Identifying Arrest-Related Deaths

A hybrid approach to combining open source information with official agency data

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Presentation overview

1. Overview Arrest-related Deaths (ARD) program

2. Assessment of ARD program coverage- Why open source information may be useful

3. 2015 ARD program pilot- Hybrid data collection, reliance on open source information and official records
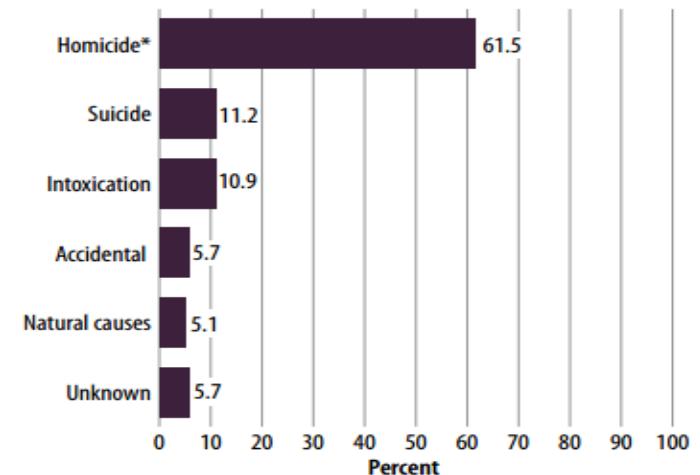
ARD Program Methodology

- Deaths in Custody Reporting Act (DICRA) of 2000 (P.L. 106-247): BJS began collecting data on the universe of deaths that occurred in the process of arrest.

- The term "arrest-related" encompasses the range of circumstances pertaining to an arrest, including those that occur from the process of apprehension to detention. Therefore, the event causing the death can occur before, during, or after the arrest of a criminal suspect.

  - Law enforcement homicides
  - Other homicides
  - Accidents
  - Suicides
  - Deaths due to natural causes

ARD Program Statistics

From 2003 through 2009, BJS obtained reports on 4,813 such deaths through its Arrest-Related Deaths (ARD) Program.

- 6 in 10 of these deaths (2,931) were classified as homicides by law enforcement personnel

- The remaining 4 in 10 were deaths attributed to other manners, including

  - Suicide and intoxication deaths (11%)

  - Accidental injury (6%)

  - Natural causes (5%)

- Among the 2,931 homicides by law enforcement personnel, in 75% of the incidents, the underlying offense of arrest was a violent offense, and no criminal charges were intended in less than 2% of these cases .
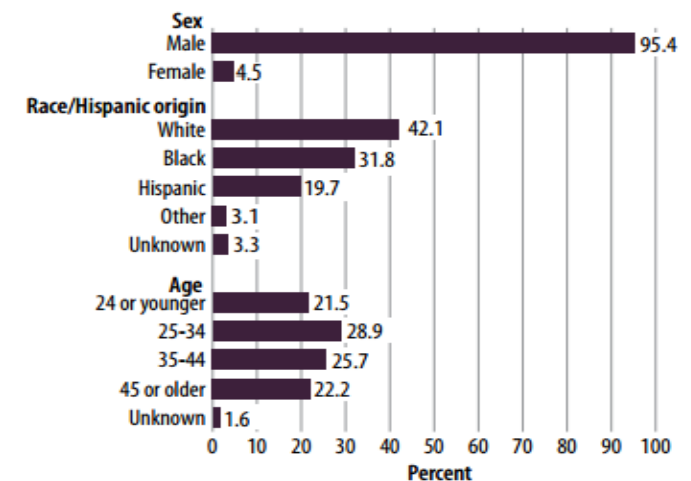
FIGURE 1
Reported arrest-related deaths, by manner of death, 2003–2009

Manner	Percent
Homicide*	61.5
Suicide	11.2
Intoxication	10.9
Accidental	5.7
Natural causes	5.1
Unknown	5.7

Note: Detail does not sum to total due to rounding.
*Includes homicide by law enforcement and other persons.

FIGURE 2
Reported arrest-related deaths, by demographic characteristics, 2003–2009

Characteristic	Percent
Sex	
Male	95.4
Female	4.5
Race/Hispanic origin	
White	42.1
Black	31.8
Hispanic	19.7
Other	3.1
Unknown	3.3
Age	
24 or younger	21.5
25-34	28.9
35-44	25.7
45 or older	22.2
Unknown	1.6

Note: Detail does not sum to total due to rounding and missing data.
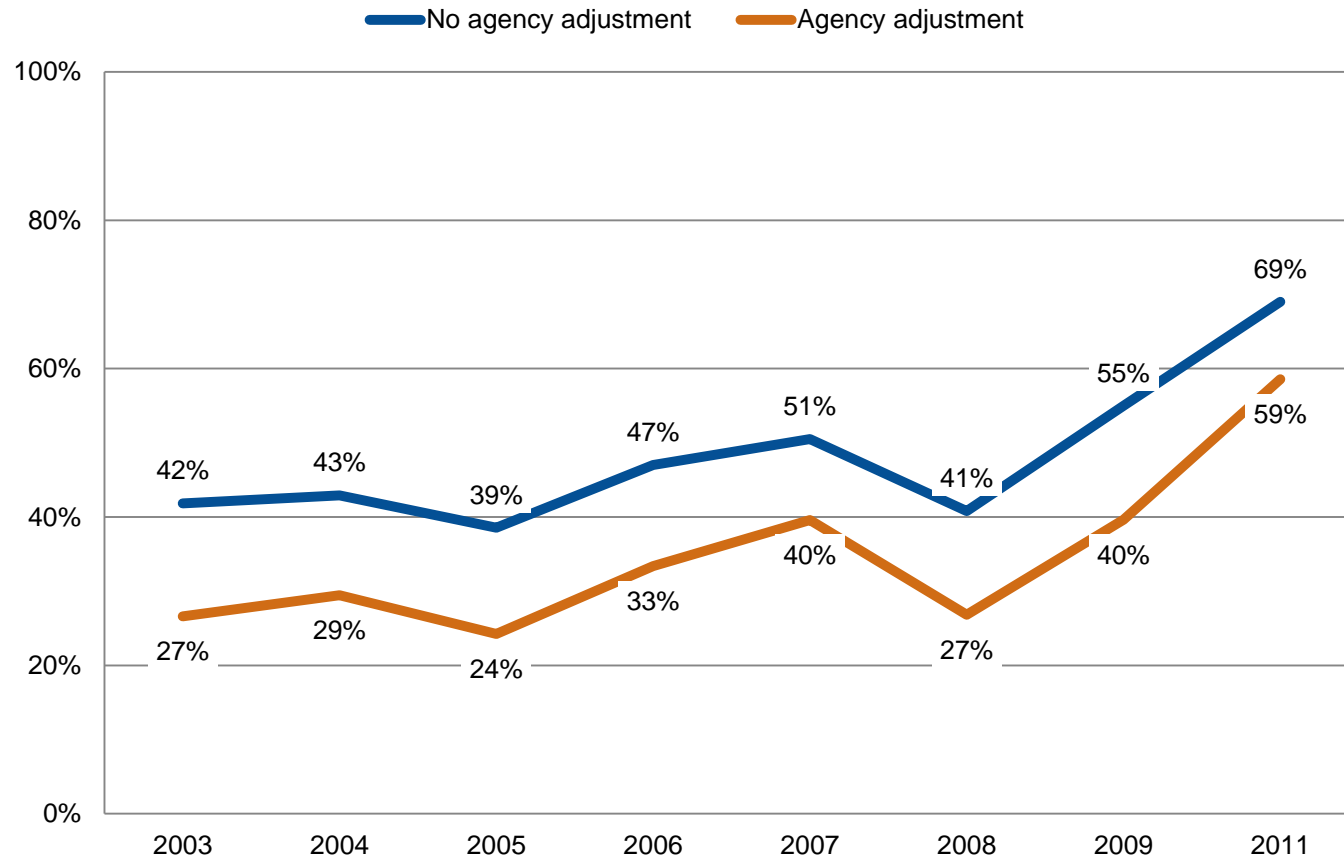
ARD Program Methodology

2003- 2011 Data Collection Model

- State Reporting Coordinator (SRC) in each state identified and compiled information about each qualifying death occurring during the process of arrest.

- BJS provided guidance on methods to use to identify, qualify, and report data.

- SRCs had some degree of flexibility in compiling this information and took advantage of the relevant sources available to them in their states.
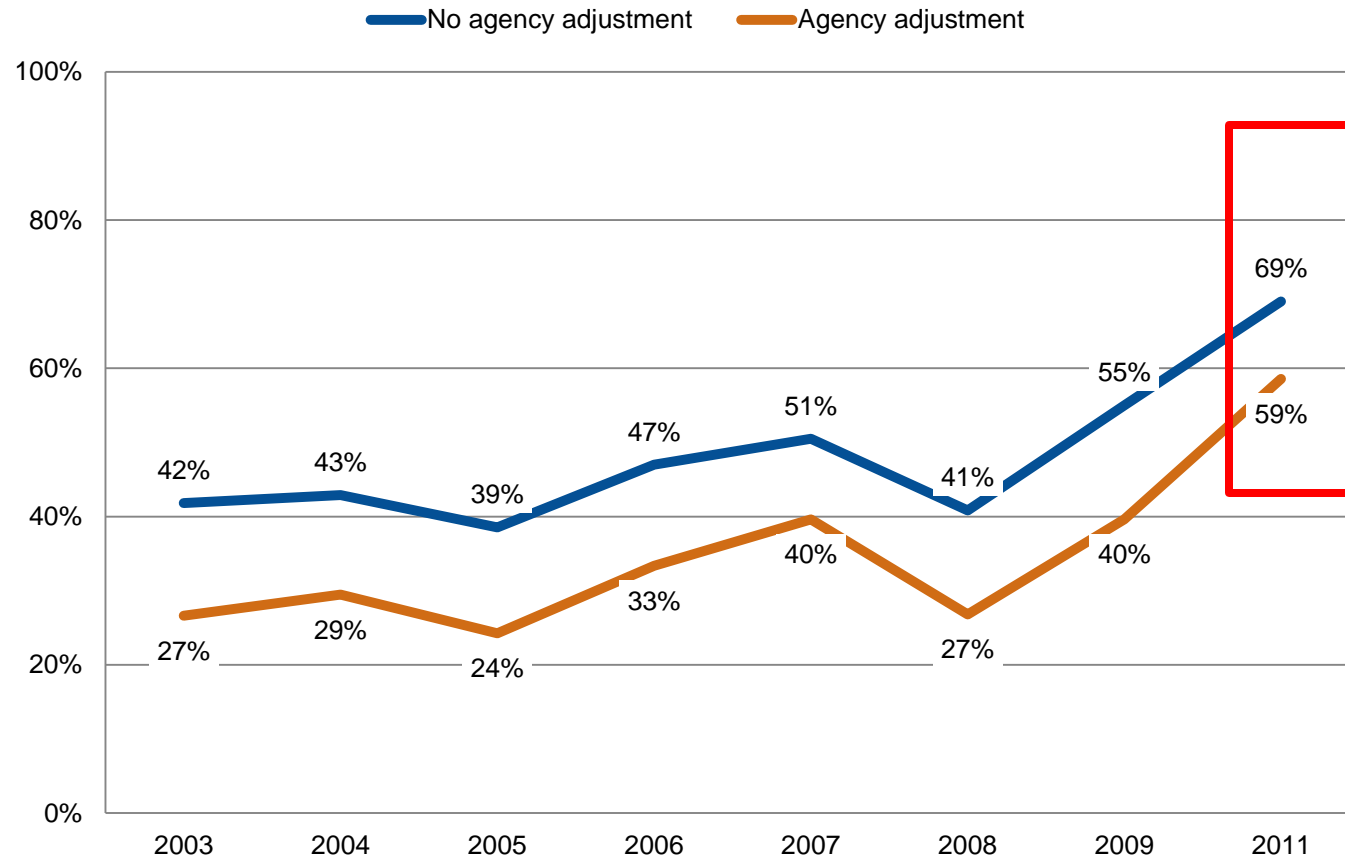
Limitations and Concerns about ARD Program Coverage

- Participation by states
- Ability to identify all manners of arrest-related deaths
- Varying methodology used by SRCs

Percent of law enforcement homicide universe covered by ARD, by estimation method and year, 2003-2009 and 2011

Banks, Couzens, & Planty (2015). Assessment of Coverage in the Arrest-Related Deaths Program, NCJ 249099
http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/acardp.pdf
Banks et al. (2015). Arrest-Related Deaths Program Assessment: Technical Report, NCJ 248543
http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ardpatr.pdf

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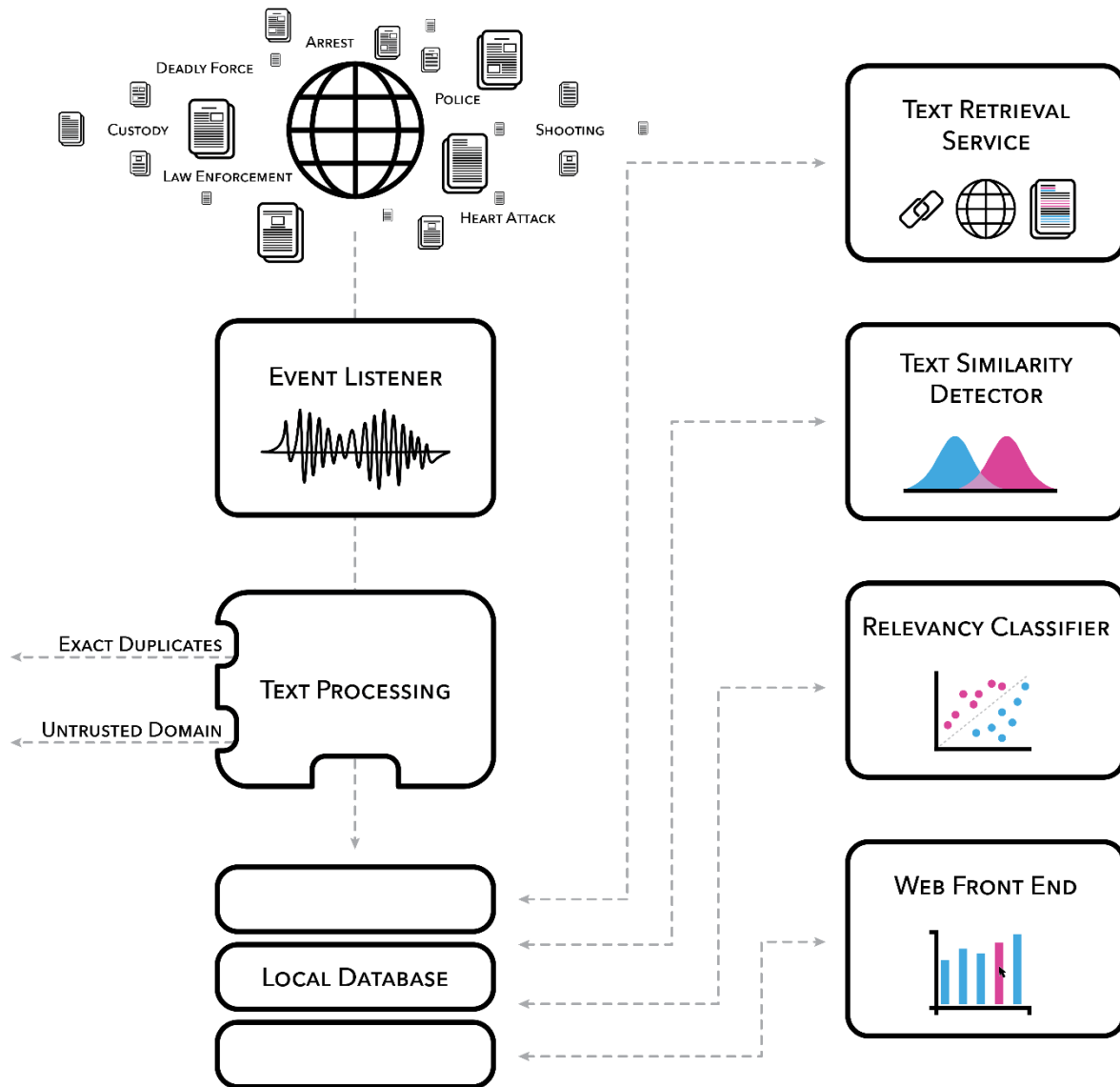http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ardpatr.pdf

ARD Program Pilot Goal

Develop specific recommendations for an ongoing method of

(1) Identifying arrest related deaths in the U.S. from open sources and,

(2) Collecting information about decedents and the circumstances surrounding those deaths from government agencies.

ARD Program Pilot Goal

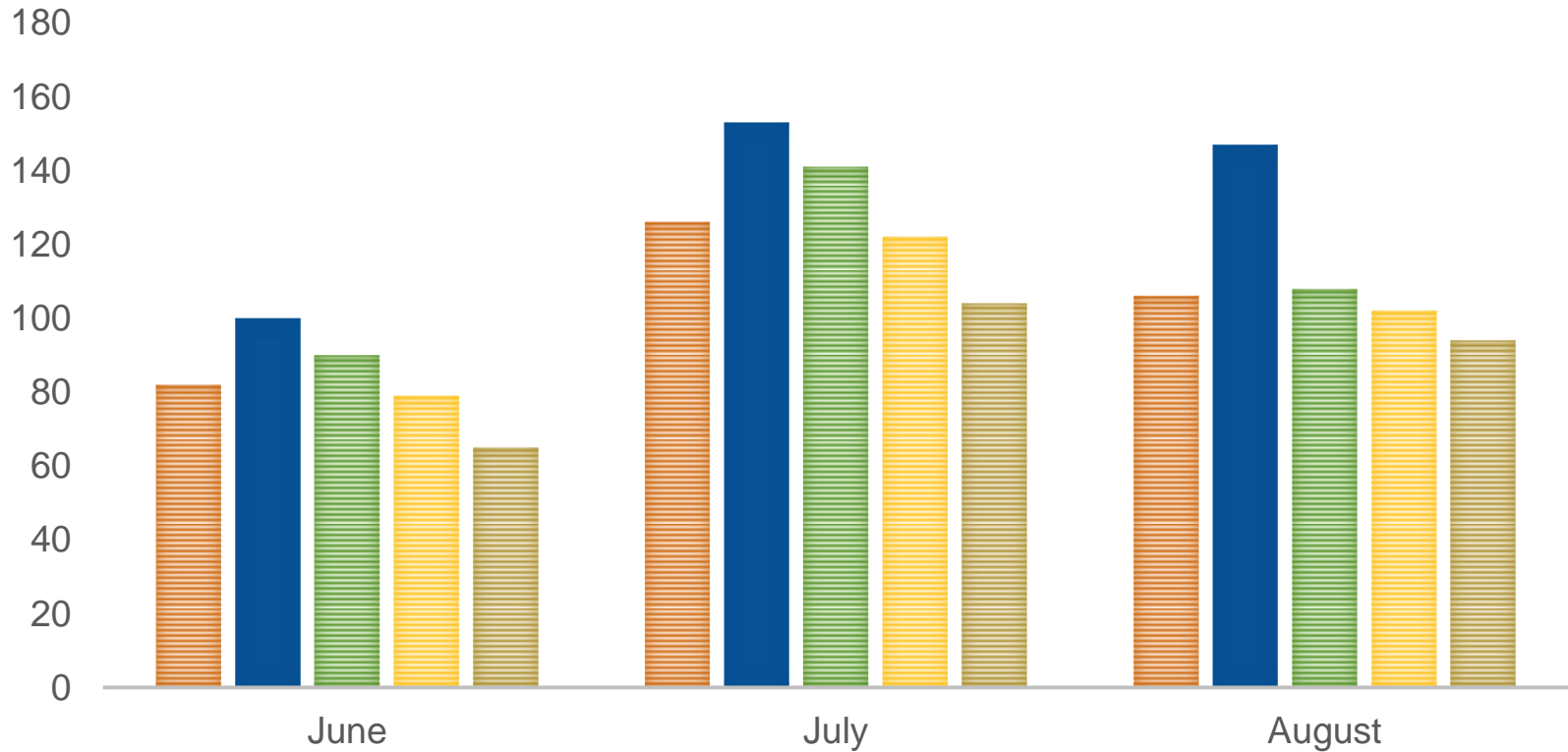| Universe of cases, by source reported		Open source identified arrest related death?	
		No	**Yes**
Agency report identified arrest related death?	**No**	1. Case is not in either source	2. Case in open source only
	Yes	3. Case in official record only	4. Case in both sources

DATA SCIENCE / Arrest-Related Deaths Pipeline

Law Enforcement Involved Deaths, by Source

DEATHS IDENTIFIED, BY MONTH AND OPEN SOURCE, 2015

■ KilledByPolice ■ ARD ■ Fatal Encounters ■ Counted ■ WashPost

Law Enforcement Agencies and Medical Examiner/ Coroner's Offices Will be Asked to

- Confirm all case identifying data, including decedent name, decedent date of death, and name of LEA with jurisdiction over the decedent at the time of death for cases identified through open-source review;

- Identify any arrest-related deaths occurring from June 1 through August 31, 2015, that were not identified through the open-source reviews; and

- Provide information about the decedent and factors precipitating law enforcement involvement with decedent for all confirmed arrest-related deaths.

2015 ARD Program Pilot Next Steps

- Conduct survey with law enforcement agencies and medical examiner/ coroner offices.

- Follow-up as indicated with criminal investigative agencies.

- Determine efficiency and comprehensiveness of various approaches for identifying arrest-related deaths, with particular attention to the types of death identified.

- Assess information provided by various sources about the decedent and the circumstances surrounding the arrest-related death.

- Provide recommendations for an ongoing data collection.

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