# Investigation reveals major safety breaches in fatal police interactions in the United States



An investigation by the Associated Press has revealed significant breaches in safety protocols during hundreds of fatal police interactions in the United States. The investigation, which scrutinized police encounters from 2012 to 2021, identified that in approximately 45% of 440 deaths involving force not from firearms, the officers departed from safety guidelines three or more times.

Common infractions noted involved officers pinning individuals face down, which could restrict breathing due to positional asphyxia, and using Tasers excessively. Approximately 30% of the deaths analyzed had occurred when officers responded to immediate threats, complicating the compliance with standard safety practices.

Despite existing guidelines cautioning against such methods, officers often used dangerous restraint techniques that resulted in fatalities. Issues such as outdated training or departmental policies were factors contributing to these deviations. The AP's review included extensive police and court records, along with analysis of body-camera footage.

Specifically, prone restraint was a recurrent issue: in about half of such cases, officers failed to reposition handcuffed individuals in a timely manner, continuing the restriction even after suspects had ceased responsive actions. Moreover, vulnerable individuals, including those with medical conditions or under the influence of substances, were disproportionately represented among the fatalities.

The misuse of Tasers was also prevalent, with officers in several instances delivering repeated electrical shocks even after a suspect was handcuffed or immobilized. Overuse and improper application of Tasers, in spite of revised training manuals and guidelines from manufacturers and policing bodies, were significant contributors to these deaths.

This extensive investigation underscores the inconsistent application of use-of-force standards across police departments, highlighting systemic issues in training and policy adherence within law enforcement in the United States.