

Peace
Corps



The 2002
Annual Report
of **Volunteer
Safety**

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The 2002 Annual Report of Volunteer Safety

Overview

Working to maximize the safety and security of our Volunteers is the top priority of the Peace Corps.

In 2002, a separate Office of Safety and Security was established by the Peace Corps director. The mission of the office is to foster improved communication, coordination, oversight, and accountability for all of the Peace Corps' safety and security efforts. One of the responsibilities of the Office of Safety and Security is to carefully track all assault events against Volunteers, and this annual Volunteer safety report provides summary statistics for calendar year 2002. It also provides information on trends over the previous six years in all three of the Peace Corps regions: the Africa region; the Inter-America and the Pacific (IAP) region; and the Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia region (EMA).¹ The twofold objective of the publication is to: (a) identify and analyze trends in safety conditions among in-service Volunteers; and (b) to provide useful feedback on the noted trends in an effort to support the training and education of Volunteers and staff.

The Peace Corps works in some of the least developed countries and in some of the most remote areas in the world. Our challenge is to operate the Peace Corps in a way that minimizes risks and maximizes security while also providing a meaningful experience for our Volunteers and their host communities. Given the environments in which we work, the following findings indicate that the Peace Corps has done well in meeting this challenge. The Peace Corps has seen a substantial decrease in major sexual assault events over the past six years and is pleased to see that this type of assault event is trending in the right direction—down by 30% since 1997. Major physical assault events, with minor fluctuations, have remained steady over the last six years. The Peace Corps will continue to track assault events on Volunteers and use this information to develop new policies, procedures, and training modules as well as assess the security environment of the three regions.

¹ These regions are described in detail in the Peace Corps' Congressional Budget Justification for fiscal year 2004.

Safety and Security: The Overarching Priority

Safety and security issues are fully integrated in all aspects of Volunteer recruitment, training, and service, with emphasis on taking personal responsibility at all times and assimilating into communities. Information provided throughout the process—to recruiters, on the recruitment website, in printed application materials, informational booklets and educational videos, and during a new two-day pre-departure orientation and the three-month in-country training—includes the key message that being a Volunteer involves risk. Volunteers can and are expected to adopt safe lifestyles, and the Peace Corps has an effective safety support system in place.

The Peace Corps uses four key elements in establishing and maintaining its safety and security framework for Volunteers and staff: data analysis, planning, training, and compliance. Safety and security information is tracked and analyzed on an ongoing basis. The data analysis is used to enhance existing policies or develop new policies and procedures, as needed. After careful planning, changes are integrated throughout the agency. The training of Volunteers includes the most up-to-date safety and security information available. Last, compliance is essential to ensure that safety and security measures are adhered to and remain a top priority over the course of time. Each of these components helps create a framework to safeguard the well-being of Volunteers and staff, enabling them to carry out the Peace Corps' mission.

Volunteers' Perception of Safety

In light of the priority the Peace Corps places on safety issues, it is helpful to consider the Volunteers' personal perception of safety conditions during their Peace Corps service. The 2002 Peace Corps Volunteer Survey was sent to all Peace Corps Volunteers to collect their feedback on the efficiency and effectiveness of Peace Corps operations. The survey is an anonymous, self-administered questionnaire and includes questions regarding issues such as training experiences, project assignments, and safety and security. Nearly all respondents to the questionnaire reported that they feel at least "adequately safe" where they live (97%) and where they work (99%). Most respondents (84%) reported that they also feel at least "adequately safe" when traveling.



Volunteer Survey: How safe do you feel in the following situations?

	“Very Safe” to “Adequately Safe”	“Often Unsafe” to “Not at All Safe”
Where You Live	97%	3%
Where You Work	99%	1%
When You Travel	84%	15%

Note: Totals may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Such responses reflect the Peace Corps’ efforts to give Volunteers the tools they need to enable them to function in the safest and most secure environment possible.

Office of Safety and Security

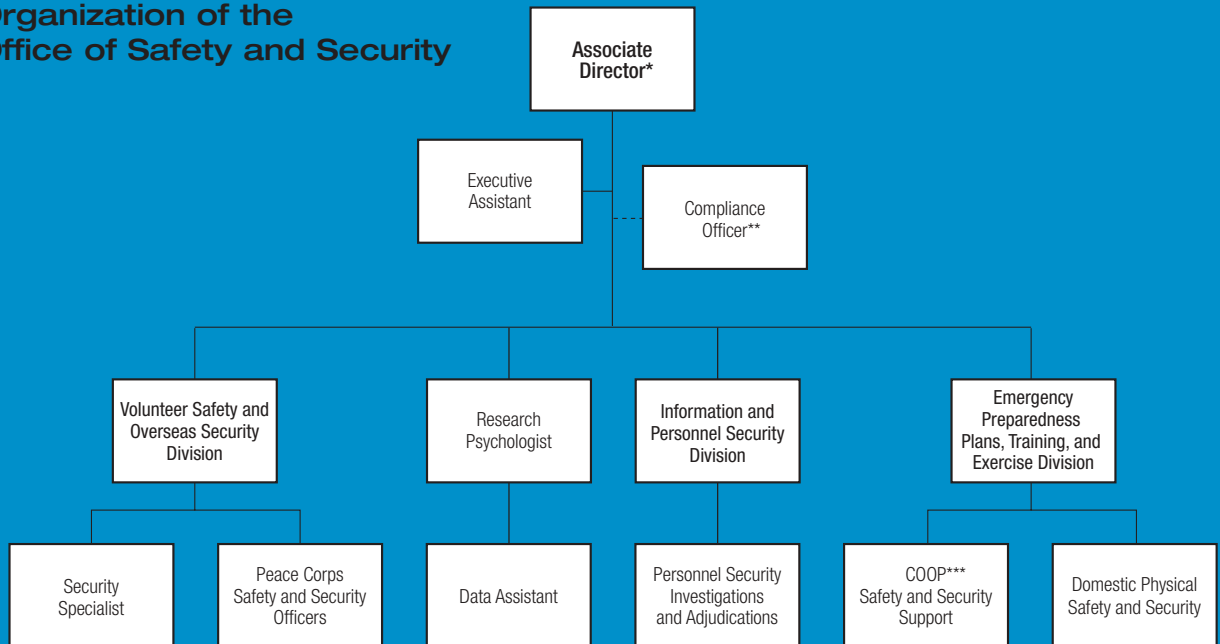
A separate Office of Safety and Security was established by the Peace Corps director in 2002. The mission of the office is to foster improved communication, coordination, oversight, and accountability for all of the Peace Corps’ safety and security efforts. The office is led by the Peace Corps associate director for safety and security, who reports to the director, and includes the following divisions: Volunteer safety and overseas security; information and personnel security; and emergency preparedness plans, training, and exercise.

In addition, two other positions were added in 2002 to further the mission of the office. A research psychologist is now working to enhance the office’s ability to track crime statistics, identify trends in criminal activity, and highlight potential safety risks to Volunteers. A chief compliance officer is charged with monitoring posts’ adherence to policies and procedures that were developed to ensure the safety and security of Volunteers.

Volunteer Safety and Overseas Security Division

The safety and security of Volunteers is the Peace Corps’ number one priority. This division coordinates the Office of Safety and Security’s overseas operations and directs the activities of the nine Peace Corps safety and security officers (PCSSOs). These PCSSOs provide support to country directors in their subregions in all areas of safety and security, with the assistance of three safety and security desk officers located at Peace Corps headquarters (one for each of the three regions—Africa; Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia; and Inter-America and the Pacific).

Organization of the Office of Safety and Security



* Reports to PC Director
 ** Reports to PC Director through Chief of Operations/Staff
 *** Continuity of Operations Plan

Information and Personnel Security Division

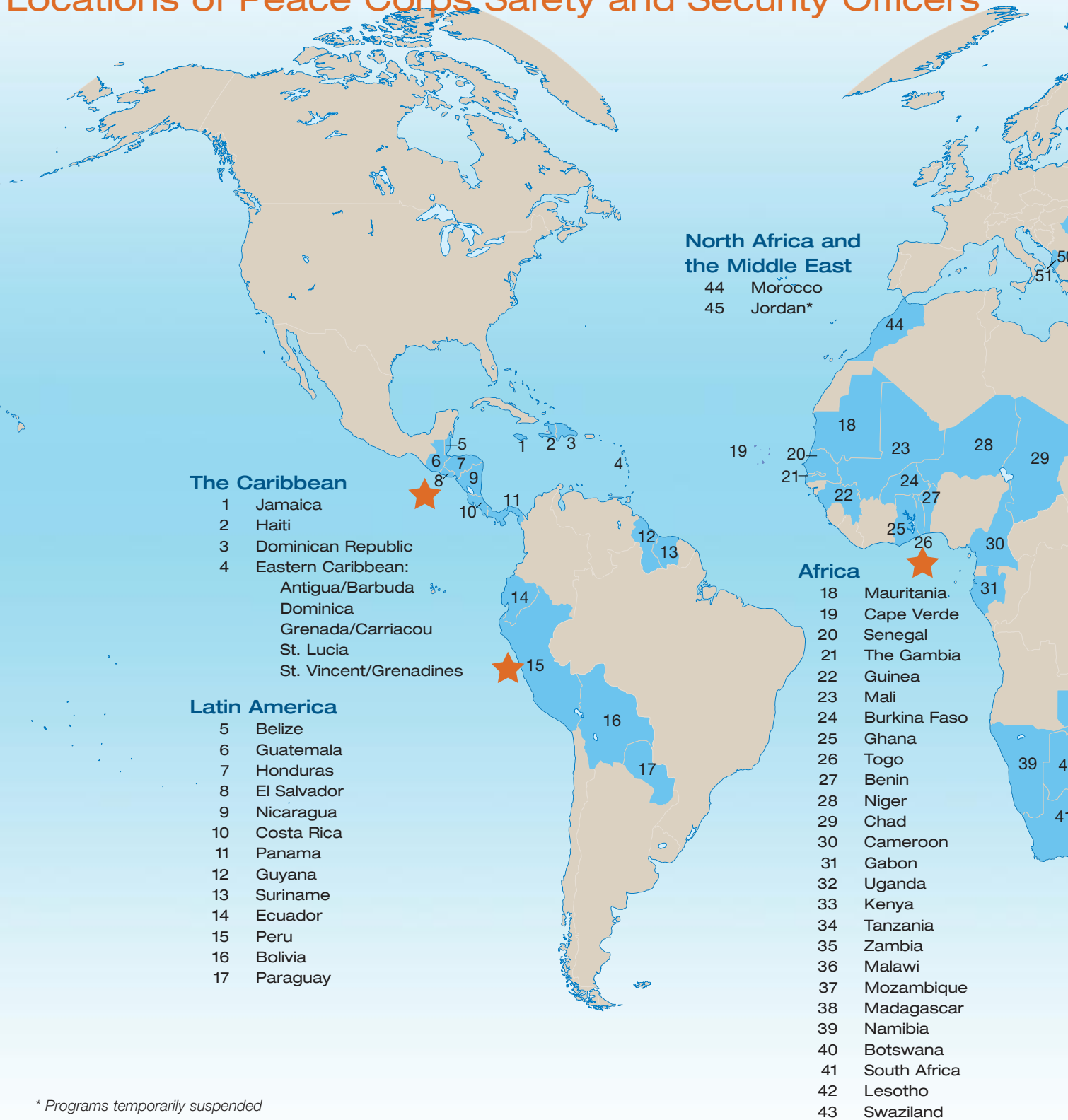
This division is responsible for maintaining classified information and staff training in the handling of such materials, which includes how to safeguard, prepare, store, and transmit classified data. The division also performs security background investigations for individuals seeking a security clearance or workplace access to Peace Corps headquarters.

Emergency Preparedness Plans, Training, and Exercise Division

This division oversees the development of a Continuity of Operations Plan in line with federal guidelines and manages all emergency preparedness plans and training for Peace Corps headquarters, the regional recruiting offices, and the situation room.

Countries Where Peace Corps Volunteers Serve

Locations of Peace Corps Safety and Security Officers

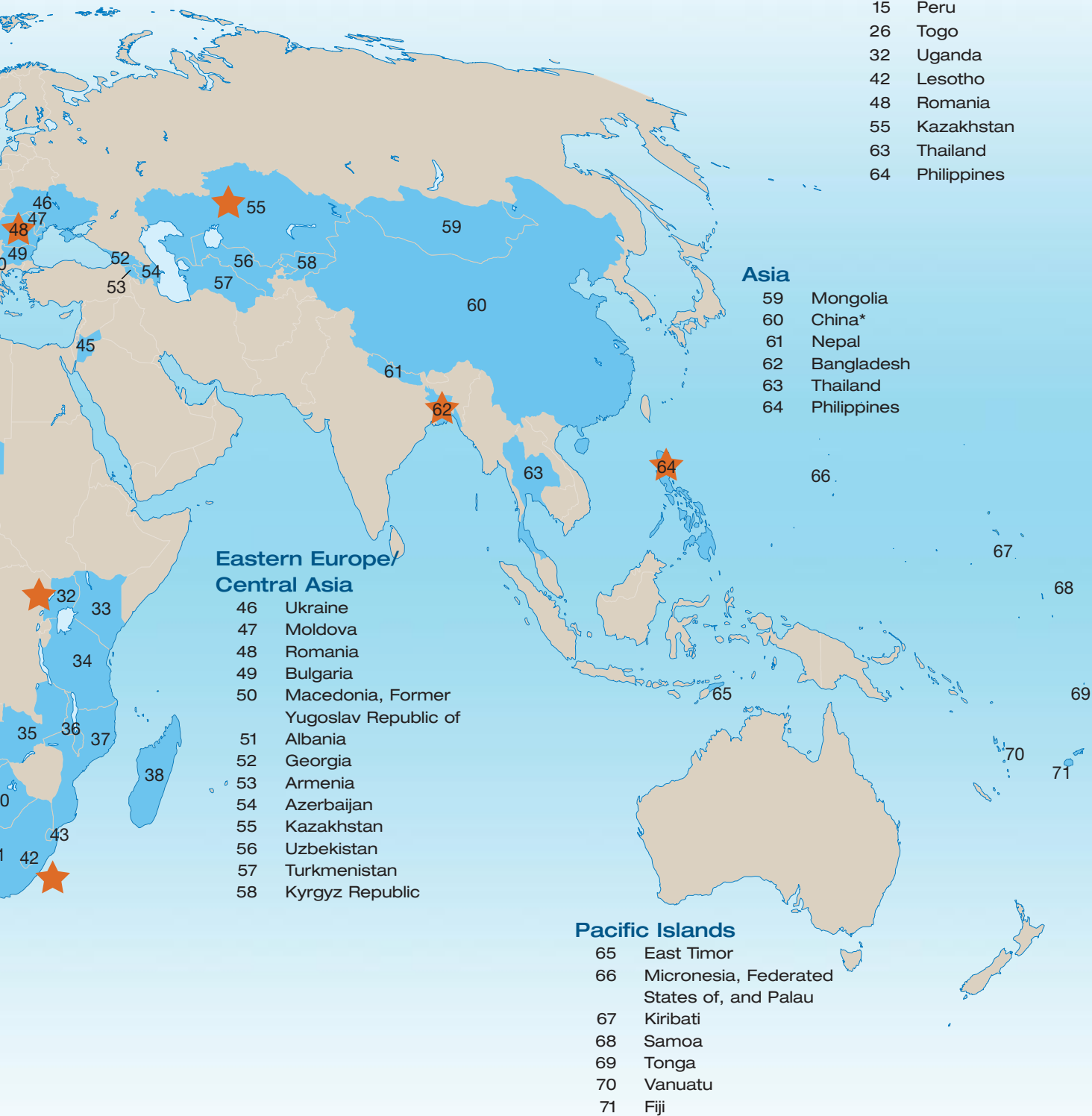


* Programs temporarily suspended


erve

★ Peace Corps
Safety and Security
Officers

- 8 El Salvador
- 15 Peru
- 26 Togo
- 32 Uganda
- 42 Lesotho
- 48 Romania
- 55 Kazakhstan
- 63 Thailand
- 64 Philippines



Each post will have a safety and security coordinator by the end of 2003.



The 2002
Annual Report
of **Volunteer
Safety**

Introduction

In the Peace Corps' 42-year history 170,000 Volunteers have served in 136 countries, almost always under conditions of hardship. The Peace Corps works in some of the least developed countries and in some of the most remote areas in the world. Health, safety, and security risks are an unavoidable aspect of volunteer service. Our challenge is to operate the Peace Corps in a way that minimizes risks and maximizes security while also providing a meaningful experience for our Volunteers and their host communities. Given the environments in which we work, the following findings indicate that the Peace Corps has done well in meeting this challenge.

In 2002, unless otherwise noted, incidence is reported using events per 100 Volunteer/Trainee-Years (V/T-Years) as the denominator. V/T-Years is a measure of person-time that accounts for both the number of Volunteers (PCVs) and the length of time each PCV is at risk for a safety event. Each Volunteer contributes only as much person-time (V/T-Years) to the population at risk for a safety event as he or she is actually at risk for that event. For example, if a PCV leaves after six months, he/she is at risk only during the six-month period he/she is present and contributes only half a V/T-Year. If a PCV completes two full years, he/she contributes two full V/T-Years. Incidence per 100 V/T-Years allows data to be compared in age-, sex-, region-, and country-specific analyses.

This is a summary of the annual report produced by the Peace Corps Office of Medical Services in cooperation with the Volunteer Safety and Overseas Security (VSOS) division for use by safety and security specialists, Peace Corps medical officers (PCMOs), Peace Corps Volunteers, and other agency staff. The current issue provides summary information for calendar year 2002 and trend information over time. The purpose of the report is: (1) to document and analyze trends in safety conditions among in-service Volunteers, and (2) to provide feedback concerning these trends in a format that is useful for training and education of Volunteers and staff.

The data used to prepare this report comes from several sources: (1) individual assault events reported via the Assault Notification and Surveillance System (ANSS), (2) monthly Epidemiologic Surveillance System (ESS) reports, and (3) the OMS Deaths in Service database. The Surveillance and Epidemiology Unit of OMS provided data management and analysis.

The Peace Corps works to minimize risk and maximize security while providing a meaningful experience for Volunteers and their host communities.

Incidence is reported using events per 100 Volunteer/Trainee-Years (V/T-Years). V/T-Years is a measure of person-time that accounts for both the number of Volunteers and the length of time each Volunteer is at risk for a safety event.



Categories of Assault Used in This Report

Major sexual assault:

This category includes rape, attempted rape, forced oral sex, and sexual assault in which a weapon was used, physical injury resulted, or substantial force was used by the victim to disengage the assailant.

Minor sexual assault:

This category includes all other assaults in which the assailant had contact with the genitals/perineal area or breasts of the Volunteer. Unwanted kissing is also included in this category.

Major physical assault:

This category includes aggravated assaults and assaults that resulted in hospitalization for more than two days, injuries that required X-rays to determine if bones were broken, injuries that required suturing of lacerations, and assaults in which the Volunteer had to use substantial force to disengage the assailant.

Minor physical assault:

This category includes all other simple physical assaults not classified as major physical assaults.

The ANSS database manages information about specific assault events against Volunteers, and for analysis purposes has four major incident categories: (1) major sexual assault, (2) minor sexual assault, (3) major physical assault, and (4) minor physical assault. We distinguish between major assault and minor assault events—which include things like threatening verbal attacks and unwanted physical touching—in order to most accurately assess the potential risks to Volunteers. And it is for this reason that the primary focus of the report is major assault events.

There are at least four limitations on interpreting the data presented in this report. First, comparing incidence among countries is most valid for countries that have similar numbers of Volunteers. Second, incidence in countries that have few V/T-Years is less precise than incidence in countries with many V/T-Years and should therefore be interpreted with caution.

A third limitation relates to selective reporting of safety events by Volunteers. Developing and implementing strategies to improve safety event reporting have been identified as key priorities of the Peace Corps' Volunteer Safety Council and in the Peace Corps Manual.

A fourth limitation relates to the misclassification of reportable safety events. Although precise case definitions are provided for classifying reportable events, Volunteers may still report events without divulging all the details of an assault, so that the event is classified incorrectly. However, the effect of any reporting bias can be minimized by providing repeated training sessions to Volunteers that emphasize the details of safety event reporting.

Safety and security specialists, PCMOs, country directors, and regional staff are expected to review the incidence of safety events in their respective countries. VSOS and OMS staff are available for consultation on trends of concern or for discussions about possible safety interventions.

VSOS and assigned regional safety and security officers are also available as resources for posts seeking to implement improved safety and security practices.

How Assault Events Are Recorded

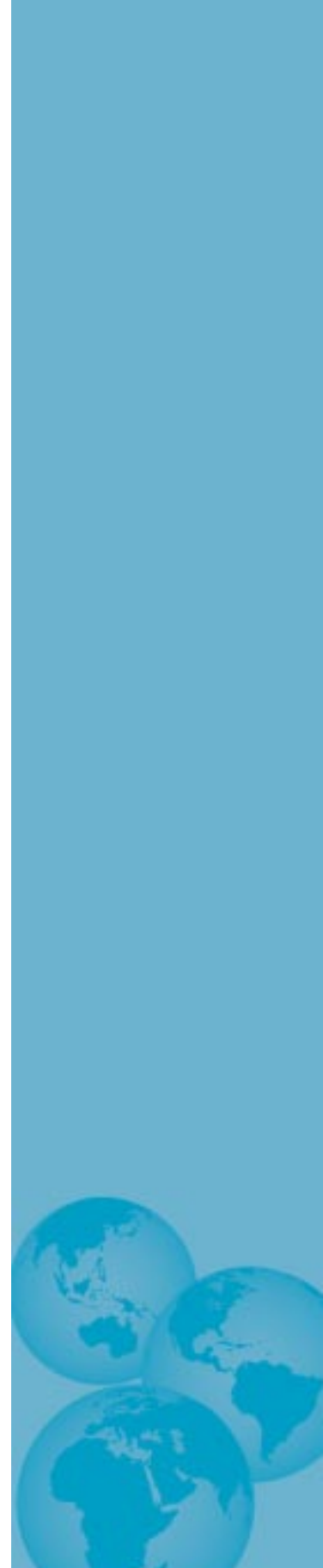
Assaults are recorded through the Peace Corps' Assault Notification and Surveillance System. In the ANSS, the PCMO reports each assault event as a sexual assault and/or a physical assault event using the case definitions provided. The ANSS defines five types of sexual assault (rape, forced oral sex, attempted rape, major sexual assault, and minor sexual assault) and three types of physical assault (aggravated assault, major physical assault, and minor physical assault).

The ANSS is used to collect specific information about assault events, as well as specific information about assaulted Volunteers, regardless of the number of Volunteers involved in an event. However, for reporting purposes, when several Volunteers are involved in an event, the Volunteer to be identified as the index Volunteer in the ANSS report is determined using a reporting hierarchy. In the hierarchy, sexual assaults have priority over physical assaults; rapes and aggravated assaults have the highest priority within their respective categories ("sexual" or "physical").

This report focuses on major assault events (both sexual and physical) because these represent the gravest threats to Volunteer safety and security. Trends observed for minor sexual and minor physical assault events, when reported, should be interpreted cautiously because these are more susceptible to the variability in reporting that occurs over time and from country to country.

In this report, incidence of major sexual assault events is expressed per 100 female V/T-Years because women are at much greater risk for major sexual assaults than men. The use of female-specific incidence rates better characterizes the risk of major sexual assault. Incidence of rape is expressed per 1,000 female V/T-Years because of the relatively low frequency of this type of sexual assault event.

Any increases in incidence of assault events (both sexual and physical) may be due in part to changes in reporting levels by Volunteers or by Peace Corps staff. VSOS has coordinated subregional safety and security workshops for both staff and Volunteers to reinforce the importance of assault event reporting, and teams have devised action plans to improve reporting. In addition, diligent efforts have been made to ensure that all assault events are reported in the ANSS. All monthly safety reports are reviewed to determine whether all completed ANSS case reports have been received, and any missing reports are routinely requested.



Major Assault Events in 2002

Major Sexual Assault Events—Trends and Contrasts

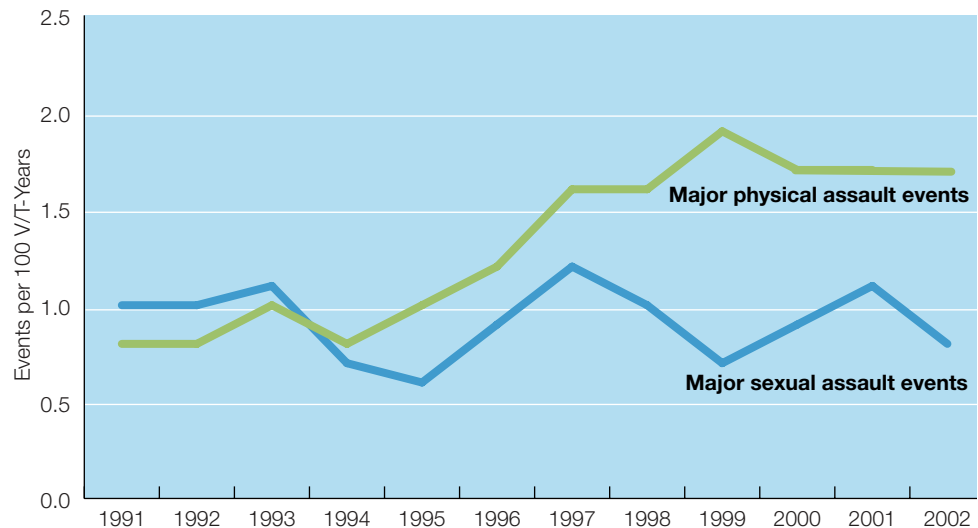
Overview

In the mid-1990s, the Peace Corps began to reinforce the importance of risk reduction training during Volunteers' pre-service and in-service training regarding sexual assaults. As a result, the Peace Corps has seen a significant decrease in major sexual assault events over the past six years and is pleased to see that this type of assault event is trending in the right direction—down by 30% since 1997. Rape events dropped 18% from 2001 to 2002. Overall, rape events have decreased by 40% since 1997. Major sexual assault events decreased by 27% from 2001 to 2002.

Overall, rape events have decreased by 40% since 1997.

Volunteer Safety Trends

Incidence of Major Assault Events 1991–2002



The physical assault category includes aggravated assault in the reporting. The sexual assault category includes rape in the reporting. Prior to 1993, rates per 100 V/T-Years were used as an approximation of V/T-Years.

In 2002 the Peace Corps reported a leveling off in major physical assault events and a substantial decline in major sexual assault events compared with 2001.

There were 32 reported major sexual assault events among Peace Corps Volunteers worldwide during 2002. For 31 (97%), the victim was a female Volunteer, yielding an incidence of 0.8 per 100 female V/T-Years.

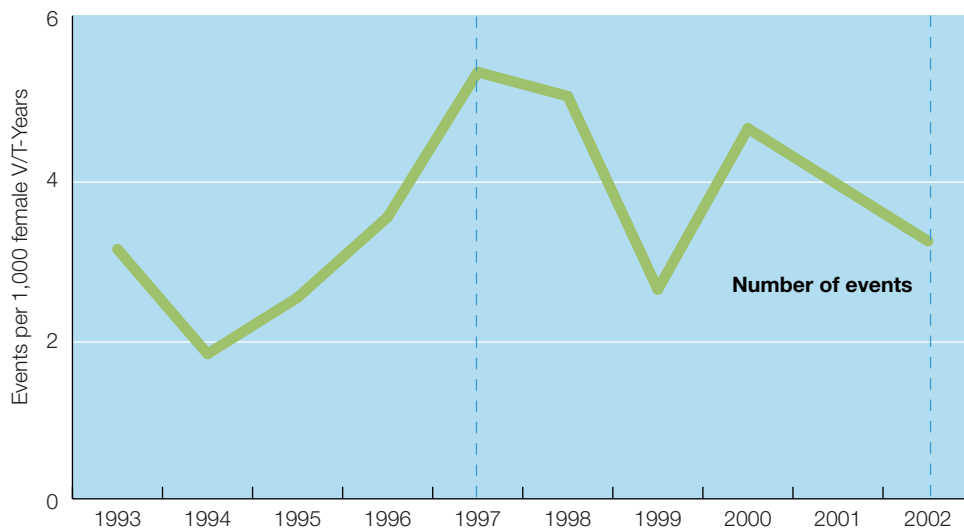
Of the 32 major sexual assault events reported during 2002, 12 (38%) were completed rapes, two (6%) were attempted rapes, one (3%) was a case of forced oral sex, and 17 (53%) were “major sexual assaults” involving injury to the victim, attack with a weapon, or use of substantial force to disengage the assailant (rape not completed).

Examining regional trends, the incidence of major sexual assault events during 2002 relative to 2001 decreased in all three regions. In the Africa region, the incidence of major sexual assault events in 2002 (0.7 per 100 female V/T-Years) was 30% less than the incidence in 2001 (1.0 per 100 female V/T-Years), and 36% less than the incidence reported in 1997 (1.1 per 100 female V/T-Years). In the EMA region in 2002, the incidence of major sexual assault events (0.6 per 100 female V/T-Years) was 33% less than the incidence in both 2001 and 1997 (0.9 per 100 female V/T-Years). In the IAP region in 2002, the incidence (1.1 per 100 female V/T-Years) was 15% less than the incidence in 2001 (1.3 per 100 female V/T-Years), and 31% less than the incidence in 1997 (1.6 per 100 female V/T-Years).

The incidence of major sexual assault events in 2002 decreased 27% from 2001.

Volunteer Safety Trends

Incidence of Reported Rape Events 1993–2002



Number of Reported Rape Events 1993-2002

1993	10
1994	6
1995	9
1996	13
1997	20
1998	19
1999	10
2000	19
2001	16
2002	12

There were 12 reported rape events worldwide during 2002. The victim was a female Volunteer in all 12 events, yielding an incidence of 3.2 per 1,000 female V/T-Years. This represents an 18% decrease from the incidence reported during 2001 (3.9 per 1,000 female V/T-Years).

Region

Examining the incidence of major sexual assault events during the most recent six-year period (1997–2002), the highest reported incidence occurred in the IAP region (1.3 per 100 female V/T-Years). The incidence of major sexual assault events in the IAP region during this period was 63% greater than the incidence in either the Africa region or the EMA region (0.8 per 100 female V/T-Years). Consistently each year, the IAP region has had a higher incidence of major sexual assault events than has the Africa region or the EMA region.

Age

The risk for major sexual assault events is highest among younger female Volunteers. The incidence of major sexual assault events was highest among female Volunteers 24 years of age or less (1.1 per 100 female V/T-Years) and decreased as age increased. Female Volunteers younger than age 30 were at 1.7 times greater risk than female Volunteers age 30 and older.

Relationship of Assailant to Victim

In reported major sexual assault events during 1997–2002, roughly equal proportions of the assailants were friends and acquaintances of or strangers to the victims. In 44% of major sexual assault events the assailant was a friend or an acquaintance, and in 45% the assailant was a stranger. For rape and attempted rape, the proportion of assailants who were a friend or an acquaintance of the Volunteer was greater (59%) than for other types of sexual assault.

Twenty-nine percent of major sexual assault events occurred in public areas and 10% were transportation associated. An additional 8% of major sexual assault events occurred in commercial establishments (e.g., restaurant, bar, hotel, store).

Alcohol Use

An assault is considered alcohol related if either the Volunteer or the assailant was drinking alcohol at the time of the incident. Data on whether assault events were alcohol related has been collected systematically since 1999.

In over half (52%) of reported major sexual assault events during 1999–2002, alcohol was confirmed to be involved. In 19% of reported major sexual assault events, alcohol involvement could not be ascertained. Two-thirds (66%) of major sexual assault events during the high-risk night hours of 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. were alcohol related.

Beginning in 2001, data was collected on whether it was the assailant or the Volunteer victim who was using alcohol at the time of the assault. For 27% of the major sexual assault events in 2001–2002, both the assailant and the Volunteer were reported to have used alcohol. In an additional 9%, only the Volunteer victim was reported to have used alcohol. In 20% of major sexual assault events, only the assailant was reported to have used alcohol.

Summary—Major Sexual Assault Events

Overall, young female PCVs (less than 25 years of age) are at the greatest risk of major sexual assault events. Therefore, the Peace Corps' risk reduction training programs emphasize “best practices” for the youngest female Volunteers.

A substantial proportion of assaults could be considered a “betrayal of trust.” In this situation, alcohol may act as a disinhibitor of aggression on the part of the assailant, and cues of friendship from the victim may be misinterpreted as sexual invitations. A Volunteer in this scenario may also have diminished coping responses because of using alcohol and thus be unable to ward off an attack. These characteristics of major sexual assault events are consistent with the literature published about sexual victimization among women in colleges and with intimate-partner violence in the United States more generally.



Major Physical Assault Events—Trends and Contrasts

Overview

During 2002, there were 107 reported major physical assault events worldwide, an incidence of 1.7 per 100 V/T-Years. This was unchanged from the incidence reported during 2001 and relatively unchanged from incidences reported since 1997.

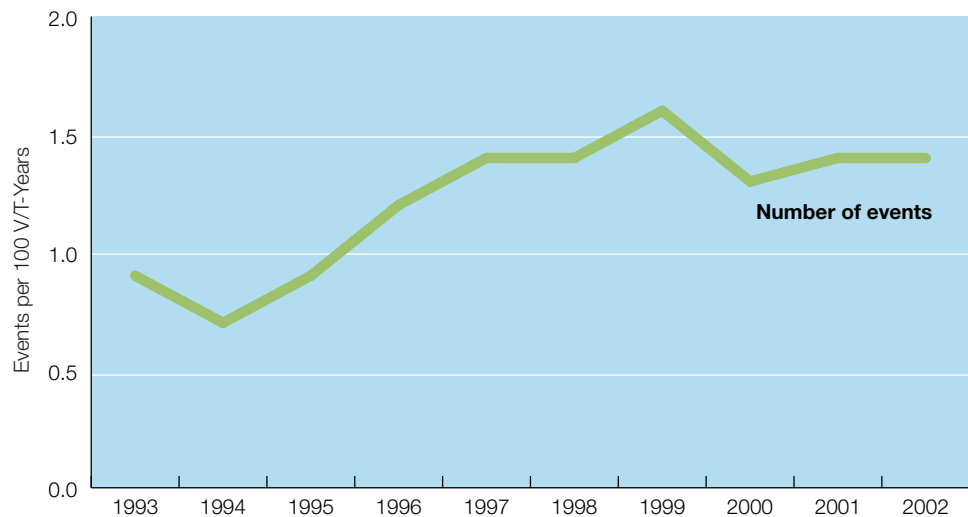
Regional analyses show that major physical assault events decreased in the EMA region and increased in the Africa and IAP regions in 2002 compared with 2001. The incidence of major physical assault events in the EMA region in 2002 (1.4 per 100 V/T-Years) decreased 30% compared with 2001 (2.0 per 100 V/T-Years), but was 40% greater than the incidence in 1997 (1.0 per 100 V/T-Years). In the IAP region in 2002, the incidence of major physical assault events (2.0 per 100 V/T-Years) increased 25% compared with 2001 (1.6 per 100 V/T-Years), but was 40% greater than the incidence in 1997 (1.0 per 100 V/T-Years). In the Africa region in 2002, the incidence of major physical assault events (1.6 per 100 V/T-Years) increased slightly (7%) compared with 2001 (1.5 per 100 V/T-Years), but was 20% less than the incidence in 1997 (2.0 per 100 V/T-Years). This was unchanged from the incidence reported in 2001, and has been relatively constant since 1996.

Number of Reported Aggravated Assault Events 1993-2002

1993	.....57
1994	.....45
1995	.....62
1996	.....78
1997	.....88
1998	.....87
1999	.....102
2000	.....88
2001	.....93
2002	.....87

Volunteer Safety Trends

Incidence of Reported Aggravated Assault Events 1993–2002



There were 87 reported aggravated assault events worldwide during 2002, an incidence of 1.4 per 100 V/T-Years.

Region

Consistent with the incidence of major sexual assault events, during the most recent six-year period (1997–2002), the IAP region had the highest overall incidence of reported major physical assault events (2.0 per 100 V/T-Years). This incidence was 25% higher than in the Africa region (1.6 per 100 V/T-Years), and 33% higher than in the EMA region (1.5 per 100 V/T-Years). However, whereas for major sexual assault events the IAP region consistently had a higher incidence each year than did the Africa or EMA regions, for major physical assault events, the Africa region had the highest incidence in 1997, the EMA region had the highest incidence in 2001, and the IAP region had the highest incidence from 1999 onward, except 2001.

Gender

The sex-specific incidence of major physical assault events during 1997–2002 is 33% higher among males than among females.

Age

In contrast to the age-specific incidence of major sexual assault events, in which the risk of assault is significantly associated with the age of the Volunteer and varies inversely, the incidence of major physical assault events is relatively similar among age groups, with Volunteers ages 25–29 having a slightly higher risk (1.9 per 100 V/T-Years) than other age groups.

However, when examining age-specific incidence by region, an interesting and significantly different pattern is apparent. Whereas in the EMA and IAP regions the peak incidence is in the 25–29 age group, in the Africa region the incidence of major physical assault events increases with increasing age and is highest (3.1 per 100 V/T-Years) in the oldest age group (50 years and older).

Relationship of Assailant to Victim

The majority (91%) of reported major physical assault events were perpetrated by strangers. The assailant was a friend or acquaintance of the PCV in only 6% of reported major physical assault events. This contrasts with assailants being friends or acquaintances in 44% of major sexual assault events.

Aggravated Assault

This category includes an attack or attempted attack with a weapon regardless of whether or not an injury occurred and an attack without a weapon when serious injury results.

Serious injury includes broken bones, lost teeth, internal injuries, loss of consciousness, and any injury requiring two or more days of hospitalization.



Alcohol Use

Twenty-six percent of reported major physical assault events were alcohol related. An assault is considered alcohol related if either the Volunteer or the assailant was drinking alcohol at the time of the incident. In 41% of reported major physical assault events, it is unknown whether alcohol was involved. This contrasts with major sexual assault events, in which over half (52%) were reported to be alcohol related.

Beginning in 2001, data was collected on whether it was the assailant or the Volunteer victim who was using alcohol at the time of the assault. For 7% of major physical assault events, both the assailant and the Volunteer were reported to have used alcohol. Only the Volunteer was reported to have used alcohol in an additional 13%, and only the assailant was reported to have used alcohol in 9%. Alcohol use was reported much less frequently in major physical assault events than in major sexual assault events.

Summary—Major Physical Assault Events

The descriptive epidemiology of major physical assault events against Volunteers is quite different from that of major sexual assault events. This analysis suggests that Volunteers are at highest risk for major physical assault events when they are in public areas in which strangers can use weapons to rob Volunteers without drawing much attention.

In contrast to major sexual assault events, confrontation of the victim by multiple assailants, even when the Volunteer was accompanied, was more likely in major physical assault events.

Major physical assault events were more likely to occur during daytime and afternoon hours than were major sexual assault events and less likely to involve alcohol use. For both major assault event types, the weekend was the time with the greatest risk, and late evening and early morning were the hours when most Volunteers were victimized.

Volunteer training programs continue to stress prevention strategies based on these factors.

Homicides

There were no homicides against Volunteers during 2002. In 1998, there were four homicides against Volunteers and in 2001 there was one homicide. Prior to 1998, the last homicide of a Volunteer occurred in 1996. There were a total of six homicides against PCVs from 1992 to 2002. In the Peace Corps' 42-year history there have been 20 homicides among 170,000 Volunteers.

Minor Assault Events

Compared to the incidence rate in 2001, reported minor sexual assault events decreased by 6% in 2002. By contrast, incidence of minor physical assault events remained largely unchanged in 2002 as compared to the previous year.

Petty Crimes

Petty crimes include robbery (property or cash taken directly from a Volunteer), burglary (unlawful or forcible entry into a Volunteer's residence), theft (property or cash taken away without force or illegal entry, such as pick-pocketing), and vandalism.

Robbery

During 2002, the incidence or rate of occurrence of events of reported robbery was 1.5 per 100 V/T-Years. This is 6% lower than the reported incidence during 2001 (1.6 per 100 V/T-Years), and a 50% decrease from the incidence in 1993 (3.0 per 100 V/T-Years).

The highest regional incidence of reported robbery in 2002 was in the Africa region (2.1 per 100 V/T-Years). The lowest incidence was in the EMA region (0.9 per 100 V/T-Years).

Burglary

A total of 195 burglaries occurred in 2002. The overall incidence of burglary during 2002 was 3.1 per 100 V/T-Years. This represents a 3% increase from the reported incidence in 2001 (3.0 per 100 V/T-Years). However, the incidence of reported burglary has remained generally unchanged since 1993 (2.7 per 100 V/T-Years).

The highest regional incidence of burglary in 2002 was in the Africa region (3.7 per 100 V/T-Years). The lowest incidence of burglary in 2002 was in the EMA region (1.6 per 100 V/T-Years).

Three countries had incidences of burglary during 2002 greater than 10.0 per 100 V/T-Years. Four other countries had incidences of burglary in 2002 greater

Categories of Petty Crimes Used in This Report

Petty crimes are classified into four reportable categories. These are given below along with their respective definitions.

Robbery

An event devoid of violence or threat of violence where property or cash is taken directly from a Volunteer.

Burglary

Unlawful or forcible entry or attempted entry of a Volunteer's residence.

Theft

The taking away of or attempt to take away property or cash without force or illegal entry (such as pickpocketing).

Vandalism

The mischievous or malicious defacement, destruction, or damage of property without unlawful or forcible entry of a residence.

The incidence of reported robbery decreased 50% from 1993 to 2002.

Summary of Trends in 2002 Safety Report

Risk Characteristics	Major Assault Event Types	
	Sexual	Physical
Age of Victim	24 years is the highest-risk age worldwide; incidence varies inversely with age	Age varies by region: 25-29 years in IAP and EMA regions; 50+ years in Africa region
Hour/Day/Month	10 P.M.–5 A.M. / Saturday / No trend noted by month	7 P.M.–2 A.M. / Saturday or Sunday No trend noted by month
Relationship of Assailant to Victim	Friend or acquaintance (44.1%) Stranger (45%)	Stranger (91%)
Location	Residence of Volunteer or different residence (49%)	Public area (68%)
Size of Community <i>(in which assault occurred)</i>	Unknown (54%)	Urban (54%)
Weapon Use by Assailant <i>(as perceived by victim)</i>	46% of assailants with weapons used a knife or other sharp object	49% of assailants with weapons used a knife or other sharp object
Motive <i>(as perceived by victim)</i>	Sexual activity (93%)	Robbery/burglary (62%)
Alcohol Use <i>(by assailant and/or victim)</i>	Yes (52%)	Unknown (41%)
Accompaniment Status <i>(Volunteer alone with assailant)</i>	Yes (86%)	Yes (46%)
Number of Assailants	Lone assailant (85%)	Multiple assailants (51%)

than 7.5 per 100 V/T-Years. Two countries had incidences of burglary greater than 7.5 per 100 V/T-Years every year from 2000 to 2002.

Theft

Theft is the most frequently reported petty crime against Volunteers. During 2002, a total of 470 thefts occurred, and the overall incidence of theft was 7.5 events per 100 V/T-Years. This is 23% higher than the incidence reported in 2001 (6.1 per 100 V/T-Years), and 63% higher than the incidence reported in 1993 (4.6 per 100 V/T-Years).

During 2002, the highest regional incidence of theft was in the IAP region (10.0 per 100 V/T-Years). The region with the lowest incidence of theft in 2002 was Africa (4.3 per 100 V/T-Years).

Incidences of theft in excess of 16.0 per 100 V/T-Years were reported in six countries during 2002. Two countries had incidences of theft greater than 16.0 per 100 V/T-Years every year from 2000 to 2002.

Vandalism

Vandalism is the least frequent of petty crimes, with a total of 16 incidences reported worldwide in 2002. The overall incidence of vandalism reported during 2002 was 0.3 per 100 V/T-Years. The incidence of vandalism has remained relatively unchanged since 1998. The highest regional incidence of vandalism in 2002 was in the EMA region (0.5 per 100 V/T-Years). Four countries reported multiple acts of vandalism in 2002.

Conclusion

The safety of the Volunteer is the number one priority of the Peace Corps, and is the focus of many of the research, planning, training, and compliance components of the agency. Over the past 18 months, the Peace Corps has reinforced the emphasis on safety and security and has integrated these enhancements into all aspects of Volunteer recruitment, training, and support. The Peace Corps believes the decrease in the past year of major sexual assault and rape events is a reflection of the increased emphasis on Volunteer safety and security. The Peace Corps will continue to track assault events on Volunteers and use this information to develop new policies, procedures, and training modules as well as to assess the security environment of the three regions. Additional information about safety and security is available in the *Congressional Budget Justification* for fiscal year 2004.

