INDIANA CODE §36-8-28 FIRE SERVICE REPORTS

Indiana Department of Homeland Security

March 2026

Final 2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is submitted pursuant to HEA 1427 (2025), in accordance with Indiana Code §36-8-28, which requires the Indiana State Fire Marshal to semi-annually collect, aggregate and report specified fire run data submitted by local fire service units across Indiana. The reporting period covered in this submission spans from July 1 through December 31, 2025.

Indiana Code §36-8-28 requires reporting on the following elements:

1. The number of separate fire runs made during the reporting period. A single fire run requiring multiple vehicles shall be considered one (1) fire run for purposes of a report.
2. The number of vehicles that participated in each fire run.
3. Information on whether a fire run consisted of:
   - a fire;
   - a vehicle accident;
   - the provision of emergency medical services (EMS); or
   - any other type of fire run.
4. Information on whether or not a fire was extinguished as part of the fire run, regardless of whether or not the report indicates that the fire run consisted of a fire under subdivision (3).

During this period, 615 local units submitted fire run data, representing approximately 73.4% of known eligible reporting entities. Statewide totals for the reporting period are presented in the summary table below.

Required Reporting Element	ImageTrend Data	Percent of Total Runs
Number of separate fire runs	374,206	N/A
Number of vehicles participating in fire runs	613,141	N/A
Number of runs consisting of a fire	17,090	4.6%
Number of runs consisting of a vehicle accident	21,094	5.6%
Number of runs consisting of the provision of EMS	214,331	57.3%
Number of runs consisting of any other type of fire run	110,381	29.5%
Number of runs that include fire extinguishment as part of the run	8,290	2.2%

Half of all runs involve a single vehicle and response sizes remain modest across the distribution: 85% of runs involve two or fewer vehicles, 90% involve three or fewer, 95% involve four or fewer, and 99% involve seven or fewer vehicles.

Data was compiled from run reports in the state's ImageTrend system, which serves as a repository for all fire runs performed by local units across Indiana. The Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) performed an analysis and data quality review to establish a consistent methodology for aggregating fire run information, as well as identifying gaps in reporting, quality and data entry that provide foundational steps for continued improvement of fire data for the state in future reporting periods.

INTRODUCTION

HEA 1427 (2025) established a statewide reporting framework for fire run activity in Indiana, creating transparency and consistency in how fire service activity is documented and summarized across jurisdictions. By requiring standardized reporting of a defined set of data elements, IC §36-8-28 sets forth a consolidated view of fire response activity, allowing for spotting trends and identifying potential barriers regarding fire services across the state.

Under the statute, “local units” are defined as counties, municipalities and townships that provide fire service, along with fire protection districts and fire protection territories. These entities must submit specified fire run data to the Indiana State Fire Marshal. The required elements are:

1. The number of separate fire runs made during the reporting period. A single fire run requiring multiple vehicles shall be considered one (1) fire run for purposes of a report.
2. The number of vehicles that participated in each fire run.
3. Information on whether a fire run consisted of:
   - a fire;
   - a vehicle accident;
   - the provision of emergency medical services; or
   - any other type of fire run.
4. Information on whether or not a fire was extinguished as part of the fire run, regardless of whether or not the report indicates that the fire run consisted of a fire under subdivision (3).

Indiana Code §36-8-28 requires the Indiana State Fire Marshal to receive submissions from local units and prepare a consolidated statewide report for the General Assembly. In fulfilling this requirement, the State Fire Marshal does not alter the underlying operational data submitted by local entities but instead standardizes and aggregates the required elements to ensure that totals are calculated consistently across jurisdictions.

This report is therefore structured to first describe the reporting population and data source landscape, then explain the aggregation methodology used to ensure accurate run level totals, and finally present the statewide results aligned directly with the statutory requirements.

METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the standardized processes used to compile, validate and aggregate fire run data submitted pursuant to HEA 1427 (2025). It defines the reporting population and summarizes the scope of data submissions received, clarifies how the required statutory elements were interpreted and aggregated at the run level, and documents the data quality review and validation procedures applied prior to statewide reporting. Collectively, these components ensure that the totals presented are calculated consistently across jurisdictions and aligned directly with the requirements and intent of the statute.

REPORTING POPULATION AND DATA SOURCE

The reporting population includes counties, municipalities and townships that provide fire service, as well as fire protection districts and fire protection territories, as required under HEA 1427 (2025). For the reporting period, 615 eligible local units were identified and submitted data meeting minimum structural and completeness standards for inclusion in this report.

All data included in this report were sourced from the ImageTrend Elite reporting system. ImageTrend Elite is the statewide data collection and analysis platform through which fire departments and EMS providers submit run information to IDHS. Incident data reported under the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) and the National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS) are transmitted into and maintained within ImageTrend, which functions as the state's centralized repository for fire run records. Each reported run entered into the system contributes to a consolidated dataset used for state and national reporting. For purposes of HEA 1427 (2025), the Indiana State Fire Marshal relied exclusively on ImageTrend data extracts corresponding to the defined reporting period. These extracts were standardized and aggregated in accordance with statutory requirements to produce the totals presented in this report.

REPORTING LIMITATIONS AND DATA COMPLETENESS

While this report reflects all data available within the statewide ImageTrend Elite system for the July 1 through December 31, 2025 reporting period, certain limitations affect completeness for a subset of local units.

Third-Party Reporting Systems

Some local units utilize third party records management or reporting systems for fire run documentation. For the current reporting period, data from certain third-party systems had not yet been imported or synchronized into ImageTrend at the time of extraction. Because IC §36-8-28 reporting relies on ImageTrend data extracts for statewide aggregation, any runs not yet integrated into that system are not reflected in the totals presented in this report.

Accordingly, the absence of reported runs for a given unit during this reporting period does not necessarily indicate that no fire service activity occurred. In some instances, it may reflect a system integration timing issue rather than non-reporting.

Transition from NFIRS to NERIS

The national fire reporting environment is currently transitioning from NFIRS to NERIS. As of January 1, 2026, participation in NERIS replaces NFIRS as the mandatory national reporting framework for fire incidents.

Some local units began onboarding to NERIS prior to the mandatory transition date. During this interim period, certain local units may have captured run data within NERIS aligned workflows while parallel integration processes with ImageTrend were still being finalized. As a result, a limited number of local units may not appear in the July through December 2025 ImageTrend extracts used for this report.

As NERIS implementation becomes fully operational statewide and system integrations are completed, local units transitioning from NFIRS to NERIS are expected to be fully represented in the January 1 through June 30, 2026 reporting period.

Ongoing Data Integration Efforts

IDHS continues to coordinate with local units and system vendors to support consistent data submission pathways, national reporting alignment and timely integration into the statewide ImageTrend repository. Future reports will reflect improved completeness as transition-related data gaps are resolved. Additionally, while data submission to NFIRS/NERIS is mandatory, IDHS continues to work with local units that have struggled to consistently or timely integrate their data into ImageTrend, with the goal of increasing the percentage of local units successfully reporting fire runs to ImageTrend for statewide reporting.

These limitations should be considered when interpreting unit level participation rates and statewide totals for the July through December 2025 reporting period.

REQUIRED DATA ELEMENTS AND AGGREGATION APPROACH

Consistent with HEA 1427 (2025), this report includes the total number of separate fire runs, the number of vehicles participating in those runs, classification of each run and whether a fire was extinguished during the run.

A “separate fire run” is counted once per incident. Where multiple vehicles responded to a single incident, those responses were aggregated and counted as a single run for purposes of the statutory total. Vehicle participation counts reflect the total number of responding vehicles aggregated at the run level.

Runs are classified into one of four statutory categories: fire, vehicle accident, emergency medical services or other fire runs. Run reports in ImageTrend contain a “basic incident type” which were grouped into the four categories for purposes of this report. Where a run reflected ambiguous or multi category information, a consistent classification logic was applied statewide using the “basic incident type” designation reported by the local fire unit in ImageTrend.

For runs classified as fire incidents, submissions in ImageTrend include a “primary action taken” field which indicates whether the fire was extinguished during the run, as reported by the local unit. These are not counted as separate runs, but as a subset of fire incident runs.

DATA QUALITY AND VALIDATION

A primary issue noted in early data analysis was duplicate records within raw data extracts. The ImageTrend source system generates multiple run report rows for a single incident; this may be due to run reports being submitted for each apparatus attending the run, multiple dispatch timestamps that may have occurred for the same run or internal update processes that caused duplicate reports. To ensure that each separate fire run was counted only once, a structured duplicate analysis was conducted.

For each duplicated run identifier, validation metrics on the above noted issues were calculated:

- The analysis shows that approximately 93% of duplicate records are caused by the same incident being listed multiple times because more than one fire truck or unit was dispatched. The key details, such as the type of incident and the resources used, remain the same. Only a very small fraction, less than 0.001%, showed any differences in resource counts or incident type. This indicates that duplicates are a normal result of how dispatch data is recorded, not evidence of separate incidents.
- An additional review examined whether differences in apparatus or personnel counts were connected to changes in incident type codes. In more than 99.9% of cases, the incident type and resource information were identical across duplicate records. In the rare instances where variation occurred, the differences followed predictable patterns and did not suggest separate events. There is no indication that incident type codes need to be included as part of the unique incident identifier for reporting.
- A time-based review assessed whether duplicate records reflected meaningful updates to incidents over time. Approximately 93% showed no change pattern, and nearly 7% had no variation in dispatch time. Only two incidents showed any evidence of updates over time. In practical terms, true updates are negligible. These findings support using a simple method to remove duplicate records rather than implementing a more complex tracking approach.

In addition to reviewing duplicate records, another data issue was identified related to how vehicles and personnel were reported. Approximately 1.7% of runs showed at least one fire truck, EMS unit or other vehicle responding to an incident, while the number of personnel assigned to those vehicles was reported as zero. In some cases, more vehicles were listed than total personnel.

In real world operations, every responding vehicle is staffed by personnel, and the number of personnel should always be equal to or greater than the number of vehicles dispatched. Records not reflecting this most likely result from incomplete or inconsistent data entry rather than actual response conditions. Because the reporting system allows local units to enter vehicle and personnel information separately, it does not automatically prevent this type of mismatch.

This issue likely does not affect the total number of fire runs reported. However, it limits the ability to fully validate or interpret vehicle deployment data. When personnel counts are missing or recorded as zero, it becomes more difficult to confirm the accuracy of reported vehicle totals or to assess how resources were staffed during a response.

For this reason, vehicle deployment figures for the July 1 through December 31, 2025 reporting period should be interpreted with caution. While vehicle counts are preserved as reported, some records contain incomplete personnel information, which affects the ability to fully evaluate response resource levels.

AGGREGATED RESULTS AND SUMMARY TABLES

Statewide totals for the reporting period are presented in the summary table below. These tables include total fire runs, vehicle participation, classification totals and extinguishment indicators consistent with statutory requirements. Unit level totals are available on the IDHS website.

Table 1: Statewide Totals for the Reporting Period July-December 2025

Required Reporting Element	ImageTrend Data	Percent of Total Runs
Number of separate fire runs	374,206	N/A
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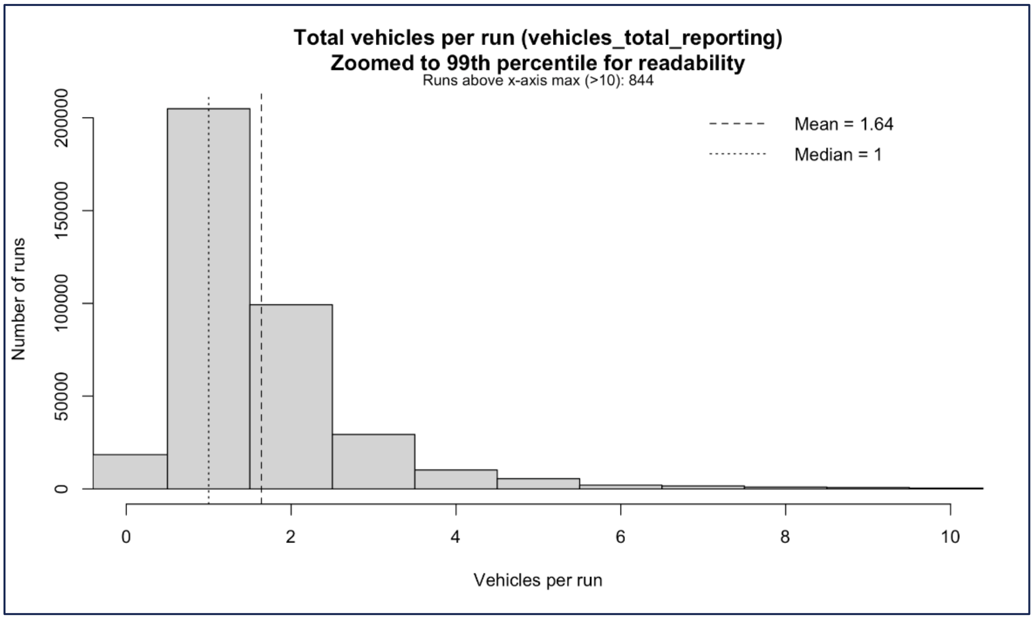
Figure 1: Total Vehicles Per Run



Across 374,206 runs, most incidents involved a small number of vehicles, while a small number of incidents involved a very large response, with the highest reported values appearing to be errors (i.e. 602 vehicles). Because of those few very large responses, the average number of vehicles per run can be pulled upward and may not reflect what typically occurs. Additionally, approximately 5% of runs reported zero vehicles, which also appear to be errors.

After adjusting for likely errors in reporting, the average number of vehicles per run is 1.64. Half of all runs involve a single vehicle, and response sizes remain modest across the distribution: 85% of runs involve two or fewer vehicles, 90% involve three or fewer, 95% involve four or fewer and 99% involve seven or fewer vehicles.

INTERPRETATION CONSIDERATIONS

Jurisdictions vary significantly in governance structure, including standalone departments, fire protection districts and joint territories. Differences in run counts may reflect organizational design rather than differences in operational activity. Local units also serve different land areas, population densities and risk profiles. Reported totals are not normalized for population, service area size or call demand.

Mutual aid and automatic aid arrangements may result in multiple local units participating in the same incident. Even with run level deduplication, participation patterns can differ by jurisdiction. Additionally, local dispatch and reporting practices vary, which can influence classification and vehicle participation reporting.

Data completeness for the July 1 through December 31, 2025 reporting period is dependent upon successful integration of run records into the statewide ImageTrend Elite system. Some local units utilize third party reporting systems whose data had not yet been imported into ImageTrend at the time of extraction. In addition, some local units began transitioning from NFIRS to NERIS in advance of the mandatory national transition effective January 1, 2026. During this transitional phase, some run data may not yet have been fully synchronized into the statewide ImageTrend repository used for this report. Further, while participation in data submission for local units is mandatory, IDHS continues to work with local units to increase overall timely participation.

Accordingly, the absence of reported data for a given local unit during this reporting period does not necessarily indicate an absence of operational activity. These integration and transition factors should be considered when interpreting unit level participation rates and statewide totals for the July through December 2025 reporting period.

In addition to system integration limitations, several data entry anomalies were identified during validation. These include runs submitted without a basic incident type, isolated instances of extreme vehicle counts associated with a single report and other outlier values that are not operationally plausible. For example, one local unit reported approximately 7,000 vehicles on a single run record, indicating a clear data entry or system mapping error. While these anomalies represent a small proportion of total records, they can materially affect aggregated vehicle counts and related statewide metrics if not addressed through validation controls.

These findings underscore the need for strengthened data governance and submission controls for future reporting cycles. Recommended improvements include implementation of mandatory field requirements for key elements such as incident type and apparatus counts prior to report submission; development of an automated import process for fire run data into ImageTrend similar to the established EMS integration workflow; establishment of a clear and consistent unique run identifier assigned at the time of incident creation to prevent duplication and reconciliation challenges; and enhanced system controls to prevent reports from remaining in pending status indefinitely without resolution. Collectively, these measures would improve completeness, consistency and reliability of statewide fire service reporting.

Finally, the statute requires a limited set of descriptive elements and does not include contextual variables such as personnel levels, response times or service demand. Accordingly, the reported data are not intended to evaluate operational performance or outcomes beyond the required elements.

CONCLUSION

This report submission includes all data elements required by IC §36-8-28, including the total number of separate fire runs, vehicle participation, run classification and extinguishment indicators for the reporting period of July 1 through December 31, 2025.

IC §36-8-28 requires the collection and reporting of the specified elements and does not mandate additional evaluative or performance analysis. The totals presented in this report reflect the information submitted by local units and aggregated by the Indiana State Fire Marshal in accordance with statutory requirements.

Click here to view the Interactive Appendix.