

Arizona Criminal Justice Commission



Arizona Violent Crime Trends Fact Sheet

Our mission is to sustain and enhance the coordination, cohesiveness, productivity and effectiveness of the criminal justice system in Arizona

May 2009

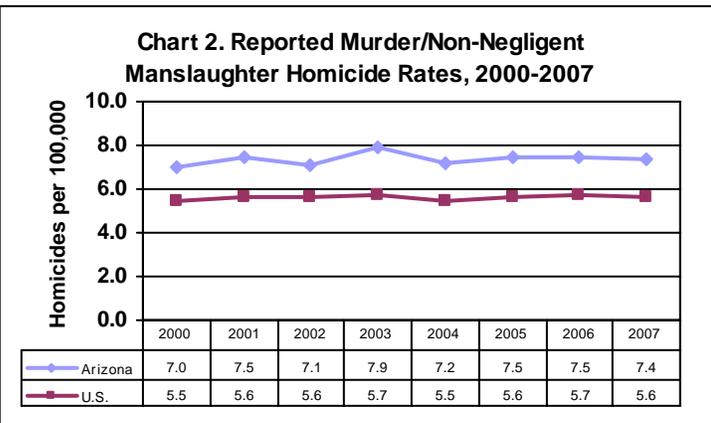
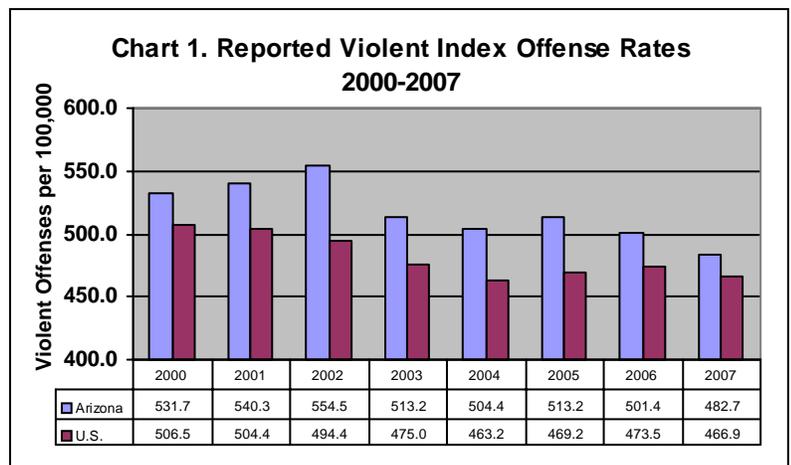
The Federal Bureau of Investigation's *Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program* is a valuable tool for gathering crime totals and rates within Arizona and throughout the United States. According to the data, the index offense rate has decreased from 1998 through 2007. This fact sheet looks to take this data a step further and concentrate specifically on violent index

offenses—murder/non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault—as they are reported to police both in the state of Arizona and the United States through the UCR Program.

Violent Crime Index Offenses Reported to Police

The violent index offense rates for both Arizona and the United States have decreased from 2000 to 2007 (Chart 1). Arizona reached a high of 554.5 violent offenses reported per 100,000 residents in 2002 before the violent crime rate decreased to the current low of 482.7 violent offenses reported per 100,000 state residents. The U.S. rate began at a peak of 506.5 in 2000 and fell to 463.2 violent offenses reported per 100,000 residents in 2004 before rising to 466.9 in 2007.

When comparing the rates in Arizona to the U.S. rates, Arizona's violent index offense rates are consistently higher over the entire period. The difference between the two is at its smallest margin in 2007.



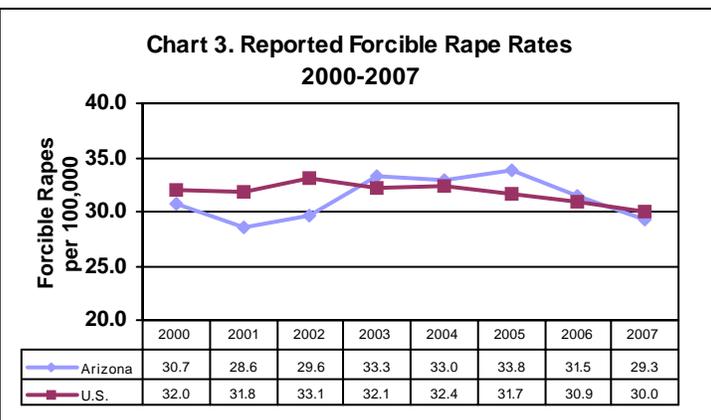
Murder/Non-Negligent Manslaughter Reporting Rates

Unlike the violent crime rates over previous years, murder/non-negligent manslaughter rates have mostly remained level (see Chart 2). Arizona's homicide rate went from 7.0 incidents per 100,000 residents in 2000 up to 7.9 in 2003 before it dropped back down to 7.4 by 2007. The nation's homicide rate was more stable with only slight changes from 5.5 incidents per 100,000 residents reported in 2000 to 5.6 by 2007. The murder/non-negligent manslaughter rate was consistently higher in Arizona than the United States over the eight year period.

Forcible Rape Reporting Rates

The rate of forcible rapes reported to the police throughout Arizona fluctuated greatly from 2000 to 2007 (Chart 3). After a rate of 30.7 reported in 2000, the Arizona forcible rape rate fell to 28.6 in 2001 and subsequently rose to a high of 33.8 incidents per 100,000 residents in 2005. A steady decrease after 2005 brought the forcible rape rate down to 29.3 by 2007.

The national forcible rape rate did not experience similar fluctuations as those that took place in Arizona, but a change in the rate did occur. After a slight increase from 32.0 in 2000 to 33.1 in 2002, the forcible rape rate fell to 30.0 by the end of 2007. Both the state and the national forcible rape rates were virtually equivalent in 2007.



National Crime Victimization Survey

The criminal justice community has long been aware of the fact that many victims of violent crimes fail to come forward and report crimes for many reasons. As a result, the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) has been created to capture the total number of crimes committed in the U.S. through a sampling of Americans regarding their experiences as victims.

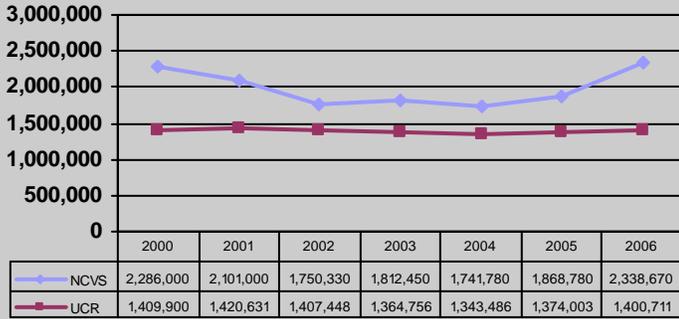
Table 1. Percentage of Crimes Reported to the Police, 2006

Type of Crime	Percent
Rape/Sexual Assault	41.4%
Robbery	56.9%
Aggravated Assault	59.2%

Less than 50 percent of rape or sexual assault victims reported the offense to local police in 2006 (Table 1). Victims of both robbery and aggravated assault reported their victimization to police less than two-thirds of the time. Homicide is not captured in the NCVS because there are inherently no surviving victims of such a crime.

Chart 4 further illustrates this point that many violent offenses go unreported throughout the United States. When isolating rape, robbery, and aggravated assault, the total number of crimes reported through the NCVS far surpasses those reported to the UCR each year. Interestingly, the gap narrowed by 2002, but this margin began to increase again in 2005. By 2006, the largest gap of the seven-year period was recorded with nearly 938,000 more violent crimes occurring than were reported to police.

Chart 4. Reported Rape, Robbery, and Aggravated Assault Totals, 2000-2006



Violent Crimes Committed with a Firearm

Firearms can increase the severity of an incident and the likelihood of fatal results. Table 2 shows the percentage of violent crimes where a firearm was involved. All violent crime categories, both in the U.S. and Arizona, show increases in the percentage involving a firearm from 2002 to 2007 with the exception of murder in Arizona. In 2007, more than two-thirds of homicides in the U.S. and Arizona involved the use of a firearm while nearly 50 percent of robberies involved a firearm in Arizona. Also, in Arizona more than 28 percent of aggravated assaults involved a firearm in 2007. Overall, Arizona had a higher percentage than the U.S. in firearm involvement across all violent crime types during each year.

Table 2. Percentage of Violent Crimes Committed with a Firearm 2002-2007

	Murder		Robberies		Aggravated Assaults	
	Arizona	United States	Arizona	United States	Arizona	United States
2002	75.9%	66.8%	47.5%	42.1%	24.4%	19.0%
2003	70.8%	66.8%	48.3%	41.8%	27.0%	19.1%
2004	72.1%	66.0%	50.5%	40.6%	26.6%	19.3%
2005	75.9%	67.9%	54.8%	42.1%	25.8%	21.0%
2006	74.2%	67.9%	49.3%	42.3%	29.5%	21.9%
2007	69.6%	68.0%	49.3%	42.7%	28.7%	21.3%

Robberies and Aggravated Assaults Reported to Police

Arizona robbery rates followed the national rates closely with the exception of the 2001 robbery rate (Chart 5). After 2001, both rates show the same decreasing trend through 2004. Robbery rates began to climb again in 2005 and nearly reached 150 robberies per 100,000 residents by 2006. In 2007, the Arizona robbery rate slightly increased to 151.7 while the national robbery rate declined to 147.6.

Chart 5. Reported Robbery Rates 2000-2007

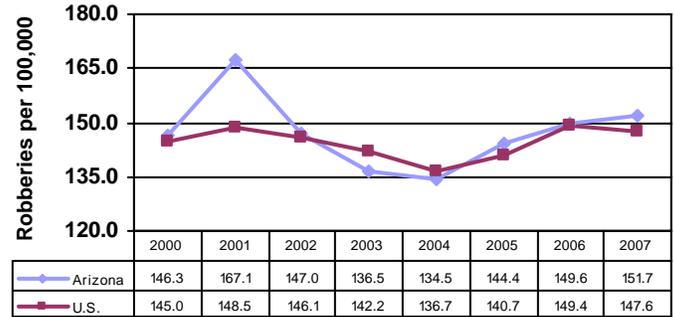
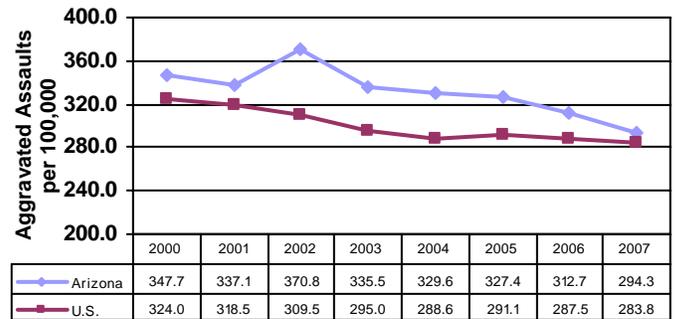


Chart 6 illustrates that both the Arizona and national aggravated assault rates decreased from 2000 to 2007. Arizona's aggravated assault rate fell from 347.7 in 2000 to 294.3 in 2007 while the national rate dropped from 324.0 in 2000 down to 283.8 in 2007. Arizona's aggravated assault rate was higher throughout the eight-year period.

Chart 6. Reported Aggravated Assault Rates 2000-2007



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