

# Memorandum



DATE: September 3, 2010

TO: Members of the Public Safety Committee

SUBJECT: Dallas Police Department Pursuit Overview

Attached is briefing material on the "Dallas Police Department Pursuit Overview" to be presented to the Members of the Public Safety Committee on Tuesday, September 7, 2010.



Ryan S. Evans  
First Assistant City Manager

Attachment

CC: Honorable Mayor and Members of the Dallas City Council  
Mary K. Suhm, City Manager  
Deborah Watkins, City Secretary  
Tom Perkins, City Attorney  
Craig Kinton, City Auditor  
C. Victor Lander, Administrative Municipal Judge  
Jill A. Jordan, P.E., Assistant City Manager  
A.C. Gonzalez, Assistant City Manager  
Forest E. Turner, Assistant City Manager  
Jeanne Chipperfield, Chief Financial Officer  
Helena Stevens-Thompson, Assistant to the City Manager Mayor/City Council



# Dallas Police Department

## Pursuit Overview

### Public Safety Committee

September 7, 2010



# Implementation of Current Policy

- In 2005, retired Chief David Kunkle requested a review of departmental pursuit policy
- The panel's review included:
  - Other agencies' policies
  - Available research in the field of police pursuits
  - International Association of Chiefs of Police and the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies recommended pursuit model policies
  - Focus groups among departmental personnel
    - Almost 100% opposition
    - Believed crime would sky rocket
    - Almost universally placed capturing a suspect above safety concerns

# Implementation of Current Policy

- The most important consideration in the implementation of the current policy was SAFETY – for the public and officers
- Nationally, about 1 in 100 pursuits end in a fatality
- DPD had 361 reported pursuits in 2004
  - 32% for traffic violations
  - About 1 in 4 ended in a crash
  - 87 officers, citizens or suspects were injured or died
  - 2 citizens were killed in crashes
- DPD had 354 Pursuits in 2005
  - 38% for traffic violations
  - Approximately 1 in 4 pursuits ended in a crash
  - 98 officers, citizens or suspects were injured or died
  - 2 citizens and 2 suspects were killed in crashes

# DPD Pursuit Policy Overview

- Current policy was implemented on June 8, 2006
- Philosophy Statement
  - General Order 906.01 B., states “protection of human life is a primary goal of the police department;
  - therefore, police officers have a responsibility to use only the degree of force necessary to protect and preserve life.”
  - Initiating or participating in a vehicular pursuit presents a danger to the officers involved, the suspect, and the general public.
  - Accordingly, the decision to initiate a pursuit must be based on the pursuing officer’s conclusion that the immediate danger to the officer, public and suspect created by the pursuit is less than the immediate or potential danger to the public should the suspect remain at large.

# DPD Pursuit Policy Overview

- Definition:
  - A Pursuit is defined as an active attempt by an officer in an authorized emergency vehicle to apprehend a fleeing suspect in a motor vehicle who is attempting to elude the officer. A suspect is considered to be fleeing upon making any overt action intended to avoid arrest.

# DPD Pursuit Policy Overview

- Pursuit Initiation Criteria
  - The decision to pursue must be based on facts and circumstances known to the officer
  - Pursuit risk factors must be considered
    - Road, weather and environmental conditions
    - Population density, vehicle and pedestrian traffic
    - Relative performance capabilities of emergency and suspect vehicles
    - Seriousness of offense
    - Presence of other persons in police vehicle
    - Age of offender
    - Whether or not offenders identity is known
    - Any circumstance under which pursuing officer will be unable to maintain control of the emergency vehicle

# DPD Pursuit Policy Overview

- Pursuit Initiation Criteria (cont.)
  - When officer has probable cause to believe that a felony involving the use or threat of physical force or violence has been, or is about to be, committed, and the officer reasonably believes that the immediate need to apprehend the offender outweighs the risk to any person of collision, injury or death

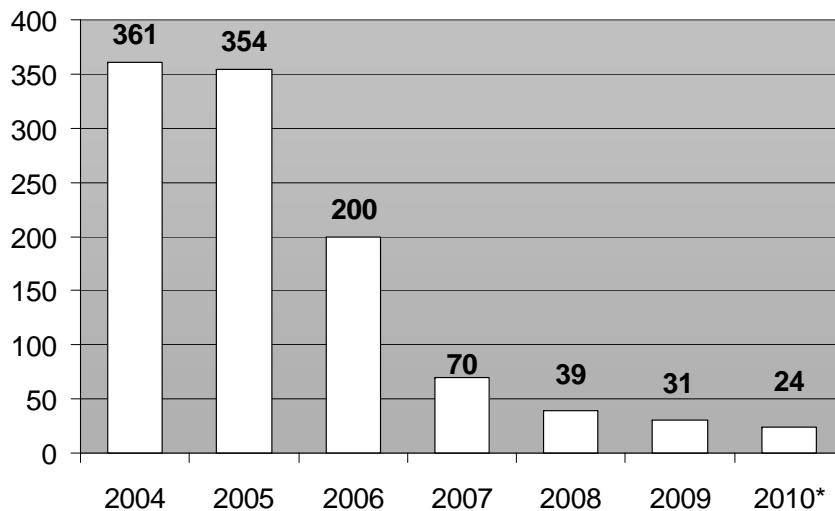


# DPD Pursuit Policy Overview

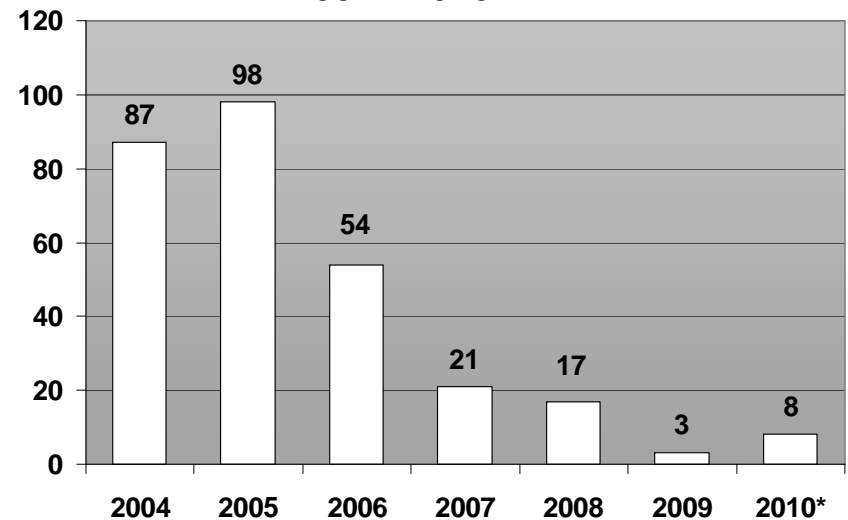
- Prohibited Practices
  - Roadblocks
  - Attempting to force the vehicle from the roadway by driving alongside or in front of the fleeing vehicle
  - Bumping or ramming the fleeing vehicle
  - Discharging weapons at a moving vehicle unless occupant is using or attempting to use deadly force on officer or other person
  - Pursuing the wrong way on a roadway
  - Following so closely that adequate reaction and braking time is insufficient to prevent collision with any leading vehicle

# Success of Current Policy

DPD Pursuits 2004 - 2010 YTD



Injuries/Deaths From Pursuits  
2004 - 2010 YTD

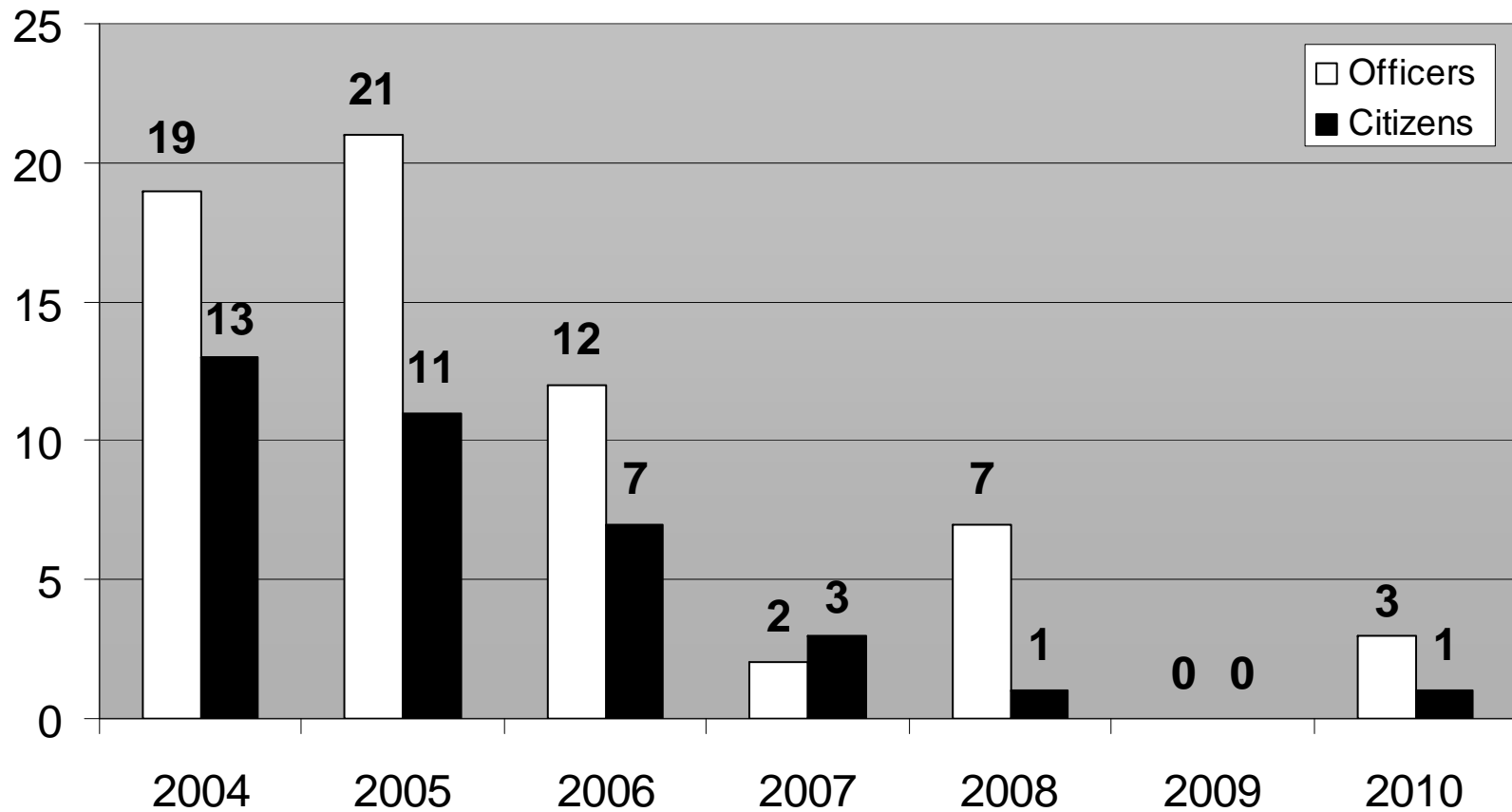


No innocent 3<sup>rd</sup> party citizens have been reported killed during a DPD pursuit since the implementation of the current policy

\*Year to date

# Success of Current Policy

Officers and Citizens Injured in Pursuits  
2004-2010

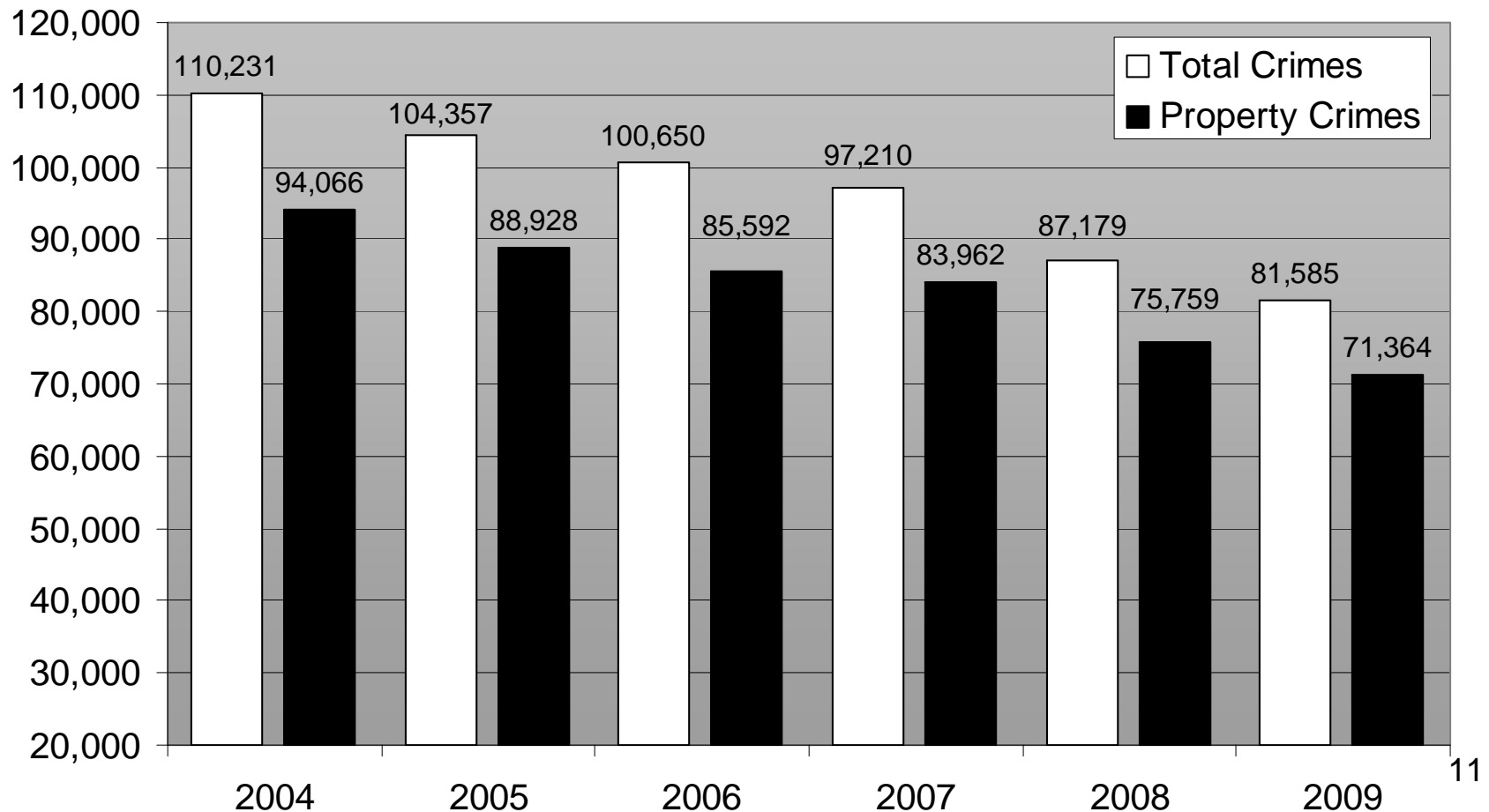


# Success of Current Policy

26% Reduction in Total Crime 2004-2009

24% Reduction in Property Crime 2004-2009

## Dallas Total and Property Crime 2004-2009



# Love Field Pursuit

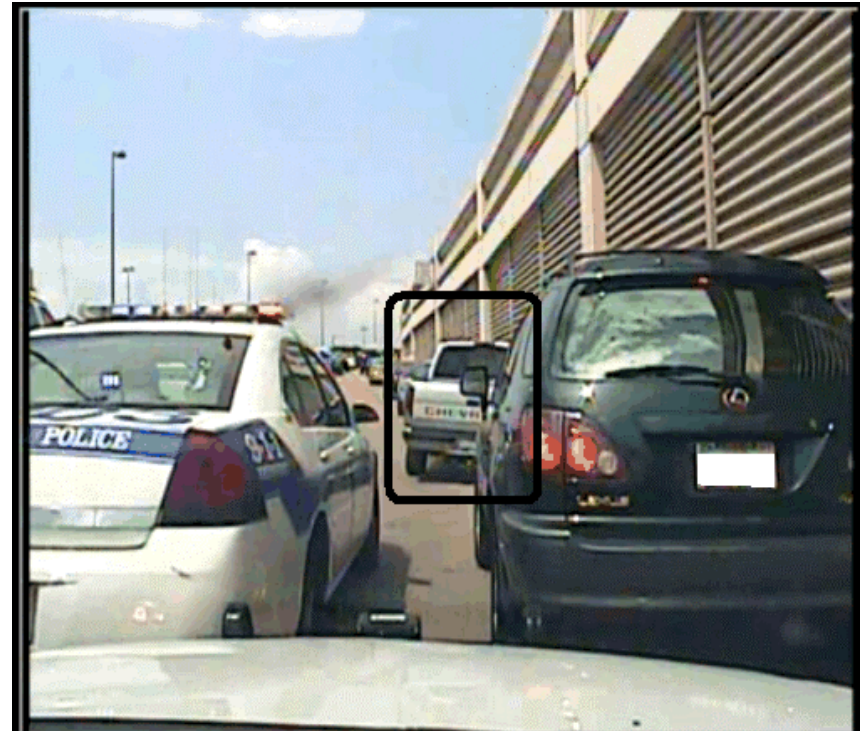
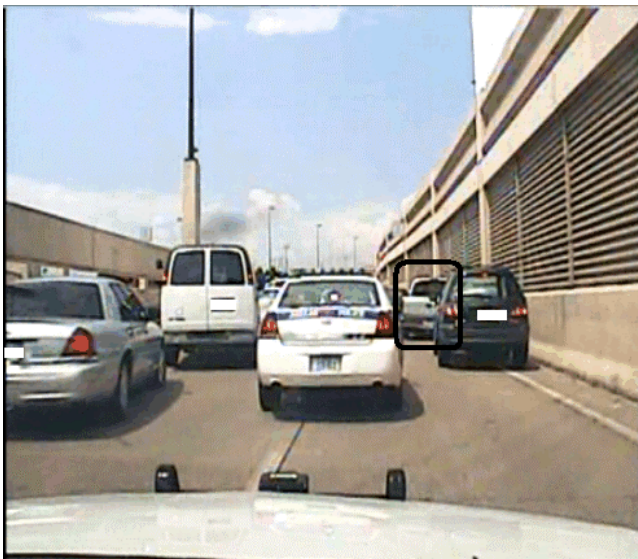
## August 19, 2010

- 2:25 PM - North Central undercover officer observes suspect driving through apartments 5900 Arapaho
  - Registration reveals vehicle stolen from Fort Worth in an Aggravated Robbery
- 2:28 PM - Helicopter requested from the hanger
- 2:32 PM - Marked elements attempt felony traffic stop at 5700 Spring Valley
  - Suspect flees and vehicle chase is initiated
- 2:33PM - Controlling supervisor authorizes 3 elements in the chase until he can catch up.
- 2:41 PM - Helicopter arrives at chase location

# Love Field Pursuit

- 2:42 PM - Suspect strikes curb at Greenville and Forest which causes right rear tire to flatten
  - Speed of vehicle slows, but pursuit continues
- 3:00 PM - Suspect is northbound Central Expressway service road just south of Mockingbird
  - Due to heavy traffic, suspect vehicle stops briefly against the concrete wall then maneuvers around the traffic and continues
- 3:02PM - Canine element is requested to assist in case suspect flees on foot
- 3:04 PM - Controlling supervisor authorizes additional element to follow behind the pursuit to assist with traffic control

# Dash Camera Views



# Love Field Pursuit

- 3:04 - 3:15 PM – Suspect takes a series of streets that lead him from southbound Central Expressway to the intersection of Harry Hines Blvd. and Mockingbird Ln.
  - Officers note that suspects flattened tire is sparking
  - Officers report that suspect appears to be talking and pointing at people as if he's amused with the situation
  - Suspects speed remains around 20 -30 mph



# Love Field Pursuit

- 3:15 PM - Helicopter announces that there is heavy traffic as the suspect turns eastbound on Mockingbird from Harry Hines
  - Suspect vehicle has difficulty proceeding up incline in road and slows to approximately 3mph
  - Suspect continues eastbound on Mockingbird
- 3:16 PM – Helicopter is in contact with FAA Tower at Love Field
- 3:18 PM- Suspect turns from Mockingbird onto Cedar Springs at the entrance to Love Field
  - Helicopter requests Love Field officers be notified
  - Field Service Division Deputy Chief contacts Love Field officers by telephone

# Love Field Pursuit

- 3:19 PM – SWAT elements arrive at pursuit location to assist in case of barricaded person situation
- 3:20 PM- Suspect turns into parking lot then proceeds to drive through fence
- 3:22 PM- Helicopter announces that the suspect is traveling towards aircraft at end of runway
  - **Supervisor authorizes deadly force to terminate pursuit**

# Love Field Pursuit

- 3:23 PM- Suspect vehicle is forced off the taxiway into grassy area
  - Suspect continues in direction of larger aircraft
  - Marked element intentionally collides with suspect vehicle in attempt to stop his progress
- **3:24 PM- Suspect is taken into custody**
  - No officer or citizen injuries
  - Minimal property damage

# Tire Deflation Device Attempts

- Mockingbird Ln. at Central Expressway
  - Suspect turned before reaching location
- Mockingbird Ln. east of Harry Hines
  - Suspect drove around device
- Mockingbird Ln. at Cedar Springs
  - Suspect turned prior to reaching device
- Love Field Main Exit
  - Suspect never drove back out of Love Field

# Initial Criminal Charges

- Aggravated Robbery
- Evading Arrest
- Criminal Mischief
- Unauthorized Use of Motor Vehicle
- 4 additional robbery charges have been added by DPD and 3 by Ft. Worth PD

# Further Considerations

- DPD Command Staff and Senior Staff members of the Aviation Department are developing a stronger, more efficient communication protocol for developing incidents near the Love Field area
- DPD studying the implementation of a practice to be followed when significant incidents develop near a critical location
- Pursuit fell within DPD guidelines
- Pursuit concluded with no injury and minimal property damage

Questions?