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FBI Releases 2015 Statistics on Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted

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 today.

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 5- and 10-year comparisons show a decrease of 31 felonious deaths compared with the 2011 figure (72 officers) and a decrease of 7 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 3 were female. Twenty-nine of the officers were White, 8 were Black/African American, 2 were American Indian/Alaska Native, and 2 were Asian/Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander.

Circumstances: Of the 41 officers feloniously killed, 8 were investigating suspicious persons or circumstances; 7 were involved in tactical situations; 6 were conducting traffic pursuits/stops; 5 were killed in arrest situations; 4 were ambushed; 3 were killed while answering domestic disturbance calls; 3 were killed in unprovoked attacks; 2 were handling, transporting, or maintaining custody of prisoners; 2 were handling persons with mental illnesses; and 1 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, 7 with rifles, 1 with a shotgun, and the type of firearm was not reported in the death of 1 officer. Three officers were killed with vehicles used as weapons.

Regions: Nineteen of the felonious deaths occurred in the South, 9 in the West, 5 in the Midwest, 4 in the Northeast, and 4 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 9 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 9. Of the 45 officers accidentally killed, 41 were male, and 4 were female. Thirty-three of the officers were White, 9 were Black/African American, 1 was Asian/Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, and race was not reported for 2 of the officers.

Circumstances: Of the 45 officers accidentally killed, 29 died as a result of automobile accidents, 7 were struck by vehicles, 4 officers died in motorcycle accidents, 2 were accidentally shot, 1 died in an aircraft accident, 1 was killed in a fall, and 1 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 8 were not wearing seatbelts at the times of the accidents. Use of seatbelts was not reported for 3 of the officers killed in automobile accidents.

Regions: Twenty-nine of the accidental deaths occurred in the South, 6 in the Midwest, 5 in the Northeast, and 5 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.

Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted, 2015, is available exclusively on the FBI's Web site at <https://ucr.fbi.gov/leoka/2015>.