

# **Peace Officers Murdered in California - 1993**

by

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*Training is the Key to Tactics and Attitude...*

*Attitude is the Key to Survival!*

## **Introduction**

Eight peace officers were murdered in California in 1993 during the performance of their official duties. All eight died as a result of gunshot wounds from felonious actions of suspects. The murdered officers represented municipal police departments and a county sheriff's department in California.

The data in this article was obtained through interviews with homicide investigators or department spokes-persons shortly after the murders. The author thanks those personnel and their administrators for cooperating in sharing information. The data is tabulated into a Table, a series of Charts and a narrative which is followed by a series of observations for learning points. This article is intended for use by law enforcement trainers and individual officers to assist in modifying tactical training and skills.

### **Tabulated Information**

A Table composite lists in column form twenty-two factors dealing with each incident in which officers were murdered. These factors include the day, date and time of the murder, agency the victim was employed by and the initiating call or incident. A footnote (\*) indicates whether the officers were wearing body armor at the time of the murder. Additional peace officer factors listed are age, race, total years of law enforcement experience, rank, assignment and number of officers on scene at time of the murder. Information on suspects is listed for their age, race and if the suspect was killed (\*\* K) or committed suicide (\*\* S). Data is listed on the type and caliber of the weapon used in the murder, distance between officer and suspect at the time of the fatal shot and if the victims were killed with their own weapon (\*\*\*). The location on the body of the officer's fatal injury is listed. A footnote (#) denotes if the victim officer was struck with just one gunshot.

In 1993 eight officers were murdered in California in seven separate incidents. The murders of the officers occurred throughout the year (Chart #1). One murder occurred in January, two in February in a single incident, one in March, one in May and three officers were murdered in December in three separate incidents. Seven of the eight peace officer murders (87.5%) occurred during the winter months of December through mid-March; however, there is no clear reason for this clustering.

Chart #2 shows the murders by day of the week in which they occurred. Three murders (two incidents) took place on Mondays and one each on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday. No peace officer murders happened on Saturday.

Considering the murders by time of day, Chart #3 lists two of the murdered officers were slain during hours normally considered to be during daylight hours (0600-1759) and six victims were killed during hours of darkness (1800-0559) including the double homicide incident.

The Table lists seven victims were municipal police officers and one was a deputy sheriff. All of the officers were murdered while on-duty and in urban settings. Six of the victims were assigned to uniformed duties, one victim was assigned to a SWAT Unit and one victim was assigned to plainclothes duties. A footnote (\*) lists seven of the victim officers were wearing ballistic body armor at the time of their deaths.

The incidents resulting in the officers' murders were varied with only one type of activity (traffic stop) accounting for two incidents (Garden Grove PD and Manhattan Beach PD). A suspicious vehicle stop resulted in two Compton Police Officers being murdered. One peace officer was slain in each of the following types of activities: narcotics search warrant (Stockton PD); disturbance-unknown trouble (Riverside SD); apprehending a murder suspect during a vehicle pursuit (Oxnard PD); and, assisting in arresting a dog owner resisting an animal-impound action (Oakland PD). Only the activities involving the murder suspect vehicle pursuit and animal-impound occurred during daylight hours.

The average age of the victims was 32.1 years (Chart #4). The ages of the officers in five-year increments were: one 21-25 years; two 26-30 years; three 31-35 years; one 36-40 years; and, one was 41 years of age. The youngest victim (23 year old Compton Officer) was killed in the double homicide during a traffic stop at night and the oldest victim (41 year old Oakland Officer) was

involved in the attempted animal-impound arrest incident during day-time hours.

Chart #5 lists the average law enforcement experience of the officers as 8.9 years. Law enforcement experience of the victims by five-year increments was: four 1-5 years (50%); one 6-10 years; two 11-15 years; and, one 16-20 years. The four victims with 1-5 years law enforcement experience included both Compton Officers on a suspicious vehicle stop, the Riverside Deputy on a disturbance call and the Manhattan Beach Officer on a traffic stop. The oldest peace officer (41 years, Oakland PD) also had the most years of law enforcement experience (19 years).

Ethnic representation of the eight slain officers is given in Chart #6: five Caucasians (63%); two Hispanics (25%); and, one Black (13%) . In the double homicide one officer was Black and one officer was Caucasian. All of the murder victims were males.

In five of the eight murders (63%) the slain officers had a partner or back-up officers at the scene (Table). Besides the two slain Compton PD Officers working as partners at the time of the suspicious vehicle stop, three other victim officers had back-up personnel. Back-up officers available at those three murder scenes ranged from four officers in the animal-control arrest incident, five officers in the vehicle pursuit of a murder suspect, to ten officers in the case of the narcotics search warrant service incident. In three of the eight murders (38%) the victim officers did not have any other officers at the scene.

The suspects have not been apprehended at the time of this writing in two of the murder incidents (Garden Grove PD and Manhattan Beach PD), both traffic stops. The suspect in the Garden Grove PD incident is reported as being in his

twenties and the Manhattan Beach PD suspect is reported to be between 25-39 years of age. For reporting purposes the author has computed those two suspects' ages at mathematical means of 25 years and 33 years. Chart #7 lists the ages of the seven male suspects in five-year increments: three 21-25 years; two 31-35 years; one 36-40 years; and one in excess of 41 years of age. The killer of the Stockton PD SWAT Team Officer on the narcotics search warrant incident was age 63 years. The average age of the seven suspects is estimated at 33.3 years.

Chart #7 also lists three of the murder suspects as being killed by other peace officers at the crime scene or shortly thereafter during the service of a narcotics search warrant, a murder suspect vehicle pursuit and an animal-control arrest assist incident. One suspect committed suicide after killing a deputy sheriff who had responded to a call of disturbance-unknown trouble.

Suspect ethnicity was two Caucasians, two Blacks, one Hispanic, one Polynesian and one outstanding suspect listed as "Unknown" (Chart #8). One Black suspect committed the double homicide of the Compton Police Officers. All the suspects were males.

Chart #9 lists the firearms used to murder the eight peace officers and varied from handguns used in six murders (75%) to a rifle in one killing and a shotgun in one slaying. Other than handgun, the description of type and caliber of weapon has not been released in the Manhattan Beach PD murder. From the known handgun weapons, three murders were committed with 9mm semi-auto loaders, one with a .380 semi-auto and one with a .38 revolver.

A 9mm semi-auto loader was used in the double homicide (Chart #10). A 12-gauge shotgun was involved in the arrest assist of the animal-control violation

in the Oakland PD murder when the suspect gained entry to his residence and obtained the weapon from inside the front doorway.

Distances from the murder suspects to the victims are tabulated in Chart #11 as ranging from within 0-5 feet in six murders (75%) to 6-10 feet in one case and 200 feet in one case (.300 rifle in the vehicle pursuit of a murder suspect). The Oxnard PD Plainclothes Officer was the only victim not wearing body armor. The body armor worn by the seven victims was not penetrated by gunshots that hit the armor.

Chart #12 lists the location of fatal wound as the head in five of the murders (63%). The other three victims were shot in the torso (two in the back and one in the side). Body armor was not a factor in the three torso wounds as the gunshots was either below or above the body armor. Two victims were struck with only one gunshot (9mm handgun at 0-5 feet and a .300 caliber rifle at 200 feet) with those shots striking the officers in their heads.

#### **Observations and Learning Points:**

1. Peace officers were killed every day except Saturday which requires officers to maintain mental alertness and a tactical attitude every day they report to work for their entire duty shift.
2. Three times as many peace officers were murdered during the hours of darkness compared to hours of light. This identifies a very strong need for continued training on night firing-range and night tactics.

3. Firing-range training must include close-in shooting. This need is self-evident with six peace officers shot within five feet of their assailant and a seventh officer shot within 6-10 feet of the assailant.

4. Southern California suffered six of the eight peace officer murders; however, no geographical part of the State can be considered 'safe' and not requiring continual in-service training. Peace officers were murdered in Oakland and the Sacramento Valley areas in 1993.

5. As always, physical fitness remains important. With the first calculation it appeared that the average suspect was older than the victim; however, if the skewing effect of a 63 year old suspect is averaged as that of the other six suspects, they are approximately four years younger (28.5 years) than the average age of the eight victims (32.1 years).

6. A companion conclusion to physical fitness is the requirement for refresher training in techniques of arrest and control holds as exemplified by a suspect breaking away from officers, entering a residence and obtaining a shotgun with which he killed a police officer.

7. In-service training must continue to review the mundane or "routine" law enforcement activities and provide tactics refreshers on traffic stops, suspicious vehicle stop and disturbance calls. Certainly this type of refresher training need was personified with five of the eight murders occurring during these three types of activities.

8. Tactics refreshers in potential or known "high-risk" activities should continue to be included in training as demonstrated by the murders of two

peace officers assigned to non-uniform units and engaged in a narcotics search warrant service and a vehicle pursuit of a murder suspect.

9. The procedure of notifying the dispatch center of the license number, location of vehicle stop and dispatch running a warrant/want check on the license number needs to be examined. Such a procedure may give the contacting officer cause to adjust his/her frame of reference and tactical approach to the vehicle's occupants and would give law enforcement additional information to follow-up if the incident turns tragic.

10. Mental alertness to the potential for the presence of easily concealed handguns should continue to be emphasized in training as highlighted by 75% of the peace officer murders were committed with handguns in 1993.

### **Summary**

There is no substitute for continuing to stress the fundamentals of officer safety and field tactics in training. Officer safety is maintained through continual review of incidents and refresher training of tactical options under a variety of conditions as measured by the experiences, equipment, personnel resources and mental alertness of peace officers.



## PEACE OFFICERS MURDERED IN CALIFORNIA - 1993

Day/Date & Time	Agency	Victim *	Type of Incident	Victim Age/LE Exp Rank/Race	Victim Assignment	Add. Off's at Scene	Sus. ** Age/Race	Murder Weapon *** Type/Cal. Distance	Location of # Fatal Wound
Fri. - Jan. 22 0210 Hrs.	Stockton PD	Arthur * Parga	Narcotics Search Warr.	31/9 Off./H	SWAT Team	10	63 **(K) H	Rev./ .38 6-10'	Head
Mon. - Feb. 22 2318 Hrs.	Compton PD	Kevin * Burrell James * MacDonald	Suspicious Vehicle	29/5/Off./B 23/1/Off./C	Uniform (Both)	0	22 B	Pistol Semi-Auto./9mm 0-5' (Both)	Head & Back-Upper Torso
Tue. - March 9 0245 Hrs.	Garden Grove PD	Howard * Dallies	Traffic Stop	36/15 Off./C	Uniform	0	20s C	Pistol Semi-Auto./ .380 0-5'	Back Lower Torso
Sun. - May 9 0150 Hrs.	Riverside SD	Kent * Hintergardt	Unknown Trouble-Disturbance	33/5 Dep./C	Uniform	0	37 **(S) P	Pistol Semi-Auto./9mm 0-5'	Head #
Thurs - Dec. 2 1150 Hrs.	Oxnard PD	James O'Brien	Murder Suspect	35/13 Off./C	Plain-clothes	5	33 **(K) C	Rifle Semi-Auto./ .300 Scoped 200'	Head #
Wed. - Dec. 15 1225 Hrs.	Oakland PD	William * Grijalva	Arrest Assist.- Animal Control	41/19 Off./H	Uniform	4	21 **(K) B	Shotgun/12 Ga. 0-5'	Side Upper Torso
Mon. - Dec. 27 2305 Hrs.	Manhattan Beach PD	Martin * Ganz	Traffic Stop	29/4 Off./C	Uniform	0	25-39 Unk.	Handgun 0-5'	Head

Ave. Age = 32.1 Yrs  
Ave. LE Exp. = 8.9 Yrs.

Ave. Age = 33.3 Yrs.

**PEACE OFFICERS MURDERED IN 1993 = 8**

\* = Victim wearing body armor - 7

\*\* = Suspect killed (K) - 3 or committed suicide (S) - 1

\*\*\* = Victim's weapon/equipment was the murder weapon - 0

# = Victim Struck With Only One Gunshot Wound - 2

### RACE

C = Caucasian  
H = Hispanic  
B = Black  
P = Polynesian

Chuck Moorman  
CSI 1/5/94

**#1. Peace Officer Murders By Month of Year**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	2 *	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3

\* One Incident-Double Homicide

**#2. Peace Officer Murders By Day of Week**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
1	3 *	1	1	1	1	0

\* One Incident-Double Homicide

**#3. Peace Officer Murders In Hour of Time**

Day	0600	0700	0800	0900	1000	1100	1200	1300	1400	1500	1600	1700
(2)	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Night	1800	1900	2000	2100	2200	2300	0000	0100	0200	0300	0400	0500
(6)	0	0	0	0	0	3 *	0	1	2	0	0	0

\* One Incident-Double Homicide

**#4. Peace Officer Murders By Victim's Age**

<b>Years of Age</b>	<b>21-25</b>	<b>26-30</b>	<b>31-35</b>	<b>36-40</b>	<b>41-45</b>
<b>Number of Victims</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

Average Age of Eight Victims = 32.1 Years

**#5. Officer Murder Victim's Years of Law Enforcement Experience**

<b>Years of Experience</b>	<b>1-5</b>	<b>6-10</b>	<b>11-15</b>	<b>16-20</b>
<b>Number of Victims</b>	<b>4 *</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

Average Years of Law Enforcement Experience = 8.9 Years

\* One Incident-Double Homicide

**#6. Murdered Officer's Race**

<b>Race</b>	<b>Caucasian</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Black</b>
<b>Number of Victims</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

**#7. Peace Officer Murder Suspects By Age**

Years of Age	20-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-Plus *
Number of Suspects	3 <sup>K</sup>	0	2 <sup>K</sup>	1 <sup>S</sup>	1 <sup>K</sup>

\* One Suspect Age 63 Years

Average Age of 7 Suspects = 33.3 Years

K = Three Suspects Killed By Police

S = One Suspect Committed Suicide

**#8. Murder Suspect's Race**

Race	Caucasian	Hispanic	Polynesian	Black	Unknown
Number of Suspects	2	1	1	2 <sup>*</sup>	1

\* One Suspect Murdered Two Police Officers

**#9. Type of Weapon Used to Murder Officers**

Weapon	Handgun *		Shoulder Arm	
	Revolver	Pistol	Rifle	Shotgun
Number of Victims	1	4	1	1

\* Handgun Type Unidentified in Murder of an Eighth Victim

**#10. Caliber of Murder Weapon**

Weapon *	.300	.380	.38	9mm **	Shotgun
Number of Victims	1 R	1 H	1 H	3 HH	1

\* One Handgun Weapon Unidentified in Murder of an Eighth Victim  
 \*\* One Double Homicide and One Single Homicide (Two Incidents)  
 R = Rifle  
 H = Handgun

**#11. Peace Officer Murders-Distance from Suspect**

Distance In Feet	0-5 *	6-10	11- Plus
Number of Victims	6	1	1 **

\* One Incident-Double Homicide  
 \*\* Victim Struck With Single Rifle Shot at 200'

**#12. Location of Fatal Wound**

Location	Head	Neck	Torso	
			Back	Side
Number of Victims	5 *	0	2	1

\* Two Victims Struck With Only One Shot, Each

**Charles B. Moorman** has served California law enforcement over 30 years with the Fullerton Police Department, California Highway Patrol and the California Specialized Training Institute (CSTI) at San Luis Obispo. He has been the Chief of the resident Emergency Management and Criminal Justice Programs at CSTI since 1984. The author earned Master's Degrees in Police Administration and Education from the California State Universities at Los Angeles and San Luis Obispo. Mr. Moorman holds several California Community Colleges Life Teaching Credentials and the Chief Administrative Officer Credential. He is a Life Member of the California Peace Officers Association and has conducted original research on 204 peace officers murdered in California from January 1, 1970, through December 31, 1993.