5.   Law Enforcement Data

This section will cover two sources of data that can be collected to assess local gang involvement in crime and to get detailed information about the demographics, culture, and climate of local gangs:

1.   Gang intelligence databases/files
2.   Police incident reports

Table 1 identifies the questions to be answered about gang characteristics and gang crime in the community, the information that will be needed to answer those questions, and the sources of that information.

Table 1—Law Enforcement Data			
Questions to Be Answered	**Information Needed to Answer**	**Sources of Information**	**How to Obtain**
1. What gangs are active? How many members are in each gang? What are their ages, races, and genders?	Name of gang, number of members, demographic makeup	Gang intelligence files, law enforcement records	Law enforcement partners must access this data from gang intelligence files.
2. What crimes are gangs/gang members committing? How has this changed over time?	Police incident report analysis by crime, broken out by gang/nongang	Police incident reports	Law enforcement partners must collect this data from existing hard-copy reports or automated systems.
3. Where/when are gang crimes being committed?	Police incident report analysis of location, date and time		
4. Who is committing gang crimes? Who are the victims of gang crimes?	Age, race, gender		

Gang Intelligence

Gang information is collected by law enforcement officers through observation, informants, field interviews, or questioning of suspects or other persons. This information is used to identify active gangs and gang members in the community and is used primarily to enhance law enforcement effectiveness in suppression and investigation strategies. This information is protected, confidential information about individuals and groups. For this reason, it can be collected and analyzed only by law enforcement personnel.

In many cases, local and statewide intelligence information on gangs is stored in databases.   Databases and intelligence systems for the purposes of tracking gang members have been in existence in many cities since the mid-1980s. Systems range from localized databases maintained by individual or metro law enforcement agencies, to statewide systems (such as CalGang), to national databases maintained by the Regional Information Sharing Systems® (RISS) Intelligence Centers. Additionally, a field on the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) database can identify individuals as "violent gang members."

Some state and local gang databases feed information on individual gang members to NCIC, thus making this intelligence accessible nationwide.

Many statewide systems (CalGang and Florida GangNet) are based on the GangNet program developed by SRA International, Inc. This program allows for collection of a wide variety of information on individuals, including name, vital information, photographs (facial and tattoos), vehicle information, nicknames/monikers, and known associates. The program can be accessed at participating agencies through intranets or nodes. Participating agencies may also be able to enter data into the system along with accessing it. Other systems, particularly local ones, allow for less detailed data collection on individuals. Most statewide systems (e.g., CalGang, Florida GangNet, Utah Law Enforcement Information Network [ULEIN]) were created or developed, or are presently maintained, with U.S. Department of Justice funds.

Local systems may be as comprehensive as these state systems or may rely on relatively simple software that can be purchased at a computer or office supply store. Some systems were specifically developed by software designers to integrate with existing law enforcement agency incident reporting software. Definitions of "gang," "gang member," and "gang associate," and the criteria used to index groups and individuals, may vary greatly within states from one local agency to another, and from state to state.

For example, the Houston Police Department in Houston, Texas, maintains the Suspect Imaging Database System (SIDS) through its Criminal Intelligence Division (CID). Entries into this database are regulated by state statute. Data from the SIDS is also forwarded to a statewide gang intelligence system maintained by the Texas Department of Public Safety.

Similarly, the Salt Lake Area Gang Project in Salt Lake City, Utah, the Salt Lake Metro Gang Unit, utilizes the Gang Reporting Evaluation and Tracking (GREAT) system (a system developed and used in California prior to adoption of CalGang) to collect data on known or suspected gang members. This information is forwarded to ULEIN and to NCIC.

The California Department of Justice maintains the CalGang system, but participating agencies can enter information on suspected/known gang members and also access information from around the state.

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) maintains the GangNet database. Many local agencies choose to participate, but others elect to use their own local databases. Data entered into Florida's GangNet system must meet the criteria established in Florida State Code 874, which defines the criteria for indexing a gang member or gang associate.

An analysis of existing gang intelligence can be used to answer questions such as:

- Which gangs are active?
- How many members are in each gang?
- Who is involved in gangs (by age, race, and gender)?

These data are useful to determine the size and threat level of the local gang problem, to identify target populations (by demographic patterns) for intervention and prevention services, and to focus suppression activities. They are also useful as a basis of comparison with demographics of perpetrators gathered from the police incident reports. These data are accessible only to law enforcement personnel and should be provided only to those outside law enforcement in the aggregate analyzed form, without using individual names or references.

Analyzing Gang Characteristics:

For each gang identified in the target community, provide the information for the most current year. The following data variables are helpful to describe each gang and can be illustrated as shown in **Table 2**.

- Name of gang
- Number of members
- Gender (number of males, number of females)
- Racial composition (percentage)
- Age (percentage)

Table 2—Age and Ethnicity, Most Active South Park Gangs									
	Age						Ethnicity			
Gang Name	<10	10–14	15–17	18–21	21–24	>24	Hispanic	Anglo	Black	Other
Brown Town	0	0	3	27	21	16	64	1	2	0
Central Park	0	0	6	21	24	16	58	10	0	0
The Mob	0	0	2	7	4	1	11	3	0	0
Puro Locos	0	0	0	6	1	0	5	2	0	0
Puro Varrio	0	0	3	15	8	2	25	1	2	0
Puro Vatos	0	0	6	35	4	7	35	18	0	0
South East Block*	0	0	15	20	5	0	40	0	0	0
South East Crips	0	0	0	15	10	5	28	7	0	0
South East Gangstas	0	0	8	25	27	13	55	17	1	0
Hoova Crips	0	0	3	8	0	0	6	5	0	0

After these data from the intelligence file are organized, the Assessment Work Group should report to the Steering Committee on the aggregate gang data and should address the answers to the following questions:

1. How many gangs are active in the community?
2. Which gangs are most active?
3. What kinds of activities are these gangs engaged in? (The police incident data can be helpful in answering this question.)
4. How many members are in each gang?
5. What is each gang's makeup by age, race, and gender?
6. Have any of these demographics changed over time? In what ways?

A sample narrative that describes the answers to some of these questions is shown in **Exhibit 5.1**.

Exhibit 5.1
Gang Descriptive Data

A case-by-case review of violent, gang-related crimes committed in South Park indicates that more than 60 gangs were involved in criminal activity in the community between 1999 and 2001, committing at least one crime in the area. Of these 60 gangs, 10 were responsible for 65 percent of the community's violent, gang-related crime.

The membership of these ten gangs is largely youth and young adults, with 73 percent of the documented membership between the ages of 15 and 24. The membership of the gangs is heavily Hispanic and almost exclusively male.

While these statistics reflect the number of gang members documented in the gang intelligence database, street-level outreach workers provide important context about the history and activity of the gangs in the area.

- **Brown Town**—One of the oldest gangs in East Hills, BT has been around since the late '70s and inspired the formation of other gangs in the area. The gang recruited juveniles heavily during the mid-'90s to sell drugs and commit burglaries and robberies. Many juveniles incarcerated during the '90s are now adult prison gang members who will soon be paroled. The gang is also known for auto thefts, drug trafficking, and terroristic threats.

- **Central Park**—South Park's most active and violent gang, Central Park is responsible for several gang-related murders and increasing numbers of robberies, and it is known to sell large amounts of drugs for prison gangs.

- **The Mob**—Formed in the early '90s for protection from Crip sets in East Hills and Central Park, MOB developed an intense rivalry with Central Park that led to weekly drive-by shootings in the early '90s. The gang is rumored to have connections to prison gangs and is known to engage in auto theft, major drug sales, assaults, and home invasions.

- **Puro Locos**—Formed in the mid-'90s, PL has many members who are undocumented immigrants. The gang is known to sell drugs and commit auto thefts, aggravated assaults, assaults, burglaries, and minor offenses.

- **Puro Varrio**—Known for auto theft, major drug selling, assaults, and home invasions, PV members are largely juveniles who attend schools in the assessment area. The gang has been linked to prison gangs.

- **South East Block**—This gang was started around the mid- to late '90s and was very active at the time.

- **South East Crips**—Known for auto thefts, drug sales, assaults, home invasions, and murders, SECC has continued to grow by recruiting members from Smith Middle School and LeGrando Park. The gang is rumored to have connections to prison gangs.

- **Hoova Crips**—The first Crip set in southeast Metropolis, HC has had a lasting influence. HC members engage in auto thefts, drug sales, assaults, and home invasions.

Police Incident Data
Law enforcement agencies are the best sources of information about gang crime in the community. The goals of using information from police incident reports are to determine the level and types of crimes committed by local gangs; to determine who is committing the majority of gang crimes, demographically and by gang affiliation; and to establish parameters for further data-collection activities.

Automated Systems
Some agencies already use an automated system to segregate gang crimes from nongang crimes in their incident-reporting systems. Most of the agencies use one of two major definitions for this purpose, member-based or motive-based. These definitions were discussed in greater detail in **Exhibit 2.3** in Chapter 2.

Some police agencies already segregate gang crimes from nongang crimes in their incident-reporting systems. This method, usually seen as a field or checkbox on the initial and/or follow-up report forms, makes the process of determining the level and extent of gang crime in a community substantially easier. However, even this system is prone to error. Police incident reports are often submitted by patrol officers, who receive little or no gang training and may prefer to err on the side of caution if they are unsure of the status of the incident or the parties involved. This may result in underreporting of actual crimes in which gang members are involved.

Even if crimes are already segregated as gang or nongang, it is recommended that law enforcement agency personnel audit at least three months' worth of incident reports within key offense categories. At a minimum, it is recommended that law enforcement agencies examine:

- Homicide
- Aggravated assault
- Robbery
- Weapons offenses
- Drive-by shootings (if a separate category from aggravated assault)
- Other crime categories of importance to the community

The auditing process involves reading the available report details and determining whether an incident is likely to have been a gang incident. The focus for the purposes of this assessment is on violent crimes that tend to have more detail in suspect/witness/victim statements and the investigating officer's description of the incident. These descriptions and statements contain the majority of information connecting this incident to gangs. The reports should be examined with an eye for details that might connect the incident to gangs, including:

- Common identifiers of known gangs (colors, bandanas, beads, etc.)
- Verbal expressions of gang affiliation (shoutouts, etc.)
- Groups of similarly dressed victims or witnesses
- Incidents occurring in known gang areas or at known addresses
- Patterns fitting an existing trend in gang activity

Officers found that they could review approximately 20 incidents per hour, per person. This process was made significantly less expensive by having light-duty officers, interns, or analysts review the reports initially; segregating instances that appeared to have gang involvement; and setting aside a reduced number of reports for a second review by experienced gang officers.

It may also be possible to search for incidents involving known gang members as suspects, victims, or witnesses. However, the Assessment Work Group should be aware that this data may be skewed by any existing gaps in the gang intelligence data.

Ultimately, the number of crimes identified through the audit process and the number identified by the system's automated process should be compared to establish reliability. If there is a large discrepancy between the number of suspected gang crimes and the number identified by the automated system, this discrepancy should be addressed by a more thorough review of the reports. In some communities with automated systems to segregate gang incidents from overall crimes, audits found that at least 80 percent of gang incidents were being missed by this system.

Paper Incident Reports

If the system is not automated, a manual review of incident reports within specific crime categories, for a period determined by key policymakers participating in the assessment, should be conducted as described above. Experience shows that at least six months to a year of records should be reviewed. This manual review will create a much clearer picture of the extent and level of gang crime in the community. In most communities, conducting manual reviews and/or audits of police incident reports was found to be time-consuming but worthwhile.

Collecting Necessary Data

A sample gang data collection sheet may assist in ensuring that all of the important data is collected from the incident reports. The form is found in **Exhibit 5.2** on page 44.

Exhibit 5.2
Sample Police Incident Report Data Collection Sheet

Gang Incident Data Collection Sheet					
Incident Report #:	**Date of Incident:**	**Time of Day:**	**Day of Week:**	**Month:**	**Type of Crime:**

Crime Code:	Location where incident occurred:

Suspect 1: Gang Affiliation:	**Gender**		**Estimated Age**		**Race/Ethnicity:**	
	Male		<10		African American/black	
Yes	Female		10–14		Hispanic/Latino	
No			15–17		Caucasian/white	
Unk			18–21		Asian	
Gang:			22–24		Native American/American Indian	
			>24		Other (specify):	

Suspect 2: Gang Affiliation:	**Gender**		**Estimated Age**		**Race/Ethnicity:**	
	Male		<10		African American/black	
Yes	Female		10–14		Hispanic/Latino	
No			15–17		Caucasian/white	
Unk			18–21		Asian	
Gang:			22–24		Native American/American Indian	
			>24		Other (specify):	

Suspect 3: Gang Affiliation:	**Gender**		**Estimated Age**		**Race/Ethnicity:**	
	Male		<10		African American/black	
Yes	Female		10–14		Hispanic/Latino	
No			15–17		Caucasian/white	
Unk			18–21		Asian	
Gang:			22–24		Native American/American Indian	
			>24		Other (specify):	

Victim 1: Gang Affiliation:	**Gender**		**Estimated Age**		**Race/Ethnicity:**	
	Male		<10		African American/black	
Yes	Female		10–14		Hispanic/Latino	
No	**Relationship to suspect:**		15–17		Caucasian/white	
Unk			18–21		Asian	
Gang:	Acquaintance		22–24		Native American/American Indian	
	Stranger		>24		Other (specify):	

Victim 2: Gang Affiliation:	**Gender**		**Estimated Age**		**Race/Ethnicity:**	
	Male		<10		African American/black	
Yes	Female		10–14		Hispanic/Latino	
No	**Relationship to suspect:**		15–17		Caucasian/white	
Unk			18–21		Asian	
Gang:	Acquaintance		22–24		Native American/American Indian	
	Stranger		>24		Other (specify):	

Other relevant information (list):

Analyzing Police Incident Data

To determine the proportion of gang crime to overall crime in the community, gang crime must be compared with nongang crime. For purposes of a gang assessment, the number of overall offenses in the community by type, as well as the number and percentage of offenses committed by gangs, should be collected and reported.

Using the data from police incident reports, answers to the following questions should also be considered:

1. How much of the overall crime problem is attributed to gangs?
2. What crimes are gang members committing?
3. Has this changed over time? In what ways?

A sample analysis of crime data is shown in **Table 3**.

Table 3—Sample Analysis of Crime Data									
Crime category	**2004**			**2005**			**2006**		
	All	**Gang**	**%**	**All**	**Gang**	**%**	**All**	**Gang**	**%**
Homicide	10	3	30%	19	7	37%	13	6	46%
Aggravated assault	399	40	10%	322	54	17%	295	49	17%
Robbery	281	30	11%	239	44	18%	292	57	20%

Analyzing Suspect Characteristics

The purpose of these data is to identify the demographics and gang affiliation of gang members who are most predisposed to commit gang crimes so that effective prevention, intervention, and suppression responses can be designed.

Answers to the following questions should be considered:

1. Who is committing gang crimes by age, race, and gender?
2. Which gangs commit the most serious (violent) crimes?
3. Which gangs are most involved in drug-related crimes?
4. How has the offender profile changed over time (older/younger offenders, race, and gender)?

Table 4 contains a sample analysis of gang suspects.

Table 4—Sample Analysis of Demographics	
Gang Crime Suspect Profile	
Average suspects per crime	2.60
Hispanic	89.45%
African American	8.41%
Caucasian	1.88%
Male	96.19%
Female	3.81%
Under 10 years old	.08%
10–14 years old	5.59%
15–17 years old	21.39%
18–21 years old	40.30%
22–24 years old	14.53%
Over 24 years old	18.12%
Known gang member	75.24%
Suspected gang member	18.85%
Hoova Crips	12
Brown Town	13
Central Park	74
The Mob	37
Puro Locos	9
Puro Vatos	36
South East Block	41
South East Crips	44
Southeast Gangstas	44

Source: Tabulation of crime review performed by Metropolis Police Department.

Analyzing Victim Characteristics

If available, information about the victims of gang crime should also be collected. The purpose of these data is to determine whether victims are affiliated with gangs, innocent bystanders, age, race, gender, etc.

Answers to the following questions should be considered:

1. Who are the victims of these crimes (age, race, gender)?
2. How often are the victims other gang members?
3. What are the patterns of offender and victim gang affiliation over time?

After these data are organized, they should be reported to the Steering Committee, using aggregate information from the data. These data can be illustrated by using appropriate tables, charts, or other graphics as shown in **Table 5**.

Table 5—Gang Crime Victim Profile	
Average victims per crime	1.34
Hispanic	92.49%
Male	76.26%
Female	23.74%
Under 10 years old	.85%
10–14 years old	5.81%
15–17 years old	11.38%
18–21 years old	19.25%
22–24 years old	10.29%
Over 24 years old	52.42%
Known/suspected gang member	2.40%
Relation to suspect:	
Stranger	49.12%
Acquaintance	43.82%
Rival gang member	3.89%
Bystander	3.18%

When and Where Gang Crimes Are Committed

The crime data also provides information about <u>when</u> and <u>where</u> gang offenses occur in the community. This information should be broken down by month. From that point, the data can be used for shaping police responses by considering the time of day and day of week that these incidents are committed. When these data are collected on a timely basis, police enforcement patterns can be shifted rapidly to deal with gang crime trends.

Answers to the following questions should be considered:

1. When are gang crimes being committed (month, day of week, time of day)?
2. Where are gang crimes being committed?
3. Are gang crimes more concentrated in particular areas of the community?
4. Are the patterns similar for Part 1 and other gang crimes? Where are the differences?

Using the data on when and where gang crimes are committed, the Assessment Work Group should report to the Steering Committee on trends and indicators. It is helpful to display aggregated data using tables, charts, or other graphics, such as those shown in **Tables 6 and 7**.
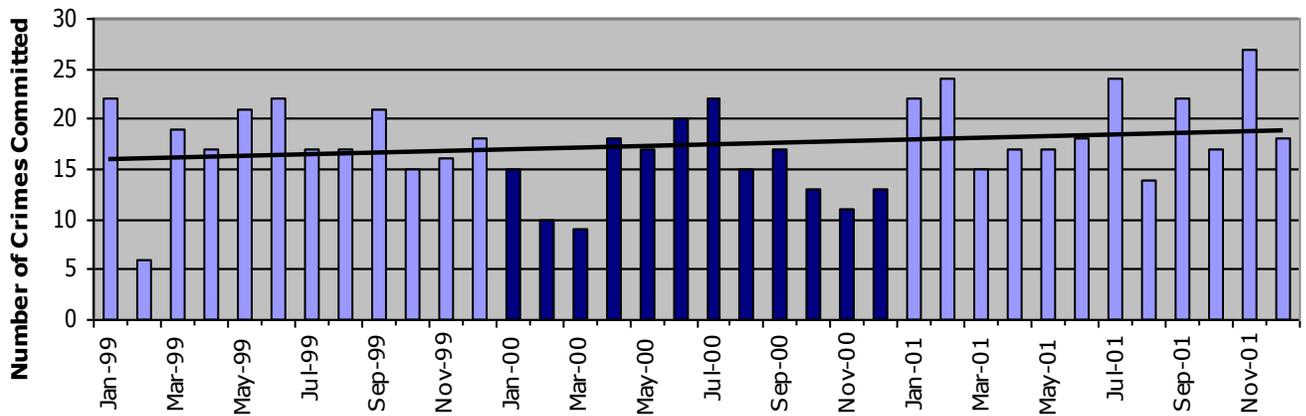
Table 6—Gang-Related Crime Time Series by Month

Table 7—Gang-Related Crimes by Time of Day