



# In Hot Pursuit: Georgia's Police Pursuit Crashes and Crash Fatalities



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## Introduction

- Vehicular pursuit is a commonly used high-risk policing activity that puts the lives of law enforcement officers, suspected fleeing criminals, and the general public at risk.
- Georgia's state laws allow officers to engage in pursuits as long as they "exercise due regard for the safety of all persons in pursuits".
- Individual departmental policies may also allow or disallow vehicular pursuits.

## Purpose

- To determine the number of fatal injuries in 2018 related to vehicular pursuit by law enforcement officers in Georgia.
- To determine the level of involvement in the pursuit to whom the fatal injury occurred (i.e. fleeing suspected criminal, passenger of pursued vehicle, non-occupant bystander, and law enforcement officer).

## Results

In 2018:

- **70 people lost their lives in the course of police vehicle pursuits.**
- **Most fatal injuries (53%) were neither the suspect nor the officer. 11% were minors under the age of 16 years.**
- **10% of fatal injuries related to vehicular pursuits were bystander pedestrians or bicyclists.**
- **16% of all vehicular pursuits in which a fatal injury occurred were multi-fatality crashes.**

## Discussion

- Vehicular pursuit should only be used when the fleeing criminal suspect presents a clear and present danger to others.
- Law enforcement departments should utilize technology endorsed by the National Institute of Justice to manage vehicular pursuits.

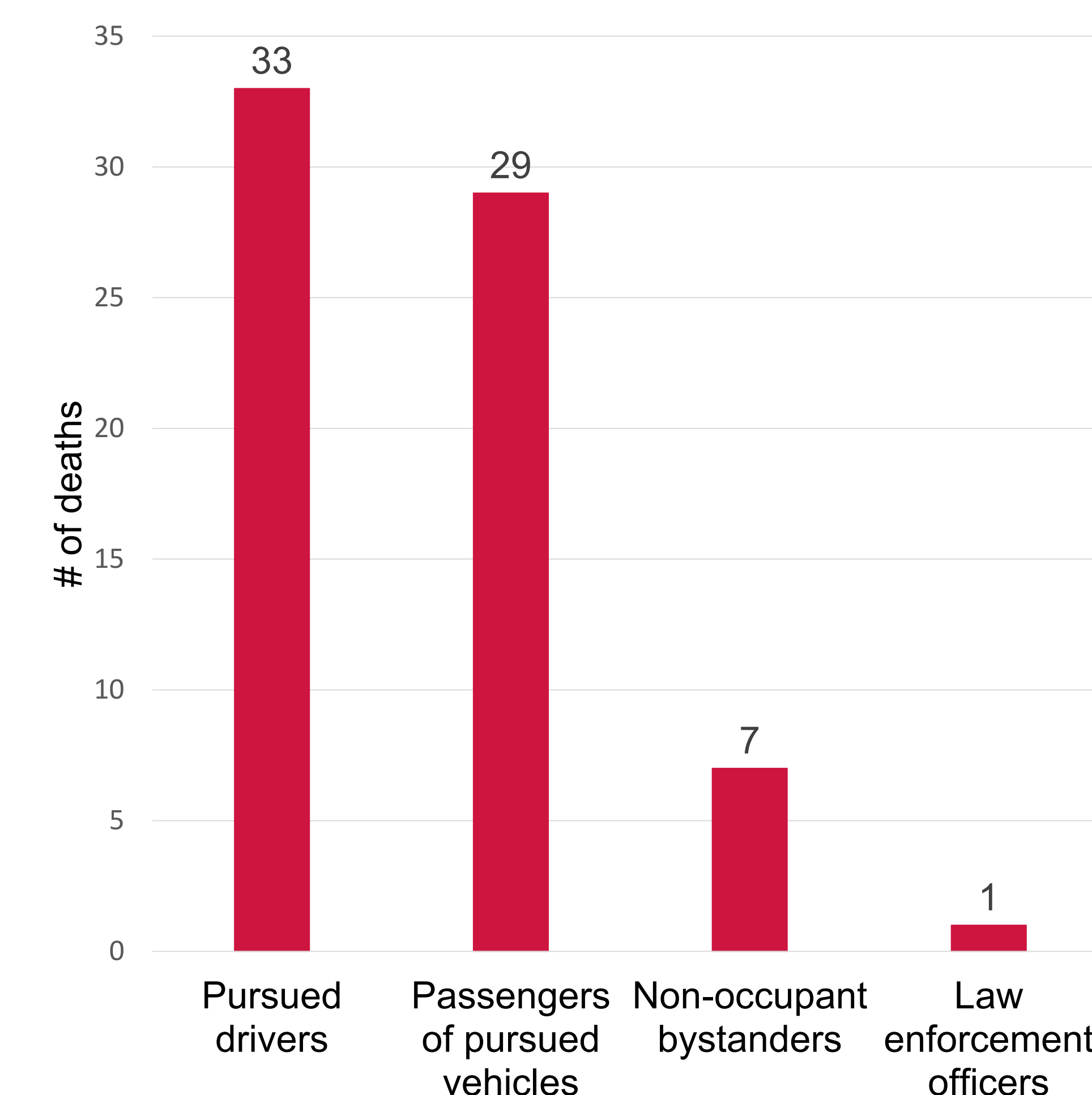
## Methods

All data collected from the Georgia Electronic Accident Reporting System (GEARS). GEARS serves as Georgia's state repository for traffic accident reports completed by Georgia law enforcement.

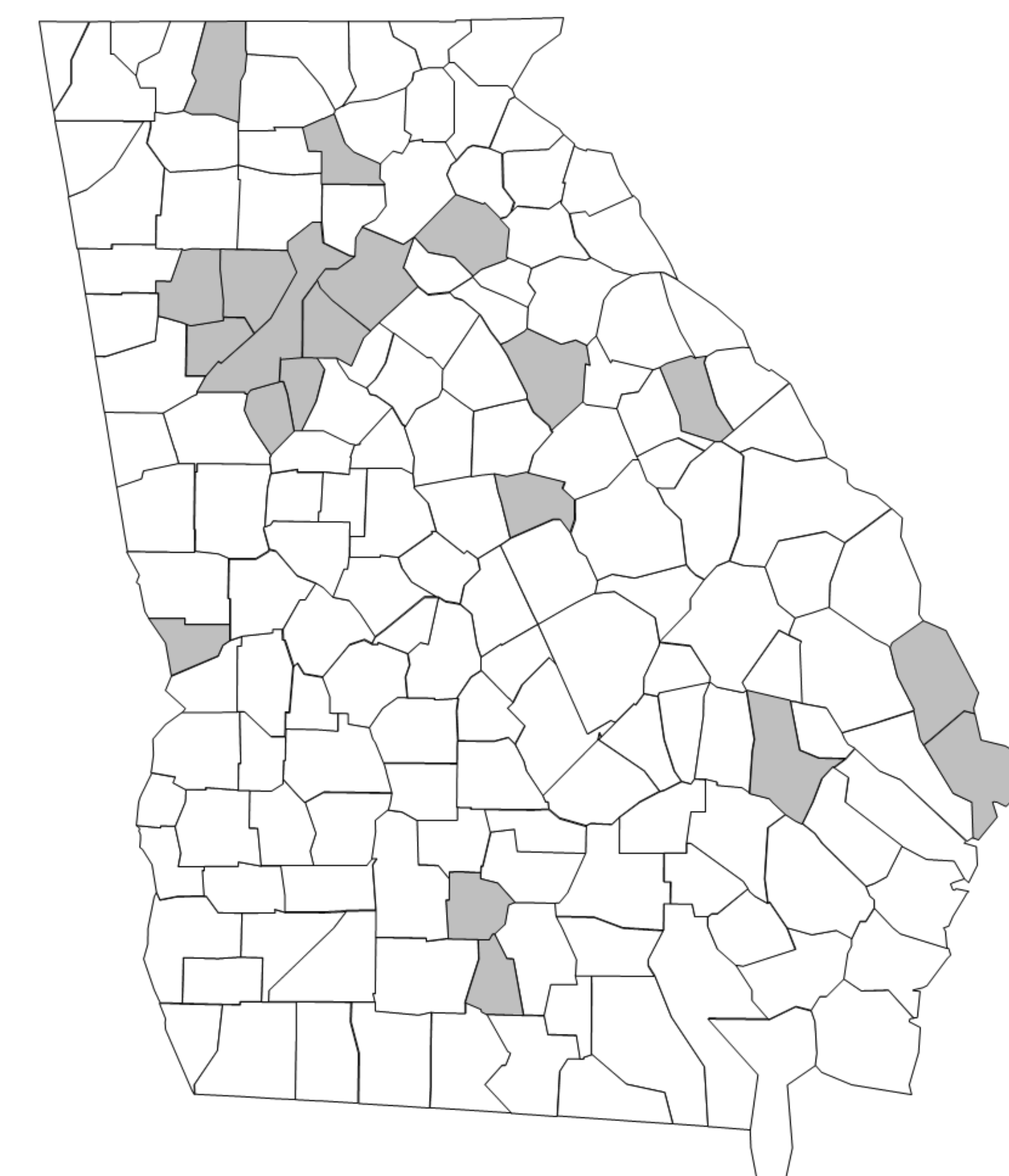
A small proportion (4.6%) of Georgia's 1,515 roadway deaths in 2018 involved a vehicular police pursuit.

Most deaths (53%) related to vehicular police pursuits in 2018 were neither the fleeing suspect nor the officer.

Pursuit-involved Fatalities by Person Type



Counties with Pursuit-involved Fatalities



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