Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
Policing and Security Branch

Overview of Crime Data Collection in British Columbia, 2017

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Date Prepared: September 2018

Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Data

The Move to the Incident-Based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) Survey

Prior to 2009, official police-reported crime data were collected through the aggregate Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR1) Survey. The UCR1 Survey included the number of reported offences, actual offences, offences cleared by charge, and offences cleared by other means. It did not include victim or incident characteristics.

The UCR1 aggregate format was extremely limiting. The survey itself included only a limited number of offence codes, and it was not possible to add offence codes when new laws were introduced. Most new offences were added to the catch-all offence of "Other, Other *Criminal Code*". This resulted in an inability to identify a number of violations including criminal harassment, extortion, and numerous offences against the administration of justice.

In the late 1980s, Statistics Canada began collecting more detailed information about each criminal incident through a new incident-based version of the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) Survey. Police services across Canada gradually adopted this new survey through their records management systems and, by 2007, almost all police services in Canada were providing UCR2 survey data.

As of 2009, official police-reported crime data are collected through the UCR2 Survey. Police agencies across Canada report to the UCR2 Survey according to nationally set scoring rules. Managed nationally by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (CCJS), the UCR2 Survey forms the basis of crime data collection within the provinces and across the country.

The UCR2 Survey represents an expansion of the UCR1 Survey. The UCR2 Survey collects all of the same information as the UCR1 Survey as well as detailed information on individual criminal incidents reported to the police, including characteristics of victims, accused persons, and incidents. The UCR2 Survey permits entry of up to four different offences for each incident, which allows for a better understanding of the multiple types of offences that may occur in any one incident.

Important Changes to UCR Data

Changes to the Categorization of Offences

In 2009, improvements were made to the way crime data were presented in Canada, with more detailed offence categories and improved crime categories. Because the new UCR2 Survey enables the collection of more offence codes, the list of offences within the offence categories was revised to better reflect nature of the offences. Changes to the three categories (**violent crime**, **property crime**, and **other crime**) are described below. The new UCR2 tables have been re-categorized going back to 1998.

The **violent crime** category has been revised to include a number of offences that were previously categorized as "other" *Criminal Code* offences but have a clear component of targeting and impacting individual victims. These offences include: criminal harassment, sexual offences against children, forcible confinement or kidnapping, extortion, uttering threats, and threatening or harassing phone calls.

The **property crime** category has been revised to include mischief and arson, which were previously categorized as "other" *Criminal Code* offences.

The **other crime** category consists of all of the remaining non-traffic *Criminal Code* violations. Data on *Criminal Code* traffic and Federal Statute violations, including the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*, are also contained in the UCR2 tables.

In Policing and Security Branch (PSB)'s publications, these three offence categories constitute total crimes under the *Criminal Code of Canada*, which are used to calculate the **crime rate**. *Criminal Code* offences pertaining to traffic as well as **drug crimes** (offences under the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*) are discussed independent of total crimes or the **crime rate**. PSB's publications also do not cover violations under other federal, provincial, or municipal statutes or bylaws.

Other Changes to Crime Data

In 2009, a change was made in the way counterfeiting offences are counted. Prior to 2009, counterfeiting data were collected from both police services and the RCMP's Bureau of Counterfeit and Document Examinations. However, many of the incidents of counterfeiting collected from the Bureau of Counterfeit and Document Examinations were detected by merchants or banking institutions following a financial transaction, and these incidents had not come to the attention of police or had not been substantiated by police. Also, in many of these incidents, the counterfeit bills had been passed unwittingly by an individual, which does not constitute a *Criminal Code* offence. The UCR2 data now reflects counterfeiting offences submitted directly by police services and only those incidents where an accused person was identified. This change will result in much lower counts of counterfeiting offences and has been applied retroactively to 1998.

In 2009, a change was made to the scoring of robbery offences to be consistent with the way other **violent crimes** are counted. Prior to 2009, robbery offences were the only **violent crime** counted according to the number of incidents that had taken place. Now with the changes to UCR2 data, the number of victims can be identified and each victim counts as one robbery offence. This change to robbery counts has resulted in an increase in the number of police-reported robbery incidents and this change has been applied retroactively to data back to 1998.

The UCR2 Survey introduced the following violations in 2009: assaulting with a weapon or causing bodily harm to a peace officer; aggravated assault to a peace officer; robbery to steal a firearm; kidnapping; forcible confinement; sexual exploitation of a person with a disability; breaking and entering to steal a firearm; and breaking and enter to steal a firearm from a motor vehicle.

The UCR2 Survey introduced the following violations in 2010: identity theft and identity fraud.

The UCR2 Survey introduced the following violations in 2011: altering, destroying, or removing a Vehicle Identification Number (VIN); trafficking and possession of property obtained from crime; and precursor/equipment (crystal meth or ecstasy).

The UCR2 Survey introduced the following violations in 2014: the purchasing of sexual services or communicating for that purpose; receiving a material benefit deriving from the purchase of sexual services; procuring of persons for the purpose of prostitution; and advertising sexual services offered for sale.

The UCR2 Survey introduced the following violations in 2015: non-consensual distribution of intimate images.

Police services are able to utilise these codes as their records management systems are updated to allow it. As a result, these data should be interpreted with caution.

UCR2 Scoring Rules

The police occurrence report forms the basis of data collection for the UCR2 Survey. There are standard rules for counting offences, persons charged, and clearance data under the UCR2 Survey. The most basic UCR2 Survey rules, and the ramifications of each, are discussed below.

Crimes reported to the police or crimes otherwise detected by police are subject to a preliminary investigation by the police to determine the validity of the report. On occasion, a reported offence may not have actually occurred. For example, a vehicle that is reported stolen may turn out to have been borrowed by a family member. These incidents are considered "unfounded" and are subtracted from the total number of reported offences to produce the number of actual offences. All of the data presented in this publication exclude "unfounded" incidents.

Number of Offences

Under the UCR2 Survey rules, the total number of offences is not a census of all crimes that are reported to, or detected by, the police. This occurs for two reasons.

First, **violent crimes** are scored differently from **property crimes** and **other crimes.** The number of **violent crimes** recorded is equal to the number of victims involved in a violent incident. For example, when one person murders three people, three offences are recorded. For all **property crimes** and **other crimes**, the total number of offences recorded is equal to the number of distinct or separate incidents. For example, in an incident where several vehicles parked in one block are spray-painted with paint from the same spray can, only one incident of vandalism is reported.

Second, the UCR2 Survey counts offences according to the "most serious offence" (MSO) rule. The MSO rule stipulates that where a single criminal incident contains a number of violations of the law, then only the most serious violation is recorded for UCR2 purposes. There are standard rules for determining the most serious offence where crimes in the same incident are of a similar severity. The application of the MSO rule tends to underestimate the true incidence of relatively less serious crimes that come to the attention of the police because these crimes are counted only when they do not occur in conjunction with a more serious crime in the same incident.

In short, under the UCR2 Survey, the total number of offences represents the number of victims of **violent crimes** plus the number of separate incidents of **property crimes** and **other crimes**.

Clearance

Crimes are **cleared** when police have sufficient evidence to identify the offender(s) and prove the offender(s) committed the crime. Offences can be cleared in one of two ways: **cleared by charge** or **cleared otherwise**.

Cleared by charge: When the police have identified at least one offender and have sufficient evidence to prove the offender committed the crime, the police prepare a Report to Crown Counsel (RCC) to recommend charges. Once an RCC is forwarded to the local Crown Counsel office, the police consider the incident to be **cleared by charge**, and this status is recorded in the UCR2 Survey.

Cleared otherwise: In some instances police identify the offender(s) and have enough evidence to support a charge, yet they do not recommend charges. Such offences are reported in the UCR2 Survey as **cleared otherwise**; that is, the offence is cleared by a method other than by recommending charges to Crown counsel. Offences are **cleared otherwise** for a variety of reasons including: the offender is under the age of 12; the offender has diplomatic immunity; the offender is deceased; the offender has been sentenced for other similar crimes; or police wish to divert the offender from the formal system.

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Persons Charged

When an offence is **cleared by charge**, the number of persons recommended for charge by the police is recorded in the UCR2 Survey. These persons are categorized according to gender and age (adult or youth). The UCR2 Survey rules dictate that an offender who is simultaneously recommended for charge on more than one offence is counted only once against the most serious offence. In addition, an offender is counted as a person charged each time the police recommends charges against him or her (for separate incidents).

Consequently, the **persons charged** data represent a count of the number of persons for whom charges were recommended, rather than a count of the number of separate individuals recommended for charge. As a result, the correlation of **persons charged** data with court data is difficult because the UCR Survey does not contain information regarding the total number of recommended charges.

Time Lapse

Incidents are recorded in the UCR2 Survey against the month in which they came to the attention of police, regardless of when the incidents actually occurred. Similarly, clearance data is recorded against the month in which the police cleared the offence. It may take months or years for an offence to be solved, therefore, an offence may be counted in one year and the clearance status may be counted in a subsequent year. Consequently, a one-to-one relationship does not exist between the number of offences and the number of cleared offences in any given time frame. This may result in the number of cleared offences in any given year being greater than the total number of offences, which would result in a **clearance rate** exceeding 100%.

Police-Reported Crime Data versus Victimization Data

The UCR2 Survey records police-reported crime data. As such, UCR2 data contains only information on those crimes that come to the attention of the police. Some crimes are never detected and some that are detected are never brought to the attention of the police.

Victimization surveys provide data that are complementary to police-reported data. Victimization surveys contain information on a greater number of criminal incidents because respondents are asked to describe both incidents they reported to the police and incidents they did not report. Victimization data indicates that less serious types of crime and minor offences are often under-reported to the police.

An example of a victimization survey is the General Social Survey (GSS), which is conducted every five years by Statistics Canada. Victimization surveys contain methodological features that preclude the collection of information about crimes such as homicide and kidnapping, as well as "victimless" crimes (e.g., drug offences), crimes committed against commercial or public property, and crimes committed against persons under 16 years of age.

Police-reported and victimization data are complementary and when combined, provide a more comprehensive picture of crime.

Factors Impacting on Police-Reported Crime Rates

A multitude of factors are believed to affect the prevalence of crime and the reporting of crime. Examples of these factors include:

- **Demographics** - Demographic shifts have an impact on **crime rates**. For example, changes in the age and gender structure of a particular **population**, specifically males aged 16 to 24 years (the age group most likely to commit crimes), can influence **crime rates**.

- **Technological change** - With continual advances in technology, opportunities for new, more complex crimes have developed, which can create new challenges for law enforcement.

- **Influences on police enforcement practice** - Policy decisions (such as the introduction of measures to deal with violence against women and children) or legislative changes (such as the introduction of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*) can impact police responses to some types of crimes.

- **Victim response to crime** - Some experts argue that victim responses to crime cause cyclical patterns in the **crime rate**. When **crime rates** are rising, potential victims take self-protective measures, causing **crime rates** to moderate. Conversely, when crime rates are stable or decreasing, self-protective measures also decline, creating opportunities for criminal behaviour to increase again.

- **Societal response to crime** - The public's decrease in tolerance for criminal acts can lead to a rise in reporting rates to police. Experts also argue that community-based policing initiatives (i.e., police-community partnerships to solve local crime problems) encourage citizens to come forward and report more incidents to police, thus impacting **crime rates**.

- **Other factors** - Factors such as inflation or economic hardship, and alcohol/drug consumption may also affect crime rates. Additionally, population density, changes in public attitudes, and the level of income and education of either victim or offender may also affect the reporting of certain types of crimes.

  It is unlikely that a single factor accounts for changes in **crime rates**. More likely, a combination of factors accounts for changes in **crime rate** trends. Generally, year-over-year comparisons of crime data should be made with caution as many non-criminally related factors can affect data from one year to another.

Crime Severity Index

Historically, **crime rates** have been used to facilitate comparisons among geographic areas as well as over time. **Crime rates** measure volumes and count all crimes equally, regardless of the seriousness of the offence. As a result, they are dominated by substantial volumes of less serious crimes. In addition, **crime rate** calculations are based solely on non-traffic *Criminal Code* offence volumes and do not factor in other federal statute offences such as **drug crimes**.

In 2009, the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics launched four **Crime Severity Indexes (CSIs).** Complementary to traditional **crime rates**, these tools are designed to track severity or seriousness of crime in addition to volume changes.

The **CSIs** are based on the total volume of federal statute reporting including *Criminal Code*, drug, traffic, and miscellaneous federal statute offences. They are designed to measure changes, not only in year-to-year crime volumes, but also changes in those volumes based on specific seriousness weights assigned to each offence. These weights assign higher values to more serious crimes, while less serious high volume crimes are assigned lower values. For example, the most serious crime of murder is weighted at a value several hundred times higher than the substantially less serious offence of disturbing the peace. As a result, serious crimes have a greater impact on CSIs as compared to those high volume offences that are less serious offences.

There are four CSIs:
- The **Overall CSI** is based on the total volume of police reported federal statute offences and measures the relative severity of overall crime.
- The **Violent CSI** is based on the total volume of police reported violent federal statute offences and measures the relative severity of violent crime.
- The **Non-Violent CSI** is based on the total volume of police reported federal statute offences not considered violent in nature and measures the relative severity of non-violent crime.
- The **Youth CSI** is based on the same principles as the Overall CSI, which reflects the relative seriousness of different offences, but uses the number of youths accused instead of an incident count to measure the relative severity of crimes committed by youth.

Each index has been standardized at 100 for the base year of 2006.

A jurisdiction with a higher proportion of more serious crimes will have a higher CSI value while a jurisdiction with a higher proportion of less serious crimes will have a lower CSI value. The CSI is not available for police services with populations less than 1,000. Data for police services with populations less than 5,000 should be used with caution.

The CSI weights are updated periodically, and CSI values are available back to 1998.

Definitions and Data Qualifiers

1. **Population figures** are estimates prepared annually by BC Stats, based on the results of the Canada Census which is conducted every five years. **Note:** In the 2011 Census, Statistics Canada adjusted the census boundary geographies and, as a result, the population estimates provided by BC Stats have been retroactively adjusted to reflect the updated census boundaries according to current police jurisdiction boundaries. Ten year population estimates included in this document may significantly differ from estimates included in the Policing and Security Branch's publications from prior years. This change affects crime rates.

   Population figures reflect only the permanent or resident population of a jurisdiction. Where a jurisdiction serves as a business and/or entertainment centre, it may have substantial "part-time" and "resident non-resident" populations relative to its resident or "late night" population, i.e., tourists, cabin owners, commuters, students, and seasonal staff. These temporary populations, whose permanent residence is within another jurisdiction, are excluded from a jurisdiction's population figures.

2. **Number of offences** represent only those crimes reported to, or discovered by the police which, upon preliminary investigation, have been deemed to have occurred or been attempted; these data do not represent nor imply a count of the number of charges laid, prosecutions conducted, information sworn or convictions obtained. The crime data contained in these reports have been recorded by the police utilizing the Uniform Crime Reporting 2 (UCR2) Survey scoring rules and guidelines. If a single criminal incident contains a number of violations of the law, then only the most serious violation is recorded for UCR2 purposes.

3. **Total *Criminal Code* offences** (excluding traffic) include property, violent, and other crimes.

4. **Violent crimes** include the offences of homicide, attempted murder, sexual and non-sexual assault, sexual offences against children, abduction, forcible confinement or kidnapping, firearms, robbery, criminal harassment, extortion, uttering threats, indecent or harassing communications, and other violent offences.

5. **Homicide data** are extracted from the Homicide Survey database. Homicides are counted according to the year in which police file the report.

6. **Sexual offences** are included in **violent crimes**. Sexual offences include sexual assault level 3 (aggravated), sexual assault level 2 (weapon or causing bodily harm), sexual assault level 1 (common sexual assault), and sexual violations against children.

7. **Sexual violations against children** include *Criminal Code* violations that specifically concern offences involving child and youth victims. This category excludes incidents of child pornography and also excludes incidents of sexual assault levels 1, 2, and 3 against children and youth, which are counted within those three violation categories. In August of 2012, Bill C-10 *The Safe Streets Act* came into effect making it an offence to make sexually explicit material available to a child for the purposes of facilitating sexual offences against children/youth, while the already existing crime of luring a child via computer was simultaneously expanded. In July of 2015, Bill C-26 the *Tougher Penalties for Child Predators Act* was enacted, which affected determinations made by police regarding the most serious violation in an incident and thus which crime gets reported to the CCJS; as such, comparisons of this category's incident counts to previous years should be made with caution.

8. **Non-sexual assaults** include assault level 3 (aggravated), assault level 2 (weapon or causing bodily harm), assault level 1 (common assault), assaulting a peace officer, assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm to a peace officer, aggravated assault to a peace officer, and other assaults. Non-sexual offences are included in **violent crimes.**

9. **Assault against a Peace Officer** includes level 1 (common assault), level 2 (assault with a weapon), and level 3 (aggravated assault). In 2009, legislation was introduced to create the offences of assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm to a peace officer (level 2) and aggravated assault to a peace officer (level 3). As a result, the large increases in assaults against police officers may be the result of increased reporting and should be interpreted with caution. Additionally, the introduction of these new codes into the UCR Survey created a system anomaly which resulted in some non-peace officer assaults being coded as peace officer assaults in 2010. Comparisons to 2010 should be made with caution.

10. **Other violent offences** include conspiracy to commit murder, other sexual violations, sexual exploitation of a person with a disability, incest, corrupting morals of a child, bestiality, voyeurism, non-consensual distribution of intimate images, trap likely to or cause bodily harm, hostage taking, trafficking in persons, intimidation of a (non)justice system participant or a journalist, explosives causing death or bodily harm, arson (disregard for human life), criminal negligence causing death and other violations causing death, and other violent violations.

11. **Property crimes** include the offences of breaking and entering, theft, motor vehicle theft, possession of stolen property, trafficking in stolen goods, fraud, mischief, identity theft, identity fraud, arson, and altering/removing/destroying a vehicle identification number.

12. **Breaking and entering offences** are included in **property crimes**. With the changes to the UCR2 tables, breaking and entering offences are no longer separated into the subcategories breaking and entering business, breaking and entering residence, and breaking and entering other.

13. **Motor vehicle theft offences** are included in **property crimes**. With the changes to the UCR2, motor vehicle theft offences are no longer separated into the subcategories motor vehicle theft automobile, motor vehicle theft truck, motor vehicle theft motorcycle, and motor vehicle theft other (e.g., snowmobiles, all terrain vehicles, motorized farming and industrial vehicles).

    In 2011, a new UCR violation code for **motor vehicle theft** was created, replacing the previous UCR violations of motor vehicle theft over $5000 and motor vehicle theft $5000 and under.

14. **Theft offences** include theft over $5,000 (non-motor vehicle) and theft under $5,000 (non-motor vehicle). Thefts are included in **property crimes**. With the changes to the UCR2 tables, theft offences are no longer separated into the subcategories theft bicycle, theft from motor vehicle, theft shoplifting, and theft other.

15. In 2010, the *Criminal Code* was amended to include two new offences: **identity theft** and **identity fraud.** The UCR was modified to create new violation codes for these offences. Prior to 2010, these offences were coded as fraud.

16. **Trafficking property offences** are included in **property crimes**. In 2011, the *Criminal Code* was amended creating a new offence for trafficking property obtained by crime. The UCR introduced a new violation code for this offence. This new offence has led to a decrease in the number of possession of stolen property offences in 2011 as a result.

17. **Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) offences** are included in **property crimes**. In 2011, the *Criminal Code* was amended to make it illegal for anyone to alter, destroy, or remove a VIN. The UCR introduced a new violation code to collect this information.

18. **Other crimes** include *Criminal Code* offences not classified as either violent or property crimes, e.g., offensive weapons, offences related to currency, offences against the administration of justice, offences against public order, and the possession and/or distribution of child pornography.

19. The British Columbia Integrated Child Exploitation Unit (BC ICE) takes a proactive approach to tracking Internet Protocol (IP) addresses in possession of, and possibly sharing, child pornography. This results in an increase in reported **child pornography** violations in different parts of the province in different years (e.g., Surrey starting in 2014, Victoria in 2015, and Vancouver in 2016). Notably, due to the online nature of the offences, the incidents and/or offenders are not necessarily limited to the geographic area targeted.

20. On December 20, 2013 the Supreme Court of Canada found laws surrounding **prostitution** to be unconstitutional, and gave parliament 12 months to review and rewrite the legislation. As a result of this, a large number of incidents of prostitution were no longer being reported, leading to a large decrease in the number of prostitution incidents in 2014. New legislation came into force December 6, 2014; as a result, comparisons between prostitution-related offences before December 2014 and after December 2014 should be made with caution and take these changes into account.

21. **Commodification of sexual activity** is a new offence created in December 2014 by the passage of Bill C-36, the *Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act*. It is classified as a violent offence and includes: the purchasing of sexual services or communicating for that purpose; receiving a material benefit deriving from the purchase of sexual services; procuring of persons for the purpose of prostitution; and advertising sexual services offered for sale. Other prostitution-related offences continue to be considered non-violent offences, including: communicating to provide sexual services for consideration; and stopping or impeding traffic for the purpose of offering, providing, or obtaining sexual services for consideration. As a result of all this, comparisons between prostitution-related offences before December 2014 and after December 2014 should be made with caution and take these changes into account.

22. **Administration of justice** includes the following offences: fail to comply with order, escape or helps to escape from lawful custody, prisoner unlawfully at large, fail to appear, breach of probation, and other violations against the administration of law and justice.

23. The category of **disturbing the peace offences** is included in **other crimes.** Any increase in disturbing the peace offences may be, in part, due to a national data quality initiative undertaken by the RCMP to properly account for the types of offences that are aggregated under this offence.

24. **Other "other" offences** include gaming and betting related offences, indecent acts, corrupting morals, obstructing a peace officer, trespassing at night, uttering threats to property/animals, public incitement of hatred, advocating genocide, unauthorized recording of a movie, offences against public order, offences relating to terrorist activity, invasion of privacy, offences against person or reputation, offences against right of property, freezing of property/disclosure/audit, fraudulent transactions relating to contracts and trade, offences relating to currency, proceeds of crime, attempts/conspiracies/accessories, public morals/disorderly conduct, firearms and other offensive weapons, offences related to criminal organizations, and other offences.

25. **Drug offences** are crimes committed under the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* (CDSA). Drug offences include possession, trafficking, production, and distribution of cannabis, cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamines (crystal meth), and other drug offences. These are not included in the Total *Criminal Code* offences. **Other drugs** include methylenedioxyamphetamines (ecstasy), the illicit use of prescription drugs including fentanyl, and other drugs.

26. In 2011, the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* was amended to make it illegal for anyone to possess, produce, sell or import anything knowing it will be used to produce or traffic in crystal meth or ecstasy. The UCR Survey introduced a new violation code for **precursor/equipment (crystal meth or ecstasy)**.

27. **Youth offences** are crimes committed by youth. There is no offence specifically known as a youth crime. An accused person is deemed to be a youth based on their age at the time an offence is committed. In BC, a youth is defined as any individual between the ages of 12 and 17.

    Youth crime in British Columbia may be somewhat undercounted due to the Crown charge-approval system in place whereby, even for minor offences, there must be approval by the Crown before charges are laid after police have made an arrest. This approval is based on the substantial likelihood of conviction. This may affect comparisons in youth offences with other provinces.

28. Impaired operation and **failure to provide blood sample** now includes the separation between alcohol and drugs (or combination of drugs). Fail/refuse to provide breath sample and failure to comply or refusal (drugs) will now have a maximum penalty of 25 years.

29. As of April 2011, **failure to stop** has been divided into three offence categories: failure to stop causing death, failure to stop causing bodily harm and failure to stop or remain. For the purposes of this report, these are displayed under the overarching category "failure to stop." 2011 and 2012 data are comparable to other years.

30. In September 2010, Immediate Roadside Prohibition (IRP) provisions were introduced to the *Motor Vehicle Act* in British Columbia as an alternative method for officers to sanction impaired drivers. The use of IRPs for impaired driving incidents that meet the elements of the *Criminal Code* was temporarily suspended from November 30, 2011 to June 15, 2012 while government amended legislation.

31. **Crime Rate** is the number of *Criminal Code* offences or crimes (excluding drugs and traffic) reported for every 1,000 persons. It is a better measure of trends in crime than the actual number of offences because it allows for **population** differences. Crime rates for the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* (CDSA) are calculated per 1,000 population basis. Since the number of homicides and attempted murders reported is small, rates are calculated on a per 100,000 population basis. Crime rates for *Criminal Code* traffic offences are also calculated per 100,000 population basis.

    Municipal crime rates do not necessarily reflect the relative safety of one municipality over another. More often than not, a high crime rate indicates that a municipality is a core city, i.e., a business and/or entertainment centre for many people who reside outside, as well as inside, the municipality. As a result, core cities may have large part-time or temporary populations which are excluded from both their population bases, and their crime rate calculations.

32. **Offences cleared** represent the number of offences where the police have identified at least one offender in relation to an offence and have sufficient evidence to solve the offence.

33. **Offences cleared by charge** clearance by charge are reported when police have filed a Report to Crown Counsel (RCC) recommending charges be laid. Once an RCC is forwarded, the police consider the incident to be cleared by charge and this status is reported in the UCR2 Survey.

34. **Offences cleared by other means** or "cleared otherwise" are recorded in situations where sufficient evidence exists to proceed with charges but police, given a certain set of circumstances, do not recommend charges but decide upon another course of action, e.g., diversion.

35. **Clearance rate** is the number of crimes cleared by police during the year as a percentage of the number of crimes reported by police during that year. The process of solving crimes is often time-consuming and a crime may be solved months or years after it was reported to the police. This may result in the number of offences cleared in a year to be greater than the total number of offences reported to the police that year, which results in a clearance rate exceeding 100%. Any comparison of clearance rates among police services should be made with caution. The reporting practices of some agencies could result in high levels of citizen reporting, including minor offences, to help track neighbourhood crime trends. These minor, generally less-serious offences (e.g., mischief, minor thefts) tend to be high-volume and, by their very nature, tend to have low clearance rates. Police services reporting higher levels of these minor offences will tend to have lower than average overall clearance rates.

36. **Persons charged** represent the number of <u>people</u> for whom charges were recommended, rather than the number of charges recommended (e.g., several charges recommended for one person resulting from a single incident counts as one person charged). When an offence is cleared by charge, the number of persons recommended for charge by the police is recorded in the UCR2 Survey. The UCR2 Survey reporting rules dictate that offenders who are simultaneously recommended for charge on more than one offence are counted only once against the most serious offence. In addition, offenders are counted each time the police recommend charges against them for separate incidents. As a result, the correlation of persons charged data with court data is difficult because the UCR2 Survey does not contain information regarding the total number of recommended charges. Total persons charged are the total of adults charged and youth charged.

    In general, the UCR2 Survey counts an adult or youth charged for the year in which the charge was recommended. The homicide totals, which come from the Homicide Survey, count an adult or youth charged with a homicide that occurred in the year the crime was reported to the police, regardless of the year in which the charge was recommended.

37. **Crime severity index** (CSI) is a tool developed by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (CCJS) in 2009 for measuring police reported crime in Canada. CSIs account for the change in the level of severity of crime in from year to year in comparison to other crimes. CSIs use weights which assign higher values to more serious crimes and lower values to less serious high volume crimes based on actual sentences handed down by the courts in all provinces and territories. The CSI includes all *Criminal Code* violations including traffic, as well as drug violations and all Federal Statutes. Each index has been standardized at 100 for the base year of 2006. A jurisdiction with a higher proportion of more serious crimes will have a higher CSI value while a jurisdiction with a higher proportion of less serious crimes will have a lower CSI value. The CSI is not available for police services with populations less than 1,000. Data for police services with populations less than 5,000 should be used with caution. The CSI weights are updated periodically, and CSI values have been calculated back to 1998.

    There are four CSIs:
    - The **Overall CSI** is based on the total volume of police reported federal statute offences and measures the relative severity of overall crime.
    - The **Violent CSI** is based on the total volume of police reported violent federal statute offences and measures the relative severity of violent crime.
    - The **Non-violent CSI** is based on the total volume of police reported federal statute offences not considered violent in nature and measures the relative severity of non-violent crime.
    - The **Youth CSI** is based on the same principles as the Overall CSI, which reflects the relative seriousness of different offences, but uses the number of youths accused instead of an incident count to measure the relative severity of crimes committed by youth.

38. Due to the differences in the organizational structure of each type of force, comparisons between independent municipal police departments and RCMP forces should be made with caution. For example, the RCMP municipal forces may have a relatively lower authorized strength because of the administrative support provided by "E" Division Headquarters.

39. Crime data from the previous years are revised to reflect any updates or changes that have been received from the police services. Therefore, crime statistics may vary slightly from year to year publications. Generally, year-over-year comparisons should be made with caution as many non-criminally-related factors can affect data from one year to another (e.g., openings, closures or reorganizations of police departments, redistribution of municipalities serviced among different police departments, significant population increases, etc.).

40. The data contained in this report may vary when compared with previous reports produced by Policing and Security Branch. Where variances occur, the report produced at the latest date will reflect the most current data available.

41. The policing jurisdictions utilized in this report reflect operational policing in BC and may vary from those provided by Statistics Canada.

42. The population estimates reported in this document and used to calculate crime rates, are provided by BC Stats and may vary from that provided by Statistics Canada.

Sources

Crime Data

Statistics Canada. 2018. Table 35-10-0184-01 *Incident-based crime statistics, by detailed violations, police services in British Columbia*. Statistics Canada database. Last updated July 23, 2018. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3510018401 (accessed July 23, 2018).

Statistics Canada. 2018. Table 35-10-0063-01 *Crime severity index and weighted clearance rates, police services in British Columbia*. Statistics Canada database. Last updated July 23, 2018. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3510006301 (accessed July 23, 2018).

Population Data

BC Stats, Ministry of Jobs, Trade and Technology, Province of British Columbia. Last updated February 2018.