

# OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL City of Chicago

#### REPORT OF THE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL:

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CHICAGO POLICE DEPARTMENT
ASSAULT-RELATED CRIME STATISTICS
CLASSIFICATION AND REPORTING AUDIT

**APRIL 2014** 

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#### **OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL**



City of Chicago

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To the Mayor, Members of the City Council, City Clerk, City Treasurer, and residents of the City of Chicago:

The City of Chicago Office of Inspector General (OIG) has concluded an audit of the Chicago Police Department's (CPD) classification and summary reporting for assault-related crimes in 2012. CPD uses crime data for three major purposes at the heart of its critical public mission:

- Crime data is the core of CPD's CompStat program—a data-driven approach to policing that targets resources and drives operational strategies.
- CPD reports its crime data to the Illinois Uniform Crime Reporting (I-UCR) program, which in turn provides state data to the Federal Bureau of Investigations for use in national crime statistics reporting, known simply as Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR).
- CPD reports crime incident data directly to the public on the City of Chicago Data Portal, where it is used by the media, citizens, and academics for tracking and analyzing crime across Chicago.

With such a myriad of uses, inaccurate crime data could lead to misdirected resource allocation for effective criminal law enforcement at the City, state, and federal levels. Moreover, the accuracy of these crime statistics is critical to the public's trust in law enforcement and to the success of those inside and outside law enforcement who seek to reduce the incidence of crime.

This audit examined a sample of assault-related incident reports. We first sought to verify that the incidents, as they were recorded, were classified accurately according to CPD's written guidelines. We did not try to verify the accuracy of the recorded incident reports. Although the accuracy of the reports themselves is critical and, we believe, worthy of review and assessment, this audit instead examined whether the reporting infrastructure itself works as intended.

Based on a comparison of incident narratives to their assigned classification code in a sample of incident reports, we found that CPD incorrectly classified 3.1% of assault-related incidents. We also reviewed CPD's CompStat reporting rules and found that all assault-related incidents in 2012 were included in CompStat reports as required.

Finally, our audit found significant errors in CPD's summary reporting of crimes to the I-UCR Program. Specifically, we found that CPD failed to count each victim in multiple victim crimes as a separate offense, contrary to I-UCR requirements. This resulted in a 24% undercount in victim offenses and 21% error rate in the reporting sample we examined. Additionally, we found that CPD erroneously excluded some crimes committed against protected persons from I-UCR

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summary reporting, thereby underreporting all aggravated assaults and batteries to the I-UCR program by 5.7% and 3.2% respectively. CPD acknowledged these omissions and has initiated efforts to correct them.

We thank CPD for its cooperation during this audit. We hope that our findings are useful to the Department in its efforts to leverage data to fight crime and to all users of Chicago's crime statistics.

Respectfully,

Joseph M. Ferguson Inspector General

City of Chicago

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#### Acronyms

AIRA Automated Incident Reporting Application
CHRIS Criminal History Records Information System

CPD Chicago Police Department FBI Federal Bureau of Investigation

FBI/CJIS Federal Bureau of Investigation Criminal Justice Information Services

ILCS Illinois Compiled Statutes

I-UCR Illinois Uniform Crime Reporting

OIG Office of Inspector General UCR Uniform Crime Reporting

#### I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted an audit of the Chicago Police Department's (CPD) classification of and summary reporting on assault-related crimes that occurred in 2012. The accuracy of criminal incident data is important to the public and department operations. Researchers and the general public use this data to evaluate crime. Data is central to CPD's internal CompStat system, through which it makes data-based policing strategy decisions. CPD also reports its crime statistics to the State of Illinois Uniform Crime Reporting (I-UCR) Program, which in turn submits the figures to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program.

The objectives of the audit were to determine if CPD accurately,

- Classified assault-related crimes under CPD guidelines and
- Reported crime statistics in CompStat reports and I-UCR submissions.

To assess the accuracy of incident classification—the offense category assigned to an incident based on the recorded facts—we examined a sample of assault-related incident reports and found that 3.1% of the incidents were incorrectly classified.

We also examined CPD's CompStat data reporting for assault-related incidents to determine if incidents were accurately reported according to CPD's CompStat reporting rules. Specifically, we examined incidents assigned one of 22 aggravated battery-related classification codes, the subset of assault-related offenses that the CPD defines as aggravated battery for CompStat purposes. OIG found that all 7,806 incidents assigned one of the 22 aggravated battery-related codes were counted in the CompStat report as required by CompStat rules.

However, we found errors in CPD's summary reporting to the I-UCR Program:

- CPD undercounted aggravated assaults and batteries on its I-UCR submission by 24.2% in a sample of incident reports examined by OIG. The undercount occurred because CPD based its crime count on the number of incident reports rather than the number of offenses against each victim, as required by the I-UCR Program. For example, if an incident resulted in three individual victims CPD would have counted this as one offense when, according to I-UCR, it should have counted it as three. CPD did not correctly report to I-UCR any of the multiple victim incidents we examined—a 20.8% CPD error rate in the reviewed sample.
- CPD's I-UCR submission underreported aggravated assault by 5.7% and aggravated battery by 3.2% because CPD incorrectly applied the I-UCR reporting rule regarding crimes that were committed against protected persons (e.g., police officers) but also involved another aggravating factor.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Assault-related crimes include assault, battery, and reckless conduct. See the "Selection of Assault-Related Crimes for OIG Audit" section of this report.

The specific recommendations related to each finding, and CPD's response, are described in the "Audit Findings and Recommendations" section of this report.

#### II. BACKGROUND

#### A. CPD Crime Reporting Process

The CPD crime reporting process begins when a crime is reported to or observed by a police officer.<sup>2</sup> Once the officer addresses immediate safety and security concerns the officer begins the crime reporting process. For example, an officer may observe a crime and apprehend an offender. After addressing crime scene and security concerns, the officer enters basic incident information about the victim, offender, location, time, witnesses, description of injuries, a brief narrative of the situation, and related information into an incident report in the Automated Incident Reporting Application (AIRA).<sup>3</sup>

In the incident report, the reporting officer makes an initial classification<sup>4</sup> of the crime, for example "041A Battery – Aggravated: Handgun." CPD has an internal Incident Reporting Guide to assist officers in selecting the correct classification code from among the over 350 possible codes.<sup>6</sup>

First, the officer enters the reporting information into AIRA. The officer's initial classification is reviewed and approved by a supervisor (or returned to the officer for correction) before it is submitted to CPD's data warehouse—the Criminal History Records Information System (CHRIS). During an investigation, detectives can add or update a crime's classification if new facts and details become available. Figure 1 depicts a simplified version of the process by which an incident is recorded and reported.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> It is important for readers of crime statistics to recognize that the process begins with a police report. Therefore, crime statistics do not represent a complete accounting of all crime because they do not include unreported crimes, which may be a significant proportion of all crime. The 2012 National Crime Victimization Survey found that only 44% of violent crimes were reported to police. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Criminal Victimization, 2012" October 2013, NCJ 243389, accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cv12.pdf">http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cv12.pdf</a>.

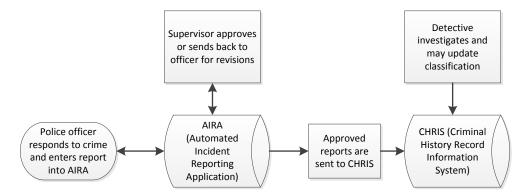
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> City of Chicago, Chicago Police Department Special Order S04-13-06, "Automated Incident Reporting Application (AIRA) Pilot Program," July 29, 2003, accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="http://www.chicagopolice.org/2013MayDirectives/data/a7a57be2-12abe584-90812-abe6-76a8f657d59410f9.html?ownapi=1">http://www.chicagopolice.org/2013MayDirectives/data/a7a57be2-12abe584-90812-abe6-76a8f657d59410f9.html?ownapi=1</a>.

The FBI UCR handbook defines "classifying" as "determining the proper crime categories in which to report offenses in UCR." U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook," (2004): 7, accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/additional-ucr-publications/ucr-handbook.pdf/view.">http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/additional-ucr-publications/ucr-handbook.pdf/view.</a>

See Appendix B for an example of an incident report with this classification.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> The codes are listed on the City's Data Portal. *See* City of Chicago, "Data Portal: Chicago Police Department – Illinois Uniform Crime Reporting (IUCR) Codes," accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="https://data.cityofchicago.org/Public-Safety/Chicago-Police-Department-Illinois-Uniform-Crime-R/c7ck-438e">https://data.cityofchicago.org/Public-Safety/Chicago-Police-Department-Illinois-Uniform-Crime-R/c7ck-438e</a>. They are similar to but not identical to the codes defined by the I-UCR Program. See Illinois State Police, "Illinois Uniform Crime Reporting Program Offense Codes," May 1, 2010, accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="https://www.isp.state.il.us/docs/6-260.pdf">https://www.isp.state.il.us/docs/6-260.pdf</a>.

Figure 1. Crime Reporting Flowchart



Source: OIG illustration based on CPD sources

In addition to the main participants discussed above, CPD employs a Quality Assurance team to review all incidents classified as Part I offenses, <sup>7</sup> all reclassifications made at the district level, and a random sample of all crime types. The staff of this team reviews Part I offenses daily to identify any issues and correct any misclassifications. When an issue appears to be recurring, CPD states that the team may suggest training improvements.

#### B. Types and Purposes of Crime Data Reporting

The information in CPD's data warehouse, CHRIS, is the source of records for CompStat reports, I-UCR reports, and the Data Portal.<sup>8</sup>

#### 1. CPD CompStat

CPD's mission is to "protect the lives, property, and rights of all people, to maintain order, and to enforce the law impartially." The Department uses CompStat, "a data-driven crime strategy"

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> FBI defines Part I offenses as Criminal Homicide, Forcible Rape, Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Burglary, Larceny-theft, Motor Vehicle Theft, and Arson. U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook," (2004): 8, accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/additional-ucr-publications/ucr handbook.pdf/view">http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/additional-ucr-publications/ucr handbook.pdf/view</a>. These eight crimes are sometimes called "index crimes" because FBI previously published an annual "Crime Index" summarizing data on these crimes. The index was discontinued in 2004. U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States*, 2012 ("About UCR"), accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2012/crime-in-the-u.s/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> All of these sources include disclaimers cautioning against using the data to make comparisons over time or among law enforcement agencies. See disclaimers for CompStat in the reports linked from Chicago Police Department, "Crime Statistics," accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="https://portal.chicagopolice.org/portal/page/portal/ClearPath/News/Crime%20Statistics">https://portal.chicagopolice.org/portal/page/portal/ClearPath/News/Crime%20Statistics</a>; for I-UCR at Illinois State Police, *Crime in Illinois 2010-2011 Annual Uniform Crime Report: Introduction*, accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="https://www.isp.state.il.us/docs/cii/cii11/cii11\_Intro\_Pg1\_to\_10.pdf">https://www.isp.state.il.us/docs/cii/cii11/cii11\_Intro\_Pg1\_to\_10.pdf</a>; for UCR at U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States*, 2012 ("Caution Against Ranking"), accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2012/crime-in-the-u.s-2012/resource-pages/caution-against-ranking/cautionagainstranking">http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2012/crime-in-the-u.s-2012/resource-pages/caution-against-ranking/cautionagainstranking</a>; and for the Data Portal in the data description at City of Chicago, "Data Portal: Crimes – 2001 to Present," accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="https://data.cityofchicago.org/Public-Safety/Crimes-2001-to-present/ijzp-q8t2">https://data.cityofchicago.org/Public-Safety/Crimes-2001-to-present/ijzp-q8t2</a>.

in an effort to, "monitor crime trends, engage in smarter policing, and target resources to the areas where they are needed most." Many police departments across the United States use the CompStat performance management system. <sup>11</sup>

The core of the CompStat program is crime data. The crime data reviewed by CPD during weekly CompStat meetings include the totals for murder, criminal sexual assault, robbery, aggravated battery, burglary, felony theft, motor vehicle theft, and shooting incidents recorded over the previous week. CompStat reports also include comparisons to prior weeks, months, and years.

#### 2. FBI UCR and State of Illinois I-UCR

In the 1930s, FBI began collecting crime data from across the country in order to "generate a reliable set of crime statistics for use in law enforcement administration, operation, and management." Over 18,000 law enforcement departments—including CPD—now participate in the UCR Program. 14

Like many departments, CPD participates in the federal program by submitting its statistics through the state. Illinois statute mandates that law enforcement agencies submit crime statistics to the Illinois State Police, which administers the I-UCR Program. The I-UCR Program has specific requirements for how agencies must report crimes. The State Police collects the I-UCR Program data and submits it to the FBI UCR Program. The subset of crimes reported to I-UCR is not the same as those reported in CompStat—the CompStat reporting categories are determined by CPD. Crime statistics are published by the State Police in its *Crime in Illinois* annual report. And by FBI in its *Crime in the United States* annual report.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> City of Chicago, "Chicago Police Department's Mission," accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="https://portal.chicagopolice.org/portal/page/portal/ClearPath/About%20CPD/Our%20Mission">https://portal.chicagopolice.org/portal/page/portal/ClearPath/About%20CPD/Our%20Mission</a>.

City of Chicago, "2013 Budget Overview," 91, accessed March 17, 2014, http://www.cityofchicago.org/content/dam/city/depts/obm/supp\_info/2013%20Budget/2013Overview.pdf.

For more on CompStat see, "CompStat: Its Origins, Evolution, and Future in Law Enforcement Agencies," Bureau of Justice Assistance Police Executive Research Forum, (2013): 6, accessed March 17, 2014 <a href="http://www.policeforum.org/assets/docs/Free\_Online\_Documents/Compstat/compstat/20-">http://www.policeforum.org/assets/docs/Free\_Online\_Documents/Compstat/compstat/20-</a>

 $<sup>\</sup>underline{\%20 its\%20 origins\%20 evolution\%20 and\%20 future\%20 in\%20 law\%20 enforcement\%20 agencies\%202013.pdf.$ 

See Chicago Police Department, "Crime Statistics," accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="https://portal.chicagopolice.org/portal/page/portal/ClearPath/News/Crime%20Statistics">https://portal.chicagopolice.org/portal/page/portal/ClearPath/News/Crime%20Statistics</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook," (2004): Foreword, accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/additional-ucr-publications/ucr handbook.pdf/view.">http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/additional-ucr-publications/ucr handbook.pdf/view.</a>

publications/ucr\_handbook.pdf/view.

14 U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States*, 2012 ("About CIUS"), accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2012/crime-in-the-u.s-2012/resource-pages/about-cius/abou

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> 20 ILCS 2630/8(a).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> For example, when reporting Aggravated Battery totals, I-UCR reporting includes Aggravated Domestic Battery with a non-firearm weapon, but CompStat does not (it includes only Aggravated Domestic Battery with a firearm).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Illinois State Police, *Crime in Illinois 2010-2011 Annual Uniform Crime Report*, accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="http://www.isp.state.il.us/crime/cii2011.cfm">http://www.isp.state.il.us/crime/cii2011.cfm</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States*, 2012 ("Violent Crime"), accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2012/crime-in-the-u.s-2012/violent-crime/violent-crime">http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2012/crime-in-the-u.s-2012/violent-crime/violent-crime</a>.

#### 3. City of Chicago Data Portal

CPD provides crime incident data on the City's public Data Portal.<sup>19</sup> The crime information on the Data Portal is used by the media, interested citizens, and academics for tracking and analyzing crime across Chicago.<sup>20</sup> The dataset shows reported incidents of crime, updated daily with data as recent as the previous week.<sup>21</sup> These data may be updated later based on additional information obtained through further investigation. If an incident is subsequently determined to be unfounded, it is reclassified to "unfounded" and removed from the Data Portal.

#### C. Importance of Accuracy in Classification and Reporting

The accuracy of criminal incident data is important because the data is central to CPD's CompStat program, which drives the Department's efforts to reduce crime by monitoring crime trends and engaging in smarter policing. <sup>22</sup> Collecting accurate and timely intelligence is the first of four key principles of CompStat. <sup>23</sup> Shortly after the introduction of CompStat in Los Angeles in 2002, the commanding officer of CompStat for the Los Angeles Police Department wrote, "In Los Angeles, police have found that the accuracy of the information is proportionate to the effectiveness of the police response. Without accurate information, the police response can only be based on the best instincts available."

Accuracy is also important to the general public. In Los Angeles,<sup>25</sup> Philadelphia,<sup>26</sup> and Dallas,<sup>27</sup> there have been public concerns about alleged underreporting of crime, particularly violent crime and assaults. In New York City, such allegations led the police commissioner to request an

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> City of Chicago, "Data Portal: Crimes – 2001 to Present," accessed March 17, 2014, https://data.cityofchicago.org/Public-Safety/Crimes-2001-to-present/ijzp-q8t2.

FAQ," Chicago Tribune, "Crime in Chicagoland accessed March http://crime.chicagotribune.com/chicago/faq; Brett Goldstein, "Open Data in Chicago: Game On," accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="http://beyondtransparency.org/chapters/part-1/open-data-in-chicago-game-on/">http://beyondtransparency.org/chapters/part-1/open-data-in-chicago-game-on/</a>; and Elise Wisnieski, Stephanie Bologeorges, Tina Johnson, and David B. Henry, "The Geography of Citizen Crime Reporting," Journal of Community Psychology, Sept. 2013, accessed 19, March 2014, http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10464-013-9597-z#page-2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> City of Chicago, "Data Portal: Crimes – 2001 to Present," accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="https://data.cityofchicago.org/Public-Safety/Crimes-2001-to-present/ijzp-q8t2">https://data.cityofchicago.org/Public-Safety/Crimes-2001-to-present/ijzp-q8t2</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> City of Chicago, "2013 Budget Overview," 91, accessed March 17, 2014, http://www.cityofchicago.org/content/dam/city/depts/obm/supp\_info/2013%20Budget/2013Overview.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> "CompStat: Its Origins, Evolution, and Future in Law Enforcement Agencies," *Bureau of Justice Assistance Police Executive Research Forum*, 6, 2013, accessed March 17, 2014 <a href="http://www.policeforum.org/assets/docs/Free\_Online\_Documents/Compstat/compstat/20-">http://www.policeforum.org/assets/docs/Free\_Online\_Documents/Compstat/compstat/20-</a>

 $<sup>\</sup>underline{\%20 its\%20 origins\%20 evolution\%20 and\%20 future\%20 in\%20 law\%20 enforcement\%20 agencies\%202013.pdf.$ 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Walt Schick, "CompStat in the Los Angeles Police Department," *The Police Chief Magazine*, January 2004, 71:1, accessed March 17, 2014,

http://www.policechiefmagazine.org/magazine/index.cfm?fuseaction=display\_arch&article\_id=190&issue\_id=1200

<sup>4.</sup> Ben Welsh and Doug Smith, "LAPD's public database omits nearly 40% of this year's crimes," *Los Angeles Times*, July 9, 2009, accessed March 17, 2014, http://articles.latimes.com/2009/jul/09/local/me-lapd-crimemap9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Michael Matza, Craig McCoy, and Mark Fazlollah, "Pressure Builds on City Police for Accuracy," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, November 15, 1998, accessed March 17, 2014,

http://articles.philly.com/1998-11-15/news/25733100 1 crime-figures-crime-statistics-crime-data.

<sup>27</sup> Steve Thompson and Tanya Eiserer, "Experts: Dallas undercount of assaults builds 'artificial image'," *Dallas Morning News*, December 15, 2009, accessed March 17, 2014,

 $<sup>\</sup>underline{http://www.dallasnews.com/news/community-news/dallas/headlines/20091214-Experts-Dallas-undercount-of-assaults-6330.ece.}$ 

external review of the police department's crime-reporting process by a committee of three former federal prosecutors. This committee "identified a number of areas in which the N.Y.P.D. could improve its [internal] audit program to better control for the risk of error or manipulation."

#### D. Sources of Error

There are several points at which errors can occur in crime statistics. We describe below three opportunities for error that are relevant to our audit findings: (1) classification of the crime, (2) scoring of the number of crimes, and (3) electronic processing of the data.

#### 1. Classification Error

The FBI UCR handbook defines classifying as "determining the proper crime categories in which to report offenses in UCR." Accordingly, "the offense's classification is based on the facts of an agency's investigation of crimes." Classification error can occur when a police officer assigns the wrong crime category to the recorded facts of an incident. Classification error, as a term of art, does not include the recording of incorrect or incomplete facts; it applies solely to the assignment of the incident type as defined by the police department. Classification errors can be inadvertent or intentional. Inadvertent classification errors can arise from inaccurate interpretation of the crimes' definitions for statistical reporting purposes, or from a simple mistake in data entry. Classification is the starting point for later aggregation and reporting of crime statistics.

#### 2. Scoring Error

The FBI UCR handbook defines scoring as "counting the number of offenses after they have been classified and entering the total count on the appropriate reporting form." For example, the I-UCR Program requires that an offense be counted for each victim (for crimes against persons), such that, if there were three victims in a single incident, it must be scored as three offenses. One possible source of scoring error may occur if scoring is based on the number of incident reports and police officers only complete one incident report in a case with multiple victims. The single report reduces the time spent on data entry by field personnel, but requires extra calculations to score crimes correctly under the I-UCR Program because, based on the number of victims, one report may represent more than one scoreable offense.

#### 3. Computer Processing Error

Computer systems must interface effectively to report the correct crime statistics. From importing and translating the officers' original entry to processing detectives' adjustments, the data systems must correctly record, store, and ultimately export the information using specific

<sup>28</sup> Al Baker and William K. Rashbaum, "New York City to Examine Reliability of Its Crime Reports," *New York Times*, January 5, 2011, accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/06/nyregion/06crime.html">http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/06/nyregion/06crime.html</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Joseph Goldstein, "Audit of City Crime Statistics Finds Mistakes by Police," *New York Times*, July 2, 2013, accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/03/nyregion/audit-of-crime-statistics-finds-mistakes-by-police.html">http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/03/nyregion/audit-of-crime-statistics-finds-mistakes-by-police.html</a>? r=0.

U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook," (2004): 7, accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/additional-ucr-publications/ucr\_handbook.pdf/view.">http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/additional-ucr-publications/ucr\_handbook.pdf/view.</a>
 U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook," (2004): 7, accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/additional-ucr-publications/ucr\_handbook.pdf/view.">http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/additional-ucr-publications/ucr\_handbook.pdf/view.</a>

algorithms. The authors of a 2006 report on the accuracy of crime statistics in West Virginia cautioned that.

Automated systems are often programmed to allow for the automatic translation of reported crimes to UCR definitions. In these instances, reported crimes are automatically translated from state code to the UCR. These computerized systems can contain programming or algorithm problems that may result in the routine misclassification of reported offenses into erroneous UCR definitions or crime categories.<sup>32</sup>

CPD CompStat and the I-UCR Program have different requirements for how to count and group incidents recorded in CHRIS. Therefore such algorithm concerns are of utmost importance.

#### E. Selection of Assault-Related Crimes for OIG Audit

This performance audit reviewed the accuracy of CPD's classification of a subset of Chicago crime reported in 2012:<sup>33</sup> the crimes and attempted crimes of battery,<sup>34</sup> assault,<sup>35</sup> and reckless conduct.<sup>36</sup> We refer to these as "assault-related crimes" for the purpose of this audit. The related offenses include the various types of aggravated battery or assault distinguished by the severity of injury or threat, the type of weapon used, and the location or type of victim. For the purpose of this audit, we also included reckless conduct as an assault-related crime because it involves endangerment or bodily harm to others. In general terms, an assault involves intentional threat of physical harm, a battery involves intentional physical contact, and reckless conduct involves physical harm or endangerment of others.

CPD reported on the City's Data Portal a total of 82,501 assault-related crimes in 2012—19,570 assaults, 60,691 batteries, and 2,240 reckless conduct incidents.<sup>37</sup> These assault-related crimes represented 24.7% of the total 334,070 crimes reported for 2012. These crimes were classified by CPD into 25 different types of battery, 15 different types of assault, and one type of reckless conduct. OIG selected this subset of assault-related crime because,

1. assault-related crimes made up a significant portion of overall crime reported by CPD in 2012:

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> James Nolan, Stephen M. Haas, Theresa K. Lester, Jeri Kirby, and Carly Jira, "Establishing the 'Statistical Accuracy' of Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) in West Virginia," State of West Virginia, Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center, (2006): 3, accessed March 17, 2014,

http://www.djcs.wv.gov/SAC/Documents/WVSAC NIBRSAudit05Report UCR.pdf.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> The OIG limited the audit scope to a subset of crime categories following a cost-benefit consideration of OIG staff resources that would be needed to analyze all types of crime.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> 720 ILCS 5/12-3(a) states that, "a person commits battery if he or she knowingly without legal justification by any means (1) causes bodily harm to an individual or (2) makes physical contact of an insulting or provoking nature with an individual."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> 720 ILCS 5/12-1(a) states that, "a person commits an assault when, without lawful authority, he or she knowingly engages in conduct which places another in reasonable apprehension of receiving a battery."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> 720 ILCS 5/12-5(a) states that, "a person commits reckless conduct when he or she, by any means lawful or unlawful, recklessly performs an act or acts that: (1) cause bodily harm to or endanger the safety of another person; or (2) cause great bodily harm or permanent disability or disfigurement to another person."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> These were the 2012 figures shown in the Data Portal on June 19, 2013. As described in the "City of Chicago Data Portal" section above, this data can change if new information about incidents is obtained.

- 2. studies in other jurisdictions have found that assault-related crime statistics tend to have higher error rates than other crimes;<sup>38</sup> and
- 3. aggravated assault—a subset of assault-related crimes—represented the majority of violent crimes reported nationally to the UCR Program in 2011 and 2012.<sup>39</sup>

Due to the increase in murders during 2012 that drew negative national attention to Chicago, we considered also auditing homicide statistics to evaluate the possibility that non-negligent (first degree) homicides were downgraded to involuntary manslaughter or reckless homicide. We counted the homicides reported by CPD on the Data Portal from 2001 through June 12, 2013 and found that of the 6,260 total homicides reported, 6,241 were non-negligent murders, and only 19 were involuntary manslaughter or reckless homicide. Given the small number of crimes categorized as involuntary manslaughter or reckless homicide, as well as heightened public scrutiny of the number of reported murders, we concluded that the present risk of downgrade was low and therefore did not audit this crime category.

<sup>38</sup> E.g., Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission, Independent Audit of Milwaukee Police Crime Statistics and December Procedure, 2012, accessed March http://city.milwaukee.gov/ImageLibrary/Groups/cityFPC/Reports/MilwaukeeReportFinalwithAppend.pdf; and James Nolan, Stephen M. Haas, Theresa K. Lester, Jeri Kirby, and Carly Jira, "Establishing the 'Statistical Accuracy' of Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) in West Virginia," State of West Virginia, Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center, (2006): 10-11, accessed March 17, 2014, http://www.djcs.wv.gov/SAC/Documents/WVSAC\_NIBRSAudit05Report\_UCR.pdf.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Aggravated assaults represented 62.4% of violent crimes in 2011 and 62.6% in 2012. U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States*, 2011 ("Violent Crime"), accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2011/crime-in-the-u.s.-2011/violent-crime/violent-crime">http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s.-2011/violent-crime</a>; and U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States*, 2012 ("Violent Crime"), accessed March 17, 2014, <a href="http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2012

City of Chicago, "Data Portal: Crimes – 2001 to Present," accessed June 12, 2013, <a href="https://data.cityofchicago.org/Public-Safety/Crimes-2001-to-present/ijzp-q8t2">https://data.cityofchicago.org/Public-Safety/Crimes-2001-to-present/ijzp-q8t2</a>.

#### III. OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

#### A. Objectives

This performance audit focuses on CPD's crime statistics for calendar year 2012. The objectives of the audit were to determine if CPD accurately,

- Classified assault-related crimes under CPD guidelines and
- Reported crime statistics in CompStat reports and I-UCR submissions.

#### B. Scope

The scope of our audit included all reported assault-related incidents that occurred between January 1, 2012, and December 31, 2012. We also tested assault-related incidents that CPD removed from public reports because it determined the incidents were unfounded.

For purposes of this audit, assault-related crimes included,

- batteries, including 29 classification codes for aggravated and simple battery; <sup>41</sup>
- assault, including 15 classification codes for aggravated and simple assault; and,
- reckless conduct (one classification code).

The "Selection of Assault-Related Crimes for OIG Audit" section of this report provides information on OIG's selection of this subset of crime.

#### C. Methodology

For all objectives, we did extensive research on crime statistics reporting nationally, as well as on the national models for UCR and CompStat programs. This research included interviews with national experts and with CPD's crime data personnel. We also reviewed CPD's classification training documents for police officers, directives, and the state law mandating I-UCR participation.

To assess the accuracy of the assault-related crimes' classification, we evaluated the classifications of a random sample of assault-related crimes. The sample drew 383 incidents from the 83,480 assault-related incidents reported for 2012. 42 OIG calculated the size of this statistical sample with a 95% confidence level, a 3% margin of error, and a hypothesized 10% error rate. The 10% error rate is based on FBI/CJIS Training & Advisory Process Unit material, which states that this error rate is acceptable for agencies participating in the UCR program.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> The "Selection of Assault-Related Crimes for OIG Audit" section of this report notes that the batteries reported for 2012 on the Data Portal reflected 25 I-UCR codes. Four of the 29 possible codes were not represented among the crimes reported on the Data Portal for 2012.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> The 83,480 incidents consisted of 19,840 assaults, 61,430 batteries, and 2,210 reckless conducts. They included incidents originally classified as assault-related but later reclassified as unfounded.

OIG staff reviewed the sample of CPD incident reports to identify any potential misclassifications.<sup>43</sup> Senior staff on the audit team, an OIG staff attorney, and a chief investigator—a former state's attorney—also independently reviewed and classified the incidents.<sup>44</sup> We submitted reports with discrepancies between the OIG classification and that of CPD to CPD for review and response. After assessing the response, we determined the overall percent of misclassifications in assault-related crimes.

To assess the accuracy of CompStat and I-UCR reporting, we compared the internal CPD data, as provided to OIG, to reports produced using CPD's standard computer queries. This methodology allowed us to test whether independent calculations of CompStat and I-UCR summaries match those in the CompStat and I-UCR reports, using the same underlying data.<sup>45</sup>

#### D. Standards

We conducted this audit in accordance with generally accepted Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

#### E. Authority and Role

The authority to perform this audit is established in the City of Chicago Municipal Code § 2-56-030, which states that the Office of Inspector General has the power and duty to review the programs of City government in order to identify any inefficiencies, waste, and potential for misconduct, and to promote economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and integrity in the administration of City programs and operations.

The role of OIG is to review City operations and make recommendations for improvement.

City management is responsible for establishing and maintaining processes to ensure that City programs operate economically, efficiently, effectively, and with integrity.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> This audit sought only to verify that the description of the crime matched the I-UCR code assigned to it. The audit did not attempt to validate the description of the crime event provided on the police report against what actually occurred, nor did it attempt to account for crimes that occurred but were not reported to the police.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Appendix A illustrates the OIG methodology for classification assessment.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> We assessed the reliability of the data by interviewing CPD crime data personnel and by comparing the internal data to the crime statistics on the public Data Portal. We used the Data Portal data from seven days later to create a comparable match as there is a seven day delay between incidents recorded in the CHRIS database and incidents reported on the Data Portal. We found a 99.99% match between the Data Portal and CPD's CHRIS data. We concluded that the data was sufficiently reliable for the purpose of this audit.

#### IV. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Finding 1: CPD Misclassified 3.1% of Assault-Related Incidents

OIG analyzed a sample of 383 assault-related incident reports and found 12, or 3.1%, for which the classification code on the report was incorrect given the facts described in the narrative. Misclassification is solely an error in the assignment of the incident type as defined by the police department and does not apply to the recording of incorrect or incomplete facts. Based on the results of the sample, we estimate between 1.6% and 5.4% of all 2012 assault-related incidents were misclassified. CPD's misclassification rate is under the 10% rate that the FBI/CJIS Training & Advisory Process Unit states is acceptable for agencies participating in the UCR program. 47

OIG conducted this analysis by reviewing the facts described in the incident report narrative and selecting the appropriate classification code using the definitions in CPD's Incident Reporting Guide. We compared our codes to those originally assigned by the reporting officer and reviewed with CPD those incidents where our classifications differed. CPD agreed that the 12 assault-related incidents identified by OIG had been misclassified and agreed to correct them.

Most of the misclassifications were due to oversight of a fact such as the relationship between the offender and victim. For example, one case narrative stated that the victim and offender were former roommates. Due to the relationship between the persons involved, the correct code for this incident was "domestic simple battery," but the officer coded the incident as "simple battery."

Three of the 12 misclassifications OIG found—less than 1% of the total sample—affected I-UCR and CompStat reporting because they changed the classification to or from a required reporting category.<sup>50</sup> The other nine misclassifications had no effect on reporting because they did not change the broad classification category (e.g., simple battery), but only a subcategory within in (e.g., simple domestic battery).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> This estimate is based on a 95% confidence level.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> OIG did not evaluate whether the 10% error rate deemed acceptable by the FBI for participating agencies constitutes an acceptable error rate for other users of crime statistics. Our reference to it therefore should not be construed as an endorsement, validation, or rejection of it.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> For more detail on the OIG's methodology see the Methodology section of this report and Appendix A.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> CPD's Incident Reporting Guide references the Illinois criminal code definition of "family or household member," which includes "persons who share or formerly shared a common dwelling." 725 ILCS 5/112A-3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> For CompStat reporting, two incidents should have been included in CompStat and one should have been excluded. For I-UCR reporting, three incidents should have been included in I-UCR.

#### Finding 2: CPD Reported All Required Assault-Related Incidents in CompStat Reports

OIG examined CPD's CompStat reporting on assault-related incidents to determine if all incidents were reported as required by CPD's CompStat reporting rules. CPD limits CompStat reports for assault-related offenses to the subset category of aggravated battery—specifically, incidents with one of 22 aggravated battery-related classification codes. OIG compared incident data in CHRIS to the Department's CompStat report incident count for 2012 and found that all 7,806 incidents with one of the 22 required codes were included in the CompStat report.

However, OIG found that, in addition to the 7,806 correctly reported incidents, 18 incidents labeled as "Murder" were also labeled as aggravated battery. CPD concluded that a software error had caused the 18 murders to be incorrectly classified as aggravated batteries in the data warehouse and stated that a correction to this software error would be implemented in 2014 as part of a larger software enhancement. CPD also stated that these 18 incidents were correctly counted as murders and not aggravated batteries in all internal and external reports including CompStat. The Department explained that the reporting systems that pull information from the data warehouse are designed to assign murder precedence over any other classification so that an incident is not double-counted. OIG did not verify this information.

### Finding 3: CPD Did Not Follow the I-UCR Reporting Rule for Crimes against Persons, Resulting in a 21% Error Rate in Incident Reporting and a 24% Underreporting of Victim Offenses in the Incidents Sampled

I-UCR guidelines state that for crimes against persons, such as assault and battery, "one offense is counted for each victim." However, OIG determined from I-UCR reporting summaries provided by CPD that the Department reported only one offense per incident report for all aggravated assaults and aggravated batteries. From our sample of 383 assault-related incidents, we found 72 incidents that met the criteria to be reported to the I-UCR Program. These 72 incidents included a total of 95 victims and were constituted of 57 single victim incidents, 8 two-victim incidents, 6 three-victim incidents, and 1 four-victim incident. CPD's failure to properly apply the I-UCR reporting rule resulted in a 20.8% error rate in incident reporting and a 24.2% underreporting of victim offenses for our sample.

CPD stated that it is possible to enter multiple victims and classification codes in the current AIRA system but did not explain why aggravated assault and aggravated batteries with multiple victims were reported to the I-UCR Program as a single incident. The Department agreed to review its reporting practices for 2012 to ensure compliance with I-UCR reporting guidelines and to remedy this issue going forward.

#### **Recommendation:**

We recommend that CPD follow I-UCR guidelines for crimes against persons by counting each victim as a separate offense when reporting the number of offenses in its I-UCR submission to the State.

#### **Management Response:**

"Under Mayor Emanuel and Superintendent McCarthy, the Chicago Police Department (CPD) takes the tracking, compiling and reporting of crime data extremely seriously as that information informs our policing strategies and our deployment, and is shared with the public to provide an accurate understanding of crime conditions. We make extensive amounts of crime data available to the public online in a number of formats—which can be broken down citywide, by police district, by neighborhood, and even by small areas around a specific address. We are proud that CPD is regarded as the national leader for public transparency in crime data. We appreciate that the Office of the Inspector General affirmed CPD's CompStat system and crime data.

The federal Unified Crime Reporting system (UCR) dictates each agency follow their state reporting procedures for federal reporting. In 2010, the Illinois State Uniform Crime Report (I-UCR) issued an update to all Illinois police agencies clarifying the way it tracks aggravated assaults / aggravated batteries, defining that reporting for these crimes should be by the number of victims as opposed to the number of incidents. At the time of the 2010 clarification, CPD, during a previous administration, did not change the city's tracking of these crimes to reflect the clarified I-UCR definition.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> See Appendix B for an example of an incident report with multiple victims.

This issue was first raised to the current CPD administration by the Office of the Inspector General in late 2013 during the process of this audit, and we agree with the IGO's recommendation with respect to Finding #3. Upon learning of this reporting issue, CPD immediately launched an in-depth review of every single aggravated assault and aggravated battery that occurred during 2012 and 2013, to correct the tracking of these crimes and bring the city into stricter adherence with reporting standards. This in-depth review is ongoing, and where errors in victim-level reporting exist they will be corrected.

Beyond our in-depth review, additional measures—outlined below—are being taken to correct this issue.

As this report alludes, the Automated Incident Reporting Application has the capability to capture multiple offense types within the same incident, multiple suspects per incident, and multiple victims per incident, and then relate individual offense types to individual victim/suspect pairs. If the incident only includes a single offense type, single suspect, and single victim, then the matter is fairly straightforward. The issue becomes more complex if there are multiple offense types, suspects, or victims. In such instances, each victim/suspect pair is associated with a particular offense type so victim-level reporting is, in part, a matter of carefully extracting the right information. While the Department's case reporting process incorporates multiple stages of review that, in our experience, effectively address reporting errors, we are working to ensure the necessary level of detail was being adequately reported by Department members.

The Department is in the process of revising its Field Reporting Manual, a Department-wide document that describes I-UCR reporting rules. This revision will provide clear reporting guidelines, in instances when there are multiple offense types within the same incident. We will also develop and execute training for our Detectives, to ensure accurate victim-level offense assignment. Finally, CPD has notified the state UCR coordinators at the Illinois State Police of the issue described in Finding #3.

We take this matter extremely seriously, and appreciate the Office of the Inspector General's work on this matter. CPD goes to great lengths to ensure the accuracy of crime data—for the purposes or reporting and public transparency, but also because it is the key factor in deployment and the development of policing strategies. CPD has, and will continue to have, frequent contact with state UCR coordinators, engaging them as necessary to improve our reporting as any issue comes to our awareness."

## Finding 4: CPD Incorrectly Applied the I-UCR Reporting Rule Regarding Crimes Against Protected Persons, Thereby Underreporting Aggravated Assaults and Aggravated Batteries to the I-UCR Program by 5.7% and 3.2%, Respectively

I-UCR Program guidelines require law enforcement agencies to follow specific rules when reporting aggravated assaults and batteries. The rules note that the designation of "aggravated" should be based on the type of weapon used, intent of the assailant, or extent of the injury, not on who the victim is. This is required for compliance with the federal UCR program rules.

However, for non-UCR reporting purposes, Illinois statutes allow battery or assault charges to be elevated to "aggravated" status based on other factors including who the victim is. Such protected persons include police officers, firefighters, school employees, pregnant victims, and persons over 60 years of age. Therefore, I-UCR guidelines warn law enforcement agencies that incidents which were elevated from simple to aggravated solely because of who the victim is must be excluded from I-UCR submissions.

OIG examination of CPD's I-UCR reporting found that CPD excluded all aggravated assaults and batteries of protected persons, regardless of any other aggravating factors. However, some of these incidents were not elevated from simple to aggravated solely because of the victim. For example, an incident in which an offender points a gun at a police officer is aggravated because of the presence of a gun, regardless of the victim's status as a protected person. Although such an incident must be included in the I-UCR submission, CPD's I-UCR reporting mechanism would have excluded it. By excluding these incidents from its I-UCR submission, CPD underreported 5.7% of all aggravated assaults and 3.2% of all aggravated batteries to the State for 2012.

When OIG staff alerted CPD to this finding, the Department stated that it would take immediate action to correct prior omissions of this type and prevent future omissions.

#### **Recommendation:**

We recommend that CPD ensure all required incidents are included in future I-UCR submissions, including incidents which would remain aggravated regardless of the protected status of the victim, and that previous omissions of such incidents are corrected.

#### **Management Response:**

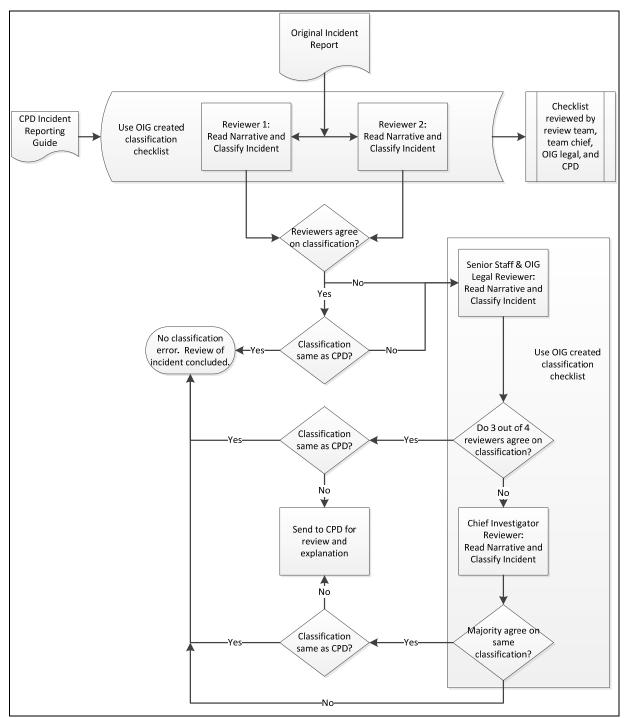
"CPD agrees that most of the categories identified by the Office of the Inspector General are reportable under I-UCR guidelines, although a review shows for several of the offense categories some records are reportable, while others are not. As soon as CPD was made aware of this issue, remedies were immediately put in place to ensure even greater precision in the future. The Department examined case narratives for a sampling of incidents classified under each of the 'police officer' and 'protected employee' offense codes, to determine whether the cases were eligible for I-UCR reporting. Wherever feasible and appropriate, we will address this matter by adding the categories to our reporting. In addition, we are in the process of revising previously reported totals that omitted these categories. These revisions will be incorporated

into those made to address Finding #3, and done in accordance with the Illinois State Police and Federal Bureau of Investigation policies for accepting revisions.

The Chicago Police Department would like to thank the Office of the Inspector General again for their diligence in conducting this audit. The Department consistently reviews its policies and practices on a continuing basis to look for efficiencies and improvements wherever possible."

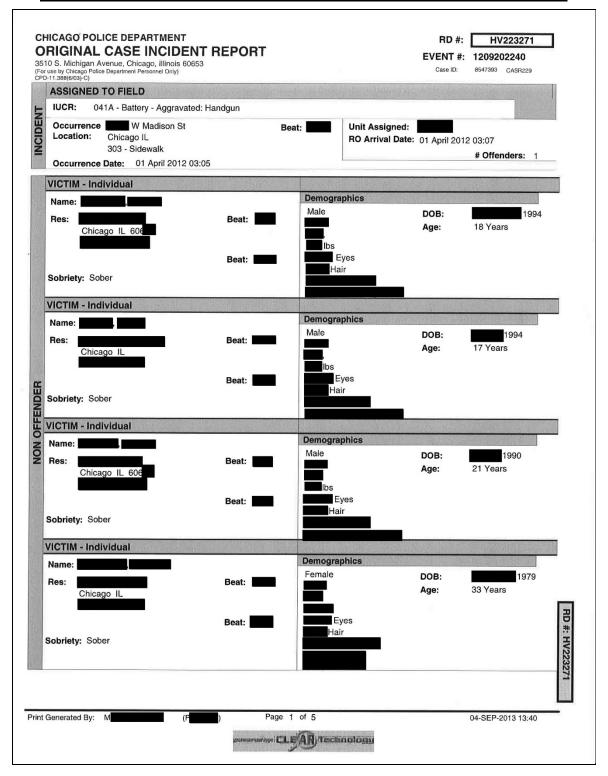
#### V. APPENDIX A: INCIDENT CLASSIFICATION TESTING METHODOLOGY

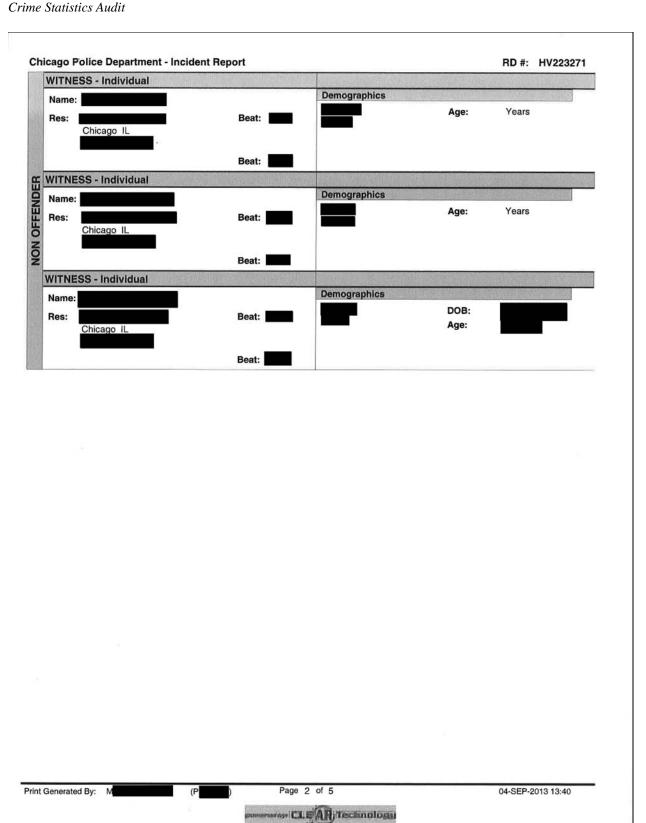
The diagram below illustrates the process OIG used to review the classifications of a random sample of assault-related incidents.

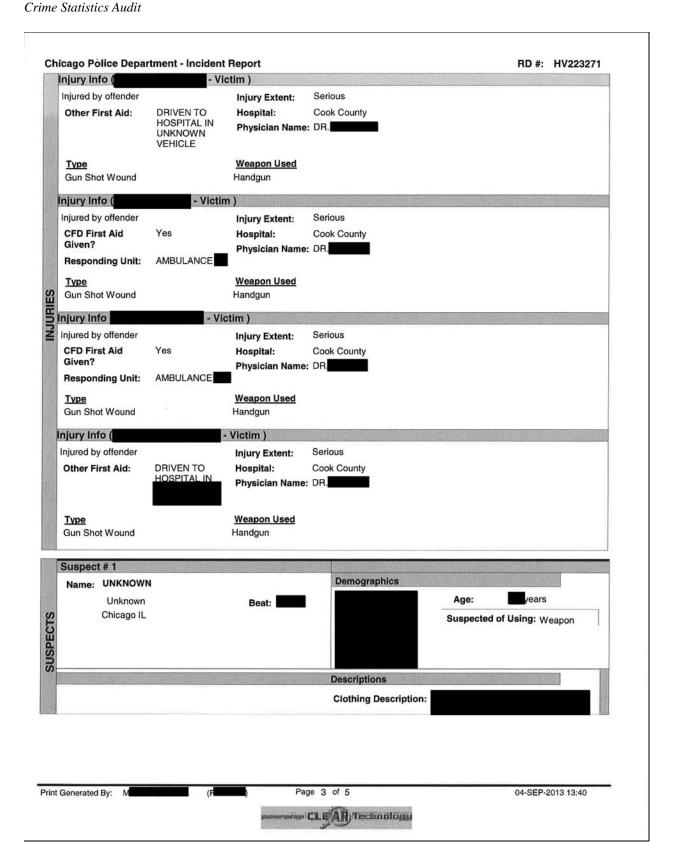


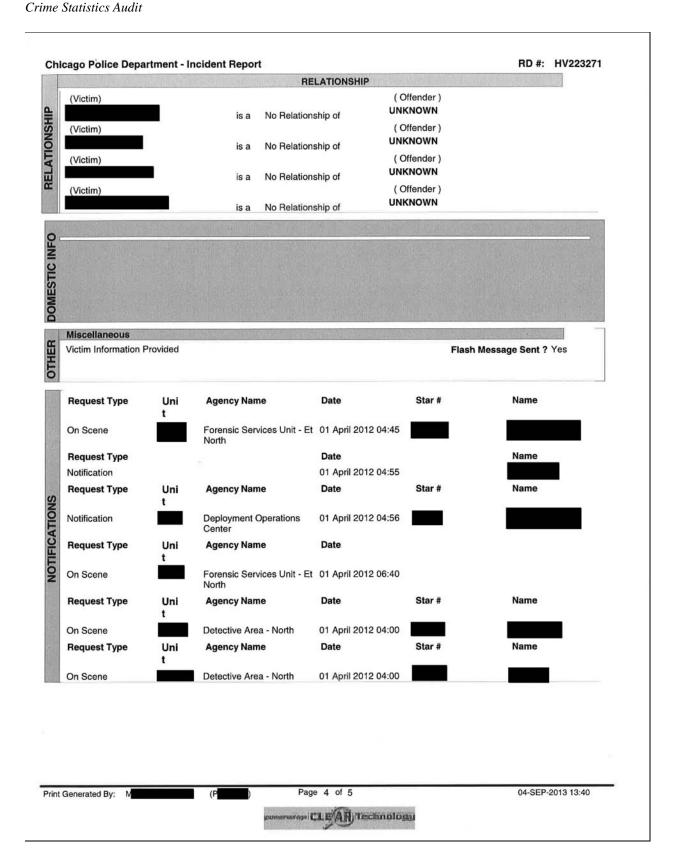
Source: OIG

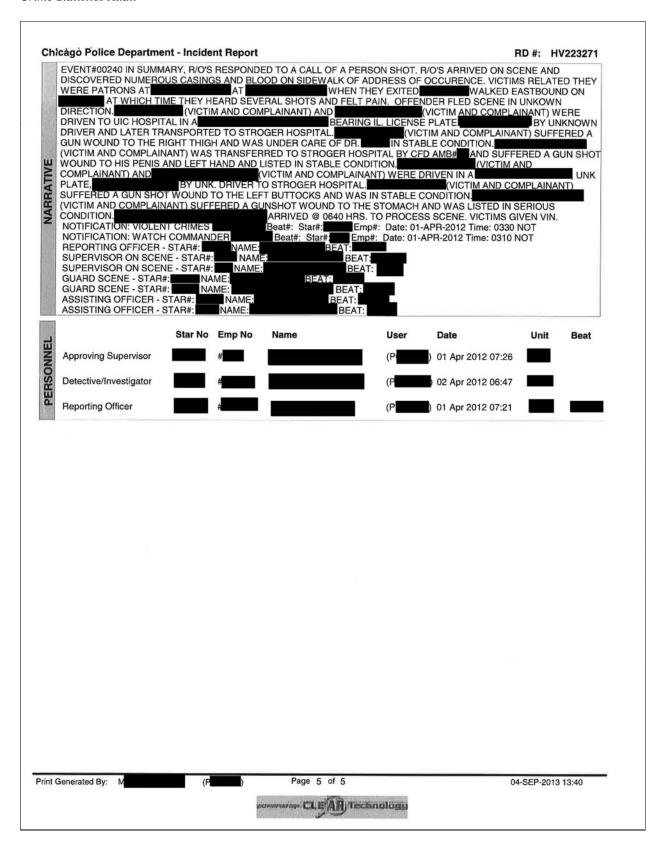
#### VI. APPENDIX B: EXAMPLE ORIGINAL INCIDENT REPORT WITH MULTIPLE VICTIMS











#### CITY OF CHICAGO OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

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#### MISSION

The City of Chicago Office of Inspector General (OIG) is an independent, nonpartisan oversight agency whose mission is to promote economy, efficiency, and integrity in the administration of programs and operations of City government. OIG achieves this mission through:

- Administrative and criminal investigations
- Audits of City programs and operations
- Reviews of City programs, operations, and policies

From these activities, OIG issues reports of findings, disciplinary, and other recommendations to assure that City officials, employees, and vendors are held accountable for the provision of efficient, cost-effective government operations and further to prevent, detect, identify, expose and eliminate waste, inefficiency, misconduct, fraud, corruption, and abuse of public authority and resources.

#### **AUTHORITY**

The authority to produce reports and recommendations on ways to improve City operations is established in the City of Chicago Municipal Code § 2-56-030(c), which confers upon the Inspector General the following power and duty:

To promote economy, efficiency, effectiveness and integrity in the administration of the programs and operations of the city government by reviewing programs, identifying any inefficiencies, waste and potential for misconduct therein, and recommending to the mayor and the city council policies and methods for the elimination of inefficiencies and waste, and the prevention of misconduct.