

Americus Police Department

2019 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



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Message from the Chief

Turn to Page 2 for a message from Chief of Police, Mark A. Scott and a summary of the crime statistics for 2019.

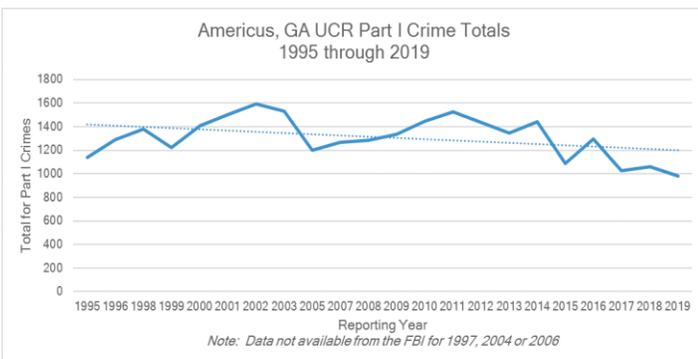
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2019 CRIME STATISTICS

The number of reported Part I Crimes in the City of Americus continued the downward trend. Turn to Page 3 for a summary of current statistics and a look at the numbers over the past 25 years.

Message from the Chief



Thank you for taking the time to read our report to the community. We have made it through another decade! I know, some people say the 20's don't actually start until 2021, but I like to think that a milestone year like 2020 deserves to be thought of as the beginning rather than the end. Growing up, the year 2020 figured prominently into a lot of predictions for the future. I've enjoyed reading articles comparing the predictions for technology in 2020 with the reality of technology in 2020. It's amazing how accurate some of those predictions are. While we don't have flying cars and robot maids like we saw on *The Jetsons*, we do have cars that can drive themselves, robot floor cleaners, people setting flight records with jet packs, and people living continuously in space on the International Space Station.

August of 2019 marked 30 years as a police officer for me and there have been a lot of changes in our profession during that time. In 1989 crack cocaine use was becoming epidemic and the national focus for law enforcement was the "war on drugs". In Thomasville, we were actively working to arrest drug dealers, but we were also being trained on the concept of Community Oriented Policing. Computers were just coming on the scene and our city was one of the first in South Georgia to install a computer system to electronically store information. Patrol officers like me weren't allowed to use it, but I did get to go in the computer room once. The computer filled the room and looked quite impressive. It probably had about a tenth of the computing power of the smart refrigerator we have at home.

During the first twenty years of my career, technology began to change how we did business. We got video cameras in our patrol cars and started using laptop computers to write reports rather than pen and three-part carbon paper. In the last ten years, technology in law enforcement has increased exponentially. Every officer now has a body camera. All our data is stored electronically, and officers can run a tag, swipe a license, and print out a traffic ticket in just a few minutes. There are video cameras everywhere and facial recognition software can identify a suspect almost instantly. We can now get DNA from just the smallest amount of trace evidence and scientific advances are allowing us to go back and solve serious cases from decades past.

With all the technological advances this past decade one thing that has not changed is the imperative that police departments focus on the needs of the community and actively work to build community trust and support. In fact, it is more important now than ever. We've made a good start, but trust and respect are not something that you can earn one time and then put on a shelf to have forever. They must be earned continually.

As you read this report, I think you will see that the men and women of the Americus Police Department are hard at work every single day earning your trust. We are proactively working to solve crime and arrest those few individuals who prey on the rest of the community. We are also working to educate our young people about the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse and the importance of making good life choices (and the consequences of making bad ones). Our officers and support staff are a part of this community. We live and work here. We are raising our families here. This is our home and we care deeply about this community. Whether we are patrolling the streets, chasing down felons, working a fender bender, holding pressure on a serious injury while we wait for EMS to get there, or shopping with foster kids, cooking hotdogs in a park, teaching GREAT classes in the schools, or coaching our kids' sports team, we are Americus and we will not rest until this is the safest community in Georgia.

Accreditation

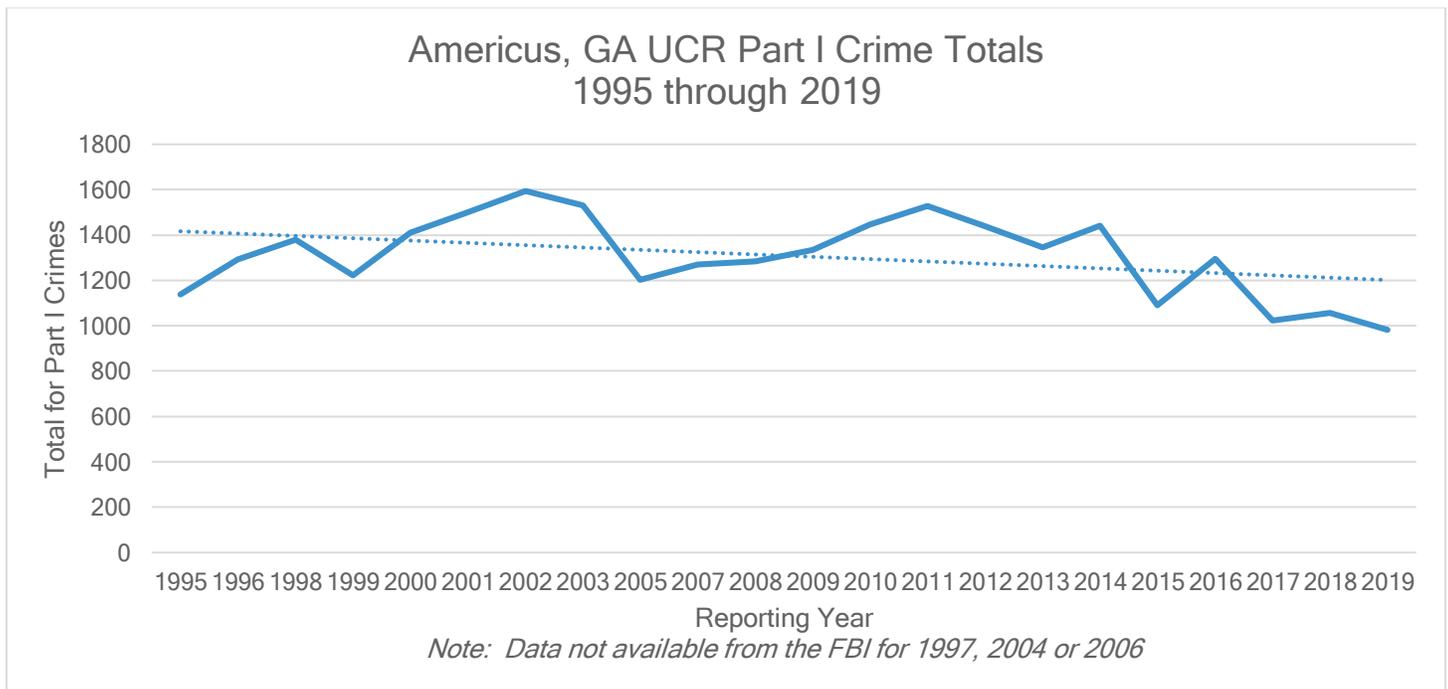
One of our major accomplishments as we closed out 2017 was to become a State Certified Agency through the Georgia Law Enforcement Certification Program. We received this certification in October of 2017. We then began the process of becoming a nationally accredited agency through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) in January 2018. We were awarded accredited status by CALEA in November of 2019 following an extensive review of our written policies and a four day on site inspection.



Accreditation is a big deal. There are only a handful of nationally accredited agencies in the State of Georgia and across the nation. Accreditation is important, because it encourages us to constantly review our policies and practices and stay current with the accepted best practices and legal changes that govern how we do business. Two of the main areas that open a law enforcement agency to liability are out of date policies and failure by employees to follow established policies and procedures. The accreditation process ensures that our policies and procedures are constantly being reviewed and updated as the standards are updated. Annual reviews of our files by CALEA staff ensure that we are current with best practices and that we are actually doing the things that our policies say we should do.

Of course, the accreditation process isn't easy and it isn't free. It costs us \$4065.00 a year to participate in the program. Fortunately, our insurance carrier recognizes the benefits of increased professionalism and less liability that the accreditation progress brings. The company offers a significant discount on our liability insurance which offsets the annual cost of the program.

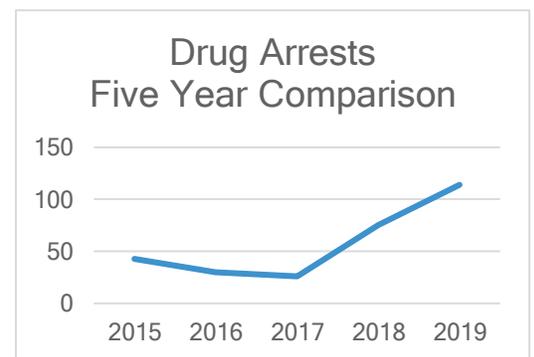
Crime Statistics



The men and women of the Americus Police Department are committed to our community. We will continue to pursue and arrest individuals who choose to victimize others. More importantly, we will work tirelessly in 2019 to address the issues that negatively impact our community in partnership with

others in Americus who truly care about making our city a safe place to live, work and play. Each month we report our crime statistics to the FBI along with most of the other law enforcement agencies in the United States. The FBI makes an annual summary of these statistics available to the public each year in a publication called "Crime in the United States". It is available on the FBI's web site and is usually one year behind, meaning that the report posted at the end of 2019 is actually based on 2018 numbers. Fortunately for us, we can access our crime statistics in real time and are able to provide the public with the information as soon as the calendar year ends. We are pleased to report that our Part I Crime numbers for 2019 continued the downward trend and are the lowest they have been in over 30 years. In fact, the last time our total serious crime count was this low was in 1988. Part I Crimes are the more serious crimes tracked by the FBI and include murder, rape, robbery, burglary, auto theft, theft in general, etc. These are all crimes that are generally reported to the police by the public and are driven by criminal activity, rather than police activity. These type crimes tend to be fairly constant in a community and are a good indicator of trends in criminal activity.

We also track and report Part II Crime numbers to the FBI. These are crimes that the FBI considers to be less serious such as simple assault, criminal trespass, drug charges, disorderly conduct, forgery, DUI of alcohol or drugs, etc. These numbers reflect both crimes reported to the police by citizens and crimes discovered by the police through patrol operations. Part II Crime numbers can vary considerably, based on the activities of the police. For example, felony drug arrests made by the Americus Police Department have increased dramatically over the past two years. We have gone from a low of just 26 felony drug arrests in 2017 to 114 felony drug arrests in 2019, an increase of well over 300%! This is due in part to filling most of the vacancies in patrol and to a more proactive focus on drug enforcement, including the addition of our K-9 Team in 2018.



This can be a two-edged sword. While it is good that we have more officers on the street making more proactive arrests, taking criminals off the streets for minor crimes prevents them from committing major crimes, these arrests cause an increase in the number of Part II crimes we report to the FBI. Consequently, as our Part I Crime Index goes down, our Part II Crime Index can go up. This can make it appear that crime is increasing when it is actually getting better.

Although violent crime has decreased greatly, we are not immune to violence in our community. There has been an increased awareness and focus on criminal gang activity across the nation and particularly in the State of Georgia. Governor Brian Kemp has made the prosecution of gang related crimes a focus for the state and the GBI has formed a specialized unit to deal with gang activity in the State of Georgia. Locally, we have sent seven of our officers to training on the investigation and prosecution of gang related crimes. We are partnering with our District Attorney, Lewis Lamb, and the Albany office of the U.S. Attorney to add gang charges to any offender that we can prove committed a crime in the furtherance of a criminal street gang.

In 2019 we identified eighteen different incidents that were in some way related to gang membership or gang activity. Five of these incidents involved assaults and four involved armed robberies. The remaining incidents involved a drug charge, a stolen car, a firearm possession charge and two burglaries. We were able to charge two offenders with Participation in a Criminal Street Gang in addition to their original charges. Why not charge them all with the additional charge? The way the law is currently written, we can only add a gang charge if we can prove that the suspect committed the crime to further the cause of the gang or at the direction of a gang leader. It is not enough to simply be

a verified gang member committing crimes. We are working with state and local law enforcement partners to maintain a database of validated gang members who are living in our community and to track criminal activity associated with these gang members. We are fully committed to prosecuting criminal gang members as allowed by law, but we are even more committed to working with the youth in our community to help them choose not to get involved in gangs in the first place.

Community Relations

It is the responsibility of every employee of the Americus Police Department to foster a positive relationship with members of our community. All employees are encouraged to be active participants in community activities and many employees are members of local civic and service organizations and serve as volunteer coaches and mentors. Sgt. John Brown is responsible for helping to coordinate our community relations activities.

Our Community Relations Unit participated in over 40 different events and activities in 2019. These events included Career Fairs, Health Fairs, Neighborhood Watch Meetings, Community Forums, Special Olympics, Town Hall Meetings, and a number of community cookouts. We continued to teach the Gang Education and Resistance (G.R.E.A.T.) Program in the Intermediate Schools, reaching over 300 students and encouraging them to make positive choices that will have a positive impact on their futures. We also hosted GREAT Summer Camp in 2019, giving early teens a safe place to spend their summer with physical fitness activities and a continuation of the GREAT educational curriculum. The unit partnered with the US Attorney's Office again this year to sponsor a presentation of the Successful Tips for Youth on Law Enforcement Encounters (STYLE) Program as a part of graduation week from the summer program. The STYLE Program is sponsored by the US Attorney's Office and the FBI and is specifically tailored for middle and high school students, who participate in several mock scenarios on how to engage law enforcement. These scenarios include instructions on how to respond when approached by law enforcement officers while driving a car, on the street, or at home. The scenarios are a combination of videos, depicting the split-second decisions that officers are often required to make and role play scenarios with volunteers from local law enforcement agencies. The program concluded with the students participating in a roundtable discussion about the day's events over lunch with individual officers followed by a presentation of certificates to the graduates.



Lt. Al Ross and Ofc. Charles Kinnamon carried the torch for Special Olympics.



The department participated in a Coffee with A Cop event again this year, in conjunction with other departments across the United States. This was our third year in a row participating in this event which was held at Café Campesino and was very well attended. Neighbors from the community were invited to join members of local law enforcement for a time of coffee and fellowship. There was no set agenda for the meetings and no formal program. The only objective was to provide a relaxed atmosphere where officers and citizens could get to know one another.

As we entered into The Christmas Season, we launched a new outreach program called Santa Patrol. The objective was simple. Volunteer officers stuck magnetic Santa Patrol signs on the side of their patrol cars and headed out into neighborhoods in search of kids

with a sack full of candy canes. The officers were encouraged to start up a conversation with the kids about their Christmas wish lists and give them a candy cane along with a promise to put in a good word for them with Santa. The signs proved to be magnetic indeed, as word got out about the program and children flocked to the marked patrol car whenever it pulled into a neighborhood. We had a few adults come up in search of candy too! We wrapped the project up on Christmas Eve by giving out a few gifts along with the last of the candy canes. We will be trying this program again in 2020.

We finished out our 2019 community outreach efforts with the 4th Annual Shop with A Cop event. This event pairs police officers with kids from the community to go shopping for Christmas gifts. This year we all met at the Windsor Hotel for a dinner catered by Toboggan Steve's and then went shopping at Wal Mart. Thanks to the overwhelming generosity of our community, we were once again able to sponsor thirty community children, but this year we were able to increase the amount on the gift cards presented to the kids. This is one of our most popular community events with both our employees and community members and we are already working to collect donations for December 2020. Organizations and individuals are encouraged to contact us at the police department for information on how to donate. We hope to increase both the gift amount and the number of kids served this year.

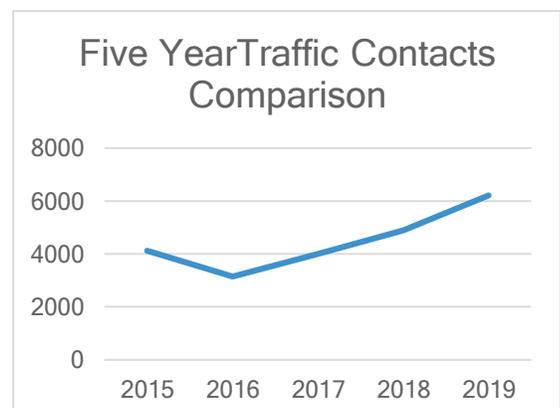


Santa and Det. Sims with a Program Participant

Traffic Enforcement Analysis

The number one goal of traffic enforcement is to try to decrease the number and severity of traffic accidents inside the city limits. Officers of the Americus Police department responded to 533 traffic crashes in 2019 with 62 reported injuries and one fatality. This is down slightly from the 569 traffic accidents reported in 2018. An analysis of all traffic activity reveals that officers issued 2,519 citations and 3,693 warnings in 2019, for a total of 6,212 traffic contacts, which is a 27% increase in traffic contacts over the 4,899 traffic contacts documented in 2018. This increase reflects an increase in both the number of citations and the number of warnings issued. The department switched to a new records management software system on September 1, 2017. The new software allows officers to electronically generate traffic citations and warnings and print the citations in their vehicles, rather than having to hand write citations and warnings on multi-part preprinted forms. The new system also allows administrators to quickly and easily access statistical data on citations and warnings issued overall and by individual employees.

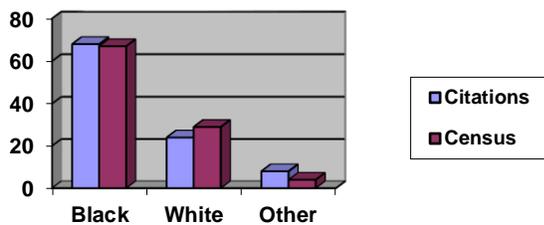
Biased Based Profiling is clearly defined in Chapter 14-1 of the Americus Police Department Standard Operating Procedures Manual as the targeting of people based on their race, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation, religion, economic status, age, cultural group, or any other identifiable group. This practice is strictly prohibited. For example, the fact that a person is African-American, Hispanic, or a member of any other ethnic group is not a basis for suspecting that person of wrongdoing. Any law enforcement-initiated actions that rely upon membership in a particular people group, rather than on behavior are strictly prohibited and will not be



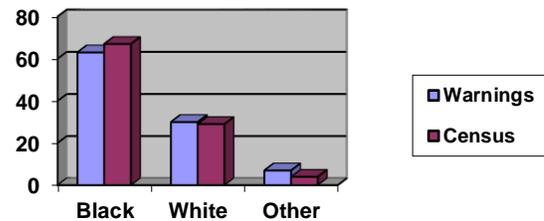
tolerated. Such actions include but are not limited to traffic contacts, field contacts, and asset seizure and forfeiture efforts. No officer of the Americus Police Department shall endorse or act upon stereotypes, attitudes, or beliefs that a person’s background increases the probability that the person will act unlawfully. An individual may only be detained and/or law enforcement action taken based on factors related to a violation or the investigation of a violation of Federal Law, State Statute, or Local Ordinance.

The percentages in the accompanying charts and analyses are based on the data captured from both the issuance of electronic citations. The number counted as “Other” reflects all races other than Black, White or Hispanic.

**2019 Citations by Race %
Compared to 2010 Census Data**



**2019 Warnings by Race %
Compared to 2010 Census Data**



There were no complaints made with the department in 2019 alleging bias-based profiling on traffic stops. There was one complaint made through the local office of the NAACP alleging that officers profiled a subject who was arrested on an outstanding warrant. The allegation was investigated, and it was determined that the officers involved had legal reason to stop the subject and check his identity and then had probable cause to believe that he had a valid active warrant for his arrest. As depicted in the graphs, the racial breakdown of citations is a close match to the racial composition of the City of Americus according to official US Census data (2019 estimate). There is nothing in the statistical analysis that indicates disparate treatment of persons in traffic enforcement encounters according to their race or their gender.

Written Citations and Warnings Issued

	Citation	Warning	Census
Black	68%	63%	67%
White	24%	30%	29%
Hispanic	6%	3%	2%
Other*	2%	4%	2%
Male	58%	51%	44%
Female	42%	49%	56%

**The Other category includes those persons whose race was not recorded on the citation.*

Vehicle Pursuits

A pursuit is defined by department Standard Operating Procedure as: An active attempt by a law enforcement officer in a motor vehicle to apprehend one or more occupants of another moving motor vehicle, where the driver of the fleeing vehicle is aware of the attempt and is actively resisting apprehension.

The Americus Police Department is aware of the tendency for a violator to attempt to avoid arrest by fleeing the police. We are also aware that pursuit of violators poses a threat to the safety of all

concerned and to non-involved citizens. This department therefore acknowledges both the utility of pursuit actions as necessary for apprehension and the importance of protecting the life and property of all persons. The decision to initiate pursuit is that of the individual officer, but at no time shall an officer act outside the parameters of this policy regarding chase or pursuit.

Pursuit is a judgment-initiated call that relies on good common-sense decisions on the part of the officer. Officers shall consider the following question when initiating pursuit; "Will the risk to other drivers be heightened because of the pursuit; and does the severity of the violation justify the risk involved?" Many factors must be considered when an officer makes a decision to initiate pursuit. They include, but are not limited to:

1. Severity of Violation
2. Weather Conditions
3. Time of Day
4. Area of Pursuit (Open highway, residential, school zones, etc.)
5. Traffic Congestion/Pedestrian Activity
6. Jurisdiction

Traffic law enforcement is a major function of this department. Officers may employ basic apprehension action in order to stop a traffic law violator. However, once a traffic violator has clearly exhibited a refusal to stop for police and an intention to elude, the officer shall cease pursuit and resume safe driving practices and attempt to bring the suspected violator to justice by other means. Pursuit of a motor vehicle for any traffic or misdemeanor violation is strictly prohibited.

When an officer knows that the occupant of a vehicle is a forcible felon (armed robbery, aggravated assault/battery or other violent crime, see OCGA 16-3-1) he/she may initiate and continue pursuit until such time as the forcible felon is apprehended or the risks associated with the pursuit outweigh the risks associated with the felon's escape. The primary principle the officer must keep in mind is the level of threat to innocent persons that the felon may pose if he or she escapes, compared to the possibility of injury to the pursuing officer or others resulting from the pursuit. Even in the case of a forcible felon, if at any time the officer or his/her supervisor feels that the threat of injury to others caused by the pursuit is greater than the threat of injury if the felon escapes, the pursuit must be terminated.

When an officer knows that the occupant of a vehicle is a felon, but not of a forcible nature, he/she may initiate pursuit of the felon vehicle. The standard for termination of the pursuit is much lower, however, for a non-forcible felon. Since the felon poses no known threat to life if he/she escapes the lives of pursuing officers and innocent bystanders must not be risked in apprehending the felon. The pursuit may continue only as long as the pursuing officer and his/her supervisors feel that the pursuit does not pose a significant threat to the lives of others. If conditions change or the fleeing suspect exhibits a reckless disregard for others or an intentional attempt to hurt others, the pursuit must be terminated. For example, if a non-forcible felon disregards a stop sign or light, passes other vehicles, or in any way exhibits dangerous driving practices, the pursuit must be terminated.

Juvenile drivers are statistically known to be less safe drivers than adults. Juvenile offenders are more likely to make poor decisions and take unnecessary risks when attempting to elude capture in a vehicle. When the pursuing officer knows or is almost certain that the fleeing vehicle is operated by a juvenile and the offense is a misdemeanor or non-forcible felony, pursuit should be immediately terminated. If the fleeing juvenile is known to have committed a forcible felony and poses a threat to others if allowed to escape the officer may initiate pursuit. However, the pursuing officer must take the age of the offender into consideration and should terminate the pursuit if the juvenile exhibits a pattern of driving which poses a greater risk of injury to others than the risk of the juvenile's escape.

There were seven Pursuit Reports completed by officers in 2019. One of the incidents did not meet the criteria of a pursuit, as the officer did not attempt to pursue the suspect vehicle when it sped off during a traffic stop. Two of the pursuits involved felony suspects. One of these was terminated by a supervisor and the suspect later arrested. The other stopped his vehicle and fled on foot but was shortly arrested. The remaining four suspects fled during attempted stops for traffic violations. In three of the incidents, officers followed behind the vehicles then terminated the pursuit attempt when they knew that the suspect was not going to stop. Two of the suspects were later arrested and one has not yet been identified. In all cases where the suspect was apprehended later, the charges were much greater than the original citation would have been had they just stopped for the police.

The remaining pursuit involved an attempted stop for a minor traffic violation. The officer involved in the stop initiated a pursuit, which was then joined by the shift supervisor and other members of the shift. The pursuit continued until the suspect vehicle was blocked in by the pursuing officers and the suspect arrested. This pursuit was carried out in clear violation of department policy and the personnel involved received severe disciplinary action. All six of the pursuits were reviewed by a supervisor and the command staff and five were found to be within department guidelines.

Use of Force Analysis

Police officers are occasionally required to use physical force against persons who have committed a crime in order to affect an arrest or to protect the life or wellbeing of others. It is the policy of the Americus Police Department that the value of human life is immeasurable and that officers will use only that force necessary to protect life and effect lawful objectives.

Department records show that officers of the Americus Police Department answered 45,219 calls for service in 2019, up 14% from the 39,761 calls for service answered in 2018. Officers made 1,119 arrests in 2019. Out of all these arrests, there were only 15 reportable use of force incidents in 2019 for a forcible arrest percentage of approximately 1.2%. The race and gender of the officers involved were also consistent with the makeup of the department. Four of these incidents resulted in minor injury or complaint of injury to the suspect arrested and two of the incidents resulted in injury to the arresting officer. None of the injuries required hospitalization.

The Americus Police Department is governed by the United States Constitution, State law and department policy in its use of force to obtain lawful objectives. Officers are given extensive training in the use of force and are supplied with several options for dealing with a combative subject. Each time that force must be used by an officer, the officer must file a written report detailing the incident. These reports are reviewed by the Chief of Police and the department's Command Staff.

There are several different types of force which an officer may have to use in performing his or her duty. The type of force used by the officer is dictated primarily by the person with whom the officer is dealing. The first force option which officers may employ, aside from the officer's presence on the scene, is verbal. Officers of the Americus Police Department are trained in the proper way to use verbal commands and communication skills to convince a person to comply with the officer's requests. In most cases, verbal direction is all that is required by an officer to safely affect an arrest. If the officer is unable to verbally gain control of a suspect or if the suspect becomes violent toward the officer or toward others, officers are authorized to use other means to gain control of the suspect.

The next force option is empty hand physical control of a suspect. Officers are trained in a variety of tactics designed to allow the officer to gain physical control of a suspect offering resistance to the officer's attempt to make an arrest. In the event that an officer is unable to gain physical control of a suspect or if the suspect is violent and causing or threatening to cause harm to the officer or other persons, officers are authorized to use a variety of non-lethal devices to gain control of the violent suspect.

All sworn officers of the Americus Police Department are issued oleoresin capsicum (OC) spray. OC spray is a non-chemical natural agent made from the essence of cayenne or habanero pepper.

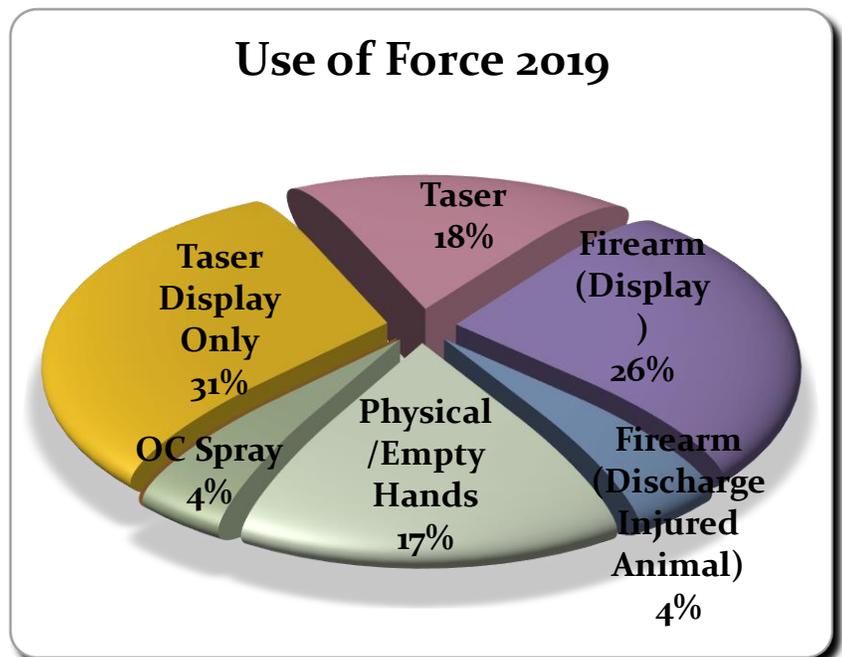
The spray causes immediate irritation to the mucous membranes in the eyes, nose, mouth and bronchial tubes of the person being sprayed. The initial effects of the spray last for 15 to 30 minutes with a burning sensation lasting for up to 60 minutes. The spray impairs the vision of the person sprayed and causes an intense burning sensation to the exposed skin and mucous membranes.

Officers are trained to provide a suspect with facilities to flush the affected areas with water as soon as possible after exposure. Normally, copious amounts of water and washing with non oil based soap are all that is required to counter the effects of the spray. Rarely is further treatment at a medical facility required. Officers are instructed during training to watch for respiratory distress or failure during transport of the suspect to the holding facility.

All sworn officers of the Americus Police Department are issued an expandable baton. The baton is designed as a defensive weapon to be used against a violent suspect. Officers are trained in the proper use of impact weapons and will only use impact weapons to counter a physical attack on the officer or on others by a suspect.

The police department utilizes Taser brand electronic incapacitation devices for use by sworn officers. Taser devices utilize compressed nitrogen to project two small probes up to 21 feet. These probes are connected to the Taser device by insulated wire. An electrical current is transmitted through the wires to where the probes make contact with the body or clothing, resulting in an immediate loss of the person's neuromuscular control and the ability to perform coordinated action for the duration of the impulse. Officers receive extensive training in the use of the device before the device is issued. The department has also implemented a clear and comprehensive policy which guides the use of the devices.

The final force option which officers may use is deadly force. The use of deadly force is strictly governed by both Georgia law and department policy. The Americus Police Department Use of Force Policy is as follows:



An officer may use lethal force only when the officer reasonably believes that the action is:

1. In defense of human life, including the officer's life or
2. In defense of any person in imminent danger of serious physical injury, or
3. When necessary to stop or prevent the commission of a forcible felony where the victim is in imminent danger of serious physical injury or death, or
4. In the apprehension of a fleeing felon, when:
 - a. The officer has probable cause to believe that a forcible felony has been committed and the person to be arrested has committed it, and
 - b. The officer has identified himself as a police officer and given notice of his/her intention to arrest (time and circumstances permitting), and
 - c. The officer reasonably believes that the suspect's freedom represents a significant imminent threat of serious physical injury or death to the officer or to other persons, and
 - d. All other reasonable means of apprehension have been exhausted or are precluded before lethal force is used. (Americus Police Department Standard Operating Procedures Manual)

Each time that an officer uses force to arrest a suspect, the officer must complete a Use of Force Report which is submitted to the Office of Professional Standards. Each report is reviewed by the Chief of Police and critiqued by the department's Command Staff.

Internal Affairs

It is the mission of the Americus Police Department to provide service to all citizens based on the foundations of honesty, integrity and respect. To ensure that all employees maintain a culture of transparency and uphold our foundational values, the Americus Police Department treats all complaints against our employees seriously and all complaints made to the department are thoroughly investigated. To file a complaint, a person may contact any member of the Americus Police Department or come by the Public Safety Building at 119 S Lee Street to fill out a complaint form. The complaint form contains the name of the complainant, the name of the employee against whom the complaint is made, and a brief written summary of the complaint. Persons wishing to make a complaint against an employee are encouraged to make the complaint in person; however, the department will take complaints over the phone, through the internet, or by other means. Each formal complaint is assigned a tracking number and logged for follow up.

Internal affairs investigations may also be initiated at the request of the Chief of Police. Such investigations typically involve violations of department policy or situations involving one or more supervisors. Requests for consideration of a disciplinary action may also be assigned for investigation through the internal affairs function.

There were twenty complaints made against a total of nineteen different officers in 2019. Two of the complaints were made by the same person against the same officers at different times. Five of the complaints originated within the department and one came from an outside police agency.

Control Number	Date	Nature of Complaint	Finding
2019IA0001	1/22/2019	Conduct	Unfounded
2019IA0002	1/25/2019	Mental Health violation	Sustained
2019IA0003	1/22/2019	Procedural	Sustained
2019IA0004	4/1/2019	Conduct	Sustained
2019IA0005	4/2/2019	Conduct unbecoming	Sustained
2019IA0006	4/26/2019	Procedural	Sustained
2019IA0007	6/11/2019	Policy violation	Sustained
2019IA0008	6/11/2019	Neglect of Duties	Sustained
2019IA0009	7/10/2019	procedural	Unfounded
2019IA0010	VOID	VOID	Void
2019IA0011	7/11/2019	Procedural	Unfounded
2019IA0012	7/26/2019	Procedural	Exonerated
2019IA0013	8/13/2019	Conduct	Exonerated
2019IA0014	8/16/2019	Rudeness	Unfounded
2019IA0015	9/9/2019	Rudeness	Unfounded
2019IA0016	10/23/2019	Harassment	Unfounded
2019IA0017	12/5/2019	Conduct unbecoming	Sustained
2019IA0018	12/27/2019	Conduct	Unfounded
2019IA0019	12/23/19	Conduct	Exonerated

The remaining thirteen complaints were made by different citizens from the community. All the complaints received by the department were recorded and thoroughly investigated. All the complaints were resolved in some manner and the results relayed to the original complainant. Nine of the twenty complaints were sustained, meaning that the employee was found to have committed some violation of department policy. All the sustained complaints resulted in disciplinary action with one employee being fired for Dereliction of Duty and Untruthfulness, and two supervisors being demoted. One employee was suspended with out pay and the remaining employee received a written reprimand. The remaining complaints were of a minor nature and were either ruled to be unfounded, meaning that the allegation made by the complainant was found to be untrue, or the employee was exonerated, meaning that the employee did actually commit the alleged act, but the action was not improper or a violation of policy.

Recruitment Activities

The recruitment and retention of employees continued to be a major focus of the police department in 2019. The department has 44 positions allotted for sworn police officers and supervisors. Although we worked continuously to recruit and hire throughout the year, we consistently maintained 4 to 5 sworn vacancies. We utilized aggressive recruitment efforts to strive toward our recruitment goal of having a diverse department that represents the community that we serve. We intend to accomplish this goal through a continuous program of recruitment activities designed to target unrepresented population groups within the guidelines of applicable Federal and State guidelines. Our recruitment objectives are:

1. Recruit the best possible candidates with the highest quality combination of skills and abilities to perform the required job-related duties.
2. Have an ethnic and gender composition in the sworn ranks that is representative of our service area.
3. Increase the number of qualified minority and female applicants for the position of Police Officer.

Through our recruitment efforts, we had 39 people apply for the position of Police Officer during 2019. Out of those 39, we were able to hire 5. The Americus Police Department has an ethnic composition that is within 7.8 percentage points of the community demographics for Caucasians and within 7.1 percentage points of the community demographics for African Americans. Other ethnic groups, including Hispanics, comprise 5.9% of the service population, and comprise 5.2% of the department's sworn officers. Although the composition of the department is not an exact match with the community, it is much more representative than other departments in the Southeastern United States, according to statistics from the US Department of Justice.

One area of concern for this department and for police departments across the country continues to be the lack of female sworn employees and female applicants for employment. Based on current census estimates, females represent 53.9 % of the service population, and 49.7 % of the available workforce in the Albany Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Within the police department, however, females represent only 15.4% of the sworn ranks. Although this percentage is slightly better than the national average of 11.6% for female sworn officers, there is clearly room for improvement in our recruitment and employment efforts.

We are pleased to report that as of January of 2020, we have only four vacant positions left for police officer (although one of our current officers is on long term military leave). We have aggressively recruited applicants through advertisements and attendance at career fairs over the past year. The current composition of the department is depicted in the accompanying table.

	WHITE		BLACK		OTHER		TOTAL
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Number on Staff	15	0	17	5	1	1	40
Percentage of Staff	38.4%	0%	43.6%	12.8%	2.6%	2.6%	100%

Department Profile Compared to 2010 Census			
	Black	White	Other
Department	56.4%	38.4%	5.2%
2010 Census	63.5%	30.6%	5.9%

Community Partners

The police department could not work in this community effectively without the cooperation and support of our community partners. It would be impossible to list all of the groups and individuals that have given us support over the past year. One group, however, does deserve recognition for their major contributions to the agency.

The Smarr-Smith Foundation was incorporated last year following the murders of Officers Nick Smarr and Jody Smith on December 7th, 2016. The foundation provides funding for scholarships at our two local colleges and also provides money to local law enforcement agencies for training and equipment. The foundation provided over \$20,000 in scholarships and over \$30,000 in equipment to the Americus Police Department, Georgia Southwestern State University Police Department, Sumter County Sheriff Office, and Georgia State Patrol.



Thanks to the generosity of the Smarr-Smith Foundation we were able to purchase new Tasers for all of our patrol officers. This allowed us to make sure that all sworn personnel assigned to enforcement activities are equipped with this non-lethal force option. We also purchased First Aid/Trauma Kits for all of our patrol units in 2019.

We Do Not Forget

Members of the Americus Police Department, Sumter County Sheriff's Office, and the Georgia Southwestern State University Police Department sponsored a Peace Officer Memorial Day Observation on May 15th, 2019. Friends and family members of the seven law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty in Americus and Sumter County were invited to attend the ceremony and place a carnation in wreaths presented by each of the law enforcement agencies with fallen members. The guest speaker for this year's memorial service was Representative Marc Morris, the great grandson of slain Americus police officer William R. Morris. We do not forget.



Joint Americus Police and Sumter County Sheriff Honor Guard



Saluting during the playing of Taps



Keynote Speaker, Georgia State Representative Marc Morris



Officers escort Janice Smarr, mother of fallen officer Nick Smarr



Americus Fire and Emergency Services Members