Cargo Theft, 2016

The FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program collects cargo theft data to inform the law enforcement community, state and federal legislators, academia, and the public at large about this particular 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 new with only 4 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.

Background

Due to the significant economic impact cargo theft has on the United States economy, and the potential for use by terrorist organizations, Congress mandated H.R. 3199, the USA Patriot Improvement and Reauthorization Act of 2005 on March 9, 2006. It required 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 Uniform Crime Reporting System, or any successor system, by no later than December 31, 2006." In response to this mandate, the Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Advisory Policy Board approved a definition for collecting cargo theft in December 2006. Creation of the data specifications required to capture cargo theft data in the UCR's Summary Reporting System as well as the National Incident-Based Reporting System were finalized in 2010 with the first publication of cargo theft data in 2013.

What is cargo theft?

Cargo theft is defined as "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. In 2015, a total of 31 states and the Bureau of Indian Affairs participated in submitting data to the UCR Program. In 2016, a total of 30 states, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the National Institute of Health submitted cargo theft data, although only 20 states had at least one cargo theft incident and were able to verify the submitted data as publishable. Participation in the cargo theft data has remained steady; however, several factors have been identified having a direct impact on this important data 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 and make decisions based on their immediate needs regarding resource allocation.

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, 2016

State	Number of agencies reporting an incident	Number of incidents reported	Value of property		Percent recovered
			Stolen	Recovered	
Total	**147**	**692**	**$26,933,356**	**$8,449,949**	**31.4**
Alaska	1	3	331	0	0.0
Arkansas	2	3	169,212	30,000	17.7
Colorado	2	2	77,741	34,000	43.7
Delaware	3	6	695,564	530,566	76.3
Florida	10	26	3,080,534	497,070	16.1
Georgia	4	12	312,684	53,000	17.0
Indiana	1	1	700	0	0.0
Maine	2	2	225	0	0.0
Michigan	22	45	1,005,058	454,024	45.2
Mississippi	1	6	6,102	0	0.0
Montana	1	1	2,000	0	0.0
Nevada	2	3	283,001	104,901	37.1
New Hampshire	1	1	50,921	49,721	97.6
North Dakota	1	1	15,269	0	0.0
Oklahoma	1	1	21,657	0	0.0
South Carolina	12	21	359,943	238,563	66.3
Tennessee	16	298	4,821,502	501,156	10.4
Texas	56	249	15,140,787	5,881,948	38.8
Utah	1	1	610	0	0.0
Virginia	8	10	889,515	75,000	8.4

Table 1, Download Excel

Table 2

Cargo Theft Property Stolen and Recovered

by Type and Value, 2016

Type of property	Value of property		Percent recovered
	Stolen	Recovered	
Total	**$26,933,356**	**$8,449,949**	**31.4**
Alcohol	826,360	1,029	0.1
Automobile	392,879	180,000	45.8
Bicycle	6,527	0	0.0
Building materials	1,262,488	441,583	35.0
Camping, hunting, fishing equipment, supplies	144	0	0.0
Chemicals	20,400	0	0.0
Clothes, furs	390,666	5,420	1.4
Computer hardware, software	530,772	515,925	97.2
Consumable goods	3,066,939	301,116	9.8
Credit,debit cards[1]	0	0	
Drugs, narcotics	50,081	0	0.0
Farm equipment	3,368	500	14.8
Firearm accessories	41,200	40,000	97.1
Firearms	15,550	3,650	23.5
Fuel	29,770	0	0.0
Household goods	1,557,553	112,920	7.2
Identity documents[1]	0	0	
Industrial equipment	371,693	52,183	14.0
Jewelry, precious metals	17,768	548	3.1
Lawn, yard, garden equipment	5,406	4,206	77.8
Livestock	120,000	0	0.0
Medical, medical lab equipment	702	0	0.0
Merchandise	732,734	27,568	3.8
Metals, nonprecious	1,126,825	952,500	84.5
Money	35,029	0	0.0
Musical instruments	9,000	0	0.0
Negotiable instrument	15	0	0.0
Nonnegotiable instrument[1]	0	0	
Office equipment	303,062	0	0.0
Other	6,770,506	1,021,466	15.1
Other motor vehicles	122,700	60,000	48.9
Pending inventory	10	0	0.0
Photographic, optical equipment	53,100	2,800	5.3
Portable electronic communications	1,262,051	18,185	1.4
Purse,wallet	959	0	0.0
Radio, TV, VCR	472,001	1,500	0.3
Recreational, sports equipment	100,500	0	0.0
Tools	379,657	21,850	5.8
Trailers	2,589,730	1,735,703	67.0
Trucks	3,919,445	2,879,963	73.5
Vehicle parts	345,766	69,334	20.1

[1] According to Uniform Crime Reporting guidelines, the value of property stolen and/or recovered must be zero for this property description.

Table 2, Download Excel

Table 3
Cargo Theft by Location, 2016

Location type	Total locations
Air/Bus/Train Terminal	2
Amusement Park	1
Commercial Office Building	61
Construction Site	1
Convenience Store	46
Department/Discount Store	6
Dock/Wharf/Freight/Modal Terminal	51
Drug Store/Doctor's Office/Hospital	2
Government/Public Building	1
Grocery/Supermarket	14
Highway/Road/Alley/Street	90
Hotel/Motel/etc.	7
Industrial Site	21
Liquor Store	1
Parking Lot/Garage	305
Park/Playground	1
Rental Storage Facility	7
Residence/Home	7
Rest Area	2
Restaurant	2
School/College	1
Service/Gas Station	32
Shopping Mall	1
Specialty Store (TV, Fur, etc.)	4
Other/Unknown	48

Table 3, Download Excel

Table 4
Cargo Theft by Victim Type, 2016

Victim type	Total victims
Business	626
Government	3
Individual	89
Other	6

Table 4, Download Excel

Table 5
Cargo Theft by Offense, 2016

Offense	Number reported
Grand total of offenses	**730**
Cargo theft applicable offenses	
All other larceny	168
Burglary	19
Embezzlement	29
False pretenses, swindle, confidence game	7
Motor vehicle theft	105
Robbery	6
Theft from building	14
Theft from vehicle	363
Total cargo theft applicable offenses	711
Other offenses occurring with cargo offenses	
Destruction of property	13
Shoplifting	1
Stolen property offense	5
Total other offenses occurring with cargo offense	19

Table 5, Download Excel

Data Declarations and Methodology

Table 1
Cargo Theft by State
by Incidents, and Stolen, Recovered Values, 2016

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

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 for each submitting state.

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.

Table 2
Cargo Theft Property Stolen and Recovered
by Type and Value, 2016

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

General comment

The value of stolen and recovered property, and the percentage of recovered value of each property type is reflected within this table.

Note: Based on UCR guidelines, the property descriptions of credit/debit cards, nonnegotiable instruments, documents/personal or business, and identity-intangible, must be submitted with zero value for stolen and/or recovered.

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.

Table 3
Cargo Theft by Location, 2016

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 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, 2016

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

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 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.

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

Table 5
Cargo Theft by Offense, 2016

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

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 apply 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 to be reported. Cargo theft data are 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.