

2014

Firearms

Used in the Commission of Crimes

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California Penal Code section 34200¹ requires that the Attorney General shall provide the Legislature on or before April 15 of each year a written report on the specific types of firearms used in the commission of crimes based upon information obtained from state and local crime laboratories. The report shall include all of the following information regarding crimes in which firearms were used:

- a) A description of the relative occurrence of firearms most frequently used in the commission of violent crimes, distinguishing whether the firearms used were handguns, rifles, shotguns, assault weapons, or other related types of weapons.
- b) A description of specific types of firearms that are used in homicides or street gang and drug trafficking crimes.
- c) The frequency with which stolen firearms were used in the commission of the crimes.
- d) The frequency with which fully automatic firearms were used in the commission of the crimes.
- e) Any trends of importance such as those involving specialized ammunition or firearms modifications, such as conversion to a fully automatic weapon, removal of serial number, shortening of barrel, or use of a suppressor.

Pursuant to Penal Code section 34200, the Department of Justice (DOJ) produces this annual report based on data obtained from state and local crime laboratories. Unfortunately, none of the local crime laboratories provided data to the DOJ for inclusion in this year's report. As a result, the 2014 annual report only includes data from DOJ crime laboratories, and tends to focus on crimes committed in rural areas of California. Data from major cities, including those crime laboratories that serve the urban and heavily populated areas of California, are not included in this report.

During 2014, data collected from DOJ's Bureau of Forensic Services (BFS) crime laboratories revealed that 121 of the 444 completed examinations involved firearms that are qualified for inclusion in this report. Small inconsistencies in data totals are artifacts of automatic data extraction and data that may fit multiple categories.

¹ Previously California Penal Code section 12039

Purpose

This report is prepared by the California Department of Justice, Bureau of Forensic Services (BFS), for the Legislature as directed by California Penal Code section 34200. The report details specific types of firearms used in the commission of various crimes.

Scope

This report includes firearms examined during 2014 in the BFS regional criminalistics laboratories.

Because BFS principally serves the rural areas of California, the data in this report may not represent gun-use trends within urban areas or within California as a whole.

Firearm Types (Figures 1 and 2)

The 121 qualifying firearms examined during the reporting period included 99 handguns (81.8 percent), 14 rifles (11.6 percent), eight shotguns (6.6 percent), and no machine guns. Four firearms (3.3 percent) were assault weapons (as defined in Pen. Code §§ 30510 and 30515) and four firearms (3.3 percent) were classified as a short-barreled shotguns or rifles. The most commonly encountered caliber was 9mm Luger, followed by 45 ACP and 40 S&W (see Figure 2).

Firearms used in crimes, 121 firearms

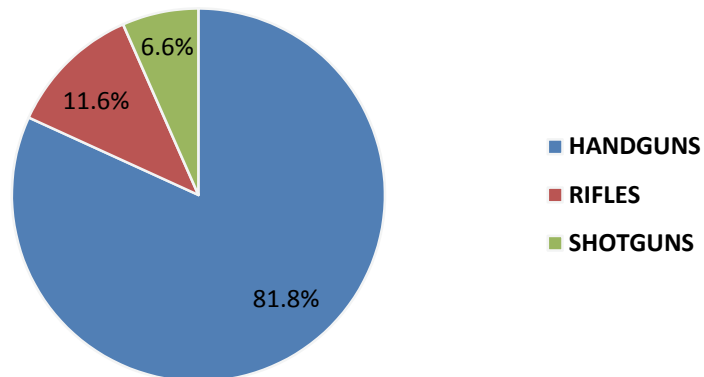


Figure 1

Weapons by cartridge (caliber)

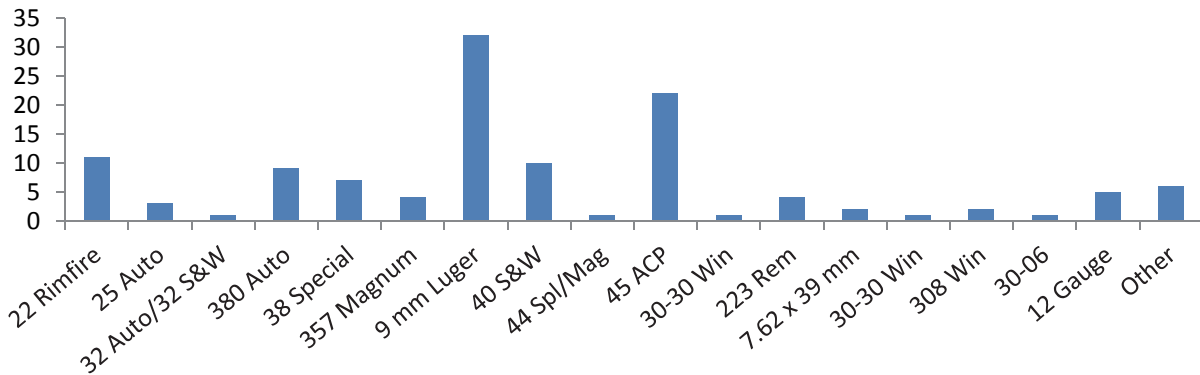


Figure 2

Crimes of Violence other than Homicide (Figure 3)

Seventy of the firearms examined were submitted in cases involving crimes of violence other than homicide. These 70 firearms included 60 handguns (85.7 percent), eight rifles (11.4 percent), and two shotguns (2.9 percent).

Firearms used in crimes of violence (other than homicide), 70 firearms

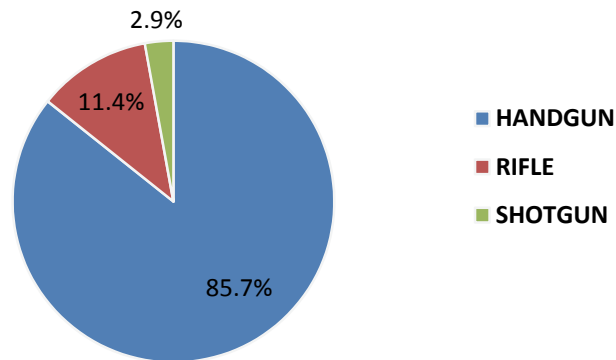


Figure 3

Homicides (Figure 4)

The 46 firearms that were submitted in homicide cases included 35 handguns (76.1 percent), five rifles (10.9 percent), and six shotguns (13.0 percent). There were no full auto firearms linked to homicides.

**Firearms used in homicides,
46 firearms**

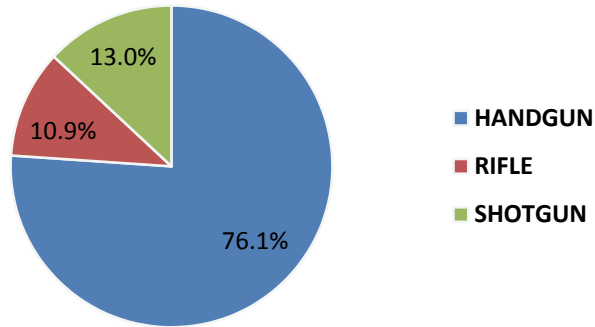


Figure 4

Street Gang Crimes

All nine firearms (7.4 percent of the total) identified as being related to street gang crimes were handguns.

Drug Trafficking Crimes

Four firearms (3.3 percent of the total) identified as being used in drug trafficking crimes were three handguns and one shotgun.

Special Cases

California Assault Weapons

Four firearms examined in 2014 were identified as California Assault Weapons (as defined in Penal Code §§ 30510 and 30515) (see Figure 5).

Stolen Firearms

None of the firearms examined were confirmed to have been reported stolen. Ownership status was not determined for many of the firearms examined.

Serial Numbers Removed

Six firearms were submitted with the serial numbers removed.

Full Auto Firearms (Machine Guns, Submachine Guns or Full Auto Conversions)

One full-auto firearm was examined this year.

Short Barreled Rifles or Shotguns

Four of the examined firearms were classified as short-barreled rifles or shotguns.

Officer-Involved Shooting Incidents

Sixteen firearms identified as being related to officer-involved shooting incidents were 11 handguns and five rifles.

Suppressors

No firearms equipped with suppressors (silencers) were examined this year.

No unusual ammunition

There was no reported use of armor piercing, exploding, frangible, Glazer-type, incendiary or tracer ammunition.

California Assault Weapons by Year (Figure 5)

California assault weapon use has continued at a relatively low level since this annual report commenced in 1998.

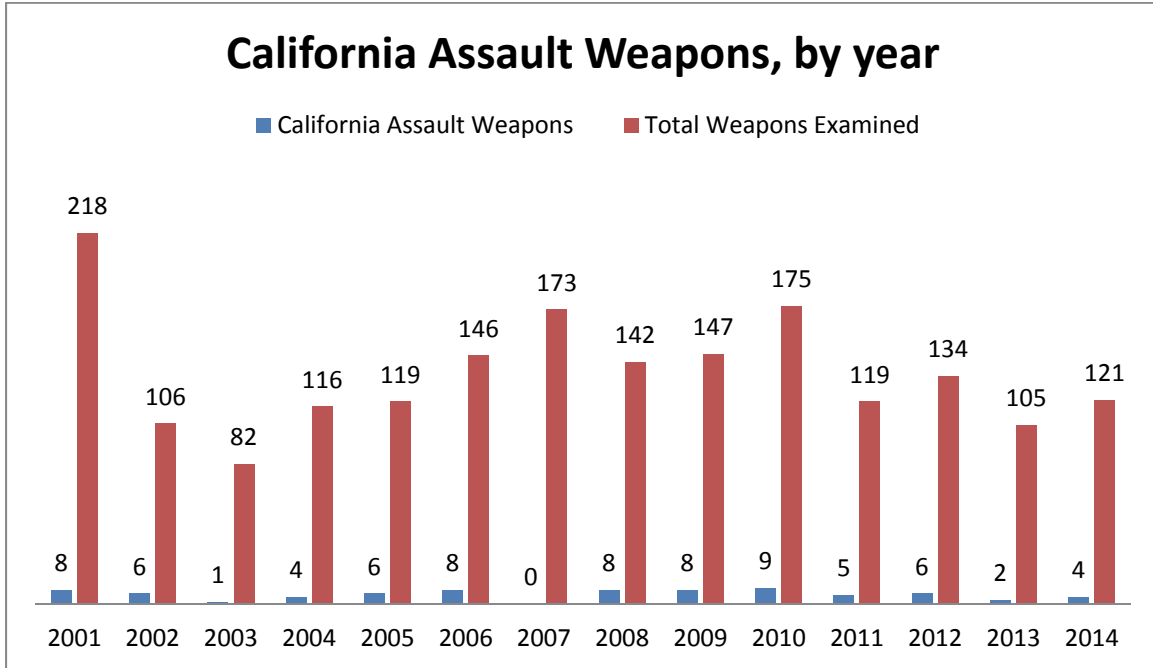


Figure 5