National Crime Statistics Exchange (NCS-X)
State UCR/NIBRS Coordinator Interview Questionnaire

RESPONDENT INFORMATON (to be completed ahead of interview)

Name:

Title:

State:

Phone:

Other Contact:

INTRODUCTION

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), in collaboration with the FBI is implementing a new initiative called the National Crime Statistics Exchange (or NCS-X) to increase reporting to the National Incident Based Reporting System in order to create a nationally representative database of incident-based crime records from U.S. law enforcement agencies. NCS-X will generate national estimates on crime incidents and return meaningful information on reported crimes (including details about the incidents, victims, and offenders) to the law enforcement community and other constituents.

More specifically, BJS will work with agencies who are currently not reporting NIBRS data to report their incident data to their state's incident based reporting system and then onto the FBI. NCS-X will be providing funding and technical assistance to the sampled 400 law enforcement agencies and to state UCR/NIBRS programs to enable them to report these additional data to the FBI. When completed, this program will increase our nation's ability to monitor, respond to, and prevent crime by allowing NIBRS to produce timely, detailed, and accurate national measures of crime incidents.

Thank you for taking the time to talk with us today. Again, the purpose of this interview is to learn about the UCR and incident-based data that your state collects and reports to the FBI, as well as understand how your agency processes and manages these data. Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary and you may choose to not answer any question you do not want to. We may record this interview to assist us in writing up our notes, are you okay if we record the interview? Do you have any questions for me before we begin?

STATE PROGRAM GENERAL QUESTIONS

I would like to first ask some general questions about your role and your agency's role in your state data collection program.

1. What is your title [*or confirm title if known*]? Please briefly describe your primary duties?

2. How long have you been in this position? _____ years

3. Background on the State:
    a. Does your state currently collect incident-based crime data from state and local law enforcement agencies?
       [IF DEFINITION IS NEEDED: By "incident-based data," I mean for each crime incident that comes to the attention of law enforcement, a variety of data are collected about the incident. These data include the nature and types of specific offenses in the incident, characteristics of the victim(s) and offender(s), types and value of property stolen and recovered, and characteristics of persons arrested in connection with a crime incident. These data are reported in detail by the local agency to your state.]

    b. Are these data compatible with the FBI National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) reporting requirements?
       Probes
       i. If not, why?
       ii. Are these data reported to the FBI NIBRS Program?

    c. Does your state have additional incident-based data elements, codes or other reporting provisions that are specific to your state, beyond the standard NIBRS data elements and reporting provisions of the NIBRS program? [If so, briefly identify and describe.]

    d. Does your state have requirements for reporting either summary or incident-based crime data to the state that local agencies must adhere to? If yes, have you received feedback from local agencies regarding any challenges of meeting these requirements?
       Probes
       i. Statutory requirements?
       ii. Required to submit summary vs. incident-based data?
       iii. Must conform to specific State standards (e.g., data format, data quality)

4. Approximately how many law enforcement agencies are there in your state?
    Probes:
    a. How many law enforcement agencies report summary UCR data only?

b. How many law enforcement agencies report incident-based data?

COLLECTING AND REPORTING INCIDENT-BASED DATA

This next set of questions focuses on how incident-based data is generally collected and processed in your state.

5. How are incident-based data reported to your agency from other agencies?
   Probes:
   a. What systems or options are available for agencies to report incident-based data to your agency (i.e., web-based options, FTP, e-mail)? Approximately what proportion of submitting agencies submit incident-based data by each of these options?
   b. Do you have plans for other reporting channels/capabilities in the near (12-24 months) future?
   c. How frequently are incident-based data reported to your agency? Does the frequency of reporting vary by agency?
   d. *IF KNOWN WHAT AGENCIES IN THEIR STATE ARE IN THE SAMPLE ASK:* Do you know if and how _____ agencies collect incident-based data?

6. What is your agency's role in collecting and processing UCR, state incident-based, or NIBRS data for your state?
   Probes:

   a. Maintain reporting standards
   b. Update applicable reporting code tables
   c. Provide training and/or technical assistance to contributing agencies *[probe for in-person, online, general assistance, training to improve data quality]*
   d. Receive and process submissions
   e. Provide auditing protocols for local agencies to implement
   f. Conduct onsite audits of agencies to ensure reporting standards
   g. Review and edit submissions for accuracy, data quality, and compliance with reporting rules *[probe for what data elements or reporting rules are most problematic for agencies]*
   h. Process submitted data and prepare:
      i. Multi-agency (i.e., state level) data, files for internal and external use,
      ii. summary reports,
      iii. analytic reports,
      iv. other products (specify_____) made available to
         v. Contributing agencies,
         vi. Other local/state agencies,

       vii.   The general public
      viii.   Other (specify_____)
   i.   Convert state incident-based data to NIBRS specifications for reporting to FBI
   j.   Convert incident-based data to summary data for analysis
   k.   Submit UCR data to FBI
   l.   Submit NIBRS data to FBI
   m. Other (specify___)

6. What, in your opinion, are the greatest barriers that local agencies face in their ability or willingness to report incident-based data to your agency?
   Probes:
   a. Expected/projected costs of modifying their information/records management systems to collect and report the data in compliant formats
   b. Expected/projected costs of training staff within their agency
   c. Little perceived value to local operations
   d. Concerns that the volume and/or rate of crime will appear to increase
   e. Insufficient data organization at local level
   f. Needing to manipulate data into proper format
   g. Other (specify)

7. How, in your opinion, might we best address these barriers to support and enable more agencies in your state to participate in incident-based reporting?

8. A. What, in your opinion, are the greatest barriers *your agency* faces in supporting and expanding incident-based reporting/NIBRS reporting in your state?
   Probes:
   Staff and resources to support:
   i) Training
   ii) Technical assistance
   iii) Research and analysis of IBR data
   iv) Provide analysis tools to contributing agencies
   v) Other (specify_____)

8. B. Is there any help or technical assistance that *your agency* could use that would facilitate the expansion of incident-based reporting/NIBRS reporting in your state?
   Probes:
   i) Training
   ii) Expert assistance (If so, for what?)
   iii) Analysis tools, software, hardware
   iv) Funding (If so, for what?)
   v) Other (specify_____)

9. How, in your opinion, might we best address these barriers to support and enable IBR reporting within your state?

10. Does your state have a plan or an overall goal related to incident-based reporting? (e.g., 80% participation by 2015) If so, what is it? If you don't have a goal related to incident-based reporting, what are the main reasons for not having one? What would be a realistic goal for incident-based reporting in your state?

11. To what extent do agencies in your state participate in other regional or Federal information sharing or reporting systems (e.g., N-DEx, State/Regional Fusion Center, Real-Time Crime Center, etc.)?

STATE-LEVEL DATA FILES

The following questions ask about how your agency produces state-level data files for use in your state and for submitting to the FBI

12. What steps and processes are required to produce the state-level UCR/State incident-based/NIBRS data file?
    Probes:
    a. What are the steps and processes required for submitting NIBRS data to the FBI?

13. Does your office use any particular software to process these data?
    Probes:
    a. Which company provided the software to you?
    b. Can you provide the software product name and its version?
    c. Did this software have to be modified in any way to meet your state's incident-based reporting requirements?

14. What steps do you take to fulfill the requirements for NIBRS data file standardization?
    Probes:
    a. For example, is a NIEM (National Information Exchange Model) conformant state-level data file prepared?
    b. If so, how is this done?
    c. What else do you have to do? [compare to FBI response]

15. How is your NIBRS data transmitted to the FBI, and how often?

LEVEL OF EFFORT

The next questions focus on the level of effort that is required by your agency for collecting and processing traditional UCR, State incident-based, and NIBRS data.

16. How many people within your agency are currently involved in collecting, processing, auditing, and preparing the data for submission to the FBI? About how many person hours is collectively required to complete these tasks?
    Probes:
    a. Separately, how much time is spent training or responding to technical assistance inquiries from local agencies?

17. What data collection and processing step(s) tend to be the most resource-intensive for your organization? Why are these most resource-intensive? What do you think could be done in each step to reduce this resource requirement?
    Probes:
    a. Collection
    b. Processing
    c. Validity check/auditing
    d. Producing state level file
    e. Producing the file that is reported to the FBI
    f. Other steps? [NAME: _____]

18. If state incident-based reporting was expanded to include the two largest law enforcement agencies in your state, what impact would that have on your need for resources, including staffing and infrastructure?
    a. Do you believe that this level of increase could be handled with current resources or would additional resources be required?

ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

The next few questions focus on how data collected from local agencies is used both at a state and local agency level. This will help determine what types of assistance could be provided to improve the analytical and operational value of incident-based data.

19. Does your agency, or another other agency such as the Statistical Analysis Center, provide analysis of incident –based data or analytical tools to process incident-based data to local agencies? If so, what analyses or analytic tools are provided? If not, what types of analysis or analytical tools or resources do you think would be beneficial to local agencies?

20. What reports or other analytic products (e.g., websites, mapping, etc.) does your agency produce using UCR, state incident-based or state NIBRS data—identify reports and products by program—UCR, IBR, NIBRS? How frequently are these products created or published?

21. Which State agencies or organizations regularly use your data or report summaries (e.g., legislature, governor, etc.)? [Also—differentiate between other agencies who use the data and those who use the reports. If the data are used, how are they accessed and how frequently? Did this require substantial investment by the agency?]

WRAP-UP

22. What changes, if any, could be made to the FBI's NIBRS format to make it easier you to acquire NIBRS data from more of the agencies in your state?

23. Thinking back to the primary NCS-X goals, which is to recruit a sample of agencies from across the US to report NIBRS data to the FBI through the state UCR program, is there anything else I should know about the crime incident data that the State collects, processes or reports that we have not already discussed or the efforts you have made in the past to expand incident-based reporting in your State?
    Probes:
    a. Do you have any documentation you could supply that would provide any additional information to us or help clarify anything we have talked about today?
        i. For the overall State program?
        ii. Regarding the nature of the agencies within the state?

CLOSING

Thank you for taking the time to talk to me today. Your input is extremely important in these early stages of NCS-X and it has been very helpful to learn about your state's activities. If you have any questions about the interview today or the National Crime Statistics Exchange overall, you may contact Kevin Strom, NCS-X project director at RTI International. He can be reached via phone at 919-485-5729 or email: kstrom@rti.org.

IF NEEDED: During the interview we talked about you emailing me information regarding _____. You can send this information to me via e-mail. My email address is _____. If you need to call me, I can be reached at _____.