



Questions & Answers

Q. What kind of information is found in the report?

- A. This public report presents a current overview of organized and serious crime activity affecting Canada, with a particular focus on activity over the past year. The groups and issues highlighted in this report are reviewed and determined annually by CISC's Executive Committee, which is comprised of representatives from Canadian senior law enforcement management.

For additional details on the report's conclusions see The 2003 CISC Annual Report - Highlights document.

Q. Why is this report important to Canadians?

- A. The activities and workings of criminal organizations are often complex and can be hidden from the everyday world. This report provides the public with current, relevant information that informs and educates Canadians about the scope and impact of organized crime affecting Canada. Organized crime does have an impact, whether it be subtle or apparent, on all of us - it affects the fabric of our society and we all have a role to play in fighting organized crime.

Some examples of how organized crime impacts our daily lives include:

- Stolen vehicles cost Canadians and Canadian business \$1 billion per year.
- Individuals lose their vehicles, while automobile insurance rates rise in response to those thefts. According to the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, organized crime can be attributed to approximately 25% of these thefts.
- Credit card and bank fraud - organized crime groups have demonstrated their ability to exploit technology to facilitate credit and debit card fraud. Individual Canadians have been victimized by having unauthorized withdrawals from their bank accounts or their credit cards used to the maximum limit.
- Drug trafficking - many lives are significantly impacted by the economic

- and social effects of illicit drug use.
- Sexual exploitation of children - children, of all people in our society, should be able to enjoy their childhood free of exploitation of any kind. Globally, individuals and groups have targeted children for sexual exploitation, increasingly for profit.
- Violence goes hand in hand with many organized crime activities. Unfortunately, the innocent can be victimized directly or indirectly by this violence.

Q. What types of organized crime is CISC monitoring?

- A. Through its Executive Committee, CISC annually sets national intelligence priorities for its membership. In addition, CISC establishes organized or serious crime issues for ongoing monitoring by the membership.

Currently, CISC national intelligence priorities include:

- ▶ Aboriginal-based organized crime
- ▶ Asian-based organized crime
- ▶ Eastern European-based organized crime
- ▶ Outlaw Motorcycle gangs
- ▶ Organized Crime at Marine Ports
- ▶ Traditional (Italian-based) organized crime

CISC national monitored issues include:

- ▶ contraband tobacco and alcohol
- ▶ illicit movement of firearms
- ▶ technology and crime
- ▶ organized crime and the diamond industry
- ▶ sexual exploitation of children, and
- ▶ street gangs

Q. The purpose of the report is to educate the public and seek support and involvement in the effort to counter organized crime. How does the public play a part in this fight without risking their personal security?

- A. First, by being aware of the negative impact of organized crime the public can better protect itself from being victimized.

By recognizing criminal activities most frequently attributed to organized crime, the public can contact law enforcement agencies to report any suspicious activities and aid in minimizing organized crime.

Q. What does CISC contribute to the fight against organized crime?

- A. CISC is a living model of integrated law enforcement.
- ▶ Through CISC, approximately 380 different law enforcement agencies across Canada work together in a collective effort to detect, reduce and prevent organized and serious crime affecting Canada.
 - ▶ By working together to gather and share intelligence about organized crime activities, we have a more comprehensive understanding about the many facets of organized crime, and an enhanced ability to respond collectively in the interest of public safety.
 - ▶ This national service is committed to detecting, reducing and preventing organized and serious crime affecting Canada, while using precious resources effectively.

Q. Can you give some specific examples of things that have happened in the past year that have diminished organized criminal activity?

- A. There have been many successes in the past year. Here are just a few examples:
- ▶ **Project RIP** - the arrest of 32 people associated with Traditional (Italian-based) organized crime. These individuals were involved in the distribution of marihuana, ecstasy, GHB (gamma hydroxy butyrate) anabolic steroids, psilocybin (magic mushrooms), credit card fraud and stolen goods.
 - ▶ In April 2003, 42 individuals, including 14 Hells Angels full patch members from five Ontario chapters, were arrested as the result of **Operation SHIRLEA**, a joint forces police operation based in the greater Toronto area.
 - ▶ **Project RETIRE**, a three-year joint forces operation targeting the Outlaws motorcycle gang, concluded in September 2002 with the arrests of approximately 60 individuals, including 40 full patch members, two US based members, the US national vice-president, and the international president. Over 700 charges were laid and include: participating in a criminal organization, accessory after the fact, murder, attempted murder possession of property obtained by crime and firearm offences. Five Outlaws' clubhouses in Ontario were also seized. The Outlaws in Ontario are currently in disarray, and their criminal influence is diminished.
 - ▶ **Project AMIGOS** targeted the Bandidos outlaw motorcycle gang and resulted in the virtual elimination of the criminal influence of this group in Ontario and Quebec in the past year. This operation concluded with over 60 arrests with charges of gangsterism and murder, among others. To date 29 individuals have entered guilty pleas and 30 others are awaiting trial.
 - ▶ The **Diamond Industry** in Canada is starting to produce diamonds. It is recognized that this commodity, a readily convertible form of currency, could draw the attention of organized crime, as observed in other

countries with active diamond mines. As a preventative measure, the RCMP's Diamond Protection Service, other law enforcement agencies, CISC, and the diamond industry are working proactively to detect and prevent illegal activities of organized crime that could disrupt the new diamond industry in Canada.

- ▶ In 2002, Québec-based police investigations disrupted a long-standing child prostitution ring run by a Québec City based street gang.
- ▶ An elaborate debit card fraud scheme, generating approximately \$1.2 million dollars in profits for a Vancouver-based Eastern European-based organized crime group, was disrupted by law enforcement in December 2002.

Q. You say that these reports are issued to raise the Canadian public's awareness of the complexity and prevalence of organized crime in Canada. What can the public do to help?

A. If members of the public have any information on criminal activity in their communities, or wish to report criminal activity, we urge them to contact their local police service.

Persons aware specifically of outlaw motorcycle gang activity can contact:
Canada (except province of Québec) 1-877-660-4321
Quebec 1-800-659-GANG (4264)

For more information on the 2003 CISC Annual Report, please visit <http://www.cisc.gc.ca/>