



Fort Bragg Police Department Annual Report 2016

Fabian E. Lizarraga
Chief of Police



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City Council



Mayor
Lindy Peters



Vice Mayor
Dave Turner



Councilmember
Michael Cimolino



Councilmember
Scott Deitz



Councilmember
Doug Hammerstrom



Councilmember
Bernie Norvell

Mission Statement
Fort Bragg is a small town with a strong sense of community that seeks to preserve its natural beauty while providing exceptional public facilities and infrastructure, safe streets, and a well-planned framework for sustainable development and prosperity.



Councilmember
Will Lee

The Fort Bragg City Council meets on the second and fourth Mondays of every month at 6:00 p.m. at Town Hall, 363 N. Main Street, Fort Bragg, California. The public is encouraged to attend and participate in City Council meetings.



Message from the City Manager



Message from the City Manager:

The Fort Bragg Police Department plays a central role in protecting and enhancing the quality of life in our community. On a daily basis, our police officers work diligently to ensure that Fort Bragg remains safe. They are responsible for even-handedly enforcing the laws and promptly dealing with calls for service. Fort Bragg is a small town with a small police force and, consequently, all of our officers are required to perform a complex array of tasks. Our officers respond to accidents and emergencies, investigate crimes, patrol the streets, respond to complaints, work with local youth, and collaborate with the many agencies and institutions that serve our community.

A police officer's work is incredibly challenging. Fort Bragg's police officers contend with difficult and demanding situations every day, whether responding to a traffic accident, intervening in a domestic dispute, or investigating a serious crime. Our officers are well-trained, hard-working, and dedicated to serving the citizens of Fort Bragg. They have earned the strong support of the Fort Bragg City Council, the City Manager, fellow City employees, and a broad cross-section of our community.

This annual report summarizes the accomplishments of the Fort Bragg Police Department over the past year. It serves as a testament to the exceptional work performed by the Fort Bragg Police Department's sworn officers and non-sworn personnel. Our community is fortunate to have such a talented and committed police force.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Linda Ruffing".

Linda Ruffing, Fort Bragg City Manager



Message from the Chief of Police



Message from the Chief of Police:

Calendar year 2016 saw a lot of incentives and programs established and brought back. We were able to implement a K-9 Unit with the assistance of the Mendocino County Public Safety Foundation, and now have two dogs and their handlers fully trained and operational at our disposal. Using Asset Forfeiture funds, the Emergency Operations Center was refurbished into a working Command Center with work stations for every essential function during a crisis. Asset Forfeiture also allowed us to purchase three Electric Motorcycles. We are using these to help us patrol the coastal trails as well as City streets. The motorcycles were purchased because they allow us to respond quickly to town if we're out on the trails, as well as being environmentally safe and friendly. We submitted and were subsequently awarded a grant from the Department of Justice to purchase Body Worn Cameras. 2017 will see full implementation of this program. The Department obtained a Drone for use during Search and Rescue off our bluffs as well as monitoring the trails and for use at community events. Also, during 2016 we re-established the Cadet Program which saw 10 of our youths complete the basic training and have started working with our officers at community events throughout the City. Two of our officers successfully completed training to be members of the Regional County SWAT team and have participated in many callouts.

Throughout the implementation of these programs, members of the Department have continued to give service to the community in a more effective manner in order to improve the quality of life of all our residents. We have committed and dedicated officers and support personnel that are willing and able to help any of our residents in need of service.

The year 2016 was a tumultuous and turbulent time for those of us in law enforcement. While Police Agencies across the State and the Country saw a slew of anti-police sentiment, the members of the Fort Bragg community continually expressed their support and appreciation of the members of the Fort Bragg Police Department. Every one of us is grateful and recognize our duty to continue to give our residents the police service they have come to expect and deserve.

From top to bottom, the members of the Fort Bragg Police Department will continue to take on challenges, work hard and establish more partnerships with you, our community, to ensure the best quality of life possible for all of the Fort Bragg Community.

Sincerely,

Fabian E. Lizarraga



Mission Statement



The Fort Bragg Police Department is committed to providing excellence in police service to all segments of our Community. Acting under the tenet of Respect and Dignity for all, we strive to impact and improve the quality of life for families, the business community and visitors. We work in partnership with all segments of our community so that, together, we achieve a better standard of life by which our residents can live in an environment without the fear of crime.





Department Summary



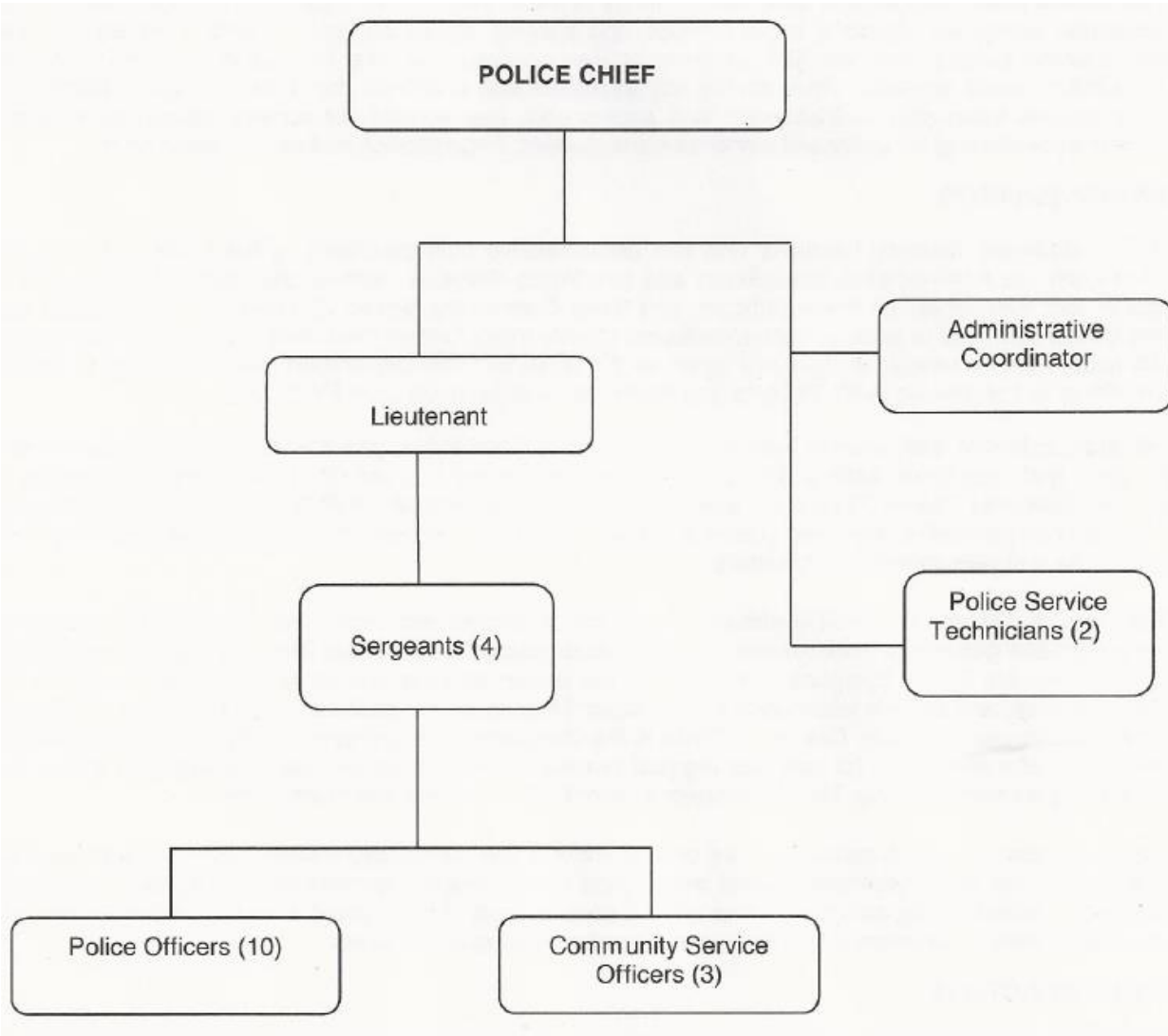
The Fort Bragg Police Department is made of up 22 full-time employees. Chief Fabian Lizarraga, Lieutenant Charles Gilchrist, Administrative Coordinator Debbie Desmond, Police Service Technician/Records Supervisor Sally Provencher and Police Service Technician/Property & Evidence Tech Lesley Bryant make up the Administrative Division. Along with administrative responsibilities, the Administrative Division is responsible for records management, property and evidence management, Live Scan services and other duties. The Operations Division is comprised of 4 Sergeants, 10 sworn Police Officers, and 3 Community Service Officers. The Operations Division is tasked with handling all items related to the enforcement of laws.

The Fort Bragg Police Department is the only law enforcement agency on the California coast between Eureka and the San Francisco Bay Area with sworn law enforcement officers on duty 24 hours per day. The Police Department is divided into 4 teams, each working 12-hour shifts. Police Officers respond to a variety of calls for service, including criminal and non-criminal incidents. Examples of criminal incidents include assault/battery, domestic violence, burglaries and public intoxication. Examples of non-criminal incidents include non-DUI traffic collisions, civil disputes, and landlord-tenant disputes.





Organizational Chart





Program and Personnel Review



Parking Enforcement:

Local community member Valerie Thornton was chosen as the top candidate for the seasonal temporary Parking Enforcement Officer for 2016. Valerie was chosen for several reasons, but some of her stronger hiring attributes were her deeply rooted family ties to the community and a strong knowledge of the streets and geography of Fort Bragg. Valerie began training on May 18, 2016, and began performing the duties of parking enforcement just a couple weeks later. The position continued until October 2016, once the weather had changed dramatically and the numbers of visitors to the coast had tapered off. Valerie did an excellent job of performing the duties and representing the Police Department and City of Fort Bragg overall. Valerie was encouraged to maintain her connection with the Police Department during the winter months, with the possibility of returning for the 2017 spring/summer season, and continuing with the position of Seasonal Parking Enforcement Attendant.



Program and Personnel Review



E-Motorcycle Program:

With the expansion of the Coastal Trail project and increased demand for more routine patrol in City parks, streets and alleys, a recommendation to deploy officers on motorcycles was made. With approval from administration, research began to identify the most suitable equipment to satisfy the needs of the Department and make an appealing impression to the community. Zero Electric Motorcycles were chosen and the Department purchased three of fully-equipped, environmentally-friendly and economical units. The motorcycle units were initially deployed and debuted during the City's Coastal Trail Celebration in May 2016. The e-motorcycles have been a big success, and have captured the interest and attention of numerous citizens and visitors. Three officers were selected to operate the e-motorcycles, and after being sent to a rigorous training session, each of the officers was assigned an e-motorcycle which has been utilized to perform their duties at various times throughout the remainder of the drier months of 2016.



Program and Personnel Review



Police Cadet Program:

The Fort Bragg Police Cadet Program was resurrected and implemented thanks to the untiring efforts of Officer Thomas O'Neal. When tasked with the challenge of preparing and launching the Cadet Program, Officer O'Neal set out to recruit and enlist youth from all over the community. The Cadet Program launched in October of 2016, and training was conducted for four consecutive Sundays. The first phase of training was completed just before the holiday season. The Cadet Program was then scheduled to continue with more training and activity after the start of the 2017 year. The program began with 12 cadets, and has sustained 10 cadets through the completion of the first phase.



Program and Personnel Review



Fleet Update:

In 2016, the Police Department continued to update its somewhat antiquated fleet. Two new marked Police Interceptor SUVs were added to its patrol fleet, along with new unmarked Interceptor SUV's for the Police Chief and Police Lieutenant. In addition to the SUVs, the Department took advantage of some surplus sedan vehicles that the fleet provider had in their inventory. Two Ford Taurus Police Interceptors were purchased to supplement the Community Service Officer vehicle pool, and the Department's regular unmarked vehicle pool. All of these vehicles were added to the Police Department fleet to replace several vehicles that were in excess of 10 years old.



Program and Personnel Review



Newly Hired Employees:

Community Service Officer Crystal Rowley successfully completed the testing and hiring phases of employment and began formal Field Training in October of 2016. CSO Rowley is another locally-recruited Department member who has shown interest in the law enforcement profession for several years. Upon successful completion of Field Training, CSO Rowley became the third Community Service Officer for the Police Department. Police Officer Michael Herringshaw came to the Fort Bragg Police Department from the Lake County area. Officer Herringshaw completed the Santa Rosa Law Enforcement earlier in 2016.



Program and Personnel Review



Drone Program:

In 2016, the Police Department purchased a quad-copter style drone. The drone's primary intended purposes are: disaster preparedness and response, search and rescue, and public events. The drone was deployed at various events throughout the year and assisted in surveying the damage to city property when the Pudding Creek Dam suffered damage due to flooding.



Program and Personnel Review



SWAT:

In May of 2016, Officer Wesley Rafanan and Officer Anthony Melendez tested for the Mendocino County multi-agency Special Weapons and Tactics (S.W.A.T.) Team. Both Officers did very well on the test which included an assessment of their physical ability and their shooting ability. Officer Rafanan had previously been on the team and attended S.W.A.T. training. Officer Melendez, a new addition to the team, will attend S.W.A.T. training as soon as possible. Updated equipment including weapons has been procured for the team members and they are actively participating in monthly training. In their short time on the team, they have already been involved in several high risk operations, including a barricaded gunman.



Program and Personnel Review



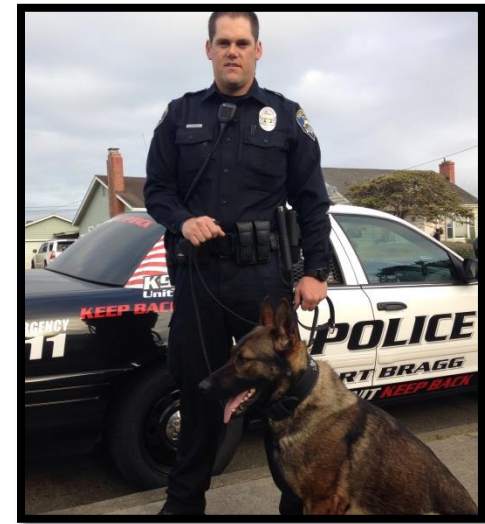
CANINE PROGRAM:

The Fort Bragg Police Department had a busy year and brought back some exciting programs to the Department. The Police K9 program was instituted in early February. Funding was obtained through the Mendocino County Public Safety Foundation. Once the funding was secured and a K9 was located at CJ's Police K9s, a selection process was conducted to find a K9 handler. Officer Brandon McGregor was selected as the new K9 handler. The Department purchased K9 Takoda in early February and Officer McGregor set off to K9 handler school. Sergeant Andrew Kendl was selected as the K9 program manager/supervisor. Sergeant Kendl was sent to K9 Program Management School in March.

After completing K9 School, Officer McGregor and Takoda were ready to be deployed. In the very first week, Officer McGregor and Takoda were called upon to help locate a fleeing felon. Within minutes of arrival, K9 Takoda located the suspect hiding in the bushes.

With the success of the re-implementing of the K9 program, Chief Lizarraga and Lieutenant Gilchrist moved forward with adding a second K9 team. Sergeant Kendl contacted the Mendocino County Public Safety Foundation and they generously funded a second K9 team. Shortly after the approval, K9 Maverick was purchased and assigned to Sergeant Kendl.

Both K9 teams are active in the community, conducting foot patrols and K9 demonstrations at the school and local events. Both K9 teams are very friendly and are willing to meet new people.





Community Involvement



Coast Police Activities League Bicycle Rodeo

Officers work with the youth in our community teaching them the rules of the road and safe habits when riding their bicycles on our local streets. One of the goals of the Bicycle Rodeo is to teach children good bicycle safety. Free helmets are given out by the Police Department to any child who needs one.



Coast Police Activities League Fishing Clinic

Shown here are youth from our community getting an opportunity to fish in a local pond during the annual Police Activities League Fishing Clinic. The Fish and Wildlife Department stocks the pond, then along with other law enforcement members, help the children with their catch!



Coast Police Activities League Christmas Party

Every year staff from the Fort Bragg Police Department participate in the Coast Police Activities League Christmas Party. The children at this event are presented with a multitude of craft activities and a variety of games to play.



Community Involvement



Take Back Event

The Police Department participated in the annual Take Back Event in cooperation with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). This event was successful in removing a great deal of potentially dangerous drugs and substances from our community. The Department has a "Red Box" to collect unused, expired and unwanted drugs throughout the year.



Fire Safety Day

Each year the Police Department joins many other agencies such as the Fire Department, CalFire, Mendocino County Sheriff's Office, Fish and Wildlife, CalStar and PG&E on Fire and Safety Day. This event is usually held at Timberwolf Stadium and is open to all 3rd, 4th and 5th graders at Dana Gray School who are taught various safety tips throughout the day.



National Night Out

National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make our neighborhoods a safer, better place to live. The Police Department had a hot dog BBQ at the Police Station. Other celebrations were held at Bainbridge Park and various neighborhood locations throughout the community.



Community Involvement



Big River Run

The Police Department participated in the annual Police Activities League's Big River Run. Employees assisted as monitors at various checkpoints throughout the event.



Day in the Park

The Police Department held the annual Day in The Park event at Bainbridge Park. It drew over 400 people and everyone enjoyed the day, despite the foul weather conditions.



Special Olympics Basketball

Every year various Police Department employees volunteer to participate in the Special Olympics basketball tournament held at the Fort Bragg High School. The event is always enjoyed by all.



Community Involvement



Chili Cook Off

This will be the first year the Police Department made an entry into the annual chili cook-off put on by the Fort Bragg Food Bank. We will re-enter in 2017 and hopefully take home the prize!



EOC Open House

The Police Department hosted and participated in the open house session of our Emergency Operations Center. The EOC will be activated in the event of an emergency or disaster as a command center for the City.

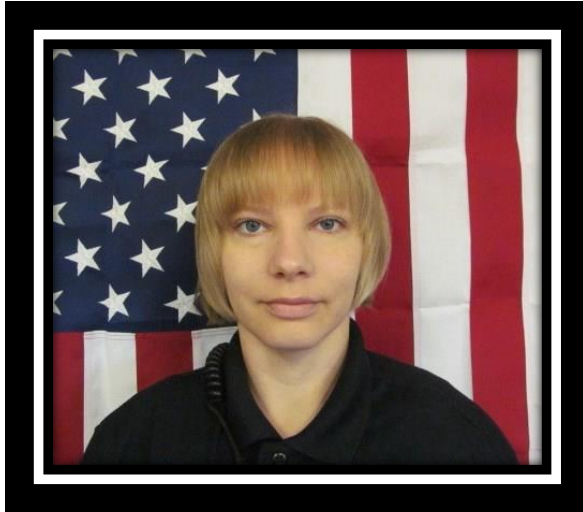


Whale Run

This year, the Police Department not only provided traffic control and security for the annual Whale Run, but participated as well. Numerous members walked or ran in the event.



Employee Recognition



Community Service Officer Crystal Rowley

Community Service Officer Rowley began her career with the Fort Bragg Police Department on 10/17/16. She completed her initial training at the Santa Rosa Junior College Public Safety Training Center on 12/14/16. CSO Rowley is currently in the Field Training Program. CSO Rowley was raised in Fort Bragg and is very excited to be working in the field of law enforcement.



Officer Michael Herringshaw

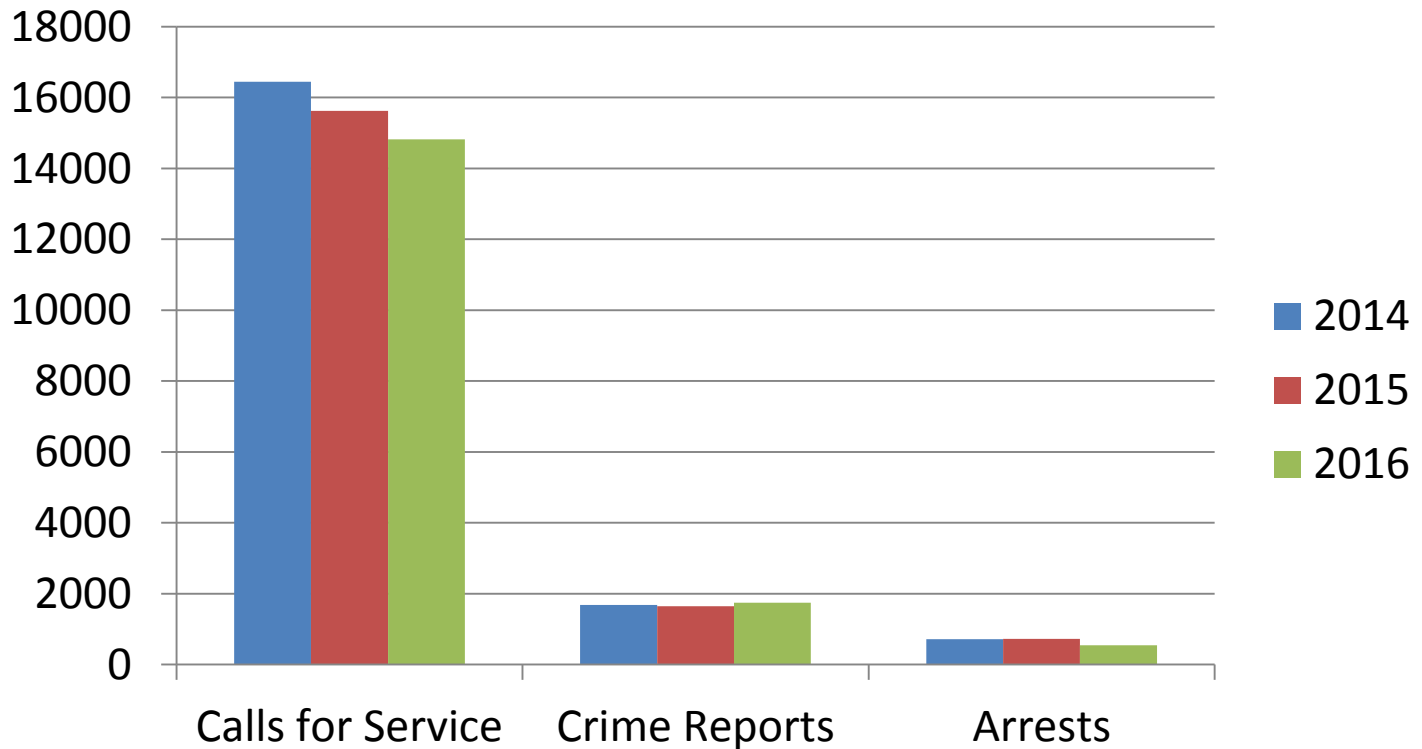
Officer Herringshaw began his career with the Fort Bragg Police Department on 11/28/16. He graduated from the College of the Redwoods Public Safety Academy on 06/16/16. Officer Herringshaw is currently in the Field Training Program. Officer Herringshaw was born and raised in Lake County and looks forward to his future in law enforcement.



Calls for Service/Reports/Arrests



In 2014, Fort Bragg Police Officers responded to a total of 16,350 calls for service and wrote 1,681 Crime Reports associated with those calls for service, which resulted in 721 arrests. In 2015, Fort Bragg Police Officers responded to a total of 15,629 calls for service and wrote 1,643 Crime Reports associated with those calls for service, which resulted in 722 arrests. In 2016, Fort Bragg Police Officers responded to a total of 14,819 calls for service and wrote 1,749 Crime Reports associated with those calls for service, which resulted in 548 arrests.



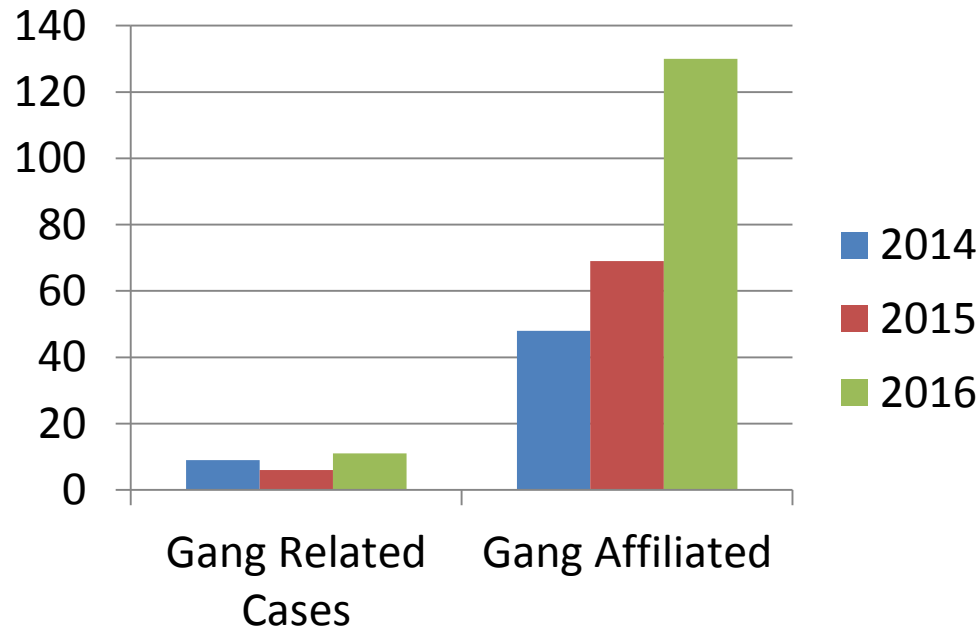


Gang Crime



Criminal Street Gangs present a threat to the safety of law enforcement and the community alike. Criminal Street Gangs are responsible for drug sales and trafficking, weapons violations, property crimes for the benefit of the gang, and violence against citizenry, law enforcement and rival gang members.

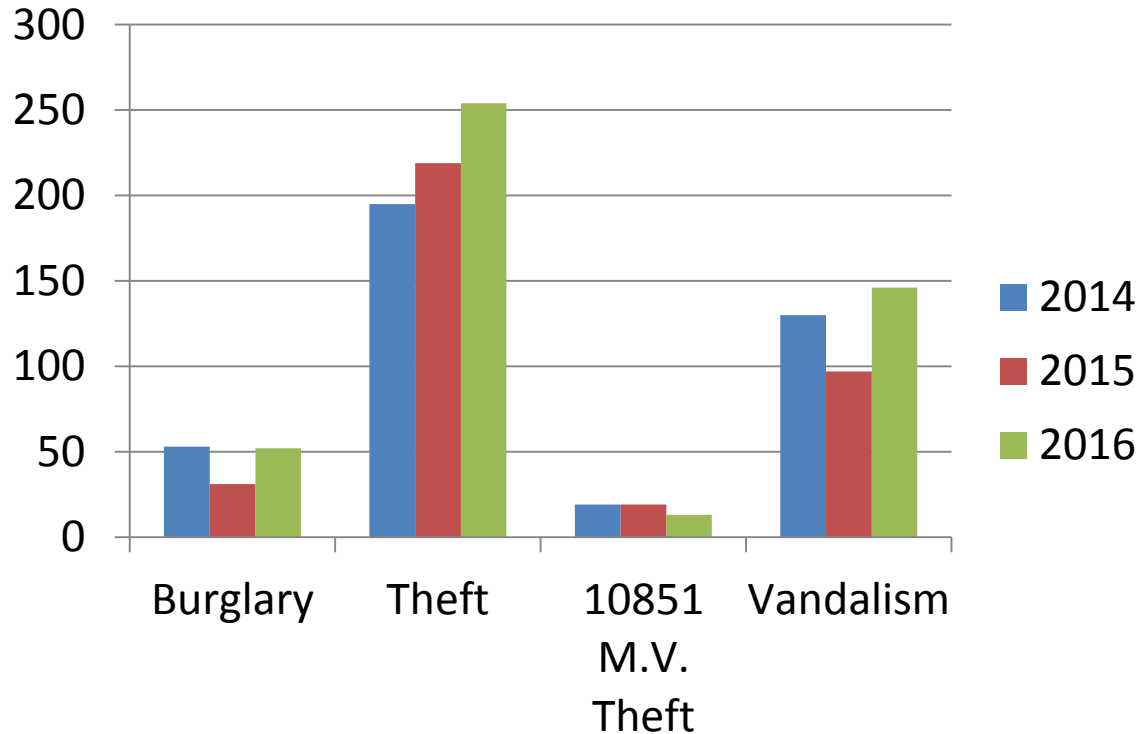
The Fort Bragg Police Department, in conjunction with local allied agencies, participates in the Multi-Agency Gang Suppression Unit (MAGSU). Statistics of reports taken for gang related crimes in 2016 are as follows:





Property Crime

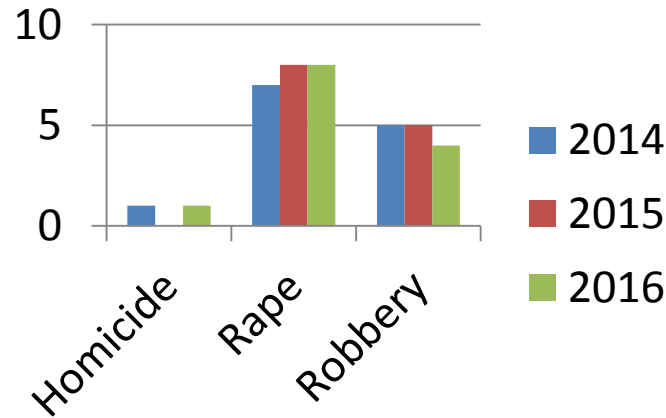
The Fort Bragg Police Department reviews the data of problem areas where community members report activities or conditions that could lead to criminal activity. Fort Bragg Police Officers conduct frequent patrols of these areas throughout their shifts and whenever time permits. These “Extra Patrols” serve as a pro-active method for catching in-progress crimes and deterring would-be criminals. Reports taken for Burglaries, Thefts, and Vandalisms from years 2014 through 2016 are as follows:



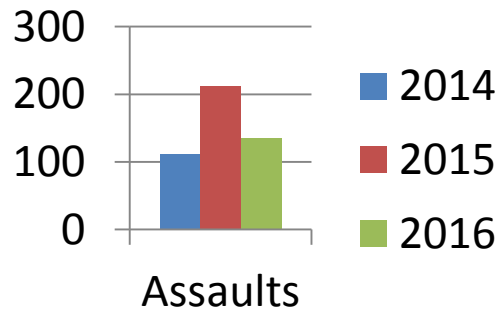


Crimes against Persons

Over the last three years, the City of Fort Bragg remained a safe place to live. There was one homicide in 2016 which has been solved and resulted in an arrest. Robberies remained at five. Reported rapes increased by one. Reports taken for Murder, Manslaughter, Rape, and Robbery from the 2014 through 2016 are as follows:



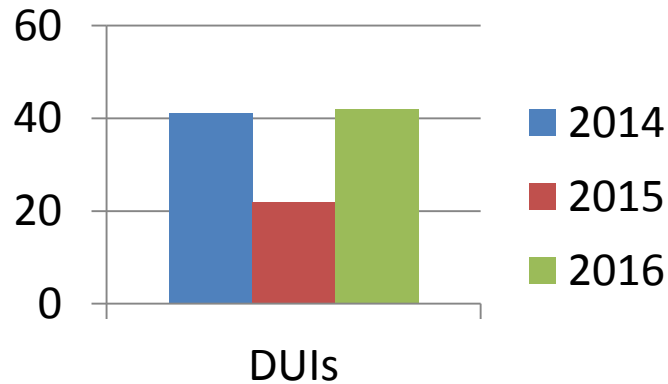
Assaults can refer to many different types of crimes against persons, including but not limited to gang fighting, simple or aggravated battery and domestic violence assaults. There was a slight decrease from the previous year. Reports taken for assaults from years 2014 through 2016 are as follows:





D.U.I. Arrests

The Fort Bragg Police Department initiates traffic stops on traffic safety violators with the purpose of education and enforcement. During these stops, drivers are evaluated for the potential of being under the influence of alcohol or other substances while operating their vehicle. Below are statistics for arrests related to driving under the influence from years 2014 through 2016 :





END