

THE CQB ENVIRONMENT

Where Are Officers Being Killed?

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As tactical officers it's of critical importance to evaluate close-quarters combat (CQC) or close-quarters battle (CQB) scenarios and related data on a regular basis. As a member of our SWAT team and our department's Special Enforcement Team, which focuses on fugitive apprehension, warrant services, and street crimes related investigations, I developed an individual study based on 10 years of data. The purpose of my study was to determine statistically where officers have been killed in and around a structure, specifically residences. My study was narrowed down to situations in which a team of officers was searching a residence with the purpose of search warrants, arrest warrants, barricades, or hostage rescue. It was not intended for, and does not reflect, basic patrol calls for service in which one to two officers arrived on scene to handle the call. Many of the incidents started with a call for service but turned into a "tactical" type situation.

THE AREA WHERE MOST OFFICERS HAVE BEEN KILLED IN A STRUCTURE WAS AT OR NEAR THE FRONT DOOR. THE FRONT DOOR IS STATISTICALLY FOUR TIMES MORE DANGEROUS (IN RELATION TO OFFICERS BEING KILLED) THAN THE SECOND MOST DANGEROUS AREA, WHICH IS CLOSED-DOOR BEDROOMS.

This study is based on FBI LEOKA information, with some additional information obtained. The time frame was a 10-year period, from 2008 through 2018. Each incident covered was one in which at least one officer was killed. The law enforcement officers included in this study are deputies, troopers, federal agents, U.S. Marshals, and police officers. I broke down the information based on the location where the officers were killed: at or near the front door, in closed-door bedrooms, in open-door bedrooms, in open areas of kitchens or living rooms, in attics, in bathrooms, in closets, in hallways, at windows, and in second-story landings. Each area was ranked based on the number of incidents in which one or more officers were killed.

Due to the variables in the above categories, I also broke down the statistics based on the following: officers killed on perimeter or during the approach, how many incidents involved SWAT officers, ad hoc teams, or patrol officers (in tactical/ searching scenarios), and how many were hostage-rescue situations.

The categories were ranked on a scale of 10 to 1 based on what are statistically the least to the most "dangerous" areas, or where most officers have been killed.

10. ATTICS – 2

In one of those two incidents, three officers were killed. In both of those incidents, a K9 officer was killed while checking the attic.

9. BATHROOMS – 2

In one of those incidents, six officers were shot and one was killed.

8. OPEN AREAS OF RESIDENCE (KITCHENS OR LIVING ROOMS) – 2

7. OPEN-DOOR BEDROOMS – 2

6. CLOSETS – 3

5. WINDOW TEAMS – 3

This category is referring to an officer “covering” a window, or after breaching a window.

4. SECOND-STORY LANDING – 4

In these incidents, the suspect was either “lying in wait,” or appeared from an area while the team was moving up the stairs.

3. HALLWAYS – 5

2. CLOSED-DOOR BEDROOMS – 6

This includes instances where an officer was standing outside of a closed bedroom door, attempting to open it, or as the team was opening it and entering.

1. THE FRONT DOOR – 24

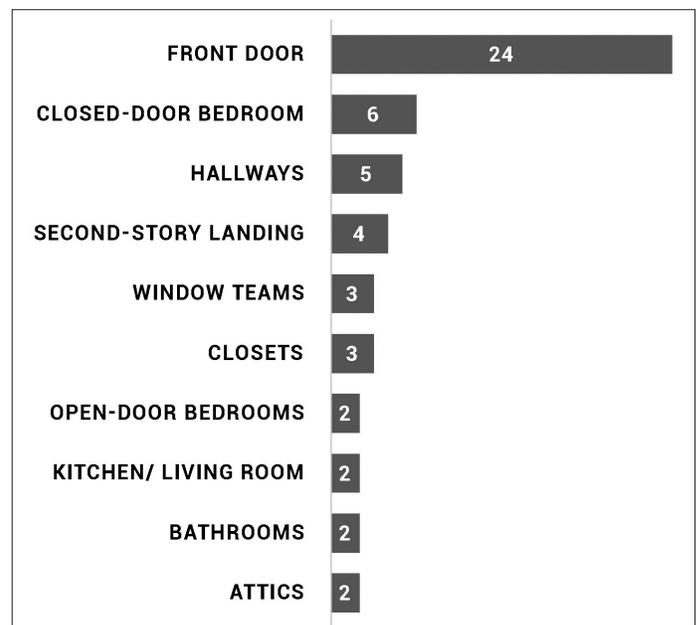
The area where most officers have been killed in a structure was at or near the front door. The front door is statistically four times more dangerous (in relation to officers being killed) than the second most dangerous area, which is closed-door bedrooms. In several of these incidents, multiple officers were shot and/or killed. They included officers knocking and announcing, attempting to breach the door, opening the door, and entering through the door.

This category poses the most questions and variables. Again, this number does not reflect basic calls for service where one to two officers respond. A logical question would be, how many of those front-door incidents did the officers not have access to the front door? Of the 24 incidents, six were at a hotel/ motel or apartment in which there was likely not an accessible alternate entry point.

Also, three incidents were hostage rescue situations. In one of those hostage rescue incidents, the team staged two teams, one at the front door and one at the side door of the residence. The front door ended up being barricaded, and the front door team had a failed breach. The side door team made entry. The

suspect fired multiple 7.62 rounds toward the front door, striking three officers who were standing on the porch area near the front door. One of those officers died. The side door team engaged the suspect inside, killing him, and one officer was shot, but survived.

Although this study was intended for the CQB environment/ residences, another category to note was officers killed while on perimeter, or during the approach shortly after arriving on scene. There were eight “tactical” type incidents in which one of those officers were killed. In several of those incidents, multiple officers were shot and/or killed. A common trend was the suspect firing from an unknown location inside the house with a rifle.



Some additional breakdowns I gathered from the study include: 16 incidents were SWAT-related, or where a SWAT officer was killed. 25 incidents were ad hoc teams. When I refer to ad hoc teams, I am referring to the following: Narc teams, street crimes teams, task forces, detectives, and commonly a combination of them. 16 incidents involved officers/deputies only. These incidents were still “tactical” type situations where they were there to search the residence. An example would be four to six officers going to a residence to arrest a subject for a bench warrant. An additional 14 incidents were basic patrol calls, in which one to two officers responded to a call for service and were killed in one of the categories cov-

ered above. It should be noted that the officers were not necessarily “searching” the residence in those incidents. For example, an officer could have been talking to a family member regarding a disturbance for 30 minutes when a subject appeared from a room and shot the officer. These types of scenarios were not my intention during the study, but they were notable because they include scenarios like: Two officers were shot as they exited their vehicles when they arrived on scene at a residence, and a 20-minute gunfight ensued.

In 24 of the 60+ incidents I studied, the suspect was killed by officers. In several of those incidents, the suspect died later at the hospital. I correlate this statistic with possible trends I will mention below.

TRENDS

In many of the incidents covered, one could point out a decision or action which led to an officer being killed. The purpose of this study is to recognize those decisions, establish trends, and come up with tactical solutions. The trends I found were the following:

- Marksmanship
- Mindset
- Training
- Ad Hoc team issues
- The front door
- Drywall issues
- Correct use/application of shields
- Stealth
- Perimeter roles
- Turret use issues
- Window team roles/issues
- Less lethal issues
- Movement tactics
- Gas works
- Detac issues
- Discipline

I will further discuss each trend in a separate report. If you have questions or would like to discuss any-

thing from this report, I am more than happy to do so. My email is jakepineo1@gmail.com.

Lastly, Bill Blowers from Tap-Rack Tactical conducted a study, using LEOKA information, regarding officers killed while conducting dynamic vs. surround and callout techniques. Refer to Bill for further details: tap-rack.com



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