

issues in Labor Statistics



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Security guard employment before and after 2001

Employment in the security guards and patrol services industry spiked after the attacks on September 11, 2001 in New York City and Arlington, Virginia. Today, if you work in a large office building in a major city, chances are you have at least one security guard at the front entrance, as well as numerous security cameras mounted around the lobby. But which counties experienced the largest increase in security employment between 2001 and 2002?

The over-the-year period between 2001 and 2002 was analyzed in order to depict the immediate response to the September 11th attacks. Five large counties were selected for review be-

cause they had the largest percent or level change in employment in the privately-owned security guard and patrol services industry (NAICS 561612).

Looking at national employment for the industry, the spike in 2002 is clearly visible. Employment dropped in 2003, rather than sustaining the higher levels for a longer period of time. Subsequently, employment grew to about where it would have been had the rate of growth remained at its steady rate of between 1.1 and 3.3 percent per year. Employment within the industry is higher now than it was in 2002, but may well have gotten there even without the impetus of the September 11 attacks.

At the county level, four of

the ten biggest counties in the nation had the largest change in employment levels. Los Angeles County expanded their security workforce by 5,071 employees in 2002, equivalent to 16.6 percent. Suffolk County, Massachusetts, home of Boston, had the third largest level increase in employment without even being one of the twenty largest counties. The addition of 1,321 new workers boosted security employment by 41.5 percent in the county.

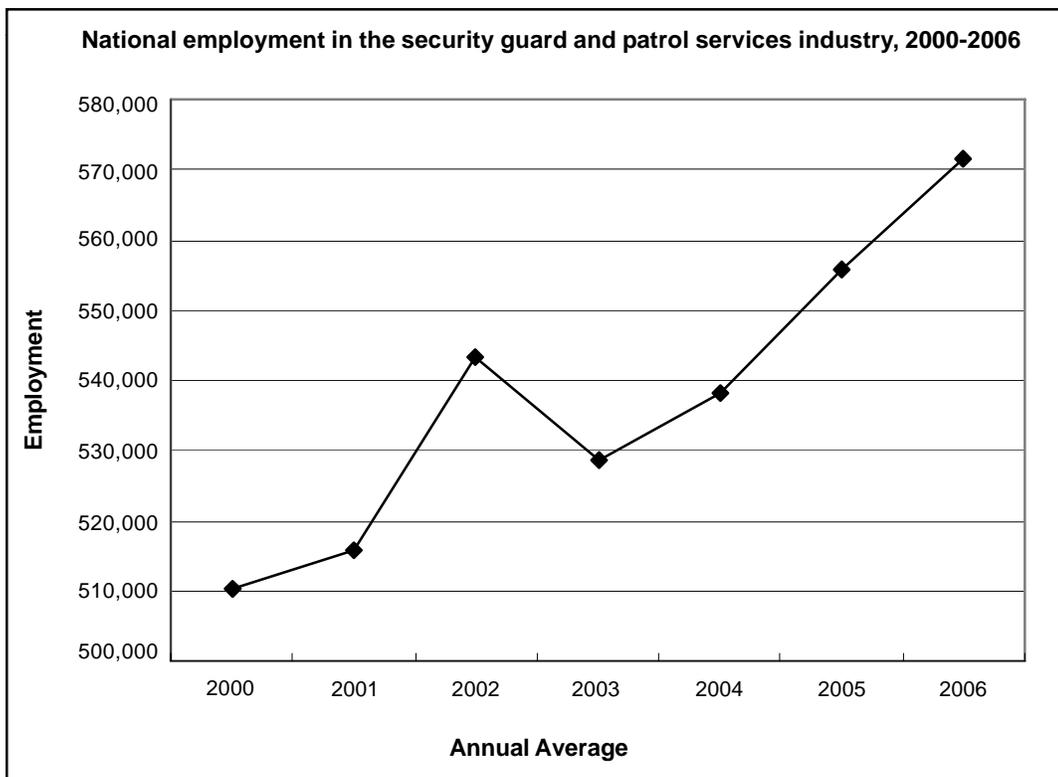
However, when looking at the counties with the five highest percentage increases in employment, the story changes to focus on smaller counties. Anne Arundel County, Maryland—whose County seat is Annapo-

lis and is adjacent to Baltimore—had the highest percentage change of almost 170 percent when employment jumped by 640. Cumberland County, Maine, home of Portland, had the next highest percentage increase of almost 100 percent by only gaining 221 workers.

In summary, security employment rose significantly in the period just after the terrorist attacks of September 2001. That growth was diffused across many counties and not confined to the metropolitan areas that had been the targets. Levels of security industry employment subsequently subsided and are now roughly in line with what they might have been given the industry's secular uptrend in jobs.

These data were obtained by the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages in the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Data presented here are for all private-sector workers covered by State and Federal unemployment insurance programs. Largest counties refer to those counties with 75,000 or more jobs in 2006. For additional information, contact Anne Lise Almira, an economist in the Division of Administrative Statistics and Labor Turnover, Office of Employment and Unemployment Statistics. E-mail: almira.anne@bls.gov. Telephone: 202-691-6449.

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Employment changes in security guards and patrol services, selected counties, 2001-2002

Counties with largest percent change	Employment change	Percent change	Counties with largest employment change	Employment change	Percent change
Anne Arundel County, MD	640	168.9	Los Angeles County, CA	5,071	16.6
Cumberland County, ME	221	96.9	Miami-Dade County, FL	3,112	37.0
Arapahoe County, CO	536	49.2	Suffolk County, MA	1,321	41.5
DeKalb County, GA	332	47.1	New York County, NY	1,180	5.7
San Mateo County, CA	474	43.8	Cook County, IL	1,069	7.8

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