

DATA CHARACTERISTICS AND KNOWN LIMITATIONS

CRIMES

A crime is an act specifically prohibited by law, or failure to perform an act specifically required by law, for which punishment is prescribed (15 PC).

If multiple crimes occur during the same event, only the most serious (based on hierarchy) is counted; arson is the exception. Since arson frequently occurs in conjunction with other crimes, it is felt that valuable information could be lost using the hierarchy rule. Therefore, arson is counted along with the other most serious offense.

The offenses of criminal homicide, forcible rape, and aggravated assault are crimes against persons; one offense is counted for each victim. Robbery, burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson are crimes against property; one offense is counted for each distinct operation.

The FBI and California Crime Indexes have been temporarily suspended as efforts continue to redefine those measurements.

Beginning in 2003, larceny-theft over \$400 was included in the property crime category to give a more representative depiction of crime in California.

All 2004 homicide crime reports were received and processed by reporting month for all agencies.

In 2004, the homicide contributing circumstance for the offense of carjacking was programmatically miscoded as a motor vehicle theft which contributed to an increase for this offense. These offenses should have been coded as robberies. After 2004, carjacking will again be shown as a robbery offense.

The Agnews State Hospital did not report data for January through December 2004.

The Bay Area Rapid Transit Police Department converted to a new computer-aided dispatch/records management system in November 2004. Experiencing system problems, they were unable to produce reports for November and December 2004.

The Sacramento Police Department discovered in May 2004, that while their larceny-theft totals were accurate, there were problems with the nature of larcenies reported. For February through October 2004, the categories of purse-snatching, shoplifting, and pocket-picking were captured under the "all other" category. The problem with their records management system has been corrected and the reports for November and December 2004 contain the accurate breakdowns.

Data for the San Francisco County Sheriff's Department are reported by the San Francisco Police Department.

The San Jacinto Police Department did not report data for January through May 2004. In June 2004, the agency became a contract with the Riverside County Sheriff's Department. Its data for June through December are provided separately from the sheriff's department's reports.

The San Simeon District of the Department of Parks and Recreation consolidated their reporting with the San Luis Obispo Coast District on January 1, 2004. Data for both agencies will be reported under the name of San Luis Obispo Coast District.

The Torrance Police Department did not report property values for 2004 due to problems with their records management system.

The Vallejo Police Department did not report data for July through December 2004 due to staffing shortages and problems with the implementation of a new records management system.

The Woodlake Police Department did not report data for December 2004.

Motor vehicle thefts are reported by the California Highway Patrol for the Contra Costa, El Dorado, Santa Cruz, Trinity, and Tulare Sheriff's Departments. The only motor vehicle thefts reported by the El Dorado County Sheriff's Department are the motor vehicles that were stolen while a burglary was committed.

ARRESTS

Monthly Arrest and Citation Register (MACR)

Arrests occur when persons are taken into custody because they are believed to have violated the law. Not all arrests result in persons being placed in jail. Arrestees may be released by the arresting agency, may post bail, or may be released on their own recognizance to appear in court at a later date. Some are issued citations, much like traffic tickets, which direct them to appear in court.

Arrests are divided into two major groups: felony arrests and misdemeanor arrests. An arrest for a felony-level offense can result in a sentence to state prison if the offender is convicted as an adult. An arrest for a misdemeanor-level offense can result in a sentence of up to one year in county jail, a fine, probation, restitution, or any combination of the four.

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Juveniles may also be arrested for truancy, incorrigibility, running away, and curfew violations. These are referred to as status offenses because agency intervention is based solely on the juvenile's status as a minor. Status offenses are acts that would not be "crimes" if committed by adults.

If a person is arrested for multiple offenses, the MACR selects only the most serious offense, based on the severity of possible punishment.

Felony arrest counts may include some misdemeanor warrants for felony offenses.

The subjectivity of the classification and labeling process must be considered in the analysis of race/ethnic group data.

In 2004, it was determined that the Alcohol Beverage Control agencies did not meet the Criminal Justice Statistics Center's requirement as a reporting agency; therefore, they are no longer submitting statistical reports.

The Bay Area Rapid Transit Police Department converted to a new computer-aided dispatch/records management system in November 2004. Experiencing system problems, they were unable to produce reports for November and December 2004.

After the close of the 2004 MACR file, the Fremont Police Department discovered a problem in their automated coding system. Their system erroneously coded attempted murder [PC 664/187(A)] as murder (PC 187). Therefore, the arrest totals for murder and assault are incorrect. The correct arrest counts should be a total of 4 arrests for murder (3 adult males, one adult female) and a total of 266 arrests for assault (207 adult males, 24 adult females, 26 juvenile males, and 9 juvenile females).

The King City Police Department did not report data for July through December 2004 due to formatting problems with their new records management system.

The Oakland Police Department did not provide data for August 2004 due to malfunctions in the conversion from the old to the new records management system.

The San Jacinto Police Department did not report data for January through May 2004. In June 2004, the agency became a contract with the Riverside County Sheriff's Department. Its data for June through December are provided separately from the sheriff's department's reports.

The San Simeon District of the Department of Parks and Recreation consolidated

their reporting with the San Luis Obispo Coast District on January 1, 2004. Data for both agencies will be reported under the name of San Luis Obispo Coast District.

The Vallejo Police Department did not report data for July through December 2004 due to staffing shortages and problems with the implementation of a new records management system.

ADULT FELONY ARREST DISPOSITIONS Offender-Based Transaction Statistics (OBTS)

The OBTS system describes the processing of adults arrested for felony offenses from arrest through final disposition. "Final" disposition refers to a specific legal action which takes place following an adult felony arrest. Final disposition can occur at the law enforcement, prosecutor, or court level.

Only the final disposition of an arrest event is selected for statistical purposes. Intermediate dispositions (diversion programs, suspended proceedings, reopenings, retrials, or subsequent actions) are not included in the OBTS data.

If a person is arrested for multiple offenses, the OBTS system selects only the most serious offense, based on the severity of possible punishment. If there are multiple court dispositions, the OBTS system selects the most serious court disposition and the associated offense.

OBTS data are grouped by the year of disposition regardless of the year in which the arrest occurred.

Adult Felony Arrest Disposition data represent final dispositions equal to approximately 65-75 percent of the total adult felony arrests made during a calendar year. Therefore, final dispositions may occur in a year following the year of arrest. In the aggregate, the data generally describes state patterns; however, this may not be the case in any particular county.

Caution should be used when comparing conviction and nonconviction dispositions since budget constraints necessitated the processing of conviction dispositions on a priority basis. Therefore, fluctuations from year to year may not necessarily be due to actual occurrences in the criminal justice system, but only reflect the degree to which reports of dispositions were reported and processed.

The OBTS data for state institutional commitments may vary from information

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compiled and reported by other state agencies because of differences in the data collection systems and criteria.

The OBTS file includes some persons whose age at the time of arrest was less than 18. These minors received a final disposition in adult court under provisions of the Welfare and Institutions Code sections 602, 707(a), 707(b), 707(c), and 707.1(a).

ADULT PROBATION

Data are limited to original grants of probation and do not include subsequent grants of probation to persons already under supervised probation by the same level court in the same county. Persons are counted once for each jurisdiction. Also, probationers who are jurisdictional cases of more than one county are counted more than one time in statewide totals.

Due to reporting problems, Los Angeles County submitted corrections for 1997 and 1998. Their caseload counts for 1997 decreased and their 1998 counts increased from previously published data.

For 2002, Marin County implemented a new computer system. Due to difficulty with the new system, they were unable to extract data for November and December.

For 2000, Mariposa County reported a negative caseload count for the misdemeanor offense level. The negative count resulted from more probationers being removed from probation at the beginning of the year than were added during the year.

Beginning in March 2002, Placer County caseloads increased due to the combination of the Tahoe City and Auburn offices. Previously, the Tahoe City office did not submit reports.

Beginning in August 2002, Sacramento County combined their felony and misdemeanor offense counts which resulted from a computer program change and audit.

San Bernardino County data are incomplete for 2001 due to a loss of personnel.

San Francisco County reported incomplete data for 2000. Also, they were unable to report for 2001 through 2004 due to computer program issues and budget cuts.

In 2002, San Joaquin County reported a negative count for caseloads of felony offenses.

Sierra County did not report data for 1998.

For 1998, Solano County reported estimates for the number of placements. Also, they did not report data for 1999.

Yolo County experienced programming problems and was unable to report for 2000, and only partially reported for 2001 (April through December).

Counties not reporting misdemeanor offense counts for 2002 through 2004 were Contra Costa, Siskiyou, Tulare, and Yolo. Beginning July 1, 2003, the misdemeanor caseloads for Merced County were absorbed into the felony caseloads.

JAIL PROFILE SURVEY

Type I facility: a local detention facility for detainment of persons for not more than 96 hours after booking, excluding holidays. Type I facilities may also detain persons on a court order, for either their own safekeeping, or sentence persons to a city jail as an inmate worker. This facility may also house inmate workers sentenced to the county jail, provided such placement in the facility is made voluntarily by the inmate. As used in this section, they define an inmate worker as a person assigned to do designed tasks outside his/her cell or dormitory, pursuant to the written policy of the facility, for a minimum of four hours each day on a five-day scheduled work week.

Type II facility: a local detention facility for the detention of persons pending an arraignment, during a trial, or a sentence of commitment.

Type III facility: a local detention facility used only for persons convicted and sentenced.

Type IV facility: a local detention facility, or portion of it, designated for the housing of inmates eligible under Penal Code section 1208 for work/education furlough and/or other programs involving inmate access into the community.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic Violence-Related Calls for Assistance

Domestic violence is defined as "...abuse committed against an adult or a fully emancipated minor who is a spouse, former spouse, cohabitant, former cohabitant, or person with whom the suspect has had a child or is having or has had a dating or engagement relationship." [13700(b) PC]

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Abuse is defined as "...intentionally or recklessly causing or attempting to cause bodily injury, or placing another person in reasonable apprehension of imminent serious bodily injury to himself or herself, or another." [13700(a) PC]

The definition of "domestic violence" is subject to varying interpretations by law enforcement agencies. As a result, different types of domestic violence relationships may be included in the database.

Included in the data are any cases which resulted in a report being written by the responding law enforcement agencies. Data, therefore, include both cases where an arrest was made and those where circumstances did not warrant an arrest.

Domestic violence-related calls for assistance which involved the use, or threat to use, a firearm, knife or cutting instrument, or other dangerous weapon are reported by type of weapon regardless of the outcome or injury.

In 2002, the definition of a personal weapon was modified. The use of a personal weapon, such as hands, fists, or feet, was reported as a weapon only if the assault was considered an aggravated assault under Uniform Crime Reporting guidelines. An aggravated assault is an unlawful attack by one person upon another for the purpose of inflicting severe or aggravated bodily injury, e.g., broken bones, internal injuries, or required stitches.

The Agnews State Hospital did not report data for January through December 2004.

The Bay Area Rapid Transit Police Department converted to a new computer-aided dispatch/records management system in November 2004. Experiencing system problems, they were unable to produce reports for November and December 2004.

The Sacramento Police Department reported partial data for October and did not submit reports for November and December 2004. Issues with properly capturing data in the correct format were discovered after the implementation of a new records management system.

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