Connecticut Uniform Crime Reporting Program

Introduction:

The National Uniform Crime Reporting Program was initiated in 1929, when the International Association of Chiefs of Police standardized procedures for crime data collection, then, on June 11, 1930, Congress enacted legislation authorizing the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to collect nationwide crime counts and to serve as the clearinghouse for such data. In July 1977 under CGS 29-1c Connecticut began its own UCR Program.

The UCR Program periodically measures crime in the United States by counting those offenses brought to the attention of law enforcement agencies. According to the Connecticut Department of Public Safety's (DPS) publication entitled "UCR Program Description 2004," the objective is to produce reliable crime statistics for law enforcement administration, operation and management." After the data undergoes a quality control process, it is forwarded to the FBI National UCR Program by DPS.

Who Reports?

Every month law enforcement agencies, as well as some colleges and universities throughout Connecticut submit UCR data to DPS. According to DPS's Crime Analysis Unit, there is 100% participation in the UCR Program. The data submitted consists of the number of offenses brought to the attention of law enforcement agencies by a variety of sources such as police or victim reports. Of course, not all crimes are reported, and hence not all crimes are counted. UCR data is collected for all crimes reported, except traffic violations, and includes the age, race and gender of arrestees.

In Connecticut, some police departments report summary data and others use incident based reporting (see matrix).

What is Incident Based versus Summary Based Reporting?

The National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) is a second generation UCR system that went into effect in Connecticut in 1993. NIBRS collects and reports data on each incident, and allows reporting of one or more offenses for any one incident. Information in UCR is summary based, meaning that only the highest level offense in any one incident is reported. Consequently, NIBRS data provides considerable more detail about an incident, yields richer and more meaningful data than those produced by the summary UCR system.

Pitfalls of Ranking

The FBI has a caution against ranking cities, counties, states, universities and colleges on the basis of crime data alone. There are many factors that cause the nature and type of crime to vary from place to place. Rankings do not include the uniqueness of each place, and provide no insight into the many variables that mold crime. Consequently, the use of rankings can lead to inaccurate analyses and misleading conclusions.

"The data user is, therefore, cautioned against comparing statistical data of individual reporting units from cities, counties, metropolitan areas, states, or colleges or universities solely on the basis of their population coverage or student enrollment. Until data users examine all the variables that affect crime in a town, city, county, state, region, or other jurisdiction, they can make no meaningful comparisons."*

How does the FBI deal with incomplete data?

Crime estimates are calculated for agencies with incomplete data (less than 12 months) or for NIBRS agencies with very low data for one or more months. The low data are manually deducted from the offense totals. Estimated crime is calculated to arrive at a 12 month crime count total.

Crime estimates are calculated for the following offenses:
Murder
Rape
Robbery
Aggravated assault
Burglary
Larceny-theft
Motor vehicle theft

If fewer than 3 months of data are received from an agency their crime counts will be estimated by the computer based on the agency's population and the crime rates of similar agencies (suburban areas, cities outside metropolitan areas, other cities, or rural counties) within their states. If any agency reports between 3 - 11 monthly reports, estimates are manually tabulated using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Crimes Reported x 12}}{\text{Number of Months Received}}$$

* http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/cius2006/documents/variablesaffectingcrime.pdf

Converting this formula to:

$$\frac{12}{\text{Crimes Reported x Months Reported}}$$

Provides the following table of multiplying factors:

Months Submitted	Multiplying Factor
3	4.0
4	3.0
5	2.4
6	2.0
7	1.7
8	1.5
9	1.33
10	1.2
11	1.1

Connecticut Towns with incomplete data for 2005 & 2006 Crime in the US Publications, for which the FBI used an estimate as described above:

2005

1. Cheshire
2. Groton Town
3. New Haven
4. Rocky Hill
5. Southington
6. Thomaston

2006

1. Bloomfield

2. Branford
3. Brookfield
4. Clinton
5. Coventry
6. Cromwell
7. Derby
8. Naugatuck
9. New Haven
10. New London
11. Newtown
12. North Haven
13. Norwalk
14. Portland
15. Rocky Hill
16. Southern CT State University
17. Southington
18. Stamford
19. Suffield
20. Torrington
21. Vernon
22. Willimantic

The missing towns are estimated for purposes of generating the state totals. The estimates are based on the latest information that the FBI has at the time of estimation.

Crime Rate Calculation

Crime Rate = <u>Number of Offenses</u> X 100,000
                           Population

DPS, Crimes Analysis Unit - Statutory Mandates for Reporting

1. UCR Mandate: CGS 29-1c - program effective in 1977 in CT.
2. NIBRS Mandate: CGS 29-1c – program effective in 1993 in CT.
3. Family Violence Reporting Mandate: CGS 46b-38d – program effective in 1987 in CT.
4. Hate Crime Reporting Mandate: CGS 29-7m – program effective in 1988 in CT.
5. Missing Person Reporting Mandate: CGS 29-1e – program effective in 1985 in CT; transferred to another DPS unit. However, we do include a

missing persons report in the Special Sections of the annual Crime in CT publication.

6.   Gang Reporting Mandate: CGS 29-7m – program effective in 1994 in CT; no report has ever been issued. CT added a NIBRS code to capture gang related crime (yes or no), but many law enforcement agencies do not provide that information.

Sources:

1. UCR Program Description, DPS, Crime Analysis Unit

2. Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook, Revised 2004