

Arizona Criminal Justice Commission

Statistical Analysis Center Publication

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



2014 Arizona Gang Threat Assessment

March

2016

ARIZONA CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION



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Executive Summary

In 2014, the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission's Statistical Analysis Center surveyed law enforcement agencies across Arizona on the topic of gangs and gang activity in their jurisdictions. The survey used for the Arizona Gang Threat Assessment was based on the National Youth Gang Survey, as well as the National Gang Threat Assessment conducted by the National Alliance of Gang Investigators Associations, in partnership with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, National Drug Intelligence Center, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. The survey was designed to seek information from local law enforcement about the gangs in their jurisdictions and their level of activity. This report provides statewide results from the 2014 Gang Threat Assessment and compares it to similar data collected from 2007 to 2013, when available, to illustrate changes over time.

Findings

- Gang activity was reported in 44 of the 57 jurisdictions¹ (77.2% percent) that responded to the survey in 2014.
- Less than half (34.1 percent) of the responding agencies with a gang presence reported that gangs were expanding their scope of activities.
- Slightly more than half of the agencies reported no change in gang activity 6 months prior to the survey (53.7 percent), with over 35 percent reporting that gang activity has increased slightly over the last 12 months, and last five years (35.9 percent and 45.0 percent, respectively). No significant decreases were reported in the last six or 12 months, with 5.0 percent of respondents indicating that gang activity decreased significantly over the last five years.
- 27.5 percent of agencies reported a high level of gang involvement in weapons possession, followed by 24.4 percent in graffiti/tagging and 17.5 percent in burglaries.
- 50.0 percent of responding agencies reported a high level of gang involvement in the sale of marijuana (an increase from 38.8 percent in 2013), followed by 37.5 percent reporting a high level of gang involvement in the sale of methamphetamine (an increase from 34.7 percent in 2013). The percent of agencies reporting a high level of gang involvement in heroin sales experienced a large increase, rising from 8.2 percent in 2013, to 28.2 percent in 2014.
- When asked about gang intervention strategies, law enforcement agencies identified targeted patrols (61.4 percent), participation in multi-agency task forces (56.8 percent) and Dedicated Gang Units/Officers (54.5 percent) as the most commonly utilized intervention/suppression strategies for responding to gangs and gang activity in their jurisdictions.

¹ Missing response recorded for one responding agency

Introduction

During the summer of 2014, the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission’s (ACJC) Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) surveyed law enforcement officers in Arizona regarding their perceptions and experience with gangs, gang members and gang activity in their jurisdictions. This report examines and summarizes the results from the survey in compliance with the mandate of Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) §41-2416, that requires ACJC to conduct an annual survey that measures the prevalence of gang activity in Arizona when monies are specifically appropriated for that purpose. As in past years, no funds were specifically appropriated for this assessment; however, because effectively addressing gangs and gang activity presents a significant challenge to Arizona’s law enforcement agencies and criminal justice system, ACJC continues to collect and share information on gangs and gang activity using existing resources.

Research Methods

Since 1990, ACJC has administered a gang survey to law enforcement agencies in Arizona. In the summer of 2007, the *Arizona Gang Survey* was replaced with the *Arizona Gang Threat Assessment*, after feedback from the Arizona law enforcement community requesting a more in-depth analysis of current threats posed by gangs². The *Arizona Gang Threat Assessment* includes components modeled after the *National Gang Threat Assessment and National Youth Gang Survey*. The national assessment is a project of the National Alliance of Gang Investigators Associations in partnership with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the National Drug Intelligence Center and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearm and Explosives. The first national assessment was conducted in 2005, with surveys sent out to hundreds of gang investigators across the nation.

The current *Arizona Gang Threat Assessment* survey was distributed to 112 law enforcement agencies throughout Arizona asking them a series of questions about gangs and gang activity in their jurisdictions. The survey was designed to gather information on gangs, gang members, gang activity and response strategies to better understand the threat gangs pose to public safety. Of the 112 surveys distributed, 58 law enforcement agencies took part in the survey, resulting in a 51.8 percent overall response rate. This is a slight decrease (11.8 percent) from 2013, and considerably lower than earlier iterations of the survey (36.4 percent decrease from 2007).

Table 1: Number of Law Enforcement Agencies Responding to Arizona Gang Threat Assessment Survey, 2007-2014

	2007		2008		2010 ³		2011		2013		2014	
	Number	Percent Returned	Number	Percent Returned	Number	Percent Returned	Number	Percent Returned	Number	Percent Returned	Number	Percent Returned
Sent a Survey	113		113		113		111		109		112	
Returned a Survey	92	81.4%	99	87.6%	78	69.0%	63	56.8%	64	58.7%	58	51.8%

² ARS §13-105.8 and ARS §13-105.9 establish a criteria for objectively identifying criminal street gangs and gang members: 10. "Criminal street gang" means an ongoing formal or informal association of persons in which members or associates individually or collectively engage in the commission, attempted commission, facilitation or solicitation of any felony act and that has at least one individual who is a criminal street gang member. 11. "Criminal street gang member" means an individual to whom at least two of the following seven criteria that indicate criminal street gang membership apply: a) self-proclamation, b) witness testimony or official statement, c) written or electronic correspondence, d) paraphernalia or photographs, e) tattoos, f) clothing or colors, g) any other indicia of street gang membership

³ 2010 data was previously included in the 2010 report as 2009 data.

Gangs in Arizona

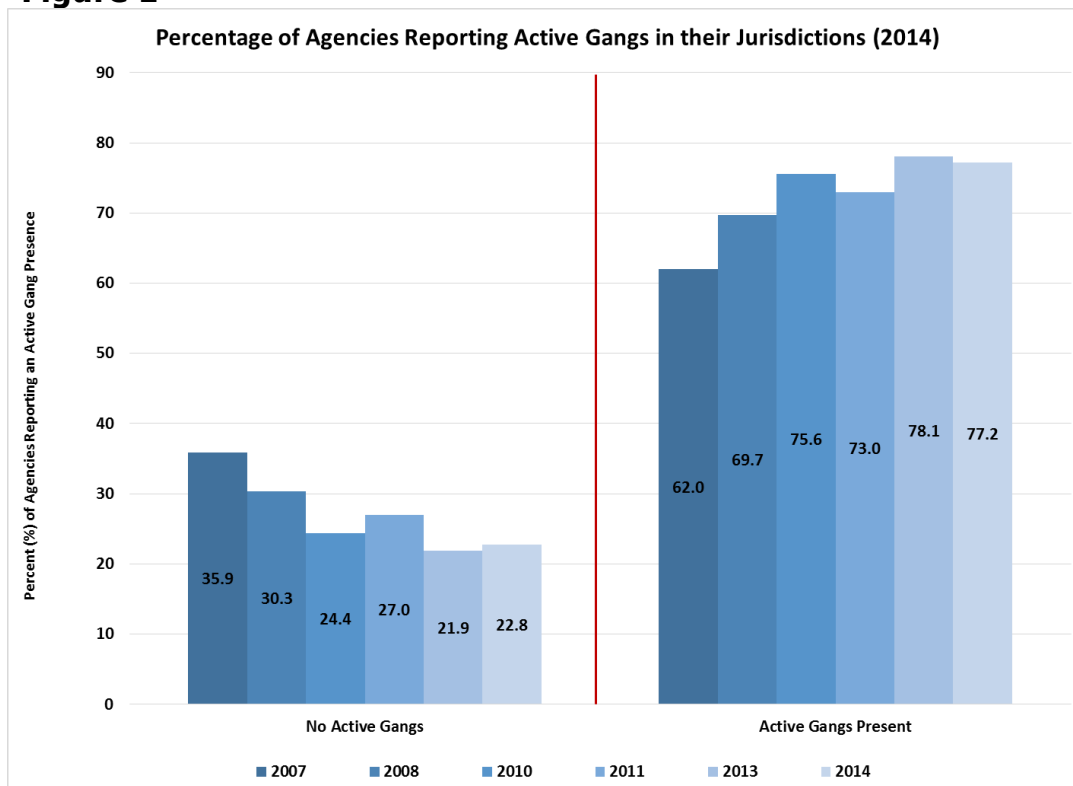
Total Gang Membership

Of the 58 agencies that responded to our request for information on gangs and gang activity in their jurisdictions in 2014, 77.2 percent (44 agencies⁴) reported the presence of gangs, a slight decrease from 2013 (See Table 2; Figure 1). When asked to report the range of gang members present within their jurisdictions, 24.4 percent of agencies indicated that fewer than 25 members resided in their boundaries, followed by 22.0 percent reporting the presence of 101-250 members. Only 4.9 percent of respondents indicated that more than 2,500 gang members reside within their jurisdictional boundaries, with slightly more (7.3 percent) stating that they are unsure how many active gang members are present (See Figure 2). Estimation difficulties may be attributed to members who are not easily identified by agency criteria, in addition to the transient, migratory nature of some gangs. Members that are part of larger, less isolated gang networks spanning multiple geographies, such as prison gangs or drug cartels, may not be detectable via traditional efforts.

Table 2: Number of Law Enforcement Agencies that Reported Gangs, 2007-2014

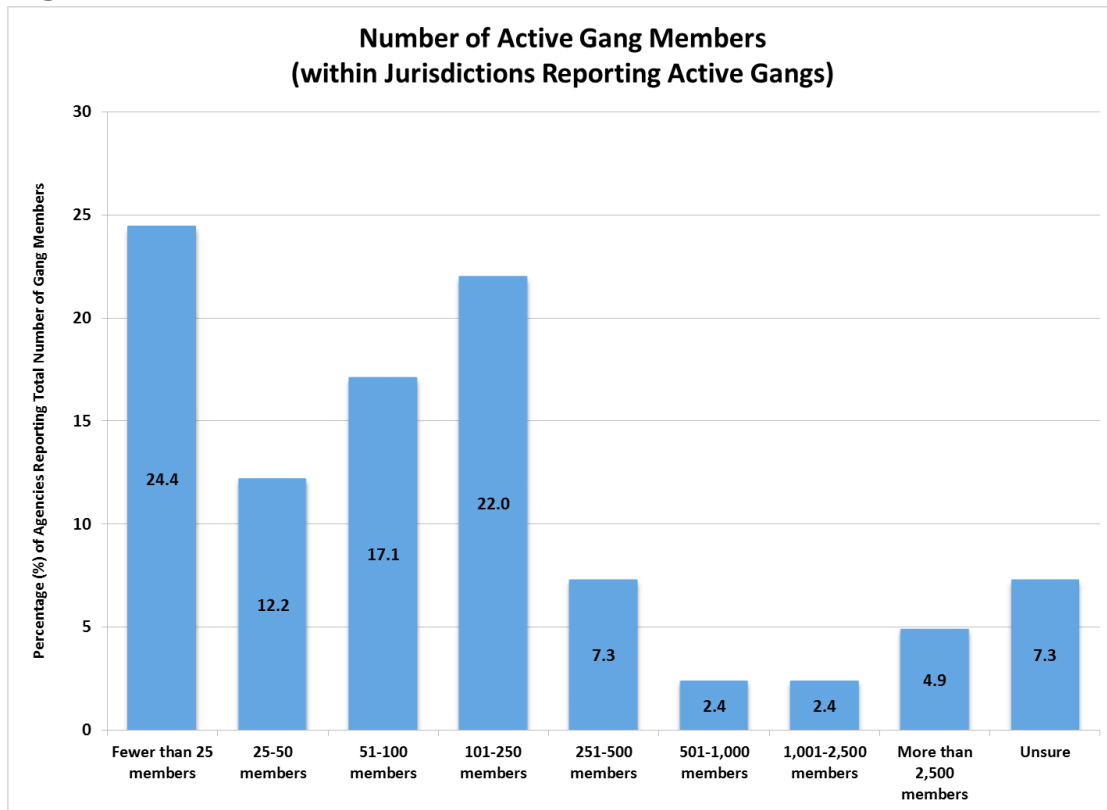
	2007		2008		2010		2011		2013		2014	
	Number	Percent	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Yes	57	62.0%	69	69.7%	59	75.6%	46	73.0%	50	78.1%	44	77.2%
No	33	35.9%	30	30.3%	19	24.4%	17	27.0%	14	21.9%	13	22.8%

Figure 1



⁴ Missing a response from one agency; valid percentages reported

Figure 2



Level of Gang Activity over Time

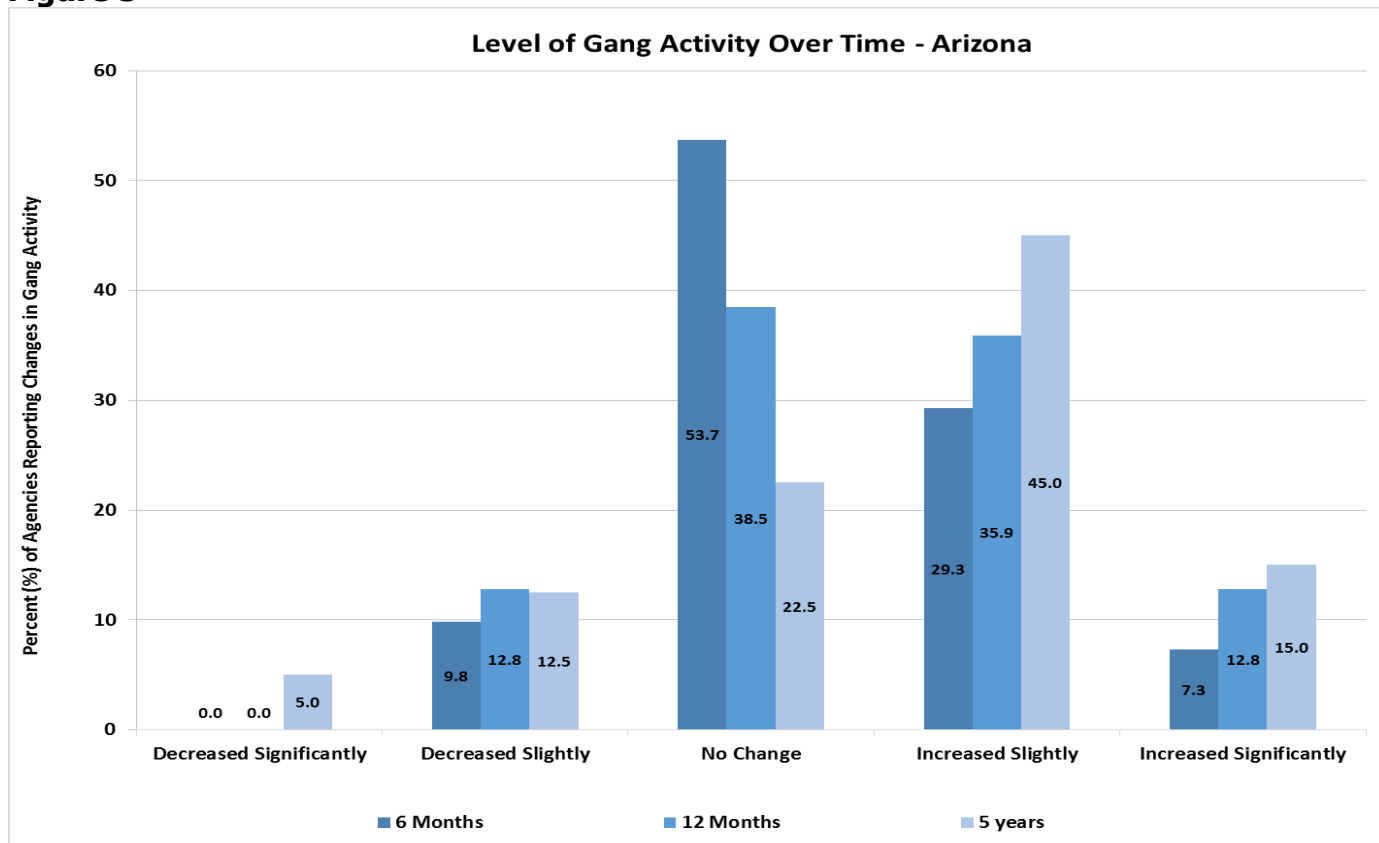
Agencies that reported gangs or gang members in their jurisdiction were asked a question regarding whether or not gangs were expanding their scope of activities, in addition to being asked about the level of gang activity occurring within their jurisdictions. When asked whether gangs in their area were broadening their scope of activities, 34.1 percent of respondents said yes (See Table 3), whereas 65.9 percent said no, or were unsure. This is a 34.4 percent decrease from those reporting expansion of scope in 2013, and could be attributed to the dynamic, technology-driven nature of gang activity in recent times. Such shifts may result in less of a street presence, and more anonymity and sophistication in emerging gang activities.

Table 3: Percentage of Jurisdictions Reporting Gangs Expanding their Scope of Activities (Of the Jurisdictions Reporting Gang Activity), 2007-2014

	2007	2008	2010	2011	2013	2014
Yes	65.5%	64.5%	50.0%	48.8%	52.0%	34.1%
No	27.3%	29.0%	46.4%	51.2%	42.0%	41.5%
Unsure/Don't Know	7.3%	6.5%	3.6%	-	-	24.4%

When presented with the opportunity to further elaborate on their responses about the scope of gang activities, many agencies reported that there has been an increase in property crimes, specifically well-orchestrated burglaries, as well as more evidence of migration and collaboration with prison gangs. Additionally, a number of agencies indicated that both human and drug trafficking have increased, as well as thefts and violent crime as a whole.

Figure 3



Of the participating law enforcement agencies with a gang presence, 7.3 percent reported that the level of gang activity in their jurisdiction had increased significantly in the six-month period prior to the survey (See Figure 3), decreasing from 18.8 percent in 2013. More than 35.9 percent of responding agencies reported that gang activity increased slightly over the preceding 12 months (up from 32.6 percent in 2013), with 53.7 percent of agencies reporting no change over the last six months, and 38.5 percent reporting no change over the last 12 months. Such results indicate that while gang activity is slightly increasing in almost half of jurisdictions over the previous 1 to 5 years, there does not appear to be rapid, significant increases or decreases.

Gang Migration

Respondents were prompted to address the issue of gangs/gang members who appear to have migrated into their jurisdictions from other areas. Of those reporting active gangs, 51.2 percent indicated that gangs and/or gang members have migrated into their locale, followed by 39.0 percent who did not experience migration, and 9.8 percent who were unsure, or did not know. Several agencies provided more intricate details pertaining to gang migration, with urban to rural movement and intra-state migration appearing most frequently. Understandably, outlaw motorcycle gangs also appear to exhibit migratory behavior based on survey responses, in addition to prison gangs who are, according to respondents, appearing in new jurisdictions for the purpose of expanding drug markets. While it is important to understand fluctuations in criminal activity in order to develop strategies to combat external influences, it is also imperative that internal, community factors be

examined to understand why such areas are susceptible to the spread of gangs⁵. Research indicates that most gang problems originate in their respective communities, and entire gangs rarely migrate; individuals tend to relocate to be with family and friends⁶.

Gang Involvement in Crimes and Drugs

Agencies were asked to rate the level of gang involvement in 18 specific crimes in their jurisdictions by selecting one of five choices for each type of offense: high, moderate, low, none and unknown. This question, as well as the response options, is intended to provide consistent measurements over time of gang involvement in a set of violent and property crimes, including many from past reports, as well as additional offenses identified by respondents. It is hoped that such an examination will allow agencies to understand emerging threats, reflect on past enforcement efforts and develop strategic plans for future interventions and prevention programs.

The crime type with the largest percentage of agencies reporting a high level of gang involvement was weapons possession, followed by graffiti/tagging (See Table 4). Burglary rounded out the top three offenses, with 17.5 percent of respondents reporting a high level of gang involvement, down from 26.5 percent in 2013. There are numerous potential explanations for the increase in graffiti/tagging, including shifting law enforcement efforts to more high-profile crimes, and the possibility that new gangs may be showcasing gang insignia to assert their presence in a new territory. Several responding agencies reported that gangs have been collaborating with one another to partake in more sophisticated offenses that yield larger profits and/or are orchestrated by larger gangs or cartels. It is possible that the reduction in burglaries may be attributed to fewer, more profitable burglaries, decreasing the number of incidents, but increasing the losses. Changes in offense operationalization may also account for this decrease, as the 2014 survey explicitly stated that the burglary category does not include home invasions.

After agencies were asked about the involvement of gangs in the commission of specific crimes, they were given the opportunity to discuss additional offenses outside of those listed that are prevalent among gangs and gang members in their jurisdictions. Among those offenses reported were probation violations, disorderly conduct and assaults.

**Table 4: Level of Gang Involvement in Crime
(Of the Jurisdictions Reporting Gang Activity), 2007-2014**

	Year	High	Moderate	Low	None	Unknown
Graffiti/Tagging	2007	38.6%	49.1%	7.0%	3.5%	1.8%
	2008	51.5%	29.4%	13.2%	2.9%	2.9%
	2010	57.1%	28.6%	8.9%	-	5.4%
	2011	53.3%	24.4%	13.3%	4.4%	4.4%
	2013	17.0%	57.4%	12.8%	2.1%	10.6%
	2014*	24.4%	26.8%	31.7%	9.8%	7.3%
Felonious Assault	2007	22.8%	33.3%	29.8%	7.0%	7.0%
	2008	25.4%	29.9%	20.9%	10.4%	13.4%
	2010	17.5%	35.1%	28.1%	10.5%	8.8%
	2011	24.4%	31.1%	31.1%	6.7%	6.7%
	2013	14.3%	32.7%	30.6%	12.2%	10.2%
	2014*	15.0%	25.0%	30.0%	17.5%	12.5%

⁵ Maxson, C. 2006. Gang Members on the Move. Located in Egley, A. et al., *The Modern Gang Reader*.

⁶ Howell, J.C. 2007. Menacing or Mimicking? Realities of Youth Gangs. *Juvenile and Family Court Journal*, 58,2:39-50.

Burglary	2007	14.0%	50.9%	15.8%	5.3%	14.0%
	2008	11.8%	38.2%	27.9%	8.8%	13.2%
	2010	22.4%	41.4%	19.0%	6.9%	10.3%
	2011	22.2%	44.4%	22.2%	4.4%	6.7%
	2013	26.5%	30.6%	14.3%	8.2%	20.4%
	2014*	17.5%	37.5%	22.5%	7.5%	15.0%
Intimidation/Extortion	2007	14.3%	32.1%	33.9%	5.4%	14.3%
	2008	10.3%	38.2%	25.0%	8.8%	17.6%
	2010	15.5%	31.0%	31.0%	6.9%	15.5%
	2011	13.3%	37.8%	24.4%	4.4%	20.0%
	2013	14.3%	34.7%	26.5%	8.2%	16.3%
	2014	10.0%	32.5%	32.5%	7.5%	17.5%
Robbery	2007	8.9%	23.2%	42.9%	12.5%	12.5%
	2008	14.7%	16.2%	42.6%	16.2%	10.3%
	2010	12.1%	29.3%	25.9%	20.7%	12.1%
	2011	9.1%	27.3%	36.4%	11.4%	15.9%
	2013	14.6%	22.9%	33.3%	10.4%	18.8%
	2014*	15.0%	20.0%	37.5%	10.0%	17.5%
Firearms Trafficking	2007	8.9%	23.2%	35.7%	12.5%	19.6%
	2008	5.9%	14.7%	30.9%	20.6%	27.9%
	2010	5.3%	22.8%	24.6%	26.3%	21.1%
	2011	8.9%	26.7%	28.9%	13.3%	22.2%
	2013	4.1%	18.4%	30.6%	14.3%	32.7%
	2014	2.5%	20.0%	27.5%	20.0%	30.0%
Murder	2007	3.6%	7.1%	46.4%	30.4%	12.5%
	2008	6.0%	13.4%	28.4%	32.8%	19.4%
	2010	3.6%	14.3%	28.6%	44.6%	8.9%
	2011	6.7%	13.3%	28.9%	44.4%	6.7%
	2013	-	12.2%	30.6%	32.7%	24.5%
	2014	5.1%	12.8%	30.8%	30.8%	20.5%
Human Trafficking	2007	1.9%	11.1%	24.1%	25.9%	37.0%
	2008	-	19.4%	16.4%	28.4%	35.8%
	2010	8.8%	17.5%	14.0%	31.6%	28.1%
	2011	4.4%	15.6%	15.6%	33.3%	31.1%
	2013	8.3%	8.3%	14.6%	29.2%	39.6%
	2014	10.0%	7.5%	30.0%	15.0%	37.5%
Prostitution	2007	-	3.6%	19.6%	41.1%	35.7%
	2008	2.9%	2.9%	7.4%	50.0%	36.8%
	2010	1.8%	5.3%	14.0%	40.4%	38.6%
	2011	4.4%	6.7%	20.0%	37.8%	31.1%
	2013	-	2.0%	22.4%	34.7%	40.8%
	2014	7.5%	12.5%	17.5%	25.0%	37.5%
Auto Theft	2007	17.9%	30.4%	30.4%	7.1%	14.3%
	2008	6.0%	28.4%	32.8%	17.9%	14.9%
	2010	12.1%	39.7%	20.7%	19.0%	8.6%
	2011	4.4%	28.9%	46.7%	15.6%	4.4%
	2013	6.4%	27.7%	38.3%	8.5%	19.1%
	2014	9.8%	24.4%	29.3%	17.1%	19.5%
Identity Theft	2007	12.3%	22.8%	19.3%	15.8%	29.8%
	2008	7.4%	11.8%	23.5%	23.5%	33.8%
	2010	12.3%	22.8%	21.1%	21.1%	22.8%
	2011	4.4%	26.7%	28.9%	22.2%	17.8%
	2013	6.3%	25.0%	14.6%	14.6%	39.6%
	2014	10.3%	15.4%	25.6%	23.1%	25.6%
Kidnapping	2007	-	1.8%	44.6%	33.9%	19.6%
	2008	1.5%	4.4%	17.6%	48.5%	27.9%
	2010	3.5%	1.8%	31.6%	42.1%	21.1%
	2011	2.2%	8.9%	31.1%	33.3%	24.4%
	2013	-	8.2%	28.6%	42.9%	20.4%
	2014	2.5%	2.5%	27.5%	40.0%	27.5%

Arson	2007	-	3.6%	21.4%	41.1%	33.9%
	2008	-	-	17.9%	50.7%	31.3%
	2010	3.4%	5.2%	19.0%	46.6%	25.9%
	2011	2.2%	6.7%	26.7%	40.0%	24.4%
	2013	-	4.1%	14.3%	42.9%	38.8%
	2014	-	2.5%	30.0%	40.0%	27.5%
Sexual Assault/Rape	2007	-	3.6%	50.0%	17.9%	28.6%
	2008	-	11.8%	20.6%	36.8%	30.9%
	2010	1.8%	5.3%	31.6%	36.8%	24.6%
	2011	2.2%	4.4%	46.7%	26.7%	20.0%
	2013	-	2.0%	26.5%	38.8%	32.7%
	2014	-	2.5%	32.5%	30.0%	35.0%
2014 Additions						
Home Invasion	2014	7.5%	25.0%	27.5%	17.5%	22.5%
Drive by Shootings	2014	7.5%	12.5%	30.0%	37.5%	12.5%
Weapons Possession	2014	27.5%	22.5%	25.0%	12.5%	12.5%
White Collar Offenses	2014	2.5%	10.0%	27.5%	20.0%	40.0%

*See Appendix A for details on 2014 Additions

Agencies were also asked to rate the level of gang involvement in the sale of drugs (See Table 5). Of those who responded, 30.0 percent reported that gangs were highly involved in street-level drug sales, a slight decrease since 2013. A high level of gang involvement in drug trafficking as well as heroin sales was reported by 28.2 percent of agencies. The drastic increase may, in part, be attributed to the opioid epidemic, with the quantity of prescription pain relievers sold in the U.S. increasing 4-fold over the last decade⁷. Prescription opioids can be a gateway to heroin, which is less costly and more accessible on the street. It is possible that the overwhelming demand for such drugs has led to the saturation of heroin in drug markets, funneling down from larger drug organizations to smaller street dealers. Pharmaceutical sales experienced an uptick, with 20.5 percent of agencies reporting a high level of gang involvement, up from 14.9 percent in 2013. Other drug distribution offenses, namely marijuana grows, were not as common in reporting jurisdictions, with only 2.5 percent of agencies reporting a high involvement.

**Table 5: Gang Involvement in the Distribution of Drugs
(Of the Jurisdictions Reporting Gang Activity), 2007-2014**

		High	Moderate	Low	None	Unknown
Drugs – Street Sales	2007	26.3%	43.9%	22.8%	1.8%	5.3%
	2008	20.6%	44.1%	19.1%	2.9%	13.2%
	2010	29.3%	36.2%	27.6%	-	6.9%
	2011	28.9%	37.8%	26.7%	2.2%	4.4%
	2013	30.6%	30.6%	22.4%	2.0%	14.3%
	2014	30.0%	30.0%	20.0%	7.5%	12.5%
Drugs – Wholesale	2007	10.5%	21.1%	40.4%	5.3%	22.8%
	2008	10.6%	16.7%	30.3%	12.1%	30.3%
	2010	5.2%	29.3%	31.0%	8.6%	25.9%
	2011	11.4%	31.8%	25.0%	13.6%	18.2%
	2013	8.2%	28.6%	26.5%	12.2%	24.5%
	2014	5.3%	21.1%	36.8%	13.2%	23.7%
Drugs – Manufacture	2007	3.6%	3.6%	41.1%	19.6%	32.1%
	2008	4.4%	5.9%	22.1%	33.8%	33.8%
	2010	-	10.5%	36.8%	21.1%	31.6%
	2011	-	15.9%	34.1%	27.3%	22.7%
	2013	2.1%	10.6%	27.7%	29.8%	29.8%
	2014	5.1%	2.6%	33.3%	23.1%	35.9%

⁷ CDC, 2013

Marijuana Grows	2007	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	2008	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	2010	-	5.2%	41.4%	20.7%	32.8%
	2011	2.2%	13.3%	37.8%	22.2%	24.4%
	2013	-	10.4%	33.3%	27.1%	29.2%
	2014	2.5%	7.5%	30.0%	32.5%	27.5%
Marijuana – Sales	2007	36.8%	42.1%	15.8%	1.8%	3.5%
	2008	41.2%	26.5%	13.2%	4.4%	14.7%
	2010	44.8%	29.3%	15.5%	3.4%	6.9%
	2011	45.5%	27.3%	13.6%	2.3%	11.4%
	2013	38.8%	32.7%	14.3%	2.0%	12.2%
	2014	50.0%	27.5%	5.0%	10.0%	7.5%
Methamphetamine – Sales	2007	29.8%	36.8%	24.6%	3.5%	5.3%
	2008	23.5%	35.3%	17.6%	5.9%	17.6%
	2010	31.6%	36.8%	14.0%	8.8%	8.8%
	2011	26.7%	31.1%	22.2%	6.7%	13.3%
	2013	34.7%	28.6%	16.3%	4.1%	16.3%
	2014	37.5%	30.0%	17.5%	7.5%	7.5%
Crack Cocaine – Sales	2007	12.3%	17.5%	40.4%	8.8%	21.1%
	2008	13.2%	11.8%	25.0%	23.5%	26.5%
	2010	10.3%	12.1%	29.3%	32.8%	15.5%
	2011	11.1%	15.6%	33.3%	13.3%	26.7%
	2013	2.1%	12.5%	35.4%	20.8%	29.2%
	2014	5.1%	12.8%	30.8%	33.3%	17.9%
Heroin – Sales	2007	7.4%	16.7%	38.9%	14.8%	22.2%
	2008	5.8%	15.9%	39.1%	11.6%	27.5%
	2010	10.3%	29.3%	24.1%	19.0%	17.2%
	2011	20.0%	17.8%	28.9%	11.1%	22.2%
	2013	8.2%	38.8%	28.6%	4.1%	20.4%
	2014	28.2%	23.1%	28.2%	7.7%	12.8%
Pharmaceuticals – Sales	2007	5.4%	10.7%	32.1%	16.1%	35.7%
	2008	6.0%	13.4%	19.4%	22.4%	38.8%
	2010	6.9%	24.1%	32.8%	10.3%	25.9%
	2011	8.9%	24.4%	35.6%	11.1%	20.0%
	2013	14.9%	21.3%	29.8%	6.4%	27.7%
	2014	20.5%	17.9%	28.2%	12.8%	20.5%
Powdered Cocaine – Sales	2007	3.6%	16.1%	50.0%	7.1%	23.2%
	2008	5.9%	19.1%	36.8%	14.7%	23.5%
	2010	6.9%	13.8%	43.1%	20.7%	15.5%
	2011	2.3%	22.7%	40.9%	6.8%	27.3%
	2013	4.2%	20.8%	41.7%	8.3%	25.0%
	2014	7.7%	10.3%	30.8%	28.2%	23.1%
MDMA (Ecstasy) and analogs – Sales	2007	3.6%	3.6%	42.9%	21.4%	28.6%
	2008	1.4%	13.0%	20.3%	24.6%	40.6%
	2010	-	17.2%	27.6%	29.3%	25.9%
	2011	4.5%	6.8%	43.2%	15.9%	29.5%
	2013	2.1%	14.6%	37.5%	10.4%	35.4%
	2014	5.1%	2.6%	41.0%	17.9%	33.3%
2014 Additions						
Synthetics	2014	5.1%	12.8%	35.9%	10.3%	35.9%
Drug Trafficking	2014	28.2%	25.6%	23.1%	10.3%	12.8%

In addition to the aforementioned drugs, agencies were asked to elaborate on other drugs that are sold by gangs in their area. Other substances such as PCP and Wax (i.e., high-potency marijuana extract) were identified as two additional drugs sold by gang members in responding jurisdictions.

Level of Activity by Gang

Responding agencies were asked to rate the level of activity of 20 specific gangs in their jurisdictions⁸. The gangs were chosen for inclusion in the Arizona assessment because they correspond to the gangs listed in the *National Gang Threat Assessment*, allowing for a state-to-nation comparison over time. It is important to note, however, that certain gangs have a stronger presence in other areas of the country, therefore this list has been modified to include gangs that are prevalent on a national scale, as well as those identified by Arizona law enforcement in past surveys as having a local presence. While national comparison is essential for understanding where Arizona falls among other states, local intelligence is vital to a comprehensive understanding of the gang landscape in Arizona. When agencies were asked to rate the level of activity by each gang, 14 of the 20 gangs listed were identified by one or more agencies as having high levels of activity in their jurisdiction (See Table 6). Among those gangs reported as having a high level of activity, Drug Cartels were reported by 22.5 percent of agencies, followed by Mexican Mafia/La Eme (20.0 percent) and Bloods (all sets, 14.6 percent). These results align with agency responses that highlight collaborations among prison gangs and drug cartels with smaller, local gangs. Such partnerships pave the way for boots-on-the-ground criminal efforts that would otherwise be too risky for higher-level criminal organizations who wish to remain less visible and avoid apprehension.

**Table 6: Level of Activity by Gang
(Of the Jurisdictions Reporting Gang Activity), 2007-2014**

	Year	High	Moderate	Low	Not Applicable	Unknown
Hispanic Sureños (SUR 13)	2007	19.6%	25.0%	23.2%	30.4%	1.8%
	2008	17.6%	35.3%	22.1%	14.7%	10.3%
	2010	24.6%	33.3%	24.6%	12.3%	5.3%
	2011	31.1%	17.8%	31.1%	17.8%	2.2%
	2013	16.7%	18.8%	33.3%	27.1%	4.2%
	2014	15.0%	25.0%	32.5%	15.0%	12.5%
Bloods (all sets)	2007	17.9%	19.6%	28.6%	28.6%	5.4%
	2008	18.8%	14.5%	26.1%	40.6%	-
	2010	14.0%	14.0%	33.3%	26.3%	12.3%
	2011	22.2%	20.0%	28.9%	20.0%	8.9%
	2013	8.3%	14.6%	39.6%	33.3%	4.2%
	2014	17.5%	12.5%	37.5%	25.0%	7.5%
Mexican Mafia/La Eme	2007	7.1%	19.6%	39.3%	23.2%	10.7%
	2008	7.2%	20.3%	40.6%	18.8%	13.0%
	2010	12.3%	15.8%	38.6%	21.1%	12.3%
	2011	22.2%	17.8%	26.7%	24.4%	8.9%
	2013	12.8%	25.5%	36.2%	19.1%	6.4%
	2014	20.0%	30.0%	22.5%	15.0%	12.5%
Crips (all sets)	2007	14.3%	25.0%	25.0%	28.6%	7.1%
	2008	17.9%	20.9%	25.4%	32.8%	3.0%
	2010	15.8%	19.3%	26.3%	28.1%	10.5%
	2011	17.8%	26.7%	31.1%	20.0%	4.4%
	2013	8.2%	14.3%	36.7%	32.7%	8.2%
	2014	15.0%	17.5%	32.5%	30.0%	5.0%
Skinheads	2007	3.5%	21.1%	38.6%	31.6%	5.3%
	2008	4.3%	14.5%	33.3%	43.5%	4.3%
	2010	5.3%	14.0%	42.1%	28.1%	10.5%
	2011	8.9%	8.9%	37.8%	28.9%	15.6%
	2013	6.1%	10.2%	42.9%	32.7%	8.2%
	2014	2.5%	17.5%	40.0%	30.0%	10.0%

⁸ Gangs not listed on the most recent survey have been omitted from this list. Please consult reports published in 2011 and 2014 for previous gangs listed.

Hispanic Norteños (14)	2007	3.6%	9.1%	25.5%	52.7%	9.1%
	2008	1.5%	4.4%	35.3%	48.5%	10.3%
	2010	3.5%	8.8%	40.4%	38.6%	8.8%
	2011	6.7%	11.1%	40.0%	35.6%	6.7%
	2013	4.1%	4.1%	34.7%	46.9%	10.2%
	2014	7.5%	2.5%	35.0%	37.5%	17.5%
Neighborhood – based Drug Trafficking Groups/Crews	2007	10.9%	23.6%	20.0%	30.9%	14.5%
	2008	13.0%	18.8%	24.6%	37.7%	5.8%
	2010	8.6%	29.3%	22.4%	32.8%	6.9%
	2011	4.4%	24.4%	26.7%	24.4%	20.0%
	2013	6.1%	30.6%	26.5%	24.5%	12.2%
	2014	12.5%	30.0%	17.5%	22.5%	17.5%
Aryan Brotherhood	2007	Not Included in 2007 Survey				
	2008	7.4%	8.8%	39.7%	39.7%	4.4%
	2010	5.3%	15.8%	45.6%	22.8%	10.5%
	2011	4.4%	13.3%	46.7%	26.7%	8.9%
	2013	2.0%	20.4%	38.8%	30.6%	8.2%
	2014	-	22.5%	30.0%	35.0%	12.5%
Hells Angels OMG	2007	3.5%	17.5%	42.1%	33.3%	3.5%
	2008	4.3%	17.4%	42.0%	34.8%	1.4%
	2010	5.3%	28.1%	29.8%	29.8%	7.0%
	2011	2.2%	24.4%	37.8%	24.4%	11.1%
	2013	14.6%	16.7%	35.4%	25.0%	8.3%
	2014	5.0%	35.0%	32.5%	22.5%	5.0%
Gangster Disciples	2007	1.8%	1.8%	18.2%	61.8%	16.4%
	2008	-	2.9%	22.1%	73.5%	1.5%
	2010	1.8%	1.8%	21.1%	64.9%	10.5%
	2011	-	8.9%	22.2%	57.8%	11.1%
	2013	-	-	27.1%	62.5%	10.4%
	2014	-	5.0%	20.0%	57.5%	17.5%
Border Brothers	2007	-	1.8%	17.9%	64.3%	16.1%
	2008	-	4.5%	19.4%	62.7%	13.4%
	2010	-	3.6%	28.6%	57.1%	10.7%
	2011	-	4.4%	26.7%	60.0%	8.9%
	2013	-	2.1%	25.5%	55.3%	17.0%
	2014	-	2.5%	15.0%	57.5%	25.0%
18 th Street Gang	2007	-	7.1%	23.2%	51.8%	17.9%
	2008	-	4.3%	21.7%	65.2%	8.7%
	2010	-	1.8%	28.1%	59.6%	10.5%
	2011	-	-	27.3%	61.4%	11.4%
	2013	-	2.1%	19.1%	63.8%	14.9%
	2014	2.5%	2.5%	17.5%	57.5%	20.0%
Latin Kings	2007	-	3.6%	32.1%	50.0%	14.3%
	2008	-	1.5%	30.9%	64.7%	2.9%
	2010	-	1.8%	31.6%	54.4%	12.3%
	2011	-	2.3%	40.9%	47.7%	9.1%
	2013	-	-	27.1%	64.6%	8.3%
	2014	-	5.0%	20.0%	55.0%	20.0%
Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13)	2007	-	-	42.9%	42.9%	14.3%
	2008	-	6.0%	40.3%	47.8%	6.0%
	2010	-	5.3%	42.1%	40.4%	12.3%
	2011	-	-	50.0%	38.6%	11.4%
	2013	2.1%	2.1%	33.3%	47.9%	14.6%
	2014	-	5.0%	22.5%	52.5%	20.0%
2014 Additions						
Mongols OMG	2014	-	7.5%	27.5%	52.5%	12.5%
Vagos OMG	2014	2.5%	5.0%	10.0%	60.0%	22.5%
Brown Pride (all sets)	2014	7.5%	12.5%	40.0%	22.5%	17.5%

Drug Cartels	2014	22.5%	10.0%	17.5%	22.5%	27.5%
Party Crews	2014	7.7%	2.6%	28.2%	35.9%	25.6%
Juggalos	2014	7.5%	15.0%	35.0%	32.5%	10.0%

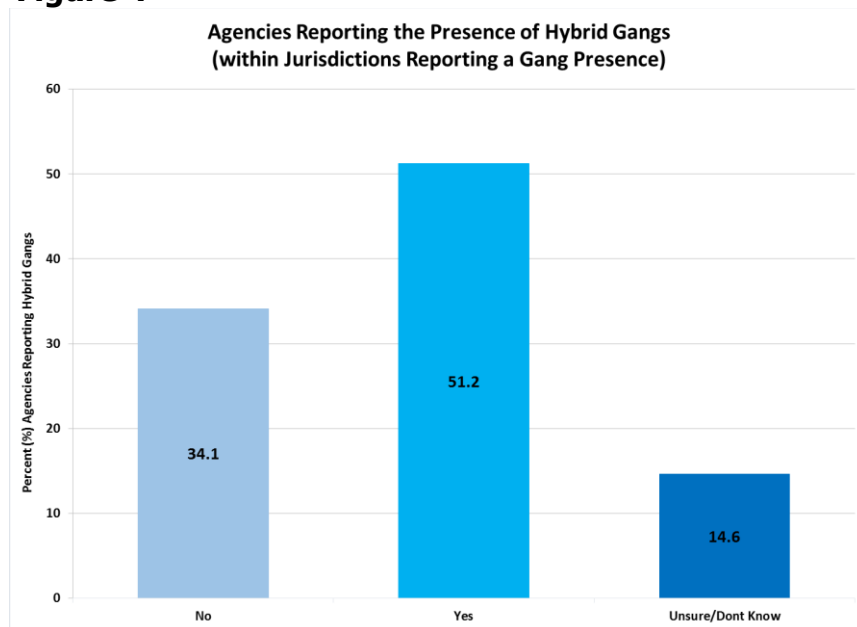
Additional Gangs

The landscape of gangs often changes over time, with the presence of certain groups remaining relatively stable, and others being displaced or disbanded due to law enforcement efforts and community-based prevention programs. To further examine Arizona’s gang landscape, the survey prompted agencies to list any additional gangs in their jurisdictions not otherwise included as a response option. Among those listed were lesser-known prison gangs and geographically-specific street gangs, as well as outlaw motorcycle gangs such as Huns, Lost Dutchmen, Loose Cannons and Hooligans.

Hybrid Gangs

Hybrid gangs are comprised of members with different affiliations, and, according to 2013 survey narratives, are considered an emerging trend in Arizona’s gang landscape. These gangs may defy traditional typologies, characterized by more diverse attributes and behaviors⁹. In order to fully understand the prevalence of such groups, the 2014 Gang Threat Assessment asked respondents if their jurisdictions are characterized by these gangs, in addition to providing an opportunity to provide further details. More than half of respondents (51.2 percent) reported the presence of hybrid gangs (Figure 4), followed by 34.1 percent with no presence and 14.6 percent who were unsure. According to the results, among the most common attributes were gangs with both local and prison gang affiliations, as well as multi-race gangs. While there are a number of possibilities for the formation of such groups, criminal activity-driven goals appear to hold more weight than norms defined by racial or geographic boundaries.

Figure 4

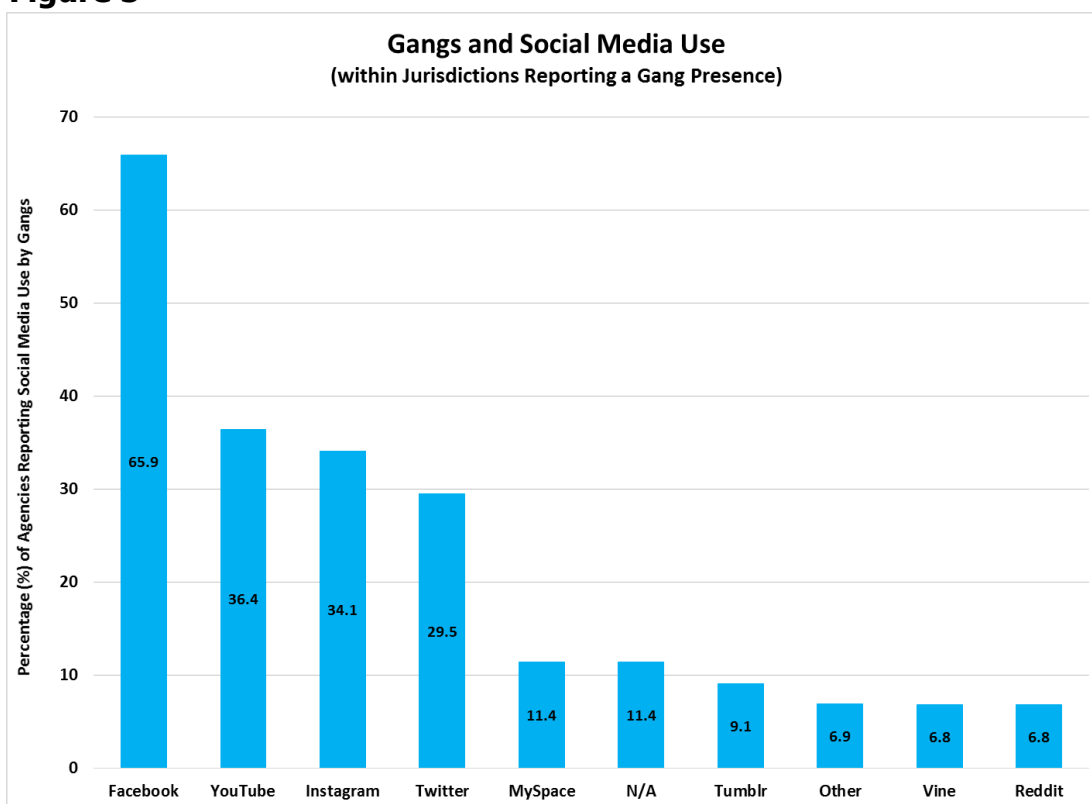


⁹ Starbuck, D., J.C. Howell, & D.J. Lindquist. 2001. Hybrid and Other Modern Gangs. *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Social Media Use by Gangs

One of the more prevalent trends among gangs in Arizona is their presence on, and use of, social media. With a host of platforms available for both individuals and groups, the anonymity and breadth of reach afforded by social media accounts create new opportunities for gangs to recruit, communicate with one another and display insignia. Of respondents who reported a gang presence, 60.0 percent indicated that gangs use social media, followed by 27.5 percent who were unsure about the level of social media use. Subsequently, agencies were asked to report on the use of common social media platforms by gangs in their jurisdictions, and indicate any others that may have not been included in the survey. More than half of respondents (65.9 percent) reported the use of Facebook, followed by YouTube, Instagram and Twitter (36.4, 34.1, and 29.5 percent, respectively). Vine and Reddit were reported less frequently than other sites, with 6.9 percent of respondents reporting the use of “Other” sites, namely Back Page, Snapchat and other mobile applications.

Figure 5



Law Enforcement Intervention and Suppression Strategies

Respondents were provided with a list of strategies that have been identified as methods to combat gangs in their jurisdictions, and were then asked to select those used by their agency. Past iterations of this survey have provided only broad categories, whereas the most recent survey included response options that were consistent with national gang assessments. Targeted Patrols was the strategy identified by the largest percentage of agencies (61.4 percent) as an effective gang response (See Table 7), followed closely by participation in a multi-agency gang task force (56.8 percent). Over half of responding agencies reported having a dedicated gang unit/officer (54.5 percent), with coordinated probation searches identified as a less common strategy (36.4 percent). On

the lower end of the spectrum, civil gang injunctions and participation in a multi-agency re-entry initiative were among the least identified (4.5 and 2.3 percent, respectively).

Table 7*: Intervention/Suppression Strategies		
	# of Agencies	% of Agencies
Targeted Patrols	27	61.4
Participation in a multi-agency gang task force	25	56.8
Dedicated Gang Unit/Officer	24	54.5
Coordinated probation searches	16	36.4
Multi-agency community-based anti-gang strategy	15	34.1
Curfew Ordinance	12	27.3
Targeted Firearms Initiative	7	15.9
Gang Member Call-ins	6	13.6
Civil Gang Injunction	2	4.5
Participation in a multi-agency Reentry Initiative	1	2.3

*not mutually exclusive; will not sum to 100%

Information Sharing among Law Enforcement Agencies

With the presence of hybrid gangs spanning multiple jurisdictions and territories, coupled with an increase in reports of gang migration, it is essential that Arizona law enforcement agencies have access to the most up-to-date internal and external gang intelligence. When presented with the most common information-sharing practices (See Table 8), three-quarters (75.0 percent) indicated that they utilize GangNet when developing strategies, followed closely by Bulletins and Gang Meetings (both 61.4 percent). Half of participating agencies reported using an email list (50.0 percent), followed by inter-agency memos (45.5 percent). Newsletters, fusion centers and gang databases were identified as information sharing practices less frequently than others (34.1 percent and 31.8 percent, respectively), but still utilized by more than one quarter of responding agencies.

When asked to provide details on other information-sharing practices that were not previously identified, databases such as Spillman and CAD were reported, as well as the use of informants, monthly investigators meetings, social media and street contacts.

Table 8*: Information Sharing with Other Agencies		
	Number of Agencies	% of Agencies
GangNet	33	75.0
Bulletins	27	61.4
Gang Meetings	27	61.4
Email List	22	50.0
Inter-agency memos	20	45.5
Newsletters	15	34.1
Fusion Center	15	34.1
Gang Databases/Directories	14	31.8

*not mutually exclusive; will not sum to 100%

Conclusion

To fully understand the depth and breadth of the gang problem in Arizona, it is imperative that we continue to consult the vast experience of law enforcement agencies who oversee jurisdictions characterized by a gang presence. The fluid nature of gang activity, coupled with the ever-changing composition of the gangs themselves, require frequent assessment in order to stay abreast of emerging trends.

As evidenced by the aforementioned results, gangs are no longer restricted to their territories of origin, with a number of agencies reporting the presence of urban gangs in rural jurisdictions. Similarly, results suggest the existence of hybrid gangs, comprised of individuals with multiple affiliations, symbols and rules who would otherwise be separated by neighborhood boundaries. With the face of gangs becoming more dynamic, it is imperative that agencies use approaches that are designed with community-specific attributes in mind. Each jurisdiction is characterized by its own unique set of challenges, and in most cases will require a comprehensive response that incorporates law enforcement and community partners.

It is hoped that this report will serve as a tool to foster collaborative efforts, namely information-sharing practices among law enforcement agencies in Arizona. While the majority of agencies use ARS codes as a framework for defining both gangs and gang-related incidents, variation still exists in the way these groups and events are identified. Future efforts may benefit from uniform approaches to these definitions, as well as the standardization of software and databases used by agencies for record keeping. With the structure and movement of gangs changing over time, it is essential that agencies have the ability to gather information not only from their own units, but also from departments across the state collecting gang intelligence.

Although this report serves as an important overview of the gang presence in Arizona, it is hoped that increased participation in future administrations will broaden our understanding of gangs across Arizona. Upcoming versions of the survey will be modified to reflect input from agencies, with the goal of capturing information that will aid in strategic planning and resource distribution. It is anticipated that through such efforts, this report will continue to serve as a vital resource for law enforcement working to diminish the gang problem in Arizona.

Appendix A

Survey Additions

Item Name	Table Number	Original Category	New Category
Graffiti/Tagging	4	Vandalism/Graffiti/Tagging	Graffiti/Tagging
Felonious Assault	4	Felonious Assault	Felonious Assault (does not include drive-by shootings)
Burglary	4	Burglary	Burglary (does not include home invasion)
Robbery	4	Robbery	Robbery (does not include home invasion)
Home Invasion	4	-	New Item
Drive by Shootings	4	-	New Item
Weapons Possession	4	-	New Item
White Collar Offenses	4	Credit Card Fraud	White Collar Offenses
Synthetics	5	-	New Item
Drug Trafficking	5	-	New Item
Mongols OMG	6	-	New Item
Vagos OMG	6	-	New Item
Brown Pride (all sets)	6	-	New Item
Drug Cartels	6	-	New Item
Party Crews	6	-	New Item
Juggalos	6	-	New Item