

# Arizona Criminal Justice Commission

## Statistical Analysis Center Publication

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



# 2009 La Paz County Gang Threat Assessment

# 2011

# ARIZONA CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION



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## Executive Summary

During spring 2010, the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission's (ACJC) Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) surveyed law enforcement officers in Arizona regarding gangs and gang activity within their respective jurisdictions. The SAC gang threat assessment survey, titled the *Arizona Gang Threat Assessment*, was modeled after the *National Gang Threat Assessment*, conducted by the National Alliance of Gang Investigators Associations in partnership with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, National Drug Intelligence Center, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. The SAC survey contained questions for law enforcement officials concerning the presence of gangs within their jurisdictions, the level of gang activity, the involvement of gang members in crime and illegal drug distribution, the extent of cross-gang coordination, and law enforcement strategies targeting gang members. The following report provides La Paz County and statewide results from the 2009 survey administration, including trend data collected during prior administrations of the survey in 2007 and 2008. Additional state and county reports are available at <http://www.azcjc.gov/ACJC.Web/publications/publications.aspx?ServId=1000>.

### Findings

- Only one La Paz County law enforcement agency responded to the survey, and the agency reported an active gang presence within its jurisdiction in 2009. This agency estimated a total of 80 active gang members in its jurisdiction.
- The one agency with a gang presence reported that gang activity had not changed during the six months prior to filling out the survey. When asked about the prior 12 months, the agency reported that gang activity had increased significantly. Over the previous five years, the responding agency reported that gangs had increased slightly.
- Assault/aggravated assault and threatening/intimidation were listed as the primary crimes being committed by gangs within the one jurisdiction with a gang presence in La Paz County.
- The single agency with a gang presence in 2009 reported that gangs had a high level of involvement in the distribution of marijuana and methamphetamine.
- Neighborhood-based drug trafficking groups/crews were reported to have a moderate level of activity in the single jurisdiction reporting a gang presence in La Paz County.
- When asked about gang intervention strategies, the single agency reporting a gang presence identified community programs, enforcement, gang crime/intelligence data analyses, identification of gang members, and joint efforts with other agencies as the effective strategies in responding to gang activity.

## **Introduction**

During spring 2010, the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission's Statistical Analysis Center surveyed law enforcement officers in Arizona regarding their perceptions and experiences with gangs, gang members, and gang activity within their respective jurisdictions. This report examines and summarizes the results from the Arizona Gang Threat Assessment and fulfills ACJC's statutory requirement to conduct an annual survey that measures the prevalence of gang activity in Arizona using available monies per Arizona Revised Statute §41-2416. Although no funds were specifically appropriated to carry out the Arizona Gang Threat Assessment, effectively addressing gangs and gang activity presents a significant challenge to Arizona's law enforcement agencies and the criminal justice system. For this reason, ACJC continues to collect and share information on gangs and gang activity using existing resources.

## **Research Methods**

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

Three law enforcement agencies throughout La Paz County received the *Arizona Gang Threat Assessment* in 2010, which asked a series of questions about gangs and gang activity within the respective law enforcement jurisdictions during 2009. The survey was designed to gather information on gangs, gang members, gang activity, and other pertinent information to better understand the threat gangs pose to public safety. Of the three surveys distributed to law enforcement agencies in La Paz County, one (33.3 percent) agency returned a survey to the SAC.

## Gangs in La Paz County and Arizona

### Total Gang Membership

The one La Paz County agency that responded to the SAC's request for information on gangs and gang activity reported the presence of gangs and gang activity within its jurisdiction. This is a small increase from no agencies reporting gang activity in La Paz County in 2008 (Table 1). The single agency with a gang presence estimated that there were 80 active gang members in its jurisdiction in 2009. The number of gang members reported is possibly a conservative estimate of the number of gang members in La Paz County in 2009. The potential causes of underestimation include the failure of some agencies to respond to the survey and the likelihood that some gang members have not yet come to the attention of law enforcement.

<b>Table 1: Number of Law Enforcement Agencies that Reported Gangs, 2007-2009</b>								
	<b>2007</b>		<b>2008</b>		<b>2009</b>		<b>2009 Arizona</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Yes</b>	2	50.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	59	75.6%
<b>No</b>	2	50.0%	2	100.0%	0	0.0%	19	24.4%
<b>Unsure/Don't know</b>	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	N/A	N/A

### Level of Gang Activity Over Time

The single agency in La Paz County that reported a gang presence in its jurisdiction was asked to rate the level of gang activity and whether gang membership and gang activities were expanding.

<b>Table 2: Percentage of Jurisdictions Reporting Gangs Expanding their Scope of Activities (Of the Jurisdictions Reporting Gang Activity)</b>			
	<b>2007</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2009 Arizona</b>
<b>Yes</b>	50.0%	-	50.0%
<b>No</b>	0	-	46.4%
<b>Unsure/Don't Know</b>	50.0%	-	3.6%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>56</b>

The agency did not respond to the question asking about whether gangs were expanding in their activities. However, when given the chance to explain their answers the agency did indicate that it was unknown, but gang membership does appear to remain current and consistent (Table 2).

In 2008 there were no agencies that reported a gang presence in La Paz County.

Looking at the six months prior to taking the 2009 assessment, the agency with a gang presence reported that gang activity had not changed. The agency also reported that gang activity increased significantly over the previous 12 months and gang activity increased slightly over the past five years (Figure 1).

Figure 1

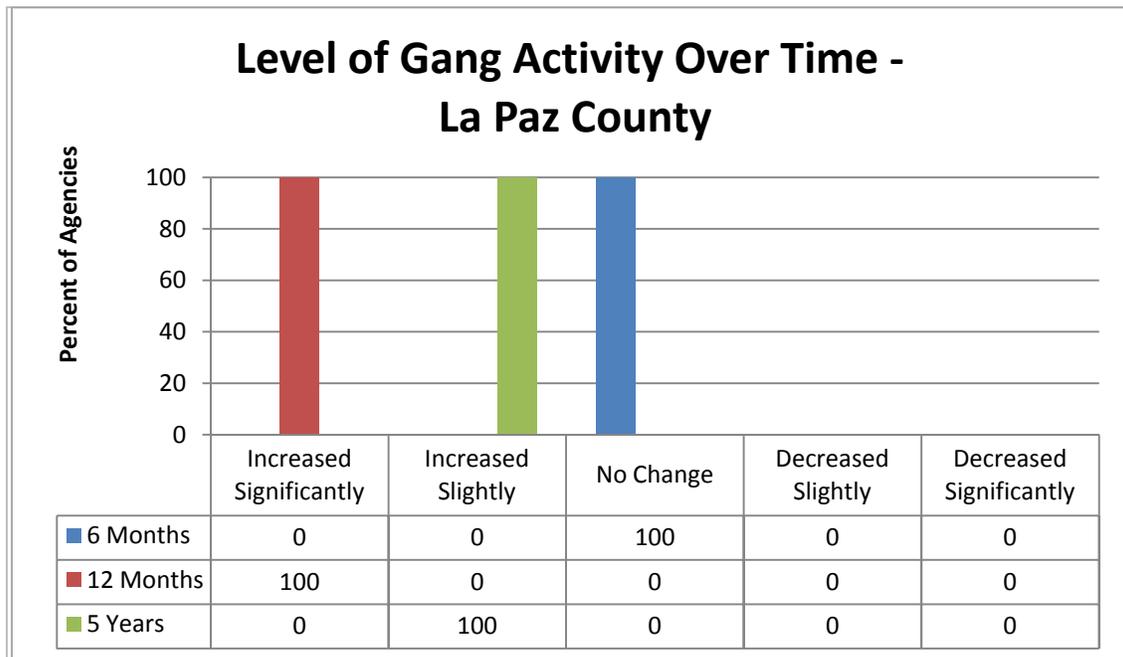
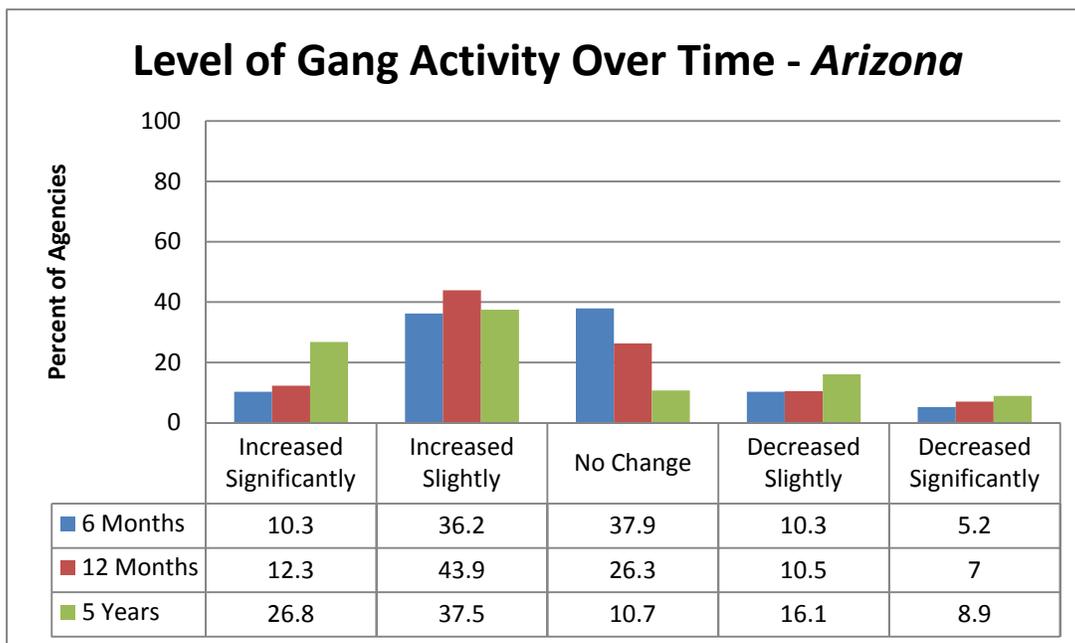


Figure 2



Gang Involvement in Crimes and Drugs

<b>Table 3: Primary Crimes Committed by Gangs (Of the Jurisdictions Reporting Gang Activity)</b>				
Crime	La Paz County		Arizona	
	Number of Agencies	Percent of Agencies	Number of Agencies	Percent of Agencies
Assault/Aggravated Assault	1	100.0%	43	78.2%
Threatening and Intimidation	1	100.0%	13	23.6%
<b>Number of Agencies Responding</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>55</b>	

The agency with a gang presence also reported the primary crimes committed by gangs within its jurisdiction

(Table 3). The question was open-ended, and respondents were asked to list the crimes that were being committed by gangs in their jurisdictions with no limit to the number and types of crimes that could be reported. Table 3 also provides the number of agencies at the state level that reported the same crimes identified by law enforcement in La Paz County.

The responding agency reported that assault/aggravated assault and threatening/intimidation were the primary crimes being committed by gangs in its jurisdiction in 2009 (Table 3).

Law enforcement agencies also rated the level of gang involvement within their jurisdictions for 15 specific crime categories. Agencies ranked the level of gang involvement for each type of crime based on the following five categories: high, moderate, low, none, and unknown gang involvement. This categorical question provides consistent measurements over time for the level of gang involvement across a predetermined set of violent and property crimes.

The La Paz County agency with a gang presence reported a high level of gang involvement in arson in 2009 (Table 4). Additionally, a moderate level of involvement was reported for auto theft, felonious assault, and intimidation/extortion. A low level of involvement was reported for fraud.

<b>Table 4: Level of Gang Involvement in Crime (Of the Jurisdictions Reporting Gang Activity)</b>						
	Year	High	Moderate	Low	None	Unknown
Arson	2007	-	-	100.0%	-	-
	2009	100.0%	-	-	-	-
Arizona	2009	3.4%	5.2%	19.0%	46.6%	25.9%
Auto Theft	2007	-	-	100.0%	-	-
	2009	-	100.0%	-	-	-
Arizona	2009	12.1%	39.7%	20.7%	19.0%	8.6%
Felonious Assault	2007	50.0%	50.0%	-	-	-
	2009	-	100.0%	-	-	-
Arizona	2009	17.5%	35.1%	28.1%	10.5%	8.8%
Intimidation/Extortion	2007	100.0%	-	-	-	-
	2009	-	100.0%	-	-	-
Arizona	2009	15.5%	31.0%	31.0%	6.9%	15.5%
Fraud	2007	-	100.0%	-	-	-
	2009	-	-	100.0%	-	-
Arizona	2009	13.0%	14.8%	27.8%	20.4%	24.1%
Human Trafficking	2007	-	-	-	100.0%	-
	2009	-	-	-	100.0%	-
Arizona	2009	8.8%	17.5%	14.0%	31.6%	28.1%

Burglary	2007	50.0%	50.0%	-	-	-
	2009	-	-	-	-	100.0%
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>22.4%</i>	<i>41.4%</i>	<i>19.0%</i>	<i>6.9%</i>	<i>10.3%</i>
Firearms Trafficking	2007	-	100.0%	-	-	-
	2009	-	-	-	-	100.0%
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>5.3%</i>	<i>22.8%</i>	<i>24.6%</i>	<i>26.3%</i>	<i>21.1%</i>
Identity Theft	2007	-	50.0%	-	-	50.0%
	2009	-	-	-	-	100.0%
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>12.3%</i>	<i>22.8%</i>	<i>21.1%</i>	<i>21.1%</i>	<i>22.8%</i>
Kidnapping	2007	-	-	-	100.0%	-
	2009	-	-	-	-	100.0%
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>3.5%</i>	<i>1.8%</i>	<i>31.6%</i>	<i>42.1%</i>	<i>21.1%</i>
Murder	2007	-	-	100.0%	-	-
	2009	-	-	-	-	100.0%
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>3.6%</i>	<i>14.3%</i>	<i>28.6%</i>	<i>44.6%</i>	<i>8.9%</i>
Prostitution	2007	-	-	-	-	100.0%
	2009	-	-	-	-	100.0%
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>1.8%</i>	<i>5.3%</i>	<i>14.0%</i>	<i>40.4%</i>	<i>38.6%</i>
Robbery	2007	-	-	100.0%	-	-
	2009	-	-	-	-	100.0%
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>12.1%</i>	<i>29.3%</i>	<i>25.9%</i>	<i>20.7%</i>	<i>12.1%</i>
Sexual Assault/Rape	2007	-	-	-	-	100.0%
	2009	-	-	-	-	100.0%
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>1.8%</i>	<i>5.3%</i>	<i>31.6%</i>	<i>36.8%</i>	<i>24.6%</i>
Vandalism/Graffiti/Tagging	2007	-	100.0%	-	-	-
	2009	-	-	-	-	100.0%
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>57.1%</i>	<i>28.6%</i>	<i>8.9%</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>5.4%</i>

In 2008 there were no agencies that reported a gang presence in La Paz County.

In addition to the level of gang involvement by crime type, agencies rated the level of gang involvement in the distribution of various illegal drugs. The one agency with a gang presence in La Paz County reported a high level of gang involvement in street drug sales in 2009 (Table 5). Additionally, the agency reported a high level of involvement in the distribution of marijuana and methamphetamines.

Table 5: Gang Involvement in the Distribution of Drugs (Of the Jurisdictions Reporting Gang Activity)						
		High	Moderate	Low	None	Unknown
Drugs – Street Sales	2007	-	50.0%	50.0%	-	-
	2009	100.0%	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>29.3%</i>	<i>36.2%</i>	<i>27.6%</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>6.9%</i>
Drugs – Manufacture	2007	-	-	-	100.0%	-
	2009	-	-	-	-	100.0%
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>10.5%</i>	<i>36.8%</i>	<i>21.1%</i>	<i>31.6%</i>
Drugs – Wholesale	2007	-	50.0%	-	-	50.0%
	2009	-	-	-	-	100.0%
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>5.2%</i>	<i>29.3%</i>	<i>31.0%</i>	<i>8.6%</i>	<i>25.9%</i>
Marijuana Grows	2007	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	2009	-	-	-	-	100.0%
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>5.2%</i>	<i>41.4%</i>	<i>20.7%</i>	<i>32.8%</i>
Marijuana	2007	-	50.0%	50.0%	-	-
	2009	100.0%	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>44.8%</i>	<i>29.3%</i>	<i>15.5%</i>	<i>3.4%</i>	<i>6.9%</i>

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Methamphetamine	2007	-	100.0%	-	-	-
	2009	100.0%	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>31.6%</i>	<i>36.8%</i>	<i>14.0%</i>	<i>8.8%</i>	<i>8.8%</i>
Crack Cocaine	2007	-	50.0%	-	50.0%	-
	2009	-	100.0%	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>10.3%</i>	<i>12.1%</i>	<i>29.3%</i>	<i>32.8%</i>	<i>15.5%</i>
Heroin	2007	-	-	-	100.0%	-
	2009	-	-	100.0%	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>10.3%</i>	<i>29.3%</i>	<i>24.1%</i>	<i>19.0%</i>	<i>17.2%</i>
MDMA (Ecstasy) and analogs	2007	-	-	-	-	100.0%
	2009	-	-	-	-	100.0%
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>17.2%</i>	<i>27.6%</i>	<i>29.3%</i>	<i>25.9%</i>
Pharmaceuticals	2007	-	-	-	-	100.0%
	2009	-	-	-	-	100.0%
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>6.9%</i>	<i>24.1%</i>	<i>32.8%</i>	<i>10.3%</i>	<i>25.9%</i>
Powdered Cocaine	2007	-	50.0%	-	-	50.0%
	2009	-	-	-	-	100.0%
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>6.9%</i>	<i>13.8%</i>	<i>43.1%</i>	<i>20.7%</i>	<i>15.5%</i>

In 2008 there were no agencies that reported a gang presence in La Paz County.

*Level of Activity by Gang*

Law enforcement agencies reported the level of activity within their jurisdictions for 26 specific gangs. The list of gangs in the Arizona Gang Threat Assessment was selected based on the gangs listed in the National Gang Threat Assessment, allowing for a state and national comparison.

According to the 2009 response from the one agency with a gang presence in La Paz County, neighborhood-based drug trafficking groups/crews were rated as having a moderate level of involvement in its jurisdiction (Table 6). The agency did not respond to the level of activity for any additional gangs from the list. When given the opportunity to provide a gang not included in the list, the agency reported a moderate level of involvement for a "Native" gang.

<b>Table 6: Level of Activity by Gang (Of the Jurisdictions Reporting Gang Activity)</b>						
	<b>Year</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>	<b>Unknown</b>
Neighborhood-based Drug Trafficking Groups/Crews	2007	-	-	50.0%	50.0%	-
	2009	-	100.0%	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>8.6%</i>	<i>29.3%</i>	<i>22.4%</i>	<i>32.8%</i>	<i>6.9%</i>
18 <sup>th</sup> Street Gang	2007	-	-	-	50.0%	50.0%
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>1.8%</i>	<i>28.1%</i>	<i>59.6%</i>	<i>10.5%</i>
Almighty P Stone Nation	2007	-	-	-	50.0%	50.0%
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>7.0%</i>	<i>75.4%</i>	<i>17.5%</i>
Aryan Brotherhood	2007	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>5.3%</i>	<i>15.8%</i>	<i>45.6%</i>	<i>22.8%</i>	<i>10.5%</i>
Asian Gangs (all sets)	2007	-	-	-	50.0%	50.0%
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>12.5%</i>	<i>66.1%</i>	<i>21.4%</i>
Bandidos OMG	2007	-	-	50.0%	50.0%	-
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>1.8%</i>	<i>19.3%</i>	<i>66.7%</i>	<i>12.3%</i>

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Black Gangster Disciples	2007	-	-	-	50.0%	50.0%
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>1.8%</i>	<i>3.5%</i>	<i>10.5%</i>	<i>70.2%</i>	<i>14.0%</i>
Bloods (all sets)	2007	-	50.0%	-	-	50.0%
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>14.0%</i>	<i>14.0%</i>	<i>33.3%</i>	<i>26.3%</i>	<i>12.3%</i>
Border Brothers	2007	-	-	-	50.0%	50.0%
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>3.6%</i>	<i>28.6%</i>	<i>57.1%</i>	<i>10.7%</i>
Crips (all sets)	2007	-	50.0%	-	-	50.0%
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>15.8%</i>	<i>19.3%</i>	<i>26.3%</i>	<i>28.1%</i>	<i>10.5%</i>
Gangster Disciples	2007	-	-	-	50.0%	50.0%
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>1.8%</i>	<i>1.8%</i>	<i>21.1%</i>	<i>64.9%</i>	<i>10.5%</i>
Hells Angels OMG	2007	-	-	100.0%	-	-
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>5.3%</i>	<i>28.1%</i>	<i>29.8%</i>	<i>29.8%</i>	<i>7.0%</i>
Hispanic Norteños (14)	2007	-	-	100.0%	-	-
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>3.5%</i>	<i>8.8%</i>	<i>40.4%</i>	<i>38.6%</i>	<i>8.8%</i>
Hispanic Sureños (SUR 13)	2007	-	50.0%	50.0%	-	-
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>24.6%</i>	<i>33.3%</i>	<i>24.6%</i>	<i>12.3%</i>	<i>5.3%</i>
La Nuestra Familia	2007	-	-	-	50.0%	50.0%
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>1.8%</i>	<i>1.8%</i>	<i>10.5%</i>	<i>64.9%</i>	<i>21.1%</i>
La Raza	2007	-	-	-	50.0%	50.0%
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>14.0%</i>	<i>73.7%</i>	<i>12.3%</i>
Latin Kings	2007	-	-	-	50.0%	50.0%
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>1.8%</i>	<i>31.6%</i>	<i>54.4%</i>	<i>12.3%</i>
Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13)	2007	-	-	100.0%	-	-
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>5.3%</i>	<i>42.1%</i>	<i>40.4%</i>	<i>12.3%</i>
Mexican Mafia/La Eme	2007	-	-	100.0%	-	-
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>12.3%</i>	<i>15.8%</i>	<i>38.6%</i>	<i>21.1%</i>	<i>12.3%</i>
Mexikanemi (Texas Mexican Mafia)	2007	-	-	-	50.0%	50.0%
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>1.8%</i>	<i>78.6%</i>	<i>19.6%</i>
Outlaws OMG	2007	-	-	50.0%	50.0%	-
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>3.6%</i>	<i>12.5%</i>	<i>69.6%</i>	<i>14.3%</i>
Pagans OMG	2007	-	-	-	100.0%	-
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>8.9%</i>	<i>78.6%</i>	<i>12.5%</i>
Skinheads	2007	-	-	100.0%	-	-
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>5.3%</i>	<i>14.0%</i>	<i>42.1%</i>	<i>28.1%</i>	<i>10.5%</i>
Texas Syndicate	2007	-	-	-	50.0%	50.0%
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Arizona</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>3.5%</i>	<i>75.4%</i>	<i>21.1%</i>
UBN	2007	-	-	-	50.0%	50.0%
	2009	-	-	-	-	-

Arizona	2009	-	1.8%	8.9%	66.1%	23.2%
Vice Lords	2007	-	-	-	50.0%	50.0%
	2009	-	-	-	-	-
Arizona	2009	-	1.8%	10.5%	68.4%	19.3%

In 2008 there were no agencies that reported a gang presence in La Paz County.

*Level of Gang Coordination*

The survey also contained questions regarding gangs coordinating their activity with other gangs. The one agency with a gang presence in La Paz County did not respond to whether gangs were coordinating with other gangs. However, when given the chance to explain their response, the agency indicated that it was unknown but gangs appear to remain local (Table 7).

<b>Table 7: Gang Coordination with Other Gangs (Of the Jurisdictions Reporting Gang Activity)</b>			
	2007	2009	2009 Arizona
Yes	50.0%	-	44.6%
No	50.0%	-	42.9%
Unsure/Don't Know	-	-	12.5%
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>56</b>

In 2008 there were no agencies that reported a gang presence in La Paz County.

*Most Effective Gang Responses*

Agency respondents provided information pertaining to which strategies were effective in their respective jurisdictions when combating gangs. Prior to the 2009 assessment, agencies were asked to simply list any strategies that were effective within their jurisdictions. To make responses more consistent over time, researchers changed the question in the 2009 Arizona Gang Threat Assessment by instructing agency representatives to select from a number of response categories. The new response categories provide a range of activities that may not have been previously considered by the respondents during prior survey administrations. For this reason, the change in the structure of the question is a likely explanation for the large increases in some categories of interdiction, intervention, and suppression strategies.

The single La Paz County agency with a gang presence reported that community programs, enforcement, gang crime/intelligence data analyses, identification of gang members, and joint efforts with other agencies were the effective gang interdiction, intervention, or suppression strategies in its jurisdiction (Table 8).

<b>Table 8: Effective Gang Interdiction, Intervention, or Suppression Strategies</b>						
	2007		2009		2009 Arizona	
	Number of Agencies	Percent of Agencies	Number of Agencies	Percent of Agencies	Number of Agencies	Percent of Agencies
Community Programs	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	8	13.6%
Enforcement	1	50.0%	1	100.0%	46	78.0%
Gang Crime/Intelligence Data Analyses	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	22	37.3%
Identification of Gang Members	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	39	66.1%
Joint Efforts with Other Agencies	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	29	49.2%
GIITEM	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	34	57.6%
Law Enforcement Gang Units	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	19	32.2%
School Programs	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	17	28.8%
Special Prosecution Programs	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	13	22.0%

In 2008 there were no agencies that reported a gang presence in La Paz County.

Task Force Participation

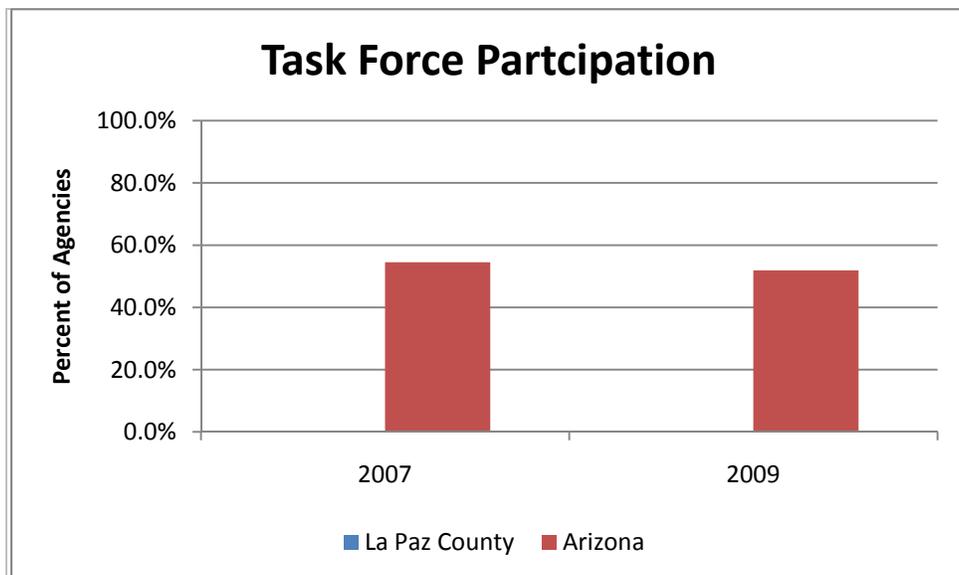
Under the direction of the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS), the Gang Intelligence and Immigration Team Enforcement Mission (GIITEM) assists criminal justice agencies statewide with multi-agency collaboration for criminal gang enforcement and investigative strategies. GIITEM brings together law enforcement agencies from federal, state, county, municipal, and tribal jurisdictions in a coordinated, intelligence-driven approach to suppress gang presence on a large scale.

In 2006, after several years of declining resources and downsizing operations resulting from state revenue shortfalls, DPS received funding to revitalize GIITEM and enhance its mission to include combating illegal immigration and human smuggling. More specifically, GIITEM is charged with:

- 1) Deterring criminal gang activity through investigations, arrest and prosecution;
- 2) Dismantling gang-related criminal enterprises;
- 3) Deterring border-related crimes;
- 4) Disrupting human smuggling organizations;
- 5) Collecting, analyzing and disseminating gang and illegal immigration intelligence; and
- 6) Providing anti-gang awareness training to communities and schools.

In the 2007 and 2008 Arizona Gang Threat Assessment, agencies were asked if they *participate* or *lead* a multi-agency task force. In 2009, agencies were only asked if they *participate* in a multi-agency gang task force. In 2009, the agency with a gang presence reportedly did not participate in a multi-agency task force (Figure 3). However, the agency noted that they are in the process of developing an IGA with the Department of Public Safety.

Figure 3



In 2008 there were no agencies that reported a gang presence in La Paz County.

## **Conclusion**

Gang activity continues to negatively affect one law enforcement jurisdiction in La Paz County and a number of jurisdictions throughout Arizona. The one respondent from La Paz County reported gang involvement in crime and drug distribution within its jurisdiction during 2009. The one agency reported a high level of gang involvement in the distribution of marijuana and methamphetamines. The agency also cited gang involvement in assaults/aggravated assaults and threatening/intimidation as a concern within its jurisdiction.

The only gang category identified for having a moderate level of gang involvement in 2009 was the neighborhood-based drug trafficking groups/crews affiliation. In 2007, one agency listed this gang category as having a low level of involvement in its jurisdiction.

Over the past three years, law enforcement agencies in La Paz County have reported a decrease in the presence of gangs in their jurisdictions, but concern about gang activity is still prevalent. The number of agencies reporting gangs and gang activity has decreased from two in 2007 to one in 2009. Nonetheless, the data reveals that the law enforcement agency with a gang presence in 2009 was concerned about the high level of gang involvement in arson in 2009, which is an increase from the low level of involvement reported throughout La Paz County in 2007.

The data collected from local law enforcement agencies illustrates what many working in the criminal justice system already know: at least one La Paz County community, communities across the state, and the law enforcement agencies that serve these communities continue to face a gang problem. Through the research work of the SAC, the ACJC intends for the La Paz County gang profile and the state gang report to inform policy makers, practitioners, and other stakeholders on gangs and gang activity both at the state and county level.