



Police Department – Brian O’Hara, Chief of Police  
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**TO:** Dawit Teketel, Badge #7158

**CC:** Internal Affairs Division

**DATE:** February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**RE:** Internal Affairs Administrative Investigation Case # EVT-102 (IA Matter #21-08707)

**CHIEF’S DECISION:**

- Discharge
- Suspension    Duration: 20 hours (unpaid)
- Permanent Demotion
- Temporary Demotion    Duration:
- No Merit

**Summary of the Basis for Decision:**

The facts noted in the case investigation support the conclusion that Officer Dawit Teketel did violate Minneapolis Police Department MPD P&P 7-401 (D)(5) Emergency Vehicle Operation. I concur with the recommendation from the Community Commission on Police Oversight (CCPO) that there is merit to the allegation.

The investigation found that Officer Dawit Teketel was working in full uniform, driving a fully marked Minneapolis police squad car, Squad 420 (P#76953), with his Field Training Officer, Officer [REDACTED] 13.43, and was the 4th squad car involved in a police pursuit. The pursuit supervisor authorized the additional squad car to the pursuit because a K-9 squad was also involved. As the pursuit route traveled southbound on Lyndale Ave N, approaching Dunwoody Blvd, traffic began to build. At Dunwoody Blvd, traffic was stopped at the semaphore across all lanes. Other involved squads slowed to nearly stopped in traffic. Officer Teketel began to brake but was unable to stop before crashing his marked squad car into the rear of another squad car, Squad 443. After this collision, Officer Teketel swerved to the right, veering off the roadway, and struck a street sign pole before stopping. The officer driving Squad 443 sustained minor injuries and was transported to the hospital for evaluation.

**Allegation:**

- **Allegation: MPD P&P 7-401 (D)(5) Emergency Vehicle Operation:**
  - Officers performing Emergency driving shall exercise caution and due consideration for the safety of the public.
    - *It is alleged that Officer Teketel violated the Emergency Vehicle Operation policy, MPD P&P § 7-401 (D)(5), by not exercising caution and due consideration for the safety of the public when operating a fully marked squad car. He was operating the police car as an emergency vehicle while involved as the fourth squad car in a pursuit. He could not stop the police car nor avoid a collision due to his excessive speed when he encountered significant traffic congestion.*

**Relevant Facts Supporting the Decision:**

- On September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Officer Teketel was on duty and driving a fully marked squad car. Officer Teketel was assisting other officers who initiated a vehicle pursuit for a vehicle wanted in connection to a person with a gun call.
- While involved in the vehicle pursuit, Officer Teketel drove the squad car at speeds over 90 mph southbound on Lyndale Ave N.
- Officer Teketel was involved in a vehicle accident with another squad car during the pursuit.
- According to the analysis of the pre-crash data conducted by the MPD Traffic Unit (Pursuit Review Committee), Officer Teketel was driving the squad car at 90.7 mph at the 3-second mark before the crash.
- According to the analysis of the pre-crash data from the squad car Officer Teketel was operating, the vehicle was going 54.6 mph at the time of the impact with the nearly stopped squad car in front of him.
- Officer Teketel veered off the roadway after the accident with the squad car and struck a street signpost before coming to a complete stop.
- During the investigative interview, Officer Teketel stated that his unfamiliarity with the area, speed, and inability to slow down led to the squad crash.
- During the investigative interview, Officer Teketel stated he had trained in Emergency Vehicle Operations while in the Academy.
- The officer in the squad car that was hit sustained minor injuries and was transported to the hospital for evaluation.

As Chief of Police with authority to discipline for policy violations under Minn. Stat 626.89 Subd. 17, I am imposing discipline for the policy violation listed below.

Policy Number	Policy Description	Category	Disposition
7-401	Emergency Vehicle Operation	B	Sustained

Based on the evidence presented to me regarding this investigation, as the Chief of Police, I find that the policy violation is sustained. Officer Teketel was involved in a preventable squad accident, and his actions directly contributed to the incident.

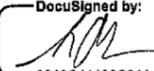
As an aggravating factor, Officer Teketel's speed was over 90 mph on a residential street. He did this while pursuing as the fourth squad car in the pursuit. Officer Teketel did not need to maintain a high rate of speed to keep the vehicle being pursued in sight but only needed to keep the police vehicles in front of him in sight.

At his Loudermill Hearing, Officer Teketel did not share any mitigating factors regarding this violation. In making this decision, I considered that this took place during his field training period. However, this factor has limited mitigating effect due to the fact that the field training followed Academy training on emergency driving.

Officer Teketel's negligent driving resulted in a preventable accident, damaging two MPD squad cars and injuring an officer. The above policy, as well as MN State Law (MN Statute 169.17),

mandates exercising caution and due consideration for the safety of the public whenever operating a vehicle as an emergency vehicle. As a result, I am imposing a 20-hour unpaid suspension for a Level B violation.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:  
  
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Brian O'Hara  
Chief of Police

CC: IA Case File  
Inspector Charles Adams