

UNIFORM CRIMINAL STATISTICS

General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

JOINT STATE GOVERNMENT COMMISSION

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

1969

The Joint State Government Commission was created by Act of 1937, July 1, P. L. 2460, as last amended 1959, December 8, P. L. 1740, as a continuing agency for the development of facts and recommendations on all phases of government for the use of the General Assembly.

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

To the Members of the General Assembly of the
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

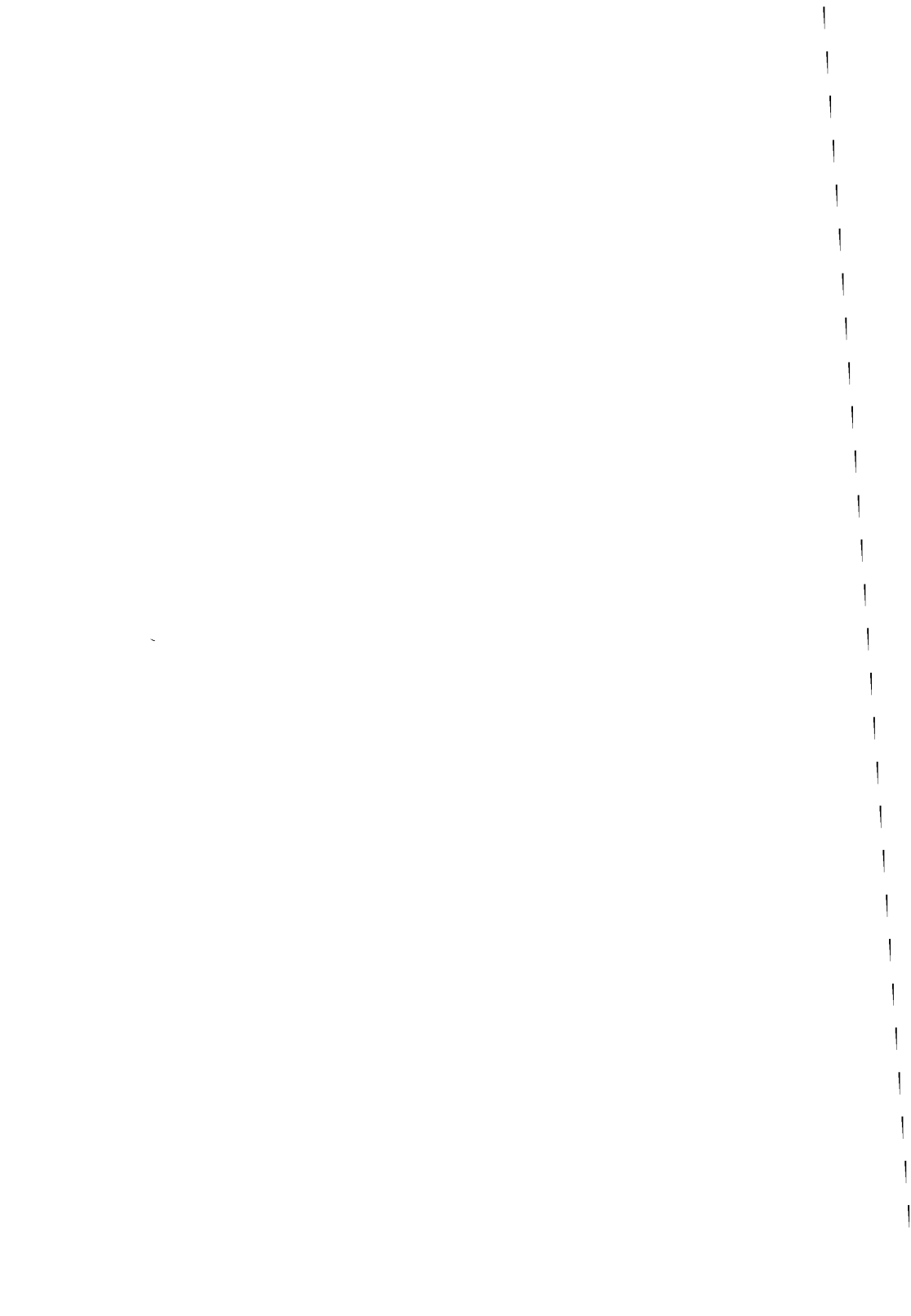
In January 1968 the Executive Committee of the Joint State Government Commission reactivated the Task Force on Uniform Crime Reporting which had originally been appointed pursuant to House Resolution No. 91, Session of 1963. Between January 1964 and March 1965, the original task force assembled evidence and heard testimony on the need for a uniform criminal statistics reporting system for Pennsylvania. Subsequently, the operations of the task force were suspended to await the findings of the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, which was formally established by President Johnson in July 1965.

In view of the widespread emphasis on a comprehensive criminal statistics program by the President's Commission, the reactivated study was not confined to consideration of uniform reporting of arrest and police statistics only, which had been the subject of House Resolution No. 91 (1963) but was extended to encompass uniform data collection programs for all of the processes in the criminal justice system.

The Commission wishes to recognize, with appreciation, the contribution of the members of the Task Force on Uniform Crime Reporting, under the chairmanship of Senator Clarence D. Bell.

FRED J. SHUPNIK, *Chairman*

*Joint State Government Commission
Capitol Building
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
May 1969*



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RECOMMENDATION

The Joint State Government Commission recommends the establishment of a Bureau of Criminal Statistics in the Department of Justice to collect uniform statistical data from public agencies and officers dealing with crimes and criminals, to analyze and interpret those data, and to present an annual report of criminal statistics to the Governor and the General Assembly.

UNIFORM CRIMINAL STATISTICS

In the report of the Pennsylvania Crime Commission *Goals For Justice*¹ the Attorney General of the Commonwealth, William C. Sennett, said:

“The problem of crime in the United States and Pennsylvania is not new. It has existed for decade after decade. But we have taken the position that, to effectively counterattack this menace, we must first know its extent and true nature.”

This statement of the Attorney General highlights the necessity for obtaining accurate information with respect to crime and criminal behavior. Meaningful measurements of the extent of crime and of the effectiveness of crime control efforts are conspicuously lacking in Pennsylvania today.

Statewide measurements of crime are limited to the data provided by the Federal Bureau of Investigation in its annual Uniform Crime Report covering seven crime classifications: homicide, forcible rape, aggravated assault, robbery, burglary, larceny over \$50 and auto theft.

In 1967, approximately 127,000 of these so-called major crimes were known to the police in Pennsylvania. Not reported to the FBI and therefore not available on a statewide basis were an estimated one-half million or more other crimes, including such offenses as arson, forgery, counterfeiting, indecent exposure and a long list of sex crimes, contributing to the delinquency of a minor, driving while intoxicated, and many other criminal acts.

Even for the major crimes reported by the FBI, systematic analysis of trends and causal factors is greatly impeded by the absence of comparable data on the characteristics of arrested persons and the lack of a coordinating authority. The reader of the Uniform Crime Reports of the FBI is warned that many

¹ Pennsylvania Crime Commission, Office of the Attorney General, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, *Task Force Report, Goals for Justice* (January 1969).

factors influence the extent and trends in crime and that direct comparisons of crime figures are unwarranted and may lead to incorrect conclusions unless consideration is given to numerous social and economic factors.

Among the "Crime Factors" listed in the FBI report as affecting the amount and type of crime are the following:

"Density and size of the community population and the metropolitan area of which it is a part.

"Composition of the population with reference particularly to age, sex and race.

"Economic status and mores of the population.

"Relative stability of population, including commuters, seasonal, and other transient types.

"Climate, including seasonal weather conditions.

"Educational, recreational, and religious characteristics.

"Effective strength of the police force.

"Standards governing appointments to the police force.

"Policies of the prosecuting officials and the courts.

"Attitude of the public toward law enforcement problems.

"The administrative and investigative efficiency of the local law enforcement agency, including the degree of adherence to crime reporting standards."

The incomplete and fragmented status of criminal justice statistics in the Commonwealth is demonstrated by the entries in Table 1, which contains a summary of the statistical activities being carried out by agencies responsible for the various criminal justice processes.

Aside from the FBI statistics, most of the criminal justice statistical data currently available in Pennsylvania arise as by-products of administrative procedures. They are not designed for analyzing the nature and extent of crime nor for appraisals of the operating efficiency of the criminal justice system.

Because no coordinating authority currently exists, much of

Table 1
SUMMARY OF
CRIMINAL JUSTICE STATISTICAL PROGRAMS IN PENNSYLVANIA
1969

Criminal Justice Process	Government Agency	Status of Statewide Data Collection and Reporting Programs
(1)	(2)	(3)
I. Police		
(a) Criminal Offenses Known	Federal Bureau of Investigation	Seven major crimes only. No data for other offenses.
(b) Arrests	State and Local Police	No program.
II. Prosecution	District attorneys and other prosecutors.	No program.
III. Detention		
(a) Juvenile	Office of Children and Youth, Department of Public Welfare.	Annual published reports.
(b) Adult	Bureau of Correction, Department of Justice.	Annual published reports.
IV. Courts		
(a) Minor Judiciary	Department of Revenue and Bureau of Highway Safety.	Fines collected and dispositions on traffic offenses only. No reports on other offenses.
(b) Juvenile Court	Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, processed by the Department of Public Welfare.	Infrequent detailed reports and annual summary reports.
(c) Criminal Courts	Department of Justice	Annual published reports of data received from clerks of courts.

Table 1 (continued)

Criminal Justice Process	Government Agency	Status of Statewide Data Collection and Reporting Programs
(1)	(2)	(3)
V. Probation		
(a) Juvenile	Juvenile Court Judges' Commission	No program.
(b) Adult	Board of Probation and Parole	Semiannual published reports.
VI. Institutions		
(a) Local Lockups	Bureau of Correction	No program.
(b) County Prisons	Bureau of Correction	Annual and special published reports.
(c) Juvenile	Office of Children and Youth, Department of Public Welfare.	Annual reports.
(d) Adult-State	Bureau of Correction	Monthly, annual and special reports.
VII. Pardons	Board of Pardons	No program.
VIII. Parole		
(a) Juvenile	Juvenile Court Judges' Commission	No program.
(b) Adult-County	Board of Probation and Parole	Semiannual published reports.
(c) Adult-State	Board of Probation and Parole	Monthly, annual and special reports.

the data contained in the published reports noted in Table 1 are not collected on the basis of uniform definitions and methods and therefore are of limited usefulness in facilitating the operation of an integrated criminal justice system.²

A uniform criminal statistics reporting system encompassing all of the agencies and officers dealing with criminal processes in the Commonwealth would necessitate the coordination of data received from several thousand reporting units. A listing of the number of these potential reporting units is contained in Table 2.

All of the evidence examined by the task force and all of the testimony presented before it emphasizes the pressing need for reliable measurements of crime, collected and analyzed by a single agency on the basis of uniform definitions, procedures and methods.

The report of the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice states the matter with clarity and accuracy as it applies to Pennsylvania and many other states.

"While almost all States collect some criminal statistics, this collection is usually fragmented among various agencies whose statistics are not compatible with each other. More importantly, in most States there is no systematic method of monitoring or improving the quality of data received from operating agencies.

"It seems clear that any State which is serious about limiting crime and improving its criminal justice system should establish a centralized criminal statistics bureau with the funds and authority necessary for it to be effective. The Uniform Criminal Statistics Act, promulgated by the Commissioners on Uniform State Laws in 1946 but adopted to date only in California, is one effective way of beginning this. . . ."³

² A comprehensive view of the frequencies associated with the various criminal justice processes, to the extent of available data, is provided in Figure 12, pages 68-69, *Task Force Report, Assessment of Crime and Criminal Justice in Pennsylvania*, Pennsylvania Crime Commission, Office of the Attorney General, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (January 1969).

³ Task Force on Assessment, the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, *Task Force Report: Crime and Its Impact—An Assessment*, 1967, p. 125.

Table 2
ESTIMATED NUMBER OF CRIMINAL STATISTICS REPORTING UNITS
IN PENNSYLVANIA

Agency	Number of Units
(1)	(2)
Police Departments—State, City and Township	1,150
District Attorneys	67
Minor Judiciary	1,800 ^a
Clerk of Courts	67
Court Administrators	7
Juvenile Court Judges' Commission	1
Detention Lockups	420
County Jails	70
Department of Welfare—Juvenile Institutions	1 ^b
Bureau of Correction—Adult Institutions	1 ^c
Board of Probation and Parole	1
County Adult and Juvenile Probation and Parole	69
Board of Pardons	1
Other State departments involved	3 ^d

^a Will be reduced to approximately 600 when constitutional modifications are fully effective.

^b Covers 25 local juvenile detention facilities, 10 State juvenile institutions and 20 private juvenile institutions.

^c Covers 10 State correctional institutions, 4 mobile forestry camps, 3 pre-release centers and 1 regional correctional facility.

^d Liquor Control Board, Department of Revenue, Department of Health.

The task force has had the benefit of consulting with Mr. Ronald H. Beattie, Director of the Bureau of Criminal Statistics of the California Department of Justice, formerly Chief, Division of Procedural Studies and Statistics, Office of the United States Courts and a nationally recognized expert in the field of criminal statistics. Mr. Beattie outlined the operations of the California Bureau of Criminal Statistics and strongly recommended that to gain an accurate view of crime the Commonwealth establish a bureau of criminal statistics to administer a uniform crime reporting system. He noted that the California statute followed in all important respects the "Uniform Criminal Statistics Act" drafted by the Commissioners on Uniform State Laws in 1946

and suggested that the model statute would provide a strong and uniform basis for the establishment of state criminal statistics programs.

In testimony before the task force, Mr. J. Shane Creamer, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Crime Commission, emphasized the difficulties encountered by the Crime Commission when attempting to ascertain the dimensions of crime in Pennsylvania as well as the number and kinds of law enforcement agencies. Both the Chairman of the Crime Commission, Attorney General William C. Sennett, and Mr. Creamer urged the establishment of a Bureau of Criminal Statistics in the Pennsylvania Department of Justice. Other organizations for whom spokesmen presented testimony to the task force recommending a Bureau of Criminal Statistics were the Pennsylvania Association on Probation, Parole and Correction, the Pennsylvania Prison Society and the Crime Commission of Philadelphia, Inc.

In the Uniform Crime Reports issued by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, J. Edgar Hoover, Director, has repeatedly urged the states to establish criminal statistics programs:

“ . . . a vital need within the state is effective criminal justice statistical programs. Crime statistics are necessary if the states are to know the extent and nature of the crime problem and be in a position to intelligently plan for and evaluate their criminal justice systems. . . .”⁴

The anticipated cost to the Commonwealth of establishing a bureau of criminal statistics in the Department of Justice is small because Federal participation in the program is available. The Governor's Budget for 1969-1970 proposes to spend “. . . \$238,000 to create a Bureau of Criminal Justice Statistics . . .” and indicates that “. . . The Federal government will provide approximately 60 percent of the cost . . .” of this and other new criminal justice programs.

⁴ J. Edgar Hoover, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Department of Justice, *Uniform Crime Reports—1967*, Preface, p. 5.

APPENDIX

DRAFT OF PROPOSED BILL EMBODYING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

AN ACT

Amending the act of April 9, 1929 (P. L. 177), entitled "An act providing for and reorganizing the conduct of the executive and administrative work of the Commonwealth by the Executive Department thereof and the administrative departments, boards, commissions, and officers thereof, including the boards of trustees of State Normal Schools, or Teachers Colleges; abolishing, creating, reorganizing or authorizing the reorganization of certain administrative departments, boards, and commissions; defining the powers and duties of the Governor and other executive and administrative officers, and of the several administrative departments, boards, commissions, and officers; fixing the salaries of the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and certain other executive and administrative officers; providing for the appointment of certain administrative officers, and of all deputies and other assistants and employes in certain departments, boards, and commissions; and prescribing the manner in which the number and compensation of the deputies and all other assistants and employes of certain departments, boards and commissions shall be determined," creating a Bureau of Criminal Statistics in the Department of Justice, and imposing reporting duties on certain agencies and officers.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA HEREBY ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The act of April 9, 1929 (P. L. 177), known as "The Administrative Code of 1929," is amended by adding at the end of Article IX, three new sections to read:

Section 924. Bureau of Criminal Statistics.—There shall be in the Department of Justice a Bureau of Criminal Statistics, in the charge of a director, who shall be a person with statistical

training and experience and possess knowledge of the problems of criminal law enforcement and administration and penal and correctional institutions and methods. The Attorney General shall appoint the director and employes of the Bureau of Criminal Statistics, subject to the provisions of any applicable law relating to civil service.

Section 925. Duties of the Bureau of Criminal Statistics.— The Bureau of Criminal Statistics shall have the power and its duty shall be:

(1) To collect data necessary for the work of the bureau, from all persons and agencies mentioned in section 919 of this act and from any other appropriate source;

(2) To prepare and distribute to all such persons and agencies, cards or other forms used in reporting data to the bureau. Such cards or forms may, in addition to other items, include items of information needed by Federal bureaus or departments engaged in the development of national and uniform criminal statistics;

(3) To request the form and content of records which must be kept by such persons and agencies in order to insure the correct reporting of data to the bureau;

(4) To instruct such persons and agencies in the installation, maintenance, and use of such records and in the reporting of data to the bureau;

(5) To process, tabulate, analyze and interpret the data collected from such persons and agencies;

(6) To supply, at their request, to Federal bureaus or departments engaged in the collection of national criminal statistics data they need from this Commonwealth;

(7) To present to the Governor and the members of the General Assembly on or before July 1 of each year a report containing the criminal statistics of the preceding calendar year and

to present at such other times as the Attorney General may approve reports on the special aspects of criminal statistics. The annual report shall contain statistics showing: (i) the number and types of offenses known to the public authorities; (ii) the personal and social characteristics of criminals and delinquents; and (iii) the administrative actions taken by law enforcement, judicial, penal, and correctional agencies in dealing with criminals or delinquents;

(8) The Bureau of Criminal Statistics, at the request of any of the following, may assist or advise in a statistical and research capacity the Bureau of Correction, the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, the Pennsylvania State Police, and the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission.

(9) It shall be the duty of the director to give adequate interpretation of such statistics and so to present the information that it may be of value in guiding the policies of the General Assembly and of those in charge of the apprehension, prosecution, and treatment of the criminals and delinquents, or concerned with the present state of crime and delinquency. The report shall include also statistics which are comparable with national uniform criminal statistics published by Federal bureaus or departments heretofore mentioned;

(10) The Bureau of Criminal Statistics shall take advantage of all available Federal funds and establish new programs as well as undertake a continuous analysis of future data needs.

Section 926. Duties of Public Agencies and Officers in Reporting Criminal Statistics.—It shall be the duty of every constable, chief of police, county police force, sheriff, coroner, district attorney, probation officer and of the Bureau of Correction in the Department of Justice, the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, the Pennsylvania State Police, the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, the Department of Public Welfare, State Fire Marshal, Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board, magis-

trates, the Philadelphia Municipal and Traffic Courts, aldermen, justices of the peace, county prison wardens, and every other person or agency dealing with crimes or criminals or with delinquency or delinquents, when requested by the Attorney General:

(1) To install and maintain records and recording systems needed for the correct reporting of statistical data required by the Bureau of Criminal Statistics;

(2) To report statistical data to the Bureau of Criminal Statistics at such times and in such manner as the Attorney General prescribes;

(3) To give to the Attorney General, or his accredited agent, access to statistical data for the purpose of carrying out the duties of the Bureau of Criminal Statistics.

Section 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

