

Role of the N.C. SAC in Shaping Gang Policy



JRSA National Conference

October 2010

Relationship to SAA

North Carolina Criminal Justice Analysis Center
Research section (SAC) of Governor's Crime
Commission (SAA)

Dept. Crime Control & Public Safety

Commission staff includes CJ Planners

Commission - 44 members appointed & ex-officio

Awards all OJP grant funds

Policy advisory board to Governor



Original 1999 Study

- Approached Executive Management
- Gangs not a pressing issue w/ Committees
- Sold survey to JJ planners as exploratory study
- Surveyed LE agencies, juvenile court counselors, SROs
- Report released – garnered media attention

2000-2004

- JJ Committee prioritizes gang programs
- DCSI Committee follows
- JJ and Byrne funds allocated (data driven)
- Grant special conditions to provide data
- Pounding pavement w/ conference presentations
- Legislature takes notice
- Replication of 1999 study

2005-2007

Sec. of CC & PS requests Hispanic/Latino study after media accounts of MS-13

GangNet Development - (SAC gang definition)

Street Gang Crime Prevention Act

Legislative Appropriations

\$ 2 million (FY 05/06)

\$ 1.5 million (FY 06/07)

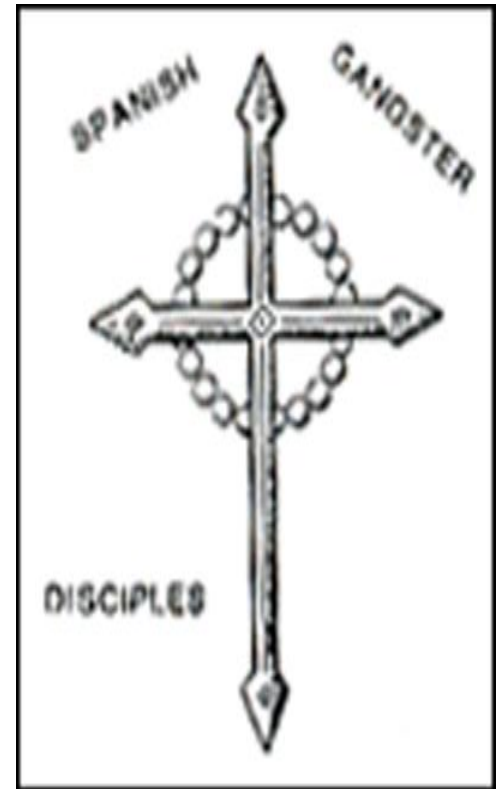
\$ 4.8 million (FY 07/08)



2008 Comprehensive Legislative Study

Mandated by General Assembly Study Components:

1. Assess gang activity in communities known to have gangs, including any connections between gang activity and organized crime.
2. Consult with the Department of Correction to assess gang activity in the state's prisons.
3. Consult with the Department of Public Instruction, Department of Justice and the Department of Correction on any gang prevention initiatives they have in place or have administered in the past.

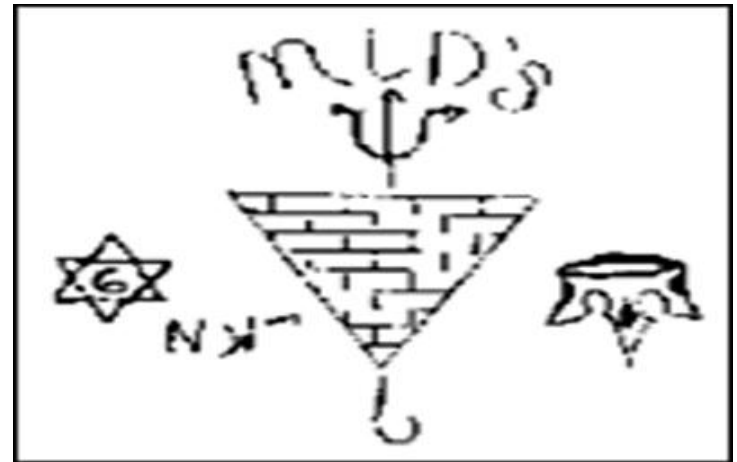


2008 Comprehensive Legislative Study

4. Summarize significant gang prevention, intervention and suppression programs that have been administered by local law enforcement, state agencies, local governments and community-based organizations and evaluate those programs for effectiveness.
5. Review accepted best practices in gang prevention and evaluate whether or not increasing penalties will mitigate gang activity.
6. Project the growth of gang activity over the next five years and identify the locations where that activity is expected to occur.
7. Provide recommendations on ways to use state and local resources to improve the effectiveness of future gang prevention initiatives.

2009-

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- Annual updates/tracking of gangs now included in General Statutes
 - Will staff Governor's Street Gang Task Force – 2 new SAC positions



Conclusion

- Research has a place in policy making, but that place is a supportive role in the decision making process. In criminal justice policy planning agencies, moral ideologies dictate decision making. Criminal justice decision making is implemented through a hierarchical and bureaucratic system in which political realities and opportunities govern final decision making and implementation of policy.
- Criminal justice policy making is incremental, it's a process. Researchers who understand this dynamic process will have more influence within that system.

Garrison, A. (2009). The influence of research on criminal justice policy making . Professional Issues in Criminal Justice 4(1) , 9-21.

Conclusion

- “If we can avail ourselves of existing opportunities to use our skills and knowledge, a funny thing might happen to our research on the way to the publisher—it might be used”

McCoy, C. (1975). The impact of an impact study: Contributions of sociology to decision making in government. *Environment and Behavior*, 7 (3), 358–372.