

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted a performance audit of the New Orleans Police Department's (NOPD) documenting and reporting of rapes to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting Program (UCR Program) for the period of October 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015. The reporting guidelines for the UCR Program are established in the Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook (UCR Handbook).

In May 2014, the OIG released an audit which revealed that the NOPD misclassified calls for service, reclassified (downgraded) rape offenses to a miscellaneous offense, and failed to complete incident and supplemental reports. These factors led NOPD to exclude rape offenses from the data reported to the FBI's UCR Program or misclassify the rape data submitted to the UCR Program.¹

As a result of the audit, the OIG Investigations Division conducted an inquiry into NOPD's documentation of sex crimes investigations by five detectives in the Special Victims Section and released its results in November 2014. Investigators found that 65 percent of the sex crime cases reviewed contained no documentation of any investigative efforts beyond the initial report.² Investigators observed that "the widespread failure to submit supplemental reports as well as the discrepancies between [NOPD] reports and other factual documentation means there was no effective supervision... nor could there have been any effective supervision of supervisors, nor any review of the outcome of the cases...."³

Since 2014, the NOPD made significant improvements in its documentation of its investigative efforts, its supervisory oversight, and its reporting of rapes.

¹ Office of Inspector General City of New Orleans. "A Performance Audit of the New Orleans Police Department's Uniform Crime Reporting of Forcible Rapes." May 14, 2014.

<http://nolaog.gov/reports/all-reports/the-new-orleans-police-department-s-uniform-crime-reporting-of-forcible-rapes>.

² Office of Inspector General City of New Orleans. "Report of Inquiry into Documentation of Sex Crime Investigations by Five Detectives in the Special Victims Section of the New Orleans Police Department." November 12, 2014. <http://nolaog.gov/reports/all-reports/report-of-inquiry-into-documentation-of-sex-crime-investigations-by-five-detectives-in-the-special-victims-section-of-the-new-orleans-police-department>.

³ Ibid.

In 2015 NOPD implemented the following policies:

1. Chapter 42.2 in the New Orleans Police Department Operations Manual regarding Sexual Assault.⁴
2. Sex Crimes Unit Standard Operating Guidelines.⁵
3. Special Victim's Section (SVS) Signal Guidance.⁶

Collectively, these policies included detailed guidance on interviewing sex crime victims, collecting evidence, documenting the results of the investigation, and supervisory oversight. Not only did the NOPD implement these policies, but it also adhered to those policies which significantly improved documentation, oversight, and accountability within the NOPD.

Auditors reviewed information pertaining to 154 sex crime related calls for service and found that:

1. NOPD included documentation in 100 percent of the case files. All case files included documentation such as incident reports, supplemental reports, victim/witness statements, detective notes, etc.
2. NOPD supervisors reviewed and/or approved 100 percent of the case files in accordance with NOPD policies and procedures.
3. NOPD classified 99.4 percent of calls for service in accordance with the guidelines established in the UCR Handbook.
4. NOPD classified all calls for service in accordance with the Louisiana Revised Statutes.

Not only did NOPD classify 99.4 percent of the calls for service in accordance with the guidelines established in the UCR Handbook, but of the 154 calls for service, NOPD reclassified (upgraded) 78 of these calls for service (50.6 percent) and reported these offenses to the UCR Program.

⁴ New Orleans Police Department. "Sexual Assault." New Orleans Police Department Operations Manual, Chapter 42.2 (November 15, 2015). NOPD implemented the policy on October 1, 2015 even though it was not yet effective.

⁵ New Orleans Police Department. *Sex Crimes Unit Standard Operating Guidelines*, January 3, 2016. NOPD implemented the policy on September 1, 2015 even though it was not yet effective.

⁶ New Orleans Police Department. *SVS Signal Guidance*, August 5, 2015.

Of the 78 calls for service, 63 were initially reported as a miscellaneous offense and were reclassified (upgraded) to an aggravated rape, simple rape, or oral sexual battery. In addition, no allegations of rape were reclassified (downgraded) to a miscellaneous offense.

NOPD resolved all of the previous findings in the 2014 audit.