

# 2017

# 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) 210-7460



**XAVIER BECERRA**  
**ATTORNEY GENERAL**

## Table of Contents

Legislative Mandate. . . . .	1
Scope . . . . .	2
Firearm Categories Used in Crimes. . . . .	2
Crimes of Violence Other than Homicide . . . . .	3
Homicides . . . . .	4
Street Gang Crimes . . . . .	4
Drug Trafficking Crimes . . . . .	4
Trends and Special Cases . . . . .	5
California Assault Weapons by Year . . . . .	6

## Legislative Mandate

California Penal Code section 34200<sup>1</sup> requires the Department of Justice (DOJ) to provide to 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. Although DOJ is required to produce this annual report based on data obtained from state and local crime laboratories, there is no corresponding mandate for local crime laboratories to provide their data to the DOJ. The report must 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.

---

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

## Scope

This report includes firearms examined during 2017 in the DOJ regional criminalistics laboratories and the San Francisco Police Department's (SFPD) crime laboratory, the only non-DOJ laboratory that participated in this report. Data from other major cities, including those crime laboratories that serve many of the urban and heavily populated areas of California, were not provided to DOJ for inclusion in this report. Because DOJ's 10 regional laboratories principally serve the rural areas of California, the data in this report may not represent gun use trends in urban areas or across California as a whole.

The overall counts of qualifying firearms and calibers in Figures 1 and 2 include data from both DOJ and San Francisco; Figures 3 through 5 reflect only those firearms examined by DOJ laboratories.

## Firearm Categories Used in Crimes (Figures 1 and 2)

The 329 qualifying firearms examined by DOJ and SFPD during the reporting period included 306 handguns (93.0 percent), 14 rifles (4.3 percent), and nine shotguns (2.7 percent) (see Figure 1). No firearms were assault weapons (as defined in Pen. Code §§ 30510 and 30515) and one firearm (less than 1 percent) was classified as a short-barreled shotgun or rifle. The most commonly encountered calibers were 9 mm Luger and .40 Smith & Wesson (S&W), followed by .45 Automatic Colt Pistol (ACP) (see Figure 2, next page).

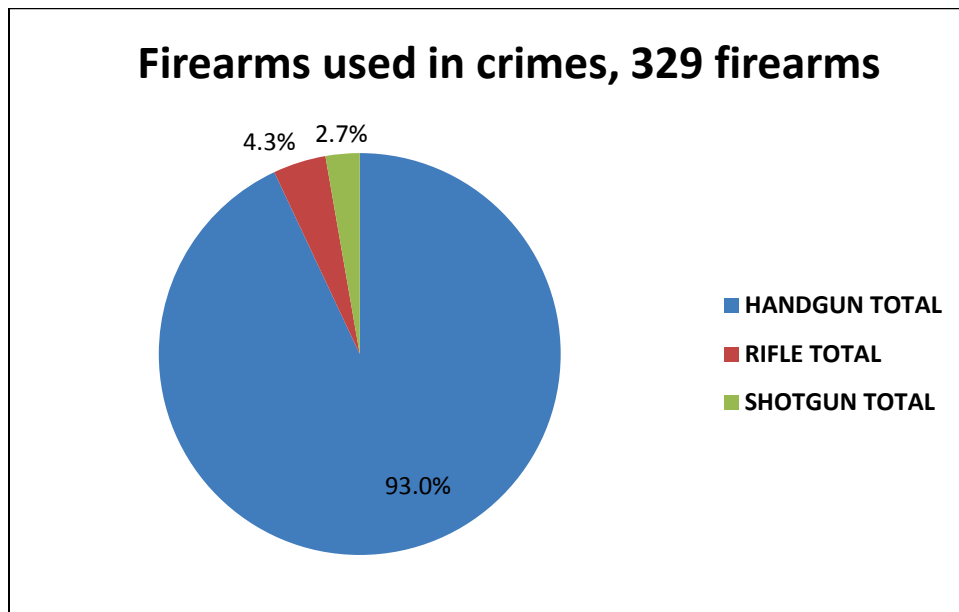


Figure 1

## Firearm Categories Used in Crimes, Continued

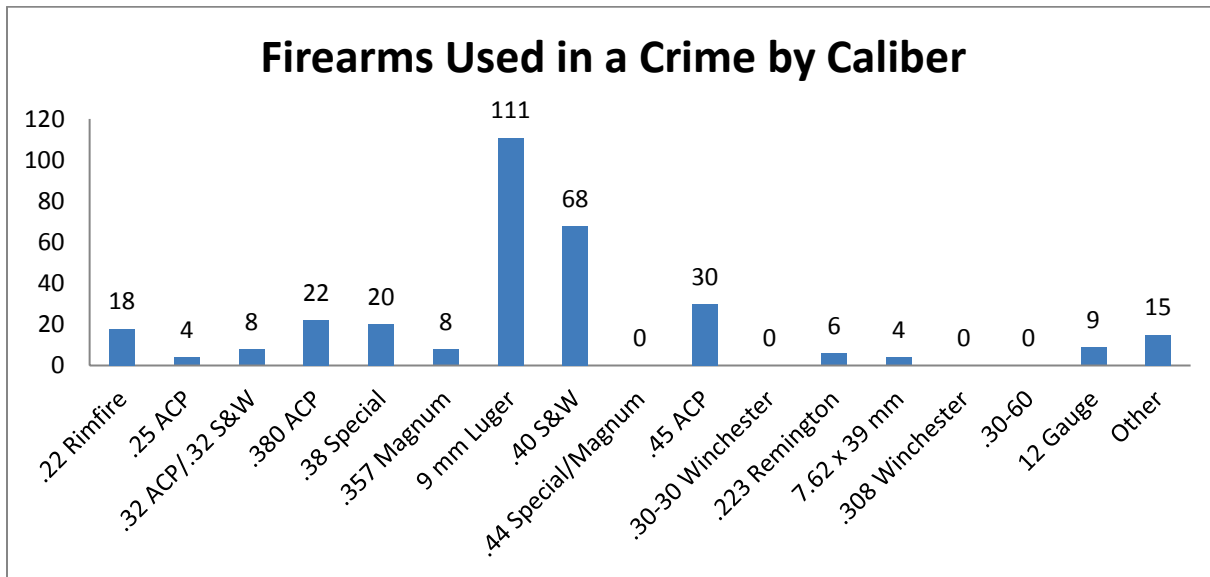


Figure 2

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

Sixty-two of the firearms examined by DOJ were submitted in cases involving crimes of violence other than homicide. These 62 firearms included 57 handguns (91.9 percent), four rifles (6.5 percent) and one shotgun (1.6 percent).

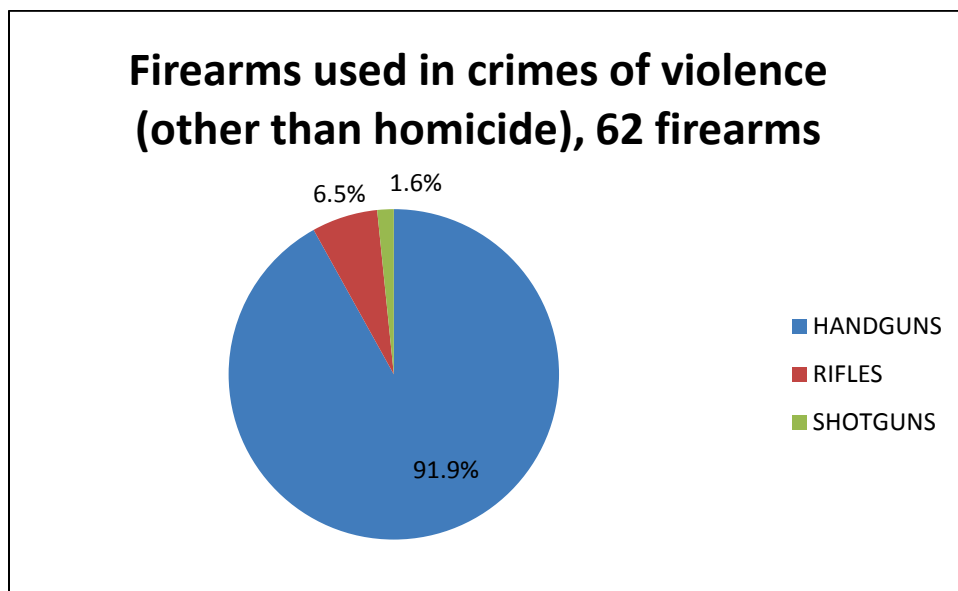


Figure 3

## Homicides (Figure 4)

The 35 firearms that were submitted to DOJ laboratories in homicide cases included 29 handguns (82.9 percent), four rifles (11.4 percent) and two shotguns (5.7 percent). There were no fully automatic firearms linked to homicides.

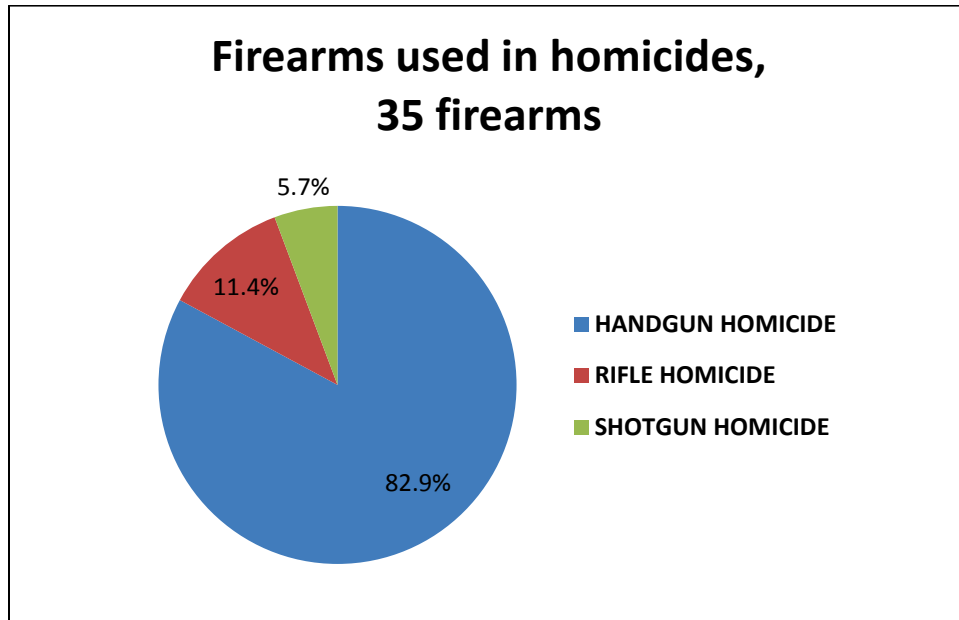


Figure 4

## Street Gang Crimes

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

## Drug Trafficking Crimes

One handgun and one shotgun (approximately 1.9 percent of the total) were identified as being used in drug trafficking crimes.

## **Trends and Special Cases**

### **California Assault Weapons**

None of the firearms examined in 2017 were identified as California Assault Weapons (as defined in Pen. 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**

One firearm was submitted with the serial number removed.

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

No qualifying firearms exhibiting fully automatic fire 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**

The six firearms identified as being related to officer-involved shooting incidents were five handguns and one rifle.

### **Suppressors**

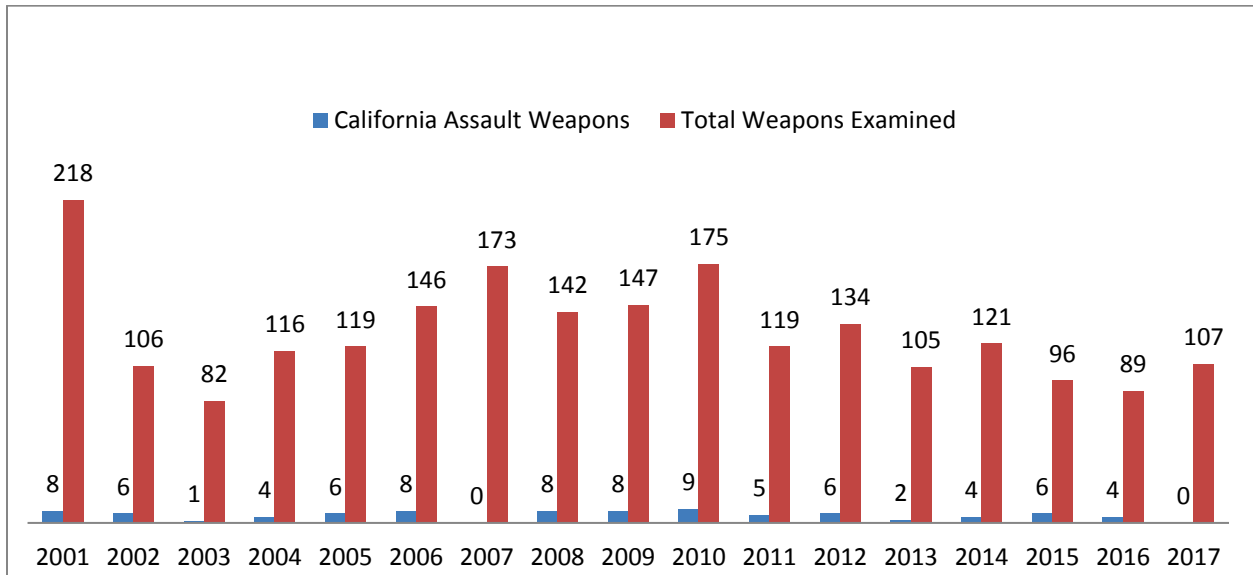
No firearms equipped with suppressors (silencers) were examined this year.

### **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 commenced in 1998. In 2017, for the first time since 2007, none of the firearms that qualified for inclusion in this report were California assault weapons.



Note: The reported number of California Assault Weapons is based on a defined list for each year. That list has been expanded a number of times since 1998; therefore, subsequent years may include firearms that were not counted previously.

**Figure 5**