Report to / Rapport au:

OTTAWA POLICE SERVICE BOARD
COMMISSION DE SERVICE DE POLICE D'OTTAWA

22 July 2024 / 22 juillet 2024

Submitted by / Soumis par:
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SUBJECT: ANNUAL USE OF FORCE REPORT - 2023

OBJET: RAPPORT ANNUEL DE L'EMPLOI DE LA FORCE - 2023

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Ottawa Police Service Board receive this report for information.

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que la Commission de service de police d'Ottawa prenne connaissance du présent rapport à titre d'information.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ottawa Police Service (OPS) is committed to transparency and accountability. This commitment includes annual reporting on incidents in which OPS officers use or display force against a member of the public.

The vast majority of calls for service (99.9%) are resolved with officer presence and communication. Use of Force is extremely rare; however, events in which police officers use force can have large impacts on individuals and communities. When force is displayed or used, officers are obligated to file a report about the incident. This document is a summary and analysis of Use of Force reports submitted by OPS officers in 2023.

OPS officers displayed or used force against one or more individuals in 261 incidents in 2023, which represents an average of 1.19 incidents per 1,000 dispatched calls. Almost half of the Use of Force incidents (47%) involve displaying, rather than applying force.

Situations involving weapons were the most common type of incident in 2023 (21%); the second most common type of incident involved a person in crisis or barricaded subject (18%). The third largest category of incident was violent crime or active attacker (13%).

Most Use of Force incidents (80%) involved one individual, but in some cases (13% of incidents) there were multiple subjects. However, of the incidents in which officers used or displayed force, 17 (7%) involved officers drawing their weapons in the presence of people without pointing or displaying these weapons toward any individual in particular. For example, officers can be called to a scene due to suspicion of an armed individual. Upon their arrival, they may draw their weapon while searching the premises, but they do not direct it toward anyone if the suspect is not found.

In 2023, there were 310 individuals involved in Use of Force incidents. Since 2020, the OPS has been reporting on the perceived race of subjects involved in Use of Force incidents. The percentage of racialized subjects against whom force is used has remained relatively consistent. In 2023, 46% of Use of Force subjects were racialized, which is equivalent to the four-year average. Black and Middle Eastern subjects continue to be over-represented in Use of Force incidents relative to their share of Ottawa's population. Black individuals are over-represented at more than three times (3.3) their share of the City's population; Middle Eastern subjects at almost twice (1.8) their share. The percentage of Indigenous subjects involved in Use of Force incidents is 1.5 times higher than their share of the population.

The new Use of Force reporting template this year requires identification of the perceived gender and age of subjects. In 2023, men made up a significant majority of individuals involved in Use of Force incidents (89%) as well as the majority of individuals against whom force was applied (91%). Individuals perceived to be between the ages of 25 and 34 made up the largest age category (33%) against whom force was demonstrated or applied.

Officers indicate the reasons for which they use force against an individual, as well as the factors impacting their decision. For each of the 310 individuals against whom force was demonstrated or applied, officers indicated an average of three reasons for doing so, the most common of which were to protect self (80%), effect an arrest (72%), and protect other officers (55%). The most frequently selected factors impacting their decision were the nature of the call (60%), subject's access to weapons (46%), and

active resistance from the individual involved (32%). Of the 310 individuals involved in Use of Force incidents in 2023, 47% had, or were perceived to have, weapons.

Outcomes of Use of Force incidents can include injuries to subjects and/or officers. Of the 310 individuals involved in Use of Force incidents in 2023, there were 18 (6%) individuals injured. One was fatally injured, six individuals received injuries requiring medical attention at a medical facility, and another four had minor injuries requiring First Aid. Additionally, there were 15 officers injured in 2023, three of whom required treatment at a medical facility.

BACKGROUND

Police officers have the authority to use force in the lawful execution of their duties. They also have a responsibility to use only the level of force reasonably necessary to bring an incident under control effectively and safely.

The elimination of systemic racism and implicit bias is a priority for the OPS. In addition, the OPS has committed to improving the experiences of Black, Indigenous, racialized people, and various equity-seeking groups in their encounters with OPS members and the criminal justice system more broadly. To this end, the OPS collects and reports on race and identity-based data (RIBD).

The collection, analysis, and reporting of RIBD is being done in compliance with Ontario's Anti-Racism Act (ARA), which requires law enforcement agencies to "identify and monitor racial disparities in order to eliminate systemic racism and advance racial equity." Collection of race-based data began in 2020. Data collection relies on officer perception, described in the ARA as 'Participant Observer Information'. Officers are not to ask the individual for their self-identified characteristics since the intent of collecting and reporting RIBD is to identify and address bias on the part of police. This race and identity-based data collection complies with human rights legislation such as Ontario's Human Rights Code, the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Updated Use of Force Report Template

In 2022, the Ontario Ministry of the Solicitor General (SolGen) developed a revised template for Use of Force reporting (UFR), to be adopted as of January 1, 2023. This new standardized report is a dynamic template with up to 40 pre-defined variables. It includes data capture for subject race, gender, and age category (as perceived by the officer at the time of use of force), as well as type of force used, any weapons involved, injuries sustained, etc. As the SolGen suggests, these reports be used for officer

training, policy and procedure requirements, and analysis of racial disproportionalities and disparities.

The new standardized UFR allows for a more nuanced level of analysis than has previously been possible. Reporting on the gender and age category of subjects is also in alignment with requests from the community and stakeholders. That said, given changes to reporting categories, identification of trends and comparisons with previous years is not possible in all sections of analysis provided in the discussion below. One of the most significant changes is that prior to this report, the OPS analyzed the reasons for Use of Force by incident. In this report, and from this point forward, reasons for Use of Force will be analyzed and reported by subject. This recognizes that in an incident involving more than one subject, officers may assess and respond to each individual differently.

DISCUSSION

The following discussion examines Use of Force incidents and subjects in detail. It begins with a summary of Use of Force reporting requirements, OPS training, Duty of Care, and response to persons in crisis. Discussion Section 2 provides analysis of the 261 Use of Force incidents in 2023, including the number of occurrences by quarter, the incident types, and the location types. Discussion Section 3 examines the 310 subjects involved in Use of Force incidents, including race, gender, and age categories. Discussion Section 4 looks at reasons for which officers displayed or used force in 2023, as well as the factors influencing their decisions. Discussion Section 5 reviews outcomes of Use of Force incidents, with particular attention to injuries to subjects and officers.

There are three appendices to this report. Appendix A provides the data tables which have been discussed in the report and/or presented in charts and graphs. Appendix B provides two examples of scenarios in which officers may use force with a person in crisis. Appendix C provides an overview of the methodology applied in the analysis and drafting of this report.

Discussion Section 1: Use of Force Reporting, Training, and Duty of Care

Many principles and procedures guide police interventions, decisions, and training. Particularly relevant to Use of Force are the reporting requirements to the Ministry of the Solicitor General, Duty of Care principles, and Use of Force training. For example, a supplement to the Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019, O. Reg. 391/23 states the following restrictions on drawing handgun, pointing, and discharging firearm: A member of a police service "shall not draw a handgun, point a firearm at a person or discharge a

firearm unless they believe, on reasonable grounds, that to do so is necessary to protect against loss of life or serious bodily harm."

Reporting requirements

Police services in Ontario are required to submit a Use of Force Report to the SolGen whenever an officer:

- draws a handgun in the presence of a member of the public, points a firearm at a person or discharges a firearm;
- uses a weapon on another person;
- draws, displays, points, or discharges a conducted energy weapon (CEW) to a person with the intention of achieving compliance;
- uses physical force on another person that results in an injury requiring medical attention.

The OPS Professional Development Centre (PDC) is responsible for reviewing each UFR, filing completed UFRs with the SolGen, and maintaining an internal repository of completed UFRs.

Officer training

The PDC ensures that all sworn members are trained and certified in Use of Force. They also make sure OPS officers receive training in crisis management and de-escalation, training which instructs officers on how to use the least amount of force required in any situation. All new recruits to the OPS receive extensive Use of Force training, with a strong focus on communication and de-escalation techniques. De-escalation strategies are designed to prevent and/or assist officers to minimize the amount of force required in a situation. Employing de-escalation strategies to peacefully resolve an incident is a fundamental goal of OPS Use of Force training.

OPS members participate in an annual full-day Use of Force requalification, which includes communication, de-escalation, firearms, and defensive tactics. This requalification includes training scenarios that require using appropriate responses to people in crisis and mental health distress. On-going training is designed to ensure officers can quickly assess situations, determine appropriate responses, evaluate whether physical methods are required, and prevent injuries to the subject, members of the public, and police officers.

The Ontario Public-Police Interactions Training Aid is a framework that updated the previous Use of Force model in May 2023. New training has been launched to ensure that all officers are familiar with this new training aid. This training is in addition to the

officer's annual Use of Force requalification. This training aid assists officers in continuously assessing each situation and selecting the most reasonable option for any given point in time. Often the demonstration of force is enough to achieve compliance from the subject. Indeed, almost half (47%) of Use of Force incidents involved displaying rather than applying force.

Duty of Care

OPS officers are also trained in, and guided by, the principles of Duty of Care, which recognize that members are always to act in a manner that promotes the well-being of the community, individual members of the public, and other members of the Service. The concept of Duty of Care is reflected in the Community Safety and Policing Act, the provincial legislation that replaced the Police Services Act in April 2023. Duty of Care is also entrenched in OPS policies and procedures.

Duty of Care principles recognize that all members of the public deserve to be treated with dignity and have their well-being supported. Victims of crime are owed the emotional support they need; they have the right to expect that their problems will be taken seriously and investigated in a competent manner. Suspects of offenses have the right to be treated in accordance with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and to be cared for when they are in need.

Duty of Care also recognizes that members of the OPS may be impacted both physically and psychologically due to exposure to traumatic and emotionally damaging events. The OPS has several layers of support available to support member wellness.

Duty of Care exists in situations in which OPS members use force on a subject. Once the situation has de-escalated, and when it is safe to do so, OPS members will deliver various levels of medical intervention and request the assistance of trained medical personnel to ensure the prioritization of life.

Persons in crisis

Police are often called to engage with persons experiencing a mental health crisis or with someone who is feeling suicidal. This may present as the individual having delusions, hallucinations, disorganized behavior, disorganized speech, or a combination thereof. In any case, when a person is experiencing a mental health crisis, communication and reasoning will often become impaired.

The role of officers when engaging with a person experiencing a mental health crisis is to diffuse the crisis by de-escalating and attempting to offer support and solutions. This is most often achieved without the use of any physical force or physical intervention.

The OPS Mental Health Unit (MHU) provides training to patrol officers on signs and symptoms of mental health disorders and how to interact with someone experiencing a mental health crisis. The OPS also engages trained negotiators where appropriate and, in certain circumstances, may request assistance from trained mental health professionals.

If, despite these interventions, and if the crisis situation results in the person becoming a danger to themselves, a danger to others, or should the person no longer have the inability to care for themselves, police have a duty to act in order to ensure the safety of the person in crisis and the safety those around them. Police officers may decide to apprehend the person under the Ontario Mental Health Act and bring them to the hospital for assessment and treatment. In other cases, a doctor or a judge may have issued a Mental Health form directing police to bring the person to hospital.

Since a person who is experiencing a mental health crisis may have impaired communication and reasoning skills, the act of getting them help may be difficult. They may not realize or appreciate that they are in need of intervention and may refuse assistance or deny that there is a mental health issue at play (as they may not be able to see it for themselves). In these cases, police make every attempt to de-escalate and reason with the person but because of their impaired thinking processes and communication skills, de-escalation may be unsuccessful. There are times when police are required to use physical force to intervene with the end goal of keeping the person in crisis safe and those around them safe. See Appendix B for example scenarios, provided by the MHU, in which officers may use force in an incident involving mental health and/or a person in crisis.

Discussion Section 2: Use of Force Incidents

In 2023, OPS officers were dispatched to approximately 220,000 calls. Of these calls, there were 387 UFRs for 291 incidents involving the display or Use of Force. Thirty-one reports, and 30 incidents, were for incidents which OPS members used their weapons on animals, primarily to end the suffering of animals involved in motor vehicle accidents.[1] The analysis below focuses on the 356 reports and 261 incidents in which OPS officers displayed or used force toward human subjects.

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[1] The one incident with two reports for the same event involved the situation on April 24, 2023, in which officers put down a black bear in Kanata.

This analysis section examines Use of Force incidence by per thousand dispatched calls (by year and by quarter), as well as by incident type, location type, and type of force used.

**Use of Force occurrences, per thousand dispatched calls**

Use of Force by OPS officers has generally trended down in recent years. In 2020, OPS officers used force an average of 1.58 times per thousand dispatched calls. In 2021 and 2022 there were 1.27 and 1.14 Use of Force incidents per thousand dispatched calls, respectively. In 2023, OPS officers used or displayed force an average of 1.19 times per thousand dispatched calls (see Figure 1 and Appendix A, Table 1A).

Figure 1: Use of Force Incidents per Thousand Dispatched Calls, 2020-2023
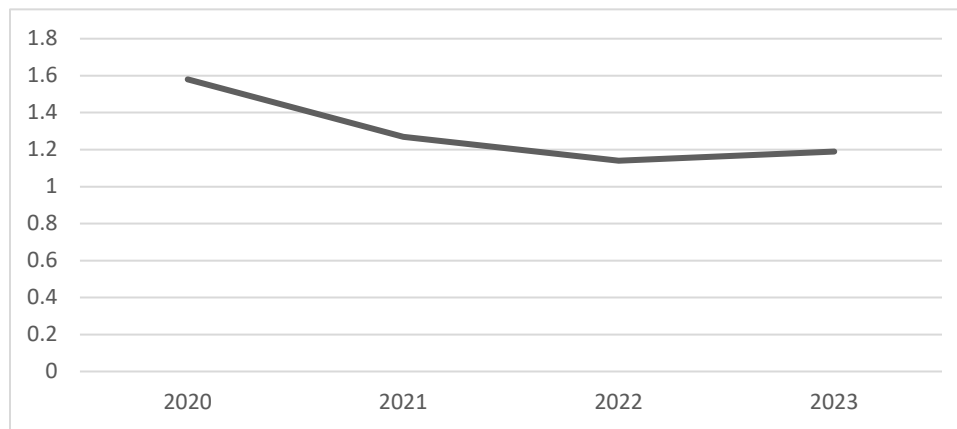
In 2023, the number of Use of Force incidents per thousand dispatched calls trended up and was highest in the fourth quarter (see Figure 2 and Appendix A, Table 2A).

Figure 2: Use of Force Incidents per Thousand Dispatched Calls, by quarter 2023
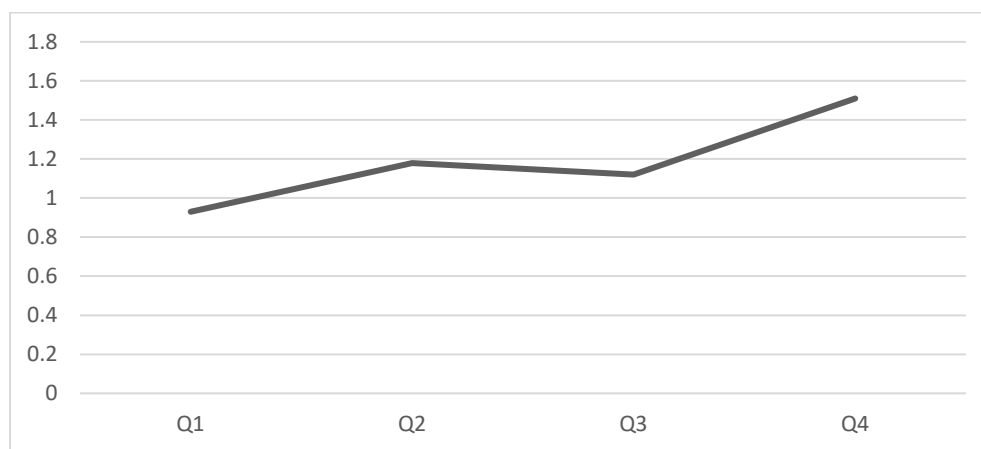
Use of force was most likely to occur between midnight and the early morning (see Figure 3). The 261 incidents in 2023 were almost equally divided before and after noon

(51% after, 49% before). The hour with the highest number of incidents was between 4 and 5 am (45 incidents) (see Appendix A, Table 3A).

Figure 3: Approximate time of day period when force was applied (n=261)
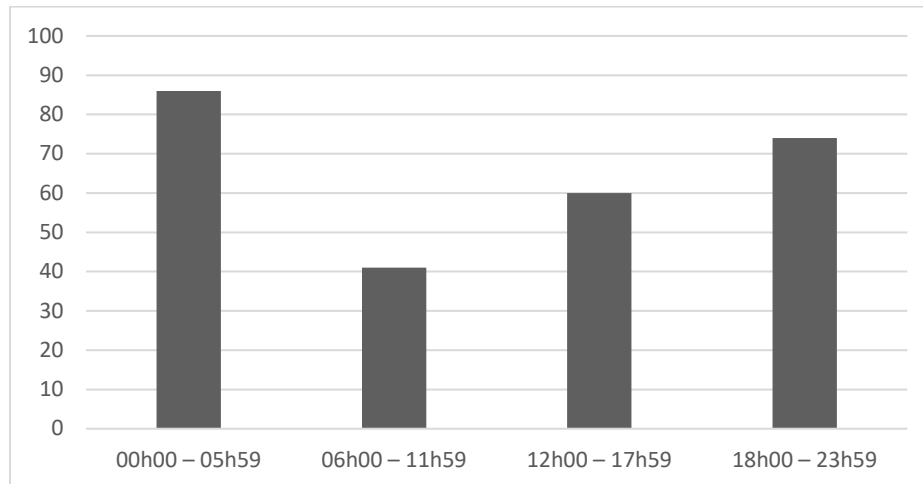
Incident type

Use of Force incidents can be categorized by the type of incident to which police officers responded, such as a violent crime, disturbance, or person in crisis. The most common incidents involving Use of Force in 2023 were calls relating to weapons (21%). The second most common category was calls relating to a person in crisis or barricaded subject (18%) (see Figure 4 and Appendix A, Table 4A).

Figure 4: Incident type (n=261)
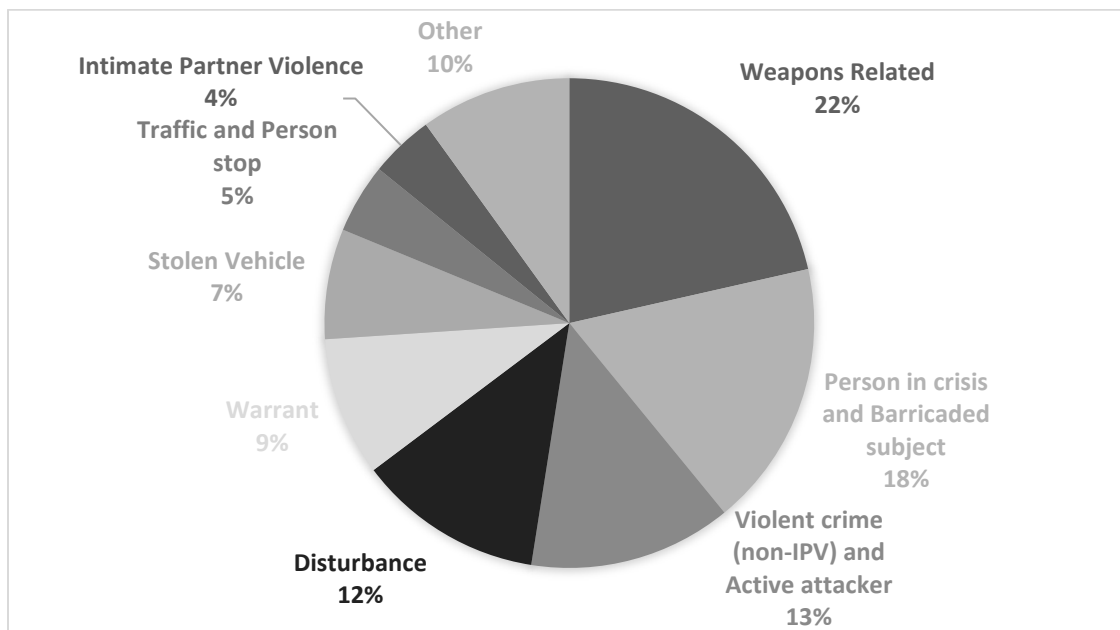
Location type

In addition to indicating the type of incident to which they responded, officers indicate the type of location where force was applied from the following five options:

- Residential building (e.g., private dwelling, community-based dwelling)

- Non-residential building (e.g., business, public institution)

- Motor vehicle (e.g., personal vehicle)

- Open space (e.g., park, field, parking lot)

- Public transportation (e.g., station, bus)

In 2023, the majority of Use of Force incidents took place in either residential buildings (40%) or open spaces (30%) (see Figure 5 and Table 5A in Appendix A).

Figure 5: Location type where force was applied (n=261)
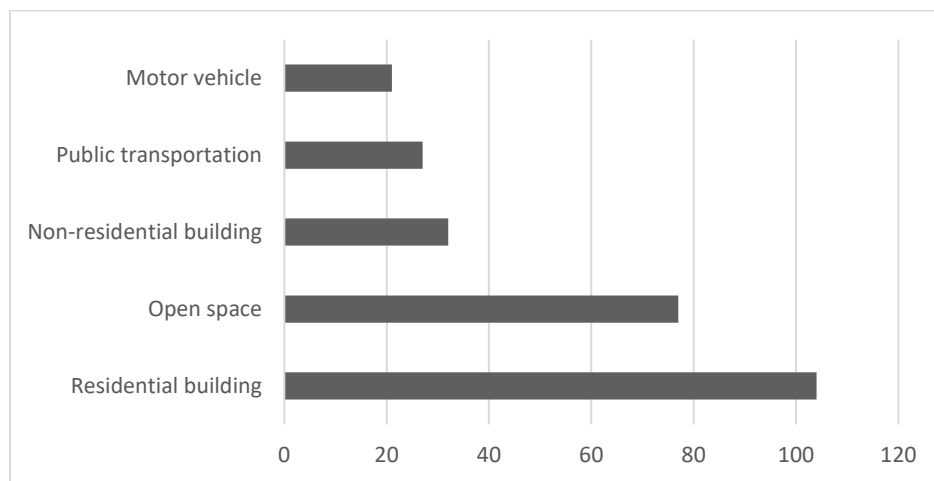
Type of force

In a single incident, one or more officers may display or apply one or more types of force. As such, while there were 261 incidents in 2023 in which force was demonstrated or used on a member of the public, a total of 457 types of force, for unique incidents, were reported in 356 reports (see Table 1). In Appendix A, Table 5A provides a breakdown of the types of physical control as well as types of force by subjects.

Table 1: Type of force used on subjects in incidents, 2021-2023

Force Category	Type of Force	2021	2022	2023
Aerosol Weapon	Aerosol (Pepper Spray)	1	4	10
Physical Control	Soft empty hand	38	27	50
	Hard empty hand	28	21	52
	Sub-total physical control	66	48	102
Impact Weapon (Baton)	Soft impact weapon	3	1	2
	Hard impact weapon	1	3	3
	Sub-total impact weapon	4	4	5
Firearm	Rifle pointed	35	22	20
	Handgun drawn	212	134	111
	Handgun pointed	108	101	69
	Firearm discharged	1	3	3
	Sub-total firearms	356	260	203
Conducted Energy Weapon (CEW)	CEW demonstrated force	118	76	64
	CEW deployed	75	81	69
	Sub-total CEW	193	157	133
Other[3]	Arwen, K9, Pepper ball, CS (chlorobenzalmalononitrile) vapor, Distraction device	1	9	4
TOTAL		619	483	457

As in prior years, conducted energy weapons (CEWs) were the most frequently used weapon by officers. Just over half of Use of Force incidents in 2023 involved the

demonstration or use of a CEW. Handgun drawn and handgun pointed were the second most frequent types of force used by officers (43% and 26% of incidents, respectively).

Firearms were discharged in three incidents in 2023, resulting in injuries to the subjects, one of which was fatal. All of these were investigated and cleared by the provincial Special Investigative Unit (SIU). See discussion below on Outcomes of Use of Force Incidents.

Discussion Section 3: Use of force subjects

There were 310 individuals toward whom officers demonstrated or used force in 2023. Most Use of Force incidents (n=209, 80%) involved one individual, but in some incidents, there were multiple subjects (n=35, 13%) (see Table 2).

Table 2: Number of Subjects involved in Use of Force incidents, n=261

Number of subjects in each incident	Number of incidents	% of incidents
1	209	80%
2	21	8%
3	9	3%
5	2	1%
6	1	0%
8	2	1%
0	17	7%

Of the incidents in which officers used or displayed force, 17 (7%) did not directly involve any subjects. Examples of these incidents include officers responding to a call about a suspected weapon, such as in a public building or on public transport. In such situations, officers are authorized to draw their weapon if they believe the proactive drawing of their firearm is necessary to protect against loss of life. Officers will make this decision based on the information available to them at that time, as well as their knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience. Following the incident, the circumstances are reviewed by both the officers' supervisor and the Use of Force Analyst.

The following discussion analyzes the 310 subjects involved in Use of Force incidents by perceived race, as well as by the newly added categories of gender and age.

Perceived race of subjects

OPS officers are required to report on their perception of the subject's race when completing their Use of Force report.[2] These data help ensure public accountability and help to promote fair and equitable service delivery. As in previous years, to analyze the race data in UFRs, the percentage of the race groups amongst Use of Force subjects is compared with the percentage of race groups within the city's population (please refer to Table 3).[3] A ratio of 1.0 times means the group's proportion of subjects in Use of Force incidents corresponds to its proportion in the general population. Consistent with previous Use of Force reports, race groups are described as having "disproportionately high incidences in Use of Force" when their proportion is above a ratio of 1.2 times.

Table 3: Proportions of race groups, comparing Census data of residents to Use of Force subjects (n=310)

Race Groups (total n=310)	Ottawa Resident Populations, 2021	Use of Force Subjects, 2023	Ratio of Share of Subjects to Share of Population
White (n=167)*	68%	54%	0.79
Black (n=81)	8%	26%	3.3
Middle Eastern (n=33)	6%	11%	1.8
Indigenous (n=19)	4%	6%	1.5
Other Racialized (n=10)	8%	3%	0.4

*n refers to the number of Use of Force subjects from that race group category in 2023

Three racialized groups are over-represented in Use of Force incidents. Black people were the most significantly over-represented at 3.3 times their share of Ottawa's 2021 resident population. Middle Eastern people are also over-represented at 1.8 times what

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[2] As per the Ontario Data Standards for the Identification and Monitoring of Systemic Racism, police services should collect race-based information "if there are observed unequal outcomes for Indigenous, Black, and racialized persons, persistent complaints of systemic racial barriers, and/or widespread public perception of systemic racial barriers or bias within the organization". Indirect collection of race-based data (based on observation) is authorized under Ontario's Anti-Racism Act.
[3] The most recent Census data from Statistics Canada for Ottawa resident population is from 2021.

we could expect based on population. Indigenous people were over-represented at 1.5 times their population.

Records of the OPS officer-perceived race have been collected and reported on since 2020. Table 4 below compares 2023 Use of Force subjects, by race, relative to the previous three years. However, when interpreting these results, it is important to keep in mind the changes to reporting requirements, such that prior to 2023 report formats, officers could not indicate the perceived race of more than three subjects.

Table 4: Percentages of Use of Force subjects, by race, 2020-2023

Perceived Race Group	2020	2021	2022	2023	Four-year average
White	52%	52%	58%	54%	54%
Black	28%	26%	25%	26%	26%
Middle Eastern	12%	11%	10%	11%	11%
Indigenous	4%	6%	2%	6%	5%
Other Racialized	4%	6%	6%	3%	5%

As demonstrated in the Table 4, over the last four years, the percentages of OPS Use of Force incidents with racialized subjects has remained relatively stable, between 48% in 2020 and 2021, 42% in 2022, and 46% in 2023. More specifically, the percentage of Black subjects has ranged between 25 and 28%. Similarly, the percentage of subjects perceived to be Middle Eastern has been between 10 and 12%. The percentage of Indigenous subjects has ranged from 2 to 6 %; while that of other racialized subjects has been between 3 and 4%.

Incident types, by subject race groups

The External Review Race Data in Use of Force Reporting by the Ottawa Police Service, 2020 (Foster and Jacobs 2022) recommended not only examining the incident type of calls in which OPS officers used force, but also asking if there are patterns in the race data with regard to types of incidents. Figure 6 shows comparison of the top five occurrence types, by the overall incidents, for White, Black, and other racialized subjects (see Appendix A, Table 6A).

**Figure 6: Comparison of top 5 incident types by race groups**

Top 5 incident types overall (n=261):	Top 5 incident types for White subjects (n=167):
• Weapons (21%) • Person in crisis & Barricaded subject (18%) • Violent crime & Active attacker (13%) • Disturbance (12%) • Warrant (9%)	• Weapons (20%) • Person in crisis & Barricaded subject (20%) • Warrant (13%) • Violent crime & Active attacker (11%) • Disturbance (10%)
Top 5 incident types for Black subjects (n=81):	**Top 5 incident types for other racialized subjects (n=62):**
• Violent crime & Active attacker (17%) • Weapons (15%) • Warrant (14%) • Disturbance (12%) • Traffic & Person stop (12%)	• Weapons (29%) • Disturbance (19%) • Person in crisis & Barricaded subject (13%) • Warrant (10%) • Investigation & Police custody (6% each)

Applied or demonstrated force, by race groups

As noted above, the demonstration of force is often enough to achieve compliance from the subject, and almost half of Use of Force incidents involve displaying rather than applying force. Similarly, almost half of subjects involved in Use of Force incidents had force displayed toward them, rather than applied against them (n=143, 46%).[4]

Figure 7 below shows both the number of subjects from each race groups against whom force was used (dark grey column) and the number of those against whom force was applied (light grey column) (see also Appendix A, Table 7A).

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[4] Applied force includes aerosol (OC) spray, CEW deployment, firearm discharge, soft and hard use of impact weapon, as well as any physical control. Demonstrated force includes handgun drawn and/or pointed, rifle pointed, CEW-drawn and/or pointed.

Figure 7: Percentage of subjects against whom force was applied, by race group
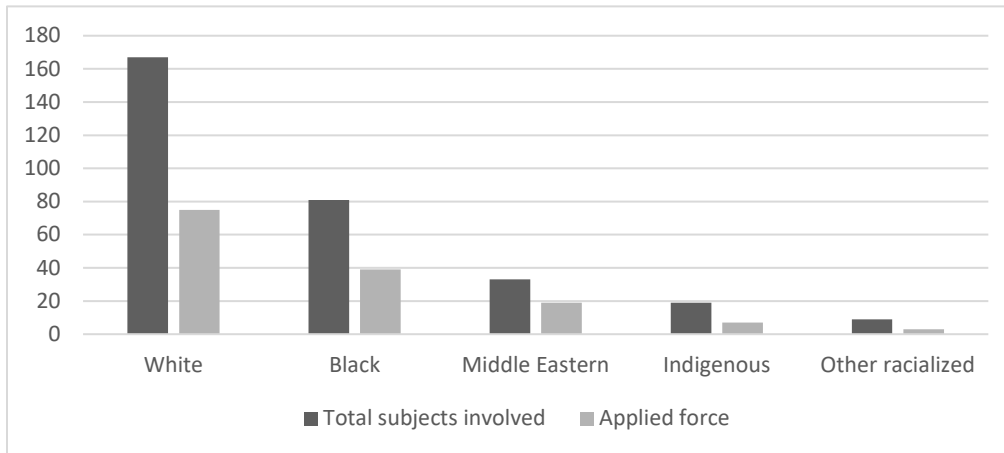

When examined by race group, Middle Eastern and Black subjects were more likely than White, Indigenous or other racialized groups to have force applied against them; 58% of the Middle Eastern subjects, and 48% of the Black subjects, had force applied against them, compared to 45% of White subject, 37% of Indigenous subjects, and 33% of the other racialized subjects.

Perceived gender of subjects

As of January 2023, officers completing the UFR have been required to indicate the perceived gender and age category of subjects against whom force was demonstrated or applied.

Men make up the majority of individuals involved in Use of Force incidents (89%), as well as the majority of individuals against whom force was applied (91%). Considered another way, of the men involved in Use of Force incidents, 48% had force applied against them, while 38% of the women had force applied against them. There were three individuals identified as Transgender/Non-binary who were involved in Use of Force incidents in 2023; none of them had force applied against them (see Figure 8, Table 8A).

Figure 8: Individuals involved in Use of Force incidents, by perceived gender
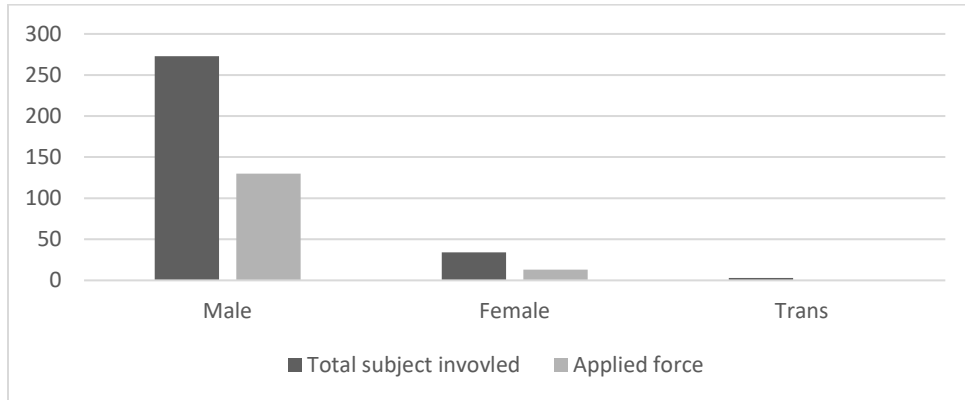
Incident type, by gender

Female subjects were most likely to be involved in situations involving the execution of a warrant, while male subjects were most likely to be involved in weapons-related incidents (see Figure 9, Table 9A).

Figure 9: Comparison of top 5 incident types by gender groups

Top 5 incident types for male subjects (n=273):	Top 5 incident types for female subjects (n=34):
• Weapons (21%) • Person in crisis & Barricaded subject (15%) • Disturbance (14%) • Violent crime & Active attacker (13%) • Warrant (10%)	• Warrant (33%) • Person in crisis & Barricaded subject (14%) • Weapons (12%) • Traffic & Person stop (12%) • Intimate Partner Violence (9%)

One interesting finding when examining Use of Force incidents by gender category is that of the women involved, the majority were in incidents involving two or more individuals (59%). For men the inverse is true; the majority of males were in incidents in which they were the only subject (70%). Another finding is that a slightly higher percentage of female subjects were unarmed (59%) compared to male subjects (53%).

Perceived age of subjects

In addition to indicating the perceived race and gender, officers were required to identify the perceived age category for subjects involved in Use of Force incidents.

Individuals perceived to be between the ages of 25 and 34 make up the largest age category (33%), roughly equivalent to those both under (31%) and over (36%) that age group (see Figure 10 and Table 10A).

Figure 10: Perceived age category of subjects, n=310
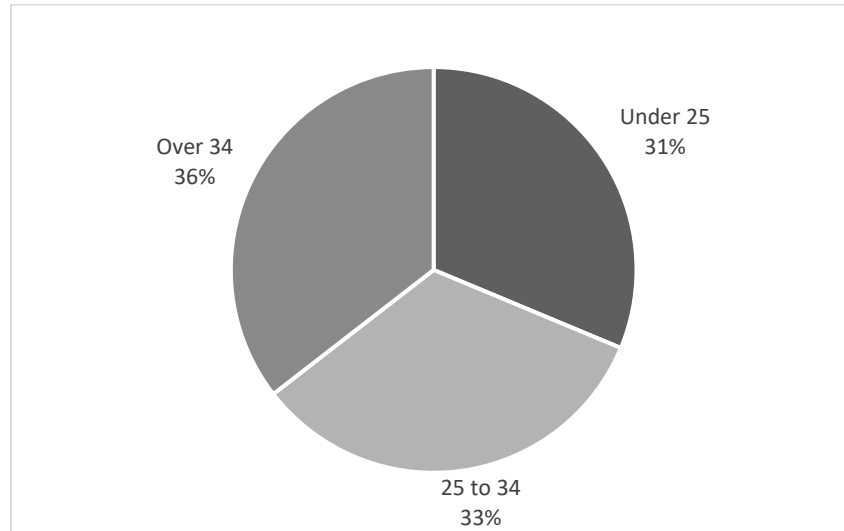
More specifically, 18- to 24-year-olds and 35- to 44-year-olds each make up 24% of the total individuals. Only 23 (7%) were under the age of 18, and only one individual was perceived to be older than 65 (see Table 10A in Appendix A).

Discussion Section 4: Reasons for Use of Force

Police officers must have just cause to use force against an individual. In the 2023 UFR, officers could select one or more of nine provided reasons when explaining why they used force against each of the individuals involved in an incident. Reasons were associated with each individual, rather than the incident in general (as was the case for previous UFRs). As such, for the 310 individuals involved in Use of Force incidents in 2023, officers provided 1,018 reasons (an average of just over three reasons per individual) (see Table 11A in Appendix A).

 The top three reasons provided were:

- Protect self (n=247, for 80% of individuals)

- Effect arrest (n=222, for 72% of individuals)

- Protect other officer(s) (n=172, for 55% of individuals)

Officers also selected factors that influenced their response, which reflect an officer's assessment of the likelihood of injury to themselves, the subject, other officers and/or members of the public.

For the 310 individuals, officers identified 767 factors, the top three of which were:

- Nature of call (n=183, for 60% of individuals)
- Subject perceived/believed to have access to weapon(s) (n=144, for 46% of individuals)
- Resistant active (n=100, for 32% of individuals)

Possession of Weapons by Subject

Of the 310 individuals involved in Use of Force incidents in 2023, 145 (47%) had, or were perceived to have, weapons. As indicated in Table 5, the most common category of weapons is firearms (for 48% of armed individuals), the second is knife or edged weapon (for 38% of armed individuals). Note that an individual may have, or be perceived to have, access to one or weapons, so of the 145 individuals with weapons, there are 156 types of weapons noted in UFRs (see Table 5).

Table 5: Categories of weapons, by individual, n=145

Category of weapon	Number of Subjects having weapons	% of Subjects having weapons
Firearm (incl. handgun and long gun)	69	48%
Knife / edged weapon (incl. glass)	55	38%
Unknown type of weapon	12	8%
Club or impact weapon	5	3%
Other (such as vehicle, hard object)	15	10%

When considering the perceived race categories of individuals with weapons, the percentages of race categories among armed subjects are very close to the percentages of race categories among all Use of Force subjects.

For example, a total of 80 White individuals had or were perceived to have weapons, and thus made up a little over half (55%) of the 145 people with weapons. This is similar to their proportion of all Use of Force subjects (54%). Similarly, Black individuals made up 25% of those who were armed, and 26% of those involved in Use of Force incidents. For all racialized individuals, their percentage of those who were armed to those

involved in Use of Force incidents is also almost identical (19% and 20%, respectively) (see Table 6).

Table 6: Subjects possessing weapons, by race category, n=145

Race group of subjects	Percentage of subjects possessing weapons*
White (n=80)	55%
Black (n=36)	25%
Other racialized groups (n=28)	19%

* Percentage of subjects possessing weapons refers to the number of subjects in a race category who possessed weapons relative to the number of all subjects who possessed weapons.

Looked at another way, of the 167 White individuals involved in Use of Force incidents, 48% of them were armed. Of the 81 Black individuals, 44% were armed, and 47% of the other 62 racialized individuals were armed.

Discussion Section 5: Outcomes of Use of Force incidents

This final analysis section examines outcomes of OPS Use of Force incidents. As noted above, almost half of OPS Use of Force incidents involve the display, not application, of force. OPS officers rarely discharge their firearm or CEW.

Outcomes of Use of Force incidents can include injuries to subjects and/or officers. Of the 310 individuals involved in Use of Force incidents in 2023, there were 18 (6%) who were injured. One individual was fatally injured, six individuals received injuries requiring medical attention at a medical facility, another four had minor injuries requiring First Aid or no treatment, and four individuals fled before it could be verified that they were uninjured.

Pursuant to section 15 of the Special Investigative Unit (SIU) Act, the SIU investigates the conduct of police officers in incidents that result in death, serious injury, sexual assault or the discharge of a firearm at a person. A person sustains a "serious injury" for purposes of the SIU's jurisdiction if they: sustain an injury as a result of which they are admitted to hospital; suffer a fracture to the skull, or to a limb, rib or vertebra; suffer burns to a significant proportion of their body; lose any portion of their body; or, as a result of an injury, experience a loss of vision or hearing. In addition, a "serious injury" means any other injury sustained by a person that is likely to interfere with the person's health or comfort and is not transient or trifling in nature.

In relation to Use of Force Incidents in 2023, the SIU conducted the following six investigations:

- Case Number 23-OCI-279: Subject was accidently hit by a door while attempting to barricade

- Case Number 23-OFD-243: Armed subject was fatally shot by police when advancing on officers and not heeding calls to drop their weapons

- Case Number 23-OFI-071: The Tactical Unit returned fire with the subject, who was subsequently injured

- Case Number 23-OFP-075: Subject fell after CEW deployment and sustained facial injuries

- Case Number 23-OFP-303: Subject was evading police and ARWEN was deployed

- Case Number 23-OFP-517: Shots were fired at a subject in a vehicle that attempted to hit officers during a traffic stop

All of the cases were concluded without charges with the exception of 23-OFP-517 which is still under investigation.

Analysis of Use of Force reporting includes examination of whether racialized subjects experienced disproportionately high incidences of serious outcomes. Of the individuals who were injured in Use of Force incidents, 28 percent were racialized, and 72 percent were White. This suggests that racialized individuals, who comprised 46 percent of subjects in Use of Force incidents, were not disproportionately injured.

When considered by gender, 89% of subjects injured were male. As noted above, men make up the majority of individuals involved in Use of Force incidents (89%) as well as the majority of individuals against whom force was applied (91%). Thus, their injury rate is proportional to their involvement in Use of Force incidents.

The age distribution of those injured is also comparable to the age distribution of total subjects, such that those between the ages of 25 and 34 comprise 39% of the injured subjects, while 27% of injured subjects were under 18, and 33% were older than 34.

Incident types in which subjects were injured include:

- weapons-related calls (5 individuals),

- persons in crisis (4 individuals),

- disturbance calls (3 individuals),

- violent crime calls (2 individuals), and

- one individual in traffic, investigation, dispute, and assist other agency calls.

There were 15 officers injured in 2023, three of whom required treatment at a medical facility. A third of these individuals were injured in incidents involving a person in crisis. Other incident types in which officers were injured include disturbance (3 officers), warrant (2 officers) and one officer in a traffic, violent crime, active attackers, weapons, and stolen vehicle. The most serious injuries to officers occurred in the active attacker and weapons calls, as well as in one of the disturbance calls.

CONSULTATION

This report has been prepared in participation with the OPS Professional Development Centre (PDC) and input from the Mental Health Unit and the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Unit. The report will be provided to the Community Equity Council as well as to the newly established Use of Force Review Committee.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendix A – Data Tables

Appendix B – Person in Crisis scenarios

Appendix C – Research Methods

CONCLUSION

The vast majority of calls for service (99.9%) are resolved with officer presence and communication. OPS officers used force in only 1.19 incidents per 1,000 dispatched calls in 2023. Of the incidents in which officers used force, almost half were resolved with only the display of force, rather than its application. This demonstrates that officers are effectively resolving, with minimum forceful intervention, the vast majority of incidents to which they respond.

Calls involving armed indivduals can be dangerous for officers, the public, and the subjects involved. It is not surprising that the most common incidents involving Use of Force in 2023 were weapons-related (21%). Indeed, more than a quarter (27%) of the individuals injured in Use of Force incidents in 2023 were involved in weapons-related calls, as was one of three seriously injured officers.

Incidents relating to a person in crisis or barricaded subject are complex and challenging calls for police. As in previous years, mental health calls were among the most frequent types of incidents involving display or use of force in 2023. Almost a quarter (22%), of individuals injured in Use of Force incidents were involved in person in

crisis situations, as were five officers. The OPS is continuing to work closely with community partners, in particular the Guiding Council on Mental Health Responses, to improve responses to mental health calls to effect better outcomes for both subjects and officers.

Concerns about systemic racism and disproportionate engagement with racialized populations have prompted changes to the collection, analysis, and reporting of race data. Since 2020, the OPS has included race data in Use of Force reporting. The proportion of racialized subjects involved in Use of Force incidents has remained relatively stable since 2020; Black and Middle Eastern subjects continue to be disproportionately involved, relative to their share of Ottawa's resident population. However, when applying the race categories of subjects involved in Use of Force incidents as the benchmark (comparative) metric, rates of injuries do not suggest that racialized individuals are more likely than White individuals to be injured during Use of Force incidents.

Outcomes of Use of Force incidents can include injuries to subjects and/or officers. Of the 310 individuals involved in Use of Force incidents in 2023, there were 18 (6%) individuals injured. One was fatally injured, six individuals received injuries requiring medical attention at a medical facility, another four had minor injuries requiring First Aid. This indicates that even when police officers use force, serious injuries are rare. There were 15 officers injured in 2023, three of whom required treatment at a medical facility.

In 2023, the OPS DRIVE2 Strategy was developed in collaboration with the Community Equity Council (CEC). It identified necessary changes for improvements to police culture and service delivery. One of the key recommendations was the establishment of a community review panel to improve Use of Force procedures and training. Launch of this Committee is anticipated in the fall of 2024. The OPS is also committed to working with this Use of Force Committee and to responding to their recommendations.

Appendix A – Data Tables

Table 1A: Use of Force per 1,000 dispatched calls, 2020-2023

Year	Dispatched calls	Use of Force incidents	Use of Force incidents per 1000 dispatched calls
2020	221,370	348	1.58
2021	223,306	284	1.27
2022	214,930	245	1.14
2023	220,119	261	1.19

Table 2A: Use of Force per 1,000 dispatched calls, by quarter 2023

2023 Quarters	Dispatched calls	Use of Force incidents	Use of Force incidents per 1000 dispatched calls
Q1	51,377	48	0.93
Q2	57,552	68	1.18
Q3	58,040	65	1.12
Q4	53,150	80	1.51

Table 3A: Number of Use of Force Incidents by Time of Day, n=261

Time Period	Hour	Number of Use of Force Incidents, by hour	Number of Use of Force Incidents, by period
00h00 – 05h59	00h00 – 00h59	7	86
	01h00 – 01h59	6	
	0h200 – 02h59	9	
	03h00 - 03h59	11	
	04h00 – 04h59	45	
	05h00 – 05h59	8	

06h00 – 11h59	06h00 – 06h59	4	41
	07h00 – 07h59	7	
	08h00 – 08h59	5	
	09h00 – 09h59	8	
	10h00 – 10h59	8	
	11h00 – 11h59	9	
12h00 – 17h59	12h00 – 12h59	15	60
	13h00 – 13h59	13	
	14h00 – 14h59	7	
	15h00 – 15h59	9	
	16h00 – 16h59	8	
	17h00 – 17h59	8	
18h00 – 23h59	18h00 – 18h69	17	74
	19h00 – 19h59	5	
	20h00 – 20h59	10	
	21h00 -21h59	14	
	22h00 – 22h59	17	
	23h00 – 23h59	11	

Use of Force incidents (n=261) was grouped by time at which the incident started, as indicated on the Use of Force Report.

Table 4A: Incident Type, n=261

Incident Type	Count of incidents	% of incidents (n=261)
Weapons Related	56	21%
Person in crisis and barricaded subject	46	18%
Disturbance	32	12%
Violent crime (non-IPV) and active attacker	35	13%
Warrant	24	9%
Stolen Vehicle	19	7%
IPV	11	4%

Traffic and Person stop	11	4%
Investigation and Police custody	7	3%
Family/Neighbour/Other dispute	6	2%
Public order and Other statutes	5	2%
Property crime and Drugs	4	2%
Assisting other agency	3	1%
All other	1	0%
Homicide	1	0%

Table 5A: Type of Force, by incident (n=261) and subject (n=310)

Type of force	Incidents in which this type of force was used	Subjects against whom this type of force was used
Aerosol (OC spray)	10	23
Impact weapon (Baton) hard	3	3
Impact weapon (Baton) soft	2	2
CEW demonstrated force	64	77
CEW deployment	69	69
Handgun drawn	111	127
Handgun pointed	69	84
Handgun discharged	1	1
Empty hand soft		
Physical control-escort	15	16
Physical control-joint locks	11	11
Physical control-other	3	7
Physical control-pinning	18	18
Physical control-pressure points	3	3

Empty hand hard		
Physical control-grounding	51	57
Physical control-strikes	1	17
Rifle pointed	20	34
Rifle discharged	2	2
Other	2	2
Canine	2	2
Extended Range Impact Weapon - pointed	1	1
Extended Range Impact Weapon - deployment	1	1

Table 6A: Incident types, by race group, 2023, n=310

Incident Type	Total incidents (n=261)	White subjects (n=167)	Black subjects (n=81)	Other racialized subjects (n=62)
Weapons Related	56	33	12	18
Person in crisis and Barricaded subject	46	33	6	8
Violent crime (non-IPV) and Active attacker	35	19	14	3
Disturbance	32	16	10	12
Warrant	24	22	11	6
Stolen Vehicle	19	15	5	3
IPV	11	8	1	3
Traffic and Person stop	11	6	10	2
Investigation and Police custody	7	2	3	4
Family/Neighbour/Other dispute	6	3	1	2
Public order and Other statutes	5	4	0	1
Property crime	4	2	0	0
Assisting other agency	3	4	0	0
All other	1	0	8	0

Table 7A: Applied force, by race group, n=310

Race Group	Total subjects in race group	Number on whom force was applied	Percentage of race group against whom force was applied
White	167	75	45%
Black	81	39	48%
Middle Eastern	33	19	58%
Indigenous	19	7	37%
Other racialized	9	3	33%
TOTAL	**310**	**143**	**46%**

Table 8A: Perceived gender of Use of Force Subjects, n=310

Perceived gender category	Total subjects involved in UoF incidents	Total subjects against whom force was applied	Percentage of gender group against whom force was applied
Male	273	130	48%
Female	34	13	38%
Transgender / Non-binary	3	0	0%

Table 9A: Incident type, by gender group

Incident Type	Total incidents (n=261)	Females (n=34)	Males (n=273)	Trans / Non-binary (n=3)
Weapons Related	56	4	58	1
Person in crisis and Barricaded subject	46	5	40	2
Violent crime (non-IPV) and Active attacker	35	2	34	
Disturbance	32		38	
Warrant	24	11	28	
Stolen Vehicle	19	1	22	
IPV	11	3	9	
Traffic and Person stop	11	4	14	
Investigation and Police custody	7		9	
Family/Neighbour/Other dispute	6	2	4	
Public order and Other statutes	5		5	
Property crime	4		2	
Assisting other agency	3		4	
All other	1	2	6	

Table 10A: Perceived age and gender categories

Age and gender categories	Number of subjects
12 to 17	**23**
Female	4
Male	18
Trans	1
18 to 24	**74**
Female	4
Male	69
Trans	1
25 to 34	**103**
Female	12
Male	91
35 to 44	**74**
Female	9
Male	64
Trans	1
45 to 54	**22**
Female	2
Male	20
55 to 64	**13**
Female	3
Male	10
65 and older	**1**
Male	1

Table 11A: Reasons for display or use of force against an individual

Reason for Use of Force	Total count of reason selected (n=1,018)	Percentage of individuals for whom this was a reason (n=310)
Protect self	247	80%
Effect arrest	222	72%
Protect other officer(s)	172	55%
Protect public	143	46%
Prevent an offence	96	31%
Prevent escape	82	26%

Protect subject(s)	50	16%
Other	6	2%

Table 12A: Factors for display or use of force against an individual

Factor in deciding to display or use force	Total count of factor selected (n=767)	Percentage of individuals for whom this was a factor (n=310)
Nature of call	183	59%
Subject has access to weapons	144	46%
Resistant active	100	32%
Assaultive	96	31%
Risk of serious bodily harm or death	71	23%
Physical size, strength, abilities of subject	53	17%
Resistant passive	31	10%
Past history with subject	30	10%
Other	59	19%

Appendix B – Persons in crisis, example scenarios

The OPS Mental Heath Unit provided the following two scenarios of examples of incidents in which offfcers may deploy force in a situation involving mental health and/or persons in crisis. Note that these examples include descriptions that some people may find disturbing.

Scenario 1

A scenario where officers may be required to use force might be a call for a male who is experiencing psychosis. He is paranoid and experiencing auditory hallucinations that are directing him to remove the demon from their mother. He has grabbed the mother who has managed to get away and has now called 911. Officers attend and attempt to speak with the person experiencing the mental health crisis. He is not receptive at all to them and attempts to pass officers to get to his mother once again. In this case, officers would have grounds to apprehend the male under section 17 of the Mental Health Act and would be required to keep the mother safe by intervening. The male who is experiencing psychosis is determined to access his mother (in his mind, to save her) and is not responding to officer's de-escalation techniques. As a result, a physical altercation ensues and depending on the size and strength of the individual, officers may be required to use physical control and/or deploy their taser in order to apprehend him safely under the Mental Health Act and keep the mother safe.

Scenario 2

A second scenario where officers may be required to use force might be a call for a person who is experiencing suicidal thoughts. Officers receive additional information on the way to the call that she has now brandished a knife and is going to cut her neck. They are also made aware that the female was recently released from hospital after a serious suicide attempt. Upon arrival, officers find the female in the kitchen with a knife. Officers stay back to provide the female space while they attempt to build rapport with the female. The female all of a sudden begins to cut her neck. Officers see that there are multiple other knives available to the female within hands reach but need to intervene quickly to minimize the damage the female is doing to herself. One of the officers deploys their conducted energy weapon (CEW) while a second officer is able to remove the knives from the immediate area around the female and safely administer first aid.

Appendix C – Analysis Methods and Research Questions

The Use of Force Reports (UFR) are used by police to record information about police use of force incidents. UFRs have two parts. Part A includes information about the incident and the subject(s), such as the type of force used, whether any other individual was perceived to be carrying a weapon, and the reason force was applied. Part B includes information about the officer submitting the report, including their name and identification number.

UFRs are submitted by officers to their supervisors and to the Professional Development Centre (PDC). These reports are reviewed and, if required, follow ups conducted to collect missing information from the officer(s) involved. Following this process, Part A of the completed reports are submitted to the Ministry of the Solicitor General (SolGen) pursuant to the SolGen's authority to request such information under the Equipment and Use of Force Regulation (s. 14.5 (4)). When these reports are submitted, some fields are redacted to comply with SolGen requirements and protect privacy (location code, subject identification, officer involved).

Officers are required to report on their perception of the subject's race, gender, and age when completing their Use of Force report. The broad objective of collecting and reporting these demographic data are to determine whether there are disproportionately high incidences of racialized subjects in Use of Force incidents, as well as to better understand the subjects involved in Use of Force incidents.

Internally, PDC staff review the UFRs and input data into a spreadsheet for analysis and report writing. Given changes to the reporting template in 2023, the PDC spreadsheet was adapted, with additional fields (such as gender and age category) added in order to allow for demographic analysis.

Approach and research questions

The following research questions were identified:

- Are there disproportionately high incidences of Use of Force by the OPS for persons of different race groups, when compared with their respective populations in the City of Ottawa?
    - How do ratios from 2023 data compare with those from 2020 to 2022?
- Are there patterns in the race data with regard to incident types in Use of Force incidents?
- Did racialized subjects experience disproportionately high incidences of serious outcomes in Use of Force incidents in 2023?

- Are there patterns in the race data with regard to the factors contributing to officer decision to use force, particularly with regard to possession of weapons and aggressive behaviour?

Methods

Analysis of the Use of Force incidents involves several steps. Importantly, there are three sets of data requiring identification and analysis: number of UFRs, number of unique incidents, and number of unique subjects.

1) Data collection and validation

The first step of analysis involved the collection and validation of data fields from the PDC-provided spreadsheet and the 387 UFRs. This involved comparison of data in spreadsheet with UFRs, and occasional consultation of other OPS data records (such as the records management system). Data fields for gender and age were added to the spreadsheet, and information captured from the UFRs. Additionally, data fields were added and populated for reasons and factors, as well as for all types of force and all subjects involved.

2) Identification of number of UFRs submitted and reviewed

This simply involved counting the number of rows in the submitted PDC spreadsheet, checking that all events occurred in 2023 (n=387). This number was also verified by the PDC, who confirmed the number of reports submitted with the number of reports received by the SolGen.

3) Identification of number of unique incidents involving human subjects

Preparing the dataset of the 261 unique incidents involving human subjects involved:

- Identifying and removing all incidents in which OPS members used force on an animal or discharged a weapon accidentally. 'Reason for use of force #1' was searched and all UFRs marked 'destroy animal' (n=30) were removed. In 2023 there were no reported accidental discharges. This resulted in 356 UFRs relating to use of force incidents involving human subjects.

- Identifying duplicate case numbers. Rows of duplicate case files were reviewed to ensure that the row retained for reporting on the incident included requisite details such as incident type and subject description. Individual files were consulted in case of discrepancies or missing information.

- Identifying the number of unique incidents per thousand dispatched calls required reference to data for dispatched calls from the OPS Versaterm Data Mart (VDM)

database. "Dispatched calls" refers to the number of calls for service to which an officer was directed to attend. To calculate the Use of Force incidents per 1,000 calls, the number of Use of Force incidents for each quarter was divided by the number of dispatched calls x 1,000.

4) Identification of number of subjects involved in Use of Force incidents

Each UFR contains information about all subjects involved. Preparing the dataset of the 310 subjects involved:

- Identifying the number of subjects involved in each incident (one of the fields in the UFRs). The majority (80%) of incidents had only one subject, while 35 incidents involved multiple subjects.

- Creating data tables for each subject and validating across reports if there were two or more reports for the same incident.

- Note: as demographic data collection relies on officer perception, it is not unexpected that there are some discrepancies when two or more reports are completed for the same incident. In case of discrepancies regarding race and gender (such as one report indicating the individual was racialized, the other indicating White, or one report indicating the individual was Trans/gender non-binary, the other as male/female), the minority category was recorded (racialized or Trans).

5) Incident and subject analysis

To address the research questions, various steps are taken to group and analyze data. These include:

- Identifying all types of force used, both per subject and in each incident. This involved first capturing each type of force listed per subject. For incidents involving more than one subject, the types of force captured for that incident reflect all types of force used on any of the subjects involved.

- Similarly, identifying the number of individuals against whom force was applied, as well as the number of incidents in which force was applied, involved reviewing the above data set and noting if, of the types of force listed for that subject, any included the application of force. Applied force includes aerosol (OC) spray, CEW deployment, firearm discharge, soft and hard use of impact weapon, as well as any physical control. Demonstrated force includes handgun drawn and/or pointed, rifle pointed, CEW-drawn and/or pointed. For incidents involving more

than one subject, the incident was considered to involve applied force if one or more individual had force applied toward them.

- Identifying which characteristics apply to the situation, and which to individual subject, and analyzing appropriately. For example, the factors and reasons for which force was applied are associated to subjects, not incidents, and were analyzed as such. Multiple factors and reasons could be associated to each subject.

Limitations

There are several limitations in the data and analysis provided in this report, particularly with regard to comparison against prior years where different, and few, categories of information were collected.

Prior to 2023, if more than one subject was involved in an incident, the UFR format did not provide specification regarding which type of force was used against which subject, something which the 2023 format allows. Officers could select the perceived race for up to three individuals, but they could not indicate which types of force were used against which of these individuals. As such, in previous years all subjects involved in a Use of Force incident were counted as having experienced the same type of force. As of 2023, the types of forces can be examined both by those employed in an incident and by those employed against subjects. This provides for better understanding of incidents and the impacts on subjects involved but adds some limitations to comparisons with previous years.

Additionally, in previous years officers could not identify the perceived race category of all individuals in incidents involving four or more subjects, being limited by the template to data capture for 1-3 subjects. This is not a significant limitation, given that in 2023 there were only five incidents involving four or more subjects, but it is a limitation, nonetheless.

With regard to 2023 UFRs specifically, while it is possible to identify the unique Use of Force incidents, it is not possible through review of UFRs to verify that all subjects involved are unique, such that one or more individuals may have been involved in one or more incidents.

Reporting alignment with SolGen

When the OPS submits UFRs to the SolGen, identifying information about incident (case number, date, and time) is redacted to protect privacy. As such, the SolGen is unable to identify and remove duplicate report submissions, nor identify multiple reports

about the same Use of Force incident. Indeed, the SolGen notes that "analyses conducted at the Use of Force Report level will not be reliable" (2023, 22).

Compounding this difficulty are other factors including:

- OPS analysis can identify incidents for which there are multiple reports; the SolGen data sets cannot identify duplicate reports for the same incident.

- UFRs are classified according to date received at the SolGen. Given that UFRs are not submitted until after an internal review process, there is a time lag between date of incident and date of submission.

Due to these complications, the number of OPS Use of Force incidents within a calendar year will not align with the number of UFRs submitted by the OPS to the SolGen within that same calendar year. Similarly, breakdowns of incidents, subjects, weapons, etc. will not align between the two datasets.

Privacy considerations

Use of Force reporting must balance the need for police transparency with the importance of protecting the privacy of subjects. This is particularly important given the significant percentage of incidents involving individuals in mental distress and/or incidents of self-harm.

As per privacy guidelines provided by the Treasury Board of Canada (2020),[5] it is important to mitigate risks that individuals could be identified in a dataset, alone or in combination with other sources of information, as this could constitute a breach of privacy for the individuals involved.

To protect the privacy of individuals involved, direct identifiers of subjects are not included in datasets made publicly available via the SolGen. Similarly, direct identifiers of officers are not made publicly available. Additionally, as per Treasury Board standards, we generally refrained from using a cell size of 10 or fewer in this analysis. Cell size refers to data in a summary table about a group of individuals with a common attribute, such as the number of subjects in a particular race category involved in Use of Force encounters. Minimum cell size is not a fixed determination, but rather must be assessed in consideration of re-identification risk, sensitivity of the data, and the potential harm that could result from re-identification (Treasury Board, 2020).

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[5] Privacy Implementation Notice 2020-03: Protecting privacy when releasing information about a small number of individuals.

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