



SASKATOON _____
POLICE SERVICE

TO: Shirley Greyeyes, Chairperson
Board of Police Commissioners

FROM: Cameron McBride
Office of the Chief

DATE: 2025 May 05

SUBJECT: 2024 Use of Force Annual Report

FILE #: 10,030

ISSUE:

The Saskatoon Police Service (SPS) provides statistical reporting to the Board of Police Commissioners on an annual basis. This report details the Use of Force that was reported from January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024.

RECOMMENDATION:

That this report be received as information.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

This report supports several strategic priorities including Crime & Safety, Innovation and Our People, mainly by ensuring our members have the best equipment, technology and training to do their jobs in an efficient, effective and safe manner.

BACKGROUND:

The primary objectives of the SPS are: the safety of lives and protection of property, the preservation of peace and order, the prevention of crime, the detection of offenders, and the enforcement of the law. Meeting these objectives sometimes requires an application of force which may only be reasonable, in direct response to the offender’s resistance and not excessive.

In the interest of public safety, officers are granted the lawful authority to use force as outlined in sections 25, 26, and 27 of the *Criminal Code of Canada*. This protection is conditional; officers must be able to justify their actions and are responsible for any force that is excessive.

“PUBLIC AGENDA”

The Use of Force Review Committee carefully reviews all reports of force usage by SPS members. The Committee is a senior supervisory review mechanism that provides opinions on the appropriateness of the force used and the quality of the supervision at the time of the incident. The Committee also attempts to identify any training issues or emerging trends, striving to ensure proper application of force. Proper application of force is guided by the Use of Force Model (Appendix B).

Police use the Use of Force Model nationwide for reference and training and to articulate actions and decision-making specific to force usage. It facilitates understanding of the events associated with an incident involving a member’s use of force. Since last year, the grey exterior ring around the use of force circle highlights the importance of conflict prevention and de-escalation. This diagram clearly shows how evolving situations may require different uses of force as threats escalate or diminish.

Since March 2024, the SPS has been using software (BlueTeam) to streamline Use of Force reporting. BlueTeam provides an advanced software solution to enhance digital documentation, supervisory oversight, and organizational accountability. This user-friendly platform empowers frontline officers to complete incident reports efficiently and conveniently while supporting the chain of command with structured review and approval processes.

Prior to implementing BlueTeam, one use of force report was generated per incident where force was used. For example, an officer might use a physical strike as well as a takedown/throw, resulting in one report capturing two uses of force. With the implementation of BlueTeam, SPS members generate a report per each use of force. In the same example, this one incident would result in two use of force reports. This difference causes an increase in the numbers reported but does not imply an increase in force usage.

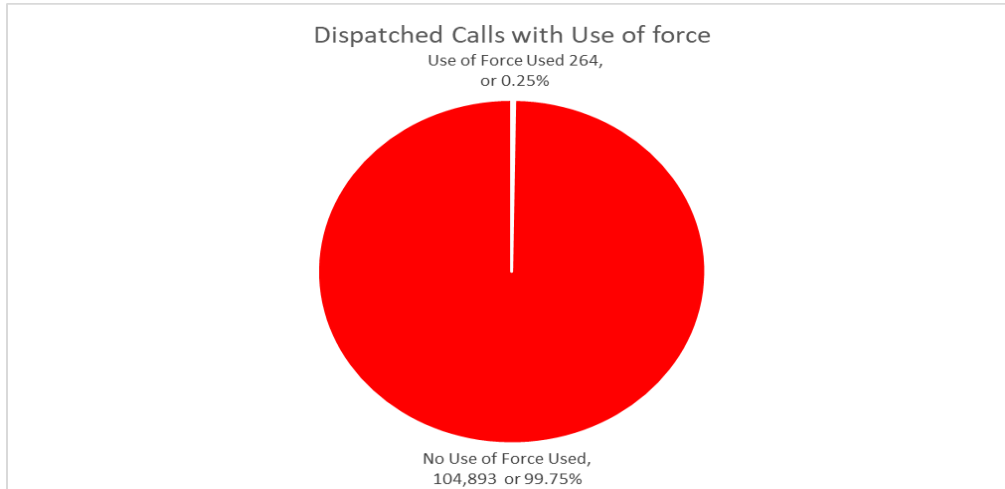
In 2024, incidents with force usage included between one and ten “uses of force” with an average of 1.8 uses of force per incident. As demonstrated in the Use of Force model, officers are constantly analyzing and re-analyzing situations and adjusting their response, de-escalating when safe and appropriate, and using their best judgement to apply appropriate force required by the situation to ensure safety of everyone involved. Due to the change in reporting, a direct Use of Force report comparison between 2024 and past years will not accurately reflect any changes in actual force usage. Future reports will include year-over-year comparisons.

DATA:

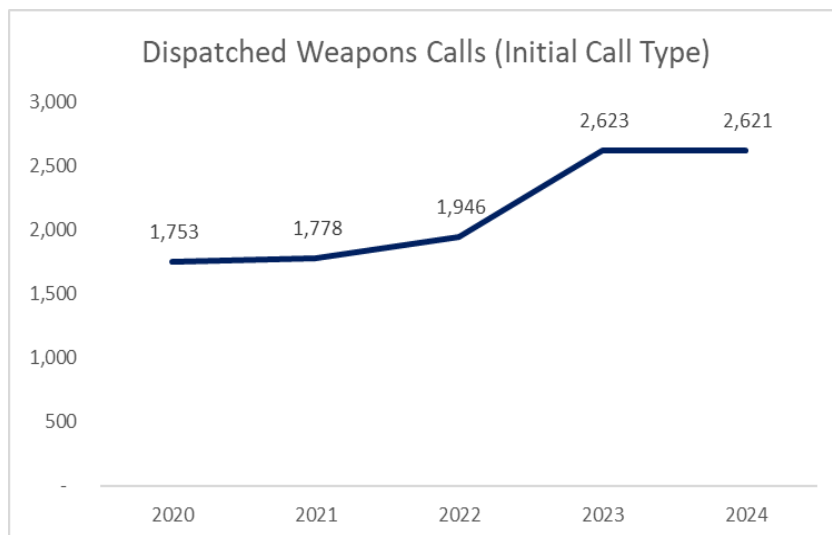
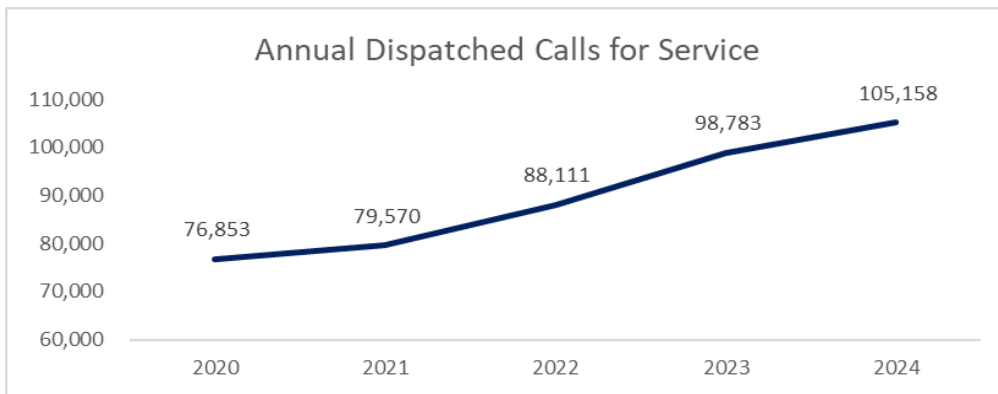
Frequency of Use of Force

No use of force was utilized for 99.75% of calls for service in 2024. The SPS was dispatched to 105,157 calls for service, which resulted in 264 occurrences where force was used (0.25%) which is slight reduction from 2023.

“PUBLIC AGENDA”



The uses of force correlate with the severity and quantity of calls dispatched. Dispatched calls for service increased by 6.4% in 2024 while dispatched weapons calls also increased in recent years.



“PUBLIC AGENDA”

The below table outlines the quantity of times each type of use of force was used. As previously stated, this displays multiple uses of force in **one incident**, which is a departure from previous reporting methods. For that reason, year-over-year comparisons delineated by type force used are not available.

2024 Use of Force Category	Quantity	
Baton	6	1%
Canine	33	7%
Chemical Weapon	13	3%
Conducted Energy Weapon	49	10%
Conducted Energy Weapon Pointed	8	2%
Conducted Energy Weapon Warning Arc	1	0%
Diversionsary Device	1	0%
Firearm Discharged	2	0%
Firearm Pointed	23	5%
Firearm Used on Animal	4	1%
Less Lethal Device	8	2%
OC Spray	7	1%
Other (Breach, TSU tactic/special equipment etc)	56	11%
Physical Control Technique: Joint Lock	36	7%
Physical Control Technique: Mod. Restraint Strap	7	1%
Physical Control Technique: Neck Restraint	1	0%
Physical Control Technique: Physical Strike	134	27%
Physical Control Technique: Pressure Point Stun	2	0%
Physical Control Technique: Takedown/Throw	29	6%
Public Safety Unit for Crowd Control	0	0%
Restraint Chair	12	2%
Spit Sock	28	6%
Tactical Support Unit	37	7%
Grand Total	497	

DISCUSSION:

Preventative Use of Force

SPS officers often act to prevent injury, prevent assaults or prevent suffering to animals. These are recorded as force usage and included in the SPS use of force statistics. The following are examples:

- Firearm Used on Animal - 4
- Spit Sock - 28
- Restraint Chair - 12
- Restraint Strap – 7
- Tactical Support Unit (TSU) – 37

“PUBLIC AGENDA”

Despite efforts to de-escalate or prevent injuries, both citizens and officers sometimes require medical attention as a result of use of force. In 2024, 85 incidents resulted in citizen injury and 42 resulted in officer injury. The table below outlines actions taken to treat injuries as a result of SPS use of force. As with the Use for Force data, when two actions were taken, both appear in the data; if one incident resulted in a citizen being treated at scene and transported to hospital, both actions are reported.

	Citizen Injuries	Officer Injuries
Admitted to Hospital	11	5
Declined Medical Treatment	8	20
EMS Treated at Scene	23	4
EMS Treated at Detention	34	16
EMS Transported to Hospital	13	2
SPS Transported to Hospital	14	7
Total	103	55

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Appendix A Glossary
2. Appendix B National Use of Force Model

CONCLUSION:

Despite an increase in call volume, Incidents where use of force was used decreased 4% from 2023 to 2024, while dispatched calls increased by 6%. BlueTeam software introduced greater detail with more comprehensive reporting on a digital platform to ensure efficient submission and tracking of force usage by Police.

Written by: Lisa Nowosad, Inspector, Patrol A/B
Chair, Use of Force Board

Approved by: Tonya Gresty, Superintendent, Patrol Bureau
Darren Pringle, Deputy Chief, Operations

Submitted by: Cameron McBride, Chief of Police

Appendix A
Glossary

- Less Lethal
 - Extended range impact weapon designed to debilitate or induce compliance authorized by the Chief of Police. This includes: 12-gauge Stabilized Bean Bag Round, ARWEN, and Pepperball Launching system.
- Modified Restraint Strap
 - Modified Restraint Strap may be used when a subject within lawful custody requires a greater level of restraint in order to prevent harm to themselves or others, to prevent the destruction of property, or to prevent escape.
- OC Spray
 - Oleoresin Capsicum Spray
- Restraint Chair
 - The Restraint Chair is an approved restraint system designed to limit the movement of prisoners who require extreme measures of control while in custody of the SPS Detention unit. The Restraint Chair is only used as a “last resort” when no other means is available to control or keep a prisoner from hurting themselves or others.
- Spit Sock
 - Officers slip a disposable cover over the head of an arrest that is spitting at them without having to use any further physical force to prevent the assault against police.
- Tactical Support Unit (TSU)
 - TSU has access to specialized training and equipment which increases the likelihood of a peaceful resolution. The decision to utilize TSU should not be considered an escalation, but rather a de-escalation of force. The mere presence of the TSU team is often enough to have suspects surrender peacefully. Even when TSU is able to resolve a situation peacefully, it is considered a use of force.

Appendix B
Use of Force Continuum

National Use of Force Model

