



Department of Justice

A Unified Message: Support for a New Initiative to Improve Incident-Based Crime Reporting and National Crime Statistics

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) have agreed upon several key principles related to improving national crime reporting and the new BJS initiative titled the National Crime Statistics Exchange (NCS-X).

The FBI and BJS are components within the Department of Justice and share statutory responsibility for developing national estimates of crime known to law enforcement and the characteristics of criminal incidents. Both organizations have long histories of providing valuable statistical information and rely on local, state, and tribal law enforcement agencies to provide the data they use in their crime reporting programs.

In 2012, BJS announced its NCS-X initiative. NCS-X is designed to increase participation in the FBI's National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) so that this reporting system will have the coverage to generate statistically-sound national estimates of crime known to law enforcement agencies. Through NCS-X, BJS will provide funding and technical assistance to selected local, state, and tribal law enforcement agencies and to state Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) programs to enable them to report NIBRS data to the FBI. The following principles represent the shared view of the FBI and BJS regarding the NCS-X initiative:

- NCS-X is designed to expand participation in NIBRS so that the resulting data can be used to produce detailed national estimates of crime known to law enforcement. It is not designed to replace or interfere with the UCR or to establish a new and separate crime data system.
- The FBI and BJS propose to increase law enforcement agency participation in NIBRS by at least 400 agencies through NCS-X. BJS will not use NCS-X data to report agency-level crime statistics until such statistics are released by the FBI as that type of reporting falls within the scope of the FBI's authority. Understanding that some selected agencies will elect not to participate in NIBRS, BJS will identify additional local, state, and tribal agencies that may elect to participate, thereby enabling the NCS-X to reach the necessary minimum number of agencies required to produce national estimates of crime.
- BJS, along with other components within the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), will explore funding opportunities to support and encourage these selected agencies to begin their NIBRS reporting. Subject to budgetary constraints, BJS plans to make a substantial commitment each year from 2014 through 2016 to encourage selected local, state, and tribal departments to provide incident-level data to state UCR programs, to assist state UCR programs to handle this increased responsibility, and to cover some of the individual agency costs of participating in the national program.

- BJS and the FBI will work together with other organizations and advisory bodies to explore the feasibility of “enter once, use many” strategies, such as extracting NIBRS data from an agency’s Law Enforcement Data Exchange (N-DEX) submissions, a process that would not require agencies to enter data into each system independently.
- NCS-X will provide more meaningful analytic information to law enforcement, policymakers, and criminal justice planners on topics important in the twenty-first century and will provide local, state, and tribal law enforcement along with state UCR programs with technology-based tools to analyze and compare data within NIBRS.
- BJS will regularly discuss the NCS-X efforts with the FBI and the CJIS Advisory Policy Board as well as with other NCS-X supporting organizations [e.g., the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), the IJIS Institute (IJIS), and the National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics (SEARCH)] to ensure broad understanding and acceptance of the initiative. A formally established NCS-X executive steering committee made up of representatives from the various partner organizations will review decisions to ensure the maximum benefit possible to key stakeholders.
- BJS and the FBI will seek UCR State Program involvement in NCS-X and will provide status updates for agencies participating in NCS-X. Some funding is available for upgrading UCR State Program technical capabilities to encourage and enable them to receive and report NIBRS data.

If NCS-X is successful, the FBI’s NIBRS data will provide the nation with detailed and insightful information about the nature of crime known to law enforcement in the United States at levels that cannot be achieved today through existing summary collection programs, such as the traditional Uniform Crime Reports.

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6/5/13

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BJS