



Robberies

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A bank's No. 1 concern during a robbery is the safety of its customers and employees.

- Banks regularly schedule ongoing training for all front-line and branch staff so they understand how to handle robberies before, during, and after they occur.

Better bank security is one of several factors contributing to the sharp decline in robberies.

- Bank robberies are at their lowest level in more than 30 years.
- Banks invest heavily in sophisticated alarm systems, bait money and surveillance cameras to help deter and catch robbers.
- Improved investigative techniques, tougher sentencing and the shift to electronic transactions have also contributed to the drop-off in robberies.

Banks play a critical role in helping law enforcement catch criminals.

- The majority of robberies end in arrest thanks to well-trained tellers, "wanted" posters and Internet sites, alarm systems, cameras and other tracking devices.
- Most bank robbers are serial criminals. ABA has created a database – ABA Bank Capture – that allows bankers and the FBI to share detailed information about robberies in an effort to catch the robbers, as well as learn ways to prevent future robberies.

Contrary to popular belief, robberies do not mirror economic trends.

- Robberies have been trending down since the 1990's, even through recessions.
- Being mentally unstable or under the influence of a controlled or illegal drug is more highly correlated with robberies than economic trends. According to a 2014 FBI report, 40 percent of bank robbers identified were determined to be users of narcotics.

Banks continue to search for new ways to prevent robberies.

- However, their best strategy is still to make sure employees are trained and security systems are in place and working properly.
- Front-line employees can help divert bank robberies by keeping teller cash box levels low, exercising lobby engagement, adhering to standard bank compliance regulations and completing routine training.

Background:

Ninety-seven percent of all robberies do not involve actual violence such as a shooting, assault or injury, according to the FBI. In 2014, there were a total of 13 robbery-related deaths, ten of which were the perpetrators. The remaining three deaths included employees and a customer.

In 2014, the following modus operandi were used: demand note (2,179), oral demand (2,260), use of a weapon threatened (1,666), and firearm (930). The area with the highest number of robberies is the Southern region of the U.S., with 1,135 incidents reported in 2014.

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(continued)

Total number of robberies (includes those of commercial banks, mutual savings banks, savings and loan associations and credit unions).

1984 – 6,067	1991 – 9,532	1998 – 7,711	2005 – 6,714	2012 – 3,870
1985 – 5,427	1992 – 9,540	1999 – 6,813	2006 – 6,948	2013 – N/A
1986 – 5,672	1993 – 8,561	2000 – 7,310	2007 – 5,933	2014 – 3,866
1987 – 6,078	1994 – 7,081	2001 – 8,516	2008 – 6,700	
1988 – 6,549	1995 – 6,986	2002 – 7,703	2009 – 5,943	
1989 – 6,690	1996 – 8,362	2003 – 7,442	2010 – 5,543	
1990 – 8,042	1997 – 8,082	2004 – 7,510	2011 – 5,014	

Source:

¹FBI Bank Crimes Statistics database (2014). Retrieved from <https://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/bank-crime-statistics-2014/bank-crime-statistics-2014>