

Introduction

Crime and Arrests in Wisconsin - 2004

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This report, prepared by the Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance Statistical Analysis Center (SAC), presents data on crime and arrests in Wisconsin during 2004. From 1969 through 1981 the state Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program, operated by the Crime Information Bureau of the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ), collected, compiled and reported Wisconsin crime and arrest data. Beginning in 1971, DOJ also provided data to the national UCR system, a program of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

Effective December 31, 1981, the state program operated by DOJ was discontinued due to budget reductions. The 1981 data collected by DOJ were transmitted directly to the FBI and the 1981 Wisconsin Crime and Arrests report, prepared by Statistical Analysis Center, was based for the most part on information provided to the Center by the FBI. In 1982 and 1983 Wisconsin law enforcement agencies transmitted their UCR data directly to the FBI, but in addition, provided copies of the principal offense and arrest forms to the Center. As of 1984, Wisconsin resumed its status as part of the national UCR system. Since 1984, Wisconsin law enforcement agencies have provided complete UCR data to the Statistical Analysis Center, which in turn, has transmitted the data to the FBI electronically.

The National UCR Program

The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) initiated the national Uniform Crime Reporting Program in 1930. After soliciting input from law enforcement agencies throughout the country, an IACP committee developed uniform crime definitions and reporting procedures that could be used by law enforcement agencies in every state. The FBI was designated as the national clearinghouse for UCR data. The Committee on Uniform Crime Records of the IACP continues to serve the national program in an advisory capacity. In 1956, the National Sheriffs' Association also established a Committee on Uniform Crime Reports to act as an advisory body to the program. The data are provided by the 47 state UCR programs which collect and compile data for their states and convey the data to the FBI. There are three states (Indiana, Ohio, and Mississippi) where law enforcement agencies report directly to the FBI. From these data the FBI publishes its annual report, Crime in the United States.

The Wisconsin UCR Program

The FBI recognized the Wisconsin Council on Criminal Justice (WCCJ) as the administrator of the Wisconsin State Uniform Crime Reporting Program effective January 1, 1984. The WCCJ was constituted as the Office of Justice Assistance on October 1, 1987. The program operated by DOJ from 1969 through 1981 required that all law enforcement agencies submit UCR data either directly or through the county sheriff's office. It also required that DOJ submit the prescribed data to the FBI. DOJ expanded the national UCR program's classifications to collect more detailed and appropriate data on Wisconsin crime and arrests. From the statewide UCR data, DOJ published its annual report Wisconsin Crime and Arrests, as well as quarterly, semi-annual, and other summary reports.

In November 1981, the WCCJ received a grant from the United States Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, to develop Wisconsin's Statistical Analysis Center. The SAC was mandated by executive order to collect and analyze criminal justice data, produce statistical reports on crime and the justice system, and promote development of criminal justice information systems. From 1981 through 1984, SAC assumed a substantial number of the functions of the state UCR program to meet the

information needs of state and local criminal justice decision-makers, elected officials and interested citizens. Since January 1984, Wisconsin has been recognized officially by the FBI as having a State UCR Program and is again part of the national system of state UCR programs.

Wisconsin Incident - Based Reporting System (WIBRS)

For nearly sixty years the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program remained virtually unchanged in terms of the amount and type of data collected and disseminated. By the 1980s it had become obvious that the nature of law enforcement investigations and reporting had changed dramatically since the inception of the UCR Program. As a result, the FBI initiated a thorough evaluation of the existing system with the purpose of formulating a phased-in redesign effort to enable the UCR Program to meet the needs of law enforcement into the 21st century.

Based upon the recommendations of the evaluation, the FBI developed a new system known as the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). This new system differed from the original UCR system in ways such as:

- reporting on offense codes previously not included
- increased volume and detail of information on victims, offenders, arrestees, and characteristics of the offense
- improved quality control and
- expanded user services.

The most significant change was from a summary-based reporting system to an incident-based system in which the incident number links detailed information about each offense, offender, victim, and arrestee involved in an incident.

Based on the success of a pilot in South Carolina, the FBI released the final data elements and offense specifications in July 1998. At that time, Wisconsin and other state programs began their efforts to implement this enhanced program. Wisconsin is certified through the FBI as a NIBRS submitter. Currently several agencies including Muskego, Dane County Sheriff, Vilas County Sheriff, Menomonee Falls, New Richmond, Brown Deer, and West Allis, are submitting their WIBRS data to the OJA. In 2005 the State of Wisconsin is moving forward with implementation of WIBRS in a number of additional agencies, including Milwaukee and Green Bay.

Due to the increased reporting requirements of the new program, both the FBI and the Wisconsin UCR/IBR Program are encouraging a phased-in transition so that law enforcement agencies will be able to adopt the new program as they acquire the necessary information technology capabilities. There are Records Management System (RMS) vendors who now have the WIBRS modules ready for distribution to their present and future clients. It is anticipated that Wisconsin will be operating a dual collection program for the next few years, with some departments reporting under summary-based guidelines while others will make the transition to WIBRS. It is expected that a significant amount of WIBRS data will be available for examination in 2005 and 2006.

Issues in Comparing this Report with Earlier Reports

Caution should be exercised in making comparisons of the data in this report with the data contained in previous annual reports. Adjustments may be required for the following reasons:

1. Shifting of a law enforcement agency from one population category to another based on annual re-estimation of the jurisdiction's population.
2. On occasion, the Federal Government designates an additional Wisconsin county as being included in a Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA). This would shift a Sheriff's Office from the Nonmetropolitan Areas category to the Metropolitan Sheriffs' group. As an example, Pierce County was designated as being in an SMSA in 1992. Hence, the Pierce County Sheriff's Office moved from the Nonmetropolitan category to the Metropolitan Sheriff's group. (See footnote 3 on page 23 for a listing of the twenty-five Metropolitan Sheriffs' Offices.)
3. Populations are estimated for non-census years. They are calculated using 2000 census data with estimates published by the Demographic Services Center, Wisconsin Department of Administration.

Note: The reporting of UCR statistics is mandated by Wisconsin Statutes - 16.964 (1)(g) and (2).