

Arizona Criminal Justice Commission

Statistical Analysis Center Publication

Our mission is to sustain and enhance the coordination, cohesiveness, productivity and effectiveness of the Criminal Justice System in Arizona



2009 Arizona Gang Threat Assessment

2011

February

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Executive Summary

In the spring of 2010, the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission's Statistical Analysis Center surveyed law enforcement officers in Arizona regarding gangs and gang activity in their jurisdictions. The survey used for the Arizona gang assessment was based upon the *National Gang Threat Assessment* conducted by the National Alliance of Gang Investigators Associations in partnership with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, National Drug Intelligence Center, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. The survey was designed to obtain from law enforcement information about the gangs in their jurisdictions and their level of activity. This report provides statewide results from the 2010 gang threat assessment and compares it to similar data collected in 2009 and 2008 to assess changes over time.

Results of the threat assessment from local agencies have also been aggregated to the county level for 14 of the 15 Arizona counties. While responses were received from agencies in Apache County there were not enough data to provide meaningful Apache County report. The county gang threat assessment reports can be found at <http://www.azcjc.gov/ACJC.Web/publications/publications.aspx?ServId=1000>.

Findings

- Gangs were reported to be active in 59 of the 78 jurisdictions of agencies (75.6 percent) that responded to the survey in 2010. Of the agencies that reported active gangs, 43 provided estimates of the number of gang members in their jurisdiction. Together, these agencies estimated that there are 32,772 active gang members across Arizona.
- Half of the participating agencies reported that gangs were expanding their membership and scope of activities. Over half of the agencies reported that gang activity had increased in the prior 12 months and during the last five years. When asked about the previous six months over half of the agencies (53.4 percent) reported gang activity had either stayed the same or decreased.
- Assault/aggravated assault was listed by nearly 80 percent of agencies as the primary crime being committed by gangs, followed by burglary, and criminal damage.
- Nearly 45 percent of responding agencies reported that gangs have a high level of involvement in the distribution of marijuana and 31.6 percent reported high levels of gang involvement in the distribution of methamphetamine.
- When asked about gang intervention strategies, law enforcement agencies identified enforcement and identification of gang members as the most effective strategies when responding to gangs and gang activity in their jurisdictions. Much lower percentages of agency respondents saw value in school programming, gang prosecution units, and community-based gang programming.

Introduction

During the spring of 2010, the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission's (ACJC) Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) surveyed law enforcement officers in Arizona regarding their perceptions and experience with gangs, gang members, and gang activity in their jurisdictions. This report examines and summarizes the results from the survey and fulfills the mandate of Arizona Revised Statute (ARS) §41-2416, which requires ACJC to conduct an annual survey that measures the prevalence of gang activity in Arizona when monies are specifically appropriated for that purpose. Although no funds were specifically appropriated for this assessment, effectively addressing gangs and gang activity presents a significant challenge to Arizona's law enforcement agencies and the criminal justice system. For these reasons, ACJC continues to collect and share information on gangs and gang activity using existing resources.

Research Methods

Since 1990, ACJC has administered a gang survey to state, county, tribal, and local law enforcement agencies in Arizona. In the summer of 2007, the *Arizona Gang Survey* was replaced with the *Arizona Gang Threat Assessment* because of feedback from the law enforcement community in Arizona who requested a more in-depth analysis of current threats posed by gangs. The *Arizona Gang Threat Assessment* was modeled after the *National Gang Threat Assessment*. The national assessment is a project of the National Alliance of Gang Investigators Associations in partnership with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the National Drug Intelligence Center and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearm and Explosives. The first national assessment was conducted in 2005, with surveys being sent out to hundreds of gang investigators across the nation.

The current *Arizona Gang Threat Assessment* survey was distributed to 113 law enforcement agencies throughout Arizona asking them a series of questions about gangs and gang activity in their jurisdiction during calendar year 2009. The survey was designed to gather information on gangs, gang members, gang activity, and other pertinent information to better understand the threat gangs pose to public safety. Surveys were sent to all 15 county sheriff's offices, 74 municipal police agencies, six marshals, and 18 tribal police departments. Of the 113 surveys distributed, 78 (69.0 percent) of the surveys were returned. A total of 73.3 percent of sheriffs, 74.3 percent of municipal law enforcement agencies, 83.3 percent of marshals, and 38.9 percent of tribal police departments returned completed surveys.

Gangs in Arizona

Total Gang Membership

Of the 78 agencies that responded to our request for information on gangs and gang

	2007		2008		2009	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	57	62.0%	69	69.7%	59	75.6%
No	33	35.9%	30	30.3%	19	24.4%
Unsure/Don't know	2	2.2%	0	0.0%	N/A	N/A

activity in their jurisdictions, 75.6 percent (59 agencies) reported the presence of gangs and gang activity in their jurisdiction. Although this is a decrease in the number of agencies that reported active gangs in their jurisdictions during the previous year, a higher percentage of responding agencies reported active gangs in their jurisdictions than during the previous two years (Table 1). Of the agencies that responded that there were gangs in their jurisdiction, together they estimated that there were 32,772 active gang members in their jurisdictions statewide. Importantly, 16 of the agencies reporting gang activity were not able to provide an estimate of the number of gang members in their jurisdiction. Thus, the number of gang members reported here is a conservative estimate of the number of gang members in Arizona. The reasons for the underestimation includes the inability of some agencies to provide estimates, other agencies not responding to the survey at all, and the likelihood that some gang members have not yet come to the attention of law enforcement.

Level of Gang Activity Over Time

Agencies that reported gangs or gang members in their jurisdiction were asked to rate the level of gang activity and if gang membership and gang activities were expanding. When asked whether

	2007	2008	2009
Yes	65.5%	64.5%	50.0%
No	27.3%	29.0%	46.4%
Unsure/Don't Know	7.3%	6.5%	3.6%
Total Responses	55	62	56

gangs in their area were expanding their numbers and scope of activities, half of the responding agencies reported that gangs in their jurisdictions were expanding their membership and scope of activities (Table 2). This is a decrease in the percentage of agencies reporting expansion in the number of gang members and scope of activities in

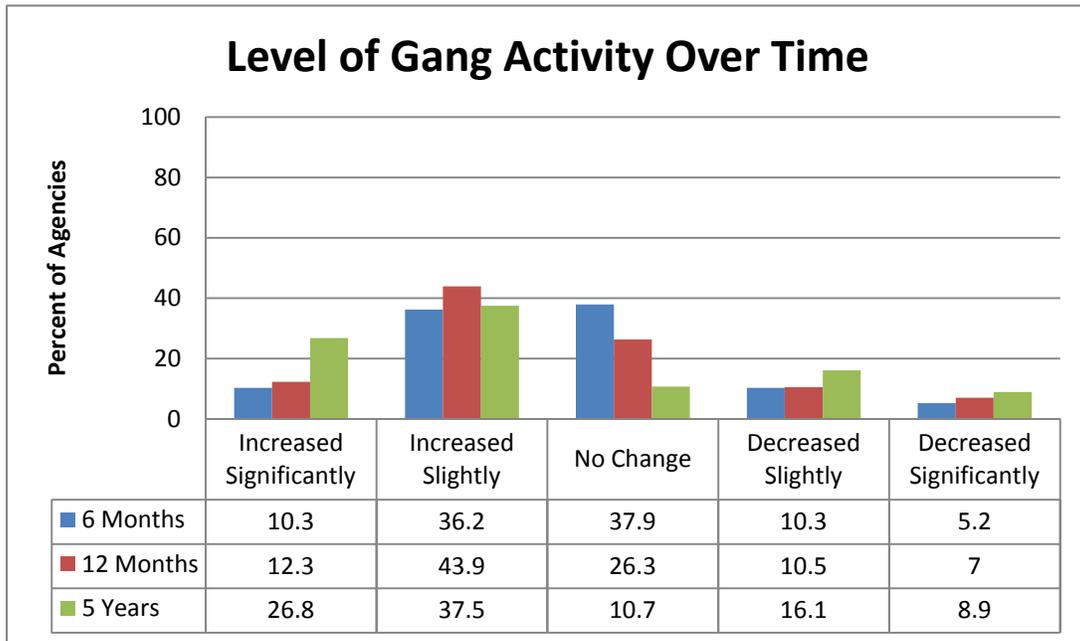
both 2007 and 2008.

When given the opportunity to provide further explanation of their responses about gang membership and gang activities, many agencies reported that gangs were becoming more involved in human smuggling, drug smuggling, identity theft, and fraud.

When considering only the six months prior to their completing the 2009 assessment, 36.2 percent of agencies reported that the level of gang activity in their jurisdiction had increased slightly; this is slightly lower than the 37.3 percent reporting in 2008 (Figure 1). More than 40 percent of the agencies reported that gang activity increased slightly over the preceding 12 months and close to 40

percent reported that gang activity has increased slightly over the past five years, which is an increase from the 33.3 percent of agencies reporting slight increases in 2008.

Figure 1



Gang Involvement in Crimes and Drugs

Table 3: Primary Crimes Committed by Gangs (Of the Jurisdictions Reporting Gang Activity)		
Crime	2009	
	Number of Agencies	Percent of Agencies
Assault/Aggravated Assault	43	78.2%
Burglary	23	41.8%
Criminal Damage	17	30.9%
Drug Offenses	15	27.3%
Vandalism/Graffiti/Tagging	13	23.6%
Threatening and Intimidation	13	23.6%
Drug Sales	13	23.6%
Theft	10	18.2%
Robbery/Armed Robbery	9	16.4%
Drive-by Shootings	8	14.5%
Narcotics Offenses	8	14.5%
Auto Theft	7	12.7%
Drug Smuggling/Trafficking/Transport	6	10.9%
Fraud/Identity Theft	5	9.1%
Weapon Offenses	4	7.3%
Homicide	4	7.3%
Human Smuggling	4	7.3%
Drug Possession	4	7.3%
Drug Use	4	7.3%
Alcohol Crimes/Minor in Consumption/DUI	3	5.5%
Property Crimes	3	5.5%
Attempted Homicide	2	3.6%
Disorderly Conduct	2	3.6%
Prostitution	2	3.6%
Extortions	1	1.8%
Home Invasions	1	1.8%
Kidnapping	1	1.8%
Money Laundering	1	1.8%
Public Disorder Crimes	1	1.8%
Shoplifting	1	1.8%
Trafficking of Stolen Property	1	1.8%
Traffic	1	1.8%
Violent Crime	1	1.8%
Number of Agencies Responding	55	

Agencies were also asked to report the primary crimes committed by gangs in their jurisdiction (Table 3). This question was open ended and respondents were asked to list the crimes that were being committed by gangs in their jurisdiction with no limit to the number or type of crimes they could report.

Assault/Aggravated assault was reported as a primary gang crime by more than three-fourths of agencies (78.2 percent), followed by burglary (41.8 percent), criminal damage (30.9 percent), and drug offenses (27.3 percent). Nearly one quarter (23.6 percent) of agencies reported vandalism/graffiti/tagging, threatening and intimidation, and drug sales as the primary crimes committed by gangs in their jurisdictions. Comparatively, in 2008 68.3 percent of agencies reported assault, 33.3 percent reported burglary, and 28.6 percent reported vandalism/graffiti/tagging as the primary crimes being committed by gangs.

Agencies were also asked to rate the level of gang involvement in 15 specific crimes in their jurisdictions. Agencies were given five choices to rate the level of gang involvement in each type of crime: high, moderate, low, none, and unknown. In contrast to the data above that allows for emerging gang crimes to reveal themselves, this question is intended to provide consistent measurement over time of gang involvement in a predetermined set of violent and property crimes.

The crime type with the largest percentage of agencies reporting a high level of gang involvement in 2009 was vandalism/graffiti/tagging, followed by burglary (Table 4). Vandalism/graffiti/tagging was also reported by the highest percentage of agencies in 2007 and 2008 to be a crime with a high level of involvement by gangs and gang members. In addition, the percentage of agencies reporting a high level of involvement in vandalism/graffiti/tagging has increased every year since 2007.

Conversely, for murder, kidnapping, arson, and prostitution, over 40 percent of the agencies reported that gangs were not involved at all in these crimes in their jurisdiction. While the previous table revealed that more than three-fourths of agencies reported assault as the primary crime committed

	Year	High	Moderate	Low	None	Unknown
Vandalism/Graffiti/Tagging	2007	38.6%	49.1%	7.0%	3.5%	1.8%
	2008	51.5%	29.4%	13.2%	2.9%	2.9%
	2009	57.1%	28.6%	8.9%	-	5.4%
Burglary	2007	14.0%	50.9%	15.8%	5.3%	14.0%
	2008	11.8%	38.2%	27.9%	8.8%	13.2%
	2009	22.4%	41.4%	19.0%	6.9%	10.3%
Felonious Assault	2007	22.8%	33.3%	29.8%	7.0%	7.0%
	2008	25.4%	29.9%	20.9%	10.4%	13.4%
	2009	17.5%	35.1%	28.1%	10.5%	8.8%
Intimidation/Extortion	2007	14.3%	32.1%	33.9%	5.4%	14.3%
	2008	10.3%	38.2%	25.0%	8.8%	17.6%
	2009	15.5%	31.0%	31.0%	6.9%	15.5%
Fraud	2007	3.5%	19.3%	35.1%	14.0%	14.0%
	2008	3.0%	10.6%	22.7%	27.3%	27.3%
	2009	13.0%	14.8%	27.8%	20.4%	24.1%
Identity Theft	2007	12.3%	22.8%	19.3%	15.8%	29.8%
	2008	7.4%	11.8%	23.5%	23.5%	33.8%
	2009	12.3%	22.8%	21.1%	21.1%	22.8%
Auto Theft	2007	17.9%	30.4%	30.4%	7.1%	14.3%
	2008	6.0%	28.4%	32.8%	17.9%	14.9%
	2009	12.1%	39.7%	20.7%	19.0%	8.6%
Robbery	2007	8.9%	23.2%	42.9%	12.5%	12.5%
	2008	14.7%	16.2%	42.6%	16.2%	10.3%
	2009	12.1%	29.3%	25.9%	20.7%	12.1%
Human Trafficking	2007	1.9%	11.1%	24.1%	25.9%	37.0%
	2008	-	19.4%	16.4%	28.4%	35.8%
	2009	8.8%	17.5%	14.0%	31.6%	28.1%
Firearms Trafficking	2007	8.9%	23.2%	35.7%	12.5%	19.6%
	2008	5.9%	14.7%	30.9%	20.6%	27.9%
	2009	5.3%	22.8%	24.6%	26.3%	21.1%
Murder	2007	3.6%	7.1%	46.4%	30.4%	12.5%
	2008	6.0%	13.4%	28.4%	32.8%	19.4%
	2009	3.6%	14.3%	28.6%	44.6%	8.9%
Kidnapping	2007	-	1.8%	44.6%	33.9%	19.6%
	2008	1.5%	4.4%	17.6%	48.5%	27.9%
	2009	3.5%	1.8%	31.6%	42.1%	21.1%
Arson	2007	-	3.6%	21.4%	41.1%	33.9%
	2008	-	-	17.9%	50.7%	31.3%
	2009	3.4%	5.2%	19.0%	46.6%	25.9%
Prostitution	2007	-	3.6%	19.6%	41.1%	35.7%
	2008	2.9%	2.9%	7.4%	50.0%	36.8%
	2009	1.8%	5.3%	14.0%	40.4%	38.6%
Sexual Assault/Rape	2007	-	3.6%	50.0%	17.9%	28.6%
	2008	-	11.8%	20.6%	36.8%	30.9%
	2009	1.8%	5.3%	31.6%	36.8%	24.6%

by gangs, table four shows that only 17.5 percent of agencies reported that gangs had a high involvement in felonious assaults. This difference is likely because of agencies including all assaults when responding to the previous question, but restricting their responses, as directed, to felonious assaults in the question that followed.

In addition to the level of gang involvement by crime type, agencies were also asked to rate gangs' involvement in the distribution of various drugs. Approximately 30 percent of agencies reported that gangs had a high involvement in drug street sales in 2009, with an additional 36.2 percent reporting a moderate level of gang involvement (Table 5). Approximately five percent of agencies reported a high level of gang involvement in the wholesale trafficking of drugs and no agencies reported a high level of gang involvement in the manufacturing of drugs. In 2009, marijuana grows was added to the survey and the list of drug activities. No agency reported that gangs had a high level of involvement in marijuana grows, but more than 40 percent reported a low level of involvement. The highest percentage of agencies reported a high level of involvement by gangs in the distribution of marijuana

**Table 5: Gang Involvement in the Distribution of Drugs
(Of the Jurisdictions Reporting Gang Activity)**

		High	Moderate	Low	None	Unknown
Drugs – Street Sales	2007	26.3%	43.9%	22.8%	1.8%	5.3%
	2008	20.6%	44.1%	19.1%	2.9%	13.2%
	2009	29.3%	36.2%	27.6%	-	6.9%
Drugs – Wholesale	2007	10.5%	21.1%	40.4%	5.3%	22.8%
	2008	10.6%	16.7%	30.3%	12.1%	30.3%
	2009	5.2%	29.3%	31.0%	8.6%	25.9%
Drugs – Manufacture	2007	3.6%	3.6%	41.1%	19.6%	32.1%
	2008	4.4%	5.9%	22.1%	33.8%	33.8%
	2009	-	10.5%	36.8%	21.1%	31.6%
Marijuana Grows	2007	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	2008	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	2009	-	5.2%	41.4%	20.7%	32.8%
Marijuana	2007	36.8%	42.1%	15.8%	1.8%	3.5%
	2008	41.2%	26.5%	13.2%	4.4%	14.7%
	2009	44.8%	29.3%	15.5%	3.4%	6.9%
Methamphetamine	2007	29.8%	36.8%	24.6%	3.5%	5.3%
	2008	23.5%	35.3%	17.6%	5.9%	17.6%
	2009	31.6%	36.8%	14.0%	8.8%	8.8%
Crack Cocaine	2007	12.3%	17.5%	40.4%	8.8%	21.1%
	2008	13.2%	11.8%	25.0%	23.5%	26.5%
	2009	10.3%	12.1%	29.3%	32.8%	15.5%
Heroin	2007	7.4%	16.7%	38.9%	14.8%	22.2%
	2008	5.8%	15.9%	39.1%	11.6%	27.5%
	2009	10.3%	29.3%	24.1%	19.0%	17.2%
Pharmaceuticals	2007	5.4%	10.7%	32.1%	16.1%	35.7%
	2008	6.0%	13.4%	19.4%	22.4%	38.8%
	2009	6.9%	24.1%	32.8%	10.3%	25.9%
Powdered Cocaine	2007	3.6%	16.1%	50.0%	7.1%	23.2%
	2008	5.9%	19.1%	36.8%	14.7%	23.5%
	2009	6.9%	13.8%	43.1%	20.7%	15.5%
MDMA (Ecstasy) and analogs	2007	3.6%	3.6%	42.9%	21.4%	28.6%
	2008	1.4%	13.0%	20.3%	24.6%	40.6%
	2009	-	17.2%	27.6%	29.3%	25.9%

(44.8 percent) and methamphetamine (31.6 percent). Few to no agencies reported that gangs were highly involved in distributing MDMA, powdered cocaine, and pharmaceuticals. It is worth noting that the percent of agencies reporting a high level of gang involvement in heroin distribution nearly doubled from 5.8 percent in 2008 to 10.3 percent in 2009.

Level of Activity by Gang

Responding agencies were also asked to rate the level of activity in their jurisdictions of 26 specific gangs. The gangs were chosen for inclusion in the Arizona assessment because they correspond to the gangs listed in the National Gang Threat Assessment, allowing for a state to national comparison.

When agencies were asked to rate the level of activity by each gang, 12 of the 26 gangs listed were identified by at least one agency as having high levels of activity in their jurisdiction (Table 6). The gangs reported by law enforcement agencies to have high levels of activity in 2009 in the highest percentage of jurisdictions were the Hispanic Sureños/SUR 13 (24.6 percent), Crips (15.8 percent), Bloods (14.0 percent), and Mexican Mafia/La Eme (12.3 percent). Comparatively, in the 2009 National Gang Threat Assessment the most significant gangs reported in the Southwest Region (i.e. Utah, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and Oklahoma) were Barrio Azteca, Latin Kings, Mexicanemi, Tango Blast, and Texas Syndicate.

Table 6: Level of Activity by Gang (Of the Jurisdictions Reporting Gang Activity)						
	Year	High	Moderate	Low	Not Applicable	Unknown
Hispanic Sureños (SUR 13)	2007	19.6%	25.0%	23.2%	30.4%	1.8%
	2008	17.6%	35.3%	22.1%	14.7%	10.3%
	2009	24.6%	33.3%	24.6%	12.3%	5.3%
Crips (all sets)	2007	14.3%	25.0%	25.0%	28.6%	7.1%
	2008	17.9%	20.9%	25.4%	32.8%	3.0%
	2009	15.8%	19.3%	26.3%	28.1%	10.5%
Bloods (all sets)	2007	17.9%	19.6%	28.6%	28.6%	5.4%
	2008	18.8%	14.5%	26.1%	40.6%	-
	2009	14.0%	14.0%	33.3%	26.3%	12.3%
Mexican Mafia/La Eme	2007	7.1%	19.6%	39.3%	23.2%	10.7%
	2008	7.2%	20.3%	40.6%	18.8%	13.0%
	2009	12.3%	15.8%	38.6%	21.1%	12.3%
Neighborhood-based Drug Trafficking Groups/Crews	2007	10.9%	23.6%	20.0%	30.9%	14.5%
	2008	13.0%	18.8%	24.6%	37.7%	5.8%
	2009	8.6%	29.3%	22.4%	32.8%	6.9%
Aryan Brotherhood	2007	-	*	*	*	*
	2008	7.4%	8.8%	39.7%	39.7%	4.4%
	2009	5.3%	15.8%	45.6%	22.8%	10.5%
Hells Angels OMG	2007	3.5%	17.5%	42.1%	33.3%	3.5%
	2008	4.3%	17.4%	42.0%	34.8%	1.4%
	2009	5.3%	28.1%	29.8%	29.8%	7.0%
Skinheads	2007	3.5%	21.1%	38.6%	31.6%	5.3%
	2008	4.3%	14.5%	33.3%	43.5%	4.3%
	2009	5.3%	14.0%	42.1%	28.1%	10.5%
Hispanic Norteños (14)	2007	3.6%	9.1%	25.5%	52.7%	9.1%
	2008	1.5%	4.4%	35.3%	48.5%	10.3%
	2009	3.5%	8.8%	40.4%	38.6%	8.8%

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Black Gangster Disciples	2007	3.6%	-	10.7%	73.2%	12.5%
	2008	-	1.4%	17.4%	76.8%	4.3%
	2009	1.8%	3.5%	10.5%	70.2%	14.0%
Gangster Disciples	2007	1.8%	1.8%	18.2%	61.8%	16.4%
	2008	-	2.9%	22.1%	73.5%	1.5%
	2009	1.8%	1.8%	21.1%	64.9%	10.5%
La Nuestra Familia	2007	-	-	7.1%	71.4%	21.4%
	2008	-	-	10.3%	75.0%	14.7%
	2009	1.8%	1.8%	10.5%	64.9%	21.1%
Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13)	2007	-	-	42.9%	42.9%	14.3%
	2008	-	6.0%	40.3%	47.8%	6.0%
	2009	-	5.3%	42.1%	40.4%	12.3%
Border Brothers	2007	-	1.8%	17.9%	64.3%	16.1%
	2008	-	4.5%	19.4%	62.7%	13.4%
	2009	-	3.6%	28.6%	57.1%	10.7%
Outlaws OMG	2007	-	1.8%	7.3%	78.2%	12.7%
	2008	-	1.5%	13.6%	77.3%	7.6%
	2009	-	3.6%	12.5%	69.6%	14.3%
18 th Street Gang	2007	-	7.1%	23.2%	51.8%	17.9%
	2008	-	4.3%	21.7%	65.2%	8.7%
	2009	-	1.8%	28.1%	59.6%	10.5%
Bandidos OMG	2007	-	-	5.5%	80.0%	14.5%
	2008	-	4.5%	9.0%	82.1%	4.5%
	2009	-	1.8%	19.3%	66.7%	12.3%
Latin Kings	2007	-	3.6%	32.1%	50.0%	14.3%
	2008	-	1.5%	30.9%	64.7%	2.9%
	2009	-	1.8%	31.6%	54.4%	12.3%
UBN	2007	-	2.1%	6.4%	66.0%	25.5%
	2008	-	-	8.2%	67.2%	24.6%
	2009	-	1.8%	8.9%	66.1%	23.2%
Vice Lords	2007	-	-	5.4%	78.6%	16.1%
	2008	-	-	10.1%	82.6%	7.2%
	2009	-	1.8%	10.5%	68.4%	19.3%
La Raza	2007	-	1.8%	7.1%	71.4%	19.6%
	2008	-	-	8.8%	73.5%	17.6%
	2009	-	-	14.0%	73.7%	12.3%
Asian Gangs (all sets)	2007	-	1.9	7.4%	79.6%	11.1%
	2008	-	-	2.9%	88.4%	8.7%
	2009	-	-	12.5%	66.1%	21.4%
Pagans OMG	2007	-	-	3.6%	83.6%	12.7%
	2008	-	-	4.5%	92.4%	3.0%
	2009	-	-	8.9%	78.6%	12.5%
Almighty P Stone Nation	2007	-	-	3.6%	80.4%	16.1%
	2008	-	-	1.4%	95.7%	2.9%
	2009	-	-	7.0%	75.4%	17.5%
Texas Syndicate	2007	-	-	5.5%	81.8%	12.7%
	2008	-	-	2.9%	92.8%	4.3%
	2009	-	-	3.5%	75.4%	21.1%
Mexikanemi (Texas Mexican Mafia)	2007	-	-	7.3%	78.2%	14.5%
	2008	-	-	1.4%	92.8%	5.8%
	2009	-	-	1.8%	78.6%	19.6%

Level of Gang Coordination

Agencies were also asked if the gangs in their area were coordinating their activity with other gangs. Approximately 45 percent of agencies reported that gangs in their jurisdiction were coordinating with other gangs (Table 7). Agency responses indicated that gangs were coordinating with other gangs in drug smuggling and drug trafficking activity as well as other ways to make money.

	2007	2008	2009
Yes	33.9%	48.4%	44.6%
No	57.1%	39.1%	42.9%
Unsure/Don't Know	8.9%	12.5%	12.5%
Total Responses	56	64	56

Most Effective Gang Responses

	2007		2008		2009	
	Number of Agencies	Percent of Agencies	Number of Agencies	Percent of Agencies	Number of Agencies	Percent of Agencies
Enforcement	22	38.6%	23	33.3%	46	78.0%
Identification of Gang Members	6	10.5%	6	8.7%	39	66.1%
GIITEM	13	22.8%	7	10.1%	34	57.6%
Joint Efforts with Other Agencies	3	5.3%	11	15.9%	29	49.2%
Gang Crime/Intelligence Data Analyses	7	12.3%	6	8.7%	22	37.3%
Law Enforcement Gang Units	5	8.8%	4	5.8%	19	32.2%
School Programs	9	15.8%	8	11.6%	17	28.8%
Special Prosecution Programs	N/A	N/A	4	3.9%	13	22.0%
Community Programs	8	14.0%	8	11.6%	8	13.6%

Agency respondents were also asked which strategies have been the most effective in their jurisdiction in responding to gangs. Prior to 2009 agencies were asked to simply list any strategies that were effective in their jurisdiction. To make responses more consistent over time, in 2009 the question was changed to provide response categories from which agency representatives were instructed to choose. Because the survey identified a range of activities that might not come to mind for all respondents, the change in the structure of the question is the likely explanation for the large increases in some categories of interdiction, intervention, and suppression strategies.

Enforcement was the strategy identified by the largest percentage of agencies as an effective gang response in their jurisdictions (Table 8). Enforcement was followed by identification of gang members (66.1 percent), the Gang and Immigration Intelligence Team Enforcement Mission (GIITEM) (57.6 percent), and joint efforts with other agencies (49.2 percent).

Task Force Participation

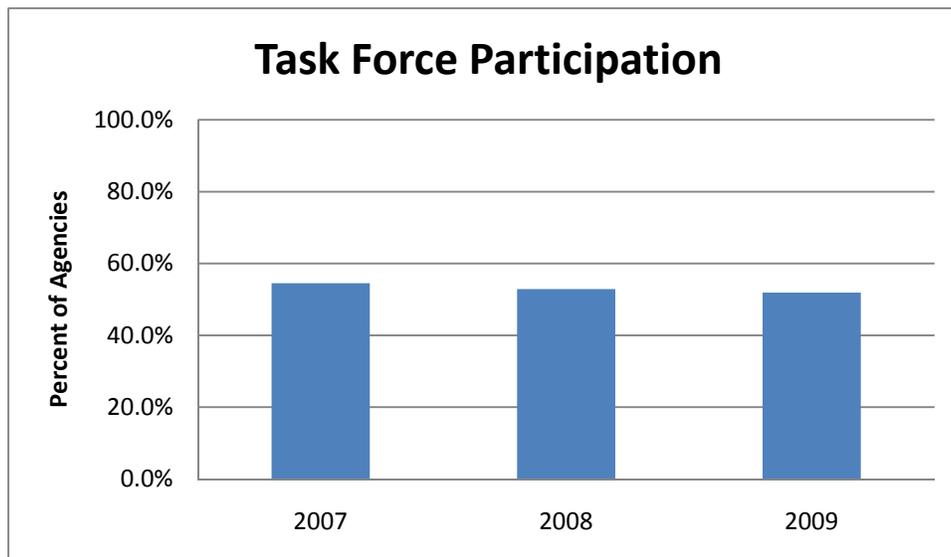
Under the direction of the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS), the Gang Intelligence and Immigration Team Enforcement Mission (GIITEM) assists criminal justice agencies statewide with multi-agency collaborations for criminal gang enforcement and investigative strategies. GIITEM brings together law enforcement agencies from state, county, municipal, federal, and tribal jurisdictions in a coordinated, intelligence-driven approach to deal with gangs on a large scale.

In 2006, after several years of declining resources and downsizing of operations because of state revenue shortfalls, DPS received funding to revitalize GIITEM and add to their mission combating illegal immigration and human smuggling. More specifically, GIITEM is charged with:

- 1) Deterring criminal gang activity through investigations, arrest and prosecution;
- 2) Dismantling gang-related criminal enterprises;
- 3) Deterring border-related crimes;
- 4) Disrupting human smuggling organizations;
- 5) Collecting, analyzing and disseminating gang and illegal immigration intelligence; and
- 6) Providing anti-gang awareness training to communities and schools.

In the 2007 and 2008 Arizona Gang Threat Assessment, agencies were asked if they *participate* or *lead* a multi-agency task force. In 2009 agencies were only asked if they *participate* in a multi-agency gang task force. Just over half of the agencies (51.9 percent) reported that they participate in a task force, which is similar to the percentage in 2008 and just slightly lower than 2007. Of those agencies reporting task force involvement, the majority reported participation in GIITEM. Additional gang task forces listed by law enforcement agencies include, the East Valley Fusion Center, East Valley Gang Task Force, and the FBI Desert Hawk Fugitive Task Force. For those agencies that did not report participating in a multi-agency task force, some reported that they do not participate because of lack of manpower and/or funding.

Figure 2



Conclusion

Gang activity continues to affect many law enforcement jurisdictions in Arizona, with agencies reporting significant gang involvement in crime and drug distribution. Law enforcement agencies continue to report a high level of gang involvement in the distribution of marijuana and methamphetamine, similar to what was reported in 2007 and 2008. Law enforcement agencies also cited gang involvement in assault/aggravated assault, burglary, criminal damage, drug offenses, and vandalism/tagging/graffiti as major concerns in their jurisdictions.

The most active gangs identified by Arizona law enforcement agencies were the Hispanic Sureños (SUR 13), followed by the Crips, Bloods, and the Mexican Mafia/La Eme. Other gangs that agencies reported high levels of activity in their jurisdiction include neighborhood-based trafficking groups/crews, Aryan Brotherhood, Hells Angels OMG, Skinheads, Hispanic Norteños (14), Black Gangster Disciples, Gangster Disciples, and La Nuestra Familia. Comparatively, data from the 2009 National Gang Threat Assessment reports that the significant gangs in the southwest region are Barrio Azteca, Latin Kings, Mexicanemi, Tango Blast, and Texas Syndicate.

Over the past three years, law enforcement agencies have reported increases in gangs and the problems associated with gangs in their jurisdictions. The percentage of agencies reporting gangs and gang activity has increased from 62 percent in 2007 to 75.6 percent in 2009. The data also reveals law enforcement agencies concern about increased gang involvement in many types of crimes in their jurisdictions during 2009. In addition, a larger percentage of agencies reported high levels of gang involvement in the distribution of most drugs with the exception of crack cocaine and MDMA (Ecstasy) and analogs. Although a lower percentage of agencies reported that gangs are expanding in their membership and numbers in 2009, many agencies reported that gang coordination with other gangs in their jurisdiction has increased. Finally, even though a higher percentage of agencies reported gangs in their jurisdictions, there has been little change over time in the percentage of agencies participating in multi-agency gang task forces from 2007 to 2009.

The data collected from local law enforcement agencies and included in this report illustrates what those working in the justice system already know: that many Arizona communities and the agencies that serve them continue to face a significant gang problem. It is hoped that this state gang report and the county gang profiles will assist policy makers and practitioners by capturing information on gangs and gang activity at the state and county level and sharing that information with those working on the gang problem in Arizona.