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CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

CHANGING LIVES. PROTECTING CANADIANS.



RESEARCH REPORT

Criminal Organizations: An Examination of Gang Management Practices Inside Canadian Institutions

2015 N° R-347

**Criminal Organizations: An Examination of Gang Management Practices Inside Canadian
Institutions**

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May 2015

Ce rapport est également disponible en français. Pour en obtenir un exemplaire, veuillez vous adresser à la Direction de la recherche, Service correctionnel du Canada, 340, avenue Laurier Ouest, Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0P9.

This report is also available in French. Should additional copies be required, they can be obtained from the Research Branch, Correctional Service of Canada, 340 Laurier Ave. West, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0P9.

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Executive Summary

Keywords: *security threat group, criminal organization, gang, population management, best practice*

The Correctional of Service Canada (CSC) continues to address issues of safety within its institutions driven by the presence of gangs and criminal organizations. While CSC has policies in place to address the risks posed by these groups in Canada's federal institutions, a comprehensive examination of the practices used to manage these populations had not been undertaken. This study aimed to better understand the management practices implemented with gang populations and to allow for the compilation of national best practices in gang management.

Telephone interviews were conducted with 55 staff members from a sample of medium, maximum, and women's institutions across Canada. Participants included security intelligence officers, parole officers, correctional managers, correctional officers, managers of assessment and intervention, primary workers, and a programs manager.

A number of management strategies were discussed, some focusing on suppressing the gang and their activity and others targeting individual members to either reduce their influence or assist with their disaffiliation. Participants noted that their federal facilities do not offer gang-specific programming; however, participants expected that core correctional programming would be beneficial for gang members.

In addition, the following ten best practices were submitted by correctional staff as being particularly effective in assisting them in managing their site-level gang populations: (1) collecting information on gang affiliations; (2) ensuring high quality security information; (3) sharing information with institutional staff; (4) sharing information with external partners; (5) gang separation from general population; (6) specialized transition unit for disaffiliating gang members; (7) transfers to disrupt gang activity; (8) integration; (9) building credibility and rapport with offenders; and (10) providing choices for respect.

This report aims to provide a first step in the documentation, categorization, and dissemination of strategies used by CSC staff to manage security threat groups within their facilities. By culminating the knowledge and experience gained by staff working directly with gangs, this report can act as a source of information to guide day-to-day gang management strategies at operational sites, inform future policy and guidelines, and provide a more comprehensive and dynamic understanding of the gangs in Canadian federal custody.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	ii
Executive Summary.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
List of Tables.....	v
List of Appendices.....	v
Introduction.....	1
Method.....	4
Participants.....	4
Measures.....	4
Procedure.....	5
Results.....	6
Gang Management Strategies.....	6
Best Practices in Gang Management.....	10
Challenges to Effective Gang Management.....	12
Discussion.....	18
Conclusions, Limitations, and Future Directions.....	21
References.....	22

List of Tables

Table 1 <i>Summary of Best Practices in Gang Management</i>	11
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List of Appendices

Appendix A: Best Practices in Gang Management and Intervention	25
Best Practice 1: Collecting Information on Gang Affiliations.....	26
Best Practice 2: Ensuring High Quality Security Information.....	28
Best Practice 3: Sharing Information with Institution Staff.....	31
Best Practice 4: Sharing Information with External Partners	33
Best Practice 5: Gang Separation from General Population.....	35
Best Practice 6: Specialized Transition Unit for Disaffiliating Gang Members.....	37
Best Practice 7: Transfers to Disrupt Gang Activity	39
Best Practice 8: Integration.....	41
Best Practice 9: Building Credibility and Rapport with Offenders	43
Best Practice 10: Providing Choices for Respect	45

Introduction

In Canada, gangs and criminal organizations are responsible for a variety of criminal behaviour (e.g., crimes involving illicit drugs, weapons, human trafficking, fraud, money laundering and homicide; Europol, 2013; Royal Canadian Mounted Police [RCMP], 2010). It is estimated that up to 900 criminal groups were operating within Canada between 2005 and 2010 (Criminal Intelligence Service Canada [CISC], 2010) and research suggests that up to 70% of offenders in some Canadian institutions are suspected of gang affiliations (Michel, Stys, Moore, & Jordan, 2014). As a result, Canadian society has prioritized gangs and organized crime in the Canadian public safety context (MacKenzie, 2012).

The number of admissions to federal custody for criminal organization offences continues to rise in Canada (Motiuk & Vuong, 2005; Stys, 2010), although it is not clear if this increase is a result of the legislative changes or a true increase in this type of offending. As the gang-affiliated offender population grows, so does the risk for gang-related activity in the institutions; a situation that raises serious safety concerns for other inmates and institutional staff. Gang affiliation is commonly found to be associated with institutional misconduct and violence (Schenk & Fremouw, 2012). For example, a study by Nafekh and Stys (2004) found that offenders with a gang affiliation were significantly more likely than non-affiliated offenders to be directly involved in assaults on staff and inmates as well as in narcotics seizures. Of particular concern were street and prison gangs, who were found to be especially violent and to pose the biggest threat. More recent studies have made similar conclusions, including research by Worrall and Morris (2012) which found that gangs in prison have a moderate association with inmate-on-inmate violence experienced within the institution. Within correctional facilities, gang-affiliated offenders are also more likely to be subjected to violence and to be victimized than their non-gang-affiliated counterparts (Fox, Rufino, & Kercher, 2012).

Once released from correctional institutions, gang-affiliated offenders are more likely to be re-arrested and convicted than those without a gang affiliation (Guay, 2012). One exception to this finding are those gang members convicted of criminal organization offences, who are less likely to be re-incarcerated than matched offenders with no criminal organizational offence history (Stys & Ruddell, 2013), a finding that underscores previous recommendations regarding the importance of considering the unique threats and diverse needs of different gang types

(Ruddell & Gottschall, 2011).

CSC categorizes gangs as a type of security threat group (STG), which is defined as, “any formal or informal ongoing inmate/offender group, gang, organization, or association consisting of three or more members” (CSC, 2013b, p. 8). STGs encompass street gangs, prison gangs, outlaw motorcycle gangs (OMG; also referred to as motorcycle gangs in this report), traditional organized crime (TOC), Aboriginal gangs, White supremacy groups, subversive groups, terrorist organizations, and hate groups¹. CSC also provides a definition for what constitutes a member or associate of an STG:

A person associated or involved with a STG or criminal organization which includes supporters, sympathizers, strikers, affiliates, hang-arounds, prospects, associated members and persons aspiring to be members. Some STG members in our correctional institutions belong to sophisticated criminal organizations such as outlaw motorcycle gangs. Some of them are “hard core” members (fully committed/most active gang members they are not gang leaders/key players but have a greater role in the group than “wannabes” or “affiliates”). (CSC, 2013b, p. 8)

In 2010, CSC announced a multi-faceted gang strategy, with a focus on effective and efficient collection, analysis, and dissemination of information to support the key elements of gang management: prevention, repression, and intervention (CSC, 2010). To manage the gang-affiliated offender population, CSC has implemented policies to provide guidance on the management of the security threat groups, a gang management strategy, and several resources for staff. Commissioner’s Directive (CD) 568 (CSC, 2012a) and 568-2 (CSC, 2012b) outline how security and preventive information (gang and non-gang related) should be documented and communicated throughout the institution. The management of incompatibles, including rival gang members, is outlined in CD 568-7 (CSC, 2012c) and the processes for identifying and managing criminal organizations is set out in CD 568-3 (CSC, 2013b). The Population

¹ For the purposes of this paper, the terms STG, gang, and criminal organization will be used interchangeably, and will not include terrorist or violent extremist organizations.

Management Strategy has resulted in the establishment of institutional and regional population management committees as well as a gang management working group. It has also increased staffing as it pertains to gang and intelligence management. In 2009, CSC launched an online staff training module on gangs and organized crime to increase knowledge, awareness, and intelligence-gathering capacity. There is also a gang resource kit available which provides information for staff and outlines CSC's position on correctional programming specifically for those involved in gangs.

There has been very little research on the strategies in place to manage gangs within Canadian institutions. Dunbar (2013) reviewed the literature on intervention strategies and concluded that innovative strategies are necessary to meet the diverse needs of the gang-affiliated offender population. One study surveyed correctional officials to identify strategies to address security threat groups within American institutions (Winterdyk & Ruddell, 2010). This survey provided a first step in developing a "toolbox" of management strategies to allow flexibility for each institution. Yet a gap in knowledge still exists regarding the effectiveness of such strategies as few have received a methodologically rigorous evaluation (Bureau of Justice Assistance, n. d.; Di Placido et al., 2006; Westmacott, Stys, & Brown, 2005). One evaluation of a STG program by the Arizona Department of Corrections found a reduction of violence (via isolation) among other positive results (Fischer, 2002). However, Hemmati (2006) has argued that knowledge on the American gang situation can not necessarily be applied to Canada. Thus, it is important to consolidate a series of best practices that are considered effective in Canada as it facilitates information sharing and acts as a first step towards evaluating strategies.

To improve our understanding of the practices utilized to manage gang-affiliated offenders within correctional institutions; this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How are gangs currently managed in Canadian federal institutions?
2. What are the challenges related to effective gang management?
3. Which practices have been especially effective in managing the gang population?

Method

Participants

To obtain a representative sample of participants, a medium and maximum security level institution in each region (Pacific, Prairie, Ontario, Quebec, and Atlantic) was selected for participation upon consultation with CSC's Security Branch and examination of gang affiliate representation in the institutions. An additional maximum security institution was selected for the Prairie region to compensate for the disproportionate number of gang affiliates incarcerated in that region. Also, in order to take into account gang affiliation among women offenders, two women's institutions were included. Participating institutions included Springhill, Atlantic, Donnacona, Leclerc, Joliette, Millhaven, Collins Bay, Stony Mountain, Saskatchewan Penitentiary, Edmonton Institution, EIFW, Kent, and Mission.

Site contacts at each institution were asked to recruit interview participants who they believed to be knowledgeable in the management of criminal organizations and the challenges that they pose to their institution. Although the site contacts were not limited in who they selected for participation, they were asked to consider staff in the following positions: security intelligence officers (SIO), parole officers (PO), correctional officers (CX), correctional supervisors, coordinators of correctional operations, visiting and correspondence staff, and admissions and discharge staff. Of the 65 staff members contacted by the research team for an interview, 55 (85%) consented and participated. The majority of participants were security intelligence officers ($n = 20$, 36%), ten were parole officers (18%), nine were correctional managers (16%), eight were correctional officers (15%), five were managers of assessment and intervention (9%), two were primary workers (4%), and one was a programs manager (2%).

Measures

Participants were engaged in a telephone interview with a member of the research team, in which they were posed questions as outlined in an interview protocol. Subtopics within the interview focused on key areas of interest regarding the management of gang populations, including: the current situation regarding gang affiliates and activity in the institution, the management of gangs, gang initiation and desistance in the institution, and gang-related

programming². As the main objective of this study was to allow for the compilation of national best practices in gang management, best practices in gang management in each participant's institution was a focus of the interview protocol³. Additionally, a template for an institutional best practice was developed and distributed to SIOs for their completion and submission. The template asked participants to outline specific details of a successful gang management strategy that had been, or was being, used in their institution, including the practice target, objectives, approach, results, challenges, and conclusions. Templates were distributed to participants and submitted to the research team via e-mail.

Procedure

The site coordinator at each institution assisted the researchers in recruiting study participants and distributing the informed consent form to these identified individuals. Participants were asked to sign informed consent forms prior to participating and were informed that participation in the study was strictly voluntary, that the results of the study were completely confidential, and that they were free to refuse to answer any particular question or discontinue participation at any time. Those staff members who gave consent between October 2012 and January 2013 were contacted by the research team to schedule an interview. All but one participant agreed to the recording of the interview for data quality purposes. While interviews were projected to be one hour in duration, actual interviews ranged from 38 minutes to two hours in length. Qualitative interview data was transcribed, recorded electronically, and thematically analyzed in NVivo.

In order to facilitate the completion of the best practice templates, a research team member reviewed the interview transcripts for noted best practices, summarized the best practices in the template forms, and distributed to template to the participant for completion. This process resulted in 10 unique best practices (see Appendix A).

² Data collected as part of this interview was also used to contribute to a technical report on gangs and criminal organizations. See Michel, S., Stys, Y., Moore, J.P., & Jordan, R. (2014).

³ A best practice is a method or technique that has consistently shown results superior to those achieved with other means and is used as a benchmark (Bogan & English, 1994).

Results

Gang Management Strategies

Population management strategies. A variety of population management strategies for gangs were discussed by the participants as being effective in the federal correctional context, the application of which was dependent on the issues and dynamics present at each institution at that point in time. An interview participant from Prairie region reported that three factors should be taken into consideration when selecting a management strategy: the structure of the gang (e.g., some gangs have councils that make decisions on gang activity while others have a single leader), the size of the organization (e.g., smaller gangs, generally less than 10, may be disrupted through moving affiliates to different ranges, units, or institutions), and the regional scope of the gang (e.g., if the gang exists or has rivals across the region, then inter-regional transfers may need to be considered). Another interview participant noted that the problems the gang causes should be considered when deciding which strategy to implement (e.g., are they violent, distributing drugs, muscling).

Gang isolation. Physically separating gangs from the general population onto gang units has been a strategy implemented by several institutions to address multiple problems posed by gangs. First, this strategy reduces the ability of the gang to recruit new members in the general offender population. As a participant from the Prairie region explained, "...when you separate the gangs from general population, you reduce the number of potential fringe players. You also reduce incidents by a significant amount." Furthermore, separating the gangs from general population was also reported to increase the number of offenders disaffiliating from gangs. As a participant noted, gang-affiliated offenders have two unappealing choices if their gang is held in an open population: they can either continue working for the gang, or disaffiliate and check into segregation as they will be at significantly higher risk for being victimized. When the gang is separated from the general population, offenders affiliated with the gang can disaffiliate and enter general population with a reduced risk of being victimized by the gang.

This strategy also limits the capacity of the gang to intimidate and muscle non-gang members for goods. One interview participant reported that the separation of gangs from the general population has reduced the frequency of problems experienced, stating, "When the gangs were mixed with the general population, I found a lot more problems daily than they cause now".

Separation also addresses issues of incompatibilities between gangs. Issues experienced by the rival gang-driven incompatibilities were commonly discussed by interview participants, as Aboriginal gangs were identified as often being incompatible with each other. As a means of preventing inter-gang conflict and enhancing institutional safety, rival gangs were often separated into closed sub-populations. As one participant explained, “I think closed populations are a fantastic thing because it keeps these guys who want to kill each other separated”.

Participants who had experience with this separation strategy also recognized the logistical difficulties inherent in this management approach: “... from an operational aspect, managing multiple populations that don’t get along is a nightmare, because we are dividing up exercise, programs, and jobs”. Delivering programs was reported to be particularly difficult in settings where the gangs were separated from the general population. In these settings, the gang members would receive programming separately from the general offender population. Programming outside of general population occurs less frequently, as most programs require a minimum number of participants in order to commence. Separating incompatible gangs also causes problems with scheduling offender movement throughout the institution, as staff need to be aware of the location of each incompatible offender at all times to avoid meeting another incompatible.

Another issue with separating gangs is the void in power it creates within the general offender population. With the removal of the dominant gangs from the general population, new groups may form to take control. An interview participant noted: “It’s inmate 101. Someone needs to take control as there is a large amount of money to be made in prison, so someone will step up and try”.

Clustering/concentration. One strategy, particularly intended for managing incompatible gangs, is the concentration of specific gangs within specific institutions. For example, interview participants discussed that, to manage incompatibilities between gangs, they will not accept anyone who has listed incompatibilities at their institution, resulting in each institution admitting specific gangs who are compatible. Some institutions then become known by the gangs they hold, and offenders with a gang affiliation will request to be placed at the institution most favourable for them.

Gang dispersion. Another strategy identified to reduce gang activity and membership was gang dispersion - separating the members of a gang by transferring them to different units or

institutions. This strategy has been found to be more successful with smaller gangs, where it is more logistically feasible to find a place where the dispersed gang members can exist with no incompatibles. This did not appear to be a commonly utilized strategy, according to study participants, and concerns were raised over the risk of “spreading the gang” to new locations. Based on experiences with these transfers, some staff found that some who were moved quickly integrated into another gang, while others appear to not have joined a gang at their new institution. Several participants did, however, report that if this strategy would be more routinely used, it would be more successful.

Gang integration and balancing power. This strategy permits a large number of different gangs to co-exist within the institution, as the number of members from each gang is kept small (2-5 affiliates), and ranges and units hold a diverse mix of gang members. In this way, no gang can take control and gang conflict is reduced. However, one interview participant did warn that groups may become redefined, sometimes by ethnicity, in order for a group to have enough members to take power. Additionally, the success of this method may in fact be due to the current status of the affiliated offenders – if they are less influential or are in the process of disaffiliating, they may be much less likely to cause problems with other gang-affiliated offenders.

Key player separation. Some institutions focus less on the entire gang and more on specific individuals within the gang, particularly key players. These individuals have an influence on how the gang behaves and may be encouraging affiliated offenders to engage in illegal activities. If an offender is identified as a key player during the 1184-02 affiliation process, the management team completes a special management plan considering the unique risks the key player poses (see CD 568-3, CSC, 2013b). The most common strategy is to remove the offender from the gang, which could include moving the key player to another unit, segregating them temporarily, or transferring them to another institution. Isolating key players from the gang was reported to have a calming effect on the unit. Some interview participants did warn that this may only be a temporary solution to gang activity. First, despite being separated from the gang, some offenders still have the capability to communicate with, and provide directions to, their gang. Second, street and Aboriginal gangs will usually replace the removed leader, sometimes resulting in an internal power struggle culminating in violence and additional problems. Focusing on key individuals may also disrupt the rapport that staff have built with

offenders and may create population management difficulties.

Disaffiliation transition units. This strategy, as described by interview participants, is intended for institutions which separate their gang population from the general offender population in order to assist gang-affiliated offenders to disaffiliate from the gang. When offenders request to disaffiliate, they are removed from the gang unit and placed on a unit with only offenders seeking to disaffiliate. This strategy provides several advantages. First, it allows staff to monitor the offender who is requesting to disaffiliate from the gang to ensure their request is genuine. Second, it provides physical safety for the offender who would otherwise have to go into segregation, to be protected from the gang. Third, other offenders on the unit can act as a source of support as they are all going through a similar experience. This strategy does, however, require that there are enough offenders who are seeking to disaffiliate at any given time to warrant the use of valuable space within the institution.

Correctional programming strategies. All interview participants indicated that there were no programs available at their institution that were specifically designed for gang members. However, several programs were discussed by interview participants as possibly providing benefits to address gang-affiliated offenders' needs, such as the Violence Prevention Program (VPP), Alternatives, Attitudes, and Associations (AAA), and Integrated Correctional Program Model (ICPM).⁴ An interview participant explained that, while substance abuse and violence programs are helpful, gang members should also receive programs to help them build pro-social life skills to ensure they will not return to muscling and violence. Similarly, education was considered by one interview participant to be the most important program gang-affiliated offenders could receive, as it provides them with the base from which they can build other life skills, helping them to gain employment, and become self-sufficient. As the participant explained, "Once you get education you can get into CORCAN where they develop skills and employability that they can use in community. ... A high school diploma opens the door more so than programming, I think anyways". Another participant suggested modifying one of the evaluated disaffiliation programs offered in the community and implementing it within the institutions.

⁴ At the time of interviews in 2012/13, CSC was undergoing a transition to an Integrated Correctional Program Model, which targets multiple criminogenic needs with one program.

Participants questioned the utility of a group approach in addressing issues such as membership and entrenchment. Issues around image were discussed, as described by one participant, “Another problem with programs is guys are not often willing to be open, because they have a persona of being solid and don’t want to be ridiculed by their friends when they get back to the range”. Safety was also considered to be an issue with group programming as another participant explained, “How is a guy going to be rehabilitated if he is scared to go to the programs room because he will be assaulted?”. Thus, some participants underscored the importance of individualized treatment in addressing gang-related problems and suggested that since gang membership was indicative of personal problems, it should require one-on-one intervention. However, the individual approach to treatment was also discussed as having limitations. One participant explained that seeking help in a one-on-one setting may lead other offenders to perceive that individual as being an informant.

Best Practices in Gang Management

Interview participants noted many practices that were effective in assisting with the management of security threat groups. Of those that were discussed, the following ten were identified as best practices that may be useful for other institutions:

1. Collecting information on gang affiliations
2. Ensuring high quality security information
3. Sharing information with institution staff
4. Sharing information with external partners
5. Gang separation from general population
6. Specialized transition unit for disaffiliating gang members
7. Transfers to disrupt gang activity
8. Integration
9. Building credibility and rapport with offenders
10. Providing choices for respect

Several practices are related to population management strategies to help individual members or to disrupt gang activity. This includes strategies for separating rival gangs from each other and the general population, integrating gangs back together with the general offender population, a transition unit for members who want to disaffiliate, and transfers of gang members out of the institution. Several information management strategies were also provided by

participants, including security information collection sources, information sharing with staff and criminal justice partners, and reviewing security information to maintain security data quality. Finally, strategies related to dynamic security were provided as part of successfully managing security threat groups. Table 1 summarizes the goals and results of the ten best practices. For a complete description of each best practice (including the practice target, objective, and approach), see Appendix A.

Table 1
Summary of Best Practices in Gang Management

Best Practice	Involves	Results
<i>Information Management</i>		
1. Collecting information on gang affiliation	• Being proactive with identification.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves capacity to make informed and accurate population management decisions as it relates to gangs and their affiliates • Improves capacity for partners to address gang-related public safety concerns
2. Quality of security information	• Cleaning and maintenance of security-related data	
3. Sharing information with institutional staff	• Routine sharing of information with frontline staff	
4. Sharing information with external partners	• Networking and building trusting relationships with external partners	
<i>Population Management</i>		
5. Gang separation from general population	• Dedicating a unit to housing compatible gang members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces rates of institutional incidents and recruitment • Increases rates of disaffiliation as well as access to programs, employment, and leisure
6. Transfers to disrupt gang activity	• Transferring members out of region	
7. Specialized transition unit for disaffiliating gang members	• Dedicating a range to offenders who seek to disaffiliate from their gang	
8. Integration to general population	• Reintegrating gangs into general population	
<i>Dynamic Security</i>		
9. Building credibility and rapport with offenders	• Increasing rapport through honest, straightforward, individualized communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces rates of gang activity, institutional incidents, and lockdowns • Increases in offender willingness to share information and general attitudes and respect shown to staff members
10. Providing choices for respect	• Considering the importance of maintaining respect for offenders and offering choices where respect is upheld	

Challenges to Effective Gang Management

Collection and dissemination of security information. The effective management of any population is only as good as the information that is being used as a basis for management decisions. Interview participants reported monitoring for behaviours and objects that may indicate an offender as being affiliated with a security threat group and recording and reporting these observations as outlined in policy. However, challenges in the collection and dissemination of security information were expressed by both security and frontline staff, which could, in turn, affect effective management. Informal methods of information sharing (e-mail, telephone, or in-person exchanges) with the SIOs were often used, in lieu of the completion of formal forms or documentation, as the former were considered less demanding in terms of time and human-resource requirements. As one participant explained, “It’s [the observation report] a good form for reporting but we need more time as a correctional officer to fill them out”.

While all participants acknowledged the importance of information reporting and dissemination, several highlighted the challenges faced by staff at all levels when a lack of dissemination of information regarding gang-affiliated offenders is perceived, especially as it concerns the quality and frequency of reported information.

SIOs don’t know what or when to share, and I don’t know they have info so you have to keep asking them. It would be great if we had lots more communication but I understand their priority is not the same as my priorities.

We receive lots of info from CXs and POs but info is biased to what they know and believe. For example, the SIO knows inmate A is leader but CXs believe inmate B is leader, so they provide info to SIO on inmate B.

The more information you share with frontline staff, the more info you get back.

Information provided by criminal justice partners such as the local police (including federal, provincial, and municipal police agencies), provincial correctional centres, and the courts were regularly identified as a commonly used, and very important, source of information.

Interview participants reported that the gang activity in correctional facilities is often reflective of what occurs on the street, thus maintaining good working relationships with criminal justice partners helps security staff to anticipate possible problems. While challenges in communicating gang-related information were expressed both within and between institutions, gaps in communication between CSC and external partners were not noted by participants. On the contrary, participants reported that, through networking with criminal justice partners at conferences and workshops, they had developed relationships with these partners that supported excellent two-way communication. Barriers to effective sharing and communication, such as mistrust, were reduced through developing the network and building rapport.

Building relationships with external partners is very individual and informal. You build them by going to monthly meetings (for example, the provincial roundtable meeting) with various agencies (30-40 people attend) or you meet them through your SIO partners.

Identification, disaffiliation, and prevention practices. An important element in guiding management approaches is the identification of gangs and their members, the encouragement of gang disaffiliation, and the prevention of gang recruitment. Each of these areas presents their own sets of challenges.

Interview participants reported the predominant use of two forms as it relates to the identification of gangs and their members: 1184-01, *Identification of a new security threat group*; and form 1184-02, *Assessment of affiliation with a security threat group*. In discussing these processes, interview participants felt that the identification policies were comprehensive, but difficult to use in all cases. For example, the CD that provides guidance on how to identify gang members (568-3; CSC, 2013b) requires evidence to be collected to prove membership. There can be cases where membership is strongly suspected, but not enough evidence has been obtained. If concrete information cannot be retrieved to support membership, the offender in question cannot be formally identified as affiliated with a security threat group. In other cases, interview participants reported that completing form 1184-01, *Identification of a new security threat group*, becomes difficult as gangs change profiles, identities and membership rules, often more quickly than forms can be adapted and updated.

Second, participants reported that the identification process was long and resource-intensive, requiring the completion of extensive documentation and verification of intelligence. Time was required to review the evidence, analyze the intelligence, present it to the offender, and seek the approval of the warden. While most interview participants reported following policy closely by completing the necessary paperwork, some reported that it was to the detriment of other duties, such as engaging in dynamic security and speaking with staff.

It's very time-consuming. ... You can do identification of inmates involved in criminal organizations all day. We've got a hundred and seventy something identified, for sure 40 that ... haven't been identified yet just because of the time it takes to do these kinds of reports.

Participants discussed the difficulties in preventing offenders who are recently admitted to the institution from joining a gang. Participants mentioned that staff members, often the SIOs, would speak with all new admissions to the institution to inform them of the dangers of associating with a gang. However, staff members felt it was challenging to dissuade offenders from becoming gang affiliated when membership is viewed as a means to obtain friends, allies, and protection in a correctional environment. Similarly, participants reported that they rarely conducted a termination of an affiliation (a disaffiliation), noting that a termination would not be considered if there was any information to suggest that the offender could still be affiliated with the gang. One example provided by a participant was that it is uncommon to terminate an affiliation for an offender with known gang identifiers such as tattoos. As CSC does not pay for tattoos to be removed and it is illegal for offenders to have tattoos removed or covered while incarcerated. The participant suggested that to address this, CSC could allow those affiliated offenders who have the money to pay for the removal of the tattoos to do so. As a result of not terminating an affiliation, interviewed participants reported that the active/inactive flags in the Offender Management System (OMS) are used to indicate if an affiliated offender is actively involved in gang activity.

Interestingly, while disaffiliation is not frequently formalized in the OMS, the idea of disaffiliation poses a management challenge for security staff. Participants reported receiving frequent requests by many offenders affiliated with a gang who would like to have their

affiliation terminated. Most security staff reported that these termination requests are used to increase the likelihood of release, or to gain access to the general population to carry out gang activities. One tactic reported to be used by SIOs to determine if a termination request is genuine is to see if the offender is willing to share information about their gang. Sharing information suggests they are willing to risk their safety, as becoming a human source usually results in physical punishment by the gang. This tactic is not always effective, however, as one participant pointed out that in some cases a gang will allow their members to share information if the termination of affiliation is beneficial to the gang (e.g., offender can be a sleeper in the general offender population). In addition, some offenders refuse to talk even if they genuinely want to disaffiliate from the gang. Ultimately, according to participants interviewed, a termination of affiliation is completed when there is good intelligence from multiple sources to suggest that the individual is out of the gang.

Participants felt that if a gang member were to truly leave the gang, they would be more likely to do so once in the community in order to avoid the negative consequences of disaffiliating while in the institution. One interview participant noted that CSC aims to place offenders in locations where they receive support in the community, yet the gang is often their greatest source of support. While it may be difficult for the offender to adjust in an unfamiliar area, placing them in a new community may encourage them to develop new support networks and help them to leave the gang lifestyle.

Policies on the Management of Gang Activity. While responses to gangs and their activities are primarily governed by the general application of CDs, the CCRA, and the Charter, it was noted by interview participants that these documents often provided staff with standards rather than tangible ways to manage gangs. For example, while all participants indicated that their institution prohibits gang colours and paraphernalia, several noted that this is very difficult to carry out in practice as these indicators can change over time, resulting in staff always trying to “catch up” with the latest indicators. Further, gangs have shifted to using very subtle details to indicate gang affiliation, such as how clothing is worn (e.g., left pant leg rolled up a certain length). Several interview participants noted that some of the obvious identifiers, such as tattooing, are less commonly used, as gangs are aware of the implications of their affiliation status on security, placement, and release decisions.

Staff Training. The provision of additional staff training and information was generally

seen as an element which could be considered a challenge to the effective management of gangs. CSC-based training on security threat groups was usually acquired during core training. Learning about gangs and how to manage them was also commonly reported by interview participants to have been learned from on-the-job experience. Learning from colleagues and interactions with gang members provided staff with knowledge on the specific issues relevant to their institution, and for some participants, was the only manner in which to obtain the intimate knowledge they possessed:

A lot of stuff you learn on the fly, and it's one of the better ways to do it because it changes so much. CSC could put together a training package and it would be good for right now, but two months from now it will be outdated.

Interview participants indicated that they would have benefited from further training regarding gang management policy and application, with many interview participants noting that knowing more about the gangs and the characteristics to watch for would allow them to pass on more useful information to the SIO for further investigation. For example, "If you are cognizant of their verbal and non-verbal communication then you know when to focus in and when not to". Some interviewed participants felt that the training should be regionally-based, focused more on the gangs that they will deal with rather than those in another region, while others indicated intra-region transfers necessitates training on all gang types across CSC. It was also highlighted that a lot of the information provided does not necessarily apply to women offenders who are affiliated with a gang. "When you work in a female facility, the info on men doesn't always pertain to us".

Some interview participants wanted more in-depth information to help them assess the risk the gang-affiliated offenders pose to help with release decisions:

I guess the hardest part is not really knowing what kind of risk the gang member would pose. So we don't have the knowledge of how being a gang member would affect their risk. We use dynamic items (attitudes, associates), but no analysis behind how it affects his risk.

An interview participant explained, “I would like to learn about the dynamics, functioning, and how to deal with difficult gang members, and learn how other sites deal with their institution or other external agencies”. Participants also recognized the importance of understanding what was occurring in the community to help them manage any risk posed by gangs inside the institution. “What happens in the community greatly affects what goes on in here, so information, even yearly presented would be helpful”. Another participant felt it was important for cross-training between positions to occur to ensure that everyone is aware what information other correctional employees need to know to do their job effectively.

Discussion

With a substantial gang-affiliated offender population, both in number and diversity (Motiuk & Vuong, 2005; Stys, 2010), CSC is faced with the challenge of utilizing effective management practices that facilitate the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders while also ensuring the safety and security of the institution and the Canadian public. This report provides an overview of the gang management practices currently in use by CSC from the perspective of security and frontline staff. Aiming to act as a resource for both institutional staff who manage gangs on a daily basis and administrative staff who develop policy, this study may also provide guidance to the Security Threat Group Management sub-strategy and other STG-related policies and practices.

Participants reported a number of ways in which the gang populations are managed in their facilities, and these varied based on the types of gangs present and the operational challenges they pose. To address recruitment by Aboriginal and street gangs, several institutions separate these gangs from the general population. Some institutions balance power by keeping the number of members of each gang low so that no specific gang can gain control over the offender population. Transferring offenders with a gang affiliation was identified as another implemented strategy, and was more frequently used on those who played a leadership role within the security threat group. Less common was the transfer of entire gangs throughout the region, a strategy which received mixed levels of endorsement from participants. These strategies are consistent with practices to manage security threat groups in other countries (Correctional Institution Inspection Committee, 2012; Fischer, 2002; Lafontaine, Ferguson, & Wormith, 2005; SCDCR, 2012). For example, according to American correctional officials, segregation/isolation was considered to be the most effective management strategy in a sample of American correctional facilities, followed by a restriction on visits and specialized gang housing units (Winterdyk & Ruddell, 2010).

Ultimately, every strategy requires careful consideration to determine if the strategy is: a) appropriate for the institution, and b) dynamic in its ability to respond to changes in the offender population. However, a number of practices in the management of gang populations were identified in this study as those which may be especially effective across various institutions and populations (i.e., as best practices). Encompassing information management, population management, and dynamic security practices, these best practices offer a “toolbox” of

strategies that can be used to help manage the gang population by improving the capacity to collect and share accurate intelligence information; reducing rates of gang activity, institutional incidents, and lockdowns; increasing rates of disaffiliation and ability to access programs, employment, and leisure activities; and improving offender attitudes towards staff members. The compendium of best practices offers correctional staff options for revising their approaches, identifies individuals who can be contacted for additional information and support, and acts as an additional tool for knowledge sharing within CSC - an aspect identified by the organization as essential for effectively managing the gang population (CSC, 2010).

Results indicated that the success of gang-management practices could be facilitated through the elimination of certain operational challenges, including challenges related to the sharing of intelligence information and obstacles to gang identification, as well as challenges with the supporting structures of these tasks: policies and staff training. While participants could easily identify some of these barriers to effective management, they also offered numerous solutions to these challenges, solutions which could be considered in future policy frameworks and guidelines.

Security information is vital to informing gang management strategies and, therefore, the practices employed to collect and disseminate such information, both internal and external, are equally vital. While the intelligence sharing relationship with criminal justice partners is reportedly effective, it is worth underscoring the importance of continued support for participation in networking opportunities in order to maintain this relationship. Comparatively, information sharing within and between institutions may benefit from several adjustments. Regular training or refresher courses and dedicated time to walk through the institution to speak with all offenders may be required to optimize the dynamic security that is so vital in the process of intelligence gathering. Further, dedicated time to complete observation reports coupled with a revised method for frontline staff to share information with SIOs may also be considered to ensure intelligence information reaches the security team. Similarly, participants recognized the necessity for security information to be routed back to frontline staff – a practice that was viewed as increasing the quality and amount of information collected by these staff members. Thus, new methods of information sharing may also be required to ensure information is communicated to all relevant staff. Management team meetings, an internal internet site, informal conversations, or the creation of a national electronic gang database are all avenues that could be explored in

facilitating the collection and sharing of gang-related information.

Participants reported that the intelligence collected by the SIO from various sources can lead to the identification of a new security threat group as per CD 568-3 (CSC, 2013b). As it has been argued that definitions of gangs should be revised as the gangs and their activities change (Grekul & LaBoucane-Benson, 2008), it may be worthwhile revising the categories of gangs within the STG category to groupings that are more operationally informative. For example, gangs could be grouped by level of threat to institution and public safety, with each group being subject to different management strategies (State of California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation [SCDCR], 2012). Similarly, applying a greater degree of standardization to the way that individual gang members are identified may be beneficial. In California, for example, a point system has been implemented (e.g., legal documents indicating affiliation receive 7 points, tattoos or body markings receive 6 points, self-admission receives 5 points), with 10 points and 3 independent pieces of evidence required to officially identify the offender as affiliated with a security threat group. In addition, those with two or more points but fewer than 10 are deemed “suspects” and subject to monitoring for intelligence purposes (SCDCR, 2012). Standardizing and weighting items is common in other areas within CSC, such as needs assessment (i.e., Dynamic Factor Intake Assessment; CSC, 2012d), and mental health screening (i.e., Computerized Mental Health Intake Screening System; CSC, 2012e) and may have value for identifying affiliations by increasing transparency and concordance between SIOs.

A number of the challenges related to the practicality of CDs have been addressed subsequent to the 2012/13 interviews. One change, to address abuse of the termination of affiliation process, now stipulates that a review for termination of an affiliation does not need to occur sooner than 12 months after a previous request for termination is rejected by the institutional head (CSC, 2013b). Participants also expressed concern regarding the lack of concrete operational guidance provided by the policy on managing security threat groups. As noted by the participants, the objectives are clear (e.g., no member to be in a position of authority, no gang paraphernalia); however, the methods to achieve these objectives are less clear. The development of future policy or training should include some examples of how to achieve the policy objectives. This could be included in guidelines associated with relevant CDs in order to allow the policy to remain global in nature but also provide concrete examples for operational staff. Alternatively, this information could be provided in training sessions. As

mentioned previously, a security threat group sub-strategy is currently being developed that may rectify some of these concerns.

Conclusions, Limitations, and Future Directions

The current study employed a qualitative methodology to answer the research questions. As the study was considered a first step in understanding the management of gangs inside Canadian federal facilities, the use of this approach was therefore deemed appropriate. While interviews are useful in identifying issues, exploring ideas, and brainstorming solutions to problems, sampling to recruit the most knowledgeable staff may limit the generalizability of the findings to other institutions or jurisdictions. In addition, the semi-structured nature of the questions may have led participants to focus on areas of particular interest or concern for them, which may have led to differences in the information gathered across the sample.

With these limitations in mind, there are a number of areas that should receive future research attention. While this project has identified valuable gang management practices based on feedback from institutional staff members, the effectiveness of these practices has not been evaluated. As it is important that all practices utilized by CSC are evidence-based, future research should aim to evaluate the best practices outlined herein. In addition, the management practices for those gang-affiliated offenders who are supervised in the community also deserve attention, as gang management in the community poses distinctly different challenges than those experienced in the institutions. Speaking with community parole officers, community SIOs, and community liaison officers would be a first step in identifying the best practices in community gang management which ensure that these offenders do not pose a threat to themselves or the community.

Looking forward, CSC may consider examining the operational suggestions provided in this report and continuing the process of identifying, compiling, and sharing management practices. As a better understanding of gang management strategies is developed, the effectiveness of these strategies can be improved, which will contribute to the rehabilitation and reintegration of the gang-affiliated offender population, while ensuring the safety and security of the institutions and community.

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Appendix A: Best Practices in Gang Management and Intervention

The following best practices were contributed in part or wholly by participants of this project. This list of best practices is to be used as a resource for those working with offenders who are affiliated with security threat groups, and is neither intended to be implemented across all institutions, nor are they necessarily CSC endorsed practices. Participants provided practices they believed to be effective in the management and intervention with gangs within a given institution at a given time and may not be applicable to all institutions or at all times. As each institution is unique in the resources available and dynamic presented by the gangs, each strategy should be carefully considered to ensure it is the most appropriate practice to address the needs of the institution and offenders.

BEST PRACTICES IN GANG MANAGEMENT AND INTERVENTION

<p>BEST PRACTICE: A process, technique, or innovative use of resources (technology, equipment, personnel, data) that has resulted in outstanding and measurable improvement in the operation of an institution. This best practice will have demonstrated success by significantly and measurably improving such factors as institutional safety and security, offender safety and security, institutional incidents, cost, etc. A best practice should be able to be documented to allow other institutions to adapt this practice and realize success in their own environment.</p>
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Best Practice 1: Collecting Information on Gang Affiliations

Target:

Security Intelligence Officers

Objective(s):

To reduce the number of unidentified inmate affiliations with gangs.

Approach:

It is important for SIOs to be very proactive with identification and conduct a thorough review of all file information as well as contacting partners to obtain additional information for each offender who is admitted to their institution. A magnetic white board is physically maintained by the Intelligence office that includes all the known active and inactive STG members in the institution and their current location (unit) can facilitate an effective process. Continued communication with counterparts in other institutions and partner agencies is important to keep up-to-date on the changing dynamics between STGs. The Intelligence office also closely monitors the dynamics on all the living units in the institution. This allows the Intelligence office to provide overviews that can be used to provide advice and make recommendations to management.

Ideally, the offender would have been previously identified at some point prior to their admission to the current institution. Police agencies are a useful source with information available in police reports but SIOs may also need to communicate directly with the appropriate agency. Court reports may also discuss possible affiliations with security threat groups. Information may also be available from the Provincial Correctional Centres (PCC) where they were held prior to their transfer to federal custody. Some PCC group gang members on the same range, and may also put people who are able to coexist with the gangs on the same range, despite not actually being affiliated with the gang. This is important to identify as there can be perceptions of gang affiliations by other inmates simply due to being placed on a gang range while in the PCC. Information may also be available from the Regional Reception Centre, including who they associated with. Ideally, as many of these sources should be consulted as possible prior to the transfer.

An important step in the identification process is the interview with the offender. An interview should be conducted with each offender who is admitted to the facility. This is to ascertain if the offender will have any specific issues related to his integration. For example, did he/she receive new charges for sex offences, did he/she disobey the STG, did he/she not do something he/she was told to do while on parole, did he/she start using again, and various other pieces of information that can indicate what his/her current status with his/her STG or offender population may be. It is also an opportunity to learn about the gangs themselves and who is likely to bring street beefs into the institution. This information can then be shared with the transfer co-ordinator to help them make transfer decisions. Other information that may provide clues to their associations includes the offence history and any co-accused.

Wardens of institutions that separate their gangs from the general population may consider, after reviewing information provided by the SIO and other sources, putting suspected or known gang

members who deny affiliation into segregation or a separate unit to ensure sleepers or gang members tasked to covertly carry out tasks (e.g., sell drugs, attack another inmate) do not enter the general population. Once the offender realizes they are not going to be moved into general population, they will likely claim their gang affiliation and ask to be moved to a specific range.

Behaviour, apparel, and associations may assist in identifying gang members. While gang colours are prohibited, many gangs will adapt and use colours that are not currently prohibited. Symbols may also be found within tattoos on the offender or drawings and photographs in their cell. Incoming communication in the form of letters or photographs may also provide clues.

Results:

The contributors noted that information gathered from the various sources above have led to the identification, or confirmation of suspicion, of gang members. Furthermore, this practice can help to identify important security related information, and help to determine if the unit/range placement of the offender is appropriate.

Awareness of gang affiliations at admission is important as it has implications on population management (e.g., possible incompatibilities) and the potential for recruitment to gangs going on in the institution. If they go unidentified they could be placed onto a unit that consists of general population and not gang members. Some members will try to avoid detection and/or deny affiliation, to be placed with the general population. They can then act as sleepers and carry out gang duties such as recruit or carry out a hit. Many offenders also realize the impact being associated with a gang can have on their correctional plan and their chances at being granted release. At some sites, however, many offenders are open about their gang membership, especially at sites that separate gangs from the general population because they know it will help them to be placed on a range with fellow members and prevent them from being placed on a range with a rival gang.

Challenges:

Depending on the number of SIOs on staff, the number of offenders at the institution, and the rate of turnover of inmates, this practice can be very demanding of SIOs. It also requires an established network of contacts with external partners that the SIO can communicate with to obtain information.

Conclusion:

By conducting a thorough intake assessment, communicating with partners, and using effective population management techniques, more affiliations can be identified.

Additional Notes:

None

Supporting Documentation:

None

Best Practice 2: Ensuring High Quality Security Information

Target:

Security Intelligence Officers/Security Intelligence Analysts and file and OMS information

Objective(s):

To increase the quality and integrity of the security file information.

Approach:

OMS and security information on gangs can be outdated for a number of reasons. First, it could be that an offender has been under the jurisdiction of CSC since before the implementation of the 1184 affiliation and disaffiliation process. This would mean that while they may be part of a security threat group, they may not formally be recognized as such. Some offenders switch between gangs regularly which can lead to multiple affiliations to gangs listed to which they no longer belong. Finally, some offenders may not have had their current affiliations updated.

To ensure high data quality and integrity, an SIO should do an initial data cleaning which can take 10 to 15 working days. After this initial review, a day or two a month should be set aside to maintain the quality of the file information. This involves checking the data for anomalies (e.g., 1 person is listed as active in 3 gangs), and going through the paperwork to identify who should and who should not have an 1184. In some cases, an 1184 may need to be completed to disaffiliate an individual then another 1184 completed to list their current affiliation. SIAs can be an excellent resource to initially analyze the data to identify the anomalies. The SIO can then follow-up with those cases flagged by the SIA to review file information, discuss with external partners and institution staff, and interview the offender to determine the current affiliation status.

Results:

Reviewing the files and interviewing offenders will help the SIO identify which affiliations are current and which ones can be removed. Ensuring the quality of the security information on gangs can result in a decrease in the number of affiliations listed within the institution. This could result in fewer incompatibilities and thus more flexibility with decisions regarding to which unit and range an offender will be assigned. The quality of the data can also impact admission decisions.

Challenges:

Constant maintenance of the security information is required as offenders transfer institutions, and as new offenders enter the system.

The process of reviewing the files to ensure the data quality requires considerable resources (e.g., time). Depending on the state of the data, the initial cleaning phase may take up to 3 weeks of a SIO's time. Subsequent maintenance of the data may require up to two days a month of a SIO's time.

Conclusion:

Initial examination of the data (RADAR Regional Affiliation Report) illustrated the large

number of out-of-date affiliation information on the database (OMS). This was resulting in data reporting issues where the number of STG-affiliated offenders was being over-reported and considerable confusion regarding subjects' current status.

The institution is in a maintenance mode at this point, but this still requires considerable work due to flow through. We are constantly in need of updating not only returning offenders but offenders from other institutions / regions where data quality systems are not as thorough.

If every institution did a review and then regular maintenance, this overall workload would be distributed more evenly and would be reduced.

Additional Notes:

To access the Gang Affiliation Report in RADAR:

- In RADAR, select the HOME tab and select REGIONAL REPORTS
- Scroll down to the SECURITY section and select GANG AFFILIATION REPORT.
- In the top right hand corner of the report, select the TOTAL link
- When the GANG AFFILIATION REPORT - DETAIL comes up, select EXPORT TO EXCEL
- This will create an EXCEL spreadsheet with all gang affiliations in the region.
- You can then customize the report to your needs (e.g. delete all the data for other sites)
- Once you have the report to your liking, you can SAVE AS a separate Excel Spreadsheet.
- With your own "Institutional Gang Affiliation Report" you can then begin identifying anomalies such as inmates with multiple active affiliations, OMS entries with no 1184 listed, known defunct STGs, etc.

Supporting Documentation:

A sample list is attached. Names & FPS #s have been removed. Unit, range, cell numbers, and dates have been altered.

- All inmates were first checked to ensure none had multiple active affiliations.
- Green highlights (medium grey in black and white versions) show areas requiring minor fixes (spelling mistakes or syntax).
- Yellow highlights (light grey in black and white versions) show areas with no listed 1184. A file check will need to be performed to confirm an 1184 (and enter the date in OMS) or confirm the need for one.
- Red highlights (dark grey in black and white versions) show a major problem (such as an inactive flag on what appears to be an active affiliation). A file check will need to be performed to see if an 1184 needs to be entered or completed.

Sample List

Offender	FPS	Unit	Range	Cell	Gang Affiliation	Active/Inactive	Comment
		U-1	A1	3	LOS BRAVOS - MBR	Inactive	FORMER LOS BRAVOS MEMBER (1184-2 termination completed 2012/09/28)
		U-1	A2	2	INDIAN POSSE - ASSOC	Active	INDIAN POSSE ASSOCIATE (1184-2 2012/01/19). File review 2012-11-08 SPMSU. No change in status.
		U-1	A3	1	INDIAN POSSE - ASSOC	Active	ASSOCIATE MEMBER OF INDIAN POSSE.
		U-2	M1	5	OTHER STREET GANGS - MEMBER	Active	FORMER SCION KRU MEMBER (1184-2 2012/02/05 SMI) termination completed
		U-2	M2	2	NATIVE SYNDICATE - MBR	Active	MEMBER OF THE NATIVE SYNDICATE.
		U-2	M3	7	INDIAN POSSE - MBR	Active	INDIAN POSSE MEMBER (1184-2 2012/02/03)
		U-2	M4	1	HELL'S ANGEL - MBR	Active	HELL'S ANGEL MEMBER (1184-2 2012/12/03)
		U-3	B1	6	MARA SALVATRUCHA (MS 13) - MBR	Active	MS-13 MEMBER (1184-2 2012/01/13)
		U-3	B2	3	RED ALERT - MBR	Inactive	The subject was interviewed for intake on 2012/02/20. The subject dropped his colors Jan 2012 in ERC for the REDD ALERT Gang.
		U-4	C1	1	NATIVE SYNDICATE - MBR	Inactive	NATIVE SYNDICATE MEMBER (1184-2 2005/10/18). LISTED INACTIVE 2012-02-20.
		U-4	C2	8	OTHER STREET GANGS - MEMBER	Inactive	Inactive GANGSTER CRIPS MEMBER (1184-2 2012-03-08 SMI)
		U-4	C3	9	PRISON GANG	Inactive	Member of Native Syndicate Prison Gang.

Best Practice 3: Sharing Information with Institution Staff

Target:

Frontline and security staff at the institution

Objective(s):

To increase sharing of information between SIOs and front line staff.

Approach:

Many SIOs reported that the sharing of information with other institutional staff was integral to the security of the institution. As front line staff, such as Correctional Officers, Program Officers, and parole officers (among many others), spend significant amounts of time interacting and monitoring the activities of offenders, these staff act as the eyes of the institution and are a significant source of information for the SIOs. As such, it is important that staff are kept up-to-date on the activities of the gangs within the institution.

One practice that was identified as helpful was to have regular morning briefings with frontline staff and management. As not all staff can attend those meetings, an electronic version of the briefing could be posted online for staff. Additionally, education sessions held by the SIO may be helpful in sharing the information to the frontline staff. Another method to share this information is for the SIO to walk around the institution and visit the units.

One example was a weekly email was sent as a means of information sharing. The emails usually consisted of some humour to keep staff interested, substance to keep them engaged (such as background on a gang including their community as it may help the staff make connections to the gangs issues), and what they can do to help maintain the security of the institution and safety of staff and inmates. This practice has ceased however due to information being shared too widely by recipients of the email. To replace this method of information sharing, the institution is currently looking into developing an internal website that can be accessed by staff.

Ultimately, multiple methods of information sharing may need to be utilized to overcome challenges of need to know and the audience. The key information shared within these various forms of communication involved an overview of the status and dynamics of the gangs and the activity that is occurring in the institution, information on new gangs or gang members, and incidents that recently occurred and how they were handled (including seizures). Information was also shared on characteristics or behaviours to look for and tips for searching.

It is also important for the SIO to recognize key contributions from frontline staff. One example is to send a note to the Correctional Manager if a Correctional Officer has shared a piece of information that has been helpful in an investigation.

Results:

Increasing information sharing with frontline staff can result in more relevant information shared to the SIO to assist with investigations and the safety and security of the institution. Staff have been found to be particularly responsive when given specific cases that includes background

information on the issue and what specific things they should look out for as it will help them identify if a piece of information is important enough to be passed along to the SIOs. As noted by one SIO in the Prairie Region, “The more information you share with frontline staff, the more you get back”.

Speaking informally with staff on the units can also provide an opportunity for frontline staff to share information, especially the information which they are unsure is important enough to pass along. In addition, both the electronic version of the daily briefings and the weekly email had received positive feedback from staff.

Challenges:

As with standard CSC information practice, only those individuals with a need to know should be privy to such information. This creates a challenge for information sharing. For example, providing information via e-mail reduces control over who can see the information and can result in the SIO providing less information. Further, there is a challenge of finding the right balance of information and sharing method, as the information shared becomes more specific and personal, the more the method of sharing needs to become focused on specific staff members.

Conclusion:

Information sharing with institutional staff is important to ensuring quality information is reported back to the SIO, and thus helps with the management of the security threat groups.

Additional Notes:

None

Supporting Documentation:

None

Best Practice 4: Sharing Information with External Partners

Target:

Security staff and criminal justice partners

Objective(s):

To strengthen partnerships with, and increase information gathered from, criminal justice organizations.

Approach:

It is important to recognize that security threat groups in the community are constantly changing, forming new partnerships, new rivalries, multiplying, and being newly created. Territories change, gangs are wiped out through violence, and some are gaining status or forming new ties with other STGs such as TOC or OMGs. Others are being taken down in major police projects, thus leading to increased incarceration periods for specific gangs, which could lead to an influx and gang migration impact for CSC institutions. These changes always have the potential to impact on institutional gang activity, and it is imperative that SIOs remain aware of these current trends and changes, and attempt to stay ahead of potential security concerns resulting from community gang activity. The persons who hold the sum of the knowledge of all these changes are our community criminal justice partners. Only by participating in conferences, working groups, and regular meetings are SIOs able to ensure that their knowledge of STG activity remains current and relevant to the institutional environment.

There are a number of criminal justice partners that have information related to gangs, their members, and/or their activities within an institution and it is therefore important to increase the sharing between CSC and these partners. This includes partners such as gang units from city police departments, provincial police, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Criminal Intelligence Service Canada, and the provincial correctional systems.

First, it is important to build a network with individuals within the various relevant agencies. One effective method to do this is through attending gang conferences and workshops put on by the criminal justice partners. This provides an opportunity for the SIOs to initiate contact with the agencies. Even if the agency is not responsible for the same jurisdiction (e.g., in another province), it is still useful to make contact as the institution could receive an out of region transfer. Colleagues are also a useful resource for networking with external partners.

Once a connection has been established, it is important to build trust to allow for all need to know information to be shared. Providing information to the external partner is one method to build trust. Information shared with external partners could include gangs that are associating together within the institution, or intercepted communication to gang members from an individual in the community. Also, how information obtained from the contact is handled can also affect the trust. It is important to communicate the sensitivity level of all information when shared, as some information vital to an ongoing investigation may be shared informally by the community contact.

Results:

As criminal justice agencies are an excellent source of information on gangs, it is important SIOs network with them at conferences and through colleagues. Sharing information with the contact on their cases can demonstrate an openness and willingness to assist them with their cases, which can result in increased trust.

As trust is built, more information will be shared to the SIOs which could assist in investigations, security level decisions, and institution/unit placement. Information may also assist the SIOs in detecting gang activity such as introduction of contraband to the institution. Ultimately, developing and maintaining relationships with external partners will result in safer institutions.

Challenges:

Networking opportunities at conferences are decreasing thereby leaving SIOs to find new methods to communicate with partners. As networks grow and more information is shared, there is also increased possibility for information to unintentionally leak to individuals who do not have a need to know.

Conclusion:

To ensure SIOs have a current knowledge of the gangs present and their dynamics within the federal institutions, it is important that strong relationships are developed with community criminal justice partners.

Additional Notes:

None

Supporting Documentation:

None

Best Practice 5: Gang Separation from General Population

Target:

Gangs and their members

Objective(s):

To reduce gang activity, such as recruitment, within the institution

Approach:

Recruitment was identified as a considerable issue with Aboriginal street gangs, who are predominately in the Prairie Region. Aboriginal street gangs are considered heavy recruiters, with tension on the units leading to increased efforts to recruit additional members. As the desire is to obtain control over various aspects of the institution, higher numbers of members will help achieve power. It should be noted that those who do join while in prison are likely joining for a specific reason, such as protection, so they may not have an allegiance to a specific gang but more to the one that can protect them the most.

One strategy that may be appropriate to combat recruitment perpetrated by Aboriginal street gangs and to address the balance of power, is to move those gangs that heavily recruit offenders from the general population to a separate unit. This is considered to be an ‘aggressive strategy’ and should be carefully considered only after other alternatives. As STGs are dynamic and fluid, and sites vary by unit availability, this population management strategy is one that may not be appropriate for all sites or at all times.

Results:

At one specific institution, this practice has resulted in:

- Decreased recruitment which should decrease incidents (e.g., fights, introduction of contraband) and increase the safety of the institution. By separating gangs from the general offender population, there are few opportunities to recruit new members and thus they are unable to increase their power, which could result in power struggles with other gangs. In addition, by restricting access to the general offender population, there are fewer opportunities for financial or material gain (through distribution of contraband or muscling).
- An increase in the ability to manage the prison population due to a decrease in the number of fringe gang members. For example, by reducing recruitment, the institution only has to deal with the 7 core gang members rather than the 7 plus the additional 14 fringe members. Incidents should decrease not only due to fewer gang members, but rival gangs are also separated so the violence that would have occurred if they were all in general population is also reduced.

Challenges:

If the number of gangs and gang members continues to grow within the institutions, this practice can lead to logistical difficulties for staff. Coordination of the various activities (e.g. recreation, visits, and programs) so that groups do not overlap can become difficult with multiple groups that should not interact. This results in fewer opportunities for the activities which can affect the offender such as progress on their correctional plan. For example, when security threat groups are separated, programs may be available less frequently than if they had been in the general

population. This is because programs will usually only run once there are enough offenders to fill the program.

Conclusion:

Despite logistical issues, separation of the recruiting gang from the general offender population can effectively reduce recruitment within that population and keep the numbers of offenders affiliated with the security threat group to a minimum.

Additional Notes:

None

Supporting Documentation:

None

Best Practice 6: Specialized Transition Unit for Disaffiliating Gang Members

Target:

Those gang members who indicate that they seek to disaffiliate from a gang either truthfully or with malicious intentions

Objective(s):

To identify and assist gang-affiliated inmates prepared to leave a gang and enter into the general population.

Approach:

It can often be difficult for offenders to disaffiliate from a gang while in prison. This can be due to several issues including fear of retaliation, loss of respect, and loss of support systems. To address this, a range at a specific institution was used as a transition range for members of security threat groups who express a desire to leave the gang, allowing the SIOs time to evaluate the offender's activities to determine if they genuinely want to leave the gang. The inmates' activities and behaviour were monitored to identify possible continued ties to gang members to determine if there were ulterior motives to claim they wanted to leave the gang such as opportunities to distribute contraband or to carry out a hit ordered by the gang. To help avoid protective custody perceptions, the range is always discussed as a unit for ex-gang members that are not yet trusted by the institutional staff. Inmates asking to disaffiliate from different STGs were housed on this range and it is a way to show their sincerity in leaving old STG politics/rivalries behind.

Results:

There have been a number of offenders that have successfully transitioned through the range at a specific institution and left the gang they were with. Offering a transition range for individuals who want to leave gangs can result in:

- Protection for the ex-members
- Ability to closely monitor offender activity
- Maintain the level of respect the offender has earned from the offender population and fellow gang members through the appearance that the offenders on the unit cannot be trusted
- Support from other offenders on the range who understand the difficulty and pressures associated with leaving a gang while in prison
- Reducing the power held by gangs: for many Aboriginal street gangs, power is built through numbers in the gang so by providing an opportunity for members to leave the gang, the power held by these gangs is also reduced.

Challenges:

Offenders may perceive this range as providing protective custody. If it is viewed in this manner, the offenders who are considering leaving their gang will refuse to move to the range because it will lower the respect they have earned from the offender population and members of their gang.

Conclusion:

To assist with the disaffiliation process, a transition unit can provide support for the disaffiliating

offender and an opportunity for staff to monitor them, all while maintaining the offenders level of respect garnered from the offender population.

Additional Notes:

None

Supporting Documentation:

None

Best Practice 7: Transfers to Disrupt Gang Activity

Target:

Active and large gangs in prison

Objective(s):

To disrupt the gang as a whole and help individual members break ties from the gang.

Approach:

One strategy that has had some success in disrupting gang activity is transferring gang members out of region. Since Aboriginal street gangs gain power through large numbers, the goal is to reduce the numbers of members from the same gang in an institution. Standard procedures are followed for out of region transfer and discussion with SIOs at the other institutions should occur to identify which sites may be most appropriate to ensure the offender does not continue their gang activity. Ideally, the transferred offender should not know many people in the admitting institution and thus have no respect built up within the offender population.

Results:

Transferring gang members out of region may be particularly effective for members of Aboriginal street gangs. Due to the structure and cohesion, some gangs, such as Aboriginal street gangs, will not be able to sustain themselves if they are split up and transferred to institutions where they have few affiliates or direct rivals. By not knowing many people, and not having earned any respect from the offender population, the offender population will act as a control to keep the transferred offender in line. Furthermore, fringe members may choose to disaffiliate if they are separated from the core group.

There could also be a positive impact on the community as Aboriginal street gangs maintain their existence through recruitment and activities in prison. By addressing the gang in prison the number of members in the community may also decrease over time.

Challenges:

Several issues can make implementing this practice challenging including:

- Identifying an institution at the appropriate security level
- Identifying an institution that does not house members from the same gang
- Identifying an institution that does not house incompatibles such as rival gang members

There is also concern that implementing this practice could spread gangs across the country, providing gangs with new opportunities to increase membership and access to illegal markets, although this may not apply to Aboriginal gangs as they have not shown the ability to increase their numbers significantly in other areas of the country. In addition, removing the gang from the institution may create a gap that other gangs will begin to compete for.

Conclusion:

Despite concerns over spreading the gangs across the country, this practice may be particularly

effective for managing Aboriginal gangs who are structured in a manner that would collapse should the core group be dissolved.

Additional Notes:

None

Supporting Documentation:

None

Best Practice 8: Integration

Target:

Gangs separated from the general population

Objective(s):

To have an open population within the institution that will allow all offenders to participate in their correctional plans.

Approach:

Having multiple gangs within the institution creates many sub-populations. When you are running an institution with many sub-populations, routines become hard to manage. Time management poses an extreme difficulty when trying to meet the needs of all sub-groups. Program needs become almost impossible to meet due to incompatibility issues. When offenders are not participating in their Correctional Plans, you see more detentions, more denials of parole, etc.

A specific institution specified a goal which entailed integrating the gangs within their population. A specified manager was appointed the duties of developing a Threat Risk Assessment; develop a system of communication amongst the general population including the gangs and, further to that, to integrate the gangs into the population. The integration was to include integration in Core Programs, work places, and leisure.

The approach was a very slow process. A Threat Risk Assessment was completed in order to obtain the risk of integrating the gangs within the general population. Then the first task to be completed was to gain an agreed upon understanding between the two rival gangs. Meetings were held with the opposing gang leaders.

The Integration Manager must be able to build a working rapport with both gangs. It is imperative that when working with the gangs that you "Tell it like it is" as Gangs are receptive to the truth whether or not it is what they want to hear what is being said. The Integration Manager must also treat each gang with respect and not treat them any differently than general population offenders when communicating with them.

A communication committee had to be established with offenders from all ranges within the institution so that every offender would have a voice in the integration process. Communications occurred daily between the Integration Manager, Security Intelligence Officers, Warden, Staff and offenders. Communication is also imperative with all departments within the institution to ensure that offenders are where they are scheduled to be and not elsewhere.

Staff presence also increases when major movement occurs within the prison.

Results:

The result of the approach thus far is that one sub-population has been eliminated and they are currently working with the other sub population. Both gangs are able to participate within their correctional plans and more offenders will be able to be compliant with their correctional plans. Furthermore, Visits and Correspondence area became open to all offenders, Programs/School area became open to all offenders, and employment was gained for members of both gangs.

There is currently a gang member who is completing his last core program on his correctional plan and is applying for minimum security. Prior to the integration it would have proven very difficult for this offender to participate in his plan.

Challenges:

One of the targeted gangs to be integrated had a negative history at the institution that contributed this practice. General Population offenders were not willing to accept the gang into the population.

A decision was made to create a communications committee which was composed of offenders and management. Each range had to vote in a range rep and weekly round table meetings were held to discuss concerns, ideas, etc. Management would sit at the round table and problem solve with all offenders. The committee consisted of gang members as well as general population offenders. Round tables proved to be an effective way for all to communicate

A significant challenge was developing agreed upon areas of the institution that were considered safe zones. In order to integrate, the gangs and general population had to agree that all offenders could safely attend programs, work and structured inmate activities. This process in the integration involved a vast amount of communication between offenders and management.

Another significant challenge was to identify any incompatibility issues that may arise amongst the population. In order to have solid information it was important to ensure that the lines of communication remained open at all times. The integration manager needs to be available and seen by all offenders, be able to have and maintain a rapport with offenders and staff.

Conclusion:

The institution contributing this practice has been successful in integrating one of the two sub-populations. The integration is a process that is currently ongoing. Similar to other population management strategies, this practice may not be appropriate for all institutions as STG dynamics are very fluid, and not all institutions may have the required resources to implement this practice.

Additional Notes:

None

Supporting Documentation:

None

Best Practice 9: Building Credibility and Rapport with Offenders

Target:

The offender population in general with a specific focus on gang-affiliated offenders and key players.

Objective(s):

To increase cooperation and information sharing by inmates through an improvement in the working relationship between staff and offenders.

Approach:

At intake, the SIO approaches most new inmates and speaks with them to let them know they are always available to talk and to describe the risks of joining a gang while in the prison. It is important not to be too strict or serious, but be fair and firm, and speak in a manner that will make them feel comfortable.

Building credibility and rapport requires interacting regularly with the offenders. For example, the participants who contributed to this practice noted they spend hours with the offenders on their unit and can tell if something is wrong. To develop the rapport, it is important for staff to be honest and straightforward with offenders and to emphasize that their door is always open to an offender if the inmate is going to be honest.

Since the institutional culture frowns strongly upon informants or “rats”, it is important to make the offender population aware that simply speaking with a staff member in a one on one private setting does not necessarily mean information is being leaked. This can be done by regularly speaking with all inmates, informants or not, in private. After repeated contacts, inmates will learn that the contact is a normal aspect of their correctional plan and will become more comfortable with the practice.

Finally, it is also recommended that gang members not be treated any differently from other inmates despite the influence they may have over other inmates.

Results:

Building credibility and rapport with gang leaders and members can lead to more effective and open communication between staff and offenders, resulting in:

- An increase in the willingness of gang members to share information with staff.
- A decrease in gang activity in the institution.
- A decrease in incidents and/or lockdowns.
- An improvement in offender’s attitudes and receptiveness towards staff, respecting that they have a job to do and rules to follow.

This approach can be more effective and efficient than other gang management methods. For example, while removing the leader of a gang through segregation or transfer out of the institution may temporarily disrupt gang activity, for many gangs, especially street gangs, another individual will attempt to take control. This is often an individual who is not as smart as the previous leader (otherwise they would have likely had power already) and may be less open

to communicating with staff and more willing to use violence. Furthermore, removing the leader may result in a power struggle which could result in additional violence.

Challenges:

Staff members need to understand and accept that some offenders will just not be willing to speak.

This approach may be impacted by other population management practices, including the transfer and/or segregation of leaders with whom an effective working relationship has been established.

Conclusion:

Building rapport with the offender population can facilitate the management of security threat groups.

Additional Notes:

None

Supporting Documentation:

None

Best Practice 10: Providing Choices for Respect

Target:

Gangs and their members

Objective(s):

To increase gang member compliance with CSC staff direction.

Approach:

This practice was recommended to highlight the importance of recognizing the position offenders are in while in prison. The respect a member and their gang receive from other offenders plays an integral role in the decision process for some gangs. The contributors to this practice emphasized the importance of putting the gang and their member in a position where they do not have to choose between respect and something else. To accomplish this, choices provided to the gang and their members need to allow them to maintain their respect. For example, if two gangs are separated because they are feuding, then it reduces the number of visits they can have because logistically it is difficult for the institution to be able to increase the number of visit opportunities the gangs would have for them to have visitors at the same time. The institution could speak with both gangs, and offer to reinstate the number of visits if both gangs agree that no violence will occur during this time.

Results:

Allowing gangs to have an active role in decision-making is more effective than staff members dictating behavior. This results in:

- The respect an offender has earned from the inmate population to maintain its current level.
- Decreased incidents.
- Increased cooperation from the security threat groups.
- A better ability of the staff to predict future behaviour by the gang and its members.

Typically, an offender would lose respect if they chose not to attempt to harm a member of the other gang, but in this scenario, the respect is maintained because gang members recognize that visits are important to the individual (e.g. see friends and family) and could be beneficial to the gang (e.g., potential opportunity to illegally smuggle in drugs). Often if a decision to act a particular way is made by the gang as a whole, it will often hold, and this practice is more often effective than staff dictating to gangs how to behave. By considering the effect staff direction will have on the respect an offender receives by other inmates, anticipation of the response and thus best alternatives can be identified.

Challenges:

This practice assumes offenders will always behave in the manner that earns them the most respect however this may not always be the case. In some cases, unexpected incidents may result.

Conclusion:

Since respect from the offender population is important to many gangs, providing options to the gang that recognize this importance can assist in the management of the security threat groups.

Additional Notes:

None

Supporting Documentation:

None