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FBI Releases 2005 Statistics on Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted

Washington, D.C.—The FBI reported today that 55 law enforcement officers were feloniously killed in the line of duty last year; 67 officers died in accidents while performing their official duties; and 57,546 officers suffered assaults while on duty. The 2005 edition of *Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted*, released today, provides comprehensive tabular data about these incidents and brief narratives describing the fatal felonious attacks.

Felonious Deaths

The 55 felonious line-of-duty deaths took place during 53 separate incidents. The deaths occurred in 24 states and Puerto Rico. The number of officers feloniously killed in 2005 decreased by 2 compared with the 2004 figure (57 officers). A 5-year comparison shows a decrease of 15 line-of-duty deaths compared with the 2001 number (70 officers) and a decrease of 6 compared with the 1996 figure (61 officers).

Officer Profile: Among the officers who were feloniously killed, the average age was 37 years. They had served in law enforcement for an average of 10 years at the time of the fatal incidents. Fifty-four of the slain officers were male; 47 officers were white; and 8 were black.

Circumstances: Of the 55 officers feloniously killed, 15 were handling traffic pursuits or traffic stops. Eight of the slain officers were handling arrest situations, and another 8 were ambushed. Seven of the slain officers were answering disturbance calls, and another 7 were investigating suspicious persons. Of the remaining 10 officers who were feloniously killed in the line of duty, 4 were pursuing investigative activities, such as surveillance; 3 were in tactical situations (e.g., high-risk entry); 2 were handling mentally deranged persons; and 1 had custody of a prisoner for transport.

Weapons: Offenders used firearms to kill 50 of the 55 victim officers. Of these 50 officers, 42 were slain with handguns, 5 with shotguns, and 3 with rifles. Fifteen of the 55 victim officers who were slain fired their own weapons during the fatal incidents, and 6 officers attempted to use their own weapons during the incidents. Five officers were feloniously killed when hit by vehicles that the offenders used as weapons.

Region: An analysis of the data by region showed that 28 of the felonious deaths occurred in the South, 10 in the West, 10 in the Midwest, and 5 in the Northeast. Two of the deaths took place in Puerto Rico.

Suspects: Law enforcement agencies identified 57 alleged assailants in connection with the 55 felonious line-of-duty deaths. All of the assailants were male, and 54 of them had previous criminal arrest records.

Accidental Deaths

Sixty-seven law enforcement officers were killed in accidents while performing their duties. Automobile accidents claimed the highest number (39) of accidental line-of-duty deaths.

Assaults

The Nation's law enforcement agencies reported to the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program that 57,546 officers were assaulted while performing their duties. The largest percentage of victim officers (30.5 percent) were assaulted while responding to disturbance calls (family quarrels, bar fights, and so forth). The smallest percentage of victim officers (0.3 percent) were assaulted during ambush situations. Assaultants used personal weapons (hands, fists, feet, and so forth) in 80 percent of the incidents, firearms in 3.7 percent of the incidents, and knives or cutting instruments in 1.8 percent of the incidents. In 14.4 percent of the assaults, other types of weapons were used.

Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted, 2005, is available exclusively on the FBI's Web site at www.fbi.gov/ucr/ucr.htm. Printed copies of this publication are no longer available.