National Law Enforcement Officers
MEMORIAL FUND
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# 2015 Mid-Year Law Enforcement Officer Fatalities Report

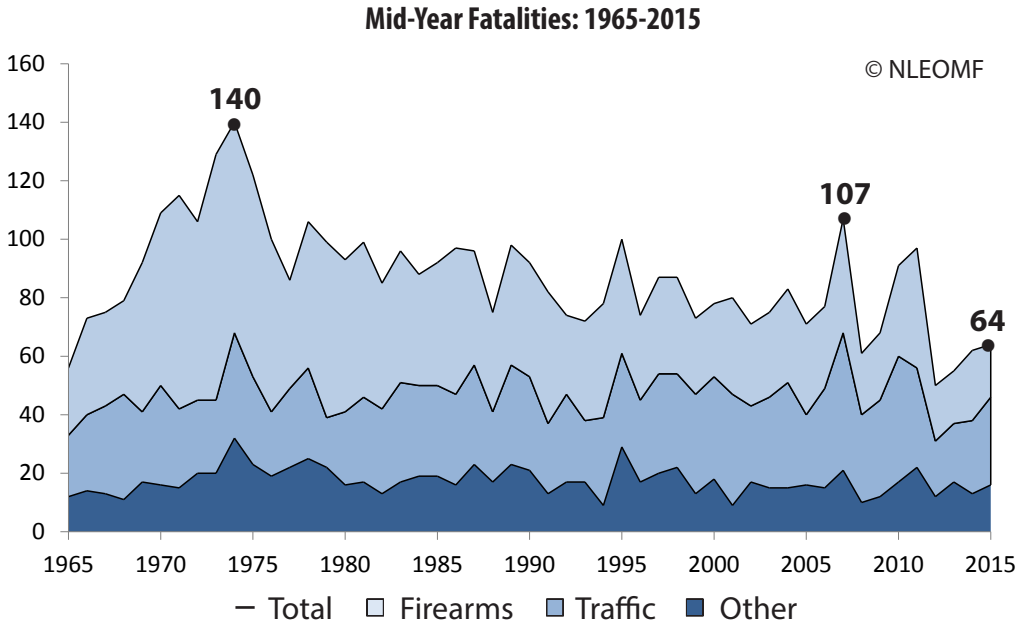
www.LawMemorial.org/facts/research-bulletins/ info@nleomf.org

## 64 Law Enforcement Fatalities Nationwide in the First Half of 2015

*Traffic-related incidents were the leading cause of officer fatalities in the first half of the year*

According to preliminary data compiled by the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, 64 law enforcement officers have been killed in the line of duty during the first half of 2015. This represents a three percent increase over the same period in 2014 in which 62 officers were killed.

For the third year in a row, traffic-related incidents were the leading cause of officer fatalities in the first half of 2015. Thirty officers were killed as a result of traffic-related incidents, increasing 20 percent from the same period in 2014.




Firearms-related fatalities were the second leading cause of death among our nation's law enforcement officers in the first half of 2015, decreasing 25 percent with 18 fatalities compared to 24 in the same period last year.

**Thirty officers were killed as a result of traffic-related incidents**

Officers feloniously killed during a traffic stop or pursuit was the leading circumstance of fatal shootings, with four fatalities.

In the first half of 2015, 16 officers died as a result of other causes unrelated to firearms or traffic, increasing 23 percent during the same period in 2014.

Job-related illnesses, such as heart attacks, increased in the first half of 2015, with 16 officer deaths compared to 13 officers during the same period in 2014.

Sixty-two fallen officers were male and two were female. Their average age was 40 years, with 13 years of service. On average, each officer left behind two children.

## RECENTLY FALLEN

**Police Officer Daryle Holloway**
New Orleans (LA) Police Department
EOW: 6/20/2015

Police Officer Daryle Holloway was shot and killed while transporting a prisoner.

**Police Officer Kerrie Orozco**
Omaha (NE) Police Department
EOW: 5/20/2015

Police Officer Kerrie Orozco was shot and killed while attempting to serve a felony arrest warrant.

**Police Officer David Joseph Nelson**
Bakersfield (CA) Police Department
EOW: 6/26/2015

Police Officer David Joseph Nelson was killed in a crash during a high-speed pursuit.

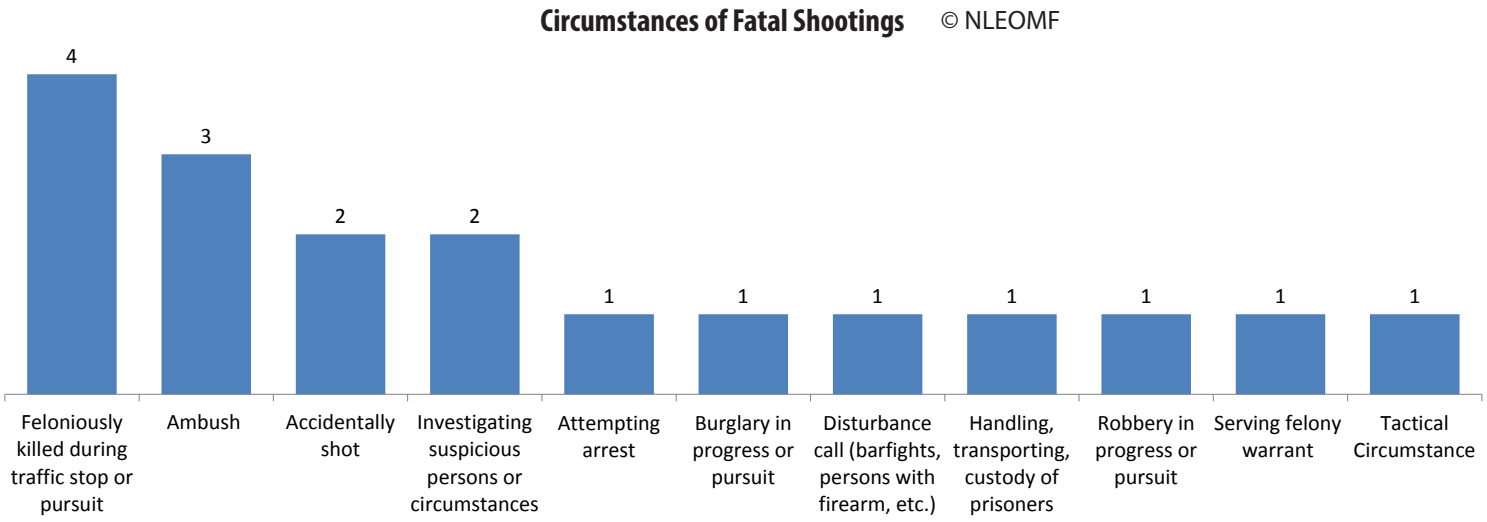
Register to receive Recently Fallen alerts at **www.RecentlyFallen.org**

*The data and statistics contained in this report are preliminary and do not represent a final or complete list of individual officers who will be added to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in 2016. This report was produced by the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund.*

## Firearms-related Fatalities

After increasing during the first half of 2014, firearms-related fatalities decreased during the first half of 2015. Eighteen officers were fatally shot and killed this year, compared to 24 in the same period of 2014. Of the 18 firearms-related fatalities, four officers were feloniously shot and killed during a traffic stop or pursuit—the most of any circumstance of fatal shootings in 2015.

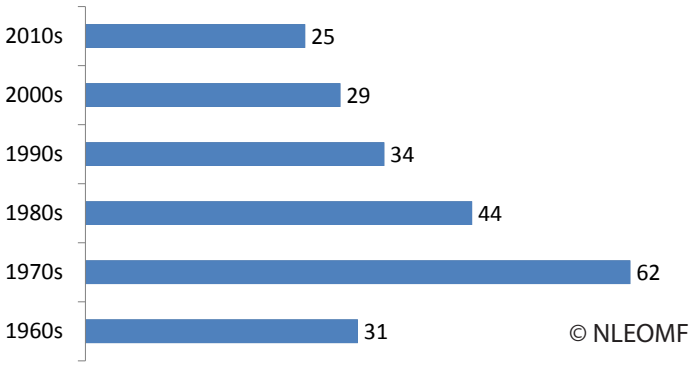
Three officers were shot and killed in ambushes, two officers were inadvertently shot and killed and two officers were killed while investigating suspicious persons or circumstances. One officer was shot and killed while pursuing a burglary suspect, one officer was shot and killed while responding to a disturbance call, one officer was shot and killed while transporting a prisoner, one officer was shot and killed while attempting to make an arrest, one officer was shot and killed while serving a felony warrant and one officer was killed during a tactical operation.




Handguns were the leading type of firearm used in fatal shootings of law enforcement officers in the first half 2015. Of the 18 officer fatalities, 14 officers were shot and killed with a handgun. Two officers were shot killed by assault weapons and two officers were killed with rifles in the first half of 2015.

Of the 18 officer fatalities in the first half of 2015, eight were shot and killed in May, the most of any other month. This represents 44 percent of all firearms-related fatalities during the reporting period. February saw no firearms-related fatalities.

Firearms-related fatalities peaked in 1973, with 84 officers shot and killed in the first six months of that year. Since then, the average has decreased from 62 in the 1970s, to 29 in the 2000s.



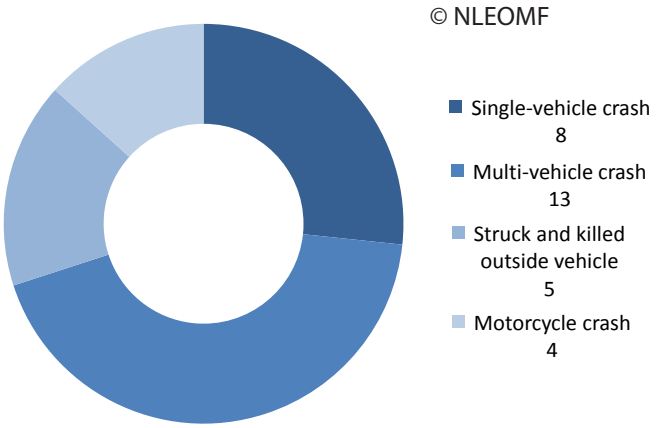
## Traffic-related Fatalities

After decreasing dramatically in 2012 and 2013, traffic-related fatalities began increasing last year and have again increased 20 percent in the first six months of 2015.

Traffic-related fatalities were the leading cause of officer fatalities in 2015, accounting for 30 deaths. Twenty-one officers were killed in automobile crashes, five were struck and killed outside their vehicles and four were killed in motorcycle crashes.

**Average Mid-Year Traffic-related Fatalities by Decade**

**Circumstances of Traffic-related Fatalities**




Of the 21 automobile crashes in the first half of the year, eight were single-vehicles crashes and 13 were multiple-vehicle crashes.

Compared to the average number of fatalities per decade, 2015 ranks below the past 10-year average (2000-2009). In the prior decade, nearly 33 officers were killed on average in the first half of a given year. Since the 1960s, traffic-related fatalities have increased, even as overall law enforcement fatalities have been decreasing.

## Other Causes of Officer Deaths

During the first half of 2015, sixteen officers died from causes other than firearms- or traffic-related fatalities compared to 13 officer deaths from other causes during the first half of 2014.

In the first half of this year, all 16 officers died from job-related illnesses, such as heart attacks, compared to 12 during the same period in 2014.

## Felonious and Non-Felonious Fatalities

Twenty-three officers were feloniously killed in the first half of 2015, decreasing 28 percent from the same period in the prior year when 32 officers were feloniously killed. Of these 23 officer deaths, sixteen were shot and killed, four officers were killed attempting arrest or investigating suspicious persons or activities and three officers were struck and killed by vehicles.

Forty-one officers died in non-felonious incidents in the first half of 2015, increasing 36 percent from the same period in the prior year when 30 officers were feloniously killed. Of these 41 officer deaths, 27 were traffic-related incidents, 12 were job-related illnesses (heart attacks) and two were inadvertently shot.

## Officer Fatality Data

The deadliest month in the first half of 2015 was May with 17 fatalities. Sixteen officers were killed in March and 14 were killed in January. Nine officers died in June, six officers died in April, and February had the fewest fatalities with two deaths.

Tuesday was the deadliest day of the week for law enforcement officers in the first half of the year, with 15 fatalities, followed by Wednesday with 13 fatalities. Thursday and Sunday had the fewest fatalities with five fatalities each during the first six months of the year.

## Five Deadliest States

In the first half of 2015, more officers were killed in Texas (seven) than any other state. Georgia, Louisiana and Mississippi all lost five officers in the first half of 2015 and Alabama lost four officers during the period.

Three federal officers, one territorial and one tribal officer were also killed in the line of duty in the first six months of 2015. Fifteen states lost one officer. Thirty-three states and the District of Columbia did not lose an officer in the first half of this year.

### Gender

62 2

| | Low | Average | High |
|---|---|---|---|
| Age of Officer | 21 | 40 | 58 |
| Length of Service | 0 years | 14 years | 43 years |
| Number of Children | 0 | 2 | 6 |

### Jurisdiction

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Municipal | 36 | Federal | 3 |
| County | 12 | Territorial | 1 |
| State | 11 | Tribal | 1 |

**Texas**
7 Officers Killed

**Louisiana**
5 Officers Killed

**Mississippi**
5 Officers Killed

**Alabama**
4 Officers Killed

**Georgia**
5 Officers Killed