



2017 CRIME in the UNITED STATES

Cargo Theft, 2017

The FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program collects cargo theft data to inform the law enforcement community, state and federal legislators, academia, and the public at large about this particular crime. The data can be used to create awareness and to measure the impact cargo theft has on the economy and potential threats to national security. Often cargo theft offenses are part of larger criminal schemes and have been found to be components of organized crime rings, drug trafficking, and funding for terrorism. The UCR collection of cargo theft data is new with only 5 years of data published, but the number of agencies reporting cargo theft incidents has increased each year. As more agencies participate, future versions of this cargo theft report will depict a more complete account of the occurrences of cargo theft in the United States.

Background

Due to the significant economic impact cargo theft has on the United States economy, and the potential for use by terrorist organizations, Congress mandated H.R. 3199, the USA Patriot Improvement and Reauthorization Act of 2005 on March 9, 2006. It required the Attorney General to "take the steps necessary to ensure that reports of cargo theft collected by Federal, State, and local officials are reflected as a separate category in the Uniform Crime Reporting System, or any successor system, by no later than December 31, 2006." In response to this mandate, the Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Advisory Policy Board approved a definition for collecting cargo theft in December 2006. Creation of the data specifications required to capture cargo theft data in the UCR's Summary Reporting System as well as the National Incident-Based Reporting System were finalized in 2010 with the first publication of cargo theft data in 2013.

What is cargo theft?

Cargo theft is defined as "The criminal taking of any cargo including, but not limited to, goods, chattels, money, or baggage that constitutes, in whole or in part, a commercial shipment of freight moving in commerce, from any pipeline system, railroad car, motor truck, or other vehicle, or from any tank or storage facility, station house, platform, or depot, or from any vessel or wharf, or from any aircraft, air terminal, airport, aircraft terminal or air navigation facility, or from any intermodal container, intermodal chassis, trailer, container freight station, warehouse, freight distribution facility, or freight consolidation facility. For purposes of this definition, cargo shall be deemed as moving in commerce at all points between the point of origin and the final destination, regardless of any temporary stop while awaiting transshipment or otherwise."

This definition was developed, not as a legal description for prosecutorial purposes, but to capture the essence of the national cargo theft problem in the United States. The legal elements of knowledge and intent were intentionally omitted.

Participation

Participation in the UCR Program is voluntary, and agencies or states may choose not to participate. In 2013, seven states participated in the first release of cargo theft data from the national UCR Program. In 2014, a total of 29 states and the Bureau of Indian Affairs submitted cargo theft data to the UCR Program. In 2015, a total of 31 states and the Bureau of Indian Affairs participated in submitting data to the UCR Program. In 2016, a total of 30 states, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the National Institute of Health submitted cargo theft data. In 2017, a total of 33 states and the Bureau of Indian Affairs participated in the submission of cargo theft data, although only 18 states had at least one cargo theft incident and were able to verify the submitted data as publishable. Participation in cargo theft data submission has remained steady; however, several factors have been identified having a direct impact on this important data collection:

- States may not have the resources required to make the necessary technical changes or to align their local and state statutes with federal requirements.
- States may not have the necessary resources to conduct data quality checks on reported incidents associated with cargo theft, which could result in inaccurate data.
- States may not have adequate resources to train participants on how to recognize and properly record cargo theft incidents.
- States may not perceive cargo theft as a priority or a significant problem within their states and make decisions based on their immediate needs regarding resource allocation.

Quality data concerning cargo theft can help us better understand this crime and the threats associated with it. As more agencies choose to report their incidents, the FBI's UCR Program will be able to provide more information about cargo theft on a national scale. For additional information on the UCR Program's collection of cargo theft incidents, visit <https://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/ucr-program-data-collections>.

Table 1**Cargo Theft by State**

by Incidents, and Stolen, Recovered Values, 2017

State	Number of agencies reporting an incident	Number of incidents reported	Value of property		Percent recovered
			Stolen	Recovered	
Total	145	736	\$21,721,702	\$5,731,104	26.4
Alaska	2	4	8,321	0	0.0
Arkansas	5	12	87,192	75,066	86.1
Colorado	7	11	263,629	104,081	39.5
Delaware	3	18	29,799	11,266	37.8
Florida	20	68	5,047,275	1,723,768	34.2
Georgia	3	10	88,350	45,000	50.9
Indiana	2	2	8,100	0	0.0
Maryland	1	9	25,227	0	0.0
Michigan	6	13	129,938	0	0.0
Nevada	1	2	25,650	0	0.0
North Dakota	2	2	9,787	22	0.2
Ohio	10	18	131,728	0	0.0
Oklahoma	1	1	2,318	0	0.0
Oregon	2	2	61,559	0	0.0
Tennessee	30	324	3,798,984	437,008	11.5
Texas	42	227	11,815,043	3,239,893	27.4
Virginia	7	12	188,552	95,000	50.4
West Virginia	1	1	250	0	0.0

[Table 1, Download Excel](#)

Table 2**Cargo Theft Property Stolen and Recovered**

by Type and Value, 2017

Type of property	Value of property		Percent recovered
	Stolen	Recovered	
Total	\$21,721,702	\$5,731,104	26.4
Alcohol	117,272	17,675	15.1
Artistic supplies, accessories	46,666	0	0.0
Automobile	280,002	92,000	32.9
Building materials	910,118	213,501	23.5
Camping, hunting, fishing equipment, supplies	10	0	0.0
Chemicals	120,016	0	0.0
Clothes, furs	1,744,256	50,489	2.9
Collections, collectibles	1,600	0	0.0
Computer hardware, software	889,738	3,000	0.3
Consumable goods	2,598,199	188,651	7.3
Crops	25,765	16,000	62.1
Documents, personal or business ¹	0	0	
Drugs, narcotics	24,219	0	0.0
Farm equipment	110,000	10,000	9.1
Firearm accessories	56	0	0.0
Firearms	11,538	0	0.0
Fuel	9,990	0	0.0
Household goods	1,155,532	42,197	3.7
Identity documents ¹	0	0	
Industrial equipment	297,832	87,000	29.2
Jewelry, precious metals	89,561	55,030	61.4
Lawn, yard, garden equipment	14,746	12,405	84.1
Medical, medical lab equipment	5,000	0	0.0
Merchandise	487,503	101,436	20.8
Metals, non-precious	246,847	15,000	6.1
Money	3,764	0	0.0
Office equipment	500,801	500,001	99.8
Other	1,792,099	483,296	27.0
Other motor vehicles	217,334	74,834	34.4
Pending inventory	9	0	0.0
Portable electronic communications	1,158,436	5,800	0.5
Purse, wallet	221	170	76.9
Radio, TV, VCR	655,626	15,200	2.3
Recreational Vehicle	120,000	0	0.0
Recordings	9,150	0	0.0
Structure, storage	34,665	0	0.0
Tools	643,585	0	0.0
Trailers	2,569,404	1,644,926	64.0
Trucks	3,494,104	2,072,005	59.3
Vehicle parts	1,335,888	30,488	2.3
Watercraft equipment, parts, accessories	150	0	0.0

¹ According to Uniform Crime Reporting guidelines, the value of property stolen and/or recovered must be zero for this property description.

[Table 2, Download Excel](#)

Table 3**Cargo Theft by Location, 2017**

Location type	Total locations
Abandoned, condemned structure	1
Air, bus, train terminal	2
Bar, nightclub	1
Camp, campground	2
Church, synagogue, temple	1
Commercial office building	67
Construction site	3
Convenience store	59
Department, discount store	19
Dock, wharf, freight, modal terminal	42
Drug store, doctor's office, hospital	4
Farm facility	1
Field, woods	4
Government, public building	1
Grocery, supermarket	10
Highway, road, alley, street	115
Hotel, motel, etc.	6
Industrial site	15
Liquor store	5
Parking lot, garage	297
Park, playground	1
Rental storage facility	5
Residence, home	4
Rest area	3
Restaurant	4
School, college	2
Service, gas station	27
Shopping mall	1
Specialty store (TV, fur, etc.)	14
Other, unknown	45

[Table 3, Download Excel](#)

Table 4**Cargo Theft by Victim Type, 2017**

Victim type	Total victims
Business	681
Financial	1
Government	7
Individual	80
Other	1
Society	1
Unknown	5

[Table 4, Download Excel](#)

Table 5**Cargo Theft by Offense, 2017**

Offense	Number reported
Grand total of offenses	791
Cargo theft applicable offenses	
All other larceny	183
Burglary	32
Credit card, automated teller machine fraud	1
Embezzlement	20
Extortion, blackmail	1
False pretenses, swindle, confidence game	3
Motor vehicle theft	100
Robbery	12
Theft from building	6
Theft from vehicle	418
Total cargo theft applicable offenses	776
Other offenses occurring with cargo offenses	
Destruction of property	12
Stolen property offense	2
Weapon Law	1
Total other offenses occurring with cargo offense	15

[Table 5, Download Excel](#)

Data Declarations and Methodology

Table 1 Cargo Theft by State by Incidents, and Stolen, Recovered Values, 2017

The FBI collects these data through the Uniform Crime Reporting Program's Summary Reporting System and National Incident-Based Reporting System.

General comment

This table presents by state the total number of agencies that submitted data about cargo theft incidents, the number of incidents reported, the reported value of stolen property, and the value of recovered property. The table also lists the percentage of recovered value for each submitting state.

Methodology

The data used in creating this table were from all law enforcement agencies submitting one or more cargo theft incidents for at least 1 month of the calendar year. The published data, therefore, do not necessarily represent reports from each participating agency for all 12 months of the calendar year.

Table 2 Cargo Theft Property Stolen and Recovered by Type and Value, 2017

The FBI collects these data through the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program's Summary Reporting System and National Incident-Based Reporting System.

General comment

The value of stolen and recovered property, and the percentage of recovered value of each property type is reflected within this table.

Note: Based on UCR guidelines, the property descriptions of credit/debit cards, nonnegotiable instruments, documents/personal or business, and identity-intangible, must be submitted with zero value for stolen and/or recovered.

Methodology

The data used in creating this table were from all law enforcement agencies submitting one or more cargo theft incidents for at least 1 month of the calendar year. The published data, therefore, do not necessarily represent reports from each participating agency for all 12 months of the calendar year.

Table 3

Cargo Theft by Location, 2017

The FBI collects these data through the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program's Summary Reporting System and National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS).

General comment

Cargo theft is the criminal taking of any cargo including, but not limited to, goods, chattels, money, or baggage that constitutes, in whole or in part, a commercial shipment of freight moving in commerce, from any pipeline system, railroad car, motor truck, or other vehicle, or from any tank or storage facility, station house, platform, or depot, or from any vessel or wharf, or from any aircraft, air terminal, airport, aircraft terminal or air navigation facility, or from any intermodal container, intermodal chassis, trailer, container freight station, warehouse, freight distribution facility, or freight consolidation facility. For purposes of this definition, cargo shall be deemed as moving in commerce at all points between the point of origin and the final destination, regardless of any temporary stop while awaiting transshipment or otherwise.

This table presents the number of location types reported in cargo theft incidents.

Note: In NIBRS, a location may be entered for each offense; therefore, an incident may have more than one location code reported.

Methodology

The data used in creating this table were from all law enforcement agencies submitting one or more cargo theft incidents for at least 1 month of the calendar year. The published data, therefore, do not necessarily represent reports from each participating agency for all 12 months of the calendar year.

To arrive at the totals provided, the UCR Program counted one for each offense location reported in an incident.

Table 4

Cargo Theft by Victim Type, 2017

The FBI collects these data through the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program's Summary Reporting System and National Incident-Based Reporting System.

General comment

This table presents the number of victim types in each of the cargo theft incidents reported to the FBI.

The victim of a cargo theft may be an individual, a business, an institution, or society as a whole.

Methodology

The data used in creating this table were from all law enforcement agencies submitting one or more cargo theft incidents for at least 1 month of the calendar year. The published data, therefore, do not necessarily represent reports from each participating agency for all 12 months of the calendar year.

The UCR Program counted one for each victim type reported in an incident.

Table 5 Cargo Theft by Offense, 2017

The FBI collects these data through the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program's Summary Reporting System and National Incident-Based Reporting System.

General comment

Cargo theft is the criminal taking of any cargo including, but not limited to, goods, chattels, money, or baggage that constitutes, in whole or in part, a commercial shipment of freight moving in commerce, from any pipeline system, railroad car, motor truck, or other vehicle, or from any tank or storage facility, station house, platform, or depot, or from any vessel or wharf, or from any aircraft, air terminal, airport, aircraft terminal or air navigation facility, or from any intermodal container, intermodal chassis, trailer, container freight station, warehouse, freight distribution facility, or freight consolidation facility. For purposes of this definition, cargo shall be deemed as moving in commerce at all points between the point of origin and the final destination, regardless of any temporary stop while awaiting transshipment or otherwise.

Because cargo theft has been defined as "the criminal **taking of** any cargo . . .," there are specific crimes against property that apply to cargo theft. The applicable crimes against property include:

- 120 = Robbery
- 23D = Theft from building
- 23F = Theft from motor vehicle
- 23H = All other larceny
- 26A = False pretenses, swindle, confidence game
- 26B = Credit card, automatic teller machine fraud
- 26C = Impersonation
- 26E = Wire fraud
- 210 = Extortion, blackmail
- 220 = Burglary, breaking & entering
- 240 = Motor vehicle theft
- 270 = Embezzlement
- 510 = Bribery

In addition, cargo theft is not considered an offense by itself; all offenses that happen within a cargo theft incident are to be reported. Cargo theft data are derived by capturing the additional element of "theft of cargo" in incidents that contain any of the applicable offenses.

This table shows the number of offenses specific to cargo theft and the number of additional offenses reported within a verified cargo theft incident.

Methodology

To arrive at the totals provided, the UCR Program counted one offense for each offense type reported in an incident.
