

Louisiana Law Enforcement Accountability Database (LLEAD)

Report: Baton Rouge Police Department Misconduct Data (2004–2025)

March 2026

Summary

This report provides a descriptive overview of internal complaint allegations filed against officers of the Baton Rouge Police Department (BRPD) from 2004 through 2025. Over this twenty-two-year period, BRPD’s internal affairs process documented 4,607 individual complaint allegations involving 1,757 unique officers. The most common allegation categories were conduct unbecoming of an officer (21.5%), use of force (15.9%), and damaging equipment (15.6%). Annual complaint volume declined from a peak of 357 allegations in 2004 to a low of 125 in 2016, before rising sharply to 306 in 2021, and settling at roughly 250 per year in the most recent period. Across the full dataset, 77% of allegations with a recorded disposition were sustained (52.6%), not sustained (41.0%), or exonerated (6.4%). However, sustained rates varied dramatically by allegation type: administrative violations like damaging equipment were sustained at rates above 90%, while use-of-force allegations were sustained less than 6% of the time. A small number of officers accounted for a disproportionate share of complaints: 3% of officers generated nearly 17% of all allegations. This report is limited to data provided by BRPD through public records requests; it does not include complaints that may have been filed through other channels or that involved other agencies.

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1. Executive Summary

The Baton Rouge Police Department is the primary municipal law enforcement agency for the city of Baton Rouge, the capital of Louisiana, serving a population of approximately 223,000 residents.¹ BRPD is one of the largest police departments in the state, with over 600 sworn officers. The department has been the subject of significant public scrutiny over policing practices, particularly following the 2016 shooting of Alton Sterling, which drew national attention to questions of police accountability in Baton Rouge.

This analysis examines internal complaint records obtained from BRPD through public records requests. The dataset covers allegations filed between 2004 and 2025. Internal complaints, also called citizen complaints or internal affairs investigations, are the formal mechanism through which officer conduct is reviewed, whether the complaint originates from a member of the public or from within the department itself.

Understanding complaint patterns is essential for evaluating how a department holds its officers accountable. High sustained rates in some allegation categories and low rates in others can reveal where investigative processes function well and where they may fall short. Repeat complaint patterns among individual officers can indicate whether the department identifies and addresses recurring conduct issues. This report presents these data descriptively, providing a factual baseline for policymakers, community members, and oversight bodies.

A note on data quality & limitations: Disposition data is available across the full 2004-2025 period, with 77.3% of allegations having a recorded outcome. Disposition data quality varies by year, ranging from about 55% in some years to over 90% in others. Discipline data is more limited and is analyzed only for the 2021-2025 period, where recording is most complete. Complaint data provided by BRPD do not include the race, gender, or other demographic information of officers or complainants, which prevents any analysis of whether complaint patterns differ across demographic groups. Data limitations are documented transparently throughout.

2. Key Findings

2.1 Overall Volume & Trends

BRPD's internal affairs process documented 4,607 individual complaint allegations between 2004 and 2025. Each allegation represents a specific claim of misconduct against a specific officer—a single investigation can produce multiple allegations if an officer is accused of violating more than one policy.

Annual complaint volume was highest in the earliest years of the dataset, with 357 allegations in 2004 and 336 in 2005. Volume then generally declined through the mid-2010s, reaching a low of 125 allegations in 2016.

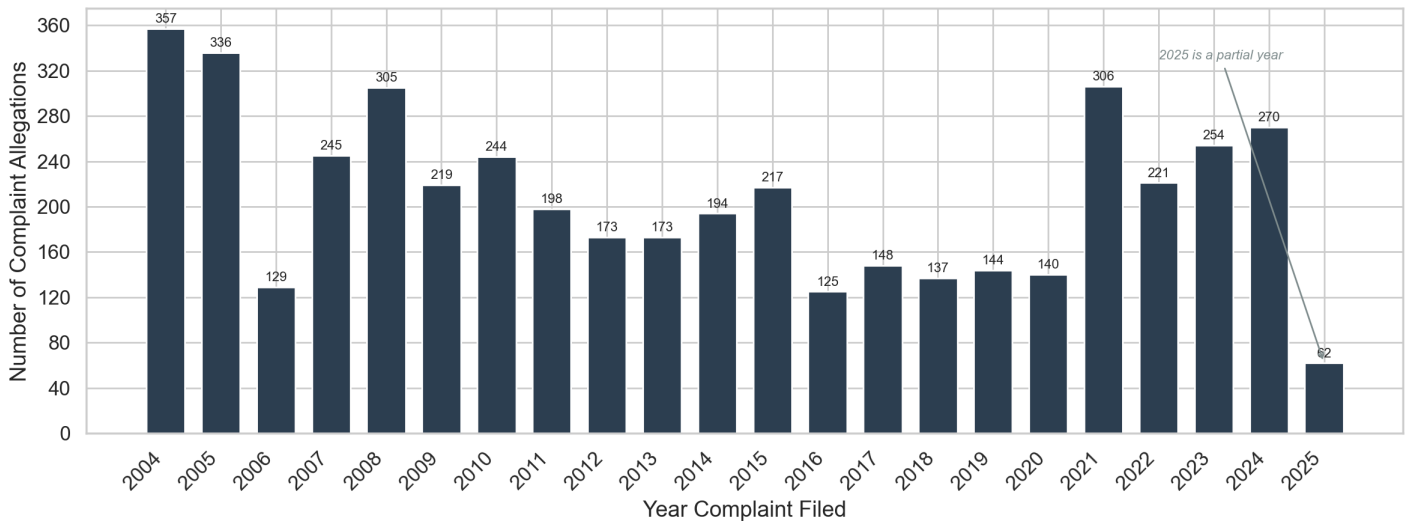
¹ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2020–2024 5-Year Estimates, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana. Retrieved via Census API, February 2026.

Beginning in 2021, volume rose sharply to 306 allegations (the highest since 2005) before settling at roughly 220 to 270 per year in 2022 through 2024.

Whether these changes reflect actual shifts in officer conduct, changes in how the public or the department files complaints, or differences in how data was recorded across different periods is not clear from the data alone. The 2021 spike is particularly notable and may be related to changes in BRPD’s data reporting practices, as the data source for 2021 onward differs from the earlier files.

This chart shows the number of complaint allegations filed each year from 2004 through 2025. Taller bars indicate years with more allegations. The highest volumes occurred in 2004–2005 and again in 2021, while the lowest was in 2016.

Baton Rouge Police Department: Annual Complaint Allegations, 2004–2025



2.2 Types of Allegations

Each complaint allegation is classified by the type of misconduct alleged. Because the raw allegation descriptions in BRPD’s records use hundreds of slightly different wordings (for example, “2:11 conduct unbecoming an officer – 21” and “conduct unbecoming an officer” refer to the same policy), we grouped these into 32 standardized categories for analysis.

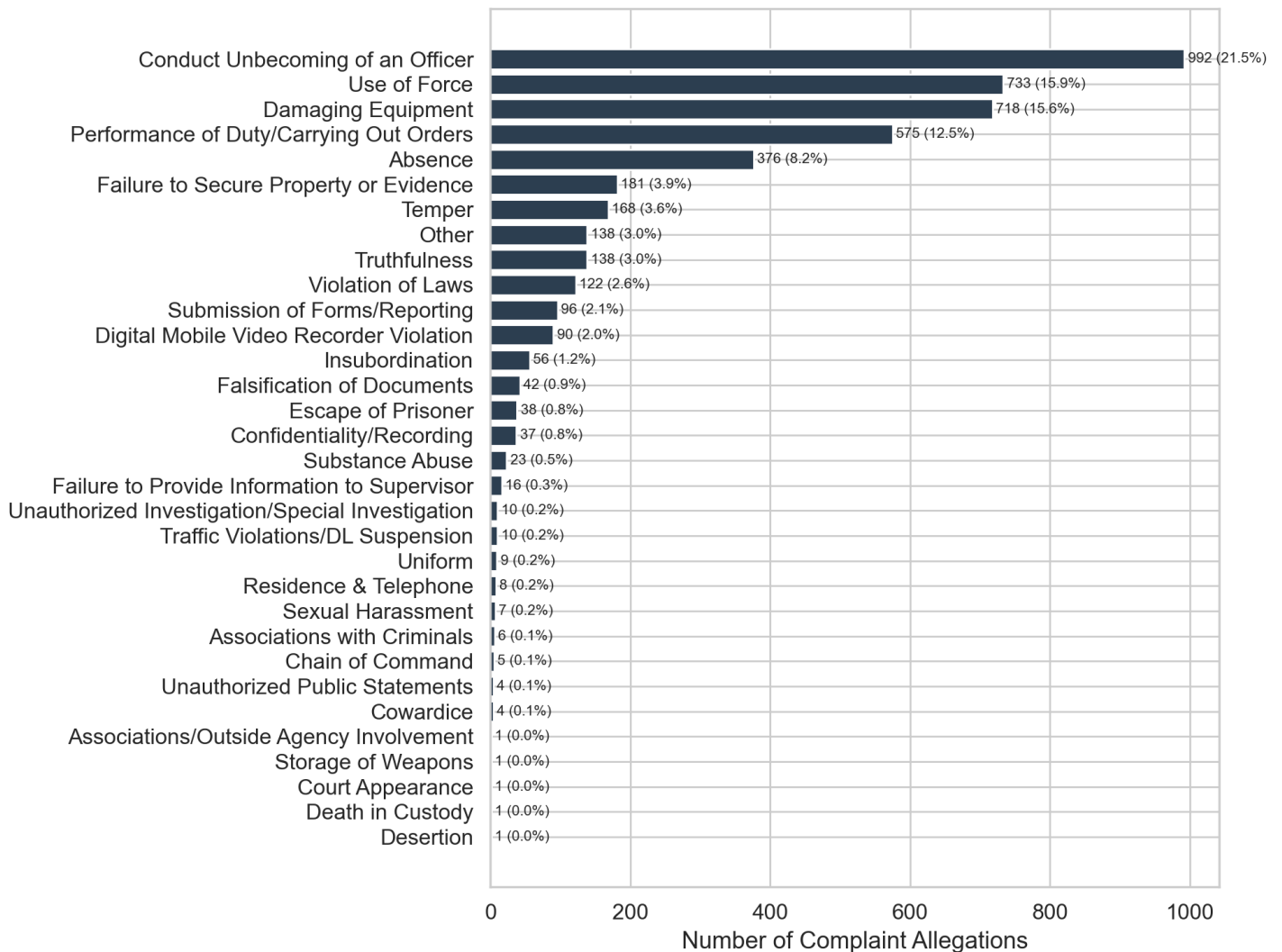
Five categories account for nearly three-quarters of all allegations:

- **Conduct unbecoming of an officer** was the most common category, representing more than one in five allegations (21.5%). This broad category covers behavior that reflects poorly on the department, including disrespect, harassment, and general misconduct.

- **Use of force** was the second-most common (15.9%), covering allegations that an officer used physical force inappropriately. Sub-types include shootings, Taser deployment, hard and soft empty-hand techniques, and in-custody incidents.
- **Damaging equipment** was the third-most common (15.6%), primarily involving damage to department vehicles or property.
- **Performance of duty/carrying out orders** (12.5%) covers allegations that officers failed to follow department policies, general orders, or memoranda.
- **Absence** (8.2%) covers AWOL, shirking duties, abuse of sick leave, and punctuality issues.

This chart shows how complaint allegations are distributed across categories. Each bar represents a different type of misconduct allegation. The longest bars (Conduct Unbecoming, Use of Force, and Damaging Equipment) are the most common complaint types. The “Other” category (138 allegations, 3.0%) includes 136 records with no allegation text recorded and 2 entries that could not be classified.

Baton Rouge PD: Complaint Allegations by Category, 2004–2025



2.3 How Complaints Were Resolved: Disposition Outcomes

When an internal affairs investigation concludes, each allegation receives a disposition, which is the department's finding on whether the allegation was supported by evidence. The three most common dispositions are:

- **Sustained** means the investigation found sufficient evidence to support the allegation.
- **Not sustained** means the investigation could not confirm or refute the allegation. Essentially, the evidence was inconclusive.
- **Exonerated** means the investigation found the officer's actions were lawful and within policy, even though an incident occurred.

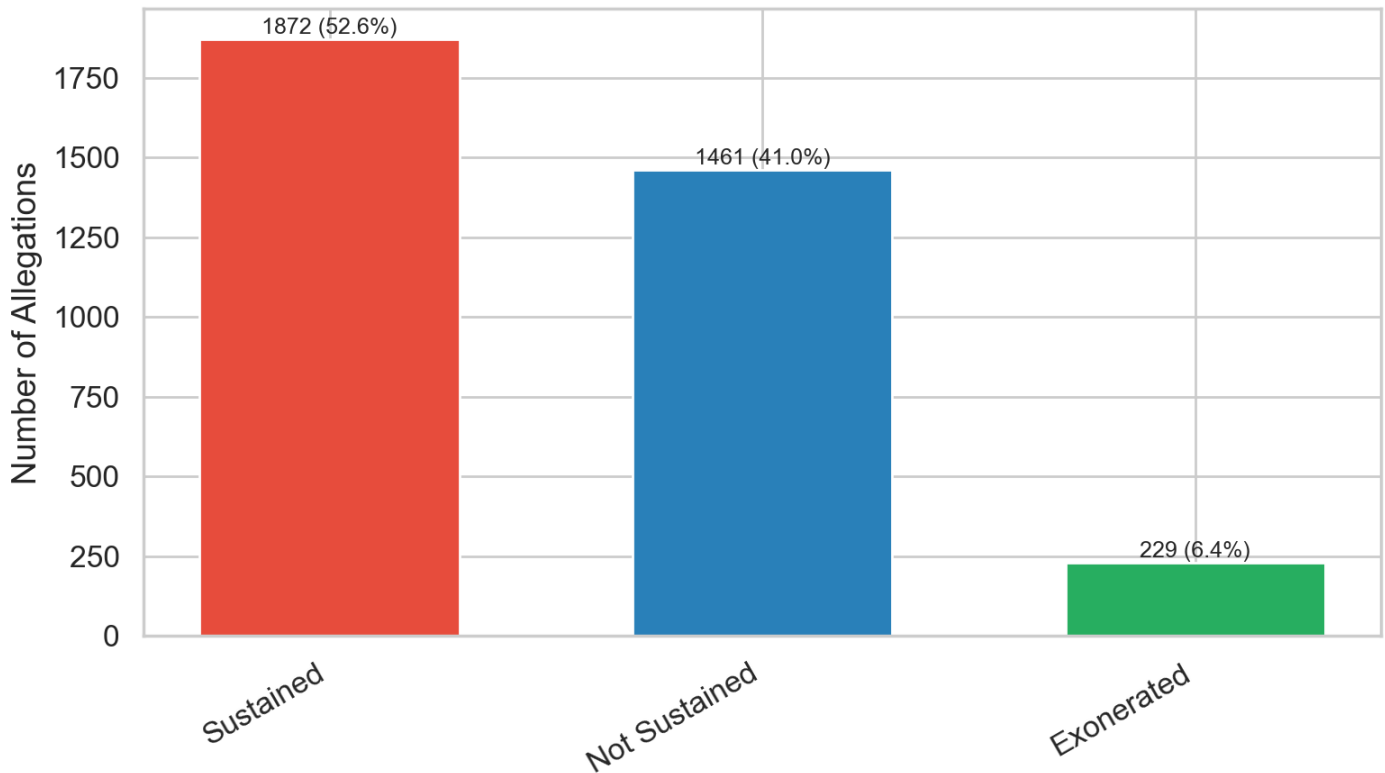
Across the full 2004-2025 period, 3,562 of 4,607 allegations (77.3%) have a recorded disposition. More than half of resolved allegations were sustained (1,872, or 52.6%), about four in ten were not sustained (1,461, or 41.0%), and 229 (6.4%) resulted in the officer being exonerated.

More than half of resolved allegations were sustained—meaning the department found sufficient evidence of a policy violation in a majority of cases that reached a conclusion. About four in ten were not sustained, and roughly one in sixteen resulted in the officer being exonerated.

This chart shows how complaint allegations were resolved across the full 2004–2025 period among those with a recorded outcome. “Sustained” means the department found sufficient evidence to support the allegation. “Not Sustained” means the evidence was inconclusive. “Exonerated” means the officer’s actions were found to be within policy.

It is important to note that 1,045 allegations (22.7%) have no recorded disposition. These may represent investigations still in progress, cases that were administratively closed without a finding, or gaps in data recording. Disposition recording rates vary by year, ranging from about 48% (2023) to over 91% (2017), so year-to-year comparisons should account for differences in data completeness.

Baton Rouge PD: How Complaints Were Resolved, 2004–2025



2.4 Discipline Actions Taken

When an allegation is sustained, the department imposes some form of discipline. The severity of discipline ranges from informal counseling to termination. Across the full 2004–2025 period, 2,294 allegations (49.8%) have a recorded disciplinary action.

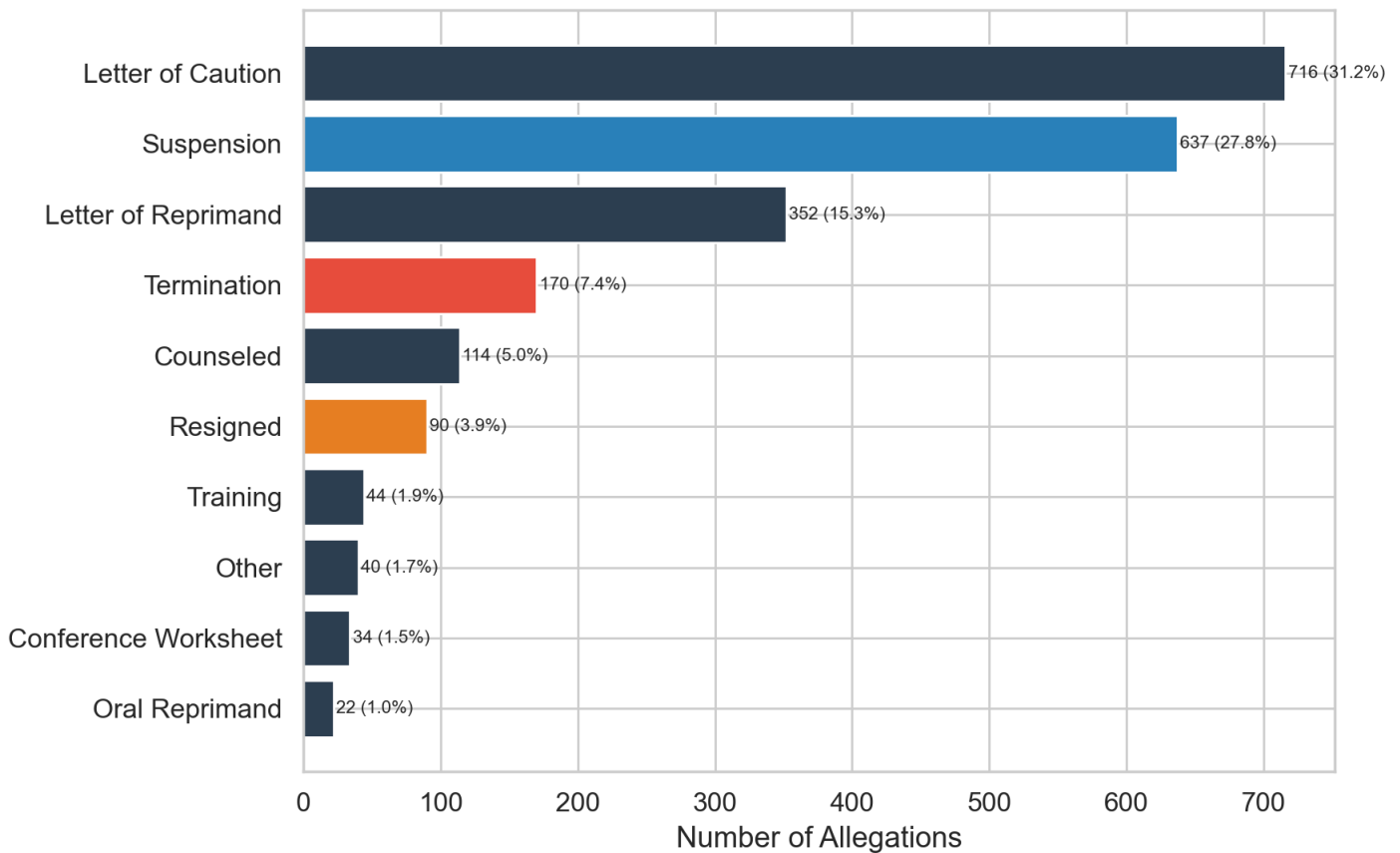
Letters of caution were the most frequently recorded action, accounting for nearly a third of all discipline entries (716, or 31.2%). Suspensions, ranging from 1 day to 90 or more days, were the second most common at 27.8% (637 cases). Letters of reprimand (352, or 15.3%) and terminations (170, or 7.4%) followed.

This chart shows what discipline was imposed across all complaint cases from 2004 to 2025. Each bar represents a type of action. Letters of caution and suspensions were the most common, together accounting for nearly 60% of all recorded discipline.

Terminations and resignations combined account for 260 cases (11.3% of those with a recorded action). Together, these represent the most serious outcomes: officers who were either removed from the department or left before being terminated.

It is important to note that about half of all allegations have no recorded disciplinary action. Recording rates vary by year, from about 21% in 2016 to 68% in 2008, so the discipline figures presented here reflect only the subset of cases where an outcome was documented.

Baton Rouge PD: Discipline Actions Taken, 2004–2025



2.5 Sustained Rates by Allegation Category

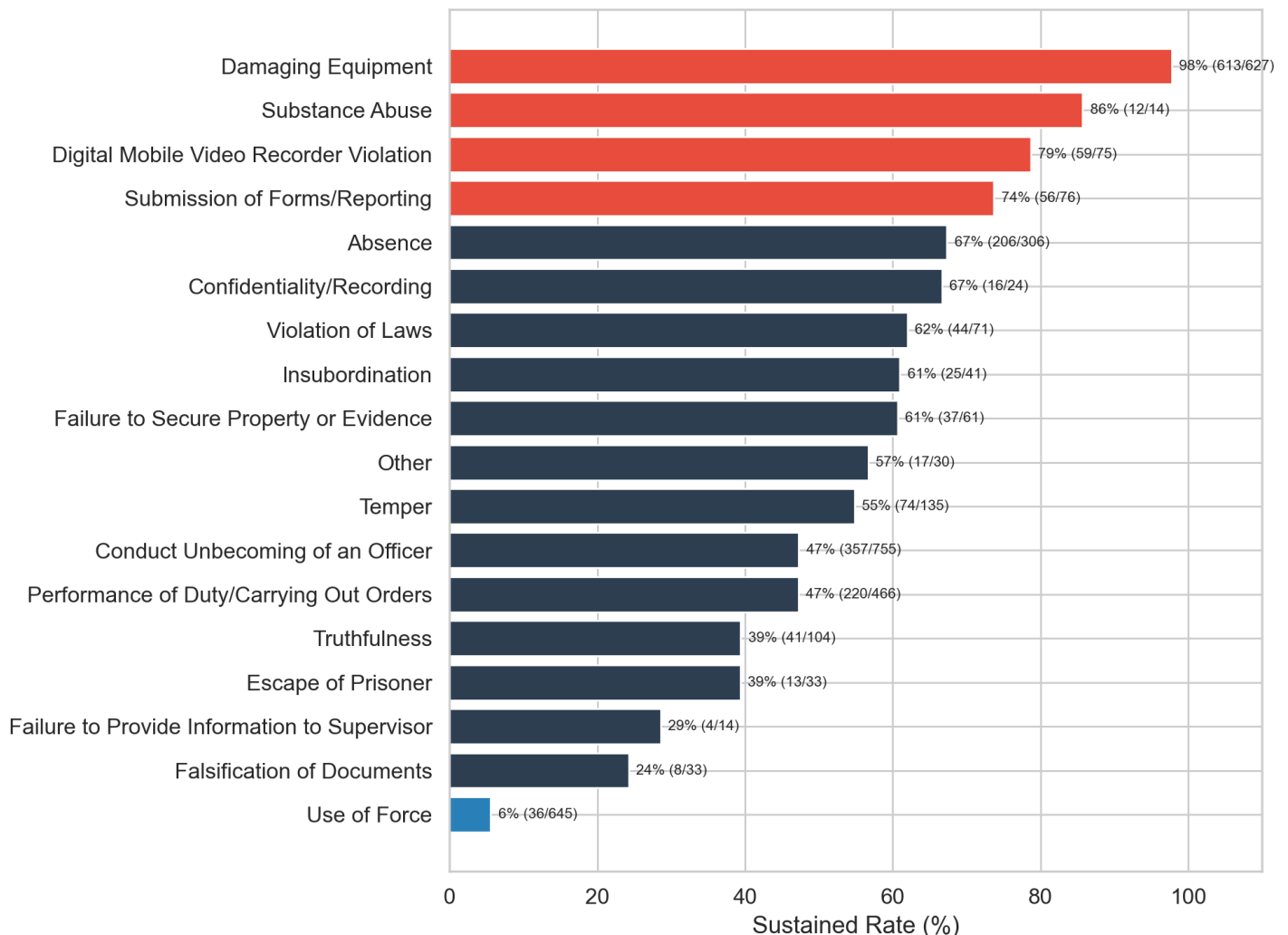
Perhaps the most striking pattern in the data is how dramatically sustained rates vary depending on the type of allegation. Across the full 2004–2025 period, administrative and equipment-related violations were sustained at very high rates. More serious allegations, particularly use of force and falsification of documents, were sustained far less often.

At one extreme, damaging equipment allegations were sustained nearly 98% of the time (613 of 627 resolved cases). Substance abuse, digital mobile video recorder (DMVR) violations, and submission of forms were all sustained at rates above 70%. These are categories where the evidence tends to be objective and straightforward to verify.

At the other extreme, use-of-force allegations were sustained less than 6% of the time (36 out of 645 resolved cases). Falsification of documents was sustained at about 24%, and truthfulness allegations at about 39%. These categories involve more complex evidentiary standards and subjective judgments.

This chart shows the percentage of allegations that were sustained for each category across the full 2004–2025 period. Red bars indicate categories with sustained rates above 70%, while light blue bars highlight categories with sustained rates below 15%. The gap between administrative violations (sustained 70%+) and use-of-force allegations (sustained 5.6%) is one of the most notable patterns in the data.

Baton Rouge PD: Sustained Rate by Allegation Category, 2004–2025
(Categories with 10+ resolved allegations)



There are several possible explanations for this disparity. Administrative violations like damaging equipment or DMVR violations often have clear, objective evidence; a damaged vehicle or missing camera footage is straightforward to verify. Use-of-force allegations, by contrast, often involve subjective judgments about whether force was reasonable under the circumstances, with the officer's account weighed against the complainant's. The evidentiary bar for sustaining a force allegation may be significantly higher.

This pattern is not unique to Baton Rouge—many police departments sustain administrative complaints at far higher rates than use-of-force complaints. However, the magnitude of the gap here (98% for damaging equipment versus 5.6% for force) is worth noting.

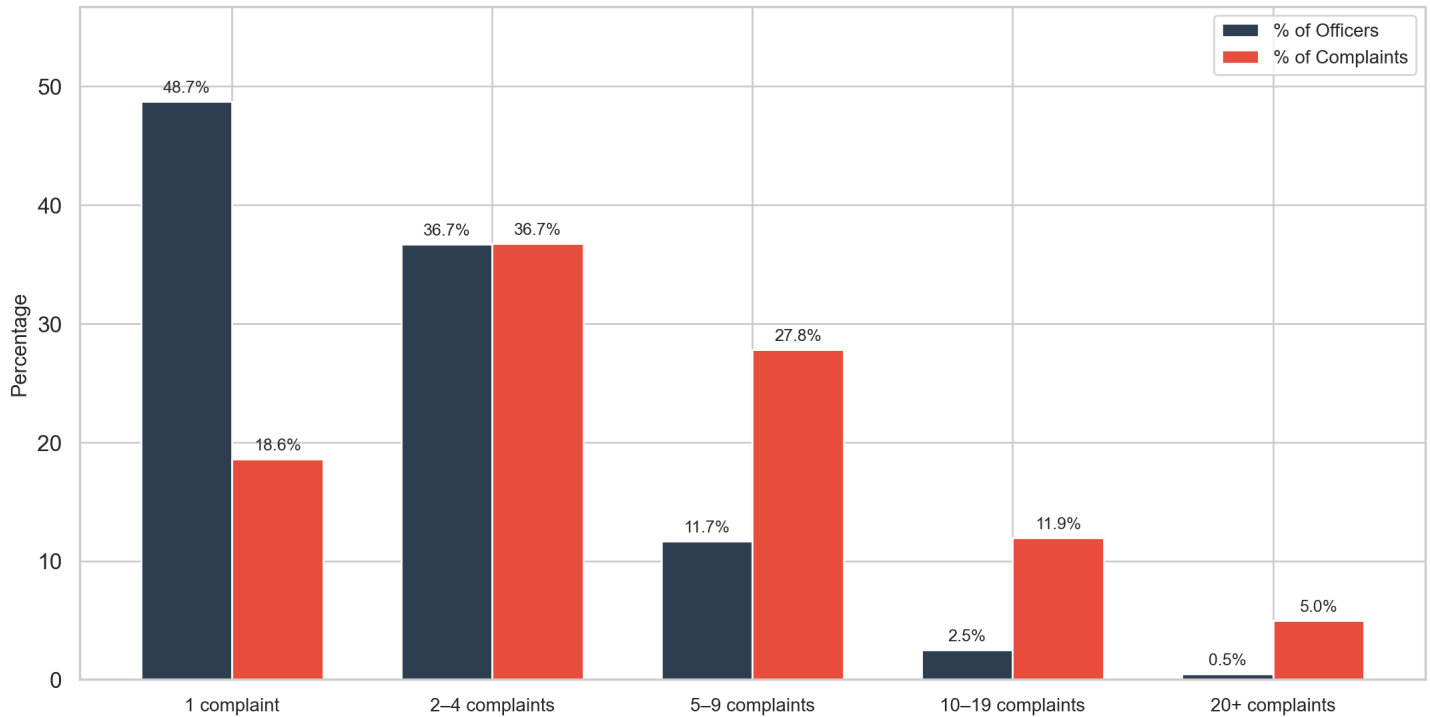
2.6 Repeat Officer Patterns

Across the full 2004–2025 dataset, 1,757 unique officers were named in at least one complaint allegation. The distribution of complaints across officers was highly concentrated: a small number of officers accounted for a large share of total allegations.

Nearly half of all officers (48.7%) had only a single complaint allegation against them. At the other end, 52 officers (about 3% of all officers) had 10 or more complaint allegations and together accounted for nearly 17% of all allegations in the dataset. Eight officers had 20 or more allegations, collectively generating 229 complaints (5.0% of the total).

This chart compares each group's share of officers (dark bars) to its share of complaints (red bars). On the left, nearly half of all officers had just one complaint, but they account for less than a fifth of total complaints. Reading from the right, the pattern flips: officers with 5 or more complaints make up about 15% of the police force but generated 45% of all allegations. The wider gap between the two bars, the greater the concentration of complaints in that group.

Baton Rouge PD: Complaint Concentration Among Officers, 2004–2025



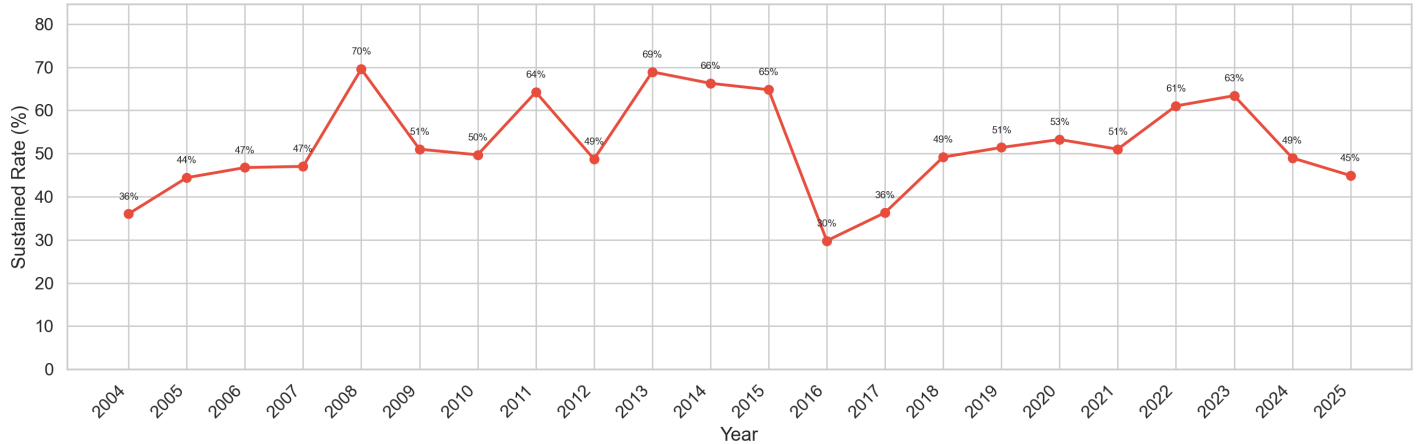
2.7 Yearly Sustained Rate

The overall sustained rate (the percentage of resolved allegations that the department found sufficient evidence to uphold) has fluctuated substantially over the past two decades.

The sustained rate has swung between roughly 30% and 70% over the twenty-two-year period. Notable peaks occurred in 2008 (70%) and during 2013–2015 (65–69%), while the lowest rates were recorded in 2016 (30%) and 2017 (36%). More recently, the rate climbed from 51% in 2021 to 63% in 2023 before declining to 49% in 2024. Whether these shifts reflect changes in the types of allegations being filed, evolving investigative standards, or other factors is unclear from the data alone.

This chart shows the sustained rate for each year from 2004 through 2025. The line tracks what percentage of resolved complaints were upheld by the department. The rate has fluctuated substantially, with peaks around 2008 and 2013–2015 and a notable dip in 2016–2017.

Baton Rouge PD: Complaint Sustained Rate by Year, 2004–2025



3. Conclusion: What the Data Suggests

This analysis of Baton Rouge Police Department internal complaint data from 2004 through 2025 reveals several patterns worth noting.

Complaint volume has shifted over time. The department documented its highest volume of complaint allegations in 2004–2005, followed by a general decline through the mid-2010s. Complaint volume rose sharply in 2021 and has remained at an elevated level (around 250 to 270 allegations per year) since then. Whether this reflects changes in officer conduct, community willingness to file complaints, departmental recording practices, or some combination is not clear from the data alone.

Conduct unbecoming and use of force dominate the complaint landscape. Together, these two categories account for more than a third of all allegations. Conduct unbecoming, a broad category covering disrespect, harassment, and general misconduct, is the single largest category at 22%. Use of force, the category with the most direct implications for community safety, accounts for 16%.

Administrative violations are almost always sustained; use-of-force complaints rarely are. This is the most striking pattern in the data. Damaging equipment allegations were sustained nearly 98% of the time across the full dataset. DMVR violations, substance abuse, and submission of forms were sustained at rates above 70%. Use-of-force allegations, by contrast, were sustained less than 6% of the time—just 36 out of 645 resolved cases. This gap likely reflects differences in the type of evidence available, for example, a damaged vehicle is easy to confirm, while determining whether force was “excessive” involves subjective judgment. But the magnitude of the gap warrants attention from oversight bodies.

A small number of officers drive a large share of complaints. About 15% of officers generated 45% of all complaint allegations, and eight officers each had 20 or more allegations over the study period. This concentration suggests that early identification and intervention systems, if not already in place, could meaningfully reduce complaint volume.

The sustained rate has been inconsistent. The rate has ranged from about 30% to 70%, with notable peaks in 2008 and 2013–2015 and a sharp dip in 2016–2017. More recently, the rate climbed to 63% in 2023 before declining to 49% in 2024. The reasons for these fluctuations are unclear and may relate to changes in the types of allegations being filed, investigative capacity, or other factors.

Important limitations. This analysis relies entirely on data self-reported by BRPD. We cannot independently verify the completeness or accuracy of these records. Disposition data is missing for about 23% of allegations, with coverage varying by year from about 48% to over 91%. The data does not include information about the race, gender, or demographics of officers or complainants, nor does it include the circumstances surrounding each complaint. The “allegation category” groupings used in this analysis were created by standardizing hundreds of slightly different wording variations in the original data, which introduces a small margin for classification differences. Finally, this dataset covers only internal affairs records obtained through public records requests; it may not represent the complete universe of complaints filed against BRPD officers.

4. Methodology

1. Data sources. Internal complaint records were obtained from the Baton Rouge Police Department through public records requests. Four files spanning different time periods were provided:

- 2004–2009: 1,596 allegation records
- 2018: 137 allegation records
- 2010–2021: 1,765 allegation records
- 2021–2025: 1,143 allegation records

2. Data preparation. The four files were merged into a single dataset, yielding 4,641 rows after deduplication. Each row represents a single allegation—a specific claim of misconduct against a specific officer within a specific investigation. Deduplication was performed using the “allegation_uid” field, a unique identifier present in all source files. No duplicate UIDs were found across the four files.

3. Allegation categorization. The raw “allegation” field contains over 300 unique strings due to inconsistent formatting across years and data systems (e.g., “2:11 conduct unbecoming an officer – 21,” “conduct unbecoming an officer,” and “2:12 conduct unbecoming an officer 21” all refer to the same policy violation). These were mapped to 32 standardized categories using an explicit lookup table of over 400 string-to-category mappings. Two entries that could not be meaningfully categorized and 136 entries with no allegation text were assigned to “Other.”

4. Timeframe decisions. The full 2004–2025 period was used for all analyses, including complaint volume, allegation types, disposition outcomes, discipline actions, sustained rates, and repeat officer patterns. Disposition data is available for 77.3% of allegations across the full period, with year-to-year recording rates ranging from about 48% to 91%. Discipline data is available for 49.8% of allegations across the full period, with year-to-year recording rates ranging from about 21% to 68%.

5. Column completeness. Key fields and their completeness across the full dataset:

- Allegation category: 100% (4,607/4,607)
- Receive year: 99.8% (4,597/4,607)
- Allegation text: 97.0% (4,471/4,607)
- Officer UID: 100% (4,641/4,607)
- Disposition: 77.3% (3,563/4,607)
- Action/discipline: 49.8% (2,294/4,607)
- Department/unit: 29.0% (1,335/4,607)
- Rank: 11.6% (538/4,607)

6. Data Limitations. All data is self-reported by BRPD and has not been independently verified. The dataset does not include officer or complainant demographics, contextual information about the underlying incidents, or information about complaint intake processes. Disposition recording rates vary by year, so year-to-year comparisons of sustained rates should be interpreted with this in mind. The “allegation category” groupings were created by standardizing hundreds of slightly different wording variations in the original data, which introduces a small margin for classification differences.

5. References

1. U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2018–2022 5-Year Estimates, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana. Retrieved via Census API, February 2026.
 2. Baton Rouge Police Department, About BRPD. [<https://www.brla.gov/2706/Police-Department>] (<https://www.brla.gov/2706/Police-Department>). Accessed June 2026.
 3. Baton Rouge Police Department, Internal Affairs Complaint Records 2004–2025. Obtained via public records request to their Public Records Portal.
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