



STATE OF THE INDUSTRY PROJECTION SURVEY FOR 2027

Find out what your peer agencies are
experiencing and have planned.

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INTRODUCTION

OFFICER Media Group's State of the Industry Projection Survey, gathering information about the 2027 budget year was run during August 2026.

There were approximately 500 respondents and information about them regarding rank, assignment, agency type and size and more follows in this report.

At the time the survey was run and completed, some agencies had already started their 2027 budget year while others will be starting October 1 and more still on January 1.

This year, instead of the formal word-based report, we present you with this "slide show" formatted report.

If you have any questions about the contents or conclusions, contact information is included at the end.

WHO RESPONDED?

One of the most important things to remember about rank is that it doesn't always correspond to agency position or level of responsibility.

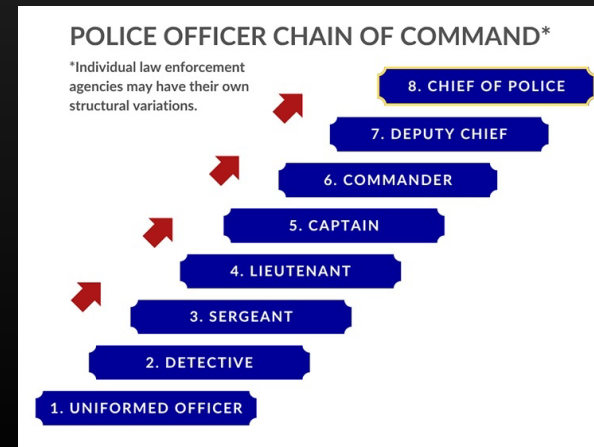
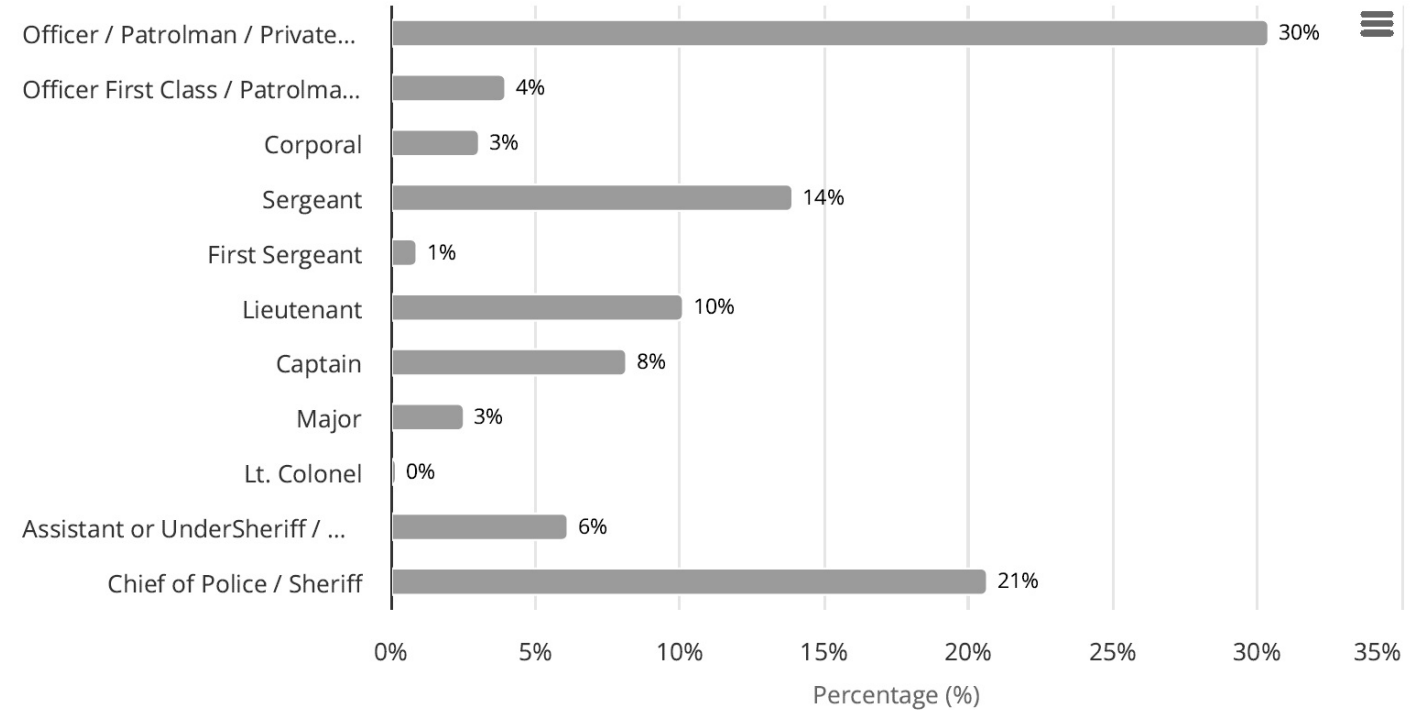
As you go through this report, you'll see that agencies of all sizes are represented in the responses. In the smaller agencies, a sergeant could be second in command and in larger agencies lieutenants may only be responsible for a squad.

Here you see the respondents' reported ranks per their answers.

First & second in command of the responding agencies represent 27% of the respondents.

About 1/3 represent ranks most common to patrol officers.

Q1. Rank Information: Check one most appropriate: What is your rank?



CURRENT DUTY ASSIGNMENTS?

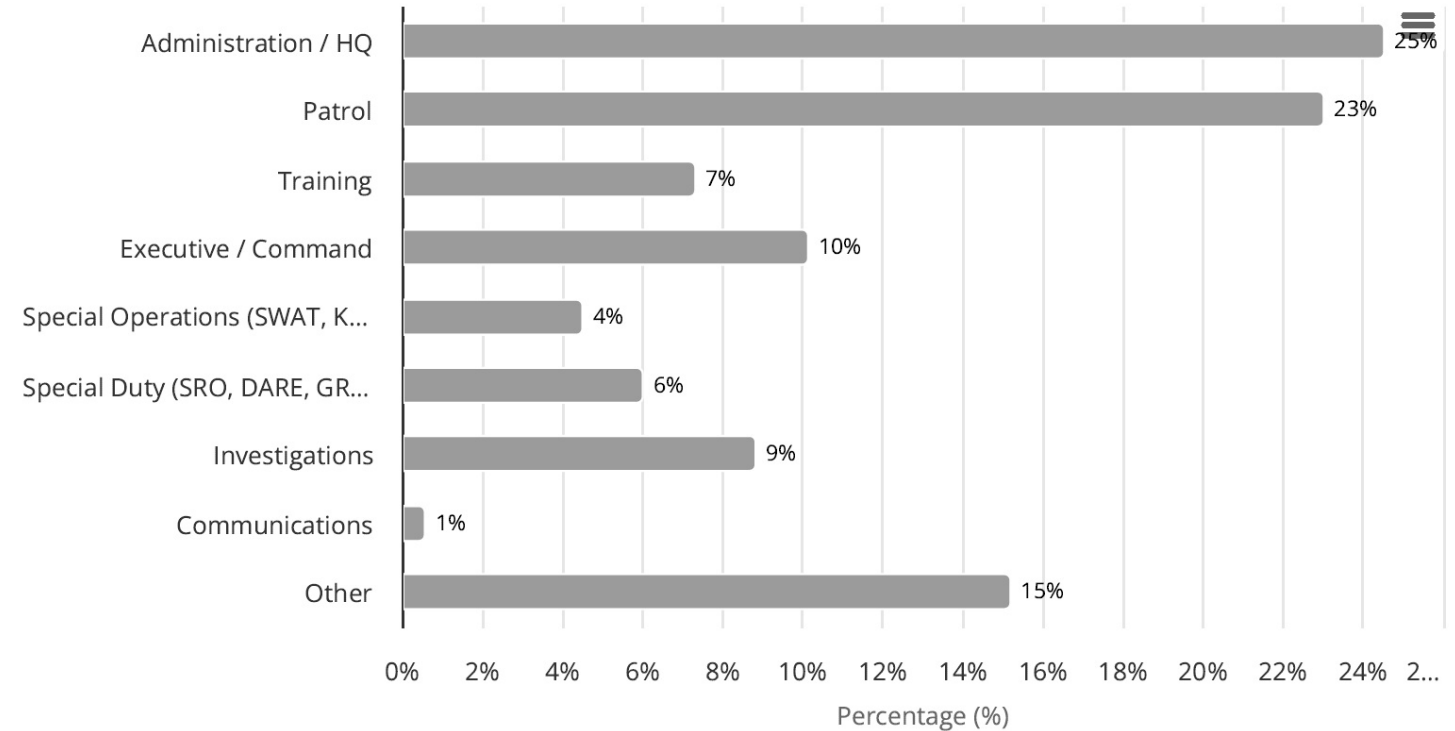
As noted on the previous slide, rank doesn't always directly correlate to command position.

35% of the respondents indicated that they held positions in executive/command or administration.

All respondents were sworn officers so "administration" would still be a supervisory or unit command position.

Patrol represented the second largest group of those who took our survey.

Q2. What is your current assignment? Check one most appropriate



COMMAND & SUPERVISORY STATUS

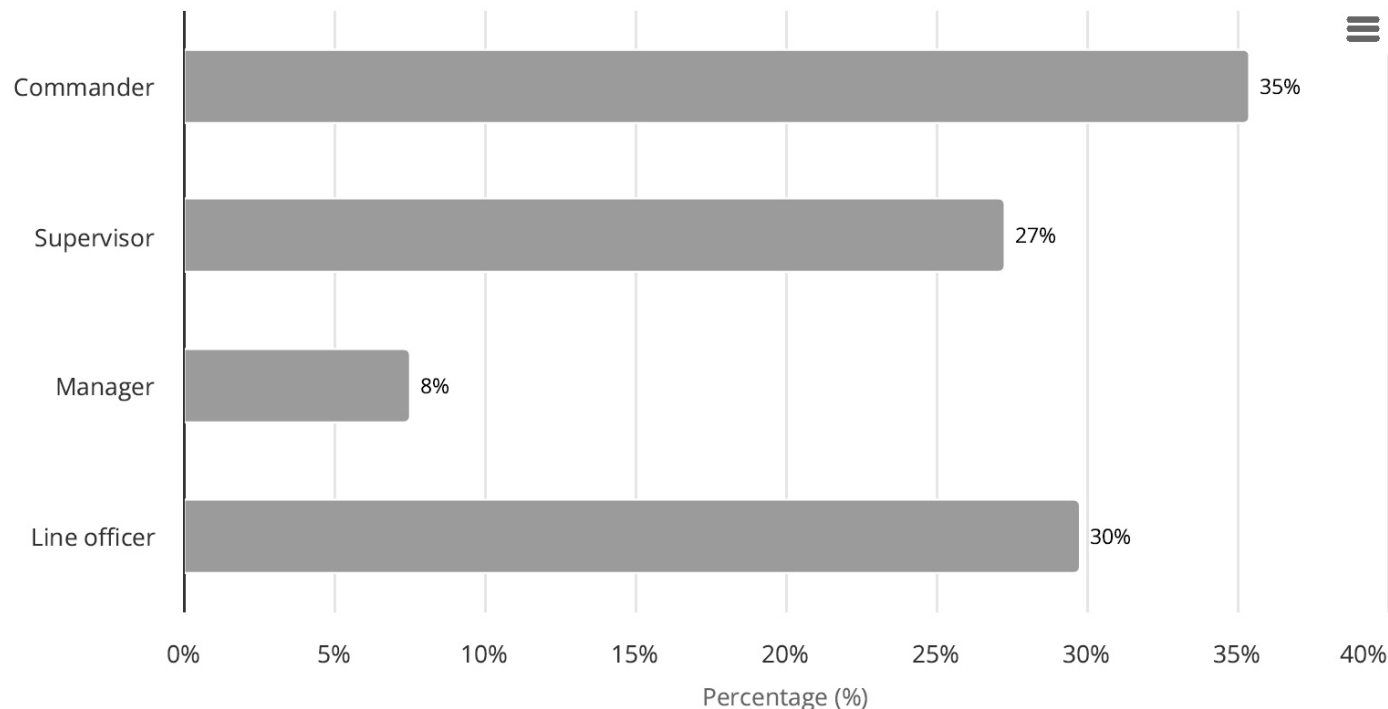
To further clarify the command / leadership position of those who took our survey, we asked the respondents to identify what role they play at their agency.

The “30% line officer” aligns closely to the ranks typically working patrol.

The “35% Commander” aligns with the ranks and duty assignments for command and leadership ranks.

The additional 27% shown in supervisory positions could be squad sergeants or unit commanders.

Q3. Your current supervisory status: check one most appropriate



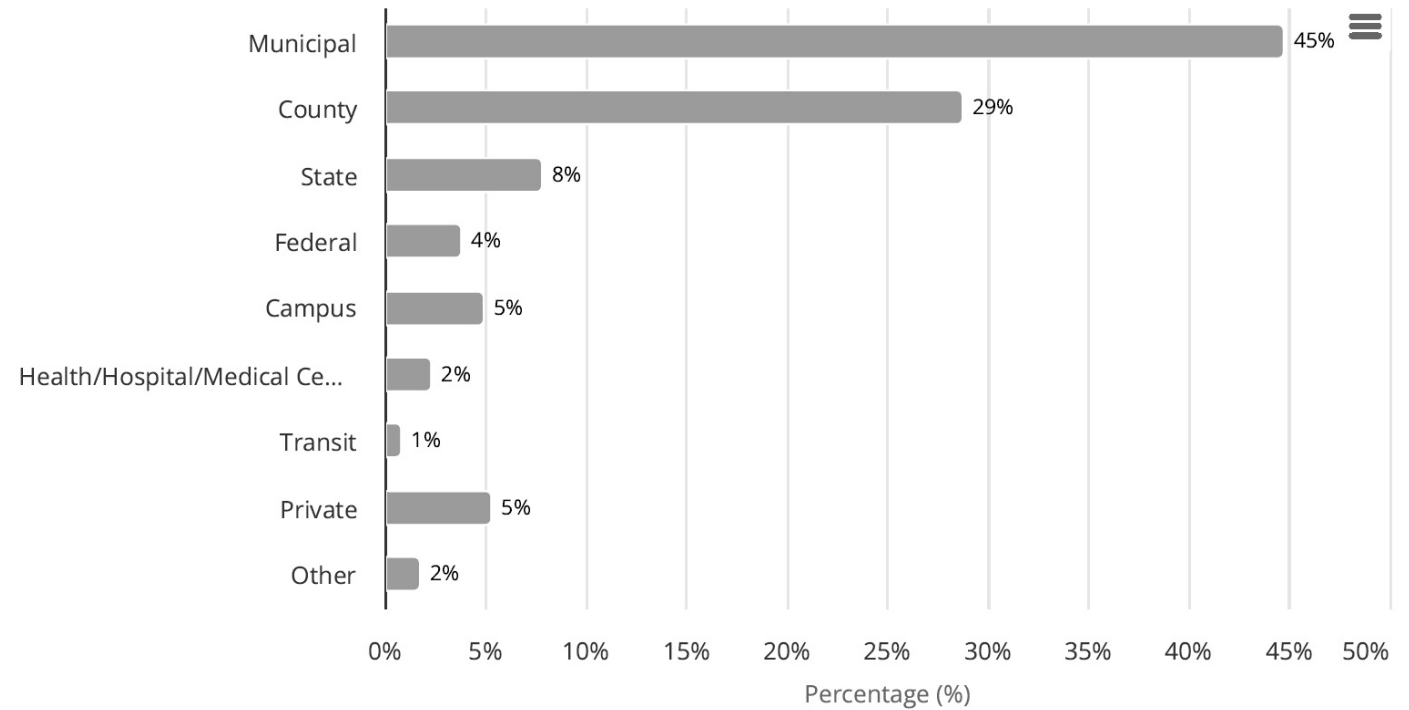
WHAT TYPE OF AGENCY?

It's not surprise that municipal agencies represent the largest majority of respondents. "Municipal" covers everything from the smallest town to the biggest city (and yes, we had some response from NYPD).

There are more towns and cities than any other type of jurisdiction. Counties are next followed by states and federal agencies.

It can be surprising how many hospitals and campuses have their own police agencies.

Q4. Type of Agency: check one most appropriate



SIZE OF COMMUNITY SERVED

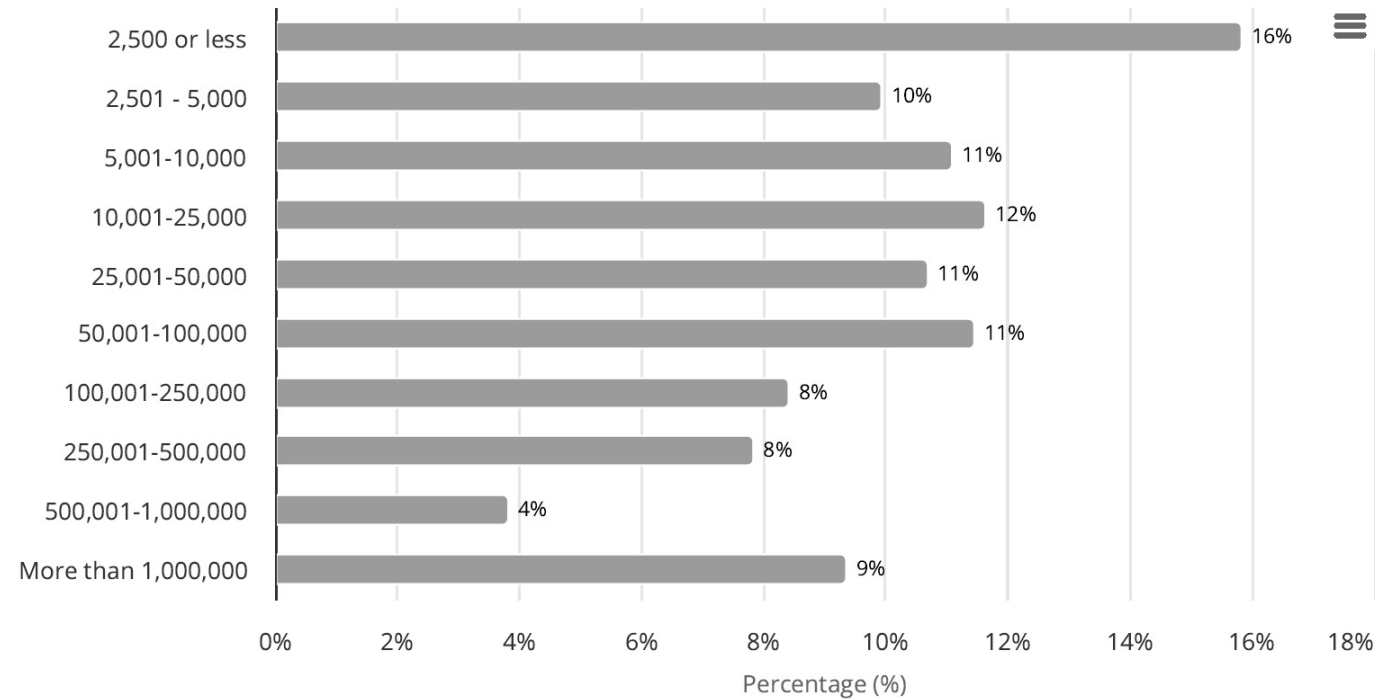
While there isn't always a direct correlation between community size and agency size, it's always good to know what population sizes are represented.

Jurisdictions with fewer than 10,000 citizens represent over 1/3 of the responses.

Over 70% of the jurisdictions represented have less than 100,000 citizens.

At the recommended ratio of one officer per one thousand citizens, that would mean that about 70% of agencies have less than 100 officers.

Q5. Size of Population served: Check one most appropriate



AGENCY SWORN STRENGTH

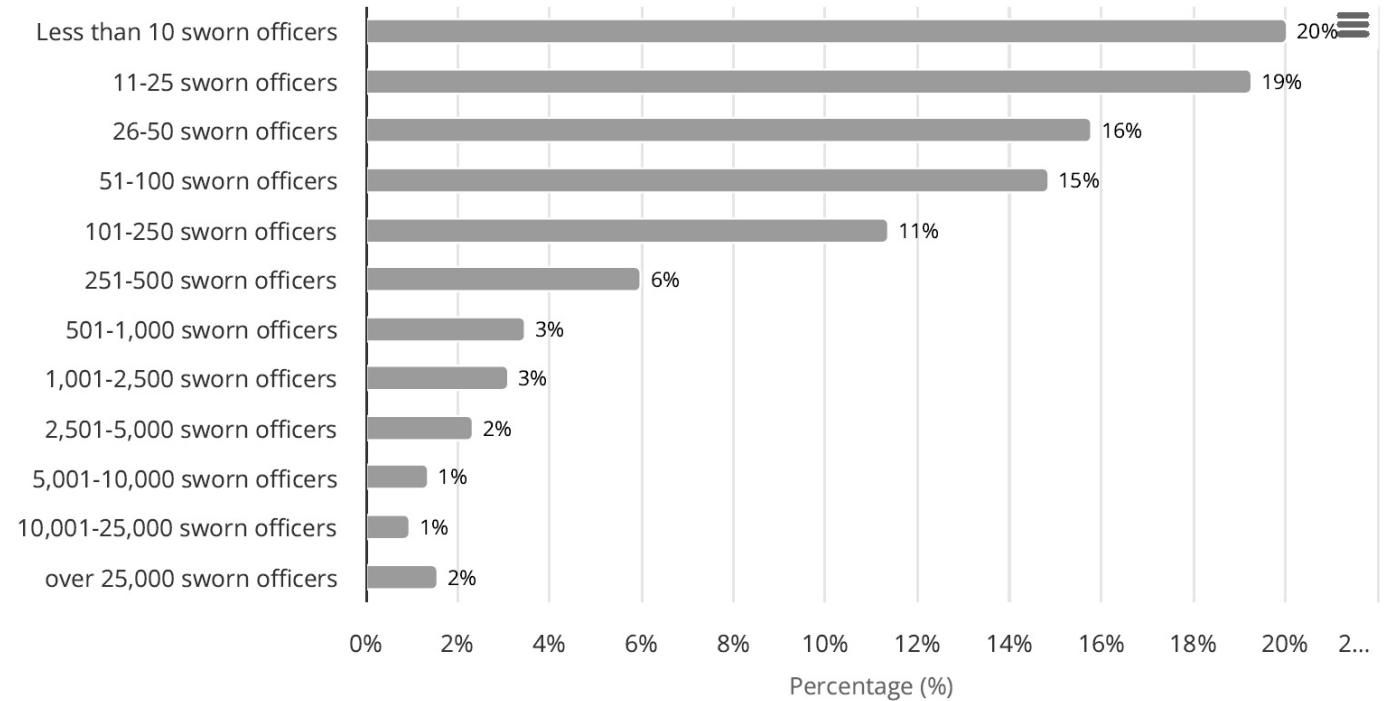
In almost perfect correlation to the previous slide, 70% of the agencies represented have 100 sworn officers or less.

Very few agencies have over 250 sworn officers.

Typically, only the “NFL Cities,” those huge cities like New York, Los Angeles, Houston, Dallas, Detroit, Chicago, etc. have agencies over 1,000 officers.

60% of the respondents were from agencies of 100 sworn officers or less. We believe that is strongly indicative of the state of law enforcement nationwide.

Q6. What is your current sworn strength?



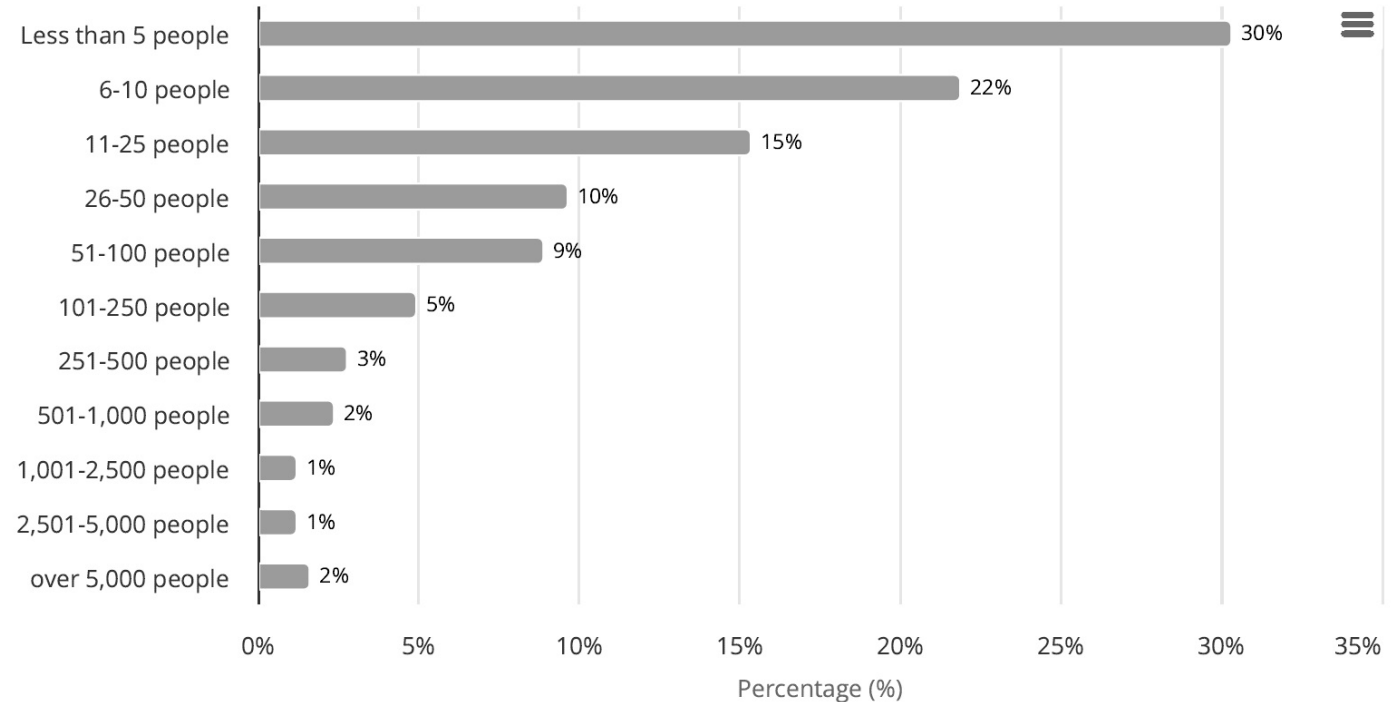
DON'T FORGET CLERKS & ANALYSTS

It's no surprise that this graphic almost exactly parallels the previous one. Size of community translates to size of agency translates to number of support personnel needed.

Even the smallest of agencies, however, need support staff. A five-officer agency that has an administrative assistant for the Chief – but is also the clerk for the whole agency. The 25-officer agency that has a desk clerk, evidence “officer,” and office manager (catch all phrase for the person who does everything else).

In smaller agencies, the municipal clerk might do double duty as the agency clerk with the two budgets splitting the clerk's associated costs of salary, benefits, etc.

Q7. What is your current support strength?



DEDICATED DUTIES

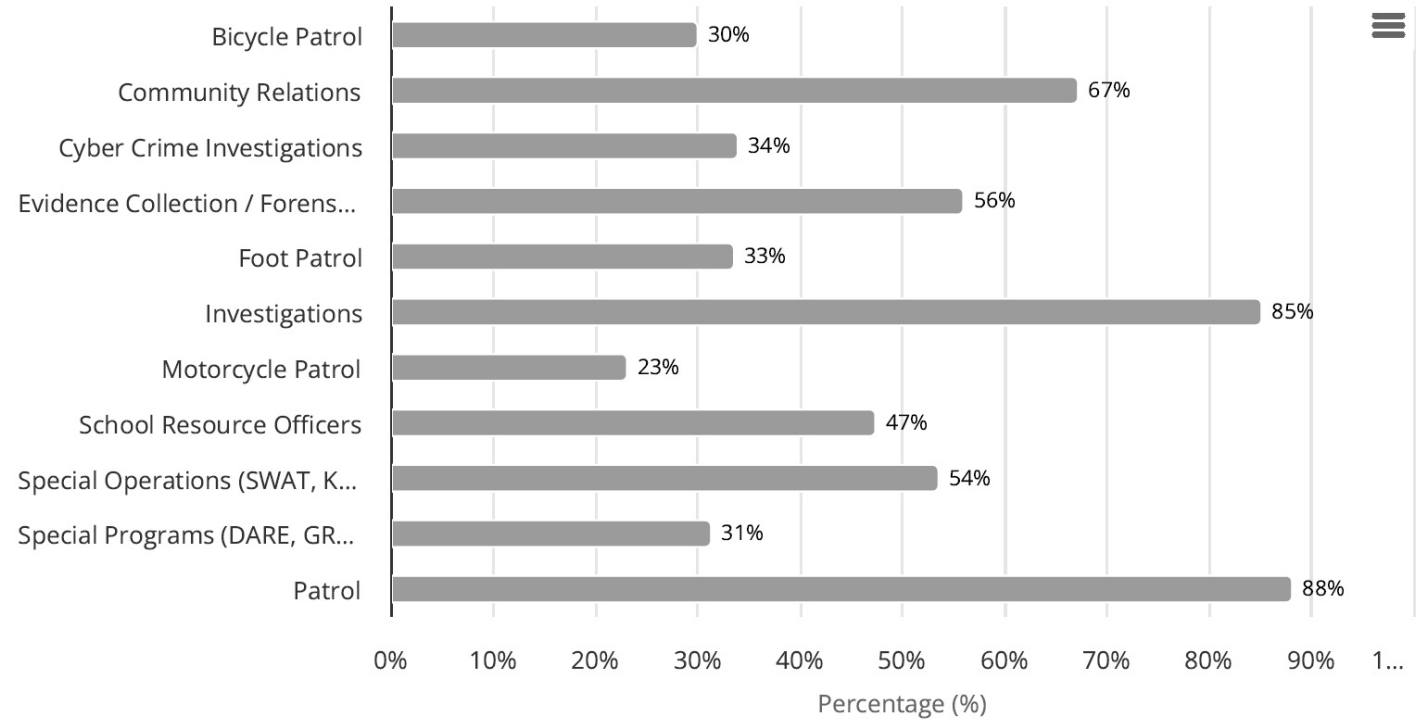
We are surprised not to see that 100% of agencies have patrol services but realize that some of the police agencies responding don't have a need for patrol services. Some health, private or other police agencies have officers only for access control or other duties.

In direct order of most to least, the common duty assignments are:

- Patrol
- Investigations
- Community Relations
- Evidence Collections / Forensic Specialist
- Special Operations (SWAT, K9, etc.)
- School Resource Officers
- Cyber Crime Investigations
- Foot Patrol
- Special Programs such as DARE, GREAT, etc.
- Bicycle Patrol
- Motorcycle Patrol



Q8. Please indicate all services your agency has dedicated officers for: (check all that apply)



GROWING, SHRINKING OR NEUTRAL IN 2027

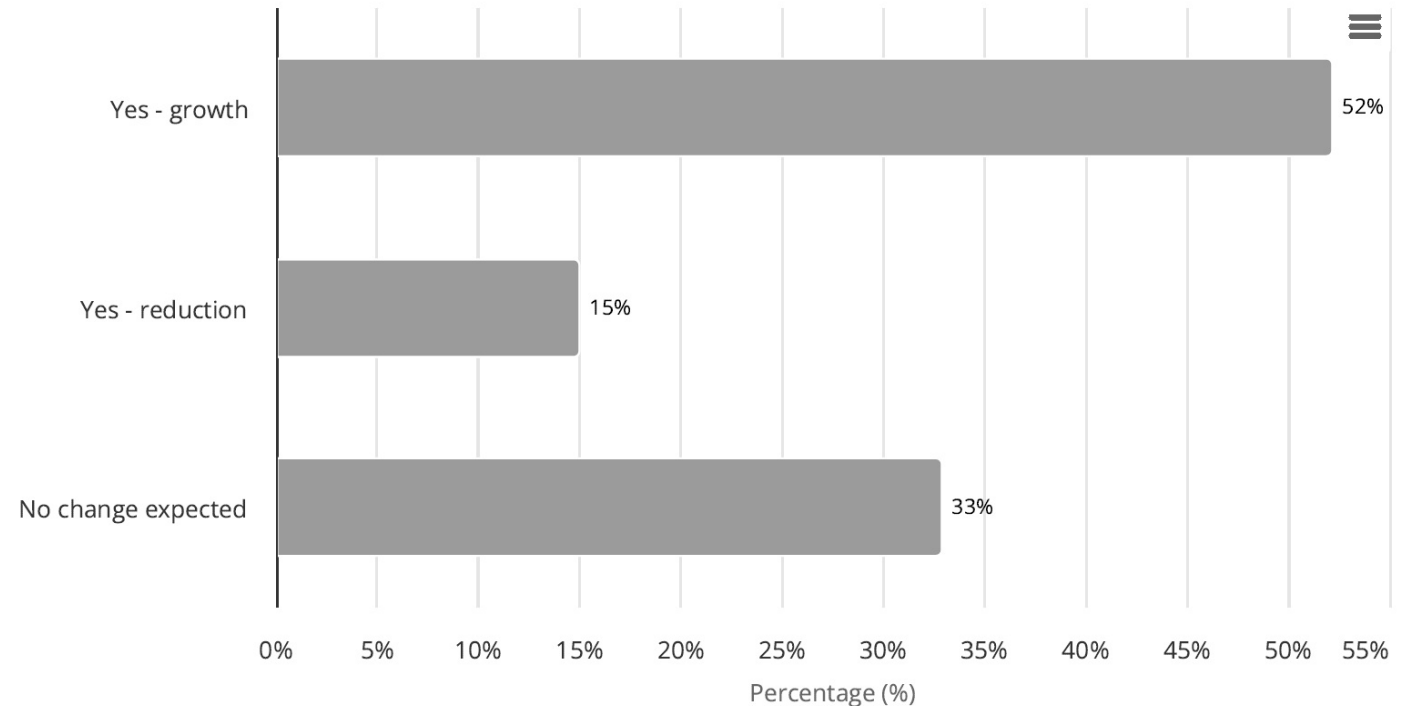
Responses show that over half (52%) of the agencies expect to see growth in their budget for the 2027 fiscal year.

One third expect their budget to remain flat (the downside is that with increasing costs of anything, a flat budget still means finding a way to cut expenses/overhead).

Only 15% expect to see any reduction in budget.



Q9. In your 2027 budget year, do you anticipate growth or reduction in your budget?



SPENDING GROWTH BUDGET AMOUNTS WHERE?

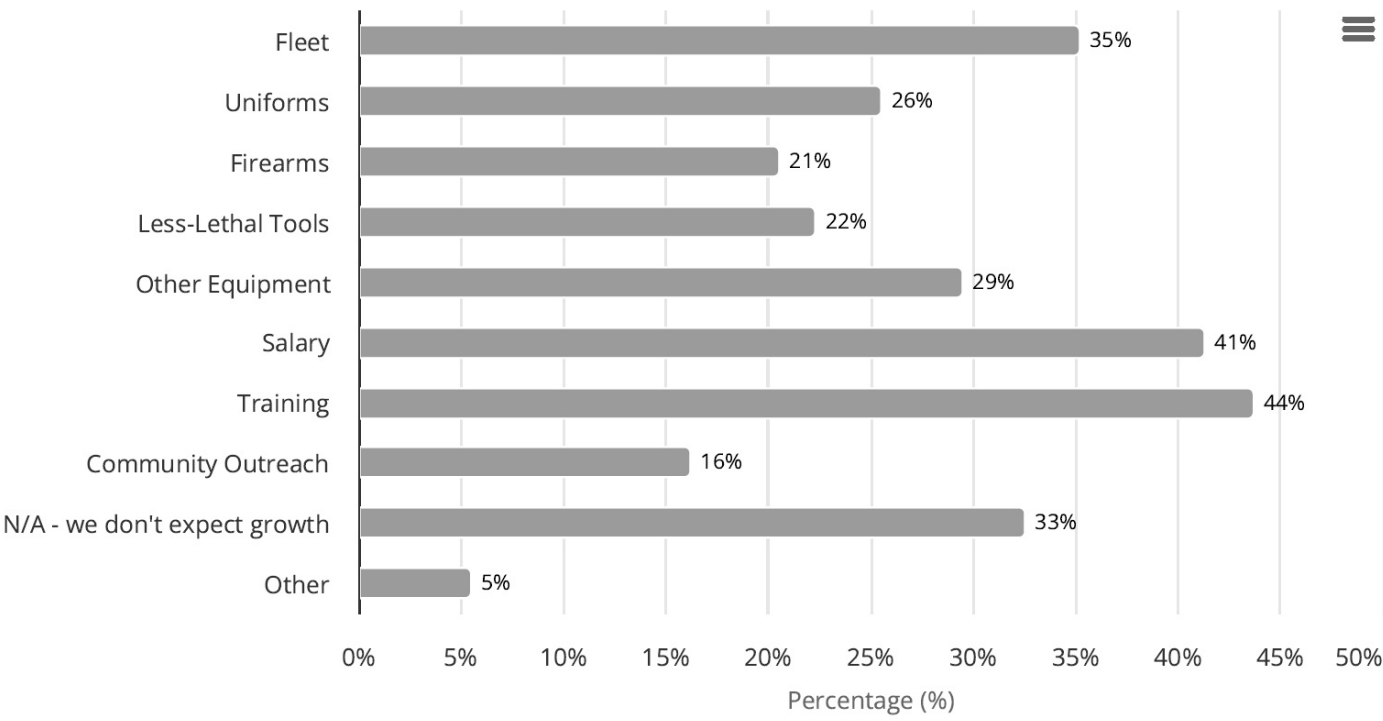
It is heartening to see that among those agencies expecting an increase in their budget, Salaries and Training are the two most focused on line items.

Fleet vehicles or equipment and “other equipment” come in next and are understandable. If the Salary line item is increased, it may mean new hiring which means new uniform and equipment costs.

Which makes sense as to why Uniforms comes in next at 26%.

It’s also interesting that so many agencies have dedicated Community Relations Officers (67% according to responses) but only 16% of respondents would spend more dollars on Community Outreach.

Q10. If you anticipate growth, please indicate which departments/line items you anticipate applying the increase to: (Check all that apply)

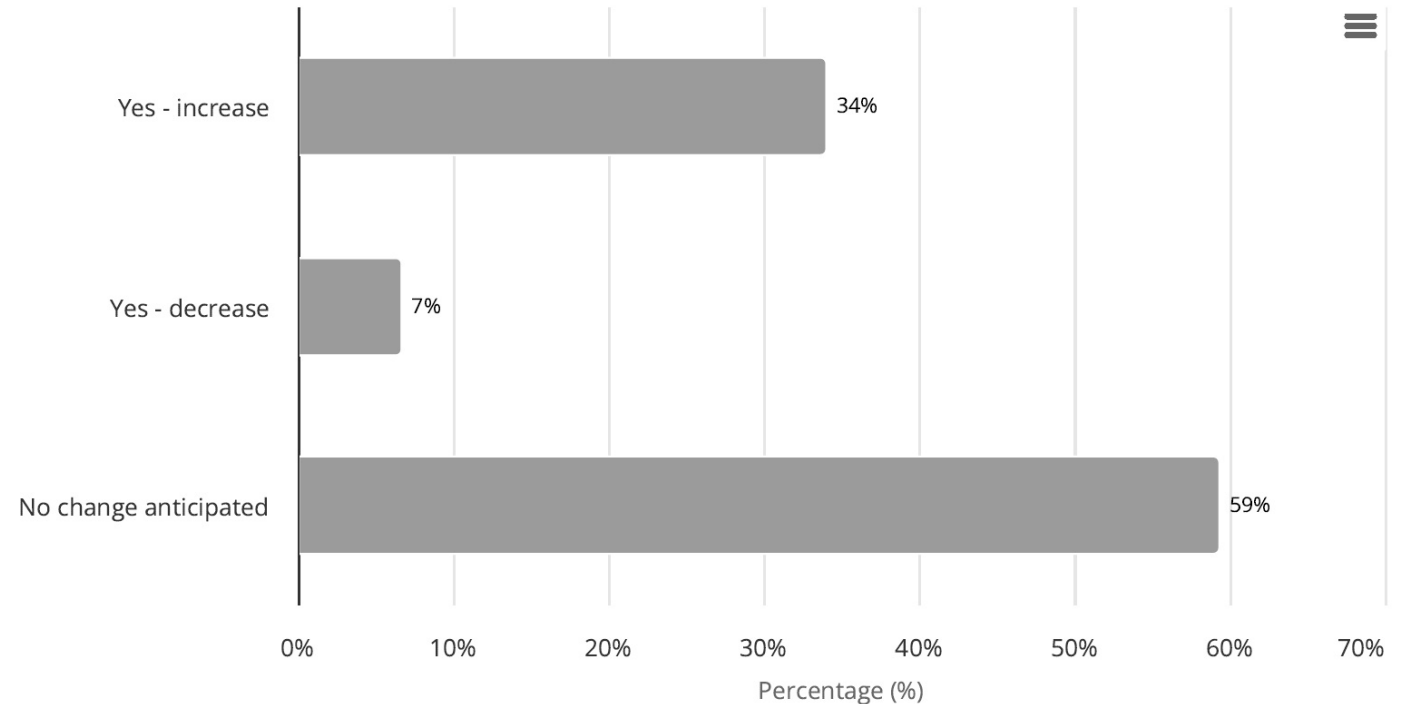


WILL YOUR SWORN STRENGTH GROW?

It's heartening to see just over one third (34%) of the responding agencies anticipate adding to their sworn strength for the 2027 budget year.

With 59% of the agencies expecting no change and only 7% expecting a decrease, the net result is that we should see an increase in the number of law enforcement professionals in our country for the fiscal 2027 year.

Q11. Do you anticipate a change to your sworn strength in the 2027 budget year?

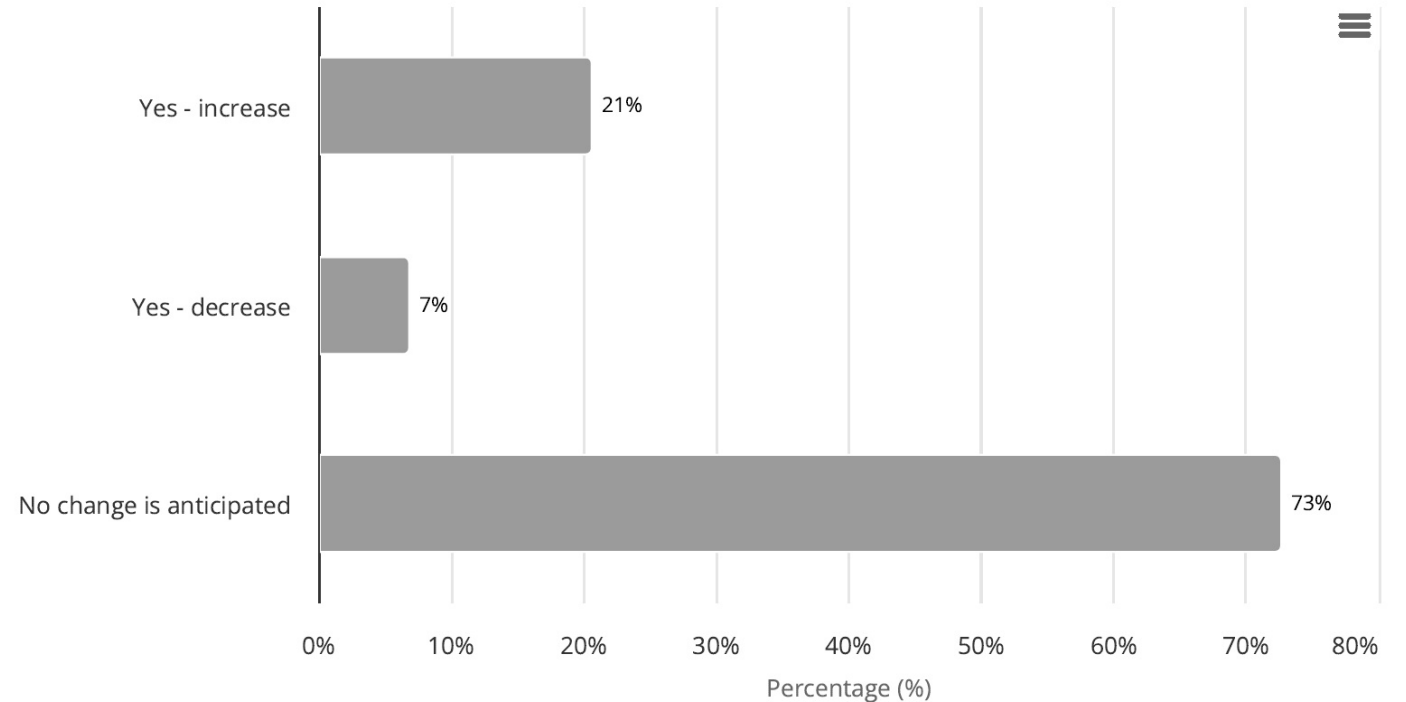


WILL YOUR SUPPORT STRENGTH GROW?

While not exactly parallel, it's easy to see the correlation in need for support staff as related to sworn strength.

The question is raised, but would need more research to answer, is the increase in sworn strength at some agencies being offset by a reduction in support staff?

Q12. Do you anticipate a change to the number of support personnel your agency has in the 2027 budget year?



WHAT'S YOUR DUTY HANDGUN?

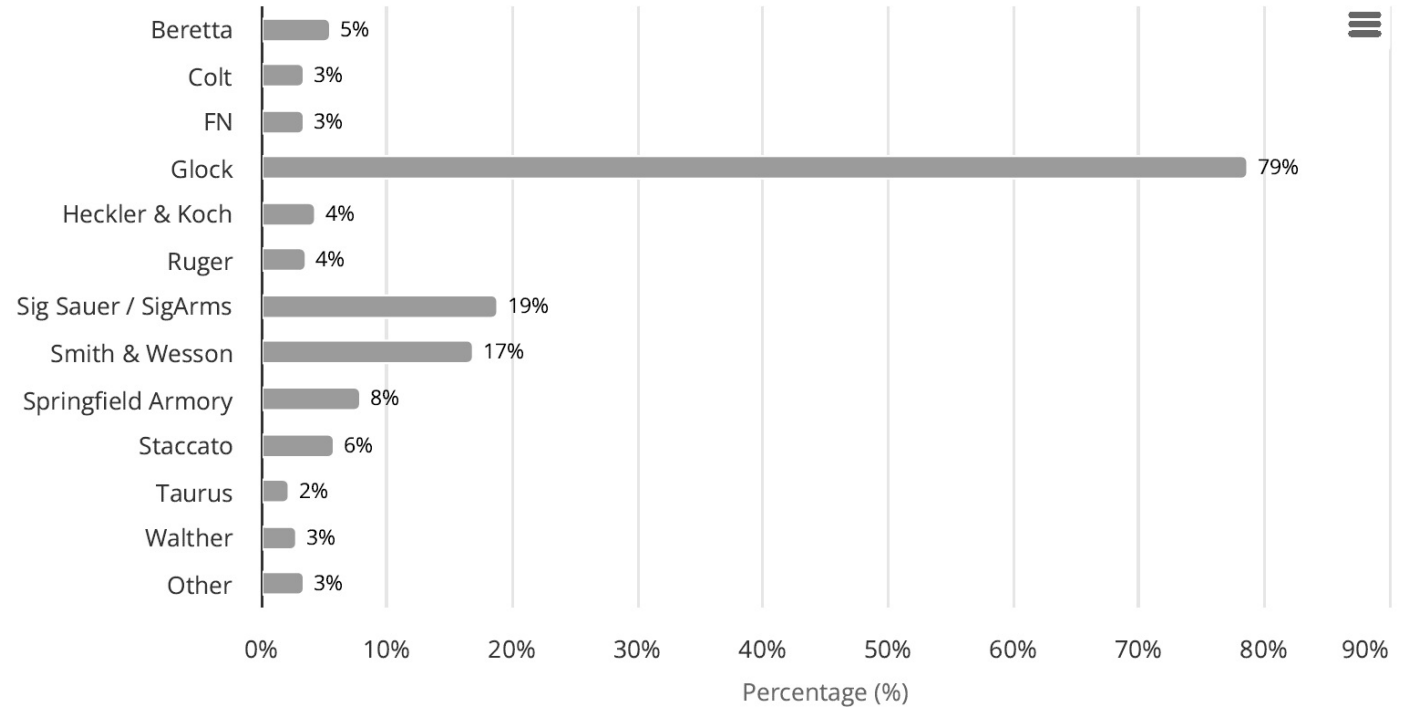
As it has for years, Glock “owns” the law enforcement market, with most agencies reporting a Glock handgun in their officers’ holsters.

The growing presence of the Sig Sauer P320 and the Smith & Wesson M&P is shown in the numbers as they run #2 and #3 in the L.E. market.

What’s interesting is that Springfield Armory and Staccato are #4 and #5. The double-stack 9mm 1911-style single-action pistol is growing in numbers in L.E. holsters.

Look for handguns from FN, H&K and Walther to push into the market as all three manufacturers have handguns specifically designed for, and adopted by, law enforcement agencies.

Q13. What is your issued or authorized duty handgun? (check all that apply)



WHAT'S THE MOST POPULAR L.E. CALIBER?

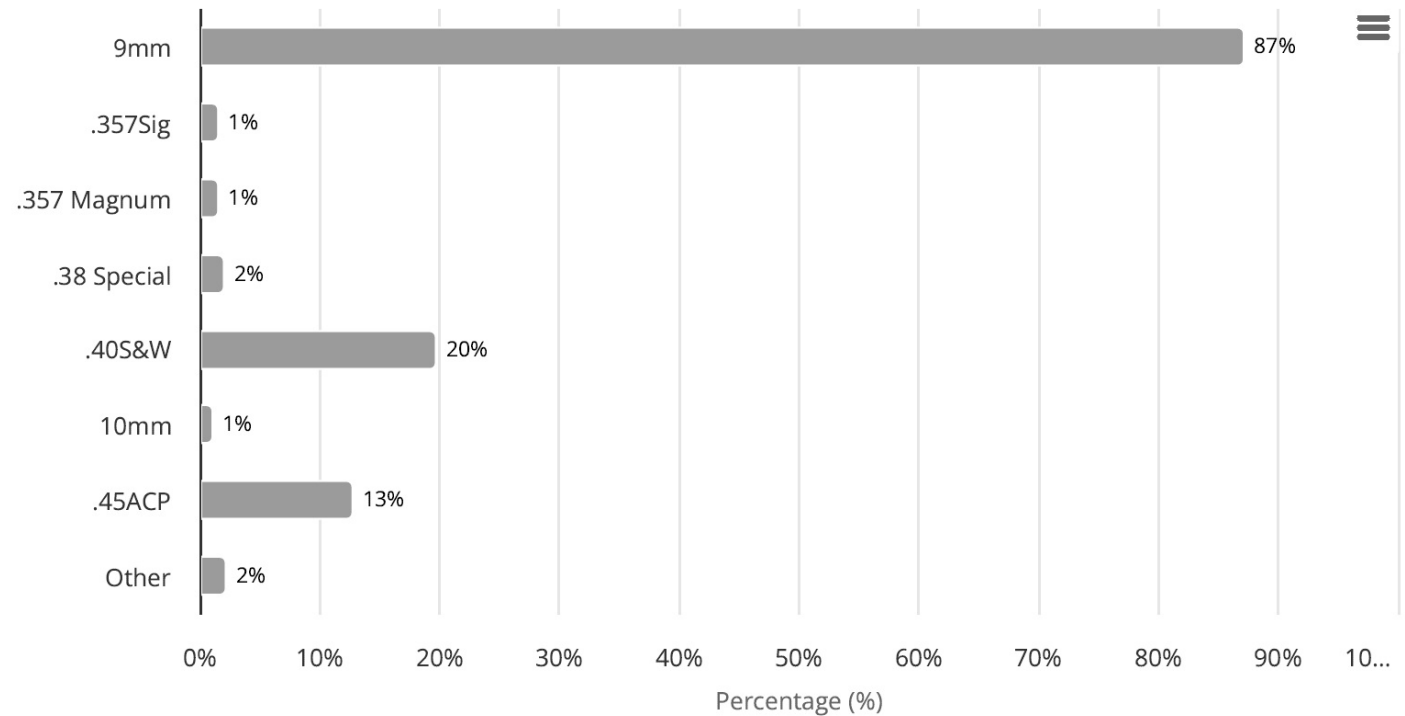
As little as 15 years ago, the .40S&W was the most popular caliber in L.E. handguns. That followed the FBI's adoption of the caliber.

Modern metallurgy and simple capacity demands have brought the 9mm back into the limelight.

.38 Special and .357 Magnum are revolver calibers and very few agencies carry revolvers anymore. Usually these are private agencies at health facilities, campuses and private facilities.

.357Sig and 10mm both provide "uncomfortable" recoil for some smaller shooters, or those with smaller hands/wrists.

Q14. What caliber is your issued or authorized duty handgun? (Check all that apply)



ADDING OR ISSUING NEW HANDGUN IN 2027?

The respondents indicated that of those agencies planning to change or add handguns for duty use, Glock is the preferred handgun. This may be a result of market support in the form of holsters and accessories.

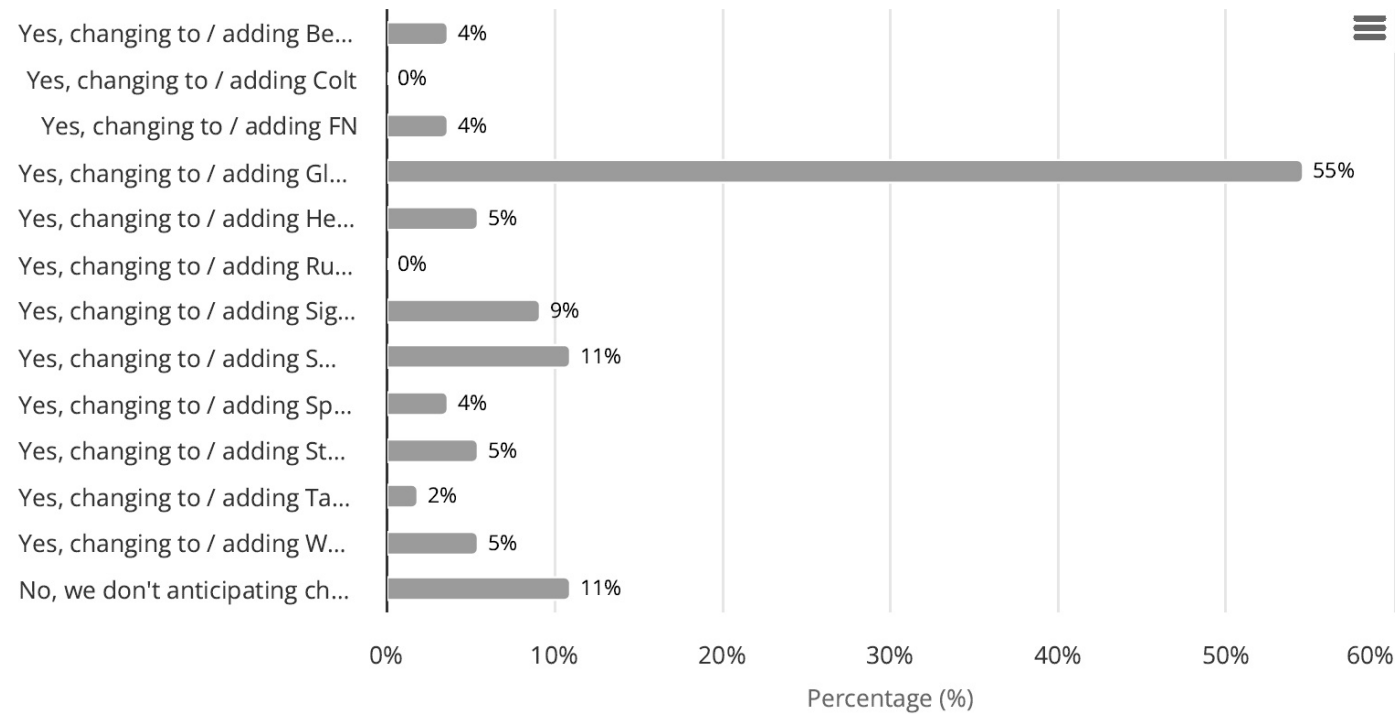
The Smith & Wesson M&P 2.0 is coming on strong.

The Sig P320 is also taking market share.

The FN509 series has been adopted by a few large agencies and is seeing positive reception.

H&K has tailored handgun design for ease of adoption in the L.E. community.

Q15. Do you anticipate changing to or adding authorization for additional handguns in the 2027 budget year?



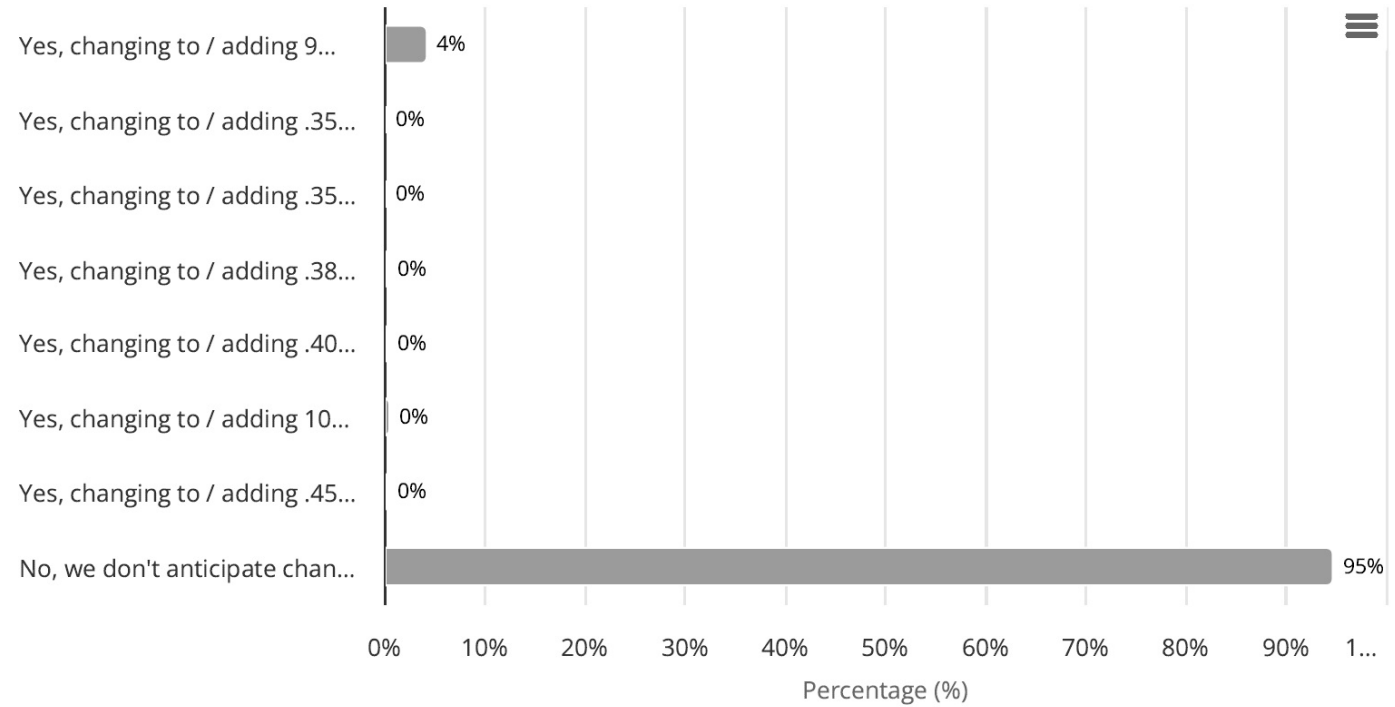
ADDING OR CHANGING AUTHORIZED CALIBER?

Among the small number of agencies that plan to change calibers, it's 100% to the 9mm.

The majority of agencies have no plan to change calibers.

It is suspected, but there's no way to verify, that the agencies that indicate they are switching to or adding the other calibers are adding them – not switching the whole department to them. However, this is anecdotal and not verified in the survey.

Q16. Whether you are changing your authorized handgun list or not, do you anticipate changes or additions to your authorized/issued caliber?



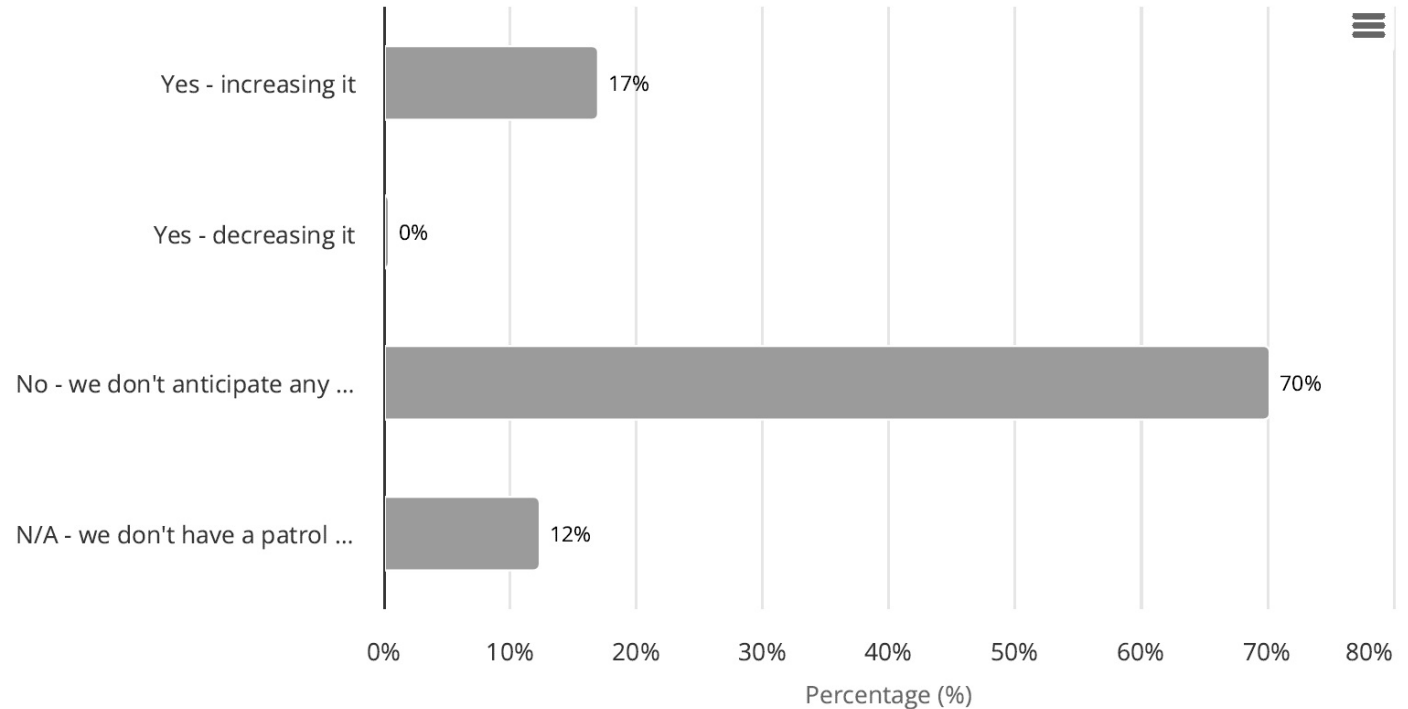
PATROL RIFLE PROGRAM INFORMATION

It's surprising, given the state of contemporary law enforcement, that 12% of responding agencies report not having a patrol rifle program while 17% report increasing the program they have.

It's likely that the 12% of agencies with no patrol rifle program are those agencies that report no patrol officers, i.e. healthcare, campus or private police agencies that focus on access control and other duties.

Over two-thirds of responding agencies report no changes to their current patrol rifle program.

Q17. If you authorize or issue patrol rifles, do you anticipate any changes to your program in the 2027 budget year?



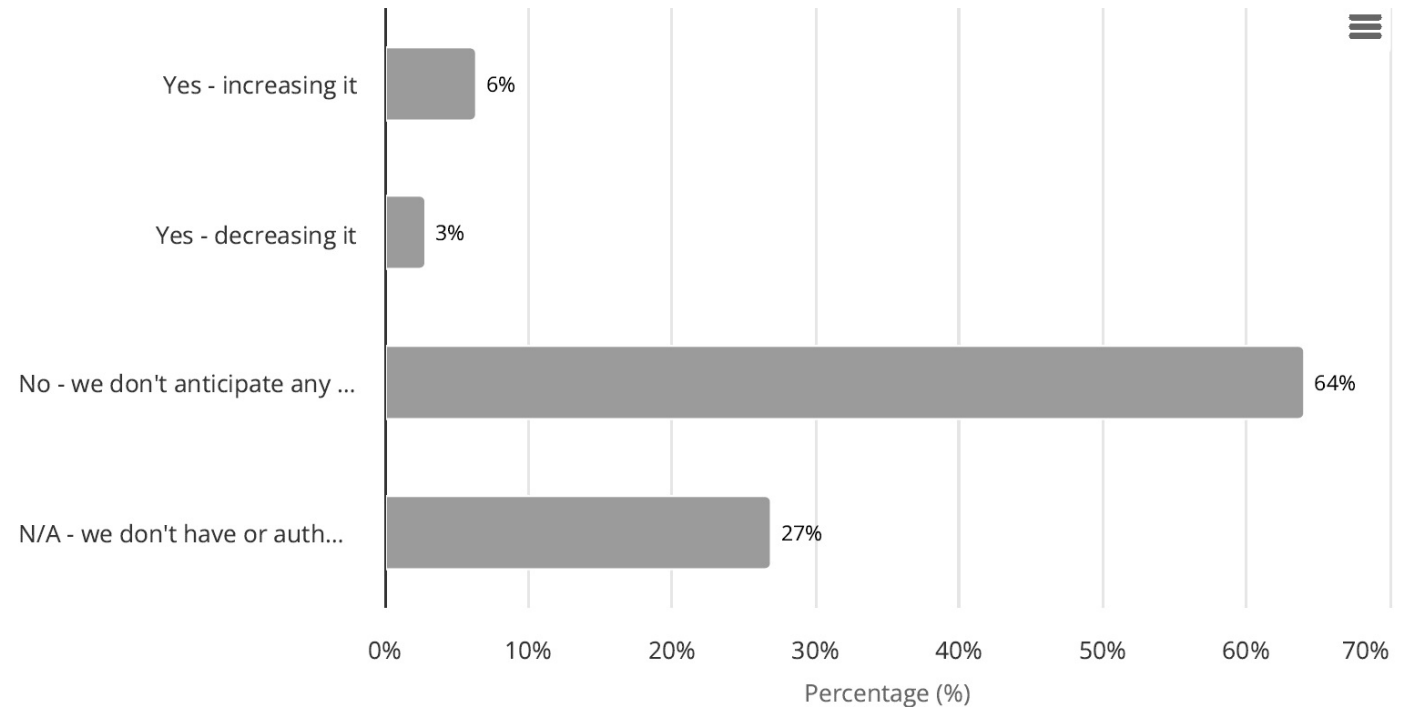
SHOTGUN PROGRAM INFORMATION

It's interesting to see shotguns still slowly coming back.

When agencies began embracing patrol rifles in parallel with the advent of active shooter response policies, many of them did away with their existing shotgun programs, replacing shotguns with patrol rifles.

Many of those agencies have come to the realization that shotguns and rifles perform different tasks and that the selection doesn't have to be one or the other.

Q18. If you authorize or issue shotguns, do you anticipate any changes to the program in the 2027 budget year?



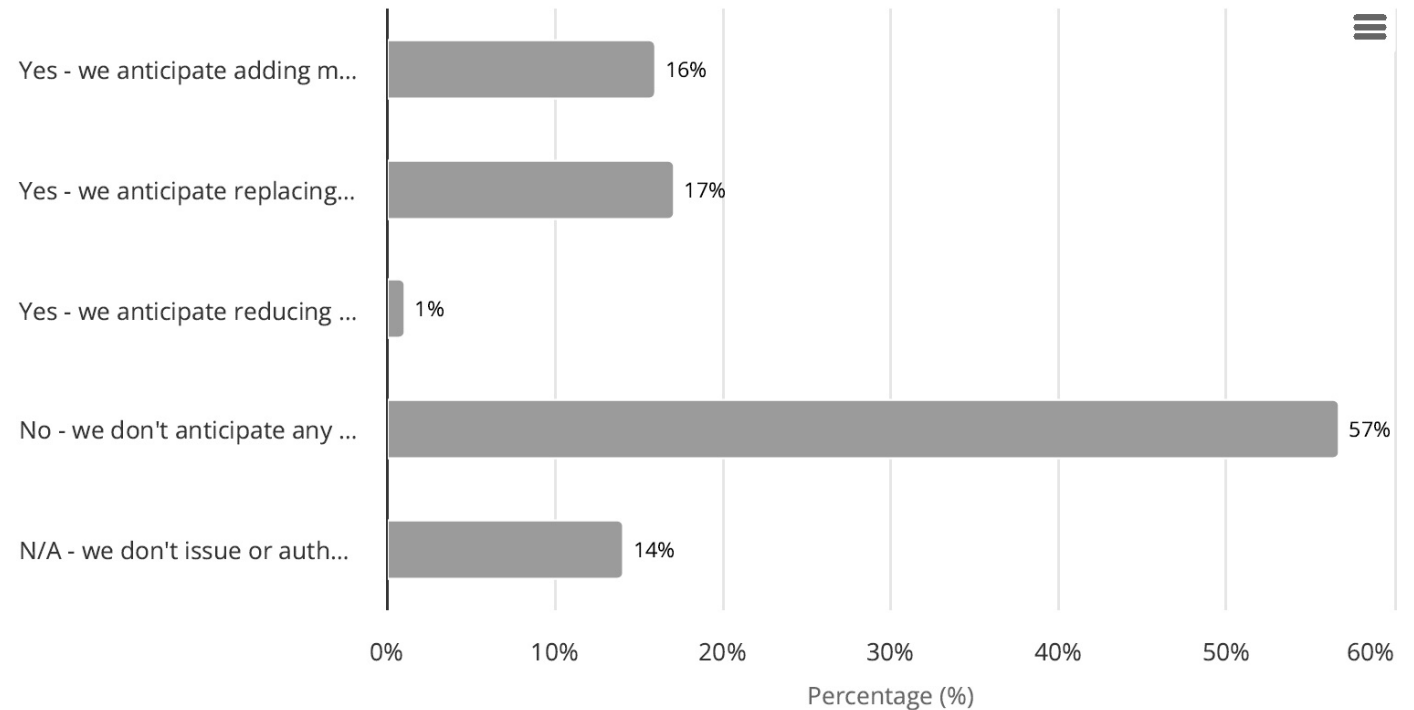
ELECTRONIC CONTROL DEVICES?

Response suggests that one-third of agencies who took our survey are planning to add to their ECD inventory or replace parts of it.

ECDs continue to evolve and the replacements may simply be upgrades to newer versions.

It's interesting (and perplexing) to see the 1% response of reducing their ECD program.

Q19. If your agency issues or authorizes Electronic Control Devices, do you anticipate any changes to the program in the 2027 budget year? (check all that apply)



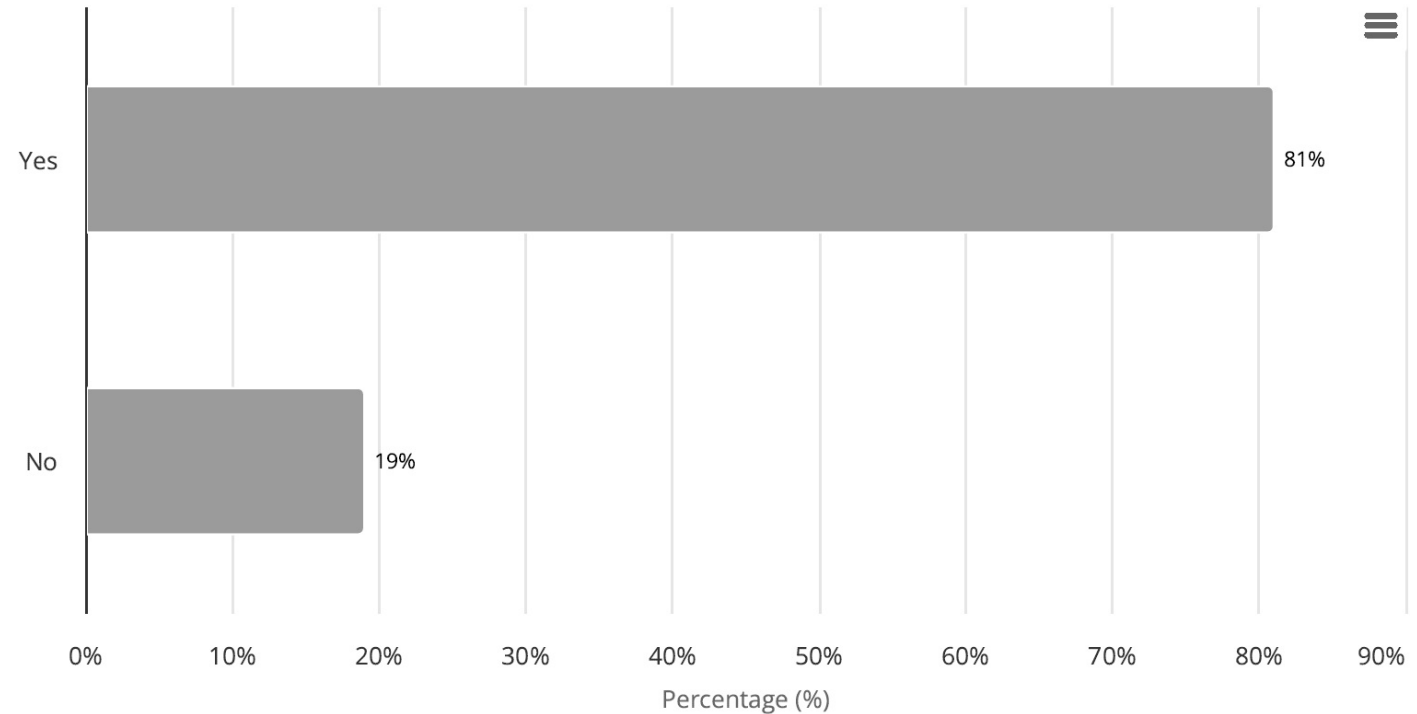
OC SPRAY & CHEMICAL WEAPONS

In the previous slide you see 14% of responding agencies don't issue an Electronic Control Device.

This slide shows 19% of responding agencies don't issue OC Spray or other chemical spray variant.

It's likely that both are in those agencies that have sensitive environments such as hospitals or other healthcare facilities.

Q20. Does your agency issue OC Spray or other chemical spray variant?

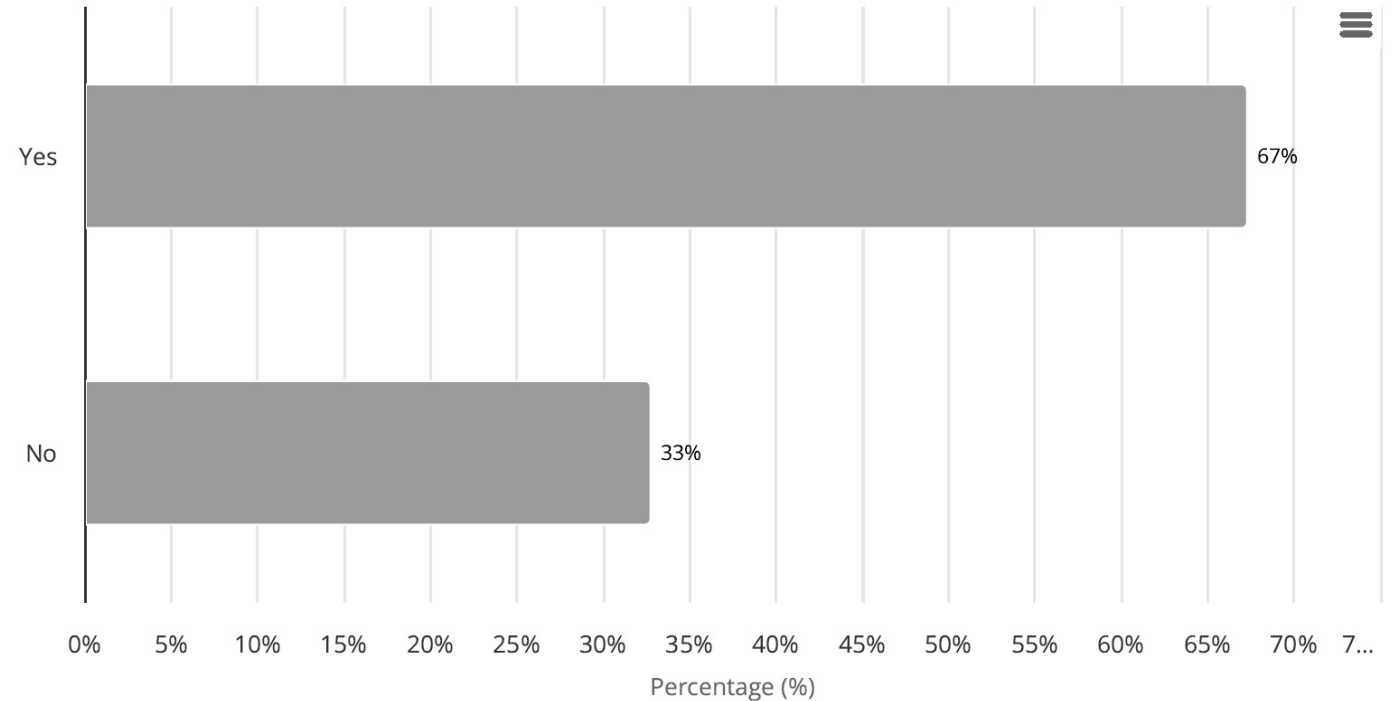


IMPACT WEAPONS & TOOLS

It is surprising to see that one-third of responding agencies don't issue an impact weapon.

Further research will have to be done, but could this be a result of “de-escalation” thinking? Are impact weapons seen as “too brutal” for duty use?

Q21. Does your agency issue batons, collapsible or otherwise?



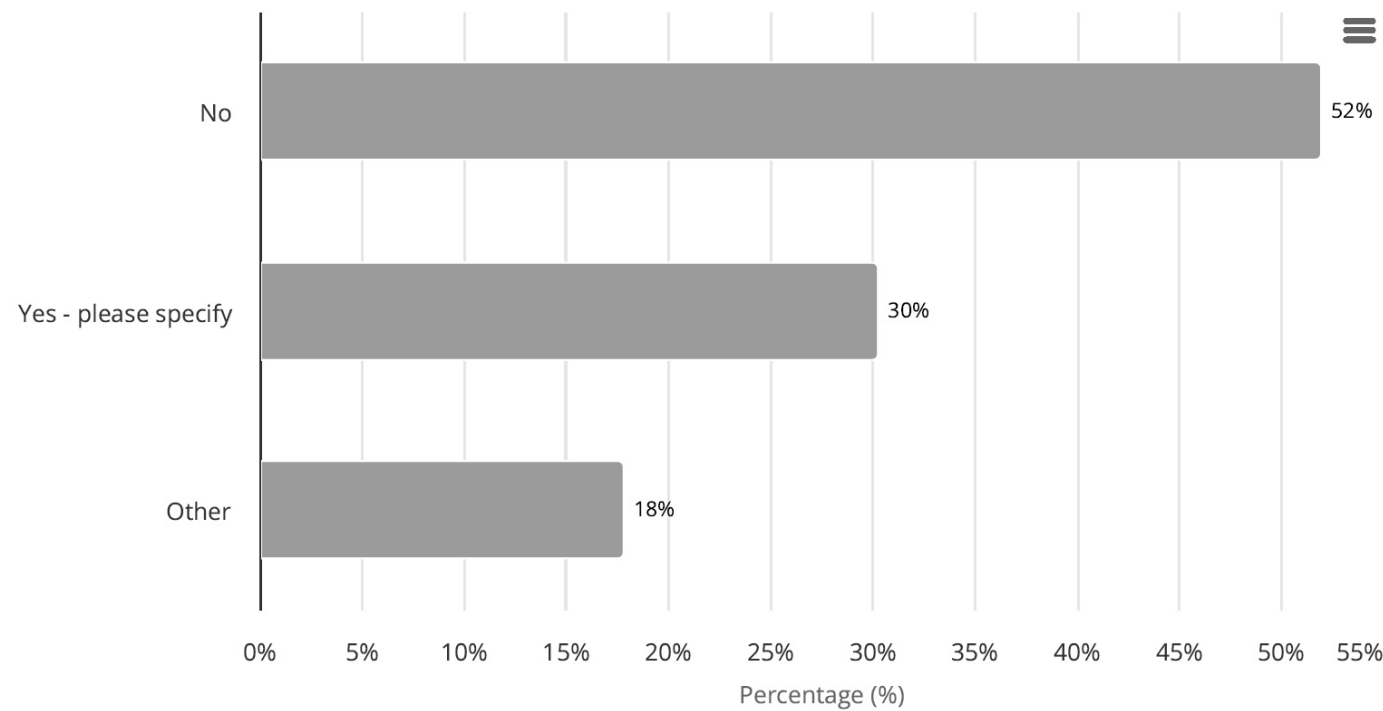
OTHER LESS-LETHAL TOOLS

Among the “other” less-lethal tools specified, the most common were:

- Dedicated less-lethal shotguns w/ beanbag munitions
- Pepperball/FN-303 launchers
- Bolowrap

*A significant number of respondents for the “other” category then listed TASER not realizing it’s an Electronic Control Device (ECD) and was covered in a previous question.

Q22. Does your agency issue TO PATROL OFFICERS any other less-lethal tools?



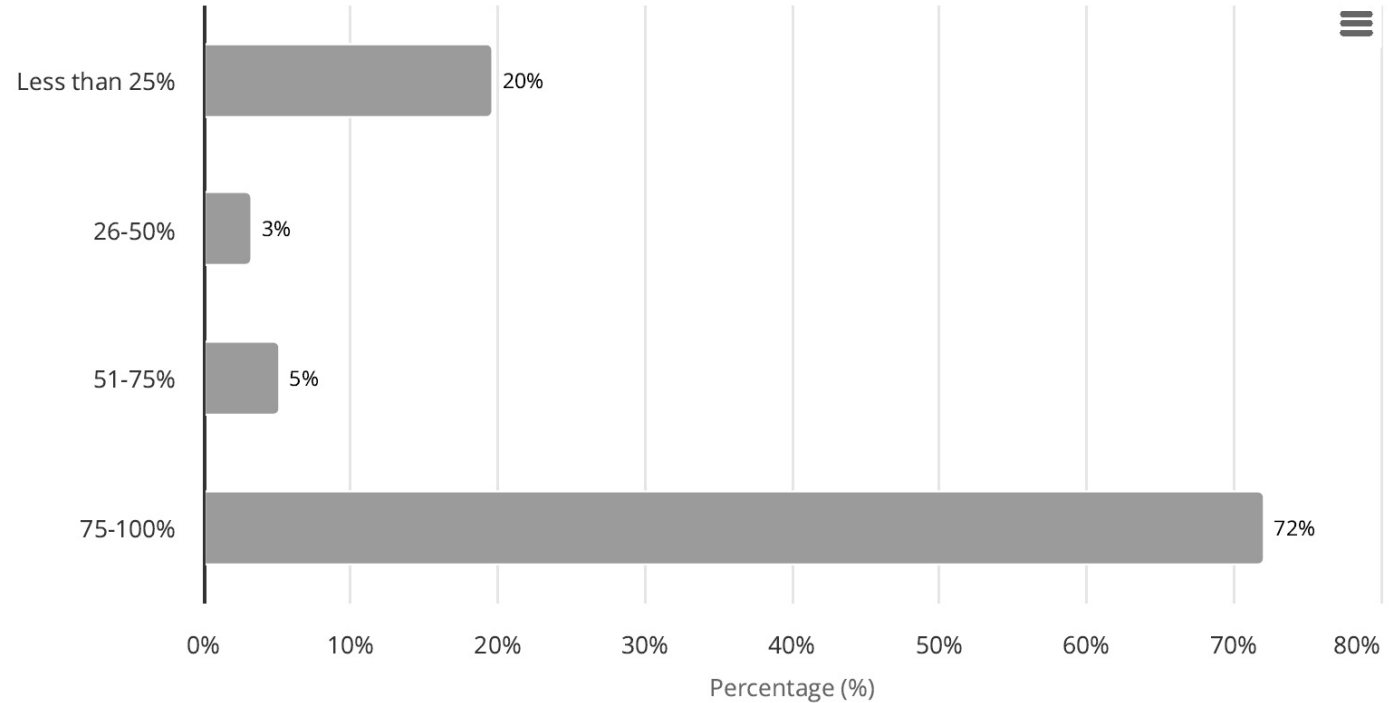
BODY WORN CAMERAS

It is shocking to see that 28% of respondents are at agencies where less than 75% of officers are equipped with body worn cameras.

Future research/survey will have to ascertain if that means:

- a) not all officers on duty have a body worn camera, or
- b) body worn cameras are a “pool” item and there are enough for each on-duty officer, but far fewer than the total number of officers on the agency.

Q23. What percentage of your officers are equipped with body worn cameras?



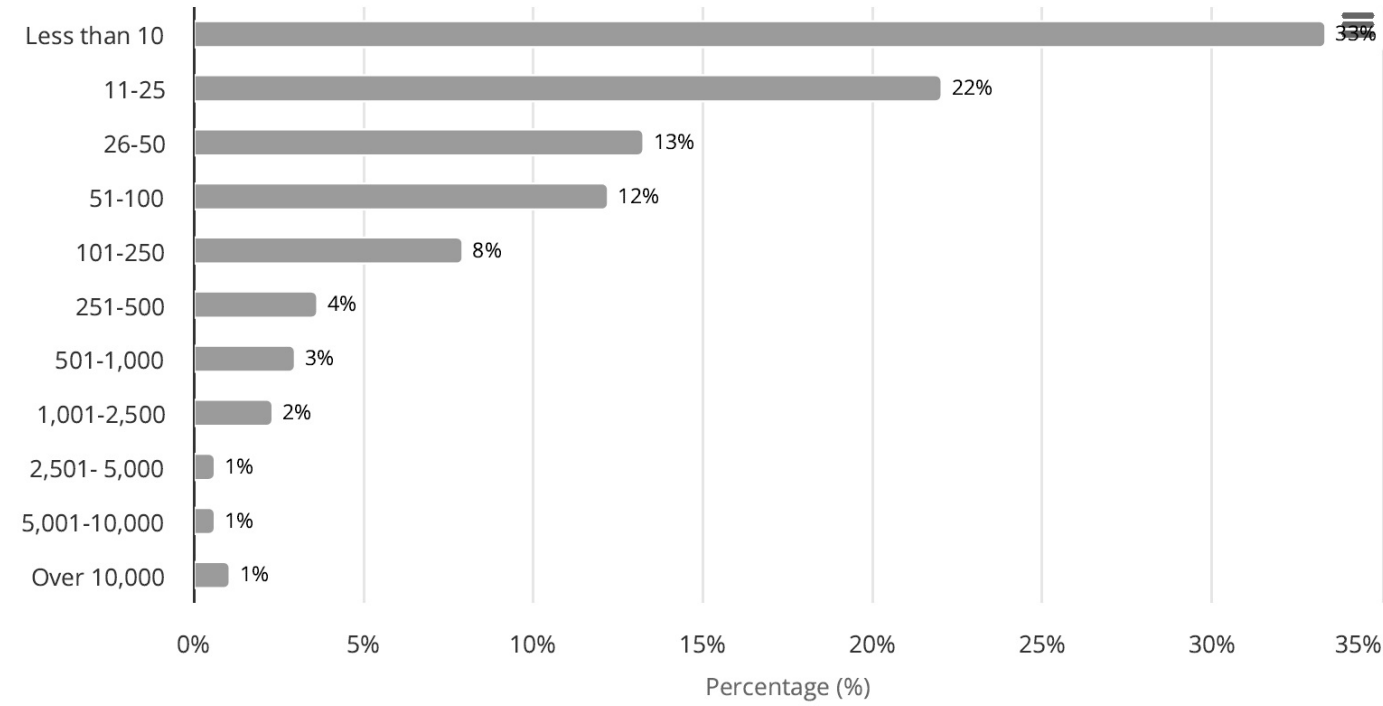
FLEET INFORMATION

It make sense that fleet count would parallel sworn strength indicators.

Look how few agencies have over 500 fleet vehicles: 8%

Agencies with fewer than 100 fleet vehicles account for 60% of the respondents.

Q24. How many fleet vehicles does your agency have in service?



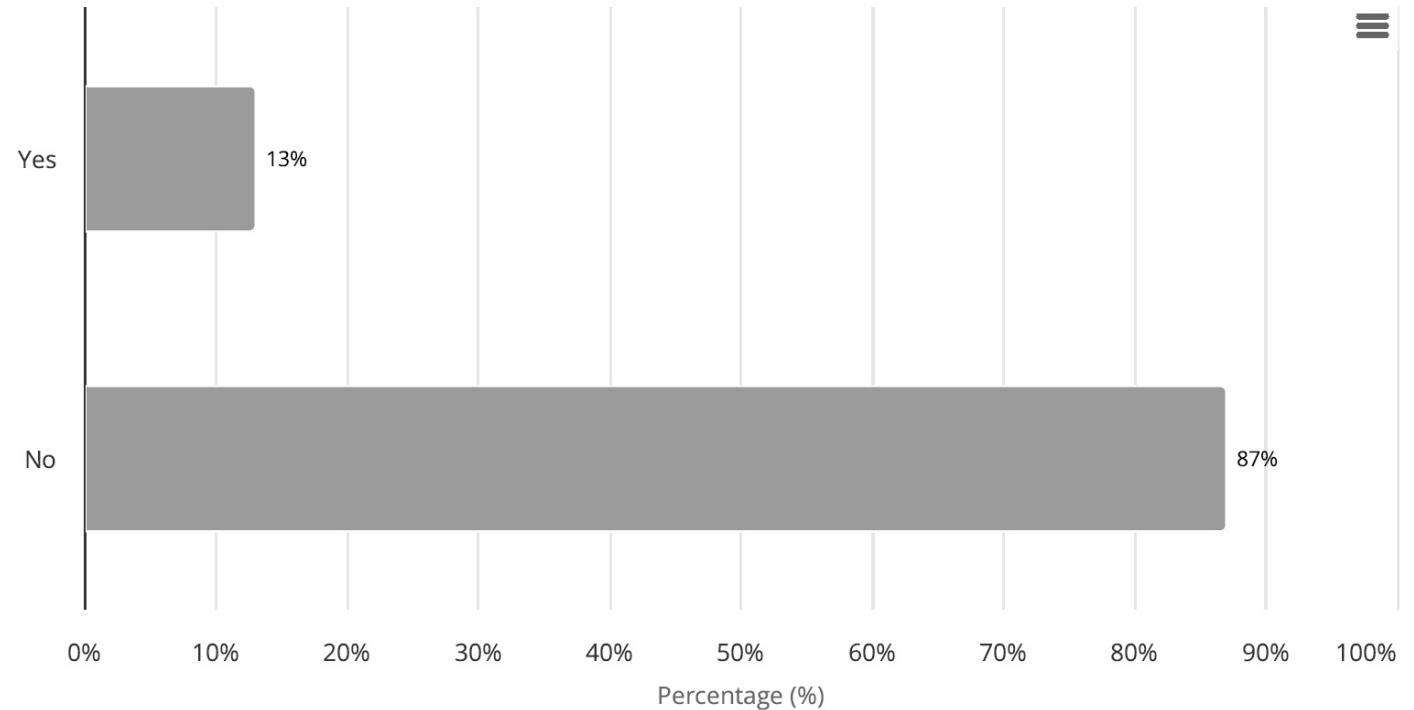
FLEET GROWING OR SHRINKING?

At first one might think that a shrinking fleet is an indicator of challenged budget.

On larger agencies, when vehicles get “dead-lined” they may be pool vehicles and not need replacement.

Other circumstance may allow for dead-lining a vehicle and not replacing it.

Q25. Do you anticipate removing from service any vehicles WITHOUT REPLACEMENT in the 2027 budget year?



WHAT'S IN YOUR TRUNK? WHAT'S NOT?

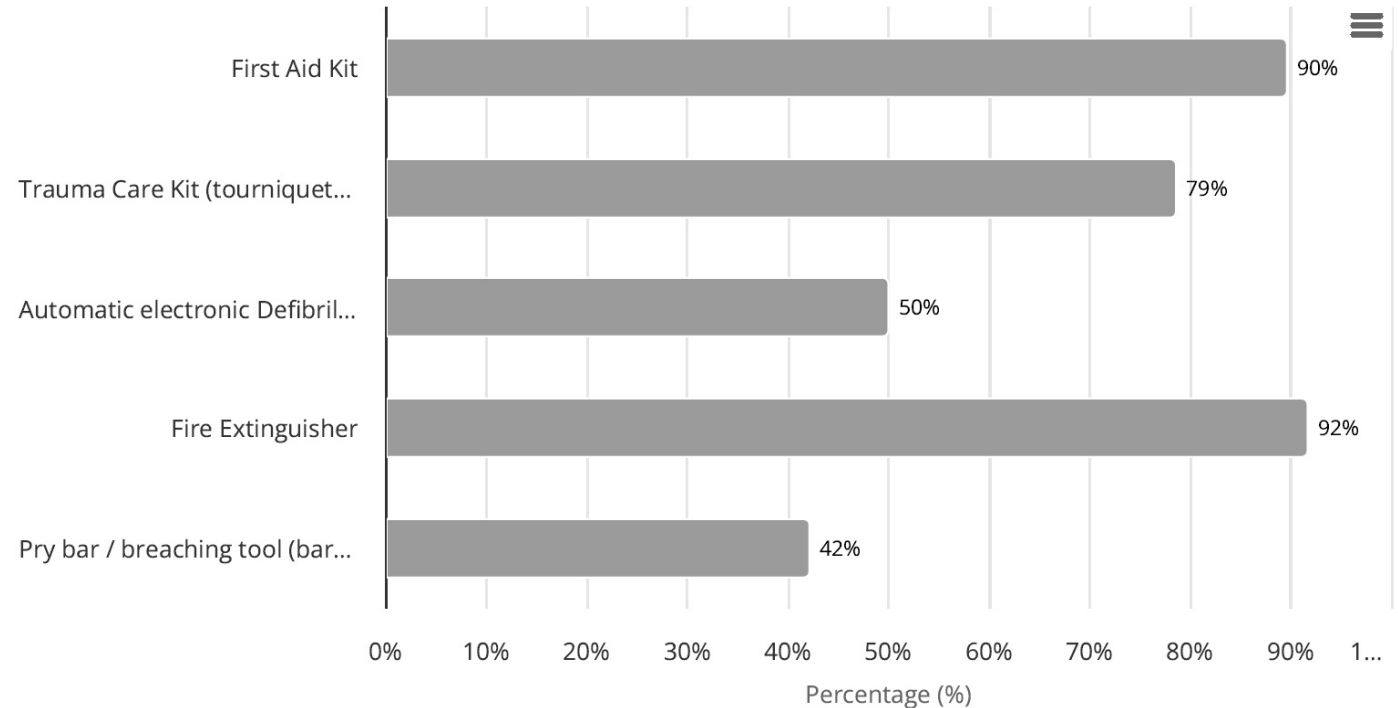
It's been a given for decades that every patrol vehicle would have a first-aid kit and a fire extinguisher in the trunk/storage area.

Automatic Electronic Defibrillators (AEDs) are becoming more common.

Trauma Care Kits such as tourniquets, IFAKs, etc. are often not in the trunk because they are in the passenger compartment or on the officer's person.

Given that recent active shooter events have shown officers needing to breach to make entry, it's surprising that there aren't more patrol vehicles equipped with a basic breaching tool.

Q26. Please indicate which of the following your agency has in all, or the large majority of, patrol vehicles. (Check all that apply)



WHAT WORRIES YOU THE MOST?

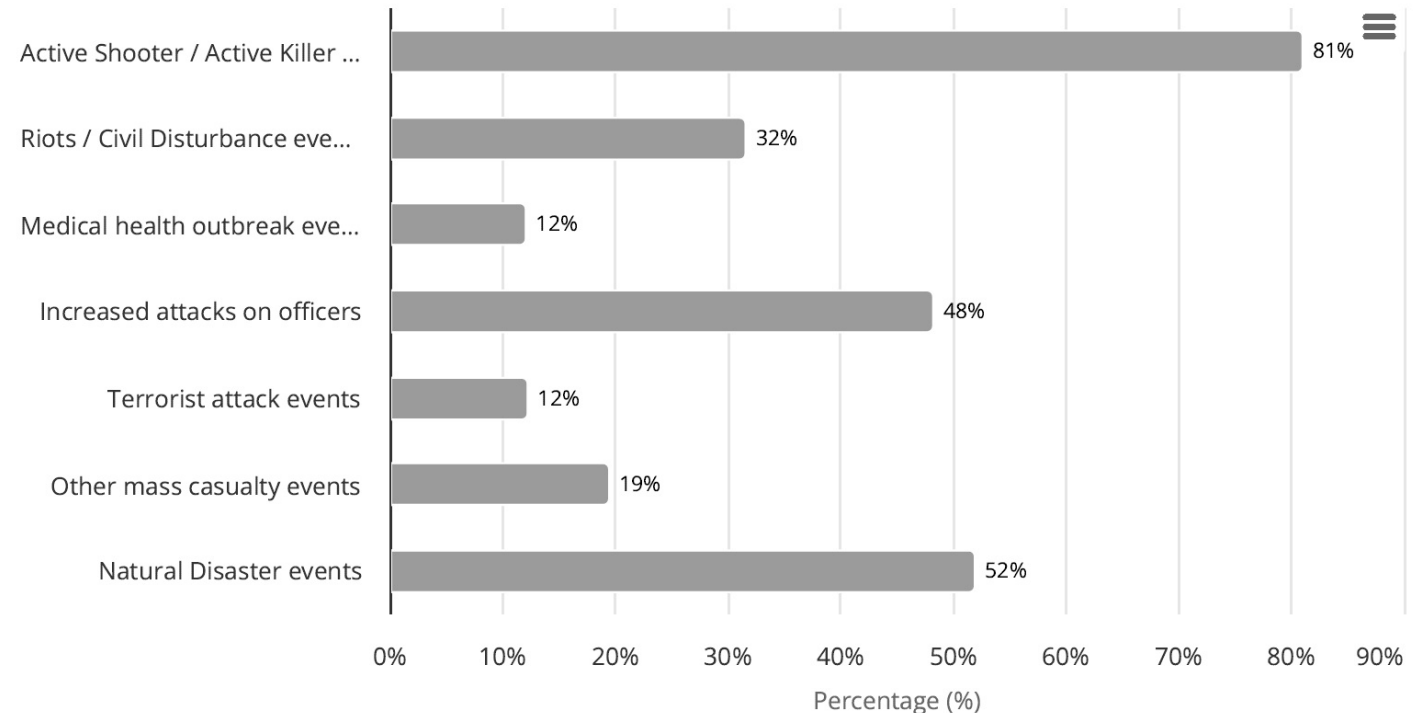
It's interesting to see the changes in concerns across the years. Ten years ago, Riots and Civil Disturbance were #2 on the list.

Active Shooter / Active Killer / Active Assailant remains the #1 concern – and likely will for the near future. These events continue to occur and evolve.

Natural Disaster Events are #2 on the response list this year. Hurricanes, tornadoes and wildfires continue to create challenges for law enforcement agencies.

Increased attacks on officers should be a concern for every agency. Ambushes and random assaults seem to be growing in numbers.

Q27. What of the following types of events are of greatest concern to you as you plan your budget for the next three to five years? (Check the three of greatest concern)



OTHER OBSERVATIONS & CONCLUSIONS

The highlights from this year's State of the Industry Projection Survey are:

Municipal Agencies (understandably) account for a majority of L.E. professionals in the country.

- Our respondent community was comprised by executives and command staff, adding to the validity of response.
- 81% of our respondents are from agencies with a sworn strength of 250 officers or less.
- 85% of our respondents expect their 2027 budgets to either grow or remain flat.
- Most new budget dollars will be spent on Salaries, Training and Fleet vehicles/equipment.
- Over one-third of respondent agencies expect their sworn strength to increase in 2027.
- Glock 9mms are the most common handgun in L.E. followed by Smith & Wesson and SigSauer.
- The issue or authorization of Patrol Rifles is growing in 2027.
- Shotguns are making a comeback – slowly.
- Electronic Control Devices are growing in usage and being upgraded regularly.
- There are a few types of agency jurisdictions that choose not to have less-lethal tools issued to officers.
- Body worn cameras may not be as prevalent as is believed.
- Active Shooter events remain the greatest concern of L.E. leadership.

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