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Chief Deputy
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Winnebago County Sheriff

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TO: Sheriff Matz and Chief Deputy Christopherson

FROM: Lt. Eichman

DATE: January 16, 2025

RE: Annual Use of Force Report (Field Services) – 2024

Pursuant to General Order 5.05, USE OF FORCE/ REPORTING AND REVIEW, all use of force reviews conducted for 2024 incidents in the Field Services Division have been reviewed. Field Services encompasses the Patrol Unit, Detective Unit, and Special Teams for the Sheriff's Office. A use of force review is completed for any of the following incidents:

- Reported injuries to a suspect based on use of force
- An Electronic Control Device (ECD) is discharged
- Chemical Agents are utilized (Oleoresin Capsicum)
- Intermediate weapons are used
- K-9 units are used as force
- Specialty impact munitions are pointed or deployed
- Vehicle Pursuits and/or induce or force to stop techniques are used
- A firearm is pointed or discharged
- While not specified, use of force reviews are completed on any use of force deemed to necessitate further analysis

Reviews are conducted to ensure that a deputy's actions are consistent with Winnebago County Sheriff's Office General Orders, applicable federal, state, and local laws, and the State of Wisconsin Defensive Tactics system.

Beginning 2023 the Winnebago County Sheriff's Office no longer considered an Electronic Control Device (ECD) Posture, or pointing of the device, as a use of force. The decision to consider an ECD Posture no longer a use of force was made after careful consideration. This change put the Sheriff's Office in line with other area law enforcement agencies regarding how ECD usage is reviewed. While the posturing of an ECD is no longer reviewed as a use of force, deputies are still required to document each incident in which an ECD is pointed at an individual in a long form report.

Since the State of Wisconsin unveiled their Use of Force and Arrest Related Death Reporting system in March 2020, the Winnebago County Sheriff's Office has submitted a Use of Force and Arrest Related report form each month as per State requirements. The State's Use of Force and Arrest Related Death program is the conduit to the FBI's National Use of Force Data Collection program. These forms are submitted via the Traffic and Criminal Software (TraCS) program.

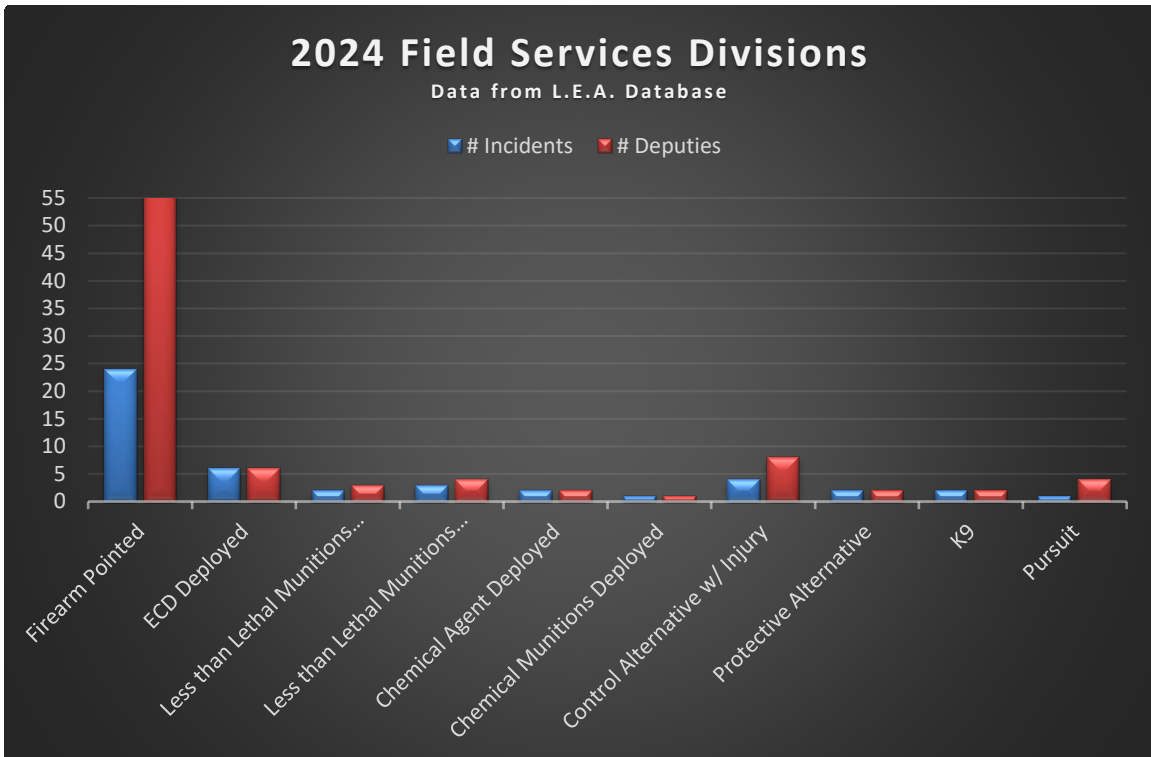
The information utilized for this annual review and analysis was collected from the L.E.A. Data Technologies software used to document use of force incidents for the Sheriff's Office. Individual reviews were conducted based on submitted use of force reporting forms as well as the associated incident reports and available squad and/or body worn camera footage. Thirty-four (34) use of force reviews were conducted in 2024 for incidents that met the reporting criteria. This is a 6% increase from the 32 incidents for which a use of force review was completed in 2023. The 32 reviews in 2023 was a 10% increase from the 29 use of force reviews completed in 2022.

During 2024, deputies from the Field Services Division of the Sheriff's Office responded to 48,843 incidents according to Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) records. This accounts for a 5% decrease in call volume from 2023. 34 of those incidents, or .07%, resulted in force being used.

A total of 90 deputies used force during these 34 incidents in 2024. The following chart illustrates the types of force utilized that required a formal review.

Note: several incidents had multiple uses of force meeting the Sheriff's Office's General Order regarding use of force review. As such, the numbers below are higher than the total 34 use of force incidents noted above:

Force Option	# Incidents	# Deputies
Firearm Pointed	24	58
Firearm Discharged	0	0
ECD Deployed	6	6
Less than Lethal Projectile Postured	2	3
Less than Lethal Projectile Deployed	3	4
Chemical Agent Deployed	2	2
Chemical Munition Deployed	1	1
Protective Alternative	2	2
Control Alternative with injury	4	8
Pursuit	1	4
K9 Deployed	2	2
Total	47	90



Pointing of firearms was the most common use of force used by Field Services Deputies in 2024. 71% of the 34-total uses of force for which a review was conducted involved a firearm, or multiple firearms, being pointed at a subject or subjects.

That percentage becomes clearer when considered in proper context.

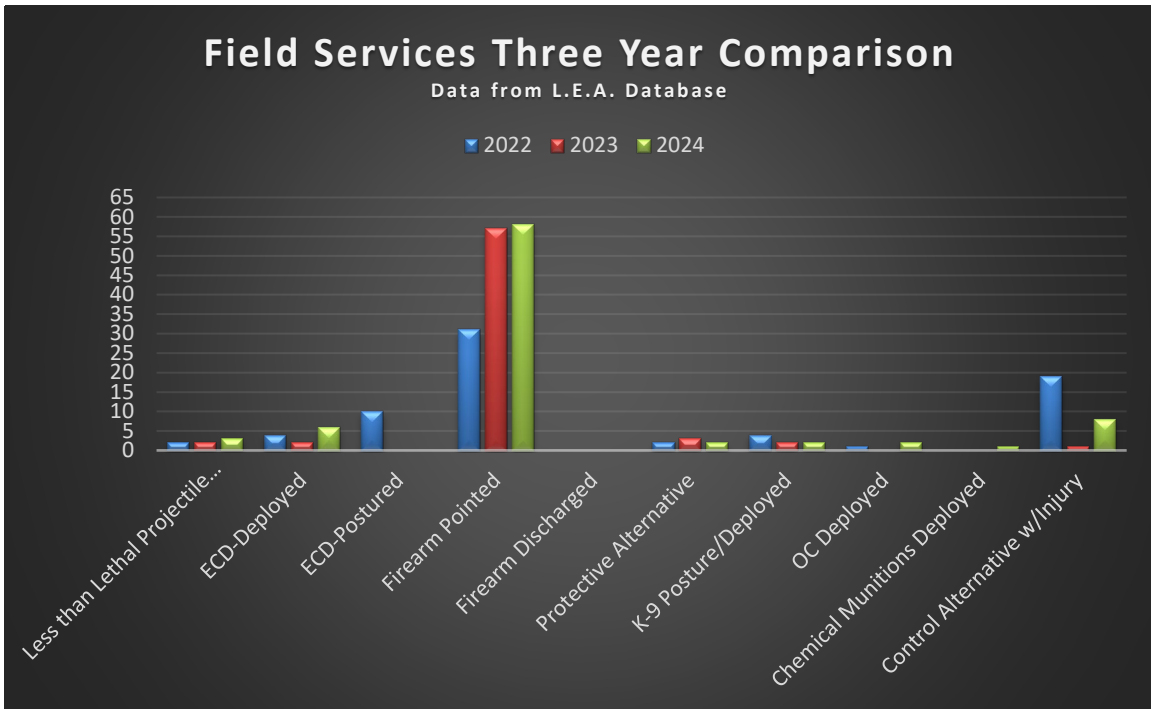
- 17 deputies pointed firearms at subjects involved in high-risk traffic stops
- 21 deputies pointed firearms at a subject involved in a weapons complaint
- 18 deputies pointed a firearm at a subject involved in a SWAT incident

The number is inflated based on multiple deputies responding to the same incident. There were 24 incidents that resulted in deputies pointing firearms at the suspect, or multiple suspects. The threat level presented by the subject, or subjects, involved in the incidents justified the pointing of firearms. Of the 24 reviews completed for incidents in which deputies pointed a firearm, all were deemed objectively reasonable.

To further evaluate use of force for the Sheriff's Office, the following chart lists all actions taken by deputies for the previous three years. The most prevalent use of force option is the pointing of firearms each year.

Force Option	2022 Field Services	2023 Field Services	2024 Field Services
ECD-Deployed	4	2	6
ECD-Postured	10	N/A	N/A
Firearm Pointed	31	57	58
Firearm Discharged	0	0	0
Less than Lethal Projectile-Postured	2	2	3
Protective Alternatives	2	3	2
Control Alternatives w/injury	19	1	8
K-9 Posture/Deploy	4	2	2
OC-Deployed	1	0	2
Chemical Munitions Deployed	0	0	1
Pursuit	0	1	4
Total	73	68	86

**Note: In 2022 there was a significant increase in the "Control Alternatives w/injury" category. In 2022 there were six incidents with 19 deputies involved. All six incidents involved deputies attempting to control or arrest uncooperative or combative subjects. All injuries were either minor (not requiring medical attention) or alleged (no visible injury present). All force used during these incidents were found to be objectively reasonable.*



Over the previous three years, pointing of firearms was the most common and consistent use of force action for the Field Services Division, with an average of 49 deputies pointing firearms per year.

All use of force reviews completed in 2024 for the Field Services Division were found to follow Agency General Orders and training. In conclusion, I do not feel there are any specific training or equipment deficiencies, or systematic performance matters that need to be addressed. The Training Division will continue to monitor use of force incidents utilizing them as a guide for the development of new trainings for the agency.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lt. Tim Eichman