

FBI releases 2015 stats on law enforcement officers killed and assaulted

Written by Staff Reports

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WASHINGTON D.C. - According to statistics collected by the FBI, 86 law enforcement officers were killed in line-of-duty incidents in 2015. Of these, 41 law enforcement officers died as a result of felonious acts, and 45 officers died in accidents. In addition, 50,212 officers were victims of line-of-duty assaults.

Comprehensive data tables about these incidents and brief narratives describing the fatal attacks and selected assaults resulting in injury are included in the 2015 edition of *Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted*, released Oct. 18.

Felonious Deaths

The 41 felonious deaths occurred in 21 states and in Puerto Rico. The number of officers killed as a result of criminal acts in 2015 decreased by 10 when compared with the 51 officers who were feloniously killed in 2014. The five- and 10-year comparisons show a decrease of 31 felonious deaths compared with the 2011 figure (72 officers) and a decrease of seven deaths compared with 2006 data (48 officers).

Officer Profiles:

The average age of the officers who were feloniously killed was 40 years. The victim officers had served in law enforcement for an average of 12 years at the time of the fatal incidents. Of the 41 officers, 38 were male, and three were female. Twenty-nine of the officers were white, eight were black/African-American, two were American Indian/Alaska Native, and two were

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Asian/Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander.

Circumstances: Of the 41 officers feloniously killed, eight were investigating suspicious persons or circumstances; seven were involved in tactical situations; six were conducting traffic pursuits/stops; five were killed in arrest situations; four were ambushed; three were killed while answering domestic disturbance calls; three were killed in unprovoked attacks; two were handling, transporting, or maintaining custody of prisoners; two were handling persons with mental illnesses; and one was conducting an investigative activity (such as surveillance, a search, or an interview).

Weapons: Offenders used firearms to kill 38 of the 41 victim officers. Of these 38 officers, 29 were slain with handguns, seven with rifles, one with a shotgun, and the type of firearm was not reported in the death of one officer. Three officers were killed with vehicles used as weapons.

Regions: Nineteen of the felonious deaths occurred in the South, nine in the West, five in the Midwest, four in the Northeast, and four in Puerto Rico.

Suspects: Law enforcement agencies identified 37 alleged assailants in connection with the felonious line-of-duty deaths. Thirty-one of the assailants had prior criminal arrests, and nine of the offenders were under judicial supervision at the time of the felonious incidents.

Accidental Deaths

Forty-five law enforcement officers were killed accidentally while performing their duties in 2015. The majority (29 officers) were killed in automobile accidents. The number of accidental line-of-duty deaths remained the same as the 2014 total (45 officers).

Officer Profiles: The average age of the officers who were accidentally killed was 37 years; the average number of years the victim officers had served in law enforcement was nine. Of the 45 officers accidentally killed, 41 were male, and four were female. Thirty-three of the officers were white, nine were black/African-American, one was Asian/Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, and race was not reported for two of the officers.

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Circumstances: Of the 45 officers accidentally killed, 29 died as a result of automobile accidents, seven were struck by vehicles, four officers died in motorcycle accidents, two were accidentally shot, one died in an aircraft accident, one was killed in a fall, and one officer died in another type of duty-related accident. Use of seatbelts was reported for 26 of the 29 officers killed in automobile accidents. Of these 26 officers, 18 were wearing seatbelts, and eight were not wearing seatbelts at the times of the accidents. Use of seatbelts was not reported for three of the officers killed in automobile accidents.

Regions: Twenty-nine of the accidental deaths occurred in the South, six in the Midwest, five in the Northeast, and five in the West.

Assaults

In 2015, of the 50,212 officers assaulted while performing their duties, 28.4 percent were injured. The largest percentage of victim officers (32.4 percent) were assaulted while responding to disturbance calls. Assaultants used personal weapons (hands, fists, feet, etc.) in 79.0 percent of the incidents, firearms in 4.0 percent of incidents, and knives or other cutting instruments in 1.8 percent of the incidents. Other types of dangerous weapons were used in 15.1 percent of assaults.

Visit: ucr.fbi.gov/leoka/2015