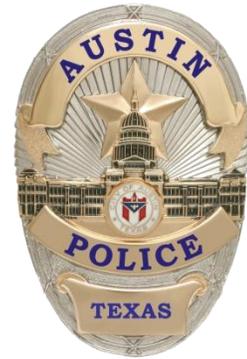


Austin Police Department

Officer-Involved Shootings: 2006-2015



Prepared by the Austin Police Department
Research and Planning Unit
May 2, 2016

Background

This analysis is conducted to better understand the characteristics of officer-involved shootings in APD's jurisdiction. Ultimately, the report may assist in identifying how training and/or procedures might be revised to improve the outcome in situations that have led to officer-involved shootings in the past.

Overview

This report reflects all officer-involved shootings that occurred from 2006 through 2015 in Austin. It includes incidents in which APD or non-APD officers fired their weapons within the city of Austin as well as incidents in which APD officers fired their weapons outside the city of Austin.

Officer-involved shootings are defined as:

- an incident in which an officer fired his/her firearm intentionally at a subject;
- an incident in which an officer fired his/her firearm unintentionally and struck a subject; or
- an incident in which an officer used a less-lethal firearm, struck the subject, and contributed to the subject's death.

There were 52 officer-involved shooting incidents in Austin during this timeframe, involving 71 officers and 54 subjects.

The report is organized into three sections:

- Incident characteristics
- Officer characteristics
- Subject characteristics

Sources

Versadex; APD Special Investigations Unit; APD Training Academy; APD Professional Standards; APD Human Resources; Austin Park Police; Travis County Sheriff's Office; US Marshall; Texas Alcohol and Beverage Commission.

Notable Findings

This report contains the following noteworthy findings:

- Nearly half of the incidents (49%) **occurred at night** and the vast majority (83%) **occurred outside**.
- Over half of the incidents (51%) **occurred in a parking lot or a yard/courtyard**.
- The most common reason for **initial officer contact** was a disturbance call (23%).
- The **most common weapons used by subjects** were guns (67%) followed by vehicles (19%).
- Most of the incidents (61%) involved subjects' use of **drugs, alcohol, or both**.
- A total of **nine officers were injured**, including one who was shot non-fatally.
- **Nearly half of the subjects were killed** (48%), and an additional 33% were injured.
- More than one-third of officers (39%) had between **2 and 5 years of law enforcement experience** at the time of the incident.
- **Most officers (77%) were no-billed by a grand jury**.
- **Almost half of the subjects were White** (44%), 31% were Black and 22% were Hispanic.
- Most subjects (67%) were **between the ages of 20 and 39**.
- Subjects had been **arrested on average five times** prior to the incident.

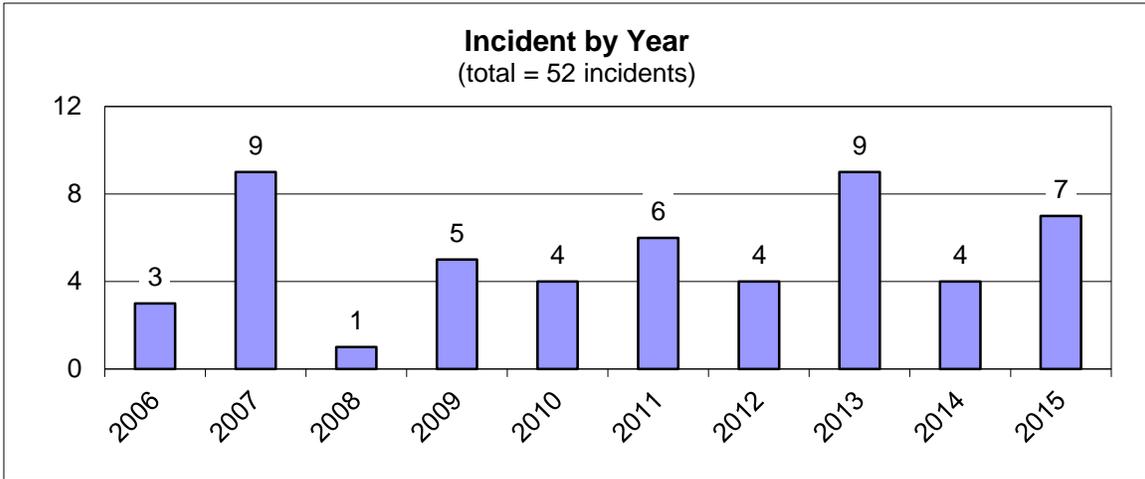
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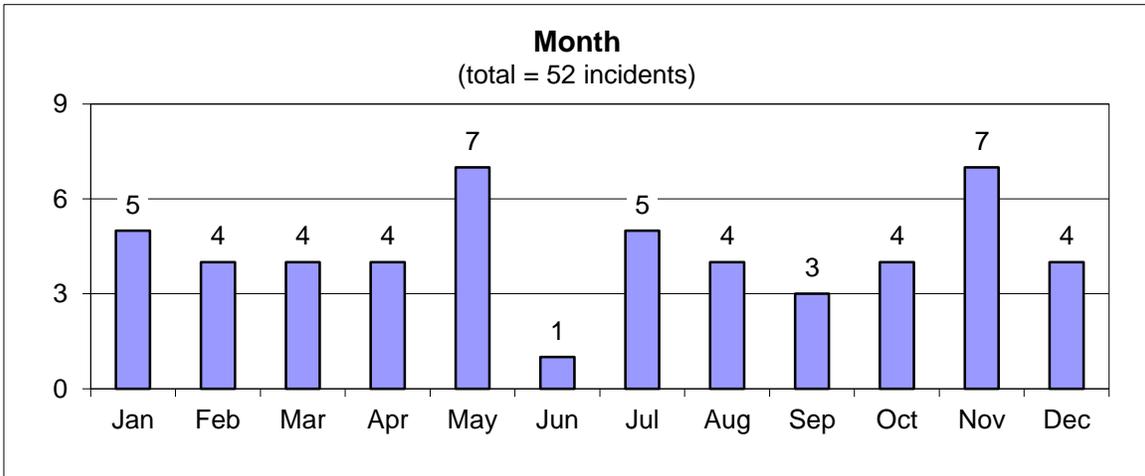
Incident Characteristics

Timing

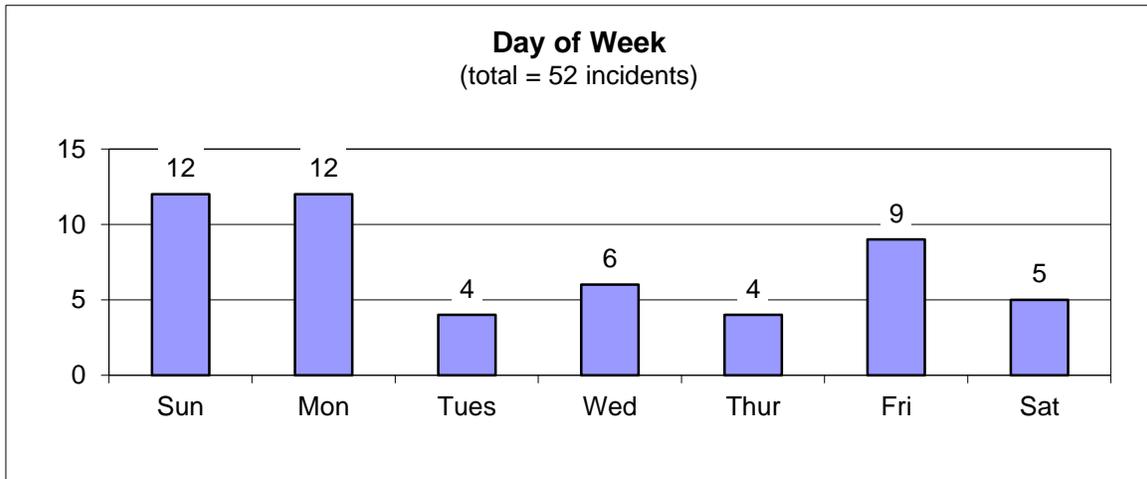
During the years 2006 – 2015, Austin experienced 52 officer-involved shootings. Peak years included 2007 and 2013 (nine shootings). The average was five shootings per year.



May and November were the months with the most officer-involved shootings.



Sunday and Monday were the most common days for officer-involved shootings.

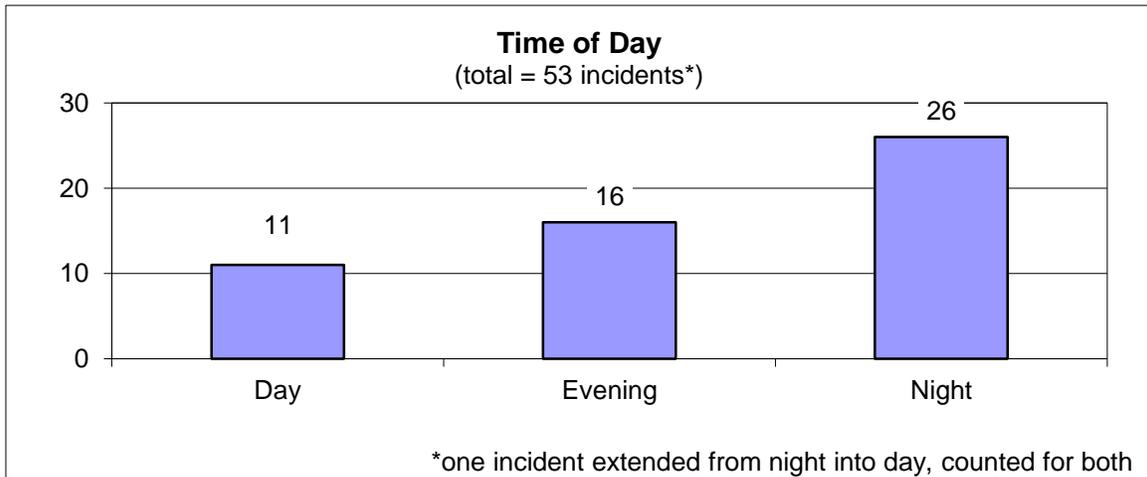


Almost half of the incidents occurred at night (49%) and the fewest incidents occurred during the day. Time frames were based loosely on patrol shifts and were defined as follows:

Day: 06:00 - 13:59

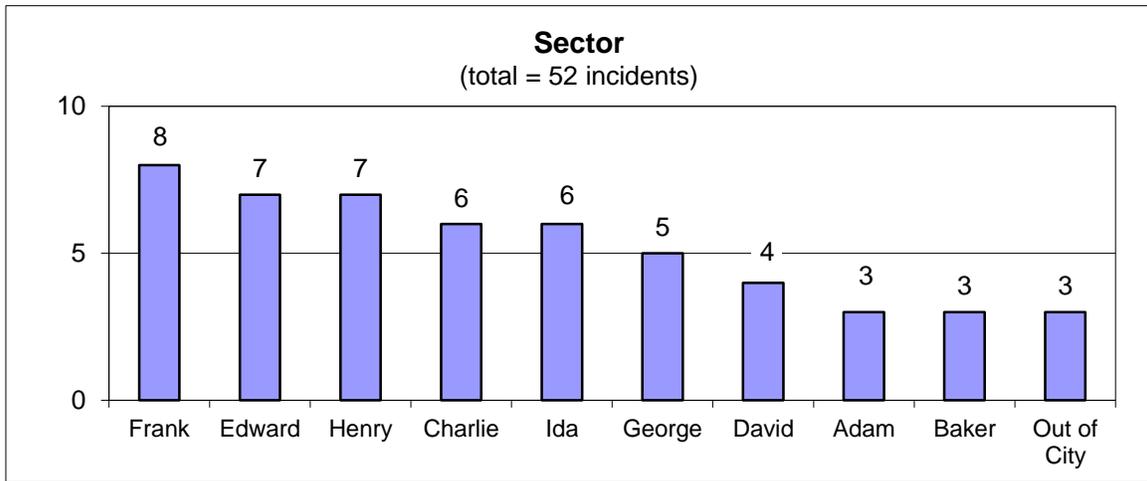
Evening: 14:00 - 21:59

Night: 22:00 - 05:59

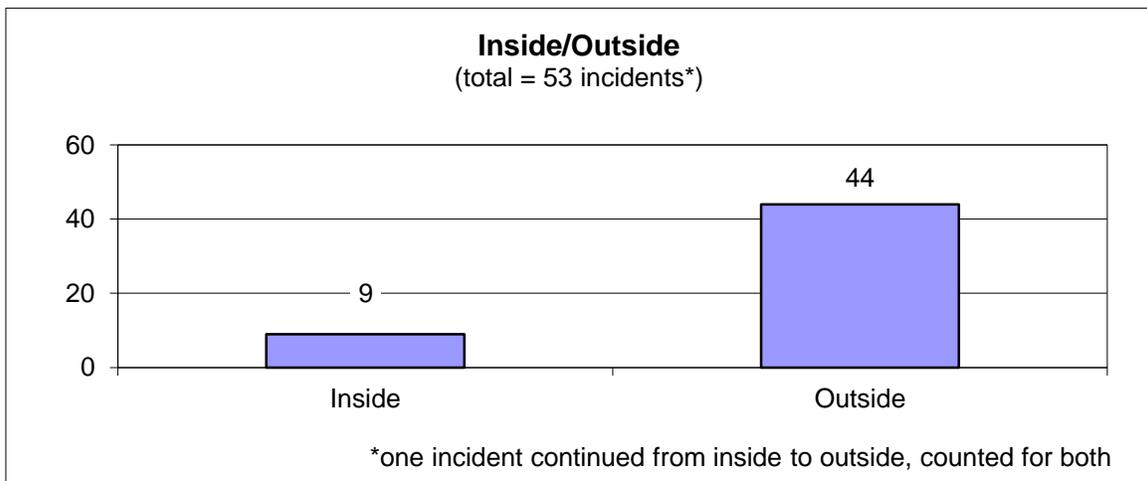


Location

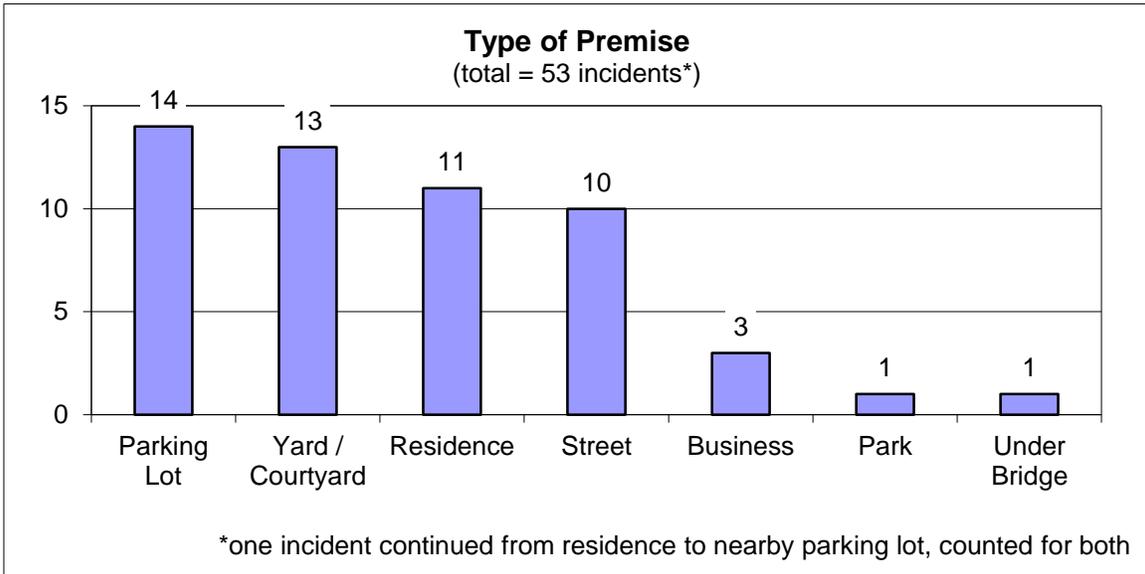
Incidents were slightly more common in Frank sector. Three incidents occurred outside of the city. A map showing the location of each incident is provided on page 20.



A majority of incidents occurred outside (83%), and only 17% occurred inside.

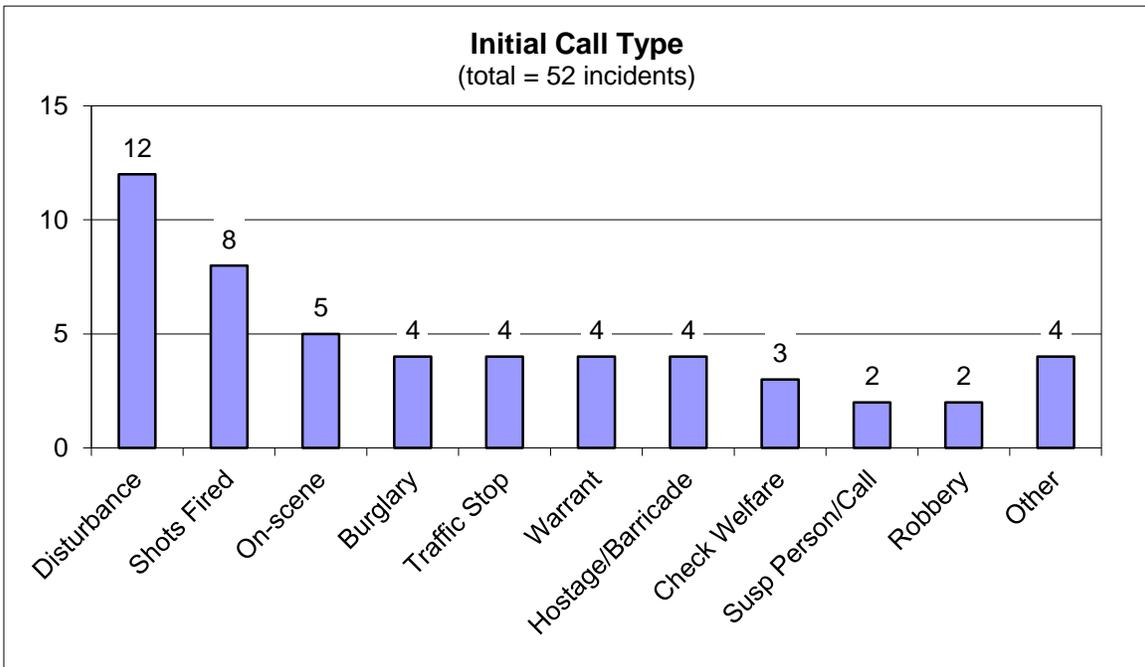


The most common type of premise for an officer-involved shooting was in a parking lot, yard or courtyard (a combined 51% of incidents).



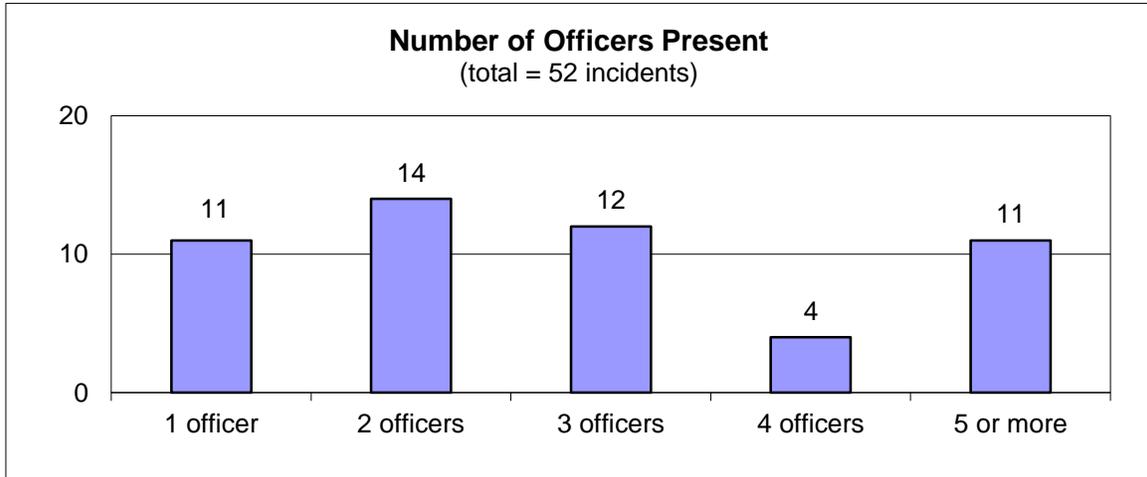
Call Type

Reasons for the initial contact between the officer and subject(s) varied. Disturbance calls were the most frequent type (23%) that ended in an officer-involved shooting.



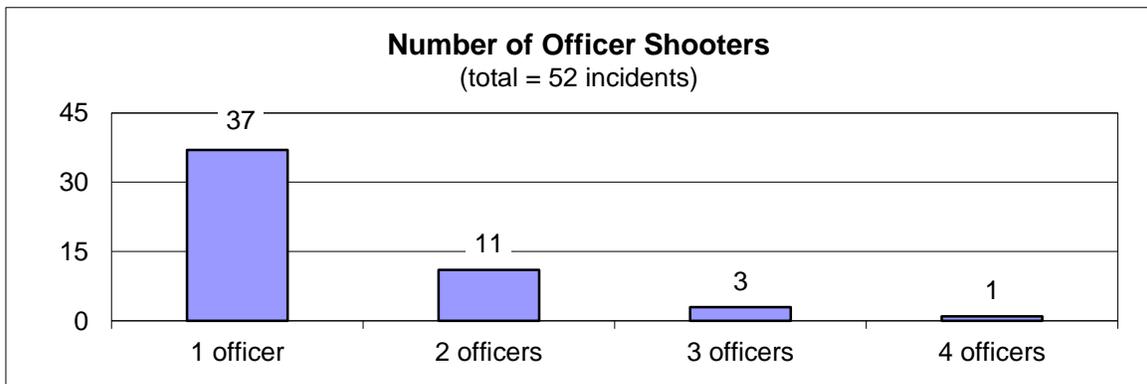
Police Presence

When incidents are examined by total number of officers present, the most common scenario (27% of incidents) was for two officers to be present during the shooting. For 71% of incidents, three or fewer officers were present during the shooting.

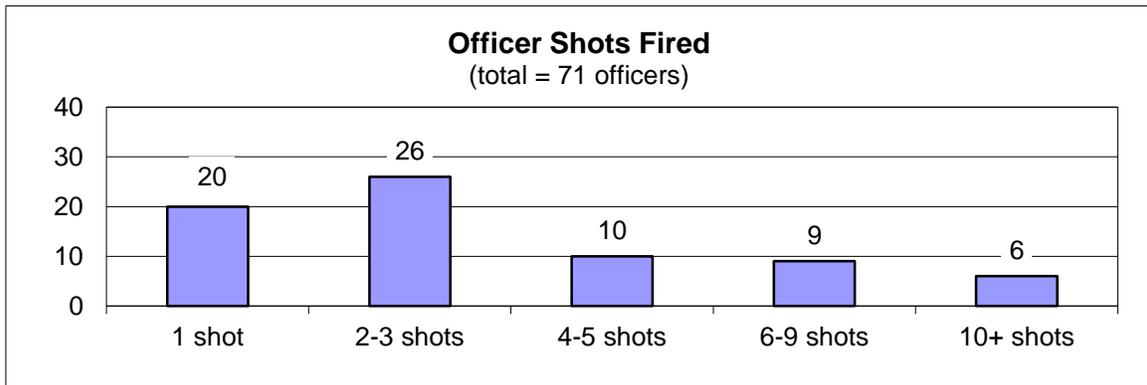


Shots Fired and Hits

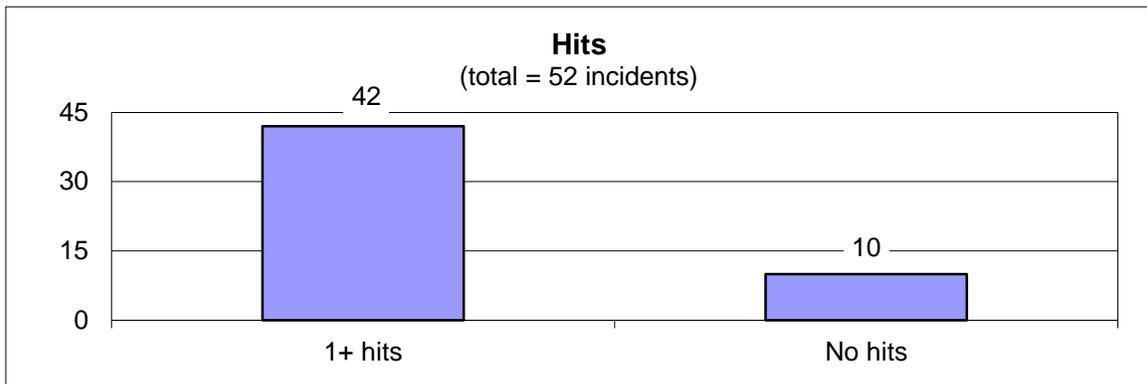
Looking at number of officers shooting, regardless of how many officers were present at the scene, it was most common that only one officer was the shooter (71% of incidents).



It was most common for officers to shoot 2-3 times (37%).

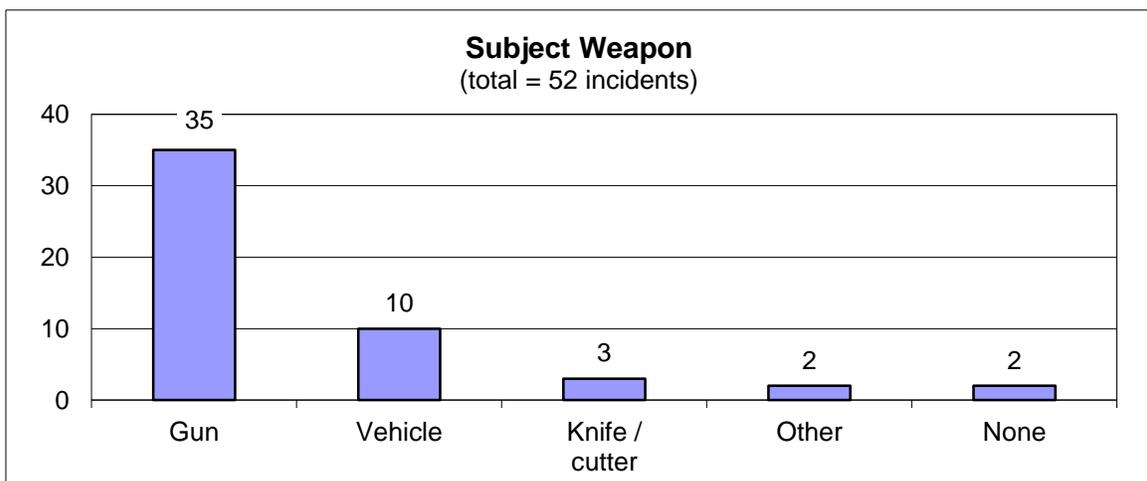


In 81% of incidents, one of the fired shots hit the subject.



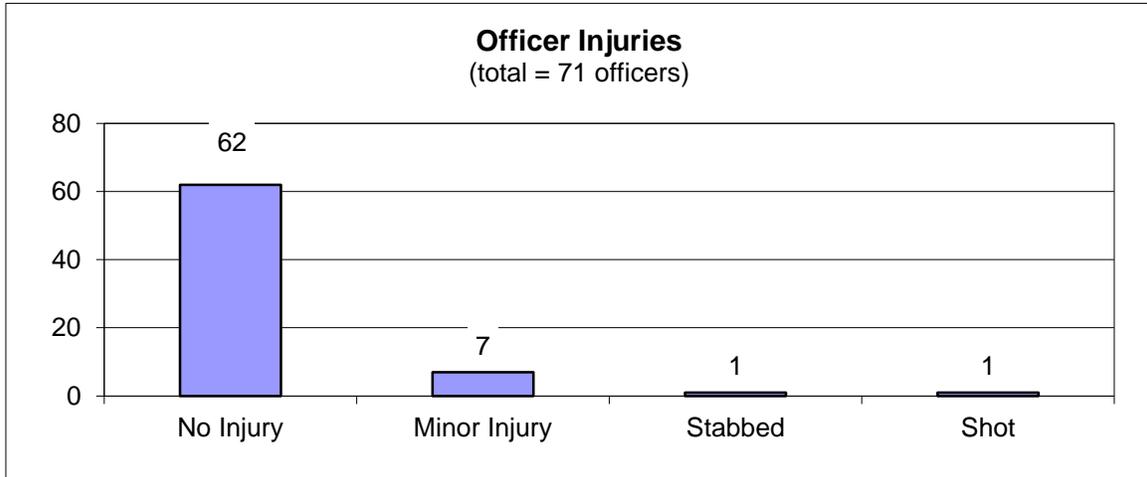
Subject Weapon

Guns (including handguns, rifles, shotguns, and air pistols) were used in the majority of the incidents (67%). The next most used weapons were vehicles (19%).

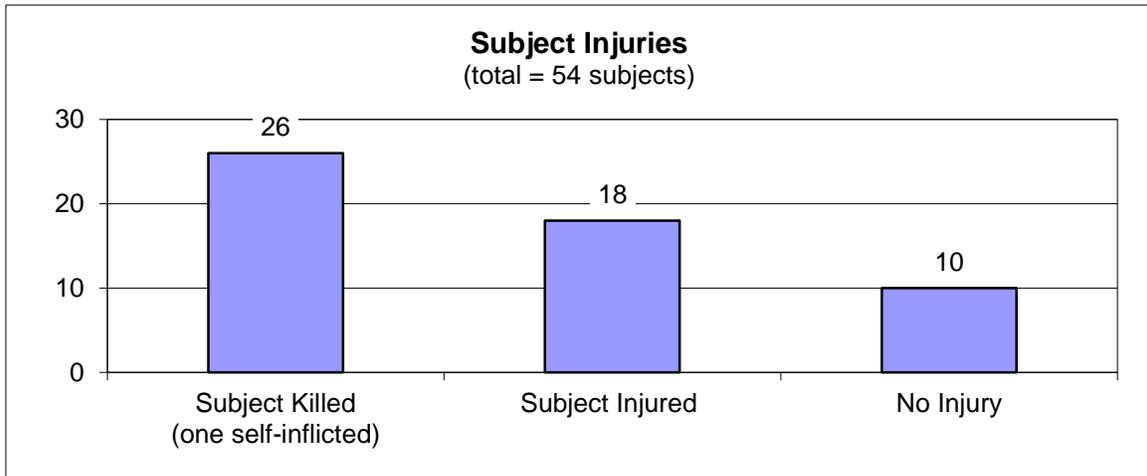


Injuries

Of the 71 officers involved in shooting incidents, the majority (87%) were not injured. Of those injured (13%), the majority sustained only a minor injury including abrasions or a broken finger, while the remaining two were stabbed or shot. No officers were killed.



Of the 54 subjects involved, almost half died as a result of the incident (48%), and an additional 33% were injured.

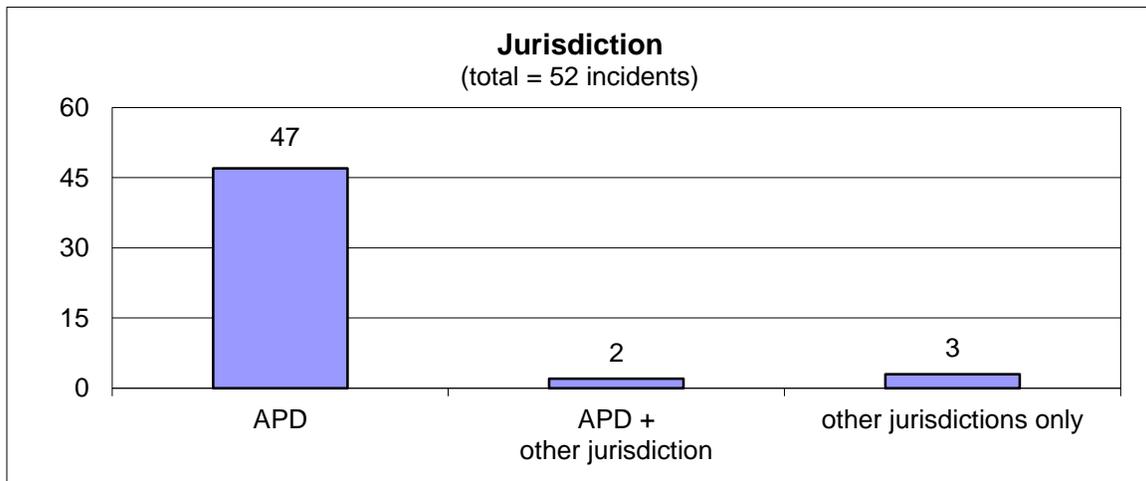


Officer Characteristics

The 52 officer-involved shootings that occurred in Austin from 2006 through 2015 involved 71 officers.

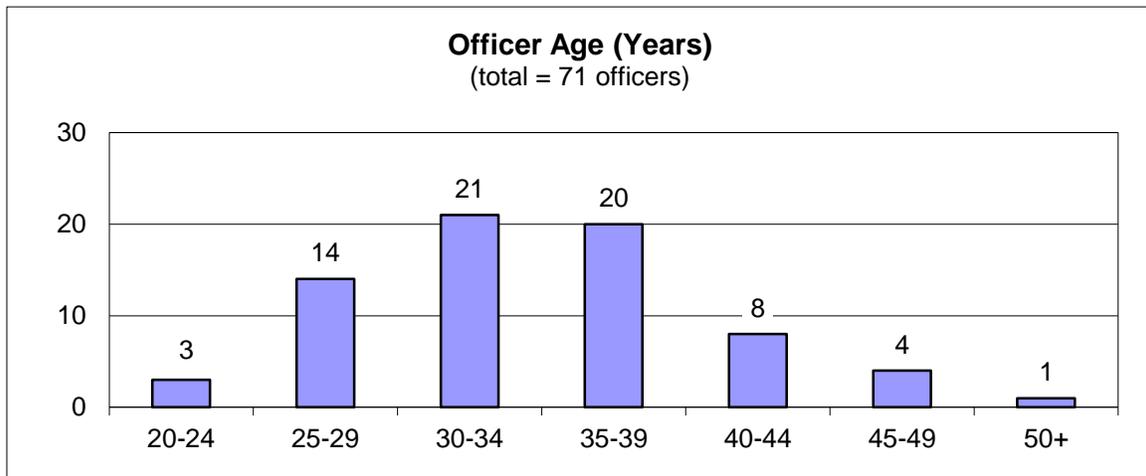
Department

Most shootings involved APD officers (49 incidents). Three incidents involved only officers from other jurisdictions, including Texas Alcohol and Beverage Commission, Travis County Sheriff's Office, and the US Marshal.

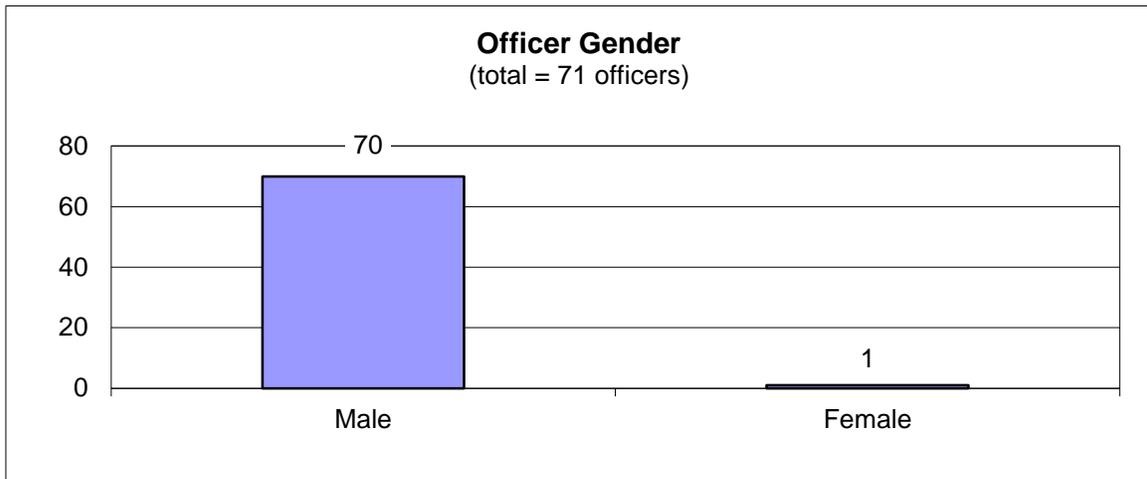


Demographics

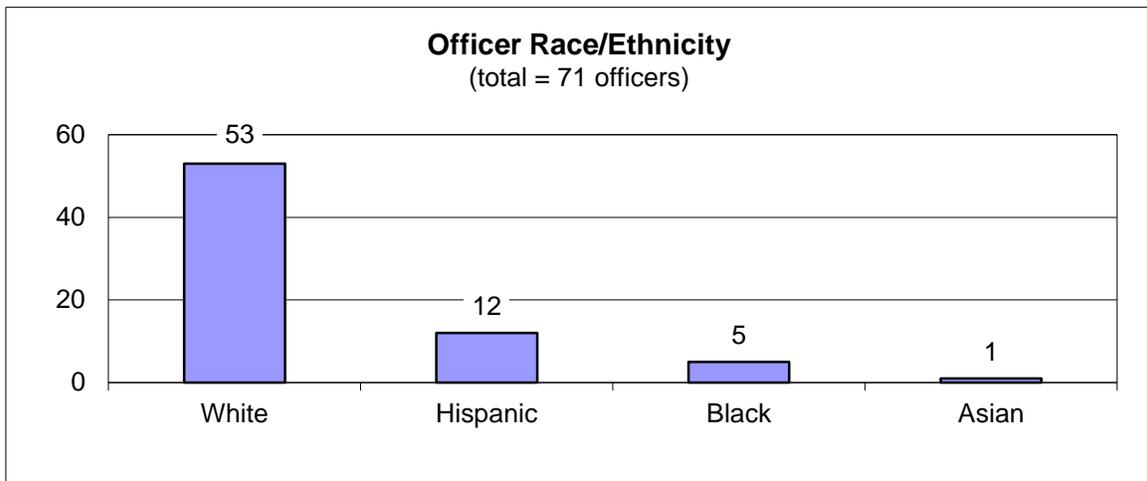
About one-third of officers (30%) were between the ages of 30-34 at the time of the officer-involved shooting.



All but one of the officers involved in shootings were male (99%). As context, in March 2016 APD's sworn population was 90% male and 10% female.

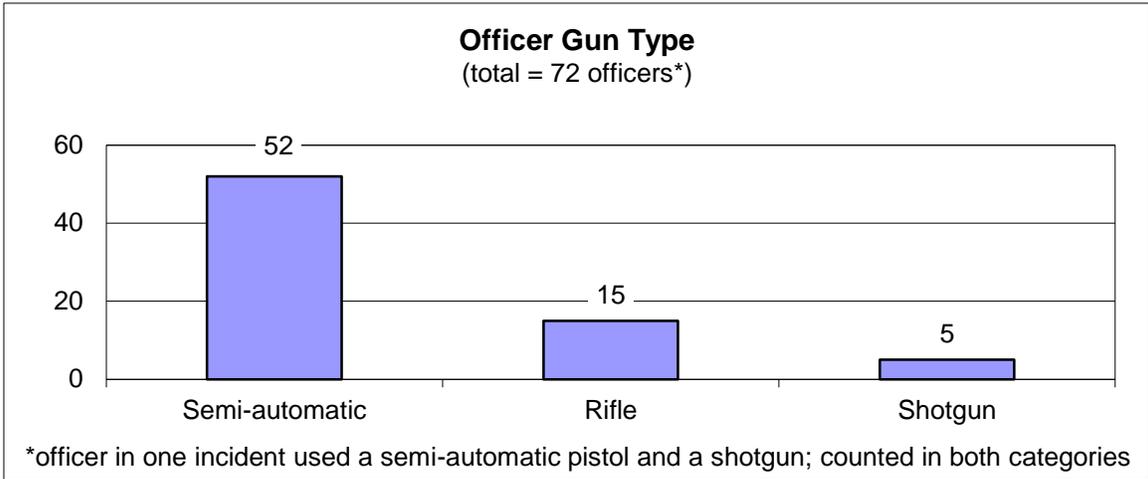


Most officers involved in shootings were White (75%), followed by 17% Hispanic, 7% Black, and 1% Asian. As context, in March 2016 APD's sworn population was 69% White, 20% Hispanic, 9% Black, and 2% Asian.

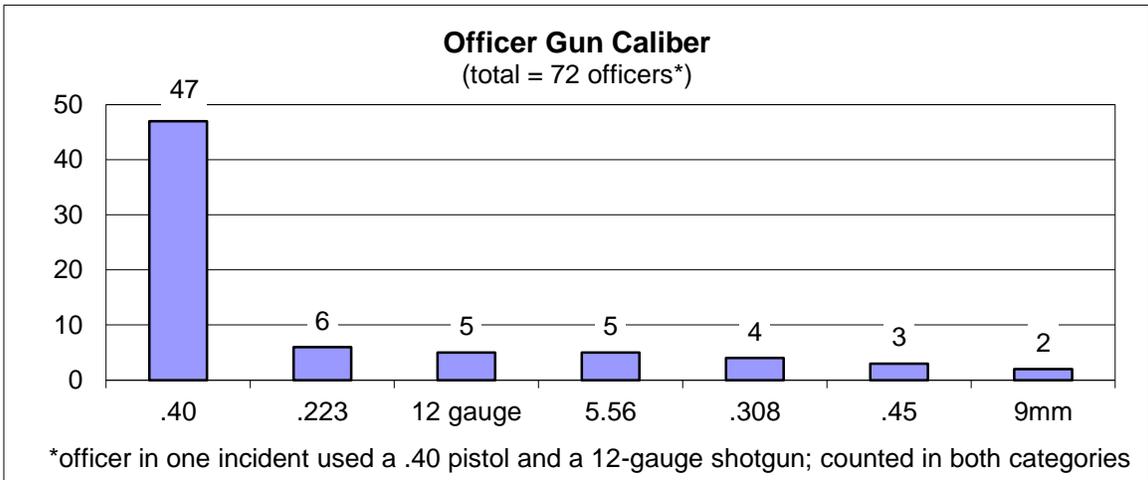


Weapon

Most officers involved in shootings fired a semi-automatic gun (72%).

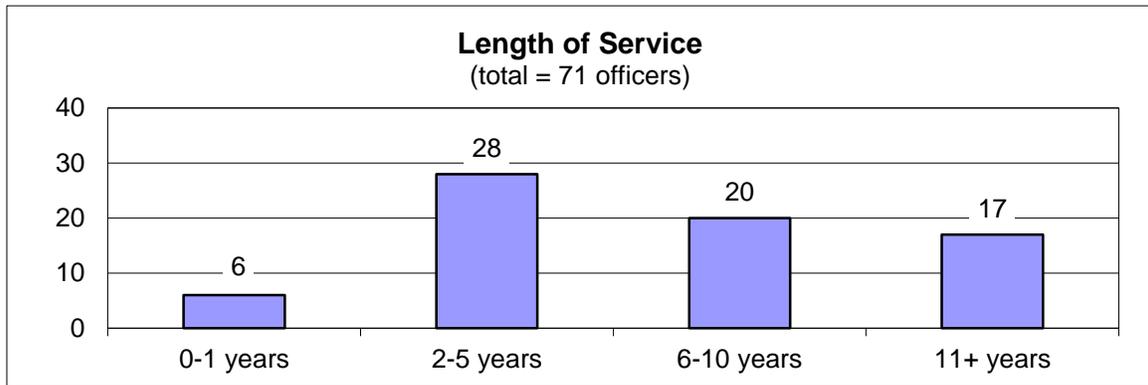


The caliber used most frequently in officer-involved shootings was .40 (used by 65% of officers).

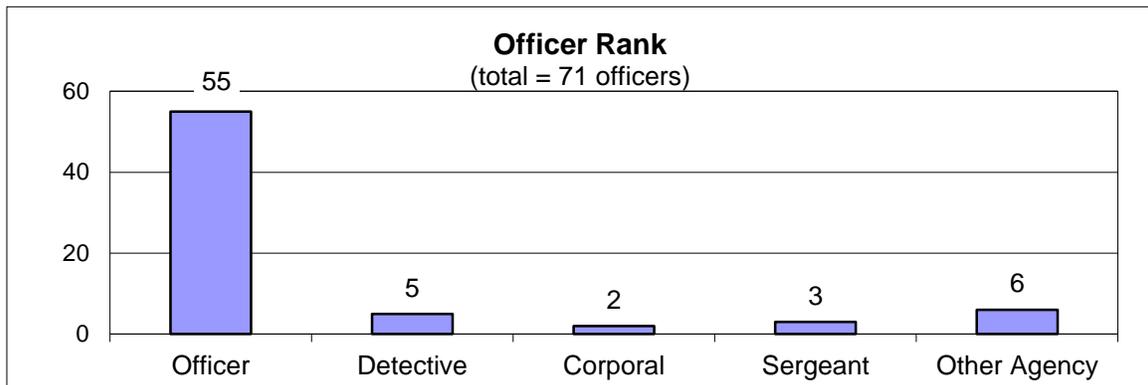


Experience and Prior Involvement

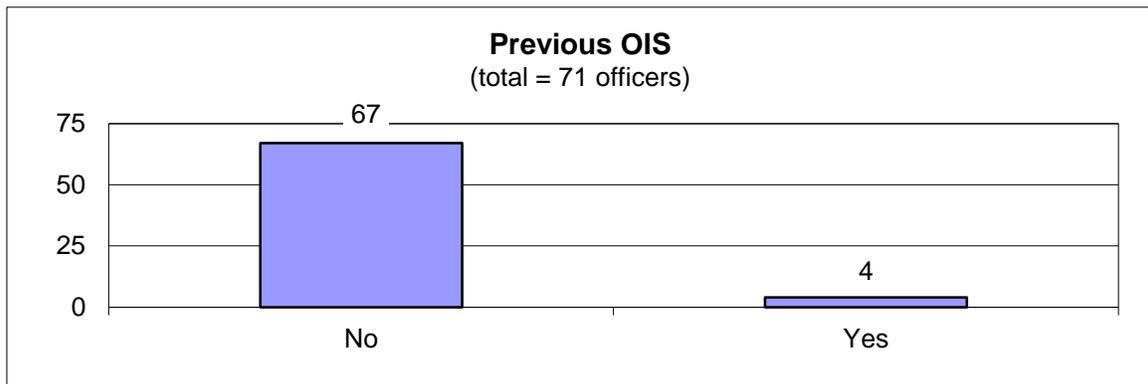
In terms of experience, officers most commonly had between two and five years of law enforcement experience at the time of the officer-involved shooting (39%). This includes years of experience at APD as well as other departments.



Only 14% of those involved were ranked detective, corporal, or sergeant with APD at the time of the shooting, while the majority (77%) were ranked as officer with APD. All others were with other agencies.

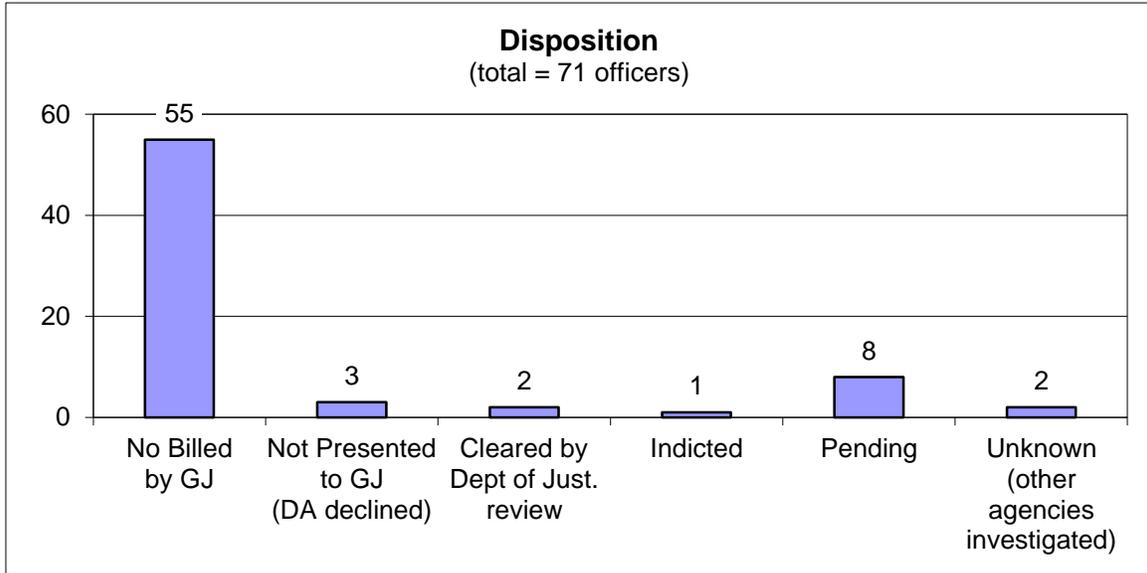


Most officers (94%) had never been involved in an officer-involved shooting in Austin during the years after 2000 prior to the event.



Disposition

The majority of officers (77%) were cleared by grand jury “no bill.” In three cases (4%), there was an insufficient basis to present the case to the grand jury (GJ). Unknown cases include investigations that involved or were conducted by other agencies.

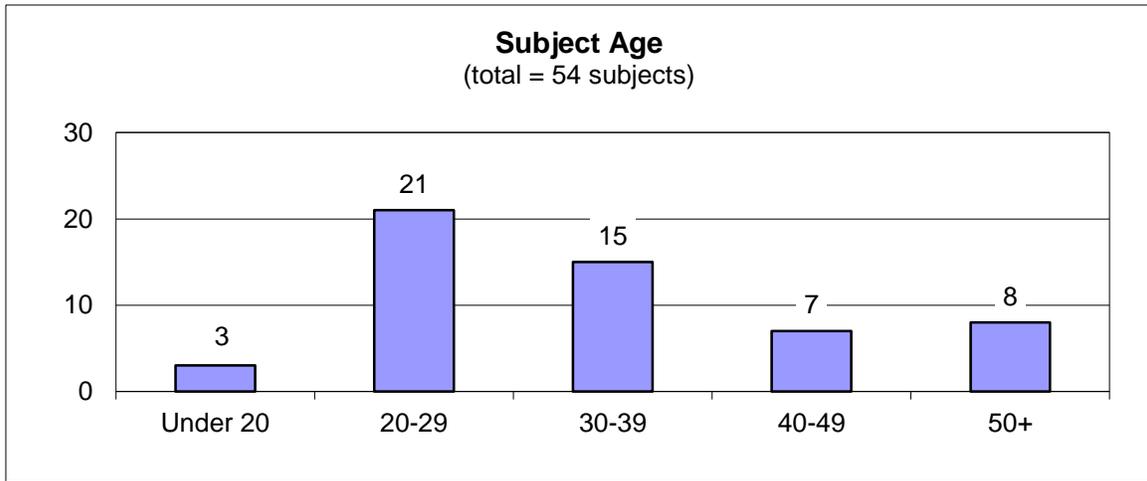


Subject Characteristics

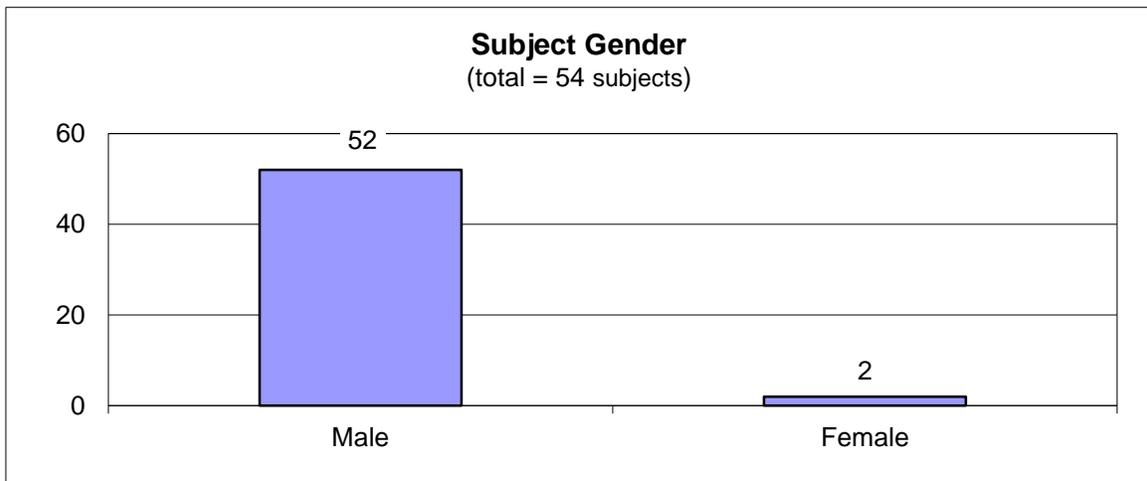
There were 54 subjects involved in the 52 officer-involved shootings that occurred in Austin from 2006 through 2015.

Demographics

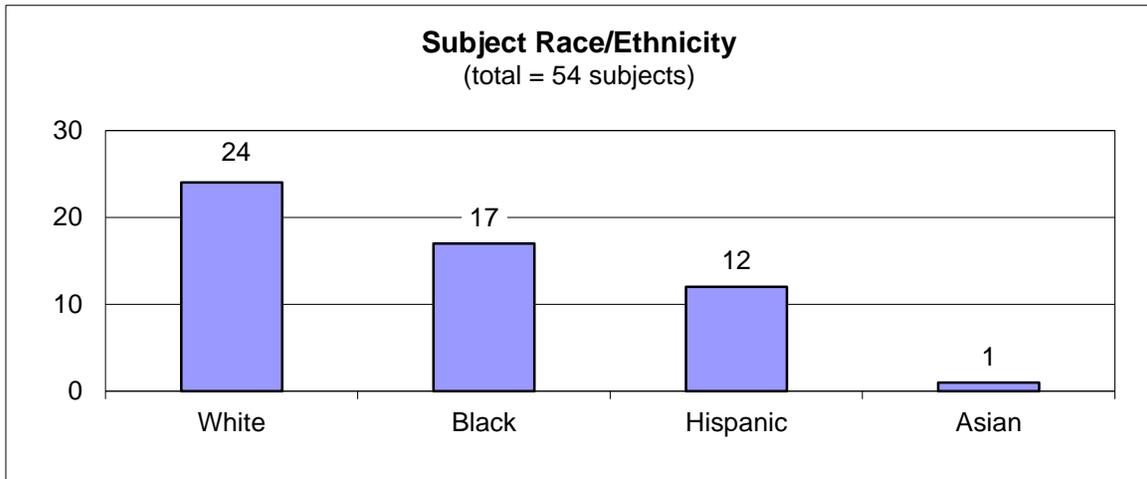
The majority of subjects (67%) were between the ages of 20 and 39 years.



Most of the subjects were male (96%).

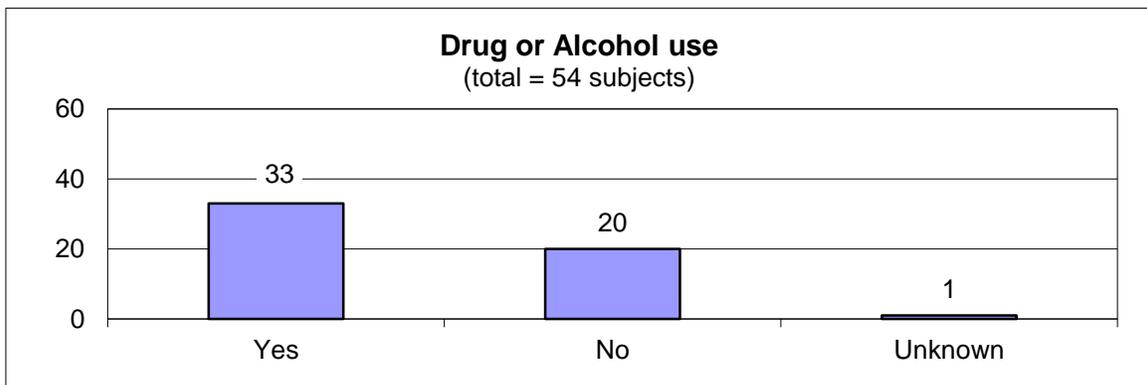


Subjects were most commonly White (44%), followed by 31% Black, and 22% Hispanic.



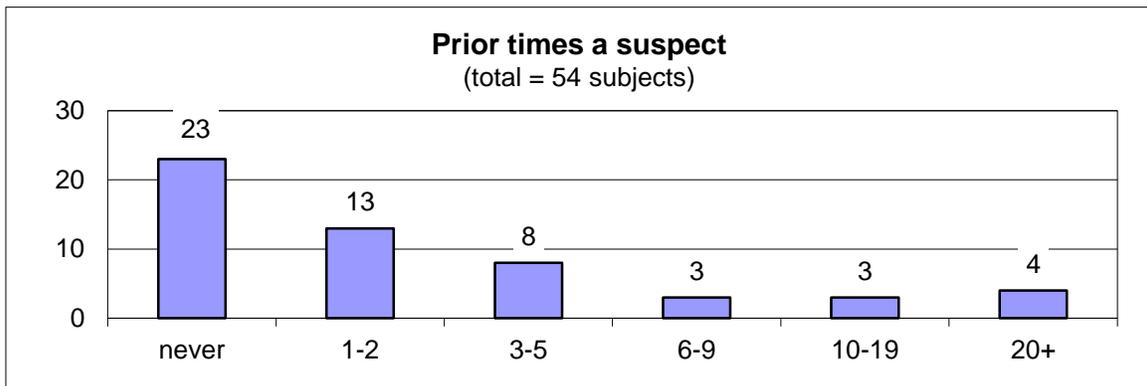
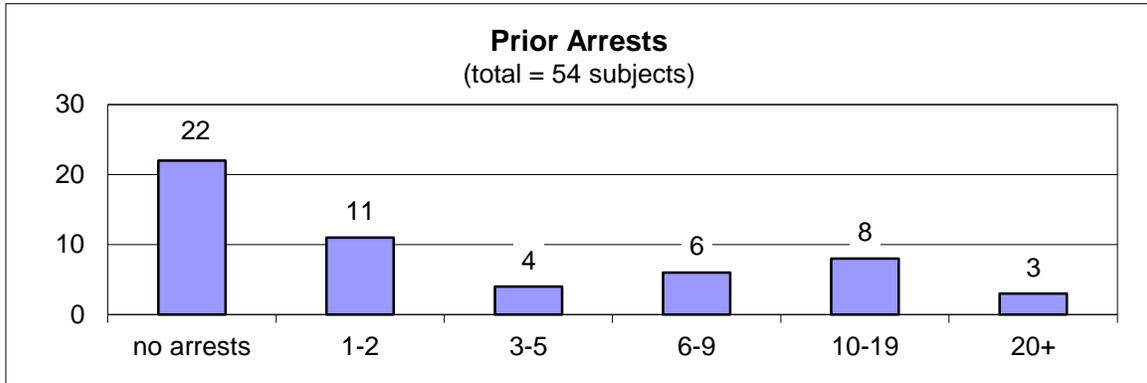
Involvement Factors

Common incident characteristics included subjects who were using drugs or alcohol (61%), or had a mental illness (13%).



Criminal History

Most subjects had been arrested at least once (59%) or been a suspect at least once (57%) prior to the officer-involved shooting.



Appendix: Map of Incidents

