



**PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
LARGE JAIL NETWORK
MEETING**

January 1995

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LARGE JAIL NETWORK MEETING

Jail administrators have only recently begun to recognize the serious problems caused by gang members held in local jails. As their awareness has grown, administrators have become increasingly interested in identifying new methods for controlling gangs and countering their influence in jail operations.

This meeting of the Large Jail Network focused exclusively on the issue of gangs in jails. It provided the opportunity for administrators of large jails throughout the country to share information on how they are dealing with gangs. Presentations centered on the following issues:

- Identification of gang members
- Housing policies
- Relationship of gang activity to inmate services and programs
- How to address gang activity through intergovernmental cooperation

As the complete proceedings make clear, agencies are currently using a variety of approaches under each of these categories. However, all participants expressed broad support for a firm “zero tolerance” policy in dealing with the presence of gangs in local jails.

Opening Address: Research and Analysis Perspective on Gangs, Jails, and Criminal Justice

George W. Knox, Ph.D., Director, National Gang Crime Research Center

Introduction

I have been studying gangs professionally for twenty years now. In all my research I take the viewpoint of a skeptical criminologist: when it comes to understanding crime and criminals, don't believe anything you hear and only about half of what you see, and perhaps you will be sufficiently skeptical to have a social scientific understanding of the gang problem.

I- like getting as many facts as possible and from as many different people as possible. My research on gangs dates back to a 1974 test of the differential opportunity theory of gang delinquency. I interviewed several hundred youths detained in a juvenile detention center. My research on gangs and gang members continued through the '70s and '80s on a wide range of issues. Both my master's thesis and Ph.D. dissertation dealt with gang members and gang issues. When I did get my Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, I found myself in the incredible situation of being at a university with two gang courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

When I was teaching gang courses there were a wide variety of "gang materials," that is, various books with various perspectives, to use in a course about "gang violence" and in a course about "gang intervention." But both courses were developed originally around 1960's intellectual contributions. Needless to say, I was at times exceedingly frustrated in trying to link the real world of gang problems to the formal training setting by using existing books about gangs.

There are many books about gangs, dating back over a hundred years. But when I was faced with the real responsibility for teaching and training, I realized what we had in the literature were monographs and specialized studies, none of which really satisfied the full range of issues and concerns for someone who works in law enforcement or corrections. It was, then, chiefly out of frustration that I began a decade ago to write the first full textbook on gangs. There was no single textbook that dealt comprehensively with all the issues about gangs. So I wrote it.

My textbook, *An Introduction to Gangs*, appeared in its first edition in 1991. The second edition sold out in the first couple of months, and, like the first, was sold in hardcover form. But a new phenomenon occurred: other universities and colleges across the United States began for the very first time to offer full college courses on gangs. Many of them used my textbook. There are today many "readers" on and about gangs, and many "viewpoint" series on gangs, and even a new genre of books has appeared: Those written by gang members. But my book remains the first and only full textbook. It is also the longest gang book in existence.

I learn something new every day about gangs. I've brought the current third edition of this book with me to let you peak at it, and I understand I will also be able to expose you to our Gang Cultural Artifact Exhibit.

In my ongoing research, I saw a major rise in gang crime impact in 1992; at that point, I founded the National Research Center at my university, Chicago State University. I realized that I needed to take personal responsibility for establishing leadership in this area to foster a more scientific understanding of this national problem we call "gangs."

I am a very practical person, that is, if my training and skills are to be of any positive impact, then I also assert that the real test of one's conceptual, research, analytical, and writing skills comes when these can be put to the test of fire: Applying them to the real world of the criminal justice system. I know a lot about being practical. I was one of the very few persons ever granted certification as an applied criminologist by the American Sociological Association. The

scholarly designation was called being certified beyond the Ph.D. In “Law and Social Control,” it required five years of field experience, evidence of cooperative work with the real world of criminal justice, and professional publications based on one’s research in such settings.

When I started the National Gang Crime Research Center, I began with a practical philosophy because I had to. I have done a lot of professional research for the government--federal, state, and local. I realized that if I were to be able to establish an ongoing agency with genuine positive impact, I would have to develop a new model. Whether in government or foundation-funded research, tight controls, bureaucratic delays, and restrictions on dissemination can together erode the moral imperative to educate those who need to know.

I had been accustomed, like almost all other Ph.D.s to Model A of research and scholarship. Model A was: Always get paid. If there’s no money in it, it’s not worth researching. Model A also meant get the money, use authority to get the data, give an analysis, and always say goodbye when the checks stop coming in. Model A would often be able to release a report about two years after it was first funded. Findings by then could be “decayed” or dated. Findings often just rest in a government or foundation file, sometimes with small excerpts as journal articles in obscure professional publications with limited circulation.

So I developed what I call Model B, or the service-research model. I wanted to be able to conduct a different type of academic scholarship, one that was oriented toward service to those who work in the criminal justice system. I wanted to be able to ensure that we would not have to wait for two years to be able to release the findings. As I said earlier, in the traditional manner that scholarly researchers are accustomed, the research is undertaken only if it is paid work, and, secondly, the knowledge sharing or educational dissemination function is usually a low priority and is assumed to be a future rather than current benefit.

When we started doing ongoing yearly national studies, I had to enlist persons who were more interested in results than paychecks. However, since 1990 we have conducted ongoing yearly national studies of all components of the correctional system and other components of the criminal justice system, and we are expanding on a yearly basis. Since 1990, we have conducted the yearly national survey of state adult correctional institutions. We then added juvenile long term correctional facilities, short term detention centers, and jails. We have included sheriffs, police chiefs, and prosecutors as well as separate components of the criminal justice system. And all of this research was pinpointed on the gang problem, but not necessarily limited to gang problems, because, after all, our research had to be practical.

What we found in being practical was the opportunity to show a larger scholarly strength: showing that gang problems are related to other problems, such as racial conflicts among inmates, assaults on staff, riots and disturbances, improvised weapons production among inmates, seized cash from the inmate “poor box” or treasuries maintained by gangs, and a wide variety of other concerns.

We have found that the gang problem affects all aspects of the criminal justice system and is often associated with a host of other problems. What success we have had is reflected in our products of knowledge, and we have a long list of such reports and products for staff training. Beyond this, our “success” was measured by accomplishing largescale national research projects without government or foundation funding. We attribute our success to one thing. Cooperation from correctional administrators like you, we found, could be significantly enhanced if we took off our scholarly robes and rolled up our proverbial sleeves and provide some “service” along with our requests for research cooperation.

In short, what we did was reverse the traditional model of scholarly research. In Model A of traditional criminological, penological, criminal justice, and most social science research, the researchers often treat the data sources as suspects, and rarely if ever provide full feedback to them. Rather, the research is conducted, the respondent is sent a thank you letter if it is a budgeted item giving additional income to the research labor, and the officials involved rarely see the end product. We began with the premise that respondents to our national surveys would have to be the first in line, not the last, to receive the information that was most relevant only to them, and not to libraries or archives.

This was a somewhat radical departure from the ordinary approach in our field. We took the attitude that in order to motivate large numbers of criminal justice administrators to take the time out to assist us we would have to do things a little differently. We were going to do the research no matter what, and we would have to do the research without funding. Some recent research included interviewing gang members in about ten jails in the Midwest. The group I lead is responsible for the greatest achievements in terms of sample size, quality of data, scope and extent of data collected on actual gang member inmates nationwide.

Let me now turn to some specific lessons my research has for mega-jail administrators.

Lesson 1: Zero-Tolerance is Required

The reason a zerotolerance policy is required is that gang conflicts and rivalries existing outside the correctional setting carry over into the jail environment. Also, a little known fact about gang life is the benefit a jail can offer a gang member. In the jail and prison context it may be easier for the gang member to achieve a promotion in rank than it would be on the street. In the jail, one can make rank simply by agreeing to shank someone or carry out an unarmed assault. Numerous situations arise where the gang can benefit from other inmate gang members waiting wings to volunteer to “do some nation business.” Correctional administrators must therefore face a new and formidable inmate threat from gangs.

Lesson 2: Inmate Culture Has now Completely Changed with the Advent of Gangs.

Anyone who has examined the literature of penology, the sociology of corrections, and criminological research knows that inmate culture from the early 1900s and up through the '50s remained essentially intact until relatively recently. Some changes began to appear as long-

lasting effects in the 1960s and 1970s. Today, inmate **culture** has changed permanently because of gangs. Correctional facilities in the U.S. today no longer face the inmate culture of “do your own time” and similar norms associated with the type of lone-ranger offender common prior to the dominant role played by modern criminal gangs. The inmate does the hardest time today is the “neutron”: the non-gang affiliated inmate.

Lesson 3: Gang Members Pose a Threat for Assaults Against Staff and Other Inmates

Gang members today have what might be called a “combative personality syndrome.” They often see themselves as “freedom fighters,” and they have high hostility levels toward criminal justice authorities. Gang members in all forms of correctional settings today constitute a new source of violence behind bars: assaults on both staff and other inmates. Conflict is at the very core of gang life, and it extends from outside to inside jails and other correctional settings. Gangs pose a new and formidable threat to staff and inmate safety.

Lesson 4: The Power of a Gang is the Power of a Group or Organization of Inmates--Examples of a new Form of Corporal Punishment Behind Bars Today

Gangs enforce strict obedience to their code of values and rules. The type of gangs that mega-jail administrators will deal with are not “Spanky and Alfalfa” groups of loose-knit “near groups” forming just a “street corner society.” *American Jails* magazine (Jan-Feb 1993, pp. 45-48) shows an example by the present author of how gangs administer a rigid and ruthless disciplinary system of their own, complete with “written disciplinary infraction reports” on their own members in one mega-jail in the Midwest. Gangs have brought corporal punishment back to the correctional setting, and they routinely punish their own members with physical force.

Another growing problem is the fact that gangs do single out and target some correctional officers in some settings for serious bodily harm and even death. Illinois state correctional officers are now seeking to obtain the right to carry a firearm to and from work because of this fear of revenge from gangs.

Lesson 5: Gang Recruitment Behind Bars and the Lack of Evidence on what Works for Containing, Controlling, and Preventing an Escalation of the Gang Problem

Some of the policies used in response to gang problems behind bars are now well known, but evidence is lacking that any of these work or whether some carry additional risks. The “set-off or “balancing technique” is a popular method. This means placing equal numbers of rival gang members in one cell-house or living unit, mixing in a few “neutrons” as buffers. The problem with the “balancing technique” is that neutrons may have to join the gang to eat, use the phone, shower, or anything else the gang can control.

Clearly, jail administrators today need specific rules and regulations in the disciplinary policies for inmates to discourage gang activity behind bars. The state of Connecticut’s example of

written and other materials provided to inmates during their intake into the system is recommended as a way of communicating such policies to inmates.

What works to curtail gang activity behind bars works to improve the safety and security generally of the same facility. Gangs should not be afforded an opportunity to recruit new members behind bars. However, this currently goes on in many settings nationally, covering the entire gamut of corrections.

Conclusion

The gang problem will not disappear any time soon. The modern American gang may have changed the entire crime picture in our society. In some mega-jails “gang density” (i.e., the percentage of all inmates who are gang members) is over fifty percent. The kind of person being locked up, therefore, is no “lone ranger” offender; he or she is part of an organization. The gang as an organization poses many new problems and threats for the jail administrator. As you know, this training conference addresses how some of you have adapted to this new situation. I have prepared some reading materials for you, and I have brought along some materials I also want you to see, so I will remain with you during this conference as a potential resource.

Session #1: Controlling the influence of gangs on the administration, operation, and safety of our jails

Sgt. Roger Ross, Operation Safe Jail Unit, L.A. County Sheriffs Office

Background

A lot of what I will say has to do with southern California and may not be entirely applicable to you. Gangs are regional and vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

To give you some idea of the dimension of the gang problem in LA, we have identified more than 1500 street gangs with more than 150,000 street gang members in LA County alone. These are Asian gangs, white, Hispanic, and Black gangs. There are 226 Crip gangs in the county and 88 Blood gangs.

In the past ten ye&s, gangs have grown and changed dramatically. Gangs now are almost like gangsters in the '20s and '30s. The problem is that they are now accepted by youngsters. They are a strong subculture, with their own music, their own movies. The people who made the movie "American Me" intended to show the evil side of gangs, but the movie actually had the opposite effect. What is a deterrent to us is not a deterrent to gang members.

Until very recently, gang members got to be about twenty years old and then quit the gang. In the early '70s, gang banging was no longer popular with twenty-year-olds. Many of them went into the military. However, now these gangs have no break from the community and no role models, nothing to pull them from the gangs. There is no incentive for them to quit.

Our problems with Hispanic gangs go back before World War II. One of the oldest Hispanic gangs can be traced back to the '30s. Because they are ingrained in the community, the LA County Jail has had gang members for a long time. However, until the '70s they had not posed a housing problem for us.

In the early '70s, the Crips and Bloods started fighting each other. In the early '80s, the introduction of crack cocaine also encouraged gang members to stay in a gang. The result was older and older gang members on streets. Consequently, gangs became an adult institution problem.

Street Gang Unit

In the early '80s, we started a street gang patrol unit called Operation Safe Streets (OSS). Initially, they were dealing with juveniles. When crack cocaine came on the scene, these guys started coming to the adult in jail in larger numbers. Between 1980 and 1984, the jail system saw an increase of about 150% in incustody crime. Jail administrators recognized the problem as related to street gangs.

The response was to call on our newly formed street gang unit to come into our custody environment to set up a gang program. They identified Crips and Bloods as causing most of the problems, so they targeted them, setting aside two complete modules-420 beds--to house members of these gangs. Their approach was to take every gang member out of wherever they were in the jail and put them in the gang unit. Within a short period of time, we had a tremendous drop in jail crime. It was great, initially.

The problem was that we had a patrol group doing a custody function. Eventually, some problems surfaced because the street gang people began to use the custody environment to get information that would help them solve the gang problem on the streets. For example, they took guys out of the gang module, interviewed them, and promised them things in return for information on street gangs. The result was that gang members felt immune in the jail, which created conflicts within the system between the OSS unit and jail staff.

When you put 210 gang members in one area you provide them with a major power base. They have to try to impress others in the module. It is "show time" for them, but a serious problem for staff. Eventually, we had a major disturbance in the facility, followed by three others that involved the Crips and Bloods.

Other Approaches

We realized that the system wasn't working and began talking to the administration. As a result, the patrol unit left the facility. By this time, with four major disturbances, a lot of people were watching the system and there was a lot of pressure on the administration to get a successful program for dealing with gangs.

We tried several other methods of dealing with gang members, including appeasement. After realizing that we couldn't effectively control all the gang members in a module, we developed a program that just separated the hard-core gang members who were in the jail committing crimes. We went from multiple-man modules with 410 to single-man modules with 104 in each, which cut down on the number we had to segregate. Targeting only the hard-core members removed the problem of their trying to recruit and impress each other. The basic program was to lock them down for 90 days and let them out if they didn't cause problems. They were waist-chained and escorted everywhere.

This seemed to be the answer. However, then we started experiencing additional problems, including various ways of manipulating the system, racial conflicts, and problems coming from prison gangs.

LA County's Current Gang Program

Finally, after hiring several experts on street gangs who were committed to developing a program that would work, we worked toward our present approach.

The first important step is to identify all gang members. Our criteria for a gang member are if the individual:

- Admits gang membership or association;
- Is observed to associate on a regular basis with known gang members
- Has tattoos indicating gang membership;
- Wears gang clothing, symbols, etc, to identify with a specific gang;
- Is in a photograph with known gang members and/or using gang-related hand **signs**;
- Name is on a gang document, hit list, or gang-related graffiti;
- Is identified as a gang member by a reliable source;
- Is arrested in the company of identified gang members or associates;
- Corresponds with known gang members or writes and/or receives correspondence about gang activity; or
- Writes about gangs (graffiti on walls, books, paper, etc.)

A combination of these factors may be used in identifying gang members. The definition of a Security Threat Group member is somewhat more general, and there are advantages to using this category, rather than “gang.” You need to be flexible in developing a gang program. Gang members figure out what you are doing very quickly and you need to be able to adapt, to roll with the punches.

Restrictions Placed on Security Threat Group Members

- Strip searches of inmates every time they come onto the floor; this takes time but is very important.
- Frequent cell shake-downs--a key element in controlling contraband.
- Cancellation of good time/work time credits--for those who are problems.
- Work and/or program limitations--most are not eligible for work programs and they are not given education programs.
- Visit restrictions/no contact visits--visiting is restricted to two days a week.
- Monitor mail and telephones--may need court approval.
- Monitor inmates' accounts.
- Place all confirmed STG members in Administrative Segregation.

Universal Gang Traits

Although gangs vary from region to region, they share some common traits:

- It's about power and respect.
- Must stand up to any threat or challenge.
- Cannot show any weakness.
- Their reputation is the most valued possession.
- Never snitch (at least never get caught at it).
- Use of violence to settle disputes.

In-Custody Gang Crimes

- Robbery
- Extortion
- Assaults
- Drug Violations
- Murder
- Riots
- Smuggling
- Sexual Assaults

Gangs' Impact on Jail Facilities:

- Compete with staff for control of inmate population
- Damage facility with graffiti
- Cause increase of medical costs by use of violence to control or intimidate other inmates
- Constantly destroy property to keep supply of weapons available
- May orchestrate disturbances to cover other activity or make demands

Gangs' Impact on Other Inmates:

- Constantly victimize other non-gang affiliated inmates.
- Extort money from other inmates for "protection" or for use of facilities like phones, canteen, recreation equipment, etc.
- Force others to participate in illegal acts by threats or intimidation.
- Try to control contraband and eliminate any competition.
- Control who is allowed to live in what areas by victimizing others.
- Assault rival gang members.
- Their presence may cause an increase in tension on compound.

Gangs' Impact on Staff:

- Will attempt to find personnel willing to bend rules for them.
- Try to cause friction between staff members.
- More confrontational than non-gang members and more likely to get involved in physical altercations.
- Do not like taking orders or being told what to do.

Performance-Based Housing

- » Target only hardcore gang members.
- » Segregate from the general population inmates and non-problem gang members.
- » Program consists of legally mandated activities only.

- » Length of stay in unit is based on the gang member's behavior.
- » Frequent contacts by gang unit personnel to evaluate behavior and attitude.
- » Placement and removal into and out of unit is by gang unit personnel only.
- » Minimal time outside of cell.
- » Mail monitored for security reasons.

Maintaining Gang Records and Files

- » Establish unit policy regulating the maintenance of files.
- » Only trained personnel should be allowed to make official records.
- » All records should have the name and number of the person creating the record.
- » Records should document all pertinent information on the gang member--monikers, tattoos, scars, arresting agency, charge booked for, system violations, and photograph.

The best compliment to our program is when gang members complain about us and how we are limiting their activities. There are many things to take into consideration in developing a gang control unit. Different regions have different problems.

How Your Communities are Getting Our Gang Members

The LA area is very mobile; people are used to traveling to San Francisco, Las Vegas, everywhere. Gang members think nothing of driving across the country. When the heat increases in LA, they go to Atlanta, Little Rock, etc., and set up gangs in other cities. Most LA gangs have gotten away from colors because they make you a real sitting duck. They have gone to black Raiders jackets; you don't see red or blue as you used to.

Session #2: Approaches for dealing with gang affiliation in jails and developing intelligence information for decision making in gang-related issues

Vince Vaughn, St Louis County, Missouri

Our policy on gangs is simple: we don't tolerate them. Our regulations manual makes clear that gang operations are prohibited. There will be no recruiting, no hand signs or gestures, no "sagging." There will be no writing, no logos, on our property. We also hold other inmates responsible for letting us know of gang activity. In addition, we have clear restrictions on mail. If a piece of mail has any kind of logos, we confiscate it and let the inmate know we have it in his property. We tell inmates to advise family and friends they can't receive mail if there is any gang sign on it. We don't accept any property from the street.

We put all inmates together and we communicate with them. If we know we have gang members who are likely to try gang-banging in our jail, we talk to them. We meet with them one-on-one or in small groups. If we have problems, we can send them to one of two other facilities or lock them down until they are ready to cooperate. We take good time from them. If a person assaults someone, we turn him over to the local police for prosecution.

We also provide programs, such as "Life on the Streets" and "Breaking Barriers." We try to get them to understand that if they can go to class together, they can live together.

Information Sources

We get information on gang members from a variety of sources:

- ▶ On our classification form is the question, "Are you a gang member? Are you affiliated?"
- ▶ We also get information from the type of crime committed, if it is gang-related.
- ▶ We attend seminars and conferences.
- ▶ We get information from police departments.
- ▶ We get information from inmates every day. I walk around the facility every day, talking to everyone. Most of them want to run a clean, healthy jail. Some use the jail as a way to escape from gangs.
- ▶ We get information from publications and from a 40-hour training program, which includes 8 hours of training on gangs.

When I left our minimum security jail and was promoted to the maximum security jail, I found that inmates there were housed in separate groups. Consequently, there were all kinds of problems. Inmates were taking over the jail. They were in control and wouldn't let people

come into certain areas. We had several riots. It took a while for me to sell the idea to the staff, but I said we were going to put them all together. We gradually moved them all together, and we have had no problems. We have a direct approach in St. Louis County. It might be called suppression. To sit back and do nothing is wrong. You need to show gang members that you are not afraid of them. Part of our job is to run a clean and healthy institution, which is what we're trying to do in St. Louis County.

Tom Melcher, Maricopa County, Arizona

Maricopa County has a jail system with an ADP of 5400 inmates. At the end of the year nearly 1,000 of those inmates were in a tent facility. The tents hold work release, work furlough, or working inmates within system. This latter group has been a problem for us because these inmates are circulating back into the system, to the laundry, kitchen, and so forth. Because they are housed (tented) with those going out into the community every day, this provides a good method for introducing contraband into the system. Therefore, we are now building a second tent facility for these inmates.

Maricopa County has the same kinds of problems with gangs and the same groups as LA County. We do not segregate by gang type; we don't allow them to demonstrate any gang activity in the jail. We do segregate an individual if he becomes a problem.

In the last year because of budget problems in Maricopa County, we have closed five of our eleven jails. These were small outlying jails or holding facilities. Two were significant because they could house 50-75 inmates. Those little jails gave us flexibility in moving troublesome inmates around.

Since 1980, the Maricopa County Jail System has undergone drastic changes. Our average daily population was 2,165 in 1985, and 5,208 in 1994. We expect to go over 6,000 this year. We are not building jails in the Phoenix area because of the difficulty of passing bond issues.

Jail Intelligence System

What we have developed in the jail to deal with this problem is an intelligence system. We have Intelligence Officers assigned to each jail facility. They are responsible for:

- Identification of gang members and their associates;
- Tracking and aiding in the prosecution of inmates participating in criminal activities;
- Uncovering plots to injure or loll inmates or staff;
- Discovering escape plans;
- Debriefing gang members;
- Interviewing and interrogating inmates;
- Developing and working confidential informants
- Coordinating and assisting in investigations by other criminal justice agencies;
- Maintaining working intelligence files;
- Preparing reports;
- Briefing and training staff;
- Working closely with MCSO Special Investigations and Jail Crimes Detectives on issues related to jail intelligence;
- Arranging for searches based on information obtained.

Once a month these representatives meet with other members of the Jail Intelligence Committee. These other members include representatives of Sheriffs office sections, including Court Security and Prisoner Transportation Section, Warrants and Fugitives Section, and Jail Crimes Investigations. The Committee is spearheaded by the Special Investigations Unit. Topics range from current escape plots to gang graffiti. Discussions aimed at resolving security breaches are held. The meetings are tape-recorded and the information is included in a comprehensive, monthly intelligence report that is disseminated to all sections of the Maricopa County Sheriffs Office.

As the Jail Intelligence Officer interprets information gathered, it frequently becomes evident that the intelligence would be of equal, and sometimes more, value to another criminal justice or law enforcement agency. When this occurs, the Intelligence Officer contacts that agency and shares the information:

- ▶ Prosecuting Attorneys--Mail scans present an opportunity for a prosecutor to obtain admissions of guilt. Of additional interest is illegal, hand-passed correspondences, or "kites." Cell searches produce graffiti, drawings, or other materials that can be used as an aid to prosecution, particularly where an enhancement of gang affiliation is being sought.
- ▶ Law Enforcement Officers/Other Agencies--When information is obtained regarding criminal activity that has been under investigation, but has not been introduced into the court system, the investigating officer is contacted. The information is passed along and, if an informant is involved, a meeting is arranged for the other agency to conduct an

interview. Physical evidence is turned over to those agencies with or without a subpoena, at the agency's discretion.

- ▶ Other Holding/Confinement Institutions-Often, prisoners or inmates are transferred back and forth between institutions. Intelligence information is essential to the appropriate housing and management of these persons. Information regarding drugs, weapons, extortions, assaults, escapes, gang affiliations, and even homicides is shared on a regular basis and helps to preserve the security of these institutions.

Problems Presented by Prison Gangs

Another recent problem for us is the potentially volatile combination of street and prison gang members. Prison gangs are racially grouped, while many street gangs are made up of any combination of races and are more or less territorially grouped. Generally speaking, the more influential of these two types of gangs are the prison gangs. The knowledge and experience for surviving in the system belongs with the prison gang/convicts. Most prison gang members were once members of a street gang. Therefore, many street gang members leave the prison system as prison gang members and, to many, the change is thought of as a natural and desired evolution.

Many of these "warmabe" inmates, particularly those assured of prison sentences, act out and become physically and verbally abusive in order to attract the attention of prison gang members. Once that is done, the prison gang/convict acknowledges the inmate's "heart," the prison gang/convict begins to school the inmate. Simultaneously, the inmate is called on to do a variety of chores for the prison gang/convict, including collecting on extortions, assaults, holding weapons, and aiding in the procurement and sale of drugs. Once the prison gang/convict checks his background and determines the inmate to be faithful, the next step in the initiation process is conducted in the prison system after the inmate is sent there. Most prison gangs require "blood-in" commitment from their probates. "Blood-in" means different things, depending on the gang.

Examples of Intelligence Success

- ▶ In one instance, an inmate in our custody approached another inmate, asking if he would kill the victims/witnesses in his criminal case for \$10,000. The approached inmate contacted one of our Jail Intelligence Officers and gave her the information. The prosecutor was contacted and, after working out the details, the informant was released from custody and set up in a wire-tapped hotel room. Telephonic communications were made between the inmate and the confidential informant, resulting in seven grand jury indictments and an offered plea of twenty-two years. Although these inmates were not members of Security Threat Groups, the same idea of an inmate respecting a convict applies because the suspect was an inmate and the fellow he approached to help him was an ex-convict.

- ▶ Another incident involved the seizure of some paperwork from a remanded juvenile inmate's cell during a routine search. There were some drawings and handwritten letter that were forwarded to a Jail Intelligence Officer, who determined the letter contained desired responses to testimony and the drawing to be a corresponding diagram of a murder scene. The prosecutor was contacted, and he obtained the documents via a subpoena. A handwriting analysis confirmed the documents as having been prepared by the defendant. This case was just going to trial as I was preparing for this presentation. Our Intelligence Officer is scheduled to testify as to the chain of evidence. This inmate is a documented member of the Los Marcos Homeboys Street Gang, and his victim was a rival gang member.

Remanded Juveniles

In Maricopa we are holding a large number of remanded juveniles, including about 120 males and seven females. These are the “baddest of the bad,” but we still have to maintain sight and sound separation. The seven remanded female juveniles are being housed in the psychiatric infirmary.

During orientation, our remanded juvenile inmates are given a packet of rules that state:

“No mail containing gang writing, graffiti, photos, or any related gang items will be accepted by the officers and will be returned to the sender.” Gang activity is not tolerated. this includes: sagging (wearing trousers low on hips), flagging (presenting colors of your particular gang), signing (use of hand signals to signify particular gang), use of street names or graffiti. If you feel you must participate in gang activity or behavior, you will be placed on Behavior Hours. This means you will remain in one hour out status for a minimum of fourteen days before you will be reviewed again for additional time out. You may also receive disciplinary segregation and/or will restriction. Continuation of gang activity will include more severe sanctions. No gang behavior will be tolerated in this unit. If you continue gang activities while you are in the juvenile unit, other sanctions such as loss of roommate and loss of all non-hygiene items will be imposed. You will not be afforded normal privileges until this behavior ceases:

Albert Gardner, Rhode Island Department of Corrections

History: Criminal Activity in the State

Rhode Island has a unified state system. Rhode Island is a strange place, smaller than most of your counties. It's there because people left England because they couldn't get along with anyone. Then they left Massachusetts for the same reason and decided to form their own colony.

Rhode Island became early on a haven for criminal activity, “Rogues' Island.” It was a place where criminal activity was accepted. In the 1700s one of every five adult males made their living from piracy or smuggling. Irish gangs came into Rhode Island in the 1800s, and in the

1950s we had organized crime from the Mafia. Rhode Island became known as “the land of mobsters and lobsters.”

Through the '60s and '70s the state was infested with organized crime. It infected every business, every restaurant, every clothing establishment. All were operated by organized crime. It infested banking to the extent that it destroyed credit unions in the state; organized crime was involved politically and with the courts. By the 1990s, however, organized crime was decimated, as a result of federal law enforcement agencies working with state law enforcement.

For many years we did not have a prison, jail, or street gang problem. The reason was that the Mafia wouldn't tolerate it. They controlled crime in the state. Any other group was quickly squashed. In 1990s the leadership of a mafia family died, the son who took over was inept. This set the stage for attack on the Mafia. But, because crime does not allow a vacuum, we have begun to see the beginnings of gang activity in Rhode Island. It has reached the point now that the Mafia Kings carried out a contract to assassinate a Mafia member.

The Gang Problem

We hadn't recognized gang behavior until we were told by an inmate from Connecticut that we had a problem. We began to look more closely at the gang situation, especially at the Intake Service Center. The Special Investigation Unit that worked for the entire department began conferring with their counterparts in Connecticut. We had training provided by that state, and started to look closely at our population. We identified not only Latin Kings but many other gangs who had become members in other states and were doing time in our facilities. We began developing intelligence on gang activities. We have put together a policy addressing Security Risk Groups because we are beginning to recognize the need to address this problem quickly or it will get out of hand.

Recent Activity

I look at the Intake Service Center almost as my personal property, as my facility. I received a call from my night shift captain about a year ago saying there had been two stabbings that night in the same housing unit. From what he could gather from the person stabbed, a certain number of telephones were being claimed by Latin Kings as their phones. I lost my temper. My reaction was, “Tell everyone they're my phones.” Next morning, I came in, expecting the inmates to be terribly upset, but they weren't. They were upset with the gang members. I maintained the posture that it was my facility, not theirs, and that I was going to run it.

From then on, overt gang activities subsided. This made intelligence-gathering more difficult. Previously, they had been willing to share their affiliation. As we began to close the noose on that activity, it was driven underground.

We have a very close operation in Rhode Island. This is helpful in that we have great communications with our prison. All seven facilities are within a mile and a half of each other. All the wardens meet formally on a weekly basis; informally, we meet every day. All the wardens have come up through the system. We were correctional officers with each other, so we can speak freely to each other. Initially, it was difficult to get some prison wardens to recognize the developing gang problem.

Last August, there was a serious disturbance at one of our facilities. Several of our officers were seriously injured. It was clear to the special investigation unit that it was not a spontaneous event, but a gang-related event. We locked down the instigators of the event. As we have a unified system, it is simple to transfer inmates from one facility to another, including back to my facility.

Inmates don't want to come to the Intake Center. They have little movement or activity. Housing units don't come in contact with each other, and personal property is limited. Their dislike of the Intake Center has been used to manage some troublemakers.

Limitations on Intelligence Gathering

Our intelligence gathering is somewhat hampered. We can't do some things that are routinely done in other facilities. A consent decree in the '70s prohibited us from reading inmate mail, which shut down that area of intelligence gathering.

In addition, our phone system has no provision for monitoring phone calls, although we are looking into doing that. We are also trying to get court relief so that we can review at least the mail of the Security Risk Group. We have made staff aware of gang activity in the form of signs and graffiti and made them aware that they should look at papers and read mail in cell searches.

Role of Police Departments

Police chiefs in the cities and towns believed they had no gang problems. Some are still in denial. However, the Special Investigation Unit drove around the state and began to pay attention to graffiti in communities. They took pictures of gang related graffiti. Police chiefs were presented with the information, and their antennae began to go up, especially when kids confirmed that there were gang members in schools.

Police departments are now active in drug raids and warrant arrests in communities. We have begun to receive intelligence information on materials recovered at the scenes of the raids. Recently, they recovered a number of letters from gang leaders in my jail to those on the street. In the letters, the inmates complained that their activities were being curtailed. There were also instructions from the gang leaders in the jail to expand their criminal activities.

Gangs are beginning to evolve as the Mafia did, by legitimizing their activities and getting involved in the community. We are providing information to local cities and towns to be alert for this. Although Rhode Island is just beginning to recognize the situation we are in, we are trying to keep one step ahead of the evolution of the gang situation within jails and prisons. We are very new at this and are glad to draw upon as many experiences of other agencies as we can.

We are able to communicate readily because we're such a small state. However, although we are a close-knit operation, so is the inmate population.

David Listug, Dane County, Wisconsin

An Unlikely Place for Gangs?

Dairy cows and fishing and "gangs"? Can there be gangs in Wisconsin? Let me tell you, it is a new experience for us. When I started with the jail, it had 100 beds; now it has 1,000. Madison, Wisconsin, is 150 miles north of Chicago, a mere 2 1/2 hour ride between the two areas.

We have recently gone through a number of new experiences. Madison is considered one of the top ten places to live in the country. All of a sudden, we are beginning to experience gangs. We began to see the crack trade, gangs standing on street corners and shooting 30-40 rounds at each other across the street in quiet neighborhoods. Public parks were beginning to be taken over.

In spite of the evidence, the chief of police denied there was a gang problem. It got to the point where controversy was raging in the newspaper. In a University of Wisconsin picture of the football team, you could see gang signing on the football team. Several of the UW football players were recently arrested and admitted gang affiliation. They said there were a number of players on the UW team associated with gangs. This was quite an eye-opener, a frightening fact.

In the jail we also began to see some inmates flashing signs. We asked ourselves how we were going to deal with it. At the same time, I started to face some problems in dealing with the county board, which of course controls the money. A few years back when we started to look at classification, we needed data to show what was really happening. At the time we began forming our classification program, we started asking questions--not only about gangs but also about educational and other programs.

Relational Database

We developed a database in which information is gathered through the classification process. It is a relational database, which enables us to relate one indicator to any other. For example, you can look at: education level, gang affiliation, gang membership, prior record, reading level,

last test scores, family, children, health, mental health, drug use, medications, religious affiliation, and so forth. It is the first time we have tried to establish this kind of information.

We have only been running this system for a few months, but at the end of a year, we will know some things. We know that gangs in our area are likely to be different from those in LA. Our approach is to recognize that we have a problem and to begin collecting information to let us know where we are. No doubt Chicago gangs are a heavy influence. We have a gang unit on the street, but the jail has been the last bastion for dealing with the issue.

We are trying various approaches to gather information, including the telephone system. We are also looking to get information from others who have solved some of these problems. Essentially, I am the new guy in town, here to learn. In turn, I hope in the future I can contribute some of the indicators we have gathered from the database.

Session #3: Staff safety: training; and effective control of gang activities in the jail

Jack Terhune, Bergen County, New Jersey

Background

Bergen County is a suburban jail, with an average daily population of 1,000 pre-trial and post-trial inmates. Half the inmates are not from the county but were arrested for offenses in the county--often in the process of transporting drugs from major urban areas.

Bergen County used the NIC Prisons Division document, ***Management Strategies in Disturbances with Gangs and Disruptive Groups*** as a starting point for developing its gang policies. At the risk of being an “East Coast Denier,” let me say that the gang density level in our facility is probably less than 10%. We don’t have traditional street gangs, even though we are near New York City. However, knowing that it was just a matter of time until we did get these gangs, we began to develop policies in 1990-‘91.

It was important for us to define differences between gangs and groups because we were used to dealing with groups to our advantage in programming. We defined a prison gang as “an exclusive and clandestine group of disruptive inmates involved in the mutual caretaking of each other. Methods used to maintain their identity are most often illegal and counter-productive to the interest of the correctional facility.” Groups, on the other hand, can develop around almost any similarity, including geography, religion, race, or ethnicity.

Data Collection

We also recognized that we needed to collect data to understand where gang activities were likely to occur. We placed our emphasis on intake, booking, and classification. We wrote into our classification program were street names and monikers used by particular groups, tattoos, etc. We ask the intake officer to look for types of clothing, tattoos, hair styles, admission of gang activity, associates, photos in their possession.

We found that we had been weak on getting information from the committing authority. In New Jersey, our facility is not the primary point of booking. Each police agency has its own initial booking process, and the individual is then committed to the detention setting. We found that we needed to be sure our officers also interviewed the arresting officer.

Early Warning Signs

The last area in which we placed an emphasis was something of a shock to our staff. We identified early warning signs of gang activity. These counter-productive group activities were:

- an increase in assaults among inmates;

- an increase in staff assaults;
- an increase in requests for protective housing;
- an increase in requests through the classification process for transfer or housing unit assignments;
- an increase in tattoos;
- an increase in graffiti;
- information from confidential informants;
- information from criminal justice agencies;
- an increase in participation in legitimate programs.

I am interested in what we do with the information we obtain about gangs, whether through a data base or interviews. I don't know that there is a single classification scheme or policy that works for everyone. It might behoove us to share information on what type of response works best under what circumstance. There is no common thread in terms of the best approach for dealing with gangs in jails.

Eric M. Taylor, New York City, New York

Background

The New York City DOC has a jail population of about 19,000--about 21,000 in the next few months. Fifteen thousand of these inmates are housed on Rikers Island, which is where we have most of our gang problems.

Until the latter part of 1993, we didn't acknowledge our gang problem. Historically, the agency had denied such problems or acknowledged them in a general way, but didn't try to identify or track gang members. However, in April 1993, we began to track the different gangs in the system.

Gang Activity in the New York City DOC

The number one gang in New York City is the Latin Kings. They have a professional operation in the city. It extends from the street to inside; those outside bring information to those inside. Last year at Christmas at a facility housing 3,000 inmates, the Latin Kings decided to have a show of unity by refusing to come in from the recreation yard. At that time, I was deputy chief, but they were in my facility.

My position was that we needed to deal with the situation immediately. I proposed that we take away the beads worn by Latin Kings. These beads create havoc within the staff because our officers are frightened, which empowers the gang. Politically, however, people were more concerned with keeping power than with keeping order in the jail, so my plan was denied. Fortunately, however, a few months later we got a new mayor, a new commissioner, and a new chief--me.

I decided to form a task force. Members talked to people around the country and came up with some ideas of how to control gangs. We have found a direct correlation between gang activity and staff safety. As long as gang members were allowed to wear gang insignia and congregate as groups, staff were becoming ineffective. One of our problems was that we had never stopped inmates getting together and coercing others to join their gang. We used to see 150 inmates holding hands in a circle. I finally stopped this. We now have a rule of no more than five in any group.

We also said we're going to take the beads away, but the Legal Aid Society has filed an injunction against us, saying that the beads can be considered jewelry. Inmates are allowed to wear jewelry and to wear their own clothes to court.

What I had to do was change the mind-set of staff. Our Emergency Response Team has the job to settle disturbances. We had them train other officers within the jail. Then we talked to officers about the gangs; we tried to address their fears.

We have also used our intelligence network to identify the leaders of various gangs. As these leaders went to court, they didn't come back. They were sent to a 500-bed jail in a borough. Consequently, they lost their audience. We don't see beads anymore because the gangs have gone underground. They don't want us to know who they are.

Policy on Gangs

I have refused to meet with gangs. I will not talk to you if you say you represent a gang. We have an inmate council system made up of elected representatives. I tell inmates if they want to express their grievances, they must get on the inmate council or talk to their council representative. In addition:

- ▶ We have tailored our inmate rule book to prevent gangs from meeting, to limit the number of people in the yard.
- ▶ We have restricted items that are gang indicators. If we can show that an article identifies you as a member of a gang, it is being outlawed
- ▶ We have identified any inmate caught carrying a razor or a weapon and have now outlawed Vaseline to prevent carrying of contraband in the anal cavity. A red ID card identifies you as a weapon-carrier, someone who has used a weapon. If staff see you, you are searched; you are transported in a separate vehicle.

As a result of our efforts, we have had a 24% reduction in assaults on staff. However, inmate on inmate assaults have stayed constant.

We are now looking closely at the needs of our inmate population. Over the past fifteen years, we haven't addressed the needs of Hispanic inmates. They have had many problems because

they had no one to talk to. We didn't sell Hispanic items in our commissary. I have now established an Hispanic Needs Task Force to look at Hispanic inmates' problems in an effort to provide what they need so they won't be dependent on the gang structure.

We have made real strides in New York City, but we have a long way to go.

Savala Swanson, Tarrant County, Texas

Until October 1992 the Tarrant County Confinement Bureau did not take an aggressive stance towards identifying gang members. Prior to that time, we took no action to identify gang members except members of prison gangs. However, increased violence forced us to take notice of so-called "street thugs."

Agency Gang Intelligence Network

In 1992, with the creation of the Agency Gang Intelligence Network (AGIN), we started to notice a dramatic increase in the number of individuals being identified as gang members. These individuals were interviewed about their gang affiliations, how they had been members and what "set" they belonged to. We began to catalog gang members, initiating a file system to cross-reference our software. The purpose of this system is to track gang members within the jail system. The program data helped line officers identify gang members and their gangs. Our classification section helped to compile this information through interviews.

Problems Caused by Gangs

Correctional officers and law enforcement officers tend to deny the fact that these young offenders are taking advantage of our perception that "street gangs" do not pose a threat to the security of an institution. This attitude toward gang members is in fact taking its toll on officers' and inmates' safety. The young offenders are often considered "stupid little street thugs," while, in fact, they are the most organized, violent, and relentless inmates within the system. These offenders place no value on life, and they have no respect for anything but the gang.

These gang members study officers to determine their weaknesses, ignorance, and indifference. Their power comes from numbers. Therefore, they constantly change their language, identifiers, and methods of operation in order not to bring attention to themselves. We have experienced incidents in which inmates have set themselves up to go to sick call and G.E.D. classes in order to attack a rival gang member. Inmates also take advantage of the legal system, for example, by having a rival member bench-warranted from the Texas Department of Corrections in order to have the rival set up to be attacked. They have also used bench warrants of an associate for the purpose of setting up meetings to convey information and set up hits. They use everything at their disposal.

Identification of Gang Members

Gang members are identified in our facility through the following methods: self-admission (which is more common than one would expect), clothing, attitude/demeanor, carriage/language, type of offense, behavior, tattoos, or hand signs. After they are identified, staff conduct extensive interviews, which focus on:

- how the gang members initially became affiliated with the gang;
- the type of initiation they had;
- the length of their 'affiliation;
- their criminal history;
- their enemies and allies; and
- their gang-related activities.

During the interview process an officer can usually build a rapport with the inmate, which can be beneficial in obtaining information on gang-related offenses in the free world as well as gang activity in the jail. On many occasions gang members have relayed valuable information, which has notified us of events before they actually occur, allowing jail personnel to take corrective measures to prevent a homicide, escape attempt, or riot.

This information can be obtained by officers if they respect and do not belittle the inmate during the interview process. Officers need to be trained to deal with this new breed of prisoner. Gangs are not based on race, economics, or neighborhoods any more. Appearances can no longer identify gang members in jail. Communication is very important.

During the interview process the gang member is also photographed. This provides visual reference for our own files, for use by other agencies, and for identification by other gang members, witnesses, and victims. It is important to photograph the inmate in street clothes before he/she is dressed in jail clothing. Gang members are not coerced into having a picture taken for the files. Each time the gang members comes to jail this interview process is repeated and the inmate gang file is updated.

Since the inception of the Gang Files only eight people interviewed have refused photographs. The Tarrant County District Attorney's Office and other law enforcement agencies make extensive use of our files and photographs. Surprisingly, we have found this information vital in monitoring a rapidly growing problem in confinement--gang activities behind bars. The activities are virtually the same as those in the free world: recruiting, extortion, initiation, blackmail, drug trafficking, violence-for- hire, assaults/murders.

Controlling Gang Activities

We estimate that 20% of our jail population can be presumed to be gang members, and the recruiting rates are increasing. Recruiting has to be constant because they are always losing

members. Taking measures to identify gang members and monitor their behavior is the first step in an effort to maintain control of gang activity within the jail.

Intelligence gathering allows us to keep any particular gang from obtaining numerical superiority in housing units. Other steps to control activities are: cell searches, routine shakedown of housing areas will keep contraband such as weapons, tattoo needles and gang-related homemade bandannas, photographs, drawings, code letters, and recruiting letters to a minimum.

The presence of gang members within the jail has had a dramatic* increase on the level of violence reported within the housing units, including fights between rival gang members and the initiation of new members into gangs (jumping-in). Officers are alert to the obvious signs of violence, including black eyes, marks, and bruises. Now gang members are “quoted in,” meaning a person wanting to become a gang member will “mule” for the gang of his choice by using his/her position as trusty to deliver mail/information to other members throughout the facility. Passing information during visitation, religious services, recreation, medical (any time inmates from separate housing units are gathered to receive a specific service). “Quoting-in” is preferred among gangs because this form of initiation does not bring attention to the organization.

Gang members use all jail services to their advantage. They have tennis shoes displaying gang colors brought in and placed in personal property. They began to use the property containers passed out for storage of personal property to show gang affiliation. The Crips were carrying the blue crates and Bloods were carrying the red crates. If, by chance, an inmate carrying a blue crate was placed in a holdover with an inmate carrying a red one, a fight was inevitable. All crates are now one color.

Training

Staff training is a major part of successful gang management. Staff in housing units, work areas, and recreation areas are crucial to the information-gathering process. Trained staff members are better prepared to deal with gang members they encounter and become skilled in identifying situations before they get out of hand. Line staff will always be the first to detect changes in inmate behavior. Inmates who see that staff are successfully dealing with problems caused by gang members realize they do not require a gang to ensure their safety.

Reactive Management

Proactive measures work to help maintain security, however, we must take steps to handle situations caused by gang members:

- Document behavior;
- File charges on individuals committing assaultive offenses while in jail;
- Establish sanctions and discipline; and
- Regain the jail physically.

By dealing with gang-generated problems on a case-by-case basis, we send a message to the general population that gang-related activities will not be tolerated. From the administrative staff to the line officer, all must go in the same direction and work toward the same goals.

Rocky Hewitt, Orange County, California

Background

Our current jail system was built to hold 3,203 prisoners. The older buildings are linear, with large dorms. At the time our central men's jail was constructed in 1965, we had four major gangs. In 1968, most of our inmates were misdemeanants (70% +); only 30% or less were felons. We were indeed a county jail, with our population made up mostly of drunk drivers, petty theft violators, and few burglars sentenced to one year or less in the county jail. It was rare to hold someone charged with murder.

Today we are a mini-prison. On any given day we now have well in excess of 5,000 prisoners in custody. Only 30% or less are misdemeanants; over 70% are felons. As a result of a federal court order on overcrowding we accept no misdemeanants through off-the-street bookings. The only offenders of this type we receive are those remanded to us by the court. We have more than 200 inmates at any given time waiting trial for murder. We send approximately 150 felons to state prison every week, and by week's end we have over 300 prisoners sentenced to state prison waiting for transportation. This keeps occurring week after week.

The Gang Problem in Orange County

We have 320 gangs in beautiful Orange County. For the last 25 years criminologists, penologists, law enforcement administrators have been telling politicians to focus on inner city gangs, focus on drugs, poverty, education, peer pressure and the cultural environment. My colleague Jerry Krans, who could not be here with us today, one of the top penologists in the country, was telling people in government years ago about the pending crisis. People in the community, the media, civic groups, largely turned their backs in most bedroom communities, wing, "This is a big city problem, an inner city problem. They only put graffiti in their neighborhoods; they only shoot each other; they are only worried about turf and drugs in the inner city." Then migration began. Relatives sent gang members to live with other family members outside the inner cities.

And suddenly the "city of tomorrow" in Mission Viejo, California, in Orange County, had a drive-by shooting. Graffiti sprang up on Orange County freeways, a young man from San Clemente had a mop handle shoved into his brain by a gang member at a beautiful ocean beach, downtown San Juan Capistrano, home of the year-round swallows, had a gunfight between two gangs in the middle of town. Everybody is shocked. Today, throughout our great land, no community, no matter the size, is immune to gang activity. What used to be unruly juveniles,

now wear colors and, thanks to the media, they all have names, all feel power, want power, all carry guns.

The 320 gangs in Orange County have 19,000 members. Members as young as 8 years old belong, and members in their late 50s and early 60s are still active.

Gangs in Orange County Correctional Facilities

With the increase in gang activity in the community have come significant changes in the types of inmates we have in custody. Our older buildings were not built to house these types of inmates. We have five jails and, until recently, only one, the Intake Release Center in Santa Ana, had an adequate infrastructure to deal with this problem. We now have some new housing at our Theo Lacy Jail in the city of Orange.

However, it is extremely difficult to deal with the influx of individuals who suddenly do not conform to jail rules, who are not compatible with the jail population, whose purpose in jail is often to pass information, get information, set up violence, or commit violence.

Intelligence System

With the help of many people, including Sgt. Ross from LA and other colleagues from throughout California and many other states, we put together a very sophisticated classification team. We book approximately 80-90,000 prisoners each year. Every inmate is identified. Intelligence files are set up on repeaters and classified material is given to prison authorities when gang members are sent to them.

Every inmate is placed in a security level based on criminal history, nature of charges, and gang affiliation. All prisoners are given rules and direction to where rules are posted. We attempt to create an environment that makes clear we run the jail, we treat every inmate decently and in a manner prescribed by law. There will be no nonsense, no problems from us. Of course, no gang activity is allowed.

Once a gang member is identified,, a gang information sheet is forwarded to our Special Handling Deputies. About 25% of our jail population is affiliated with a gang.

Our Special Handling Officers handle administrative segregation inmates, protective custody inmates, and most gang members. All Classification Officers and Special Handling Deputies are members of the Orange County Gang Investigators Association and the California Prison Gang Force. Their contacts include liaison with every gang investigation coordinator in every city, county, prison system, the FBI, and most state departments of public safety.

Our unit has a never-ending job of identifying gang members. This is sometimes done through self-admission at the classification interview. Every officer in the gang identification unit is educated to identify tatoos on those who do not admit they are part of a gang. Many gang

members tattoo their gang name somewhere on their body. Some use dots or a star on their elbow or bum marks, such as many Asian gangs do. Asian gangs, in particular, are often difficult to ID because they will not admit who they are.

We have a system of searching inmates and their cells, and we monitor activity. We intercept notes or hand signals; we look for pictures. The nature of the inmate's crime also often helps us. When we are suspicious, we rely heavily on outside information, other police agencies, reliable informants, or information from other police agencies' informants.

In addition to our specialized classification team, our special handling force, every officer working in our jails is trained in gang control, to look constantly for inmate notes or "kites."

- One of the best sources on gang activity is notes; these are forwarded to Special Handling;
- Information is constantly shared with all deputies about gang activity.
- Everyone working in our jails knows we must consistently ID who is calling the shots for the jail population.

Develop informants

It is important for all police, sheriffs, and federal agencies to work together--not only among ourselves, but to work with the community to win this war. This nation is in a war--make no mistake about it. It has many fronts--drugs, gangs--call it what you will. But unless we win, this country is going to collapse. Communities must work with us; teachers, churches, businesses, civic groups must all stand up, all stay involved.

Informants are often gang members who have dropped out. They give information in exchange for a lower security level and for protection or other favors. When we house gang members we attempt to put all prison gang members in administrative segregation because of their criminal sophistication. High power inmates or "shot callers" are placed in higher security levels where they can be monitored.

Gang members following orders and/or causing problems are placed in a more restrictive housing, i.e., single man cells, with in-cell meals to prevent access in chow halls.

Training

- Update academy seminars
- Role call training
- Monthly--California Prison Gang Task Force
- Monthly-Grange County Gang Investigators Association
- Weekly--LA Sheriffs Department Special Investigations and other large agency investigators
- Annually--California Gang Investigators Association training seminar
- Quarterly--gang seminars
- 24 hour standards and training for all officers working in the jail

Administrative Segregation:

- Keep in groups of 3
- Two deputies escort whenever they are to be moved
- Full restraints used
- Housed in intake release center, a new facility, so they can be monitored

Maximum Security Inmates:

- Keep in groups of 8
- Limited access to jail population
- Housed in Intake Release Center so they can be monitored

General Population:

Those who cause problems are put in single man cells, given means in their cells. They are also housed at the Intake Release Center so they can be monitored.

We are all human and we make mistakes. Gang members are always on the alert to our mistakes. We have about 2600 personnel in our agency. About 300 are reserves who continually help us search. If they search one day, they might find 30 or 40 knives; if they search the next day, they will find numerous weapons in the area searched the day before. We must constantly keep searching. One thing the county administrative office and Board of Supervisors don't understand is that it is difficult to work short-handed. The county's bankruptcy certainly doesn't help. We have a great staff. We find that more education you give them, the more seriously they take their jobs.

Discussion:

- Intelligence gathering has to be coordinated with law enforcement agencies in the community. If you take it on alone, it can be a mistake. Assigning staff who are employees of the correctional agency to work with local law enforcement on the street is useful.
- It is important to develop a database and to train staff to identify and deal with gangs. Information gathered through the database can be shared with other agencies.
- Direct supervision is successful in controlling gang activity. It provides an immediate identification of situations that might promote gang activity. In direct supervision, gangs are not running a cellblock.
- It is important to give corrections officers in direct supervision units real power. You have to give them the right to apply sanctions. Empowering the staff helps to regain control of the jail.
- It is important to have support from the judiciary and others who set policies.
- Corrections needs its own standards for intelligence gathering; courts will step in if we don't establish our own standards.
- Good classification is crucial in dealing with gangs; good data collection is closely related.
- What type of person makes a good intelligence officer? It should be someone who wants the job and will put in extra effort.
- Most gang activity in jails is for protection. Inmates join for protection; they do whatever they have to do to protect themselves.
- New York State lost the right to take away certain articles because they overlooked the religious issue. New York City researched the issue and went to the clergy, asking that all rosary beads be the same color. The DOC doesn't accept rosary beads from outside.
- New York City is trying to have the regulating body get the federal court to look at some of the mandates that govern us, such as the jewelry issue, the requirement to spend \$400,000 to wash windows, the requirement to lock them down at a certain time.

Session #4: Does gang affiliation and gang activity in the jail have an impact on the establishment of inmate services and programs and the accomplishment of the objectives of those services and programs?

Denis Dowd, Shelby County, Tennessee

Unlike a lot of the rest of country, we didn't believe Shelby County had a gang problem. We now know there are several hundred gang members in our jail. Shelby County has about 2500 inmates, mostly pretrial, but several hundred are post-conviction waiting to go to state prison. Lately, we have been seeing some nationally recognized gangs. Others are local street gangs that don't go much beyond Memphis.

Impact of Gangs on the Jail

What happened is that these gang members came into the jail in some numbers, and without anyone noticing, had a significant impact on services and programs in the jail:

- ▶ One of the things we found right away was that they were controlling the housing units. They controlled who came in and where they lived.
- ▶ We also found forcible recruitment going on.
- ▶ Organized gangs were also controlling assignment; the classification system assigned inmates to living areas, but the gangs were assigning where they actually lived.
- ▶ We had problems with organized disturbances led by strong gangs.
- ▶ Inmates also were controlling food delivery, requiring others to pay or join the gang before they could eat. They controlled the telephones, the canteen.
- ▶ We found that some gangs were actually controlling who got into the direct supervision unit. Our education programs are assigned by level of academic ability, but we found gang members were all testing to the same level so they all got to live together.
- ▶ We found inmate gang members using our attorney visiting process to hold gang meetings. This took a couple months to spot. Our public defenders call in advance to say who they wanted to see; a gang figured this out and began to call, identifying themselves as attorneys. When the inmate came down to the attorney visiting area, they had an hour-long gang meeting before we knew what was happening.
- ▶ They were also using visitors to deliver and collect money for inmates.

- ▶ We had drug trafficking in the jail. We had trusties on each of the seven floors of the facility. We found over time that certain gangs had gotten their members into trusty positions and they were transferring information and drugs throughout the jail.
- ▶ In addition, we had a big problem with staff/inmate relations. Most staff and inmates come from the same neighborhoods of the city. Inmates know officers, identify them, say they are friends. They say, “In case we’re not friends, I know where you live, where your wife shops.” It is a kind of covert intimidation. It doesn’t necessarily get staff to do anything wrong, but they do tend to overlook things. This is an ongoing problem with us.

Shelby County’s Approach

About a year ago we began to deal with this. Our approach was not exactly like what anyone else did. One thing we did up front was to agree that we had gangs in jail. We agreed also that the gangs started on the street and would probably continue to exist, whatever we did. Our goal was therefore not to eliminate gang membership, but to minimize gang influence on the operations of Shelby County Jail.

We made a concerted effort to be sure staff were in control of the jail. When inmates have additional advantage of an organized structured system in place, they will take over the facility. Our policy up front was that inmates would control no part of the jail. For a while, this was difficult. Initially, we had to lock everyone down several times a day and move inmates where they were supposed to be. We no longer have to do this. It was an absolute requirement that a staff member had to supervise absolutely every inmate activity.

The thing that probably had the most impact was we empowered line- level staff to make decisions about where an inmate was and what the inmate was doing. We began by saying we wanted to do everything we could to identify inmate gang members. We told all the staff who gang members were, made it public information. A staff member can then decide that an inmate is engaged in gang activity, we wanted all staff to know it. The Sgt. can move an inmate to another pod. If this kept happening, we locked the inmate down until an investigation was complete.

Informal Intelligence Gathering System

Unlike many other facilities, we don’t have a formal gang investigation network. What we have done is ask all staff to let everyone else know about it when they suspect someone is a gang member. When an inmate comes in the jail, the first thing he does is go through the classification process. About 80% of inmates have been in the jail before. If staff know he is a gang member, the pod officer is notified. If there is a problem, we deal with it by moving the inmate or locking him down. We tell the chaplain, teachers, visiting officers that the inmate is a member of a gang. If they are supervising an inmate who engages in gang activity, we take them out of the program. We don’t allow any gang identifiers or give them any kind of

recognition, positive or negative. They have no priority to get into a program, whether or not a gang member. Any recognition of a gang member gives him status.

This informal system is working well. Staff assaults have dropped dramatically; we have fewer in a month than we used to have in a day. Inmate assaults have gone down. We don't see any organized gang activity. Fewer people are getting beat up.

There are some questions. You need to be sure of staff intentions in this kind of program. Gang members still act like gangsters. We don't have good records on gangs, only records on violence and inmate movement. We may have a legal challenge some day. to the empowerment issue. We are not doing due process as we would have to in a prison. Inmates do not complain as much as they did a year ago when inmate gangsters controlled a lot of activity. Those are some of the impacts gangs had on our jail and some of the things we did to counter their influence.

John Simonet, Denver County, Colorado

Intelligence Gathering in Denver

A State Task Force works with the Denver Police Department and all counties in the metropolitan area. This group identifies gang members and helps all participants know what is going on outside their own agency.

We used to know the gang members in Denver, but a lot of gang members are now coming from LA. They look at Denver as an easy place to operate. A lot of hard criminals carrying assault rifles are coming from LA and other places.

Importance of Training

It is very important to provide training on gangs for new deputy sheriffs. When they come in they don't understand how brutal and unprincipled they are. They need information about what gangs are really like.

Classification

Gangs have made us more conscious than ever of the importance of classifying inmates accurately. This is more important than ever. We have a number of programs in our jail, we must be very careful about how we classify inmates. We end up locking down more and more people; sometimes it is our only option. Our administrative segregation is made up mostly of gang members. Gangs have definitely caused an increase in the number of inmates locked down in the Denver County Jail.

Ralph Mitchell, El Paso County Sheriff's Department, El Paso, Texas

The subject of prison gangs is not new to most of you. However, in the jurisdiction of the El Paso County Detention Facility it has raised its ugly head in a tragic way. Since February 1994, three inmates have been murdered as a direct result of prison gang activities.

Background

Before addressing the specific murders, I want to review some background information about El Paso County and the County Detention Facility. El Paso County covers over -110 square miles and has a population of over 600,000. It is a border community, with more than one million people sitting on the border. This fact is very important because over one-third of the Detention Facility's inmates are Mexican citizens.

Data on Gangs

Accurate information on gang activity in the El Paso County Detention Facility is available only from mid-1994, although some partial data is available from early 1994. Even taking the problem of data collection into consideration, the information available in December 1994 indicated the following:

Data	Number	Percent
Number of reported assaults in facility	359	100%
Number of assaults with a known gang member identified in the report	78	21.79%
Number of assaults involving Barrio Azteca gang	48	13.41%
Number of assaults involving Mexican Mafia gang	17	4.75 %
Number of assaults involving Aryan Brotherhood gang	4	1.12%



The El Paso County Detention Facility is currently tracking seventy-six prison gang members, approximately 6 percent of the present population. The breakdown by gang is as follows:

Gang	Number	Percent
Barrio Azteca	52	69.43%
Mexican Mafia	13	17.11%
Texas Syndicate	8	10.53%
Aryan Brotherhood	3	3.95%
Totals	76	100%

The El Paso County Sheriffs Department currently has files on 233 other prison gang members who are not presently incarcerated but were in the facility earlier in 1994. These combined numbers mean that of the more than 30,000 inmates who have been booked, 1.03% have been prison gang members.

Analysis of this data indicates that 1 percent of the jail population is involved in almost 25% of the reported assaults. This data in itself provides adequate justification for requesting additional resources to combat the prison gang activity. It is important to remember that what I am talking about here is 25% of **reported** assaults. Many inmates, out of fear, do not report being assaulted; they say, "I fell in the shower." If an accurate count of assaults was possible, the number of assaults to the gang population would be much higher.

Prison gangs are not the only gangs that affect the detention facility. Street gangs also have a major effect on the jail atmosphere. Currently, the El Paso County Detention Facility has records on 1,143 street gang members, approximately 4 percent of the annual number of inmates booked. If these numbers were included in the count of assaults by **any gang member**, then 6 percent of the jail population is involved in from 50% to 70 percent of all assaults in the jail.

Again, it is important to remember that these numbers reflect only assaults. All three homicides in 1994 involved prison gang members. Gang members are also involved in other criminal activities within the facility. Both prison and street gang members extort money and commissary from non-members. They deal drugs and other contraband. They also attempt to undermine the staff's control and authority.

Three Inmates Murdered in Gang-Related Incidents

As previously noted, three inmates have been murdered in the El Paso County Detention Facility since February 1994. These murders, in addition to the numerous assaults already cited, are the direct result of gang activities. One gang member was killed by a rival gang. The other two inmates were killed by their own gang.

Our facility is experiencing an explosion of gang activity, which must be combated through proactive and reactive measures before it is too late. Many of the street gangs have caused minor disruptions in the jail, but these were controllable. Now, with the prison gangs imposing their will on local facilities, problems have magnified. Gang members not only threaten other inmates, but they try to intimidate staff members.

The present wave of activity in the El Paso County Detention Facility is related primarily to the Barrio Azteca gang. This gang is attempting to build its influence in the prison system through recruitment in the county jail system. The more entrenched gangs are fighting back, which is leading to the assaults and killings.

El Paso County's Procedures for Dealing with Gangs

To protect inmates and staff, the El Paso County Detention Facility has had to implement changes in procedures. One change has been to isolate known gang members from other inmates. Tighter security control measures have been implemented. This includes cuffing and shackling all gang members when they are moved anywhere in the facility. Extra detention personnel are required for escort duty when gang members are involved. In addition, staff have recognized the need to identify present or former prison gang members as they are processed into the facility.

Officers are now trained to use weapons. Just a few years ago, this training was unheard of in a county facility. Officers are learning to back up other officers and to depend on each other more. They now understand that they are not paid to be heroes. Officers realize that gang members have nothing to lose. The gang member's oath to the gang is a death oath. Officers are therefore more careful about doing their jobs.

Prison gang activity at the county level has resulted in a need for more officers, more training, and more equipment at a time when budget resources are being reduced. If the El Paso community is an indication, then other facilities can expect to see an increase in violent gang activity. However, if appropriate measures are implemented, it may be possible to suppress, or at least curb, this gang activity and the facility will be safer for both inmates and staff.

Session #5: Are the problems that result from gang activities in the jail being addressed through intergovernmental cooperation, inter-agency agreements or community involvement or can these approaches be successful?

Ed Royal, Orange County, Florida

In the beginning of 1988, the sheriff turned the jails back to the county commissioners. This was a good idea since they had already been hit by a federal and circuit court order identifying inadequacies.

In 1993 we discovered we were being targeted by gangs because of national crime indicators. Innocent tourists were being robbed and raped. We had local people being kidnapped, and upper middle-class kids influenced by gangs who were ringing doorbells and kidnapping people. This escalated until our tourist industry lost \$26 billion. We knew something had to be done.

Task Force

Orange County is operated by a charter form of government, which is headed by a chairperson who has ultimate power. In 1993, she summoned the Corrections Division along with other groups to talk about her dream of fixing the juvenile justice system. We recommended that she establish a Task Force composed of a cross-section of people. The Task Force toured the Hillsborough County facility in Tampa, along with other facilities, treatment programs, and boot camps to get a broad picture of approaches. Once it had completed its study, the group decided to develop a facility similar to the one in Hillsborough.

Emulating Hillsborough County's Approach

Hillsborough has taken a unique approach to the problem. Separate from adult facilities, it has a separate receiving center that houses and detains juveniles. It also has a detox center and social workers. It is not an obvious correctional facility, although it is secure, fenced in. We have tried to duplicate this in Orange County. We found an old printing shop with 25,000 square feet, and received \$4 million from HRS to renovate it.

We asked for top-level correctional staff to staff the facility. This was difficult, but we eventually got a loan of sixteen correctional slots. We decided to hand-pick the staff to work in the facility based on good interpersonal communications skills and a knowledge of the principles of direct supervision. We also got an independent contractor to do full assessments of all juveniles arrested and brought to the center.

The Facility

The facility has an open area booking area, rather like an airport. To date, we have booked 1700 inmates. On one side of the facility any arresting agent can bring in an offender and book him/her in six to seven minutes. This used to take ten to twelve hours because the juvenile had

to be transported, and officers were saddled with the juvenile because they had no place to go. All nineteen arresting agencies in the area have embraced the concept. At the other end of the facility are forty-two case managers, on duty twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year. The case managers work with each juvenile brought in. The family must come in to sign the juvenile out. Except for unusual circumstances, no one booked into the facility is there longer than six hours. We try to get them placed in appropriate setting to meet their needs.

Florida's Policy on Juvenile Offenders

Florida has recently changed its way of dealing with juvenile offenders. Historically, if not adjudicated as adults, there was not much to do with a juvenile. The state has never been in compliance with Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. The state has now established a juvenile justice division to deal with all juvenile justice issues.

Orange County's Philosophy for Juveniles

Those of you who have visited Orange County know we believe in helping inmates become socially functional by acquiring life skills and education. Many of you may be familiar with Orange County's Phoenix Project, a 250-bed facility with a vocational education program attached. Any inmate can take courses--automotive, computers, engineering, blueprint reading, carpentry, or building trades. We are now working on duplicating this program for juveniles. A site has been chosen and we are negotiating to have the facility built. We are also looking to build a 20-bed detox center. Many juveniles are involved with drugs but there are few treatment centers.

Our job is to set a new tone for values in the community. This is a concerted campaign for all division directors and managers in Orange County. We are committed to changing the tone. The school board, HRS, commissioners, and others are providing funds. Corrections, along with the whole criminal justice system, is on the line to see that it works.

John Kenney, Hampden County, Massachusetts

Background

We have a 1400-bed-facility that has been open since October 1992. We never had any gangs in the community or facility, but, as we were preparing to move to our new facility, there was a murder in Springfield involving a 16-year-old who was shot for disrespecting a Latin King member. Eight individuals were arrested, including a University of Massachusetts student.

At that point, we knew we had Latin Kings in custody, but we were treating them as regular high security pretrial inmates, but we didn't recognize that we had a gang problem. While we were making the transition from a small facility to a large facility and working toward ACA

accreditation, gang activity started in the facility. It clearly came from the influence of the eight Latin Kings in custody. We were naive; we allowed them to wear beads and to assemble. Then we began to see rising assault rates and examples of inmates deferring to another inmate's authority rather than to a correctional officer.

In August 1993, we had a disturbance between Hispanic and Black inmates. When staff responded, they were assaulted by the Hispanics. We determined that the Latin Kings were involved and sent members to another facility.

We decided it was time to take a hard look at gang activity. We went to Connecticut to talk to them because they had a longer experience with gangs. We came back with some good plans. We met weekly, and adopted a zero tolerance policy. We published that policy on November 21, 1993; the next day, we had three disturbances in three pods. This was carefully timed, well-orchestrated disturbance led by one gang leader. Three officers were injured.

Gang Policy

In the aftermath of that incident, we decided to implement gang policy. We have four segregation units. We made one of them the gang discipline pod. Anyone in violation of our policy, using hand signals, literature, beads, any type of gang activity, was placed in that pod. From that placement, they must have three weeks of incident-free behavior. We can take away the one-hour a day of recreation based on their behavior.

We instituted a gang classification meeting weekly at which we review person by person all security-risk inmates. The group has representation from every area of staff. We review behavior and make recommendations for which inmates can move to the next, less restrictive level, and win back privileges, including non-contact visits, telephones, and recreation.

Gang Task Force

Springfield has developed a Gang Task Force modelled after the Connecticut experience. We go after rank and file members of gangs. A full-time officer is assigned to the Task Force, which was created in September 1994. This officer works in the community.

We have an unofficial relationship with police departments in the region, which allows us to exchange information. We print a release sheet daily from our computer system and fax it to communities around Springfield. Most information flow is from the jail to police departments, however. We need more information coming to the jail.

John Tevoli, Middlesex County, New Jersey

Like many other jurisdictions, we didn't recognize our gang problem. In the spring of 1990, we were summoned by the warden for a meeting between community leaders and corrections

on how to take back the community. We had nothing exciting like Crips and Bloods to deal with. We had heard the terms “uptown,” “downtown,” and “country,” but these had never meant anything to us. These groups were patterning themselves after the movie, “Colors.”

Gang Identification

Our first problem was how to identify the gangs and their members. Between the local community and some sporting goods stores, we set up midnight basketball. Gang members came to sporting goods stores, which provided uniforms. The community was happy, and so were we because we were able to do surveillance on these basketball games. By the end of the summer, we had hundreds of hours of videos and still photos that let us identify who the players were and where they lived. They wore their colors and put their names on the back. This enabled us to know who belonged to “country,” “uptown,” and “downtown.”

The next step was to incorporate our emergency response team into the county prosecutor’s office. They formed TNT, which stood for “tactical narcotics teams. “When they made raids in the housing projects, part of the team looked for drugs and others looked at papers to identify who was communicating with whom in jail. We learned how the pattern was forming between the community and the jail. As in other communities, this was not a jail problem or a street problem, but a societal problem.

Posture Toward Gangs

About two years ago, a gang member was running a million dollar a year operation. He came into the jail and had two other trustees working for him, running dope in the jail. We decided to do a drug operation on this guy. With the cooperation of DEA, county narcotics, and members of our department, we set up a three-month surveillance operation. The result was that we got the drug kingpin who was in the jail and everyone else involved. The DEA was happy because they confiscated two homes and four vehicles. The leader was sentenced to ten years in the state prison, and everyone was alert to the fact that we were going to go after gangs aggressively.

About a month ago, there was a stabbing by gang members in the jail. I talked to the county prosecutor, and in two weeks they are going to start an Attempted Murder and Conspiracy case against the two individuals who did the stabbing and those who ordered it. This is another indication of our very aggressive posture toward what goes on in the jail. It has been very successful. Although the gang members in the jail do everything underground, our intelligence officers are on top of them. It is an ongoing process, working on the streets and working with other agencies.

Ralph Green, Hudson County, New York

Countering a Negative Image

When I came to Hudson County about two years ago, everything was in disarray. Anyone in the community who had been reading the newspaper for the past five or six years saw something negative about the jail every day. Corrections had a terrible image in the community, and we were therefore not getting any information, nor were we giving any information back. We have worked to try and turn this situation around. We had to start from scratch and re-build our institution--from policies and procedures all the way up. When the image of your facility in your community is so low, you have to fight a real battle.

We had a small intelligence unit in the jail, which was initially a drug interdiction team. We were successful in dealing with this problem, but what we found out during the drug investigations was that we had two gangs in the jail. I couldn't believe it. After about three or four assaults, we finally conceded that maybe we did have a gang problem and that it was growing. We also saw that most of the population of the jail was Black inmates, with Hispanic inmates in the minority. We saw very little control by the correctional staff. So when a Black inmate wanted anything from an Hispanic inmate, he just went over and took it. In response, the Hispanic inmates decided to gang up to protect themselves.

Zero Tolerance Policy

Our policy therefore became one of zero tolerance for gangs. If we see someone wearing beads or signing, we just lock them up for the duration. The inmates know that. Once we took the beads, they were announcing through the intelligence network that they were going to riot. We locked down half the jail until the inmates decided there weren't any more gangs in the jail.

It has been hard to deal with prosecutors. It is not easy. It is going to take a continuous effort to re-establish our image and our accountability. We have been involved with the "Take Back the Streets" which helps.

Communications Important

One thing we see in jails not run by sheriffs is that the communications gap widens. We are not run by a sheriff. We had the largest drug kingpin in Jersey City arrested a couple of weeks ago. The only way we knew he was in the Hudson County jail was through the newspaper. It usually takes about thirty days to get out of our intake unit, one of our worst units. However, the next day when I called to check on the drug kingpin, it turned out he had miraculously been cleared in 24 hours and was in a housing unit. We have not been successful in dealing with community issues, but we will continue to work at it.

Session #6: National Major Gang Task Force

Anna Thompson, NIC Prisons Division

The National Major Gang Task Force started in May 1993. Growing out of a conference and workshop sponsored by the University of Houston Downtown, it concentrated on identification and management techniques for prison gangs. Out of that conference a core group of about twenty-five from different states and counties and the federal system came together to form an ad hoc task force. The leader of the task force is Dale Welling, who is the leader of the Sacramento Intelligence Unit, the Bureau of Prisons gang management headquarters. Other people involved were Brian Murphy from Connecticut, Terry Ewing from Nebraska, Sam Buentello from Texas, and Bill Philpott from the Los Angeles County Sheriffs Department. In the two years or so following that first gathering, it has been a loosely organized group exchanging information. There is a bimonthly newsletter that issues security alerts and describes different states' efforts with respect to security and management.

However, as more and more systems have begun to have problems with gangs, this group has come to be aware that more needs to be done, especially in the exchange of information. Information tends to be exchanged primarily on an informal, who you know basis. If you don't know someone in the system personally, it is difficult for you to get the information you need. Because of the sensitivity of the information, there is a trust issue. This technique for exchanging information is not efficient or timely. Since the gangs themselves exchange information very efficiently, however, many people were feeling that we needed to at least match their information exchange.

One of the major objectives of the task force was to look at ways to organize the exchange of information that would be quicker and accessible to everyone who had a need to know. At a meeting of the task force in Sacramento this past summer were those from the original group of twenty-five plus representatives from RISS, the Regional Information Sharing System, a federally funded regional system established primarily to enable local law enforcement to exchange information. RISS is federally funded, a line item in budget. It is an expensive program, but there is every expectation that it will continue.

RISS had always been reluctant to involve corrections. However, with the increase in gangs, law enforcement agencies have begun to recognize that corrections agencies have good information. Now, law enforcement is courting corrections and is interested in getting county corrections, parole, probation, and state departments of corrections involved in the RISS network.

The Sacramento meeting was designed to hammer out the way in which we might get involved. It is not an inexpensive program because it involves computers in a number of locations and personnel to feed data. It is a simple program, basically a pointer system. If you need information about a particular inmate, you can access the database and it will tell you who to

call to get information. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is interested in providing funding for the National Major Gang Task Force. The task force has now written a grant application to BJA which is being reviewed. By all accounts, the review is favorable, and we expect the National Major Gang Task Force will be tied into that major law enforcement national network.

You fit into this project because the National Major Gang Task Force is very interested in including all components of the correctional community in this network. You might want to discuss whether you would like to contact Dale Welling individually or if you would rather have a representative of the Large Jail Network on the National Major Gang Task Force. This is the first time corrections is being asked to be involved, so it is important. I have a handout that includes Dale Welling's phone number, in case any of you would like to contact him.

This organization is also planning a national conference in Connecticut. Representatives from law enforcement and corrections will be invited to this. The person to contact for information about this conference is Lt. Ray Rivera in the Connecticut Department of Corrections.

Next Meeting of the Large Jail Network:

The next meeting will be held July 9-11, 1995. The topic will be recruitment, training, selection, and termination of staff. Discussions of these personnel issues will include labor relations.

APPENDIX A

10:45 AM

Approaches for dealing with gang affiliation in jails and developing intelligence information for decision making in gang related issues.

- Vince Vaughn, St. Louis Co., MO
- Thomas Melcher, Maricopa Co., AZ
- Albert Gardner, Rhode Island DOC
- David Listug, Dane Co., WI

Group discussion

MONDAY- January 23, 1995 (cont.)

12:00 NOON LUNCH

1:00 PM

Staff safety; Training; and Effective control of gang activities in the jail.

- Jack Terhune, Bergen Co., NJ
- Eric M. Taylor, New York City, NY
- Savala Swanson, Tarrant Co., TX
- Rocky Hewitt, Orange Co., CA

Group Discussion

3:00 PM BREAK

3:15 PM

Does gang affiliation and gang activity in the jail have an impact on the establishment of inmate services and programs and the accomplishment of the objectives of those services and programs?

- Denis Dowd, Shelby Co, TN
- John Simonet, Denver Co., CO
- Ralph W. Mitchell, El Paso Co., TX

Group Discussion

5:00 PM **ADJOURN**

6:00 PM **DINNER**

LARGE JAIL NETWORK MEETING

TUESDAY, January 24, 1995

7:30 AM BREAKFAST

8:30 AM ***Are the problems that result from gang activity in the jail being addressed through intergovernmental cooperation, inter-agency agreements or community involvement or can these approaches be successful?***

..... John Kenney, Hampden Co., MA

..... John Tevoli, Middlesex Co., NJ

..... Edward Royal, Jr. Orange Co., FL

..... Ralph W. Green, Hudson Co., NJ

Group Discussion

10:00 AM B R E A K

10:15 AM ***National Major Gang Task Force.***

..... Anna Thompson

Correctional Program Specialist,

National Institute of Corrections, Prison Division

10:45 AM **Presentation of Future Meeting Issues**

11:00 AM **RECAP AND CLOSEOUT** Richard Geather

APPENDIX B

**National Institute of Corrections
Jails Division**

LARGE JAIL, NETWORK MEETING

January 22 - 24, 1995

Longmont, Colorado

Raintree Plaza Conference Center

FINAL PARTICIPANT LIST - 95-J2401

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