

# Annual Review of Use of Force & Vehicle Pursuit Incidents

This submission is made in accordance with Sections 7.6 and 7.7 of the Attorney General's Use of Force Policy (April 2022) ("Use of Force Policy"), and Sections 12.2 and 12.3 of Addendum B to the Attorney General's Use of Force Policy (April 2022) ("Vehicular Pursuit Policy").

\* Indicates required field

**County\***

Morris

**Law Enforcement Agency \***

Netcong Borough

**Date of Report \***

1/22/2025

**Year of Data Covered in this Report\***

2024

**Check the box below to confirm\***

Report has been reviewed by and endorsed by the agency's law enforcement executive.

## Contact Information

**Your Name\***

Russ Van Houten

**Phone Number (Please enter a valid telephone number)\***

(973) 347-0516

**Email (example@example.com) \***

rvanhouten@netcong.org

**Email Address for Submission to Prosecutor's Office\***

mcpoannualreports@co.morris.nj.us

## Use of Force Annual Review: Written Report

### Section One: BWC/Video Audit

***Your review must include a brief description of your agency's random and risk-based audit process (e.g., how videos are selected, who reviews the videos, etc.). If your agency did not conduct a risk-based and/or random BWC/video audit in 2024, please indicate how you plan to remedy that in 2025.***

#### Section One: BWC/Video Audit\*

Supervisors conduct random formal reviews of selected recordings at the rate of at least one segment per subordinate per calendar month to assess officer performance as well as to identify video/audio that may be appropriate for training purposes. The reviews are documented on a Supervisory Review of Digital Video/Audio Recording Forms.

## Section Two: Internal Affairs Complaints

*Your analysis must include a review of internal affairs complaints related to use of force incidents and must include the following: 1. number of IA complaints filed; 2. number filed by civilians; 3. number initiated by the agency; 4. numbers sustained; and 5. number still pending.*

### Section Two: Internal Affairs Complaints \*

Our department did not receive any Internal Affairs Complaints regarding Use of Force incidents in 2024, and none were initiated by the agency.

## Section Three: Meaningful Review of Individual Uses of Force

*Section 7.5 of the Attorney General's Use of Force Policy requires that every use of force must undergo a meaningful command level review. Your annual review should include a brief description of your agency's meaningful review policy. If your agency was not able to conduct a meaningful review of each use of force incident, please explain why you were unable to do so and please indicate how you plan to do so going forward.*

### **Section Three: Meaningful Review of Individual Uses of Force\***

Every Use of Force incident must receive a meaningful command level review in accordance with our written department policy. The officer's sergeant shall review these reports for accuracy and completeness and shall promptly address any issues as they may pertain to policy changes, training, weapons or equipment or discipline. The lieutenant shall also review these incidents in the same manner as described above. The Chief of Police shall review each meaningful command review and approve or reject the recommendations of the supervisors who conducted the review. The Chief of Police's decision shall be memorialized and retained in the use-of-force investigative file.

## Section Four: Non-Discriminatory Application of Force

*Your review must include an explanation of how you concluded whether force was applied in a non-discriminatory manner based on race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other protected characteristic. Your analysis should include a review of your community's demographics and demographic data from the Use of Force portal. If you conclude that any use of force was applied in a discriminatory manner, please explain what steps you have taken and will take to address this conclusion.*

### **Section Four: Non-Discriminatory Application of Force\***

Current census data for Netcong Borough shows the demographics as 63% white, 12% Black or African American, 3% other and 20% Hispanic. In 2024 we had fourteen reports in which force was used. Force reports by race and ethnicity showed use of force against 6 Caucasians, 2 black or African American and 6 against Hispanics. Of the fourteen an executive-level review was conducted and did not reveal any discernable pattern, practice, or trend regarding the use of force with respect to the subject's race, ethnicity, gender, or any other protected characteristics. The level and type of force used was warranted and appropriate to ensure the safety of others during the incidents.

## Section Five: Overall Review of Use of Force

*Please utilize as much space as needed to conduct a thorough review of your agency's use of force during the preceding calendar year. Your review should evaluate whether force was used in compliance with the Attorney General's Use of Force Policy and your agency's policy. Even if overall use of force was compliant with those policies, your review should include any recommendations for training, equipment, or room for improvement (e.g., additional de-escalation efforts could have been made). Your review must address trends in the number of total force incidents, number and severity of injuries, and levels of force increasing or decreasing over the past three (3) years.*

### Section Five: Overall Review of Use of Force\*

A complete review of all use of force incidents and their meaningful reviews for 2024 was conducted and are in compliance with the Attorney General's Use of Force Policy and our agency's policy.

The reasons for physical force techniques are that officers are attempting to use the minimum amount of force necessary to control and de-escalate situations, especially those involving subjects that are experiencing psychological emergencies or are combative/resisting while under the influence of alcohol/drugs/or both. Also, the interactions occur quickly, which require immediate action to maintain control over the scene. Minimal physical force is required during some psychological emergencies to limit the harm a subject may do to themselves, or the officers involved.

I reviewed the fourteen (14) Use of Force Reports submitted by the officers who were involved in the eight (8) use of force incidents for 2024. The incidents involved the officers deploying minimal physical force to gain control of suspects. The supervisory and administrative meaningful reviews of the Officers Use of Force Reports revealed that the officers did in fact use force; however, the use of force was justified in controlling the situations. My collective review of all the incidents also did not find any concerning trends or patterns of concern in the involved officers' behavior and actions. In 2024, there was one (1) incident where a subject reported minor injuries because of the use of force used on him. This is compared to zero (0) subjects in 2023 and zero (0) in 2022. The injured subject was provided with prompt medical attention, and his injuries were very minor. There were no complaints of excessive force made against any officers in 2024, nor did our agency initiate any IA complaints after a meaningful review of each incident. In conclusion, I also found that Use of Force incidents are low overall for the past three years, and only one minor injury occurred during this time period.

The Netcong Borough Police Department handled 9,034 incidents with over 5,000 citizen contacts in 2023. Of which there were eight (8) Use of Force incidents. Only 0.16% of calls for service resulted in a Use of Force situation; and of those eight incidents, five (5) of them involved assisting neighboring jurisdictions. These incidents accounted for 0.1% of Netcong's use of force incidents.

My recommendation is for our officers to continue to use the tools and training provided to them; including !CAT/ABLE, peer support, verbal commands, and any other de-escalation technique at their disposal to reduce Use of Force incidents.

## Section Six: Further Action

*Please explain what further action your agency has taken, or will take, to implement any changes in departmental structure, policy, training, or equipment you have deemed appropriate. These actions can include department-wide changes, or changes applicable to specific officers or divisions.*

### **Section Six: Further Action \***

Our department continues to offer training in the handling of Use of Force issues and incidents. Officers receive mandatory Use of Force training semi-annually along with their firearms qualifications. Officers are also provided with hands-on instruction on the use of OC Spray techniques. Training has also been developed to include instruction on how to utilize less lethal force when making arrests in the field and the implementation of conflict resolution techniques, especially when dealing with those with mental health issues. This includes annual refresher training of all personnel, training of all sworn personnel on de-escalation, and ICAT and ABLE training for personnel. Additionally, de-escalation techniques to help minimize the requirement of Use of Force are encouraged through all the ranks of the department. This has helped to create a more modern-day culture on how to deal with incidents by our officers. If there is no urgency to quickly resolve an incident due to safety concerns, officers are trained and encouraged to take as much time as necessary to resolve the incident in a non-confrontational manner with minimal force.

## **Vehicle Pursuit Annual Review: Written Report**

### **Section One: BWC/Video Audit**

*Your review must include a brief description of your agency's random and risk-based audit process (e.g., how videos are selected, who reviews the videos, etc.). If your agency did not conduct a risk-based and/or random BWC/video audit in 2023, please indicate how you plan to remedy that in 2024.*

### **Section One: BWC/Video Audit \***

Supervisors conduct random formal reviews of selected recordings at the rate of at least one segment per subordinate per calendar month to assess officer performance as well as to identify video/audio that may be appropriate for training purposes. The reviews are documented on a Supervisory Review of Digital Video/Audio Recording Forms.



## Section Two: Internal Affairs Complaints

*Your analysis must include a review of internal affairs complaints related to use of force incidents and must include the following: 1. number of IA complaints filed; 2. number filed by civilians; 3. number initiated by the agency; 4. numbers sustained; and 5. number still pending.*

### **Section Two: Internal Affairs Complaints\***

Our department did not receive any Internal Affairs Complaints regarding vehicle pursuits incidents in 2024, and none were initiated by the agency.

### **Section Three: Meaningful Review of Individual Pursuits**

***Section 12.1 of the Attorney General's Vehicular Pursuit Policy requires that every vehicle pursuit must undergo a meaningful command level review. Your annual review should include a brief description of your agency's meaningful review policy. If your agency was not able to conduct a meaningful review of each use of force incident, please explain why you were unable to do so and please indicate how you plan to do so going forward.***

#### **Section Three: Meaningful Review of Individual Pursuits\***

Every vehicular pursuit incident must receive a meaningful command level review in accordance with our written department policy. The officer's sergeant shall review these reports for accuracy and completeness and shall promptly address any issues as they may pertain to policy changes, training, weapons or equipment or discipline. The lieutenant shall also review these incidents in the same manner as described above. The Chief of Police shall review each meaningful command review and approve or reject the recommendations of the supervisors who conducted the review. The Chief of Police's decision shall be memorialized and retained in the use-of-force investigative file

## Section Four: Analysis of Non-Compliant Reports

*Your review must include an analysis of all pursuits determined to not be in compliance with the Attorney General's Use of Force Policy, or agency policy, and the steps taken to address the non-compliance. Please indicate whether all non-compliant pursuits were referred to the Office of Public Integrity and Accountability or the County Prosecutor in compliance with Section 12.1(e) of the Attorney General's Vehicular Pursuit Policy.*

### Section Four: Analysis of Non-Compliant Reports \*

The Netcong Police Department did not have any pursuits in 2024.

## Section Five: Non-Discriminatory Pursuits

*Your review must include an explanation of how you concluded whether vehicular pursuits were conducted in a non-discriminatory manner based on race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other protected characteristic. Your analysis should include a review of your community's demographics and demographic data from the Use of Force portal. If you conclude that any pursuit was conducted in a discriminatory manner, please explain what steps you have taken and will take to address this conclusion.*

### Section Five: Non-Discriminatory Pursuits\*

The Netcong Police Department did not have any pursuits in 2024.

## Section Six: Overall Review of Vehicle Pursuit Analysis

*Please utilize as much space as needed to conduct a thorough review of your agency's vehicle pursuit incidents during the preceding calendar year. Your review should include but is not limited to: the reason the pursuit was initiated; the number of officers who engaged in pursuits; whether supervisors approved or terminated pursuits; role of any outside agencies; length of pursuits by time and distance; top speeds reached; nature of any injuries, crashes, or property damage; reason for termination (if terminated), and the outcome of pursuits. Your review should evaluate whether pursuits were compliant with the Attorney General's Vehicular Pursuit Policy and your agency's policy. Even if overall pursuits were compliant with those policies, your review should include any recommendations for training, equipment, or room for improvement.*

### Section Six: Overall Review of Vehicle Pursuit Analysis\*

The Netcong Police Department did not have any pursuits in 2024.

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## Section Seven: Further Action

*Please explain what further action your agency has taken, or will take, to implement any changes in departmental structure, policy, training, or equipment you have deemed appropriate. These actions can include department-wide changes, or changes applicable to specific officers.*

### **Section Seven: Further Action\***

Our department continues to offer training in the handling of vehicle pursuits. Officers receive mandatory vehicle pursuit training semi-annually. Over the past three years the Netcong Borough Police Department has had one vehicle pursuit involving one officer. Pursuits in our jurisdiction are very rare. To maintain and strengthen the officer's knowledge of pursuit guidelines and tactics the department will implement additional training in this area. In addition to the mandatory training, Sergeants will review vehicle pursuit guidelines quarterly with their squads.