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National Alliance of Gang Investigators Associations

2005 NATIONAL GANG THREAT ASSESSMENT

In Partnership With

Federal Bureau of Investigation
National Drug Intelligence Center
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives

BJA

Bureau of Justice Assistance

National Alliance of Gang Investigators' Associations

NAGIA

2005 NATIONAL GANG THREAT ASSESSMENT

This document was prepared under Grant Number 2003-DD-BX-0311 from the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), U.S. Department of Justice

Points of view or opinions expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of BJA or the U.S. Department of Justice.

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FOREWORD

Once found principally in large cities, violent street gangs now affect public safety, community image, and quality of life in communities of all sizes in urban, suburban, and rural areas No region of the United States is untouched by gangs Gangs affect society at all levels, causing heightened fears for safety, violence, and economic costs

Funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), this report is the result of a collaborative effort among the members of the National Alliance of Gang Investigators Associations (NAGIA) NAGIA is composed of the leadership of 15 state and regional gang investigators associations, representing over 10,000 gang investigators across the country, and representatives of federal agencies and other organizations involved in gang-related matters

NAGIA is dedicated to educating and informing professionals dealing with gangs The purpose of the 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment is to provide a national and regional picture of the threat posed by gangs It is anticipated that the assessment will help federal, state, and local policymakers and law enforcement agency administrators understand the dimensions of the national gang problem and assist them in formulating policy and allocating resources

Additional information about gangs may be found by visiting the NAGIA Web site, *www nagia org*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment is a collaborative effort in the best sense of the word While it contains information obtained from many sources, the assessment also represents personal involvement, hard work, and task sharing by employees of many organizations at all levels of government It presents a unique, multilevel perspective on the nation's gang problem

Funding for this effort was provided by a grant from the U S Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Without the vision and resources provided by BJA, the assessment could never have been initiated, and without the cooperation, perseverance, and contributions of the partners, it would not have been completed Surveys were mailed to hundreds of investigators who are members of the 15 state and regional gang investigators associations that comprise the National Alliance of Gang Investigators Associations (NAGIA) These responses from local law enforcement officers form the basis for the assessment To this information on gang activity was added intelligence generated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC), and two of the Regional Information Sharing Systems® (RISS) centers the Middle Atlantic-Great Lakes Organized Crime Law Enforcement Network® and the New England State Police Information Network® Valuable assistance in data collection was also provided by the Ohio Attorney General's Office, and the National Youth Gang Center™ assisted the partners throughout the process

NAGIA especially appreciates the hard work and support for this project provided by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, whose staff coded and analyzed the survey responses, integrated the collateral intelligence, and produced the written report We also appreciate the review of the report and suggestions provided by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives

NAGIA would particularly like to acknowledge the support for anti-gang and anti-violence efforts of the Office of Justice Programs and the U S. Department of Justice, such as the Gang Resistance Education And Training (G R E A T) Program and the Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) Initiative. We commend their work and hope that these efforts will continue to support state and local law enforcement in their fight against gangs

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The pervasiveness of gangs throughout society is undeniable They incite fear and violence within our communities Gangs threaten our schools, our children, and our homes Gangs today are more sophisticated and flagrant in their use of violence and intimidation tactics As they migrate across the country, they bring with them drugs, weapons, and criminal activity Acceptance of the problem and joint community and law enforcement responses are our best defense

Law enforcement respondents to the 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment noted several trends that were prevalent across the country.

GENERAL TRENDS

- Gangs remain the primary distributors of drugs throughout the United States
- Gangs are associating with organized crime entities, such as Mexican drug organizations, Asian criminal groups, and Russian organized crime groups These groups often turn to gangs to conduct low-level criminal activities, protect territories, and facilitate drug-trafficking activities Financial gain is the primary goal of any association between these groups
- Gang members are becoming more sophisticated in their use of computers and technology. These new tools are used to communicate, facilitate criminal activity, and avoid detection by law enforcement
- Few gangs have been found to associate with domestic terrorist organizations. The susceptibility of gang members to any type of terrorist organization appears to be highest in prison
- Prison gangs pose a unique threat to law enforcement and communities Incarceration of gang members often does little to disrupt their activities. High-ranking gang members are often able to exert their influence on the street from within prison
- Hispanic gang membership is on the rise These gangs are migrating and expanding their jurisdictions throughout the country Identification and differentiation of these gangs pose new obstacles for law enforcement, especially in rural communities
- Migration of California-style gang culture remains a particular threat The migration spreads the reach of gangs into new neighborhoods and promotes a flourishing gang subculture
- While the number of all-female gangs remains low, the role of women in gangs is evolving. Women are taking more active roles, assisting in the movement of drugs and weapons, and gathering intelligence from other gangs
- Indian Country is increasingly reporting escalating levels of gang activity and gang-related crime and drug trafficking. The remote nature of many reservations and a thriving gang subculture make youth in these environments particularly vulnerable to gangs
- Outlaw motorcycle gangs (OMGs) are expanding their territory and forming new clubs This is reflected in increased violence among OMGs as they battle over territories.
- Approximately 31 percent of survey respondents indicated that their communities refused to acknowledge the gang problem Several communities only began to address gang issues when high-profile gang-related incidents occurred
- Forming multiagency task forces and joint community groups is an effective way to combat the problem However, decreases in funding and staffing to many task forces have created new challenges for communities

REGIONAL TRENDS

While general trends were apparent across the nation, each region also noted specific trends affecting their communities

Northeast

- Neighborhood or homegrown gangs and hybrid gangs are being seen with increasing frequency
- A growth of gangs within Hispanic immigrant communities has occurred recently, bringing increased violence and crime to many communities.
- The frequency of incidents of gang-related violence and drug trafficking on Indian reservations has increased.
- Gang members display a lack of respect for their community and for law enforcement.
- This region is particularly vulnerable to drug distribution by gangs because of the compact nature of the region and the well-developed transportation infrastructure
- Gangs are reported to be most frequently involved in crimes relating to vandalism and graffiti, firearms possession, assault, and homicide.

South

- Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) is one of the newest threats to the region, especially in Washington, DC, Virginia, and the surrounding areas
- The growth of gangs within the Hispanic community has brought increased levels of violence and crime to the region
- Communities are noting increases in graffiti and tagging
- Neighborhood or homegrown gangs are reported throughout the region
- Gangs in this region are most likely to be involved in the distribution and sale of marijuana and cocaine

Midwest

- Gang activity around schools and college campuses has increased
- Gangs are concealing their affiliations and colors to hide from law enforcement
- Gangs are substantially involved in both the wholesale and street-level distribution of drugs in this region
- Gangs are increasingly cooperating with each other to facilitate crime and drug trafficking
- Gang and drug activity in Indian Country has increased
- Indian Country is being affected by the high level of drug trafficking Hispanic street gangs are reportedly using Native Americans to transport narcotics onto reservations

West

- Gangs are employing an increased level of sophistication in the planning and execution of criminal acts, especially against law enforcement officers

- Street gangs are frequently involved in the distribution of both marijuana and methamphetamine.
- The number of cases of identity and credit card theft perpetrated by gang members has increased.
- Reports indicate an increased use of firearms by gang members
- Approximately three-quarters of respondents to this survey reported moderate to high involvement of gangs in the street-level distribution of drugs
- More than 90 percent of respondents in this region reported some level of gang involvement in vandalism and graffiti

INTRODUCTION

The 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment brought to light several new trends in gang activity and gang migration Hispanic gang membership is growing, especially in the Northeast and South Gangs are more sophisticated in their use of technology and computers and are using these tools to perpetrate criminal acts. Respondents reiterated that gangs remain a constant threat, that they are still growing in membership and violence, and that denial by communities is a gang's greatest ally

As gangs migrate across the country, they bring with them crime and violence Reasons for migration range from expansion of territories to families moving because of jobs or incarceration As families move, they bring with them children, associates, and long-distance ties to gangs The migration of gang members leads to the establishment of gangs in neighborhoods previously gang-free and may bring new arrivals into potentially deadly conflict with local gangs Many times the migratory pattern, as well as the genesis and growth of homegrown gangs, is indirectly aided by official denial. This allows the gangs to work with anonymity, establishing gang turfs that support narcotic networks and neighborhood drug dealing Gang members returning from prison also have an impact on neighborhoods Jurisdictions with returning members have documented notable increases in violence and drug trafficking [1] Lack of community-assistance programs for these individuals only compounds the problem

New immigrant populations in the United States are also vulnerable to gang activity Often immigrants are isolated in communities by language and employment difficulties This is apparent in many Hispanic immigrant communities. Hispanic gangs flourish as a means of providing the communities with support and protection Asian gangs, on the other hand, often victimize Asian communities, as the communities are less likely to report crimes to law enforcement

New hybrid and homegrown gangs with no apparent national affiliations are blurring the traditional boundaries of alliances and rivalries In some communities, colors, tattoos, and outward acknowledgement of gang affiliations are less visible as gangs try to hide from law enforcement. In other jurisdictions, gangs are uniting to strengthen and facilitate more extensive criminal activities Money remains the driving force behind most criminal enterprises

Across the nation, gang-related statistics are maintained sporadically, making it difficult to obtain an exact measurement of gang violence Additionally, the lack of a national definition of *gang* and *gang-related crime* acceptable to law enforcement and the political establishment compounds the problem Only estimates of the actual number of gangs and gang members across the United States exist. The most recent survey conducted by the National Youth Gang Center estimates the number of youth gangs in the United States to be 21,500, with 731,500 gang members [2] Prison gangs, motorcycle gangs, and adult gangs are excluded from these estimates The 2002 National Youth Gang Survey, conducted by the National Youth Gang Center, also found that all cities with populations of 250,000 or more reported a youth gang problem, in addition, 87 percent of cities with populations between 100,000 and 249,999 reported youth gang problems [3]

Apparent in many responses to the 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment was community fear Citizens often expressed fear of the continual violence in their neighborhoods, and they also expressed fear for their children Gang members are recruiting in elementary, middle, and high schools, and children are often forced to join one gang for protection from another

Throughout the 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment, law enforcement agencies have noted trends and patterns of gang activity However, reiterated throughout is the underlying need for communities and law enforcement to jointly acknowledge and address this problem

METHODOLOGY

The results reported in this document are the compilation of information received from 455 law enforcement agencies across the country The agencies represent gang investigators at the federal, state, and local levels. A detailed survey was distributed to law enforcement agencies across the country by member organizations of NAGIA (see Appendix). Results from the surveys were entered into an SPSS database Agencies were asked to provide relevant open-source materials to supplement this report Additionally, presidents of the NAGIA member associations were asked to provide an overview of gang trends and patterns in their respective regions

The information reported here is not representative of the nation as a whole, nor is it based on a statistically valid sample It merely presents a snapshot of trends and patterns of gang activity as documented by these law enforcement entities.

GANGS AND DRUGS

Gangs, whether street gangs, OMGs, or prison gangs, are the primary distributors of drugs throughout the United States [4] They are involved in distribution at both the wholesale and retail/street levels. Gangs consistently travel across the country, seeking out new territory and trafficking routes for distribution Suburban and rural areas, as well as Indian Country, are increasingly reporting gang- and drug-related criminal activity Overall, 31 6 percent of respondents to the 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment indicated that gangs were highly involved in drug distribution at the retail level, while 28 6 percent indicated at least moderate involvement Gangs in both the West and Northeast were more likely to be highly involved in drug distribution at the retail level than gangs in the South and Midwest

Gangs often use drug trafficking as their primary means of financial gain Gang members are more likely to be involved in retail, street-level sales of drugs than in wholesale trafficking As gangs become more involved in the sale of drugs, the likelihood of criminal activity increases [5] The correlation between crime and drug trafficking is highest for robbery and aggravated assault; thus, regions experiencing an increase in gang-related drug trafficking can expect to see a rise in crime rates [6]

Table 1. Level of Street Gang Involvement in Distribution (Percentage by Region)

	Northeast	South	Midwest	West	Total
Street Sales					
High	39 2	24 3	29 5	39.2	31.6
Moderate	21 6	28 9	22 7	34.3	28 6
Low	17 6	23 1	27 3	16 1	21 1
None/Unknown	21 6	23 7	20 5	10 5	18 7
Wholesale					
High	15 7	14 5	22 7	20.3	18 0
Moderate	25.5	19.7	20 5	24.5	22 0
Low	25 5	32.4	31.8	28 7	30.3
None/Unknown	33 3	33 5	25 0	26 6	29 7

*Table columns do not add up to 100% due to rounding

While gang involvement in wholesale drug distribution is less than in retail distribution, 18 percent of law enforcement respondents indicated that gangs were highly involved in wholesale drug distribution, with the Midwest reporting the highest activity.

Additionally, law enforcement agencies were asked to indicate the level of gang involvement in the distribution and trafficking of specific illicit narcotics. Table 2 reports the percentage, by region, of moderate and high gang involvement in the distribution of these drugs Gang involvement in the distribution of marijuana is highest in the West, where 79 percent of law enforcement respondents reported moderate to high gang involvement in its distribution. Gangs obtain marijuana primarily from Mexican, Colombian, and Jamaican criminal groups [7]

Table 2. Moderate and High Gang Involvement in Distribution (Percentage by Region)

Drug Type	Northeast	South	Midwest	West	Total
Powdered Cocaine	52 9	38 7	37 5	32 9	38 2
Crack Cocaine	52 9	45 7	60 2	39 2	47 3
Heroin	45 1	17.9	25 0	35 7	27 9
Marijuana	56 9	54.3	67 0	79.0	64.8
Methamphetamine	17 6	24 9	23 9	73.4	39 1
MDMA	31 4	19 1	18 1	30 1	23 7

Distribution by gang members occurs at both the wholesale and retail levels [8]

Law enforcement respondents noted that gangs were actively involved in the distribution of cocaine—particularly crack cocaine—with 38 percent of respondents reporting moderate to high involvement in the distribution of powdered cocaine and 47 3 percent reporting moderate to high involvement in the distribution of crack cocaine While most cocaine is obtained from Mexican, Colombian, and Dominican criminal groups, such gangs as the Bloods, the Crips, 18th Street, and Mara Salvatrucha have also been known to smuggle the drugs from Mexico.[9] In addition, OMGs are known to smuggle cocaine into the United States from Canada.[10] Hispanic and African-American gangs are the primary distributors of cocaine at the retail level in every region of the United States [11]

Gang involvement in heroin distribution is highest in the Northeast, although each region is greatly affected by this narcotic Reports indicate that heroin distribution is on the rise in suburban and rural areas.[12] Colombian, Mexican, Dominican, Nigerian, and Asian criminal groups are the primary suppliers of heroin to gangs in the United States.[13] While such gangs as the Gangster Disciples, Vice Lord Nation, the Bloods, the Crips, 18th Street, Neta, and the Latin Kings distribute heroin throughout the United States, distribution at the retail level varies by jurisdiction [14]

While most regions report less involvement by gangs in the distribution of methamphetamine, 73 4 percent of respondents from the West indicated high to moderate involvement by gangs in the distribution of this drug Overall, only 39 1 percent of respondents indicated moderate to high involvement by gangs. OMGs, street gangs, and prison gangs are all involved in the distribution of methamphetamine [15] OMGs have been reported to produce, transport, and distribute methamphetamine throughout the United States.[16]

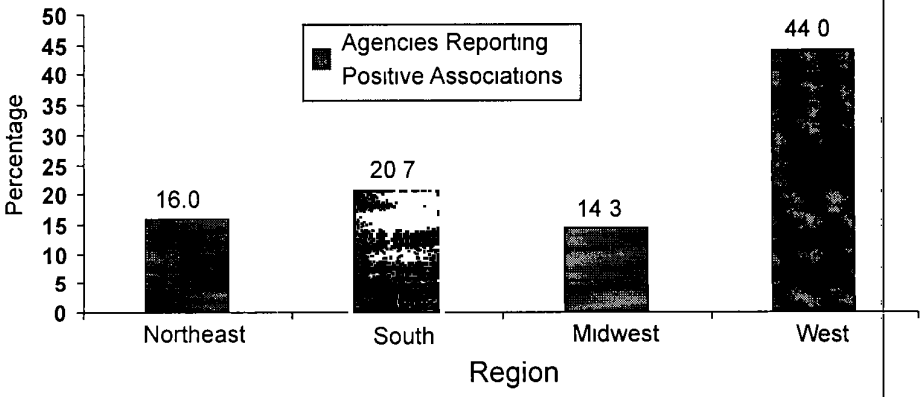
Overall, 23 7 percent of respondents reported moderate to high gang involvement in the distribution of MDMA (also known as Ecstasy). Asian-based criminal groups, both in the United States and Canada, provide large quantities of MDMA to street gangs in the United States [17] OMGs also obtain this drug from Canada [18] However, Israeli and Russian criminal groups have been reported to control most wholesale distribution of MDMA in the United States.[19] While street gangs are active in the retail distribution of MDMA, reports indicate that Caucasian males aged 18 to 30 control most retail distribution [20]

GANGS AND ORGANIZED CRIME

Approximately 26 percent of law enforcement agencies surveyed indicated that gangs were associated with organized crime (OC) entities in their jurisdictions. Criminal enterprises, whether street gangs or OC groups, are involved in similar criminal activities and often cooperate with each other to the extent that it will increase their profits and expand their control of illicit activities. Of the reporting agencies in the Western region, 44 percent reported a nexus between gangs and organized crime entities (Figure 1)

The 116 law enforcement respondents who indicated positive associations were asked to further elaborate on the type of associations present in their regions Table 3 displays the results Eight out of ten investigators indicated gangs were associated with Mexican drug organizations—an expected result, as drug trafficking is the primary source of income for most gangs. Law enforcement officials identified two additional groups with which a high percentage of gangs were associated Asian and Russian OC groups

Figure 1. Percentage of Agencies Reporting a Positive Association Between Gangs and Organized Crime (by Region)



Asian Organized Crime

Approximately 28 percent of law enforcement agencies reported that gangs were associated with Asian OC groups It is not uncommon for Asian criminal enterprises to work with street gangs, as their cooperation increases both their profits and the extent of the criminal activity [22] Asian-based OC groups are often involved in multiple criminal activities.[23] This includes drug trafficking, credit card fraud, illegal gaming, and money laundering [24] However, violence remains a defining characteristic of these organizations [25]

Table 3. Percentage of Agencies Reporting Association Between Gangs and Organized Crime Entities (by Type of Organization)

Type of Organized Crime	%[21]
Mexican Drug Organizations	78 4
Asian Organized Crime	28 4
Russian/Central/East European Organized Crime	24 1
Colombian Drug Organizations	16 4
Dominican Drug Organizations	12 9
Middle-Eastern Organized Crime	6 9
La Cosa Nostra Organized Crime	6 9
Italian Organized Crime	6.0
Nigerian Organized Crime	4 3
Albanian Organized Crime	3 4
Other	11

Additionally, these groups are involved in human trafficking and migrant smuggling [26]

Cooperation between Asian street gangs and more sophisticated Asian OC groups is widespread Asian OC groups and street gangs work with non-Asian groups, usually for the purposes of drug trafficking

Russian Organized Crime

Over 24 percent of law enforcement officials indicated that gangs were associated with Russian organized crime in their jurisdictions According to the Middle Atlantic-Great Lakes Organized Crime Law Enforcement Network (MAGLOCLEN), "Unlike most organized crime groups, post-Soviet criminals do not discriminate along ethnic lines and focus solely on illicit profits."[27] Russian groups have been associated with "Asian, Colombian, Dominican, La Cosa Nostra, outlaw motorcycle gangs, street gangs, and the YACS [Yugoslavian, Albanian, Croatian, and Serbian crime groups]."[28]

Russian OC groups may coordinate with local gangs (Russian or non-Russian) to conduct low-level criminal activities in which they do not want to heavily involve themselves For example, law enforcement intelligence indicates Russian OC groups have been associated with the Crips in California for the purpose of fencing stolen goods

It is possible that law enforcement officials have identified as Russian OC groups those that are more accurately described as Russian street gangs

Many groups from the former Soviet Union consisting of younger immigrants have formed gangs in the United States that are equivalent to relatively small, local street gangs These gangs generally do not engage in major criminal enterprises but partake in low-level criminal activities These gang-type groups are made up of the individuals who are most often encountered by U S law enforcement, as opposed to higher-level OC figures [29]

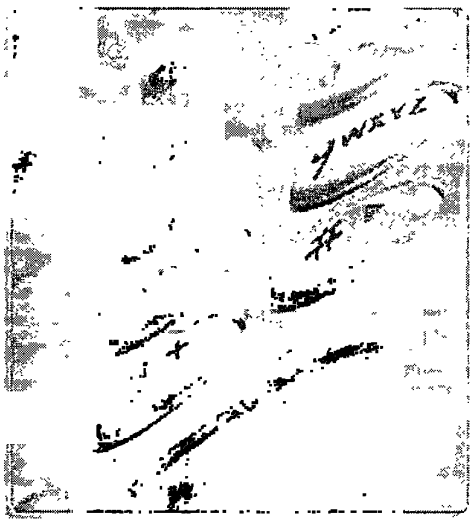
GANGS AND TECHNOLOGY

Gangs have kept pace with advancing technology and are utilizing new tools to communicate with each other, facilitate criminal activity, and avoid detection by law enforcement. Approximately 45 percent of respondents to the 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment reported gangs using technology in the commission of crimes Although gangs have used technology in the form of computers, the Internet, and cellular phones in the past, they are constantly expanding their capabilities as new technology becomes available and affordable and as young people proficient with emerging technology join gangs

Cell Phones

The most frequently reported use of technology in the 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment was that of cell phones with the walkie-talkie or push-to-talk function, such as Nextel phones Investigators reported that gangs use this technology because they believe it is untraceable or not subject to wiretaps Walkie-talkie cell phones enable

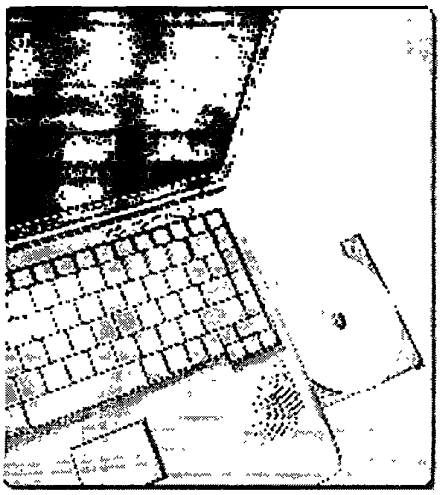
gang members to readily alert one another of the presence of law enforcement or rival gang members Furthermore, gang members also use pay-as-you-go cell phones and call forwarding to insulate themselves from law enforcement



In addition to walkie-talkie cell phones, gangs also use police scanners, surveillance equipment, and equipment for detecting microphones or bugs They use these tools to insulate their criminal activity and to impede law enforcement investigations.

Computers

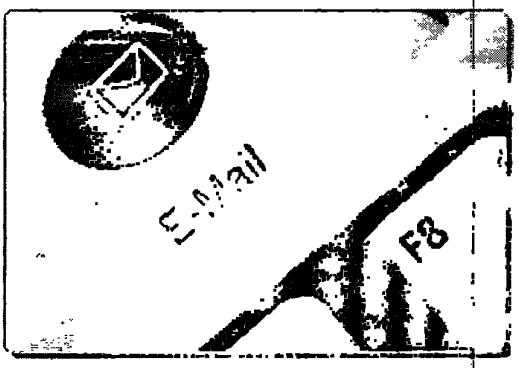
Law enforcement respondents also report emerging trends in the use of computers and the Internet Recent information indicates that gangs are using computers to produce fraudulent checks and counterfeit currency and to develop and maintain databases of gang and drug activity. Gangs use laptops, personal digital assistants, and personal computers to produce materials and maintain records of their own criminal enterprises Additionally, gangs are now using the Internet to track court proceedings and identify witnesses Using information and public records on legal proceedings, gangs are identifying and exploiting witnesses through intimidation and violence



Internet

The Internet is often used for soliciting sexual acts for money in the form of Internet prostitution and Internet gaming in the form of online video games According to law enforcement respondents, these games have led to physical confrontations between participating gang members The Internet provides a venue for the sale of gang-related music, clothing, and other gang paraphernalia Intelligence also indicates that gangs are becoming more involved in the pirating of movies and music via the Internet This lucrative criminal industry does not require a great deal of technical equipment or knowledge, and gangs can allegedly make more money copying films than selling drugs [30]

Gangs continue to use Web sites to notify members of meetings and event dates Rural and suburban gangs use Web sites to disseminate information about the activities of urban gangs and to emulate their behavior These sites have also been used by gangs to advocate political platforms Web sites often include photos of members, tattoos, and gang hand signs Sites may also have bulletin boards, message boards, or chat rooms where members can post messages or "shout-outs" to identify cliques or chapters of the gang in various cities Many of these sites are now becoming password-protected, members-only sites. However, it is important to note that Web sites may contain false information intended to mislead other gangs and law enforcement. There is no documentation quantifying the existence of these sites or the types of information they contain.



Survey respondents stated that gangs use the Internet to steal victims' personal information and to perpetrate theft or fraud, as in the case of identity theft. This can be effected using a number of electronic methods, including the use of Trojans (or backdoors) that give the thieves unlimited access to the information on the victim's computer or e-mail scams that pose as requests from a seemingly legitimate company asking victims to verify personal information or account details Gangs may even be able to access other information the victims have shared on the Internet.[31] Law enforcement respondents to the 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment noted that Asian gangs are highly involved in these high-tech crimes.

Internet activities related to identity theft and fraud are expected to broaden, as exemplified by at least one British gang believed to be launching phishing attacks These attacks are perpetrated when criminals lure victims to fake Web sites that look like those of legitimate organizations They attempt to persuade people to enter their passwords and credit card information, which can then be exploited [32]

Advances in technology and their future exploitation by gang members will create new challenges for law enforcement. However, collaboration and the sharing of intelligence will enable agencies across the country to stay one step ahead of gangs and their criminal activity

GANGS AND TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS

Only 5 7 percent of law enforcement officials surveyed indicated that gangs were associated with any domestic or international terrorist organizations or extremist groups within their jurisdictions Most of those groups associated with terrorist organizations or extremist groups were from the Western region

Domestic Terrorist Groups

The majority of those who indicated associations identified connections to domestic rather than international terrorist groups. Of the domestic terrorist groups identified, most were white-supremacist groups, including the following·

- Aryan Resistance
- Hammerskins
- Ku Klux Klan
- Militia groups
- National Alliance
- Neo-Confederates
- Neo-Nazi
- National Socialist Movement
- Skinheads
- Soldiers of Aryan Culture

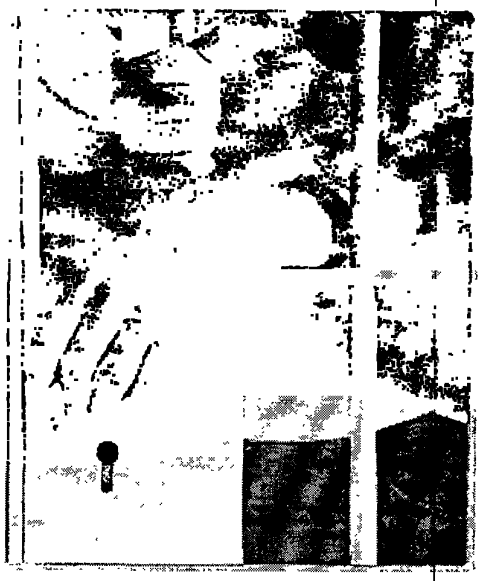
International Terrorist Groups

Despite their vigilance in looking for associations between gangs and international terrorist groups in the post-9/11 environment, few investigators have identified any associations in their jurisdictions, and those who have, describe the connections in terms of speculation supported by little evidence According to investigators, suspected associations focused on credit card fraud and sales of drugs, weapons, and false identification

A small number of investigators observed conditions that could potentially lead to terrorism connections, including the presence of Afghan and Indian street gangs, gangs with predominantly Muslim and Sikh membership, and East-African gangsters possibly living with Iranian nationals

Terrorist Recruitment in Prisons

Despite the lack of documented connections between gangs and terrorist groups, the potential for such associations is well established Previously documented associations (both known and suspected) between American gangs and international terrorists include the association between El Rukns (also known as the Black P Stone Nation) and the government of Libya in 1986 and the potential connection between the Latin Kings and the Armed Forces of National Liberation. Prison gangs seem to be particularly susceptible to terrorism recruitment

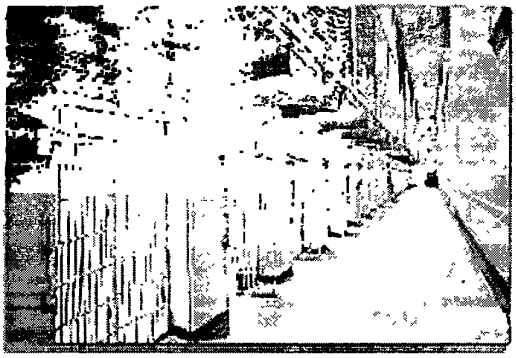


PRISON GANGS

By the middle of 2003, the number of persons incarcerated in prisons and jails across the United States was 2,078,570.[33] In addition, 4,073,987 persons were on probation and 774,588 were on parole at the end of 2003 [34] According to these figures, one in every 32 adult persons in the United States is incarcerated or on probation or parole [35] This is underscored by the fact that within the federal prison system, it is estimated that at least 11 7 percent of the inmate population is involved in gang-related activity [36] In state prisons this portion of the population is 13 4 percent, and in jails it is 15 6 percent.[37]

Prison gangs pose a significant threat to correctional officials across the country The rise of gang crime and the incarceration of thousands of gang members during the 1980s perpetuated the issue of gang membership in prisons [38] Inmate gangs thrive on violence, extortion, and a range of illicit activity involving drugs, gambling, and

prostitution [39] The need of inmates to form associations for self-protection creates an environment ripe for recruiting and controlling gang members Compounding this problem, many inmates are incarcerated near their communities, where gang members continue to have



significant influence [40] Frequently, prison gang members continue to affiliate with one another and commit criminal acts once released into the community.[41]

While little information about the presence and composition of gangs in prisons is available, a 2002 survey commissioned by the National Major Gang Task Force revealed details about gangs and security threat groups (STGs) in the nation's prisons and jails.[42]

- Prison and jail officials identified more than 1,600 STGs, comprising 113,627 inmates in their jurisdictions
- An average of 13 4 percent of all inmates per prison system and 15.6 percent of all inmates per jail system were estimated to be involved in STGs.
- The median number of inmates estimated to be involved in STGs per prison and jail systems was 1,575 and 300, respectively
- The most frequently identified STGs in both prison and jail settings included the Crips, Bloods, Gangster Disciples, Latin Kings, and Aryan Brotherhood The Mexican Mafia, La Nuestra Familia, the Black Guerilla Family, and the Texas Syndicate have also been identified in earlier studies as dominant prison gangs [43]
- Both prisons and jails reported substantially more STG-related incidents of violence against inmates than against staff members Likewise, in both prisons and jails, approximately one-third of all violent incidents were STG-related, whether directed against staff or inmates
- State correctional systems in California, Colorado, New Jersey, Texas, and Wisconsin, as well as in the Federal Bureau of Prisons, have the highest number of STG-involved inmates; correctional systems in Hawaii, New Mexico, and Wisconsin have the highest percentage of STG-involved inmates.
- The prisons and jails surveyed reported 11 STG-related homicides for 2001—only one of which was reported by a jail
- Many STG inmates additionally have ties to terrorist groups, and those who do not may be susceptible to recruitment by terrorists. For example, 27 STG inmates at the Administrative Maximum Security Prison in Florence, Colorado, represent al Qaeda, the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS), and the Palestinian Liberation Organization. Of these STG inmates, 18 have formal terrorist training [44]

Incarcerating gang members has done little to disrupt their activities and, in many ways, has augmented their growth and power inside prisons. High-ranking gang members exert increased control and discipline over their street gangs from prison Prison gangs have hierarchical structures based on power and ranks and are organized to survive leadership changes. This structure insulates gang leaders from direct involvement in criminal activity and, ultimately, prosecution [45] Many inmates who have not been previously exposed to gangs are recruited and, after serving their sentences, allied with the gang outside the prison walls [46] The following are reports of the criminal activity committed by incarcerated gang members·

- The Mexican Mafia (La Eme) controls many of the Hispanic gangs in southern California by imposing a street tax on drug sales
- A Latin Kings leader responsible for an entire network of gang members across Illinois used his cell phone to organize an elaborate drug ring and order hits. He was indicted in 1997 for running the drug-dealing operation from behind prison walls [47] Latin Kings members are known for their control over correctional officers and routinely order hits on those who fail to cooperate with them
- Gangster Disciples leader Larry Hoover was convicted of running—from prison—a $100 million-per-year drug operation that stretched across 35 states. Much of the gang's criminal enterprise is coordinated from behind bars

Many community and law enforcement officials mistakenly believe that when a gang member is incarcerated, the threat disappears In reality, incarcerated gang members often use the prison environment to recruit other members and perpetuate their criminal enterprise Furthermore, a large percentage of incarcerated gang members will be

released into the community to continue their criminal activities Often the return of gang members to the community results in increases in violent crime and drug trafficking in the area.[48]

Attempts made by criminal justice professionals to disrupt prison gangs by transferring their leaders and dangerous members to other prison systems have had little impact Gang members who are moved to new institutions with few or no gang members will often form new gangs, and gangs that lose a leader will likely generate a new one [49] In addition, as family members move near prisons to provide support for incarcerated relatives, gang associates are able to expand their jurisdictions and maintain criminal ties with the incarcerated member through family liaisons

HISPANIC GANGS

Hispanic gangs are not a new phenomenon in the United States, however, they have increasingly become a concern for law enforcement agencies in recent years The Hispanic population in the United States in 2003 was reported to be 39.9 million, an increase of 13 percent from the 2000 census [50] As a result of the continuous growth in the Hispanic population throughout the United States, Hispanic gang membership is also increasing The 2001 National Youth Gang Survey reported that 49 percent of all gang members were Hispanic/Latino, an increase of 2 percent from 1999 survey results [51 52] As Hispanic men and women migrate, both legally and illegally, to rural and urban areas in the United States, they are confronted by language challenges, limited employment options, and victimization by gangs already operating in the area. Faced with these obstacles, gang membership is often viewed as a viable option

As Hispanic gang membership rises throughout the United States, law enforcement pays it more attention More gang members are being arrested than ever before Those who enter the prison system often join together, creating an even stronger entity Prison officials report that Hispanic gangs that may have been rivals on the street are aligned in the prisons to combat other Hispanic or non-Latino gangs. Some of the strongest Hispanic prison gangs are the Mexican Mafia and the Texas Syndicate

Another aspect of Hispanic gang membership impacting law enforcement efforts concerns implications rising from illegal immigrant arrests and deportation. Deported individuals often maintain their ties to gangs in the United States, resulting in the extension of criminal enterprises into other countries Hispanic gang members find it easier to access drugs and weapons in their home countries and courier the items back to the United States rather than to conduct their operations within the United States U.S currency used to pay for drugs and weapons is easily exchanged and has a much higher value in many foreign countries

In addition, gangs identified and targeted by law enforcement may migrate to areas where law enforcement is unfamiliar with them and they are freer to continue their criminal activity Hispanic gang members take advantage of the language and cultural obstacles posed to law enforcement in areas where there has not been a very large Hispanic population in the past.

The following sections define and describe some of the most recent issues affecting law enforcement efforts to identify and dismantle Hispanic gangs.

Prominent Hispanic Gangs

Law enforcement agencies were asked to report the presence of several Hispanic gangs in their region, and the results are displayed in Table 4 Of the reporting agencies, more than 50 percent indicated that Los Sureños (Sur 13) was present in their region Nearly 40 percent of agencies reported moderate to high Sur 13 gang activity The presence of Sur 13 was reported in 87.8 percent of jurisdictions reporting in the Western region. Approximately 45 percent of law enforcement agencies also reported the presence of the Latin Kings, with 16 7 percent indicating moderate or high gang activity

Table 4. Hispanic Gang Presence

	Agencies Reporting Gang Presence		Agencies Reporting Moderate to High Activity	
Gang	N	%	N	%
Sur 13	241	53 0	176	39 5
Latin Kings	204	44 8	76	16.7
MS-13	145	31 9	55	12 1
18th Street	143	31 4	54	11 8
Norteños	125	27 5	64	14.5
La Raza	77	16.9	29	6.4

The identification and differentiation of Hispanic street gangs pose obstacles for law enforcement across the nation. These prominent street gangs are described briefly below

Sur 13

During the 1980s, California street gangs were divided into Sureños (Southerners) and Norteños (Northerners)—umbrella terms for Hispanic street gangs in California. These terms are used to distinguish whether the gang is from the northern or southern part of the state Southern gangs are closely associated with the Mexican Mafia and thus often use the number 13 in their gangs and tagging, as *M* is the 13th letter of the alphabet

As various southern California gang members migrated from the state, many began to unite under the name Sureño. Additionally, as a result of the gang's close connection to the Mexican Mafia, the group retained the use of the number 13 in its name. Thus, as gang members began to appear in the Southwest and on the East Coast, they referred to themselves as both Sur 13 and Los Sureños

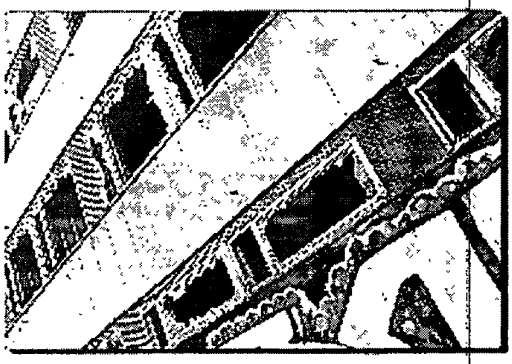
It is important to note that hundreds of Hispanic gangs identify with the Sureño philosophy and use the number 13 as part of their gang identifiers The presence of the number 13 does not necessarily indicate affiliation with the Mexican Mafia Claiming Sureño merely indicates that the gang resides or originated in southern California, in some cases the gang may not be from southern California but simply identifies with the Sureño gang style. Many Sureño gangs are rivals of each other. For example, Florencia 13 is a Sureño gang but is an enemy of MS-13 in some areas

Northern California street gangs are considered Norteños and use the number 14, as *N* is the 14th letter of the alphabet Norteño gangs are rivals of Sureño gangs, but just as Sureño gangs are not all aligned with each other, Norteño gangs are not necessarily aligned with other Norteños

California is redefining the ways that law enforcement traditionally considers Norteño and Sureño alliances and rivalries After observing increasing numbers of Sureño gangs from southern California migrating to northern California, law enforcement noted the following trends·

- Local northern California gangs, typically in conflict with each other over drug trafficking and territorial issues, are now collaborating in order to resist the Sureño gangs migrating from the south
- The Sureños migrating from the south are conflicting with their counterparts who reside in northern California because they believe they are more like Norteños than Sureños
- Hispanic gangs in northern California are negotiating with an outlaw motorcycle gang to acquire drugs in exchange for allegiance against another OMG, which has aligned with southern Hispanic gangs

In light of these trends, law enforcement must recognize that the terms *norteños* and *sureños* are no longer sufficient to describe California street gangs. When documenting gang members in their local areas, law enforcement must deliberately note not only an individual's gang affiliation but also where the individual is from and the gang's local allies and rivals



Sur 13 was reported to be present in every region and in 35 states across the country More than 50 percent of law enforcement respondents indicated the presence of Sur 13 in their jurisdictions, with 39.5 percent of agencies reporting moderate to high activity It must be noted that there are no national Los Sureños or Sur 13 hierarchical gangs While there may be loose connection among some gangs using the Los Sureños or Sur 13 name, most of these gangs are not connected to one another They simply may have latched onto the name for their local group from media sources or gang-connected relatives. They may not even be aware of other Sureños.

Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13)

MS-13, a primarily El Salvadoran street gang, originated in Los Angeles in the 1980s. Since then, the gang has successfully migrated from southern California to the East Coast, establishing a significant presence in Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, and New York MS-13 formed in the Rampart area of Los Angeles, which was heavily populated by Mexican-American gangs After being constantly victimized by the dominant Mexican gangs, El Salvadoran immigrants banded together for protection, thus enlarging their membership and force The group called itself Mara Salvatrucha, or MS, and as it grew in size, it aligned with the Mexican Mafia under the

Los Sureños umbrella Once aligned with the Mexican Mafia, the group incorporated the number 13 in its name MS-13, while maintaining independent leadership and organization, remains affiliated with the Mexican Mafia

The presence of MS-13 was reported in the jurisdictions of 145 law enforcement agencies across the country, although only 12.1 percent of respondents indicated that this gang had moderate to high activity. MS-13 was present in 31 states.

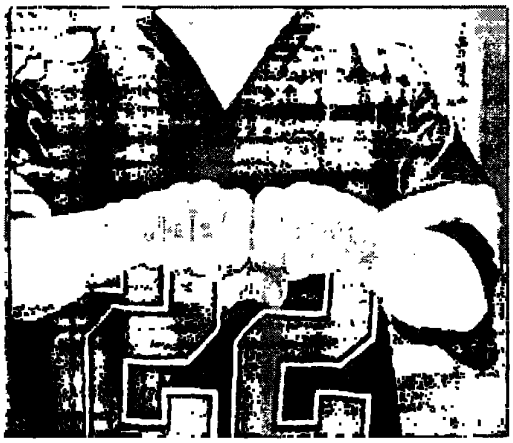
18th Street

18th Street, formed in the 1960s, is a Hispanic gang composed of individuals with mixed racial backgrounds.[53] One of the largest and oldest Hispanic gangs, 18th Street's acceptance of immigrants and its lack of racial barriers enabled this group to grow and expand substantially [54] Originating in Los Angeles, the gang has migrated up the West Coast and over the Midwest to the East Coast [55] 18th Street is calculated in its expansion and recruitment, reportedly recruiting in elementary and middle schools.[56] It is also known to have counterparts in Mexico and throughout Central America. 18th Street is known to maintain ties with the Mexican Mafia on the West Coast and to have rivalries with MS-13.[57]

Law enforcement officials reported activity by 18th Street in 31 4 percent of jurisdictions. Regionally, while only 22 percent of reporting agencies in the Northeast indicated the presence of 18th Street, 60.9 percent of law enforcement respondents from the West Coast reported its presence

Latin Kings

The Latin Kings, also known as the Almighty Latin King Nation (ALKN), formed in Chicago in the mid-1960s In the 1980s, after a lengthy power struggle with members of the Chicago faction, the Connecticut- and New York-based Latin Kings chapters separated and formed the Almighty Latin Charter Nation and the Almighty Latin King and Queen Nation (ALKQN), respectively Both regional factions have operated autonomously from the Chicago faction and abide by their own constitutions State contingencies generally exercise allegiance to one of these three major factions Gang membership consists predominately of Puerto Rican males, although individuals of other ethnicities—including Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, and South American—are allowed to become members. The Latin Kings have regional chapters across the Midwest, the East Coast, the central states, Texas, and California, with an estimated 25,000 to 50,000 members nationwide and nearly 20,000 members residing within Chicago alone In particular, the New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut regions are hotbeds for Latin Kings activity, including drug-related crime and bitter gang turf wars



Nearly half of reporting agencies—44 8 percent—documented the presence of the Latin Kings in their jurisdictions. Seventy percent of law enforcement respondents in the Northeast reported the presence of the Latin Kings, while 56 9 percent of respondents in the Midwest reported their presence

Migration of Sureños Into the Southwestern United States

Sureño gang members are migrating out of California into the southwestern part of the United States and have been well documented in Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas Information suggests that members of Sureño street gangs are migrating out of California as a result of prison transfers and to avoid the state's tough three-strikes laws. Once outside California, the members assimilate under the name Sureños or Sur 13 While some gangs continue to pay taxes to the Mexican Mafia and assist in its drug distribution, others cut ties to California and operate as a local gang It is not uncommon for gangs in these other states to form using the name Sureños—when they have no ties to California other than an affinity for the name—so they can bask under the reputation of the Sureños style.

The migration of Sureño gangs from California poses a threat in terms of drug trafficking and violence because of their extensive criminal networks. These networks not only facilitate the expansion of drug-trafficking enterprises, they also allow gangs to easily replace local leaders in the event of arrest or death. Law enforcement should closely monitor their criminal activity and their contact with gang members in California, both on the street and in correctional institutions

Identifying and Distinguishing Hispanic Gangs

The ability to identify and distinguish Hispanic gangs and cliques creates a unique challenge for law enforcement; however, it is essential for anticipating criminal activity and rivalries as well as for preventing gang expansion and recruitment.

For example, while Sur 13 and MS-13 street gangs use similar identifiers in their tags and tattoos, the gangs differ greatly in composition, typical modus operandi, and allies and rivals. In order to effectively target and dismantle violent criminal enterprises, law enforcement officials must be aware of the subtle differences between these groups

Gang Coordination and Alliances

Recent information suggests that law enforcement officials are seeing an increased effort on the part of some Hispanic gangs to organize their members into a criminal enterprise. The different ALKQN cliques in the New York area came together several years ago under one leader in New York and attempted to align with one of their largest rivals, the Bloods. More recently, information gleaned by law enforcement indicates that MS-13 clique leaders from the United States and Central America have been holding meetings in an attempt to coordinate all MS-13 members under one leadership umbrella. There has also been some speculation that MS-13 leaders would like to bring 18th Street and MS-13 together to become the strongest Hispanic gang in Central America and the United States Recent violence occurring between MS-13 and 18th Street and within the gangs themselves in several jurisdictions indicates that attempts to align the two gangs have not yet been successful.

Although some Hispanic gangs have developed extensive networks, most Hispanic gangs are not coordinated. Hispanic gang behavior in one jurisdiction may not carry over to another Members adapt to the area in which they operate, and this may differ from location to location

Foreign Law Enforcement Efforts to Combat Gangs

Hispanic gangs have also become the focus of numerous law enforcement efforts abroad In Central America, approximately 30,000 gang members, particularly in Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala, are being targeted for a major law enforcement crackdown Many of these members are affiliated with MS-13 and 18th Street, two of the most prominent gangs in Central and North America. In August 2003, Honduras implemented anti-gang laws, making it illegal to participate in a gang formed to perpetuate criminal activity. The penalty carries a maximum prison sentence of 12 years. El Salvador declared a state of emergency, enacting an anti-gang initiative in July 2003 While similar legislation is pending enactment in Guatemala, all three countries have initiated anti-gang operations.

As a result of the Central-American anti-gang initiatives, the United States may become fertile ground for international gangs fleeing newly established or reformed anti-gang laws While the United States is aggressive in deporting convicted gang members of international origin, gang members are reportedly using the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Temporary Protective Status (TPS) to remain in the United States and avoid gang prosecution in Central America

TPS was established for Central-American nationals as a result of the natural disasters occurring in Honduras and El Salvador The status allows migrants from these two areas to remain in the United States for a designated period of time and apply for work Under TPS, a migrant can only be deported if convicted of a felony or more than one misdemeanor

El Salvadoran nationals were recently granted a TPS extension until March 2005, while the extended TPS for Honduran nationals is scheduled to end in January 2005.

FEMALE GANGS

Young women continue to take active roles in gangs Although the number of female gangs is increasing, street gangs are still predominately made up of males. The 2000 National Youth Gang Survey revealed that only 6 percent of the nation's gang members were female.[58] All-female gangs continue to be an anomaly, as most female gang members tend to be affiliated with male gangs In fact, 2000 National Youth Gang Survey respondents reported that 39 percent of all youth gangs had female members, however, 82 percent of respondents reported that none of the gangs in their jurisdictions were predominately composed of females.[59]

The responsibilities of females in gangs are evolving While they continue to assume the traditionally subordinate functions of providing emotional, physical, and sexual support to male gang members, females are taking more active roles in gangs, as some female gang members have graduated from affiliate status to membership.

This elevation in status also involves an elevation in risk. Females now assist in the movement of drugs and weapons for male gang members and gather intelligence from rival gangs [60] Others are committing drug sales, robberies, assaults, and drive-by shootings on behalf of male gang members Respondents to the 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment Survey reported that female gang members in their jurisdictions most often

- Assist male gang members in committing crimes;
- Carry drugs and weapons and provide safe houses for contraband,
- Commit assaults and larcenies and intimidate other female students in schools;
- Engage in prostitution, and
- Engage in drug sales, vandalism, and credit card and identity theft

Although female gang members can be just as violent as their male counterparts, violence committed by female gang members is still relatively low compared to that of male gang members One Chicago-based study found that although females in gangs may fight as much as males, they use weapons less frequently and are less likely to kill [61] A large number of fights and assaults involving female gang members occur within the school setting

Some females commit violent crimes to gain status and prove themselves worthy of the gang. However, male gang members rarely grant women the same power or status as men in the gang There have also been numerous reports of females being sexually exploited by males within the gang Female gang members are often "sexed in" (rather than "jumped in") to the gang, an initiation ritual that involves sex with several gang members, often for an extended period of time [62]

Although female gang membership in male-dominated gangs is increasing, the prevalence of predominately female gangs continues to be a rare phenomenon. The most recent data from the 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment reveals that 10 percent of law enforcement agencies are now reporting exclusively female gangs Female gang members are generally more inclined to commit property crimes and drug offenses, and most of their assaults and fights occur within a school setting and without weapons Although female gang members commit relatively little violent crime, violence among girls in gangs is on the rise, and law enforcement should be concerned about their increasing brutality and their roles as weapons carriers Traditionally, female gangs have received less attention from researchers and law enforcement, and most efforts have focused on intervention programs designed to provide an alternate refuge for girls attempting to escape abusive environments. Furthermore, law enforcement officials are less likely to recognize or stop female gang members, and they have experienced difficulty in identifying female involvement in gang-related activity

GANGS AND INDIAN COUNTRY

The consistent growth of the gang subculture as a national phenomenon has touched communities of every size across the country While still perceived by some to be an urban-based social problem, gang activity has steadily affected parts of the country that were once believed to be immune from this behavior. Such is the case with Indian Country and the emergence of the gang subculture not only on reservations across the country but among certain urban-based Native Americans as well

Although most youth in Indian Country are not involved in gang activity, those who are involved tend to be young, primarily between the ages of 12 and 24 These youth become involved in gangs either by connecting to existing gang structures or by starting their own gang sets. Gang behavior is more about group cohesiveness, predatory activities, and a party atmosphere than it is about organized criminal behavior with a profit motive

Most gangs in Indian Country are small and autonomous. Structurally, leadership tends to be decentralized, with collective decision making the common theme Although some of these gangs will claim turf, gang alignment tends to revolve around which gang is perceived to be the most influential at any given time.

Native-American gangs will often take on the characteristics of urban street gangs in terms of signs, symbols, and other forms of gang representation While some gangs identify themselves by names unique to the Indian culture or a specific area (such as Shanob Mob, Nomadz, Wild Boyz, Native Mob, Native Outlawz, and Dark Side Family), others align themselves with nationally recognized gangs (such as Indian Bloods, Native Gangster Disciples, Indian Gangster Disciples, Native Mob Vice Lords, Igloo Housing Crips, and Insane Cobra Folk Nation). This national affiliation, often evidenced by body markings, is not indicative of a relationship between Native-American gangs and

other gang structures; rather, it is utilized for purposes of notoriety and intimidation.

Most gang crimes occurring in Indian Country are property-based, such as graffiti and vandalism; however, the extent of violent crime connected to gang activity is increasing.[63] Over the past decade, Indian reservations across the country have increasingly reported escalating levels of gang violence, as well as drug usage and distribution. Although not all of the violence is connected to gang activity, gangs are considered one of the factors in the escalating violence.

When studying the growth of gangs in Indian Country, it is essential to consider the illicit drug trade. The remote nature of many reservations is conducive to the proliferation of methamphetamine labs, the growth of marijuana, and the distribution of a wide variety of illegal substances The proximity of many reservations to the Mexican border also provides easy access to these drugs, a fact only exacerbated by the extent of alcohol and drug abuse already occurring in many parts of Indian Country

Female involvement in Indian-Country gangs is another important consideration Twenty percent of females are engaged in some level of gang activity, compared to the national rate of 6 percent for female gang involvement [64] The significance of female involvement must not be underestimated, as gang-involved females are allowing themselves to be physically and sexually abused and will sometimes escalate their own behavior to prove they can be as violent or antisocial as their male counterparts.

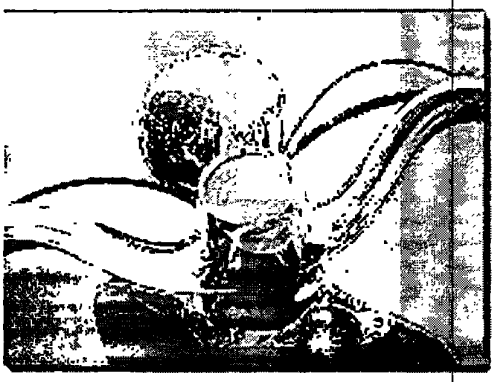
Gang activity among Native Americans in prison is increasing due to the general influence of gang activity in correctional facilities as well as the tendency for some Native-American gang members to feel a sense of pride in serving time. The rate of prison incarceration per capita among Native Americans is approximately 38 percent higher than the national rate, and the number of youth in custody in the Federal Bureau of Prisons has increased 50 percent since 1994 [65] This trend may account for the emergence of Native-American prison gangs, such as Indian Brotherhood, Red Brotherhood, Indian Posse, Warlords, Bear Paw Warrior Society, and similar structures Native-American gang members released from these facilities often return to their communities and bring the gang lifestyle with them, contributing to the growth of the gang problem

The absence of an aggressive gang-prosecution initiative in Indian Country has allowed gang activity to flourish and grow Law enforcement in Indian Country lacks a comprehensive and sustained law enforcement model that emphasizes identification of active gang members and directed enforcement activity to deal with the behavior A lack of gang intelligence, including gang trends, membership numbers, and alliances and rivalries, places law enforcement officials at a disadvantage, as they are unable to have a clear understanding of the depth of the gang problem Additionally, many Native-American youth involved in gang- and drug-related crime perceive that little or no retribution for criminal behavior will occur at the tribal court level

An increasing number of tribes have recognized the need to curb the growth of the gang problem over the past several years, despite the historic denial of the presence of gangs in Indian Country Efforts have been made to educate tribal authorities and educators in gang recognition and effective resource allocation Finally, some tribes are returning to the traditional practice of banishment as a means of dealing with gang and criminal behavior Although used by only a handful of tribes across the country, the practice is an alternative available to tribes as they seek solutions to deal with the growing problem of gang activity.

OUTLAW MOTORCYCLE GANGS

Outlaw motorcycle gangs have been in existence for more than 50 years The growth of OMGs and their increasing criminal endeavors have made them the subject of numerous criminal investigations by law enforcement. These criminal activities include, but are not limited to, murder, assault, kidnapping, prostitution, money laundering, weapons trafficking, motorcycle and motorcycle-parts theft, intimidation, extortion, arson, and the production, smuggling, transportation, and distribution of drugs. While drug trafficking is still the primary source of income for OMGs, the other criminal activities represent an increasing source of funds



Each of the major OMGs—the Hells Angels, Bandidos, Outlaws, and Pagans—has been identified as involved in

murder, bombings, extortion, arson, and assault The Hells Angels, Bandidos, and Outlaws have also been involved in weapons trafficking, prostitution, money laundering, explosives violations, motorcycle and motorcycle-parts theft, intimidation, insurance fraud, kidnapping, robbery, theft, stolen property, counterfeiting, and contraband smuggling (see Table 5)

Individual club members are also involved in all types of criminal activity apart from the activities of the club In some cases, the club sanctions these criminal activities, while in other cases, the criminal activities are carried out by individual OMG members on their own In many cases, individual members conduct the same type of criminal activity conducted by the club

Table 5. Criminal Activities of OMGs[66]

Criminal Activities	Hells Angels	Bandidos	Outlaws	Pagans
Drugs				
Production	x	x	x	
Smuggling	x	x	x	
Transportation	x	x	x	
Distribution	x	x	x	x
Weapons Trafficking	x	x	x	
Murder	x	x	x	x
Prostitution	x	x	x	
Money Laundering	x	x	x	
Explosives Violation	x	x	x	
Bombings	x	x	x	x
Motorcycle and Motorcycle-Parts Theft	x	x	x	
Intimidation	x	x	x	
Extortion	x	x	x	x
Arson	x	x	x	x
Assault	x	x	x	x
Insurance Fraud	x	x	x	
Kidnapping	x	x	x	
Robbery	x	x	x	
Theft	x	x	x	
Stolen Property	x	x	x	
Counterfeiting	x	x	x	
Contraband Smuggling	x	x	x	

While OMGs have long been involved in violence and drugs, their ties to organized crime represent a relatively new phenomenon In addition to reports that OMGs are performing some menial tasks for organized crime, there are also indications that OMGs may be attempting to take over many of the activities of traditional OC entities

Drug Trafficking

OMGs are involved in the trafficking of multiple types of drugs, and specific drug activity tends to depend on the geographic region—that is, the distribution of drugs in a given geographic area reflects the preferences of the drug consumers in that area. For example, while marijuana is used in all parts of the country, the demand for methamphetamine is primarily in the West, and cocaine demand is primarily in the East Nevertheless, OMGs as a club and OMG members individually will generally deal in any drug that provides a source of income

The Hells Angels are considered primary producers and distributors of illegal drugs within the United States They have been identified as involved with marijuana, methamphetamine, cocaine, hashish, heroin, LSD, PCP, and diverted pharmaceuticals [67]

The Bandidos have used their worldwide network of chapters to distribute marijuana, cocaine, and methamphetamine. Frequently, the drugs originate outside the United States and are smuggled into the country via a multitude of different methods They cross the border at manned border crossings while hidden in vehicles and at other points along the unprotected border The retail distribution of drugs is normally handled by hang-arounds, prospects, and support clubs, with Bandido members normally distributing at the wholesale level.[68]

The Outlaws are major producers and distributors of methamphetamine, although they are also involved in the transportation and distribution of marijuana, cocaine, MDMA, and prescription drugs Their involvement in drugs has been long-standing, and two of their former international presidents, Henry Bowman

and Frank Wheeler, were imprisoned for drug distribution, among multiple other charges

The Pagans are involved in the distribution of marijuana, methamphetamine, and PCP in the United States Generally, they are not directly involved in the retail distribution of drugs, preferring instead to use puppet clubs and female associates to handle retail distribution.[69] Successful law enforcement efforts against the Pagans have reduced their drug-trafficking activities, however, a resurgence of drug activity by the Pagans to cover the cost of the escalating conflict with the Hells Angels is possible [70] Much of this increased activity would likely be carried out by puppet clubs and newly recruited members

Outlaw Motorcycle Gang Expansion

Violence among OMGs has escalated. In the United States, this is largely due to the efforts of the major clubs, particularly the Hells Angels, to expand their territory and establish new clubs Expansion efforts involve not only adding members to existing clubs but also adding chapters in new areas. Frequently, one club attempts to move into an area that another club claims as its territory, and conflicts ultimately arise.

Table 6. OMG Worldwide Chapters Summary[71]

	Hells Angels	Bandidos	Outlaws	Pagans
U S. Chapters	62	80	67	41
Canadian Chapters	35	5	8	0
Rest of the World	121	67	59	0
Total Worldwide	218	152	134	41

The major OMGs have been in an expansion mode for the past several years. As of 2005, Hells Angels chapters numbered 218—more than double the number seen in the previous five years. Between 1999 and 2000, the Bandidos more than tripled their size. Although they have only 152 chapters, their estimated membership of more than 2,000 makes them a potential threat to surpass the Hells Angels in size The Outlaws added 28 chapters in the United States between 1999 and 2002 Their 1,200 members make them third in size, however, arrests of Outlaws members in Canada and the United States have severely crippled the club. The Pagans are attempting to add and retain members, but due to recent arrests and the defection of current members, their numbers have been falling It is possible they may fall below the Sons of Silence, currently ranked fifth in size in the United States.

In the ongoing turf battles between rival motorcycle clubs, the major clubs are aligning against the Hells Angels. In general, the Hells Angels have adversarial relationships with the Pagans and the Mongols and clash over territory with the Bandidos and the Outlaws The Hells Angels were at odds with the Outlaws as a result of recent expansion of Outlaws into Hells Angels–controlled states, including Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and New York.

All of the major OMGs have puppet clubs that serve as a recruitment source and as foot soldiers in conducting criminal activities. The Hells Angels' principal puppet club is the Red Devils, the Outlaws have the Black Pistons and the Forsaken-Few, and the Pagans have the Tribe and the Blitzkrieg and Thunderguards (in Maryland). The Bandidos have several support clubs, including the Amigos, Pistoleros, LA Riders, Hombres, and Hermanos. Another recruitment source for OMGs is former street gang members. For example, the Mongols have been known to recruit new members out of street gangs and have them buy motorcycles subsequent to their OMG membership

Recent intelligence reports from California, however, indicate that the Mongols may be losing members due to a "green light," or hit, placed on them by the Mexican Mafia. Intelligence reports state that the Mongols are abandoning their patches and may be returning to the street gangs from which they were recruited.

COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO GANGS

Community

Gangs are no longer a problem limited to major city centers, their influence has contaminated the surrounding suburban areas and spread to rural communities The 2002 National Youth Gang Survey estimates that there were approximately 731,500 gang members and 21,500 gangs in the United States in 2002 [72] Overall, all cities with a population of 250,000 or more and 87 percent of cities with a population between 100,000 and 249,999 reported youth gang problems [73] As gangs migrate, they bring with them the violence, intimidation, and crime associated with their lifestyle For this reason, gangs are a problem not only for law enforcement, but for parents, educators, youth, and concerned community members as well

Unfortunately, not all communities are willing to acknowledge gang problems when they exist for fear that it will reflect poorly on the community or city as a whole. Approximately 31 percent of law enforcement officials surveyed reported that their communities either denied the problem, had no response, or expressed no interest in it. Several officials added that their communities did not respond to the gang problem until high-profile gang-related incidents and homicides escalated

Although schools were often singled out as the most frequent institutions denying gang problems, they were also the primary institutions offering gang-prevention or intervention programs in communities addressing the problem Of the law enforcement officials surveyed, approximately 69 percent reported a positive response from the community regarding gangs. The most frequent response by the community was the implementation of a gang prevention or intervention program Several programs were mentioned multiple times in responses to the 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment Survey, including Gang Resistance Education And Training, Drug Abuse Resistance Education, and Gang Prevention/ Intervention Through Targeted Outreach, sponsored by the Boys & Girls Clubs of America

For those communities looking for ways to address the gang problem, the Texas Attorney General provides three useful recommendations·

- **Acknowledge the problem.** According to the Texas Attorney General, "Denial is never beneficial You cannot solve a problem until you admit that it exists "[74]
- **Assess the problem.** Gangs are found in communities of every size. The Texas Attorney General advises, "Before you can begin to find solutions to your own situation, you must understand it. How many gangs and gang members are there? What kinds of gangs are present? Do you have an emerging or chronic gang problem? . . To gather this information, you must establish cooperative relations among schools, police, and community organizations."[75]
- **Act on the problem.** The Texas Attorney General says to send "a clear message to the gangs in your community that gang activity will *not* go unanswered Call neighborhood meetings for citizens concerned about gangs Involve the media. Clean up graffiti—and keep it cleaned up "[76]

Communities that are interested in assessing the extent and level of gang activity locally or in adopting a collaborative model for key agencies to work together to address gang violence can find an assessment and implementation guide at *http //www iir com/nygc/acgp/ default htm*

It is essential that community members recognize gangs as a growing threat, regardless of the size or location of their towns and cities Acknowledgment and action are the only tools communities have to respond to the violence and intimidation accompanying gangs in their migration across the country

Law Enforcement

Often in concert with community efforts, law enforcement officials have responded to gangs in numerous ways, ranging from school resource officer programs, after-school programs, and informational meetings in schools and communities to "zero tolerance" enforcement policies, aggressive patrols, and gang injunctions

Police departments have also participated in multiagency task forces as an effective way to combat gang violence Whether organized on a state, regional, or federal level, task forces allow for immediate information sharing, increased resources to collect and analyze gang intelligence, and additional enforcement capacity in a specific region. Task forces have allowed agencies with differing strengths to collaborate and dismantle major gangs.

Unfortunately, due to decreases in funding and political urgency, many gang task forces have been disbanded Only about half of the law enforcement officials surveyed reported that their agencies currently participate in a multiagency task force However, many agencies reported participation in gang investigators associations, which hold meetings and conferences that facilitate information sharing.

The sharing of gang intelligence is an issue of great concern throughout all levels of law enforcement Usually, the most effective sharing of information takes place informally between individual law enforcement officers The problems endemic in sharing information among the many federal law enforcement agencies exist to a large degree within some local law enforcement agencies Gang, narcotics, homicide, and other units within municipal police departments must ensure that intelligence is communicated department-wide. In addition, law enforcement administrators need to recognize that the gang problem transcends geographic borders, making it essential that gang investigators meet regularly with their

colleagues from other jurisdictions and receive advanced training at seminars. Because of the violent nature of gang members, both inside prisons and in communities, the sharing of information among criminal justice professionals has become an issue of public safety NAGIA strongly recommends that all law enforcement agencies consider membership in their local RISS center to facilitate the sharing of gang-related intelligence through the RISS National Gang Database, conferences, and information sharing meetings

The response to gangs posed by community members and law enforcement will determine the success or failure of a gang. Denial and neglect will foster the growth of gangs and allow them to establish a resilient organizational structure, making prosecution more difficult It is clear that many communities are ignoring the problem in the hopes that it will quietly go away or bypass their region However, it is also clear that many communities are meeting the challenge with prevention, intervention, and enforcement

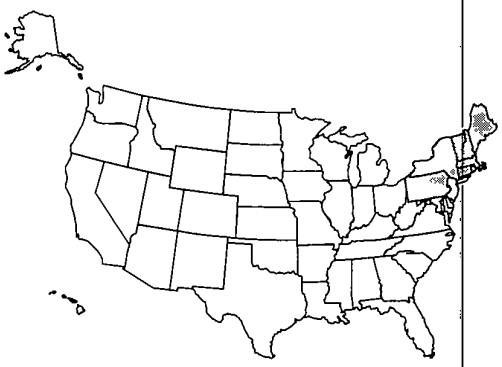
NORTHEASTERN REGION

General Trends

Wes Daily, President of the East Coast Gang Investigators Association, relates the general feeling of gang investigators across the Northeastern region when he states

> Gangs are growing. Seldom has a day gone by without some television, radio, or newspaper headline referring to gang activity With the growing population of undocumented persons in the Northeastern region, gangs from Mexico and Central America are increasing Drug dealing continues to be a main method of generating income. Gangs are growing, reorganizing, and joining together to form hybrid groups The result is that in the Northeastern region, gangs are a serious and constant issue that impacts all communities [77]

In the Northeast, 51 law enforcement agencies documented trends and patterns in gang activity Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania were among the states that provided insight for this regional assessment

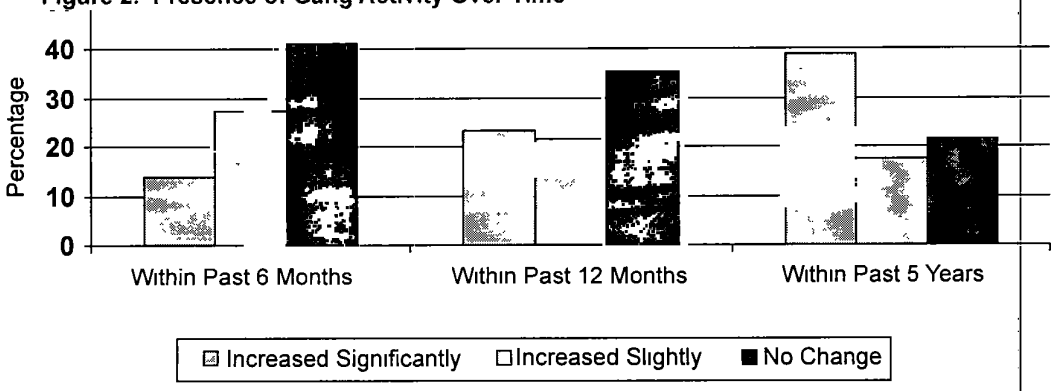


Over the past five years, the Northeastern region has seen an increase in gang activity Surveys indicate that over the past five years, 56 8 percent of responding law enforcement agencies saw an increase in gang activity, with 39 2 percent reporting a significant increase (see Figure 2). Within the past six months, 41 2 percent of these agencies continued to report increases in gang activity, with 13 7 percent reporting a significant increase

Gang Presence and Migration

Law enforcement agencies indicate a wide-ranging scope of gang presence in the area While many of the gangs in this region are largely neighborhood-based, several have been documented as having a national affiliation. Table 7 illustrates the large role that neighborhood-based drug-trafficking groups play in gang activity in the Northeastern region Intelligence reporting confirms that many gangs in this region are either homegrown or are local versions of national gangs, which assume the gang name but are not connected to any national leadership or structure However, some nationally recognized gangs have a strong presence in many states in the Northeast—especially the Bloods and Latin Kings. Recent surveys conducted by the New England State Police Information Network (NESPIN) substantiate this information.

Figure 2. Presence of Gang Activity Over Time



National Gangs

MS-13

According to Wes Daily, the Northeastern region has several top priorities with respect to gangs. With growing numbers of undocumented persons in the region, investigators are seeing increases in Mexican and Central-American gangs in Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware One of the more prominent gangs, MS-13 is recognized by investigators as the most fearless [78]

Intelligence indicates that in 2002, MS-13 members moved "multikilogram quantities of powdered cocaine, crack cocaine, and marijuana throughout the greater New York City metropolitan area and New Jersey "[79] In the current survey, officials in the Northeastern region reported a relatively low level of activity by MS-13; however, approximately 43 percent of officials in New York and New Jersey alone reported the presence of MS-13 in their jurisdictions, consistent with reporting that the gang is particularly active in these states

MS-13 has also been found to be a serious threat in Massachusetts.[80] This gang, with between 75 and 100 members in the state, has an affinity for excessive violence and little respect for law enforcement.[81]

Table 7. Gang Presence in the Northeastern Region

Level of Gang Involvement	High (%)	Moderate (%)	Low (%)	Not Applicable/ Unknown (%)
Neighborhood-Based Drug-Trafficking Groups and Crews	23 5	31 4	7.8	37 3
Bloods	21 6	21 6	17.6	39.2
Latin Kings	17 6	19 6	31.4	31.4
Hells Angels (OMG)	11 8	19 6	19.6	49 1
United Blood Nation	11 8	13 7	15 7	58 9
Crips	9 8	27 5	31 4	31 4
MS-13	7 8	3 9	11.8	76 5
Pagans (OMG)	5 9	19 6	17.6	56 9
Asian Gangs	5 9	5 9	23.5	64 8

Bloods

Wes Daily reports that the Bloods continue to grow in the Northeastern region under several names, including United Blood Nation (UBN) and Gangster Killer Bloods [82] The similarity in names creates difficulty for law enforcement in distinguishing between the East Coast and West Coast gangs sharing this name Although the two versions of the gang share a loose cultural affinity, there is little intelligence indicating extensive structural links between them.[83] In fact, many East Coast versions of the Bloods, including UBN, are considered to be more structured than their West Coast counterparts.

Intelligence reports estimate UBN membership at 5,000 members in New York City and 7,000 nationwide. In the current survey, 26 percent of law enforcement officials in the Northeast reported a moderate or high level of UBN activity, and 40 percent of officials reported a moderate or high level of Bloods activity

Crips

The Crips have established a substantial presence in the Northeastern region as well, partially due to the gang's multiethnic makeup [84] The NDIC reports that "Crip sets obtain cocaine, heroin, and marijuana from New York City–based Dominican criminal groups and cocaine, heroin, marijuana, and PCP from Los Angeles–based Crip sets "[85] In the current survey, roughly 40 percent of law enforcement officials in the Northeastern region reported moderate or high activity by the Crips, with about 30 percent more reporting low activity, consistent with intelligence indicating Crip drug smuggling and violence in this region. In Connecticut, law enforcement reports a small presence of Crips, and there is no information to indicate whether these groups are affiliated with the original Los Angeles groups or are independent sets.[86]

Latin Kings

The Latin Kings are struggling to find and maintain leadership following the arrest of their leader; however, New Jersey and eastern Pennsylvania are reporting continued growth of the Latin Kings and the Chicago influence.[87] Approximately 40 percent of the law

enforcement officials in the current survey reported moderate or high activity by the Latin Kings, and 30 percent reported low activity, consistent with previous reporting. New York and New Jersey have specifically been identified as having heavy Latin Kings activity, and within these two states, approximately 86 percent of officials reported the presence of the Latin Kings NESPIN survey results indicated that the Latin Kings in Connecticut have a widespread presence within the state, with numbers ranging from 40 to more than 300 active members [88] Latin Kings members active in Maine are reportedly migrating from areas in Massachusetts and Connecticut [89]

Hells Angels

Gang intelligence indicates that in 2003 the Hells Angels had developed several new chapters in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeastern regions, including Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania These territories were traditionally considered the domain of the Pagans motorcycle gang, the Hells Angels' rivals.

Approximately 31 percent of officials reported moderate or high activity by the Hells Angels outlaw motorcycle gang in the Northeastern region, and about 20 percent reported low activity Similarly, 50 percent of agencies in New York and Pennsylvania reported some level of Hells Angels activity

Asian Gangs

Although intelligence on Asian gangs and criminal enterprises points to the West Coast as the "stronghold of Asian organized crime activity,"[90] it also indicates the presence of Asian gangs in New York City and Connecticut [91] Overall, law enforcement officials in the Northeastern region reported a low level of Asian gang activity; however, 30 percent of agencies in New York and Connecticut indicated the presence of Asian gangs

The gangs listed below were present in the Northeastern region but were reported to have a low level of activity [92]

Three of the gangs—Los Sureños, 18th Street, and La Raza—are Hispanic gangs known to be active in the Western region The Skinheads are also primarily active on the West Coast. The Black Gangster Disciples and the Gangster Disciples are both native to the Midwestern region

- Black Gangster Disciples
- Gangster Disciples
- Skinheads
- 18th Street
- La Raza
- Outlaws
- Sur 13

The following gangs would not be expected to be active in the Northeast, as they are primarily based in the Midwestern and Western regions and, in fact, were not reported to have a significant presence in the Northeastern region.[93]

- Almighty P Stone Nation
- Bandidos
- Border Brothers
- La Nuestra Familia
- Mexican Mafia
- Norteños
- Texas Mexican Mafia
- Texas Syndicate
- Vice Lords

Drug Trends

Gangs in the Northeastern region were reported to have significant involvement in the distribution of street-level drugs, with nearly 61 percent of agencies reporting moderate to high activity While the level of involvement of gangs in wholesale distribution was not as high, 25.5 percent of reporting agencies rated the level of activity as moderate

Each agency was also asked to document the level of gang activity in the distribution of specific drugs At least 50 percent of the reporting agencies indicated that gangs were involved in the distribution of the following illegal narcotics. cocaine (powdered and crack), heroin, methamphetamine, marijuana, and MDMA Gangs in the Northeast appear to be most heavily involved in the distribution of crack cocaine, powdered cocaine, heroin, and marijuana. The Northeastern region is particularly vulnerable to drug distribution by gangs because of the region's compact nature and its well-developed transportation infrastructure.[94] New York City is a primary hub for the distribution and transportation of drugs in the region Drugs can be moved through the region via road, air, or sea and readily concealed in the high volumes of transport vehicles that move through the different cities [95]

Table 8. Level of Gang Involvement in Drug Distribution (by Drug Type)

Level of Gang Involvement	High (%)	Moderate (%)	Low (%)	None/ Unknown (%)
Street Sales	39 2	21 6	17 6	17.7
Wholesale	15 7	25 5	25.5	33 3
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Powdered Cocaine	29.4	23 5	25.5	21.6
Crack Cocaine	41 2	11 8	25 5	21.6
Heroin	29 4	15 7	19.6	35.3
Methamphetamine	5.9	11 8	35 3	47.0
Marijuana	33.3	23 5	11.8	31.4
MDMA	3.9	27 5	27.5	41.1

Cocaine and heroin are readily available throughout the region. Colombian and Dominican drug-trafficking organizations (DTOs) and criminal enterprises are the primary transporters of cocaine into this region [96]
New York is the largest market for cocaine in the country, serving as a distribution center for most of the Great Lakes, the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic, and the Southeast [97] The Colombian and Dominican DTOs act as the wholesale distributors of the cocaine.[98] Street gangs, such as Neta, the Latin Kings, MS-13, and the Bloods, are involved in cocaine distribution at the retail level [99] South-American heroin is brought into the country by Colombian DTOs. Dominican criminal groups are the primary wholesale dealers of heroin, and they are also the dominant distributor at the retail level [100] Jamaicans are among the most dominant distributors of marijuana in the region, although no single group dominates at any distribution level.[101] Street gangs are involved in much of the distribution at the retail level.[102]

UBN, with approximately 5,000 members in the New York City metropolitan area, is heavily involved in the distribution of cocaine, heroin, and marijuana in New York City [103] While locations in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania remain primary distribution points, UBN has expanded distribution into Connecticut and Massachusetts. 18th Street has a prominent role in the distribution of cocaine, heroin, and marijuana in New Jersey [104] MS-13 and the Crips also have notable involvement in the drug distribution for this region

The NDIC 2003 National Drug Threat Survey (NDTS) found that OMG involvement in drug distribution in the Northeast, while notable, was lower than the involvement of street gangs.[105] Overall, 10 2 percent of agencies responding to the 2003 NDTS reported that OMG involvement in drug distribution in the Northeast was moderate to high [106]

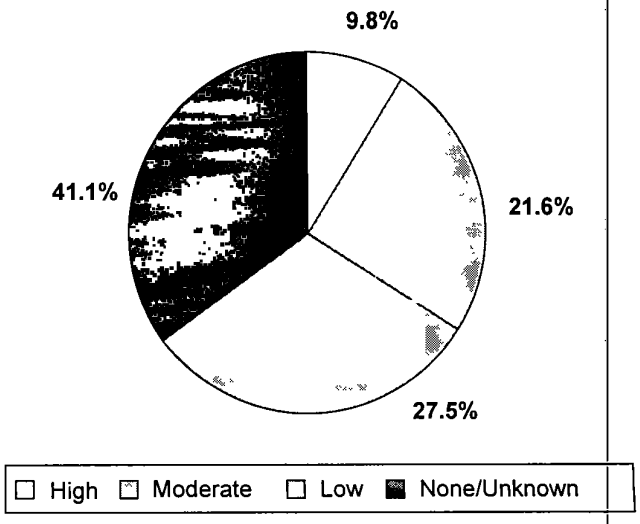
Methamphetamine and marijuana were the most common drugs with which OMGs were associated in the region.

Criminal Activity

Gang-related crime and violence—especially activity associated with drug trafficking and distribution—are significant issues across every region of the United States. In the Northeast, law enforcement agencies reported that gangs were involved in more than 58 9 percent of crime in their jurisdictions, with 31.4 percent indicating a moderate or high involvement

Gangs were more likely to be involved in several different types of crime. The highest involvement of gangs in crime occurred with vandalism and graffiti, firearms possession, assault, and homicide (see Table 9) Gangs were reported to be involved in as much as 62.7 percent of crime associated with vandalism or graffiti Respondents

Figure 3. Overall Gang Involvement in Crimes



indicated a high level of gang activity related to intimidation and extortion in only 5 9 percent of cases.

The 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment attempted to determine the impact of firearm use in the commission of crime by gang members Law enforcement agencies were asked to estimate how often gangs used firearms while committing specific crimes. More than one-third (39 2 percent) of respondents said gangs almost always used firearms in the commission of a homicide, and 23 5 percent respondents said firearms were almost always used when the crime was felonious assault

Table 9. Level of Gang Involvement in Crime (by Type of Crime)

Level of Gang Involvement	High (%)	Moderate (%)	Low (%)	None/ Unknown (%)
Firearms Possession	23 5	13 7	19 6	43.2
Vandalism and Graffiti	23 5	25.5	13 7	37 3
Felonious Assault	21 6	21 6	21.6	35.2
Homicide	15 7	11 8	21.6	51 0
Burglary	9.8	21 6	19 6	49 0
Firearms Trafficking	9 8	19 6	17.6	52 9
Auto Theft	7 8	23 5	27 5	41 1
Intimidation and Extortion	5.9	15 7	31 4	44.0
Firearms Burglary	5.9	13 7	19 6	60.8

Table 10. Use of Firearms by Gang Members in the Commission of a Crime

	Almost Always (%)	Sometimes (%)	Almost Never (%)	Not Applicable/ Unknown (%)
Homicide	39 2	9 8	5 9	45.1
Felonious Assault	23.5	29 4	11 8	35.2
Wholesale	19.6	27.5	15 7	37.2
Street Sales	17.6	41.2	13 7	27.4
Intimidation and Extortion	17.6	27.5	15.7	39.2
Carjacking	13 7	15.7	15.7	54 9

Overall, Northeast investigators responding to the 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment specifically noted the following gang trends in their region that had an impact on communities and law enforcement efforts:

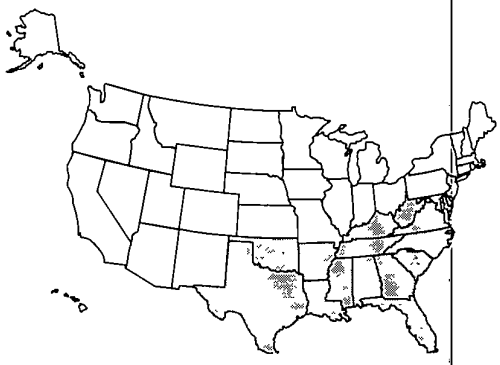
- Increase of incidents of gang-related violence and drug trafficking on Indian reservations,[107]
- Gangs disrupting schools,[108]
- Community fear and witness intimidation,
- Increases in crime in smaller and more rural communities,[109]
- Lack of respect by gang members for the community and law enforcement, and
- Denial of gang presence by the community.

SOUTHERN REGION

General Trends

Responses from law enforcement in the Southern region of the United States included the overriding themes of fear, intimidation, and increases in crime and graffiti. Randy Crank, President of the Virginia Gang Investigators Association, stated that "the quality of life is decreasing where the rise of gang activity is increasing."[110]

From the Southern region, 173 law enforcement agencies from 15 states provided insight into



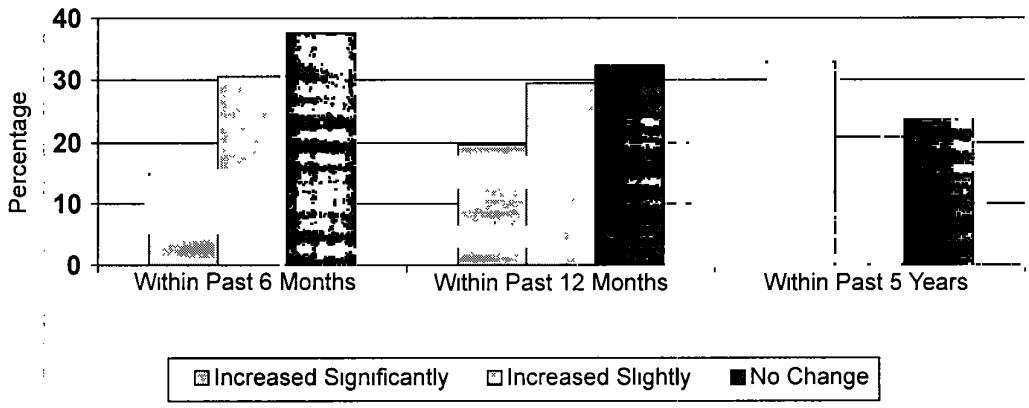
gang activity While results varied from state to state, several overall trends and patterns were identified More than 50 percent of agencies responding to the 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment reported an increase in the presence of gangs over the past five years Even within the past six months, 45 6 percent of agencies reported at least a slight increase in the presence of gangs

The following sections further document the trends in migration, drug trafficking, and criminal enterprises identified from information received from law enforcement agencies

Gang Presence and Migration

Gangs in the Southern region of the United States claim both neighborhood-based and national affiliations. Table 11 demonstrates that the largest percentage of investigators reported moderate or high activity by neighborhood-based gangs As in the Northeastern region, these homegrown gangs are responsible for much of the gang activity. However, 10 national gangs are also significantly represented in the Southern region

Figure 4. Presence of Gang Activity Over Time



National Gangs

MS-13

The Mid-Atlantic Regional Gang Investigators Network (MARGIN) reports that MS-13 is the largest and most dangerous threat in the Mid-Atlantic area. Specifically in Virginia and Washington, DC, MS-13 has solidified itself as the largest Hispanic gang [111] MS-13 has also been expanding into North Carolina and Virginia [112,113]

Intelligence reporting in 2002 indicated that MS-13 members trafficked in powdered cocaine, marijuana, heroin, and methamphetamine throughout the South, including Texas, Virginia, and Maryland [114] In the current survey, about 35 percent of officials in the Southern region reported an MS-13 presence, however, approximately 50 percent of officials in Texas, Virginia, and Maryland alone reported the presence of MS-13 in their jurisdictions, consistent with reporting that the gang is particularly active in these states.

Bloods

Intelligence reporting documents the presence of the Bloods throughout the Southern region In Maryland, investigators see the presence of UBN,[115] which is typically more structured than the LA-based Bloods,[116] while in North Carolina[117] and Virginia,[118] Bloods are typically less structured and are described as offshoots or factions of their West Coast counterparts Members of the Bloods sets are said to transport "multikilogram quantities of cocaine and marijuana primarily from southern California and Texas and distribute the drugs in locations throughout the Southeastern region, particularly Florida, Georgia, and Tennessee "[119] Little Rock, Arkansas, has also noted a significant presence of Bloods sets Consistent with this intelligence, more than 50 percent of law enforcement officials in the current survey reported the presence of the Bloods, with 24 percent reporting high or moderate activity

Crips

Like the Bloods, the Crips are also present throughout the South Crips sets in this region operate autonomously and are not formally affiliated with West Coast Crips [120] In North Carolina, the Crips show signs of a Midwest influence in their adoption of the traditional Gangster Disciples' signs and symbols, such as pitchforks and six-pointed stars [121] Crips follow drug-trafficking patterns similar to those that the Bloods follow. "Members of Crip sets transport cocaine, marijuana, heroin, methamphetamine, and PCP primarily from southern California, Texas, and Florida for distribution throughout the southeastern states "[122]

In the current survey, 30 percent of officials reported moderate or high Crips activity, and an additional 25 percent reported a low level of activity by the gang

Latin Kings

According to MARGIN, the Mid-Atlantic region has seen an increase in Latin King recruitment by members from the Northeastern region.[123] Law enforcement officials report a significant presence of the Latin Kings in North Carolina,[124] Florida,[125] Virginia,[126] and Texas. This information is further corroborated by the current survey, wherein 47 percent of law enforcement officials reported the presence of the Latin Kings

Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs

Intelligence indicates the presence of numerous OMGs in the Southern region. North Carolina and Virginia have documented the presence of the Hells Angels, Outlaws, and Pagans,[127] and Virginia also noted increasing numbers of the Bandidos [128] Additional intelligence indicates the presence of OMGs in the following areas.

- Hells Angels South Carolina, Maryland, Kentucky, and North Carolina
- Sons of Silence: Florida, Arkansas, Kentucky, and Louisiana
- Bandidos Texas, South Carolina, Kentucky, Oklahoma, Alabama, Arkansas, and Louisiana

Many southern states have chapters of OMGs, but because their membership numbers are smaller than those of street gangs and because OMGs receive less political attention, many jurisdictions do not consider them as great a threat as other street gangs In the current survey, more than 30 percent of officials in the region reported the presence of the Outlaws Officials reported the presence of the Hells Angels and Pagans as well, with a low level of activity

Asian Gangs

Approximately 31 percent of officials in the Southern region reported the presence of Asian gangs. This is consistent with intelligence reporting that documents the West Coast, Chicago, and New York City as major areas for Asian gang activity [129]

Sur 13

Although Sureño street gangs originated in southern California—in fact, in California their name is used as an umbrella term for all southern California street gangs—they have been documented in almost every region of the United States through tattoos, graffiti, and interviews with sources Most Sureño gangs outside of California merely emulate the activities, signs, and symbols of their California counterparts and have no affiliation with West Coast members. This is the case in the South

Within the Southern region, Sureño street gangs have been documented in Georgia, North Carolina, Florida, and Texas Currently, more than 40 percent of officials in the South reported a Sur 13 presence, with about 25 percent reporting moderate or high activity

Table 11. Level of Gang Activity

Level of Gang Involvement	High (%)	Moderate (%)	Low (%)	Not Applicable/ Unknown (%)
Neighborhood-Based Drug-Trafficking Groups and Crews	17 9	18.5	16 2	47.5
Crips	14.5	15 6	25.4	44 5
Sur 13	11.6	13 3	16 2	59 0
Bloods	9.8	13 9	26.6	49.7
MS-13	7.5	11 6	15 6	65.4
Latin Kings	4.6	7 5	34.7	53 2
Gangster Disciples	4.6	11 0	23.1	61.3
Outlaws (OMG)	4.6	6 9	19 1	69 4
Asian Gangs	1 7	11 0	18.5	68.7

Gangster Disciples

Gang intelligence reports indicate the Gangster Disciples (GD) transport and distribute "multikilogram quantities of powdered and crack cocaine and multipound quantities of marijuana throughout the Southeastern region, particularly Tennessee and Georgia."[130] Gangster Disciples in North Carolina are self-contained and have no association with GD members on a national level. The gang has also been documented in Florida[131] and Virginia [132] In the current survey, almost 40 percent of investigators in the

Southern region reported the presence of the Gangster Disciples

Maryland and Washington, DC, have also documented the Gangster Disciples, although the gang calls itself the Crips while adopting the Gangster Disciples signs, symbols, and ideology [133] This phenomenon was also reported in North Carolina, however, investigators there classified the gangs as Crips [134]

Texas Gangs

The Office of the Attorney General in Texas provided information to supplement the current survey In 2005, gang investigators in central Texas reported significant activity by the gangs listed below.[135] Considering the proximity to the Mexican border, the influence of Hispanic gangs in the Southwest, and the large population of Hispanic persons in Texas, it is interesting that the largest percentage of investigators in each jurisdiction size reported the Crips and the Bloods as the most influential, rather than the Hispanic Sureños and Norteños. Investigators in West Texas reported the presence of the OMG Los Carnales and the prison gangs Texas Syndicate, Aryan Brotherhood, Texas Mexican Mafia, and Barrio Azteca

Drug Trends

Street gangs in the South have some level of involvement in the distribution and sale of drugs Respondents to the 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment Survey indicated that more than 50 percent of gangs had at least moderate involvement in street-level distribution, whereas at the wholesale level of distribution, gangs were more likely to have a lower level of involvement. Survey respondents indicated that gang involvement was highest with regard to the distribution and sale of marijuana and cocaine.

- Bandidos (OMG)
- Black Gangster Disciples
- Bloods
- Crips
- Hells Angels (OMG)
- Hermanos de Pistoleros Latinos (prison gang)
- Latin Kings
- Raza Unida (prison gang)
- Texas Mexican Mafia (prison gang)
- Los Sureños

Texas, as part of the Southern region, is one of the more vulnerable states to the trafficking and smuggling of illicit drugs into the United States Texas shares a 1,254-mile border with Mexico, parts of which are open and easily accessible to drug-trafficking organizations [136] Dallas and Houston are two of the primary markets identified for marijuana [137] Smuggled from Mexico by various modes of transportation, the drugs are destined for markets throughout the country,[138] including Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia [139]

In Dallas, retail distributors include such gangs as MS-13, the Latin Kings, the Rolling 60s, the Bloods, and the Hoover Crips, as well as Mexikanemi and Texas Syndicate.[140] In Houston the Gangster Disciples, Latin Kings, and Vice Lords are highly involved in the retail distribution [141] Overall, marijuana distribution at the retail

Table 12. Level of Gang Involvement in Drug Distribution (by Drug Type)

Level of Gang Involvement	High (%)	Moderate (%)	Low (%)	None/ Unknown (%)
Street Sales	24 3	28 9	23.1	23 8
Wholesale	14 5	19 7	32 4	33 6
Marijuana	30 6	23 7	10.4	35 2
Crack Cocaine	24 9	20 8	16.8	37 6
Powdered Cocaine	15 0	23 7	17.9	43 3
Methamphetamine	11 6	13 3	24.3	50 8
Heroin	7.5	10.4	22.5	59 5
MDMA	3 5	15 6	19.7	61 3

Figure 5. Overall Gang Involvement in Crimes

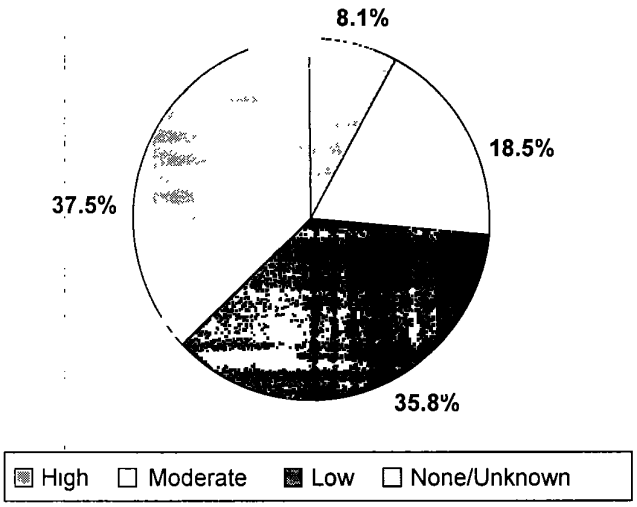


*Figure does not add up to 100% due to rounding

level is controlled by the local African-American or Hispanic gangs, with OMGs and independent dealers, students, homemakers, and businessmen selling the drug [142]

retail distribution. In Florida, drugs enter Miami via the Caribbean [145] Cocaine is transported throughout the Northeast and Midwest, with distribution at the wholesale and retail levels varying by jurisdiction [146] In Houston, Mexican criminal groups are the primary distributors of drugs at the wholesale level, whereas gangs, such as the Black Gangster Disciples, the Crips, the Latin Kings, and MS-13, control most retail distribution.

While the primary markets for methamphetamine remain in the Central and Western regions of the United States, the South is still greatly affected by the distribution and availability of this drug. Reports indicate that in such areas as Atlanta, Miami, Mississippi, New Orleans, and Tennessee, availability is increasing [147]

Such gangs as the Vice Lords and Sur 13 are known to be distributors of methamphetamine in the South, especially in Florida.[148] OMGs and various local street crews are also highly involved in the distribution of methamphetamine at the retail level

Table 13. Level of Gang Involvement in Crime (by Type of Crime)

Level of Gang Involvement	High (%)	Moderate (%)	Low (%)	None/ Unknown (%)
Vandalism and Graffiti	22.5	22 0	28 9	26 6
Felonious Assault	16.8	17 3	28 9	37 0
Burglary	16.2	16 8	30 1	37 0
Firearms Possession	14.5	20 8	27 2	37 6
Auto Theft	12.7	20 8	24 9	41 6
Firearms Burglary	11 0	20 2	28.3	40 5
Intimidation and Extortion	10 4	13 9	32 4	43 4
Homicide	9.8	10 4	31 2	48 6
Firearms Trafficking	8.7	13.3	24.3	53 8

Table 14. Use of Firearms by Gang Members in the Commission of a Crime

	Almost Always (%)	Sometimes (%)	Almost Never (%)	Not Applicable/ Unknown (%)
Felonious Assault	31 8	22.0	6 4	39 9
Homicide	30.6	13.3	5 2	50 9
Drug Sales (Street)	19 1	34 7	9 2	36 9
Drug Sales (Wholesale)	16.2	23.1	8 1	52.6
Carjacking	15 6	21.4	6.9	56.0
Intimidation and Extortion	10 4	24 9	8.1	56 6

Atlanta, Miami, and Houston remain primary markets for cocaine in the South.[143] In Atlanta, wholesale Mexican traffickers transport the cocaine into the city for further distribution to drug markets throughout the Southeastern and Northeastern regions [144] African-American and Hispanic gangs in these regions are responsible for the

According to the 2003 NDTS, 8.5 percent of agencies reported that OMG involvement in drug distribution was moderate to high.[149] Methamphetamine and marijuana were the most common drugs with which OMGs were associated in the region

Criminal Activity

Hispanic gangs are moving into new territories and expanding their criminal enterprises The expansion of gangs into a region will likely coincide with an increase in crime and violence. Respondents to the 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment Survey indicated that gangs are at least moderately involved in 26.6 percent of crime

When asked to describe the level of gang involvement in specific crimes, law enforcement agencies in the South were able to document certain trends Gangs in this region were most highly involved in vandalism and graffiti crimes as well as felonious assaults. More than one-third of respondents indicated at least moderate gang involvement in burglary and firearm possession Thirty percent of respondents indicated that gangs almost always use firearms in the commission of felonious assaults or homicides Additionally, 53 8 percent reported that gang members use firearms at least sometimes in the street distribution of drugs

Overall, investigators responding to the 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment in the South specifically noted the following gang trends having an impact on communities and law enforcement efforts

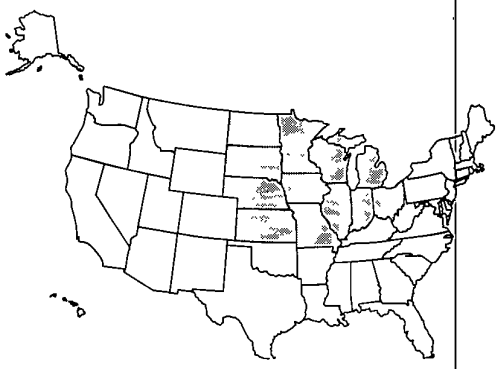
- Increases in neighborhood or homegrown gangs,
- Increased graffiti and tagging;
- A significant rise in the number of Hispanic gangs and gang members,
- The escalation of gang violence due to drug trafficking and turf wars, and
- The denial of gang presence in several jurisdictions

MIDWESTERN REGION

Law enforcement officials in the Midwestern region of the United States reported that gang activity has been increasing over the past two years. High schools and middle schools are reporting more activity, and crime on college campuses is on the rise Investigators noted that gangs seem to be hiding their affiliations, not wearing colors, and denying allegiance to traditional gang groups. Overall, 42 percent of law enforcement respondents to the 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment Survey reported a slight or significant increase in gang activity in the past 12 months

General Trends

The Midwest, especially Chicago, has historically been a center for gang activity. Chicago is home to some of the largest and most violent gangs in the country. In addition, it is a transportation hub for the movement of illicit drugs throughout the country Gang migration in this region has been prevalent for several years Gangs are moving from the larger cities to more suburban and rural regions, where there is new and fertile ground for recruitment and drug trafficking, especially in areas where law enforcement pressures are less evident



Gang Presence and Migration

The Gangster Disciples are reported to have the highest level of activity in the Midwest, although reporting indicates that several additional gangs have high or significant activity

Table 15 illustrates that the Midwest sees high levels of activity from the Gangster Disciples, Los Sureños, Latin Kings, and Vice Lords. However, a large percentage of officials also reported the Black Gangster Disciples, Bloods, Crips, and Outlaws as having a significant level of activity. Officials reported that neighborhood-based groups are also very active in the Midwest

Figure 6. Presence of Gang Activity Over Time

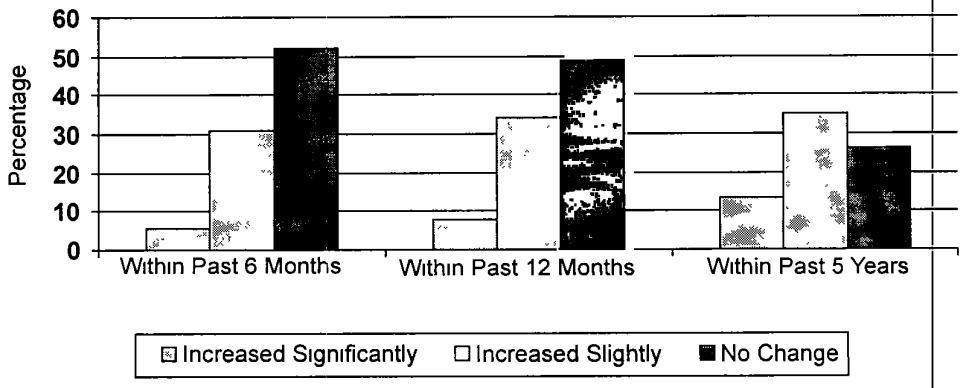


Table 15. Level of Gang Activity

Level of Gang Involvement	High (%)	Moderate (%)	Low (%)	Not Applicable/ Unknown (%)
Gangster Disciples	20 5	19 3	23.9	36.3
Neighborhood-Based Drug-Trafficking Groups and Crews	18 2	13 6	15.9	51 1
Sur 13	13 6	17 0	12 5	56 8
Latin Kings	12 5	20 5	23 9	43 1
Vice Lords	11 4	13 6	29.5	45.4
Black Gangster Disciples	8 0	10 2	31 8	50 0
Bloods	4 5	8 0	26 1	61 4
Crips	3 4	9.1	25.0	62.5
Outlaws OMG	3 4	9 1	21 6	50 0

National Gangs

Bloods

In the Midwestern region, law enforcement reporting identifies drug-related ties between Bloods in the Midwest and Bloods on the West Coast According to the NDIC, "Bloods sets transport multikilogram quantities of cocaine and marijuana from Los Angeles, Chicago, and Detroit and distribute the drugs in locations throughout the Great Lakes region, particularly in Ohio and Minnesota Several Bloods sets in the region obtain cocaine from Los Angeles–based Bloods sets "[150] In the current survey, almost 40 percent of law enforcement officials in the Midwestern region reported a Bloods presence, while most of these reported a low level of activity.

Crips

The activity of the Crips in the Midwest is almost identical to that of the Bloods. While the Crips are primarily active on the East and West Coasts, they maintain a low level of activity in the Midwest and have ties to their West Coast counterparts The NDIC reports that "Crip sets transport multikilogram quantities of cocaine and marijuana and multiliter quantities of PCP primarily from southern California for distribution throughout the Great Lakes region, particularly Ohio and Minnesota . . . Crips sets in the region obtain cocaine, marijuana, and PCP from Los Angeles–based Crips sets." In the current survey, almost 40 percent of law enforcement officials in the Midwestern region reported a Crips presence, while most of these reported a low level of activity—almost the exact same amount of activity as the Bloods.

Latin Kings

The Latin Kings, also known as the Almighty Latin King Nation, was formed in Chicago in the mid-1960s The Latin Kings are one of the largest, most organized, and violent Hispanic street gangs in Illinois. With an estimated membership of between 25,000 and 50,000 nationwide, the gang is active in 34 states

By virtue of its predominately Hispanic membership, the gang reportedly has extensive ties to several Mexican drug cartels and is responsible for a large amount of the cocaine trafficking in Chicago and its surrounding areas. According to the NDIC, Chicago-based Latin King members also obtain drugs from the Barrio Azteca, Texas Syndicate, and Mexican Mafia prison gangs in Texas, as well as from Colombian, Dominican, and Nigerian criminal groups operating in Chicago

In the current survey, almost 60 percent of law enforcement officials reported the presence of the Latin Kings in the Midwest, and 33 percent reported a moderate or high level of activity Of Illinois officials, 81 percent reported a presence of Latin Kings, and 62 percent indicated a moderate or high level of activity.

Outlaws OMG

The Outlaws Motorcycle Club is the "dominant [outlaw motorcycle gang] in the Great Lakes region" and claims more than 1,100 members nationwide.[151] Midwestern states with an Outlaws presence include Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin

Approximately 34 percent of officials reported some level of activity by the Outlaws in the Midwestern region, and about 33 percent of Illinois officials reported some level of activity This reflects the fact that while the Outlaws are the dominant outlaw motorcycle gang in the region, OMGs, in general, maintain a lower profile in the Midwestern region compared to the chapters on the East and West Coasts

Gangster Disciples

The Gangster Disciples, also commonly referred to as the Black Gangster Disciples, are one of the largest, most organized, and most virulent street gangs in Chicago. They are nationally recognized as the largest denomination of Folk Nation gangs The Gangster Disciples are highly organized and hierarchical in structure The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and open-source reporting estimates that the Gangster Disciples are active in 43 states and the District of Columbia, and the gang continues to build a nationwide membership that surpasses 100,000 Intelligence reports from the NDIC state that gang members "transport multikilogram amounts of powdered and crack cocaine, heroin, and marijuana and distribute the drugs in Chicago and the Great Lakes region "[152]

Approximately 64 percent of officials responding to the current survey reported the presence of the Gangster Disciples, and 40 percent reported a moderate or high level of activity Respondents were asked independently about the activity of the Black Gangster Disciples, and 50 percent reported the presence of the gang Within Illinois, 90 percent of investigators reported the presence of the Gangster Disciples, and 80 percent reported the presence of the Black Gangster Disciples. This reporting is consistent with intelligence concerning the gang's origin, presence, and activity throughout the Midwest

Vice Lords

Like the Latin Kings and the Gangster Disciples, the Vice Lords (or Vice Lord Nation) are endemic to Chicago but have spread to states throughout the Midwest. In total, Vice Lord sets have been confirmed in 28 states, building a nationwide membership to nearly 35,000 members and associates In addition to Illinois, much of the gang's activity has been reported in neighboring states, such as Indiana, Wisconsin, Tennessee, Michigan, Mississippi, Ohio, and Iowa Chicago-based Vice Lord members frequently migrate to the northwest Indiana area to expand their gang activity. This is considered an ideal area to facilitate gang activity due to the poor economic conditions and dilapidated neighborhoods According to the NDIC, Vice Lord Nation gangs transport and distribute multikilogram quantities of powdered cocaine, crack cocaine, heroin, and marijuana on a monthly basis from Chicago to destinations throughout the Great Lakes region. The gang obtains drugs from Mexican, Nigerian, and Colombian DTOs in Chicago [153]

In the current survey, approximately 55 percent of gang investigators in the Midwest reported the presence of the Vice Lords, and 25 percent reported a moderate or high level of activity More than 90 percent of Illinois officials reported the gang's presence, and almost 40 percent reported moderate or high activity, consistent with intelligence reporting that the gang is particularly active in this state

Sureños

Although originally an umbrella term for gangs in southern California, Sureño gang members have migrated across the United States and have initiated gangs using their California namesake Calling themselves Los Sureños or Sur 13, these gangs sometimes maintain contact with gang members in California but often simply emulate the southern California gangs from which they came This is primarily the case in the Midwestern region. Within this region, Sureños have been identified in Illinois, Indiana, and Nebraska.

Midwestern officials responding to the current survey indicated that Sur 13 was a problem in their jurisdictions, with 43 percent reporting the presence of the gang and more than 30 percent reporting a moderate or high level of activity.

The following gangs were present in the Midwestern region but were reported as having a low level of activity [154] With the exception of the Almighty P Stone Nation, it is expected that many of these gangs would have low activity in the Midwest, as they are primarily based on the West and/or East Coasts

- Almighty P Stone Nation
- MS-13
- Norteños
- 18th Street
- Hells Angels
- Bandidos
- Mexican Mafia
- Asian Gangs
- Skinheads

The Almighty P Stone Nation (also commonly known as the Black Peace Stone Nation, among other names) originated in Chicago and remains active there. Gang members "transport multikilogram quantities of cocaine, heroin, and marijuana from Chicago and Los Angeles for distribution by members in 20 states, primarily in the Great Lakes, West Central, and Southeastern regions "[155] Overall, officials in the Midwest reported a low level of activity of the Almighty P Stone Nation However, within Illinois, almost 60 percent reported the gang's presence, and approximately 14 percent reported a moderate level of activity

The following gangs (with the exception of the Pagans) would not be expected to be active in the Midwest and, in fact, were not reported to have a significant presence in the Midwestern region [156] The Pagans have been documented in Ohio, and more than 25 percent of Ohio officials reported their presence in the current survey

- UBN
- La Raza
- Border Brothers
- Pagans
- Texas Mexican Mafia (Mexikanemi)
- Texas Syndicate
- La Nuestra Familia

Drug Trends

Gangs are highly active in the distribution and trafficking of drugs in the Midwestern region, with 52 2 percent of respondents indicating a moderate or high involvement in the street-level distribution of drugs and at least 43.2 percent of respondents indicating a high or moderate level of involvement in the wholesale distribution of drugs (see Table 16)

Within this region, gang involvement was highest in the distribution of marijuana, with nearly 40 percent of reporting agencies indicating a high level of gang involvement. Crack cocaine was ranked as the second-highest illicit drug with which gangs were involved.

These responses are expected, as Chicago is the hub of a prime drug-transportation corridor for distribution throughout the country. Chicago is a primary market for the distribution of marijuana, half of which is distributed to other states in the Midwest, including Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin.[157] While the Mexican DTOs are the principal transporters at the wholesale level of this drug, street gangs—particularly the Gangster Disciples, Vice Lords, and Latin Kings—are the principal retail distributors [158]

More than 70 percent of respondents to this survey reported at least low levels of gang involvement in the distribution of crack cocaine and powdered cocaine This is consistent with the fact that Chicago-based wholesale distributors are the primary suppliers of powdered cocaine to the city and to the Great Lakes Region, as well as some areas in the Northeastern and Western regions [159] While Colombian and Mexican drug traffickers dominate the wholesale distribution of the drug, the Gangster Disciples, Latin Kings, and Vice Lords are responsible for sales at the street level.[160] Gang migration from the larger cities to more rural areas has increased the spread of cocaine

Approximately 13 percent of respondents to the 2003 NDTS reported that OMG involvement in drug distribution in the Midwest was moderate to high OMGs in this region were most likely to be involved in the distribution of marijuana and methamphetamine, although the level of involvement was very low

Indian Country is also being affected by the Midwestern region's high levels of drug trafficking Hispanic street gangs have been reported to be using Native Americans to transport illicit drugs onto reservations.[161]

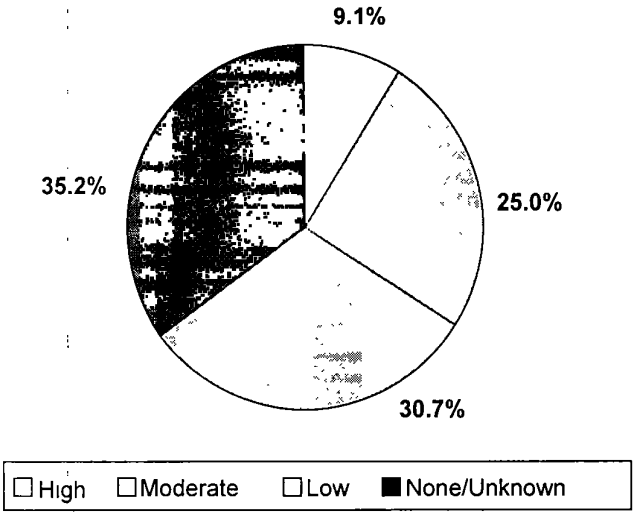
Table 16. Level of Gang Involvement in Drug Distribution (by Drug Type)

Level of Gang Involvement	High (%)	Moderate (%)	Low (%)	None/ Unknown (%)
Street Sales	29 5	22 7	27.3	20 5
Wholesale	22 7	20 5	31 8	25.0
Marijuana	39 8	27.3	9 1	23 8
Crack Cocaine	36.4	23 9	15.9	23.8
Powdered Cocaine	21 6	15.9	34.1	28.4
Heroin	9 1	15 9	33.0	42.0
Methamphetamine	6 8	17.0	34 1	42 0
MDMA	3 4	14 8	40 9	40.9

Criminal Activity

In the Midwest, approximately 65 percent of law enforcement respondents indicated that gangs are involved at some level in the crimes in their region. More than one-third of these agencies reported moderate to high gang involvement.

Figure 7. Overall Gang Involvement in Crimes



Respondents to the 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment were asked to rate the level of involvement of gangs in specific criminal acts. More than half of the respondents indicated that gangs were at least moderately involved in the vandalism and graffiti reported in their jurisdictions Gangs were also found to have a high level of involvement in felonious assault (23 9 percent) and firearms possession (22 7 percent) Whereas in the Northeastern region gangs were found to have a high level of involvement in intimidation and extortion less than 6 percent of the time, in the Midwest nearly 15 percent of respondents reported high gang involvement in intimidation and extortion crimes, and an additional 16 percent reported moderate involvement.

Law enforcement respondents to the 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment were asked to quantify how often gangs use firearms while committing specific crimes. More than one-third (36.4 percent) of respondents stated that gangs almost always used firearms in the commission of a homicide, and 35.2 percent of respondents said firearms were almost always used when the crime was felonious assault Firearms were also found to be used at least sometimes in more than 35 percent of carjackings

Overall, investigators responding to the 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment in the Midwest specifically noted the following gang trends that were having an impact on communities and law enforcement efforts.

- An increase in thefts and burglaries;
- Fear and intimidation of community members,
- Competition between Hispanic gangs for territories,
- Increased cooperation between gangs; and
- Increased gang and drug activity in Indian Country

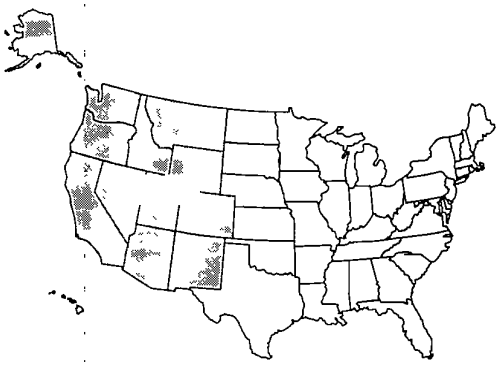
WESTERN REGION

General Trends

Gangs continue to thrive and flourish in many areas in the Western region of the United States. Hispanic gang members are consistently a threat to communities and law enforcement, especially due to the increased migration of these gangs into both large cities and small communities throughout the region. Survey respondents reported continued growth in membership, violence, and general

Table 17. Level of Gang Involvement in Crime (by Type of Crime)

Level of Gang Involvement	High (%)	Moderate (%)	Low (%)	None/ Unknown (%)
Vandalism and Graffiti	35.2	19 3	21 6	23.9
Felonious Assault	23 9	19 3	27.3	29 6
Firearms Possession	22 7	18 2	30 7	28.4
Intimidation and Extortion	14 8	15.9	26.1	43.2
Homicide	14 8	11.4	25 0	48.9
Auto Theft	12.5	21.6	37 5	28 4
Firearms Burglary	12 5	21 6	34 1	31 8
Firearms Trafficking	12.5	18 2	23 9	45.4
Burglary	6 8	30 7	35.2	27 3



antisocial activity. There is some evidence of increased sophistication in the planning of violent attacks, especially in the use of ambush techniques and assaults on police officers. This level of sophistication appears to span all types of gangs, with numerous agencies also reporting an increased use of technology among gang members.

National Gangs

MS-13

MS-13 originated in Los Angeles and has migrated to areas throughout the United States. In addition to California, MS-13 cliques have been identified in Alaska, Colorado, Nevada, Arizona, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington.[162] The gang transports "multikilogram quantities of powdered cocaine and marijuana and kilogram quantities of heroin and methamphetamine throughout the Southwest, particularly southern California, Nevada, and Texas."[163] In the current survey, officials in the Western region reported a relatively low level of activity by MS-13. Although 40 6 percent of officials in the West reported an MS-13 presence, less than 10 percent reported a moderate or high level of activity Within California, a similar percentage of officials reported the gang's presence and level of activity

Table 18. Use of Firearms by Gang Members in the Commission of a Crime

	Almost Always (%)	Sometimes (%)	Almost Never (%)	Not Applicable/ Unknown (%)
Homicide	36 4	10 2	5 7	47 7
Felonious Assault	35 2	23 9	11 4	29 6
Carjacking	20.5	14.8	11.4	53.4
Street Sales	13.6	33 0	17.0	36 3
Intimidation and Extortion	12.5	30 7	11 4	45.5
Wholesale	11 4	47.7	13 6	27.3

Responses from 143 law enforcement agencies from 12 states in the Western region provided insight into gang activity in this region Resonating throughout the region was the fact that within the last 12 months, the majority of reporting agencies noted moderate to significant increases in gang-related activity

Gang Presence and Migration

By far, the gang with the highest-reported activity was Los Sureños The large presence of Sureño gang members is consistent with reported migration patterns of this gang into both large cities and small communities Norteños, Asian gangs, Bloods, and Crips were also noted as highly active in several of the reporting jurisdictions Neighborhood-based gangs remain active throughout the region.

One explanation for the low level of reported MS-13 activity in the West is the gang's migration to the Mid-Atlantic region, especially to northern Virginia and Washington, DC. Thus, despite the gang's Los Angeles origins, it is currently most active on the East Coast

18th Street

The 18th Street gang formed in Los Angeles, and it is estimated that 80 percent of the gang's California members

Figure 8. Presence of Gang Activity Over Time

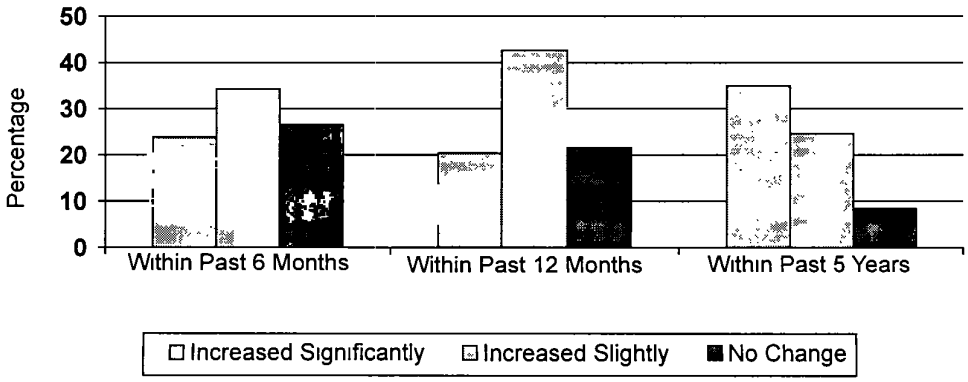


Table 19. Level of Gang Activity

Level of Gang Involvement	High (%)	Moderate (%)	Low (%)	Not Applicable/ Unknown (%)
Sur 13	51 0	21 0	13.3	14 7
Crips	21 7	14 7	35 0	28 7
Norteños	20.3	14 7	17 5	47 6
Neighborhood-Based Drug-Trafficking Groups and Crews	18.9	19 6	23.1	38 5
Asian Gangs	13.3	17.5	31 5	37 8
Bloods	12.6	11.9	39.2	36 4
18th Street	10 5	16 1	32 2	41 3
Skinheads	8 4	18 2	41 3	32 2
Hells Angels (OMG)	8 4	16 1	32 2	43 4
Mexican Mafia	7 7	16 8	36 4	39.2
La Nuestra Familia	4.9	7.7	17 5	69.9
MS-13	4 9	4.2	31.5	59 4
Bandidos (OMG)	2.8	7.7	18.2	71 3

are illegal aliens from Mexico and Central America.[164] Nationwide, the estimated membership of 18th Street ranges from 30,000 to 50,000 members.[165] According to the Connecticut State Gang Threat Assessment, "The gang is most active in the Southwestern and Pacific regions and is expanding in the New York/New Jersey and West Central regions "[166] Outside of California, 18th Street has been identified in the Western states of Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, Washington,[167] and Utah [168] 18th Street's West Coast origins and migration throughout the West are reflected in the current study Approximately 60 percent of law enforcement officials reported the presence of the gang, and about 27 percent reported its activity level as moderate or high Within California the responses were similar

Bloods

The Bloods street gang association was formed in Los Angeles in the early 1970s—initially to provide members protection from the Crips [169] For this reason, it is not surprising that almost 64 percent of law enforcement officials in the Western region reported a Bloods presence, and approximately 25 percent reported moderate or high activity

Bloods members transport cocaine, marijuana, and PCP from southern California and Texas and distribute the drugs in locations throughout the Pacific, Southwestern, and West Central regions—specifically California, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, and Washington.[170]

Crips

Like the Bloods, the Crips street gang association was formed in Los Angeles and has been identified throughout the country The Crips maintain a strong presence in California and have also been identified in the Western states of Washington, Idaho, Colorado, Utah, and Arizona.[171] Consistent with this reporting, more than 70 percent of officials in the Western region reported the presence of the Crips, and 36 percent reported a moderate or high level of activity

Sureños

As mentioned above, almost 90 percent of officials in the West reported the presence of Sureños, with 51 percent reporting a high level of activity and 21 percent reporting a moderate level of activity. This overwhelming presence is likely attributable to the fact that "Sureño, or Sur 13, is a banner under which most southern California Hispanic gangs gather "[172] As a result of the collective nature of the term *sureño,* one would expect Sur 13's presence in California to be larger. In contrast to other regions reporting the existence of a specific gang called Los Sureños or Sur 13, Western officials may classify all Sureño gangs together to describe their activity Sureño gangs and gang members have been identified throughout the West and have a major presence in Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah

Norteños

Like the Sureño gangs, the term *norteño* is used to describe street gangs from central or northern California Norteños and Sureños are considered bitter rivals; in fact, Norteños originally formed for protection from Sureño gangs. Like the reporting of the presence of Sureños, the term *norteño* is used to describe an entire category of California street gangs Therefore, it is not surprising that more than 50 percent of officials in the Western region reported the gang's presence, and 35 percent reported their activity level as moderate or high

Mexican Mafia

The Mexican Mafia is one of the oldest and most powerful prison gangs operating in the United States Like many gangs in the West, the Mexican Mafia originated in California and spread throughout the country However, many groups outside California calling themselves Mexican Mafia are not formally affiliated with the gang These groups—often formed by California gang members fleeing the state's tough three-strikes laws—have become powerful in prisons, especially in Arizona (Old Mexican Mafia and New Mexican Mafia) and Texas (Texas Mexican Mafia, or Mexikanemi).

According to the NDIC, the "Mexican Mafia smuggles the drugs from Tijuana into southern California for distribution and is suspected of smuggling drugs from Mexico into Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas." It also distributes drugs throughout northern California, Washington, and Hawaii and, to a lesser degree, Idaho, Nevada, and Oregon [173] This presence in the Western region is reflected in the current study, as 61 percent of officials reported the gang's presence, and 25 percent reported a moderate or high level of activity

California's Mexican Mafia has recently increased the extent to which it controls the street-level drug trade through its dominance of Sureño gangs Sureño street gangs sell drugs and must pay a 10 percent tax to the Mexican Mafia in return for protection in prison. Failure to pay the tax will result in a "green light" on the gang's members, meaning that they will be shot on sight. As the Mexican Mafia's control increases, some evidence suggests that "Sureño gangs are rebelling against the process and fighting back "[174]

La Nuestra Familia

La Nuestra Familia is a highly structured and violent prison gang primarily active in central and northern California. The gang has also been documented across the West in Arizona, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington [175]

In the current study, 30 percent of officials in the West reported the presence of La Nuestra Familia, and approximately 13 percent indicated that its activity was moderate or high. Because the gang is particularly active in California, it is not surprising that a larger percentage of California investigators reported moderate or high activity.

Hells Angels OMG

The Hells Angels Motorcycle Club (HAMC) was formed in San Bernardino, California, in 1948 and currently has chapters in Alaska, California, Arizona, Nevada, Washington, and Colorado [176] According to the NDIC·

> HAMC is considered a primary producer and distributor of illegal drugs in the United States While it primarily has been involved in the production and distribution of methamphetamine and marijuana, the OMG also smuggles or distributes cocaine, hashish, heroin, LSD , MDMA , PCP, . . and diverted pharmaceuticals into or within the United States.[177]

In the current study, approximately 57 percent of law enforcement officials in the West reported the presence of the HAMC, and 25 percent reported a moderate or high level of activity. The percentage of officials reporting HAMC activity in California is slightly higher, with approximately 60 percent reporting a presence and 29 percent reporting moderate or high activity

Bandidos

Originally formed in Houston, the Bandidos OMG has been documented in Washington, Nevada, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico The Bandidos are "particularly active in marijuana, methamphetamine, and cocaine distribution in the Southwestern and Pacific regions of the United States "[178]

In the current study, officials in the West corroborated the Bandidos' presence in that region Almost 30 percent of investigators in the region reported the presence of the Bandidos. Intelligence indicates that the Bandidos have a larger presence in Washington and New Mexico than in other states in the region Within these two states, 70 percent of officials reported the gang's presence, and 30 percent reported its activity as moderate or high

Asian Gangs

The West Coast has been identified as the "stronghold of Asian organized crime activity, particularly within the communities of Santa Ana and Garden Grove in Orange County, California " This assertion is supported by the current survey data In the West, more than 60 percent of officials reported the presence of Asian gangs, and 31 percent reported a moderate or high level of activity. Within California, more than 70 percent reported the presence of Asian gangs, and almost 35 percent reported that the gangs' activity level was moderate or high.

Skinheads

The Skinhead movement began in England in the 1960s and attracted a substantial following in the United States in the mid-to-late 1980s [179] With active pockets across the country, Skinheads often sympathize with other white supremacist groups, especially in the prison setting In the current survey, 68 percent of officials in the Western region reported the presence of Skinheads, and 27 percent reported a moderate or high level of activity. Of the states in the West, the largest percentage of California and Utah officials reported a Skinhead presence.

The following gangs were present in the Western region but were reported as having a low level of activity [180] This is not surprising, as most of these gangs are based in the Midwest or on the East Coast. However, intelligence indicates that the Pagans have a presence in Nevada and Washington.

- Almighty P Stone Nation
- Black Gangster Disciples
- Border Brothers
- Gangster Disciples
- La Raza
- Latin Kings
- Outlaws
- Pagans
- UBN
- Vice Lords

Drug Trends

The widespread Hispanic gang activity in this region is also associated with a high volume of drug-trafficking activity. The drugs most commonly associated with Hispanic-based groups are marijuana, heroin, and methamphetamine Approximately three-quarters of the respondents to the 2005 National Gang Threat Assessment rated gang involvement in street sales of drugs as moderate to high Twenty percent of law enforcement agencies indicated a high involvement of gangs in the wholesale distribution of narcotics and illicit drugs

Nearly 90 percent of law enforcement respondents indicated that gangs were involved at some level in the distribution of marijuana. As California has been reported to be one of the leading domestic sources of marijuana, these results are not unexpected [181] Hawaii and the Pacific Northwest are also primary sources of domestic marijuana [182] Foreign marijuana sources include Mexico and Canada. The distribution of the foreign-produced marijuana is often controlled by the Mexican DTOs at the wholesale level, whereas domestic marijuana distribution at the wholesale and retail levels often occurs by the cultivator of the drug [183] In Los Angeles, retail distributors include the Bloods, the Crips, 18th Street, and MS-13.[184] In San Diego, African-American and Hispanic gangs are known for the distribution of marijuana.[185]

Street gangs in the West are highly involved in the distribution of methamphetamine, with 73 5 percent of respondents indicating moderate or high involvement by gangs California is one of the primary domestic sources of this drug and the only area that produces enough quantities for national distribution.[186] Street gangs and OMGs are known for distribution at varying levels.[187] Specifically,

Table 20. Level of Gang Involvement in Drug Distribution (by Drug Type)

Level of Gang Involvement	High (%)	Moderate (%)	Low (%)	None/ Unknown (%)
Street Sales	39.2	34.3	16.1	10 5
Wholesale	20.3	24 5	28.7	26 6
Marijuana	54 5	24 5	9 8	11 2
Methamphetamine	45 5	28 0	15.4	11.2
Crack Cocaine	28.0	11 2	35 7	25.2
Heroin	12.6	23 1	39 2	25 2
Powdered Cocaine	12 6	20.3	41 3	25.9
MDMA	11 2	18 9	34.3	35.7

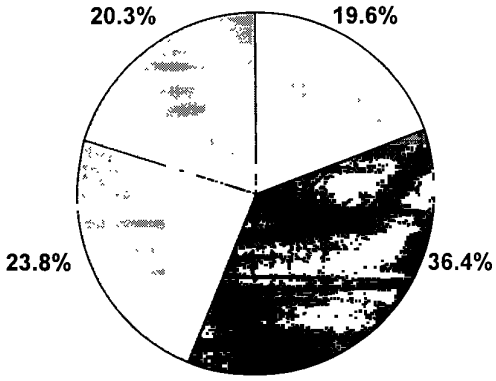
MS-13 and 18th Street have been noted to control distribution in parts of this region [188]

Cocaine is brought into the West by Mexican and Colombian DTOs through Los Angeles. From Los Angeles, the drugs are transported across the country [189] The Mexican Mafia and 18th Street, as well as the Bloods and Crips, are reported to control most street-level distribution of both powder and crack cocaine [190]

In the Western region, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Seattle are significant markets for the distribution or abuse of heroin [191] Mexican black-tar heroin is smuggled daily into Los Angeles and then transported throughout the Western states.[192] Street-gang involvement in the distribution of heroin varies substantially by jurisdiction

According to the 2003 NDTS, 19.1 percent of responding agencies reported that OMG involvement in drug distribution was moderate to high [193] Methamphetamine and marijuana were the most common drugs with which OMGs were associated in the region

Figure 9. Overall Gang Involvement in Crimes



☐High ■Moderate ☐Low ☐None/Unknown

*Figure does not add up to 100% due to rounding

Criminal Activity

Acording to Wes McBride, President of the California Gang Investigators Association,

> While street-gang activity is most often associated with violence, gang members involve themselves in all manner of criminal activities, from graffiti, vandalism, theft, burglary, carjacking, and murder. They rob from persons, stores, banks, and armored cars [194]

Table 21. Level of Gang Involvement in Crime (by Type of Crime)

Level of Gang Involvement	High (%)	Moderate (%)	Low (%)	None/ Unknown (%)
Vandalism and Graffiti	60.1	22 4	9 8	7 7
Felonious Assault	45.5	25.2	18 2	11 1
Firearms Possession	43 4	25.9	14.7	16 1
Auto Theft	36.4	31.5	18.9	13 3
Firearms Burglary	28 7	23.8	23.8	23 8
Burglary	27.3	33 6	26.6	12 6
Homicide	27 3	16 8	31 5	24.5
Intimidation and Extortion	21 0	27 3	27.3	24 5
Firearms Trafficking	21 0	17 5	25 9	35 7

Table 22. Use of Firearms by Gang Members in the Commission of a Crime

	Almost Always (%)	Sometimes (%)	Almost Never (%)	Not Applicable/ Unknown (%)
Felonious Assault	63 6	21.7	2.8	11.9
Homicide	55 9	16 1	2.8	25.2
Bank Robbery	42.0	16.8	4.9	36 4
Carjacking	41.3	28.0	5.6	25.2
Wholesale	28.0	23.1	9.1	39.9
Street Sales	23 1	53 8	9.1	14 0
Intimidation and Extortion	19 6	40 6	9.1	30 8

These beliefs were supported by survey respondents, who noted that gangs were at least moderately involved in 56 percent of all crimes in the Western region.
More than 90 percent of respondents indicated that gangs had some type of involvement in vandalism and graffiti throughout all jurisdictions. Gangs were noted to be highly involved in 45.5 percent of felonious assaults Law enforcement agencies in this area also reported substantial gang involvement in identity theft and credit card fraud, a trend not seen in other regions Approximately 39 percent of respondents indicated moderate to high gang involvement in identity theft, and 34 percent indicated moderate to high involvement of gangs in credit card theft This supports intelligence that suggests gangs are becoming more sophisticated and technologically savvy

Survey respondents were asked to rate the use of firearms by gangs in the commission of a crime Gangs were reported to almost always use firearms by 63.6 percent of respondents. Homicide was the second-most common crime in which gang members were likely to use firearms It is interesting that 42 percent of respondents noted that gangs almost always used firearms in bank robberies, another trend not seen in other regions.

2005 National Gang Threat Assessment Survey respondents noted several criminal trends, including the following

- Sophistication in the planning of violent attacks and assaults on police officers;
- Increased uses of technology,
- Increased cases of identity and credit card theft,
- An increase in the migration and activity of Hispanic gangs,
- The reemergence of graffiti, and
- An increase in the use of firearms

OUTLOOK

Patterns of gang-related violence and crime have been thoroughly documented throughout this report As gang migration occurs at increasing levels across the country, new and emergent trends in criminal activity will surface New communities will feel the impact of gangs in their neighborhoods and will see the slow erosion of safe havens for their children Gangs will move into jurisdictions where law enforcement may have less knowledge of their activities and culture and may not have the support to combat them The lessons learned from this report, and those previously published, lay the foundation for communities and law enforcement to work together to develop thoughtfully constructed prevention, intervention, and suppression plans The gang problem in the United States can be solved if communities acknowledge the issue and work with partners in their communities and across the country.

While law enforcement officials have responded to the gang threat in many jurisdictions, most of the response has been localized. As the problem spreads into other areas and goes national and international, a more coordinated response is necessary A national gang database that is accessible and interactive with local, state, and federal agencies is germane to addressing this issue As most gang crimes are violations of local statutes, coordination and cooperation by federal agencies with local law enforcement is imperative Additionally, further coordinated training for law enforcement, community, and public officials will provide the knowledge and forethought to the development of prevention and intervention programs in communities across the nation

APPENDIX A:
National Gang Threat Assessment Survey

Agency Name _____

Name of person filling out survey _____

Title _____

Address: _____

_____

City _____ State: _____ Zip _____

County _____

Telephone _____

Fax _____

E-mail: _____

Jurisdiction/Region (Please indicate what city/cities or county/counties pertain to your answers.): _____

_____

Total population of area reporting on: _____

1. Please rate the impact of the following crime problems in your jurisdiction.

	High	Moderate	Low	None	Unknown
Drug Trafficking	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Street Sales	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wholesale	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Chemical Drug Manufacture	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Intimidation/Extortion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Robbery	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Bank Robbery	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Jewelry Theft	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interstate Theft of Stolen Property	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Auto Theft	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Chop Shop	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Carjacking	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Burglary	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Murder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Felonious Assault (Including Drive-by Shooting)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sexual Assault/Rape	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Kidnapping	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Weapons	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Firearms Trafficking	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Firearms Burglary/Theft of Gun	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Straw Purchases	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Firearms Possession Offenses	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Explosives/Explosive Devices	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Arson	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Prostitution	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fraud	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Identity Theft	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Insurance Fraud	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Credit Card Fraud	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Vandalism/Graffiti/Tagging	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Money Laundering	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Human Trafficking	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other:_____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other:_____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Rate Overall Crime Problem	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2. Please rate the level of gang involvement in the following crimes:

	High	Moderate	Low	None	Unknown
Drug Trafficking	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Street Sales	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wholesale	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Chemical Drug Manufacture	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Intimidation/Extortion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Robbery	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Bank Robbery	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Jewelry Theft	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interstate Theft of Stolen Property	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Auto Theft	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Chop Shop	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Carjacking	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Burglary	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Murder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Felonious Assault (Including Drive-by Shooting)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sexual Assault/Rape	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Kidnapping	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Weapons	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Firearms Trafficking	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Firearms Burglary/Theft of Gun	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Straw Purchases	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Firearms Possession Offenses	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Explosives/Explosive Devices	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Arson	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Prostitution	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fraud	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Identity Theft	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Insurance Fraud	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Credit Card Fraud	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Vandalism/Graffiti/Tagging	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Money Laundering	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Human Trafficking	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other:_____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other:_____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Rate Overall Crime Problem	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3. Please indicate how often gangs use firearms while committing the following crimes. Check N/A if gangs are not involved in these crimes.

	Almost Always	Sometimes	Almost Never	N/A	Unknown
Drug Trafficking	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Street Sales	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wholesale	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Chemical Drug Manufacture	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Intimidation/Extortion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Robbery	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Bank Robbery	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Jewelry Theft	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interstate Theft of Stolen Property	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Auto Theft	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Carjacking	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Burglary	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Murder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Felonious Assault (Including Drive-by Shooting)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sexual Assault/Rape	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Kidnapping	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Prostitution	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Human Trafficking	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other: _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other: _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. Please rate the level of gang activity in your region.

	Increased Significantly	Increased Slightly	No Change	Decreased Slightly	Decreased
Length of Time	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Within the Past 6 Months	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Within the Past 12 Months	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Within the Past 5 Years	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5 What emerging gang trends have you seen in your community (i.e , graffiti, tagging, open drug sales, gang members in colors)?

_____

_____

_____

_____

6 Does your community have exclusively female gangs (do not include a female gang that is a counterpart of a male gang)? YES ☐ NO ☐

If yes, how do they impact the community?

_____

_____

_____

_____

7 Are gangs in your jurisdiction using technology to facilitate criminal activity (e g , Internet, Web sites, e-mail, Nextel, computers)? YES ☐ NO ☐

If yes, please elaborate _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. Please rate the level of activity of each group in your jurisdiction. If a group does not exist in your jurisdiction, please check N/A.

Group	High	Moderate	Low	None	Unknown
Bloods (all sets)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
UBN	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Crips (all sets)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Latin Kings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Vice Lords	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Almighty P Stone Nation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Black Gangster Disciples	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Gangster Disciples	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hispanic Sureños (Sur 13)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hispanic Norteños (14)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hispanic Other_____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18th Street Gang	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
La Raza	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Border Brothers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hells Angels OMG	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pagans OMG	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Banditos OMG	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Outlaws OMG	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mexican Mafia/La Eme	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mexikanemi (Texas Mexican Mafia)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Texas Syndicate	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
La Nuestra Familia	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Neighborhood-based Drug-Trafficking Groups/Crews	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Asian Gangs (all sets)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Skinheads	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other:_____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

For the MORE SIGNIFICANT gangs in your region, please answer the following questions. Please make additional copies as needed.

9 GANG NAME:_____

How long has the gang been in your region?				
Less than 6 months	6 months to 1 yr	1yr to 2 yrs	2 yrs to 5 yrs	More than 5 yrs
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Where did this gang originate?

_____

_____

_____

If this gang originated from a different area, what brought it to your region?

_____

_____

_____

Please indicate how many members of this gang are illegal aliens:				
Most	Some	Very Few	None	Unknown
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

What is the country of origin of these illegal aliens?

_____

_____

Is this gang migrating from your region to other areas, and if so, where?

_____

_____

_____

What is the estimated membership of this gang within your community (do not include persons incarcerated in state or federal prison)?

_____

_____

What gangs are allies of this gang?

_____

_____

What gangs are rivals of this gang?

_____

_____

Please document any other significant facts or emerging trends about this gang.

_____

_____

10. Please rate the level of gang involvement in the distribution of the following drugs in your jurisdiction.

	High	Moderate	Low	None	Unknown
Drug	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Powdered cocaine	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Crack cocaine	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Heroin	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Methamphetamine	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Marijuana	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
MDMA (Ecstasy) and analogs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
GHB and analogs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ketamine	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Rohypnol	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
LSD	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
PCP	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Psilocybin (mushrooms)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pharmaceuticals	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other:_____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other:_____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

11. Are GANGS associated with any organized crime entities in your jurisdiction?		
☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Unknown

Russian/Central/East European Organized Crime	☐
Italian Organized Crime	☐
La Cosa Nostra Organized Crime	☐
Asian Organized Crime	☐
Albanian Organized Crime	☐
Nigerian Organized Crime	☐
Middle Eastern Organizations	☐
Mexican Drug Organizations	☐
Colombian Drug Organizations	☐
Dominican Drug Organizations	☐
Other_____	☐
Other_____	☐

12. Are GANGS associated with any domestic or international terrorist organizations or extremist groups within your jurisdiction? YES ☐ NO ☐

If yes, please explain.

_____

_____

_____

_____

13. How many gangs are active in your jurisdiction?_____

14. How many gang members are active in your jurisdiction?_____

15. What has been the response by communities within your region to the gang problem?
(Example community outreach programs, school initiatives, denial, etc.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

16. Describe how gangs impact the quality of life in the communities within your jurisdiction _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

17. What gang interdiction, intervention, or suppression strategies have been most effective in your jurisdiction?

_____

_____

_____

_____

18. Has your gang unit increased or decreased over the past two years?
Increased ☐ Decreased ☐ Please explain._____

19. Does your jurisdiction lead or participate in a multiagency gang task force?
YES ☐ NO ☐ Please explain._____

20. Please describe what you believe is the overall national threat _____

Please provide a comprehensive list of all gangs in your jurisdiction We have provided the following table for you to use. Please make additional copies as necessary. If you have a list of gangs in an electronic format, please attach a computer printout or disk instead.

	Gang/Clique/Set Name	Group Affiliation	Race/Ethnicity	# of Members
Ex	*Cornado Locos Salvatrucha (CLS)*	*MS-13*	*H*	*150*
Ex	*Monroe Street Hustlers*	*Bloods*	*AA*	*230*
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

Race/Ethnicity Codes. Please use all that apply.

AS – Asian	**PI – Pacific Islander**	**N – Native American**	**O – Other (please specify)**
AA – African American	**W – White**	**H – Hispanic**	

Thank you for completing this survey. Before sending your responses back, please be sure to attach:

1 A comprehensive list of gangs in your region and/or jurisdiction This list may be a computer printout or in a handwritten or electronic version.
2 Copies of all published materials your agency has written about gangs (i e , Threat Assessments, Profiles).

APPENDIX B:
Regional Divisions of the United States

Midwest
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kansas
Michigan
Minnesota
Missouri
Nebraska
North Dakota
Ohio
South Dakota
Wisconsin

West
Alaska
Arizona
California
Colorado
Hawaii
Idaho
Montana
Nevada
New Mexico
Oregon
Utah
Washington
Wyoming

Northeast
Connecticut
Maine
Massachusetts
New Hampshire
New Jersey
New York
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
Vermont

South
Alabama
Arkansas
Delaware
District of Columbia
Florida
Georgia
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maryland
Mississippi
North Carolina
Oklahoma
South Carolina
Tennessee
Texas
Virginia
West Virginia

APPENDIX C:
National Alliance of Gang Investigators Associations

California Gang Investigators Association
http://www.cgiaonline.org

President
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East Coast Gang Investigators Association
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GRIPE Web site ***http://www.gripe4rkids.org***

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Florida Gang Investigators Association
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Mid-Atlantic Regional Gang Investigators Network (MARGIN)
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National Major Gang Task Force

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North Carolina Gang Investigators Association

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Northern California Gang Investigators Association

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NAGIA believes that implementation of the following recommendations will greatly enhance the ability of criminal justice professionals and communities to effectively address the gang problem together

Federal Role in the Gang Problem

The gang problem is found throughout the United States, in communities large and small. There is a great need for a consistent and ongoing response to gangs at all levels, from the local to the state and federal levels This response should be based upon best practices and should be flexible enough to deal with both rapidly changing trends and gang problems, which can vary greatly from one locality to another. Because gangs are a national problem, there is a need for a cohesive national response that supersedes agency boundaries.

Gang Denial

The education of the public, school administrators, community leaders, and law enforcement officials concerning the detrimental effects of gang denial is critical to controlling gang growth and its impact on the community. Public and institutional denial of the existence of gangs and a lack of proactive community measures are perhaps the greatest contributing factors in the alarming increase in the number, size, and strength of gangs. Denying the presence of gangs in a community significantly hampers effective prevention of gang growth and development during the early stages when violence is limited and active measures can effectively deter the problem.

Law Enforcement Intelligence Sharing

The sharing of gang intelligence is an issue of great concern throughout all levels of law enforcement Usually, the most effective sharing of information takes place informally between individual law enforcement officers. The problems endemic in sharing information among the many federal law enforcement agencies exist to a large degree within some local law enforcement agencies. Gang, narcotics, homicide, and other units within municipal police departments must ensure that intelligence is communicated department-wide. In addition, law enforcement administrators need to recognize that the gang problem transcends geographic borders, making it essential that gang investigators meet regularly with their colleagues from other jurisdictions and receive advanced training at seminars Because of the violent nature of gang members, both inside prisons and in communities, the sharing of information among criminal justice professionals has become an issue of public safety. NAGIA strongly recommends that all law enforcement agencies consider membership in their local RISS center to facilitate the sharing of gang-related intelligence through the RISS National Gang Database, conferences, and information sharing meetings.

Gang Definitions

There is a need for standardized definitions of a gang, gang member, and gang crime. If criminal justice professionals are to effectively work together and share gang-related intelligence across jurisdictions, it is imperative that they employ the same standards to determine what constitutes a gang, gang member, and gang crime Many states do not have a gang definition, either formal or commonly understood, among jurisdictions within that state. In fact, there are many different definitions among jurisdictions at the state and local levels, which make it difficult to have a common discussion on gang issues. The lack of a common definition also contributes to the complexity of quantifying the nature and extent of the gang problem. NAGIA representatives have developed a recommended definition of the term "gang" to facilitate a national discussion

> Gang. A group or association of three or more persons who may have a common identifying sign, symbol, or name and who individually or collectively engage in, or have engaged in, criminal activity which creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation Criminal activity includes juvenile acts that, if committed by an adult, would be a crime

Uniform Crime Reporting of Gang Activity

In order to comprehend the scope and dimension of the gang problem and to accurately measure the effectiveness of anti-gang programs, there is a need for uniform crime reporting on gangs and gang activity. Accurate reporting is needed not only from municipal and county law enforcement agencies but also from schools

The standardization of gang definitions may help alleviate this problem. The FBI's full implementation of the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), which collects information reported through the Uniform Crime Reports (UCRs), will also help in this endeavor.

Correctional Intelligence

There is a lack of intelligence coordination between police departments and corrections officials. This is largely due to the fact that many officers are unaware of the wealth of intelligence related to gangs and gang members available within the corrections community Corrections officials and databases within federal, state, and local prison systems are an unexploited source of vital intelligence. Many correctional facilities identify gang members, validate gang membership, and have the capability to monitor mail, telephone calls, and visits. NAGIA encourages police agencies to work cooperatively with corrections departments through partnerships involving information sharing, fugitive apprehension, and specialized enforcement

Gang-Related Training

The explosion of gang activity in the United States has resulted in a tremendous increase in the availability of training about gangs. However, information presented at some of these training programs and conferences is outdated, inaccurate, or inappropriate for the local situation. NAGIA believes that there is a need to identify and support worthwhile training sessions, conferences, instructors, and events related to gang training. This endorsement will help to ensure that only accurate and up-to-date information is disseminated to criminal justice professionals and others who have a need for instruction.

Legislation

Increased awareness of gang activity has led to a proliferation of federal, state, and local gang-related laws with varying degrees of effectiveness. There is a need to identify and track legislation pertaining to gang prevention and suppression issues and to provide well-informed guidance to legislative sponsors. There is also a need to catalog and evaluate existing legislation to provide examples of beneficial statutes to those seeking to shape new legislation The National Youth Gang Center maintains a comprehensive list of state and local gang legislation on its Web site at *http //www iir com/nygc/maininfo htm#Legislation.*

Gang Officers

Experience in working with gangs is important to law enforcement's success in their anti-gang strategies and goals Many police departments have formed gang units and have developed specialized positions within these units. The ability of officers to effectively combat gangs is greatly enhanced by accumulated on-the-job experience Many police officers and other law enforcement agents routinely rotate into other job assignments every few years, thereby diminishing the institutional knowledge of a particular unit Expertise regarding gangs is particularly difficult to maintain because gangs on both local and national levels are unpredictable and readily adapt their methods of operation to changing circumstances. Therefore, it is critical that at least some of the personnel involved in gang enforcement have extensive experience working with gangs NAGIA recommends that law enforcement agency administrators consider these factors when rotating or reassigning personnel from a gang unit.

Community Responses to Gangs

Law enforcement alone will never successfully eliminate the threat of gangs. Other community agencies and partners, including schools, juvenile justice agencies, grassroots community organizations, faith-based organizations, social services organizations, and others, must work together to address the problem of gangs in the local community and to provide youths with opportunities to opt out of the gang lifestyle. NAGIA strongly recommends that law enforcement agencies reach out to social service agencies, nonprofit community assistance agencies, faith-based groups, schools, and private businesses to promote a comprehensive and coordinated community action plan to deal with gang suppression, intervention, and prevention

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