

Available UCR Quality Assurance Review Options

The tailored approach to a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) may include:

Service/Qualitative Review, which could entail:

- A simulation of the current process to include a review of a set amount of records at multiple law enforcement agencies (LEAs).
- A review of LEAs selected by the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program manager based on a specific need, e.g., a new National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) contributor, concerns of underreporting or overreporting of data.

Statistical/Quantitative Review and would entail:

- A justifiable UCR Program sampling of LEAs' records that contribute data to the FBI UCR Program.
- Identification of a Probability Sampling Method by the FBI CJIS Audit Unit (CAU). Up to two offenses or specific areas of concern will be the focus of the QAR.

Special Review and would entail:

- A review of a local LEA and would occur as a result of an immediate need for assistance identified by a UCR Program.

The findings from the above-mentioned reviews, with the exception of the Special Review, will be reported to the UCR Subcommittee and CJIS Advisory Policy Board (APB) and culminate with dissemination of the Letters of Interest.

Listed below is a further breakdown of the three QAR options.

Service/Qualitative Review Objective

At the request of a UCR Program, assess the accuracy of an LEA's reporting practices to entail a review of a LEA's records.

A Selective/Qualitative Review conducted under the existing QAR structure will involve the participation of multiple LEAs, and the QAR methodology identifies certain qualifiers for LEA selection:

- One agency to be audited is a university/college.
- Half of the agencies to be audited are major contributors, which are agencies that are identified as part of the top quartile due to the volume of crime reported.
- The UCR Program selects half the agencies to be audited and the CAU audit manager selects half the agencies to be audited.

Note: The local agency selection process determined by the CAU audit manager may also be limited to a variety of constraints to include: logistics, geography, and fiscal and personnel resource limitations.

The number of records to be reviewed at a LEA is determined by the CAU audit manager after a review of the number of crimes reported by each LEA. For the NIBRS contributing LEA, incident numbers to be audited are programmed to be randomly selected from the CAU's Audit Information Management Database.

An alternative Service/Qualitative Review could entail the UCR Program selecting LEAs to participate in a QAR for a specific area of concern, for example:

- Confirmation of data if a LEA is a new NIBRS contributor
- The LEA's offense trends reveal reporting inconsistencies
- Confirmation of a LEA's crime reporting practices
- Concerns of underreporting or overreporting of crime

For the above-mentioned Service Reviews, the FBI will be onsite at the LEA to conduct reviews of case files, to include the officer's narrative and supplemental information at the LEA, and *may* also include the review of calls for service records. The CAU will request the local LEA to compile records based on the area of concern identified by the UCR Program manager.

The Service/Qualitative Review will continue to consist of the three phases currently part of the QAR:

- **Administrative Interview:** The CAU auditors will learn how an agency manages incidents and whether the data submitted to the FBI's UCR Program comply with national definitions and standards.
- **Data Quality Review:** The CAU auditors will review individual LEA case files to include the officer's narrative and any information deemed supplemental to determine compliance to FBI UCR Program definitions and standards.
- **Exit Briefing:** The FBI's CAU auditors will provide an exit briefing to the local LEA, which will be a preliminary summarization of the QAR findings based on the administrative interview and the data quality review.

After preliminary findings have been verified by the CAU, the FBI will provide an Audit Findings Letter to the UCR Program manager and the CJIS Systems Officer (CSO). The UCR Program manager will be requested to respond within 60 days, if recommendations were identified. At that time, the QAR Audit Findings Letter will be reissued as final, which will include the response received from the UCR Program manager, if applicable, and will be sent to the UCR Program manager and CSO.

Finalized QAR findings from the Service Review of a UCR Program will also be presented to the UCR Subcommittee and the CJIS APB and culminate with dissemination of the Letters of Interest.

Statistical/Quantitative Review Objective

The FBI will identify a specific data set to be reviewed and assess the UCR Program's accuracy in that reporting, which will include a review of randomly selected LEAs' records and culminate with the identification of an error rate by UCR Program and possibly the nation.

For a Statistical/Quantitative Review:

- The FBI Crime Statistics Management Unit (CSMU) will identify two areas for review.
- Or the CAU will consult with the FBI CSMU and the FBI's CJIS Training and Advisory Process Unit to develop a tailored Statistical Review for that UCR Program.
- Or the UCR Program could identify in their tailored request the parameters of the review.
- Up to 400 incidents per each data set may be reviewed.
- The FBI CAU auditors will identify incidents to be reviewed from a Simple Random Sample of the UCR Program's submissions. All of the UCR Program's contributing LEAs that reported data for the specific data set will be considered in the random sampling of records to be reviewed (city, county, university/college, and tribal).
- The UCR Program will collect from its LEAs the data selected for review, such as, case files, officer's narrative and any additional information deemed supplemental.
- If the UCR Program is unable to collect local agency records in support of the Statistical Review methodology, another option is the use of an alternative Probability Sampling Method. The benefit of the alternative Probability Sampling Method is that it will remove the burden to the UCR Program of collecting the local agency records. Rather, the CAU will conduct the Statistical Review by assessing the local LEA records identified for review at a sample of local agencies.

Note: Requesting LEAs to provide records for review and requesting the agency to send those records to another entity for review is not unprecedented. During Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015, the QAR was conducted for the most part remotely. Local LEAs selected to participate in the QAR were asked to submit their records for review to the FBI. In addition, selecting specific records for review occurs during the QAR of UCR Programs submitting NIBRS data. While conducting remote QARs, LEAs were given the option to submit their reports in soft or hard copy.

The Statistical Review will consist of three phases:

- **Administrative Interview:** The FBI's CAU auditors will learn how the UCR Program ensures data received from its LEAs complies with the FBI's UCR Program definitions and standards.
- **Data Quality Review:** The FBI's CAU auditors will review individual LEA case files to include the officer's narrative and any information deemed supplemental to determine compliance to the FBI's UCR Program definitions.
- **Exit Briefing:** The FBI's CAU auditors will provide an exit briefing to the UCRS Program that will be a preliminary summarization of the QAR findings based on the administrative interview and the data quality review.

After preliminary findings have been reviewed by the CAU, a draft Audit Findings Letter

will be disseminated to the UCR Program manager and also the CSO. The methodology implemented to conduct the Statistical Review of the UCR Program will also be presented in the documents accompanying the draft Audit Findings Letter.

The UCR Program manager will be requested to respond within 60 days, if recommendations were identified. At that time, the QAR Audit Findings Letter will be reissued as final, which will include the response received from the UCR Program manager, if applicable, and will be sent to the UCR Program manager and CSO.

Finalized QAR findings from the Statistical Review of a UCR Program will also be presented to the UCR Subcommittee and the CJIS APB and culminate with dissemination of the Letters of Interest.

For Statistical Reviews conducted with a sampling method other than a Simple Random Sample, the following will occur:

- A pre-determined count of records by data set will be reviewed onsite at the local LEAs identified as part of the sampling.
- The CAU will perform a data quality review of records identified for review.
- When the review is completed, the CAU will discuss with the local LEA point of contact, those records identified as a data discrepancy. This will serve as an exit briefing, although informal because the information gleaned from all LEAs reviewed will be compiled and formally presented to the UCR Program manager.
- The QAR findings will be compiled and presented as the draft Audit Findings Letter and the above-mentioned procedures will be followed.

Special Review Objective:

Perform a QAR of a local LEA as a result of an immediate need for assistance identified by a UCR Program.

The Special Review will be addressed on a case by case basis. For this review to occur, the following would be required:

- A written request from the UCR Program manager on behalf of the local LEA to the FBI CAU Chief to include: explanation of specific need; reason why the UCR Program cannot address concerns; and timeline to complete Special Review/expectations.
- The FBI, before responding, must first consider: costs to accommodate the Special Review request; availability of FBI CAU auditors to conduct the Special Review within an identified time frame; urgency of the issue; and impact to scheduled QARs.
- The local LEA to compile records based on the need for the Special Review.

The Special Review will continue to consist of the three phases currently part of the QAR:

- Administrative Interview: The FBI's CAU auditors will learn how the agency manages incidents and whether the data submitted to the FBI's UCR Program

complies with national definitions and standards.

- Data Quality Review: The FBI's CAU auditors will compare individual LEA case files to include the officer's narrative and any information deemed supplemental to determine compliance to FBI UCR Program definitions and standards.
- Exit Briefing: The FBI's CAU auditors will provide an exit briefing to the local agency that summarizes the QAR findings based on the administrative interview and the data quality review.

Upon completion of the review at the local LEA, the QAR Team will discuss findings from the data quality review and administrative interview. After preliminary findings have been verified by the CAU, an Audit Findings Letter will be disseminated to the UCR Program manager and local agency head.