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**Title:** INTOXICATION ASSOCIATED WITH “SUICIDE BY COP”

**Abstract Body:**

Introduction

“Suicide by Cop” (SBC) is a colloquialism for a form of victim-precipitated homicide in which a suicidal individual (subject) engages in calculated, life-threatening and criminal behavior in order to compel police to use deadly force. Little data has been published pertaining to SBC. We hypothesized that the majority of the subjects were intoxicated at the time of the SBC event.

Methods

A retrospective review was performed of all SBC cases entered into Federal Bureau of Investigation's Law Enforcement Online Hostage Barricade Database System. Demographic data pertaining to the subject, specific information pertaining to the event, previous substance abuse history by the subject, and use of inebriating substances by the subject during the event were collected.

Results

From 1983 to 2009, a total of 54 SBC cases were documented. Of those cases: 1 (1.9%) age under 18, 8 (14.8%) ages 18-29, 28 (51.9%) ages 30-45, 12 (22.2%) ages 46-65, 1 (1.9%) age over 65, and 4 (7.4%) the age was not documented; 49 (90.7%) were male and 5 (9.3%) female. The incident durations were: 18 (33.3%) lasting 0-2 hrs, 16 (29.6%) 2-4 hrs, 7 (13%) 4-6 hrs, 7 (13%) 6-9 hrs, and 6 (11.2%) greater than 9 hrs. A total of 46 subjects (85.2%) were killed, 7 (13%) injured, and 1 (1.9%) no injury. There were no deaths of law enforcement or bystanders. The subject's previous substance abuse history was: ethanol 25 (39.1%), Schedule I Controlled Substance 19 (29.7%), prescription 3 (4.7%), and unknown 17 (26.6%). Substances inebriating the subject during the event included: ethanol 21 (37.5%), Schedule I Controlled Substance 11 (19.6%), prescription 2 (3.6%), none 5 (8.9%), and unknown 17 (30.4%).

Conclusion

Of the SBC subjects, only 13.5% (5 of 37 where results were available) were not intoxicated, whereas the remaining cases were intoxicated with mind-altering substances. The majority of SBC cases (85.2%) were killed. Law enforcement agents should be aware that when managing SBC cases, the majority of subjects are intoxicated, further complicating negotiations. Through disinhibition, intoxication can increase the potential for violent threats or behavior leading ultimately to tactical resolution and loss of life.