

A summary report of use of force incidents for calendar year 2020.



University of Texas System Police Use of Force Report

By: University of Texas System Police Academy Staff

2020

Summary

During the period of January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020, UT System Police Officers encountered 115 situations that required the use of force above the level of command presence, verbal commands and low-level handcuffing techniques. This represents a 7.25% decrease from the 2019 Use of Force Reports.

The 115 situations involved the uses of force against 149 individual subjects. An average of 1.94 officers were involved in uses of force against an average of 1.30 subjects (total of 223 officers and 149 subjects). The largest number of officers involved in one event was five, and the largest number of subjects involved was five. The average age of officers involved in uses of force events was 35.83 years old (versus 37.73 for 2019). The youngest officer was 22 years of age and the oldest was 61 years old. The average age of the subjects was 32.75 years old (versus 31.55 in 2019) with 61 years old as the oldest (In this incident, officers were responding to a suspicious person who was soliciting for money who resisted arrest) and the youngest was 17 years of age. There were no juveniles subject to use of force in 2020. Eleven percent of uses of force situations involved an Emergency Detention (when persons pose a danger to themselves or others, a brief emergency detention allows for a mental health assessment) of the subject(s) which is a 9% decrease from the 2019 report.

	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Use of Force – Incidents	115	124	122	111	78
Taser Use or Exhibition	13	20	9	7	12
Pepper Spray Use of Exhibition	0	3	0	0	2
Baton Use or Exhibition	0	0	1	0	0
Empty Hand Tactics	57	74	75	67	48
Other/Combination of Tactics ⁺	3	-	-	-	-
Exhibit Firearm	47	26	34	26	17
Discharge of Firearm [*]	1 ^{**}	1	3	0	1

^{*} Includes humanitarian euthanasia of wounded/injured/suffering animals. ⁺ 2020 saw the first reporting of combination of tactics that were successful instead of one single tactic being successful, such as Taser exhibition and Empty Hand Tactics.

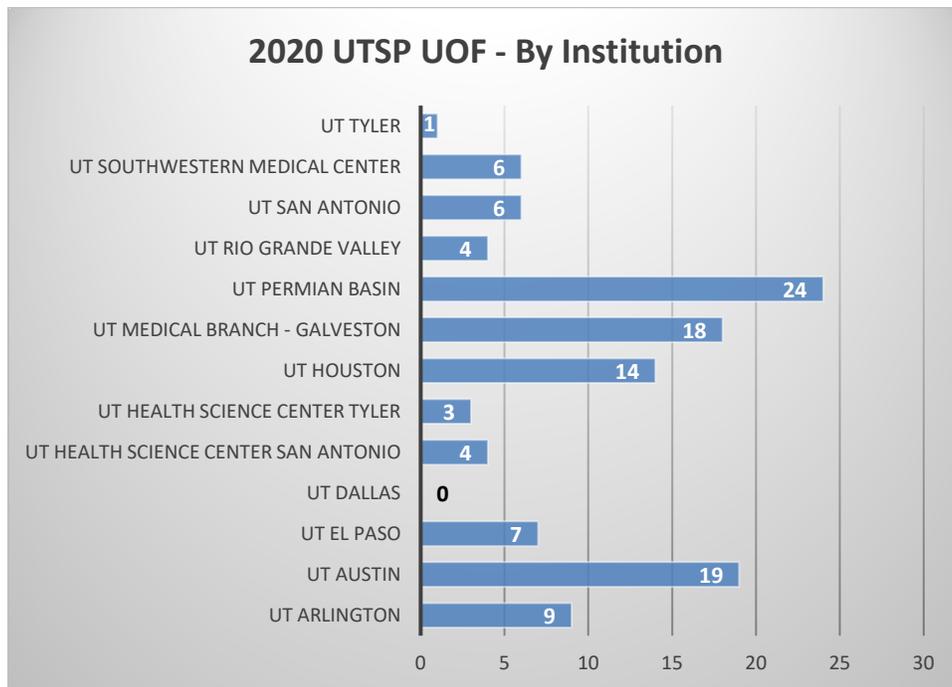
^{**} This event occurred when an off duty officer interrupted a burglary of his vehicle at his residence during hours of darkness and the officer discharged his weapon after identifying himself as a police officer and one of the multiple suspects involved turned toward the officer with an object in his hand that the officer believed was a handgun—The officer fired in defense of his life given the threat he perceived—The suspect(s) fled, apparently uninjured and remain unidentified—Both the Houston PD and the Office of Director of Police responded and conducted the criminal and administrative investigations, respectively.

INCIDENT INFORMATION

Institution

Demographically by campus, 21% of all uses of force occurred at UT Permian Basin with 24 incidents. This is because UTPB officers regularly provide mutual aid support to Odessa PD proximate to campus and the majority of the UTPB PD uses of force involve non-affiliated arrestees. UT Austin had 19 use of force incidents and UT Medical Branch-Galveston had eighteen use of force incidents. UT Houston had fourteen incidents and UT Arlington had nine incidents. UT El Paso had seven use of force events while UT Southwestern had six events.

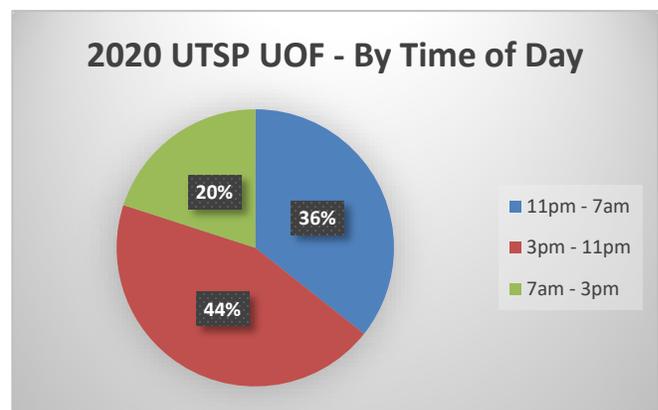
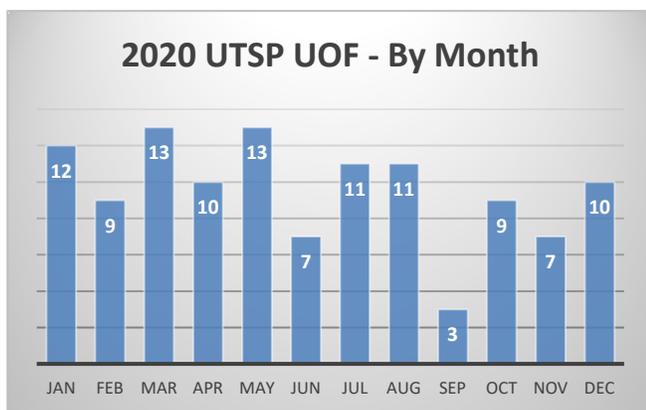
Of the 115 uses of force reports, 16% occurred at medical facilities where officers used low level control measures (hands-on passive-type guidance) to assist medical staff with a combative patient in an emergency room setting. UT Dallas did not report any use of force in 2020.



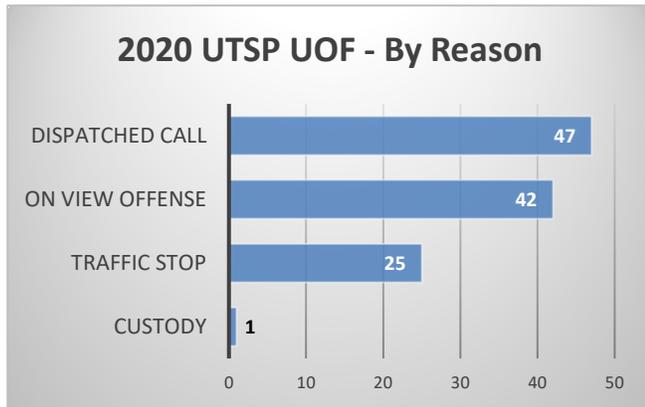
Date & Time

The majority of uses of force by University of Texas System Police (UTSP) officers in 2020 occurred in March and May with 13 incidents compared to April (total of 14) in 2019. January had the next most occurrences of uses of force with 12. The months of July and August had 11 each of occurrences of uses of force.

The majority of uses of force occurred between the hours of 3pm and 11pm at 44% (similar to the 42% in 2019). The 11pm to 7am shift saw 36% of the uses of force followed by 20% for the hours between 7am to 3pm.

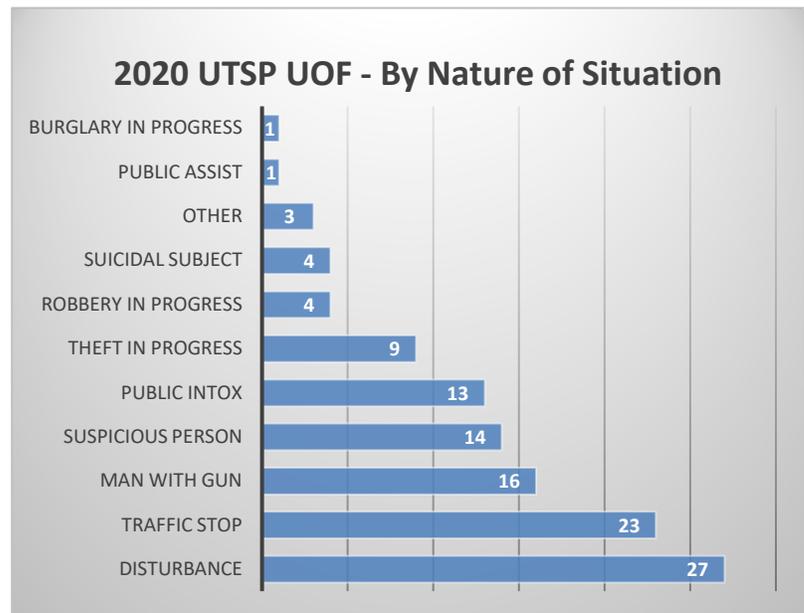


Incident Conditions



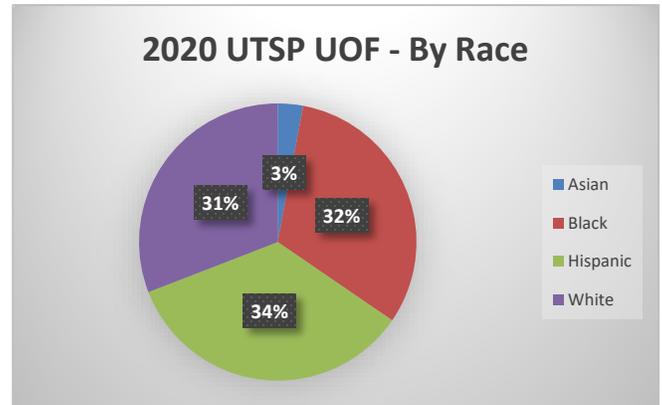
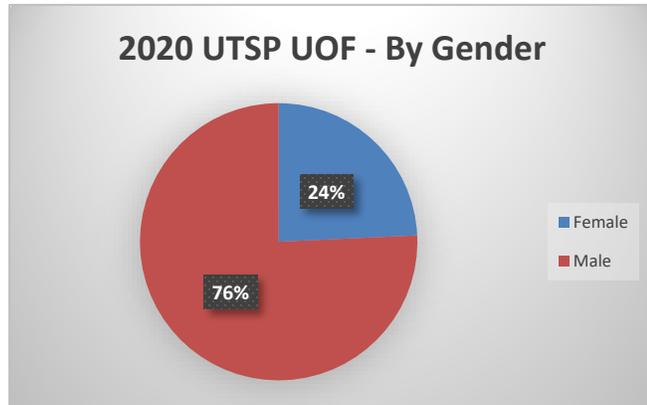
The reason for the officer and the subject’s contact varied. In 41% of the reports, the incident was classified as a “Dispatched Call” in which the officer was assigned a call via the radio or telephone (compared to 56% in 2019). Thirty-six percent of officer/subject contacts occurred when the officer directly saw the event unfold, which is classified as “On-view Offense/Incident” which is an increase of ten percent compared to 2019. Events classified as “Traffic Stop” accounted for 22% of all uses of force (compared to a percentage of 13% in 2018).

When classifying the nature of the situation in which uses of force occurred, there were several factors involved. “Disturbance” accounted for 24% concerning the nature of the situation (27 total) while “Traffic Stop” accounted for 20% (23 total) of incidents. “Man with Gun” situations accounted for 14% (16 total) of incidents. Other incident conditions where officers used force included suspicious persons, public intoxication, and theft in progress. These four categories combined accounted for approximately 31% of all uses of force in 2020.



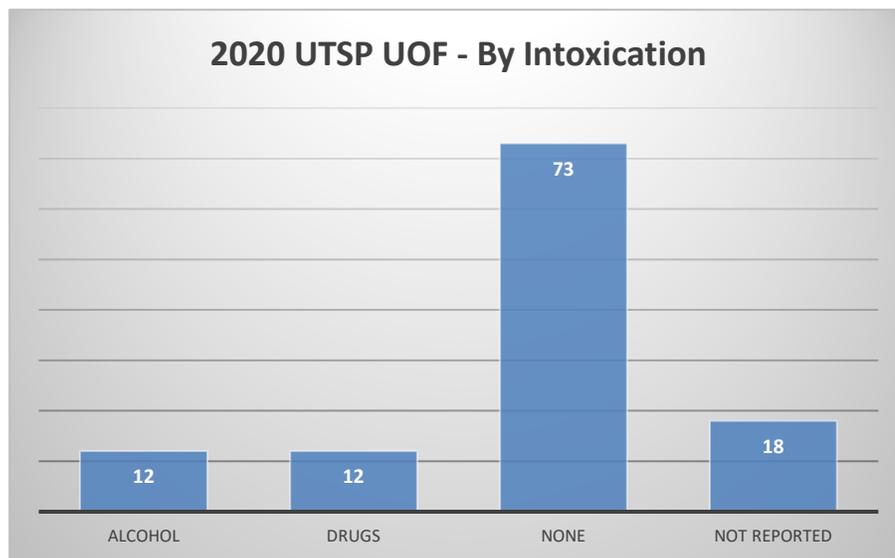
SUBJECT INFORMATION

Subject Demographics



In 2020, 76% of all subjects involved in uses of force situations by UTSP officers were male, compared to 81% in 2019. Female subjects accounted for 24% of events. When classifying subjects by ethnicity, 34% of subjects were Hispanic, 32% were black, 31% were white and 3% were Asian.

Subject Intoxication

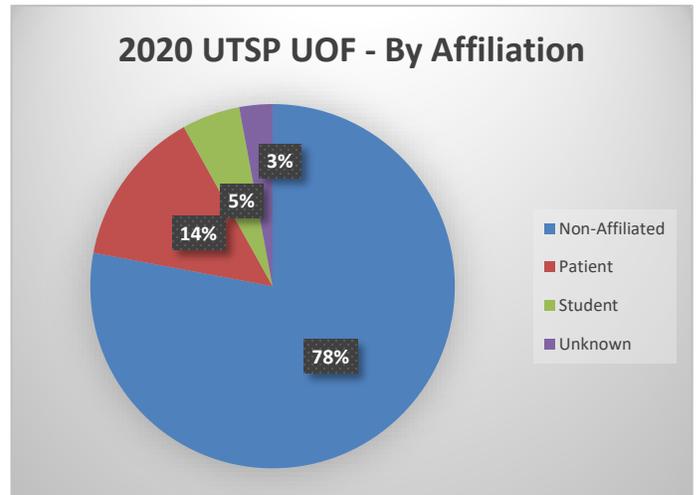


During use of force events, 10% of the subjects were under the influence of alcohol when they encountered UTSP officers in 2020, which is similar to the 12% in 2019. Another 10% were under the influence of drugs/controlled substances. This means that 20% of the force incidents involved subjects who were under the influence of drugs or alcohol, which is a 3% increase from 2019. In 64% of force incidents, the subject(s) were not under the

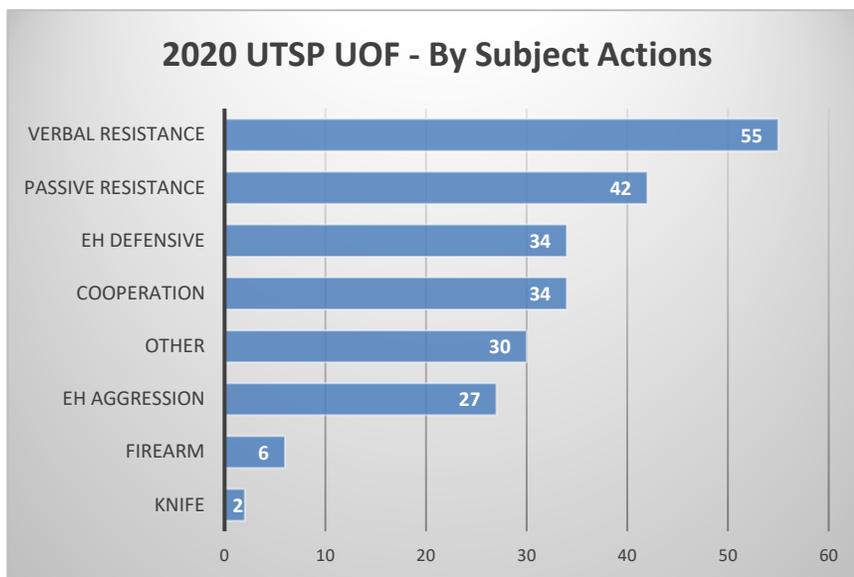
influence of drugs or alcohol. In 16% of the reports the use of drugs/alcohol was not indicated or documented.

Subject Affiliation

When analyzing affiliation of subjects in use of force situations, 78% were classified as “Non-Affiliated” with the institution, an increase of 39% over last year. Fourteen percent of subjects were patients who were assaultive, combative or threatening physical violence to emergency room staff that occurred at the medical campuses. Five percent were classified as students, which is a decrease of 50% from 2019. Three percent of the reports did not indicate the affiliation of the subject on the report and were labeled as “Unknown”.



Subject Actions/Behaviors

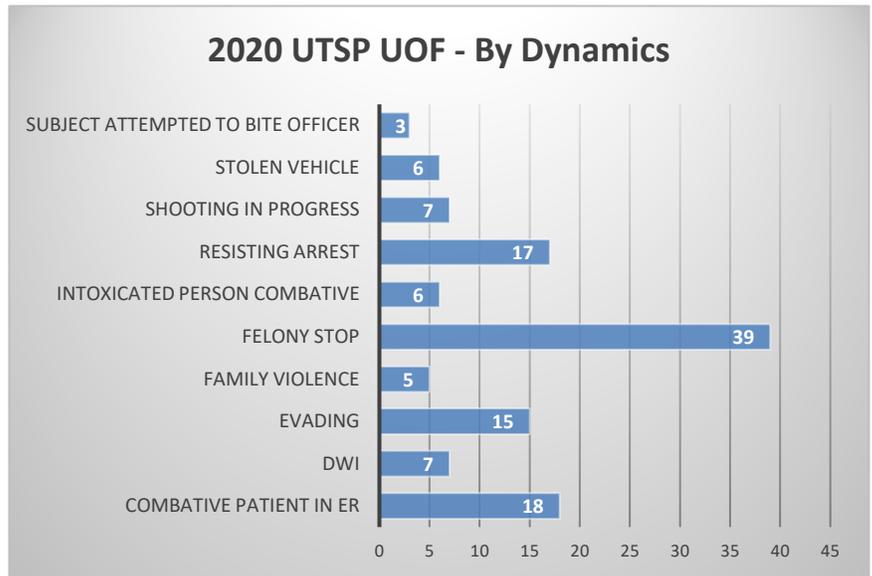


A total of 230 separate actions or behaviors exhibited by the 149 subjects were documented in 2020. This is a 15.75% decrease in the number of subject actions from 2019. Most of the actions took place in combinations where the subject exhibited two or more actions/behaviors together. Forty-two percent of the time, subjects exhibited resistance to the officer(s) either through verbal resistance, passive resistance, or both. Examples of passive resistance include dropping to the ground or using body weight to

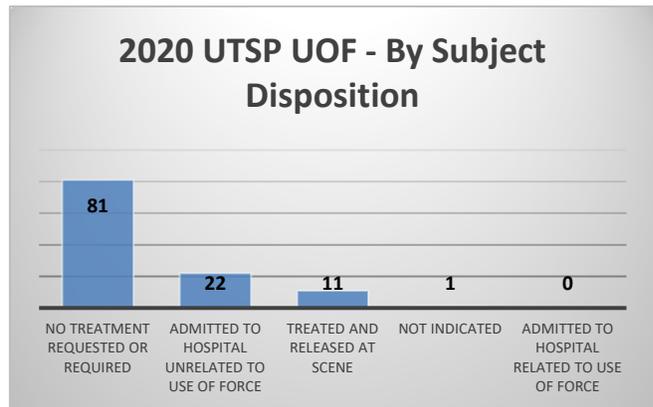
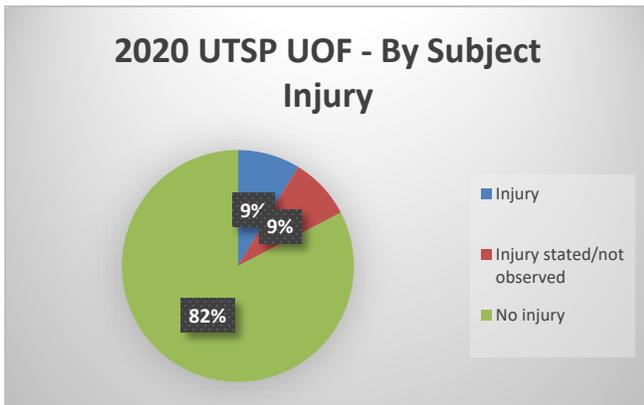
counter the officer’s actions. In 15% of the incidents, empty hand resistance was used by the subject towards the officer(s). Examples of these actions include pulling away or pushing away from the officer(s). In 12% of the incidents, empty hand aggression was used by the subjects towards the officer(s). Examples of these include striking or kicking the officer(s). Other subject actions included evading/running away (15 total or 13% of all incidents), biting/attempting to bite the officer (3) or attempting to disarm a UTSP officer (1 total). Six subjects were either armed with a firearm or were reported to have been armed with a firearm. It should be noted that the UTH PD officer believed the subject in his firearms discharge was armed with a handgun. Two subjects were armed with a knife at the time of the encounter with the UTSP officer. Other weapons used against the officer(s) in 2020 included a fire extinguisher and throwing rocks at the officer(s).

Other Dynamics

There were thirty-nine high risk/felony stops conducted by UTSP officer(s) (or were assisting an outside agency with a high-risk/felony stop) where a firearm was displayed by the officer(s) due to the potential danger of the incident, which represented 34% of all use of force incidents. In 17 of the incidents (14.78%) the subject resisted arrest. There were four family violence situations where force was used against the officer(s). One incident occurred when the UTSP officer was affecting a felony arrest warrant.



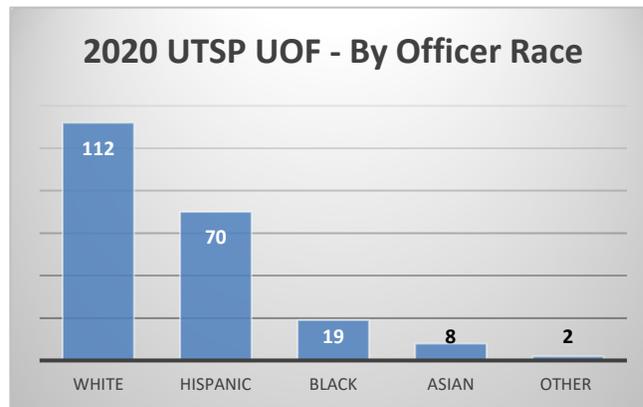
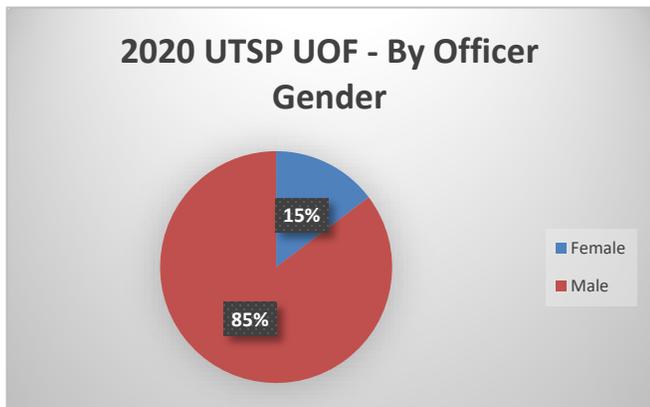
Subject Injuries



In 2020, there were 10 actual injuries sustained by the subject during the use of force event (9% of all events), which is a decrease of 50% from 2019. In 9% (10 total) of the use of force reports, an injury was complained by the subject(s); however, no injury was observed by the officers involved. There were no injuries for subject(s) in 82% of use of force events (95 total). Twenty-two subjects were admitted to the hospital unrelated to the use of force event. Examples of these hospital admissions included drug ingestion, Emergency Detention when the subject was a danger to themselves or others, injured in a motor vehicle accident prior to the officer(s) arrival or self-inflicted/self-sustained injuries which occurred prior to or following an arrest. Eleven subjects (9.56%) were treated and released at the scene by emergency medical personnel.

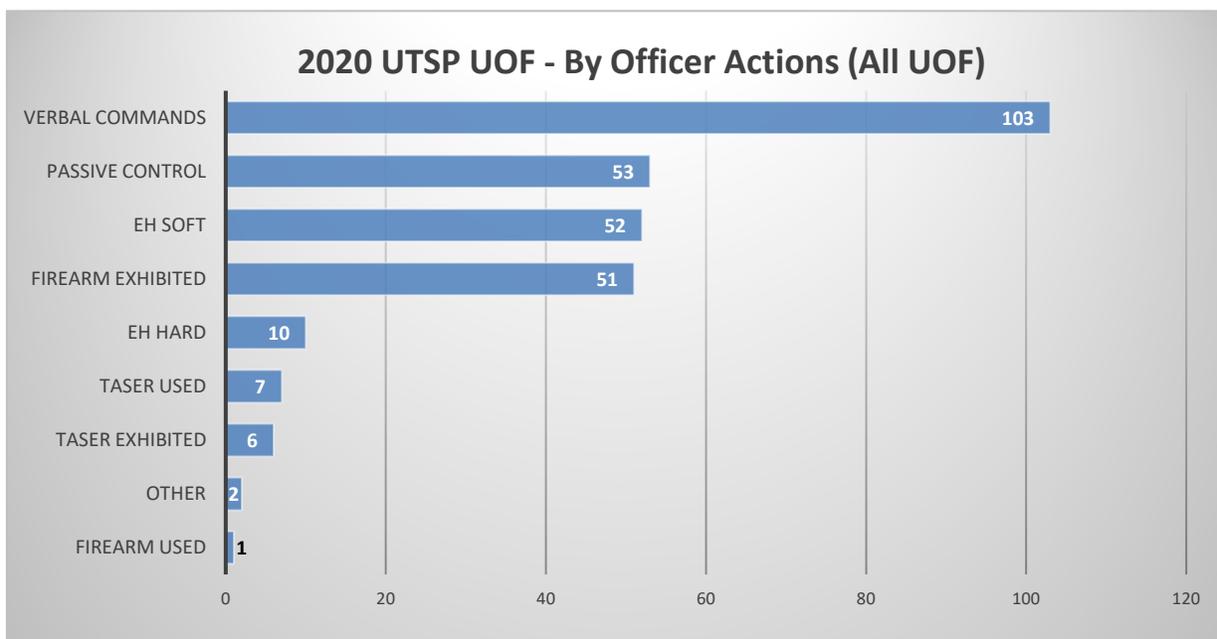
OFFICER INFORMATION

Officer Demographics



Of the 223 officers involved in uses of force in 2020, 85% of them were male and 15% were female, which is the same percentages as 2019. Fifty-three percent of officers involved in uses of force were white, followed by 33% of officers were Hispanic, 9% were black and 4% were Asian. By comparison in 2019, 56% were white, 19% were Hispanic, 19% were black and 3% were Asian. For context, as of March 1, 2021, the ethnicity of UTSP officers were as follows: White—51.29%, Black—13.47%, Hispanic—32.47%, Asian—1.29%, American Indian—1.19%, Multicultural—1.29% (or 51.29% white and 48.71% minority).

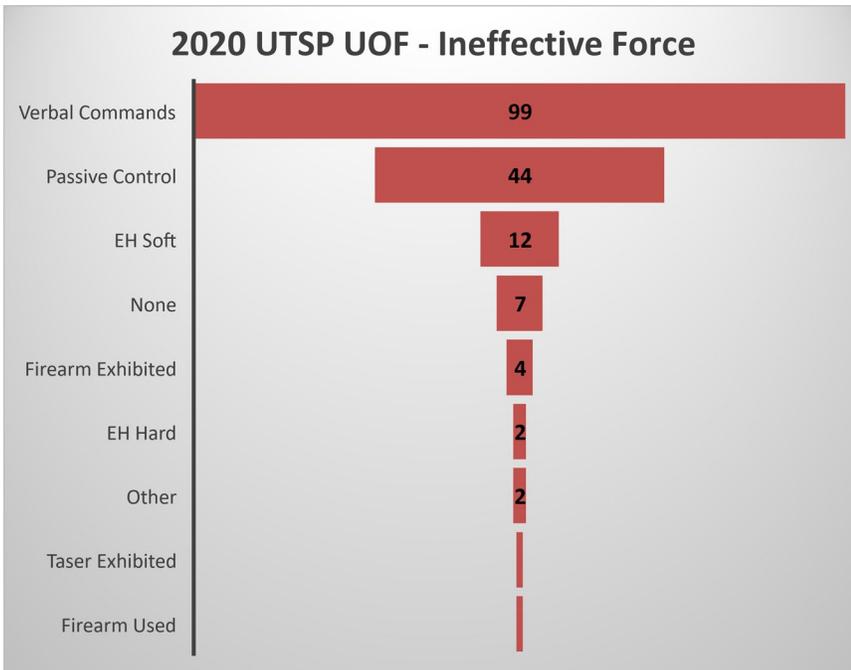
Officer Actions/Responses



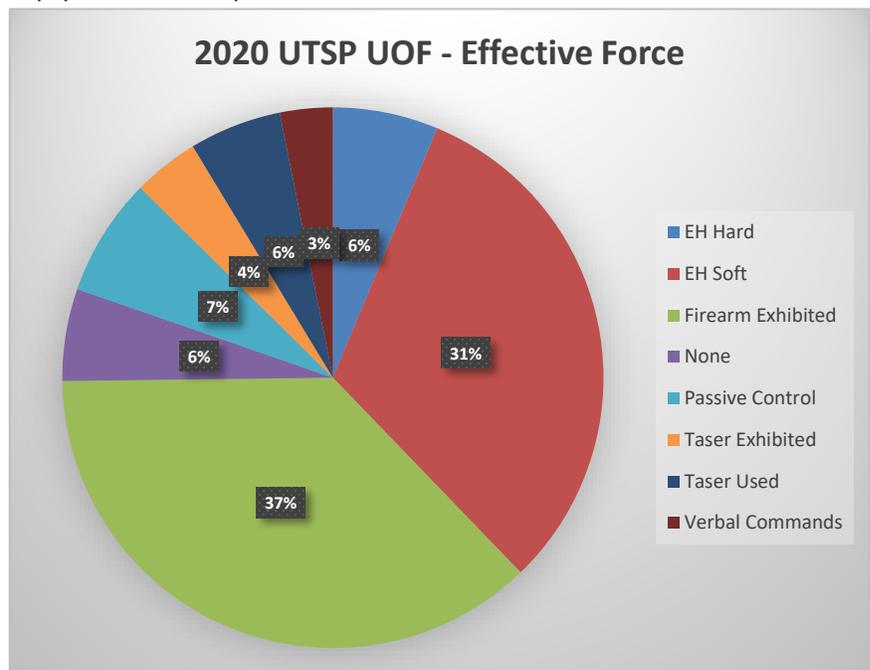
All Responses: A total of 285 separate actions/responses exhibited by the 223 involved officers were documented in 2020. These actions took place in combinations where the officer(s) utilized two or more actions together.

Ineffective Responses: One hundred and seventy-two of the force option responses selected by officers proved ineffective in gaining compliance from the subject(s). Verbal Commands by the officer were ineffective in 57% of the incidents, which is similar to the 55% in 2019. 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 nearly 26% 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 8% of events. There were seven incidents (4%) in which all force options were ineffective with the subject and were resolved when the subject either submitted/gave up or in one case, the subject escaped.



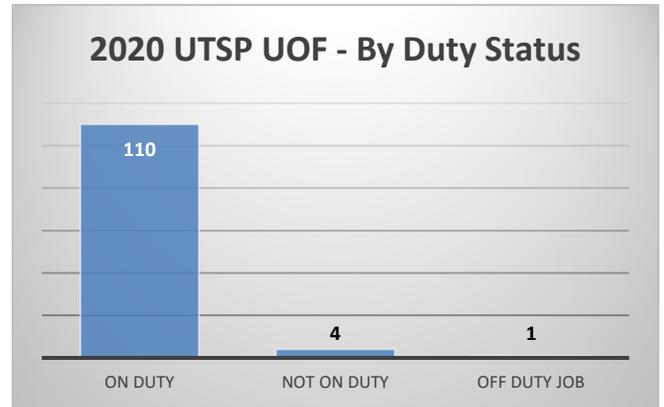
Effective Responses: UTSP officers took 127 separate actions that resulted in effective force responses within the Use of Force Report situations. An Empty Hand technique was the most common use of force and was effective in 37% of events. These techniques include arm bars, pressure points and takedowns or striking techniques such as the brachial stun or other strikes to key motor points to restrain an individual. Thirty-seven percent of the time an exhibition of a firearm by the officer(s) proved effective in gaining compliance from the subject(s). These mainly occurred during potentially dangerous events such as a high-risk traffic stop. There were no deployments of OC Spray in 2020. There were 12 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) which accounted for 7% of effective use of force actions. All actual use of a Taser by officers proved effective.

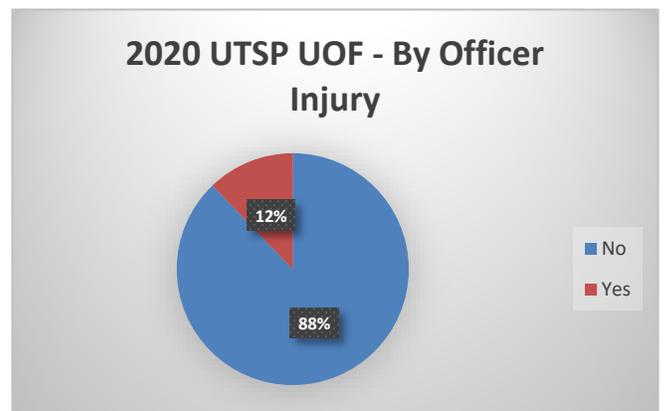
Officer Involvement; Duty Status

In over 95% of the reports, UTSP Officers were on-duty at the time of the use of force events. There were four UOF incidents in 2020 where a UTSP officer was not on duty. There was one incident where an officer was working secondary employment.



Officer Injuries

In 2020, 14 officers (12%) were injured as a result of the use of force events. The range of officer injuries included abrasions, lacerations and bruising to hands, torso, elbows and knees. No officers were hospitalized due to their injuries as recorded in the narrative portion of the DP-54.



CONCLUSION

The following conclusions can be made:

- UTSP Chiefs/Command Staff found that the uses of force by the officer(s) was necessary and reasonable in all 115 incidents.
- The UTSP Academy in collaboration with the institution department training officers 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.