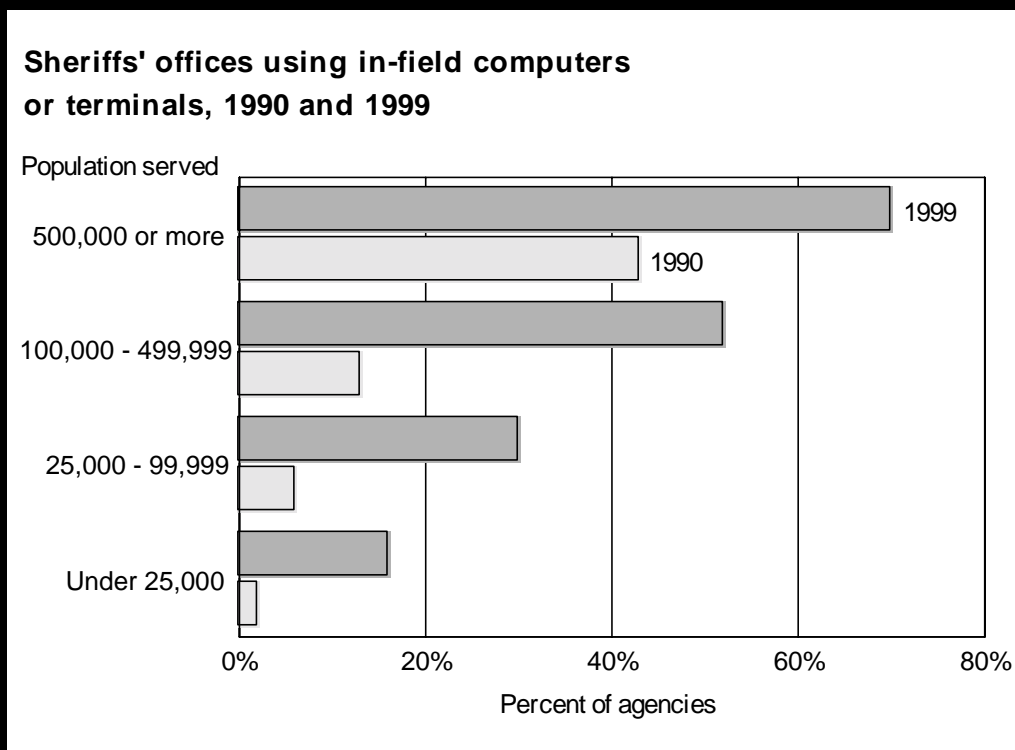# Bureau of Justice Statistics

Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics

Sheriffs' Offices 1999

Sheriffs' offices using in-field computers or terminals, 1990 and 1999

Population served

Percent of agencies

Sheriffs' Offices 1999

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Highlights

Personnel

• As of June 1999, the nearly 3,100 sheriffs' offices operating nationwide had an estimated 290,707 full-time employees, including about 186,000 sworn personnel.

• From 1997 to 1999, the number of full-time sheriffs' employees increased by about 27,000, or 10.4%. When only sworn personnel are considered, employment increased by about 11,000, or 6.4%.

• Forty-eight sheriffs' offices had 500 or more full-time sworn personnel, and these agencies employed nearly a third of all sheriffs' deputies. The largest, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, had 8,107 full-time officers.

• About half of all sworn personnel were assigned to law enforcement field operations. Overall, approximately 66,000 deputies had regularly assigned duties that included responding to calls for service.

• About a third of all sworn personnel worked in jail-related positions, and about 1 in 10 performed court-related duties such as providing court security or serving civil process.

Operations

• Nearly all sheriffs' offices provided basic law enforcement services such as routine patrol (97%), responding to citizen calls for service (95%) and investigating crimes (92%).

• In 1999, 88% of sheriffs' offices, employing 90% of sworn personnel, participated in a 9-1-1 emergency telephone system. About two-thirds of agencies had enhanced 9-1-1 in 1999 compared to about half in 1997.

• From 1997 to 1999, the percent of sheriffs' offices using routine foot patrol increased from 16% to 21%; the percent using routine bicycle patrol, from 6% to 9%; and the percent using either type, from 20% to 26%.

• Most sheriffs' offices had duties related to traffic law enforcement (81%), accident investigations (72%), and traffic direction and control (58%).

• Nearly all sheriffs' offices had responsibility for court-related functions such as executing arrest warrants (98%), serving civil process (98%), and providing court security (94%). About four-fifths operated at least 1 jail.

• Fifty-six percent of sheriffs' offices were responsible for search and rescue operations, while 38% performed tactical (SWAT) operations.

Community policing

• Sixty-two percent of sheriffs' offices had some type of community policing plan in effect during 1999. About a third of those serving 250,000 or more residents had a formal, written plan.

• About 2 in 3 sheriffs' deputies were employed by an agency that trained at least some new recruits in community policing skills such as problem-solving and building community partnerships. Nearly two-thirds of sheriffs' offices serving 25,000 or more residents offered such training.

• Sixty percent of sheriffs' offices had full-time sworn personnel designated as community policing officers. Nationwide, about 15,000 sheriffs' deputies were regularly engaged in community policing activities.

• Nearly two-fifths (38%) of sheriffs' offices had full-time sworn personnel serving as school resource officers, with a total of more than 3,400 so assigned overall.

• An estimated 86% of sheriffs' offices met regularly with community groups. More than 40% of those serving 100,000 or more residents formed problem-solving partnerships through written agreements, and a similar percentage provided community policing training to citizens.

Computers and information systems

• Nearly all (95%) sheriffs' offices used computers for administrative purposes during 1999. Just 1% of all sheriffs' deputies worked for an agency not using computers.

• In 1999, 52% of sheriffs' dispatch systems were computer-aided, including more than 80% of those in agencies serving 100,000 or more residents. In 1990, 30% of sheriffs' dispatch systems were computerized.

• From 1990 to 1999, the percent of officers employed by an agency with computerized arrest records increased from 70% to 91%. Increases were also observed for criminal histories (67% to 81%), warrants (75% to 91%), and summonses (48% to 60%).

• More than a third of sheriffs' offices used computers for crime analysis (39%) and crime mapping (36%) during 1999. This included a majority of agencies serving a population of 50,000 or more.

• From 1990 to 1999, the percent of sworn personnel working for a sheriff's office using in-field computers or terminals increased from 28% to 58%. Sheriffs' offices had about 15 in-field computers or terminals per 100 officers as of June 1999.

• About a third of sworn personnel worked for a sheriff's office where at least some officers in the field could use in-field computers to access information on wanted suspects (37%) or driving records (32%). About a fourth were in agencies where stolen property (27%) or criminal history (24%) records could be accessed.

Written policies and procedures

• Nearly all sworn personnel worked in a sheriff's office with written policies or procedures pertaining to conduct and appearance (98%), use of deadly force (98%), use of nonlethal force (95%), handling of citizen complaints (92%), and domestic disputes (90%).

The LEMAS survey

During 1999, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), as a part of its Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics (LEMAS) program, surveyed a nationally representative sample of State and local law enforcement agencies operating nationwide. Previous LEMAS surveys were conducted in 1987, 1990, 1993, and 1997.

This report presents 1999 LEMAS data describing the personnel, operations, community policing initiatives, computers and information systems, and written policies of the more than 3,000 sheriffs' offices operating in the United States.

Except for a small number of appointees, sheriffs are elected officials. To better reflect this status, this report uses the term "office," universally, a change from past reports in this series.

Sheriffs' offices typically serve counties and independent cities. Although sheriffs' offices may have countywide jail and court-related responsibilities, their law enforcement jurisdiction may exclude county areas served by a local police department. In some counties municipalities contract with the sheriff's office for law enforcement services. In counties and independent cities with a separate police department, the sheriff's office may not have any primary law enforcement jurisdiction.

The 1999 LEMAS survey was mailed to 3,319 State and local law enforcement agencies, and 3,246 of them provided data for a response rate of 97.8%. (See *Methodology* on page 20 for a description of sampling procedures.)

This report and its companion report (*Local Police Departments, 1999*, NCJ 186478, May 2001), summarize data collected from agencies of all sizes. For agency-specific tabulations, see the BJS report *Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics, 1999: Data for Individual State and Local Agencies with 100 or More Officers,* NCJ 184481, November 2000).

Table 1. Employment by general purpose State and local law enforcement agencies in the United States, 1999

| Type of agency | Number of agencies | Number of employees | | | | | |
| | | Full-time | | | Part-time | | |
		Total	Sworn	Civilian	Total	Sworn	Civilian
Total	16,661	932,780	677,933	254,847	84,171	37,062	47,109
Sheriff	3,088	290,707	185,859	104,848	19,670	9,238	10,432
Local police	13,524	556,631	436,182	120,449	63,575	27,824	35,751
Primary State	49	85,442	55,892	29,550	926	0	926

Note: Data are for the pay period that included June 30, 1999. Table excludes State and local law enforcement agencies that serve special jurisdictional areas or have limited enforcement responsibilities. Sworn employees are those with general arrest powers. Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

Personnel

As of June 30, 1999, sheriffs' offices had an estimated 290,707 full-time employees (table 1). About 186,000, or 64%, of these employees were sworn officers. This accounted for 27% of all full-time sworn personnel working for State and local general purpose law enforcement agencies nationwide. Sheriffs' offices employed about 9,000 sworn officers on a part-time basis.

The estimated 104,848 full-time nonsworn personnel employed by sheriffs' offices in 1999 comprised about 41% of all such employees working in general purpose law enforcement agencies. Sheriffs' offices had more than 10,000 part-time nonsworn employees.

From 1990 to 1999, the number of full-time sheriffs' employees increased by about 87,000, or 43% C an average of 4.7% annually (figure 1). The number of full-time sworn officers increased by about 44,400, or 31%, during this time.

There were about 27,000 more full-time sheriffs' office employees in 1999 than in 1997, an increase of 10.4%. Among sworn personnel, employment increased by about 11,000, or 6.4%, from 1997 to 1999.

From 1990 to 1999, the number of full-time civilian employees in sheriffs' offices rose from 62,556 to 104,848, an increase of 67.6%. This included an increase of about 16,000, or 18.1%, from 1997 to 1999.

Full-time employment by sheriffs' offices, 1990, 1993, 1997, and 1999
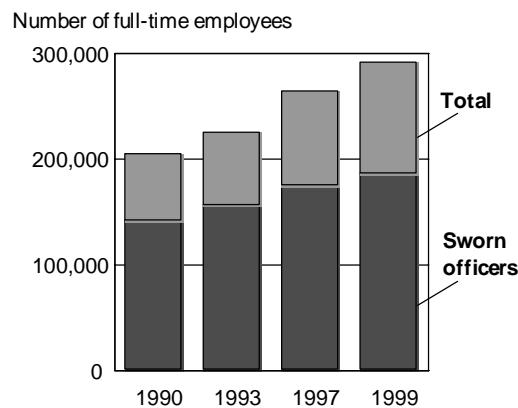
Figure 1

Nationwide, 408, or 13.2% of sheriffs' offices, employed at least 100 sworn personnel (table 2). This included 17 agencies with 1,000 or more officers. An estimated 815, or 26.4% of all agencies, employed fewer than 10 sworn personnel.

About a fifth of all full-time sheriffs' deputies were employed by a agency with 1,000 or more officers, and about two-thirds worked for one with at least 100 officers. Agencies with fewer than 10 sworn personnel accounted for about 2% of all officers.

Table 2. Sheriffs' offices, by number of sworn and civilian personnel, 1999

Number of sworn personnel*	Agencies		Full-time sworn personnel		Full-time civilian personnel	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	3,088	100%	185,859	100%	104,848	100%
1,000 or more	17	0.6%	37,030	19.9%	18,021	17.2%
500-999	31	1.0	20,435	11.0	10,522	10.0
250-499	86	2.8	29,837	16.1	15,674	14.9
100-249	275	8.9	40,513	21.8	20,000	19.1
50-99	372	12.0	22,818	12.3	14,145	13.5
25-49	562	18.2	18,099	9.7	12,079	11.5
10-24	931	30.1	12,945	7.0	10,081	9.6
5-9	565	18.3	3,479	1.9	2,935	2.8
2-4	229	7.4	682	0.4	524	0.5
0-1	21	0.6	20	--	867	0.8

--Less than 0.05%.
Note: Sworn employees are those with general arrest powers. Detail may not add to total because of rounding. *Includes both full-time and part-time employees.

Twenty-five largest sheriffs' offices, by number and function of full-time sworn personnel, 1999

County or equivalent	Full-time sworn personnel	Officers responding to calls for service[a]		Percent of officers by area of duty		
		Number	Percent	Field operations	Jail operations	Court operations
Los Angeles Co. (CA)	8,107	1,358	17%	51%	26%	18%
Cook Co. (IL)	5,768	523	9	9	58	30
Harris Co. (TX)	2,648	653	25	35	55	6
Broward Co. (FL)	2,419	1,175	49	49	50	0
San Diego Co. (CA)	1,999	655	33	45	53	0
Clark Co. (NV)[b]	1,998	984	49%	74%	20%	0%
Hillsborough Co. (FL)	1,889	694	37	49	40	6
Jacksonville - Duval Co. (FL)[b]	1,502	906	60	96	0	3
Jefferson Parish (LA)	1,449	440	30	51	17	4
Orange Co. (CA)	1,361	367	27	48	47	0
San Bernardino Co. (CA)	1,341	498	37%	47%	50%	0%
Sacramento Co. (CA)	1,339	446	33	49	32	9
Bexar Co. (TX)	1,302	120	9	12	63	14
Riverside Co. (CA)	1,234	452	37	71	15	10
Orange Co. (FL)	1,162	576	50	89	0	8
Wayne Co. (MI)	1,127	142	13%	13%	69%	16%
Nassau Co. (NY)	1,114	0	0	5	93	0
Hamilton Co. (OH)	1,075	202	19	28	56	8
Palm Beach Co. (FL)	993	653	66	82	0	13
Orleans Parish (LA)	920	0	0	30	54	11
Salt Lake Co. (UT)	903	249	28%	46%	46%	5%
Suffolk Co. (NY)	874	0	0	26	74	0
Alameda Co. (CA)	829	61	7	26	50	18
Pinellas Co. (FL)	823	413	50	74	--	21
Suffolk Co. (MA)	817	0	0	0	98	0

Note: Sworn employees are those with general arrest powers.
--Less than 0.5%.
[a]Includes all uniformed officers whose regularly assigned duties included responding to citizen calls for service.
[b]The Jacksonville Sheriff's Office serves as the local police department for the City of Jacksonville which is consolidated with Duval County. The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, the result of a merger of the Clark County Sheriff's Office and the Las Vegas Police Department in 1973, serves as the local police department for the City of Las Vegas. These two agencies, although headed by sheriffs, are classified as local police departments in LEMAS for data analysis purposes.

Although less than a sixth of sheriffs' offices served 100,000 or more residents, such agencies employed about two-thirds of all sworn personnel (table 3). About a fifth of deputies were employed in jurisdictions with 1 million or more residents.

The average size of sheriffs' offices ranged from about 2,000 full-time employees in the largest jurisdictions to 11 in the smallest (table 4). By sworn personnel, the average size ranged from 1,300 in the largest jurisdictions to 6 in the smallest.

More than a third (36%) of the full-time sworn personnel in sheriffs' offices had regularly assigned duties that included responding to calls for service (table 5). By population category, the proportion of officers responding to calls ranged from less than 1 in 4 in agencies serving 1 million or more residents, to nearly 3 in 4 in those serving fewer than 10,000 residents.

About half of sworn personnel worked in law enforcement field operations (49%) (table 6). Officers working in the field operations area, but not assigned to respond to calls, often performed supervisory or investigative duties.

The next highest area of employment for sworn personnel was in jail-related positions (31.2%). Another 10% had court-related duties such as serving process or providing court security.

About 6% of sworn personnel primarily performed administrative duties, and 4% worked in technical support positions primarily related to communications, fleet management, crime prevention, or training.

Among nonsworn employees, the largest percentage performed jail-related duties (56.5%), followed by technical support (28.4%). Other areas of duty for civilian employees included administration (6.9%), field operations (3.9%), and court operations (2.8%).

Table 3. Sheriffs' offices and full-time personnel, by size of population served, 1999

Population served	Agencies		Full-time sworn personnel		Full-time civilian personnel	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
All sizes	3,088	100%	185,859	100%	104,848	100%
1,000,000 or more	29	.9%	37,564	20.2%	21,783	20.8%
500,000-999,999	63	2.0	24,022	12.9	18,290	17.4
250,000-499,999	107	3.4	25,016	13.5	15,393	14.7
100,000-249,999	293	9.5	37,286	20.1	17,866	17.0
50,000-99,999	389	12.6	23,191	12.5	10,843	10.3
25,000-49,999	606	19.6	19,304	10.4	9,922	9.5
10,000-24,999	892	28.9	14,885	8.0	7,771	7.4
Under 10,000	709	23.0	4,590	2.5	2,980	2.8

Note: Sworn employees are those with general arrest powers.
Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

Table 4. Average number of employees in sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

Population served	Average number of employees					
	Full-time			Part-time		
	Total	Sworn	Civilian	Total	Sworn	Civilian
All sizes	94	60	34	6	3	3
1,000,000 or more	2,017	1,276	740	30	11	19
500,000-999,999	675	383	292	27	5	22
250,000-499,999	377	234	144	23	11	13
100,000-249,999	188	127	61	13	5	8
50,000-99,999	87	60	28	7	4	3
25,000-49,999	48	32	16	6	4	2
10,000-24,999	25	17	9	3	2	2
Under 10,000	11	6	4	2	1	1

Note: Sworn employees are those with general arrest powers.
Detail may not add to total because of rounding.
--Less than 0.5.

Table 5. Officers assigned to respond to citizen calls for service in sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

Population served	Full-time sworn personnel assigned to respond to citizen calls for service*	
	Number	Percent
All sizes	66,495	36%
1,000,000 or more	8,064	21%
500,000-999,999	7,122	30
250,000-499,999	7,646	31
100,000-249,999	12,523	34
50,000-99,999	9,836	42
25,000-49,999	9,695	50
10,000-24,999	8,266	56
Under 10,000	3,344	73

*Includes all uniformed officers whose regularly assigned duties included responding to citizen calls for service.

Table 6. Job function category of full-time employees in sheriffs' offices, 1999

Job function category	Percent of full-time employees	
	Sworn	Civilian
Total	100%	100%
Administration	5.7%	6.9%
Field operations	49.3	3.9
Technical support	3.7	28.4
Jail operations	31.2	56.5
Court operations	9.8	2.8
Other	0.3	1.4

Note: Sworn employees are those with general arrest powers. Percent calculations based on agencies with 10 or more full-time sworn or civilian employees.

Table 7. Authorized full-time strength of sheriffs' offices and percent of authorized strength employed, by size of population served, 1999

| Population served | Full-time employees | | | |
| | Sworn | | Civilian | |
	Authorized	Percent employed	Authorized	Percent employed
All sizes	189,215	98.2%	108,946	96.2%
1,000,000 or more	38,822	96.8%	22,795	95.6%
500,000-999,999	24,672	97.4	19,661	93.0
250,000-499,999	25,559	97.9	15,962	96.4
100,000-249,999	37,935	98.3	18,577	96.2
50,000-99,999	23,531	98.6	11,060	98.0
25,000-49,999	19,227	100.4	10,048	98.7
10,000-24,999	15,013	99.1	7,887	98.5
Under 10,000	4,454	103.1	2,955	100.8

Note: Sworn employees are those with general arrest powers.

Table 8. Use of sworn reserve/auxiliary officers and nonsworn community service officers/police service aides by sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

| Population served | Reserve or auxiliary sworn officers | | | Community service officers or police service aides | | |
| | | Average number | | | Average number | |
	Percent using	Full-time	Part-time	Percent using	Full-time	Part-time
All sizes	54%	5	14	8%	7	17
1,000,000 or more	74%	19	161	31%	80	289
500,000-999,999	59	28	57	34	14	5
250,000-499,999	63	19	25	29	8	9
100,000-249,999	61	5	24	8	6	38
50,000-99,999	57	7	14	5	4	1
25,000-49,999	56	4	13	8	1	2
10,000-24,999	55	4	5	4	3	1
Under 10,000	44	2	3	8	2	1

As of June 30, 1999, sheriffs' offices collectively employed about 98% of the maximum number of sworn personnel authorized by their budgets, and 96% of their authorized civilian employee strength (table 7). Actual-to-authorized ratios for sworn personnel were highest in jurisdictions with fewer than 10,000 residents, and lowest in those with 1 million or more residents. For nonsworn employees, agencies serving fewer than 10,000 residents had the highest ratio, and those serving 500,000 to 999,999 residents, the lowest.

Some sheriffs' offices partly offset officer shortages through the use of supplemental personnel such as sworn reserve or auxiliary officers. As of June 30, 1999, 54% of agencies were using reserve or auxiliary sworn officers, with an average of 5 full-time and 14 part-time officers each (table 8).

Some agencies utilized nonsworn volunteers such as community service officers or police service aides. As of June 30, 1999, 8% were using community service officers or police service aides, with an average of 7 full-time and 17 part-time each. About a sixth of agencies used other types of nonsworn volunteers, with an average of 68 part-time volunteers each.

Nationwide, sheriffs' offices had an estimated 8,847 full-time reserve officers and 22,654 part-time reserve officers (not shown in table). They also had about 5,800 community service officers and police service aides with about 30% of these working full-time. Agencies utilized an additional 36,000 nonsworn volunteers, with nearly all working part-time.

Operations

Stations and substations

As of June 30, 1999, sheriffs' offices operated an estimated 1,639 district or precinct stations and 1,915 neighborhood or community substations that were separate from headquarters

(table 9). More than two-thirds of the agencies serving 1 million or more residents had district or precinct stations, as did about half of those serving 100,000 to 999,999 residents. About a half of the sheriffs' offices serving a population of 100,000 or more operated community substations.

Among agencies operating such facilities, the average number of district or precinct stations ranged from 8 in jurisdictions with 1 million or more residents to 1 in those with fewer than 25,000 residents. For substations, the average number operated ranged from 8 in jurisdictions with 1 million or more residents to 2 in those with fewer than 25,000 residents.

Table 9. Stations and substations operated by sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

Population served	Agencies operating facilities separate from headquarters					
	District/precinct stations			Community substations		
	Percent operating	Number		Percent operating	Number	
		Total	Average		Total	Average
All sizes	26%	1,639	2	20%	1,915	3
1,000,000 or more	70%	168	8	55%	132	8
500,000-999,999	54	130	4	42	179	7
250,000-499,999	48	166	3	53	254	4
100,000-249,999	45	368	3	49	497	3
50,000-99,999	27	163	2	27	268	3
25,000-49,999	25	272	2	19	294	3
10,000-24,999	22	251	1	11	195	2
Under 10,000	16	119	1	9	95	2

Patrol and response

Nearly all (97%) sheriffs' offices used automobiles for routine patrol during 1999. By population category, the percent with routine auto patrol ranged from 99% of those serving fewer than 50,000 residents to about 80% of those serving a population of 500,000 or more (table 10).

About a fifth of agencies used foot (21%) or marine (19%) patrol units on a routine basis, including more than a third of those serving a population of 1 million or more. Agencies with routine foot patrol employed 30% of all sworn personnel, and those with routine marine patrol, 44%.

Smaller percentages of agencies used bicycle (9%), motorcycle (6%), or horse (3%) patrol on a routine basis. Nearly half of the agencies serving 250,000 or more residents used routine bicycle patrol, and about half of those serving a population of 1 million or more used motorcycle units on a routine basis.

Agencies using routine bicycle patrol employed 32% of all sworn personnel, those with motorcycle patrol, 35%, and those with horse patrol, 10%.

From 1997 to 1999, the percent of sheriffs' offices using foot or bicycle patrol on a routine basis increased in all population categories. In jurisdictions with 500,000 or more residents, the increase was from 41% to 55%; in those with 100,000 to 499,999 residents; from 22% to 34%; in those with 25,000 to 99,999 residents, from 18% to 24%; and in those with fewer than 25,000 residents, from 19% to 23%.

Thirty-eight percent of agencies used foot patrol for special events only. Horse (14%) and marine (9%) units were the next most likely to be used exclusively during special events, followed by bicycle (6%), motorcycle (4%), and automobile (1%) units.

Table 10. Types of patrol used on a routine basis by sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

Population served	Percent of agencies using each type of patrol on a routine basis					
	Auto-mobile	Foot	Marine	Bicycle	Motor-cycle	Horse
All sizes	97%	21%	19%	9%	6%	3%
1,000,000 or more	82%	35%	42%	48%	49%	21%
500,000-999,999	79	27	29	44	32	8
250,000-499,999	84	23	37	41	27	9
100,000-249,999	98	22	36	20	11	4
50,000-99,999	95	18	31	14	9	3
25,000-49,999	99	18	20	8	4	3
10,000-24,999	99	18	11	1	1	2
Under 10,000	99	28	9	3	2	1

Percent of sheriffs' offices using foot or bicycle patrol units on a routine basis, by size of population served, 1997 and 1999
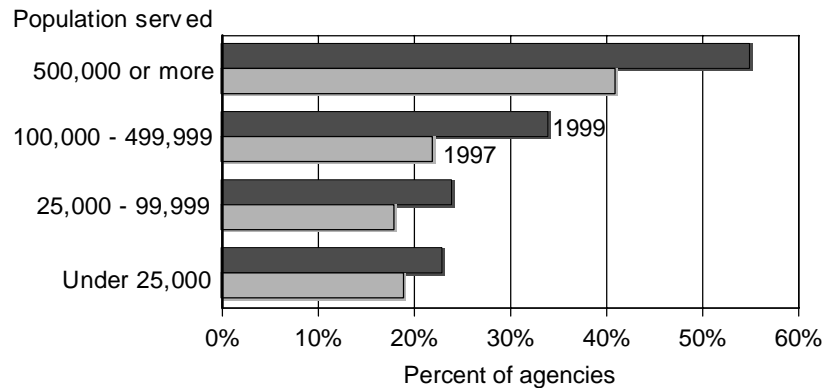
Figure 2

Dispatch

More than two-thirds (70%) of sheriffs' offices had primary responsibility for dispatching citizen calls for service (table 11). These agencies employed 71% of all sworn personnel. A majority of the agencies in each population category performed dispatch services, including about three-fourths of those serving fewer than 25,000 residents.

Table 11. Dispatch functions of sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

Population served	Percent of agencies dispatching calls for service
All sizes	70%
1,000,000 or more	63%
500,000-999,999	56
250,000-499,999	59
100,000-249,999	61
50,000-99,999	58
25,000-49,999	69
10,000-24,999	74
Under 10,000	77

Table 12. Participation in a 9-1-1 emergency telephone system by sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

Population served	Percent of agencies participating in 9-1-1 system		
	Total	Enhanced	Basic
All sizes	88%	65%	22%
1,000,000 or more	70%	66%	4%
500,000-999,999	72	65	7
250,000-499,999	84	74	10
100,000-249,999	92	83	9
50,000-99,999	97	80	16
25,000-49,999	92	79	12
10,000-24,999	87	62	26
Under 10,000	80	41	39

Note: Participation is defined as the ability to dispatch a unit as a result of a call to 9-1-1. Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

Sheriffs' offices participating in a 9-1-1 emergency telephone system, 1990, 1993, 1997, and 1999

Figure 3

9-1-1 emergency telephone system

In 1999, 88% of sheriffs' offices, employing 90% of all sworn personnel, participated in an emergency telephone system whereby one of their units could be dispatched as a result of a call to 9-1-1 or its equivalent (table 12). More than 90% of the agencies serving a population of 25,000 to 249,999 residents more were 9-1-1 participants.

Three-fourths of sheriffs' office 9-1-1 systems were enhanced, capable of pinpointing the location of a caller automatically. More than 60% of the agencies in each population category of 10,000 or more had enhanced 9-1-1.

From 1990 to 1999 the percentage of sheriffs' offices with 9-1-1 more than doubled, from 42% to 88% (figure 3). During this time, the percentage of agencies with enhanced 9-1-1 system increased from 11% to 65%. From 1997 to 1999 alone, the proportion of sheriffs' offices with enhanced 9-1-1 increased from about half to about two-thirds.

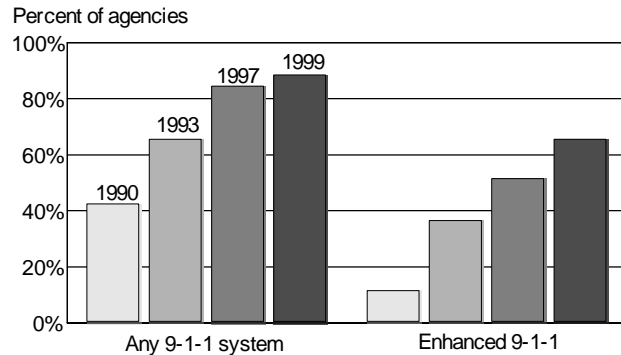In 1999, 79% of sheriffs' deputies were employed by an agency with enhanced 9-1-1 compared to 36% in 1990.

Crime investigation

Overall, 92% of sheriffs' offices conducted investigations of at least some types of crimes. Eighty-nine percent had investigative responsibility for violent crimes such as rape, robbery, or assault (table 13). This included more than 90% of those serving a population of 10,000 to 99,999. Eighty-six percent of agencies handled homicide investigations, including about 9 in 10 agencies serving 10,000 to 99,999 residents.

Ninety percent of sheriffs' offices were responsible for investigating property crimes such as burglary, larceny, or motor vehicle theft. More than 90% of agencies serving 10,000 to 99,999 residents handled such investigations.

Seventy-two percent of all agencies were responsible for arson investigations, with those serving 25,000 to 99,999 residents (78%) the most likely to handle such crimes.

Forty percent of agencies were responsible for investigating environmental crimes. No more than 44% of the agencies in any population category handled such investigations.

Forty-two percent of agencies had primary responsibility for computer-related crime investigations. This included a majority of those serving a population of 50,000 or more.

Table 13. Crime investigation functions of sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

Population served	Percent of agencies with primary responsibility for investigating:					
	Violent crimes		Property crimes		Environmental crimes	Computer crimes
	Homicide	Other[a]	Arson	Other[b]		
All sizes	86%	89%	72%	90%	40%	42%
1,000,000 or more	66%	70%	45%	74%	41%	55%
500,000-999,999	61	61	49	63	39	52
250,000-499,999	68	69	55	72	29	52
100,000-249,999	80	85	75	86	33	54
50,000-99,999	90	93	78	92	36	52
25,000-49,999	92	95	78	94	44	44
10,000-24,999	92	94	69	95	41	36
Under 10,000	81	84	71	87	44	36

[a]Includes rape, robbery, and assault.
[b]Includes burglary, larceny/theft, and motor vehicle theft.

Investigative support functions

About 3 in 8 sheriffs' offices were responsible for fingerprint processing (table 14). This included more than half of the agencies serving a population of 100,000 or more.

About 1 in 10 agencies provided crime lab services, ranging from 38% of those serving 1 million or more residents, to about 5% of those serving fewer than 50,000 residents.

Just 4% of sheriffs' offices had ballistics testing responsibilities, although nearly a third of those serving a population of 1 million or more did.

Court-related functions

Nearly all sheriffs' offices had responsibility for executing arrest warrants (98%), serving civil process (98%), and providing court security (94%) (table 15). Agencies serving a population of 1 million or more were somewhat less likely to handle these duties than agencies in other jurisdictions.

Sheriffs' offices responsible for executing arrest warrants employed 94% of all sworn personnel, those serving civil process, 93%, and those providing court security, 92%.

Table 14. Investigative support functions of sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

| Population served | Percent of agencies with primary responsibility for: | | |
	Fingerprint processing	Crime lab services	Ballistics testing
All sizes	37%	9%	4%
1,000,000 or more	66%	38%	31%
500,000-999,999	59	24	15
250,000-499,999	63	34	18
100,000-249,999	51	20	7
50,000-99,999	41	11	4
25,000-49,999	36	4	2
10,000-24,999	29	6	2
Under 10,000	31	4	3

Detention facilities

An estimated 78% of sheriffs' offices, employing 88% of all sworn personnel, operated at least one jail during 1999 (table 16). At least 64% of the agencies in each population category operated a jail, including 85% of those serving a population of 25,000 to 99,999.

As of June 1999, there were approximately 606,000 inmates in local jails. Most of these inmates were in jails operated by sheriffs, and sheriffs' offices had an estimated 112,000 full-time employees assigned to jail-related duties. About half of these employees were sworn personnel and half civilian employees.

Nineteen percent of sheriffs' offices, employing 34% of all sworn personnel, operated a temporary holding (lockup) facility for overnight detention that was separate from a jail. The percentage of agencies with a temporary lockup was highest in jurisdictions with a population of 1 million or more (47%).

Agencies in the largest jurisdictions were also the most likely (64%) to have temporary holding cells not used for overnight detention. Less than half of the agencies in each of the other population categories had them. Overall, 31% of agencies, employing 49% of all officers, had this type of holding cell.

Table 15. Court-related functions of sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

| Population served | Percent of agencies with primary responsibility to: | | |
	Execute arrest warrants	Provide court security	Serve civil process
All sizes	98%	94%	98%
1,000,000 or more	82%	75%	76%
500,000-999,999	95	93	89
250,000-499,999	96	95	99
100,000-249,999	93	92	98
50,000-99,999	98	95	97
25,000-49,999	99	93	100
10,000-24,999	99	94	98
Under 10,000	99	95	98

Table 16. Detention facilities of sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

| Population served | Percent of agencies operating: | | |
	Jail	Lockup[a]	Holding cell[b]
All sizes	78%	19%	31%
1,000,000 or more	81%	47%	64%
500,000-999,999	65	26	45
250,000-499,999	75	19	40
100,000-249,999	77	17	35
50,000-99,999	85	24	36
25,000-49,999	85	17	23
10,000-24,999	82	19	35
Under 10,000	64	18	25

[a]Temporary holding facility for overnight detention that is separate from a jail.
[b]Not for overnight detention.

Traffic and vehicle-related functions

About 8 in 10 sheriffs' offices were responsible for enforcing traffic laws, 7 in 10 for investigating traffic accidents, and 6 in 10 for traffic direction and control (table 17). Agencies serving fewer than 250,000 residents were the most likely to have traffic and vehicle-related enforcement duties.

About a third of sheriffs' offices had parking enforcement duties, including about half of those serving a population of 1 million or more. A fifth of agencies had responsibilities related to school crossing services, and a similar proportion handled commercial vehicle enforcement.

Special operations functions

Just over half (56%) of sheriffs' offices, employing about two-thirds (66%) of all sworn personnel, had responsibility for search and rescue operations (table 18). At least 47% of the agencies in each population category handled this function.

Thirty-eight percent of sheriffs' offices performed tactical operations, commonly associated with SWAT (Special Weapons and Tactics) teams. These agencies employed 67% of all sheriffs'

officers. A majority of the agencies in each population category of agencies serving 50,000 or more residents, and half of those serving 25,000 to 49,999, were responsible for tactical operations.

An estimated 28% of all agencies, employing 50% of all sworn personnel, were responsible for underwater recovery operations. This included nearly half of the agencies serving 100,000 or more residents.

Bomb disposal was handled by 8% of sheriffs' offices, employing 36% of all sworn personnel. More than 1/3 of the agencies serving 250,000 or more residents handled this function compared to less than 1/10 of those serving fewer than 100,000 residents.

Special public safety functions

About a third of sheriffs' offices were responsible for animal control services (table 19). This included nearly half of those serving fewer than 10,000 residents. Agencies handling animal control employed 20% of all sworn personnel.

Other special public safety functions handled by sheriffs' offices included civil defense (23%), emergency medical services (13%), and fire services (10%). Agencies performing civil defense functions employed 15% of all officers, those handling emergency medical services, 11%, and those providing fire services, 4%.

Table 17. Traffic and vehicle-related functions of sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

| Population served | Percent of agencies with primary responsibility for: | | | | | |
	Enforce-ment of traffic laws	Accident investi-gation	Traffic direction and control	Parking enforce-ment	School crossing services	Commercial vehicle enforcement
All sizes	81%	72%	58%	34%	20%	21%
1,000,000 or more	67%	56%	49%	53%	10%	42%
500,000-999,999	67	54	46	44	16	26
250,000-499,999	69	57	50	42	24	22
100,000-249,999	77	61	62	32	20	17
50,000-99,999	85	70	57	31	23	22
25,000-49,999	85	75	58	31	16	21
10,000-24,999	75	68	57	28	16	13
Under 10,000	89	84	63	46	26	30

Table 18. Special operations functions of sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

| Population served | Percent of agencies with primary responsibility for: | | | |
	Bomb disposal	Search and rescue	Tactical operations (SWAT)	Under-water recovery
All sizes	8%	56%	38%	28%
1,000,000 or more	45%	56%	67%	49%
500,000-999,999	40	47	74	46
250,000-499,999	34	64	65	42
100,000-249,999	23	58	57	44
50,000-99,999	8	58	52	38
25,000-49,999	3	56	50	34
10,000-24,999	2	55	25	21
Under 10,000	5	56	19	13

Table 19. Special public safety functions of sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

| Population served | Percent of agencies with primary responsibility for: | | | |
	Animal control	Civil defense	Emergency medical services	Fire services
All sizes	34%	23%	13%	10%
1,000,000 or more	11%	11%	7%	0%
500,000-999,999	10	13	5	0
250,000-499,999	23	15	11	3
100,000-249,999	25	18	4	2
50,000-99,999	32	24	8	1
25,000-49,999	32	16	11	8
10,000-24,999	33	18	12	10
Under 10,000	47	37	24	23

Table 20. Sheriffs' offices with a community policing plan, by size of population served, 1999

Population served	Percent of agencies with a community policing plan		
	Total	Formal, written	Informal, unwritten
All sizes	62%	12%	50%
1,000,000 or more	70%	38%	32%
500,000-999,999	68	26	42
250,000-499,999	63	41	22
100,000-249,999	69	13	56
50,000-99,999	65	19	47
25,000-49,999	68	13	55
10,000-24,999	62	10	52
Under 10,000	52	5	47

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

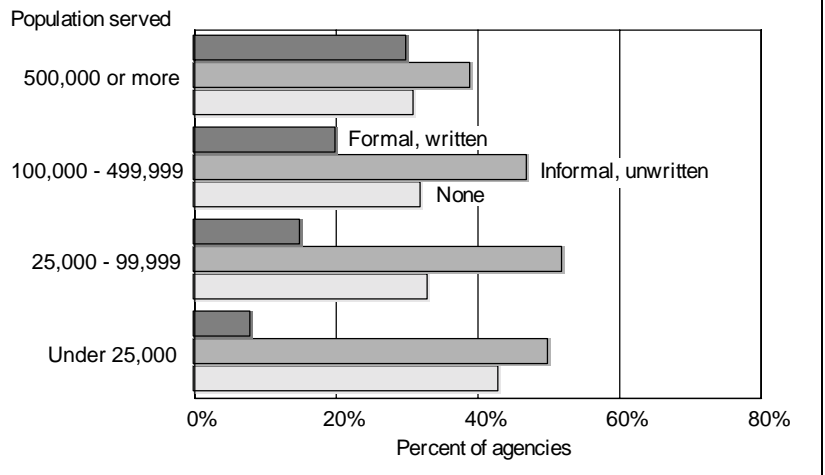Community policing plans of sheriffs' offices, 1999

Figure 4

Community policing

Community policing is a philosophy that promotes and supports organizational strategies to address the causes of crime and to reduce the fear of crime and social disorder. These strategies use problem-solving techniques and community partnerships. A fundamental shift from traditional reactive policing, community policing stresses the prevention of crime. Community policing supports and empowers front-line officers, decentralizes command, and encourages innovative problem solving. (See *Community Policing in Local Police Departments, 1997 and 1999*, BJS Special Report, February 2001, NCJ 184794.)

In 1999, 12% of sheriffs' offices, employing 33% of all sworn personnel, had a formal, written community policing plan (table 20). The percentage of agencies with a formal, written plan was highest among those serving 250,000 or more residents. Just 5% of the sheriffs' offices serving fewer than 10,000 residents, typically the most rural jurisdictions, had a formal, written community policing plan.

In jurisdictions with 500,000 residents or more, about as many sheriffs' offices had a formal, written plan as

had no plan at all (figure 4). In all population categories, a majority of sheriffs' offices had either a formal, written community policing plan or an informal, unwritten plan. Overall, 75% of all sworn personnel worked for an agency with some type of community policing plan.

Community policing training

During the 2-year period ending June 30, 1999, 54% of sheriffs' offices, employing 68% of all sworn personnel, trained at least some of their new officer recruits in community policing skills such as problem-solving and developing community partnerships (table 21).

Thirty-six percent of agencies, employing 51% of all sworn personnel, trained all new recruits in community policing. More than half of the sheriffs' offices serving 250,000 or more residents trained all recruits, compared to about a fourth of those serving a population of less than 10,000.

Sixty-one percent of agencies, employing 72% of all sworn personnel, trained at least some in-service officers during the 2-year period. Eighteen percent of agencies, employing 19% of all sworn personnel, trained all in-service officers in community policing.

Table 21. Community policing training for new officer recruits and in-service officers in sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

Population served	Percent of agencies with community policing training*					
	New officer recruits			In-service sworn personnel		
	Total	All	Some	Total	All	Some
All sizes	54%	36%	18%	61%	18%	43%
1,000,000 or more	63%	56%	7%	66%	28%	38%
500,000-999,999	63	54	8	60	16	44
250,000-499,999	70	55	14	68	23	46
100,000-249,999	69	47	22	64	14	50
50,000-99,999	60	38	22	69	14	55
25,000-49,999	62	38	24	67	19	48
10,000-24,999	53	37	16	60	18	42
Under 10,000	37	24	13	50	20	30

Note: Detail may not add to total because of rounding.
*Eight or more hours during the 2-year period ending June 30, 1999.

Community policing personnel

Overall, 60% of sheriffs' offices, employing 73% of all sworn personnel, had full-time deputies serving as community policing officers, community resource officers, community relations officers, or otherwise regularly engaged in community policing activities (table 22). As of June 30, 1999, an estimated 15,443, or 8%, of all sworn personnel served in this capacity.

The proportion of sheriffs' offices with full-time community policing officers ranged from nearly three-fourths of those serving 500,000 or more residents, to just over half of those serving a population of less than 10,000. Among agencies using them, the average number of community policing officers ranged from 137 in jurisdictions with 1 million or more residents, to 4 in those with a population of less than 25,000.

In jurisdictions with fewer than 10,000 residents, 30% of full-time sworn personnel were designated as community policing officers, twice as many as in the next highest category (figure 5). Less than 10% of the officers in each population category of 50,000 or more were so designated.

Percent of sworn personnel in sheriffs' offices designated as community policing officers, by size of population served, 1999
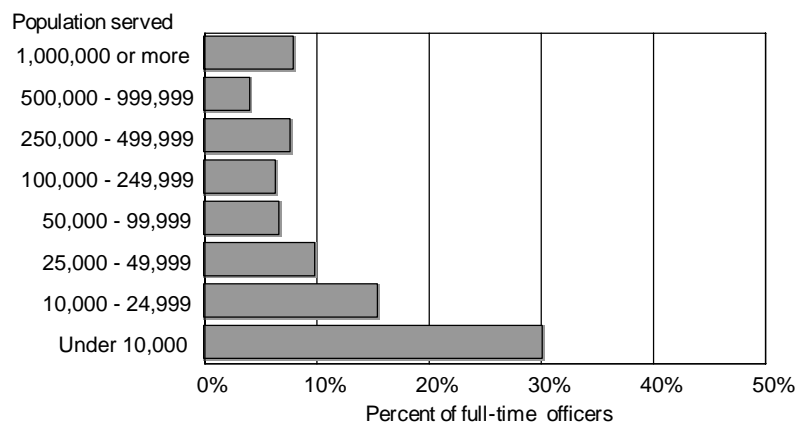

Figure 5

Thirty-eight percent of sheriffs' offices, employing 60% of all sworn personnel, had full-time school resource officers during 1999 (table 23). A majority of the agencies serving 100,000 or more residents had school resource officers, as did about two-fifths of those serving a population of 10,000 to 99,999.

These officers use a community policing approach to provide a safe environment for students and staff. In addition to handling calls for service within the school, they work closely with school administrators and staff to prevent crime and disorder by monitoring crime trends, problem areas, cultural conflicts, and other areas of concern.

As of June 30, 1999, sheriffs' offices had an estimated 3,447 full-time sworn personnel assigned as school resource officers. Among agencies using them, the average number of school resource officers ranged from 9 in agencies serving a population of 1 million or more, to 2 in those serving fewer than 50,000 residents.

Table 22. Community policing officers in sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

| Population served | Full-time community policing officers | | |
	Percent of agencies using	Total number of officers	Average number of officers*
All sizes	60%	15,443	8
1,000,000 or more	74%	3,004	137
500,000-999,999	72	990	22
250,000-499,999	69	1,915	26
100,000-249,999	65	2,371	12
50,000-99,999	57	1,558	7
25,000-49,999	62	1,912	5
10,000-24,999	60	2,306	4
Under 10,000	55	1,388	4

*Excludes agencies that did not employ any full-time sworn community policing officers.

Table 23. School resource officers in sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

| Population served | Full-time school resource officers | | |
	Percent of agencies using	Total number of officers	Average number of officers*
All sizes	38%	3,447	3
1,000,000 or more	67%	184	9
500,000-999,999	51	254	8
250,000-499,999	52	403	7
100,000-249,999	53	676	4
50,000-99,999	43	524	3
25,000-49,999	38	471	2
10,000-24,999	38	642	2
Under 10,000	23	292	2

*Excludes agencies that did not employ any full-time sworn school resource officers.

Community-oriented policies and programs

Fifty-six percent of sheriffs' offices, employing 73% of all sworn personnel, gave patrol officers responsibility for specific geographic areas or beats during 1999 (table 24). This included about two-thirds of the agencies serving a population of 25,000 or more.

Seventeen percent of agencies, employing 48% of all sworn personnel, assigned cases to investigators by geographic area. This included about half of those serving a population of 1 million or more, and about two-fifths of those serving a population of 250,000 to 999,999.

Twenty-two percent of sheriffs' offices, employing 41% of all sworn personnel, actively encouraged patrol officers to become involved in problem-solving projects. More than two-fifths of the agencies serving a population of 250,000 or more had such a policy.

Fifteen percent of agencies, employing 27% of all sworn personnel, included problem-solving projects in the performance evaluation criteria for patrol officers. This included about a fourth of the agencies serving a population of 250,000 or more.

Table 24. Community-oriented policies for sworn personnel in sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

| Population served | Geographic assignments | | Patrol officer problem-solving projects | |
	Patrol officers	Investigators	Actively encouraged	Included in evaluation
All sizes	56%	17%	22%	15%
1,000,000 or more	64%	52%	45%	21%
500,000-999,999	63	42	40	28
250,000-499,999	62	41	46	23
100,000-249,999	71	34	30	20
50,000-99,999	69	24	21	17
25,000-49,999	61	16	20	18
10,000-24,999	53	12	21	14
Under 10,000	38	7	17	9

During the 2-year period ending June 30, 1999, 25% of sheriffs' offices, employing 45% of all sworn personnel, formed partnerships with community groups, local agencies, or others through written agreements (table 25). This included about half of the agencies serving a population of 1 million or more, and about two-fifths of those serving 100,000 to 999,999 residents.

Twenty-six percent of agencies, employing 48% of all sworn personnel, offered training to citizens on community policing topics such as community mobilization and problem-solving. About half of those serving 1 million or more residents offered such training, as did more than two-fifths of those serving 100,000 or 999,999 residents.

Eighty-six percent of agencies, employing 94% of all officers, regularly met with community groups during the 2-year period ending June 30, 1999. The percent of agencies holding regular meetings ranged from 77% of those serving fewer than 10,000 residents to 93% of those serving 50,000 to 99,999 residents.

An estimated 84% of sworn personnel worked for a sheriffs' office that regularly met with school groups and 75% for one that met with neighborhood associations (figure 6). The percentages for other types of groups were: senior citizen (67%), domestic violence (66%), business (63%), youth service (53%), religious (51%), and tenant (39%).

Table 25. Community policing activities of sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

| Population served | Percent of agencies engaging in community policing activities | | |
	Community group meetings[a]	Problem-solving partnership[b]	Citizen training[b]
All sizes	86%	25%	26%
1,000,000 or more	88%	49%	52%
500,000-999,999	88	42	41
250,000-499,999	90	40	44
100,000-249,999	88	38	43
50,000-99,999	93	26	32
25,000-49,999	90	29	29
10,000-24,999	86	20	22
Under 10,000	77	19	14

[a]During 1-year period ending June 30, 1999.
[b]During 2-year period ending June 30, 1999.

Percent of sworn personnel employed by a sheriff's office that met regularly with citizen groups to discuss crime-related problems, 1999
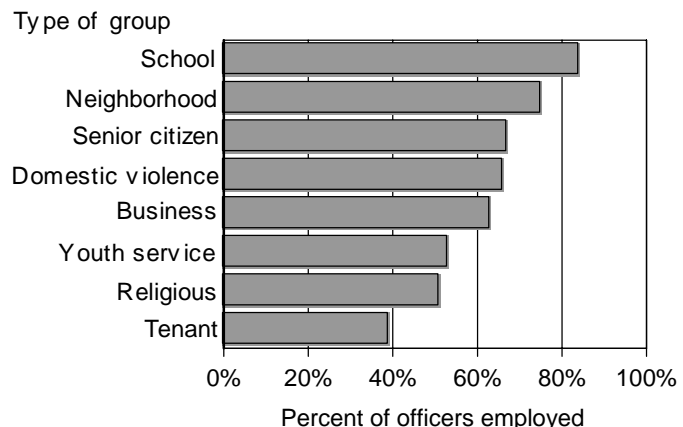

Figure 6

Citizen surveys

Twenty-two percent of sheriffs' offices, employing 39% of all sworn personnel, surveyed citizens in their jurisdiction during the year ending June 30, 1999 (table 26). This included about two-fifths of the agencies serving a population of 250,000 or more.

Eighteen percent of agencies, employing 35% of sworn personnel, surveyed citizens' about their satisfaction with the services provided by the sheriffs' office. Fifteen percent of agencies, employing 29% of all sworn personnel, surveyed citizens regarding their perception of crime problems. Seven percent of agencies, employing 15% of sworn personnel, surveyed citizens about their personal crime experiences.

A majority of the agencies conducting surveys used the data to provide information to patrol officers (72%), evaluate program effectiveness (59%), or prioritize crime-related problems (57%) (figure 7). About half used the information for allocating resources to targeted areas (50%), training officers (48%), or formulating policy and procedures (44%). A fifth used it to redistrict beats or reporting areas.

Citizen access to crime statistics

Seventy-five percent of sheriffs' offices, employing 84% of all sworn personnel, provided citizens with routine access to crime statistics or crime maps (table 27). This included more than 80% of the agencies serving a population of 25,000 to 249,999.

Agencies were most likely to provide access to statistics at the county or city level (69% of agencies employing 77% of all officers). An estimated 15% of agencies, employing 27% of all sworn personnel, provided access to statistics by neighborhood. Smaller percentages made crime statistics available at the level of patrol beat (9%), district or precinct (9%), or street or block (7%).

Table 26. Surveying of citizens by sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

Population served	Percent of agencies that surveyed citizens during 12-month period ending June 30, 1999 regarding:			
	Any topic	Satisfaction with services	Perceptions of crime problems	Personal crime experiences
All sizes	22%	18%	15%	7%
1,000,000 or more	40%	28%	29%	18%
500,000-999,999	41	38	34	23
250,000-499,999	41	39	30	23
100,000-249,999	34	31	26	10
50,000-99,999	19	15	11	7
25,000-49,999	25	19	16	8
10,000-24,999	21	17	11	4
Under 10,000	15	8	12	5

Purposes for which sheriffs' offices used information collected in citizen surveys, 1999
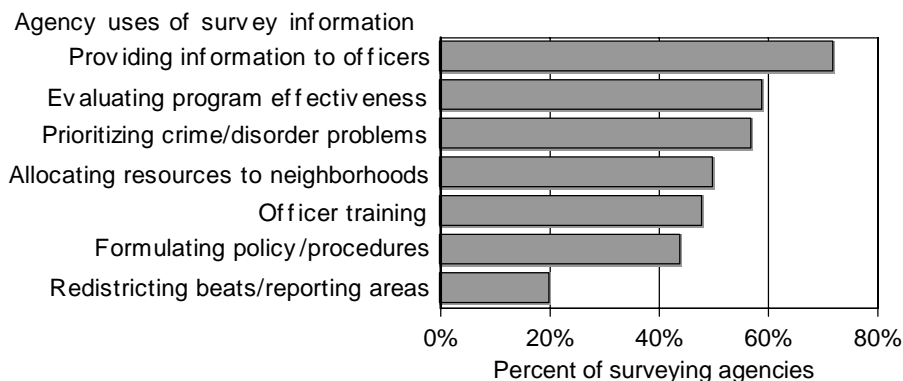

Figure 7

Table 27. Sheriffs' offices providing citizens with routine access to crime statistics or crime maps, by size of population served, 1999

Population served	Percent of agencies providing citizens with routine access to crime statistics or crime maps by:					
	Any level	County or city	Neighbor-hood	Patrol beat	District or precinct	Street or block
All sizes	75%	69%	15%	9%	9%	7%
1,000,000 or more	65%	54%	25%	32%	26%	21%
500,000-999,999	65	55	30	26	21	21
250,000-499,999	78	72	25	24	30	26
100,000-249,999	84	78	24	17	16	14
50,000-99,999	80	70	18	11	14	11
25,000-49,999	84	77	17	8	7	6
10,000-24,999	71	67	13	6	6	3
Under 10,000	67	63	8	4	6	3

Note: Neighborhood category includes apartment complexes. Other levels of statistics not included in table were available in some jurisdictions.

Eighty-six percent of the sheriffs' offices that provided citizens with routine access to crime statistics or crime maps made them available to those who inquired in person (figure 8). A majority also provided statistics in response to requests made by telephone (60%) or in writing (57%).

More than two-fifths of agencies routinely published crime statistics in newspapers (49%) or agency reports (41%). Other methods of access included radio (24%), fax (20%), television (16%), the Internet (9%), and newsletter (8%).
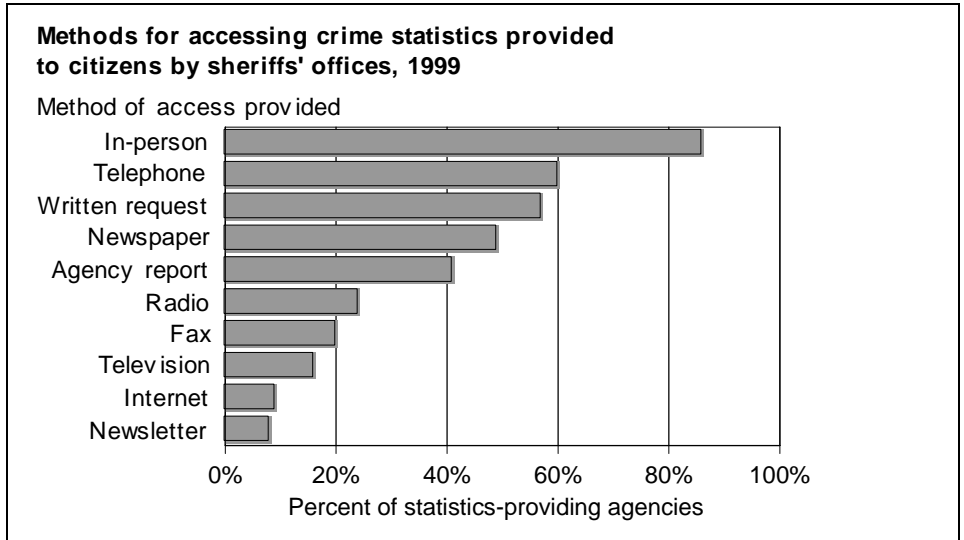
Computers and information systems

Administrative functions

Nearly all sheriffs' offices used computers for administrative purposes during 1999 (table 28). Just 1% of sworn personnel were employed by an agency not using computers.

An estimated 87% of agencies, employing 97% of all sworn personnel, used personal computers (PC's) in 1999. This was an increase over 1997 when 76% of agencies, employing 93% of officers, used them. In 1999 at least 94% of the agencies in each population category of 25,000 or more used PC's.

Forty-one percent of agencies, employing 55% of all sworn personnel, used mainframe computers during 1999. This included a majority of agencies serving a population of 50,000 or more. In 1997, 59% of sheriffs' offices, employing 81% of all sworn personnel, were using mainframes.

Sheriffs' offices stored various types of administrative records in computer files during 1999. Just over half had computerized personnel (54%) and inventory (53%) records (table 29). More than 4 in 5 agencies serving a population of 250,000 or more had computerized personnel files, and

Methods for accessing crime statistics provided to citizens by sheriffs' offices, 1999

Method of access provided

Figure 8

Table 28. Selected types of computers used by sheriffs' offices for administrative functions, by size of population served, 1999

Population served	Percent of agencies using each type of computer:				
	Any type	Personal	Main-frame	Mini	Server
All sizes	95%	87%	41%	16%	58%
1,000,000 or more	96%	96%	67%	38%	89%
500,000-999,999	98	100	67	47	87
250,000-499,999	99	99	56	34	80
100,000-249,999	100	96	51	27	78
50,000-99,999	100	94	57	30	72
25,000-49,999	98	94	49	11	69
10,000-24,999	93	80	34	13	52
Under 10,000	91	79	26	6	34

Table 29. Administrative records stored in a computerized format by sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

Population served	Percent of agencies with computerized files on:		
	Inventory	Payroll	Personnel
All sizes	53%	38%	54%
1,000,000 or more	81%	85%	89%
500,000-999,999	79	79	81
250,000-499,999	66	84	83
100,000-249,999	76	64	69
50,000-99,999	64	54	75
25,000-49,999	51	38	59
10,000-24,999	45	27	48
Under 10,000	41	17	31

about 4 in 5 agencies serving 500,000 or more residents had computerized inventory records. Agencies with computerized personnel records employed 82% of all sworn personnel, and those with computerized inventory records, 77%.

Thirty-eight percent of sheriffs' offices, employing 74% of all sworn personnel, had computerized payroll records. This included a majority of agencies serving 50,000 or more residents and about four-fifths of those serving a population of 250,000 or more.

Table 30. Sheriffs' offices using computer-aided dispatch, by size of population of served, 1999	
Population served	Percent of agencies
All sizes	52%
1,000,000 or more	93%
500,000-999,999	87
250,000-499,999	77
100,000-249,999	80
50,000-99,999	61
25,000-49,999	62
10,000-24,999	46
Under 10,000	32

Note: Table excludes agencies not responsible for providing dispatch services.

Percent of sheriffs' office dispatch systems that were computerized, by size of population served, 1990 and 1999

Figure 9

Computer-aided dispatch

Among the estimated 2,146 sheriffs' offices with responsibility for dispatching calls for service during 1999 (see table 11), about 52% used computer-aided dispatch systems (table 30). This included about 9 in 10 agencies serving a population of 500,000 or more, about 8 in 10 agencies serving a population of 100,000 to 499,999, and about 6 in 10 serving 25,000 to 99,999 residents.

The percentage of sheriffs' office dispatch systems that were computerized increased significantly from 1990 to 1999. For example, among those agencies that performed dispatch functions and served 500,000 or more residents, the percent with computer-aided dispatch rose from 51% to 89% (figure 9).

Among agencies serving 100,000 to 499,999 residents, the percentage with computerized dispatch increased from 40% in 1990 to 79% in 1999; among those serving 25,000 to 99,999 residents, from 23% to 61%; and in jurisdictions with a population of less than 25,000, the percentage of dispatch systems that were computerized increased from 9% to 40%.
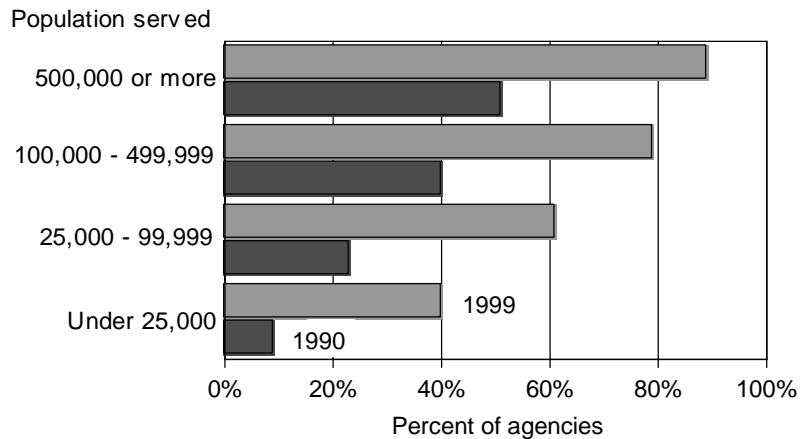
Offender and suspect records

Seventy-eight percent of sheriffs' offices had computerized arrest and warrant records in 1999 (table 31). About 9 in 10 agencies serving a population of 25,000 to 499,999 had computerized arrest records, and about 9 in 10 serving a population of 25,000 to 999,999 had computerized warrant files.

Sixty percent of sheriffs' offices had computerized criminal history information, and 49% had computerized summons records. About 4 in 5 agencies serving a population of 100,000 or more had computerized criminal history files. About two-thirds of those serving 50,000 to 249,999 residents had computerized summons information.

From 1990 to 1999 the percentage of sheriffs' offices with computerized information on arrests, criminal histories, warrants, and summonses increased substantially. Accordingly, the percentage of sworn personnel employed by an agency storing these types of records in a computerized format also increased.

Table 31. Offender and suspect records stored in a computerized format by sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

Population served	Percent of agencies with computerized files on:			
	Arrests	Criminal histories	Summonses	Warrants
All sizes	78%	60%	49%	78%
1,000,000 or more	77%	76%	29%	77%
500,000-999,999	79	79	56	91
250,000-499,999	85	80	55	98
100,000-249,999	88	79	68	88
50,000-99,999	92	64	68	96
25,000-49,999	92	68	59	84
10,000-24,999	76	58	45	74
Under 10,000	57	39	28	59

Percent of sworn personnel employed by a sheriffs' office with computerized offender and suspect information, 1990 and 1999
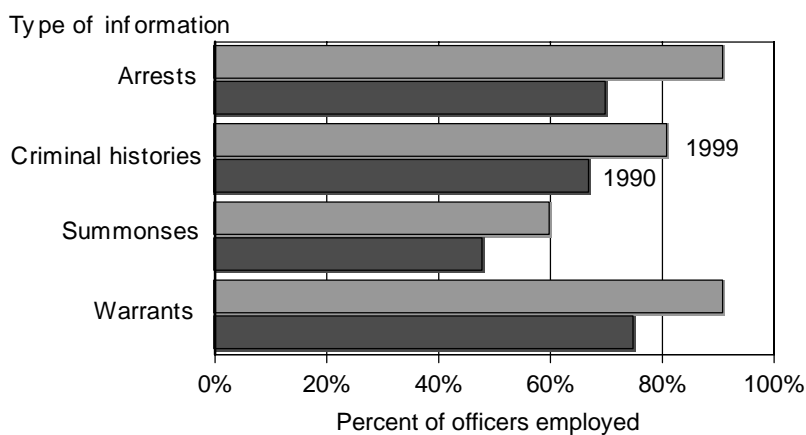
Type of information

Figure 10

The percentage of officers employed by an agency with computerized arrest records increased from 70% in 1990 to 91% in 1999 (figure 10). Similar increases in the use of computerized files were observed for information pertaining to warrants (from 75% in 1990 to 91% in 1999), criminal histories (from 67% to 81%), and summonses (from 48% to 60%).

Investigations

More than half (54%) of sheriffs' offices used computers for criminal investigation purposes other than word processing during 1999 (table 32).

This included at least 65% of the agencies in each population category of 25,000 or more.

Agencies using computers for criminal investigation purposes employed 77% of all sworn personnel in 1999. In 1990, 35% of agencies, employing 66% of all sworn personnel, were using computers for criminal investigations.

Most sheriffs' offices maintained various types of computerized information related to the investigative process. For example, 77% of them, employing 87% of all sworn personnel, had computer files pertaining to incident reports (table 33). This

included nearly 9 in 10 serving 25,000 to 249,999 residents.

Sixty-nine percent of agencies, employing 68% of all sworn personnel, stored incident report narratives in a computerized format. This included more than three-fourths of the agencies serving a population of 25,000 to 99,999.

Nearly two-thirds (64%) of agencies had computerized information on stolen property other than vehicles. This included about three-fourths of the agencies serving a population of 25,000 to 249,999. Agencies with computer files on stolen property employed 79% of all sworn personnel.

About half (49%) of agencies, employing nearly three-fourths (72%) of all sworn personnel, had computer files containing evidence information. This included a majority of those serving 25,000 or more residents, and about two-thirds of those serving 50,000 to 499,999 residents.

About a third (35%) of agencies, employing just over half (54%) of all sworn personnel, had computer files containing field interview information. This included about a half of the sheriffs' offices serving a population of 50,000 or more.

Table 32. Sheriffs' offices using computers for criminal investigations, by size of population served, 1999

Population served	Percent of agencies
All sizes	54%
1,000,000 or more	80%
500,000-999,999	67
250,000-499,999	82
100,000-249,999	71
50,000-99,999	65
25,000-49,999	66
10,000-24,999	45
Under 10,000	36

Table 33. Investigative records stored in a computerized format by sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

	Percent of agencies with computerized files on:				
Population served	Evidence	Field interviews	Incident reports	Incident report narratives	Stolen property
All sizes	49%	35%	77%	69%	64%
1,000,000 or more	53%	50%	62%	47%	58%
500,000-999,999	55	46	76	60	59
250,000-499,999	72	51	79	68	65
100,000-249,999	68	48	87	66	72
50,000-99,999	67	49	90	78	73
25,000-49,999	53	33	85	76	76
10,000-24,999	42	31	73	68	65
Under 10,000	30	25	63	60	47

Traffic and vehicle-related records

In 1999 an estimated 59% of sheriffs' offices had computer files containing information on stolen vehicles (table 34). This included 70% of those serving a population of 25,000 to 99,999. Agencies with such information employed 74% of all sworn personnel.

Nearly half of all agencies had computerized information on traffic citations (47%), including a majority of those serving 25,000 or more residents. About 2 in 5 agencies had computer files with information on traffic accidents (41%) and driver's licenses (40%).

Agencies with computer files on traffic citations employed 66% of all sworn personnel, those with computerized traffic accident files, 59%, and those with computerized driver's license information, 51%.

About a third of agencies had computer files containing information on traffic stops (32%) and vehicle registration (31%). About half (52%) of all sworn personnel worked for an agency that had computer records on traffic stops, and about two-fifths (42%) for an agency with computerized vehicle registration information.

Table 34. Traffic and vehicle-related records stored in a computerized format by sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

Population served	Percent of agencies with computerized files on:					
	Driver's licenses	Stolen vehicles	Traffic accidents	Traffic citations	Traffic stops	Vehicle registration
All sizes	40%	59%	41%	47%	32%	31%
1,000,000 or more	47%	54%	57%	57%	47%	40%
500,000-999,999	40	59	44	55	38	47
250,000-499,999	37	59	44	56	46	30
100,000-249,999	51	66	42	57	46	37
50,000-99,999	41	70	57	66	45	41
25,000-49,999	40	70	46	52	30	27
10,000-24,999	41	57	38	42	31	30
Under 10,000	34	44	31	31	19	27

Crime and calls for service records

Overall, 59% of sheriffs' offices, employing 80% of all sworn personnel, had computerized information on calls for service (table 35). This included more than two-thirds of the agencies serving 25,000 or more residents.

Fifty-three percent of agencies, employing 66% of all sworn personnel, had computerized incident-based crime data. This included about two-thirds of the agencies serving a population of 50,000 to 249,999.

Forty-four percent of agencies, employing 51% of all sworn personnel, had computerized files related to the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program's National Incident-Based Reporting System. More than half (55%) of agencies, employing nearly three-fourths (71%) of all sworn personnel, had summary UCR files.

About two-fifths of agencies, employing about two-thirds of all sworn personnel, had computerized alarm records. A majority of agencies serving a population of 50,000 or more had alarm-related computer files.

Crime analysis and crime mapping

In 1999, 39% of agencies, employing 66% of all sworn personnel, used computers for crime analysis (table 36). A majority of the agencies serving 50,000 or more residents used computers for this function. A fourth of all agencies, employing about half (49%) of all sworn personnel, maintained linked files for crime analysis purposes.

Related to crime analysis efforts in sheriffs' offices is the use of crime

Table 35. Records of crimes and calls for service stored in a computerized format by sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

Population served	Percent of agencies with computerized files on:				
	Alarms	Calls for service	Incident-based crime data	Uniform Crime Reports-NIBRS*	Uniform Crime Reports-Summary
All sizes	41%	59%	53%	44%	55%
1,000,000 or more	58%	73%	50%	47%	65%
500,000-999,999	55	65	53	40	50
250,000-499,999	66	76	60	42	57
100,000-249,999	63	72	64	41	60
50,000-99,999	58	77	67	53	70
25,000-49,999	46	70	57	45	59
10,000-24,999	35	55	50	47	56
Under 10,000	21	36	40	35	38

*National Incident-Based Reporting System.

Table 36. Use of computers for crime analysis and crime mapping by sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

Population served	Percent of agencies		
	Using computers for:		With linked files for crime analysis
	Crime analysis	Crime mapping	
All sizes	39%	36%	25%
1,000,000 or more	65%	73%	53%
500,000-999,999	58	46	33
250,000-499,999	62	55	37
100,000-249,999	57	46	41
50,000-99,999	55	50	38
25,000-49,999	48	40	23
10,000-24,999	29	31	22
Under 10,000	21	21	13

Table 37. Use of computers for Internet purposes by sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

Population served	Percent of agencies with:	
	Internet access	Internet home page
All sizes	61%	22%
1,000,000 or more	84%	73%
500,000-999,999	74	66
250,000-499,999	87	66
100,000-249,999	83	51
50,000-99,999	76	37
25,000-49,999	65	20
10,000-24,999	50	8
Under 10,000	49	9

Table 38. Types of in-field computers or terminals used by sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

	Percent of agencies using in-field computers or terminal							
			Car-mounted			Hand-held		
Population served	Any type	Laptop computer	Either type	Com-puter	Ter-minal	Either type	Com-puter	Ter-minal
All sizes	27%	23%	8%	3%	6%	1%	--	
1,000,000 or more	63%	45%	49%	14%	42%	10%	4%	7%
500,000-999,999	74	48	46	16	37	10	5	5
250,000-499,999	69	58	47	25	27	5	3	3
100,000-249,999	46	35	20	7	14	--	0	--
50,000-99,999	40	34	16	6	10	1	0	1
25,000-49,999	24	20	5	0	5	--	--	--
10,000-24,999	17	16	--	--	0	0	0	0
Under 10,000	15	15	0	0	0	0	0	0

--Less than 0.5%.

mapping. In 1999, 36% of all agencies, employing 60% of all officers, used computers for this purpose. This included 73% of the agencies serving 1 million or more residents.

Internet

In 1999, 22% of sheriffs' offices, employing 59% of all sworn personnel, had an Internet home page (table 37). This included a majority of the agencies serving 100,000 or more residents, and represented an increase over 1997 when 13% of agencies, employing 48% of sworn personnel, had a home page.

About three-fifths (61%) of agencies, employing 82% of sworn personnel, used computers for Internet access during 1999. This included about four-fifths of the agencies serving 50,000 or more residents.

Use of computers in the field

About two-thirds of sheriffs' offices serving 250,000 or more residents used in-field computers or terminals during 1999 (table 38). Overall, 27% of agencies, employing 58% of all sworn personnel, used them. Laptops were the type most commonly used with 23% of agencies, employing 48% of sworn personnel, using them.

About 1 in 12 agencies used car-mounted computers (3%) or terminals (6%). This included about half of the

agencies serving a population of 250,000 or more. Agencies using car-mounted terminals or computers employed 38% of all sworn personnel.

Just 1% of agencies used portable hand-held computers or terminals. Agencies serving a population of 500,000 or more (10%) were the most likely to use them. Overall, 5% of sworn personnel were employed by an agency that used them.

Nationwide, sheriffs' offices had 15 in-field computers or terminals per 100 officers as of June 30, 1999. Those serving 250,000 or more residents had the highest ratio, more than 20 per 100 (figure 11). The next highest ratio, 11 per 100, was among agencies serving

100,000 to 249,999 residents. The lowest ratio, 3 per 100, was in agencies serving 10,000 to 24,999 residents.

In 1990, 6% of sheriffs' offices, employing 28% of all sworn personnel, were using in-field computers or terminals. Since then significant growth in their use has occurred in all population categories (see cover graph).

Among agencies serving 500,000 or more residents, in-field computer use went from 43% in 1990 to 70% in 1999; in agencies serving 100,000 to 499,999 residents, from 13% to 52%; in agencies serving 25,000 to 99,999 residents, from 6% to 30%; and in agencies serving fewer than 25,000 residents, from 2% to 16%.
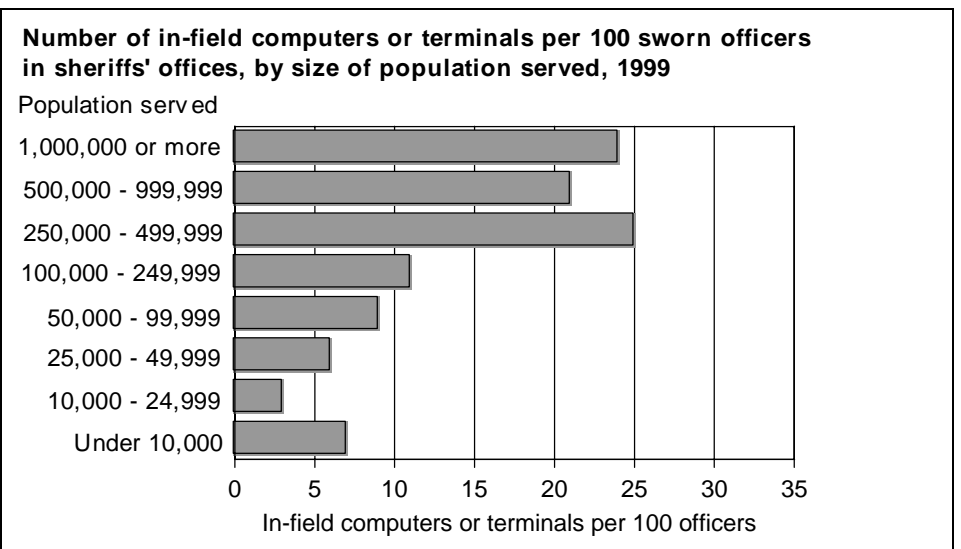
Number of in-field computers or terminals per 100 sworn officers in sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

Figure 11

Table 39. Use of in-field computers for field reports and communications, by sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

| Population served | Percent of agencies using in-field computers/terminals for: | |
	Field reports	Communi-cations
All sizes	18%	15%
1,000,000 or more	47%	44%
500,000-999,999	35	42
250,000-499,999	38	49
100,000-249,999	16	23
50,000-99,999	26	30
25,000-49,999	17	12
10,000-24,999	13	6
Under 10,000	14	8

Table 40. Computerized information accessible to in-field officers of sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

| Population served | Types of information accessible via in-field computer: | | | | | |
	Calls for service histories	Criminal histories	Driving records	Stolen property	Wanted suspects	Wanted vehicles
All sizes	5%	5%	9%	7%	9%	9%
1,000,000 or more	17%	21%	42%	35%	42%	46%
500,000-999,999	26	30	36	30	43	42
250,000-499,999	34	34	51	41	55	50
100,000-249,999	10	11	19	16	21	22
50,000-99,999	8	9	18	14	20	20
25,000-49,999	2	2	5	4	6	6
10,000-24,999	2	2	2	1	2	2
Under 10,000	0	0	0	0	0	0

In 1999, 18% of sheriffs' offices, employing 33% of all sworn personnel, used in-field computers or terminals to produce field reports (table 39). Fifteen percent of agencies, employing 35% of sworn personnel, used them for some in-field communications. Agencies serving 250,000 or more residents were the most likely to use in-field computers for these purposes.

In 9% of sheriffs' offices, at least some patrol officers could use in-field computers or terminals to access information on wanted vehicles, wanted suspects, or driving records (table 40). This included nearly half of the agencies serving 250,000 or more residents.

In 7% of agencies, officers in the field could access information on stolen property. This included about two-fifths of those serving 250,000 to 499,999 residents, and about a third of those serving 500,000 or more residents.

In 5% of agencies, computers or terminals could be used by officers in the field to access criminal histories or information on prior calls for service at a particular location. This included about a third of agencies serving a population of 250,000 to 999,999.

About 3 in 8 sheriffs' officers worked in an agency where information on wanted suspects (37%) was accessible to at

Percent of sworn personnel employed by a sheriff's office in which patrol officers have direct access to information through in-field computers, 1999
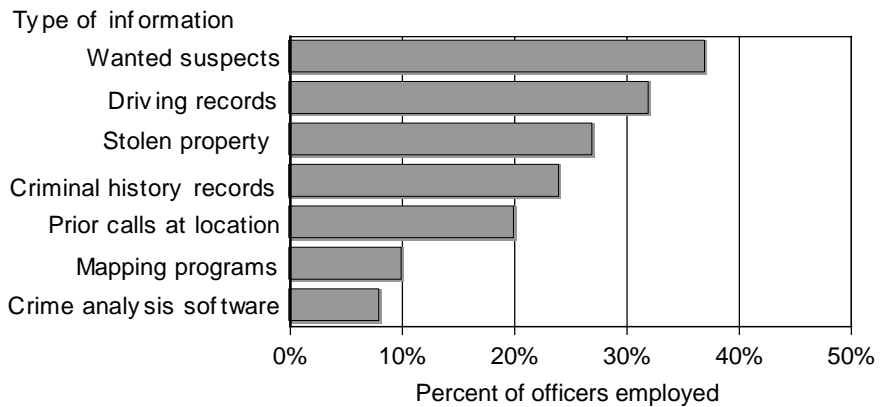
Figure 12

least some patrol officers via in-field computers (figure 12). About a third worked in agencies where information on driving records (32%), and a fourth where information on stolen property (27%) or criminal histories (24%), was accessible. A fifth worked in agencies where in-field officers could access calls for service histories.

In 10% of sheriffs' offices, employing 11% of all officers, computer media or data devices were used to transfer or download crime incident reports to a central information system (table 41). Four percent of agencies, employing 9% of all officers, used telephone or wireless transmissions.

Table 41. Methods for transmitting criminal incident reports to a central information system in sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

| Population served | Percent of agencies using: | | |
	Paper report	Computer/ data device	Phone/ wire-less
All sizes	86%	10%	4%
1,000,000 or more	84%	12%	4%
500,000-999,999	80	2	18
250,000-499,999	86	10	4
100,000-249,999	90	6	4
50,000-99,999	79	16	5
25,000-49,999	86	12	1
10,000-24,999	87	9	4
Under 10,000	87	9	4

Note: Table excludes agencies not conducting criminal incident report transmissions.

Written policies and procedures

Many sheriffs' offices have written policies and procedures to guide officers through their work activities. Eighty-six percent of them had written policies or procedures on dealing with domestic disputes, including 95% of those serving 250,000 to 499,999 residents (table 42).

An estimated 80% of sheriffs' offices had some type of written policy pertaining to discretionary arrest powers, including 94% of those serving 250,000 to 499,999 residents.

About 3 in 4 agencies had written policies or procedures pertaining to the handling of juveniles (78%) and mentally ill persons (71%) (table 43). Nearly a third had written policies or procedures on responding to the homeless (31%).

About 9 in 10 sheriffs' offices had written policies or procedures dealing with the use of deadly force (93%) and nonlethal force (88%) (table 44). All agencies serving 50,000 to 999,999 residents had a written deadly force policy, and all of those serving 250,000 to 499,999 residents had one on the use of nonlethal force.

Ninety-two percent of agencies had a written code of officer conduct and appearance, including all of those serving 500,000 or more residents (table 45). Eighty-two percent had written procedures on how to handle citizen complaints, including more than 90% of those 250,000 or more residents.

Nationwide, nearly all sworn personnel in sheriffs' offices were employed by an agency with written policies or procedures on officer conduct and appearance (98%), use of deadly force (98%), use of nonlethal force (95%), handling of citizen complaints (92%), and handling of domestic disputes (90%) (figure 13).

Table 42. Written policies or procedures on discretionary arrest powers and domestic disputes in sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

| Population served | Percent of agencies | |
	Discretionary arrests	Domestic disputes
All sizes	80%	86%
1,000,000 or more	85%	76%
500,000-999,999	81	88
250,000-499,999	94	95
100,000-249,999	80	86
50,000-99,999	82	92
25,000-49,999	81	89
10,000-24,999	77	85
Under 10,000	78	80

Table 43. Written policies or procedures on handling special populations in sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

| Population served | Percent of agencies | | |
	Homeless persons	Juveniles	Mentally ill persons
All sizes	31%	78%	71%
1,000,000 or more	25%	77%	77%
500,000-999,999	25	69	69
250,000-499,999	29	80	70
100,000-249,999	31	79	74
50,000-99,999	33	81	74
25,000-49,999	24	79	72
10,000-24,999	32	78	70
Under 10,000	35	74	67

Table 44. Written policies or procedures on officer use of force in sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

| Population served | Percent of agencies | |
	Deadly force	Nonlethal force
All sizes	93%	88%
1,000,000 or more	92%	92%
500,000-999,999	100	91
250,000-499,999	100	100
100,000-249,999	100	98
50,000-99,999	100	95
25,000-49,999	97	93
10,000-24,999	92	84
Under 10,000	85	78

Table 45. Written policies or procedures on conduct and appearance, maximum work hours, and handling of citizen complaints in sheriffs' offices, by size of population served, 1999

| Population served | Percent of agencies | | |
	Citizen complaints	Conduct and appearance	Maximum work hours
All sizes	82%	92%	62%
1,000,000 or more	96%	100%	70%
500,000-999,999	91	100	67
250,000-499,999	94	96	71
100,000-249,999	88	98	66
50,000-99,999	90	98	60
25,000-49,999	83	98	59
10,000-24,999	78	87	68
Under 10,000	76	86	56

Percent of sworn personnel employed by a sheriff's office with written policies or procedures, by subject area, 1999
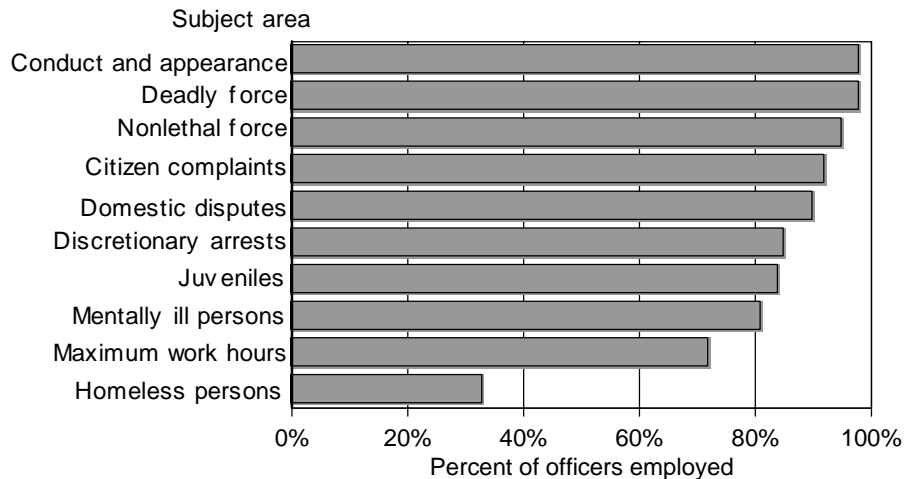

Figure 13

Methodology

The Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics (LEMAS) survey collects data from a nationally representative sample of the approximately 19,000 publicly funded State and local law enforcement agencies in the United States.

This report presents data from the 1999 survey describing sheriffs' offices in terms of their personnel, operations, community policing initiatives, computers and information systems, and written policies and procedures.

The 1999 LEMAS survey questionnaire was mailed to 3,319 State and local law enforcement agencies. The initial mailing of the questionnaire was conducted in June 1999, and, unless otherwise indicated, June 30, 1999, was used as the reference date for survey questions.

Allowing for the exclusion of certain types of special jurisdiction police, 895 law enforcement agencies in the U.S. with 100 or more sworn officers as of June 30, 1996, were included in the sample as self-representing (SR) agencies. This included 529 local police departments, 306 sheriffs' offices, the 49 primary State law enforcement agencies, and 11 special jurisdiction police agencies.

The self-representing (SR) agencies were supplemented by a nationally representative sample of agencies with fewer than 100 sworn officers. These nonself-representing (NSR) agencies were chosen using a stratified random sample with cells based on the type of agency (local police, sheriff, or special police), size of population served, and number of sworn officers. The 2,424 NSR agencies selected included 1,556 local police departments, 694 sheriffs' offices, and 174 special jurisdiction police agencies.

A total of 3,246 agencies responded to the 1999 LEMAS survey for a response rate of 97.8%. This included 883 SR agencies and 2,363 NSR agencies. The final database includes 2,052 local police departments, 967 sheriffs' offices, 178 special jurisdiction police agencies, and the 49 primary State law enforcement agencies.

The base weight for all SR agencies is 1. For NSR sheriffs' offices, the base weight is 4. The final weight associated with every agency, both SR and NSR, is the product of the base weight, a factor that adjusted for changes in the universe since 1996, and a factor that adjusted for any nonresponding agencies in each cell.

Some responding agencies did not fully complete the LEMAS questionnaire. When an agency did not supply a response to an item, median value imputation or ratio imputation was used. Median value imputation uses the median value of an item reported by agencies in the same sample cell. Ratio imputation uses the median value of a ratio reported by agencies in the same sample cell.

Median value imputation was used to impute counts of facilities, reserve sworn officers, community service officers, and nonsworn volunteers. Ratio imputation was used to impute counts of employees and computer equipment. Every imputed item on the database has an indicator that the value has been imputed. Complete documentation regarding sampling procedures and nonresponse adjustments is available upon request.

Because the data from agencies with fewer than 100 sworn personnel were collected from a sample, the results are subject to sampling error. Statements of comparison in this report have been tested to ensure that observed differences between values are significant at 2 standard errors (the 95%-confidence level) or higher. The survey data are also subject to response and processing errors.