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FBI Releases 2012 Statistics on Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted

According to statistics collected by the FBI, 95 law enforcement officers were killed in line-of-duty incidents in 2012. Of these, 48 law enforcement officers died as a result of felonious acts and 47 officers died in accidents. In addition, 52,901 officers were victims of line-of-duty assaults. Comprehensive data tables about these incidents and brief narratives describing the fatal attacks are included in the 2012 edition of *Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted*, released today.

Felonious Deaths

The 48 felonious deaths occurred in 26 states, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. The number of officers killed as a result of criminal acts in 2012 decreased by 24 when compared with the 72 officers who died in 2011. The 5- and 10-year comparisons show an increase of 7 felonious deaths compared with the 2008 figure (41 officers) and a decrease of 4 deaths compared with 2003 data (52 officers).

Officer Profiles: The average age of the officers who were feloniously killed was 38 years. The victim officers had served in law enforcement for an average of 12 years at the time of the fatal incidents. Forty-three of the officers were male, and 5 were female. Forty-two of the officers were white, and 6 were black.

Circumstances: Of the 48 officers feloniously killed, 12 were killed in arrest situations, 8 were investigating suspicious persons or circumstances, 8 were conducting traffic pursuits/stops, 6 were ambushed, 5 were involved in tactical situations, and 4 were answering disturbance calls. Three of the slain officers were handling, transporting, or maintaining custody of prisoners; 1 was conducting an investigative activity, such as surveillance, searches, or interviews; and 1 officer was killed while handling a person with a mental illness.

Weapons: Offenders used firearms to kill 44 of the 48 victim officers. Of these 44 officers, 32 were slain with handguns, 7 with rifles, and 3 with shotguns. The type of firearm used was not reported in the deaths of 2 officers. Two officers were killed with vehicles used as weapons, 1 with personal weapons (hands, fists, feet, etc.), and 1 with a knife.

Regions: Twenty-two of the felonious deaths occurred in the South, 8 in the West, 6 in the Midwest, and 6 in the Northeast. Five of the deaths took place in Puerto Rico, and 1 officer was killed in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Suspects: Law enforcement agencies identified 51 alleged assailants in connection with the felonious line-of-duty deaths. Thirty-three of the assailants had prior criminal arrests, and 8 of the offenders were under judicial supervision at the time of the felonious incidents.

Accidental Deaths

Forty-seven law enforcement officers were killed accidentally while performing their duties in 2012. The majority (22 officers) were killed in automobile accidents. The number of accidental line-of-duty deaths was down 6 from the 2011 total (53 officers).

Officer Profiles: The average age of the officers who were accidentally killed was 39 years, and the average number of years the victim officers had served in law enforcement was 12. Forty-five of the officers were male, and 2 were female. Thirty-six of the officers were white, 9 were black, and 2 officers were Asian/Pacific Islander.

Circumstances: Of the 47 officers accidentally killed, 22 died as a result of automobile accidents, 10 were struck by vehicles, 6 died in motorcycle accidents, 3 were killed in falls, 3 died in aircraft accidents, 2 were accidentally shot, and 1 died in an other type of duty-related accident.

Regions: Twenty-seven of the accidental deaths occurred in the South, 9 in the Northeast, 8 in the West, and 3 in the Midwest.

Assaults

In 2012, of the 52,901 officers assaulted while performing their duties, 27.7 percent suffered injuries. The largest percentage of victim officers (32.5 percent) were assaulted while responding to disturbance calls. Assailants used personal weapons (hands, fists, feet, etc.) in 80.2 percent of the incidents, firearms in 4.3 percent of incidents, and knives or other cutting instruments in 1.7 percent of the incidents. Other types of dangerous weapons were used in 13.9 percent of assaults.

Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted, 2012, is available exclusively on the FBI's Web site at <<http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr-publications>>.