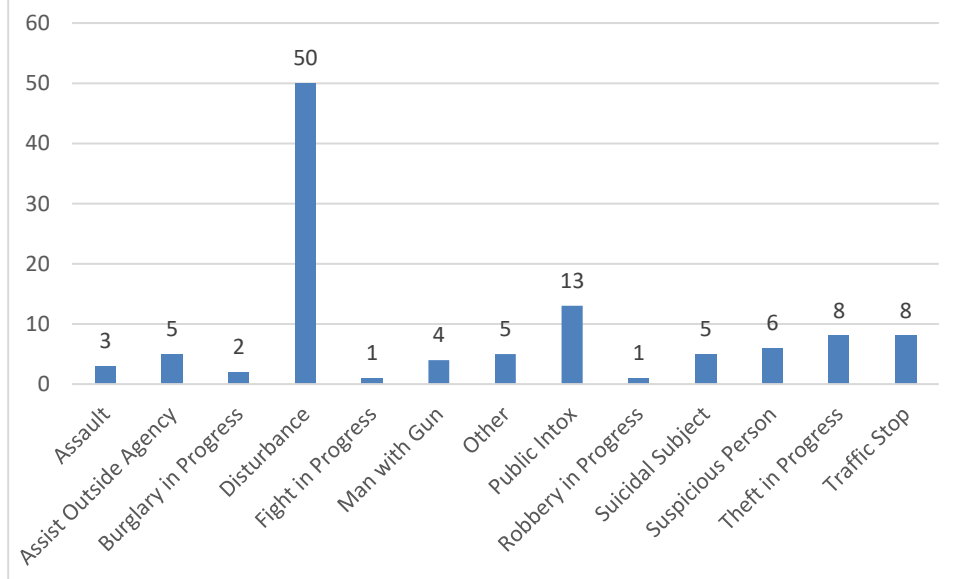
## Incident Conditions

The reason for the contact that brought the officer and the suspects together varied. In 53% of the reports, the incident was classified as a “Dispatched Call” in which the officer was assigned a call via the radio or telephone. Twenty-four percent of officer/subject contacts occurred when the officer directly saw the event unfold, which is classified as “On-view

Offense/Incident” (27 total in 2017, compared to 14 in 2016). Events classified as “Traffic Stop” accounted for 14% or fifteen incidents of all uses of force (compared to a percentage of 21% in 2016). “Other” (various different events) made up 9% of reported uses of force.

When classifying the nature of the situation in which uses of force occurred, there were several factors involved. “Disturbance” and “Public Intoxication” accounted for 45% and 12% respectively concerning the nature of the situation (50 and 13). Seventy-eight percent of the disturbances (39 out of 50) involved direct police assistance to medical personnel in an effort to restrain an out of control, combative or assaultive

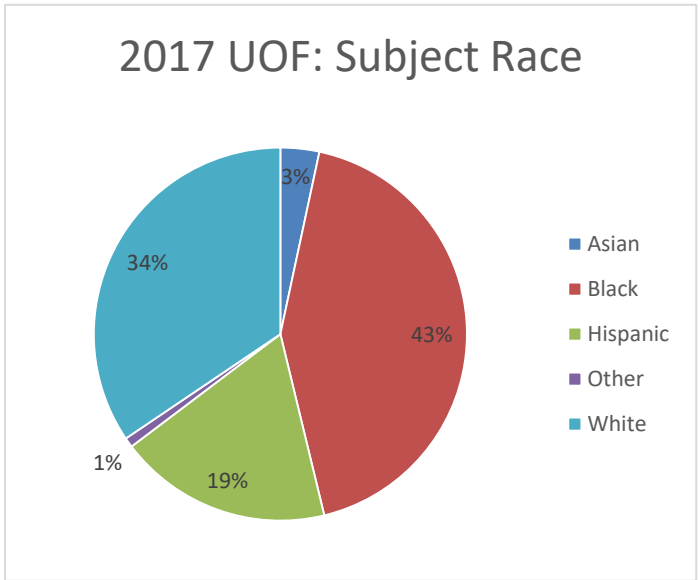
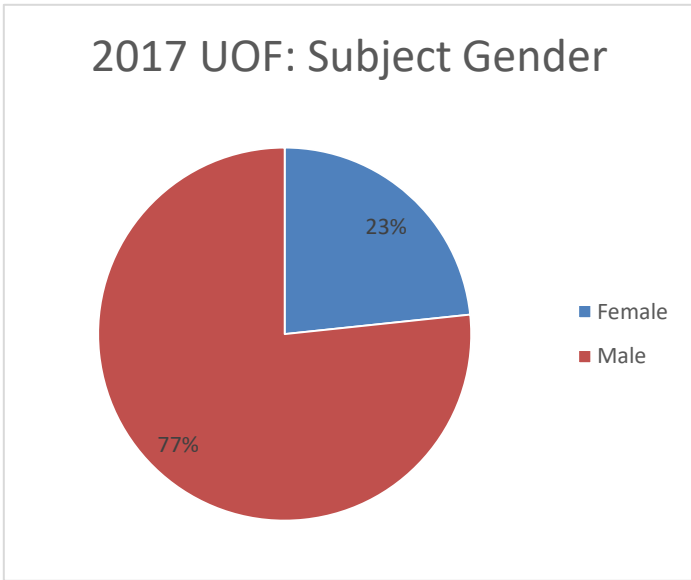
## 2017 UOF - Nature of Situation



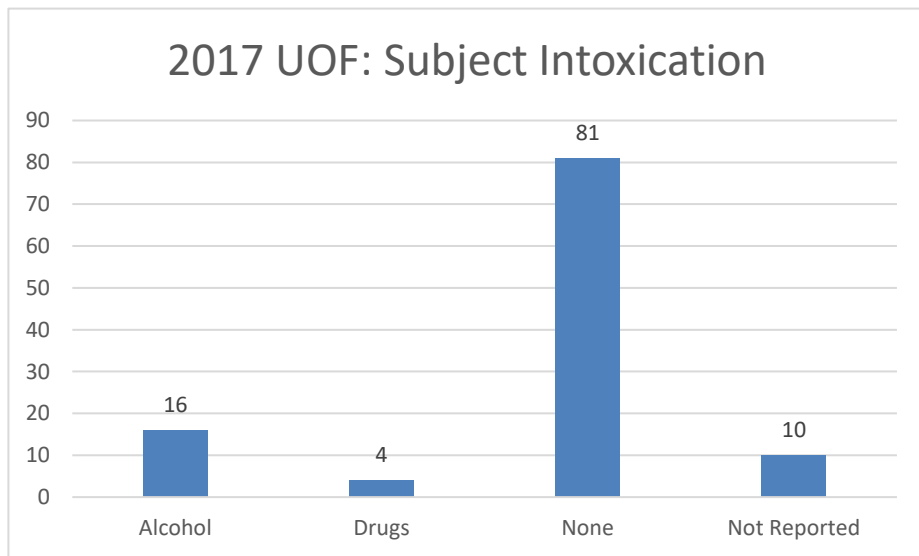
patient occurring in an emergency room setting at the medical campuses. Other incident conditions where officers used force included suspicious persons, theft in progress and traffic stops. These three categories combined accounted for 20% of all uses of force in 2017. Five percent of uses of force events were classified as assist outside law enforcement agency where UT System Police officers assisted another law enforcement

agency with a situation that required a use of force. Five percent of situations officers were faced with a suicidal subject. In two incidents, suspects were armed with a knife. In one incident, officers responded to a report of a subject with a firearm. In two other incidents weapons were reported to be involved. One incident documented a suspect armed with a syringe threatening the officer(s) involved. In another incident, an officer was spit on by the offender. At UT Austin, an officer displayed a Taser to gain compliance from a stabbing/homicide suspect during an active stabbing event with multiple victims.

Subject Demographics



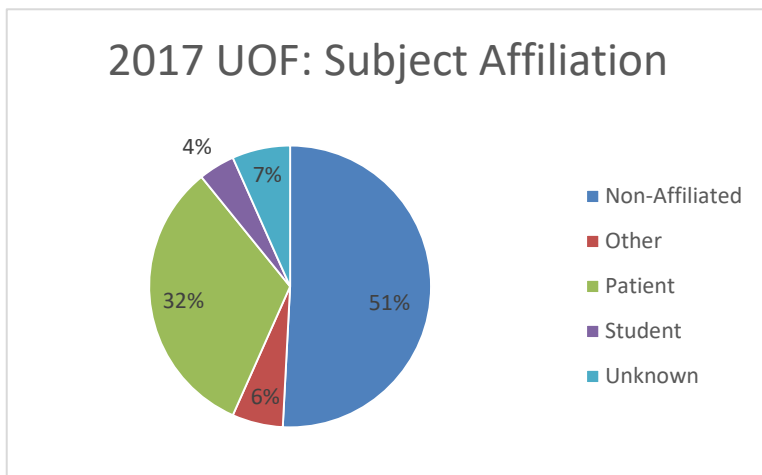
In 2017, 77% of all subjects involved in uses of force situations by UTSP officers were male. This is a 2% decrease from 2016. Female subjects accounted for 23% of events which is an increase of 3% over last year. When classifying subjects by ethnicity, 43% of subjects were black, 34% were white, and 19% were Hispanic.



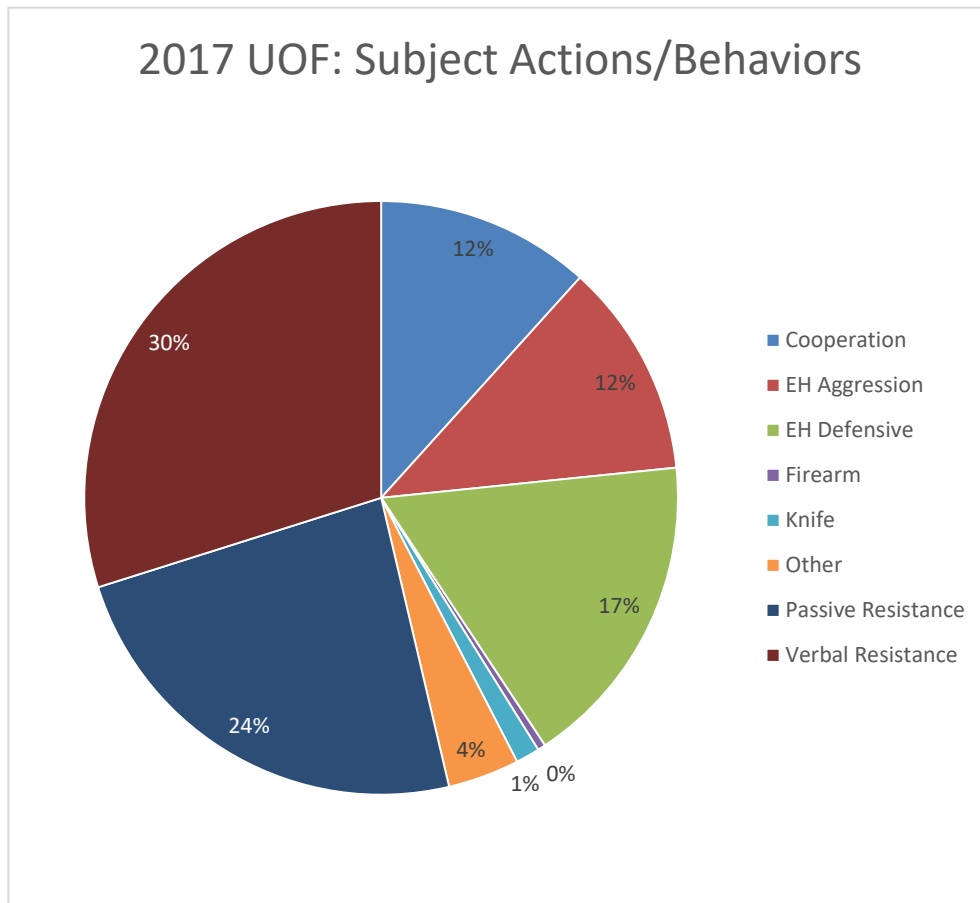
During use of force events, 14% of the subjects were under the influence of alcohol when they encountered UTSP officers in 2017, an increase of 3% from 2016. Another 4% were under the influence of drugs/controlled substances. This means that nearly 18% of the force incidents involved subjects who were under the influence of drugs, alcohol or both. This is similar to the 2016 report where 19% of incidents subjects were under

the influence of drugs, alcohol or both. In 73% of force incidents, the subject(s) were not under the influence of drugs or alcohol. In 9% of the reports the use of drugs/alcohol was not indicated or documented.

When analyzing affiliation of subjects in use of force situations, 51% were classified as “Non-Affiliated” with the institution, a decrease of 20% over last year. Thirty-two percent of subjects were patients who were assaultive, combative or threatening physical violence to emergency room staff that occurred at the medical campuses. Only 4% were classified as students. Seven percent of the reports did not indicate the affiliation of the subject on the report and were labeled as “Unknown”.



## Subject Actions/Behaviors

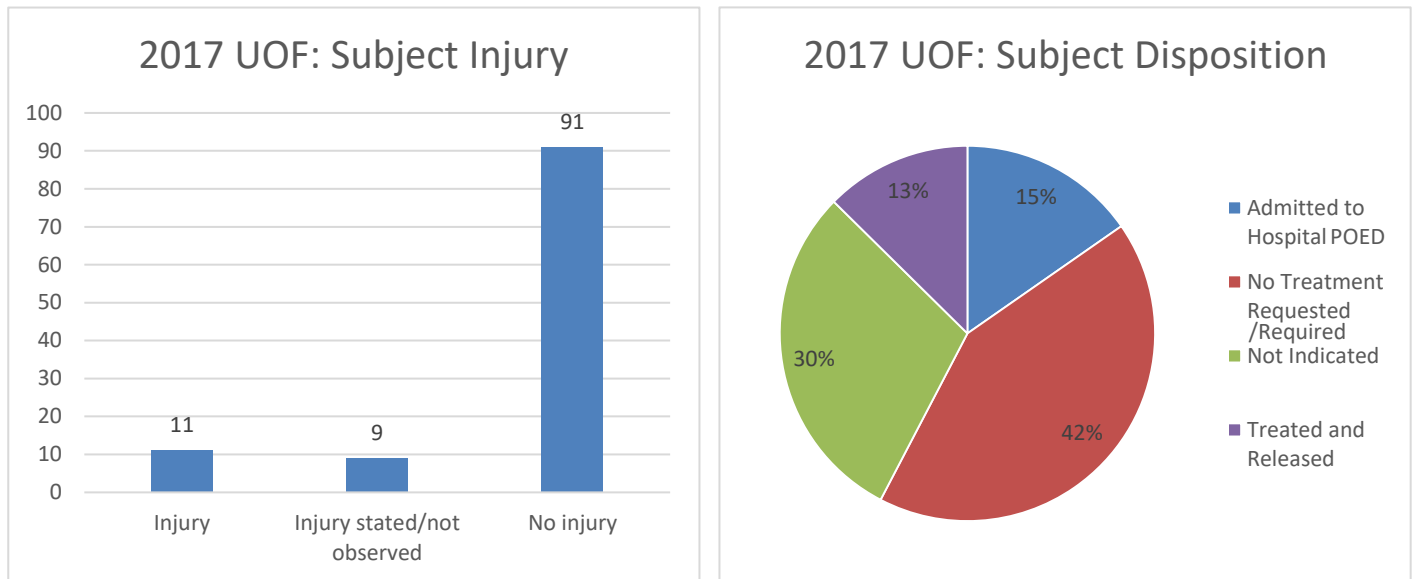


A total of 231 separate actions or behaviors exhibited by the 130 subjects were documented in 2017. This is a 34% increase in the number of subject actions and a 43% increase in the number of subjects from 2016. Most of the actions took place in combinations where the subject exhibited two or more actions/behaviors together. Fifty-four percent of the time, subjects exhibited resistance to the officer either through verbal resistance, passive resistance or both. Examples of passive resistance include dropping to the ground or using body

weight to counter the officer's actions. In 17% of the incidents, empty hand resistance was used by the subject towards the officer(s). Examples of these actions include pulling away, pushing away or hitting, kicking and biting the officer. No subjects attempted to disarm a UTSP officer in 2017. There were nine high-risk/felony stops conducted by UTSP officer where a firearm was displayed due to the potential danger of the incident. There were two family violence situations where force was used against officers. Five uses of force incidents occurred when warrants for blood draws were served for the investigation of Driving While Intoxicated.



## Subject Injuries

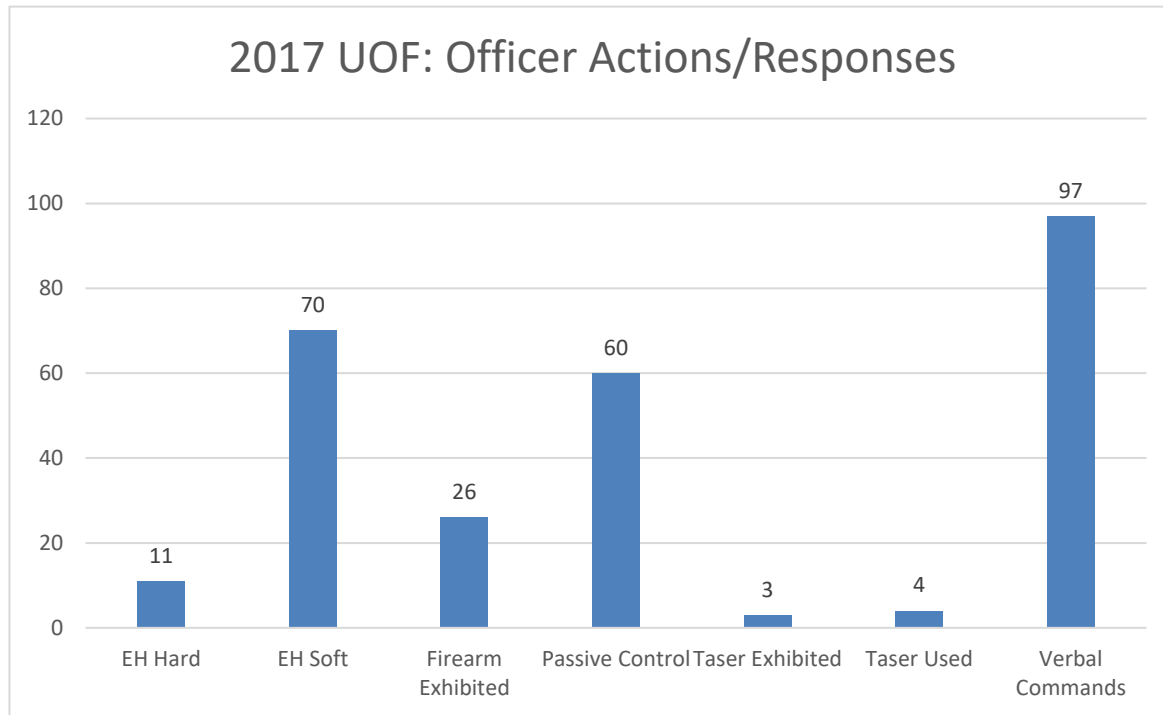


In 8% (9 total) of the use of force reports, an injury was complained of by the subject(s); however, no injury was observed by the officers involved. In 2017, there were eleven actual injuries sustained by the subject during the use of force event (10% of all events). This is a two percent reduction in subjects injured during their encounter with an officer despite a 42% increase in use of force encounters or incidents

There was no treatment required for subject(s) in 42% of use of force events (versus 46% in 2017). 15% of subjects required hospitalization, all due to an involuntary mental health commitment ( i.e. POED or Peace Officer Emergency Detention). Thirteen percent of subjects (14) were treated and released at the scene. It should be noted that in 30% of the use of force reports submitted (33) the disposition of the subject was not indicated in the report.

## Officer Actions/Responses

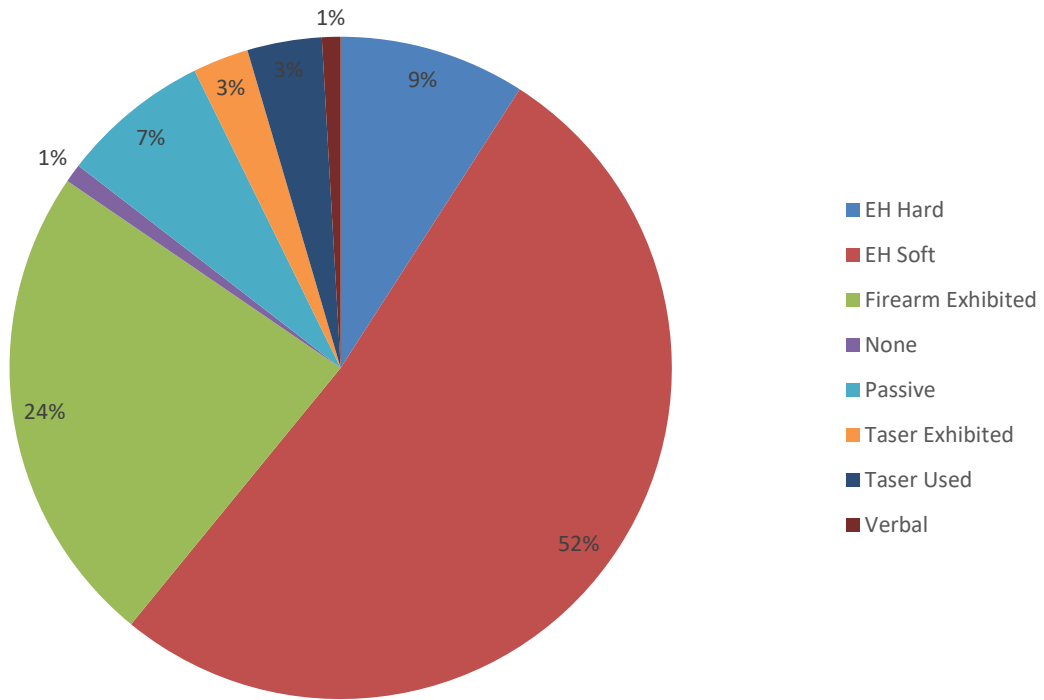
A total of 271 separate actions/responses exhibited by the 207 involved officers were documented in 2017. That is an increase of 23% in officer actions/responses from 2016 and an increase of 19% of total number of officers involved from 2016 (174 officers). A majority of the actions took place in combinations where the officer utilized two or more actions together.



**Ineffective Responses:** One hundred-sixty of the force option responses selected by officers proved ineffective in gaining compliance from the subject(s), which is a 18% increase from 2016. Ineffective Verbal Commands accounted for a majority of these. Examples of this include officers ordering the subject to comply, to put their hands behind their back, to stop resisting, etc. Passive techniques (use of bare hands to guide or hold) were ineffective in 86% of reports. Empty hand techniques (such as arm bars, pressure points & takedowns or striking techniques such as brachial stun or other strikes to key motor points) were ineffective in 17% of events. There were no deployments of an impact weapon or OC Spray in 2017.

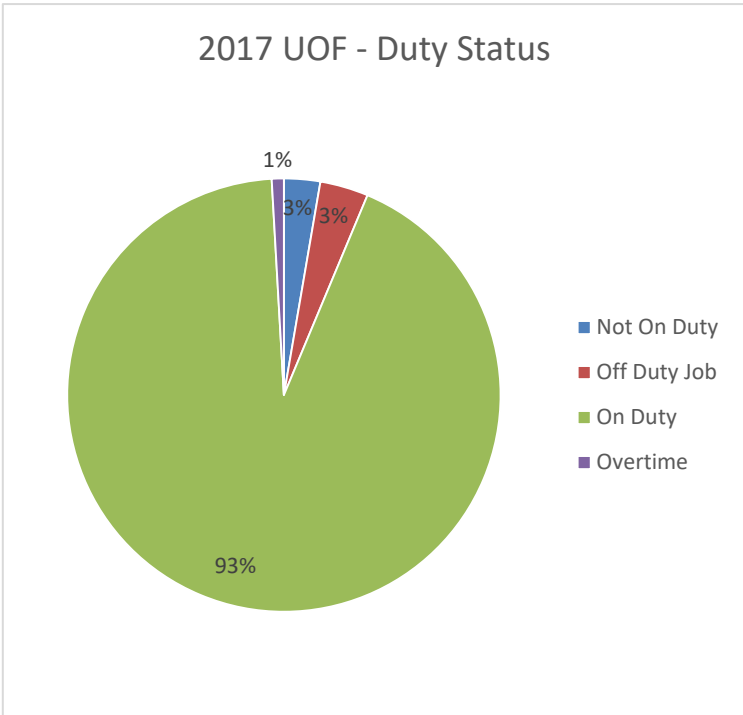
**Effective Responses:** UTSP officers took 111 separate actions that resulted in effective force responses within the Use of Force Report situations. An Empty Hand technique was the most common use of force and was effective in 60% of events. These techniques include arm bars, pressure points and takedowns or striking techniques such as the brachial stun or other strikes to key motor points to restrain an individual. Twenty-four percent of the time an exhibition of a firearm by the officer(s) proved effective in gaining compliance from the subject(s), which is similar to 2016 with 24%. These mainly occurred during potentially dangerous events such as a high risk traffic stop. There were no deployments of an impact weapon or OC Spray in 2017. There were 7 events where the display of an Electronic Control Device (Taser) or the actual use of a Taser by officers proved effective in gaining compliance from the subject(s).

### 2017 UOF: Officer Actions/Responses (Effective)

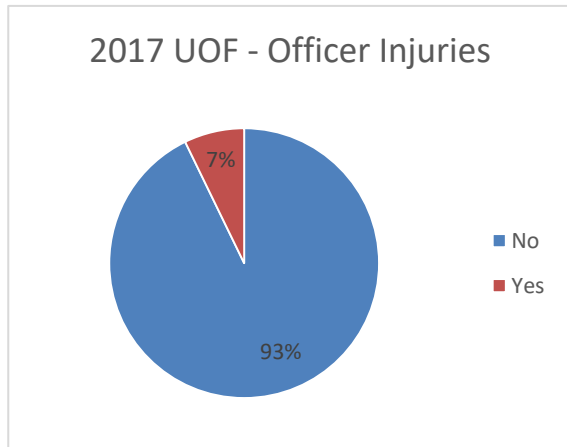


### Officer Involvement; Duty Status

In 93% of the reports, UTSP Officers were on-duty at the time of the use of force events. In three incidents (3% of total), UTSP officers were off-duty when uses of force was used. In 3% of incidents (4 total) UTSP officers were working off-duty jobs. One event occurred while an officer was engaged in an overtime event on campus.



### Officer Injuries



In 2017, 8 officers (7%) were injured as a result of the use of force events, versus 11 in 2016. No officers were hospitalized due to their injuries as recorded in the narrative portion of the DP-54.

### Found Reasonable by Chief

UTSP Chiefs/Command Staff found that the uses of force by the officer(s) was reasonable in all but two uses of force incidents. One use of force was found to be out of policy due to the intervention of a non-commissioned Public Safety Officer. That PSO was counseled for his actions. In another case, an officer thought he had a possible stolen vehicle; however, the officer did not verify the status before the stop and conducted a high-risk

stop by displaying a firearm. That officer was subsequently terminated by the institution chief of police due to other policy violations.

## Conclusion

The following conclusions can be made:

- The UTSP Academy and Training Division will continue to assess the use of force training provided to officers against the real world experience reflected in this report. Training will be adjusted and modified accordingly.
- This report will be distributed in full to all institution Chiefs of Police and their command staffs as well as all institution Police Department training officers.