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February 25, 2022

To: Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum  
1162 Court St NE  
Salem, OR 97301

From: Portland Copwatch

Re: List of 338+ Law Enforcement Deadly Force Incidents in Oregon 2010-2021, Average Still Up At 28 Per Year  
Attorney General Rosenblum:

Since 2014, Portland Copwatch has been sending you information about officer involved deadly force incidents in Oregon (or involving Oregon law enforcement). We now have data collected for twelve years: 2010-2021. Adding in the 35 cases from 2021, there have been at least 339 incidents in the past 12 years, keeping the average-- which was 25 per year before 2017-- at 28 per year. This letter updates the data to include the 2021 incidents. Since 2019, we have asked your office to pay close attention to the uptick in officer shootings-- this is now the fifth year in a row where there have been over 30 incidents. The increase in Oregon does not match the national number of deadly force incidents ending in death remaining constant at about 1000 (per the *Washington Post*). As of February 25, there have already been at last five such incidents in Oregon in 2022.\*-1

We began our analysis to ensure your office was complying with SB 111 (2007) about publishing the incidents in which a person died after Oregon law enforcement used deadly force. The State DOJ created that list quietly in late 2016. At last check, only 49 of 72 deaths caused by law enforcement deadly force from 2018 to 2021 (68%) were listed on the DOJ website.\*-2 While still better than the 30% figure we found in 2020, it is unacceptably low.

Eighteen people died at the hands of law enforcement in 2021, bringing the total to 188 in 12 years (16 per year average). Oregon's crime data show there were 211 homicides in Oregon in 2021, significantly up from its previous average of 95 a year.\*-3 However, with 18 killings this means one of every twelve homicides was committed by law enforcement. That's half the rate of our past estimates, but still alarming. At least nine people were killed by police Taser use. Such rampant use of violence to enforce state power deserves your attention.

To summarize our updated findings:

\_\_\_Totals:

---339 incidents involving 341 civilians*-4	<i>[was 304/306]</i>
----321 shootings, 172 ending in death (54%)	<i>[was 286/154 and 54%]*-5</i>
----9 Taser-related deaths	<i>[no change]*-6</i>
----5 deaths in custody	<i>[no change]</i>
----4 vehicles as deadly force, 3 ending in death	<i>[no change]</i>

\_\_\_Location of 338 incidents (excluding one in Washington state):

--The incidents occurred in 27 of Oregon's 36 counties [no change].  
--The incidents happened in 109 municipalities/unincorporated areas in Oregon [*5 new; last count of 99 was low*].  
--The top 5 cities accounted for 124 incidents (37%); the top 5 counties accounted for 214 (63%).

\_\_\_Agencies involved:

--94 Oregon agencies were involved including incidents involving multiple agencies.  
--Most frequently involved were Portland Police (60), Oregon State Police (36), Washington County Sheriffs (19), Clackamas County Sheriffs (19), Salem Police (16), Hillsboro Police (15), Eugene, Gresham and Medford Police (11 each).

*[Note: includes 8 new incidents by the PPB, 3 new incidents by Clackamas County and Salem Police, 2 new incidents by Medford Police and one each by Albany, Beaverton, Corvallis and Eagle Point Police, Douglas County, Gladstone Police, Jackson County (plus one where they were a secondary agency), Josephine County, Keizer Police, Lane County, Lincoln County, Madras Police, Malheur County, Marion County (with Silverton Police), Molalla Police, Multnomah County (with Gresham), Oregon State Police (with Lake County), Springfield and Tigard Police.]*

\_\_\_ Broken down by year:

--2021:

--- 35 incidents  
--- 35 shootings, 18 ending in death  
----> 8 by Portland Police  
----> 3 with no hits

--2020:

--- 35 incidents  
--- 33 shootings, 17 ending in death\*-5  
----> 2 by Portland Police, 1 each by  
Gresham Police and US Marshals in Portland  
----> 4 with no hits (maybe 5)  
----> 1 by Warm Springs Tribal Police,  
1 by US Marshals  
--- 1 death in custody, 1 Taser-related death

--2019:

--- 35 incidents  
--- 32 shootings, 17 ending in death  
----> 6 by Portland Police, one by  
Vancouver (WA) Police in Portland  
----> 9 with no hits  
--- 1 death in custody, 1 deadly force using vehicle  
ending in death, 1 Taser-related death

--2018:

--- 37 incidents  
---36 shootings, 19 ending in death  
----> 6 in Portland plus one death in custody  
----> 4 with no hits  
---1 death in custody (in Portland)

--2017:

--- 26 incidents  
---26 shootings, 12 ending in death  
----> 6 in Portland  
----> 4-6 with no hits (unclear)

--2016:

--- 25 incidents  
---24 shootings, 15 ending in death  
----> 2 in Portland  
----> 1 with no hits  
---1 deadly force using vehicle ending in death

--2015:

--- 25 incidents  
---24 shootings, 16 ending in death  
----> 6 in Portland  
----> 3 with no hits  
---1 deadly force using vehicle ending in death

--2014:

--- 23 incidents  
---21 shootings, 16 ending in death  
----> 4 in Portland  
---1 death in custody  
---1 deadly force using vehicle

--2013:

--- 30 incidents  
---28 shootings, 13 ending in death  
----> 2 in Portland  
----> 3 with no hits  
---2 Taser-related deaths

--2012:

--- 28 incidents  
---25 shootings, 12 ending in death  
----> 6 in Portland  
----> 1 by US Marshals  
----> 2 with no hits  
---3 Taser-related deaths

2011:

---14 incidents  
---13 shootings, 5 ending in death  
----> 4 in Portland plus one death in custody  
----> 2 with no hits  
----> 1 by off duty Protective Service officer  
---1 death in custody (in Portland)

2010:

--- 26 incidents 2010  
---24 shootings, 12 ending in death  
----> 6 in Portland  
----> 1 with no hits  
---2 Taser-related deaths

\_\_\_Race: We do not have enough information to fully break down the list by race statewide.

--12 of the 65 Portland shootings/deaths were of African Americans, or 18% of victims in a city that is 6% Black.  
--Overall, at least 20 of the 341 civilians were African Americans, still 6% in a state which is 2% Black; two people shot in 2021 were added to this total.

\_\_\_Gender: All but 15 of 339 civilians whose gender is known were male (96% male, same as 2020).

Four of the cases where females were shot (or tasered) were in 2014; one female was shot in 2018; three were shot at in 2019, two were shot in 2020, one of whom was killed, and one was shot in 2021.

\_\_\_Age: The victims whose ages are known ranged in age from 17 to 88.

--Most common ages were 29 (17); 26 and 30 (15); 25, 31 and 34 (14); 27 (13); 36 and 44 (11); 22, 32, 37, 40 and 49 (9), 20, 23, 38, 51 and 55 (8).

[Two sets of four people in 2021 were age 30 or 32; none were under 20; three were over 55.]

[At the time of this reporting, eight people's ages are not known including three from 2020 and two from 2021.]

--Average age was 38, normal for our study.

\_\_\_Veterans/mental health: At least eleven of the victims were primarily identified as military veterans in some kind of psychological crisis. We are still unable to track exactly how many of the civilians were in crisis, although in 2021 at least Jacob Macduff in Tigard, Jordan Abbe in Madras and Robert Delgado, Joshua Merritt and Michael Townsend in Portland were reported to have mental health issues.

The fact remains that the only indictment for an officer in any of these cases (that we know of) ended with the unfortunate suicide of Portland Officer Dane Reister in 2015. His prosecution for a 2011 shooting was never carried out as an appeal from the Multnomah District Attorney was pending at the time of his death. We continue to encourage the AG's office to look into the idea of special prosecutors for these incidents, since local DAs are unlikely to pursue charges in cases involving officers they need to convict criminal suspects in their daily court proceedings. In 2018, the Klamath County DA asked the Oregon DOJ to investigate the death of Philip Moskios, Jr., citing potential conflict of interest for knowing the officers plus the involvement of the DEA agent. In 2021, the state helped investigate the Lake County shooting and the Delgado shooting in Portland. Though DOJ found no criminal wrongdoing in any of these cases, we continue to encourage outside looks at these most serious events.

The officers who have not yet been named (we believe) in 2021 are the Oregon State Police and Lake County officers involved in Isaac Matheney's death, the Malheur County deputies who killed Henry Martinez, Jr., and the Molalla officer who shot at and missed Brian Scott Mills. This is more consistent with the 2-3 cases lacking such information most years, while with the identification of the officer involved in a Taser death in Forest Grove there are still 10 cases from 2020 (from 11 originally) where officers weren't identified. We again urge the AG to ensure such names are published.

We hope to hear back from you.

dan handelman  
Portland Copwatch

footnotes:

\*1- in Gresham (1/4), Portland (1/26&2/19), Crook County (a first for our list- 2/4) and in Salem (2/7).

\*2- OR DOJ data: <https://justice.oregon.gov/deathincident/home/search> .

\*3- Data from <https://www.oregon.gov/osp/Pages/Uniform-Crime-Reporting-Data.aspx>

\*4- One civilian was shot at twice by police in 2018; in three other cases, including Sept. 27, 2019 in Yamhill County, two people were targets of the police.

\*5- For 2020, PCW incorrectly listed Robert Woodside as deceased; we regret the error.

\*6- Allen Pitts died in custody in Salem after being struck by a Taser in 2019, it is not clear if this contributed to his death. If so there have been at least 13 such deaths since Tasers were introduced in Oregon in 2002.

Additional notes:

--The Portland Police used a carotid choke hold in late August 2018, but we're not including that incident on this list as otherwise every use of a Taser or other violence that could lead to death would also be included.

--There was also a report of a Clackamas County Sergeant negligently discharging his gun in Jan 2019, no one was hit so we are similarly not including this or other such negligent discharges which were not aimed at civilians.

--In 2021, a Washington County Deputy accidentally killed a pedestrian, Clackamas Deputies chased a shoplifting suspect, who crashed into another car, killing a person, and Portland Police investigated an incident where a person they boxed in took their own life as a death in custody even though they did not use deadly force on the man.

PCW's database can be found at: <https://www.portlandcopwatch.org/ORshootings2010-21.pdf> .

NOTES:

(A) Explanation of data other than shootings by Oregon law enforcement (or not in Oregon) resulting in injury or death:

---Shootings with no hits are included because the officer(s) intended to injure or kill the civilians, so the incidents should be tracked as deadly force anyway and investigated as attempted homicides.

---Incidents involving federal agencies within Oregon's borders should be of concern to the State.

---The incident near Lincoln City in 2014 in which an officer using a patrol car struck a suspect who was on foot should be counted as deadly force, especially since the suspect ended up in critical condition. The incident in Klamath Falls in 2015 saw the officer hit the suspect's car, causing his death. In 2016, a Redmond officer deliberately struck a suspect, who died three days later. In 2019, a St. Helens officer deliberately struck and killed a man with his patrol car.

---A 2013 incident in Wishram, Washington involved deadly force by a plainclothes officer from The Dalles.

(B) Breakdown of incident data: (New: Corvallis, Lake Selmac, South Beach, Valley Falls, Wimer)

--By location (338 incidents in Oregon): 67 in Portland; 23 in/near Salem; 13 in Hillsboro; 12 in Eugene and in/near Medford; 10 in Gresham; 9 in Beaverton, 8 in or near Aloha and Bend; 6 in/near Grants Pass and Springfield; 5 in/near Klamath Falls and Oregon City; 4 in or near Albany, Eagle Point, Happy Valley, and Silverton; 3 in or near Fairview, Gladstone, Keizer, Madras, McMinnville, Milwaukie, Ontario, Pendleton, Roseburg, The Dalles, Tigard and Woodburn; 2 in or near Astoria, Boring, Brownsville, Canyonville, Cave Junction, Central Point, Cornelius, Cottage Grove, Forest Grove, Lakeview, Lebanon, Lincoln City, Molalla, Oak Grove, Oakridge, Redmond, Reedsport, Seaside, Sherwood, St. Helens, Tualatin and the Warm Springs Reservation; and 1 each in/near Amity, Ashland, Athena, Aumsville, Beatty, Bethany, Boardman, Burns, Cedar Mill, Clackamas County, Colton, Coos Bay, Corvallis (new), Creswell, Dallas, Elgin, Florence, Gaston, Gates, Gold Beach, Gold Hill, Grand Ronde, Hermiston, Hubbard, Lafayette, La Grande, Lake Selmac (near/new), La Pine, Modoc Point, Mt. Angel, Myrtle Creek, Newport, North Albany, North Bend, Philomath, Sandy, Scappoose, Sisters, St. Helens, South Beach (new), Sunset Beach, Talent, Terminal City, Troutdale, Turner, Tygh Valley, Umapine, Valley Falls (near/new), Veneta, Warren, Welches, West Linn, White City, Wilsonville, Wimer (near/new) Winchester Bay, Wolf Creek, Yachats and Yamhill County.

--By county: 81 in Multnomah; 45 in Washington; 36 in Marion; 28 in Clackamas; 25 in Lane; 24 in Jackson; 12 in Deschutes; 10 in Josephine, 8 in Klamath and Douglas; 6 in Linn, Umatilla and Yamhill; 5 in Benton, Clatsop, Jefferson and Lincoln; 4 in Columbia and Wasco; 3 in Lake and Malheur; 2 in Coos, Polk and Union; and 1 each in Curry, Harney, and Morrow. [The nine counties without shootings from 2010-2021 are Baker, Crook, Gillam, Grant, Hood River, Sherman, Tillamook, Wallowa and Wheeler; these are nine of the 14 least populous counties in the state.]

--By agency (second number after /slash/ indicates agency was one of multiple responsible in additional incident[s]): Portland Police (60-including 3 or more SERT); Oregon State Police (26-including 2 SWAT/10); Clackamas County Sheriff (18-including 4 SWAT/1); Salem Police (16); Washington County Sheriff (13-including 3 SWAT or TNT/6); Hillsboro Police (13/2); Eugene Police (11-including 1 SWAT); Medford Police (11); Gresham Police (9/2); Beaverton Police (8/1); Jackson County Sheriff (7/2); Marion County Sheriff (7/1); Lane County Sheriff (6); Springfield Police (6); Deschutes County Sheriff (5); Klamath Falls Police (5); Bend Police (4); Fairview Police (4); Linn County Sheriff (4); Douglas County Sheriff (4/2); Eagle Point Police (3); Grants Pass Department of Public Safety (3/1); Josephine County Sheriff (3); Keizer Police (3); Klamath County Sheriff (3/1); Milwaukie Police (3); Polk County Sheriff (3); The Dalles Police (3); Tigard Police (2); Tualatin Police (3/1); Yamhill County Sheriff (3); Albany Police (2); Benton County Sheriff (2), Dallas Police (2); Gladstone Police (2), Multnomah County Sheriff (2/1); Oregon City Police (2); Pendleton Police (2); Reedsport Police (2); Seaside Police (2); Silverton Police (2); St. Helens Police (2); and 1 each by Astoria Police, Athena Police, Aumsville Police, Central Point Police, Cornelius Police, Corvallis Police; Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution, Elgin Police, Forest Grove Police (1/2), Gold Beach Police, Hermiston Police, Jefferson County Sheriff, LaGrande Police, Lake County Sheriff's Office (1/1), Lebanon Police, Lincoln City Police, Lincoln County Sheriff, Madras Police, McMinnville Police, Milton-Freewater Police, Molalla Police, Morrow County Sheriff, Mt. Angel Police, Myrtle Creek Police, , Newberg-Dundee Police, Newport Police, North Bend Police, Oakridge Police, Ontario Snake River Corrections Officers, Portland State University Police (1/1), Redmond Police, Roseburg Police, Sandy Police, Umatilla County Sheriff's Office, Warm Springs Tribal Police, Warrenton, Wasco County Sheriff, West Linn Police, Woodburn Police, Yamhill Police, a "multijurisdictional SWAT team" in Gladstone and, Vancouver (WA) Police; also shootings involving US Marshals (4/1) and one off duty Federal Protective Service officer, plus one which involved the Department of Justice, one with the FBI, one with the DEA and two with Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms as additional agencies. Listed as secondary agencies are also Clatsop County Sheriff's Office, Columbia County Sheriffs, Confederated Tribal Police, Coos Bay Police, Coos County Sheriff, Coquille Police, Florence Police, Milton-Freewater Police, PSU Campus Safety, and Sherwood Police.

[Note: police in Corvallis, Lincoln County, Madras and Molalla are new on the list, all other agencies had previous incidents.]