



Section 6

National Incident - Based Crime Reporting System

Overview

In 1985, the FBI introduced the National Incident-Based Crime Reporting System (NIBRS) to improve the statistical reporting and analysis capabilities of the law enforcement community. The specifications for NIBRS are the result of a collaborative effort between the FBI and local, state, and national criminal justice agencies and professional organizations. To ensure that it fulfills its purpose, NIBRS has adopted the following goals:

1. To enhance the quantity, quality, and timeliness of crime statistical data collected by the law enforcement community.
2. To improve the methodology used for compiling, analyzing, auditing, and publishing the collected crime data.

The most prominent difference between Summary reporting and NIBRS is the degree of detail in reporting. In IBR systems, law enforcement agencies maintain a database of the details of each single crime occurrence that are reported to them. Depending upon the design of the particular system, the information collected can include details about the incident location, offense(s), offender(s), victim(s), property, and arrestee(s). In UCR reporting, most local law enforcement agencies provide a monthly summary of offense and arrest counts for certain offense categories to their state UCR systems, which are in turn reported to the FBI.

Collection Method

NIBRS data are designed to be generated as a by-product of local, state, and federal automated records systems. Thus, an agency can build a system to suit its own needs, including any collection/storage of information required for administrative and operational purposes, in addition to reporting data required by NIBRS to the national UCR Program. NIBRS collects data on each single incident and arrest within 22 offense categories made up of 46 specific crimes called *Group A Offenses*. For each of the offenses coming to the attention of law enforcement, specified types of facts about each crime are collected. In addition to the *Group A Offenses*, there are 11 *Group B Offense* categories for which only arrest data are reported.

The following offense categories, known as *Group A Offenses*, are those for which extensive crime data are collected in NIBRS:

1. Arson
2. Assault Offenses-Aggravated Assault, Simple Assault, Intimidation
3. Bribery
4. Burglary/Breaking and Entering
5. Counterfeiting/Forgery
6. Destruction/Damage/Vandalism of Property
7. Drug/Narcotic Offenses-Drug/Narcotic Violations, Drug Equipment Violations
8. Embezzlement
9. Extortion/Blackmail
10. Fraud Offenses-False Pretenses/Swindle/Confidence Game, Credit Card/Automatic Teller Machine Fraud, Impersonation, Welfare Fraud, Wire Fraud
11. Gambling Offenses-Betting/Wagering, Operating/Promoting/Assisting Gambling, Gambling Equipment Violations, Sports Tampering

12. Homicide Offenses-Murder and Nonnegligent Manslaughter, Negligent Manslaughter, Justifiable Homicide
13. Kidnapping/Abduction
14. Larceny/Theft Offenses-Pocket Picking, Purse Snatching, Shoplifting, Theft from Building, Theft from Coin-Operated Machine or Device, Theft from Motor Vehicle, Theft of Motor Vehicle Parts or Accessories, All Other Larceny
15. Motor Vehicle Theft
16. Pornography/Obscene Material
17. Prostitution Offenses-Prostitution, Assisting or Promoting Prostitution
18. Robbery
19. Sex Offenses, Forcible-Forcible Rape, Forcible Sodomy, Sexual Assault with an Object, Forcible Fondling
20. Sex Offenses, Nonforcible-Incest, Statutory Rape
21. Stolen Property Offenses (Receiving, etc.)
22. Weapon Law Violations

The following eleven additional offense categories, known as *Group B Offenses*, are those for which only arrest data are reported.

1. Bad Checks
2. Curfew/Loitering/Vagrancy Violations
3. Disorderly Conduct
4. Driving Under the Influence
5. Drunkenness
6. Family Offenses, Nonviolent
7. Liquor Law Violations
8. Peeping Tom
9. Runaway
10. Trespass of Real Property
11. All Other Offenses

Advantages

Law enforcement is a public service and requires a full accounting from an agency's commissioner, chief, or director for the administration of that agency and the status of public safety within its jurisdiction. Full participation in NIBRS will provide statistics to enable a law enforcement agency to fulfill this responsibility. NIBRS has the capability of furnishing information on nearly every major criminal justice issue facing law enforcement today, including terrorism, white collar crime, weapons offenses, missing children where criminality is involved, drug/narcotics offenses, drug involvement in all offenses, hate crimes, spouse abuse, abuse of the elderly, child abuse, domestic violence, juvenile crime/gangs, parental kidnapping, organized crime, pornography/child pornography, driving under the influence, and alcohol-related offenses. The data will be available from all levels of law enforcement-federal, state, and local-aggregated at the level and in the manner which best meets the needs of the data user. Through NIBRS, legislators, municipal planners/administrators, academicians, penologists, sociologists, and the general public will have access to more detailed and accurate crime information than the summary system can provide.

The benefits of incident-based reporting include:

- Data collection is not restricted to a limited number of offense categories.
- Offense definitions can meet local, state, and national reporting needs.
- Detail on individual crime incidents (offenses, offenders, victims, property, and arrests) can be collected and analyzed.
- Arrests and clearances can be linked to specific incidents or offenses.

- All offenses in an incident can be recorded and counted, unlike the current situation with the hierarchy rule in the FBI Uniform Crime Reports.
- Additional crime scoring categories, such as Crimes Against Society, can be created.
- Distinctions can be made between attempted and completed crimes.
- Linkages can be established between variables for examining interrelationships between offenses, offenders, victims, property, and arrestees.
- Detailed crime analyses can be made within and across law enforcement jurisdictions.
- Regional law enforcement agencies can share information easily.
- Strategic and tactical crime analyses can be made at the local and regional levels.

NIBRS in Arkansas

As of September 2002, 23 states were certified by the FBI as NIBRS compliant, 18 states were engaged in testing with the FBI, and 10 states were in the developmental phase. Within each state, the number of reporting agencies varies. Law enforcement agencies with an existing incident-based reporting system can modify their systems to satisfy NIBRS requirements. Alternatively, agencies that implement NIBRS can expand its capabilities to meet internal agency requirements and still be NIBRS compliant.

Arkansas was the 19th state to be NIBRS certified. Last year, the ACIC Supervisory Board determined that crime statistics must be reported according to NIBRS standards in Arkansas beginning no later than January, 2003. In an effort to provide assistance to local agencies, a *NIBRS Users' Group* has been established. The purpose of this group is to bring local officials together to discuss common problems and issues, as well as to assist those agencies that are in the transition stage of moving from summary UCR reporting to NIBRS reporting.

To help coordinate this inter-agency sharing of ideas, a more formal *NIBRS Steering Committee* was established which include the following members:

Chief Larry James (Co-Chair)
University of Central Arkansas Police Department

Asst. Chief Rick Hoyt (Co-Chair)
Fayetteville Police Department

Joey Potratz
Arkansas Sheriffs' Association

Lloyd Hartzell
Conway Police Department

Levi Risley
Fort Smith Police Department

Sheriff Ron Ball
Hot Spring County Sheriff's Office

Chief Danny Bradley
North Little Rock Police Department

Capt. Grady Russell
Sherwood Police Department

Capt. Glenn Greenwood
Texarkana Police Department

Ptl. David Stiles
Texarkana Police Department

Helen Greenwell
Texarkana Police Department

Dr. Jeff Walker
University of Arkansas at Little Rock

Lt. Gary Crain
University of Arkansas Police Department

Chris Bentley
University of Central Arkansas Police Department

Sean Maddan
Statistical Systems, Inc.

Acknowledgments

Information for this section was gathered from the following sources. Additional materials are available at their noted web site links.

Association of State Uniform Crime Reporting Programs

<http://www.asucrp.org>

Federal Bureau of Investigation

<http://www.fbi.gov/ucr.htm>

Justice Research and Statistics Association

<http://www.search.org/>

Search - The National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics

<http://www.search.org/>

