



Uniform Crime Reporting *State Program Bulletin*

Submissions on Magnetic Media

The national Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program staff is requesting that all future data submissions on magnetic media include a label clearly identifying the name of the state, the month for which data are provided, and whether the data are summary or incident-based. This will help to alleviate some of the delays we encounter during data processing.

NIBRS Property Description Code 19

Recently, South Carolina State UCR Program staff asked for clarification of the definition of Data Element 15, Property Description, code 19. According to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) Volume 1: *Data Collection Guidelines*, page 81, Property Description, code 19 equals Merchandise (items held for sale). *Black's Law Dictionary*, Sixth Edition, page 986, defines **Merchandise** as, "All goods which merchants usually buy and sell, whether at wholesale or retail; wares and commodities such as are ordinarily the objects of trade and commerce. But the term is generally not understood as including real estate, and is rarely applied to provisions such as are purchased day by day for immediate consumption." This property description code is to be used when it is the most specific description for the property involved in an incident. In many cases, code 77 = Other is incorrectly used; code 19 = Merchandise would better describe the property involved.

The property description codes used in the following examples are listed in NIBRS Volume 1: *Data Collection Guidelines*, pages 80-82.

The shoplifting of a guitar from a music store is reported. In NIBRS, no specific value in the property description exists for a guitar or musical instrument. Since the guitar is an item held for sale, code 19 = Merchandise is the most specific descriptor. The code 77 = Other should not be used in this case, as its use is reserved for "all other property not fitting the above specific descriptions" (including merchandise).

The shoplifting of a set of windshield wipers from an auto parts store is reported. Even though the windshield wipers are merchandise or "items held for sale," code 38 = Vehicle Parts/Accessories should be used as the most specific property description.

Three guitars are reported stolen from the apartment of a musician. The code 77 = Other should be used in this case, as these guitars are "all other property not fitting the above

descriptions.”

NIBRS Offense 250 Counterfeiting/Forgery

NIBRS Volume 1: *Data Collection Guidelines*, pages 24-25, defines Counterfeiting/Forgery (Crime Against Property) as, “The altering, copying, or imitation of something, without authority or right, with the intent to deceive or defraud by passing the copy or thing altered or imitated as that which is original or genuine; or the selling, buying, or possession of an altered, copied, or imitated thing with the intent to deceive or defraud.”

Problems arise in scoring Counterfeiting/Forgery offenses for UCR purposes when forged checks or counterfeited money are used to obtain items such as cash, groceries, stereo equipment, etc. NIBRS Volume 4: *Error Message Manual*, page 7, indicates that if the offense of Counterfeiting/Forgery is completed, the Type Property Loss/Etc. can only be code 3 = Counterfeited/Forged, code 5 = Recovered, or code 6 = Seized. Therefore, items that are obtained as the result of passing a forged or counterfeited instrument are not captured for statistical purposes.

Although Counterfeiting/Forgery offenses can involve elements of fraud, they are treated separately due to their unique nature. Therefore, when incidents involving the passing of a forged or counterfeited instrument to obtain items occur, an additional offense should accompany the Counterfeiting/Forgery to allow the capture of the fraudulently obtained items.

Example: A lone male enters the Sears department store to purchase a \$400 TV and \$300 VCR (retail value) with a forged check. Later, the store manager was notified that the purchase was made with a forged check. The manager then summoned the police to file a report. The incident should be reported as Offense Code 250 = Counterfeiting/Forgery; Type Property Loss/Etc., code 3 = Counterfeited/ Forged; Property Description, code 22 = Nonnegotiable Instruments (no value). Additionally, Offense Code 26A = False Pretenses/Swindle/Confidence Game; Type Property Loss/Etc., code 7 = Stolen/Etc.; Property Description, code 26 = Radios/TV/ VCRs; Value of Property, \$550 (wholesale value) should be reported.

Responses to Questions Raised at the October 3-7, 1999, Association of State Uniform Crime Reporting Programs Conference

Reporting Crimes in Correctional Facilities

Are crimes in correctional facilities currently being reported, should they be reported, and, if so, which agency should do the reporting?

Crimes that occur in correctional facilities, state penitentiaries, prisons, or jails **should be reported by the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction.**

Concerning jurisdiction, the *Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook*, page 3, states, “To be certain that an offense or arrest is not counted more than once by overlapping jurisdictions, the following guidelines have been developed:

1. Police report offenses that occur within their city jurisdiction.
2. County and state law enforcement agencies report offenses which take place in the county outside the jurisdiction of the city.
3. Agencies report only those arrests made for offenses committed within their own jurisdictions.
4. Likewise, the recovery of property is reported only by the jurisdiction from which it was stolen.

Note: The purpose of these jurisdictional guidelines for reporting crime statistics is to accurately depict the nature and volume of crime in a particular community, *not* to claim or take 'credit' for the number of investigations, arrests, etc."

As part of our caution to data users against making simplistic or incomplete analyses of UCR crime data, the following caveat will be amended in the 1999 edition of *Crime in the United States*, under "Crime Factors" on page iv: "Understanding a jurisdiction's industrial/economic base, its dependence upon neighboring jurisdictions, its transportation system, its economic dependence on nonresidents (such as tourists and convention attendees), its proximity to military installations, **correctional facilities, state penitentiaries, prisons, jails, etc.**, all contribute to accurately gauging and interpreting the crime known to and reported by law enforcement." The information in bold lettering will appear for the first time in the 1999 edition.

NIBRS Data Element 13

Should an edit be added for Data Element 13, Type Weapon/Force Involved, to alleviate the problem of some agencies entering code 99 = None rather than code 40 = Personal Weapons for incidents in which the offender uses hands, fists, feet, teeth, etc., in the commission of an Aggravated Assault (13A)? Concern for this issue stems from situations similar to the following example:

A boyfriend places both hands around his girlfriend's neck and begins to choke her while he screams, "I'll kill you." The police respond and pull the male off the female and place him under arrest. The female has red marks on her neck. The Type Weapon/Force Involved is erroneously coded as 99 = None when it should have been coded as 40 = Personal Weapons.

Since the misuse of codes does not appear to be a widespread problem, the Education/ Training Services (ETSU) Unit and the Crime Analysis, Research, and Development (CARD) Unit feel that an edit is not warranted at this time. Rather than adding an edit, ETSU and CARD Unit members encourage agencies to address this issue in training sessions at the state and agency levels, focusing on the use of hands, fists, feet, teeth, etc., as actual weapons.

A review of the 1998 NIBRS data (total incidents) revealed the following:

Incidents that contained code 99 = None (4.7 percent)
Incidents that contained code 95 = Unknown (2.84 percent)
Incidents that contained code 40 = Personal Weapons (i.e., hands, feet, teeth, etc.) (27.08 percent)

The ETSU and CARD Unit will continue to monitor data submissions within the Aggravated Assault category for statistical reasonableness. Agency personnel may refer to NIBRS

Volume 1: *Data Collection Guidelines*, page 78, for a complete list of allowable entries for Data Element 13, Type Weapon/Force Involved.
Incidental Damage

Should incidental damage be considered when it occurs in conjunction with other reported offenses, specifically, Larceny/Theft?

The *Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook*, NIBRS Edition, page 14, under the category of Destruction/Damage/Vandalism of Property, states, "Incidental damage resulting from another offense (e.g., burglary, robbery) is to be reported in this offense category only if the reporting agency deems the amount of damage to be substantial. For example, 'insubstantial' damage, such as a broken window, forced door, etc., should not be reported; but, 'substantial' damage, such as where a truck is backed into a store front to gain admittance and major structural damage is caused, should be reported. For the crime of arson, however, incidental damage resulting from fighting the fire should be included as part of the loss caused by burning. The determination of whether the damage was 'substantial' is left to the discretion of the reporting law enforcement agency and should not require burdensome damage assessments."

For those reporting using the summary system, incidental damage is not reported; only the value of the property stolen and recovered is reported.

When reporting incidental damage in NIBRS, Destruction/Damage/Vandalism of Property should be reported in conjunction with Larceny/Theft. For example, a vehicle is entered by means of smashing the passenger side window and \$10 in currency is stolen. In reporting the offense of Destruction/Damage/Vandalism of Property, the Property Description code should be 38 = Vehicle Parts/Accessories and the Value of Property should be \$50 for the damaged window. Additionally, for the offense of Larceny/Theft, the Property Description code should be 20 = Money (legal tender, i.e., coins and paper currency) and the Value of Property should be \$10. However, when the FBI converts the NIBRS data to summary data, the damaged property is ignored in determining the value of stolen property.

Reporting Bomb Threats

For UCR purposes, what is the proper classification of a bomb threat (as opposed to the actual presence of a bomb), and how should a bomb threat be reported using NIBRS?

Some agencies may misconstrue a bomb threat to be a crime against property, using the rationale that the intent is to blow up a building. However, for UCR purposes a bomb threat is actually a crime against a person because the intent is intimidation and a building (structure) cannot logically be intimidated. For agencies using NIBRS, at least one entry of I = Individual is required as the Type of Victim in the victim segment of the Group A Incident Report. The national Program requires reporting the person who received the bomb threat as the victim. It is left to the agency's discretion as to how many individual victims (up to 999) are reported.

Example: While at work, a white female secretary, aged 45, of an elementary school receives a bomb threat over the telephone. Approximately 400 faculty and students are

evacuated from the school. A search conducted by the bomb squad yields negative results. The faculty and students return to their classrooms after an hour. The national Program requires that this situation be reported as Offense Code 13C = Intimidation; Location Type, code 22 = School/College; Victim Sequence Number, 001 for one victim; Victim Connected to UCR Offense Code, 13C for Intimidation; Type of Victim, code I = Individual; Age of Victim, 45; Sex of Victim, code F = Female; Race of Victim, code W = White; and other applicable data elements and values. **Any additional individual-type victims (up to 999) may be reported at an agency's discretion**, i.e., for the purpose of providing data to make possible special studies, such as violence against children, etc.

It must be understood that any additional individual-type victims reported will be counted in the agency's overall Assault total when the NIBRS data are converted to summary data. The new summary Assault total will not, however, inflate the Aggravated Assault total because the conversion process does not affect that specific offense.

National UCR Program and Y2K Compliance

Many have asked the national Program staff whether the UCR Program is Y2K compliant. Developers of both the NIBRS and the hate crime data collection program created these systems with an eight-digit date in mind. The two-digit year used in summary reporting is adequate and does not require modification at this time. Therefore, no Y2K-related difficulties are anticipated.

1998 Data Submission Deadline

To ensure that UCR data are processed and incorporated into the 1998 master files, please forward any outstanding 1998 data to the FBI Statistical Unit by December 30, 1999.

1999 Data Deadlines

December 22, 1999	Deadline for police employee counts as of October 31, 1999.
December 31, 1999	Deadline to make changes to an agency's current reporting status or the addition of new contributing agencies within the state.
February 22, 2000	Deadline for Most in Population agencies submitting data to be included in the <i>Preliminary Annual Uniform Crime Report, 1999</i> . Data must be 12 months complete.
March 17, 2000	Deadline for submitting data to be included in <i>Crime in the United States, 1999</i> . Data must be 12 months complete.
April 24, 2000	Deadline for submitting data to be included in <i>Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted, 1999</i> . Data must be 12 months complete.
April 24, 2000	Deadline for submitting data to be included in <i>Hate Crime Statistics, 1999</i> .

Time Table and Status Report of UCR Publications

Please copy and share the following information so that local agencies are aware of UCR publication deadlines.

Time Table for *Crime in the United States, 1999*

Month	Work Process
July	<p>FBI's Statistical Unit (SU) personnel send letters to the state UCR Programs requesting missing January-June data for law enforcement agencies that are to be included in Table 4 of the <i>Preliminary Semiannual Uniform Crime Report</i>.</p> <p>The letters also provide the late August deadline for data to be included in January-June preliminary 1999 report.</p>
August	<p>The SU staff send trend letters to state UCR Programs requesting verification of any January-June crime totals that showed significant increases or decreases over the previous year's data. This applies to Most in Population (MIP) law enforcement agencies only.</p>
September	<p>The SU staff send to state UCR Program managers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • follow-up letters identifying missing MIP data. The staff also follow up either by letter or telephone with those state UCR Program managers from whom no response to trend letters has been received. • printouts identifying for all agencies, by agency and month, the January-June data that have not been received by the deadline for the preliminary semiannual report.
October	<p>The SU staff send to state UCR Program managers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • letters requesting the completion of information on current year's police employee counts as of October 31, 1999. The deadline for submitting these data is December 22, 1999. • trend letters requesting verification of any January-June crime totals for all other contributors that show significant increases or decreases from the previous year's data.
November	<p>The national UCR Program staff publish and distribute the <i>Preliminary Semiannual Uniform Crime Report, January-June 1999</i>.</p> <p>The Communications Unit (CU) staff send out a <i>State Program Bulletin</i> reminding all state UCR Program managers of the December 31, 1999, deadline to make changes to an agency's current reporting status or additions of new contributing agencies within the state.</p>

December	<p>Deadline for current year's police employee counts to be returned to the national UCR Program (Statistical Unit) is December 22, 1999.</p> <p>Deadline to make changes to an agency's current reporting status or additions of new contributing agencies within the state is December 31, 1999.</p>
January	<p>The SU staff send letters to state UCR Program managers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • requesting missing January-December data for MIP law enforcement agencies that are to be included in Table 4 of the <i>Preliminary Annual Uniform Crime Report, 1999</i>. Deadline is February 22, 2000. • providing the February 22, 2000, deadline for submitting data to be included in the preliminary annual report for all agencies. Data must be 12 months complete. • inquiring about police employee data that are missing or that might require state UCR Program manager's review.
February	<p>The SU staff send letters to the state UCR Program managers :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • informing them of the calculated 1999 population estimations for agencies within their state. • requesting verification of any January-December crime totals for all other contributors that show significant increases or decreases from the previous year's data. <p>Deadline for MIPs to submit data for inclusion in <i>Preliminary Annual Uniform Crime Report, 1999</i> is February 22, 2000.</p> <p>The CU staff send a <i>State Program Bulletin</i> notifying state UCR Program managers of the March 17, 2000, deadline for submitting 1999 data for inclusion in <i>Crime in the United States (CIUS)</i> and the April 24, 2000, deadline for submitting 1999 data for inclusion in <i>Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted (LEOKA)</i> and <i>Hate Crime Statistics</i>.</p>
March	<p>Deadline for submitting data that will be included in <i>CIUS</i> is March 17, 2000. Reminder: Data must be 12 months complete to be included in CIUS.</p>
April	<p>Deadline for submitting data that will be included in <i>LEOKA</i> and <i>Hate Crime Statistics</i> is April 24, 2000. Reminder: Data must be 12 months complete to be included in LEOKA.</p>

May	The national UCR Program staff publish and distribute the <i>Preliminary Annual Uniform Crime Report, 1999</i> .
June-July	National UCR Program staff check data and finalize <i>CIUS, LEOKA</i> , and <i>Hate Crime Statistics</i> for publication.

Status Report of UCR Publications (Revised*)

Publication	Status
<i>Crime in the United States, 1998</i>	Release date: October 17, 1999
<i>Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted, 1998*</i>	Sent to printer November 1999 Distribution scheduled end of December 1999
<i>Hate Crime Statistics, 1998</i>	Sent to printer September 28, 1999 Distributed late November 1999
<i>Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook</i> (summary edition)	Work in progress Anticipated completion date March 2000
<i>Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook</i> (NIBRS edition)	Plan to revise/update Work to begin at date yet to be determined
NIBRS, Volume 1* <i>Data Collection Guidelines</i>	Work in progress Anticipated completion date December 1999
NIBRS, Volume 2 <i>Data Submission Specifications</i>	Work in progress Anticipated completion date January 2000
NIBRS, Volume 3 <i>Approaches to Implementing an Incident-Based Reporting System</i>	Gradual phase out of this manual (Refer to <i>State Program Bulletin 99-2</i> , dated June 23, 1999)
NIBRS, Volume 4* <i>Error Message Manual</i>	Sent to printer December 1999 Available January 2000
<i>Hate Crime Data Collection Guidelines</i>	Update completed Revised edition currently available
<i>Training Guide for Hate Crime Data Collection</i>	No current plans to revise/update
<i>NIBRS Conversion Manual</i>	Completed Currently available

Publications may be ordered by writing to:

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