

Survey on the Impact of the Economic Recession on Crime and on Police Budgets

This update is based upon the responses from 233 surveys. The current response rate: 233/328 = 71.0%.

1a through 1e:

Question	Mean	Median	Min	Max
What is the population of the area you serve?	358,261	115,478	5,000	8,274,527
How many full-time sworn personnel do you staff?	894.17	250	1	36,838
What is your authorized total for full-time sworn personnel?	912.76	250	1	35,711
What was the total number of dispatched CFS (both citizen and officer generated) in 2007?	310,375.56	124,012	800	5,076,219
To date, what was the total number of dispatched CFS in 2008?	278,608.85	117,456	750	4,767,292

1f.

My fiscal year begins...	%
July 1	51.9
October 1	18.0
January 1	25.3
Other (please specify)*	4.7

*the most commonly cited "other" answer for this question was May 1st (N=5)

2a. What was your total fiscal year budget for last year?

Mean: \$113,130,219.26

Median: \$36,036,527

Min: \$800,000

Max: \$4,170,030,000

2b. Did last year's fiscal year budget decrease, increase, or remain the same from your prior year's fiscal budget?

Change	Percent of agencies	Mean
Decreased	11.6	3.71
Increased	79.7	6.25
Remained the same	8.6	---

2c. Did your funding keep pace with what your agency needed to maintain existing operations and staffing levels?

32.3% of agencies said **no**

67.7% of agencies said **yes**

3a. What is your current total fiscal year budget?

Mean: \$118,151,103.79

Median: \$37,100,000

Min: \$866,000

Max: \$4,416,738,000

3b. Did your funding keep pace with what your agency needed to maintain existing operations and staffing levels?

61.2% of agencies indicated it **had**

38.8% of agencies indicated it **had not**

3c. Were budgets for other departments in your jurisdiction reduced this year?

72.1% of agencies indicated **yes**

26.6% of agencies indicated **no**

.4% of agencies indicated the question was **not applicable**

4. Are you currently preparing plans for an overall budget cut to your agency for the next fiscal year?

62.9% of agencies indicated **yes**

37.1% of agencies indicated **no**

4a. If “yes,” have you already been told to expect cuts by your governing authority?

87.6% of agencies indicated **yes**

4b. What percentage cut(s) are you planning overall for your agency? (can choose multiple scenarios)

The weighted mean for both scenarios came to 6.24%

4c. What is the best estimate of how you will generally aim to divide the total dollar cuts among various functions and units?

Type of budget cut	Mean (in percentages)
Sworn personnel	28.02
Civilian personnel	13.91
Overtime	10.61
Other*	7.43
Training	6.82
Capital expenses**	6.08
Administrative/support	5.79
Vehicle fleet	5.10
Maintenance	2.53
Technology	2.46
Recruitment	2.31

*"Other" cuts include supplies, equipment, leaving projected staff vacancies unfilled, delay cadet classes, ammunition, fuel, part-time employee reductions, revenue enhancements, investigative services, citizen patrols, jail incarceration fees, contract fees, special events, membership dues, DARE.

**Capital expenses included facility-related capital/building improvement, weapons, uniforms, closing facilities, communication, and general equipment purchases and upkeep.

5. Please indicate whether the following statements are true for your agency

Statement	Yes (%)
We have cut overtime spending	61.6
Out of town travel has been significantly reduced or discontinued	61.4
A hiring freeze for non-sworn positions has been implemented	53.2
We have increased and/or are considering increasing fees for some police services	51.5
We regularly rely on overtime to meet minimum safe staffing	51.5
We have cut back or eliminated plans to acquire technology	48.9
Training has been reduced or discontinued*	47.4
Recruit classes have been discontinued, reduced in size, or delayed	34.3
Take-home cars have been discontinued or reduced	28.8
A hiring freeze for sworn positions has been implemented	27.2
We have eliminated or reduced police employee salary increases	27.0
We are currently reducing police employment levels through attrition	24.1 <i>Mean sworn: 38.19</i> <i>Mean nonsworn: 19.87</i>
Our jurisdiction has implemented or is considering a tax increase to avoid police service cuts	16.4
We are currently considering laying off police employees or forcing retirements	11.9 <i>Mean sworn: 20.33</i> <i>Mean nonsworn: 4.54</i>
We have used unpaid furloughs of employees to reduce spending	10.4
We have laid off police employees or forced retirements during the last year	7.3 <i>Mean sworn: 1.53</i> <i>Mean nonsworn: 4.24</i>

*Those who indicated training was to be cut or discontinued were asked to indicate what types of training were affected:

- 13.6% of agencies indicated in-service training was reduced/discontinued
- 14.5% of agencies indicated proficiency training was reduced/discontinued
- 83.6% of agencies indicated specialty training was reduced/discontinued
- 67.3% of agencies indicated career development training was reduced/discontinued

6. Please indicate on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) your feelings about the following statements.

Statement	Mean
Sworn officer positions should be the last thing cut in the budget	4.39
Budget cuts will hurt the long-term quality of my agency*	3.89
My jurisdiction is already experiencing significant signs of economic distress	3.62
I would cut non-sworn support personnel before any sworn positions	3.42
We are seeing new types of crime patterns, such as burglaries of vacant homes and businesses (define)**	2.92
Maintaining contributions for police employee pensions is becoming a serious problem	2.79
Police services in my community will decline with the implementation of already-implemented or planned budget cuts	2.68
My agency obtains most of its funding for capital improvements through municipal bonds, so capital spending is better protected against any fluctuations in regular annual appropriations	2.59
I expect to obtain concessions from labor unions in future negotiations because of the economic downturn and/or police agency budget cuts	2.52
One year from now, I expect to have fewer officers on the street because of budget cuts	2.41
One year from now, I expect our response time to emergency calls will have increased due to budget cuts	2.33
I would cut some sworn positions to maintain critical elements of my training budget	2.16
I would cut some sworn positions to maintain equipment budgets	1.89
I would cut some sworn positions to allow for the acquisition of technology	1.80

*of those that indicated 3-5 to this question, they were asked to indicate which of the following they would be damaged by budget cuts. Responses included facility

maintenance, morale of the agency, reduction/elimination of specialized units, community policing, community programs, overtime, support functions, investigations, cuts to proactive programs/return to reactive patrol, diversity recruitment, recruitment/retention, loss of officers to other agencies, reduction in training opportunities, civilianization of sworn positions, reduction/elimination of capital projects.

**new types of crime patterns included robberies (general, armed, bank, etc.), metal (especially copper) theft, fraud, robbery of non-citizens, gang violence, drug dealing, aggravated assaults, vehicle thefts, shoplifting, domestic violence, theft from vehicles, burglaries/breaking and entering, home invasions, theft from foreclosures/abandoned properties, trespassers/squatters at foreclosed homes, larceny, destruction of foreclosed homes, decline in narcotics violations, homicide, suicide, property crimes in general (undefined).

7. Please check any type of reorganization that you are planning in your department in response to the deteriorating economy

Reorganization type	Yes (%)
Greater reliance on less costly civilian staff	42.9
Discontinuing or delaying response to certain types of CFS	36.1
Discontinuing special units (specify)**	29.4
Reducing public access hours at district stations	15.9
Contracting out for services (specify)*	14.7
Other 1***	11.8
Closing or consolidating district stations	9.9
Other 2****	1.8

*examples of contracting out for services include making use of contractors to reduce sworn staffing at special events, crime scene processing, fee collection, animal control, background investigations for nonsworn personnel, alarm billing, fleet maintenance, DNA testing, provide first point of contact services for the community, fingerprinting, parking ticket processing, building maintenance, jail infirmary, victim services, transcription, equipment installation for cars, helicopter inspections, security at city buildings, online accident and offense reports.

**examples of discontinuing special units include street crimes unit, narcotics task force/unit, delaying the implementation of a community services unit, traffic enforcement, community policing unit, SROs, bicycle team, park security team (civilian), fugitive apprehension unit, directed policing unit, special events, vice, parole, intervention, gang unit, federal partnerships, DARE, GREAT, economic crime unit, cold case squad, crime prevention, mounted units.

***other 1 includes expanding the use of civilian and part time personnel, decreased staffing in special units (but not eliminating them or making cuts to existing staff), delaying the filling of open positions, online citizen reporting of crimes, reducing on-call pay and overtime, expanding the use of 311 to other calls, decentralization, increased use of phone reporting, reduction in command positions, reduction in overtime, reduced on-call pay, greater reliance on asset forfeiture, consolidating bureaus (thereby eliminating positions), delay in facility repairs.

****other 2 includes expanding online reporting, making investigative cutbacks before patrol.

8a. Please provide your crime data for 2008

	Mean
Total number of violent crime incidents	2845.21
Total number of property crime incidents	13050.85

8b. Has your jurisdiction experienced increases in crime levels in recent months that you believe can be attributed substantially to changes in the economy and/or your budget?

- 43.5% of respondents indicated they **have**
- 55.2% of respondents indicated they **have not**
- 1.3% of respondents indicated they **did not know**

Examples of increases include: robberies (armed, residential, etc.) burglaries (residential auto, etc.), theft, metal theft, theft from vacant houses, shoplifting, property crime (unspecified), aggravated assaults, auto theft, license plate theft (to steal tax sticker), gang-related issues (including homicides, shootings, robberies), petty theft, domestic violence, theft of recyclable materials, larceny, fraud, identity theft, retail theft, homicide, home invasions, breaking and entering, .

9. Please indicate on a scale of 1 (lowest priority) to 5 (highest priority) what types of federal assistance you believe would be most effective in mitigating the effects of the recession on your police agency and on crime levels in your jurisdiction.

Type of federal assistance	Mean
Other 1*	4.50
Other 2**	4.50
COPS funding for local officers	4.19
Greater flexibility in use of federal grants	4.18
COPS funding for technology	4.07
Byrne/JAG grants	3.95
Expanded flexibility in how asset forfeiture funds can be used	3.48
Homeland security grants	3.31
COPS funding for hiring of civilian specialists for DNA analysis, forensics, etc.	3.17
Greater use of local or state task forces involving the federal government	2.87
Crime research grants	2.41

*Examples given for Other 1 include: facility improvements and funding, grants for equipment, vehicles, weapons, grants for infrastructure security improvements, local flexibility in allocation of DHS grants, flexibility in use of grants to hire civilians (remove requirements that funds must be used exclusively for sworn officers), stop statewide passthroughs, funding for regional crime forensic testing/laboratory, jail and prison beds, community development block grants, overtime funding (specifically as opposed to hiring grants).

**Examples given for Other 2 include: using federal funds to supplant budget cuts, training funds, technology assistance.