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Summary

- * New Mexico has lagged behind the nation in reporting UCR data.
- * The only way New Mexico can improve crime reporting is to increase the number of reporting agencies.
- * Grant funding allocations to NM law enforcement agencies have been effected by the low rate of participation in the national UCR program.
- * This project has increased the number of NM agencies reporting UCR data.
- * ISR assisted enough agencies to help DPS meet one requirement to become a certified state UCR program.
- * Training is a continuous need that must be addressed for NM to maintain the current number of reporting agencies.
- * ISR created an automated version of the FBI's 80 year old UCR Tally Book. The ISR version is being used by the FBI around the nation.
- * Continued training and assistance by ISR will increase the number of NM agencies eligible for federal funding.

Report in Brief:

Project to Collect Uniform Crime Data in New Mexico

Uniform Crime Reporting

This report summarizes Phase 1 of the New Mexico Crime Data Collection Project. The goal of our project was to increase the number of New Mexico law enforcement agencies submitting their Uniform Crime Report (UCR) data to the Department of Public Safety and improve the quality of the reports. The project was funded by a grant from the Department of Public Safety with funds provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Phase 1 of the project began in September 2009 and ended March 2011.

The UCR Program contains official data on crime that is voluntarily reported by law enforcement agencies throughout the United States to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The UCR Program collects information on violent crimes of murder and non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault as well as property crimes of burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. These are Part 1 crimes and are serious crimes by definition and/or by volume. The UCR limits the reporting of known offenses to the eight selected offenses because they are the crimes most likely to be reported and most likely to occur with enough frequency to provide an adequate basis for comparison. The program also collects arrest data for

Part 1 offenses and for 21 other offenses that include all other crimes except traffic violations and are known as Part 2 offenses. Crime statistics are compiled from local UCR data and published annually by the FBI.

Importance of Reporting UCR Data

The UCR Program provides a nationwide view of crime including fluctuations of the level of crime in the U.S. UCR data are used in determining the allocation of the federal Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program (JAG) and DOJ DNA Initiative grants. UCR data are also used to report on crime at the state and local law enforcement agency level, and used in law enforcement administration, operation, and management.

Grant funding allocations to the state and law enforcement agencies in New Mexico have been effected by the State's low rate of participation in the national UCR program. In 2005, 100 (70%) of the 143 law enforcement agencies in NM reported UCR data to DPS or directly to the FBI. Two years later, only 70 (49%) agencies reported UCR data, a 21% decrease in participation and in 2008 only 66 (46%) reported. In 2009, law enforcement agencies active in the UCR Program represented more than 295 million United States inhabitants—96.3% of the total population. In 2007, crime reported in New Mexico covered approximately 85% of the state's population.

To meet the national reporting standard set by the FBI, New Mexico should account for 96.3% of the state's population.

Methods of Reporting

The flow of UCR data to the FBI typically depends on the state's UCR program. States with automated UCR systems can allow local agencies with manual systems to transmit data to the state program on hardcopy UCR report forms, in which case the state program enters the data and sends it to the FBI. Alternatively, local agencies can use direct entry into a state program web site, if the state program provided this capability. Local agencies with automated Record Management Systems (RMS) ideally submit data to their state program in electronic form, either by sending an email or via the Internet. However, in small agencies with few reported offenses, the FBI anticipates the agency to use the FBI Tally Books. This method requires the small agency to compile their data in the paper Tally Book and send the FBI a paper report. In states with manual UCR systems, the data processing is done at the FBI national program level instead of at the state level, with feedback from the FBI to the state program if one exists. Local agencies in states, like New Mexico, without a state UCR program transmit data to the FBI national program rather than the state program. In these states, the FBI recommends the state achieve certified UCR Program status. New Mexico is one of three states not recognized as a State UCR Program. The other two states are Indiana and Mississippi.

New Mexico UCR

Efforts to increase the number of agencies reporting to DPS and improve the quality of reports have been tried in New Mexico. Beginning in 1996 and continuing through 1998, ISR undertook an endeavor similar to our current project. In one year, ISR reported a 17.3% increase in reporting. However, a review of the FBI's publication, *Crime in the United States, 2007* reveals New Mexico now has one of the lowest reporting rates of any state. During the past 10 years, DPS has made an effort to simplify the reporting process and help local agencies report their data. To achieve this effort, DPS built a UCR reporting system and offered free access to all local law enforcement agencies. Access to the system is gained from a secure website and the system software is downloaded from the DPS website.

The Current Project

ISR applied for and received a 2009 ARRA grant to connect participating law enforcement agencies to the DPS UCR Web-based UCR system. Acting as an

extension of DPS, ISR trained law enforcement agency staff to use the UCR system, collected incident reports, and UCR monthly reports from agencies. We checked the reports for errors, entered them into the DPS UCR system and copied and sent the reports to the FBI. We included two types of agencies: those that do not report to DPS or the FBI, and those that report to the FBI but not to DPS.

We realized because of the time frame of the grant we were not going to be able to fully change the direction of crime reporting in the state. So we conducted a partial implementation focusing on the County Sheriff Offices that do not report to the FBI or DPS. We also targeted non-reporting municipalities, tribes, and universities in these counties. Additionally, we targeted a select number of law enforcement agencies that report crime data or who have been reporting to the FBI but not DPS. This number included; Albuquerque Police, Bernalillo County Sheriff, and Santa Fe County Sheriff.

We received a list from DPS of 143 law enforcement agencies in New Mexico. We audited this list and determined there are approximately 132 active law enforcement agencies. We targeted 48 agencies to contact initially. Eight agencies in the sample had effectively closed their doors and the law enforcement duties in their jurisdiction were 'Covered By' the county sheriff and the state police. Two agencies were not interested in participating in our project. Additionally, the BIA represented 13 agencies in our sample and they did not want to report UCR data to the state and the FBI. During the project, we added 35 agencies that had attended one of our training workshops, had expressed an interest in training or being connected to the DPS system. There are 18 agencies that did not immediately wish to participate in the project and we categorized them as "Potential." We finished the first grant March 31, 2011 with a count of 83 agencies in our sample, and 18 potential agencies for a total of 101 agencies. We subtracted

4 Major Tasks of the UCR Project

1. Collect, clean, and report incident data for 48 non-reporting or partial reporting jurisdictions in NM. This objective meets one of the major goals of the Recovery Act by creating jobs with Recovery Act funding.
2. ISR staff will receive training from the DPS UCR Program staff on the use of the DPS web-based application. ISR will also coordinate with the FBI to improve training for DPS and ISR staff.
3. Arrange to travel to each agency in our cohort of 48 agencies to review records at each site and verify the reported offenses conform to the UCR classification of offenses.
4. Connect the agency to the DPS web-based application and enter the agency's crime data into the application if necessary.

from this count the agencies handled by the BIA, covered by other agencies, and not interested, to arrive at a count of 60 active agencies. During the project we directly assisted a total of 89 agencies.

We visited 52 agencies at least once during the project. We visited 9 agencies twice and visited one site three times for a total of 62 site visits. We focused our efforts on two main tasks. One, connecting agencies to the DPS system, (i.e., authorizing agency staff to use the DPS system, and installing the system on their computer, and training the agency staff to use the DPS system); two, assisting the agencies to complete as many as three years worth of UCR reports for DPS and the FBI. Table 1 describes these efforts.

Table 2 on page 4, shows the percentage of the state population covered by UCR reporting agencies compared to the most recent national rates taken in 2009. This comparison incorporates the number of NM agencies reporting at least 3 months of UCR data to DPS and the FBI and the corresponding population. We estimate NM exceeds the 2009 National percentages in all population categories. Table 2 also shows all agencies reporting to either the DPS or directly to the FBI. We left five agencies out of Table 2 because we could not determine the population in their jurisdiction.

Final Points and Recommendations

Six important points can be made regarding the ISR Phase 1 New Mexico Crime Data Collection Project.

1.) Reporting UCR data is important. The data provides a view of crime in New Mexico and data are used to determine federal grant eligibility. New Mexico lags behind the nation in reporting its UCR data and consequently New Mexico receives limited grant funds from the federal government. The only way New Mexico can improve crime reporting is to increase the number of reporting agencies.

Excel Tally Book

We created an Excel version of the FBI's 80-year old Tally Book for small agencies to compile their incident report data into the approved FBI categories. This effort has been well received and is being used by approximately 10 rural agencies in NM. The FBI and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) have also adopted the tool for a special project. FBI and BIA have been tasked with a study to re-count the 2010 crime reporting for four tribal districts. This is in preparation for a change in policy where BIA would begin collecting Indian Country crime data and sending it on to the FBI. The FBI felt like our Excel Tally Book would be an ideal tool to help them with data collection. The FBI and BIA envision Indian Country being one of the biggest users of the Excel Tally Book tool.

2.) New Mexico has used temporary projects in the past to improve UCR reporting with limited success. The level of response by agencies to report their UCR data will always be limited without a permanent and consistent program to train and assist agencies to report their UCR data.

3.) Credentials to access the DPS system are out of date and equipment is inadequate in most local agencies. During the project, we experienced constant difficulty getting usernames and passwords for agency staff. In addition to the difficulty getting credentials for users, it was also difficult connecting agencies to the DPS UCR system.

4.) New Mexico does not have a standard reporting system, each agency uses the method available. The FBI urges every state to have a certified state UCR program. The state program becomes responsible for reporting and all local agencies report to the state. The FBI will soon deploy a new data collection system that accepts only MS Excel "flat-files." This change by the FBI makes it imperative for NM to have a certified state UCR program.

Table 1 Accomplishments of the ISR UCR Data Collection Project

Agency Type	Total Number of Agencies Contacted	Total Agency Visits by ISR	Agency Staff Credentials	Agencies Connected	Total Agency Staff Trained	Monthly Reports Created	Monthly Reports Entered	Agencies Reporting to DPS or FBI
Active in Sample	60	60	71	41	76	214	571	57
-BIA	13	2	0	2	2	0	0	13
-Covered By	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
-Not Interested	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Potential	18	0	7	4	16	0	2	18
Total	101	62	78	43	94	214	573	89

Table 2 New Mexico Comparison to National 2009 UCR Program Coverage

Population Ranges		Population in Ranges	Number of Reporting Agencies After Phase 1 of Project, 2011	Population Covered by After Phase 1 of Project	Percent of Population Covered	2009 National Percentage
Cities	>250k	521,999	1	521,999	Cities outside Metro areas = 95.0	90.9
	100k to 249,999	0	0	0		
	50k to 99,999	240,442	3	240,442		
	25k to 49,999	261,473	7	261,473		
	10k to 24,999	86,919	7	86,919		
	>10k	234,395	62	199,357		
Counties	Non-Metro Counties	565,282	24	528,377	93.5	93.0
	Metro Counties	956,572	5	938,229	98.1	97.1
Total		1,345,228	109	1,310,190	97.4	96.3

5.) Six criteria must be met before a state can become a certified state UCR program. We believe New Mexico can meet 5 of the 6 criteria. The current NM UCR system conforms to the national standards. An adequate portion of the state population is now covered by agencies reporting to the FBI. ISR assisted enough agencies to meet the population requirement and train agencies to correctly gather and report UCR data. DPS has shown it can furnish the FBI with data regularly in the appropriate media and can furnish data in a timely basis.

2009 and 2010. We estimate these agencies cover 1,310,190 (97.4%) of the population of New Mexico. This approximates the percentage of the national population covered by the FBI's National program and would meet one of the 6 requirements for NM to qualify as a state certified UCR program.

6.) Obviously, training is a continuous need that must be addressed for the state to maintain the number of reporting agencies. About 40% of the participants at our training workshops had worked at their agency more than 6 years - a significant number of years - yet more than half (66%) of the participants had not received UCR training before now.

Recommendations

We recommend, that the DPS IT Department should continue to make improvements in the NMCJIS UCR system, focusing on improving customer service and addressing issues dealing with connecting local law enforcement agencies.

We also recommend DPS should contract with ISR to continue training and assisting agencies. Our efforts have increased the number of agencies reporting UCR data to DPS and the FBI. We have impacted 57 agencies that have reported their 2009-2010 data to the FBI. At the end of the 2010 reporting period a total of 114 agencies (86.3% of 132 agencies) had reported at least 3 monthly reports to the FBI during

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