

# OpTac International News Bulletin

## 2014 Line of Duty Deaths

**OpTac International** is committed to the law enforcement community through its innovative programs and research. From critical incident management to patterns in line of duty deaths, our research projects inform officers of new trends in policing and attempt to reduce loss of life. This edition of the **OpTac International News Bulletin** presents information on the 2014 line of duty deaths as they relate to SWAT and other police units, particularly first responders.



In one of our previous studies, we found that from 2004-2008, 71% of all U.S. SWAT deaths occurred in training or through blue death (fratricide). As such, we developed and continue to make available (free of charge via email request) our Training Safety Standards & Protocols.

A follow-up study indicated that U.S. SWAT training and blue deaths dramatically decreased, but an alarming number of non-SWAT officers were killed by suspects while performing SWAT functions; i.e., execution of high-risk search and arrest warrants, and responding/attempting to resolve situations involving armed barricaded suspects.

Our most recent research and analysis found that in 2014, two SWAT officers and two non-SWAT officers were killed by suspects while serving search warrants (all in separate incidents). However, after reviewing all line of duty deaths in the United States, we concluded that 11 out of 47 non-accidental gunfire deaths were the result of law enforcement officers being ambushed. The following indicates the number of ambushes in each corresponding state: 2-FL, 2-IN, 2-NV, 2-NY, 1-PA, 1-UT, and 1-VA. This accounts for 23.4% of all line of duty non-accidental gunfire deaths.

Furthermore, the total number of ambush deaths would be significantly higher if gunfire deaths that also involved traffic stops and response to domestic disputes were considered. Only clear-cut ambush deaths were included in the 23.4% figure, and not ones that could be associated with other types of occurrences.

Consequently, law enforcement officers must continue to be vigilant when working and not actively responding to calls for service, as well as during off-duty activities. Every effort must be made to minimize public access to personal data and to ensure individual/family protection at all times.

Data Source: Officer Down Memorial Page