

COLUMBUS POLICE DEPARTMENT

2005 YEAR END REPORT

“To Protect and Serve”

Submitted by the Executive Board:

**Chief William Martin
Deputy Chief Brad Latimer
Captain Robert Jarrard
Captain Curt Beverage
Captain Randy Aspenson
Captain Ron Hoskins**

Honorable Fred Armstrong
Mayor
City of Columbus, Indiana

Dear Sir:

The Columbus Police Department submits our 2005 Year End Report. The accomplishments of our Department would not have been possible without the hard work of the men and women, sworn and civilian, of the Columbus Police Department.

Each year we submit statistics in our year-end report to support our belief that Columbus is a very safe city. This year something special happened. The research/publishing company of Morgan Quitno Press agreed with us. They ranked Columbus the 6th safest city in the United States. This is up from last years ranking of 11th. The citizens of Columbus deserve a lot of credit for this great honor, as do the men and women of the Columbus Police Department who certainly played a significant role in keeping Columbus safe.

The list of our Departments accomplishments for 2005 is truly remarkable. The following is a short list of a our accomplishments.

- We were able to get an increase in our manpower this year. Our manpower went from 74 to 78 sworn officers
- Military Incentive Pay was paid out to 14 of our officers. This will help us retain our current officers as well as aid us in recruitment of new officers.
- Hazardous Devices Unit (HDU): two officers graduated from the FBI's Hazardous Devices School at the Redstone Arsenal in May of 2004. They have responded to seven calls of suspicious/hazardous devices this year. More on the HDU later in this report.
- Physical Fitness Standards: after researching several different programs, we have selected a company to design a physical fitness program for our Department. We finished our base line testing this fall and are now in the process of writing our new Physical Fitness Policy.

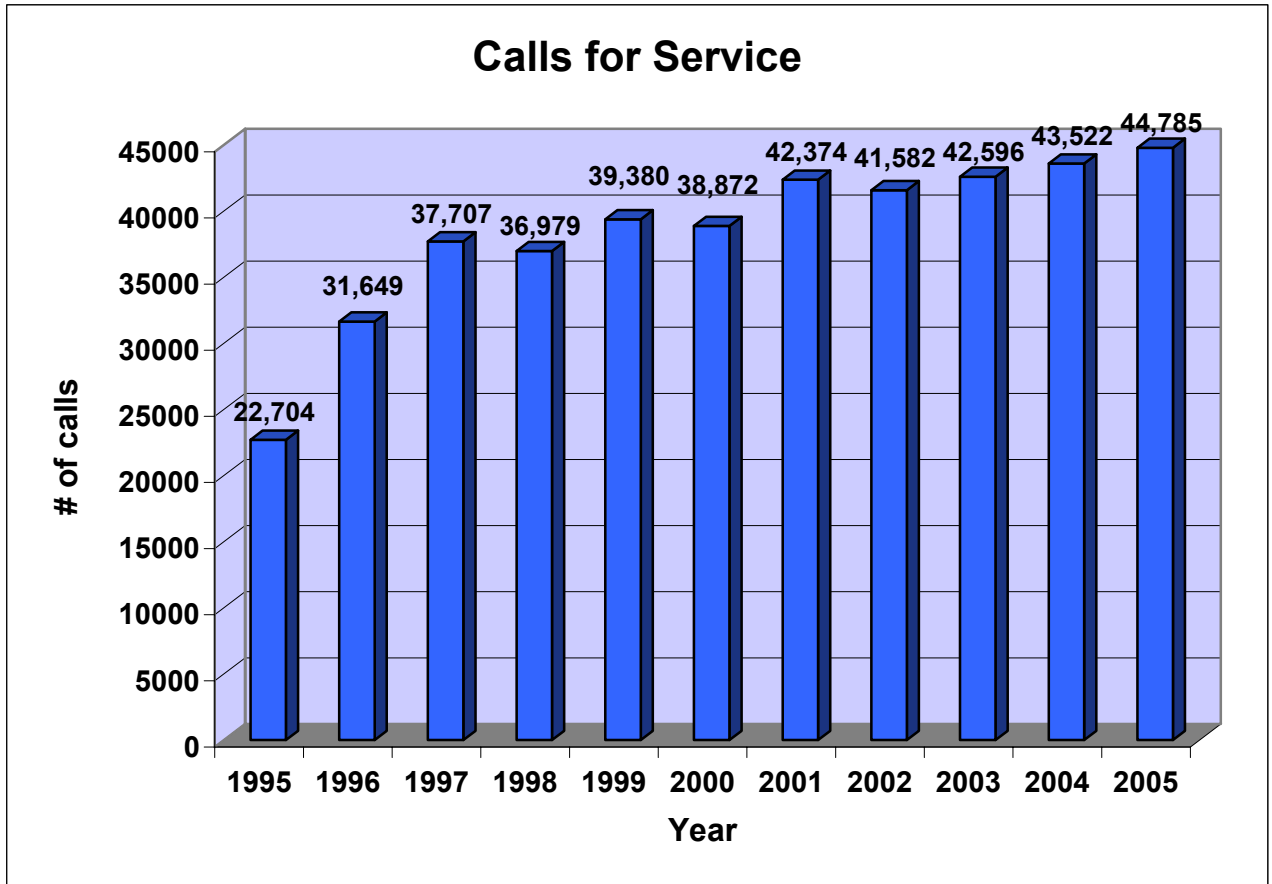
With the continued support of your office, the City Council, the Board of Works and other city departments, we will make 2006 a great, safe year for the citizens of Columbus.

Sincerely,

William Martin
Chief of Police

ACTIVITY

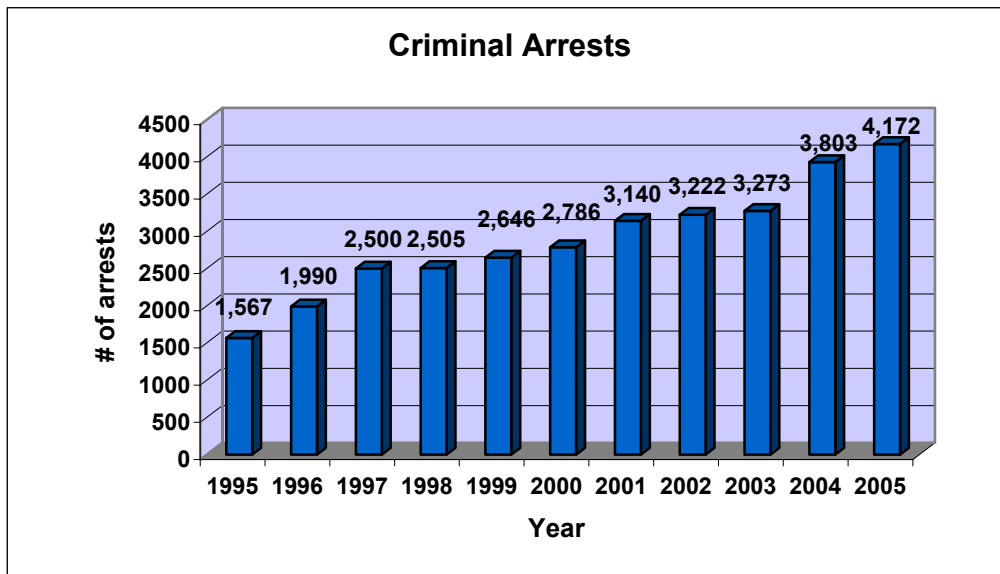
The following details some of the hard work of the officers of the Columbus Police Department.



Calls for service represent calls to the Police Department where our officers took some action. Also included in calls for service is self-initiated activity of our officers. The work by our officers has increased dramatically over the last ten years.

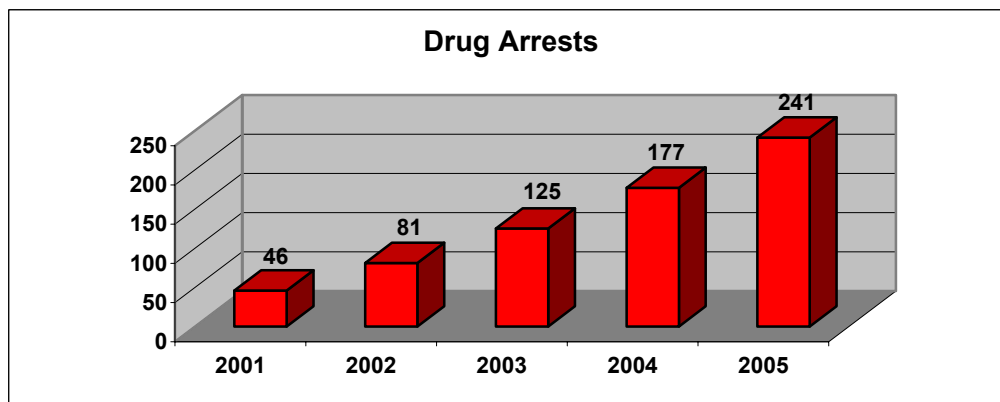
Since 1995 our calls for service have almost doubled.

There are several factors that have contributed to the increase in calls for service over the last ten years. The city of Columbus has increased in size, our Department started unlocking cars again in 1996 and the Department is doing a better job tracking the self-initiated activity of our officers.



Criminal arrests include both adult and juvenile apprehensions for crimes that are misdemeanors or felonies. The increases are not small. These are significant numbers in a category that directly reflects how hard the Police Department works at keeping our city safe. The number of criminal arrests between 1995 and 2005 has more than tripled.

When we break down the numbers of criminal arrests the following are the types of arrests which increased significantly over the previous year: battery, aggravated battery, illegal consumption, theft, driving while suspended and drug related arrests. The following graph details drug related arrests for the Uniform Division. Crimes included in this graph include arrests made for the offences of possession of precursors, possession of cocaine, possession of methamphetamine, possession of controlled substances and possession with intent to distribute.



Our drug arrest continue to grow at a staggering rate of over 5 times what we had in 2001. **Criminal arrests can vary due to population and crime trends; however, the bottom line is that criminal arrests go up when officers work harder.**

The Detective Division investigated over 2,132 (a 25% increase) criminal cases resulting in countless criminal charges. The following details some of the fine work by our Detective Division:

- Two suspects enter and rob Irwin Union – Kroger branch armed with a handgun. Both suspects were located and arrested within hours of the robbery. They are now severing out their sentences.
- A male suspect entered a teenage girl's home and takes her to a abandoned property where he bound her with duct tape and sexually assaulted her. The man is now awaiting trial this year.
- In May of this year our Detective Division worked a lengthy child molesting case. This investigation resulted in a local man being charged for multiple counts of child molesting on multiple victims. The suspect has pleaded guilty and is now awaiting sentencing.
- A joint burglary investigation between our Detective and our Narcotics Divisions of a local Veterinarian Clinic resulted in the arrest of two suspects. More importantly a large amount of dangerous narcotics were recovered and taken off our streets.

Several significant changes occurred within the Detective Division over the past two years. A major case unit was developed with the goal of insuring that our veteran detectives are assigned to all major cases. As shown in the results above this is working well.

UNIFORM DIVISION

The Uniform Division as a whole underwent many changes and upgrades during 2005. The officers' appearance changed with the addition of the new everyday "tactical" uniforms. There has been a change within the law enforcement profession to change the duty uniform to one that is more tactical and practical. Our new tactical uniforms eliminates many of the shiny buttons and pins, which reflect light causing an officer to be more visible. This can cause problems when the goal is to not be seen. Our old uniforms were 100% polyester, which was hot in the summer and cold in the winter. Our new uniforms are a blend of fabric, which eliminate these problems. The officers have welcomed the new uniforms as it is much more comfortable and is better suited for day-to-day street operations.

Another major change in the uniform division was an increase in minimum manpower requirements for all three shifts. As a department we have seen a growing demand in calls for service over the past year. We have witnessed not only a steady increase in the number of calls, but also an increase in high priority and high-risk calls. Over the past year uniformed officers found themselves running continuously from incident to incident and still having calls backlogged.

In May of this year we implemented our new Tactical Rifle program. The rifles were dispersed throughout all the shifts to provide maximum coverage. Tragic events at other agencies as they confronted heavily armed suspects led to the decision to better equip our officers. These weapons are necessary to counter the increased threat from the armed criminal element.

At the same time as our rifle program we also implemented our “Less Lethal” shotguns. We issued an equal number of shotguns outfitted to shoot “Less Lethal” beanbag rounds. The clear need for these options soon became evident. Since these weapons have been available, our officers have had need to use them three times. Each of these incidents was resolved in a positive manner and with minimum use of force by our officers.

The most notable of these incidents was the Centra Credit Union armed robbery. On July 27, 2005 at approximately 3 o’clock in the afternoon a young man entered the Union Street branch of Centra Credit Union armed with a rifle. Inside where 30 hostages and a young man who wanted to die. The response of the Uniform Division was immediate. Our negotiators were able to manage the release of all but one hostage within just a few minutes. After much negotiation and several hours the final hostage was released from the bank.

A short time later the young man exited the bank and shot at the officers outside the bank. Our Special Weapons and Tactics unit, using “Less Lethal” weapons, were able to subdue the young man without having to resort to more lethal options.

Due to the high level of training of our first responding uniform officers and our SWAT team, this potentially deadly situation was resolved without injury to any of our officers, citizens or to the suspect.

In January of 2005 record floods hit our city. The department as a whole responded with professionalism and dedication in working long hours over several days in less than ideal conditions. Our officers responded to several calls for help by citizens left stranded by rising flood waters, and worked countless hours directing traffic at busy intersections clogged by motorists trying to get to and from town.

As the preceding portions of this report show, Columbus Police Officers encountered violent and dangerous criminals in a myriad of situations throughout 2005. The continuous stream of calls for service, the long overtime hours, and the often “less than ideal” conditions were stressful to say the least. From beginning to end, our officers responded with professionalism and exhibited the highest standards of character and conduct.

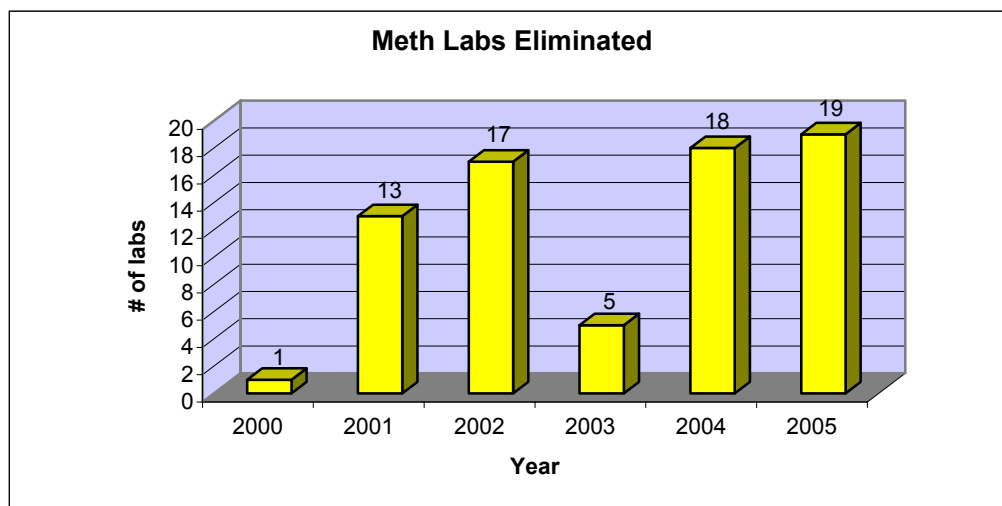
NARCOTICS DIVISION

The Narcotics Division this year saw an increase in all of the major drugs: cocaine, methamphetamine, and controlled substances. I believe that this is due to our ability to deal with the increases in our methamphetamine labs. Over the past year we have eliminated 19 meth labs. That brings our two-year total to 37. We are becoming better equipped to deal with labs and are spending less time on each one. This in turn is allowing us more time to deal with the other major drugs.

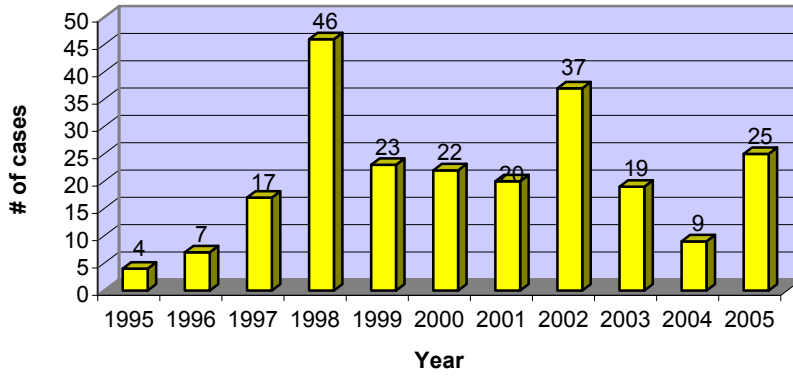
Some trends are being closely watched in regards to meth labs. First, they are becoming more difficult and dangerous to investigate. Surveillance systems, night vision equipment, weapons and in one instance an explosive, are routinely found in our labs. Patience, with special attention to officer safety, is paramount in these investigations.

The second trend involves cooks moving their labs to remote locations (rural and wooded areas). This makes surveillance very difficult. It is our belief that this is a direct result of our aggressive enforcement of drug laws. In addition, it is more common for our local cooks to travel much farther for their precursors. Again, aggressive enforcement and cooperation between law enforcement and local businesses are the main reasons that we are forcing these people to buy, or steal, their ingredients away from Columbus.

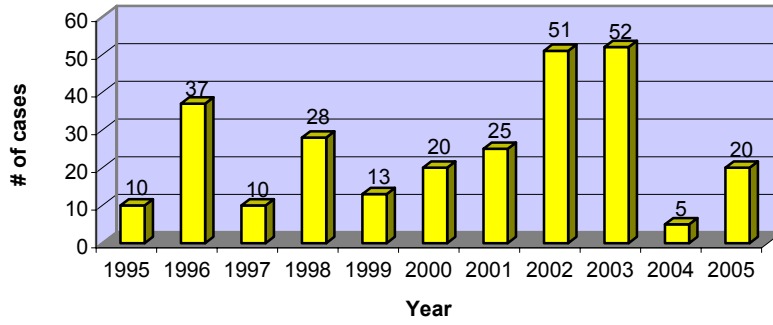
One of the more high profile cases that we worked this year was the incident involving fraudulent identification cards and social security cards. We were able to dismantle the manufacturing operation and seize a large amount of cocaine. This case culminated in federal indictments for two Columbus brothers.



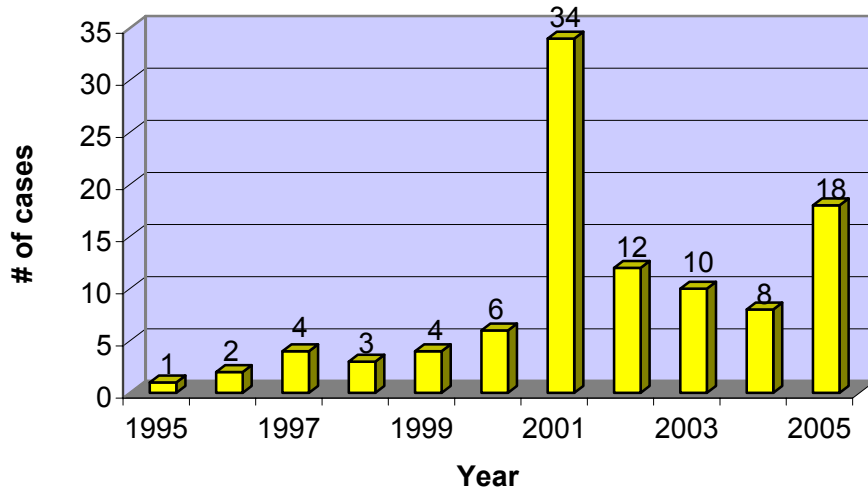
Methamphetamine



Cocaine



Controlled Substances



PUBLIC RELATIONS

At one time, the Public Relations area of the Police Department focused solely on answering questions from the media. Today, Public Relations is much more. Not only coordinating community events for the Department, but also making sure our citizens are educated as to the quality service we provide. The following are a few of the services Public Relations provided this year:

- Conducted our first Citizens Firearms Course, 39 local residents attended both classroom instruction and exercises at our firing range. Very well received.
- Conducted our first Self Defense for Women class. 25 people attended. Have received many requests for additional classes this year.
- Passed out over 5,500 new child fingerprint/DNA kits at various functions. These items are so popular that we ran out at the end of the year and have ordered more.
- Conducted our first ever Meth Community night in July at Columbus North Auditorium. We offered a diverse panel with backgrounds in all areas of law enforcement, legal system, government and even a recovering addict.
- Fifty five tours of the Police Department
- Passed out over 400 trigger locks
- Assisted in security and crowd assistance at the Tony Stewart Parade, Fair, United Way Festival, Softball World Series, Philharmonic Veterans Concert, American Heart Walk, Hospice Concert, Lazy River Festival, Ethnic Expo, Festival of Lights (to name a few)...all with very little overtime...primarily on-duty officers, cadets, and exempt personnel.

DARE

There are significant changes in DARE for 2005. The one major criticism of the DARE program is that it does not go far enough. After the sixth grade lesson, the students do not receive additional information throughout their remaining school years. To combat this, the DARE council recommended a three pronged improvement to our DARE program.

The recommended changes include expanding the DARE curriculum to include middle school. This is a change that we implemented this year. We will have reached over 900 7th graders this year. The middle school program has met with great reviews from teachers, students, and officers. As a department we are still working on the high school program. Currently our DARE officers meet with each health class 2 times a semester.

CULTURAL LIAISON OFFICER

The purpose of this support position is to address training issues with the Police Department, act as a liaison to various community groups and to assist the growing Hispanic community with obtaining information about the Police Department and the criminal justice system. The liaison office offered assistance over 1,100 times to members of the Hispanic community, covering a wide variety of topics.

Assistance was also provided to Franklin Police, Seymour Police, Bartholomew County Sheriffs Office, Indiana State Police, F.B.I. and the D.E.A. in criminal investigations as well as interpreting for the Prosecutor's office and the Courts. Our liaison officer also serves on several committees including the Heritage Fund, Indiana BMV, Su Casa and Mayor's Cultural Awareness Committee. The liaison office supervises our civilian translators who assist our officers on a regular basis.

This year we teamed up with our Human Rights Department and facilitated 2 focus group discussions with the African American Community. We also started a mentoring program for Latino students at Central Middle School, Northside Middle School, East High School as well as North High School.

POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE

The Columbus Police Department's Police Athletic League believes that children, if reached early enough, can develop a strong, positive attitude towards police. The Columbus P.A.A.L. program brings youngsters under the supervision and constructive influence of a responsible law enforcement agency while expanding public awareness about the role of a police officer. That role is positive reinforcement and support of responsible values and attitudes that are instilled in young people by their parents.

PAAL would not be possible without the help and support of the over 200 volunteers which help us utilize community-wide resources ranging from law enforcement officers to educators, physicians, attorneys, and numerous other vocations.

Over 1,400 young people participated in PAL functions this year in activities such as: basketball, golf, tackle football, flag football, cheerleading and volleyball.

2005 was an exciting year for PAAL at our football complex. Parents, coaches and officials praised the complex and the program as an important part of the Police Department. We were able to fence in the complex and enlarged our parking lot to better accommodate our ever-growing program. PAAL hopes to break ground on a much needed bathroom facility in 2006. Many local individuals and groups supported our program this year. The following are just a few of PAL's sponsors:

City of Columbus

Milestone

Cinergy

SIHO

Teegarden Foundation

Reeves Foundation

H & B Underground

Airport Authority

Moose Lodge 398

Skobel Fencing

Jolie Crider Foundation

REMC

Horn Precast

Custer Foundation

Miller Excavating

HAZARDOUS DEVICES UNIT (HDU)

In the spring of 2004, the Columbus Police Department was selected by “NABSCAB” (North America Bomb Squad Commanders Advisory Board) to have a certified “bomb squad”. After the graduation of our two officers from the five-week school at the Redstone Arsenal in May of 2004, our Hazardous Devices Unit was officially started.

The mission of the Columbus Police Department’s HDU is to:

- Maintain the safety of the public and officers
- Render safe any suspected device
- Provide for safe transportation, disposal or storage of said device
- Collect and preserve evidence
- Educate community members as to potential threats

The unit has been called out on seven occasions this year. Using specialized training and equipment, each situation has been handled with no damage to property. In one of the instances, the device was a improvised pipe bomb that we rendered safe without serious threat to our officers.

The current unit, is comprised of two certified technicians, one evidence technician and two explosive ordnance recognition personnel. The unit trains once a month and has provided training to local businesses and governmental units. Our unit officers also received 40 hours of federally funded training in Post Blast Investigation.

CRIME TRENDS

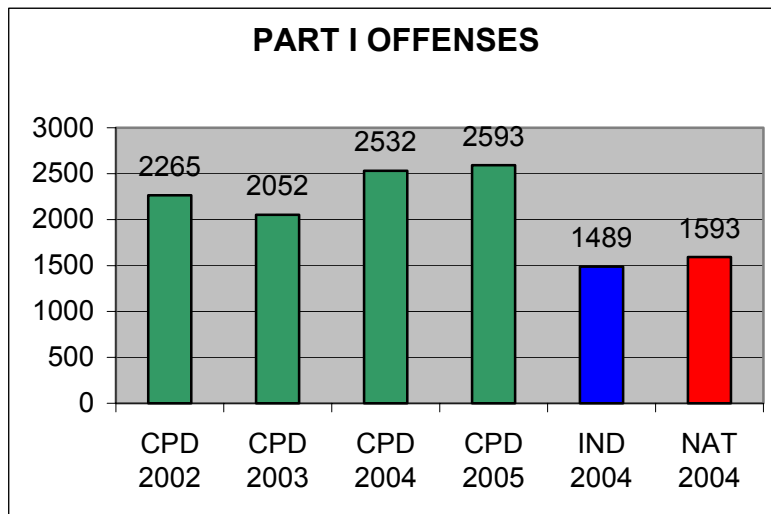
The following page provides vital information pertaining to the Columbus Police Departments Part I crime statistics. The Part I crimes are known as the Index Offenses, since they serve as a measurement of criminal activity. In past reports, we have published a section comparing our Part I offenses to State and National figures. In the format listed below, we will show trends that may be of interest to the citizens of Columbus.

Part I Crimes are an indicator of reported criminal activity within a designated area. These crimes consist of two categories: **Crimes Against Persons** and **Crimes Against Property**. Violent Crime is composed of the offenses of Homicide, Rape, Robbery and Aggravated Assault. Property Crime is composed of the offenses: Burglary, Larceny and Motor Vehicle Theft.

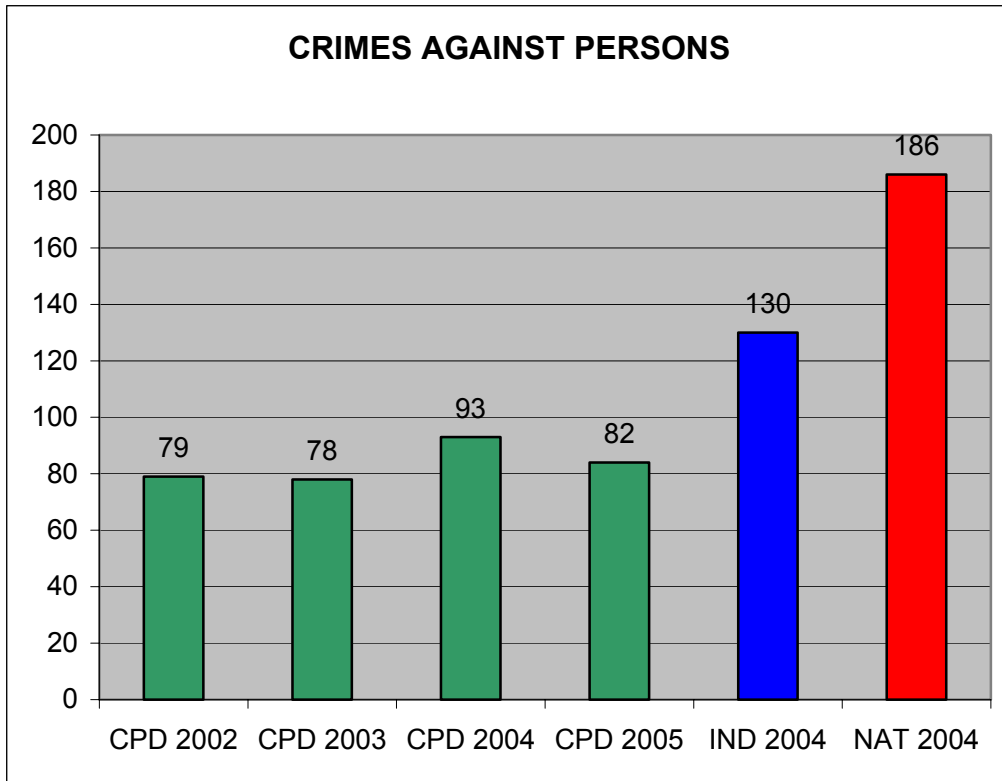
The charts shown on the next few pages show several things. The bars in **green** show data based on crime statistics here in Columbus. Each chart shows four years of data to reflect current crime trends in Columbus. The **blue** bar shows the latest data from cities our size (39,000 population) in Indiana. The **red** bar shows what cities of our size, across the country, are reporting for their Part I offenses.

The statistics reflected in this report are based on data gathered from the FBI's Uniform Crime Report. Each incident reflects crimes **reported** to police which follow strict guidelines established by the FBI. If a crime is determined to be unfounded then the figures are amended. These figures do not reflect the final disposition of the reported crime (charges filed, not filed, convictions etc.)

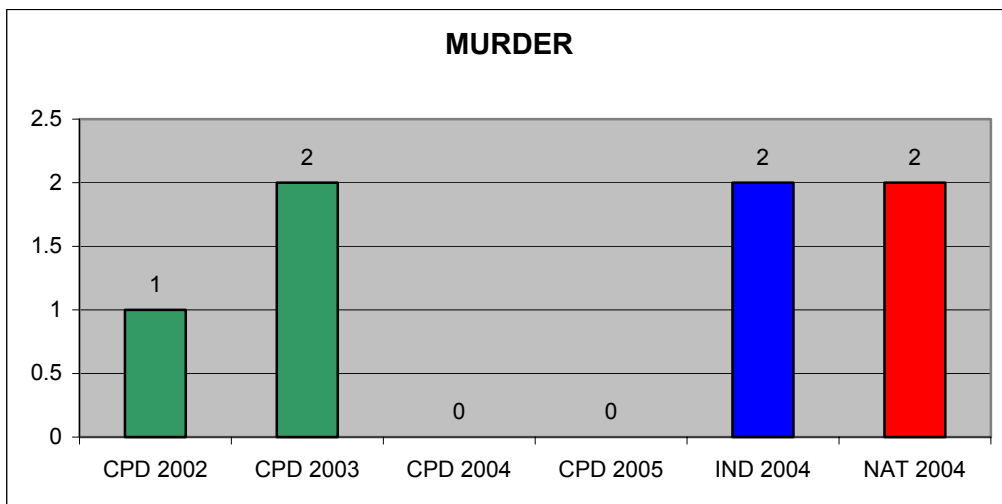
This graph shows all seven Part I offenses. While we are still higher than the State and National levels, this can be attributed to our higher rate of Theft, which will be described later in this report.



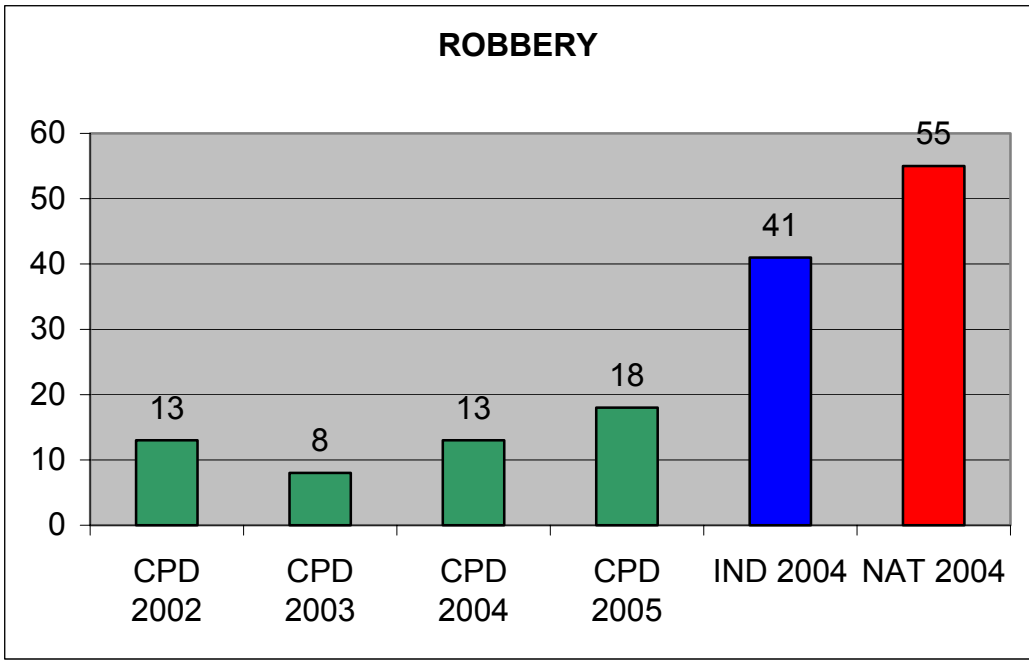
The four-year trend in Columbus for all Part I offenses shows little change between '02 and '05. We are still considerably higher than the State or National figures due to our Theft totals. The increase between '03 and '04 is based primarily on increases in Thefts.



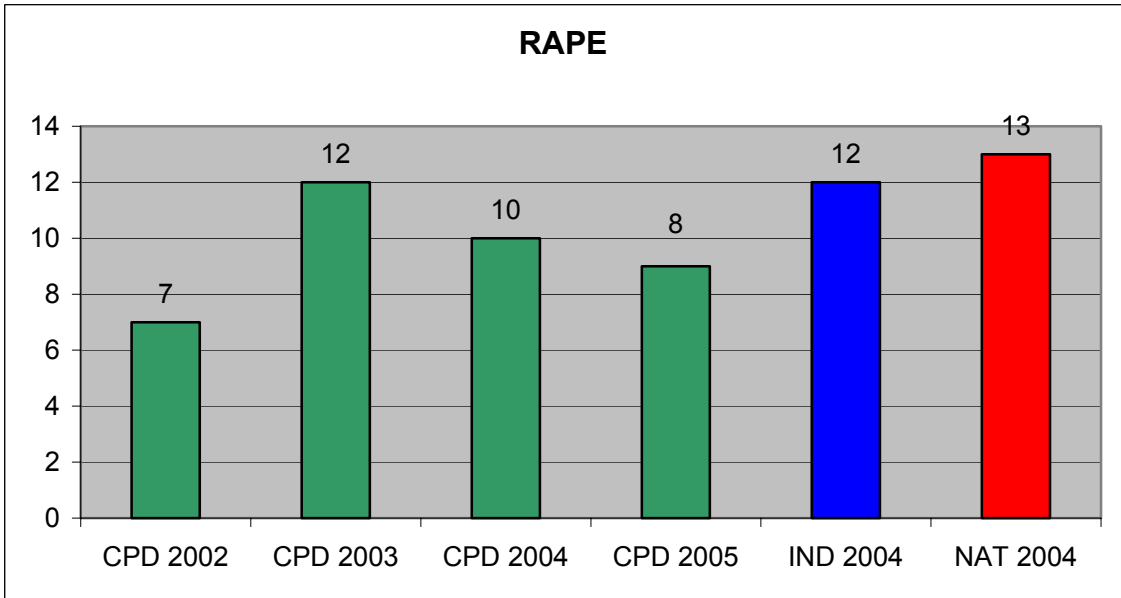
This graph shows the combined data of the four Crimes Against Persons (Murder, Rape, Robbery and Aggravated Assault). These crimes, plus Burglary and Motor Vehicle Theft, were the basis of the “safest city” study. Columbus fairs very well as compared to similar size cities in the State (37% less) and Nationally (56% less).



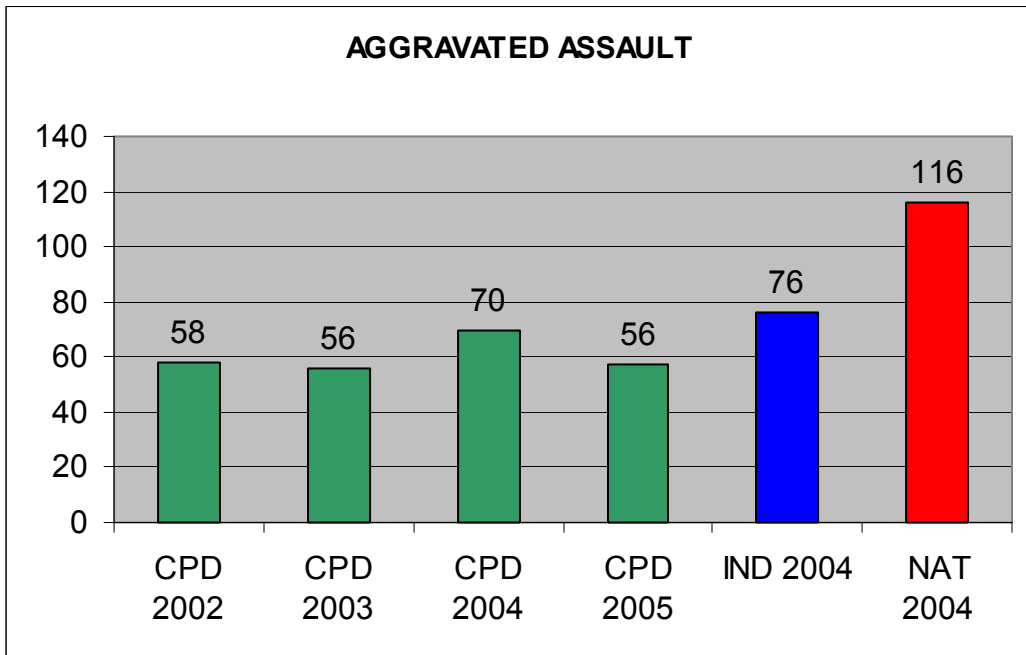
The Murder rate in Columbus has not exceeded State or National trends and is generally less than the listed rates for comparative cities. Columbus did not experience a homicide in 2005. We have managed to go two years in a row without a murder.



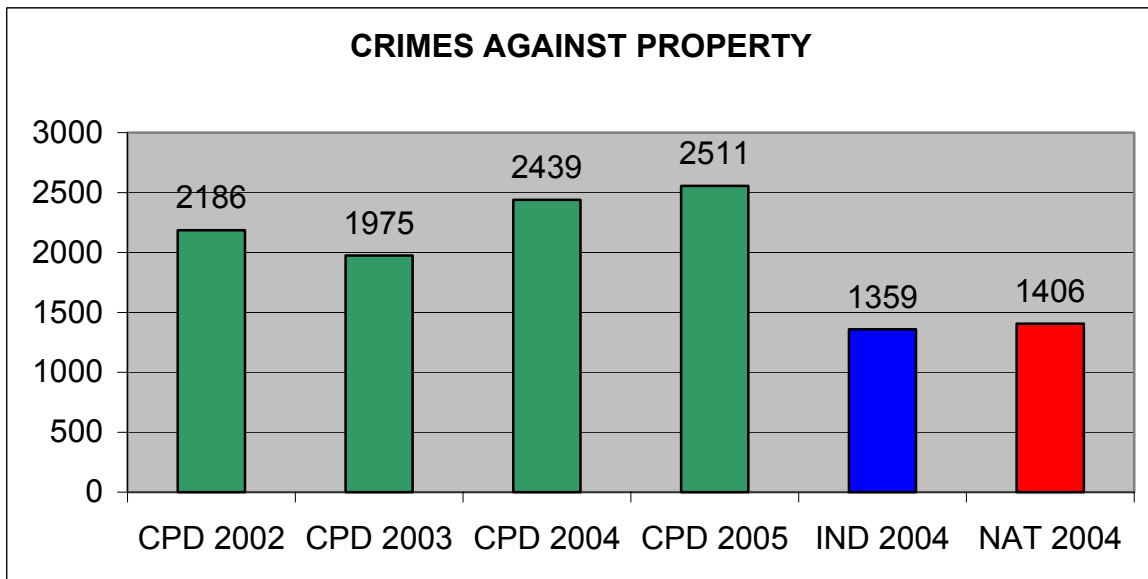
When comparing the number of Robberies in Columbus to State (56% less) and National (67% less) it is clear that Columbus is a much safer place to live. Robbery is defined as the taking of property from someone through force or the threat of force.



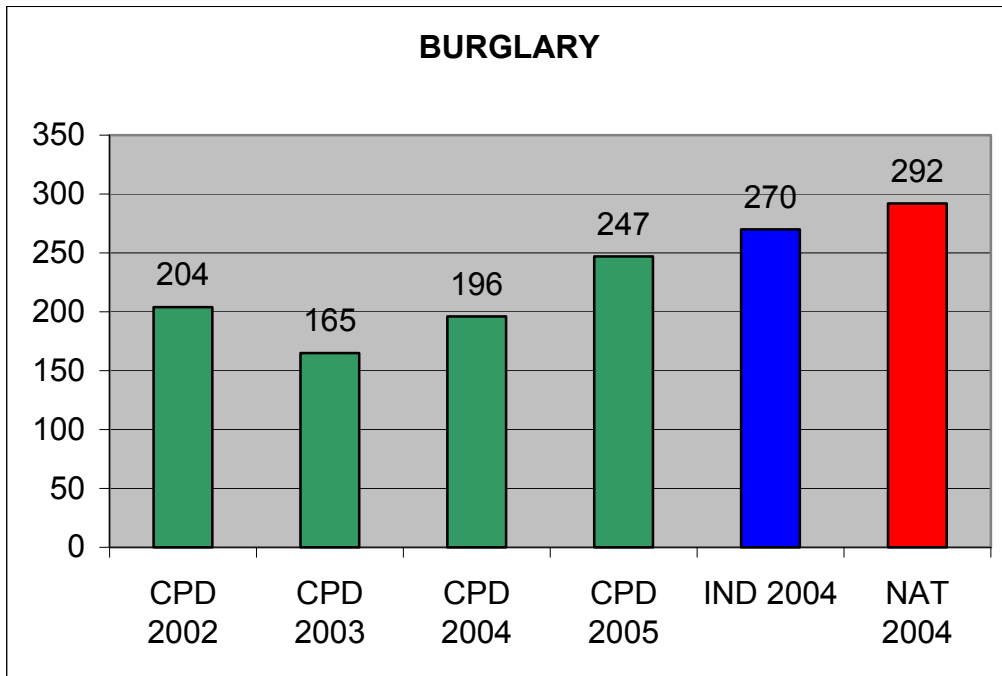
There were fewer Rapes in 2005 than in 2004. Columbus is slightly better than the State average (33%) and approximately 38% better than cities our size nationwide.



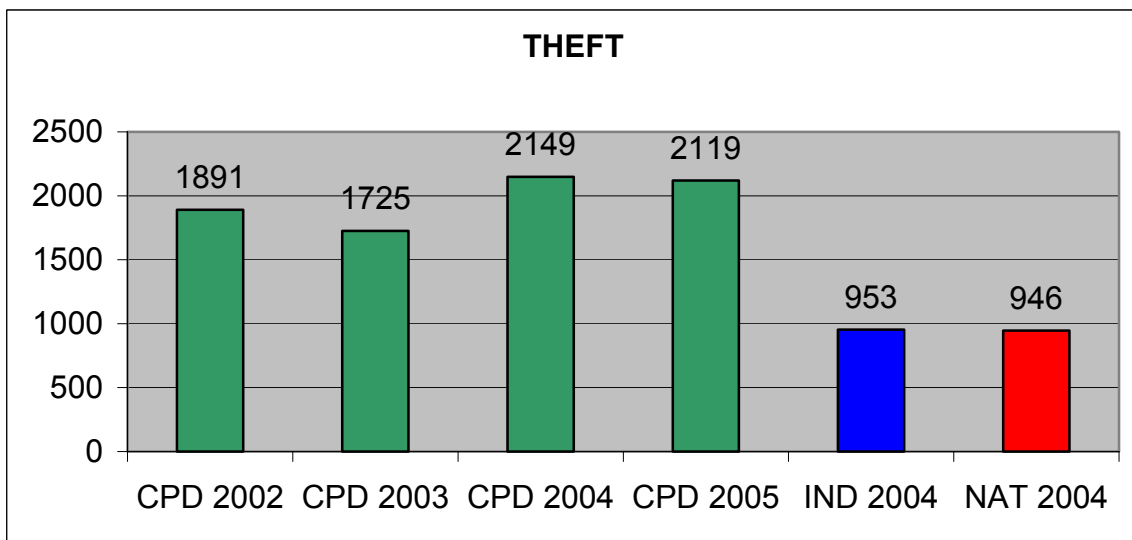
The four-year trend for Aggravated Assaults in Columbus shows little change in the last four years. We are still considerably safer than other cities in the State (26% less) or National (52% less).



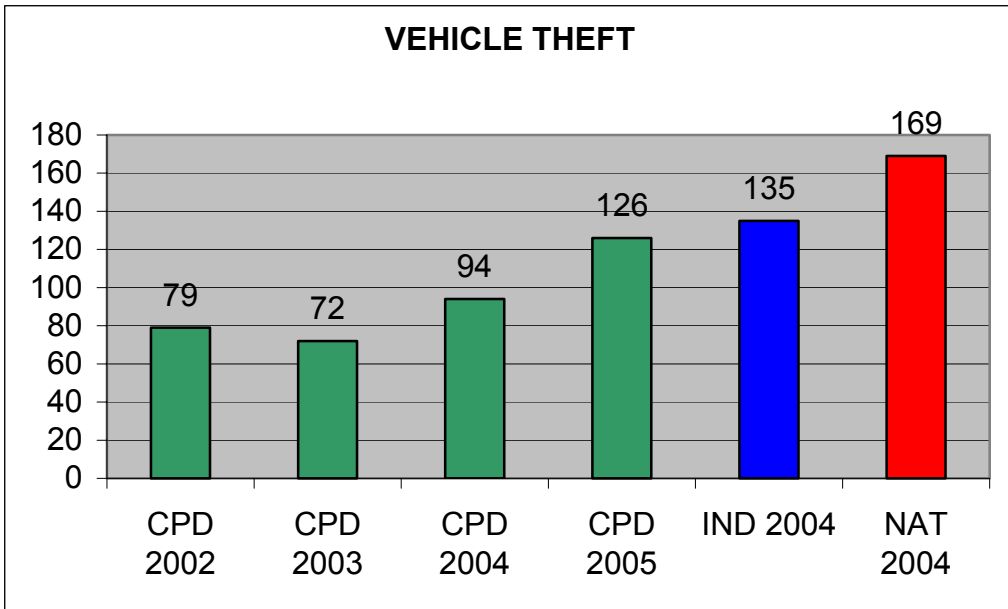
There are three crimes that make up Crimes Against Property: Burglary, Theft and Motor Vehicle Theft. As described in the Part I Crimes section, our numbers here are much higher due to Theft. This number also includes 19 arsons.



The rates reported by the State (less 9%) and National (less 15%) are also very positive in this category of crime.



Our numbers are still much higher than State (55% higher) or National (54%). As you can see we are down from last year.



The rate of auto theft is much less than other areas of the State (7% less) or National (25% less).

CLOSING

The beginning of this report detailed the goals and accomplishments for 2005. Positive changes within the Department will ensure that the quality of the service that we provide will never go stale.

In 2004 we put together a Steering Committee to assist the Department in setting both short and long term goals. The officers who volunteered for this group offered some great ideas on improving our Department. These Steering Committees continue to provide the leadership of the Department with new ideas. Here are a few of their ideas and the status of those projects:

1. Physical Fitness Standards: In August of this year we did our base line testing for our Physical Fitness Policy. Stanard and Associates conducted the testing. The Captains Board is in the process of finalizing the policy to be enacted by the Spring of 2006
2. Drug Screening: Mandatory drug screening was a goal for our Department in 2005 and is still a goal of our Department in '06
3. Digital Cameras: In 2005 we were able to outfit 33 of our officers with digital cameras. We hope to be able to finish outfitting our officers in 2006. We are also reviewing digital video systems for the police cars. Digital systems are more reliable and the quality of the video is much better. In 2006 we will start outfitting our police vehicles with digital video.
4. In Car Computers: In 2006 we will be looking to upgrade our computers that we use in our patrol vehicles. The computers in our police cars now are 6 years old and we are looking to start replacing some of them in 2006
5. In 2005 we will be starting Online Child Protection Investigations. This is a growing area of concern among law enforcement agencies. With the growth of the Internet and online talk groups our children are more at risk than ever before. We will be working with prosecutors and other local law enforcement agencies to better protect our children from online predators. We will be sending one of our officers to Washington, DC to be trained in this area of investigation.

The Columbus Police Department would once again like to thank all the citizens of Columbus who supported our Department in 2005. While we are extremely proud of our accomplishments this year, our eyes are on the future. The Columbus Police Department will continue our partnership with the citizens of Columbus in an effort to better serve and protect the community.