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FBI Releases 2009 Statistics on Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted

According to information released today by the FBI, 48 law enforcement officers were feloniously killed in the line of duty last year; 47 officers died in accidents while performing their duties; and 57,268 officers were assaulted in the line of duty. The 2009 edition of *Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted* released today provides comprehensive tabular data about these incidents and brief narratives describing the fatal attacks.

Felonious Deaths

The felonious deaths occurred in 18 states and Puerto Rico. The number of officers feloniously killed in 2009 increased by 7 compared with the 2008 figure (41 officers). The 5- and 10-year comparisons showed decreases in the number of felonious deaths, down 7 from the 2005 number (55 officers) and a decrease of 3 from the 2000 total (51 officers).

Officer Profiles: Among the officers who were feloniously killed, the average age 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-seven of the victim officers were male and 1 was female. Forty-two of the officers were white, 3 were black, 2 were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 1 was Asian/Pacific Islander.

Circumstances: Of the 48 officers feloniously killed, 15 were ambushed; 8 of the slain officers were involved in arrest situations; 8 were performing traffic stops; 6 were answering disturbance calls; 5 were involved in tactical situations (e.g., high-risk entry); 4 were investigating suspicious persons/circumstances; and 2 were handling, transporting, or maintaining custody of prisoners.

Weapons: Offenders used firearms to kill 45 of the 48 victim officers. Of these 45 officers, 28 were slain with handguns, 15 with rifles, and 2 with shotguns. Three officers were killed with vehicles that were used as weapons.

Regions: Twenty-one of the felonious deaths occurred in the South, 13 in the West, 7 in the Northeast, and 5 in the Midwest. Two of the deaths took place in Puerto Rico.

Suspects: Law enforcement agencies identified 41 alleged assailants in connection with the 48 felonious line-of-duty deaths. Thirty-three of the assailants had prior criminal records, and 13 of the assailants were under judicial supervision at the time of the felonious incidents.

Accidental Deaths

Of the 47 law enforcement officers killed in accidents while performing their duties in 2009, the majority of officers accidentally killed (34 officers) were the result of automobile accidents. The number of accidental line-of-duty deaths was down 21 from the 2008 total (68 officers) and 20 less than the 2005 total (67 officers); 36 fewer officers were accidentally killed in 2009 than in 2000, when 83 officers died in accidents.

Assaults

In 2009, 11,451 law enforcement agencies reported that 57,268 officers were assaulted while performing their duties. Of the officers assaulted, 26.2 percent were injured. The largest percentage of victim officers (32.6) were assaulted while responding to disturbance calls (family quarrels, bar fights, etc.). Assailants used personal weapons (hands, fists, feet, etc.) in 81.4 percent of the incidents, firearms in 3.5 percent of incidents, and knives or other cutting instruments in 1.5 percent of the incidents. Other types of dangerous weapons were used in 13.6 percent of assaults.

Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted, 2009, is available exclusively on the FBI's Web site at <www.fbi.gov/ucr/ucr.htm>. Printed copies of the publication are no longer available.