



GHANA PUBLIC SAFETY AND CRIME REPORT - 2021

Authorized for release

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HIGHLIGHTS

1. Violent crimes reported in Y2021 increased by 40.8%, and reported associated deaths also increased by 53.7% over Y2020. The top three most reported violent crimes in Y2021 are murder/manslaughter, armed robbery, and aggravated assault.
2. Greater Accra and Ashanti Regions reported the highest incidents of armed robberies in the country, with each region returning 19% of reported armed robbery in 2021.
3. Ashanti Region is the murder capital of the country, returning 23% of all homicide cases reported across the country in 2021.
4. Central Region dominated reported aggravated assault cases across the country by returning 23% of all aggravated assault cases reported for the period.
5. Firearm use in the commission of reported violent crime has increased for the third year running increasing in Y2021 by 57.6% over Y2020.
6. 74% of reported armed robbery cases involved the use of firearms, while 20% of homicide (murder/manslaughter) involved the use of firearms. ¹
7. 42% of reported homicide cases were executed using machetes/knives or sharp-edged tools. ²
8. 78.6% of the top three violent crimes occurred outside of the places of abode/homes of victims. Places/locations where these violent crimes were commonly reported to have occurred include roads and highways, offices, business/trade spaces, places of worship, and other transitional spaces. Less than 10% of armed robbery incidents occurred within the abode/homes of victims, and 30% of homicides (murder/manslaughter) were reported to have occurred within places familiar to victims such as homes and neighborhoods.
9. All aspects (i.e., cases, deaths and injuries) of transportation increased as compared to Y2020, and the trend at the end of December 2021 was on the upward trajectory.

¹ Only reported armed robbery events where type of weapon used was identified and/or mentioned

² Only reported homicide events where type of weapons used was identified and/or mentioned

- Reported cases/events of road traffic crashes (RTCs) increased by 23.1%, deaths and injuries reported in connection with RTCs increased by 28.8% and 11.0% respectively.
10. 67% of reported victims to homicide cases (murder/manslaughter) were males, and 79% of reported perpetrators were males.
 11. Reported police arrest efforts for the period increased from 470 in Y2020 to 610 reported arrests in 2021, representing a 29.8% increase in efforts. This also is the highest number of reported arrests since 2018.
 12. Reported spontaneous mob actions targeted at police stations, State facilities, and political events/players dominated civil disturbance events, constituting 37.5% of all reported civil disturbances for the 2021 period.
 13. Associated deaths or deaths arising from police arrest efforts also increased significantly by 75%, from 92 deaths in 2020 to 191 deaths in 2021.

Conclusions:

The data indicate that violent crimes such as armed robbery and homicide cases occurred more frequently on our roads and highways, offices, shops, places of worship, places of entertainment, and other transitional spaces than in homes. Efforts to educate the public about situational awareness and dangers in transitional spaces, and community policing cannot be over-emphasized. State-mounted CCTV cameras should be deployed, and footage occasionally released to the public to promote awareness and serve as a deterrent to would-be criminals.

The National Road Safety Authority Regulation must lead efforts to improve the road experience in Ghana. The continual rise in road traffic crashes and fatalities in the last decade can be halted. Regulations on speeding, the whole regime of driver licensing, training, and retraining are low-hanging fruits that are yet to be harnessed.

Mob actions against community Police stations and posts are becoming a worrying phenomenon. The Police administration must take deliberate steps to build police-community relations in order to stop the trend or at least reduce the incidence of mob actions on Police stations; as such attacks does not only endanger lives of serving officers but also property at the cost of the tax payer.

BACKGROUND

The Ghana Public Safety and Crime Report (BPS WATCH) broadly categorizes public safety issues into ten categories (index) namely Crime, Violent Crime, Fires/Industrial (Workplace) related incidents, Transportation related incidents, Civil Disturbances, Police Officer Casualties, Police Brutalities, Police Arrests, Natural Disasters and General Incidents. It also takes into consideration the casualties that occur under each case by recording injuries and deaths (casualties index) where they arise.

The report comprises data collected for a period, including weekends and public holidays. It involved 36,960 minutes (616 hours) of scouting, capturing, logging and validating stories reported across ten online portals associated with major television and radio stations in Ghana, and operating under the authority and guidelines of the National Media Commission (NMC) of Ghana. The report contains an overview of reported crime and public safety issues across Ghana. It highlights deaths and injuries arising out of ten monitored categories of public safety and crime issues. Depicting with bar and pie charts, the report presents aspects of the data by regions, gender, and types.

The Ghana Public Safety and Crime Report provides data on trend of public safety and crime occurrence across Ghana, with the aim of informing the general public, policy and law enforcement interventions towards predicting, preventing and building safer communities.

The report does not lend itself to public safety and crimes directly lodged or reported at any State Agency or captured by any State Agency for purposes of obtaining/providing service(s), justice, gathering data or monitoring public safety threats and/or issues. Therefore, data gathered by this project may vary from what government official sources report from time to time. Definition of terminologies may differ from what state agencies subscribe to. Refer to 2017/2018 Report at <https://ghanasafety.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/BPS-Watch-Report.pdf> for definitions of terminologies. Furthermore, casualty counts reported in using descriptive terms such as “dozens, scores, hundredths, etc.” are logged as single (1) casualties until a specific number is reported and confirmed by official sources within a 72-hour validation window.

VIOLENT CRIME

Violent crimes are generally crimes involving “*the use of physical force so as to injure, abuse, damage, or destroy*”. Thus, crime events reported involving the use of force, or threats to use force against another in violation of a criminal law prohibiting it or ordering it as the case may be are captured under violent crime.

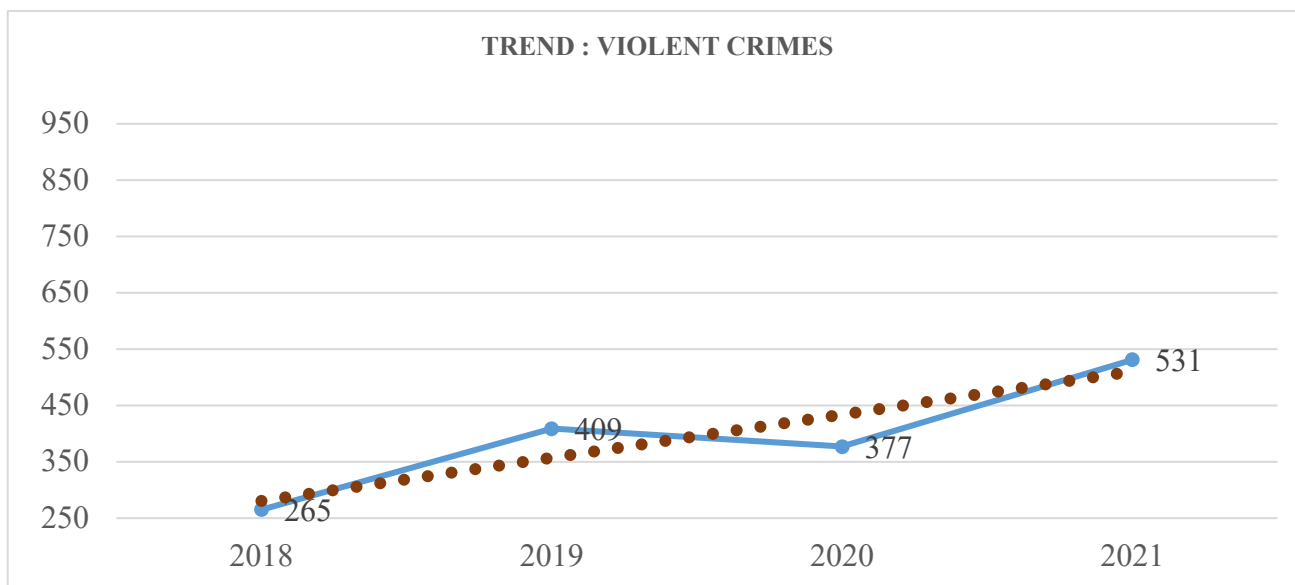


Figure 1

Violent crime has been on the rise since 2018 when record started. This includes murder and non-negligent manslaughter, sexual assault, armed robbery, and aggravated assault. Reported violent crimes increased by 40.8% from 2020 to 2021. Deaths associated with violent crimes also increased by 53.7%. In Figure 2 below the top three violent crimes reported in 2021 were murder/manslaughter, armed robber and aggravated assaults.

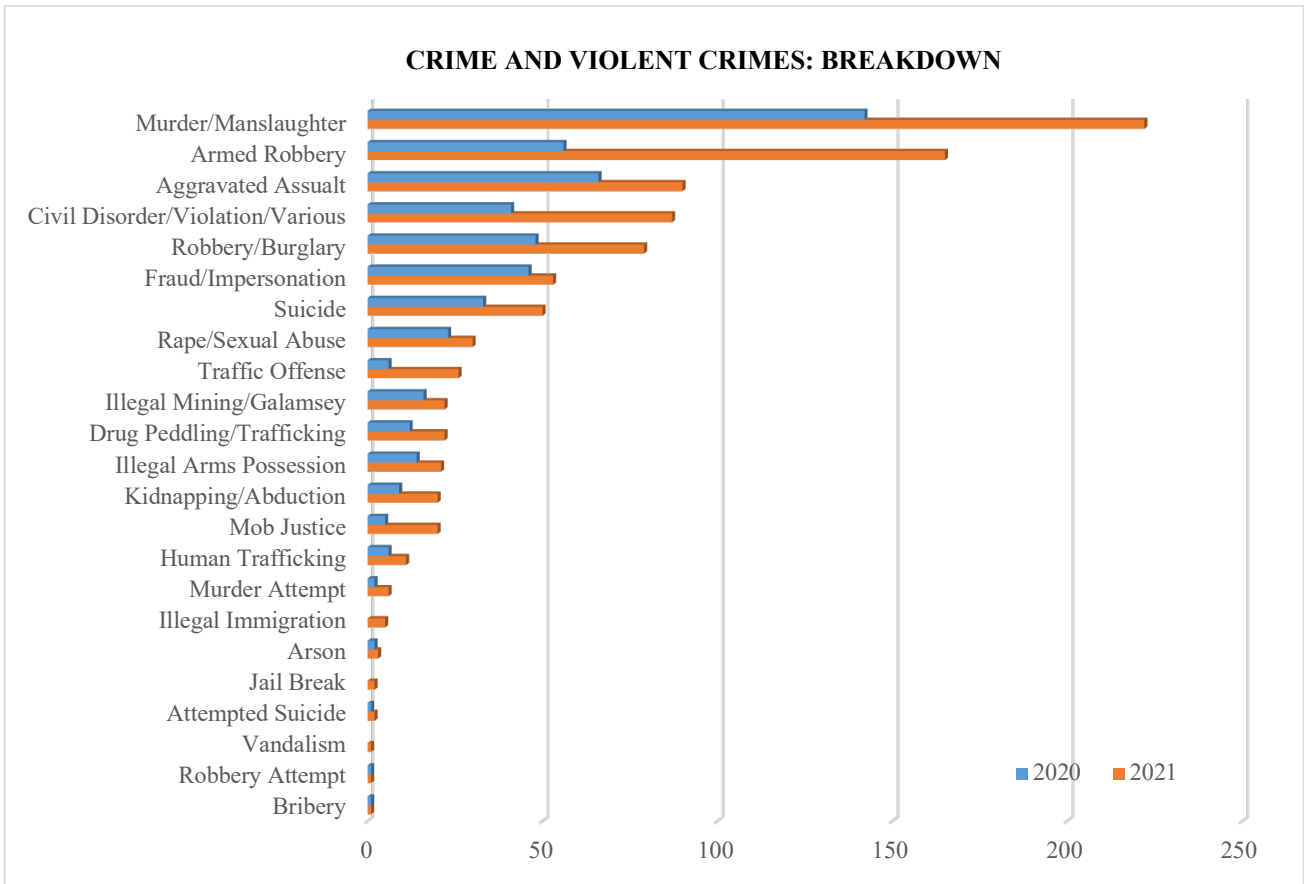


Figure 2

Offensive Weapons/Tools

Firearms are the most reported offensive weapons used in the commission of violent crimes in 2021. It is the most preferred weapon for criminals. Firearm use has been on the rise since 2018, and in 2021 it increased by 57.6% over 2020.

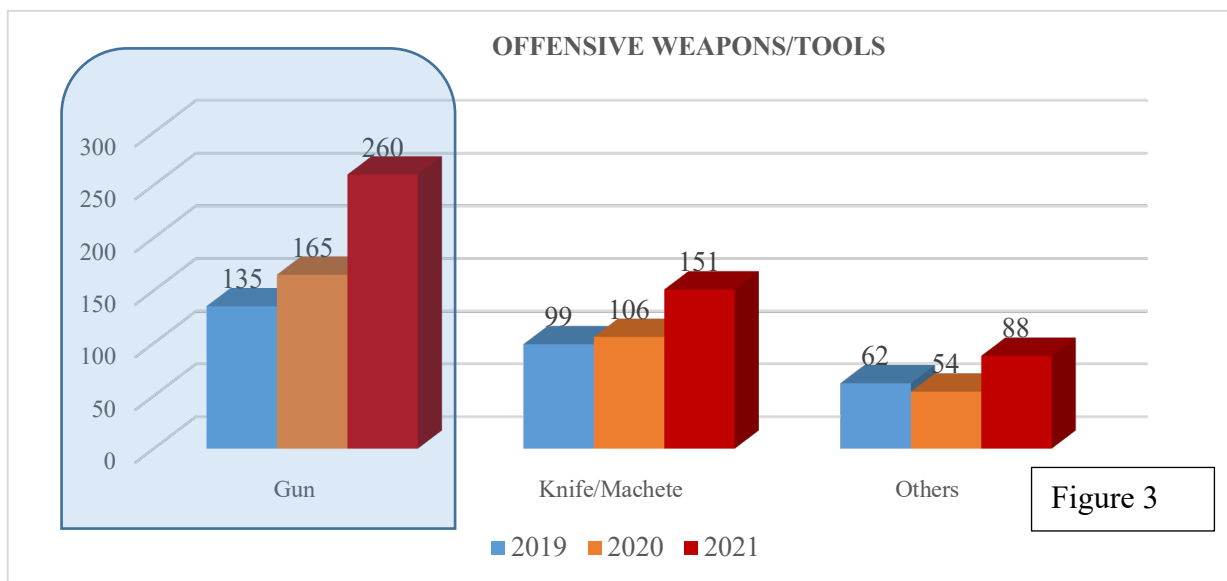


Figure 3

TRANSPORTATION-RELATED INCIDENTS

This category captures public safety issues related to all forms of transportation including marine and aviation. It takes into consideration reported motor vehicle crashes, pedestrian knockdowns, marine and aviation incidents, among others across Ghana. More than 95% of reported transportation-related incidents are road traffic crashes (RTCs).

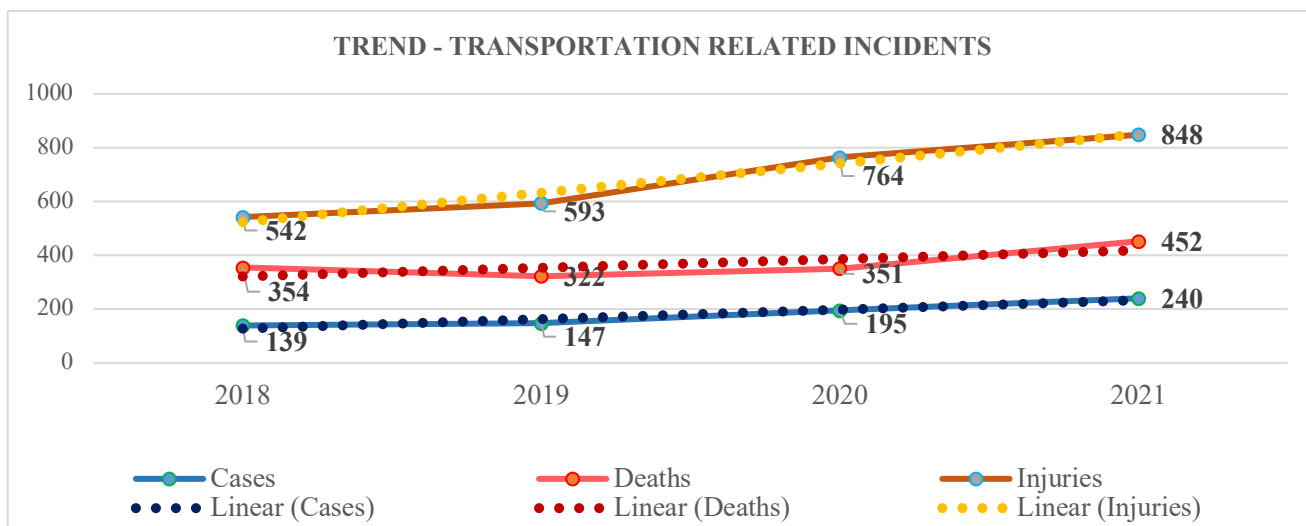


Figure 4

All aspects (i.e., cases, deaths and injuries) of transportation increased from 2020 to 2021, as shown in Figure 4. The trend from 2018 through to the end of December 2021 was on the upward trajectory. Reported cases/events of road traffic crashes (RTCs) in 2021 increased by 23.1%. 2021 deaths and injuries reported in connection with RTCs also increased by 28.8% and 11% respectively over 2020 figures. Eastern Region accounted for 20% of reported road crashes, being the leading region, Greater Accra 18%, Central region 18%, and Ashanti region 14%.

Heavy goods vehicles (HGV), high occupancy vehicles (HOVs), saloon cars, and motorbikes/rickshaws were the most reported vehicles involved in road traffic crashes, as presented in figure 5 below. Commercial vehicles constituted 58.4% of all vehicles reported to have been involved in RTC, while Government vehicles were 1.7% (Figure 6).

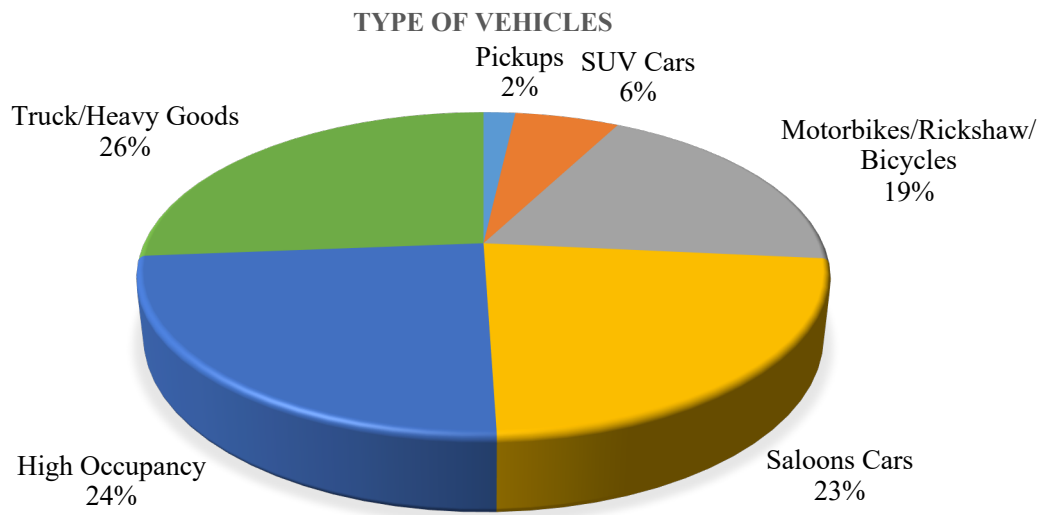


Figure 5

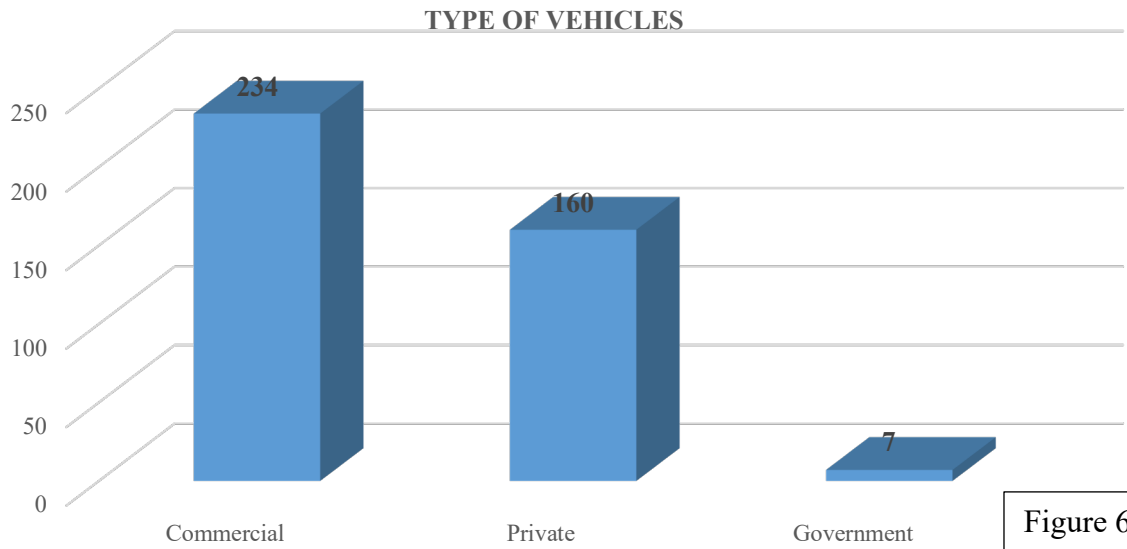
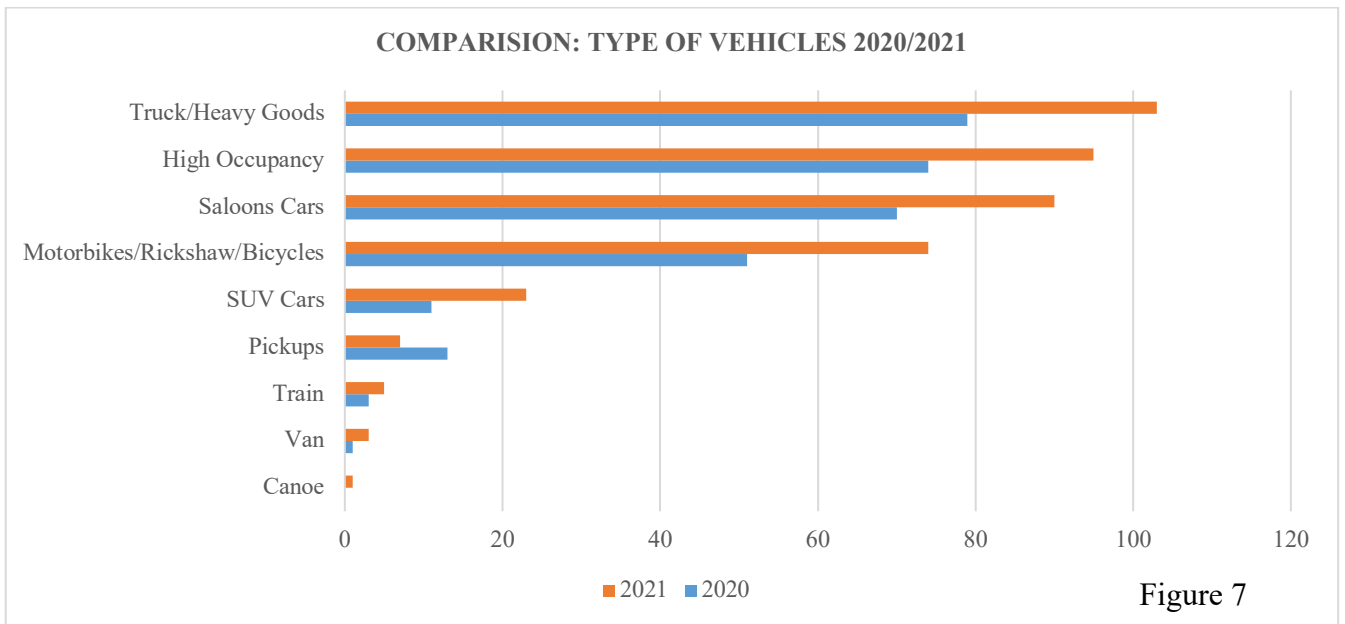
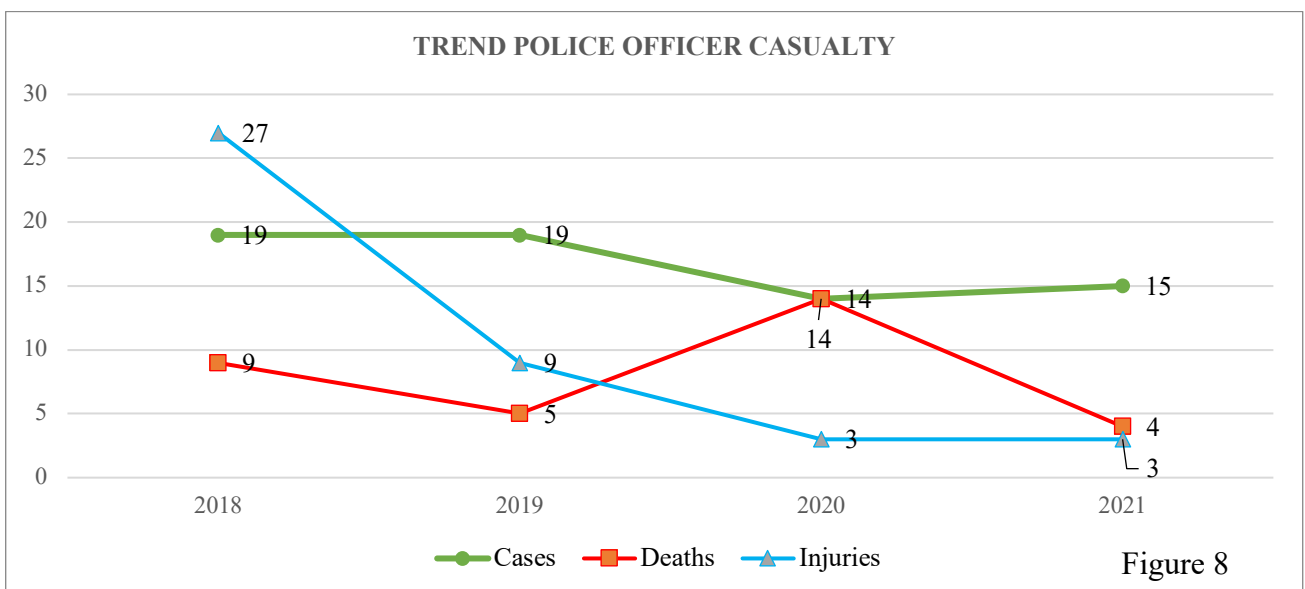


Figure 6



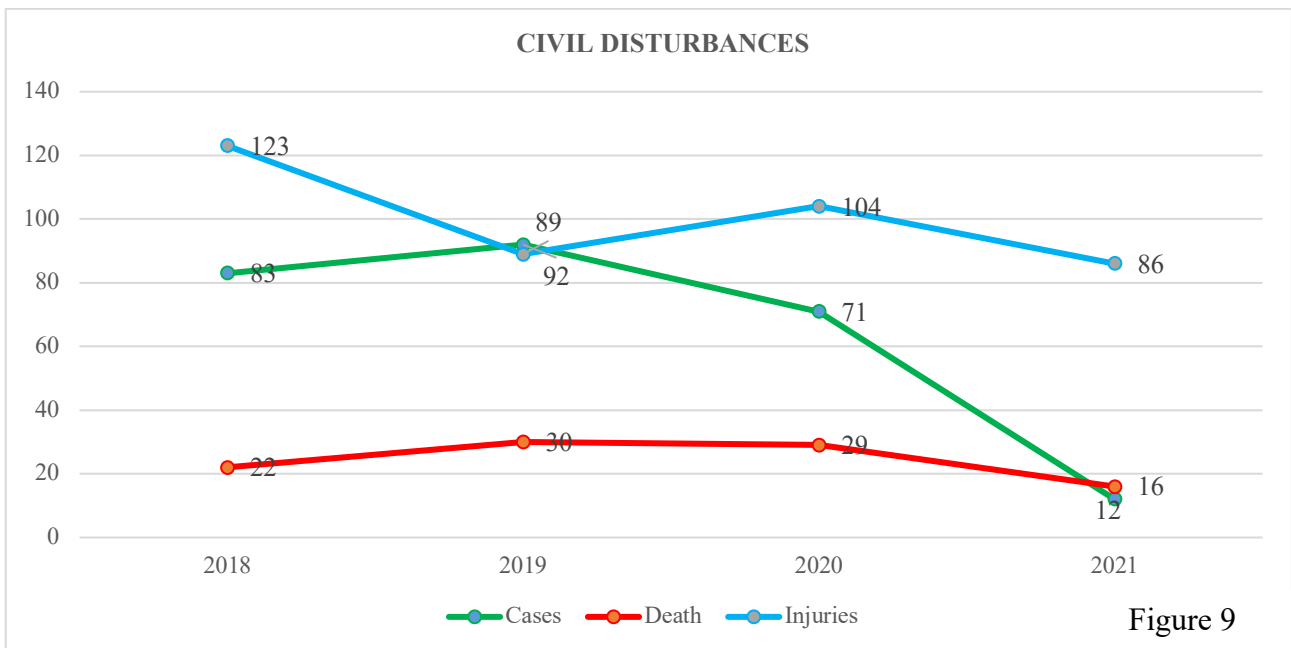
POLICE OFFICER CASUALTIES

This category captures events involving law enforcement officers actively on duty who became casualties in the course of discharge of duty or officers in uniform who became casualties by reason of their appearance (in uniform) as officers of the law.



CIVIL DISTURBANCES

This category captures spontaneous events occurring in the country (such as activities of rampaging political groupings, community members in protests, public or private facility seizures, and ethnic, chieftaincy and religious clashes, demonstrations) which may lead to a certain disruption of the public peace, thereby requiring the immediate intervention of the law enforcement agencies, and in some cases State emergency services. In his book *Public Safety and Security Administration*, Ortmeier defines civil disturbances “as any group activity that disrupts the normal peace and tranquility of a neighborhood or community.”



The year 2021 witnessed a decrease in the number of civil disturbances by 4.2% as compared to 2020. Reported spontaneous mob actions targeted at police stations, State facilities, and political events/players dominated civil disturbance events, constituting 37.5% of all reported civil disturbances for the 2021 period. Land disputes that escalated into full-blown civil disturbances were the next most frequently reported events at 25%.

FIRE AND WORKPLACE RELATED INCIDENTS

Events captured under this category include workplace accidents and fire incidents across residential and private properties, commercial and other places of occupation. (Refer to figure in Annex for 2021 outlook.)

NATURAL DISASTERS

Natural disasters refer to events occasioned as a matter of natural course, often referred to as '*act of God*'. These include floods arising out of heavy rainfalls, water bodies breaking banks, earthquakes and tremors, lightning strikes, etc. (Refer to figure in Annex for 2021 outlook.)

GENERAL INCIDENTS

General incidents captured in this project refer to events and actions resulting from commissions or omissions that endanger lives, destroy properties, and ultimately create a distress situation, which may require emergency services intervention. Some events that fall under this category are building collapses; illegal mining pit collapses, electrocutions, accidental consumption of poisonous substances, and drownings, among others.

The top three frequently reported incidents in 2021 under the General index category were drowning, illegal mining pit collapses, and building collapses. Drowning accounted for 43% of deaths in the General index category, with mining pit collapses and building collapses being 17% and 9% respectively.

ANNEX

Table of 2020/2021

FREQUENCY OF CASES RECORDED			
2020	CASES/EVENTS	2021	% Change
342	Crime	430	25.7%
377	Violent Crime	531	40.8%
470	Criminal Arrest	610	29.8%
99	Fire and Workplace	92	-7.1%
71	Civil Disturbances	68	-4.2%
13	Natural Disaster	12	-7.7%
14	Police Officer Casualty	8	-42.9%
195	Transportation	240	23.1%
3	Police Brutality	4	33.3%
107	General Incidents	123	15.0%
1221	TOTAL	1508	23.5%

DEATHS RECORDED			
2020	CASES/EVENTS	2021	% Change
6	Crime	12	100.0%
283	Violent Crime	435	53.7%
92	Criminal Arrest	161	75.0%
42	Fire and Workplace	38	-9.5%
29	Civil Disturbances	16	-44.8%
5	Natural Disaster	3	-40.0%
14	Police Officer Casualty	9	-35.7%
351	Transportation	452	28.8%
1	Police Brutality	0	-100.0%
168	General Incidents	207	23.2%
899	TOTAL	1172	30.4%

INJURIES RECORDED			
2020	CASES/EVENTS	2021	% Change
18	Crime	35	94.4%
238	Violent Crime	239	0.4%
160	Criminal Arrest	157	-1.9%
60	Fire and Workplace	23	-61.7%
104	Civil Disturbances	86	-17.3%
11	Natural Disaster	4	-63.6%
3	Police Officer Casualty	0	-100.0%
764	Transportation	848	11.0%
4	Police Brutality	1	-75.0%
74	General Incidents	71	-4.1%
1276	TOTAL	1307	2.4%

GENERAL INCIDENTS: BREAKDOWN

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL	DEATHS ³	INJURIES ³
Drowning	2		2	4	3	5	1	2	4	8	4	1	36	62	3
Building Collapse	1	1	1		2	2	2	1	1				11	13	5
Collapsed of Mining pit	1			2	1	2	1	1	1		1		10	25	1
Electrocution						1	1	2	1	1	1		7		
Flooding	1			1	1	2							5		
Rainfall		2	1	1									4		
Lighting						2		1		1			4		
Missing Person	1		1							1			3		
Fall from Height				1			1		1				3		
Poisoning	1			1									2		

³ Analysis restricted to only the top three incidents

ROAD TRAFFIC CRASHES BY REGION

TOTAL	Greater Accra	Eastern Region	Central Region	Ashanti Region	Bono Region	Ahafo Region	Bono East Region	Upper East Region	Upper West Region	Northern Region	North East Region	Savannah Region	Western Region	Western North Region	Volta Region	Oti Region	TOTAL
2021	43	48	43	33	7	2	5	5	2	8	2	13	9	3	10	7	240
2020	24	46	33	24	7	1	8	2	4	7	3	3	14	3	12	4	195
2019	30	29	21	23	6	2		5	10	8	0	5	3	1	4		147
2018	29	35	18	17				2	2	9		0					139
					11	0	0				0	0	13	0	3	0	
TOTAL	126	158	115	97	31	5	13	14	18	32	5	21	39	7	29	11	

DEFINITIONS

Murder/Manslaughter

Legally speaking cases of murder and manslaughter are matters that are determined by a competent court of jurisdiction after satisfying itself with the full facts available to it regarding a particular case. Nonetheless, in this project, the BPS captures all unlawful killings of one human being by another as murder cases.

Robbery/ Burglary

Refers to all acts of taking away something(s) from someone by use of force, threat, or violence.

Eventful Arrests

Refers to lawful arrests by law enforcement officer(s) that are characterized by either excessive use of force or results in violence such as gun battle, etc.

Rape and Sexual Abuse

This refers to unlawful sexual activity and or sexual intercourse carried out forcibly or under threat of injury against the will of a person or with a person who is beneath a certain age or incapable of valid consent.

Fraud

Fraud occurs when a person(s) is/ are deceived by other(s) with the intention of obtaining financial or personal gain or both.

Hate Crimes

Merriam Webster defines a *hate crime* as “any of various crimes (such as assault or defacement of property) when motivated by hostility to the victim as a member of a group (such as one based on color, creed, gender, or sexual orientation)

Drugs/Alcohol

Events involving possession, peddling, use of and abuse of (chemical) substances and drugs

Mob Action

Events involving a person(s) acting in concert with one or more persons and without lawful authority uses of force or violence to exact punishment on suspected criminals.

Impersonation

Events involving persons assuming the character or appearance of or pretending to be what they are not for self-serving purposes.

Authorized for immediate release

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030-330-9388/020-111-0066

info@ghanasafety.com



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