Beat: News

FBI Designates 61 Active Shooter Incidents in 2021

52.5% increase from previous year

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USPA NEWS - In 2021, the FBI designated 61 shootings as active shooter incidents. In these incidents, 103 people were killed and 140 wounded, excluding the shooters. For the period 2017–2021, active shooter incident data reveals an upward trend. The number of active shooter incidents identified in 2021 represents a 52.5% increase from 2020 and a 96.8% increase from 2017. Today, the FBI released the Active Shooter Incidents in the United States in 2021 report.

Casualty counts are higher for 2021 (243) when compared with 2020 (164), indicating a 48% increase. The casualties in 2021 represents the third highest total casualty count over the last five years (2017–2021). 2021 saw the highest number of deaths (103) since 2017, a 171.1% increase from 2020 and above the average (92.3) for the period 2017–2020. There was an 11.1% increase in people wounded (140) in 2021 compared with 2020 (126), but below the average (253) for the period 2017–2020.

For 2021, the FBI observed an emerging trend involving roving active shooters; specifically, shooters who shoot in multiple locations, either in one day or in various locations over several days.

The 61 incidents in 2021 were carried out by 61 shooters. Sixty shooters were male, and one was female. Individual shooters carried out all the incidents. The age range of the shooters was 12 years old to 67 years old. Two shooters wore body armor. Thirty shooters were apprehended by law enforcement, 14 shooters were killed by law enforcement, four shooters were killed by armed citizens, one shooter was killed in a vehicle accident during a law enforcement pursuit, 11 shooters committed suicide, and one shooter remains at large.

The FBI defines an active shooter as one or more individuals actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a populated area. Implicit in this definition is the shooter's use of a firearm. The active aspect of the definition inherently implies the ongoing nature of an incident, and thus the potential for the response to affect the outcome, whereas a mass killing is defined as three or more killings in a single incident.

The FBI remains dedicated to assisting federal, state, local, tribal, and campus law enforcement in its active shooter prevention, response, and recovery efforts, as well as to training its international law enforcement partners. The FBI remains steadfast in its efforts to train private citizens, as it is imperative that citizens understand the risks faced and the resources available in an active shooter situation.

Since the 2013, the FBI has partnered with the Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance to help deliver Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT) to law enforcement. ALERRT is the national standard for active shooting response, regardless of responder agency, and incorporates tactical best practices and lessons learned from previous active shooter incidents.

This report is part of a series of FBI active shooter-related products published since September 2014. These reports are not intended to explore all facets of active shooter incidents but rather intended to provide law enforcement officers, other first responders, corporations, educators, and the public with a baseline understanding of active shooter incidents.

The FBI also supports the Don't Name Them campaign. This campaign encourages media, law enforcement, and public information officers to shift their focus from the perpetrators of active shooter incidents toward the victims, survivors, and heroes who stopped them, as well as the communities that come together to help in the healing process. To learn more, visit dontnamethem.org.

Persons suspected of planning an active shooting should be immediately reported to law enforcement. For additional resources on the active shooter threat, please visit Active Shooter Resources.

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