PART B. Statistical Methods

1. Respondent Universe

The potential respondent universe of the *Cargo Theft Incident Report* (OMB No. 1110-0048) includes all U.S. LEAs who voluntarily report crimes to the FBI UCR Program via the SRS. In 2016, approximately 11,000 LEAs participated in the FBI UCR Program. Out of those agencies, approximately, 4,500 voluntarily reported cargo theft data. LEAs consist of local, county, state, tribal and federal agencies which correlate to all population group sizes and have many diverse attributes. These agencies include a mix of population density and degrees of urbanization; various compositions of population particularly youth concentration; population mobility with respect to residents' mobility, commuting patterns, and transient factors; different economic conditions including median income, poverty level, and job availability; areas with different modes of transportation and highway systems; different cultural factors and educational, recreational, and religious characteristics; family conditions with respect to divorce and family cohesiveness; climate; effective strength of law enforcement; policies of other components of the criminal justice system; citizens' attitudes toward crime; and crime reporting practices of the citizenry.

Response rates have gradually increased over the last three years. The table below provides an overview of the number of respondent/non-respondent LEAs/states. (The table below provides the total number of SRS and National Incident-Based Reporting System agencies and states who are providing cargo theft data).

	Number of LEAs Participating	Number of Non-Participating Agencies	Number of States/BIA[*]/ U.S. Territories Participating	Participation Percentage
2013	3,022	15,289	11	16%
2014	5,340	13,158	22	29%
2015	8,226	10,213	32	45%
2016	9,851	8,630	33	53%

*Bureau of Indian Affairs

This increase in participation is a positive response to collecting these data, but several factors still affect collection:

- States do not have the resources required to make the necessary technical changes or to align their local and state statutes with federal requirements.
- States do not have the necessary resources to conduct data quality checks on reported incidents associated with cargo theft, which could result in inaccurate data.

- States do not have adequate resources to train participants on how to recognize and properly record cargo theft incidents.
- States do not perceive cargo theft as a priority or a significant problem within their state.

2. Collection of Information Procedures

Ideally, all data are collected/received from state UCR Program participants on a monthly basis. The FBI UCR Program has established various time frames and deadlines for acquiring the monthly data. Monthly reports/submissions should be received at the FBI by the seventh day after the close of each month. Annual deadlines are also designated in order to collect/access receipt of monthly submissions. Although monthly reports are preferred by agencies, the state UCR programs, upon approval may submit data at intervals, e.g., monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, and annually; this minimizes the burden to the agency.

LEAs submit cargo theft data to the FBI UCR Program through two reporting mechanisms: the SRS or the NIBRS. The SRS is referred to as the "traditional" FBI UCR Program; it began in 1930, and has had few modifications through the years. Participating agencies submit their data via electronic files or by using the Microsoft Excel Workbook Tool which contains an electronic version of the *Cargo Theft Incident Report*. The NIBRS is used by participating LEAs to report offenses and relevant details by incident, using up to 58 data elements to collect details about offenses, offenders, victims, property, and arrestees reported to police. Developed in the late 1980s the NIBRS was designed as an automated system to modernize UCR, and includes automated checks to ensure data quality.

As the UCR Cargo Theft Data Collection is intended to collect all reported cargo thefts from LEAs in the U.S., sampling methodologies are not used. Estimation procedures will not be applied to cargo theft as only a small percentage of data is currently being collected. Although the response rates have increased over the last few years, the rates are still low and may not be a true representation of the offense. The LEAs which do not submit cargo theft data are not estimated to compensate for the missing jurisdiction due to the already low occurrence of cargo theft incidents as reported by the 53% of participating agencies.

At the end of each reporting year, the FBI UCR Program requests for state program and direct contributor personnel to verify all cargo theft incident data submitted to the program. Currently, a number of state UCR programs do not verify the data which ultimately results in a loss of potentially valid data. The UCR Technical Refresh automation capabilities will improve the current business process in effect today.

3. Response Rates/Non-Response

The *USA PATRIOT Improvement and Reauthorization Act of 2005* mandated the FBI UCR Program to collect cargo theft data, but was not a mandate for the state UCR participating LEAs. When the FBI was tasked to develop new unfunded information collections, the costs associated with the implementation of the changes are imposed upon law enforcement. Historically, the resource issue has hampered the FBI's ability to collect new initiative data from its contributors. To deal with non-responsive agencies, the FBI UCR Program provides training, liaison, and reference material to LEAs in order to submit data.

The Cargo Theft Data Collection is relatively new with only four years of data published, but the number of LEAs providing cargo theft incidents has increased each year. As more agencies participate, future publications will depict a more complete account of the occurrences of cargo thefts in the United States.

The UCR Program plans to monitor the increase/decrease of participation in the data collection for a complete five-year cycle in an effort to develop a trend of the data. Once the five-year cycle is completed, and a trend is established, if necessary, the Program will move forward with options for a possible change in the way this data is collected through the CJIS Advisory Policy Board. If after the cycle the trend is determined to meet acceptable data standards, the current collection processes will remain in place.

Response rates are maximized through liaison with the state UCR programs. Communications encouraging data submissions occur frequently because of the relationship between FBI UCR Program staff and the LEAs. FBI UCR Program staff have a strong understanding of the contextual challenges agencies face in reporting valid and reliable data and regularly work to overcome nonresponse issues when such challenges occur.

The mission of the Cargo Theft Data Collection in UCR is to acquire cargo theft data, establish guidelines for the collection of such data, and publish cargo theft data. Although the FBI makes every effort through its editing procedures, training practices, and correspondence to ensure the validity of the data it receives, the accuracy of the statistics depends primarily on the adherence of each contributor to the established standards of reporting. Additionally, the FBI UCR Program is actively working to increase NIBRS participation through the sunset of SRS by January 1, 2021. One way is through collaboration with the Bureau of Justice Statistics on the National Crime Statistics Exchange (NCS-X). The FBI is providing financial assistance to 400 select NCS-X agencies and 20 state UCR programs, as well as technical and programmatic support to any agency needing assistance.

It is very important for the data to be accurate and reliable. LEAs use UCR data to track crime, task force placement, staffing levels, and officer placement. The UCR data is also used for administration, operational, and management within LEAs. Agencies will justify task forces, staffing levels, and officer counts compared to other LEAs in order to get more staffing levels or equipment. The agencies use other agencies' crime statistics and staffing levels to justify their own crime statistics and staffing levels in order to obtain funding. Cargo theft data is used by law enforcement to identify areas of vulnerability in the transportation of cargo goods, to identify patterns of cargo theft, and forecast high risk areas for cargo transporters. The data is also used to study the impact cargo theft has on commerce and the economy.

4. Collection Development

During implementation of the Cargo Theft Data Collection, extensive research regarding the offense of cargo theft was conducted. Members of the CJIS Division's Law Enforcement Support Section, FBI UCR Program; the Information Technology Management Section; the Criminal Investigative Division (CID), Americas Criminal Enterprise Section, Major Theft Unit (MTU) discussed the steps necessary to begin the collection of cargo theft information within the scope of the FBI UCR Program as mandated. The MTU took the lead to develop cargo theft into an information collection. The MTU coordinated with local, state, and federal law enforcement officials and industry experts for input and feedback. Agencies involved were the Los Angeles Police Department, Burglary Auto Theft Division; International Cargo Security Council; National Retail Federation; Miami-Dade Police Department; FBI Cargo Theft Task Force; Miami Division, Cargo Theft Task Force; American Trucking Association; Memphis Division, Cargo Theft Task Force; Assistant United States Attorney, Miami, Florida; and the United States Department of Justice.

The primary emphasis in developing an approach for collecting cargo theft statistics was to meet the requirements of the *USA Patriot Improvement and Reauthorization Act of 2005*, and to avoid placing new reporting burdens on LEAs contributing data to the FBI UCR Program. To accomplish this goal, a data collection was developed based on the programs' existing reporting systems, the NIBRS and the SRS. Furthermore, the method by which cargo theft is collected by the FBI UCR Program was vetted and approved by the FBI's CJIS Advisory Policy Board (APB). The APB is chartered under the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 and is responsible for reviewing appropriate policy, technical, and operational issues related to CJIS Division programs and for providing appropriate guidance and recommendations to the Director of the FBI. The APB advisory process is conducted twice each calendar year. Each cycle is comprised of Working Group meetings, Subcommittee meetings, and the Board.

The Working Groups review topic papers on operational, policy, and technical issues related to CJIS Division programs and policies and make recommendations to the APB or one of its Subcommittees. All fifty states, as well as U.S. territories, federal agencies, tribal representatives, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police are organized into five Working Groups. Working Group meetings take place once each cycle and are conducted as closed meetings.

The UCR Subcommittee is comprised of APB members and other UCR subject-matter specialists. The UCR Subcommittee was established to review recommendations for the consideration of the entire APB. The Chair of the APB, in consultation with the Designated Federal Officer (DFO), may invite any governmental or quasi-governmental entity who is involved in CJIS activities to attend any meeting of the CJIS Subcommittees for the purpose of consultation or providing information. Subcommittee meetings take place at least once each cycle.

The APB meets at the end of each cycle or twice during each calendar year. A notice of these meetings is published in the *Federal Register*, and the meetings are conducted in open session unless determined otherwise by the DFO. The APB is composed of 35 executive representatives from criminal justice agencies and national security agencies throughout the U.S. The FBI established the CJIS Advisory Process to obtain the user community's advice and guidance on the development and operation of all CJIS Programs. The philosophy underlying the advisory process is one of shared management: the FBI along with local, state, tribal, and federal data providers and system users share responsibility for the operation and management of all systems administered by the FBI for the benefit of the criminal justice community. It ensures law enforcement has the opportunity to discuss and vote on any policy or procedural changes to CJIS systems affecting law enforcement's ability to share information to the nation.

At the 2009 ASUCRP conference, sessions were conducted to field test the *Cargo Theft Incident Report* and the Cargo Theft Instructions. UCR State Program Managers were given cargo theft test scenarios and were tasked with reading the instructions and filling out the Cargo Theft Incident Report. From this, the FBI's UCR Program staff reviewed all the comments, suggestions, and ideas and reviewed the cargo theft form to incorporate the suggested changes. During implementation, the FBI received feedback to include offense and location codes on the form, which would assist contributors when reporting cargo theft and also reduce data processing errors. In addition, grammatical errors were identified and verbiage on the original form was not consistent with other FBI UCR Program information collections. Instructions were rewritten to be more easily understood. Field test findings requiring changes were also made to the Cargo Theft Data Collection to cause the least impact burden on the LEAs.

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