



Message from the Director

This year marks the 90th anniversary of the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program. In 1927, the International Association of the Chiefs of Police (IACP) formed an advisory group and a technical staff to develop a uniform approach to gathering nationwide crime data. Three years later, in 1930, the U.S. Congress authorized the FBI to administer the program. From its origins as a collaboration with the IACP, the FBI's UCR Program continues to rely on law enforcement partners who voluntarily share data that provides an overview of crime in the United States.

During the past 90 years, the FBI has regularly updated and developed the UCR Program to meet the needs of our nation. It is fitting then, that this is the year the FBI is working with our stakeholders to complete the transition to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). The NIBRS data collection will fully replace the traditional Summary Reporting System (SRS) on January 1, 2021.

With the end of the SRS and its limitations, the FBI and our partners can fully focus on the richer information that a NIBRS-only data collection will bring. NIBRS includes incident-based data on 52 categories of offenses, and arrest data on 10 additional categories of offenses. The data contained in NIBRS can show up to 10 crimes committed in one incident, as well as demographic data (age, sex, race, and ethnicity) for victims, known offenders, and arrestees. NIBRS also collects times of day, location types, gang involvement, types of weapons/force involved, and drug types and quantities from incident reports. The NIBRS' more-detailed crime data offers clearer context at a national level, allowing the UCR Program and its contributors to more thoroughly identify and address crime issues. The data also provides law enforcement with the tools to generate constructive discussions, measured planning, and informed policing.

There are currently 42 states that are NIBRS certified, and the remaining 8 states are working to develop a NIBRS-certified system at the state level by 2021 [43 states were certified as of November 2020]. In addition to the agencies already reporting their crime data via NIBRS this year, more than 4,500 additional agencies have committed to

transition to NIBRS through their state UCR programs by the January 1, 2021, target date. Some of these agencies have already made the switch.

Complementing the transition to NIBRS, the FBI continues to improve the UCR Program's Crime Data Explorer (CDE). The CDE is an online, interactive tool that provides UCR data in a more expedient manner, making the data more useful for law enforcement agencies, researchers, journalists, and the general public. The CDE users can view crime data; sort it on a national, state, or departmental level; download whole UCR datasets or specified tables; sort by time periods going back to 1985; select specific offense categories; and generate data visualizations. The CDE is evolving into a comprehensive crime data digital experience and will eventually replace the traditional UCR publications. The CDE can be found at <https://crime-data-explorer.fr.cloud.gov>.

In addition to the transition to NIBRS and improvements to the CDE, the UCR Program deployed a new system that works "behind-the-scenes" to reduce the time from data collection to data publication. The enhanced capabilities enable the FBI to release UCR information to stakeholders on a quarterly basis. To support quicker releases of data, each state UCR program and direct contributor must submit data as often as possible, including any updates to an original submission. The UCR Program recommends that agencies submit their crimes and updates once per month. In September 2020, the enhanced release of data began when the FBI published January - June 2020 data on the CDE. This data release, known as the *Preliminary Uniform Crime Report, January–June 2020*, replaced the *Preliminary Semiannual Uniform Crime Report* and was released four months earlier than its predecessor. Updates of 2020 data are expected in December 2020 and March 2021. The UCR Program cautions, "the data is preliminary and subject to change." In the future, data will be released each June, September, December, and March. Quarterly data releases for the current year may come in advance of annual releases of data for the previous year.

In the past 90 years, the FBI has expanded and refined the UCR Program to keep it modern and relevant. The full transition to NIBRS in 2021 will be one of the most important developments to date. The CDE and the more timely releases of data further advance this important work. In partnership with law enforcement agencies and

organizations, the FBI will ensure that the UCR Program continues to serve the nation's law enforcement agencies and communities for many years to come.

Chris Wray, Director