

# 2015

# Firearms

## Used in the Commission of Crimes

This report is available online at  
<http://oag.ca.gov/publications#crime>

Division of Law Enforcement  
Bureau of Forensic Services  
(916) 322-6185



**KAMALA D. HARRIS**  
**ATTORNEY GENERAL**

## Table of Contents

Purpose .....	2
Scope .....	2
Firearm Types .....	2
Crimes of Violence Other than Homicide .....	3
Homicides .....	4
Street Gang Crimes .....	4
Drug Trafficking Crimes .....	4
Special Cases .....	5
California Assault Weapons by Year .....	6

California Penal Code section 34200<sup>1</sup> requires that the Attorney General provide the Legislature on or before April 15 of each year a written report on the specific types of firearms used in the commission of crimes based upon information obtained from state and local crime laboratories. The report shall include all of the following information regarding crimes in which firearms were used:

- (a) A description of the relative occurrence of firearms most frequently used in the commission of violent crimes, distinguishing whether the firearms used were handguns, rifles, shotguns, assault weapons, or other related types of weapons.
- (b) A description of specific types of firearms that are used in homicides or street gang and drug trafficking crimes.
- (c) The frequency with which stolen firearms were used in the commission of the crimes.
- (d) The frequency with which fully-automatic firearms were used in the commission of the crimes.
- (e) Any trends of importance such as those involving specialized ammunition or firearms modifications, such as conversion to a fully-automatic weapon, removal of serial number, shortening of barrel, or use of a suppressor.

The Department of Justice (DOJ) produces this annual report based on data obtained from state and local crime laboratories. The 2015 annual report only includes data from DOJ crime laboratories and therefore focuses on crimes committed in rural areas of California. Data from major cities, including those crime laboratories that serve the urban and heavily populated areas of California, are not included in this report.

During 2015, data collected from DOJ's Bureau of Forensic Services (BFS) crime laboratories revealed that 96 of the 426 completed examinations involved firearms that are qualified for inclusion in this report. Small inconsistencies in data totals are artifacts of automatic data extraction and data that may fit multiple categories.

---

<sup>1</sup> Previously California Penal Code section 12039

## Purpose

This report is prepared by the California Department of Justice, Bureau of Forensic Services (BFS), for the Legislature as directed by California Penal Code section 34200. The report details specific types of firearms used in the commission of various crimes.

## Scope

This report includes firearms examined during 2015 in the BFS regional criminalistics laboratories.

Because BFS principally serves the rural areas of California, the data in this report may not represent gun-use trends within urban areas or within California as a whole.

## Firearm Types (Figures 1 and 2)

The 96 qualifying firearms examined during the reporting period included 81 handguns (84.4 percent), 11 rifles (11.5 percent), two shotguns (2.1 percent), and two fully-automatic firearms (2.1 percent). Six firearms (6.3 percent) were assault weapons (as defined in Penal Code §§ 30510 and 30515) and one firearm (1 percent) was classified as a short-barreled shotgun or rifle. The most commonly encountered calibers were 9 mm Luger and 40 S&W, followed by 22 rimfire and .45 ACP (see Figure 2).

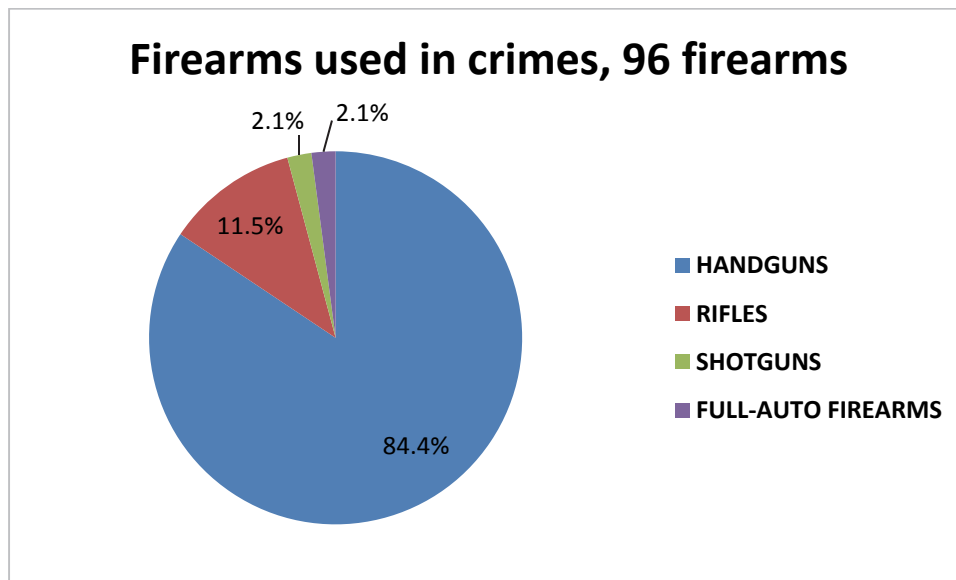
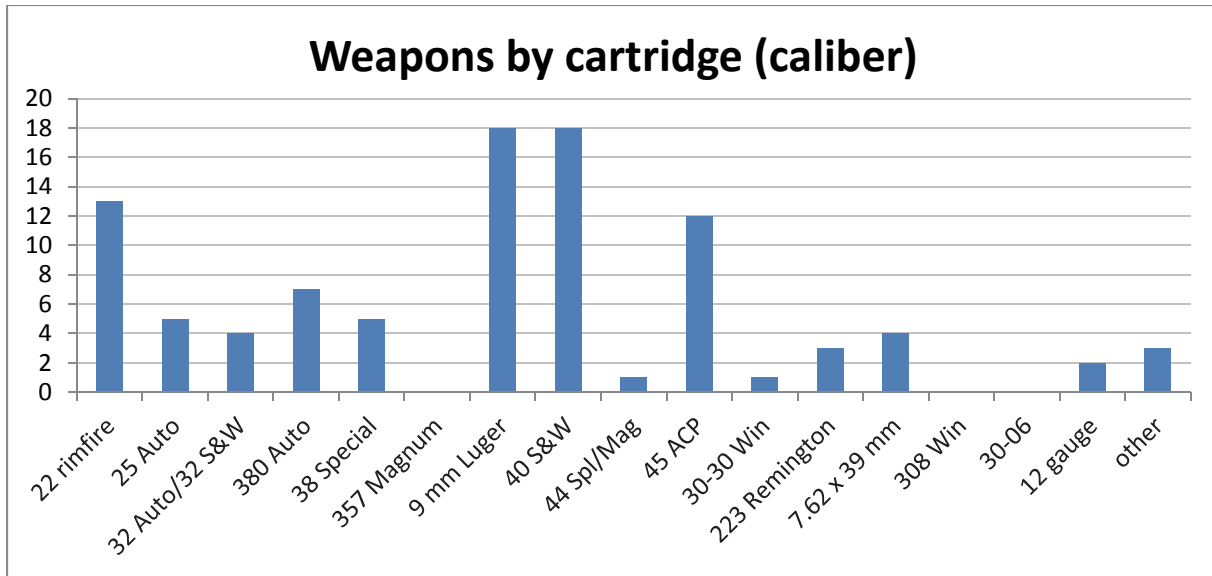


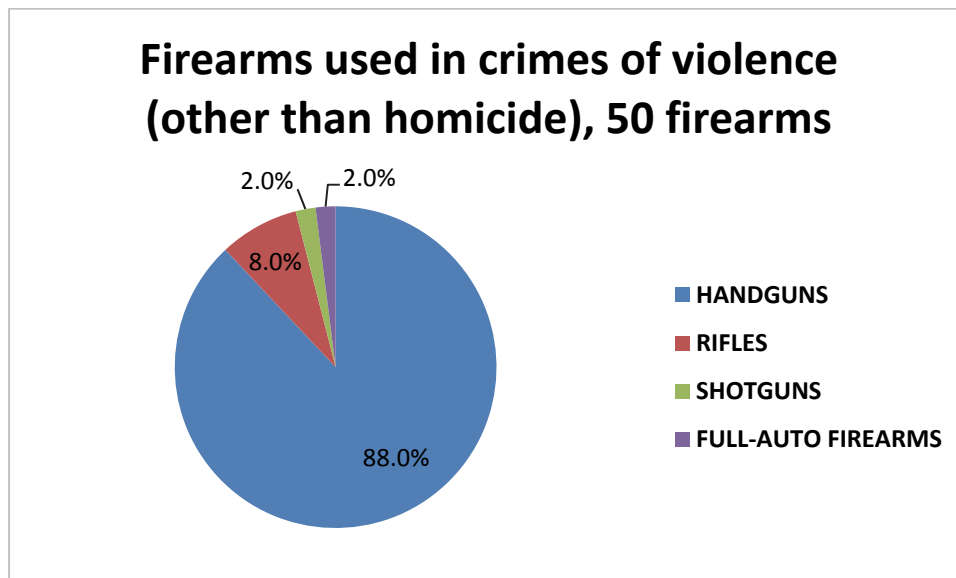
Figure 1



**Figure 2**

### Crimes of Violence other than Homicide (Figure 3)

Fifty of the firearms examined were submitted in cases involving crimes of violence other than homicide. These 50 firearms included 44 handguns (88.0 percent), four rifles (8.0 percent), one shotgun (2.0 percent) and one fully-automatic firearm (2.0 percent).



**Figure 3**

## Homicides (Figure 4)

The 30 firearms that were submitted in homicide cases included 22 handguns (73.3 percent), seven rifles (23.3 percent), and one shotgun (3.3 percent). There were no fully-automatic firearms linked to homicides.

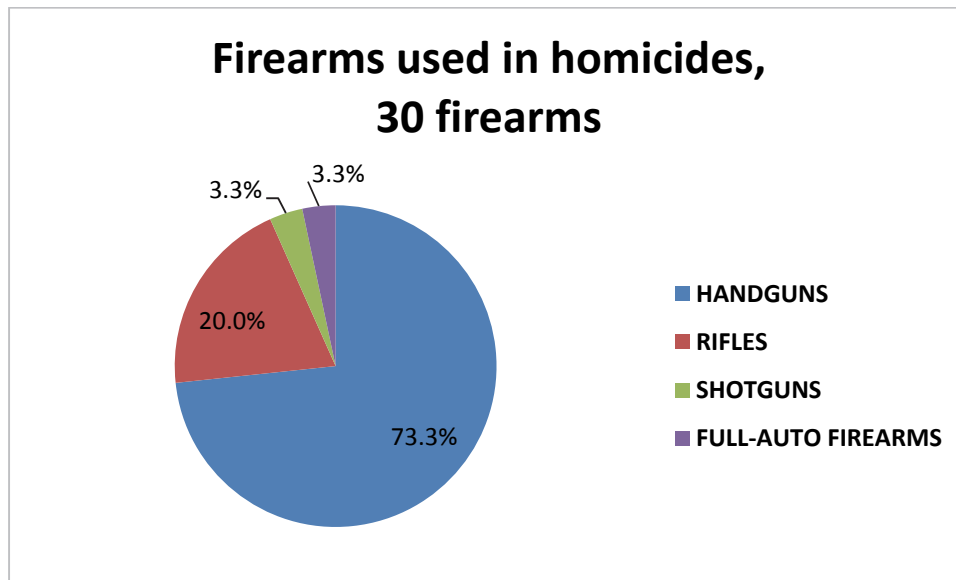


Figure 4

## Street Gang Crimes

No firearms were identified as being related to street gang crimes.

## Drug Trafficking Crimes

One firearm (approximately one percent of the total), a rifle, was identified as being used in a drug trafficking crime.

## **Special Cases**

### **California Assault Weapons**

Six of the firearms examined in 2015 were identified as California Assault Weapons (as defined in Penal Code §§ 30510 and 30515) (see Figure 5).

### **Stolen Firearms**

One of the firearms examined was confirmed to have been reported stolen. Ownership status was not determined for many of the firearms examined.

### **Serial Numbers Removed**

Seven firearms were submitted with the serial numbers removed.

### **Fully-Automatic Firearms (Machine Guns, Submachine Guns or Fully-Automatic Conversions)**

Two fully-automatic firearms were examined this year.

### **Short Barreled Shotguns or Rifles**

One of the examined firearms was classified as a short-barreled or short overall-length shotgun or rifle.

### **Officer-Involved Shooting Incidents**

Seven firearms identified as being related to officer-involved shooting incidents were five handguns, one rifle and one fully-automatic firearm.

### **Suppressors**

No firearms equipped with suppressors (silencers) were examined this year.

### **No unusual ammunition**

There were no reported examinations of armor piercing, exploding, frangible, Glazer-type, incendiary or tracer ammunition.

## California Assault Weapons by Year (Figure 5)

California assault weapon use has remained at a relatively low proportion of total firearm use since this annual report was commenced in 1998.

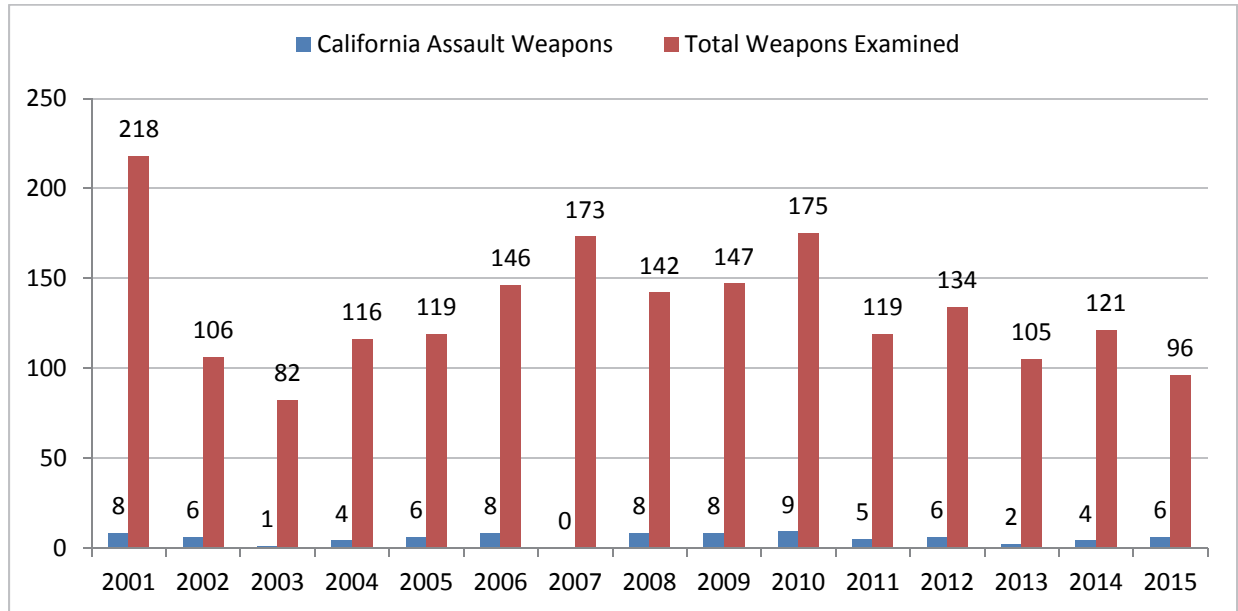


Figure 5