

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
CITY OF NEW ORLEANS



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NEW ORLEANS POLICE MISCLASSIFIED ROBBERY CASES REPORTED TO FBI

The New Orleans Office of Inspector General today released a performance audit of the New Orleans Police Department's Uniform Crime Reporting process for robbery for the three-year period June 1, 2010 through May 31, 2013. The Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Uniform Crime Report (UCR) is the official data on crime in the United States. OIG selected robbery for testing based on the FBI's 2012 published crime statistics which showed that robbery in New Orleans was 46% lower than 24 other cities with the highest crime rates.

The NOPD is among law enforcement agencies across the nation which voluntarily participate in the UCR Program by reporting data according to the FBI's quality guidelines to maximize the objectivity, utility, and integrity of the information.

OIG auditors found the NOPD violated these guidelines.

- The NOPD misclassified 37% of the offenses tested to a miscellaneous offense rather than a robbery;
- The NOPD misclassified 40% of the offenses tested to miscellaneous offense instead of assigning a disposition of unfounded (UNF);
- The NOPD did not report all robberies with a disposition of unfounded (UNF) to the UCR program;
- The NOPD did not report known robbery offenses when the victim refused to cooperate;
- The NOPD did not submit evidence to Central Evidence & Property.

"NOPD UCR report findings for robbery show similar problems within the NOPD as noted in the UCR rape report released by our office in May," stated Inspector General Ed Quatrevaux. "The findings suggest that problems with reporting accuracy are across-the-board."

The NOPD challenged the findings in its formal responses, calling its error rate "well within the norm." Former Police Superintendent Ronal Serpas wrote, "This report does not appear to identify any real systemic failings or present evidence that more than a tiny fraction of UCR robbery incidents go unreported."

The OIG will conduct an inspection of all items classified as "miscellaneous" next year as well as two audits of UCR accuracy.

The performance audit is attached to this news release. Other reports issued by the Office of Inspector General can be viewed and downloaded from the website at <http://www.nolaog.org>.