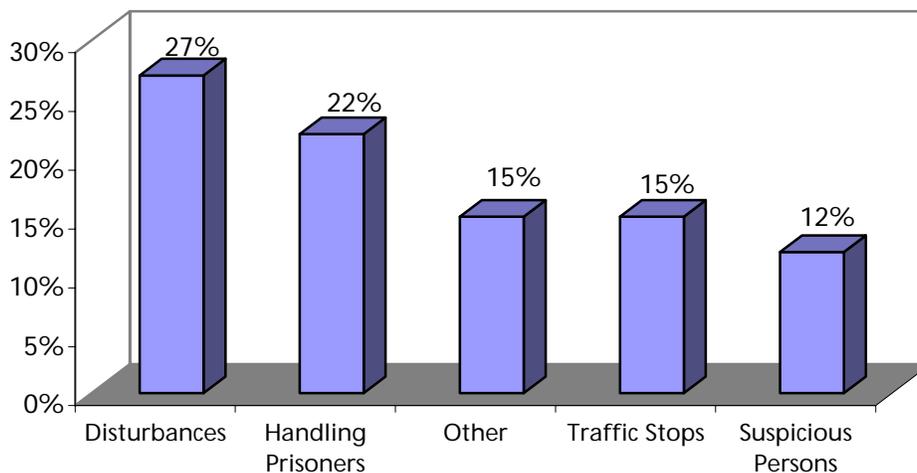


## Disturbance Calls Place Law Officers at the Greatest Risk for Assault

Law enforcement officers place themselves in harm's way each day as they uphold their mission to protect the public good. In order to track these occurrences, information regarding the circumstances under which they are assaulted in the line of duty is compiled at the national level. In San Diego County, as in the State of California, this information provides insight into the number of officers assaulted annually, but also which types of calls are most risky for officers. In 2005, there were almost two assaults per day on officers in the San Diego Region, for a total of 686 assaults. About two in five (42%) of these resulted in an injury, compared to only one-third (31%) of the 8,372 assaults at the state level.

As Figure 1 shows, responding to disturbance calls (i.e., family disputes, person with a gun) was the most frequent type of incident that resulted in an assault on an officer (27%), followed by handling or transporting prisoners (22%), "other"<sup>1</sup> calls or traffic stops (15% each), and investigating suspicious persons or events (12%). These local data reflect state and national statistics as well, with disturbance calls leading both the State (29%) and nation<sup>2</sup> (31%) as the incidents most likely to place an officer at risk (not shown). These data provide valuable information for monitoring officer safety and revising policy to reduce the likelihood of injury to an officer.

**Figure 1**  
**TOP FIVE CALLS PLACING LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS AT-RISK OF ASSAULT**



*SOURCE:* California Department of Justice, Criminal Justice Statistics Center, 2006

<sup>1</sup> Examples of "Other" calls include foot patrol or off-duty incidents.

<sup>2</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation (2006). **Crime in the United States 2005**. Washington D.C.: Author. Department of Justice. Available at <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/05cius/index.html>