U.S. Department of Justice
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Implementation of NCS-X/NIBRS in Police Jurisdictions

Workshop on State and Local Governments Use of
Alternative and Multiple Data Sources

Panel on Improving Federal Statistics for
Policy and Social Science Research Using Multiple Data Sources and
State-of-the-Art Estimation Methods

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The Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program

- Designed in the late 1920s to collect counts of crimes known to law enforcement agencies.

- Limited to seven crimes common across the U.S. and defined independently of state statutes – serve as barometer of crime.

- J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI promoted this data collection and set up a national infrastructure to collect and report these statistics at the local, state and national levels.

- By the 1960s most of the Nation's 18,000 law enforcement agencies were reporting UCR data to the state and onto the FBI.

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National Incident-Based Reporting System

In the 1980s the limitations of the traditional UCR data become apparent. Needed information was not available, such as levels and trends in:

Juvenile Violence	Street Crimes
Domestic Violence	Crimes against the Elderly
Crimes involving Firearms	Cybercrimes
Crimes by Strangers	Gang Crimes
Hate Crimes	Crimes in Schools

The solution was to move the UCR to an incident-based reporting system that captured the attributes of the incident (i.e., NIBRS).

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What is NIBRS?

Based on information commonly found in modern law enforcement management information systems, NIBRS captures many attributes of each incident, such as:

- Victim and offender demographics and relationships
- All offenses involved
- Date, time and location of incident
- Weapons involved
- Victim injury
- Hate crime flag
- Demographics of arrestees along with dates of arrest
- Reasons for exceptional clearances

A Brief History of NIBRS

- As with traditional UCR, the FBI established detailed documentation for the NIBRS system, independent of local and state classification systems.

- NIBRS was not a standalone reporting system; NIBRS data were to be extracted from the day-to-day management information systems.

- As law enforcement agencies modernized their management systems, NIBRS reporting was expected to increase naturally.

- However, by 2010 only ~30% of agencies (mostly small ones) had converted to incident-based reporting, with ~16 States being completed NIBRS reporters.
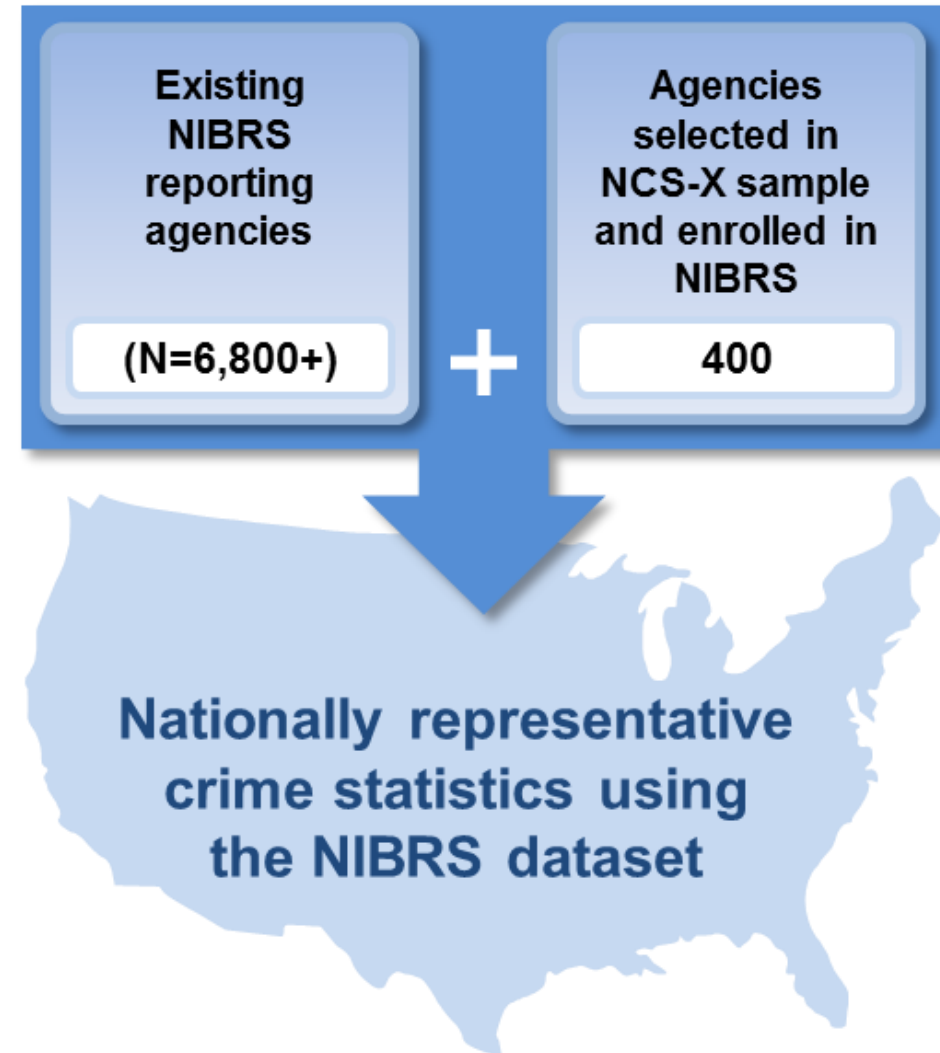
National Crime Statistics Exchange (NCS-X)

- In 2012 the Bureau of Justice Statistics funded the NCS-X initiative to develop an incident-based crime reporting program that could provide detailed national crime statistics.

- It soon became apparent that partnering with the FBI to promote NIBRS reporting was the best option given that NIBRS had a foothold in the law enforcement community and could be modified to meet many of the national information needs.

- The plan to produce national crime statistics from NIBRS data was straightforward; the implementation of this plan was not.

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The Statistical Logic of NCS-X

Stratum 1: Current NIBRS participants

Strata 2 through 12 consist of non-NIBRS agencies:

2. 750 officers or more;
3. State, 1-749 officers;
4. State or Municipality, 0 officers;
5. County or Township, 36-749 officers;
6. County or Township, 0-35 officers;
7. Municipality, 181-749 officers;
8. Municipality, 61-180 officers;
9. Municipality, 16-60 officers;
10. Municipality, 1-15 officers;
11. Remainder non-Tribal agencies;
12. Tribal.

Existing NIBRS reporting agencies	Agencies selected in NCS-X sample and enrolled in NIBRS
(N=6,800+)	400

+

Nationally representative crime statistics using the NIBRS dataset

The NCS-X Team

BJS and the FBI are spearheading NCS-X, in close coordination with other DOJ agencies and a diverse set of partner organizations

How to Implement NCS-X

- NCS-X begin developing and implementing strategies to encourage the 400 agencies to become NIBRS reporters. Progress was somewhat slow until three major events occurred:

  1. **Director Comey made NIBRS one his legacy issues.**

  2. **FBI's Advisory Policy Board agreed to sunset traditional UCR in 2021.**

  3. **The FBI agreed to transfer to BJS over $100 million to support the transition of the 400 NCS-X sample agencies (and their state UCR programs) to NIBRS.**

- Today there is funding for local agencies to transition to NIBRS and a team of experts in place to help each of the NCS-X agencies work through every step in the transition process.

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NCS-X Implementation Activities

- Surveyed State UCR Programs and local law enforcement agencies to determine needs for and barriers to NIBRS transition.

- Conducted many *Readiness Assessments.*

- Released solicitations to support NIBRS planning and implementation efforts in State UCR Programs; NCS-X Team works with these agencies to prepare applications to achieve their goals.

- Released a solicitation to fund system enhancements in certainty agencies, with a similar solicitation for probability strata agencies coming out early next fiscal year.

- Have technical assistance teams in place to support all awardees.

- Developing support items (e.g., data assessment software; media packets; publications to demonstrate utility of data to various groups with various interests).

What is the utility of NIBRS for local agencies?

- For local jurisdictions (e.g., counties, regions, or states) NIBRS (or the state-specific IBR system) provides a method for combining data from different law enforcement record management systems to describe crime and the justice system's response for areas beyond the boundaries of a single agency.

- For local jurisdictions, NIBRS provides a mechanism for comparing their crime to that in other similar agencies nationwide.

- For local agencies without crime analysts and strong analytic tools, the planned NIBRS analytic tools will enable detailed crime analysis of their NIBRS data and the ability to answer questions asked and to tell the needed stories.

Beyond recruitment, the NCS-X challenges

- When the NCS-X sample is completed, NIBRS will provide information on ~60% of all crimes known to law enforcement.

- NIBRS is essentially an extremely large administrative database, with all the types of errors that come with such data.

- These errors will have to be understood and missing data imputed before national estimates can be produced.

- Then, the NIBRS data will be weighted to compensate for non-reporters and the growth in the number of new reporting agencies outside the NCS-X sample.

- All of the processes to accomplish these goals must be developed and tested.

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