Five Years of Law Enforcement Traffic-related Fatalities

An Analysis of Cases From 2017-2021
Looking at the Data
Law Enforcement Traffic-related Deaths

- From 2017-2021 a total of 242 Law Enforcement officers were killed in traffic crashes
  - 137 in auto crashes
  - 87 in struck-by crashes
  - 20 in motorcycle crashes
Total Traffic-related Deaths by Year

2017-2021

- 2017: 50
- 2018: 50
- 2019: 40
- 2020: 40
- 2021: 55
Breakout of Crash Types

Fatal Crashes 2017-2021

- 2017: Auto Crash 30, Struck-by 10, Motorcycle 5
- 2018: Auto Crash 30, Struck-by 15, Motorcycle 5
- 2019: Auto Crash 25, Struck-by 15, Motorcycle 3
- 2020: Auto Crash 25, Struck-by 15, Motorcycle 3
- 2021: Auto Crash 25, Struck-by 25, Motorcycle 5

Legend:
- Blue: Auto Crash
- Red: Struck-by
- Green: Motorcycle
Data Points from Analysis

• 27% of the crashes involved an impaired driver
• 28% were deemed felonious (Criminal not accidental)
• 47% of officers were not wearing their seat belt
Single-vehicle Crashes

• Out of 137 vehicle crashes, **54** were single-vehicle crashes
  – 38% of all crashes were single-vehicle crashes
  – **52%** of those crashes occurred while responding to a call for service or backup
Struck-by Crashes

- Of the 87 officers killed by vehicles, 33% of them were on the scene of a previous crash
- 20% were conducting a traffic stop when struck
- 14 officers were killed while deploying tire deflation spikes
Motorcycle Crashes

• From 2017-2021, 20 officers were killed in motorcycle crashes
  • 6 of those officers were killed while conducting escorts for funerals, dignitaries or parades
Roadside Crashes 2017-2021

• Apart from the 87 Struck-by crashes, 8 officers died when their car was struck as they were stopped conducting police business.
Slow Down and Move Over

- 41 cases involved a violation of the “Slow Down and Move Over Law”
  - 8 were parked patrol cars struck from the rear
  - 33 were struck-by crashes of officers on foot
“Stop Sticks”

- From 2017-2021, 14 officers were struck and killed while deploying tire deflation spikes.
States with the highest LE fatality numbers

- Texas-23
- California-17
- Florida-17
- Georgia-14
- Arizona-12
- Illinois-11
- South Carolina-11
- Louisiana-10
- Mississippi-9
- Tennessee-9
NHTSA Regions
Where we are in 2022

• **PRELIMINARY** Total traffic-related Cases=34
  – Auto Collison=16
  – Single-vehicle=6
  – Struck-by=10
  – Motorcycle=2

  – One involved deploying Tire a Deflation Device
Lowering Risk and Enhancing Safety

- Wear your Body Armor!
- Wear your Seat Belt!
- Wear your High Visibility-reflective vest!
- Tactically position your vehicle to protect you on stops or at crash scenes
- Conduct right-side (Passenger) approaches.
- Conspicuously mark your vehicles with reflective striping. Especially in the rear.
- Learn about TIMs, Traffic Incident Management
Which is more visible?
Which is more visible?