

Texas Gang Threat Assessment

November 2018



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

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Texas Gang Threat Assessment

A State Intelligence Estimate

Produced by the Texas Joint Crime Information Center
Intelligence & Counterterrorism Division
Texas Department of Public Safety

In collaboration with federal, state, and local law enforcement and criminal justice agencies

November 2018

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(U) Executive Summary

(U) The key analytic judgments of this assessment are:

- **(U) Gangs are a significant threat to public safety in Texas.** Texas gangs are responsible for high levels of violence throughout the state, such as murder, sex trafficking, armed robbery, and aggravated assault. Texas gangs are heavily involved in the trafficking of methamphetamine, heroin, cocaine, and marijuana, and will often work with each other regardless of race or ideology in order to profit from the trafficking of drugs. We assess there are more than 100,000 gang members in Texas at any given time based on available information and data from multiple sources.
- **(U) Gangs in Texas continue to work closely with the Mexican cartels.** Gangs provide direct support to cartel drug and human smuggling operations into and throughout Texas and the nation. Cartels also utilize gang members to procure and move weapons and money to Mexico, and sometimes to commit violent crimes on both sides of the border. Given the entrenched connections between gangs and cartels for drug distribution, we are concerned about the role gangs could play in trafficking fentanyl and contributing to the national opioid epidemic. As long as illicit cross-border crimes are profitable, the relationship between cartels and Texas gangs will continue.
- **(U) Gangs assessed with a Tier 1 ranking pose the greatest gang threat to the state.** This assessment is based on several factors, including involvement in drug and human smuggling, sex trafficking, transnational criminal activity, level of violence, and overall statewide strength and presence. The tier rankings represent the threat posed by various gangs on a statewide level and do not necessarily represent the greatest gang threat in any particular city, county, or region. For example, a Tier 3 gang could be a significant public safety threat in a particular community because of their involvement in drug distribution, sex trafficking of children, and “takeover” robberies. The Tier 1 gangs are:
 - **Tango Blast and associated Tango cliques (Estimated 22,000-25,000 members)**
 - **Texas Mexican Mafia (Estimated 4,000-6,000 members)**
 - **Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) (Estimated 600-1,000 members)**
 - **Barrio Azteca (Estimated 1,000-2,500 members)**
- **(U) Some members within traditional gangs, such as Texas Syndicate and Texas Mexican Mafia, operate independently of the gang.** Continuous and successful law enforcement operations targeting traditionally organized gangs have resulted in some members working outside of the gang. In addition, some members are reluctant to take on leadership roles in order to avoid criminal enterprise investigations and prosecutions.
- **(U) Younger gang members are relinquishing traditional gang structure and rules, opting for less organizational oversight and the freedom to serve in self-interested roles.** The new generation of gang members prefer a free enterprise, no-oversight approach to their criminal operations, as seen in gangs such as Tango Blast. Previously, many Texas gangs operated under a strict rule of “blood in, blood out,” which mandated members to remain in the gang for life or face punishment. Now younger gang members are committing crimes in order to enjoy the profits for themselves, without first receiving permission from gang leadership.
- **(U) Motorcycle gangs continue to challenge the dominance of the Bandidos Outlaw Motorcycle Gang (OMG) in Texas.** The aftermath of the deadly Waco incident involving the Bandidos on May 17, 2015, along with the arrests and convictions of the Bandidos national leadership, provides

opportunities for OMGs, such as the Mongols, to operate and claim Texas as territory. Disgruntled Bandidos members in Texas created a rival motorcycle gang called the Kinfolk, which led to violent conflicts around the state.

- **(U) Gangs use social media to communicate, boast, and recruit.** Gang members of all ages use social media and video-sharing websites to brag, recruit, promote, and antagonize. They also utilize encrypted mobile messaging applications to communicate privately to thwart law enforcement's ability to counter their criminal activities.

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(U) Acknowledgments

(U) The Texas Joint Crime Information Center collaborated with law enforcement and criminal justice agencies across Texas and the United States in the production of this State Intelligence Estimate. Their contributions were invaluable in developing a comprehensive assessment of the threat posed by gangs in Texas, and they underscore the commitment among law enforcement and criminal justice agencies in Texas to share information and intelligence in order to effectively combat crime and improve public safety. The Joint Crime Information Center thanks these agencies and centers for contributing to the production of this assessment.

(U) It is also important to acknowledge the essential contributions of the many law enforcement agencies throughout Texas who routinely report gang and border-related incidents, which also contributed to this report. This includes Operation Border Star participants and agencies that contribute information to the Texas Gang Investigative Database (TxGang). Contributing agencies are listed in Appendix 2.

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(U) Preface

(U) This threat assessment is submitted to the Governor and Legislature of Texas in response to the requirements of Texas Government Code §421.082. In addition to meeting these requirements, this threat assessment provides a broad overview of *criminal gang* activity throughout the state of Texas.

(U) Texas Penal Code §71.01(d) defines a *criminal street gang* as three or more persons having a common identifying sign or symbol or an identifiable leadership who continuously or regularly associate in the commission of criminal activities.

(U) This assessment was produced by the Texas Joint Crime Information Center in the form of a State Intelligence Estimate. It includes the contributions of a wide range of law enforcement and criminal justice agencies in the state.

(U) The statements, conclusions, and assessments included in this report were reached based on a review and analysis of information from a variety of sources, including federal, state, and local reports of varying degrees of sensitivity and reliability, and open-source reporting.

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(U) State Intelligence Estimates

(U) In order to enhance the state's ability to detect, assess, and prioritize threats to the safety and security of its citizens, the Texas Department of Public Safety implemented a State Intelligence Estimate process after consultation with the National Intelligence Council, based in part on the model of the National Intelligence Estimate.

(U) State Intelligence Estimates are multi-agency assessments on issues relating to homeland security and public safety in Texas. They serve as the most authoritative and comprehensive analysis of these issues, and they are designed to provide law enforcement and government officials with the most accurate evaluation of current information on a given topic. State Intelligence Estimates are intended to provide an assessment on the status of an issue, but they may also include estimative conclusions that make forecasts about future developments and identify the implications for Texas.

(U) Unlike reports and assessments produced by an individual agency or center, State Intelligence Estimates draw on the information and expertise of multiple law enforcement and homeland security agencies across Texas. Such an approach is essential to developing a comprehensive assessment of issues that affect the state as a whole. By incorporating the perspectives and information from multiple agencies, the Texas Department of Public Safety is better able to produce assessments that support the development of proactive strategies and policies needed to address current and evolving threats to the state.

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(U) Introduction

(U) This assessment updates the findings of the Texas Public Safety Threat Overview and the previous Texas Gang Threat Assessment, and following these publications serves as the annual evaluation of the gang threat in Texas. Most of the data and information contained within this assessment covers events occurring between September 1, 2016 and December 31, 2017. While many of the underlying trends and characteristics of gang activity have not changed substantially since the last assessment, this report includes relevant updates and detailed information on several key aspects of gang activity. Analytical methodologies for gang evaluations are often modified from previous reports, and thus some reporting is not comparable with previous assessments.

(U) The purpose of this assessment is to identify and evaluate the threat posed by gangs and gang-related crime in Texas by examining several key aspects of gang activity. The first section of this report explains the criteria and factors the Joint Crime Information Center uses to assess the threat posed by an individual gang. The subsequent sections discuss law enforcement efforts to target the gang threat, gang activity in various regions of the state, gang organizational issues, gang relationships, and offense types for gang members in Texas prisons. As a final point, this assessment presents an outlook of gang activity in Texas.

(U) There are many challenges in measuring and assessing the gang threat within Texas. Quantitative information regarding gangs and gang activity is somewhat limited, and the data available is not necessarily comprehensive. The number of gang members in Texas is dynamic, with new members entering Texas undetected, gangs regularly seeking new recruits, and the movement of existing members. Furthermore, the ability of law enforcement agencies to collect and report detailed gang information electronically varies. Lastly, not all gang members are known to law enforcement, resulting in the underreporting of gang-involved criminal activity.

(U) The Texas Department of Public Safety created an online catalog to enable the exchange of gang intelligence information among criminal justice agencies, based on the requirements of Chapter 61 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure. The Texas Gang Investigative Database, or TxGang, is an online intelligence database available for all levels of law enforcement to track gang members. All local, state, or federal law enforcement agencies engaging in the administration of criminal justice are permitted to use TxGang. The Department continues to work with its law enforcement partners to increase the level of participation. More information on TxGang is available at www.dps.texas.gov/txgangs.

(U) Despite the above-mentioned limitations, the available quantitative information, combined with intelligence and information derived from investigations and multiple others sources, provides a reliable overview of gang activity in Texas.

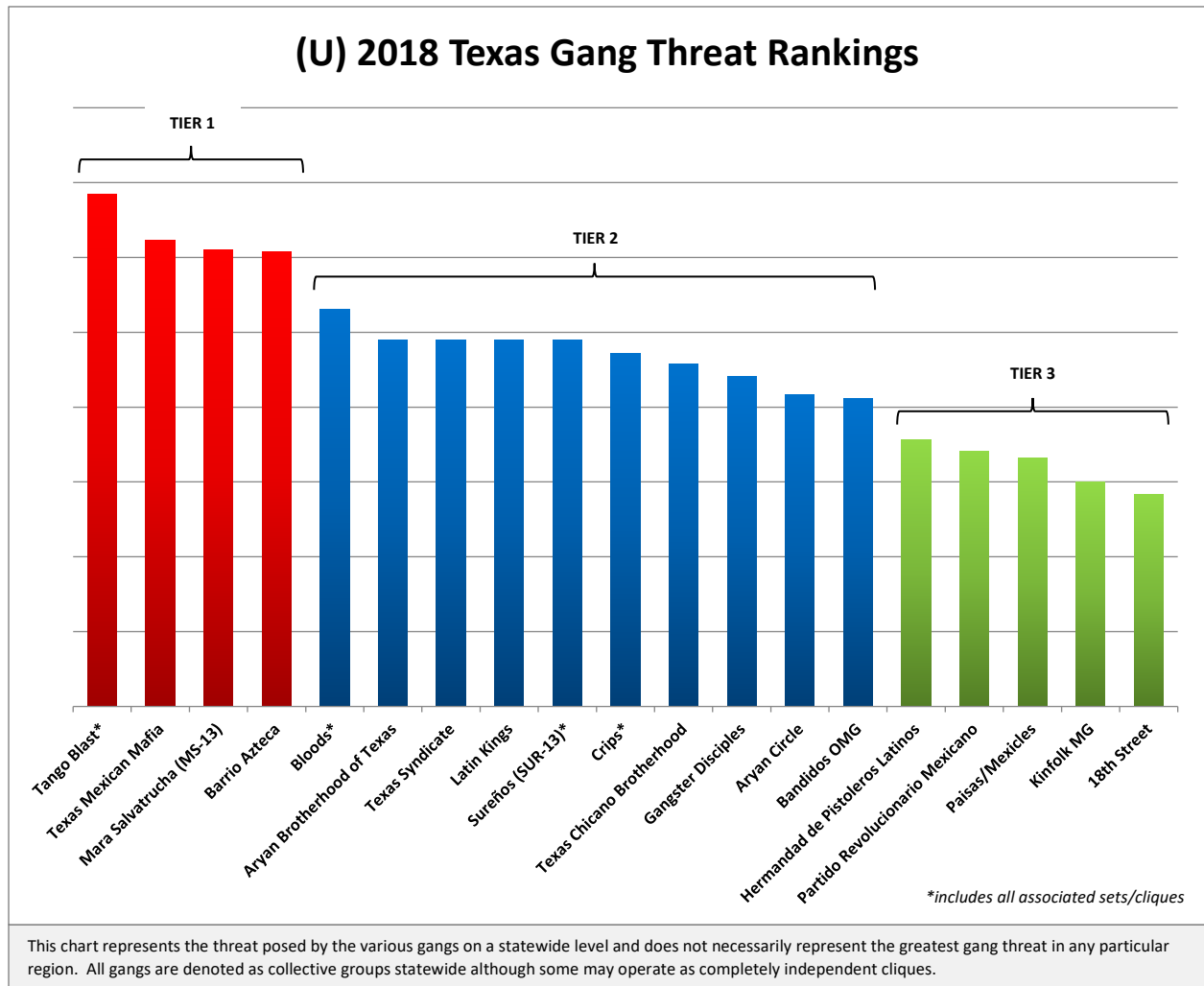
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(U) Prioritization and Criteria

(U) The Texas Joint Crime Information Center uses a threat assessment matrix to compare and evaluate the threat posed by individual gangs at a statewide level. This matrix consists of 11 factors used in determining each identified gang’s threat potential. The factors are rated using a weighted, point-based system to achieve a composite score. This score provides a measurement of the overall threat level of each gang. Gangs with the highest scores are deemed the most significant and are classified as Tier 1, with other significant gangs classified as Tier 2 and Tier 3. Considering thousands of gangs are identified in Texas, this threat assessment matrix is a necessary tool in prioritizing which gangs pose the greatest threat on a statewide scale.

(U) The rankings in *Figure 1* show the threat posed by these gangs to the state as a whole. The gangs evaluated as the greatest threat at the statewide level do not necessarily pose the greatest threat in every community. Similarly, the gangs that pose the greatest threat in one particular community may be local and not active elsewhere. Some of the gangs listed in *Figure 1* are composed of multiple sets and cliques that adhere to a common culture and identity, though the individual cliques may operate autonomously. The threat posed by any particular gang is often dynamic, and a threat assessment tool such as this is designed to be fluid.

(U) *Figure 1: Joint Crime Information Center 2018 Gang Rankings*

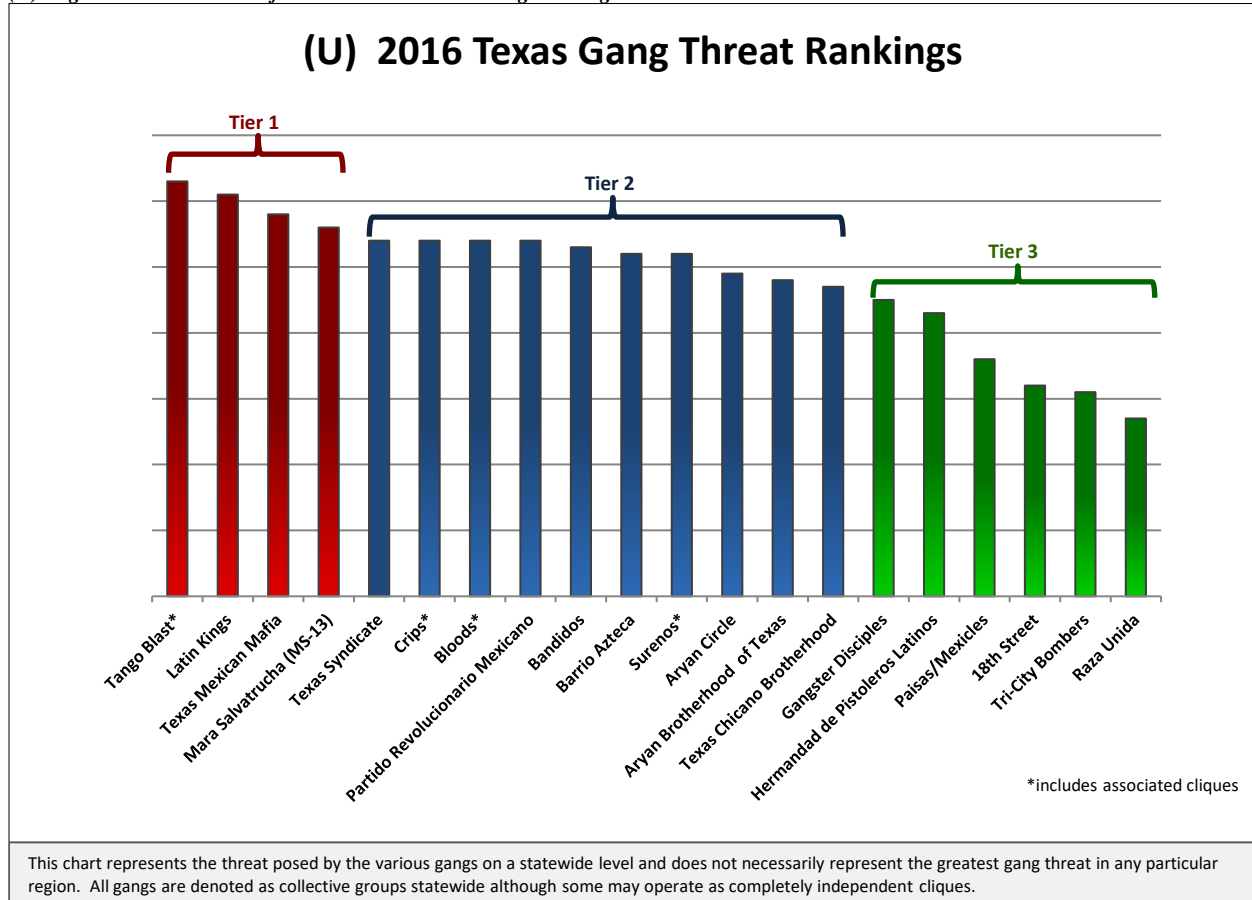


(U) The factors included in the Joint Crime Information Center 2018 gang threat assessment matrix include:

- **(U) Relationship with Cartels:** Examines the degree to which a gang is connected to Mexico-based drug cartels. Gangs are assessed as having no or limited relationships, relationships based on third-party contacts, or as having direct contacts.
- **(U) Transnational Criminal Activity:** Considers whether a gang has transnational criminal connections, including human smuggling, as well as whether a gang's criminal activity has spread into transnational territory.
- **(U) Level of Criminal Activity:** Rates the type and frequency of crimes perpetrated by the gang. Crimes are rated on a scale covering a range of offenses, from misdemeanors to various levels of felonies.
- **(U) Level of Violence:** Assesses the overall level of violence perpetrated by the gang in its criminal activity. It ranges from generally non-violent offenses, such as money laundering, to crimes involving extreme violence, such as torture and murder.
- **(U) Prevalence throughout Texas:** Determines the extent to which a gang is active throughout the state. The geographic reach of some gangs is limited to specific cities or regions of Texas, while others are widespread across the state.
- **(U) Relationship with Other Gangs:** Examines the nature of a gang's alliances and influence with other gangs. This may involve limited and temporary contacts, formal alliances, or the direct oversight of some gangs by others.
- **(U) Total Strength:** Assesses the known size of the gang, measured by the number of individuals confirmed by law enforcement and criminal justice agencies. This number is usually an underrepresentation of the true size of the gang since many members are unknown to law enforcement.
- **(U) Statewide Organizational Effectiveness:** Examines the gang's effectiveness in organizing members under its leadership across the state.
- **(U) Juvenile Membership:** Considers the extent to which the gang recruits juveniles and is active in schools, as recruitment of minors is a unique threat.
- **(U) Threat to Law Enforcement:** Considers the extent to which the gang represents a threat to law enforcement. Some gang members may only use violence to resist arrest or to flee from law enforcement, while others may actively target officers.
- **(U) Involvement in Sex Trafficking:** Examines the gang's involvement in sex trafficking activities, including the sex trafficking of juveniles.

(U) In order to provide the most accurate assessment of the threat posed by gangs in the state, the Joint Crime Information Center monitors gang-related information and updates the rankings on at least an annual basis. The 2018 rankings in *Figure 1* reflect changes from the previous gang rankings, shown in *Figure 2* (next page).

(U) Figure 2: Joint Crime Information Center 2016 Gang Rankings



(U) While some gangs received similar rankings over the past year, the evaluation of gangs is ongoing and will evolve over time as law enforcement works to reduce their effectiveness. The most noteworthy highlights regarding the current gang rankings include:

- (U) **Barrio Azteca** once again ranks as a Tier 1 threat in Texas. Their transnational criminal activities and relationships with both the Juarez and Sinaloa cartels, as well as expanded areas of operation in Texas, increased their threat status to a Tier 1 threat.
- (U) The **Latin Kings** rank as a Tier 2 threat in Texas for 2018, dropping from their Tier 1 status since 2015. Major law enforcement operations within the past few years targeting the Latin Kings in Texas have helped dismantle their organizational effectiveness statewide.
- (U) Both the **Gangster Disciples** and the **Texas Chicano Brotherhood** rose as Tier 2 threats for 2018. New reporting indicates their expanded presence throughout the state, strong organizational structure, rivalries with other gangs, and reported threats to law enforcement.
- (U) The **Kinfolk Motorcycle Gang (MG)** has been added as a Tier 3 threat. Although the gang is relatively new, created in the summer of 2016, Kinfolk MG has already been associated with murder, engaging in organized criminal activity, aggravated assaults, possession of illegal drugs, manufacture/delivery of a controlled substance, and numerous other offenses. The Kinfolk MG and Bandidos Outlaw Motorcycle Gang have a violent rivalry.

(U) MS-13 Remains a Tier 1 Threat

(U) Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) remains a Tier 1 gang threat to Texas. The Texas Joint Crime Information Center (JCIC) first evaluated MS-13 as a Tier 1 threat in Texas in 2015 and, through continued evaluation, Texas continues to experience criminal activity perpetrated by MS-13 gang members, including murder, extortion, firearms offenses, drug offenses, and assaults. Texas has historically been a thoroughfare used by MS-13 to enter the United States. In recent years, however, Houston has become a destination point for MS-13, and the FBI has identified Houston as a hot spot for MS-13 presence and violence.¹

- (U) In July 2018, ICE in Dallas indicted eight MS-13 gang members for six separate violent attacks between July-September 2017. The victims included five 18th Street Gang members, who were subjected to assaults, attempted murders, robberies, and extortion.²
- (U) As of January 2018, ICE reported that 64 of the 214 MS-13 suspects arrested as part of Operation Raging Bull had illegally crossed the border as Unaccompanied Alien Children. The MS-13 gang members arrested during the operation were facing federal and/or state charges including murder, aggravated robbery, racketeering offenses, drug trafficking and possession, firearms offenses, domestic violence, assault, forgery, driving under the influence, illegal entry/reentry, and administrative immigration violations.³
- (U) As of January 2018, an MS-13 member residing in northern Virginia gave directions to members of MS-13 in Houston to shoot rival gang members who allegedly killed an MS-13 member, according to the US DOJ. In late January 2018, the Houston MS-13 members attempted to kill suspected rival gang members while the Virginia-based MS-13 member and MS-13 members in El Salvador monitored the shooting by phone.⁴
- (U) As of August 2017, the Houston Police Department extradited a MS-13 gang member from Virginia, according to open source reporting. The gang member faced charges for two capital murders that occurred in Harris and Fort Bend Counties. Both of the MS-13 member's victims were also MS-13 members, including a 16-year-old male suspected of informing police of MS-13 activities.⁵

(U) The Return of Barrio Azteca as a Tier 1 Threat

(U) The Texas Joint Crime Information Center (JCIC) evaluates Barrio Azteca as a Tier 1 threat in 2018 due to their expansion of operating areas, propensity for violence, continued and evolving relationships with cartels and gangs, involvement in human, drug, and weapons smuggling, continuous exploitation of the US and Texas border, and the increase of reporting from law enforcement investigations.

(U) Barrio Azteca maintains a significant presence on both sides of the border as members continue their transnational criminal activities around the El Paso and Juarez corridor, including working with both the Sinaloa Cartel and Juarez Cartel. Younger and newer Barrio Azteca members are opportunistic and will work with other gangs and cartels, despite traditional gang rivalries or alliances. Regardless of alliances or rivalries, Barrio Azteca's ability to establish and maintain relationships in Mexico and in the United States, as well as their historic presence in Mexico, has aided in their recovery of power and influence in El Paso.

(U) Though its power and influence has fluctuated, Barrio Azteca has been able to regain a strong influence in both Ciudad Juarez and El Paso. Relationships with the cartels and gangs in Mexico and the United States, though fluid, are integral to Barrio Azteca's success as a criminal enterprise. The extent to which Barrio Azteca operates, their excessive level of violence, their role in exploiting both sides of the border, and the resurgence of those operations has led to an upgrade for 2018 as a Tier 1 threat to the State of Texas.

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(U) Law Enforcement Strategies

(U) The multi-jurisdictional and evolving threat posed by transnational criminal organizations requires a fully integrated approach to affect the most problematic gangs operating in Texas. It is essential to recognize that consequences of transnational crime affect not only the border region, but have a substantial impact on communities throughout Texas. Such organized crime throughout the state can be reduced using proven strategies that dismantle the command and control networks of those criminal organizations that most threaten public safety in Texas. Effectively reducing this threat requires employing a variety of initiatives that harness the various capabilities of local, state, and federal law enforcement, as well state and federal prosecutors.

(U) The combining of intelligence, patrol, investigative, and prosecutorial resources is essential for any strategy to be effective. Working together from the onset of these investigations, investigators and prosecutors must continue to utilize all available state and federal statutes that can aid in the successful prosecution of senior and mid-level gang leadership. This unified approach is most effective when agencies across jurisdictions integrate their efforts.

(U) One proven method for targeting gangs is the implementation of Texas Anti-Gang Centers (TAG) to facilitate collaborative investigations between co-located multi-agency gang enforcement resources. Since the opening of the first TAG center in Houston in 2013, five additional TAG centers have opened across the state in Irving, El Paso, Lubbock, San Antonio and McAllen. Collectively, agencies participating in the TAG centers have made over 9,000 arrests.

(U) The Texas Violent Gang Task Force (TVGTF) also contributes to the success of gang investigations and intelligence sharing around the state by promoting interagency collaboration with the common goals of prevention, intervention, suppression, and prosecution of gangs. The TVGTF's efforts in this area are complimented by the work of the Texas Gang Investigators Association (TGIA).

(U) Below are several examples of successful anti-gang operations and investigations that involved the Texas Department of Public Safety and other agencies.

- (U) In July 2017, Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) Special Agents along with personnel from the DEA – Fort Worth, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), ATF – Fort Worth, Fort Worth Police Department, Parker County Sheriff's Office, and the United States Marshal's Service, conducted an operation resulting in the arrests of 32 individuals. The arrests were part of an investigation that began in March 2015 into the criminal activities of the **Aryan Brotherhood of Texas, Aryan Circle, Tango Blast, Peckerwood, and Featherwood** criminal gangs. Members of these gangs were responsible for the distribution of more than 3,500 kilograms of methamphetamine and various other crimes in Tarrant, Dallas, Parker, Johnson, Wise, Wichita, Hood, Somerville, Brown, Smith, Denton, and Montague Counties, as well as the states of Oklahoma, Kentucky, Kansas, Louisiana, and Arkansas. In June 2017, 81 individuals were indicted in the Northern District of Texas, including 39 individuals who were incarcerated in federal, state or local custody for their role in the methamphetamine distribution organization. In December 2017, an **Aryan Brotherhood of Texas** associate connected to the investigation was found guilty of Conspiracy to Possess with Intent to Distribute 500 grams or more of a Mixture Containing Methamphetamine. The **Aryan Brotherhood of Texas** associate was also found to operate an illegal gambling establishment in Fort Worth, which became a hub for **Aryan Brotherhood of Texas** gang-related activity and drug trafficking, allowing **Aryan Brotherhood of Texas** gang members to use the establishment to distribute drugs and discipline other gang members. As a result of the investigation, 125 arrests were made, nine pounds of

methamphetamine were seized, 37 weapons recovered, \$26,000 in US currency seized and approximately \$16,000 in property was recovered. The defendants were sentenced to a range of five years to life imprisonment with a total of 2,305 years received by all defendants involved in this investigation.

- (U) In February 2017, DPS Special Agents, along with personnel from the Jacksonville Police Department, Cherokee County Sheriff's Office, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) – Tyler, began an investigation targeting **Bloods** gang members trafficking drugs, primarily methamphetamine, and weapons in the Jacksonville, Texas area. Additionally, these suspects were involved in numerous violent criminal activities in the Jacksonville area to include shootings, robberies and assaults. In October 2017, the defendants were named in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury and charged with multiple offenses, including Conspiracy to Distribute and Possess with Intent to Distribute Methamphetamine, Cocaine and other Controlled Substances; Use, Carrying, Possession of Firearms in Furtherance of a Drug Trafficking Crime; Felon in Possession of Firearms; Distribution of Methamphetamine near a Playground; and Possession with Intent to Distribute Methamphetamine on Premises where Children are Present. As a result of the investigation, 14 defendants were arrested, six of whom were documented **Bloods** criminal street gang members, and approximately 708 grams of methamphetamine, 2.5 ounces of crack, seven grams of cocaine and six weapons, including one assault rifle, were seized. In March 2018, six of the defendants pleaded guilty to charges including Possession with Intent to Distribute Methamphetamine, Cocaine, and other controlled substances; Distribution of Methamphetamine near a Playground; and Possession with Intent to Distribute Methamphetamine. Under federal statutes, the defendants are facing sentences ranging from five to 80 years in federal prison.
- (U) In June 2016, DPS Special Agents assigned to the TAG Center in Houston began a multi-agency criminal enterprise investigation involving a transnational gang known as **Los Tumbadores**. DPS Special Agents worked with their TAG counterparts from the Houston Police Department and HSI to develop intelligence on the criminal activities of the group. Through collaborative efforts, officers identified a group of criminals from Honduras who were targeting other criminals to steal their drugs, money, or human cargo. Due to the nature of the crimes and objects of attack, these crimes often went unreported to law enforcement. The criminal activities of the **Los Tumbadores** were highly organized, and identifying the members was challenging due to many members being in the United States illegally. The gang planned robberies of criminal businesses, home invasions of stash houses, and kidnappings of smuggled individuals to hold for ransom. The gang used violence to commit their crimes, including homicide, and often times tortured their victims to gain information. The gang had an established hierarchy with the leaders communicating directly with criminal elements in Honduras. The case culminated in October 2017 when Agents and Officers arrested gang members attempting to steal drugs from a residence. In late 2017, a federal grand jury in the Southern District of Texas returned a 16-count federal indictment against 11 defendants of 60 individual charges for Conspiracy to Interfere with Commerce by Robbery, Aiding and Abetting Interference with Commerce Robbery, Aiding and Abetting Using and Carrying a Firearm During and in Relation to a Crime of Violence, Illegal Alien in Possession of Firearm/Robbery, and Illegal Re-entry. The case was adopted federally and resulted in 21 arrests, along with the following seizures: 30.39 grams of cocaine, over \$65,000 in US currency, 15 firearms, one vehicle, and numerous rounds of ammunition and spent casings. In addition, 14 illegal aliens were recovered and two homicides were solved.
- (U) In 2017, a multi-agency investigation concluded regarding the drug trafficking activities of members and associates of the **Bloods** criminal street gang in the Bryan/College Station, Brazos County, Texas area. The investigation resulted in the indictment and arrest of 22 individuals, with

25 charges being filed, including charges for Manufacture/Delivery of a Controlled Substance Penalty Group 1, Less than one gram, in a Drug Free Zone. Further, the investigation resulted in the seizure of approximately 450 grams of cocaine, including over 200 grams of crack cocaine, marijuana, firearms, and US currency. Defendants were sentenced to prison terms ranging from six months to 25 years within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. The investigation was conducted by DPS Special Agents, Bryan Police Department, Brazos County Sheriff's Office, and the Brazos County District Attorney's Office, with assistance from the Texas Highway Patrol and the Texas Rangers.

- (U) As the result of a multi-year, multi-agency investigation into the criminal activities of members and associates of the **Texas Mexican Mafia** operating in Eagle Pass, Texas, in January 2018, 16 individuals were sentenced in the Western District of Texas to a combined total of nearly 300 years in federal prison. The investigation began in 2011 and was a combined effort of the DPS Special Agents, FBI – Del Rio, Maverick County Sheriff's Office, Eagle Pass Police Department, and HSI – Del Rio.
- (U) In June 2017, several members of the **Texas Mexican Mafia** were sentenced to significant terms in prison for their roles in a Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization conspiracy. All of the defendants were charged in a conspiracy involving underlying criminal activities such as drug distribution, extortion and money laundering from Nov. 1, 2013, through May 30, 2014. The members sentenced included ranking members, including the Captain, Lieutenants, and Sergeant over the Corpus Christi area. Defendants received sentences ranging from 70 months to 222 months in federal prison. DPS Special Agents, FBI, ATF, DEA, USMS, Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Victoria County Sheriff's Office, and police departments in Corpus Christi, Port of Corpus Christi, Victoria, Portland, Aransas Pass and Ingleside all assisted in the joint investigation.
- (U) In November 2016, DPS Special Agents and DPS Troopers, along with El Paso Police Department's Gang and SWAT Units, arrested seven individuals for Engaging in Organized Criminal Activity – Aggravated Robbery. Of the seven arrested, one individual was a member of the **Bandidos Outlaw Motorcycle Gang (OMG)**, four individuals were members of the One Motorcycle Club and two individuals were members of the Brass Knuckle Motorcycle Club. The warrants were issued following the aggravated robbery of a member of the Los Traviesos Motorcycle Club in August 2016 at a restaurant in El Paso. Law enforcement personnel also conducted a search warrant at the residence of one of the Brass Knuckle Motorcycle Club members in Horizon City, Texas, which resulted in the seizure of short-barreled long rifles, numerous military ordinance and items associated with the construction of explosive devices. The following day, law enforcement conducted a secondary search at the same residence and located more than 150 explosive devices and materials used to create them, along with several weapons. The individual was arrested and federally charged for Unlawful Possession of a Machine Gun.
- (U) In 2017, DPS Special Agents, along with the Midland and Odessa Police Departments, Ector County Sheriff's Office, US Attorney's Office, DEA, and the Midland and Ector County District Attorney's Office, concluded an 18-month investigation addressing the high auto theft rates in the Midland and Odessa area. The case was focused primarily on subjects who were members and associates of the **Aryan Circle** and the **Aryan Brotherhood of Texas**, both of which are recognized as criminal organizations with a significant threat potential. Members of these gangs collaborated to steal vehicles to further their criminal activities. The vehicles were altered and either resold or used to commit other crimes including drug and weapons trafficking, robbery,

burglary, prostitution, mail theft, identity theft, forgery of bank checks and credit card fraud. The investigation resulted in 115 total seizures to include 34 drug seizures valued at \$58,644.00, 26 firearm seizures valued at \$17,548.00, 55 stolen vehicle recoveries valued at \$719,817.00 and six stolen property seizures. Special Agents filed 147 charges that resulted in 21 indictments, 93 arrests and 20 convictions on individuals involved in the organization. Law enforcement efforts into these criminal organizations led to the disruption and dismantling of the activities of these gang members in the Midland/Odessa area.

- (U) In October 2017, the final defendant in a multi-year, multi-agency investigation into the criminal activities of members and associates of the **Aryan Brotherhood of Texas** operating in Potter County, Texas, was indicted in federal court. The nearly three-year investigation resulted in the arrest of 22 suspects and the seizure of approximately 20 pounds of methamphetamine, marijuana, 12 firearms, and nearly \$79,000 in US currency. Texas DPS, Amarillo Police Department, FBI, and ATF were involved in the investigation.
- (U) In February 2017, DPS Special Agents concluded a multi-year investigation targeting members and associates of the **Texas Syndicate** operating in the South Plains area of Texas. Several **Texas Syndicate** gang members and their associates were sentenced to federal prison for their role in a methamphetamine, cocaine, and marijuana distribution conspiracy in Lubbock, Lamb, and Hockley Counties. One of the **Texas Syndicate** gang members was sentenced to 327 months (27 ¼ years) in federal prison. Three associates were sentenced to 33 months, 151 months, and 48 months, respectively. Additionally, one of the **Texas Syndicate** associates sentenced, identified as a **Bloods** gang member, was sentenced to 168 months in federal prison. The sentencing was a result of a joint investigation between DPS and the DEA, where in June 2016, nine West Texas residents were arrested on federal charges. As a result of the investigation, approximately 224 grams of methamphetamine, five weapons and \$41,198 in US currency was seized.
- (U) In March 2017, DPS Special Agents in San Antonio, along with DPS Troopers, the Texas Rangers Special Operations, and personnel from the FBI and the DEA, conducted a warrant round-up on four members of the **Bandidos OMG**. The federal arrest warrants were issued following their indictment related to the 2006 murder of a male subject in Austin, who reportedly was attempting to start a Texas chapter of the **Hells Angels OMG**. In January 2016, the highest-ranking leaders of the **Bandidos OMG**, including the National President and National Vice-President, were arrested for federal racketeering and drug distribution charges. The 23-month investigation, known as Operation Texas Rocker, highlighted the methamphetamine trafficking activities of the **Bandidos OMG**, as well as other related criminal activity. Two of the four members arrested in March pleaded guilty in September 2017 to one count of Murder in Aid of Racketeering and one count of Aiding and Abetting Using and Discharging a Firearm During and in Relation to a Crime of Violence, specifically Murder. In May 2018, the remaining defendants were found guilty on all charges they faced. Sentencing is expected to occur in the latter part of 2018.
- (U) In May 2017, federal, state and local authorities arrested 26 individuals, including a **Texas Mexican Mafia** General. A federal grand jury returned an indictment against a total of 37 defendants including eight who were already in custody. Charges contained in a federal grand jury indictment unsealed in San Antonio are: conspiracy to interfere with commerce by threats or violence (Count 1); conspiracy to distribute controlled substances (Count 2); possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance (Count 3); use, carrying, or discharging a firearm in relation to a drug trafficking crime (Count 4). The indictment alleged that the defendants are

responsible for distributing heroin and methamphetamine since January 2015 as well as collecting the “dime,” a ten percent tax imposed by the **Texas Mexican Mafia** on non-members who distribute drugs. This indictment resulted from an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force investigation conducted by the FBI and the DEA together with DPS, HSI, San Antonio Police Department, Bexar County Sheriff’s Office, New Braunfels Police Department, Medina County Sheriff’s Office, Hondo Police Department, and the District Attorney’s Office for the 38th Judicial District.

- (U) As the result of a year-long investigation into a methamphetamine distribution network involving members and associates of the **Texas Chicano Brotherhood** operating in the Dallas area, in December 2016, two **Texas Chicano Brotherhood** gang members were sentenced to federal prison. One gang member was sentenced to 60 months and a second **Texas Chicano Brotherhood** gang member was sentenced to 65 months for their roles in transporting kilogram-quantities of methamphetamine from Dallas to Houston and San Antonio. In February 2017, a **Texas Chicano Brotherhood** associate was sentenced to 40 months in federal prison for their role in the distribution network. The investigation resulted in the seizure of approximately 1,000 grams of methamphetamine and a small amount of marijuana. DPS Special Agents along with personnel from the Dallas Police Department conducted the investigation.

(U) Gang Encounters During Operations North Star & Alamo

(U) In 2017, Governor Greg Abbott directed the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) to assist local law enforcement agencies experiencing increases in violent crime in their jurisdictions. Operation North Star in Harris County began in April 2017 and the San Antonio Violent Crime Task Force (Operation Alamo) in San Antonio and Bexar County began in January 2017, with DPS joining the operation in May 2017. Both operations integrate intelligence, patrol and investigations to prevent crime in these high threat areas, including gang-related crimes and violence. Gang encounters in the respective area of operations vary both by type of activity, as well as gang affiliation.

(U) The most frequently encountered gangs during Operation North Star were **Bloods** and **Tango Blast - Houston**. Other gangs repeatedly encountered were **Gangster Disciples**, **Aryan Brotherhood of Texas**, **MS-13**, **Peckerwoods**, **Sureños**, **Aryan Circle**, and **Latin Kings**. Gangs encountered less frequently were **Partido Revolucionario Mexicano** and **Texas Mexican Mafia**. Harris County was experiencing robberies involving gang members operating in hybrid crews. Not all gang encounters reported criminal activity, as some encounters resulted from traffic stops and warrants served. Arrests made during Operation North Star included robbery and burglary offenses, drug offenses, weapons offenses, and pursuit offenses.

(U) The most frequently encountered gang during Operation Alamo was **Tango Orejon**. Other gangs repeatedly encountered include **Bloods**, **Texas Mexican Mafia**, **Crips**, **Latin Kings**, **Texas Syndicate** and **Sureños**. Gangs encountered less frequently were **Aryan Brotherhood of Texas**, **Aryan Circle**, **Bandidos OMG**, **Gangster Disciples**, **Hermandad de Pistoleros Latinos**, **MS-13** and **Peckerwoods**. Not all encounters were reports of criminal activity, as some encounters were traffic stops, observations of suspicious activity (scouting), consensual contact, and warrants served. Arrests made during Operation Alamo include charges for drug and weapons offenses, DWIs, pursuit offenses, and robberies.

(U) Among these encounters are examples of different, and sometimes rival, gangs working together for mutual benefit through organized criminal activity.

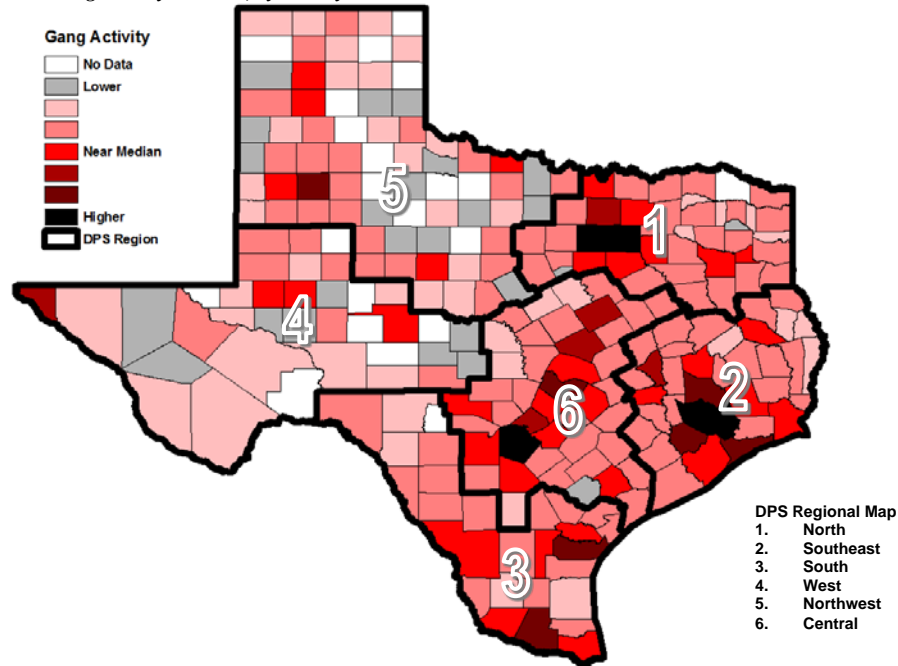
- (U) In April 2018, DPS Troopers assigned to Operation Alamo conducted a traffic stop and discovered a confirmed **Tango Orejon** member and a self-identifying **Latin Kings** member riding in the same vehicle. Officers conducted a vehicle search and found multiple credit cards in names that did not correspond to the occupants, tools that could be associated with robbery (bolt cutters, crowbar, rope, duct tape, and large knives), and a ledger with prostitution indicators (pictures of females, locations, price of sexual acts, length of time, phone number and customers).
- (U) In August 2017, DPS Special Agents assigned to Operation North Star identified an organized serial burglary crew believed to be responsible for multiple robberies and pharmacy burglaries in the Houston area and out of state (Missouri). Confirmed **Black Disciples** gang members (a Folk Nation gang), and a confirmed **59 Bounty Hunters (Bloods)** gang member (a People Nation gang) were subsequently charged with multiple offenses, including burglary and manufacturing of a controlled substance, in Phelps County, Missouri.

(U) Regional Assessments

(U) We assess gang activity likely occurs in nearly all counties in Texas, based on available information and data from multiple sources. To aid and inform law enforcement and government officials with the gang threat potential in their respective jurisdiction, we provide state regional assessments of gang activity based upon Texas DPS regions (see Map 4).⁶

(U) Individual gang activity varies among Texas DPS regions. Gangs can range from small groups composed of a few members within a local community to large organizations with thousands of members active throughout multiple countries. The statewide rankings evaluate the threat posed by gangs to the state as a whole, and therefore, some gangs identified as a threat at the statewide level may not be the most active or violent in a particular region. For example, when evaluating the localized criminal activity of a particular gang, a statewide Tier 3 threat may pose the greatest threat within that area. For this reason, a gang's prevalence throughout Texas is only one of the factors used to assess its overall threat. Additionally, law enforcement agencies continue to investigate significant gangs, completing successful operations resulting in the arrest and prosecution of high-level gang leaders and members. These efforts often result in changes to the most significant gangs by region during the next assessment period.

(U) Map 4: Areas of Assessed Gang Activity in Texas, by County

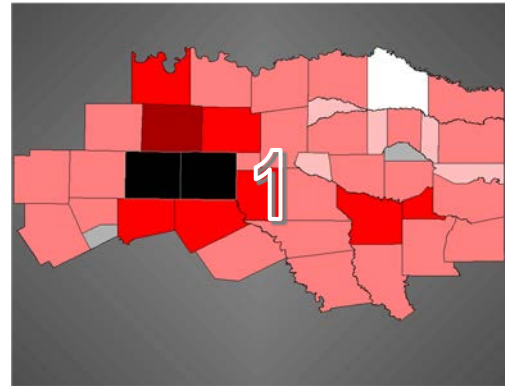


(U) While the greatest concentrations of gang activity tend to be in the larger metropolitan areas, gang members are also found in surrounding suburban and rural areas. Gang activity is prevalent in the counties adjacent to Mexico, since many Texas-based gangs are involved in cross-border smuggling and trafficking. Transnational gangs operating in Texas, such as Barrio Azteca and MS-13, engage in criminal activity in Mexico and elsewhere.

(U) The following regional summaries provide an assessment of the most significant gangs operating in each of the six Texas DPS regions. Available gang data was analyzed to evaluate gang presence and activity in each region. Data sources include local and federal law enforcement agencies, as reported in the Texas Gang Investigative Database (TxGang), Texas DPS Crime Records Service (CRS), Texas DPS Criminal Investigations Division, Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ), and the Federal Bureau of Prisons (FBOP). A detailed list of contributing agencies can be found in Appendix 2.

(U) *DPS North Texas Region*

(U) The most significant gangs in North Texas for 2018 include **Bloods** (multiple sets), **Crips** (multiple sets), **Tango Blast** (Dallas and Fort Worth), **Sureños** (multiple sets), **Aryan Brotherhood of Texas**, and **Aryan Circle**. Recent reporting also indicates transnational gangs **18th Street** and **Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13)** are present and active in Dallas, Denton, and Tarrant counties.



(U) Map 6: DPS North Texas Region Counties of Reported Gang Members. The North Texas Region contains the MSAs of Dallas, Fort Worth, Tyler, Longview, Texarkana, and Sherman.

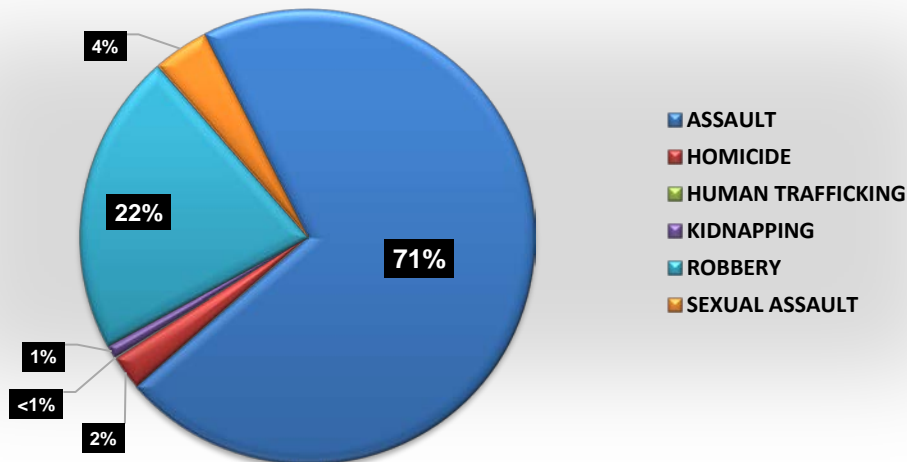
(U) Although law enforcement continues to significantly disrupt the operations and leadership of the Aryan Brotherhood of Texas and Aryan Circle around the state, each maintains a heavy presence in the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) Metroplex and surrounding rural areas. Law enforcement agencies within the region also report a significant presence of **Gangster Disciples**, **Latin Kings**, and **Peckerwoods**. Officials in the Dallas-Fort Worth area note the presence of local gangs including the **Eastside Homeboys**, **Varrío Centro**, and **Varrío Northside**.

Law enforcement agencies within the region also report a significant presence of **Gangster Disciples**, **Latin Kings**, and **Peckerwoods**. Officials in the Dallas-Fort Worth area note the presence of local gangs including the **Eastside Homeboys**, **Varrío Centro**, and **Varrío Northside**.

(U) Gang members with the most arrests for violent crimes in North Texas belong to **Bloods** (multiple sets), **Crips** (multiple sets), **Sureños** (multiple sets), and **Tango Blast** (Dallas and Fort Worth), based on reported arrest data from FY2017 through CY2017. The majority of arrests for violent crimes committed by these gangs include assaults (inc. aggravated) and robberies (inc. aggravated). Bloods (multiple sets), Crips (multiple sets), and Tango Blast (Dallas and Fort Worth) had the highest number of arrests for assaults (inc. aggravated), and Bloods (multiple sets) and Sureños (multiple sets) had the highest number of arrests for sexual assaults (inc. aggravated). Crips (multiple sets) and Sureños (multiple sets) had the highest number of arrests for kidnapping (inc. aggravated). Bloods (multiple sets) and Crips (multiple sets) had the highest number of arrests for homicide.

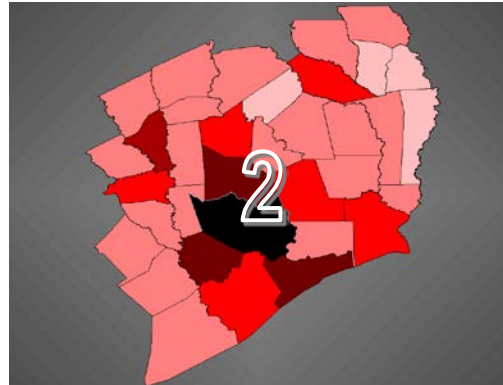
(U) Figure 4: Arrests of TxGang identified gang members September 1, 2016 through December 31, 2017, as reported to Texas DPS

(U) GANG ARRESTS FOR VIOLENT CRIMES - NORTH REGION



(U) DPS Southeast Texas Region

(U) The most significant gangs in Southeast Texas for 2018 include **Bloods** (multiple sets), **Crips** (multiple sets), **Tango Blast** (Houston), **Aryan Brotherhood of Texas**, and **Sureños** (multiple sets). Although law enforcement continues to significantly disrupt the operations and leadership of the Aryan Brotherhood of Texas around the state, the gang maintains an active presence in the counties of Harris and Montgomery. **Mara Salvatrucha** (MS-13) maintains an active presence and is highly concentrated in Harris and Montgomery counties.



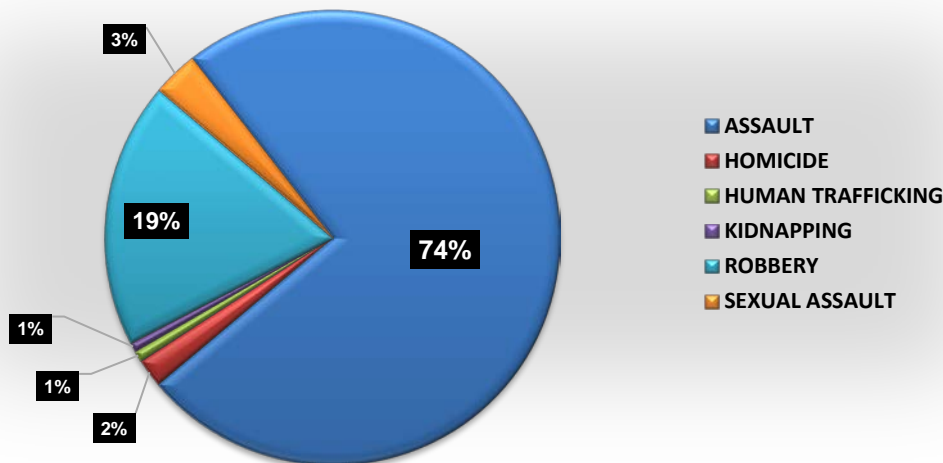
(U) Map 7: DPS Southeast Texas Region Counties of Reported Gang Members. The Southeast Texas Region contains the MSAs of Houston, Beaumont, and College Station.

(U) Other significant gangs with a large presence in Southeast Texas include **Gangster Disciples** and **Latin Kings**. The Latin Kings are especially active in the counties of Brazos, Harris, and Montgomery. Law enforcement agencies within the region also report a presence of **Peckerwoods** and **Texas Syndicate**. Houston-area officials identify several local gangs, such as **Southwest Cholos** and **5th Ward Circle**, as highly active with a significant presence.

(U) According to reported arrest data from FY2017 through CY2017, the majority of gang arrests in Southeast Texas were for drug and property crimes. Gang members with the most arrests for violent crimes in Southeast Texas belong to **Bloods** (multiple sets), **Crips** (multiple sets), and **Tango Blast** (Houston). The majority of arrests for violent crimes were for assault (inc. aggravated) and robbery (inc. aggravated). Bloods (multiple sets) and Crips (multiple sets) had the highest number of arrests for sexual assault (inc. aggravated) and homicide.

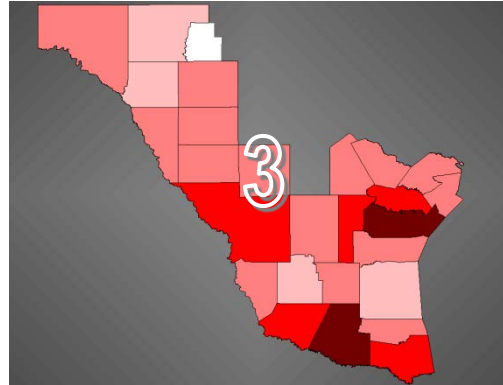
(U) Figure 5: Arrests of TxGang identified gang members September 1, 2016 through December 31, 2017, as reported to Texas DPS

(U) GANG ARRESTS FOR VIOLENT CRIMES - SOUTHEAST REGION



(U) DPS South Texas Region

(U) The most significant gangs in South Texas for 2018 include the **Tango Valluco** and **Tango Corpito**, **Texas Chicano Brotherhood**, **Texas Mexican Mafia**, and **Texas Syndicate**. The Texas Mexican Mafia and Texas Syndicate are active in the counties of Hidalgo, Nueces, Jim Wells, and Webb.



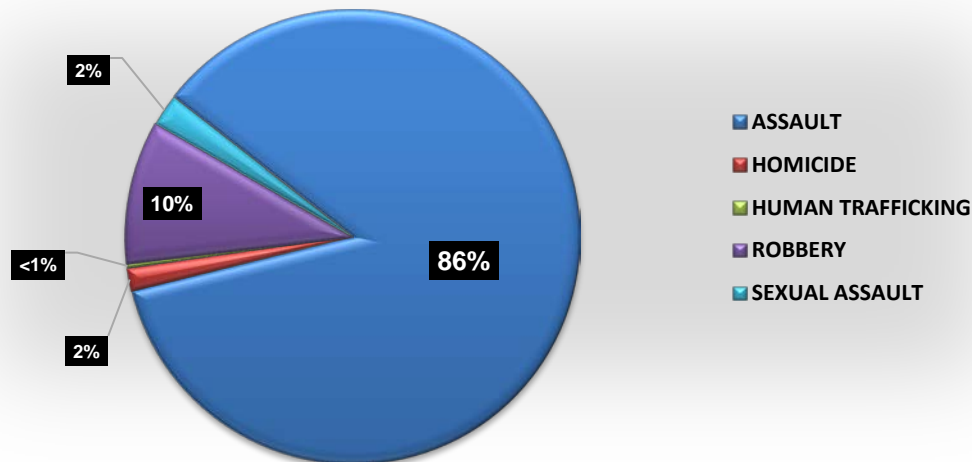
(U) Map 8: DPS South Texas Region Counties of Reported Gang Members. The South Texas Region contains the MSAs of Corpus Christi, Brownsville, McAllen, and Laredo.

(U) Other gangs that maintain an active presence in the region include **Hermanos de Pistoleros Latinos (HPL)**, **Sureños** (multiple sets), **Tri-City Bombers**, **Paisas/Mexicles**, **Latin Kings**, and **Partido Revolucionario Mexicano (PRM)**. Paisas/Mexicles and PRM are highly active in Hidalgo County, while HPL is active in Cameron County. Officials report a number of **Raza Unida** members in the counties of Jim Wells and Nueces. Law enforcement officials in Hidalgo County also identify the presence of several local gangs, such as the **Po Boys**.

(U) According to reported arrest data from FY2017 through CY2017, the majority of gang arrests in South Texas were for drug and property crimes. However, Sureños (multiple sets) and Texas Chicano Brotherhood were arrested for more violent crimes than property crimes. Gang members with the most arrests for violent crimes in South Texas belong to **Tango Valluco** and **Tango Corpito**, **Texas Chicano Brotherhood**, and **Texas Mexican Mafia**. The majority of arrests for violent crimes were assaults (inc. aggravated). Tangos (Valluco and Corpito) and Texas Chicano Brotherhood had the highest number of arrests for robbery (inc. aggravated), and Tangos (Valluco and Corpito) had the highest number of arrests for sexual assault (inc. aggravated).

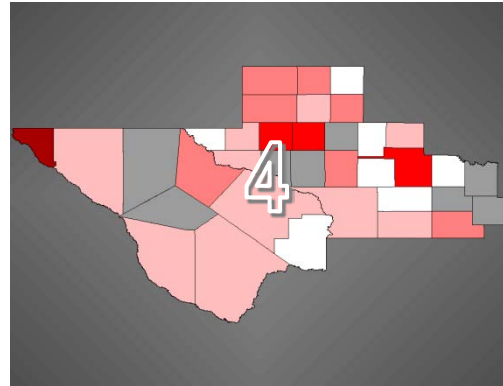
(U) Figure 6: Arrests of TxGang identified gang members September 1, 2016 through December 31, 2017, as reported to Texas DPS

(U) GANG ARRESTS FOR VIOLENT CRIMES - SOUTH REGION



(U) DPS West Texas Region

(U) The most significant gangs in West Texas for 2018 include **Barrio Azteca**, **Bloods** (multiple sets), **Crips** (multiple sets), **Gangster Disciples**, **Sureños** (multiple sets), **Chuco Tangos** and **West Texas Tangos**. The majority of reported gang activity in West Texas occurs in El Paso and Midland Counties. Officials report Chuco Tango and West Texas Tango have the highest presence in El Paso and Tom Green Counties. Barrio Azteca has a documented presence throughout the West Texas Region, with a majority of documented members in El Paso and Midland Counties.



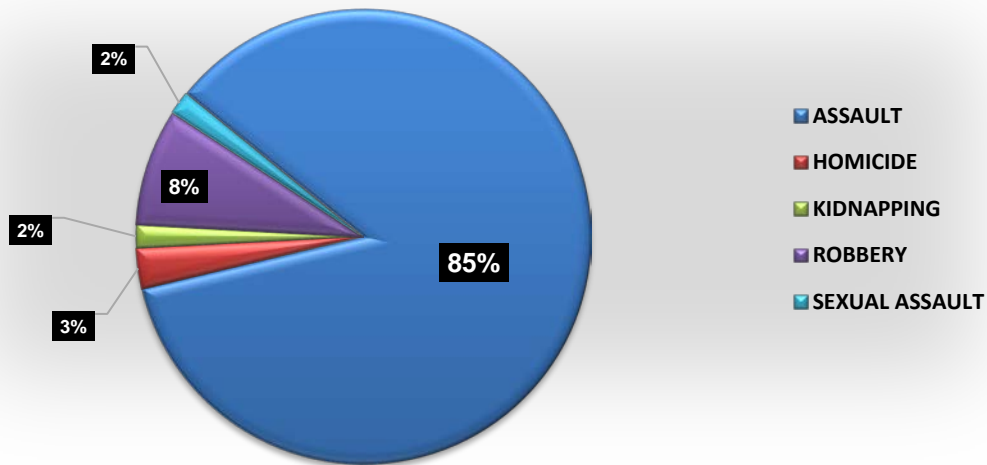
(U) Map 9: DPS West Texas Region Counties of Reported Gang Members. The West Texas Region contains the MSAs of El Paso, San Angelo, Midland, and Odessa.

(U) Other significant gangs active throughout the region include **Latin Kings**, **Aryan Brotherhood of Texas** and **Aryan Circle**. While Aryan Brotherhood of Texas and Aryan Circle have limited to no presence in El Paso County, there is a documented presence of members in Ector, Midland, and Tom Green Counties. The highest number of identified Latin Kings in West Texas are located in Tom Green County.

(U) According to reported arrest data from FY2017 through CY2017, the majority of gang arrests in West Texas were for drug and violent crimes. Gang members with the most arrests for violent crimes in West Texas belong to **Barrio Azteca**, **Gangster Disciples**, **Sureños** (multiple sets), **West Texas Tangos**, and **Chuco Tangos**. The majority of arrests for violent crimes were for assault (inc. aggravated). Sureños (multiple sets) and Tangos (Chuco and West Texas) had the highest number of arrests for homicide. Tangos (Chuco and West Texas) also had the highest number of arrests for kidnapping (inc. aggravated), robbery (inc. aggravated), and sexual assaults (inc. aggravated).

(U) Figure 7: Arrests of TxGang identified gang members September 1, 2016 through December 31, 2017, as reported to Texas DPS

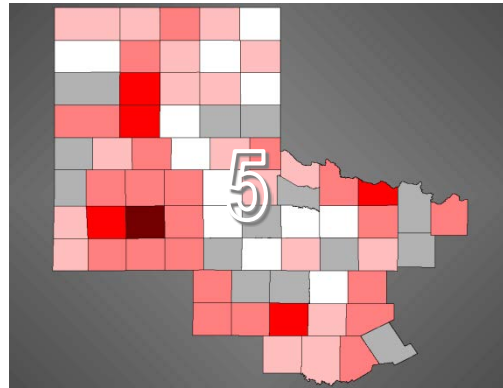
(U) GANG ARRESTS FOR VIOLENT CRIMES - WEST REGION



(U) DPS Northwest Texas Region

(U) The most significant gangs in Northwest Texas for 2018 include the **Aryan Brotherhood of Texas**, **Aryan Circle**, **West Texas Tangos**, **Crips** (multiple sets), and **Bloods** (multiple sets). Crips, Aryan Brotherhood of Texas, and Aryan Circle members have the highest number of reports in Lubbock and Wichita Counties. Officials report a significant number of Aryan Circle and Aryan Brotherhood of Texas members in Potter County.

(U) Other significant gangs reported by law enforcement in Northwest Texas are **Barrio Azteca**, **Latin Kings**, **Texas Mexican Mafia**, **Texas Syndicate**, and **Peckerwoods**. Local Law Enforcement officials also report several local street gangs, including **Puro Lil Mafia**, **Varrio Carnales**, and **Northside Locos**.

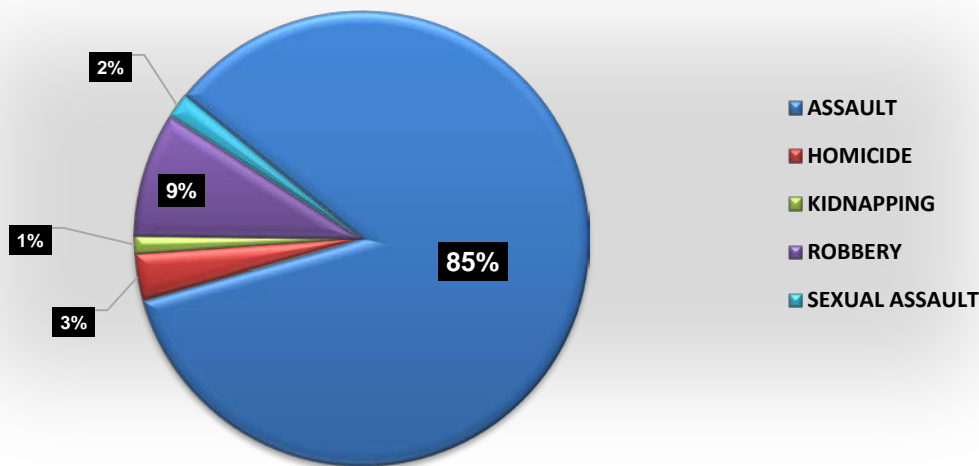


(U) Map 10: DPS Northwest Texas Region Counties of Reported Gang Members. The Northwest Texas Region contains the MSAs of Amarillo, Lubbock, Abilene, and Wichita Falls.

(U) According to reported arrest data from FY2017 through CY2017, the majority of gang arrests in Northwest Texas were for drug and property crimes. However, Bloods (multiple sets) and Crips (multiple sets) were arrested for more violent crimes than property crimes. Gang members with the most arrests for violent crimes in Northwest Texas belong to **Bloods** (multiple sets), **Crips** (multiple sets), and **West Texas Tangos**. The majority of arrests for violent crimes were for assault (inc. aggravated). West Texas Tangos were arrested for the highest number of homicides, kidnappings (inc. aggravated), sexual assaults (inc. aggravated), and robberies (inc. aggravated).

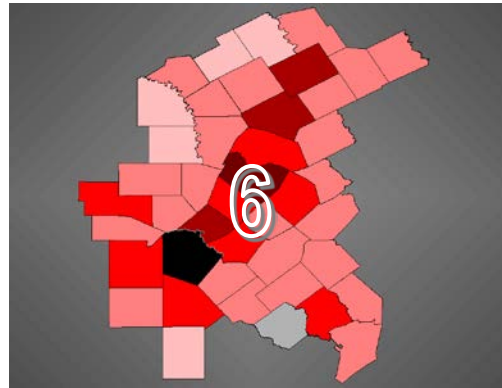
(U) Figure 8: Arrests of TxGang identified gang members September 1, 2016 through December 31, 2017, as reported to Texas DPS

(U) GANG ARRESTS FOR VIOLENT CRIMES - NORTHWEST REGION



(U) DPS Central Texas Region

(U) The most significant gangs in Central Texas for 2018 include **Tango Blast** (Austin) and **Tango Orejon, Texas Mexican Mafia, Bloods** (multiple sets), and **Crips** (multiple sets). Officials report high concentrations of Texas Mexican Mafia members in Bexar, Comal, and Hays Counties, as well as some presence in Medina County. Crips and Bloods are reported in most counties in Central Texas, but have a significant presence in Travis County, as well as Bexar, McLennan, Bell, Williamson, Victoria, and Hays.



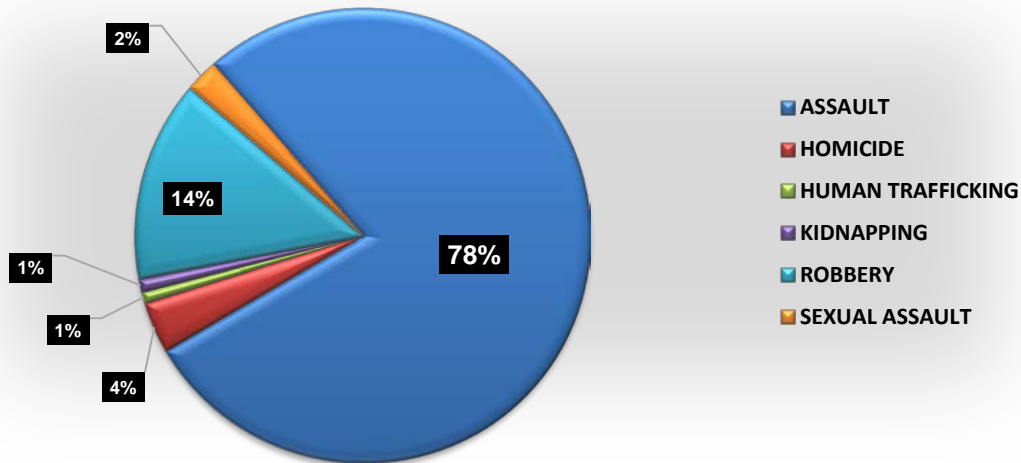
(U) Map 11: DPS Central Texas Region Counties of Reported Gang Members. The Central Texas Region contains the MSAs of San Antonio, Austin, Killeen, Waco, and Victoria.

(U) Other significant gangs found in this region include the **Aryan Brotherhood of Texas, Aryan Circle, Gangster Disciples, Texas Syndicate, Sureños** (multiple sets), **Bandidos Outlaw Motorcycle Gang, Latin Kings, and Peckerwoods**. Reporting also documents a small presence of **Barrio Azteca**, indicative of the gang’s movement eastward, as well as small presence of **Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13)**.

(U) According to reported arrest data from FY2017 through CY2017, the majority of gang arrests in Central Texas were for drug and property crimes. However, Bloods (multiple sets) and Crips (multiple sets) had more arrests for violent crimes than property crimes. Gang members with the most arrests for violent crimes in Central Texas belong to **Bloods** (multiple sets), **Crips** (multiple sets), **Tango Blast** (Austin) and **Tango Orejon**, and **Texas Mexican Mafia**. The majority of arrests for violent crimes were for assault (inc. aggravated). Bloods (multiple sets) and Tangos (Austin and Orejon) had the highest number of arrests for homicide and sexual assault (inc. aggravated).

(U) Figure 9: Arrests of TxGang identified gang members September 1, 2016 through December 31, 2017, as reported to Texas DPS

(U) GANG ARRESTS FOR VIOLENT CRIMES - CENTRAL REGION



(U) Gang Involvement in Scouting for Smuggling Operations in South Texas

(U) Mexican cartels continue to work with gangs along the US-Mexico border to further their smuggling operations.⁷ To mitigate losses during drug and alien smuggling, cartels rely on networks of scouts to conduct surveillance on law enforcement.⁸ Scouting is integral to the success of smuggling operations along the border, and scouts and smugglers not only further criminal organizations' illicit activities, they also contribute to a dangerous environment that poses a threat to law enforcement and undermines public safety.^{9,10} Within South Texas, law enforcement has encountered gang members performing scouting duties for smuggling organizations.

(U) Encounters with scouts in South Texas often involve gang members in vehicles acting as mobile scouts. Reports indicate that these mobile scouts travel in tandem with other vehicles transporting drugs or illegal aliens, likely to warn the lead vehicles of possible law enforcement interdiction. Several gangs with documented involvement in scouting activities include **Tango Blast**, **Texas Mexican Mafia**, **Texas Chicano Brotherhood**, **Latin Kings**, **Texas Syndicate**, **Sureños**, **Paisas**, and **Border Brothers**. Examples of gang members involved in scouting activity include:

- (U) On September 29, 2017, a Dimmit County Sheriff's Office Deputy assisted United States Border Patrol (USBP) Agents with a traffic stop on a Dodge Ram in Carrizo Springs, Texas. After a brief interview, the driver admitted they were in the area to scout for illegal alien smugglers. The passenger was identified as a **Border Brothers** gang member and arrested for public intoxication.¹¹
- (U) On December 21, 2016, a Kinney County Sheriff's Office Deputy conducted a traffic stop on a Jeep traveling in tandem with a Scion and a Volkswagen, northeast of Brackettville, Texas. A pursuit ensued and the Volkswagen attempted to block the Deputy from stopping the Jeep. The Deputy and USBP later apprehended and detained the driver of the Jeep along with four illegal aliens. The driver of the Scion was identified as a scout for the Jeep, and identified as a **Sureños** member. Another USBP Agent and an Uvalde County Sheriff's Office Deputy conducted a stop on the Volkswagen and identified the driver as a **Texas Mexican Mafia** member who was scouting for the Jeep.¹²
- (U) In September 2016, a DPS Trooper conducted a traffic stop on a suspicious vehicle departing the Rio Grande River area in Starr County. The driver told a DPS Special Agent that he and the passenger had been fishing prior to the stop. The Agent had suspicions the two were scouting the riverbank ahead of alien or drug smuggling operations. The driver admitted to being a **Tango Valluco** member and the passenger was identified as a **Texas Chicano Brotherhood** member. The passenger was previously arrested for aggravated kidnapping in Starr County.¹³
- (U) On August 15, 2016, a Zavala County Sheriff's Office Deputy conducted a traffic stop on a Ford east of La Pryor, Texas. The vehicle was identified as a scout vehicle for a second vehicle, which was transporting illegal aliens. The Deputy identified the driver of the scout vehicle as a **Tango Orejon** gang member and arrested the driver for a Frio County warrant.¹⁴

(U) Scouts operating on behalf of cartels in South Texas attempt to avoid law enforcement detection by operating overtly, and are able to conduct surveillance on law enforcement personnel from vehicles, houses, and business establishments. In rural areas, scouts may surveil law enforcement by embedding in the remote terrain, or by operating under the pretense of outdoor activities like fishing or ranch work. In this way, scouts can collect information that may be useful to the cartels and their smuggling activities, such as law enforcement presence within smuggling areas.¹⁵

(U) Gang Organization

(U) Gang structure in Texas may follow a variety of organizational models. These models vary in the extent to which the leadership of the organization is centralized or hierarchical. All tiered gangs fall into one of the below organizational models.

- (U) **Paramilitary** models include a hierarchical structure with clear distinction between ranks, and may include military titles such as general, captain, lieutenant, sergeant and soldier. Senior leaders issue orders to subordinates with the expectation that they will be carried out as instructed.
- (U) **Regional Cell** models are composed of several cells that are part of the same organization, but generally act independently of one another at an operational level. Each cell may have a strict internal hierarchy similar to a paramilitary model, though there may be little coordinated command and control between cells.
- (U) **Cliques (or Sets)** within a gang tend to adopt a common culture and identity, but have few tangible connections to each other. Each clique may or may not have a senior member that acts as its leader. In some cases, cliques of the same gang may work in opposition to each other.
- (U) **Loose Affiliation** gangs have relaxed membership requirements and little to no detectable leadership hierarchy. This model tends to be the most dynamic, allowing for rapid growth while simultaneously limiting the extent to which members can be effectively managed.

(U) Gang Recruitment and Identification

(U) Gangs actively seek to grow their organizations, and use various recruitment strategies to attract new members. Gang recruitment occurs within prisons, schools, neighborhoods, families, and even online. The prison system and county jails offer gangs unique opportunities for recruiting new members who may join for protection during incarceration. Gangs may recruit in order to have a majority of the prison population and defend themselves from other gangs. Some gangs require their new members to serve the gang for life, while others allow members to leave after their release from prison.

(U) Street gangs tend to recruit juveniles within schools and neighborhoods, enticing new members with promises of money, popularity, protection, and family. Some juveniles have family members who are in a gang, and follow their example by also joining the gang. Large gangs in Texas often direct young members of smaller affiliated street gangs to commit crimes on their behalf. After completing these tasks, the young members may be given the opportunity to advance up and join the larger gang.

(U) Gang members often use identifiers such as tattoos, graffiti, hand signals, colors, patches, and other behaviors to identify their gang affiliations and turf.¹⁶ Gang tattoos can include proper spellings of gang names and terms as well as abstract spellings or number substitutions. For example, Barrio Azteca members use the number “21” to represent the second and first letters of the alphabet for its initials “BA.” The Gangster Disciples use the numbers “2-15-19” to represent the letters “B-O-S,” which represents the phrase “Brothers of the Struggle.” Gang tattoos can also include other symbols associated with the gang (i.e. lightning bolts, pitchforks, sports teams, etc.) or location symbols that indicate the gang’s turf or place of origin such as city skylines, highway markers, and other iconic landmarks.¹⁷ Street gangs commonly use graffiti to identify themselves, the territory they claim, and to disrespect their rivals. Gang members often use hand signals to identify each other. When abstractly viewed, gang hand signals often form the shape of the gang name, the gang name initials, or some other symbol associated with the gang. For example, the hand signals for the Bloods and Crips gangs form the shape of the letters B and C, respectively. In addition,

gang members might display the hand signals of their rivals in an “upside down” position as a sign of disrespect. A gang often uses specific colors to identify its affiliation, to distinguish one gang subset within a larger gang, or to indicate a gang’s association with a multi-gang alliance. Outlaw motorcycle gang members wear distinct patches and insignia to identify their gang membership, their associated chapters or regions, and their ranks within the organizations. While some gang members openly display one or more of these identifiers, other gang members might use subtle displays of their gang affiliation to avoid detection from law enforcement and to blend into mainstream society.¹⁸

(U) Gang-related material found on the internet and social media can serve as an influential recruiting tool. Gangs use the internet and social media to manage their public image and to project their brand and message far beyond the neighborhoods and regions where they operate. Gang members use social media sites to upload posts, photos, and music videos that send a distorted image of gang lifestyle that might appeal to impressionable youth.

(U) Gangs also use the internet and social media sites to recruit and conduct gang communications while reducing the need to meet face-to-face. Gangs might also take advantage of the enhanced encryption features in smartphone applications to avoid law enforcement scrutiny. These social media platforms also give gangs the ability to select the intended audience of their communications. For example, messages and photos intended to promote the gang’s image and accomplishments could be broadcast publicly while internal gang communications could be disseminated to a select distribution list.

(U) Gangs and Race

(U) While gangs have historically formed along racial or ethnic lines, many gangs in Texas are becoming increasingly racially and ethnically diverse. This might be due, in part, to increasingly diverse gang member recruiting pools in a given area, the general loosening of traditional gang rules, and the willingness to facilitate business between gangs of different races. In Texas, most gangs will work with nearly any group in order to further their criminal objectives when it is mutually convenient and profitable, regardless of race or ideology.

(U) Gangs that maintain racial exclusivity may do so because of perceived racial persecution, disenfranchisement, or perceived racial superiority. In the prison environment, inmates tend to congregate or associate with others of their own race or ethnicity, or band together for protection when racially outnumbered. Gangs in Texas that remain composed of predominantly one race are the Aryan Brotherhood of Texas, the Aryan Circle, the Texas Mexican Mafia, the Texas Syndicate, and the Latin Kings.

(U) Gangs and Females

(U) The number of confirmed female gang members in Texas is considerably lower than the number of confirmed male gang members. Although seldom documented as gang members, females who have close ties with gangs or gang members are often considered associates of the gangs. Historically, female gang associates have served in supporting roles, facilitating gang-related criminal activities, communications, and information gathering. In recent years, female gang associates have served in increasingly active roles in gang-related crimes to include sex trafficking, kidnapping, burglary, robbery, aggravated assault, and murder. Texas gangs that allow females full membership or active involvement include Bloods, Crips, Gangster Disciples, MS-13, 18th Street, Sureños, Tangos, and Latin Kings, whose female members are known as Latin Queens.

(U) Gang Relationships

(U) Gang relationships can range from traditional alliances and rivalries to opportunistic interactions and hybrid gangs. These dynamic relationships develop for numerous reasons, including a need for protection, common race, personal associations or familial ties, and proximity. However, the two factors that predominately drive gang relationships are control and money.

(U) Rivalries between gangs can often result in violent conflicts. In contrast, opportunistic relationships between gangs generally focus on revenue-generating operations and seek to avoid violence when possible. Therefore, these opportunistic relationships aid the gangs' success by growing the gang financially and through self-preservation.

(U) Traditional Relationships: Rivalries and Alliances

(U) Alliances and rivalries between gangs are traditionally well defined and remain an integral part of gang relationships. Alliances and rivalries are often based on similar or competing ideologies, or events creating a positive or negative relationship between gangs. In addition, conflict between gangs can occur when another gang interferes with another's operations. These relationships are intended to further the gangs' objectives based on the need to increase revenue or control over gang territories.

(U) Rivalries can exist when a gang is willing to engage in violent conflicts over race, revenge, superiority, or control over specific areas. The dynamic of gang rivalries often differs between those gang members incarcerated in prison and those who are in the free world. However, the factors that drive rivalries in both settings tend to involve the desire to control of or weaken another gang.

(U) Some gangs continue to maintain traditional alliances, or create new ones with the goal of combating rivals to further common objectives, often related to money and influence. Gangs may also form alliances to exert control over and gain the loyalties of another organization.

(U) Prevailing Relationships: Opportunistic Interactions, Hybrid Gangs, and Cartel Relationships

(U) Recent trends show that historically non-associative gangs and even rivals seek opportunistic relationships in order to generate increased revenue and influence. Interactions between gangs and cartels are driven by similar factors. These opportunistic relationships are not always well defined and may differ between members of the same gang; however, profit and control are typically the common factors driving these relationships.

(U) Opportunistic relationships are often formed between gangs when opportunities arise to make money and/or increase their influence, as these are crucial to a gang's survival and growth. Drug trafficking and alien smuggling are the criminal activities normally associated with these opportunistic relationships, as these activities typically generate higher revenues.

(U) Mexican cartels have the greatest impact on drug trafficking in the United States, and therefore the primary interaction between cartels and gangs is centered on making money through drug trafficking. Cartels will also compensate gangs, particularly in South Texas, for carrying out illicit and violent acts or scouting on their behalf. Gang and cartel relationships are prevalent along smuggling corridors and the Texas-Mexico border, and are strongest when personal associations or familial ties exist between members of the gang and cartel.

(U) Hybrid membership is characterized as an individual having multiple gang affiliations. Gang members may align themselves within the prison system with other gangs for protection if there are few or no members from their own gang present. As a result, smaller gangs benefit from protection during incarceration, and larger gangs may expand their influence. The primary factors that influence a hybrid relationship in the free world are personal associations such as familial ties to various criminal enterprises, location, power and increased revenue.

(U) Offense Types for Gang Members in Texas Prisons

(U) Gang members in Texas commit a variety of crimes impacting the security of Texas communities, such as sex trafficking, kidnapping, extortion, money laundering, and public corruption. In addition, with 64% of the total US southwest border within Texas, gangs have a unique ability to develop relationships with Mexican cartels and engage in the cross-border smuggling of people, weapons, drugs, and currency not available or as profitable in other states. To analyze crime committed by gang members in Texas, the JCIC measures criminal activity through the evaluation of conviction data of known gang members incarcerated within TDCJ.

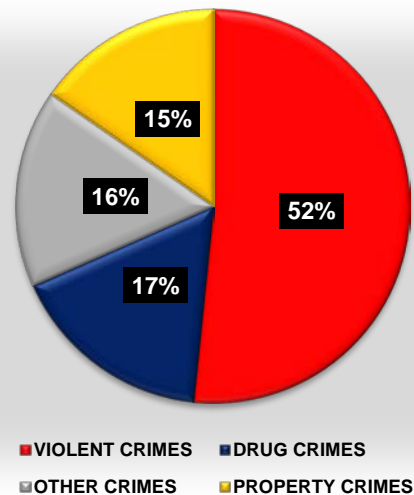
(U) The TDCJ conviction data analysis is based on the offense of record for confirmed and suspected gang members incarcerated within TDCJ, as of December 31, 2017. The offense of record is the offense that incarcerates the offender for the longest period. This data itself carries limitations, as it is sometimes unknown if the offender committed the offense as a gang member, or became a gang member after incarceration. Furthermore, this data may not always provide an accurate representation of the actual crime or crimes committed as it may reflect a lesser charge resulting from plea-bargaining. Lastly, some convictions do not appear during the scope of analysis due to the length of time between the offense and conviction dates; thus, not all convictions are accounted for within the research period.

(U) Conviction data analysis in this report focuses on the 19 tier-ranked gangs identified in this assessment. All offenses are collated into four categories of crime: Violent, Drug, Property, and Other. These offense categories are based on the definitions set forth by Texas Statutes, as of December 31, 2017. Violent crimes are those that involve force or threat of force toward persons. Drug crimes are crimes involving the sale, manufacturing, delivery, or possession of drugs. Property crimes are theft-type offenses involving the taking of money or property, or the damaging of property, but with no force or threat of force against any person. The Other crimes category contains numerous offenses, and includes crimes such as weapons offenses, evading and resisting arrest, taking weapon from officer, engaging in organized criminal activity, money laundering, bribery, coercion, and obstruction or retaliation.

(U) Of concern are the violent crimes committed by gangs. Approximately 52% of tier level gang members incarcerated within TDCJ are serving sentences for violent crimes. Of those violent crimes, 39% are for robbery (inc. aggravated) convictions, 28% for assault (inc. aggravated), 22% for homicide, 9% for sexual assault (inc. aggravated), and 2% for kidnapping (inc. aggravated).

(U) Drug-related offenses account for 17% of gang convictions in TDCJ. Property crimes account for 15% of gang convictions, with 67% of those convictions belonging to burglary. Crimes identified as “Other” account for 16%, with most convictions for evading arrest and weapon offenses.

(U) Offense Types for Gang Members Incarcerated in Texas Prisons, as of December 31, 2017



(U) Gang Involvement in Sex Trafficking

(U) Gangs across Texas continue to engage in sex trafficking, compelling prostitution of both adults and juveniles, and commercial sex trafficking. The perceived low risk and high profitability of sex trafficking attracts gang members and their associates, who often operate independently of the gang itself, to engage in sex trafficking activities. Methods gang members use to recruit their victims vary from passively grooming victims with affection, gifts, and false promises of love, to aggressively compelling victims by physical force, fraud, and coercion.

(U) Gang members in Texas continued to engage in sex trafficking during the 2016-2017 reporting period, including members of **Bloods** (all sets), **Crips** (all sets), **Gangster Disciples**, **Latin Kings**, **Sureños**, **Tangos**, and **Texas Mexican Mafia**. Members from regionally based gangs, like **Southwest Cholos**, and small neighborhood-based gangs, such as **Early Boys** and **Mash Mode Mob**, also have begun to engage in sex trafficking. Reporting of gang involvement in labor trafficking remains limited. Some examples of gang members involved in sex trafficking include:

- (U) In December 2017, a **Texas Mexican Mafia** gang member in Corpus Christi was convicted on charges of child sex trafficking. The gang member, acting independently of the gang, earned a profit by taking half the proceeds the young women earned after advertising sexual services on a commercial sex website. The gang member was also convicted of distribution of methamphetamine and felon in possession of a firearm.¹⁹
- (U) In December 2017, a **Webb Chapel Rollin 60's (Crips)** gang member received federal indictments after transporting a woman from Mississippi to Texas with the intent to compel prostitution. The gang member was arrested in Waco during an undercover prostitution operation.²⁰
- (U) In November 2017, 22 **Southwest Cholos** gang members and associates in Houston were indicted on multiple charges to include sex trafficking, selling firearms, human smuggling, identity theft and drug trafficking, following the closing of Carriage Way.²¹ Carriage Way is one of five brothels controlled by a madam and her gang-affiliated family, and was utilized as a hub for sex trafficking, gun trafficking, and drug sales. A former top ranking Southwest Cholos gang member acted as an enforcer and a pimp at Carriage Way. The enforcers branded their names and nicknames on the victims' bodies with tattoos. In one instance, a victim was forced to get a breast augmentation and liposuction in order to make the victim more profitable, and the victim was required to pay off the surgery debts.
- (U) In October 2017, a **Mash Mode Mob** gang member was indicted for trafficking a 12-year-old child in Houston. The gang member recruited the victim and used force and threat of force to compel the victim into prostitution. The gang member took the victim to Bissonnet St., locally known in the community as "The Track," to engage the victim in commercial sex acts for money.²²

(U) Outlook

(U) Based on a review of current intelligence and knowledge of gang activity, we make the following assessments with high confidence:

- (U) The overall gang threat in Texas will almost certainly continue, given previous estimated increases in overall gang membership in Texas. Gangs in Texas will continue to work directly and indirectly with the Mexican cartels to help facilitate the smuggling of persons, drugs, money, and weapons across the border and throughout Texas and the United States.
- (U) The new generation of gang members will likely continue to seek out opportunities to engage in criminal activity outside of the direction of the traditional gang organizational structure. Gangs like Tango Blast and their associated cliques offer the ability for members to keep more of their illicit profits while maintaining gang protection and criminal contacts.
- (U) The impact of law enforcement action against gangs in Texas will almost certainly continue to affect gangs' ability to operate effectively. Although we anticipate many of the Tier 1 and Tier 2 gangs will continue to be significant threats to Texas, their threat evaluations will fluctuate as law enforcement investigations target and eliminate key gang leadership, leaving the gangs vulnerable to internal strife and exodus.
- (U) We are concerned about the potential for future gang and cartel-related targeting of law enforcement officers in Texas. Notwithstanding the violent threat, gang and cartel members and their associates pose a counterintelligence threat, collecting information on patrol routes, law enforcement operations, and personal identifying information on officers. As this threat continues to evolve, we will continue to monitor and warn of gang and cartel activities that may pose a threat to officer safety.
- (U) As Mexican cartels fight to maintain or increase their share of the lucrative drug and human smuggling markets, Texas-based gangs will very likely continue to play an essential role in supporting cartel operations on both sides of the border. The cartels will likely seek to expand their existing networks in Texas by leveraging their relationships with gangs. We expect the relationships between individual gangs and cartels to remain fluid, and possibly adapt and evolve in response to the changing cartel landscape in Mexico.
- (U) We assess gangs conducting sex trafficking operations in Texas will likely continue due to the potential for large and sustainable profits and the perceived low risk of detection by law enforcement. However, as public awareness of sex trafficking increases, so does the chance for potential victims to recognize the dangers and signs of trafficking, and therefore the opportunity to reduce the number of victims.
- (U) We assess that alliances and rivalries, which are traditionally observed by the gang as a whole, will likely remain an integral part of gang relationships. However, the continual push towards profit-motivated associations will very likely create more opportunistic relationships among gangs and with cartels. These opportunistic relationships are fluid and may not occur among all members of the gang, but may instead be based on ad hoc actions by individual members.

- (U) We assess hybrid relationships are likely to continue as gang members expand their criminal network of contacts and illicit operations. The most common hybrid gang in Texas is Tango Blast and associated Tango cliques, primarily due to a loose structure and lack of commitment to the gang.

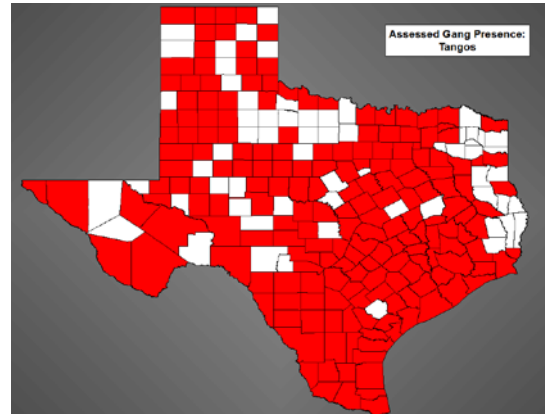
(U) Appendix 1: Overview of Tier 1 and Tier 2 Gangs

(U) The following pages provide a brief overview of the most significant gangs in Texas and include maps showing the areas of the state where each gang's presence and activities are assessed to be most concentrated, based on information provided from multiple sources. The absence of shading on a particular part of the map does not necessarily indicate that the gang does not have a presence there, and the concentration of the gang's activity varies within the shaded area.

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(U) Tier 1: Tango Blast and Tango Cliques

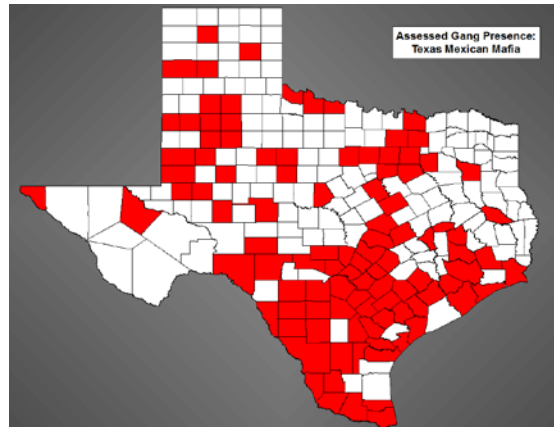
(U) Tango Blast and its associated cliques are located in most metropolitan areas and many rural counties across Texas. Tango Blast first established as a self-protection group against traditionally structured prison gangs, such as the Texas Mexican Mafia and Texas Syndicate. The Tangos continue growing at a fast rate, and maintain the highest membership numbers among all Texas-based gangs. With their lack of organizational structure and no strict commitment rules, Tango's unique "hybrid" gang status allows for widespread recruitment and increasingly dangerous appeal to younger generations. In their rapid criminal evolution, the Tangos established a robust résumé of violence and illicit activities, while building business relationships with various Mexican cartels.



(U) Map 12: Areas of Suspected Tangos Presence and Criminal Activity

(U) Tier 1: Texas Mexican Mafia

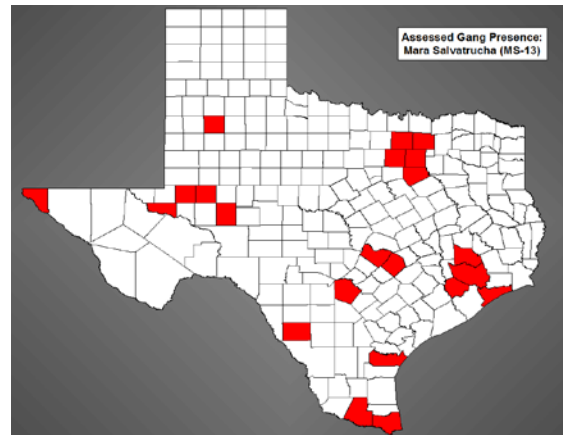
(U) The Texas Mexican Mafia (TMM) formed within the Texas prison system in 1984 as a means for inmates to protect themselves from the Texas Syndicate. Though TMM members continue to uphold commitment to the gang, unceasing law enforcement targeting efforts have affected membership growth and structure. The new generation of TMM is causing internal strife, dismantling the organization from within, and increasing the level of separation between older and younger members. Despite these struggles, the TMM will likely continue to be organizationally effective, changing their structure to best fit their available resources and engage in criminal activity, and remain a significant threat to the Texas.



(U) Map 13: Areas of Suspected Texas Mexican Mafia Presence and Criminal Activity

(U) Tier 1: Mara Salvatrucha

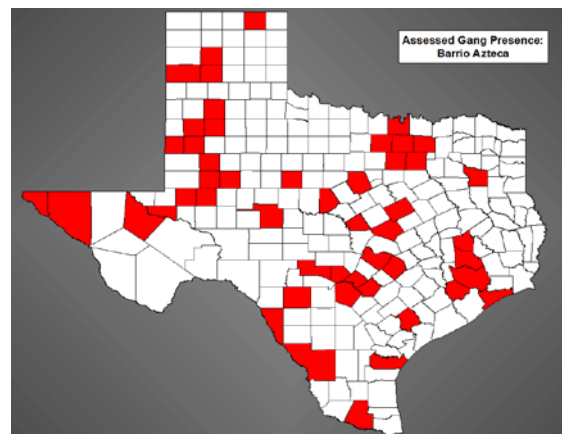
(U) Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) has attracted national attention over the past year, highlighting the violent nature of the gang and leading to increased scrutiny of the gang by law enforcement. MS-13 leadership may be attempting to capitalize on this attention and has allegedly made efforts to extend their control of cliques and programs in the United States. MS-13 members historically used Texas as a transitional area or as a location to hide from criminal charges in other states or countries. Recent intelligence, however, suggests MS-13 now uses Houston as a hub of criminal activity. This trend is likely the cause of increased membership in Texas, though actual gang presence is fluid due to the transient nature of gang members and gang activities. MS-13 continues to refine and change techniques in evading law enforcement detection by changing their long-standing rules regarding clothing and tattoos. Given the gang's propensity for violence, relationship with cartels, increased control over numerous cliques, rising numbers, and juvenile recruiting practices, MS-13 remains a Tier 1 threat.



(U) Map 14: Areas of Suspected MS-13 Presence and Criminal Activity

(U) Tier 1: Barrio Azteca

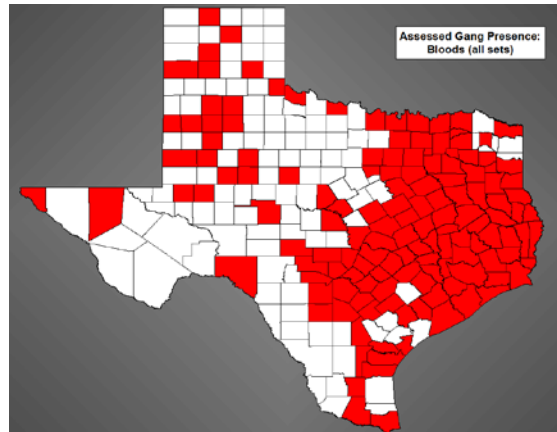
(U) Barrio Azteca continues to be a significant threat to Texas due to their propensity for violence, level of criminal activity, relationships with cartels and other gangs, control of the Valle de Juarez in Mexico and the drug corridor in El Paso, their involvement in sex trafficking, and a high level of transnational criminal activity. While in recent years there have been ebbs and flows in the amount of reporting on Barrio Azteca and though their hub of activity remains in Juarez and El Paso, the level at which they are operating earns them a high threat ranking for Texas as a whole. This is partly because their reach extends far outside the city limits of El Paso, as they distribute high amounts of drugs from their operations further into Texas and throughout the United States. It is likely that Barrio Azteca will continue to ensure their dominance in West Texas and across the border, directly affecting the citizens of Texas.



(U) Map 15: Areas of Suspected Barrio Azteca Presence and Criminal Activity

(U) Tier 2: Bloods

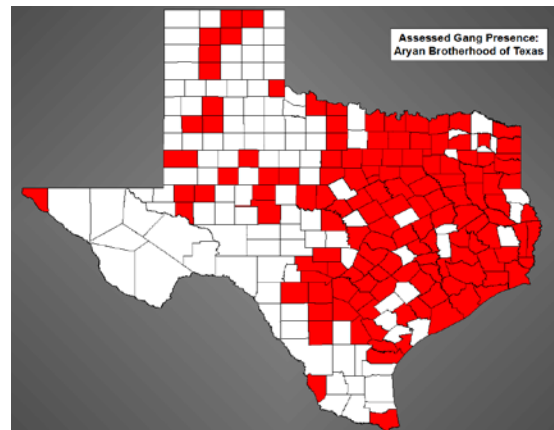
(U) The Bloods are a violent street gang that originated in Los Angeles, California, in the early 1970s, with ties to People-Nation-affiliated gangs. Bloods gang presence in Texas has been documented since the 1980s. Multiple cities in Texas have instituted gang injunctions against the Bloods and their rivals, the Crips. The Bloods' overall presence, the level of their criminal activity, and the violence perpetrated by their members qualify them as a serious threat in Texas. The Bloods continue to be a loosely organized, extremely violent street gang that is involved in a wide variety of crimes ranging from petty theft to murder. Much like their traditional rival the Crips, the Bloods street gang presence is mainly in the major urban areas, but its members regularly form small groups that travel throughout the state and beyond to conduct criminal activity, such as robberies and burglaries.



(U) Map 16: Areas of Suspected Bloods Presence and Criminal Activity

(U) Tier 2: Aryan Brotherhood of Texas

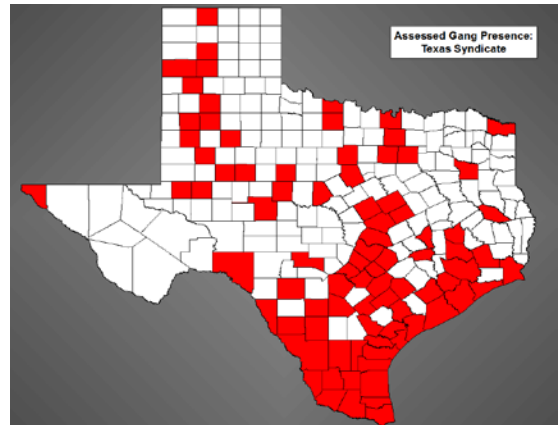
(U) The Aryan Brotherhood of Texas (ABT) places its racist ideology secondary to its everyday criminal activities. Although law enforcement continues to disrupt ABT operations and leadership structure around the state, the gang remains a significant threat due to their continued involvement in violent crimes, drug trafficking, firearms trafficking, frequent property crimes, and the strength of their organizational structure inside of correctional facilities. Multiple incidents of involvement with Mexican cartels occurred during 2017, where ABT acted as a courier. In 2017, threats to law enforcement from ABT increased in multiple states and one member engaged in sex trafficking. Recent law enforcement actions resulting in ABT members receiving federal sentences possibly facilitated the creation of a wider (though not necessarily larger) ABT network. Reports show ABT interactions with gangs typically not active in Texas and an increase of communications and incidents involving ABT members and associates located outside of Texas.



(U) Map 17: Areas of Suspected Aryan Brotherhood of Texas Presence and Criminal Activity

(U) Tier 2: Texas Syndicate

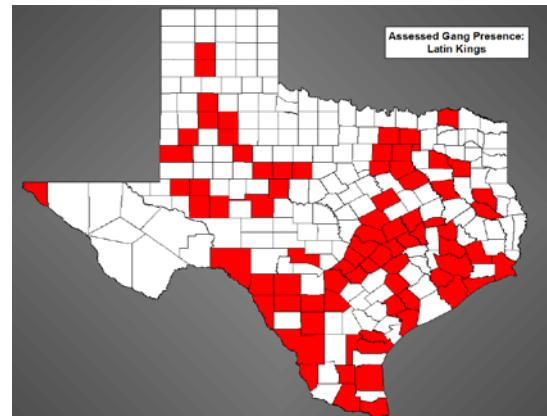
(U) The Texas Syndicate prison gang formed in the California penal system in the 1960s and eventually moved into TDCJ prisons and onto the streets of Texas. Recent law enforcement targeting created setbacks for the Texas Syndicate, in particular to the gang's structure, as the lack of material benefit, power, and security in the free world affected the gang's governance abilities. Despite the setbacks, their level of violence and continued relationship with Mexican cartels makes the Texas Syndicate a resilient criminal threat to Texas.



(U) Map 18: Areas of Suspected Texas Syndicate Presence and Criminal Activity

(U) Tier 2: Latin Kings

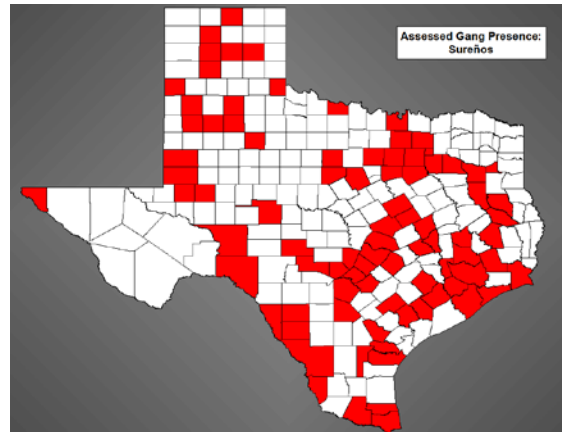
(U) The Almighty Latin Kings Nation (ALKN) is a violent street gang originating from Chicago, Illinois in the early 1960s. Though initially created to overcome racial prejudice, Latin Kings soon evolved into a criminal force nationally and internationally. The gang migrated into Texas shortly after its creation and opened local chapters, while continuing to communicate with leaders from Chicago, Illinois (aka "Motherland"). However, a recent successful multi-agency operation severely disrupted the gang's illicit activities and criminal network within the Central Texas area. As a result, it appears the ALKN is currently in a dormant mode, as leadership continues to reestablish an effective criminal structure in Texas. However, Latin Kings remain a continuous threat to Texas, in part due to its interstate structure, varying criminal activities, and networking capabilities.



(U) Map 19: Areas of Suspected Latin Kings Presence and Criminal Activity

(U) Tier 2: Sureños

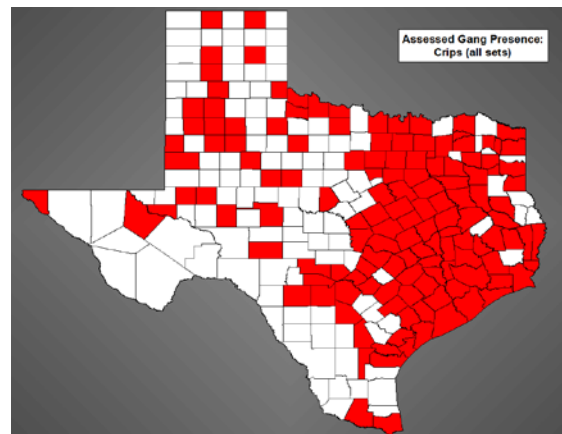
(U) The Sureños is an “umbrella” organization of gangs paying homage to the California Mexican Mafia. Gang members unaffiliated with California Mexican Mafia also use “Sureños”, which means “south” to symbolize that they are from the Southern California. Sureños remain a threat to the State of Texas due to their relationship with cartels, propensity for violence, level of criminal activity, involvement in human smuggling, and recruitment of minors. The trend of Sureños members moving from California to the El Paso area will likely continue, as well as their attempt to take over the El Paso area from Barrio Azteca.



(U) Map 20: Areas of Suspected Sureños Presence and Criminal Activity

(U) Tier 2: Crips

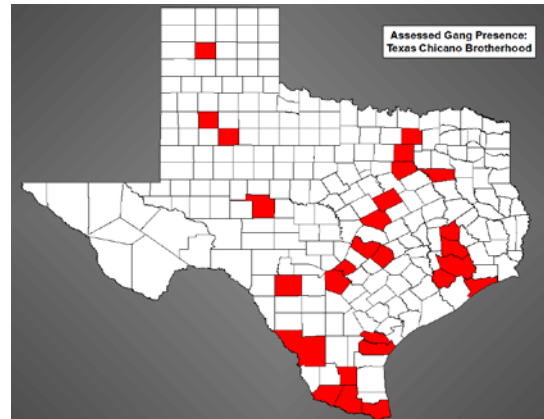
(U) The Crips criminal street gang remains loosely organized, with multiple cliques throughout the state. During this reporting period, Crips members participated in a wide variety of crimes, to include murders, assaults, robberies, burglaries, fraud, and sex trafficking offenses. Members committed violent crimes against citizens and fellow offenders during the commission of other crimes, such as robberies, burglaries, sex trafficking, and drug deals. Members committed violent crimes against law enforcement while attempting to evade arrest. Internal conflict sometimes resulted in intra-gang violence. The Crips pose the greatest threat to the larger metropolitan areas of Texas, but its members sometimes form smaller groups that travel outside of their usual operational areas to commit crimes throughout the state and as far away as Arizona.



(U) Map 21: Areas of Suspected Crips Presence and Criminal Activity

(U) Tier 2: Texas Chicano Brotherhood

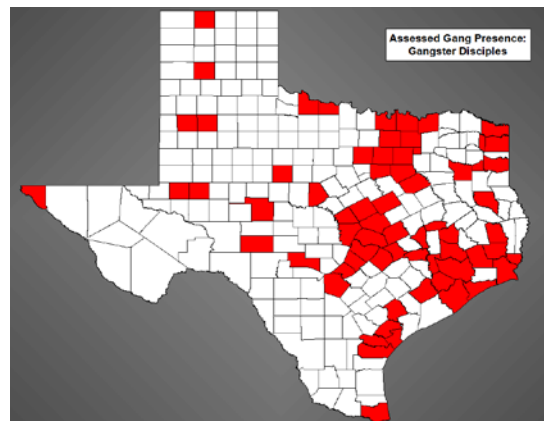
(U) The Texas Chicano Brotherhood is a violent prison and street gang with the greatest concentration of members in South Texas. While membership is now more open to a variety of individuals, most of the members are male Hispanics, usually US citizens of Mexican descent. The Texas Chicano Brotherhood engages in a wide variety of criminal activity, though the bulk of their crimes are drug related. Their proximity to the Texas-Mexico border and familial ties in Mexico give them unique advantages for working with the cartels. Their relationships with Mexican cartels and their willingness to commit extreme violence make the Texas Chicano Brotherhood a significant threat to Texas.



(U) Map 22: Areas of Suspected Texas Chicano Brotherhood Presence and Criminal Activity

(U) Tier 2: Gangster Disciples

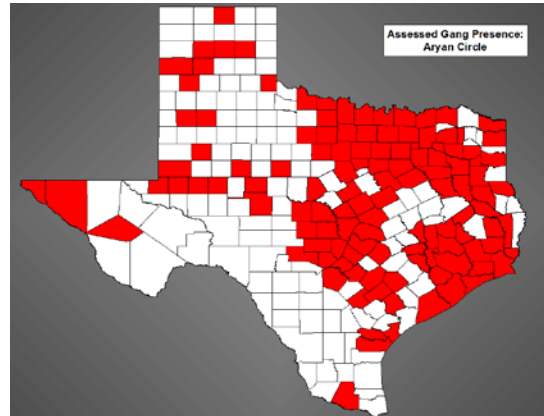
(U) The Gangster Disciples is a nationally recognized, historically black criminal street gang that was founded in Chicago, Illinois and has spread throughout the United States, including Texas. It is highly organized, violent, and active in the major metropolitan areas of Texas and in the communities surrounding the major military installations in Texas. Its members are involved in a wide variety of criminal activities, to include murder; assaults; thefts, robberies, and burglaries; sex trafficking; fraud; and illegal drug sales. Although its numbers in Texas are significantly fewer than those of the Bloods and Crips in Texas, the Gangster Disciples level of organization, level of criminal activity, proximity to military communities, and reported relationship with Mexican cartels raises concern.



(U) Map 23: Areas of Suspected Gangster Disciples Presence and Criminal Activity

(U) Tier 2: Aryan Circle

(U) The Aryan Circle’s white supremacy ideologies come secondary to illicit business and profiting from criminal activities. Although the Aryan Circle is not a threat to the border areas of Texas, they present a public safety threat to the State due to their involvement in violent crimes, drug distribution, and firearms trafficking. The Aryan Circle commits many of their violent crimes against their own members or rivals because of rules dictated by gang culture, their constitution, and leadership. Aryan Circle continues to derive its prevalence, effectiveness, and strength to withstand law enforcement operations from its paramilitary structure.

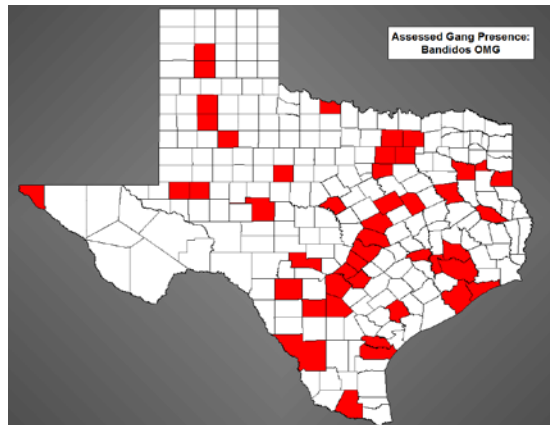


(U) Map 24: Areas of Suspected Aryan Circle Presence and Criminal Activity

(U) Tier 2: Bandidos Outlaw Motorcycle Gang

(U) Members of the Bandidos Outlaw Motorcycle Gang (OMG) continue to partake in illegal activities. The Bandidos OMG is currently involved in a violent feud with the newly formed Kinfolk Motorcycle Gang (MG).

(U) Formed in the 1960s, the Bandidos OMG conducts its illegal activities as covertly as possible and generally tries to avoid high-profile activities. However, members are not covert about making their presence known, frequently wearing their gang colors, insignia, and riding in large groups. They seek to turn public sentiment in their favor by organizing frequent charity runs.



(U) Map 25: Areas of Suspected Bandidos Presence and Criminal Activity

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(U) Appendix 2: Other Contributing Agencies

(U) DPS recognizes the following agencies for their contribution to the Texas Gang Investigative Database (TxGang), as of July 2018:

Abilene Police Department
Addison Police Department
Alice Police Department
Alief Independent School District Police Department
Amarillo Police Department
Angelina County Sheriff's Office
Aransas Pass Police Department
Arlington Police Department
Austin Police Department
Baytown Police Department
Beeville Police Department
Bexar County Community Supervision & Corrections
Bexar County Sheriff's Office
Bonham Police Department
Brazoria County Sheriff's Office
Brenham Police Department
Brownsville Police Department
Bryan Police Department
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives
Cactus Police Department
Cameron County Constable's Office Precinct 5
Carrollton Police Department
Cedar Park Police Department
Center Police Department
Cleveland Independent School District Police Department
College Station Police Department
Collin County Sheriff's Office
Comal County Sheriff's Office
Community supervision & corrections department
Conroe Police Department
Cooke County Sheriff's Office
Corpus Christi Police Department
Criminal investigation division
Customs & Border Protection
Cypress Fairbanks Independent School District Police Department
Dallas County Sheriff's Office
Dallas Police Department
Denison Police Department
Denton County Sheriff's Office
Denton Police Department
District Attorney's Office Del Rio
Donna Independent School District Police Department
Donna Police Department
Dumas Police Department
Edinburg Police Department

UNCLASSIFIED

Edwards County Sheriff's Office
El Paso co sheriff's office
El Paso Police Department
Erath County Sheriff's Office
Eules Police Department
Everman Police Department
Farmers Branch Police Department
Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office
Fort Worth Police Department
Frisco Police Department
Gainesville Police Department
Galveston County Sheriff's Office
Galveston Police Department
Garland Police Department
Georgetown Police Department
Gladewater Police Department
Goose Creek Consolidated Independent School District Police Department
Grand Prairie Police Department
Grayson County Sheriff's Office
Guadalupe County Sheriff's Office
Haltom City Police Department
Hansford County Sheriff's Office
Harlingen Police Department
Harris County Constable's Office Precinct 1
Harris County Sheriff's Office
Hays County Sheriff's Office
Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office
Houston County Sheriff's Office
Houston Independent School District Police Department
Houston Metropolitan Transit Authority Police Department
Houston Police Department
Humble Independent School District Police Department
Irving Police Department
Jersey Village Police Department
Katy Independent School District Police Department
Katy Police Department
Kaufman Police Department
Kendall County Sheriff's Office
Kenedy Police Department
Kerr County Sheriff's Office
Kilgore Police Department
Killeen Police Department
Kleburg County Sheriff's Office
Klein Independent School District Police Department
La Marque Police Department
La Salle County Sheriff's Office
Lake Dallas Police Department
Lancaster Police Department
Laredo Police Department
Levelland Police Department
Lewisville Police Department

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Liberty County District Attorney's Office
Longview Police Department
Lorena Police Department
Lubbock County Sheriff's Office
Lubbock Police Department
Lufkin Police Department
Lynn County Sheriff's Office
Mansfield Police Department
Marble Falls Police Department
McAllen Police Department
McKinney Police Department
McLennan County Juvenile Probation Department
McLennan County Sheriff's Office
Mesquite Police Department
Midland Police Department
Mission Police Department
Missouri City Police Department
Montgomery County Constable's Office Precinct 1
Montgomery County Constable's Office Precinct 3
Montgomery County Juvenile Probation Department
Montgomery County Sheriff's Office
Nacogdoches Police Department
New Braunfels Police Department
Odessa Police Department
Pasadena Police Department
Pearland Police Department
Pflugerville Independent School District Police Department
Pflugerville Police Department
Pharr Police Department
Plainview Police Department
Plano Police Department
Port Mansfield Police Department
Potter County Sheriff's Office
Primera Police Department
Quinlan Police Department
Randall County Sheriff's Office
Refugio County Sheriff's Office
Richardson Police Department
Richland Hills Police Department
Rockwall County District Attorney's Office
Rockwall County Sheriff's Office
Rosenberg Police Department
Round Rock Police Department
Sabinal City Police Department
San Angelo Police Department
San Antonio Police Department
San Juan Police Department
San Marcos Police Department
Santa Fe Police Department
Seguin Police Department
Shelby County Sheriff's Office

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Sherman Police Department
Spearman Police Department
Spring Branch Independent School District Police Department
Spring Independent School District Police Department
Sugar Land Police Department
Tarrant County District Attorney's Office
Tarrant County Sheriff's Office
Temple Police Department
Texas City Police Department
Texas Department of Juvenile Justice
Tom Green County Sheriff's Office
Tomball Police Department
Travis County Sheriff's Office
Tyler Police Department
University of Texas at Houston Police Department
US Immigration & Customs Enforcement
Uvalde County District Attorney's Office
Victoria Police Department
Weatherford Police Department
Wichita Falls Police Department
Williamson County Juvenile Services
Williamson County Sheriff's Office

(U) Agencies participating in Operation Border Star are listed below:

El Paso JOIC Sector

Anthony PD
BNSF Railway PD
ATF
CBP/OFO
Center for Disease Control
Dona Ana CO SO (NM)
El Paso CO SO
El Paso Community College PD
El Paso County Constables
El Paso CO Juvenile Probation
El Paso Fire Department/Fire Marshal
El Paso ISD PD

El Paso Office of Emergency Management
El Paso PD
EPIC
FBI
Grant CO SO (NM)
Hidalgo CO SO (NM)
Horizon City PD
ICE/HSI
Luna CO SO (NM)
Otero CO SO (NM)
Texas Attorney General's Office
Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts

Texas Tech University PD
TMD
TPWD
Union Pacific Railroad PD
University of Texas El Paso PD
US Army, Ft. Bliss CID
USBP
USMS
Veteran's Administration Intel & Crime Analysis
Veteran's Administration PD
West TX HIDTA
Ysleta Del Sur Tribal PD

Marfa JOIC Sector

Alpine PD
Brewster CO SO
CBP/OFO
Culberson CO SO
Fort Stockton PD
Hudspeth CO SO
ICE/HSI

Jeff Davis CO SO
NPS
Pecos CO SO
Pecos PD
Presidio CO SO
Presidio PD
Reeves CO SO

Terrell CO SO
TMD
TPWD
USBP
West TX HIDTA

Del Rio JOIC Sector

38th Judicial District
CBP/OFO
Crockett CO SO
Crystal City PD
DEA
Del Rio PD
Dimmit CO SO
Eagle Pass PD
Edwards CO SO
FBI

ICE/HSI
IBWC
Junction PD
Kinney CO SO
Maverick CO SO
NPS
Real CO SO
Sabinal PD
Sonora PD
South TX HIDTA

TMD
TPWD
US Marshals
USBP
USCG
Uvalde CO SO
Uvalde PD
Val Verde CO Constable Pct 3
Val Verde CO SO
Zavala CO SO

Laredo JOIC Sector

CBP/OFO
Duval CO SO
Encinal PD
Freer PD
Frio CO SO
ICE/HSI
Jim Hogg CO SO

La Salle CO SO
Laredo ISD PD
Laredo PD
San Diego PD
TMD
TPWD
United ISD PD

USBP
USFPS
Webb CO Constable Pct 3
Webb CO SO
Zapata CO SO

Rio Grande Valley JOIC Sector

Alamo PD	Indian Lake PD	San Benito PD
ATF	Kenedy CO SO	San Juan PD
Brooks CO SO	La Feria PD	South Padre Island PD
Brownsville PD	La Grulla PD	Starr CO HIDTA
Cameron CO SO	La Joya PD	Starr CO BIU
CBP/OFO	Los Fresnos PD	Starr CO SO
Donna PD	Lyford PD	Sullivan City PD
Edcouch PD	McAllen PD	TTIC
Edinburg PD	Mercedes PD	TMD
Elsa PD	Mission PD	TPWD
Escobares PD	NCIS	USBP
Harlingen PD	NICB	US Fish & Wildlife
Hidalgo CO Constable Pct 1	Palmhurst PD	USCG
Hidalgo CO Constable Pct 2	Palmview PD	UTRGV PD
Hidalgo CO Constable Pct 3	Penitas PD	Weslaco PD
Hidalgo CO Constable Pct 4	Pharr PD	Willacy CO DA's Office
Hidalgo CO SO	Raymondville PD	Willacy CO SO
Hidalgo PD	Rio Grande City PD	
ICE/HSI	Roma PD	

Coastal Bend JOIC Sector

Alice PD	Hallettsville PD	San Antonio HIDTA
Aransas CO SO	Houston HIDTA	San Patricio CO SO
ATF	ICE/HSI	Seguin PD
Bee CO SO	Jackson CO SO	Sinton PD
Beeville PD	Jim Wells CO SO	Texas Dept of Transportation
Calhoun CO SO	Kingsville PD	TMD
CBP/OFO	Kleberg CO SO	TPWD
Corpus Christi PD	Lavaca CO SO	US Fish and Wildlife
Cuero PD	Live Oak CO SO	US Marshals
DEA	Matagorda CO SO	US Postal Inspector
Dewitt CO SO	McMullen CO SO	USBP
Driscoll PD	NPS – PINS	USCG
El Campo PD	Nueces CO SO	Victoria CO SO
FBI	Refugio CO SO	Victoria PD
George West PD	Refugio PD	Wharton CO SO
Goliad CO SO	Robstown PD	
Gonzales CO SO	Rockport PD	

(U) References

Some information within this assessment was produced based on intelligence information of a sensitive nature, and is not referenced specifically. Information from other sources is referenced below.

- ¹ (U) U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs; Opening Statement of Chairman Ron Johnson; “Border Insecurity: The Rise of MS-13 and Other Transnational Criminal Organizations”; 24 May 2017; <https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Opening%20Statement-Johnson-2017-05-24.pdf>.
- ² (U) Online Press Release; ICE; “8 MS-13 Members Indicted in Dallas on Charges Including Racketeering Conspiracy, Attempted Murder, and Assault With a Dangerous Weapon”; 13 July 2018; <https://www.ice.gov/news/releases/8-ms-13-members-indicted-dallas-charges-including-racketeering-conspiracy-attempted>; accessed 16 July 2018.
- ³ (U) Law Enforcement Website; ICE; “Operation Raging Bull”; <https://www.ice.gov/features/raging-bull>; Accessed on 18 January 2018.
- ⁴ (U) Online press release; Department of Justice, US Attorney's Office for the District of Maryland; "Alleged MS-13 Member Charged in Violent Racketeering Conspiracy Including Drug Trafficking and Extortion"; 15 March 2018; <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/alleged-ms-13-member-charged-violent-racketeering-conspiracy-including-drug-trafficking-and>; Accessed on 22 August 2018.
- ⁵ (U) Online newspaper article; *Houston Chronicle*; “MS-13 Gang Member Extradited to Houston on Two Murder Charges”; 4 August 2017; <https://www.chron.com/news/houston-texas/houston/article/MS-13-gang-member-extradited-to-Houston-on-two-11735056.php>; accessed on 1 February 2018.
- ⁶ (U) This map represents an analytic assessment of where gang activity is likely most concentrated in Texas, based on data from multiple sources.
- ⁷ (U) DEA; Comprehensive Strategic Assessment; October 2017; (U) 2017 National Drug Threat Assessment; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Multiple sources.
- ⁸ (U) Online press release; DHS; “Written testimony of ICE Homeland Security Investigations Assistant Director for Investigative Programs Matt Allen for a House Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security hearing titled “A Dangerous and Sophisticated Adversary: The Threat to the Homeland Posed by Cartel Operations”; 16 February 2017; <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2017/02/16/written-testimony-ice-house-homeland-security-subcommittee-border-and-maritime>; accessed 23 May 2018; Source is the US Department of Homeland Security.
- ⁹ (U) Online press release; CBP; “Successful Operation Leads to Arrest of Two Scouts, One Who Assaulted Agent”; 2 June 2016; <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/local-media-release/successful-operation-leads-arrest-two-scouts-one-who-assaulted-agent>; accessed on 23 May 2018.
- ¹⁰ (U) Online press release; CBP; “Border Patrol agents continue to be attacked in the Rio Grande Valley”; 23 November 2016; <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/local-media-release/border-patrol-agents-continue-be-attacked-rio-grande-valley>; accessed on 23 May 2018.
- ¹¹ (U) Operation Border Star Reporting; 17 May 2018; 29 September 2017; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED//LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE.
- ¹² (U) Operation Border Star Reporting; 17 May 2018; 21 December 2016; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED//LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE.
- ¹³ (U) Texas DPS – Criminal Investigations Division. September 2016.
- ¹⁴ (U) Operation Border Star Reporting; 23 July 2018; 15 August 2016; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED//LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE.
- ¹⁵ (U) Testimony; DHS; CBP; “A Dangerous and Sophisticated Adversary: The Threat to the Homeland Posed by Cartel Operations”; 16 February 2017; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED; Testimony of Paul A. Beeson, Director Joint Task Force – West before the US House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security.
- ¹⁶ (U) US Government Web site; National Gang Center; “Parents’ Guide to Gangs”; 7 January 2015; <https://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/Content/Documents/Parents-Guide-to-Gangs.pdf>.
- ¹⁷ (U) US Government Web site; National Gang Center; “Parents’ Guide to Gangs”; 7 January 2015; <https://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/Content/Documents/Parents-Guide-to-Gangs.pdf>.

¹⁸ (U) Online news article; Businessinsider.com; "Gangs Aren't Wearing Colors Anymore"; 16 September 2014; <https://www.businessinsider.com/gangs-arent-wearing-colors-anymore-2014-9>.

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²¹ (U) Online press release; Department of Justice, US Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas; "22 Alleged Gang Members Indicted for Multiple Violent Crimes"; 8 November 2017; <https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdtx/pr/22-alleged-gang-members-indicted-multiple-violent-crimes>; Accessed on 2 January 2018.

²² (U) Online press release; Department of Justice, US Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas; "Local Man Set to Appear in Court on Allegations of Trafficking a Minor for Sex"; 11 October 2017; <https://www.houstonchronicle.com/news/houston-texas/houston/article/houston-gang-brothels-sex-trafficking-gulfton-12511521.php>; Accessed on 15 May 2018.