

# LESSONS LEARNED FROM LOSSES

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER – APRIL 2022

# POLICE VEHICLE SAFETY



The 2021 National Law Enforcement Memorial and Museum Law Enforcement Officers Fatalities Report recognized that 58 officers were killed in traffic incidents in 2021, a 38% increase from 2020. Of these 58 fatalities, 27 involved the officer being struck by a vehicle, which is an increase of 93% over the year 2020. It is clear that line of duty motor vehicle crashes remains a constant threat for law enforcement.

### **PLEASE CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING FOR THE SAFETY OF YOUR OFFICERS.**

- Make sure officers are wearing their seatbelts at all times inside the vehicle. It is estimated that half of all police officers suffering fatalities in a car crash were not wearing seatbelts.
- Roll Call Briefings reminding officers of the dangers and best practices
- Limit the amount of time the officer is sitting in the police car on the side of the road.
- Limit equipment in the car. Make sure it is properly secured and if it cannot be secured, relocate it or secure it in the trunk.

#### Examples:

- Officer stopped in the crosshatched median between opposing lanes of traffic to perform paperwork when a driver drifted into this area striking the patrol vehicle. The officer suffered upper back and shoulder injuries resulting in pain management, injections and physical therapy and ultimately surgery for the shoulder, even though he was wearing a seatbelt at the time. The total costs on this claim to this point are a little over \$135,000. Even though this accident is not the fault of the officer, it could have likely been avoided by picking a safer location to perform this work.