

FBI Releases 2015 Preliminary Stats for Law Enforcement Officers Killed in the Line of Duty

Written by Staff Reports
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Preliminary statistics released on May 16 by the FBI show that 41 law enforcement officers were feloniously killed in the line of duty in 2015. This is a decrease of almost 20 percent when compared with the 51 officers killed in 2014. By region, 19 officers died as a result of criminal acts that occurred in the South, nine officers in the West, five officers in the Midwest, four in the Northeast, and four in Puerto Rico.

By circumstance, eight officers were investigating suspicious persons/circumstances; seven were engaged in tactical situations; six officers were conducting traffic pursuits/stops; four were killed as a result of ambushes (entrapment/premeditation); three officers were killed as a result of unprovoked attacks; three died from injuries inflicted while answering disturbance calls (all three being domestic disturbance calls); three officers were killed while answering robbery in progress calls or pursuing robbery suspects; two were handling, transporting, or maintaining custody of prisoners; two officers were handling persons with mental illness; one sustained fatal injuries while performing an investigative activity; one was answering a burglary in progress call or pursuing a burglary suspect; and one officer was killed while attempting other arrest.

Offenders used firearms in 38 of the 41 felonious deaths. These included 29 incidents with handguns, seven incidents with rifles, one incident with a shotgun, and one incident in which the firearm type was not reported. Three victim officers were killed with vehicles used as weapons.

Thirty of the 41 killed officers were confirmed to be wearing body armor at the times of the incidents. Six of the 41 slain officers fired their own weapons, and six officers attempted to fire their service weapons. Three victim officers had their weapons stolen; three officers were killed with their own weapons.

Forty-one victim officers died from injuries sustained in 38 separate incidents. Thirty-six of those incidents have been cleared by arrest or exceptional means.

An additional 45 officers were killed in 2015 in line-of-duty accidents, which include officer deaths that are found not to be willful and intentional. This total is the same number of officers who were accidentally killed in 2014. By region, 29 officers died due to accidents in the South, six in the Midwest, five in the Northeast, and five in the West.

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Twenty-nine of the officers died as a result of automobile accidents, seven were struck by vehicles, and four were fatally injured due to motorcycle accidents. Two of the 45 officers were killed from accidental shootings, one from an aircraft accident, one due to a fall, and one from an all-terrain vehicle accident.

Of the 29 officers who died due to automobile accidents, 18 officers were wearing seatbelts. Eight officers were not wearing seatbelts (four of whom were ejected from the vehicles), and seatbelt use was not reported for three of the officers who were killed due to automobile accidents.

Final statistics and complete details will be available in the Uniform Crime Reporting Program's publication, *Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted, 2015*, which will be published on the FBI's Internet site in the fall.