

## Comparing Characteristics, Institutional Adjustment, and Post-Release Success of Security Threat Groups (STGs)

*STG affiliated offenders are a diverse group with unique and complex needs.*

### Why we did this study

This study was conducted to examine the characteristics of the various Security Threat Groups (STGs) under the jurisdiction of the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC). STG affiliated offenders pose a number of operational and behavioural challenges in correctional settings. Understanding the specific characteristics and behaviours of various STG groups may assist in the management of these offenders during incarceration and identify how CSC can best support their reintegration into the community.

### What we did

In total, 3,889 men federal offenders and 93 women were identified as STG affiliated between FY2014-2015 to FY2018-2019. Fifty-nine percent of the STG affiliated men ( $N = 2,299$ ) were in-custody while 41% ( $N = 1,590$ ) were on release in the community. For women, 44% percent ( $N = 41$ ) were in-custody while 56% ( $N = 52$ ) were on release in the community. Demographic, sentence and offence information, institutional behaviour, and post-release outcomes were examined.

### What we found

Among STG affiliated men, incarcerated and community offenders affiliated with outlaw motorcycle gangs or traditional organized crime (OMG/TOC) tended to be older, and serving longer sentences for drug related offences, whereas men in street, Indigenous, and prison gangs tended to be younger and convicted of violent offences. Incarcerated men in street gangs had lower static factor ratings both at intake and during the study period than the other STG groups. Offenders affiliated with Indigenous gangs in the community had higher static risk and men in prison gangs had overall higher dynamic need and were more likely to have a low reintegration potential. Incarcerated men in prison gangs were most likely to have guilty disciplinary charges and institutional incidents while OMG/TOC affiliated offenders were least likely. Among community STG affiliated men, offenders affiliated with Indigenous gangs were most likely to have a suspension during release and return to custody while OMG/TOC affiliated offenders were least likely.

On average, incarcerated STG affiliated women were twenty-nine years of age, serving their first federal sentence, and convicted of violent offences; however, women in Indigenous gangs were more likely to be serving sentences of four years or more and convicted of violent offences compared to women in street gangs. In contrast, community STG affiliated women tended to be slightly older, serving shorter sentences and less likely to be convicted of violent offences, with comparable rates across STG subgroup. Both the in-custody and community cohorts had similar static risk and dynamic need profiles, where a large proportion of both groups had moderate to high reintegration potential, motivation and accountability levels and were engaged in their correctional plan. All STG affiliated women had institutional incidents and the majority had guilty disciplinary charges, regardless of STG group. Among community STG affiliated women, women in street gangs were more likely to be suspended while women in Indigenous gangs were more likely to return to custody.

### What it means

This study represents a comprehensive profile of in-custody and community STG affiliated men and women, where the results highlight the unique and complex needs of STG affiliated offenders. As such, management and intervention approaches may be able to use these unique profiles to assist in responding to the diverse needs of STG affiliated offenders. Research examining the differences between STG affiliated and non-affiliated offenders is in progress.

### For more information

Farrell MacDonald, S., Smeth, A., Cram, S., & Derksen, D. *Comparing characteristics, institutional adjustment, and post-release outcomes of Security Threat Groups (STGs)* (Research Report R-451). Ottawa, Ontario: CSC.

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