



Athena Research Corporation
September 24, 2008

Summary and Interpretation of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Crime in the United States, 2007

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Federal Bureau of Investigation's Crime in the United States, 2007**
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The Federal Bureau of Investigation has released its annual report regarding crime in the United States in 2007. The key findings are discussed and interpreted below.

CRIME VOLUME

This section is on crime volume, as compared to crime rate. Crime rate is the number of offenses per 100,000 persons. Crime volume is based on the total number of crimes only. Violent crime decreased slightly by 0.7% from 2006 to 2007. In fact, violent crime decreased slightly in all categories. Property crime volume decreased 2.4% for the same period. Comparing 2007 violent crime to 2006 violent crime, the category of murder decreased 0.6%, rape decreased 2.5%, robbery decreased 0.5%, and aggravated assault decreased 0.6%. All categories of property crimes decreased as well. Burglary was down 0.2%, larceny/theft was down 0.6%, and motor vehicle theft was down 8.1%. The percentage change from 2006 to 2007 is shown in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1: PERCENT CHANGE IN VIOLENT CRIME VOLUME

CRIME CATEGORY	2006-2007
Violent Crime	-0.7%
Murder	-0.6%
Rape	-2.5%
Robbery	-0.5%
Aggravated Assault	-0.6%

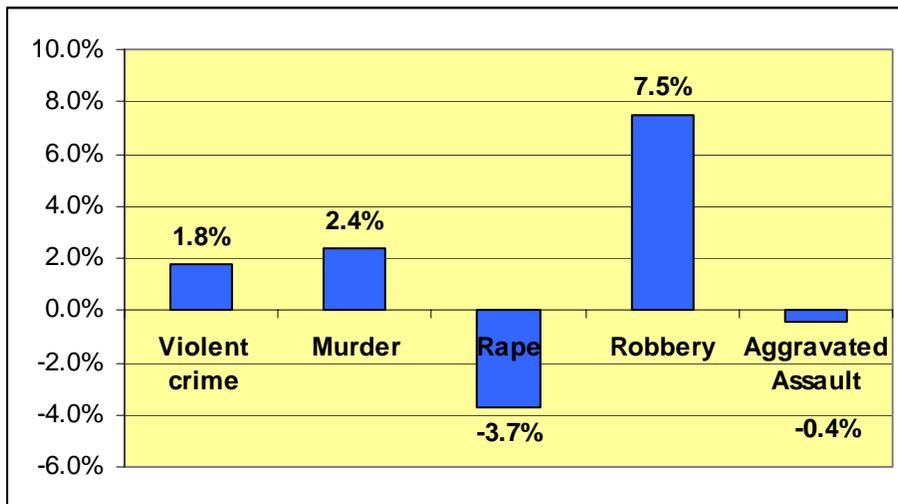
For the five year period from 2003 to 2007, violent crime overall was actually up 1.8%. Both murder and robbery increased during that five-year period with murders up 2.4% and robberies up more at 7.5%. Rape decreased 3.7%, followed by aggravated assault with a decrease of 0.4%.

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CHART 1: VIOLENT CRIME VOLUME COMPARED TO FIVE YEARS AGO – 2003 TO 2007



In addition to percentage increases and decreases in crime, it is important to keep in mind the actual numbers. There were 1,408,337 violent crimes committed in the United States in 2007, down slightly from 1,418,043 the previous year. Murders totaled 16,929 in 2007 compared to 17,030 in 2006. There were 445,124 robberies reported in the United States in 2007, down from 447,403 in 2006. Rapes totaled 90,427 in 2007, down from 92,757 in 2006. In 2007, there were 855,856 aggravated assaults, down from 860,853 in 2006.

With the exception of the South (+1.6%), all regions of the country experienced a decrease in violent crime volume from 2006 to 2007. The Midwest saw a decrease of 1.7%, the Northeast a decrease of 5.1%, and the West a decrease of 1%. Murders were up 5.3% in the South, and down in all others. The number of murders in the Northeast was down the most at 7.9%. The Midwest was down 2.5%, and the West was down 5.6%. Rape volume was down in every region. Robberies were down the most in the Northeast at 9.0%. The Midwest was down 3.2%, and the West was down 0.4%, but robberies were up 4.9% in the South. Firearms were used in 42.8% of all robberies in 2007 nationwide, up slightly from 42.2% in 2006. The South experienced the highest percentage of firearm usage (50.4%) and the Northeast the lowest (34.6%).

CRIME RATE

This section is on rate, not volume. Rate is the number of offenses per 100,000 inhabitants. The violent crime rate decreased 1.4% from the 2006 rate. The property crime rate also decreased 1.4%. From 2006 to 2007, the murder rate decreased 1.3%, rape decreased 3.2%, robbery decreased 1.2%, and aggravated assault decreased 1.3%, as shown in Table 2 below.



TABLE 2: PERCENT CHANGE IN VIOLENT CRIME RATE

CRIME CATEGORY	2006-2007
Violent Crime	-1.4%
Murder	-1.3%
Rape	-3.2%
Robbery	-1.2%
Aggravated Assault	-1.3%

For the five year period from 2003 to 2007, the violent crime rate overall was down 1.9% as shown in Table 3 below. Robbery increased 3.6% during that five-year period. Murder was down 1.3%, rape down 7.1%, and aggravated assault down 3.9%.

TABLE 3: PERCENT CHANGE IN VIOLENT CRIME RATE – FIVE YEAR PERIOD

CRIME CATEGORY	2003-2007
Violent Crime	-1.9%
Murder	-1.8%
Rape	-7.1%
Robbery	+3.6%
Aggravated Assault	-3.9%

CRIME DETAILS AND TRENDS

Aggravated assault accounted for 60.8% of the violent crimes in 2007. Robbery accounted for 31.5%, forcible rape accounted for 6.4%, and murder accounted for 1.2% of the violent crimes in 2007, as shown in Chart 2. These percentages are consistent with previous years.



CHART 2: VIOLENT CRIME BY OFFENSE

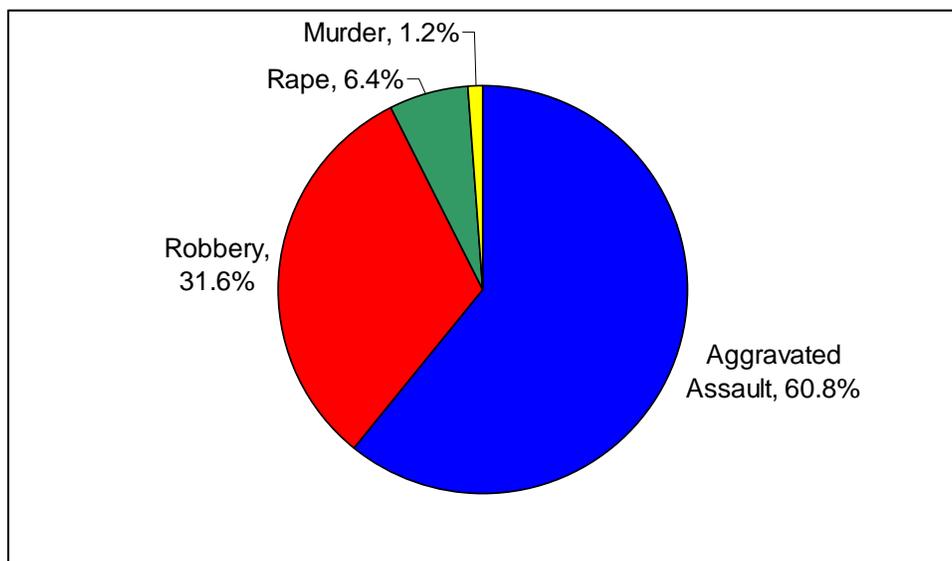
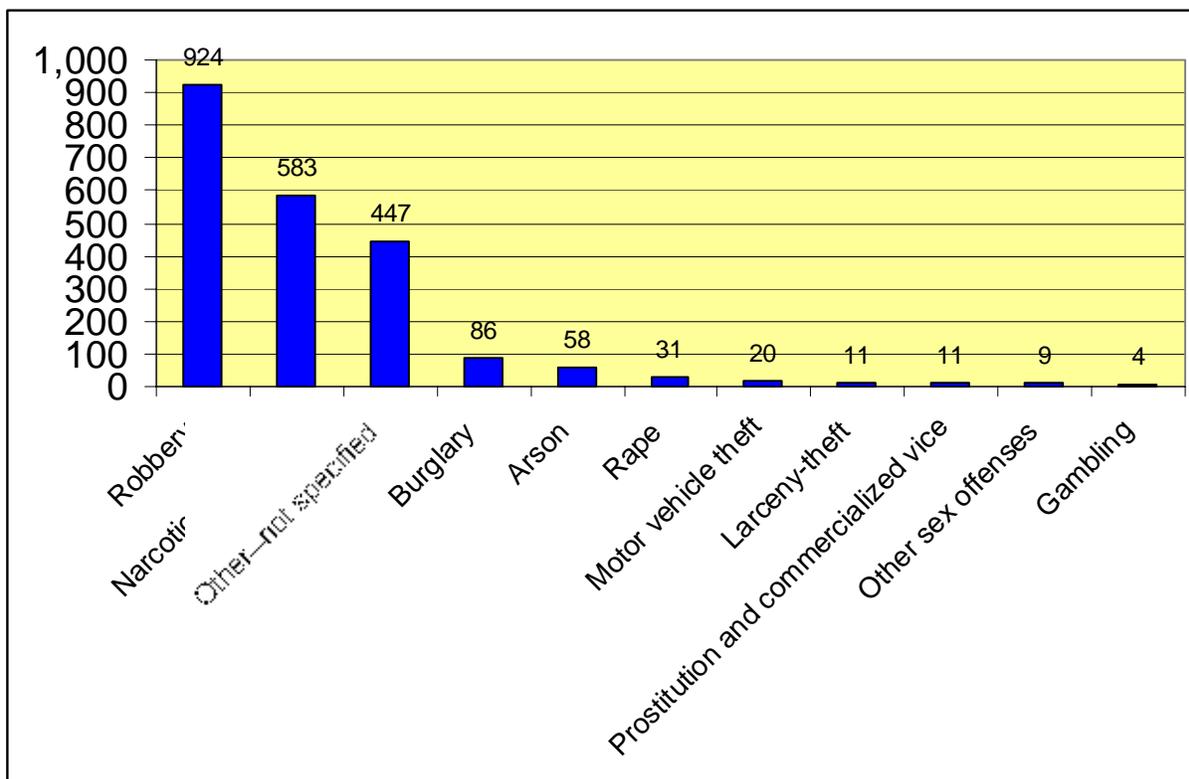


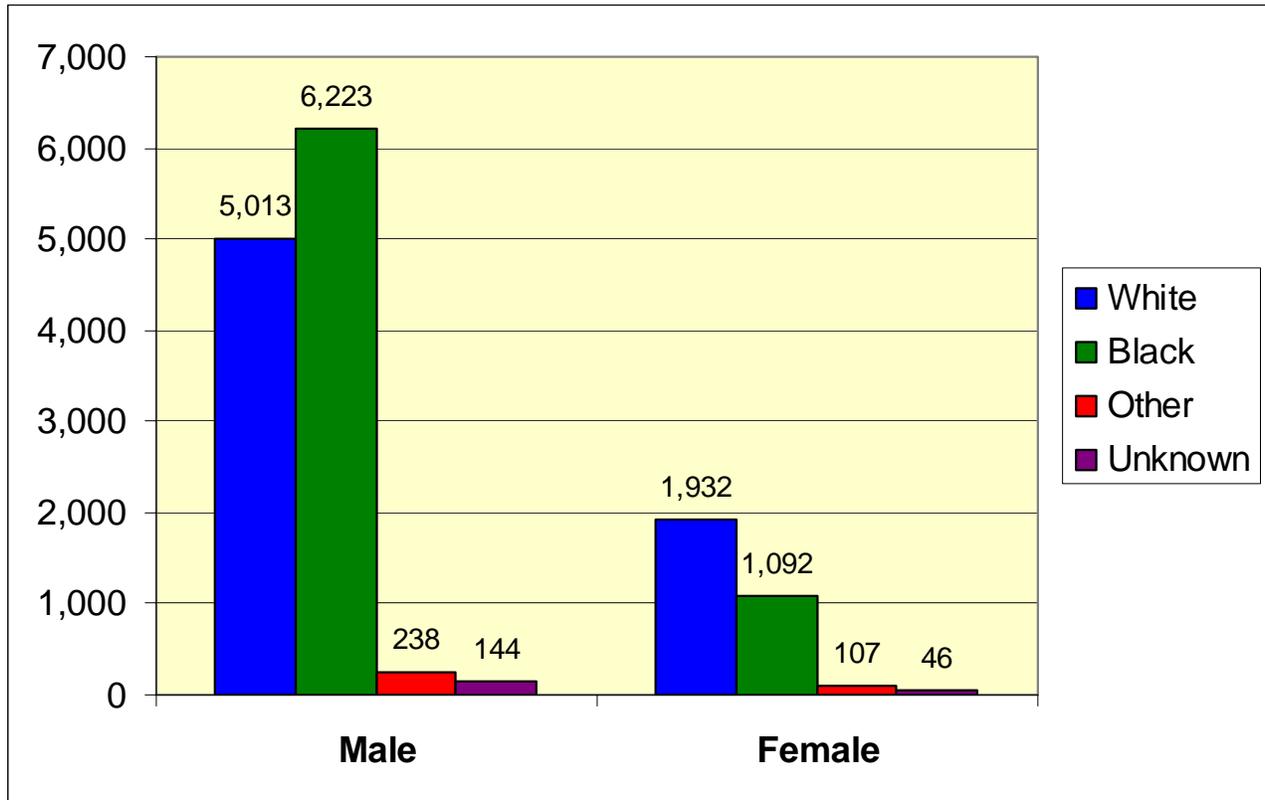
Chart 3 shows the breakdown of murders that occurred during the commission of other felonies. Of all felony murders, the most frequent (924) were robbery related. That number decreased 11% over 2006, when the number was 1,041.

CHART 3: FELONY MURDER CIRCUMSTANCES



Murder victims were killed with firearms 68% of the time in 2007, down from 73.4% in 2006. Chart 4 shows murder victims by race and sex. In 2007, 78.3% of known murder victims were male. Murder victims, for whom race was known, were 46.8% white, 49.3% black, and the remaining victims were from other or unknown races.

CHART 4: MURDER VICTIMS BY RACE AND SEX



In 2006, 46% of the perpetrators were unknown, up from 45% the previous year. When the relationships of murder victims and offenders were known, 53.7% were killed by an acquaintance, 22.1% of victims were slain by family members, and 24.1% were murdered by strangers.

Chart 5 depicts the 5-year trend in number of murders. In 2007, the number of murders were up 2% from 2003.



CHART 5: NUMBER OF MURDERS 2003-2007

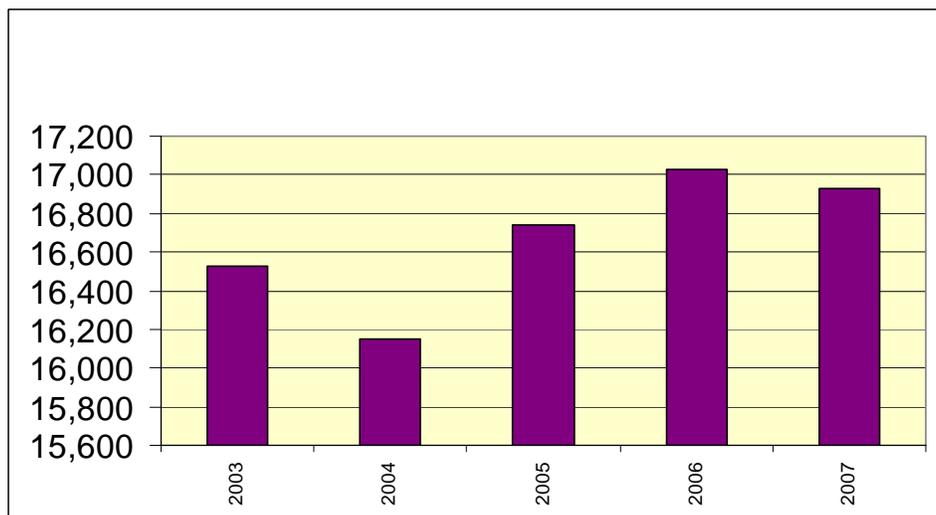
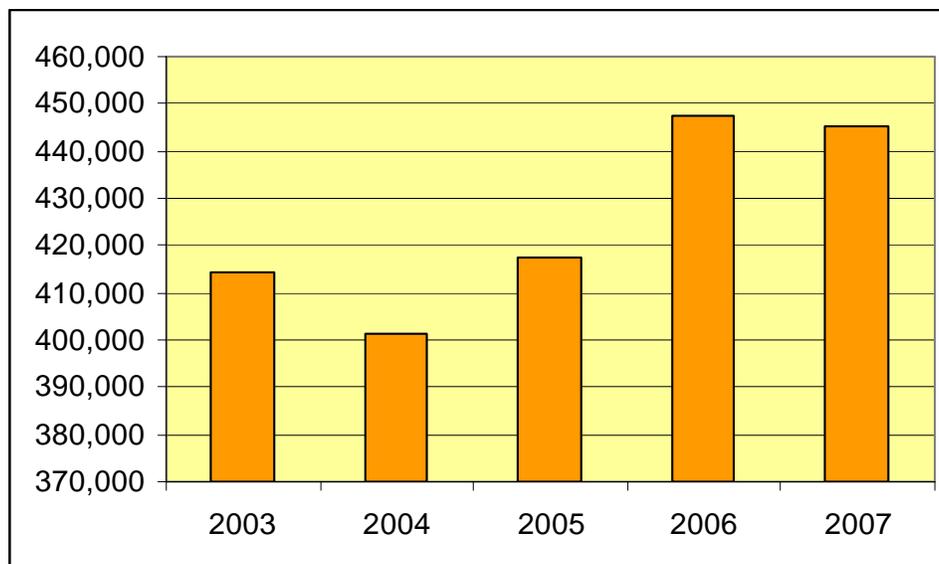


Chart 6 shows the 5-year trend for robbery. Robberies were 7% higher in 2007 than they were in 2003.

CHART 6: NUMBER OF ROBBERIES 2003-2007

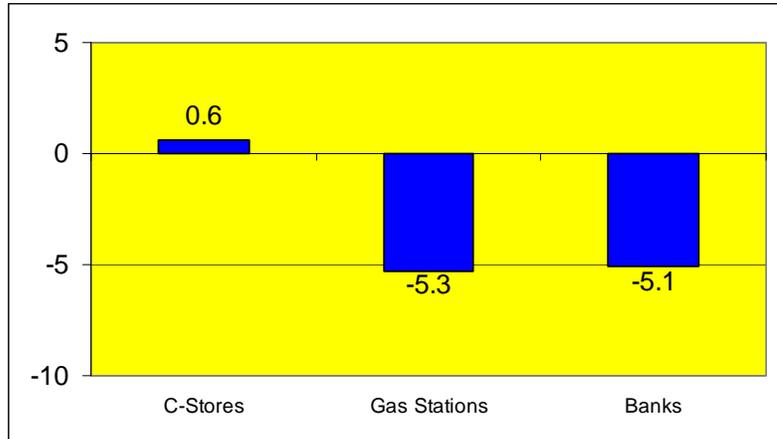


Charts 7, 8 and 9 present the robbery data for convenience stores, gas stations and banks. In evaluating the results, note that the distinction between gas stations and convenience stores is not always clear, and it is based on the law enforcement designation at the scene.



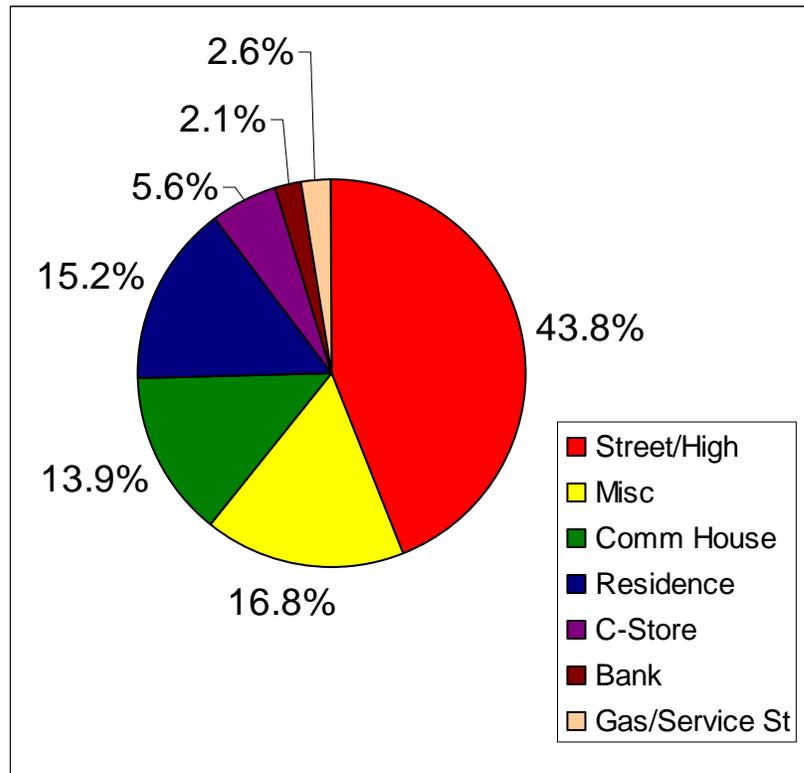
- Convenience store robbery volume was up 0.6% from 2006 to 2007.
- Gas station robbery volume was down 5.3% from 2006 to 2007.
- Bank robbery volume was down 5.1% from 2006 to 2007.

CHART 7: PERCENT CHANGE IN ROBBERY VOLUME FROM PREVIOUS YEAR – 2006-2007



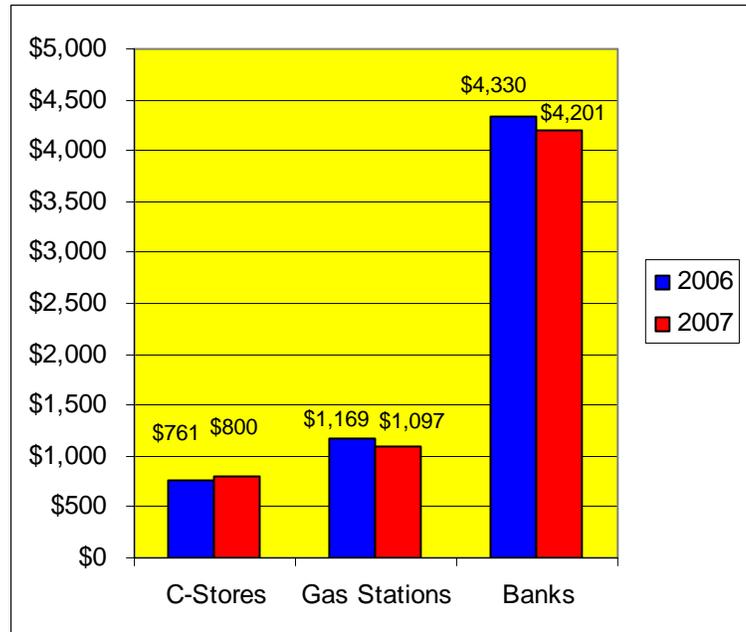
- Convenience store robbery made up 5.6% of the total robberies in 2007, the same as the prior year.
- Gas station robbery made up 2.6% of the total robberies in 2006, down slightly from 2.7% in 2006.
- Bank robberies made up 2.1% of the total robberies in 2006, the same as the prior year.

CHART 8: PERCENT DISTRIBUTION ROBBERY VOLUME – 2007



- ❖ In 2007, convenience stores had an average dollar loss of \$800, up from \$721 the previous year.
- ❖ Gas station average dollar loss in 2007 was \$1,097, down from \$1,169 the year before.
- ❖ Banks had by far the highest average dollar loss at \$4,201, down from \$4,330 in 2006.

CHART 9: AVERAGE LOSS PER ROBBERY



Authors' Note: These are not just register losses, but include safe and merchandise losses.

AUTHORS' CONCLUSIONS:

All categories of violent crime were down slightly in 2007, but both murder and robbery were still higher than five years ago, in 2003. The Bureau of Labor Statistics' Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries released last month found workplace homicides increased 13% in 2007. Given this volatility, employers need to stay focused on the crime prevention strategy that has been in place for nearly three decades in certain retail settings, particularly convenience stores. It incorporates the validated crime-reducing measures of good cash control; limiting escape routes; maintaining good visibility throughout the store; adequate lighting inside and outside stores; and training employees in safety and anti-violence measures.

