

**Title: Number of officers killed with head or neck shots in 2006
Or Injured by head wounds**

**By Stanley Cohen, Attorney at Law
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Source: The Officers Down Memorial age, Inc., www.odmp.org

The following is a list of actual shooting fatalities of police officers by shots to the head or neck of the officers in 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007 or injured by head shots requiring hospitalization. There were a total of 48 officers killed by head or neck shots. The purpose of composing the list is to demonstrate the need to equip all police officers on all three shifts immediately with a helmet with a bullet proof shield covering the face and lower neck down to the top of the bullet proof vest and covering the rear of the neck and encouraging all officers to wear them when confronting citizens during traffic stops and field interrogation/investigative stops and other situations where there is a risk of shooting the officer in the face or neck. This is a drastic suggestion but one officer's unnecessary and preventable death is drastically permanent.

The source of this information was found at the web site www.odmp.org, **The Officer Down Memorial Page, Inc.**

1. Suspect got officer's gun and shot officer in face. Officer was guarding suspect at a hospital.
2. At **TRAFFIC VIOLATION** stop officer shot in face.
3. Officer shot in neck while negotiating with armed man.
4. Officer shot in head while walking back to cruiser from traffic **VIOLATION STOP**
5. Officer shot in face approaching suspect wanted for attempted murder.
6. Shot in face executing a search warrant for drugs.
7. Officer shot in neck approaching robbery scene.
8. Officer shot in face responding to man with gun call.
9. Correctional officer stabbed in neck checking cell.

10. officer shot in head while arresting illegal alien
11. officer shot in head during **TRAFFIC STOP**. Shot to chest was stopped by vest.
12. Officer shot in head questioning person during a domestic disturbance call.
13. Officer shot above chest which would have been deflected by a shield covering that area above the vest.
14. Officer shot in head at **TRAFFIC STOP**.
15. Officer shot in head talking to shooting suspect.
16. While responding to a domestic disturbance, officer was shot in the head.
17. While making a traffic stop, officer was shot in the head.
18. While making traffic stop and walking toward driver, officer was shot in the head and neck.
19. Officer knocked on door of home investigating a shooting the day before and the suspect shot him in the head.
20. During traffic stop, suspect shot officer in the head.
21. Officer shot in rear of neck as she went to rear of car after being shot in shoulder.
22. Officer shot in face by arrestee's stepfather while making arrest for child molestation.
23. While investigating car being driven in a yard officer was shot in head and neck.
24. During domestic disturbance, officer was shot in the head making a forced entry into home of hostage situation.
25. Officer shot in neck attempting to arrest suspect for robbery.
26. While approaching car after breaking up a fight, officer shot in the head.
27. Officer shot in the neck and armpit, following a pursuit.
28. While attempting to arrest a man for a parole violation warrant, suspect shot officer in the head.

29. Officer stopped car for speeding and when officer learned person was wanted for drug possession, we walked over to arrest and was shot in the face.
30. Officer responding to 911 emergency call was shot in chest which was stopped by vest, but was shot in the head and killed.
31. December 24, 2006, San Francisco police officer entered through door to arrest an escaped prison inmate and was shot in the head.
- 32 through 36 The FBI reported that in 2004, of the 57 officers killed, five were shot in the rear of the head.
- 37 through 41 The FBI reported that in 2004, of the 57 officers killed, five were shot in the front of the head.
- 42 through 44 The FBI reported that in 2004, of the 57 officers killed, 3 were shot in the neck or throat
- 46 through 47 The FBI reported that in 2004, of the 57 officers killed, 3 were shot in the side of the head.
48. 1/7/07 Tennessee State Trooper at traffic stop was shot in face and killed.

INJURIES TO THE HEAD AND NECK

1. York City police officer responding to loud party complaint went to rear of building and was questioning persons when someone on second floor dropped a heavy pot onto the officer's head.
2. Responding to a fight, officer shot in the jaw.
3. Idaho Trooper made traffic stop and was shot in the neck.

Added to these officers are the hundreds, thousands of loved ones of the officers and millions citizens who are affected by the death of those officers, which further clearly show the present need for officers to carry helmets with bullet proof face and neck shields secured in the front seat of their cruisers and wearing them when confronting citizens in situations in which there is a risk of being shot in the face or neck, such as routine traffic stops, which can unpredictably and instantly lead to a shooting in the face or neck

Further evidencing a need wearing such a helmet is an article from the December 21, 2006, Seattle Times. in which it was reported that a rapper convicted of killing two

undercover police officers, “boasts of leaving .45 caliber slugs in the heads of his enemies.”, apparently referring to police officers.

SAVES BY HELMETS

In the Seattle Times, January 1, 2007, an article stated that a skier, wearing a helmet, fell and hit his head on a rock which put a three inch dent in the top of the helmet, instead of his head. The force of the block was absorbed by the helmet, but fractured vertebrae in his neck which was surgically repaired and he is well now. His neurosurgeon said the helmet probably saved his life. Admittedly, police work and skiing are different activities, but they both entail risk of injuries to the head. In a related incident, which turned out differently, Police Officer Obersole, York Police Department, was recently at the rear of a home investigating a loud party complaint and was standing below a second floor window when someone dropped a heavy pot onto his head causing a severe laceration and concussion and he was taken to the hospital. He was not wearing a helmet. Had he been wearing at least a helmet of the kind worn by the skier, not to mention a helmet with a bullet proof face shield, which I am supporting, he probably would not have been as severely wounded or not injured at all.

Response to Objections to Wearing helmets with bullet proof face shields

In undertaking the research on head shots and wearing bullet proof face shields, I personally know and feel the loss of a brother police officer and it is with this personal feeling in mind that I am trying to suggest a tool that will, in spite of the inconvenience of wearing it, prevent an officer from losing his/her life and the terrible sadness felt by brother officers and family members at the loss. In 1963, Patrolman Donald Martin, 27, who was on the same shift as myself, and whom I knew very well, in District 6, Cincinnati, Ohio, Police Department, was investigating something he saw in a used car lot when someone grabbed his service revolver and shot him in the back several times as he ran toward his cruiser to call for help. In 1963 we did not have issued radios on our chests. When we arrived at the scene Don was on his back, bleeding from several wounds and trying to talk but could not get any words out. He died and the suspect has never been arrested. We conducted an intensive search and investigation of the area but to no avail. I cried. Still do when I think about him and the fact that he was engaged and scheduled to marry in three weeks.

In looking at the argument of one of the officers reacting to my idea, he stated that “There must be balance of armor and mobility to maximize ones mobility.” This is certainly true. I engaged in many fights in arresting persons and know firsthand the importance of being able to move quickly in any direction to subdue the person or persons. There was an analogy made between wearing such a helmet with medieval knights wearing armor from head to toe which made them incapable of movement. This is true too. That is, that knights weighted down heavily with 60 or more pounds of steel and other armor and metal helmets could not move as quickly as officers today need to be able to move to overcome a person’s resistance to an arrest. But, the comparison is not exactly accurate because the weight of a helmet with a bullet proof face shield does not

weigh over 60 pounds. I found a helmet with a bullet proof face shield good against 9 millimeter bullets that weighed about seven pounds. This helmet can be seen at www.protecharmored.com I called Riddell helmet makers and they informed me that helmets worn by running backs weigh about 7 lbs. As we all know, those back are very fast and agile on the field, in spite of the helmet, not to mention the weight of the other equipment they wear. It would seem that a police officer in good shape should be pretty mobile and agile with a 7 pound helmet with a bullet proof face shield. Conceding the fact that some suspects might outrun a police officer wearing such a helmet due his/her wearing the helmet, this price is not as heavy and serious and long lasting as an officer being shot or stabbed in the face and dieing due to the absence of a bullet proof face shield covering his/her face.

Conceding the fact that some suspects might outrun a police officer wearing such a helmet due his/her wearing the helmet, this price is not as heavy and serious and long lasting as an officer being shot or stabbed in the face and dieing due to the absence of a bullet proof face shield covering his/her face. It would not seem that a helmet such as this would prevent a police officer from moving quickly. Admittedly, the officer may not be able to move as quickly with it on as he could without it on. And, the officer may not be able to catch a fleeing suspect on foot that he would otherwise be able to run down and arrest. But, like with most things in life, there are trade offs of good with the bad. In this case, it would seem to me that one life saved by a helmet, and the happiness of the officer's family and other loved ones and brother officers, would be worth the escape of some criminal suspects, some of whom would probably be arrested at another time. Some suspects may escape, but an officer wearing the face shield while standing at the driver's side of a vehicle who is shot at and hit in the shield and the bullet is deflected will probably not be killed and should have enough time to draw his service revolver and return fire which he would probably not otherwise be able to do had he been shot in the face.

SAVES BY HELMETS

In the Seattle Times, January 1, 2007, an article stated that a skier, wearing a helmet, fell and hit his head on a rock which put a three inch dent in the top of the helmet, instead of his head. Admittedly, police work and skiing are different activities, but they both entail risk of injuries to the head. In a related incident, which turned out differently, Police Officer Obersole, York Police Department, was recently at the rear of a home investigating a loud party complaint and was standing below a second floor window when someone dropped a heavy pot onto his head causing a severe laceration and concussion and he was taken to the hospital. He was not wearing a helmet. Had he been wearing at least a helmet of the kind worn by the skier, not to mention a helmet with a bullet proof face shield, which I am supporting, he probably would not have been as severally wounded or not injured at all.

It is very difficult to predict before going to a house that someone is going to drop a heavy pot on an officer's head, or before walking up to a vehicle to issue a citation that someone, driver or passenger is going to shot the officer in the face, and in many other

situations when police officers come in contact with citizens, so an officer cannot easily pick the times when he will and will not wear a bullet proof face shield. This is why an officer always wears a body armor vest, or should do so when confronting citizens in many situations. It is on. It is not necessary to hurry and put it on when the unexpected occurs.

Concerning being better trained to prevent being shot in the face or neck, as one officer argued, I agree that some killings could be avoided by taking preventative steps to avoid being placed in the situation where the suspect can fire into the officer's face or neck, and administrators should provide such additional survival training. But, Chief Gregory Adams, many years ago in Pennsylvania stopped one Payne who got Greg's weapon and killed him with it. Greg was very highly trained. As a matter of fact he trained police officers in safety tactics.

Also, on this same point, there was an article in officer.com from the Denver Post which stated the following. Police officers across the state say the most dangerous moments come during the most routine job they do: the traffic stop. "You do not know the person, you do not know why they are speeding at 100 mph, so when you walk up there, you are hoping that things go right, said Master Trooper Ron Watkins of the Colorado State Patrol, With all the training we get, **there is no guarantee that you can defend against it.**" My emphasis. Sheridan, Colorado police Sgt. Firko says officers often run driver's license plates to find out who they are or whether there is a dangerous history before they make contact. But, sometimes, there is not time to run a check or the driver may be different from the registered owner, he said. Firko said, "every single stop and every single location presents a danger." And, Lakewood Sgt. Mark Dewhurst said that in the end, a cop just has to be ready for the unknown. He said are always acting behind the suspect.

Even with more additional training, there is "no guarantee that you can defend against" a shot to the face or neck. It is exactly in those moments that the bullet proof face shield covering the officer's face will make up for the shortcoming of more training and ensure the officers goes home at the end of his shift instead of to the morgue. And, if officers are always reacting to the suspect's moves, the suspect is going to be first in getting shots off to the face and neck. It is then that the shield will deflect the bullet offering the officer time and ability to return fire and to go home at the end of the shift. Many officers wearing vests have going home to their families at the end of their shift who would otherwise have gone to the morgue.

One final thing. There is some evidence that some persons are intentionally planning head shots to police officers ahead of time. Further evidencing a need for wearing such a helmet is an article from the December 21, 2006, Seattle Times, in which it was reported that a rapper convicted of killing two undercover police officers, "boasts of leaving .45 caliber slugs in the heads of his enemies." apparently referring to police officers. Moreover, as the news media reports officers being saved by shots to the upper area by body armor, more of the bad guys, like the rapper, are probably learning that to be

effective they will have to aim for the head that is not covered or protected by any armored covering.

Crises should not have to first happen before something is done to deal with them. They should be dealt with ahead of time to prevent them from happening in the first place. Police administrators and local governments should at least make such helmets available to each officer to carry secured to the front seat area of the cruiser with a quick release device so that it may be quickly placed on the head. They should not wait until more and more officers are killed (crises) by head and neck shots.