

# NIBRS Implementation Issues

## NIBRS Regional Meeting Wichita, KS

David J. Roberts  
SEARCH  
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# Phase I Project Objectives

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- Identify impediments to NIBRS implementation facing law enforcement agencies, particularly large agencies, throughout the nation.
- Develop recommendations to address these impediments

# Project Structure & Management

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- Guided by a Steering Committee and Technical Working Group representing:
  - UCR Steering Committee, CJIS APB
  - International Association of Chiefs of Police
  - National Sheriff's Association
  - Major Cities Chiefs
  - Association of State UCR Programs
  - Police Chiefs & Sheriffs
  - Researchers, Users & Consumers of Data

# Phase I Project Activities

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- Survey of State UCR/NIBRS Programs
  - Determine the status of implementation
  - Identify State IBR standards
  - Identify certified agencies within the State
  - Identify certified software developers
- Survey of certified software developers
  - Detailed information regarding capabilities
  - Available via SEARCH Automated Index of Criminal Justice Information Systems

# Phase I Project Activities (cont.)

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- Survey of 65 largest law enforcement agencies throughout the nation re: technical capacity to report NIBRS
- Organized 5 regional meetings:
  - Sacramento, California
  - Austin, Texas
  - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
  - Orlando, Florida
  - Chicago, Illinois

# Observations

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- *NIBRS is a statistical derivative of operational law enforcement recordkeeping systems.*
- NIBRS captures data in an incident-based format, which mirrors the conceptual structure of law enforcement activities and recordkeeping programs. Moreover, it is designed to capture data that are essential to the crime reporting and investigative processes of local police and sheriff's departments.
- The NIBRS program itself, however, and the many State implementations of NIBRS, enforce a reporting structure and data element coding scheme that exceed the ability of the legacy records systems currently in place in many of the larger law enforcement agencies throughout the nation.

# Observations (cont.)

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- Many small- and medium-sized law enforcement agencies have adopted automation more recently than the large departments, and in doing so, they have implemented applications that are more flexible and they have less investment in the technology; consequently, they can adopt new applications that are NIBRS-compliant more readily and without the significant costs that often face large departments.
- Many large law enforcement agencies have records management systems that are incapable of reporting NIBRS data because the data are in an incompatible format (for example, they continue to follow the hierarchy rule and fail to capture multiple offenses and victims). Some of these local agencies have antiquated records systems that are fragmented and urgently in need of upgrade or replacement simply to effectively meet the ongoing needs of the department.

# Observations (cont.)

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- In these agencies, the priority is on upgrading the records management systems to meet their operational responsibilities, and IBR reporting for statistical purposes at the State and Federal levels is viewed as a secondary priority.
- In all likelihood, NIBRS implementation in these agencies will occur only in the context of a comprehensive systems upgrade, where NIBRS (or State IBR) reporting requirements can be built into the agency's functional requirements definition. Clearly the agency must also address forms redesign and training issues, but the basic information system will enable NIBRS reporting.

# Observations (cont.)

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- In contrast, other agencies currently have automated, incident-based systems that effectively meet their operational needs, but fail to capture the necessary data in an appropriate format for NIBRS reporting. In these agencies, NIBRS represents changing their recordkeeping systems in order to generate statistical data for use at State and Federal levels, without any perceived benefit at the local level.
- For these agencies, the costs of implementing changes in reporting practices to make their systems NIBRS-compliant (for example, revising offense reporting forms, department-wide training, and software re-programming), compounded by concerns over the impact NIBRS will have on the department's reported crime rate and a lack of understanding on how the data will be used at State and Federal levels, create formidable impediments to NIBRS implementation.

# Observations (cont.)

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- If NIBRS is to be implemented broadly throughout the nation, its purpose must be relevant to the operational records management systems of the local law enforcement agencies responsible for contributing the data, and it must demonstrate utility in State and Federal analyses of the data.
- In addition, it must not represent an undue burden on the law enforcement officers who capture the data at the street level.
- Technologies that assist in the collection and recording of incident data should be encouraged and funding assistance should be made available to law enforcement agencies to facilitate their adoption of NIBRS-compliant systems.

# General Categories of Impediments

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- Funding
- Uncertainty of Benefits
- Policy Concerns
- Administrative Issues
- Federal & State Reporting
- Data Elements
- Education

# Phase II Project Activities

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## ▲ **Four Project Tracks:**

- **I      Development of Standard Analytic Methodologies**
- **II      Data Elements, Software and Data Input Strategies**
- **III     Communication, Benefits, Coordination and  
Developing Momentum**
- **IV     Technical Assistance to State and Local Justice  
Agencies**

# Phase III Project Activities

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- Implement NIBRS reporting among several major agencies;
- Work with several observer sites to enable them to monitor implementation strategies, costs, etc.;
- Provide no-cost technical assistance to State UCR Programs and to local law enforcement agencies;
- Host 5 Regional Meetings regarding NIBRS implementation and impediments;
- Provide training on analysis methodologies for NIBRS data using readily available software applications.

# Implement NIBRS in Several Sites

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- Status:
  - Agencies have been identified and have submitted grant applications to BJS, which have been awarded:
  - Chicago, Illinois;
  - Charlotte-Mecklenberg, North Carolina; and
  - Wichita, Kansas.
- Invite up to 10 local law enforcement agencies to participate in the implementation project as *observer sites*, to learn from the experiences of the three funded jurisdictions.
- Those sites have been selected and met earlier this Spring, together with the implementation sites; we will meet again in North Carolina next month to assess where the agencies stand with NIBRS implementation.

# Technical Assistance

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- Provide on-going in-house and on-site technical assistance to:
  - Local law enforcement agencies in their planning for and implementation of NIBRS capable information systems that meet their operational needs, and
  - State UCR/NIBRS programs in their planning for and implementation of systems to capture, analyze and disseminate information to an expanding range of both operational and policy users of the data.

# Technical Assistance (cont.)

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## ■ Status:

– Technical assistance has been provided, or is currently scheduled, in the following sites:

📁 Louisiana (workshop for local agencies);

📁 Delaware (State);

📁 Philadelphia, PA (local);

📁 North Carolina (State);

📁 Hawaii (both State and local agencies);

– Technical assistance and workshop for agencies

📁 Colorado (State);

📁 Michigan (State);

📁 Ohio (State); and

📁 Kentucky.

# Host 5 Regional Meetings

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- Meetings Scheduled in:
  - Los Angeles (July 11-12);
  - Washington, DC (August 8-9);
  - Chicago, IL (August 10-11);
  - Charlotte, NC (August 15-16); and
  - Wichita, KS (August 17-18).

# Training Seminars

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- Provide training seminars in the analysis of NIBRS data using tools commonly available on the desktops of most computers (MS Office);
- 11 Seminars conducted thus far in:
  - Connecticut;
  - San Diego;
  - Sacramento;
  - Kansas;
  - *Michigan (planned);*
  - *Ohio (planned);*
  - *Louisiana (planned).*

# Monitor Project Activities

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- You can monitor project activities at our web site:
  - <http://www.search.org>
- Contact project staff:
  - Dave Roberts ([dave.roberts@search.org](mailto:dave.roberts@search.org))
  - Chris Gebhardt ([chris.gebhardt@search.org](mailto:chris.gebhardt@search.org))
  - (916) 392-2550