



Office of Criminal Justice Statistics

Fatal Officer-Involved Shootings, 2015

May 2016

Introduction

The Office of Criminal Justice Statistics collects data on all fatal officer-involved shootings in the State. For purposes of this report, a fatal officer-involved shooting is defined as “the discharge of a service weapon by an officer that results in the death of a civilian.”

This report provides descriptive data and a summary of events surrounding fatal officer-involved shootings in Oklahoma for 2015.

Methodology

Data are from multiple sources, including local newspapers, television reports, Internet searches, medical examiner reports, and Supplementary Homicide Reports. The Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH) serves as an additional source of information; historically, OSDH has assisted in identifying additional deaths missed using traditional sources.

Once a fatal officer-involved shooting is identified, the autopsy report is requested from the Oklahoma Office of the Chief Medical Examiner. Data are collected for state-level analysis, including descriptive data, pertinent circumstances, weapons involved in the incident, and behaviors of both the individual and law enforcement prior to the death.

Findings

Thirty-three fatal officer-involved shootings occurred in 2015; seven deaths occurred in the first quarter, 12 occurred in the second quarter, seven in the third quarter, and seven in the fourth quarter.

Demographics

The average age of the individuals was 38 - the youngest was 18 and the oldest was 83. All of the individuals were male. Twenty-one individuals were white, nine were black, two were American Indian, and one was Hispanic. Ten occurred in Oklahoma County; two in Carter, Cherokee, Payne, and Tulsa counties; and one in Adair, Bryan, Choctaw, Coal, Comanche, Creek, Grady, Grant, Logan, Mayes, Muskogee, Okmulgee, Osage, Ottawa, and Pottawatomie counties. Eight of the deaths occurred in Oklahoma City (7) and Tulsa (1), Oklahoma’s two largest cities.

Manner of Death

The Oklahoma Office of the Chief Medical Examiner is responsible for determining manner of death for all sudden, violent, unexpected, or suspicious deaths. While there may be multiple causes of death listed on an autopsy report, there can be only one manner of death: natural, accident, suicide, homicide, or unknown. In 2015, the manner of death for 28 fatal officer-involved shootings was homicide. Autopsy reports were unavailable for four deaths (see table 1).

Fatal Officer-Involved Shootings, 2015

Date	Sex	Race	Age	City	County	Manner of Death
01/04/15	Male	White	18	Guthrie	Logan	Homicide
01/17/15	Male	Black	21	Muskogee	Muskogee	--
01/29/15	Male	White	42	Stillwater	Payne	Homicide
02/06/15	Male	Black	25	Oklahoma City	Oklahoma	Homicide
02/25/15	Male	Black	37	Oklahoma City	Oklahoma	Homicide
03/08/15	Male	Hispanic	40	Oklahoma City	Oklahoma	Homicide
03/20/15	Male	American Indian	34	Olney	Coal	Homicide
04/02/15	Male	Black	43	Tulsa	Tulsa	Homicide
04/07/15	Male	White	32	Shawnee	Pottawatomie	Homicide
04/09/15	Male	White	54	Kellyville	Creek	Homicide
04/11/15	Male	White	66	Sand Springs	Tulsa	Homicide
04/12/15	Male	White	83	Oklahoma City	Oklahoma	Homicide
04/23/15	Male	White	51	Rufe	Choctaw	Homicide
04/24/15	Male	White	63	Miami	Ottawa	--
04/26/15	Male	White	29	Bunch	Adair	Homicide
04/29/15	Male	White	26	Chickasha	Grady	Homicide
05/27/15	Male	White	24	Edmond	Oklahoma	Homicide
05/29/15	Male	White	35	Mounds	Okmulgee	Homicide
06/27/15	Male	American Indian	35	Tahlequah	Cherokee	Homicide
07/04/15	Male	Black	42	Oklahoma City	Oklahoma	Homicide
07/06/15	Male	White	20	Oklahoma City	Oklahoma	Homicide
07/20/15	Male	White	54	Choctaw	Oklahoma	Homicide
07/22/15	Male	Black	26	Oklahoma City	Oklahoma	Homicide
08/09/15	Male	White	41	Ardmore	Carter	Homicide
08/30/15	Male	White	20	Cushing	Payne	Homicide
09/13/15	Male	Black	67	Pond Creek	Grant	Homicide
10/05/15	Male	Black	18	Midwest City	Oklahoma	Homicide
10/12/15	Male	Black	40	Lawton	Comanche	Homicide
10/30/15	Male	White	30	Fort Gibson	Cherokee	Homicide
11/05/15	Male	White	20	Hominy	Osage	Homicide
11/21/15	Male	White	24	Colbert	Bryan	Homicide
12/09/15	Male	White	51	Sportsmen Acres	Mayes	--
12/12/15	Male	White	36	Healdton	Carter	--

To better understand events surrounding each death, researchers gathered information on the behaviors exhibited by individuals prior to their death was gathered. In 38% of fatal officer-involved shootings, the individual attempted to escape or flee custody.

Twenty-six percent resisted being handcuffed or arrested, while 20% verbally threatened others. Fifteen percent barricaded themselves; 13% attempted to grab, hit, or kick law enforcement; and four percent made suicidal statements. Three percent attempted to gain possession of officer's weapon, and another three percent gained possession of officer's weapon (see table 3).

At the time of their death, individuals may have exhibited more than one of the identified behaviors (85%) or none at all (15%).

Table 3. Behaviors Exhibited at Time of Death

Behavior	%
Tried to escape/flee custody	38%
Resisted being handcuffed or arrested	26
Verbally threatened other(s)	20
Barricaded self or initiated standoff	15
Attempted to grab, hit, or kick officer(s)	13
Made suicidal statements	4
Attempt to take officer's weapon	3
Gained possession of officer's weapon	3

All 33 individuals would have faced charges had they survived the events leading to their death. In 91% of fatal officer-involved shootings, contact between the decedent and law enforcement was initiated due to suspected criminal activity.

Conclusion

For 2015, 33 fatal officer-involved shootings occurred in Oklahoma. Homicide by law enforcement was the leading cause of death. The majority of individuals died at the crime scene.

Thirty-eight percent of individuals attempted to flee from law enforcement, while twenty-six percent resisted arrest. Finally, the contact between law enforcement and the decedent was initiated by some form of criminal activity.

Case Descriptions

This section briefly describes the events surrounding each death.

January 4, 2015 - An 18-year-old Alva man was shot by law enforcement in Guthrie. Law enforcement attempted to place the decedent in handcuffs after finding a gun in the decedent's waistband. The decedent pushed the officer away and reached for his waistband. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

January 17, 2015 - A 21-year-old man died in Muskogee from gunshot wounds after he pulled a gun while fleeing from law enforcement. The medical examiner's report was unavailable.

January 29, 2015 - A 42-year-old Stillwater man died from a gunshot wound after he refused to comply with orders to show his hand and get on the ground. Law enforcement shot the decedent when he reached for his waist area and acted as if he was drawing a weapon. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

February 6, 2015 - A 25-year-old Oklahoma City man was shot after pulling a gun and firing at law enforcement. Law enforcement was attempting to serve a warrant for his arrest. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

February 25, 2015 - A 37-year-old man died in Oklahoma City from gunshot wounds after attempting to run over law enforcement with his vehicle. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

March 8, 2015 - A 40-year-old Oklahoma City man died from a gunshot wound after he pointed a rifle at law enforcement. The officer was responding

to a disturbance with shots fired. The manner of death was ruled a homicide.

March 20, 2015 - A 34-year-old man died in Olney after being shot by law enforcement. The decedent fired at law enforcement during a vehicle pursuit. The decedent was wanted for the murder of his brother. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

April 2, 2015 - A 43-year-old Tulsa man was shot by law enforcement following a short foot pursuit. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

April 7, 2015 - A 32-year-old man Tecumseh man was shot by law enforcement. The decedent was fleeing the scene of an attempted burglary in his vehicle. After the decedent's vehicle became disabled, he confronted law enforcement with a gun. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

April 9, 2015 - A 54-year-old Kellyville man was shot by law enforcement after he drove his truck into an officer. Law enforcement was responding to a domestic violence call. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

April 11, 2015 - A 66-year-old Sand Springs man was shot by law enforcement after making threatening statements as he approached an officer with a gun. Law enforcement was responding to a call about a man firing a weapon in his backyard. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

April 12, 2015 - An 83-year-old Oklahoma City man died from multiple gunshot wounds after confronting law enforcement with a machete. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

April 23, 2015 - A 51-year-old Rufe man was shot by law enforcement after he shot two officers, set his home on fire, and attempted to gain possession of another officer's gun. A tactical team responded to the decedent's residence after receiving reports of a

man shooting at neighbors. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

April 24, 2015 - A 63-year-old Miami man was shot by law enforcement after he displayed a weapon in a threatening manner. The decedent fled from a driver's license checkpoint and led law enforcement on a vehicle pursuit. The medical examiner's report was unavailable.

April 26, 2015 - A 29-year-old Arkansas man was shot during a confrontation with a game warden. The decedent had a warrant for his arrest. When the game warden attempted to take the decedent into custody, the two men struggled and the decedent attempted to drown the officer. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

April 29, 2015 - A 26-year-old man was shot by law enforcement in Chickasha. Law enforcement approached the decedent because they suspected him of a nearby burglary. The decedent evaded law enforcement on foot. When law enforcement confronted the decedent, he produced a knife. The decedent would not drop the weapon as ordered by law enforcement. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

May 27, 2015 - A 24-year-old Edmond man died from a gunshot wound after he refused to drop his gun and pointed it at law enforcement. Law enforcement was responding to a call regarding a suicidal man with a gun. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

May 29, 2015 - A 35-year-old Tulsa man was shot after he attacked law enforcement. The decedent was attempted to push a stalled vehicle out of high water. After complying with orders to get out of the water, the decedent tackled an officer. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

June 27, 2015 - A 35-year-old Tahlequah man was shot after pointing a gun at law enforcement. The

decedent hid in an attic when law enforcement responded to a call regarding a stolen vehicle. He jumped out of the attic and refused to drop the weapon when ordered to do so. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

July 4, 2015 - A 42-year-old Oklahoma City man was shot after pointing a gun at a police helicopter. Officers were responding to a call regarding an armed man checking vehicles in an apartment complex. The decedent fled from police. The helicopter kept track of the decedent as he attempted to evade officers. Officers opened fire when the decedent pointed a gun in the direction of the helicopter. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

July 6, 2015 - A 20-year-old Oklahoma City man was shot after pulling a gun on law enforcement. Officers were responding to a call regarding an individual attempting to break into a car. The decedent pointed a gun at officers when he was found hiding in a nearby backyard. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

July 20, 2015 - A 54-year-old man died in Choctaw from two gunshot wounds. The decedent was caught in the commission of a burglary by an off duty officer. The decedent was shot as he raised a gun when confronted by the officer. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

July 22, 2015 - A 26-year-old Oklahoma City man died after being shot by law enforcement. Law enforcement was investigating a rape complaint. The decedent armed himself with a knife and hid under a bed. When he emerged from under the bed, the decedent was ordered to drop the knife. The decedent was tased twice, but made an aggressive move toward an officer. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

August 9, 2015 - A 41-year-old Ardmore man was shot after he refused to comply with orders to remove his hand from his pockets. When the

decedent did comply, he pulled what was thought to be a handgun. Law enforcement was responding to a call regarding a suicidal individual. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

August 30, 2015 - A 20-year-old man was shot after he pointed a handgun at and verbally threatened two individuals. Law enforcement was responded to a call of an unwanted person at a home in Cushing. The decedent pulled a gun when law enforcement arrived on scene. Officers ordered the decedent to drop the gun, but he refused to comply. An officer shot the decedent as he continued to verbally threaten the individuals while holding the gun. The manner of death was ruled homicide

September 13, 2015 - A 67-year-old McAlester died from multiple gunshot wounds after a confrontation with officers in Pond Creek. Law enforcement responded to a call regarding a person outside of a home. When officers attempted to restrain the decedent, he produced a gun and opened fire. One officer was shot and the other returned fire. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

October 5, 2015 - An 18-year-old Oklahoma City man died from multiple gunshot wounds sustained during a confrontation with law enforcement. An officer initiated a foot pursuit after the decedent fled the scene of a burglary. The officer caught up to the decedent and ordered him to show his hands. The decedent pointed a loaded gun at the officer. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

October 12, 2015 - A 40-year-old Lawton man was shot after an encounter with law enforcement. Law enforcement was responding to calls regarding a man walking along the street and waving a gun at passing motorists. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

October 30, 2015 - A 30-year-old man died in Cherokee after an encounter with law enforcement. Law enforcement was responding to a call regarding multiple stabbings at a rehabilitation facility. When

officers arrived, they found the decedent hiding in an outbuilding. The decedent was shot after a Taser failed to subdue him. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

November 5, 2015 – A 20 year-old Tulsa man was shot after engaging law enforcement in a motor vehicle pursuit. Law enforcement was responding to a call that the decedent had shot himself and another person. Officers pursued the decedent's vehicle until it went into a ditch. The decedent refused to comply with orders to drop his weapon. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

November 21, 2015 - A 24-year-old Colbert man died from multiple gunshot wounds following an altercation with law enforcement. The decedent was approached by law enforcement as he was walking in town. The officer attempted to arrest the man upon discovering he had several traffic warrants. The decedent attempted to elude the officer, but they became involved in a physical confrontation. The manner of death was ruled homicide.

December 9, 2015 - A 51-year-old Vinita man was shot after pointing a rifle at law enforcement. Law enforcement was responding to a call regarding a suicidal man barricaded in a bedroom. When officers arrived, the decedent came out of the house with the rifle. The decedent initially complied with orders to drop the gun, but picked it up and aimed at officers. The medical examiner's report was unavailable.

December 12, 2015 - A 36-year-old Healdton man was shot after a physical confrontation with law enforcement. Law enforcement was responding to a domestic disturbance call. The decedent attempted to hit an officer. The officer pulled his taser and ordered the decedent to get on the ground. The decedent complied and the officer holstered the taser. When the officer attempted to handcuff him, the decedent got on top of the officer, took the taser,

and pointed it at the officer. The medical examiner's report was unavailable.

The Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation is recognized by the Bureau of Justice Statistics as the Statistical Analysis Center (SAC). The SAC collects, analyzes, and disseminates justice information; these functions are located within OSBI's Office of Criminal Justice Statistics. The following individual(s) wrote this report, under the direction of Angie Baker, Director of the Oklahoma Statistical Analysis Center:

Meredith Mouser, Statistical Research Specialist

For more information, please contact:

Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation

6600 North Harvey

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73116

405.858.5272

<http://www.ok.gov/osbi/>

Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not represent the official position or policies of the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation.