

Descriptions of Police Officer  
Murders and Woundings  
by Shooting and Bomb Blast  
1964-83

Bruce Swanton  
assisted by  
Trish Psaila



Australian Institute of Criminology

**DESCRIPTIONS OF POLICE OFFICER MURDERS &  
WOUNDINGS BY SHOOTING & BOMB BLAST 1964 - 1983**

**Bruce Swanton**

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**Trish Psaila**

**Australian Institute Of Criminology  
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## PREFACE

There is a widely held view in society that violence is increasing. Violence employed against police officers is a significant aspect of violence generally and, as such, warrants attention. This statistical description is intended to place selected dimensions of shootings and blastings of police officers upon the public record. Such information will hopefully contribute to better informed debate on the subject. Certainly, informed discussion cannot be attempted in the absence of these and similar data.

This mapping of major dimensions of the domain of violence inflicted upon police officers is also intended as a preliminary to further research designed to improve understanding of the dynamics of shooting/bombing incidents and so aid preventive measures.

Gratitude is expressed to those police officers and public servants who obtained many of the following data. Without their cooperation and the support of their respective Commissioners of Police this description would not have been possible.

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Woden, ACT  
4 March 1985

Bruce Swanton  
Trish Psaila

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## INTRODUCTION

Murders of police officers qua police officers and their malicious wounding by gunshot or bomb blast have clear consequences for police officers personally, for their functioning and for their families. Such events can, and sometimes do, result in reduced agency morale for periods, depending on circumstances. They may even result in employee militance (Swanton, 1983:42-44). Injured police officers suffer physical and emotional trauma - sometimes for life - and their families suffer with them. Wounded officers sometimes have to be invalidated out of service into premature retirement with resultant loss to the community of their expertise. Others remain in service with reduced capacity. The fortunate ones, of course, serve on without lasting impediment; but, there is a physical, emotional and economic price to be paid in respect of every police officer so attacked.

Community implications of such attacks are said to be twofold. Firstly, police officers are widely perceived as society's protectors, the public's first line of defence against predators. Serious attacks on police officers may be viewed in this light as symbolic attacks on society itself (Carrington, 1975). Secondly, should shootings of police officers exceed societal tolerance, repressive counter measures ill-suited to free societies could conceivably result (Chapman, 1976:141). Thus, it can be argued, serious attacks on police officers possess the potential to affect the quality of community life.

The fact that killings and shootings of police officers contain implications for both police and community wellbeing suggests such a phenomenon needs to be well understood. Improved understanding is necessarily dependent upon research in the first instance. The bracketing of woundings by shooting and murders in the research context is justified on the ground that the difference between the murder of a police officer qua police officer and his wounding by gunshot is as Thorten Sellin (1964:286) has remarked, largely a matter of chance. The same can be said for bomb blasts.

Most research into police officer homicides and assaults has understandably occurred in the country thought to suffer the largest incidence of such events, USA. In that country, according to Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) records, some 1,794 law enforcement officers (not all of whom were police officers) were killed in the course of duty between 1960 and 1980.

A major focus of research into homicide and assault inflicted upon police officers is that of interaction between victim officers and their assailants. David Konstantin (1984), using nationally aggregated data, discovered a majority of US police officer - citizen contacts resulting in death of a police officer were initiated by police. Konstantin also found domestic disputes account for a relatively small percentage of police deaths, with robbery incidents twice as likely to end fatally. These findings are consistent with earlier research findings of Cardarelli (1968), Fyfe (1980), and Geller & Karales (1981).



In her regional study of violence committed upon New York police officers between 1844 and 1978, Mona Margarita (1980) also emphasised interactive factors. She developed a classification of assailant motivations: (1) perseverance, (2) autonomy, (3) protection, (4) defence of others, and (5) contempt. Perseverance relates to those assailants engaged in a criminal activity and who resist police attempts to terminate their behaviour. Persons exercising dominance in certain situations, such as riots, and who assault police officers endeavouring to inhibit their control, are classified in the autonomy category. Some assaults, shootings, etc, are considered by Margarita to be predicated on a desire to avoid apprehension. Such assaults are said to be protection oriented. Occasionally, offenders attack police officers so as to aid the escape of others, thereby attracting the label of "defence of others". Finally, assailants intent upon assaulting police officers from motives of particular or general hatred are assigned the contempt category. The classification possesses obvious utility to officer survival instruction in countries other than America.

Another major research focus relative to assaults on police is that of the incidence and rates of police officer homicides. In an international comparison, based upon Interpol collected data, USA rated 21.93 police officers murdered per 100,000 of general population over the period 1970 - 1977. By comparison, Australia rated 4.70 per 100,000 of population (Lester, 1978). However, David Lester found marked differences between municipalities with regard to police officer homicide rates. Lester and Zunno (1982) also examined correlations of police homicides with other variables in major US cities. They found inter alia high violent crime indices associate closely with high police officer murder rates.

The FBI collects a wide array of information relevant to the murder of US law enforcement officers. These data provide a useful record of such events and are widely utilised by US researchers. Robert Little (1984) examined the data set for a ten year period and compiled a comprehensive profile of law enforcement officer (mostly police) homicides. He found most murdered US law enforcement officers were male, aged 26 - 40 years and having 5 - 10 years of service. US law enforcement officers were found to be most often killed while attempting "other" arrests, a category including drug violations. Situations found by Little to be closely associated with police officer homicides were: (1) responding to burglary calls, (2) responding to disturbance calls, and (3) traffic stops. He also found officers mostly sustained fatal wounds either in the head or torso above the waist and, that those injuries were sustained mostly between the hours of 9 pm and 5 am while on single officer motorised patrol. Finally, FBI data revealed that killers of law enforcement officers tended to be between 18 - 30 years of age, using handguns to effect their purpose. Of course, regional variations inevitably occur. While not of utility to trainers, his findings based on nationally aggregated data are nevertheless of utility for comparative purposes and, in any case, present a useful mapping of the terrain which is a necessary prerequisite to improved comprehension of the phenomenon. The low ground of the

police officer homicide/assault domain in USA has now been substantially researched and mapped. Major dimensions of factors involved are sufficiently defined to permit higher order research. In Australia, preliminary mapping is only just commencing. The earlier efforts of American researchers provide useful directions for us to explore.

The preliminary description of police officer murders and shootings/blastings necessarily focusses on victim, temporal, situational and offender related characteristics. These data permit answers to simple questions, such as: At what time of the day, week and month are police officers mostly shot? Are they usually in company when shot or alone? Are unarmed police officers shot more often than armed police officers? How old are murdered police officers? Were they veterans or tyros? Such answers, in turn, permit comparisons between jurisdictions and the formulation of hypotheses for further and more sophisticated research.

### Objectives

Objectives determined in respect of this study of police officer murders and woundings by shooting in Australia include:

- \* recording total frequencies and calculating rates of attacks on police officers qua police officers concerning:
  - malicious unlawful killings by any means sustained in the course of duty
  - injuries maliciously inflicted by gunshot or bomb blast and sustained in the course of duty
- \* describing selected victim, temporal, situational and offender related characteristics of such attacks.

### Definitions

"Police officer" is defined for the purpose of this study as any attested member of a state or territory police agency. The term is qualified by confining it to police officers attacked qua police officers. For example, police officers shot as a result of personal domestic disharmony, whether or not on duty, would not qualify under this definition.

"Course of duty" refers to police officers either acting in accordance with their oath of office or perceived as such by an assailant regardless of whether on rostered duty or not.

### Method

As David Lester (1978 : 375) has commented, murders of police officers are relatively rare events and rare events result in unstable rates. Thus, a substantial time frame was necessary. The 20 year period 1964-1983 was eventually selected. To go back further in time was contraindicated as data availability would have fallen below acceptable limits.

Data were initially gleaned from public and private sources. Each police agency concerned was subsequently invited to confirm same as well as provide missing data. The level of missing data is acceptable for all variables but "hour". Cooperation of the various police authorities in this matter is gratefully acknowledged.

Murders and woundings by gun shot/bomb blast were addressed separately. Police officer murders in the line of duty are a discrete area of concern and as not all murders were the consequence of gunshot or bomb attacks, fatalities were obliged to be dealt with separately. Accordingly, non-fatal shootings were also addressed separately. The two categories are assigned to Parts I and Part II respectively.

Each police jurisdiction affected was addressed separately in respect of each assault category. A national description is of no utility to police trainers and operational police officers, due to variations between jurisdictions not necessarily being captured in aggregated data. National descriptions are of little use other than for international comparison.

Rates and percentages were calculated and, in the case of woundings in New South Wales and Victoria, the two jurisdictions experiencing the greatest number of frequencies, duration intervals were examined in order to detect increases or decreases of such assaults.

Variables selected for study were determined by considerations of: (1) availability of data, and (2) comparability with US data, especially those presented in Law Enforcement Officers Killed. Variables selected include:

Victim Characteristics

age  
rank  
gender  
marital status  
service  
branch  
posting  
armed  
anatomy

Temporal Characteristics

hour  
day  
month

Situational Characteristics

weapon  
company  
attack

**PART I**

**POLICE OFFICER MURDERS,**

**1964 - 1983**

This Part presents selected data concerning police officer murders in relevant jurisdictions during the period 1964-1983 inclusive.

For the purpose of this section "murder" is defined as the wilful killing of a police officer *qua* police officer. Malice may be express or implied. Implied malice is taken to cover situations in which a fatal outcome could be reasonably foreseen by an offender, including circumstances involving palpable negligence. The question of whether a deceased officer was performing rostered duty at the time of his demise is not considered relevant. Provided he or she was acting in accordance with his or her duty as a Constable and/or was perceived as a police officer by their assailant, the event qualifies for inclusion. Several examples will make the selection criteria clearer:

- \* an off duty police officer held up and shot dead by a robber who was under the impression the victim was an ordinary citizen would not qualify for inclusion
- \* an on duty police officer in uniform accidentally knocked down while walking across a road and killed by a motorist would not qualify for inclusion
- \* an off duty police officer in plain clothes going to the assistance of an assault victim and who is then attacked and killed by the same assailant who did not know he was a police officer would qualify for inclusion

During the years 1964 to 1983 police officers were murdered in the course of duty in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia.

#### NEW SOUTH WALES

Over the 20 year period studied New South Wales Police suffered ten officer murders in a total of eight years. These data are recorded at Table 1.1, together with related information.

TABLE 1.1

NSW POLICE OFFICER MURDERS IN THE COURSE OF DUTY:  
YEAR BY AGENCY STRENGTH BY RATE  
PER 100,000 MEMBERS OF AGENCY, 1964 - 1983

Year	police officers murdered <sup>1</sup>	agency sworn strength <sup>2</sup>	police murder rate per 100,000 of agency
1968	1	6,947	14.39
1970	1	7,144	14.00
1971	3	7,513	39.93
1972	1	7,741	12.92
1974	1	8,212	12.18
1977	1	8,504	11.76
1978	1	9,011	11.10
1980	1	9,225	10.84

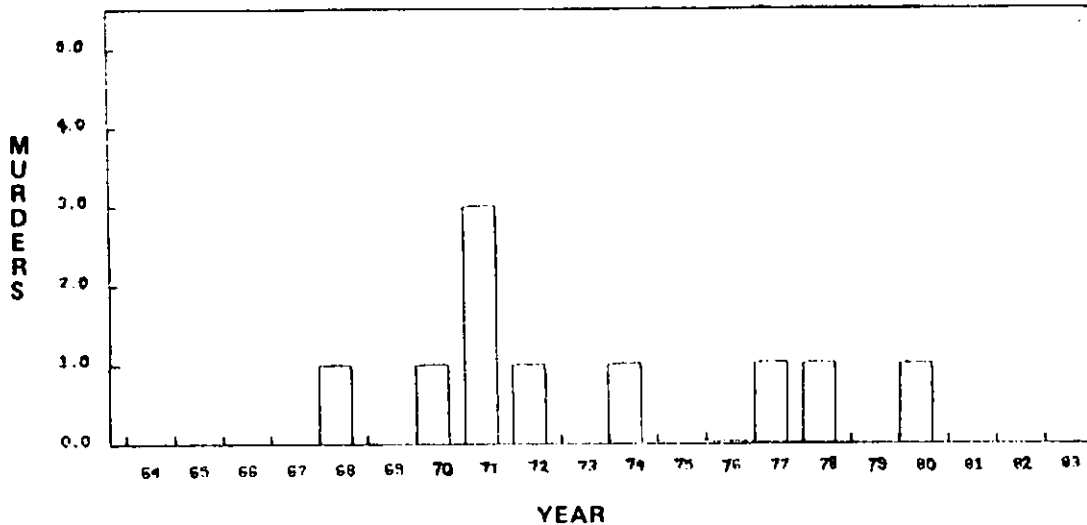
1. Source: newspapers, PDNSWARs, departmentally provided data.

2. Source: PDNSWARs, aggregated data presented at Appendix A.

Of the eight years in which murders occurred, one murder per year only was committed with the exception of 1971 when three occurred. The police murder rate of 14.39 per one hundred thousand sworn members of agency in 1968 reduced to 10.84 by 1980. Distribution of murders by year is shown as a histogram in Figure 1.1.

FIGURE 1.1

## NSW POLICE OFFICER MURDERS, 1964 - 1983



For the entire 20 year period the average annual police murder rate in NSW was 0.5. The police murder rate per 100,000 agency sworn membership for the period was 6.29. Frequencies are too few to attempt trend analysis.

#### Victim characteristics

Age. Ages of the ten murdered NSW police officers ranged from a top of 43 years down to 24 years. Median age was 34 years and average age was 32 years.

Rank. Three (30%) of the murdered officers were Sergeants of various grades and seven (70%) held one or other of the several grades of Constable. No commissioned officers were killed during the period studied.

Gender. All (100%) deceased officers were male.

Marital status. Three (30%) deceased officers were single and seven (70%) were married.

Length of service. Length of service of murdered members ranged from a high of 21 years to a low of four years. Median service was 12 years and mean service was 11.9 years.

Branch. Nine (90%) of the New South Wales police officers murdered in the course of duty were assigned to general uniform duties. The one (10%) exception was a detective.

Posting. Of the deceased officers, six (60%) were posted to metropolitan stations. Three (30%) were posted to country stations and one (10%) was killed while serving with UNCIVPOL in Cyprus.

Armed. Seven (70%) of murdered police officers were armed with a pistol at the time they were fatally assaulted. Two were shot in their residences and not actually carrying a weapon, although one would have been nearby. It is not known if the officer killed by a landmine in Cyprus was carrying a pistol at the time of his death but, the question is immaterial given the nature of the assault.

Anatomy. Fatal wounds inflicted in the course of assaults were sustained in various portions of the respective officers' anatomies. In some instances, multiple wounds were inflicted. Fatal wounds sustained in the various anatomical categories were as shown below:

head/neck	- 2 (20%)
trunk	- 4 (40%)
multiple	- 4 (40%)

Two of the multiple woundings occurred as a result of bomb/mine blasts. Of the other multiple woundings, both involved head wounds.

### Temporal characteristics

Time. Caution requires to be exercised in considering the time element in relation to murderous assaults on police officers. Firstly, with respect to bomb blasts, time is not necessarily a critical element. One officer was killed by a landmine in Cyprus, providing a case in point. Secondly, times of fatal assault are not known in respect of 40 per cent of cases. Of those murders in which the time of assault is known, two occurred during night shift (0000-0800 hrs), one occurred during day shift (0800-1600 hrs) and two occurred on late shift (1600-0000 hrs). Of these cases, 60 per cent occurred during hours of daylight and 40 per cent occurred during hours of darkness.

Day. NSW police officers were deliberately killed on six of the seven days of the week, no such murders occurring on a Wednesday. The distribution of murders by day is shown under:

Monday	- 2 (20%)
Tuesday	- 1 (10%)
Thursday	- 2 (20%)
Friday	- 3 (30%)
Saturday	- 1 (10%)
Sunday	- 1 (10%)

Month. NSW police officers were deliberately killed during seven out of the twelve calendar months over the 20 year period. During the months of March, May, June, July and December no such deaths occurred. A clear majority were killed in Spring. Distribution of murders throughout the months and seasons is shown below:

January	-	1 (10%)	] Summer
February	-	1 (10%)	
April	-	1 (10%)	] Autumn
August	-	1 (10%)	] Winter
September	-	2 (20%)	] Spring
October	-	2 (20%)	
November	-	2 (20%)	

### Situational characteristics

Weapons. Weapons used to kill NSW police officers during the period studied fell into four categories, ie, pistol, rifle, shotgun and bomb/mine. The number of murders committed with each class of weapon are indicated hereunder:

rifle	-	3 (30%)
pistol	-	3 (30%)
shotgun	-	2 (20%)
bomb/mine	-	2 (20%)

All pistols used were .38 caliber, shotguns were all .12 gauge and rifles .22 calibre. Details of weapon modifications are not known.

Company. Eighty (80%) of the deceased officers were in company with other police officers at the time of their fatal attacks. The remaining two (20%) officers were unaccompanied. In one (10%) instance two police officers were shot to death in company. In three (30%) instances in which an officer was murdered, accompanying colleagues were non-fatally wounded by gunshot or bomb blast.

Attack. NSW police officers were fatally attacked in a variety of circumstances. The incidence of attacks distributed according to situational category are given below:

attempting arrest	-	3 (30%)
investigating suspicious circumstances	-	3 (30%)
ambush, incl bombing & mining	-	2 (20%)
unprovoked attack	-	2 (20%)

No fatal attacks occurred while the deceased officers were attending reports of "domestic disturbance."

### Offender characteristics

Gender. With the exception of bomb/mine attacks, in which cases the genders of offenders are not known, all killers of police officers murdered during the period studied were male.

Age. Ages of known offenders ranged from a high of 62 years to a low of 16 years, with an average age of just over 34 years.



Company. In only two attacks were offenders known to be in company. In one of those cases, a total of two offenders was involved and, in the other, three offenders.

### Summary

- \* NSW Police Officer murder rate for 20 year period 1964 to 1983 was 6.29 per 100,000 sworn members of agency
- \* annual average police officer homicide in NSW over 20 year period was 0.5
- \* median age of murdered NSW police officers over 20 year period was 34 years
- \* average age of murdered NSW police officers over 20 year period was 32 years
- \* average length of service of murdered NSW police officers over 20 year period was 11.9 years
- \* murdered NSW police officers were found to be most likely:
  - Constable grade
  - male
  - married
  - assigned to general duties
  - posted to metropolitan station
  - armed
  - fatally injured:
    - . in torso
    - . either on late or night shift
    - . on a Monday, Thursday or Friday
    - . in the Spring
    - . by a firearm; rifle, pistol or shotgun
    - . in company
    - . either making an arrest or investigating suspicious circumstances
- \* killers of NSW police officers were found most likely to be:
  - male
  - alone
- \* average age of known killers of NSW police officers was 34 years.

### VICTORIA

During the period 1964 - 1983, four Victoria police officers were deliberately killed in the course of duty. These data are shown at Table 1.2, complete with associated information.

TABLE 1.2

VICTORIA POLICE OFFICER MURDERS IN THE COURSE OF DUTY:  
YEAR BY AGENCY STRENGTH BY RATE  
PER 100,000 MEMBERS OF AGENCY, 1964-1983

Year	police officers murdered <sup>1</sup>	agency sworn strength <sup>2</sup>	police murder rate per 100,000 of agency
1964	1	4,344	23.02
1974	1	5,841	17.12
1979	1	7,569	13.21
1982	1	8,302	12.05

1. Source: newspapers, PDVARs, departmentally provided data.

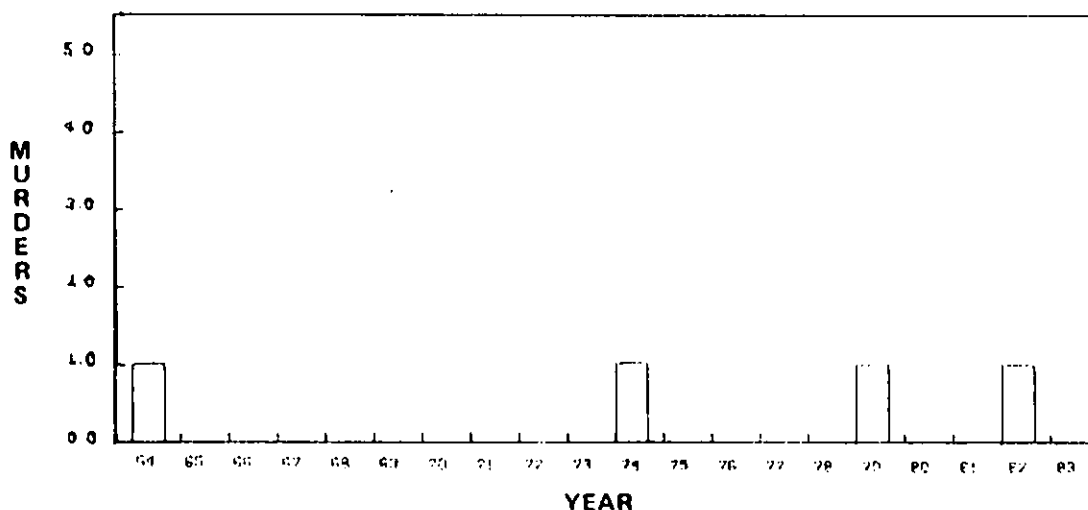
2. Source: PDVARs, aggregated data at Appendix A.

The police murder rate per 100,000 of agency sworn membership dropped progressively from 23.02 to 12.05 in the course of the four years in which such killings occurred.

For the entire 20 year period studied, average annual police murder rate was 0.2. Mean police murder rate per 100,000 of agency sworn membership for the period was 3.32. Distribution of the four murders are shown as a histogram at Figure 1.2.

FIGURE 1.2

VICTORIA POLICE OFFICER MURDERS, 1964 - 1983



### Victim characteristics

Age. Ages of the four Victoria Police murder victims ranged from a high of 38 years to a low of 27 years. Median age of murdered officers was 32.5 years and mean age was also 32.5 years.

Rank. All four (100%) dead officers held the rank of Senior Constable; one was a Detective Senior Constable. No supervisors or commissioned officers were killed in such a manner.

Gender. The four (100%) officers murdered were all males.

Marital status. All (100%) deceased members were married.

Length of service. The longest serving of the victimised officers had 12 years service and the officer possessing least service had served ten years. Median length of service was 11.5 years and mean service was 11.75 years.

Branch. Two (50%) of the four killed Victoria police officers were employed on traffic duties, one (25%) was a detective and one (25%) was engaged in general uniformed duties.

Posting. Three (75%) of the deceased officers were posted to country districts and one (25%) was posted to the metropolitan area.

Armed. Two (50%) of the murdered officers were armed with a personal issue handgun and two (50%) were unarmed.

Anatomy. Three (75%) of the officers were fatally wounded in the head or neck and one (25%) received a fatal injury to the chest.

### Temporal characteristics

Time. Times of the four fatal attacks sustained by Victoria police officers over the 20 year period studied all occurred in daylight, between 1100 hours and 1500 hours. Thus, they all occurred during day shift.

Day. The four officers were murdered on different days of the week as shown:

Tuesday	-	1 (25%)
Thursday	-	1 (25%)
Friday	-	1 (25%)
Sunday	-	1 (25%)

Fatal attacks were not sustained on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday.

Month. Officers were murdered in three of the 12 months of the year, either early in the year or during mid-year:

January	-	2 (50%)
May	-	1 (25%)
July	-	1 (25%)

### Situational characteristics

Weapon. Firearms were the weapon most favoured to murder Victoria police officers during the period studied. The number of murders associated with each class of weapon are shown below:

rifle	-	2 (50%)
shotgun	-	1 (25%)
knife	-	1 (25%)

The shotgun was .12g and both rifles were .22 caliber. In one case, an officer was shot in the head and subsequently died in hospital as a consequence of golden staph infection acquired while under intensive care.

Company. None of the four murdered police officers were in company of other police officers at the time they were fatally attacked.

Attack. Murdered members were fatally attacked under a variety of circumstances. The incidence of attacks according to circumstantial category are shown below:

disturbance call	-	1 (domestic) (25%)
spontaneous/unprovoked attack	-	1 (stabbed by psychotic in street) (25%)
traffic stop	-	1 (25%)
person in custody	-	1 (25%)

### Offender characteristics

Gender. All four murderers of Victoria police officers from 1964-1983 were male.

Age. The offender's age is not known in one case. Of the remaining three cases, the oldest offender was aged 41 and the youngest 19, with a mean of 28 years.

Company. In none of the four cases discussed above were offenders known to be in company.

### QUEENSLAND

During the period 1964 to 1983, four Queensland police officers were deliberately killed in the course of duty. These data are shown at Table 1.3, complete with associated information.

For the entire 20 year period studied, the average annual police murder rate was 0.2. Mean police murder rate per 100,000 of agency sworn membership was 5.82.

Distribution of police officer murders is pictured in the form of a histogram in Figure 1.3. A clear majority of the small number of frequencies occurred in the first half of the period studied. Frequencies are far too few to permit trend analysis.

TABLE 1.3

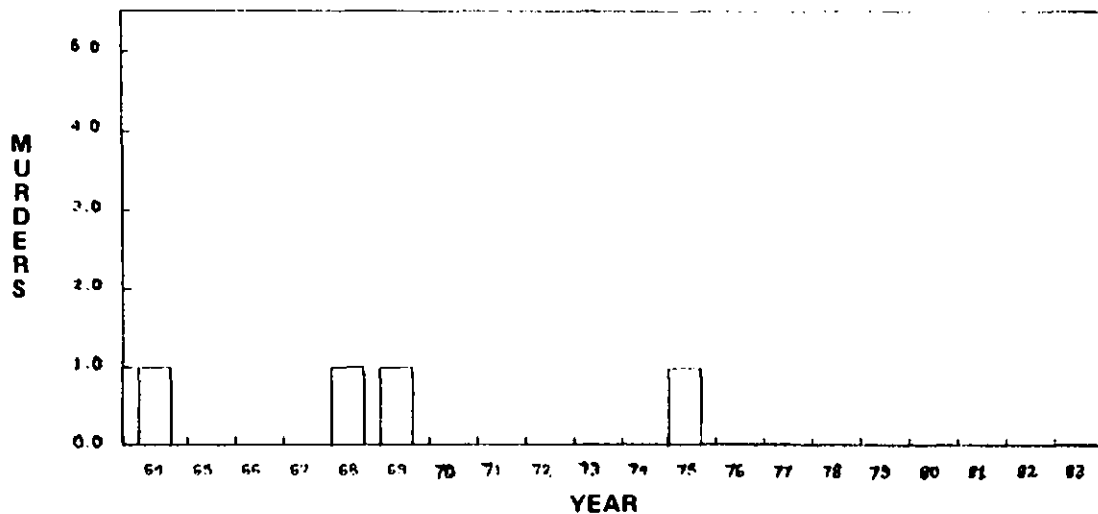
QUEENSLAND POLICE OFFICER MURDERS IN THE COURSE OF DUTY:  
YEAR BY AGENCY STRENGTH BY RATE  
PER 100,000 MEMBERS OF AGENCY, 1964-1983

Year	police officers murdered <sup>1</sup>	agency sworn strength <sup>2</sup>	police murder rate per 1,000 of agency
1964	1	2,670	37.45
1968	1	2,933	34.09
1969	1	3,022	33.09
1975	1	3,479	28.74

1. Source: newspapers, PDQARs, departmentally provided data.
2. Source: PDQARs, aggregated data at Appendix A.

FIGURE 1.3

QUEENSLAND POLICE OFFICER MURDERS, 1964 - 1983



### Victim characteristics

Age. Ages of the four killed Queensland police officers ranged from a high of 39 years to a low of 27 years. Median age of murdered officers was 37 years and mean age was 35 years.

Rank. All four (100%) deceased officers held rank in the various grades of Constable. No supervisors or commissioned officers were murdered.

Gender. All four (100%) deceased officers were male.

Marital status. All four (100%) of the victimised policemen were married.

Length of service. Service of dead officers ranged from 18 years down to one year. Median service was 15 years and mean length of service was 11.75 years.

Branch. All four (100%) of the officers murdered during the period reviewed were engaged on general uniformed duty.

Posting. Three (75%) of the dead members were posted to country stations, whilst one (25%) was posted to a metropolitan station.

Armed. Two (50%) of the murdered officers were armed with a personal issue pistol and two (50%) were unarmed.

Anatomy. Two (50%) of the officers were shot in the chest and one (25%) was shot in the head. The other (25%) officer sustained multiple injuries as a result of having been struck by a motor vehicle, ie:

head/neck	-	1 (25%)
torso	-	2 (50%)
multiple	-	1 (25%)

### Temporal characteristics

Time. The times at which the four Queensland police officers received their fatal injuries covered all three shifts. That is to say, one (25%) event occurred during day shift, one (25%) occurred during late shift and two (50%) happened on night shift. Two (50%) of the murderous attacks took place in daylight and the other two (50%) during hours of darkness.

Day. Queensland police officers were murdered on three days of the week. No such murders occurred Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. The distribution of murders by day is as follows:

Monday	-	1 (25%)
Wednesday	-	2 (50%)
Sunday	-	1 (25%)

Month. Murderous attacks were made on police officers during four of the 12 months, as shown hereunder:

March	-	1 (25%)
April	-	1 (25%)
October	-	1 (25%)
November	-	1 (25%)

### Situational characteristics

Weapon. Weapons used to fatally assault Queensland police officers included firearms and a vehicle. The number of fatal attacks made by particular weapons are shown below:

rifle - 3 (75%)  
 motor vehicle - 1 (25%)

Two of the rifles were .310 caliber and the remainder .22 caliber.

Company. In no case were murdered police officers in company with other police officers at the time they were fatally wounded.

Attack. Murdered Queensland police officers were attacked in a variety of circumstances. The incidence of attacks, distributed according to circumstantial category, are shown below:

disturbance calls - 3 (2 domestics) (75%)  
 road block - 1 (25%)

### Offender characteristics

Gender. All (100%) offenders were male.

Age. Offenders' ages ranged from a high of 54 years to a low of 25 years. Mean age of offenders was 32.75 years.

Company. In three (75%) cases offenders were not accompanied at the time of their fatal assault on a police officer. In one (25%) case an offender was accompanied by one other person only.

### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

During the period from 1964 to 1983 inclusive, three Western Australia police officers were deliberately killed in the course of their duty. These events are shown at Table 1.4, complete with associated data.

TABLE 1.4

WESTERN AUSTRALIA POLICE OFFICER MURDERS IN THE COURSE OF DUTY: YEAR BY AGENCY STRENGTH BY RATE PER 100,000 MEMBERS OF AGENCY, 1964-1983

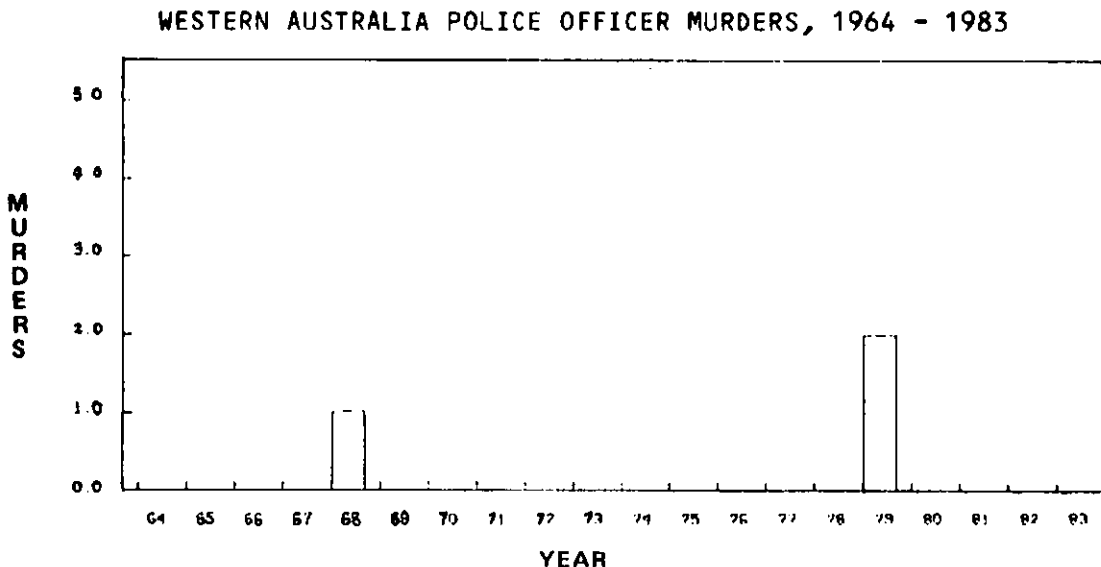
Year	police officers murdered <sup>1</sup>	agency sworn strength <sup>2</sup>	police murder rate per 100,000 of agency
1968	1	1,421	70.37
1979	2	2,558	78.19

1. Source: newspapers, PDWAARS, departmentally provided data.
2. Source: PDWAARS, aggregated data at Appendix A.

The annual average of police officers murdered in Western Australia over the 20 year period studied was 0.15. Mean police murder rate per 100,000 of agency over the same period was 7.59.

Distribution of the three murders is shown in histogram form at Figure 1.4. Trend analysis is impossible with such small frequencies.

FIGURE 1.4



#### Victim characteristics

Age. Ages of the three deceased police officers ranged from 45 to 27 years, with a median of 28 years. Average age of the three officers was 33.3 years.

Rank. All (100%) of the murdered officers held the rank of Constable. No supervisors or commissioned officers were murdered.

Gender. All (100%) deceased officers were male.

Marital status. Two (66.6%) of the murdered officers were married and the other (33.3%) was single.

Length of service. Service of the three officers ranged from 21 to four years, with a median of seven years. Mean length of service of the members was 10.6 years.

Branch. All (100%) murdered officers were employed on general uniformed duties.

Posting. All (100%) deceased members were posted to country districts.

Armed. Two (66%) of the dead officers were armed with a personal issue pistol and one (33%) was unarmed.



Anatomy. The three officers all sustained fatal injuries above the waist as indicated below:

head/neck	-	2 (66.6%)
multiple	-	1 (33.3%)

### Temporal characteristics

Time. All (100%) fatal attacks occurred during daylight hours. Two (66%) happened on day shift (0800-1600 hrs) and one happened in the course of late shift (1600-2400 hrs).

Day. All (100%) Western Australian police officers were killed during the latter part of the week. No such deaths occurred on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday. Incidence of police officer murders distributed by day of week, is shown below:

Friday	-	1 (33.3%)
Saturday	-	1 (33.3%)
Sunday	-	1 (33.3%)

Month. Fatal attacks were made on Western Australian police officers during three of the 12 months, as indicated hereunder:

February	-	1 (33.3%)
March	-	1 (33.3%)
October	-	1 (33.3%)

### Situational characteristics

Weapon. Weapons utilised to fatally assault Western Australian police officers were all firearms. Classes of weapons used are shown below:

rifle	-	3
pistol	-	1.

One such assault involved both a rifle and a handgun. One of the rifles fired was .25/.20 caliber and the other two were .22 caliber. The pistol was .25 caliber.

Company. In one (33%) case, deceased officer was not in company with fellow officers. In the other two cases, the murdered officers were in company and on both occasions a companion was wounded by gunshot.

Attack. Murdered Western Australian police officers were attacked under a variety of circumstances. They are shown here:

disturbance call	-	2 (1 domestic) (66.6%)
unprovoked attack	-	1 (whilst performing bailiff duties) (33.3%)

Offender characteristics

Gender. Two (66%) offenders were male and one (33%) was female.

Age. Offenders' ages ranged from a high of 47 years to a low of 17 years, with a median age of 27 years. Average age of all offenders was 30.3 years.

Company. None (100%) of the three offenders were in company at the time they committed their murderous assaults.

PART II

POLICE OFFICERS WOUNDED BY GUNSHOT OR BOMB  
BLAST IN THE COURSE OF DUTY, 1964 - 1983

Part 2 presents selected data concerning police officers wounded by gunshot or bomb blast in the course of duty over the period 1964-1983 inclusive. Woundings resulting in death are not included.

For the purpose of this study "wounded" is defined as physical damage sustained short of death. Wounds, for the purpose of this study, vary from trivial to massive.

Criteria applied in this Part to determine a police officer's duty status are the same as those employed in Part I.

During the years 1964 to 1983, police officers were wounded by gunshot or bomb blast in the course of duty in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and Northern Territory.

### NEW SOUTH WALES

During the 20 year period 1964-1983, 24 New South Wales police officers were wounded (but not killed) by gunshot or bomb blast in a total of 15 years. These data are recorded at Table 2.1, together with related information.

TABLE 2.1

NSW POLICE OFFICERS WOUNDED BY GUNSHOT OR BOMB BLAST  
IN THE COURSE OF DUTY: YEAR BY AGENCY STRENGTH BY RATE  
PER 100,000 MEMBERS OF AGENCY 1964-1983

Year	police officers wounded <sup>1</sup>	agency sworn strength <sup>2</sup>	police wounding rate per 100,000 of agency
1964	1	5,812	17.21
1966	2	6,429	31.11
1967	2	6,760	29.59
1970	1	7,144	14.00
1971	1	7,153	13.98
1973	1	7,923	12.62
1975	1	8,382	11.93
1976	1	8,482	11.79
1977	1	8,504	11.76
1978	5	9,011	55.49
1979	1	9,091	11.00
1980	4	9,225	43.36
1982	2	9,388	21.30
1983	1	9,797	10.21

1. Source: newspapers, PDNSWARs, departmentally provided data.

2. Source: PDNSWARs, aggregated data at Appendix A.

Distribution of woundings over the years, eg, eight in the first decade as opposed to 16 in the second, suggest the frequency of such events is growing, despite considerable year to

year fluctuation. These events are shown in the form of a histogram at Figure 2.1. Intervals between woundings are charted at Figure 2.2. Limited data preclude trend analysis but are sufficient to permit speculation.

FIGURE 2.1

NSW POLICE OFFICERS WOUNDED BY GUNSHOT OR BOMB BLAST, 1964 - 1983

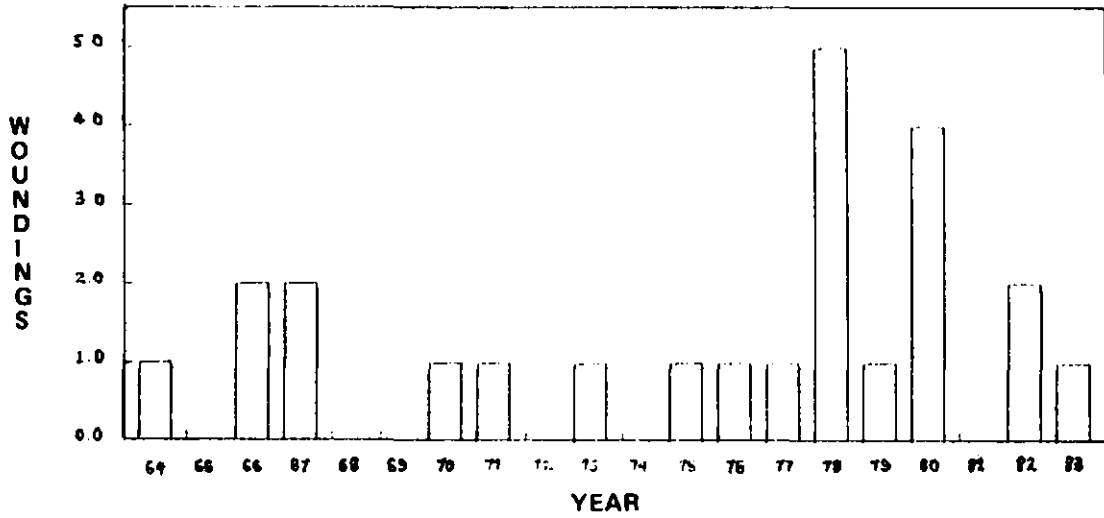
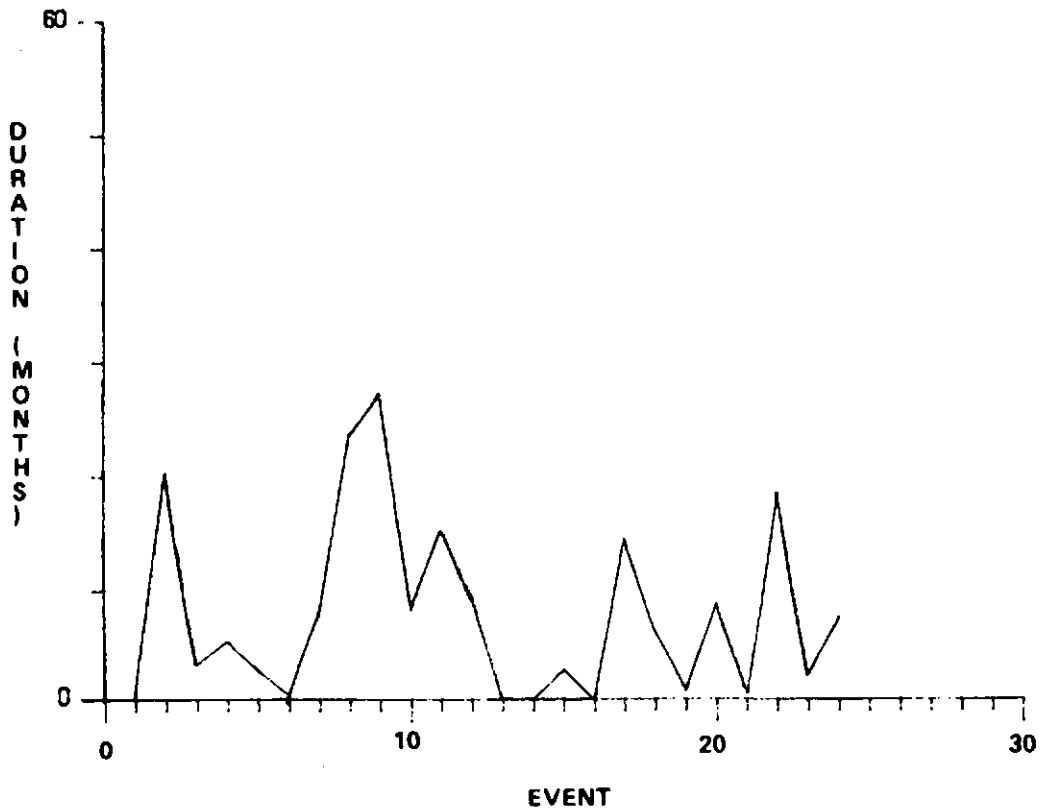


FIGURE 2.2

NSW POLICE OFFICERS WOUNDED BY GUNSHOT OR BOMB BLAST, OCCURRENCE INTERVALS, 1964 - 1983



Data hint at decreasing intervals between shootings/blastings of police officers accompanied by greater regularity of such events. But the 68 percent increase in police strength over the period studied permits both an increase in incidence and a reduction in rate. The increase in strength, of course, substantially understates the number of persons involved as it fails to take into account the number of actual mutations.

Average annual wounding rate for NSW Police over the 20 year period was 1.2. Mean wounding rate for the same period per 100,000 of agency strength was 15.1.

### Victim characteristics

Age. Ages of the 24 wounded officers ranged between 19 and 40 years. Median age was 29 years and average age was 27.7 years.

Rank. Of the wounded officers, 18 (78%) were Constables of various grades. Remaining six personnel (22%) were Sergeants of various grades; four were Detective Sergeants and one a uniformed Sergeant. No commissioned ranks were shot.

Gender. All (100%) 24 wounded members were male.

Marital status. Nineteen (79%) of the wounded police officers were married, four (17%) were single and the status of one is unknown.

Length of service. Length of service of wounded officers ranged between one and 20 years. Median service was eight years and mean service was 10.5 years.

Branch. Six (25%) of the 24 wounded officers were detectives. The remaining 75 percent were assigned to general uniformed duty.

Posting. Nine (37.5%) of the officers studied were posted to country districts. The other 15 (62.5%) were metropolitan based.

Armed. All (100%) 24 officers were armed at the time of their being wounded.

Anatomy. The 24 officers were wounded in a variety of external anatomical sites, some were discretely injured in particular places while others received multiple damage across two or more anatomical categories. Distribution of wounds sustained is shown below:

head/neck	-	3	(12.5%)
arms/hands	-	3	(12.5%)
trunk	-	6	(25%)
legs/feet	-	7	(29%)
multiple	-	3	(12.5%)
not known	-	2	(8%)

### Temporal characteristics

Time. Three of the injuries included in this study were suffered in the course of a single bomb blast and time was largely irrelevant. In fact, time of event is not known with respect to 12 (50%) cases discussed here. Six (29%) assaults occurred during night shift (0000-0800 hrs), one (4%) happened on day shift (0800-1600 hrs) and four (17%) took place on late shift (1600-2400 hrs).

Day. NSW police officers were shot or blasted on all days of the week. Distribution of frequencies by day is shown below:

Monday	-	9	(37.5%)
Tuesday	-	5	(21%)
Wednesday	-	4	(17%)
Thursday	-	2	(8%)
Friday	-	2	(8%)
Saturday	-	1	(4%)
Sunday	-	1	(4%)

The predominance of such assaults occurring on the first three days of the week, *ie*, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, is worthy of note as it runs contrary to the widely held police employee belief that the most dangerous days of the working week are Thursday, Friday and Saturday. In those assaults not involving firearms, the popular wisdom is probably correct; but, quite clearly, the reverse applies in respect of serious but non-fatal attacks with firearms or bombs.

Month. September was the only month in the entire 20 year period in which a police officer was not shot or blasted. Distribution of such events by month is shown below:

December	-	1	] Summer (25%)
January	-	1	
February	-	4	
March	-	2	] Autumn (29%)
April	-	2	
May	-	3	
June	-	3	] Winter (25%)
July	-	1	
August	-	2	
October	-	1	] Spring (21%)
November	-	4	

Although four woundings occurred in the month of November as opposed to only one in January, July and October, variations in such small monthly frequencies cannot be considered significant. The spread of such events over the seasons is not statistically significant.

### Situational characteristics

Weapons. Weapons used to shoot and blast NSW police officers during the period studied fell into four categories, ie, rifles, pistols, shotguns and bombs. The number of persons injured with each class of weapon are indicated below:

rifle	-	8	(33.3%)
pistol	-	6	(25%)
shotgun	-	4	(16.6%)
bomb	-	3	(12.5%) (single event)
not known	-	3	(12.5%)

The three officers wounded by bomb blast received their injuries from the same detonation. A fourth officer was killed in the same event. Of the rifles used all but one were .22 caliber. The odd rifle was .225 caliber. It is not known how many of the rifles used in injuring police officers were modified. Three of the six pistols employed were .38 caliber, one was .22 caliber, one was .357 caliber and the other was 9mm. Three of the shotguns shown above were .12 gauge and the fourth was .410 gauge.

Company. Seventeen (71%) injured officers were in company of other police officers at the time they were injured. In one situation, one other officer was wounded. In another, the so-called Hilton bombing, other officers were both wounded and killed. Seven (29%) officers were unaccompanied at the time of their wounding. If viewed as events rather than individual woundings, it will be seen that 12 shooting/bombing events occurred in which officers were injured in company of other officers.

Attack. Injured NSW police officers were wounded in a variety of circumstances. The incidence of attacks distributed according to circumstantial category are given below:

attempt arrest	-	6	(25%)
robbery offenders	-	2	(8.3%)
investigating suspicious circumstances	-	1	(4%)
handling prisoner	-	1	(4%)
disturbance call	-	2	(8.3%)
ambush	-	3	(12.5%)
siege	-	2	(8.3%)
breaking offenders	-	1	(4%)
searching for escapees	-	3	(12.5%)
traffic stops	-	2	(8.3%)
not known	-	1	(4%)

The unsatisfactory nature of the situational categories utilised and the small number of frequencies mean statistical analysis is not possible. It can be simply said the police officers were injured under a wide range of circumstances and that situations in which arrest was an immediate prospect appear to predominate. None of the woundings were directly associated with domestic disputes. In one incident, a police officer was wounded with his own weapon in the course of a violent struggle with an offender.



### Offender characteristics

Gender. Twenty (83%) of the injured officers were assaulted by a male and one (4%) officer was shot by a female.

Age. Ages of known offenders ranged from 47 to 19 years. Ages of eight offenders are unknown. Mean age of known offenders was 31 years.

Company. In only five cases were offenders known to be in company. In three of those cases there were at least three persons in company and, in the other two cases, it is thought two persons only were concerned.

### Summary:

- \* NSW police officers non-fatal gunshot/blasting injury rate for the 20 year period 1964 to 1983 was 15.1 per 100,000 of sworn members of agency
- \* annual average of NSW police officers non-fatally injured by ambush/bomb blast over the 20 year period was 1.2
- \* average age of NSW police officers non-fatally wounded over the 20 year period by gunshot/bomb blast was 27.7 years
- \* Median age of NSW police officers non-fatally wounded over the 20 year period by gunshot/bomb blast was 29 years.
- \* average service of NSW police officers non-fatally injured over the 20 year period by gunshot/bomb blast was 10.5 years
- \* median service of NSW police officers non-fatally injured over the 20 year period by gunshot/bomb blast was eight years
- \* NSW police officers non-fatally wounded over the 20 year period by gunshot/bomb blast were found most likely to be :
  - Constable grade
  - male
  - married
  - assigned to general duties
  - posted to metropolitan stations
  - armed
  - wounded -
    - . in torso
    - . on night shift
    - . early in the week
    - . throughout the year
    - . by rifle or pistol
    - . in company
    - . attempting an arrest

\* wounders of NSW police officers were found most likely to be :

- male
- alone

\* average age of known wounders of NSW police officers was 31 years.

## VICTORIA

From 1964 to 1983 inclusive, 28 Victoria police officers were injured by gunshot or bomb blast. Woundings occurred in 13 of the 20 years reviewed. These data are shown at Table 2.2, complete with associated information.

These events are represented in histogram form at Figure 2.3. Considerably more woundings occurred in the second half of the period studied but those occurrences need to be considered in relation to agency growth.

Intervals between woundings are graphed at Figure 2.4. The graph suggests durations between such woundings are generally increasing but becoming more regular - rather as was hinted at in the NSW data. Average annual police wounding rate for the 20 year period was 1.4. Mean police wounding rate per 100,000 of agency strength for the period was 23.21.

TABLE 2.2

VICTORIA POLICE OFFICERS WOUNDED BY  
GUNSHOT OR BOMB BLAST IN THE COURSE OF DUTY:  
YEAR BY AGENCY STRENGTH BY RATE PER 100,000  
MEMBERS OF AGENCY, 1964-1983

Year	police officers wounded <sup>1</sup>	agency sworn strength <sup>2</sup>	police wounding rate per 100,000 of agency
1965	4	4,369	91.55
1966	1	4,422	22.61
1971	1	5,089	19.65
1973	3	5,628	53.30
1974	2	5,841	34.24
1975	3	6,156	48.73
1976	1	6,487	15.42
1977	2	6,819	29.33
1978	1	7,238	13.82
1979	2	7,569	26.42
1980	2	7,814	25.60
1982	4	8,302	48.18
1983	2	8,258	24.22

1. Source: newspapers, PDVARs, departmentally provided data.

2. Source: PDVARs, aggregated data shown at Appendix A.

FIGURE 2.3

VICTORIA POLICE OFFICERS WOUNDED BY GUNSHOT OR BOMB BLAST, 1964 - 1983

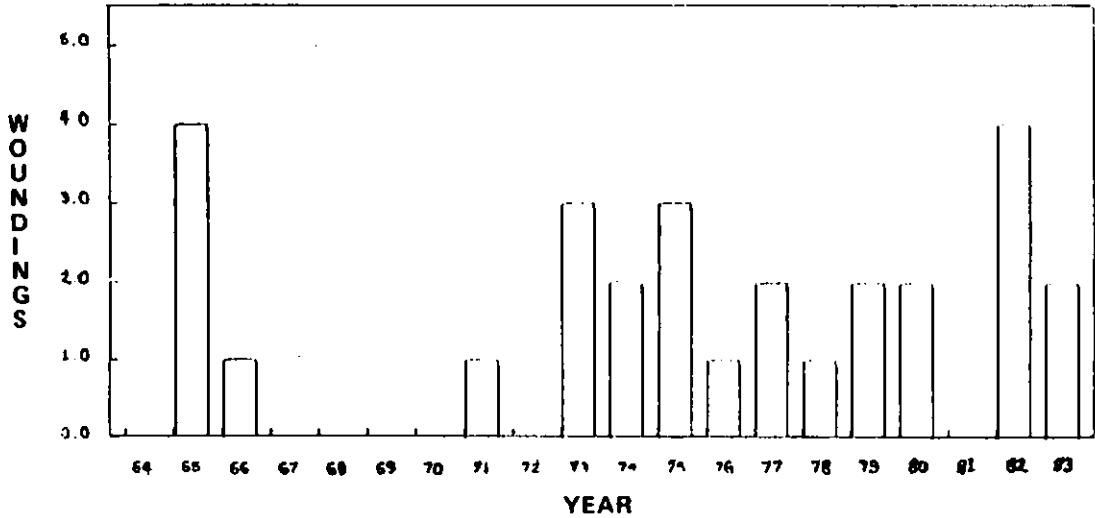
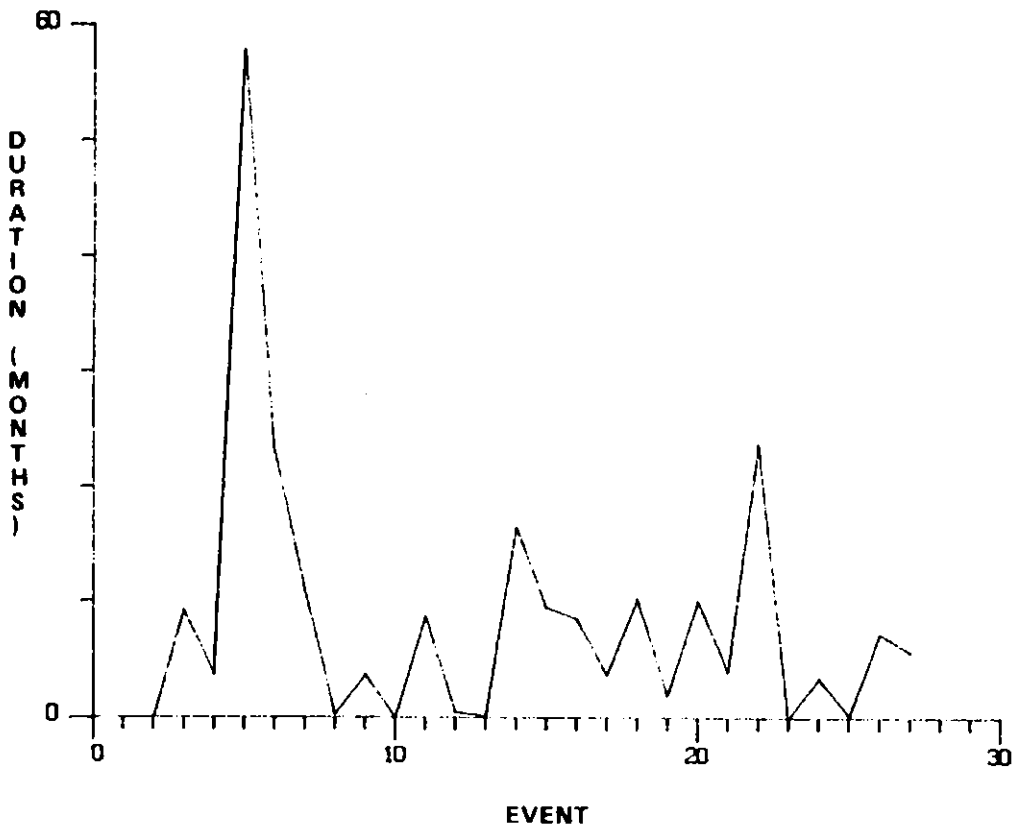


FIGURE 2.4

VICTORIA POLICE OFFICERS WOUNDED BY GUNSHOT OR BOMB BLAST, OCCURRENCE INTERVALS, 1964 - 1983



### Victim characteristics

Age. Wounded Victoria police officers' ages ranged from 20 to 49 years. Median age was 28 years and average age was 30 years.

Rank. Twenty-six (93%) wounded officers occupied one or other of the various grades of Constable, well in excess of their representation in the agency's establishment (approximately 71%). The remaining two (7%) wounded officers were Sergeants. No commissioned officers were wounded.

Gender. All (100%) 28 wounded members were male.

Marital status. Twenty-four (86%) officers included in this study were married, the remaining four (14%) being single.

Length of service. Service of wounded Victoria police officers ranged between 30 and one years. Median service was six years and mean service was 8.5 years.

Branch. Twenty-two (79%) injured officers were employed on general uniformed duties. Five (18%) were criminal investigators or vice squad members. One (3%) officer was assigned to traffic duties.

Posting. Nine (32%) wounded members were posted to country stations. The remaining 19 (68%) officers worked at metropolitan stations.

Armed. Four (14%) officers were unarmed at the time they were injured, while the remaining 24 (86%) members carried a personal issue firearm.

Anatomy. Approximately 50 per cent of wounded officers were struck by projectiles or fragments somewhere on the torso when multiple injuries are counted. Injuries distributed by wound site are shown below:

neck/head	-	6	(21%)
leg	-	3	(11%)
trunk	-	13	(46%)
arm	-	3	(11%)
multiple	-	3	(11%)

### Temporal characteristics

Time. Victoria police officers were injured by gunshot around the clock. Although 28 officers were wounded, there were only 24 actual shooting events, ie, on three occasions more than one officer was injured. This fact has a slightly distorting effect in terms of temporal distribution. In practice, nine (32%) of police officers were injured on night shift (0000-0800 hrs), six (21%) were harmed during day shift (0800-1600 hrs) and 13 (46%) were hurt on late shift (1600-2400 hrs).

Day. No Victoria police officers were shot or blasted on a Thursday or a Sunday. Distribution of shooting frequencies by day is shown below:

Monday	-	3 (11%)
Tuesday	-	3 (11%)
Wednesday	-	8 (29%)
Friday	-	9 (32%)
Saturday	-	5 (18%)

Multiple woundings on Wednesdays (3), Saturday (2) and Friday (2) had distorting effects as already mentioned. Even so, the proportion of injuries incurred on Wednesdays is of note.

Month. No Victoria police officers were wounded by gunshot or bomb blast over the 20 year period reviewed here in the months of August or September. Distribution of woundings by month is given below:

December	-	4 ]	
January	-	4 ]	Summer (32%)
February	-	1 ]	
March	-	6 ]	
April	-	5 ]	Autumn (43%)
May	-	1 ]	
June	-	3 ]	
July	-	1 ]	Winter (14%)
October	-	2 ]	
November	-	1 ]	Spring (11%)

Multiple woundings in March and April tend to emphasis Autumn woundings at the expense of Summer shootings. If the seasonal count is based on shooting events rather than officers injured, the percentage of police officers wounded in Summer and Autumn is roughly equal.

### Situational characteristics

Weapons. Rifles and shotguns were most used to injure police officers. Distribution of woundings by weapon is shown below:

rifle	-	14 (50%)
pistol	-	3 (11%)
shotgun	-	11 (39%).

Known rifle bores were .22 calibre with but four exceptions. Variety was evident among the three pistols employed, ie, .22 calibre, .45 calibre and 9mm. Of the shotguns employed to shoot police officers, all but one of the known bores were .12 gauge.

Company. Eighteen (64%) of wounded officers were in company with other police officers at the time they were shot. In two cases, two officers were jointly injured and, in one case,

three officers were jointly wounded. In no case was an accompanying officer killed. If viewed in terms of shooting events rather than actual injuries, it will be seen that in ten events officers were unaccompanied and in 14 events wounded officers were in company of others.

Attack. Wounded Victoria police officers were shot under a variety of circumstances. Woundings distributed by situational category are shown below:

attending disturbance call	- 14 (50%)	(two of which were "domestics")
attempt arrest	- 5 (18%)	
robbery offenders	- 3 (11%)	
breaking offenders	- 1 (4%)	
spontaneous/unprovoked	- 3 (11%)	
searching for escapees	- 1 (4%)	
mentally deranged	- 1 (4%)	

As with other jurisdictions, these categories are unsatisfactory and are distorted by several multiple shootings. The relatively small incidence of "domestics" is noteworthy. In one incident, an injured officer was shot with his own weapon in the course of a violent struggle.

#### Offender characteristics

Gender. With respect to 26 (93%) of woundings, offenders are known to be male. One offender was a female and the gender of one assailant is not known.

Age. Ages of known offenders ranged between 59 and 13. Two were juveniles. Mean age of the 17 known offenders was 27 years.

Company. Only six of the known offenders were in company and, of that number, only one was known to have more than one companion, ie, two.

#### Summary:

- \* Victoria police officer non-fatal gunshot/blast injury rate for the 20 year period 1964 - 1983 was 23.21 per 100,000 of sworn members of agency
- \* annual average of Victoria police officers non-fatally injured over the 20 year period by gunshot/bomb blast over the 20 year period was 1.4
- \* median age of Victoria police officers wounded over the 20 year period by gunshot/bomb blast was 28 years
- \* average age of Victoria police officers wounded over the 20 year period by gunshot/bomb blast was 30 years

- \* median service of Victoria police officers wounded over the 20 year period by gunshot/bomb blast was six years
- \* average service of Victoria police officers wounded over the 20 year period by gunshot/bomb blast was 8.5 years
- \* Victoria police officers wounded over the 20 year period by gunshot/bomb blast were found most likely to be :
  - Constable grade
  - male
  - married
  - assigned to general duties
  - posted to metropolitan stations
  - armed
  - wounded :
    - . in trunk
    - . on late shift
    - . middle of or late in the week
    - . in Autumn
    - . by rifle and shotgun
    - . in company
    - . attending disturbance call
- \* wounding of Victoria police officers were found most likely to be:
  - male
  - alone
- \* average age of known wounding of Victoria police officers was 27 years

### QUEENSLAND

Between 1964 and 1983, three Queensland police officers were maliciously wounded by gunshot in the course of duty. The wounding occurred in three of the 20 years spanned by the period. These data are shown at Table 2.3, complete with associated information. The three years in which a police officer was shot and wounded occurred roughly in the middle of the period studied and are depicted in histogram form at Figure 2.5.

Average annual wounding rate for Queensland police over the 20 year period was 0.15. Mean police wounding rate per 100,000 of agency strength for the period was 4.37.

TABLE 2.3

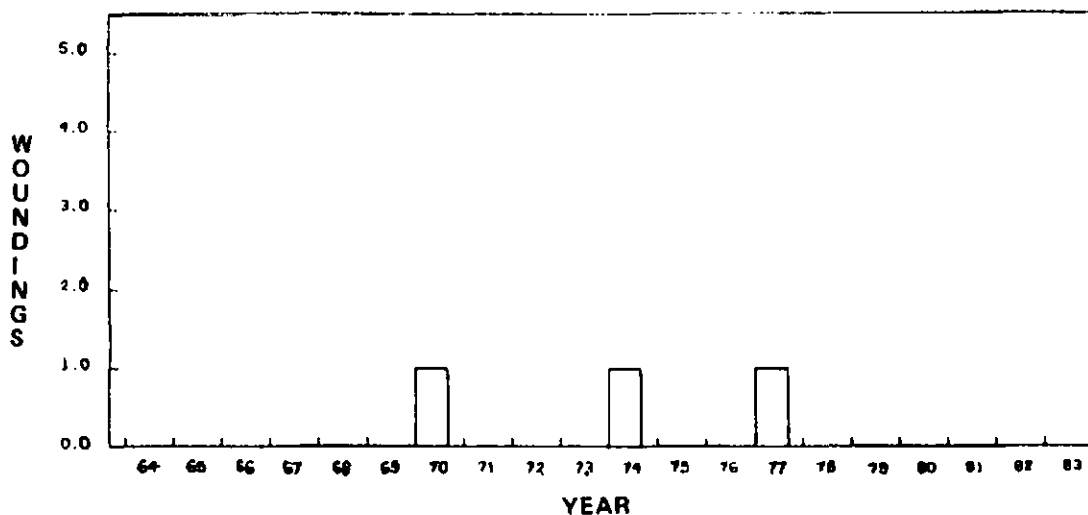
QUEENSLAND POLICE OFFICERS WOUNDED BY GUNSHOT OR  
BOMB BLAST: YEAR BY AGENCY STRENGTH BY RATE  
PER 100,000 MEMBERS OF AGENCY, 1964 - 1983

Year	police officers wounded <sup>1</sup>	agency sworn strength <sup>2</sup>	police wounding rate per 100,000 of agency
1970	1	3,085	32.41
1974	1	3,329	30.04
1977	1	3,744	26.71

1. Source: newspapers, PDQARs, departmentally provided data.
2. Source: PDQARs, aggregated data at Appendix A.

FIGURE 2.5

QUEENSLAND POLICE OFFICERS WOUNDED BY GUNSHOT OR  
BOMB BLAST, 1964 - 1983



### Victim characteristics

Age. Injured Queensland police officers' ages ranged from 36 to 26 years, averaging 29.3 years.

Rank. All three (100%) injured police officers held one or other of Constable grades, two (66%) being Constables and one (33%) a Constable (First Class).

Gender. All three (100%) officers were male.

Marital status. Two (66%) of the wounded members were married, while the third (33%) was single.

Length of service. Service of the three officers ranged between one and nine years, with a mean of 5.3 years.



Branch. Two (66%) injured officers were traffic branch members and one (33%) was assigned to general uniformed duties.

Posting. All three (100%) officers were posted to the metropolitan area.

Armed. Carriage of personal firearms by Queensland police officers is discretionary. It is known one of the injured traffic officers was armed at the time the attack was made on him but with regard to the other two officers it is not known if they were armed.

Anatomy. Injuries sustained by the three wounded members were as shown below:

head	-	1 (33%)
leg	-	1 (33%)
multiple	-	1 (33%)

### Temporal characteristics

Time. The three Queensland police officers shot and wounded over the period 1964-1983, were all attacked late at night. Two (66%) shootings occurred during the course of late shift (1600-2400 hrs) and one (33%) occurred early in night shift (0000-0800 hrs).

Day. No Queensland police officer was shot and wounded on a Monday, Wednesday, Thursday or Sunday. Distribution of woundings by day is shown below:

Tuesday	-	1 (33%)
Friday	-	1 (33%)
Saturday	-	1 (33%)

Month. With respect to the months in which Queensland police officers were shot and wounded, no such attacks occurred in the months of January, February, March, April, May, June, July, September and October. Distribution of such attacks by month is shown below:

August	-	1 (33%)
November	-	1 (33%)
December	-	1 (33%)

### Situational characteristics

Weapons. Weapons used to attack the three wounded police officers are shown below together with the frequency of attack:

rifle	-	1 (33%)
pistol	-	1 (33%)
shotgun	-	1 (33%)

The pistol was a Browning automatic of unknown calibre, the rifle was .22 calibre and the shotgun was 12 gauge.

Company. None of the three injured officers were in company of other police officers at the time they were attacked.

Attack. Conditions pertaining to the three attacks are shown below:

traffic stop	-	1 (33%)
attempt arrest	-	2 (66%)

One of the attempt arrest cases related to the arrest of a stolen car driver by a traffic officer.

### Offender characteristics

Gender. All three (100%) injured police officers were attacked by male offenders.

Age. Offenders' ages ranged between 21 and 26 years, with a mean age of 24.3 years.

Company. The youngest offender was in company of two other offenders at the time of assault. The other two offenders were unaccompanied.

### Summary:

- \* Queensland police officer non-fatal gunshot/bomb blast injury rates for the 20 year period 1964 to 1983 was 4.37 per 100,000 of sworn members
- \* annual average of Queensland police officers wounded by gunshot/bomb blast over the 20 year period was 0.15
- \* average age of Queensland police officers wounded by gunshot/bomb blast over the 20 year period was 29.3 years
- \* average service of Queensland police officers wounded by gunshot/bomb blast over the 20 year period was 5.3 years

### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Between 1964 and 1983 inclusive, eight WA police officers were maliciously wounded by either gunshot or bomb blast in the course of duty. Such woundings occurred in a total of five out of the total 20 years reviewed here. These data are shown at Table 2.4, together with associated information.

The years in which police officers were shot and wounded fell mostly in the second of the two decade periods. And, with respect to the second decade, most woundings occurred in its latter part, see Figure 2.6.

TABLE 2.4

WESTERN AUSTRALIA POLICE OFFICERS WOUNDED  
BY GUNSHOT OR BOMB BLAST: YEAR BY AGENCY  
STRENGTH BY RATE PER 100,000  
MEMBERS OF AGENCY STRENGTH, 1964 - 1983

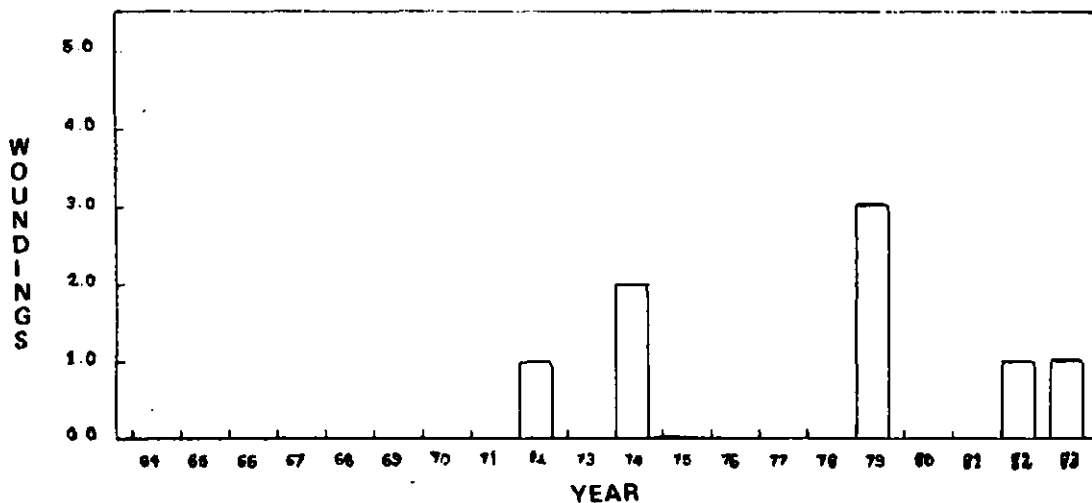
Year	police officers wounded <sup>1</sup>	agency sworn strength <sup>2</sup>	police wounding rate per 100,000 of agency
1972	1	1,686	59.31
1974	2	1,984	100.81
1979	3	2,558	117.28
1982	1	2,693	37.13
1983	1	2,984	33.51

1. Source: newspapers, PDWAARs, departmentally provided data.

2. Source: PDWARs, aggregated data at Appendix A.

FIGURE 2.6

WESTERN AUSTRALIA POLICE OFFICERS WOUNDED BY GUNSHOT  
OR BOMB BLAST, 1964 - 1983



Data are too few to permit speculation concerning trends.

For the entire period 1964 to 1983, the annual average of WA police officer woundings by shooting or bomb blast was 0.4. Mean wounding rate for the 20 year period per 100,000 of sworn agency strength was 20.27.

#### Victim characteristics

Age. Injured WA police officers averaged 32 years, with an upper limit of 46 years and a lower limit of 22 years. Median age was 32 years and average age was also 32 years.

Rank. Six (75%) wounded officers were Constables of one grade or another, while two (25%) were Sergeants. No commissioned officers were wounded.

Gender. All (100%) wounded police officers were male.

Marital status. One (12.5%) injured officer was single, the remaining seven (87.5%) being married.

Length of service. Service of injured officers ranged between three and 21 years, with a mean of nine years. Median service was 8 years.

Branch. Six (75%) injured WA police employees were assigned to general uniformed duties. One (12.5%) employee was a traffic officer and one (12.5%) was a detective.

Posting. Four (50%) officers were posted to metropolitan stations, while the other four (50%) were stationed in country districts.

Armed. Four (50%) of injured members were armed at the time they were attacked and four (50%) were not.

Anatomy. In one case the portion of the injured officer's body struck by a projectile is not known. Of the other seven cases, the distribution of injuries is shown below:

trunk	-	4	(50%)
head/neck	-	1	(12.5%)
multiple	-	2	(25%)
not known	-	1	(12.5%)

#### Temporal characteristics

Time. The distribution of wounding events by time is distorted by the fact that two (25%) officers were wounded in the course of a single event. Woundings occurred on all three shifts. Two (25%) occurred on night shift (0000-0800 hrs), both shortly after midnight. One (12.5%) case occurred on day shift (0800-1600 hrs). The time of event is not known in one case and the remaining four (50%) of injuries were inflicted on late shift (1600-2400 hrs).

Day. No WA police officers were maliciously shot or blasted during the period under review on a Monday or Wednesday. Officers were injured on other days of the week as shown below:

Tuesday	-	1	(12.5%)
Thursday	-	1	(12.5%)
Friday	-	1	(12.5%)
Saturday	-	1	(12.5%)
Sunday	-	4	(50%)

With the exception of one case in which time of injury is not known, injuries inflicted on Sundays were sustained late in the day and not close to Saturday night.

Month. No police officer was injured by gunshot over the period 1964 to 1983 during the months of January, March, April, June or December. Injuries inflicted in other months are indicated below:

February	- 2 ]	Summer	(25%)
May	- 1 ]	Autumn	(12.5%)
July	- 1 ]	Winter	(25%)
August	- 1 ]		
September	- 1 ]	Spring	(37.5%)
October	- 1 ]		
November	- 1 ]		

### Situational characteristics

Weapons. The nine weapons utilised to attack the eight WA police officers during the period reviewed here are shown below together with frequency of use:

rifle	- 7
pistol	- 2

All weapons were .22 calibre but for one pistol which was .25 calibre.

Company. All but one of the wounded members were in company at the time they were shot. In three cases where officers in company were injured, only one was wounded. In three other cases, however, other officers were either killed (in two cases) or wounded.

Attack. Attacks on WA police officers occurred under several different situational conditions as indicated under:

disturbance call	- 1 (12.5%)
breaking call	- 3 (37.5%)
robbery call	- 1 (12.5%)
mentally deranged	- 1 (12.5%)
performing bailiff duties	- 1 (12.5%)
ambush	- 1 (12.5%)

### Offender characteristics

Gender. Six of the seven offenders were male and one was female.

Age. Ages of offenders varied between 19 and 47 years, with a mean of 28 years.

Company. Only one offender was in company of another at time of shooting a police officer.

Summary:

- \* Western Australia police officer non-fatal gunshot/blast injury rate for the 20 year period 1964 to 1983 was 20.27 per 100,000 of sworn members of agency
- \* annual average of Western Australia police officers wounded by gunshot/bomb blast over the 20 year period was 0.4
- \* median age of Western Australia police officers non-fatally wounded by gunshot/bomb blast over the 20 year period was 32 years
- \* average age of Western Australia police officers wounded by gunshot/bomb blast over the 20 year period was 32 years
- \* median service of Western Australia police officers wounded by gunshot/bomb blast over the 20 year period was eight years
- \* average service of Western Australia police officers wounded by gunshot/bomb blast over the 20 year period was nine years

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

A total of six SA police officers were shot and wounded between 1964 and 1983; such woundings occurred in five of the 20 years. Wounding frequencies are shown at Table 2.5, together with related data. They are also depicted in histogram form at Figure 2.7.

The annual average of police officers wounded by gunshot over the period was 0.3. Mean rate of officer injury per 100,000 of agency strength for the same period was 12.71.

TABLE 2.5

SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE OFFICERS WOUNDED BY GUNSHOT OR BOMB BLAST: YEAR BY AGENCY STRENGTH BY RATE PER 100,000 MEMBERS OF AGENCY STRENGTH, 1964 - 1983

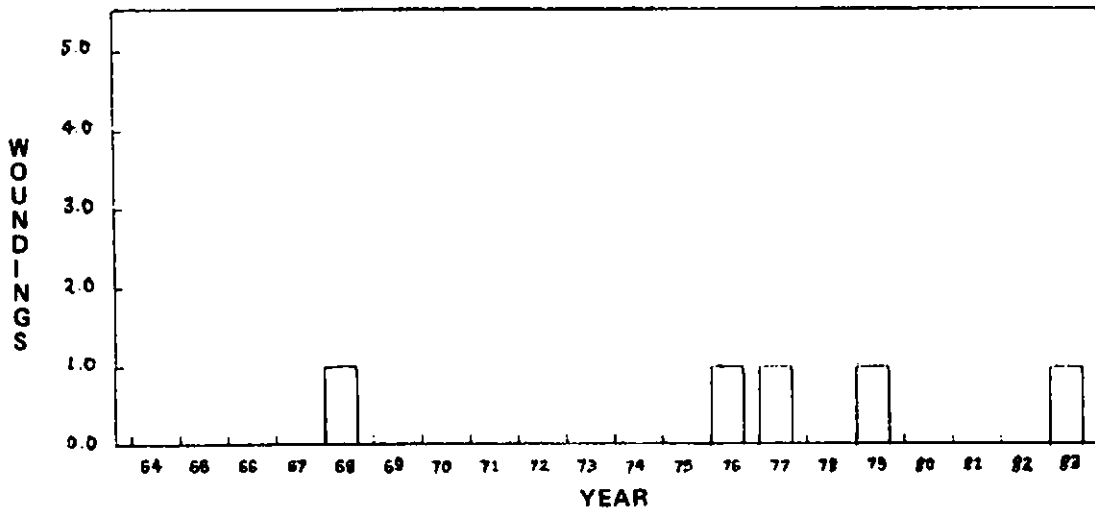
Year	police officers wounded <sup>1</sup>	agency sworn strength <sup>2</sup>	police wounding rate per 100,000 of agency
1968	1	1,777	56.27
1976	1	2,560	39.06
1977	2	2,781	71.92
1979	1	3,135	31.90
1983	1	3,286	30.43

1. Source: newspapers, PDSAARs, departmentally provided data.

2. Source: PDSAARs, aggregated data at Appendix A.

FIGURE 2.7

SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE OFFICERS WOUNDED BY  
GUNSHOT OR BOMB BLAST, 1964 - 1983



#### Victim characteristics

Age. SA police officers shot and wounded during the period under review ranged in age from 21 to 36 years. Average age was 27 years and median age was 26.5 years.

Rank. ALL (100%) injured officers held rank in the various grades of Constable. No Sergeants or commissioned officers were hurt.

Gender. All (100%) of the shot officers were male.

Marital status. All (100%) of the wounded members were married.

Length of service. Service of injured officers ranged between one and 16 years. Mean service was 6.5 years and median service was 4 years.

Branch. All (100%) shot officers were assigned to general uniformed duties.

Posting. Five (83%) wounded members were based in the metropolitan area and one (17%) was located at a country station.

Armed. Four (67%) injured members were armed at the time they were hurt. Two (33%) were unarmed.

Anatomy. All (100%) shot officers were struck by bullets on their torsos. Breakdown of injuries by location is given below:

shoulder	-	1	(17%)
chest	-	1	(17%)
abdomen	-	2	(33%)
groin	-	1	(17%)
multiple	-	1	(17%)

### Temporal characteristics

Time. SA police officers were shot and wounded around the clock during the 20 year period reviewed here. Some distortion is created in such a small array in that two officers out of six were injured in the course of a single event. Three (50%) shootings occurred during night shift (0000-0800 hrs), two (33%) occurred during day shift (0800-1600 hrs) and one (17%) happened on late shift (1600-2400 hrs). Two (33%) of the night shift shootings occurred shortly after midnight.

Day. No police officer was shot and wounded on a Wednesday, Saturday or Sunday during the period studied. Distribution of woundings by day is shown below:

Monday	-	1 (17%)
Tuesday	-	3 (50%)
Thursday	-	1 (17%)
Friday	-	1 (17%)

Month. No SA police officers were shot and wounded in the months of February, March, May, June, July, October or November. Distribution of such shootings by month is given below:

January	-	1 (17%)
April	-	2 (33%)
August	-	1 (17%)
September	-	1 (17%)
December	-	1 (17%)

### Situational characteristics

Weapon. Of the five weapons used to shoot and wound the six SA police officers, no shotguns were evident. Distribution of woundings by weapon are shown hereunder:

pistol	-	3 (60%)
rifle	-	2 (40%)

All weapons were .22 calibre. One rifle was used to shoot two others.

Company. All (100%) six wounded officers were in company of other police officers at the time they were shot. On only one occasion was more than one police officer wounded at a time. On that occasion, two officers were wounded and none killed.

Attack. SA police officers were shot and wounded in a variety of situations. Distribution of woundings by attack category is given below:

attending burglar alarm	-	2 (33%)
attending disturbance call	-	2 (33%) (single event)
attempt arrest	-	1 (17%)
unprovoked attack	-	1 (17%)

The disturbance call attended was, in fact, a domestic dispute.



### Offender characteristics

Gender. All five (100%) offenders who shot and wounded SA police officers between 1964 and 1983 were male.

Age. Ages of the five assailants varied between 14 and 41 years. Mean age was 28 years.

Company. Only two (40%) of the five offenders were in company when they attacked a police officer. One offender was in company with one other juvenile and one mature age offender was in company with three others.

### Summary:

- \* South Australia police officer non-fatal gunshot/bomb blast injury rate for the 20 year period 1964 to 1983 was 12.71 per 100,000 of sworn membership
- \* annual average of South Australia police officers wounded by gunshot/bomb blast over the 20 year period was 0.3
- \* median age of South Australia police officers wounded by gunshot/bomb blast over the 20 year period was 26.5 years
- \* average age of South Australia police officers wounded over the 20 year period by gunshot/bomb blast was 27 years
- \* median service of South Australia police officers wounded by gunshot/bomb blast over the 20 year period was four years
- \* average service of South Australia police officers wounded by gunshot/bomb blast over the 20 year period was 6.5 years

### NORTHERN TERRITORY

A total of five Northern Territory police officers were shot and wounded during the period 1964-1983 inclusive. The woundings occurred in three of the 20 years. Wounding frequencies are shown by year at Table 2.6, together with related data. Wounding frequencies are also depicted in the histogram at Figure 2.8.

For the period 1964 to 1983, the annual average of police officers wounded by gunshot or bomb blast was 0.25. Mean rate of officer injury per 100,000 of agency sworn strength over the same period was 71.59.

TABLE 2.6

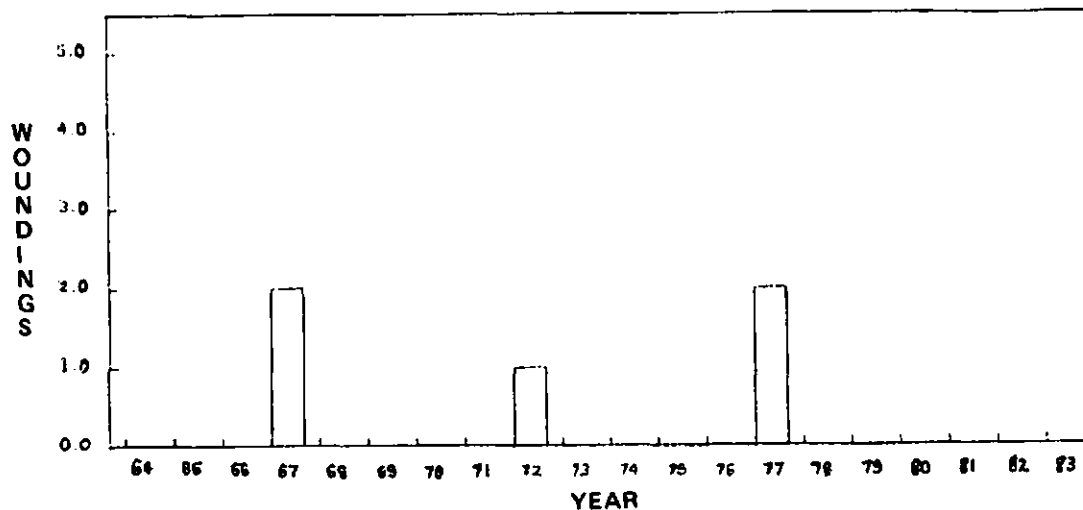
NORTHERN TERRITORY POLICE OFFICERS WOUNDED BY GUNSHOT  
OR BOMB BLAST: YEAR BY AGENCY STRENGTH BY RATE  
PER 100,000 MEMBERS OF AGENCY, 1964 - 1983

Year	police officers wounded <sup>1</sup>	agency sworn strength <sup>2</sup>	police wounding rate per 100,000 of agency
1967	2	151	1,324.50
1972	1	281	355.87
1977	2	451	443.46

1. Source: newspapers, PFNTARs, departmentally provided data.
2. Source: PFNTARs, aggregated data at Appendix A.

FIGURE 2.8

NORTHERN TERRITORY POLICE OFFICERS WOUNDED BY  
GUNSHOT OR BOMB BLAST, 1964 - 1983



### Victim characteristics

Age. NT police officers shot and wounded during the 20 year period under review ranged in age from 26 to 39 years. Mean age was 32 years and median age was also 32 years.

Rank. Three (60%) of the wounded officers were Constables, one (20%) was a Sergeant and one (20%) was an Inspector.

Gender. All (100%) of the wounded police employees were male.

Marital status. All (100%) of the officers wounded by gunshot were married.

Length of service. Service of the five wounded officers varied between a low of four and a high of 16 years. Mean service of officers was eight years and median service was four years.

Branch. Four (80%) injured members were engaged on general uniformed duties and one (20%) was assigned to criminal investigation duties.

Posting. All (100%) wounded officers were employed outside metropolitan area.

Armed. All (100%) police officers in question were armed at the time they were shot.

Anatomy. The five NT police officers were injured in a variety of sites. Distribution of woundings by site category are shown below:

trunk	-	2 (40%)
arm	-	1 (20%)
foot	-	1 (20%)
multiple	-	1 (20%)

#### Temporal characteristics

Time. NT police officers were all shot and wounded on day shift (0800-1600 hrs), for the most part within one hour of shift commencement. Some distortion is due to four of the five injured officers being wounded in company with one other officer each.

Day. No police officers were shot and wounded on a Monday, Tuesday, Friday or Saturday. Frequency of woundings distributed by day are shown below:

Wednesday	-	1 (20%)
Thursday	-	2 (40%)
Sunday	-	2 (40%)

Month. None of the five injured police officers considered in this section were shot in the months of January, February, April, May, June, July, September, October or December. Distribution of woundings by month is given hereunder:

March	-	2 (40%)
August	-	2 (40%)
November	-	1 (20%)

#### Situational characteristics

Weapon. All (100%) five officers were shot and wounded by .22 calibre rifles. Three weapons only were used to inflict the five wounds.

Company. One (20%) of the injured officers was unaccompanied at the time he was attacked. The other four (80%) officers were in company. Each was accompanied by one other officer who was also injured.

Attack. NT police officers were shot in two types of situations, as shown under:

searching for suspects	-	4 (80%) (two events)
mentally deranged	-	1 (20%)

Offender characteristics

Gender. All three (100%) offenders were male.

Age. Offenders' ages ranged between 26 and 28 years. Mean age was 27 years.

Company. All three (100%) offenders were unaccompanied at the time they wounded the five police officers.

Summary:

- \* Northern Territory police officer non-fatal gunshot/bomb blast injury rates for the 20 year period 1964 to 1983 was 71.59 per 100,000 of sworn members of agency
- \* annual average of Northern Territory police officers wounded by gunshot/bomb blast over the 20 year period was 0.25
- \* median age of Northern Territory police officers wounded by gunshot/bomb blast over the 20 year period was 32 years
- \* average age of Northern Territory police officers wounded by gunshot/bomb blast over the 20 year period was 32 years
- \* median service of Northern Territory police officers wounded by gunshot/bomb blast over the 20 year period was four years
- \* average service of Northern Territory police officers wounded by gunshot/bomb blast over the 20 year period was eight years

### CONCLUSION

As indicated at the outset this study was not designed as a comparative exercise. It was intended to describe murders and shootings/bombings of police officers by jurisdiction and nothing more. Thus, specific conclusions are recorded in respect of each affected jurisdiction in both categories. Such an approach is clearly of greatest utility to police consumers. The relatively small number of frequencies involved also contraindicates broad based general conclusions due the unstable rates they produce. Apart from these considerations, distinct differences among jurisdictions along a number of dimensions limits the number of general conclusions possible anyway.

It has been pointed out, however, there may be readers possessing general rather than particular interests in the subject. Such readers, it is suggested, require a general summary suited to their perspective. With the wants of such readers (if any) in mind and with due consideration to the various caveats mentioned above the following selective findings are tentatively offered:

- \* a total of 21 police officers qua police officers were murdered (NSW, V, Q, WA) during the period 1964 to 1983; 17 by gun shot, 2 by bomb/mine, 1 by knife and 1 by motor vehicle
- \* a total of 74 police officers qua police officers were wounded (NSW, V, Q, WA, SA, NT) during the period 1964 to 1983; 71 by gunshot and 3 by bomb
- \* a total of 93 police officers qua police officers were shot and bombed/mined (NSW, V, Q, WA, SA, NT) during the period 1964 to 1983; 88 shot and 5 bombed/mined
- \* there is no significant evidence murders and shootings of police officers qua police officers are increasing in any jurisdiction. NB: This conclusion cannot be generalised to other forms of violence employed against police officers.
- \* rifles were the most used weapon with which to shoot police officers in those jurisdictions affected
- \* junior, uniformed, married, male police officers predominated among those murdered and shot/bombed in those jurisdictions affected
- \* no female officers were murdered or shot/bombed in any jurisdiction.

This report is limited in part by data availability. Some data collection returns were incomplete, especially with regard to time and weapon. Data capable of permitting event classification by social category, such as undertaken in America by Margarita (1980), were substantially lacking. The lengthy service of some victims suggests experience is not always a relevant variable, at

least in any direct sense. On the other hand, there is the possibility some officers may have contributed to their own victimisation. Certainly this is an issue requiring attention. Only case studies possessing detailed behavioral data will produce satisfactory answers. Such answers are required not only to establish the social dynamics (and thus permit classification) of each event but, also to identify possible necessary changes of equipment, procedural guidelines, training and so on. Police administrators are thus urged to treat the sorts of events reported upon here as special occurrences requiring not only detailed criminal investigation but also analysis by agency safety specialists.

In conclusion, the support and assistance provided the study by agencies concerned is greatly appreciated and it is hoped this report provides a worthwhile return on their investment.

## APPENDIX A

POLICE AGENCY SWORN STRENGTHS: BY STATE/TERRITORY,  
1964 - 1983

year	NSW	V	Q	WA	SA	NT
1964	5,812*	4,344*	2,670	1,260	1,496	149
1965	6,120*	4,369*	2,689	1,277	1,558	155
1966	6,429*	4,422*	2,847	1,319	1,595	157
1967	6,760*	4,617*	2,910	1,375	1,660	151
1968	6,947*	4,712*	2,933	1,421	1,777	172
1969	7,081*	4,722*	3,022	1,490	1,845	195
1970	7,144*	4,770*	3,085	1,529	1,881	235
1971	7,513*	5,089*	3,051	1,616	1,985	259
1972	7,741*	5,410*	3,103	1,686	2,068	281
1973	7,923*	5,628*	3,210	1,807	2,167	318
1974	8,212*	5,841*	3,329	1,984	2,264	361
1975	8,382*	6,156*	3,479	2,179	2,474	443
1976	8,482*	6,487*	3,682	2,288	2,560	418
1977	8,504*	6,819*	3,744	2,345	2,781	451
1978	9,011*	7,238*	3,832	2,490	2,920	470
1979	9,091*	7,569*	3,902	2,558	3,135	538
1980	9,225*	7,814*	4,020	2,643	3,219	524
1981	9,357*	8,050*	4,338	2,622	3,250	550
1982	9,388	8,302	4,345	2,693	3,269	566
1983	9,797	8,258	4,514	2,894	3,286	591
TOTAL	158,919	120,617	68,705	39,476	47,190	6,984

Sources: Police department annual reports.

\* as at 31 Dec, all other strengths as at 30 Jun.

NB. For criteria employed in reaching totals consult author.

## POPULATION : BY STATE/TERRITORY, 1964-1983

year	NSW	V	Q	WA	SA	NT
1964 <sup>1</sup>	4,142,121	3,137,921	1,626,525	818,121	1,051,954	52,754
1965 <sup>1</sup>	4,211,049	3,195,860	1,659,423	838,248	1,082,958	55,464
1966 <sup>1</sup>	4,267,452	3,249,843	1,687,062	864,093	1,103,740	59,352
1967 <sup>1</sup>	4,329,913	3,303,606	1,715,803	896,988	1,115,926	64,399
1968 <sup>1</sup>	4,401,212	3,356,827	1,747,724	937,800	1,132,137	70,223
1969 <sup>1</sup>	4,490,765	3,421,178	1,779,690	976,620	1,149,375	75,831
1970 <sup>1</sup>	4,573,735	3,482,031	1,812,784	1,014,052	1,170,230	82,822
1971 <sup>2</sup>	4,725,500	3,601,400	1,851,500	1,053,800	1,200,100	85,700
1972 <sup>2</sup>	4,795,100	3,661,300	1,898,500	1,082,000	1,214,600	92,100
1973 <sup>2</sup>	4,841,900	3,707,700	1,952,000	1,101,000	1,228,500	97,100
1974 <sup>3</sup>	4,894,100	3,755,700	2,008,300	1,127,600	1,241,500	102,900
1975 <sup>2</sup>	4,932,000	3,787,400	2,051,400	1,154,900	1,265,300	92,900
1976 <sup>2</sup>	4,959,600	3,810,400	2,092,400	1,178,300	1,274,000	98,200
1977 <sup>2</sup>	5,003,200	3,837,500	2,132,400	1,204,800	1,286,000	102,200
1978 <sup>2</sup>	5,049,800	3,863,700	2,177,500	1,230,900	1,297,000	107,000
1979 <sup>2</sup>	5,103,300	3,883,200	2,223,200	1,254,100	1,301,800	111,400
1980 <sup>2</sup>	5,165,200	3,909,800	2,275,400	1,273,500	1,308,700	115,200
1981 <sup>2</sup>	5,237,100	3,948,600	2,345,300	1,299,100	1,319,300	122,800
1982 <sup>3</sup>	5,307,948	3,994,122	2,419,570	1,336,911	1,328,738	129,429
1983 <sup>3</sup>	5,354,915	4,034,632	2,473,037	1,363,239	1,340,398	134,041
TOTAL	95,785,910	72,942,720	39,929,518	22,006,072	24,412,256	1,851,815

- Sources: 1. Demography.  
 2. Yearbook Australia 1983.  
 3. Australian Demographic Statistics Quarterly.



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