

SECTION IX

**LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS
KILLED AND ASSAULTED
SUMMARY**

POLICE OFFICERS KILLED AND ASSAULTED

The killing or assault of a police officer has a deleterious effect on society that reaches far beyond the overt act. Such occurrences constitute an immediate threat to the well-being of the community and serious breach of the internal security of the country. Today a young person who considers a career in law enforcement must also consider the very strong possibility of being killed or assaulted by a member of the very same society they are sworn to protect. This deplorable situation should be a subject of serious concern, for in truth, an attack on a police officer is an attack on society. The violence directed against law enforcement officers acting in the line of duty is clearly demonstrated by the following information.

POLICE FELONIOUSLY KILLED

VOLUME/TREND

- In 1997, three police officers were feloniously killed while in the performance of their duties.
- On July 30, 1997, Frederick Baker, of the New Jersey Department of Corrections, was on duty, at Leesburgh State Prison, when an inmate stabbed the officer in the back with a sharp metal object. The offender was arrested.
- On October 24, 1997, Trooper Scott Gonzalez, of the New Jersey State Police, Sussex Station, was in a marked unit, following a suspect believed to be armed and dangerous. While awaiting backup, the suspect initiated a shootout during which Trooper Gonzalez sustained fatal injuries. The offender was subsequently located and sustained a self-inflicted fatal gunshot wound during the confrontation.
- On November 20, 1997, Sgt. Patrick A. King, of the Long Branch City Police Department, while standing at the counter of a restaurant, was shot by an armed suspect. The suspect, who had approached Sgt. King from the rear without warning or provocation, later committed suicide after leading police on a high speed chase.

Year	Police Officers Killed	Year	Police Officers Killed
1988	-	1993	1
1989	-	1994	2
1990	-	1995	4
1991	-	1996	-
1992	-	1997	3

ASSAULTS ON POLICE OFFICERS

Police assault statistics are important to the police administrator who attempts to identify the causative factors of this type of criminal activity. Many factors contribute to police assaults, and circumstances vary from place to place. Identifying specific reasons for these assaults is therefore extremely difficult. The following information illustrates the frequency of these events, and any attempt at analysis of these assaults should include consideration of the unique variable present in each jurisdiction. Due to the broad field of services performed by many state and county police agencies, no assault rates are computed for total police officers.

VOLUME/TREND

- There were 3,978 police officers assaulted in 1997, a decrease of 3 percent when compared to the 4,090 in 1996.

ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS

- Thirty-three percent (1,295) of the officers assaulted sustained injury.
- Personal weapons, such as hands, fists and feet were used in 83 percent (3,320) of all police assaults.
- Twenty-five percent of police assaults occurred when officers responded to disturbance calls.
- Sixteen percent of the assaults on police officers occurred during the 2-hour period of 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

CLEARANCES

- The police of New Jersey were successful in clearing 97 percent of the assaults directed at them.

ASSAULTS ON MUNICIPAL POLICE OFFICERS

VOLUME/TREND

- A total of 3,351 municipal police officers were assaulted during 1997, a 2 percent increase compared to the 3,273 assaulted in 1996.
- The assault rate, for every 100 municipal officers, was 16.8, a 1 percent increase compared to 1996.

ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS

- Thirty percent of the municipal officers assaulted sustained injury.
- Personal weapons, such as hands, fists and feet were used in 84 percent of all municipal police assaults.
- Twenty-nine percent of municipal police assaults occurred when officers responded to disturbance calls.
- Attempting Other Arrests accounted for 24 percent of municipal police assaults.

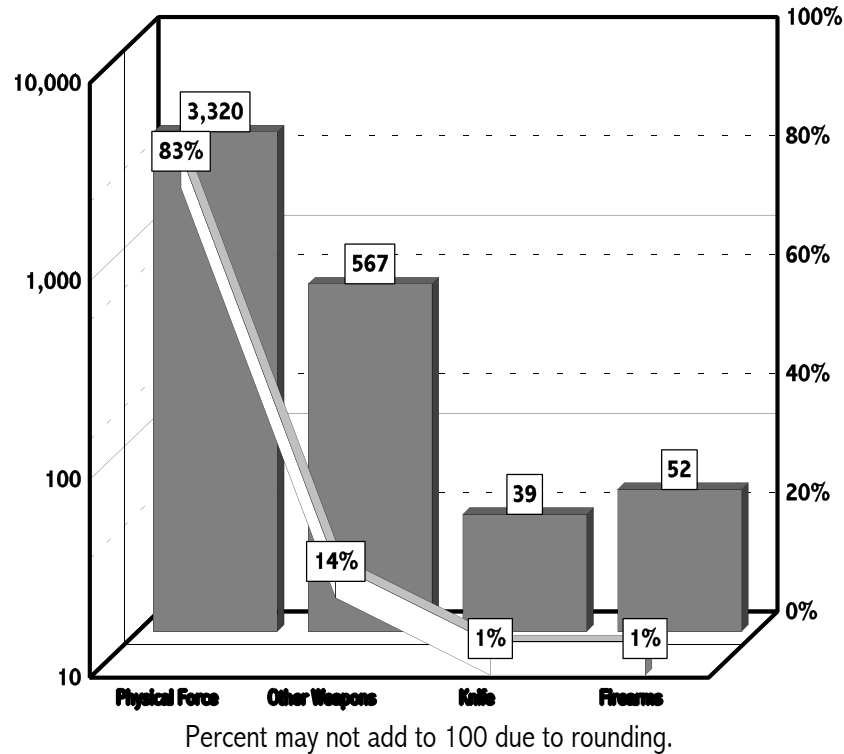
OTHER POLICE OFFICERS ASSAULTED

The following law enforcement agencies are dealt with separately and are not included when computing municipal assault rates; the services performed by these agencies vary greatly from the functions of municipal police agencies.

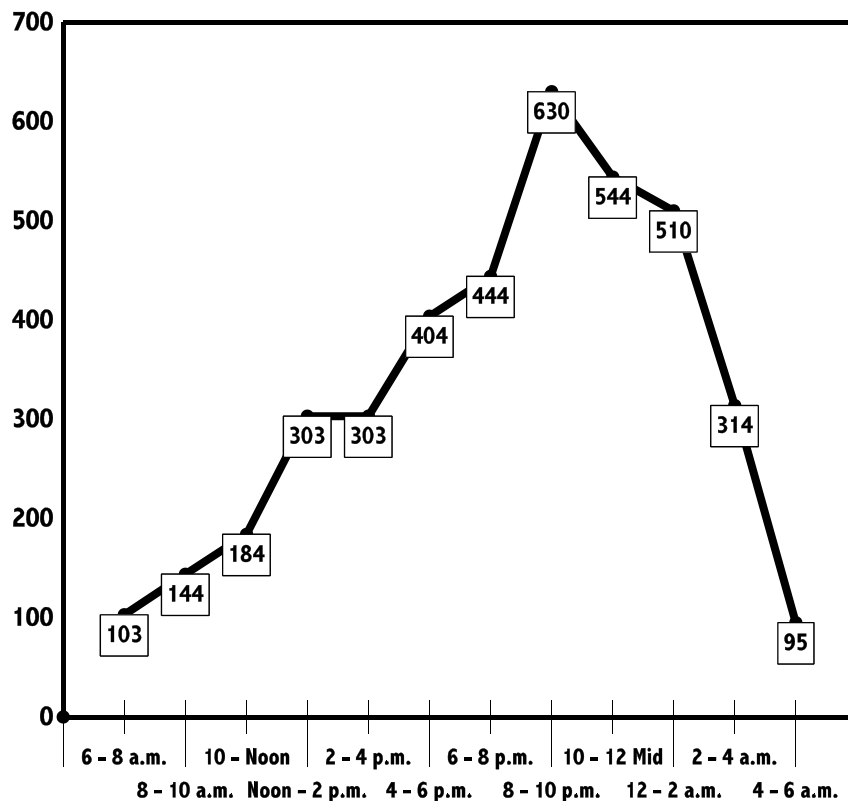
VOLUME/TREND

- County law enforcement agencies reported 111 officers assaulted with 50 sustaining injury.
- The New Jersey State Police reported 54 officers assaulted with 32 sustaining injury.
- Other state agencies, with police powers, reported 449 officers assaulted with 197 sustaining injury.
- University and college police agencies reported 13 officers assaulted with 5 sustaining injury.

WEAPONS USED IN ASSAULTS ON POLICE OFFICERS



ASSAULTS ON POLICE OFFICERS BY HOUR OF DAY NUMBER – PERCENT DISTRIBUTION



ASSAULTS ON POLICE OFFICERS BY TYPE OF ACTIVITY

NUMBER – PERCENT DISTRIBUTION

	Municipal Police		County Agencies		State Police		Other State Agencies		Universities and Colleges		TOTAL	
TYPE OF ACTIVITY	Number	Percent Distribution	Number	Percent Distribution	Number	Percent Distribution	Number	Percent Distribution	Number	Percent Distribution	Number	Percent Distribution
Responding to “Disturbance” Calls	973	29	7	6	6	11	4	1	1	8	991	25
Burglaries in Progress	53	2	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	53	1
Robberies in Progress	38	1	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	38	1
Attempting Other Arrests	788	24	31	28	13	24	7	2	-	0	839	21
Civil Disorder	72	2	-	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	72	2
Handling or Transporting Prisoners	280	8	55	50	1	2	414	92	-	0	750	19
Investigating Suspicious Persons or Circumstances	451	13	2	2	1	2	3	1	4	31	461	12
Ambush	9	*	1	1	1	2	-	0	1	8	12	*
Mentally Deranged Persons	35	1	1	1	-	0	-	0	-	0	36	1
Traffic Stops	307	9	2	2	22	41	7	2	3	23	341	9
All Other	345	10	12	11	10	19	14	3	4	31	385	10
TOTAL	3,351	100	111	100	54	100	449	100	13	100	3,978	100

* Percent is less than one-half of one percent.

Percent distribution may not total 100 due to rounding.

ASSAULTS ON MUNICIPAL POLICE OFFICERS

NUMBER – RATE PER 100 OFFICERS

BY COUNTY – 1997

COUNTY	NUMBER OF OFFICERS	NUMBER OF ASSAULTS	PERCENT DISTRIBUTION	ASSAULT RATE PER 100 POLICE OFFICERS
ATLANTIC	899	174	5.2	19.4
BERGEN	1,997	311	9.3	15.6
BURLINGTON	686	105	3.1	15.3
CAMDEN	1,219	215	6.4	17.6
CAPE MAY	341	77	2.3	22.6
CUMBERLAND	263	58	1.7	22.1
ESSEX	2,950	476	14.2	16.1
GLOUCESTER	484	77	2.3	15.9
HUDSON	1,912	451	13.5	23.6
HUNTERDON	154	17	0.5	11.0
MERCER	902	162	4.8	18.0
MIDDLESEX	1,498	217	6.5	14.5
MONMOUTH	1,341	184	5.5	13.7
MORRIS	995	92	2.7	9.2
OCEAN	905	143	4.3	15.8
PASSAIC	1,037	146	4.4	14.1
SALEM	104	19	0.6	18.3
SOMERSET	528	32	1.0	6.1
SUSSEX	175	31	0.9	17.7
UNION	1,420	351	10.5	24.7
WARREN	135	13	0.4	9.6
TOTAL	19,945	3,351	100.0	16.8