

2014

Uniform Crime Reports

CARGO THEFT

CRIMINAL JUSTICE INFORMATION SERVICES DIVISION

Cargo Theft, 2014

The FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program collects cargo theft data to inform law enforcement, legislators, academics and the public at large about this crime. The data can be used to create awareness and to measure the impact cargo theft has on the economy and potential threats to national security. Often, cargo theft offenses are part of larger criminal schemes and have been found to be components of organized crime rings, drug trafficking, and funding for terrorism. The UCR collection of cargo theft data is quite new with only two years of data published, but the number of agencies reporting cargo theft incidents has increased each year. As more agencies participate, future versions of this cargo theft report will depict a more complete account of the occurrences of cargo theft in the United States.

What is cargo theft?

In 2006, Congress enacted H.R. 3199, the "USA Patriot Improvement and Reauthorization Act of 2005," which requires the Attorney General to "take the steps necessary to ensure that reports of cargo theft collected by Federal, state, and local officials are reflected as a separate category in the FBI . . . [UCR] system..." In response to this mandate, the CJIS Advisory Policy Board approved the recommended UCR definition for cargo theft in 2006:

"The criminal taking of any cargo including, but not limited to, goods, chattels, money, or baggage that constitutes, in whole or in part, a commercial shipment of freight moving in commerce, from any pipeline system, railroad car, motor truck, or other vehicle, or from any tank or storage facility, station house, platform, or depot, or from any vessel or wharf, or from any aircraft, air terminal, airport, aircraft terminal or air navigation facility, or from any intermodal container, intermodal chassis, trailer, container freight station, warehouse, freight distribution facility, or freight consolidation facility. For purposes of this definition, cargo shall be deemed as moving in commerce at all points between the point of origin and the final destination, regardless of any temporary stop while awaiting transshipment or otherwise."

This definition was developed, not as a legal description for prosecutorial purposes, but to capture the essence of the national cargo theft problem in the United States. The legal elements of knowledge and intent were intentionally omitted.

Participation

Participation in the UCR Program is voluntary, and agencies or states may choose not to participate. In 2013, seven states participated in the first release of cargo theft data from the national UCR Program. In 2014, a total of 29 states and the Bureau of Indian Affairs submitted cargo theft data to the UCR Program; 12 of the 29 states and the Bureau of Indian Affairs reported zero cargo theft incidents. This increase in participation is a positive response to collecting these data, but several factors still affect collection:

- States may not have the resources required to make the necessary technical changes or to align their local and state statutes with federal requirements.
- States may not have the necessary resources to conduct data quality checks on reported incidents associated with cargo theft, which could result in inaccurate data.
- States may not have adequate resources to train participants on how to recognize and properly record cargo theft incidents.
- States may not perceive cargo theft as a priority or a significant problem within their states.

Quality data concerning cargo theft can help us better understand this crime and the threats associated with it. As more agencies choose to report their incidents, the FBI's UCR Program will be able to provide more information about cargo theft on a national scale. For additional information on the UCR Program's collection of cargo theft incidents, visit <https://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/ucr-program-data-collections>.

Table 1
Cargo Theft by State
 by Incidents, and Stolen, Recovered Values, 2014

State	Number of agencies reporting an incident	Number of incidents reported	Value of property		Percent recovered
			Stolen	Recovered	
Total	134	547	\$32,591,534	\$7,707,357	23.6
Alaska	1	1	492	0	0.0
Arkansas	2	2	126,787	125,000	98.6
Colorado	4	4	30,485	7,500	24.6
Delaware	4	4	29,549	0	0.0
Florida	17	58	6,558,203	1,360,229	20.7
Hawaii ¹	1	1		0	0.0
Indiana	2	6	446,009	200	*
Maine	2	2	48	28	58.3
Michigan	8	10	343,230	119,920	34.9
Montana	5	11	3,723	1,083	29.1
New Hampshire	3	4	629,707	612,213	97.2
North Dakota	1	1	114,733	110,000	95.9
Oklahoma	1	6	555,660	504,550	90.8
Tennessee	24	182	9,454,133	1,461,683	15.5
Texas	52	241	14,288,640	3,404,951	23.8
Utah	1	1	550	0	0.0
West Virginia	6	13	9,584	0	0.0

¹ The stolen property value was reported as unknown.

* Less than one tenth of 1 percent.

Table 2
Cargo Theft Property Stolen and Recovered
by Type and Value, 2014

Type of property	Value of property		Percent recovered
	Stolen	Recovered	
Total	\$32,591,534	\$7,707,357	23.6
Alcohol	288,699	439	0.2
Artistic supplies, accessories	48	0	0.0
Automobile	439,302	253,000	57.6
Bicycle	350	0	0.0
Building materials	927,193	311,082	33.6
Chemicals	86,683	0	0.0
Clothes, furs	4,071,980	375,667	9.2
Collections, collectibles	80	0	0.0
Computer hardware, software	2,702,743	529,937	19.6
Consumable goods	4,485,126	1,006,163	22.4
Drugs, narcotics	45,952	0	0.0
Firearms	24,955	150	0.6
Fuel	200,970	100,000	49.8
Household goods	1,199,665	223,780	18.7
Industrial equipment	268,854	215,755	80.2
Jewelry, precious metals	29,015	20,000	68.9
Medical, medical lab equipment	158,101	0	0.0
Merchandise	593,663	582	0.1
Metals, nonprecious	868,990	45,673	5.3
Money	11,363	0	0.0
Negotiable instrument	250,000	0	0.0
Office equipment	28,171	21,258	75.5
Other	1,738,223	771,317	44.4
Other motor vehicles	26,000	15,000	57.7
Photographic, optical equipment	200	0	0.0
Portable electronic communications	4,146,049	108,190	2.6
Purse, wallet	105,030	0	0.0
Radio, TV, VCR	2,386,897	728,872	30.5
Recordings	5,902	0	0.0
Recreational, sports equipment	2,900	0	0.0
Structure, other	150,000	0	0.0
Structure, storage	28,901	0	0.0
Tools	118,508	1,518	1.3
Trailers	2,948,435	870,886	29.5
Trucks	3,261,221	2,078,688	63.7
Vehicle parts	991,015	29,400	3.0
Watercraft equipment, parts, accessories	350	0	0.0

Table 3
Cargo Theft by Location, 2014

Location type	Total locations
Air/Bus/Train Terminal	1
Auto Dealership New/Used	1
Bank/Savings and Loan	2
Bar/Nightclub	3
Church/Synagogue/Temple/Mosque	1
Commercial Office Building	58
Construction Site	1
Convenience Store	27
Department/Discount Store	14
Dock/Wharf/Freight/Modal Terminal	47
Drug Store/Doctor's Office/Hospital	2
Field/Woods	4
Grocery/Supermarket	8
Highway/Road/Alley/Street	53
Hotel/Motel/etc.	5
Industrial Site	29
Liquor Store	2
Parking Lot/Garage	205
Rental Storage Facility	4
Residence/Home	23
Rest Area	2
Restaurant	3
School/College	2
Service/Gas Station	16
Specialty Store (TV, Fur, etc.)	12
Other/Unknown	55

Table 4
Cargo Theft by Victim Type, 2014

Victim type	Total victims
Business	442
Financial	5
Government	4
Individual	127
Society	1
Unknown	2

Table 5
Cargo Theft by Offense, 2014

Offense	Number reported
Grand total of offenses	597
Cargo theft applicable offenses	
All other larceny	187
Burglary	27
Credit card, automated teller machine fraud	2
Embezzlement	17
False pretenses, swindle, confidence game	8
Impersonation	2
Motor vehicle theft	118
Robbery	4
Theft from building	16
Theft from vehicle	199
Total cargo theft applicable offenses	580
Other offenses occurring with cargo offenses	
Counterfeiting, forgery	2
Destruction of property	9
Drug narcotics violation	1
Murder	1
Shoplifting	1
Stolen property offense	2
Theft of motor vehicle parts or accessories	1
Total other offenses occurring with cargo offense	17

Data Declarations and Methodology

Table 1 Cargo Theft by State by Incidents, and Stolen, Recovered Values, 2014

The FBI collects these data through the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program's Summary Reporting System and National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS).

General comment

This table presents by state the total number of agencies that submitted data about cargo theft incidents, the number of incidents reported, the reported value of stolen property, and the value of recovered property. The table also lists the percentage of recovered value of each property type.

Methodology

The data used in creating this table were from all law enforcement agencies submitting one or more cargo theft incidents for at least one month of the calendar year. The published data, therefore, do not necessarily represent reports from each participating agency for all 12 months of the calendar year.

Table 2 Cargo Theft Property Stolen and Recovered by Type and Value, 2014

The FBI collects these data through the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program's Summary Reporting System and National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS).

General comment

This table provides the value of stolen and recovered property and the percentage of recovered value of each property type.

Methodology

The data used in creating this table were from all law enforcement agencies submitting one or more cargo theft incidents for at least one month of the calendar year. The published data, therefore, do not necessarily represent reports from each participating agency for all 12 months of the calendar year.

Table 3 Cargo Theft by Location, 2014

The FBI collects these data through the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program's Summary Reporting System and National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS).

General comment

Cargo theft is the criminal taking of any cargo including, but not limited to, goods, chattels, money, or baggage that constitutes, in whole or in part, a commercial shipment of freight moving in commerce, from any pipeline system, railroad car, motor truck, or other vehicle, or from any tank or storage facility, station house, platform, or depot, or from any vessel or wharf, or from any aircraft, air terminal, airport, aircraft terminal or air navigation facility, or from any intermodal container, intermodal chassis, trailer, container freight station, warehouse, freight distribution facility, or freight consolidation facility. For purposes of this definition, cargo shall be deemed as moving in commerce at all points between the point of origin and the final destination, regardless of any temporary stop while awaiting transshipment or otherwise.

This table presents the number of location types reported in cargo theft incidents.

Note: In the NIBRS, a location may be entered for each offense; therefore, an incident may have more than one location code reported.

Methodology

The data used in creating this table were from all law enforcement agencies submitting one or more cargo theft incidents for at least 1 month of the calendar year. The published data, therefore, do not necessarily represent reports from each participating agency for all 12 months of the calendar year.

To arrive at the totals provided, the UCR Program counted one for each offense location reported in an incident.

Table 4 Cargo Theft by Victim Type, 2014

The FBI collects these data through the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program's Summary Reporting System and National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS).

General comment

This table presents the number of victim types in each of the cargo theft incidents reported to the FBI.

In the Cargo Theft Program, the victim of a cargo theft may be an individual, a business, an institution, or society as a whole.

Methodology

The data used in creating this table were from all law enforcement agencies submitting one or more cargo theft incidents for at least one month of the calendar year. The published data, therefore, do not necessarily represent reports from each participating agency for all 12 months of the calendar year.

The UCR Program counted one for each victim type reported in an incident.

Table 5
Cargo Theft by Offense, 2014

The FBI collects these data through the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program’s Summary Reporting System and National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS).

General comment

Cargo theft is the criminal taking of any cargo including, but not limited to, goods, chattels, money, or baggage that constitutes, in whole or in part, a commercial shipment of freight moving in commerce, from any pipeline system, railroad car, motor truck, or other vehicle, or from any tank or storage facility, station house, platform, or depot, or from any vessel or wharf, or from any aircraft, air terminal, airport, aircraft terminal or air navigation facility, or from any intermodal container, intermodal chassis, trailer, container freight station, warehouse, freight distribution facility, or freight consolidation facility. For purposes of this definition, cargo shall be deemed as moving in commerce at all points between the point of origin and the final destination, regardless of any temporary stop while awaiting transshipment or otherwise.

Because cargo theft has been defined as “the criminal taking of any cargo . . .,” there are specific crimes against property that are applicable to cargo theft. The applicable crimes against property include:

- 120 = Robbery
- 23D = Theft from building
- 23F = Theft from motor vehicle
- 23H = All other larceny
- 26A = False pretenses, swindle, confidence game
- 26B = Credit card, automatic teller machine fraud
- 26C = Impersonation
- 26E = Wire fraud
- 210 = Extortion, blackmail
- 220 = Burglary, breaking & entering
- 240 = Motor vehicle theft
- 270 = Embezzlement
- 510 = Bribery

In addition, cargo theft is not considered an offense by itself, all offenses that happen within a cargo theft incident are reported. Cargo theft data is derived by capturing the additional element of “theft of cargo” in incidents that contain any of the applicable offenses.

This table shows the number of offenses specific to cargo theft and the number of additional offenses reported within a verified cargo theft incident.

Methodology

To arrive at the totals provided, the UCR Program counted one offense for each offense type reported in an incident.