

City of Burbank
MEMORANDUM

1/30/24

CONTENTS
Michael Albanese
NOTED

STOHL
8980

Date: January 11, 2024
To: Chief Michael Albanese
From: Lieutenant Mark Stohl – Internal Affairs Bureau
Subject: Annual Analysis of Assault on Law Enforcement Officers - 2023

CALEA Standard 4.2.5 requires the Department to complete an evaluation of all assaults on Burbank Police Department (BPD) law enforcement officers to determine trends or patterns with recommendations to enhance officer safety, revise policy, or address training issues.

This is the seventh year the Department has conducted this review to comply with this CALEA standard. It should be noted that an assault on a law enforcement officer does not necessarily result in the use of force by a Department member. Also, in some cases, more than one officer or suspect was involved.

Methodology and Data

The unit of analysis for this administrative review is assaulted officers in the line of duty. The *Federal Bureau of Investigation's* definition of *Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted* (LEOKA) was used. Officers included in this analysis met the following criteria at the time of the incident:

1. Were acting in an official capacity
2. Were duly sworn and had arrest powers
3. Wore/carried badges
4. Carried department-approved firearms/less lethal options/equipment

The data was extracted from the *Tiburón* database.

Summary and Findings

In accordance with CALEA Standard 4.2.5, I reviewed Burbank Police Department assault on law enforcement officer cases for the 2023 calendar year. I discovered there were 49 cases involving assaults or threatened assaults on sworn officers in our jurisdiction. This was compared to 43 incidents in 2022, a 13% increase year over year. There were 36 incidents in 2021. This represents an increase of 27% from 2021 to 2023. A total of 78 officers and 49 suspects were involved in the 49 cases.

My review of the LEOKA incidents determined the following:

Day/Time/Location:

- Assaults on officers happened mostly on Tuesday (10 incidents), followed by Sunday (8), Friday (7), and Saturday (7).
- Assaults occurred more frequently during night watch (1740 – 0600 hours) versus day watch (0540 – 1800 hours), with 20 during day watch and 29 during night watch.
- Assault cases were split evenly between the Valley (51%) compared to the Hill (49%) sections of the City.
- 73 percent of the incidents resulted from a *call for service* (CFS). 27 percent resulted from officer-initiated contacts.
- 71 percent of the assaults took place outdoors.

Officer Characteristics

- The majority of the officers assaulted were males (95%), as compared to females (5%). This is a change from the prior year where 65 percent of suspects were male and 35 percent were female.
- 26 percent of the assaults resulted in some type of injury to an officer (cut, scrape, laceration, swelling, bruising, soft tissue joint injury, etc.). No officers suffered serious injury or were killed.
- Force was used by officers in 39 percent of the incidents. The vast majority of these uses of force involved control holds, takedowns, or strikes with personal weapons. A TASER was utilized in five of the incidents. A 40mm foam baton launcher was used in three incidents. One Officer Involved Shootings (OIS) took place during the year.
- Officers were assaulted by being bitten four times, spat upon 11 times, assaulted by vehicles two times, kicked five times, struck 11 times, and threatened with a knife/gun/acts of violence 21 times. The Burbank / Glendale Joint Air Support Unit pilots were struck by a laser one time.

Suspect Characteristics

- 84 percent were males and 16 percent were females
- 41 percent were White
- 18 percent were Black
- 41 percent were Hispanic
- The average age of the offenders was 32. The youngest was 13 (two different incidents – both female). The oldest was 51 (two different instances).
- 20 percent of the incidents resulted in an injury to the suspect (red marks, laceration, bruising, swelling, fracture, etc.). One incident resulted in an individual being hospitalized and one resulted in death.
- In 43 percent of the incidents, the suspect was under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- In 18 percent of the incidents, the suspect exhibited signs of underlying mental health issues.

Trends or Patterns

Most of the incidents in 2023 involved threats of violence. The majority of incidents where actual assaultive behavior took place occurred when officers were in physical contact with, or attempting to detain a suspect. Many of the incidents involved suspects actively resisting the officers' attempts to place them under arrest either by throwing objects, spitting, kicking, or striking the officer with a fist or other body part. Suspect management continues to be a critical component of officer safety when making field contacts. Tactical planning, recognizing behavioral cues, and engaging with adequate resources remain key to managing incidents effectively.

A continuing trend is the apparent presence of mental health issues or drug/alcohol intoxication. These were exhibited by suspects in 61% of the incidents in 2023 (versus 55% in 2022).

Recommendations

In reviewing the data, I did not identify any substantial deficiencies in officer safety practices that would require modifications to policy or training. The Department's Critical Incident Review Board (CIRB) examines use of force incidents in detail every month. CIRB provides timely input on policy, training, and equipment recommendations addressing trends or areas of concern.