

CHAPTER II

CLASSIFYING AND SCORING PROCEDURES

Classifying is determining the proper crime categories in which to report offenses in UCR. Classification is based on the facts of an agency's investigations of crimes.

Scoring is counting the number of offenses after they have been classified and entering the total count on the appropriate reporting form.

Classifying and scoring are the two most important and essential functions that must be performed by a participant in the Uniform Crime Reporting Program. The data provided are based on these two functions and are only as good as agencies' efforts to follow the guidelines of the Program.

Classifying

Generally, attempts to commit a crime are classified as though the crimes were actually completed. The only exception to this rule applies to attempts or assaults to murder wherein the victim does not die. These incidents should be classified as aggravated assaults rather than murders.

In a previous section of this handbook, the UCR Part I offenses have been precisely defined. The exceptions to the definitions also have been discussed and must be considered when classifying criminal acts to guarantee the accuracy and consistency of reports from all agencies in the Nation.

Hierarchy Rule

The experience of law enforcement agencies in handling UCR data shows that for the most part offenses of law occur singly as opposed to many being committed simultaneously. In these single-offense situations, it must be decided whether the crime is one of the Index offenses, and if so, it would be scored accordingly. However, if several offenses are committed at the same time by a person or a group of persons, a different approach must be used in classifying and scoring. The law enforcement matter in which many crimes are committed simultaneously is called a multiple-offense situation in this Program. As a general rule, a multiple-offense situation requires classifying each of the offenses occurring and determining which of them are Part I crimes. The Part I offenses involved must then be located in the listing which follows:

1. Criminal homicide:
 - a. Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter
 - b. Manslaughter by negligence

2. Forcible rape:
 - a. Rape by force
 - b. Attempts to commit forcible rape
3. Robbery:
 - a. Firearm
 - b. Knife or cutting instrument
 - c. Other dangerous weapon
 - d. Strong-arm—hands, fists, feet, etc.
4. Aggravated assault:
 - a. Firearm
 - b. Knife or cutting instrument
 - c. Other dangerous weapon
 - d. Hands, fists, feet, etc.—aggravated injury
5. Burglary:
 - a. Forcible entry
 - b. Unlawful entry—no force
 - c. Attempted forcible entry
6. Larceny-theft (except motor vehicle theft)
7. Motor vehicle theft:
 - a. Autos
 - b. Trucks and buses
 - c. Other vehicles
8. Arson:
 - a.-g. Structural
 - h.-i. Mobile
 - j. Other

Locate the offense that is highest on the list, score that offense, and ignore the other offenses involved in the incident. The *Hierarchy Rule*, which requires counting only the highest offense on the list and ignoring all others, applies *only* to crime reporting and does not affect the number of charges for which the defendant may be prosecuted in the courts. An exception to the rule is arson, which is discussed later in this chapter.

Example:

Incident: During the commission of an armed bank robbery, the offender strikes a teller with a butt of a handgun. The robber runs from the bank and steals an automobile at curb side.

Classification of this incident: Robbery, aggravated assault, and motor vehicle theft are three Part I offenses apparent in this situation. Each of these offenses should be located on the listing, and by doing so, it is seen that robbery is the crime highest on the list. Therefore, this incident will be classified as robbery, one offense scored accordingly, and all of the other offenses ignored.