



# Uniform Crime Reporting

## National Incident-Based Reporting System

### **Volume 1: Data Collection Guidelines**

## G. Major Differences Between NIBRS and the Traditional UCR System

NIBRS differs from the traditional UCR system in the following significant ways:

**1. NIBRS Uses Incident-Based Versus Summary Reporting --** The biggest difference between NIBRS and the traditional UCR system is the degree of detail in reporting.

**a. Traditional UCR Reporting --** In the traditional system, law enforcement agencies tally the number of occurrences of Part I offenses, as well as arrest data for both Part I and Part II offenses, and submit aggregate counts of the collected data in monthly summary reports either directly to the FBI or indirectly through state UCR Programs. Therefore, the traditional UCR Program can best be described as a summary reporting system. The types of data tallied include the numbers of offenses; clearances; types and values of stolen and recovered property; and the age, sex, and race of persons who are arrested. Expanded data are collected on homicides (i.e., Murder and Nonnegligent Manslaughter, Manslaughter by Negligence, and Justifiable Homicide) through the use of Supplementary Homicide Reports. Furthermore, there are no requirements to tie arrests and exceptional clearances back to previously submitted incident reports.

Note: The traditional UCR system will hereafter be referred to as the “Summary reporting system.”

The *Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook* provides a detailed description of the Summary reporting system.

**b. NIBRS Reporting --** In NIBRS, law enforcement agencies collect detailed data regarding individual crime incidents and arrests and submit them in separate reports using prescribed data elements and data values to describe each incident and arrest. Therefore, NIBRS involves incident-based reporting.

**(1) Group “A” Incident Report --** Incident reports are submitted for Group “A” offenses. A list of the Group “A” offenses can be found in subsection G on pages 10 and 11. Group “A” Incident Reports are made up of 6 segments and 53 data elements, as shown on the following pages.

Note: While Data Elements 1 (ORI Number) and 2 (Incident Number) are part of the Administrative Segment, they are repeated in the Offense, Property, Victim, Offender, and Arrestee Segments for the purpose of linking those segments to the Administrative Segment.

## Overview

### Administrative Segment:

- 1 ORI Number
- 2 Incident Number
- 3 Incident Date/Hour
- 4 Cleared Exceptionally
- 5 Exceptional Clearance Date

### Offense Segment:

- [1 ORI Number]
- [2 Incident Number]
- 6 UCR Offense Code
- 7 Offense Attempted/Completed
- 8 Offender(s) Suspected of Using
- 8A Bias Motivation
- 9 Location Type
- 10 Number of Premises Entered
- 11 Method of Entry
- 12 Type Criminal Activity/Gang Information
- 13 Type Weapon/Force Involved

### Property Segment:

- [1 ORI Number]
- [2 Incident Number]
- 14 Type Property Loss/Etc.
- 15 Property Description
- 16 Value of Property
- 17 Date Recovered
- 18 Number of Stolen Motor Vehicles
- 19 Number of Recovered Motor Vehicles
- 20 Suspected Drug Type
- 21 Estimated Drug Quantity
- 22 Type Drug Measurement

### Victim Segment:

- [1 ORI Number]
- [2 Incident Number]
- 23 Victim (Sequence) Number

- 24 Victim Connected to UCR Offense Code(s)
- 25 Type of Victim
- 26 Age (of Victim)
- 27 Sex (of Victim)
- 28 Race (of Victim)
- 29 Ethnicity (of Victim)
- 30 Resident Status (of Victim)
- 31 Aggravated Assault/Homicide Circumstances
- 32 Additional Justifiable Homicide Circumstances
- 33 Type Injury
- 34 Offender Number(s) to be Related
- 35 Relationship(s) of Victim to Offender(s)

### Offender Segment:

- [1 ORI Number]
- [2 Incident Number]
- 36 Offender (Sequence) Number
- 37 Age (of Offender)
- 38 Sex (of Offender)
- 39 Race (of Offender)

### Arrestee Segment:

- [1 ORI Number]
- [2 Incident Number]
- 40 Arrestee (Sequence) Number
- 41 Arrest (Transaction) Number
- 42 Arrest Date
- 43 Type of Arrest
- 44 Multiple Arrestee Segments Indicator
- 45 UCR Arrest Offense Code
- 46 Arrestee Was Armed With
- 47 Age (of Arrestee)
- 48 Sex (of Arrestee)
- 49 Race (of Arrestee)
- 50 Ethnicity (of Arrestee)
- 51 Resident Status (of Arrestee)
- 52 Disposition of Arrestee Under 18

## Overview

Unlike the Summary reporting system, in NIBRS arrests and exceptional clearances relating to previously submitted Group “A” Incident Reports are submitted as updates to those reports.

More information on the Group “A” Incident Report can be found in section V, “Reports.”

**(2) Group “B” Arrest Report --** Group “B” offenses are reported only when an arrest is involved, and then only an arrest report is submitted. A description of the Group “B” offenses can be found in this section on page 11. The Group “B” Arrest Report does not include incident data but uses only data elements that describe the arrestee and the circumstances of the arrest.

Group “B” Arrest Reports are made up of the following 13 data elements:

- 1 ORI Number
- \*41 Arrest (Transaction) Number
- \*40 Arrestee (Sequence) Number
- 42 Arrest Date
- 43 Type of Arrest
- 45 UCR Arrest Offense Code
- 46 Arrestee Was Armed With
- 47 Age (of Arrestee)
- 48 Sex (of Arrestee)
- 49 Race (of Arrestee)
- 50 Ethnicity (of Arrestee)
- 51 Resident Status (of Arrestee)
- 52 Disposition of Arrestee Under 18

\*The order of these two data elements is reversed from that in the Arrestee Segment.

More information on the Group “B” Arrest Report is located in section V.

**(3) Data Elements and Data Values Used in NIBRS Reports --** As shown above, there are 53 data elements used in NIBRS to describe the victims, offenders, arrestees, and circumstances of crimes.

There are two types of data elements, mandatory and optional. Data must be entered into mandatory data elements in reports submitted to the FBI, or the reports will be rejected by the FBI’s computer as containing an error. For example, a number must be entered into Data Element 2 (Incident Number). Whether data are entered into optional data elements is

up to the discretion of the submitting agency, so the absence of data in them will not cause rejections. For example, no entry is required for Data Element 29 (Ethnicity of Victim). Section VII, “Mandatories,” provides the designations regarding which data elements are mandatory and which are optional for NIBRS’ reporting purposes.

Data values are the specific codes that are allowed to be entered into the data elements in reports submitted to the FBI. For example, the allowed data values for Data Element 27 (Sex of Victim) are M = Male, F = Female, or U = Unknown. If a different data value is entered, it will be rejected by the FBI’s computer as an error.

Section VI, “Data Elements and Data Values,” provides more information on the data elements and data values used in NIBRS.

Local and state IBR systems may include additional data elements and data values to satisfy their local and state needs; however, only those prescribed in these guidelines should be submitted to the national Program for NIBRS reporting purposes.

## 2. NIBRS Involves Expanded Offense Reporting

**a. Offenses Reported in the Summary Reporting System --** In the Summary reporting system, counts are collected on the number of criminal incidents involving the following eight Crime Index offenses (Part I Offenses):

1. Murder and Nonnegligent Manslaughter
2. Forcible Rape
3. Robbery
4. Aggravated Assault
5. Burglary
6. Larceny-theft
7. Motor Vehicle Theft
8. Arson

Numerical counts are also collected on persons arrested for both Part I (Crime Index) Offenses and Part II (most other) Offenses. These counts are broken down by crime categories and the age, sex, and race of the arrestees.

**b. Offenses Reported in NIBRS --** There are two categories of offenses reported in NIBRS, Group “A” and Group “B.” It is important to determine which category an offense belongs to because depending on whether a crime is a Group “A” or “B” offense either a Group “A” Incident Report or a Group “B” Arrest Report should be submitted. To assist coding personnel in making such determinations, a reference has been provided in section III, “Offense Lookup Table.”

## Overview

**(1) Group “A” Offenses --** The following offenses are reported in Group “A” Incident Reports. There are 22 Group “A” crime categories made up of 46 offenses:

Note: The numbers in parentheses are the UCR Offense Codes of the offenses.

1. Arson (200)
2. Assault Offenses
  - Aggravated Assault (13A)
  - Simple Assault (13B)
  - Intimidation (13C)
3. Bribery (510)
4. Burglary/Breaking and Entering (220)
5. Counterfeiting/Forgery (250)
6. Destruction/Damage/Vandalism of Property (290)
7. Drug/Narcotic Offenses
  - Drug/Narcotic Violations (35A)
  - Drug Equipment Violations (35B)
8. Embezzlement (270)
9. Extortion/Blackmail (210)
10. Fraud Offenses
  - False Pretenses/Swindle/Confidence Game (26A)
  - Credit Card/Automated Teller Machine Fraud (26B)
  - Impersonation (26C)
  - Welfare Fraud (26D)
  - Wire Fraud (26E)
11. Gambling Offenses
  - Betting/Wagering (39A)
  - Operating/Promoting/Assisting Gambling (39B)
  - Gambling Equipment Violations (39C)
  - Sports Tampering (39D)
12. Homicide Offenses
  - Murder and Nonnegligent Manslaughter (09A)
  - Negligent Manslaughter (09B)
  - Justifiable Homicide (09C)
13. Kidnaping/Abduction (100)
14. Larceny/Theft Offenses
  - Pocket-picking (23A)
  - Purse-snatching (23B)
  - Shoplifting (23C)
  - Theft From Building (23D)
  - Theft From Coin-Operated Machine or Device (23E)

- Theft From Motor Vehicle (23F)
- Theft of Motor Vehicle Parts or Accessories (23G)
- All Other Larceny (23H)
- 15. Motor Vehicle Theft (240)
- 16. Pornography/Obscene Material (370)
- 17. Prostitution Offenses
  - Prostitution (40A)
  - Assisting or Promoting Prostitution (40B)
- 18. Robbery (120)
- 19. Sex Offenses, Forcible
  - Forcible Rape (11A)
  - Forcible Sodomy (11B)
  - Sexual Assault With An Object (11C)
  - Forcible Fondling (11D)
- 20. Sex Offenses, Nonforcible
  - Incest (36A)
  - Statutory Rape (36B)
- 21. Stolen Property Offenses (Receiving, etc.) (280)
- 22. Weapon Law Violations (520)

More information regarding Group “A” offenses is located in section II, “Offenses.”

**(2) Group “B” Offenses** -- The following offenses are reported in Group “B” Arrest Reports. They include all offenses that are not Group “A” offenses, except for most Traffic Offenses. Group “B” offenses are to be reported using the following 11 crime categories:

- 1. Bad Checks (90A)
- 2. Curfew/Loitering/Vagrancy Violations (90B)
- 3. Disorderly Conduct (90C)
- 4. Driving Under the Influence (90D)
- 5. Drunkenness (90E)
- 6. Family Offenses, Nonviolent (90F)
- 7. Liquor Law Violations (90G)
- 8. Peeping Tom (90H)
- 9. Runaway (90I)
- 10. Trespass of Real Property (90J)
- 11. All Other Offenses (90Z)

More information regarding Group “B” offenses can be found in section II.

## Overview

### 3. NIBRS Uses Revised and New Offense Definitions

The definitions for the eight Crime Index offenses used in the Summary reporting system are set forth in the *Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook*. Those definitions are still to be used when classifying offenses for reports in that system.

Several of the definitions for the Crime Index offenses had to be revised for NIBRS reporting purposes. For example, the definition of Forcible Rape in the *Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook*, page 10, is “the carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will.” NIBRS’ definition in the *Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook*, NIBRS Edition, page 21, is “[t]he carnal knowledge of a person, forcibly and/or against that person’s will; or not forcibly or against the person’s will where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity (or because of his/her youth).”

Furthermore, many new definitions had to be devised for offenses that had not been previously defined for UCR purposes, e.g., the definitions for Forcible Sodomy, Sexual Assault With An Object, and Forcible Fondling.

All of the offense definitions used in NIBRS are provided in section II.

### 4. NIBRS Uses New UCR Offense Codes

No official UCR Offense Codes have been established for the Summary reporting system. However, the numbers 1 through 29, with or without alphabetic suffixes, are used in the *Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook* to enumerate offense categories. For example, 1.a. stands for Murder and Nonnegligent Manslaughter and 29 for Runaways (Persons under 18).

In NIBRS, 57 three-character UCR Offense Codes have been established as shown in parentheses after the offenses listed previously on pages 10 and 11.

Forty-six of the codes are for the 46 Group “A” offenses in NIBRS. These codes are based on the four-digit National Crime Information Center (NCIC) Uniform Offense Classification Codes in order to facilitate interrelating offense data between the NCIC and UCR systems. This relationship was accomplished by using the same first two characters in the UCR Offense Codes as used in the NCIC coding system. The third character in the UCR Code is either a zero or an alphabetical letter referencing a subcategory of the crime category. For example, the NCIC Code for Simple Assault is 1313, whereas the UCR Code is 13B.

Eleven of the codes are for the 11 Group “B” crime categories in NIBRS. A separate 900 series was assigned to the Group “B” crime categories to distinguish them from the Group “A” offenses. For example, the NCIC Offense Code for Bad Checks is 2606, whereas the UCR Offense Code is 90A.

More information on the offense codes used in NIBRS can be found in section IV, “Offense Codes.”

### **5. NIBRS Does Not Use the Hierarchy Rule**

In the Summary reporting system, offense reporting is governed by the “Hierarchy Rule” that works in the following manner: If more than one crime was committed by the same person or group of persons and the time and space intervals separating the crimes were insignificant, then the crime highest in the Crime Index hierarchy (on page 9) is the only one reported. Consequently, in multiple-crime incidents the lower listed, less serious Part I offenses are not reported.

Note: Arson is an exception to the Hierarchy Rule as it must be reported regardless of any companion crimes.

The Hierarchy Rule is not used in NIBRS. Therefore, if more than one crime was committed by the same person or group of persons and the time and space intervals separating them were insignificant, all of the crimes are reported as offenses within the same incident.

Since in NIBRS all offenses occurring in an incident should be reported, care must be taken to identify all of the offenses involved in an incident. For example, a rape case might also involve the crimes of Motor Vehicle Theft and Kidnaping, and they should all be reported. Care must also be taken to ensure that each offense which is reported is a separate, distinct crime, rather than just a part of another offense. For example, every robbery includes some type of assault; but because the assault is an element which makes up the crime of Robbery, only Robbery should be reported. On the other hand, if during a robbery the victim is forced to engage in sexual relations, both Robbery and a Forcible Sex Offense should be reported, as forced sexual intercourse is not an element of Robbery.

### **6. NIBRS Provides Greater Specificity in Reporting**

Because the Summary reporting system collects most of its crime data in the form of categories (e.g., age groupings and property value groupings), it provides very little capability to break down the resulting data into specific subcategories.

On the other hand, because NIBRS collects the details of crime incidents, it allows much greater specificity in reporting. For example, breakdowns can be made among crimes against individuals, businesses, financial institutions, government, religious organizations, society/public, and other entities; crimes committed by and against residents versus nonresidents; and crimes involving various types of weapons and injuries. Furthermore, because NIBRS collects the specific values of stolen and recovered property, many more monetary value breakdowns can be made.

## Overview

### **7. NIBRS Has a New Scoring Category Called “Crimes Against Society”**

In the Summary reporting system, there are two scoring categories: Crimes Against Persons (e.g., Aggravated Assault, Murder, and Forcible Rape) where one offense is counted for each victim and Crimes Against Property (e.g., Burglary, Larceny-theft, and Robbery) where one offense is counted for each distinct operation (except Motor Vehicle Theft where one offense is counted for each stolen vehicle).

In NIBRS, it was necessary to add a new scoring category to account for crimes such as Drug/Narcotic Offenses, Gambling Offenses, Pornography/Obscene Material, and Prostitution Offenses. They are not Crimes Against Persons as they do not actually involve a victim, nor are they Crimes Against Property because property is not the real object of the crimes. Since these crimes represent society’s prohibitions on engaging in certain types of activity, a new scoring category of Crimes Against Society was created. One offense should be counted for each Crime Against Society.

### **8. NIBRS Provides a Means for Distinguishing Attempted Versus Completed Crimes**

In the Summary reporting system, there is no way to report whether most crimes were completed or only attempted. Therefore, many attempted crimes are reported as though they were completed. Exceptions are 1) Attempts to Commit Forcible Rape and 2) Assault to Murder and Attempt to Murder which are both classified as Aggravated Assault instead of Murder.

In NIBRS, each offense is designated as either A = Attempted or C = Completed in Data Element 7 (Offense Attempted/Completed). However, as in the Summary reporting system, an Assault to Murder or an Attempted Murder is still reported as Aggravated Assault.

### **9. More Correlation Among Offenses, Property, Victims, Offenders, and Arrestees**

The Summary reporting system provides limited capability to correlate the data that are collected. For example, only in homicides can the age, sex, and race of offenders be correlated with the age, sex, and race of their victims.

NIBRS employs both explicit (specifically coded) and implied (non-coded but connected by virtue of proximity) linkages. Explicit linkages are used to connect offenses, property, victims, offenders, and arrestees to the incident and to connect victims to the offenses committed against them. One of the implied linkages is between the offenders and victims within an incident. Because all of the offenders must have participated in some way in the commission of all of the offenses included in the incident, all of the offenders have an implied linkage to all of the victims. These explicit and implied linkages provide the capability to generate reports reflecting a multitude of interrelationships among the collected data.

## **10. Expanded Victim-to-Offender Relationship Data**

In the Summary reporting system, the victim's relationship (e.g., the victim was the husband, wife, employer, or employee, of the offender) is reported only for homicides (i.e., Murder and Nonnegligent Manslaughter, Manslaughter by Negligence, and Justifiable Homicide).

In NIBRS, the victim's relationship to the offender(s) is reported when the victim was the object of a Crime Against Person, i.e., Assault Offense, Homicide Offense, Kidnaping/Abduction, Forcible Sex Offense, or Nonforcible Sex Offense. Victim-to-offender relationship data are also reported for Robbery (Crime Against Property) because one of its elements is an assault, which makes it a violent crime.

## **11. NIBRS Has Increased Circumstance Reporting**

In the Summary reporting system, circumstance data are collected only for homicides.

In NIBRS, circumstance data are collected on aggravated assaults, as well as homicides. Furthermore, up to two circumstance codes can be entered for each aggravated assault or murder.

## **12. NIBRS Expands the Application of the Hotel Rule**

In the Summary reporting system, the Hotel Rule is used to reduce the burden of reporting burglaries of temporary lodgings. The Hotel Rule found on page 20 of the *Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook* states, “[I]f a number of dwelling units under a single manager are burglarized and the offenses are most likely to be reported to the police by the manager rather than the individual tenants, the burglary should be scored as one offense.”

In NIBRS, this rule has been expanded to include rental storage facilities (i.e., mini-storage and self-storage buildings). In order to determine the number of structures or enclosures that were burglarized, the number of rooms, units, suites, storage compartments, etc., that were broken into is to be reported in Data Element 10 (Number of Premises Entered).

## **13. NIBRS Requires Magnetic Media Submission for Direct Participation**

In the Summary reporting system, direct submissions are made to the FBI by state UCR Programs and local agencies using manual forms and by state UCR Programs using magnetic tapes or 34xx cartridges.

## **Overview**

In NIBRS, all agencies submitting data directly to the FBI must use magnetic tapes, 34xx cartridges, or computer disks. This does not mean that local agencies within a state must use these media in submitting data to their state IBR system. The state UCR Programs will prescribe the forms of submission they will accept from the local agencies participating in their IBR systems.

## **H. Miscellaneous Features of NIBRS**

### **1. Contents of Group “A” Incident Reports**

Each Group “A” Incident Report can contain up to 10 types of offenses (e.g., Arson, Burglary, and Forcible Rape), 999 victims, 99 offenders, and 99 arrestees. Ten different types of property (e.g., Automobiles, Bicycles, and Clothes/Furs) can be entered for each of six types of property loss/etc. [i.e., Burned, Counterfeited/Forged, Destroyed/Damaged/Vandalized, Recovered, Seized, or Stolen (includes bribed, defrauded, embezzled, extorted, ransomed, robbed, etc.)].

### **2. Clearing Records in NIBRS**

In NIBRS, clearances are performed at the incident level rather than on an individual offense basis. This means that a clearance by arrest or exceptional means of one offense in a multiple-offense incident will clear the entire incident. The first Arrestee Segment reported in connection with an incident will automatically clear the incident. An incident cannot be cleared by exceptional means if it was already cleared by arrest, i.e., an Arrestee Segment was previously submitted.

### **3. The Concept of Time and Place As Used in NIBRS**

The concept of Time and Place is based on the premise that if more than one crime was committed by the same person or group of persons and the time and space intervals separating them were insignificant, all of the crimes make up a single incident.

In the Summary reporting system, the concept is used to determine whether the Hierarchy Rule is to be applied to a group of crimes, and if so, the crime which is highest in the hierarchy is the only one reported.

In NIBRS, although the Hierarchy Rule is not used, the concept of Time and Place is still applied to determine whether a group of crimes constitute a single incident. This is of crucial importance since the application of the concept will determine whether the crimes should be reported as individual incidents or as a single incident comprised of multiple offenses.

## Overview

Because of the emphasis in NIBRS on reporting all of the crimes involved in an incident, additional clarification of the concept of Time and Place, as it applies in NIBRS, is provided below:

An incident is defined for NIBRS reporting purposes as one or more offenses committed by the same offender, or group of offenders *acting in concert*, at the *same time and place*.

*Acting in concert* requires that the offenders actually commit or assist in the commission of the crime(s). The offenders must be aware of and consent to the commission of the crime(s) or even if nonconsenting, their actions assist in the commission of the offense(s). This is important because all of the offenders in an incident are considered to have committed all of the offenses in the incident. If one or more of the offenders did not act in concert, then there is more than one incident involved.

Consequently, if an arrest is made for the incident, the arrest clears all of the offenses that occurred in that incident. Data Element 2 (Incident Number) provides a viable way to report this situation correctly in NIBRS. This is the number assigned by an agency to each Group “A” Incident Report to uniquely identify the incident, i.e., the Originating Agency Case (OCA) Number. The number can be up to 12 characters in length. This length allows for the originally assigned incident number to be entered adding an alphabetic character as a suffix to differentiate between multiple incidents occurring within the reported incident and still maintain the original incident number for record keeping purposes.

Example: A domestic argument escalated from a shouting match between a husband and wife to an aggravated assault where the husband began severely beating the wife. The wife, in her own defense, shot and killed the husband. The responding officer submitted a report with one incident number, #000222070. This should have been reported under NIBRS as two incidents because the husband cannot be said to be acting in concert with the wife in his own killing. One incident involving the aggravated assault perpetrated by the husband could have been submitted as #000222070A. The second incident involving the killing could have been submitted as #000222070B. This would have allowed the maintenance of the original incident number for record keeping purposes at the local level and simultaneously satisfied reporting requirements for NIBRS.

*Same time and place* means that the time interval between the offenses and the distance between the locations where they occurred were insignificant. Normally, the offenses must have occurred during an unbroken time duration and at the same or adjoining location(s). However, incidents can also comprise offenses that by their nature involve continuing criminal activity by the same offender(s) at different times and places, as long as the activity is deemed to constitute a single criminal transaction. On the following page Example (3) gives an illustration of a continuing offense.

## Overview

The following examples illustrate how the concept of Time and Place is applied in NIBRS:

Example (1): Two offenders robbed a bar. The bartender was forced at gunpoint to give over money from the cash register. The robbers also took money and jewelry from three customers. One of the robbers, in searching for more customers to rob, found a female customer in the rest room and raped her there outside of the view of the other offender. When the rapist returned, both robbers left. There were two incidents, i.e., one involving Robbery and the other involving Forcible Rape, because the offenders were not acting in concert in both offenses.

Example (2): Same situation as Example (1), except that the rape occurred in the bar and the other offender told the rapist to stop and only rob the victim. There was only one incident with two offenses, i.e., Robbery and Forcible Rape. Although the other robber did not consent to the rape, by displaying a gun he prevented someone coming to the victim's assistance and thereby assisted in the commission of the crime.

Example (3): Over a period of 18 months, a computer programmer working for a bank manipulated the bank's computer so that he could systematically embezzle \$70,000. This continuing criminal activity constituted a single incident involving the crime of Embezzlement.

Because it is not possible to provide instructions that will cover all of the possible fact situations that might occur, in some cases the reporting agency will have to use its best judgment in determining how many incidents were involved.

## 4. NIBRS' Updating Policy

NIBRS provides for adding, modifying, and deleting data as set forth in Volume 2: *Data Submission Specifications*.

The national UCR Program's updating policy states that a report is required to be updated only if the change would substantially alter the report's statistical significance. Circumstances giving rise to the need to update include finding out that a serious error was made in originally entering the report or the occurrence of a subsequent event which materially affects the report. Anytime a record is updated, it should be resubmitted so that the data are the same at all levels--local, state, and federal.

**Examples of circumstances requiring updating are** the discovery of an additional unreported offense, victim, and/or offender; a subsequent arrest or exceptional clearance; discovery of a significant amount of unreported property loss; the recovery of stolen property; or the incorrect entry of important data, such as the offense code, the victim's or arrestee's sex or race, etc.

**Examples of circumstances not requiring updating are** the exact age of the offender (e.g., 22) is learned after an age range (e.g., 20-25) was reported; the true value of stolen property is learned (e.g., \$958) after the approximate cost (e.g., \$1,000) was reported; or it is learned that, besides suffering a severe laceration which was reported, the victim suffered internal injury.

An agency participating in NIBRS may, of course, perform more updating than is required by the national UCR Program's policy. Again, if a state UCR Program (or direct local agency participant) updates a record in its IBR system, the record should also be updated in the national file.

### **5. NIBRS' Emphasis on Drug Offenses**

In response to the Nation's serious drug problem, special emphasis has been given in NIBRS to Drug/Narcotic Offenses. The unlawful cultivation, manufacture, distribution, sale, purchase, use, possession, transportation, or importation of any controlled drug or narcotic substance is to be reported. The unlawful manufacture, sale, purchase, possession, or transportation of drug equipment (paraphernalia) should also be reported. Likewise, the report should show whether the offenders are suspected of having used drugs or narcotics during or shortly before the commission of the crime(s).

Because it is often difficult to determine the true identity of drugs or narcotics at the time an initial incident report is prepared, only the Suspected Drug Type must be reported. Also, because of problems in determining the street value of drugs or narcotics, no value should be reported when they are seized in connection with Drug/Narcotic Violations. However, in order to obtain some measure of the Nation's drug problem, the Estimated Quantity of the seized drug or narcotic should be reported.

Note: When drugs or narcotics are involved in other types of crime, e.g., they were stolen as a result of a burglary, theft, or robbery, their value rather than their quantity should be reported.

### **6. NIBRS Accounts for Computer Crime**

The advent of computers was closely followed by the emergence of Computer Crime, i.e., crimes directed at and perpetrated through the use of computers and related equipment. As the use of computers has increased, so has the incidence of Computer Crime. Faced with this growing problem, several states have enacted statutes specifically addressing Computer Crime. Therefore, the question arose as to how Computer Crime should be treated in NIBRS.

It is the national UCR Program's position that Computer Crime actually involves the historical common-law offenses of larceny, embezzlement, trespass, etc., which are being perpetrated through the use of a new tool, the computer. Therefore, if larcenies, embezzlements,

## Overview

trespasses relating to computers were to be reported under a new classification called Computer Crime, the national UCR Program's traditional time series relating to such crimes would be distorted.

To avoid such a result, NIBRS provides the capability to indicate whether a computer was the object of the crime (by entering 07 = Computer Hardware/Software into Data Element 15 [Property Description]) and to indicate whether the offenders used computer equipment to perpetrate a crime (by entering C = Computer Equipment into Data Element 8 [Offenders Suspected of Using]). This ensures the continuance of the traditional crime statistics and at the same time flags incidents that involve Computer Crime.

## 7. Quality Assurance

Data quality assurance standards and measures have been developed for NIBRS, and they continue to evolve as participation grows. The standards are used for two purposes:

1. To assess the completeness and accuracy of data being submitted to the national UCR Program.
2. To provide a precise basis for making adjustments to the national statistics to account for any broad-based discrepancies that are identified.

To assist state UCR Programs and direct local agency participants in identifying and correcting shortcomings in their IBR systems, a set of uniform auditing procedures has also been developed. The procedures can be used by participants to conduct self-audits of their automated systems and manual procedures to ensure that they meet NIBRS' data collection and reporting requirements.

The auditing procedures are based on generally accepted auditing practices recognized by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, principles set forth in the 1994 revision of *Government Auditing Standards*, and procedures used by NCIC and the FBI's internal inspection staff. The national UCR Program can train state UCR Program personnel in the use of the auditing procedures and monitor their application to ensure effectiveness.