Underreported Motor Vehicle Crash Investigations

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Objective

To determine the discrepancy rate of motor vehicle crash (mvc) reports for three rural Indian reservations served by the Billings Area Indian Health Service.

Methods

Study Period: Jan '83-Jun'88

Multiple data sources:
* BIA
* Ambulance
* County Sheriff
* First Responder
* State Records: Montana, Wyoming

All records cross-referenced
* Time
* 1 mile vicinity
* Crash details

Rate Calculations:

$$\frac{\text{State MVC Records}}{\text{Total MVCs}} \times 100$$

100% - RAR% = RDR %*

*
RAR = Reporting Accuracy Rate
RDR = Reporting Discrepancy Rate

Results

Rate of Underreporting

Mean	= 64%
Wind River	= 49%
N. Cheyenne	= 52%
Blackfeet	= 85%

Limitations:

* Missing data for various time periods, esp. N. Cheyenne

* Incorrect or incomplete reporting ~~making~~ made it difficult to cross-reference

* Lack of research time ~~insufficient time~~ to investigate other data sources (Emergency Room logs)

Conclusions

Underreporting is a serious problem in rural areas and similar investigations should be conducted on other reservations.

Standardized forms should be used to facilitate record entry.

Training in proper completion of MVC forms is needed.

Tribes should work closer with road agencies and police departments to ensure that recordkeeping is accurate.