

Guns and Gangs Update

January 26, 2015

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Background – Gangs In Ottawa

- September 2000 Ottawa Police begin to see evidence of the re-emergence of gangs and gang activity (post Ace Crew)
- The Ottawa Police Gang Unit was established in late January 2001
- DART was established in 2007 through PAVIS funding
- Ottawa Gang Strategy – Crime Prevention Ottawa, Youth Services Bureau, John Howard Society, OPS Youth Section , Ottawa Community Housing and more



Overview

- Guns and Gangs is a top operational priority for OPS
- Focused on prevention, enforcement, suppression and proactive policing
- Increase in targeted, street gang-related incidents of shots fired with common linkages
 - Illegal drug trade
 - Availability of hand guns
 - Increased willingness of street gang members to use them



Gang Presence in Ottawa

- 400-500 gang members or associates
- 15 gangs
- 83 gang members and associates arrested with hundreds of charges laid (2014)
- 29 street gang members arrested in breach of conditions (2014)
- 49 incidents of shots fired in 2014 compared to 30 in 2013.
- 18 people injured



Illegal guns in Ottawa

- 50+ crime guns seized by the OPS, more than half were handguns (2014)
 - 60% of crime guns in Ontario are foreign-sourced and smuggled into Canada – often originating in the United States
 - 20% domestically sourced
 - 20% no known origin



OPS Response

- Increased enforcement
- Reassignment of resources
- Doubled number of investigators in Guns and Gangs Unit
- Patrol, District (NHOs), and Drug Unit focused on investigating, charging and keeping close tabs on known gang associates and prolific offenders
- Compliance checks conducted by Direct Action Response Team (DART) to ensure no breach of conditions





Overall OPS Strategy

- Long-term enforcement and suppression effort
- Active partner in Crime Prevention Ottawa's Gang Strategy
- Policing is only part of the solution
 - Support and help for individuals and families vulnerable to the gang lifestyle.
 - Exit strategies and community involvement



Ottawa Gang Strategy

- Supporting Ottawa Gang Strategy to curtail future gang membership working with:
 - Children’s Aid Society
 - Community partners such as John Howard Society and You Turn to reach out to younger siblings and break the cycle of violence in families
- Youth Services Bureau building a Trades Centre to offer training, employment possibilities creating realistic and sustainable sources of income
- Information sessions attended by hundreds of people and relationship building exercises



Going Forward...

- Ongoing enforcement and suppression focused on street gangs
 - Projects Calamity and Karma
- Working with the Courts
- Continued participation with Ottawa Gang Strategy
 - Conference on February 27, 2015
Gangs, Trauma and Community: Improving Outcomes
- PAVIS funding for DART



Questions?