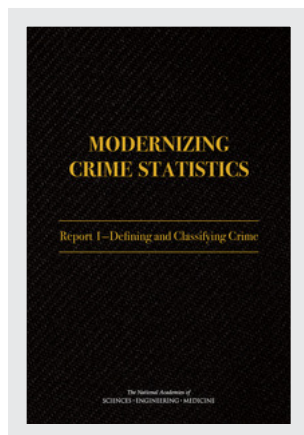


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DETAILS

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Charge to the Panel on Modernizing the Nation’s Crime Statistics

A panel of the National Research Council will assess and make recommendations for the development of a modern set of crime measures in the United States and the best means for obtaining them. For example, better information is needed on certain crime types such as against businesses or organizations and personal identity theft; also needed is greater ability to associate attributes such as firearms or drug involvement to crime types, and more complete adoption of electronic reporting, data capture, and system interoperability. The review will evaluate and make recommendations in the following areas:

- *Substantive*—Development of a framework for identifying the types of crimes to be considered in a modern crime classification, based on examining the strengths and limitations of various perspectives, such as: technical or legal definitions of crime types in criminal law or penal codes; definitions of “common unacceptable actions” in common law; and public health-type definitions that use affected persons (or victims) as the unit of analysis. The review will focus on full and accurate measurement of criminal victimization events and their attributes, considering types of crime (and their definitions), including the current scope of crime types covered by existing Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) data collections; gaps in knowledge of contemporary crime; development of international

crime classification frameworks that should be considered in increasing international comparability; and the optimal scope of crime statistics to serve the needs of the full array of data users and stakeholders—federal agencies, other law enforcement agencies, Congress, other actors in the justice system (such as the courts and corrections officials), researchers, and the general public;

- *Methodological*—Assessment of optimal methods to collect the data to complete the crime classification framework developed in the review, including assessment of the appropriateness of existing instruments and methods currently used by the FBI and BJS to collect crime information and the effectiveness and accuracy of their data processing techniques (including routines for imputation and estimation and the handling of missing data); the possible role of integrating data from non-FBI/BJS and nongovernmental sources (such as from credit card companies) into crime measurement; and capabilities for flexibly identifying and measuring new and emerging crime types going forward; and
- *Implementation*—How to maximize the use of locally collected and existing data as well as information technology assets while minding the voluntary nature of crime reporting in current systems, minimizing the effects of changes on state, local, and tribal law enforcement information management systems, meeting the needs of local law enforcement operations, and populating the national FBI and BJS data collections.

The review will also consider contextual information about crime produced by other statistical entities from different perspectives (such as contextual information on homicides, sexual assault, and stalking that may be derived from public health data collections), though the focus of the study is the taxonomy and measurement of crime and not the etiology of violence or deviant behavior generally. In addition, the review may consider cost-effectiveness and budgetary issues, such as priority uses for additional funding that may be obtained through budget initiatives or reallocation of resources among units of the U.S. Department of Justice.

The review will proceed in two stages. In phase one the panel will focus on the taxonomy and measurement of crime by hosting two workshop-style meetings, one with the research community and one with practitioners and policy makers, both addressing the scope and content of an ideal set of crime measures and indicators for the United States. Proceedings will be issued from both workshops, and the panel will produce an interim report that identifies lessons learned from the workshop input and directions for the panel's remaining work. In phase two, the panel will focus on the shape and structure of a modern set of crime measures—their sources, methods, tools, and processes—including what current sources of information could be used or modified to meet user needs, particularly for the higher priority measures. The

panel will produce a final report at the end of the study that addresses ways to ensure that the nation has an integrated, complete, and contemporary set of indicators of the full range of crime (including the best means for disseminating data and findings) and document the joint role of FBI and BJS in producing those indicators.

