FBI Atlanta
Intelligence Note from Domain Management
Intelligence Related to MS-13 Threat
December 15, 2008

Approval: SIA

Subject: Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) presence and activity in the Atlanta Division

Summary: (U//FOUO) MS-13 has an active presence in the Atlanta Division’s Area of Responsibility (AOR). Furthermore, MS-13 is assessed to be increasing in numbers throughout the state, though much of the gang’s reported activity is centered in the Atlanta metro area.

Scope:

(U//FOUO) To identify the presence, activities, and overall threat posed by MS-13 to the Atlanta AOR.

(U//FOUO) To identify populations of immigrants within the Atlanta AOR that may be at a high risk for MS-13 recruitment.

(U//FOUO) The following data sets and products were reviewed in preparation of this report:

- 2000 US Census data regarding foreign born populations reporting El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras as their places of birth
- Atlanta Division’s MS-13 Threat Assessment (November 19, 2007)
- National Threat Assessment Initiate: Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) Threat to the United States (May 17, 2007)
- Open source research regarding MS-13 activity in the US
- Atlanta FBI source reporting, open investigations, and agent interviews

(U) Key Judgments:

1 (U) High Confidence generally indicates that our judgments are based on high quality information and/or that the nature of the issue makes it possible to render a solid judgment. A “high confidence” judgment is not a fact or a certainty, however, and such judgments still carry a risk of being wrong.

(U) Medium Confidence generally means that the info is credibly sourced and plausible but not of sufficient quality or corroborated sufficiently to warrant a higher level of confidence.

(U) Low Confidence generally means that the information’s credibility and/or plausibility is questionable, or that the information is too fragmented or poorly corroborated to make solid analytic inferences, or that we have significant concerns or problems with the source.
(U//FOUO) The Atlanta Domain Team assesses that

(U//FOUO) MS-13 is assessed to be

[High Confidence]

(U//FOUO) MS-13 has

[Medium Confidence]

(U) Background:

(U//FOUO) According to open source reporting, the Mara Salvatrucha (aka MS-13) originated in the U.S. in Los Angeles, CA in the 1980s. The gang's initial membership consisted of Salvadoran refugees who had fled during the civil war in El Salvador. Since that time MS-13 has expanded its membership to include Guatemalan and Honduran nationals with current reports indicating some cliques accept members from other Latin American regions. MS-13 spread throughout Central America when Los Angeles gang members were deported back to El Salvador. While incarcerated they gained strength in the El Salvadoran prison system and proceeded to multiply all the while increasing their acts of violence. MS-13 has expanded its reach as far north as Canada and as far east as Spain with numbers continuing to grow. MS-13 is considered to be one of the most violent and rapidly growing transnational street gangs in the U.S.

(U) Details:

(U//FOUO) The members of MS-13 are primarily composed of persons with Salvadoran, Guatemalan, and Honduran decent. According to the 2000 Census data, the total population in the State of Georgia for the aforementioned countries was 30,451. The counties with the highest concentration of stated immigrants include: DeKalb, Gwinnett, Cobb, Fulton, Hall, Floyd, and Clayton.1

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<tr>
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<td>Clayton</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>315</td>
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(U) It should be noted that data does not reflect population for illegal aliens.

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(U//FOUO) Confidential Human Source (CHS) reporting indicates that the

Currently it does not appear that the

Criminal Activity

(U) One aspect of MS-13 is its flexibility regarding criminal activity. While some gangs are only into drugs, MS-13 will do any crime at any time.²

(U//FOUO) The MS-13 cliques within the Atlanta Division's AOR have engaged in a number of criminal activities to include: ten or more murders, numerous armed robberies, shootings, and weapons/drug offenses.

(U//FOUO) According to Atlanta FBI/ICE agents,

(U//FOUO) Although reporting indicates that MS-13 members in the Atlanta AOR are

- (U//FOUO) Source reporting indicates that MS-13 members are

³ Analyst Comment: This may be an indication that MS-13 is [End comment.]

- (U//FOUO) Source reporting in

- (U//FOUO) Source reporting indicates that

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(U) According to the Department of Homeland Security, deportation is a useful tool when there isn’t enough evidence to prosecute a criminal case. However, many deportees are returning to the U.S.

- (U/FOOU) Atlanta FBI/ICE agents indicate that

- (U/FOOU) Source reporting indicates that

- (U/FOOU) Several MS-13 members identified in the Atlanta AOR have

Recruitment

(U/FOOU) Georgia currently has within the Atlanta AOR. Analyst Comment: Based on the MS-13 history of recruitment in within the Atlanta AOR. End comment.

- (U/FOOU) Source reporting indicates that MS-13 members

(U/FOOU) Although traditional MS-13 recruitment is selective to persons of Salvadoran, Guatemalan, and Honduran decent, Atlanta has

(U/FOOU) Source reporting indicates that

(U/FOOU) Unlike the Atlanta metro has observed

Expansion and Emerging Threat

(U/FOOU) National reporting indicates that
(U/FOUO) Source reporting indicates an
[Blank]
11 Analyst Comment: This indicates
[Blank] End comment.

(U/FOUO) Atlanta received information from the Charlotte Division regarding
[Blank]
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(U/FOUO) [Blank] source reporting from [Blank] indicate
[Blank] 13 Analyst Comment:
[Blank] End comment.

(U/FOUO) Further FBI reporting indicates that
[Blank]
14 Analyst Comment:
[Blank] End comment.

(U) Recommendations:

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(U) Intelligence Gaps:

This intelligence summary was prepared by the Domain Team of the Atlanta Division.
Comments or questions may be addressed to SIA

(U) Endnotes

1 (U) U.S. Census Bureau at http://www.census.gov
3 (U) FBI
4 (U) FBI
5 (U) FBI
7 (U) FBI
8 (U) FBI
9 (U) FBI
10 (U) FBI
11 (U) FBI
12 (U) FBI
13 (U) FBI
14 (U) FBI