

# Memorandum

## INSTRUCTIONAL MEMORANDUM

Date : October 11, 2012

To : Associate Directors, Division of Adult Institutions  
Wardens

Subject : PILOT PROGRAM FOR SECURITY THREAT GROUP IDENTIFICATION, PREVENTION,  
AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

### PURPOSE

This memorandum announces the implementation of the Security Threat Group (STG) pilot policy which will define staff responsibilities and establish a uniform process for the prevention, identification, interdiction, and management of security threat groups and individual affiliates within the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR).

The pilot will provide individual accountability of offenders; incorporate additional elements of due process to the validation system; and provide for a Step Down Program (SDP) as an alternative for offenders to demonstrate their commitment and willingness to refrain from STG behavior. CDCR will do this while continuing to manage safe and secure institutions.

The use of this pilot program will afford the Department an opportunity to complete this complex retooling of the current gang management strategy including significant changes to regulations, practices, and institutional culture to ensure success. Changes of this magnitude must be completed thoughtfully, methodically, and deliberately. The changes in this policy will support California's efforts toward establishing a more effective model of managing security threat groups in a prison environment.

A security threat group is defined as any ongoing formal or informal organization, association or group of three or more persons which has a common name or identifying sign or symbol whose members and/or associates, individually or collectively, engage or have engaged, on behalf of that organization, association or group, in two or more acts which include planning, organizing, threatening, financing, soliciting or committing unlawful acts of misconduct classified as serious pursuant to the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 15, Division 3, Sections 3315. The term security threat group will generally replace the terms prison gang, disruptive group, and/or street gang within the CDCR.

The Department prohibits offenders from creating, promoting, or participating in any STG. Any offender engaging in STG related behavior may be subject to criminal prosecution, in addition to any administrative sanctions imposed as a result of the CDCR's disciplinary process.

The key revisions to the policy and procedure are as follows:

- A new behavior based system, which will serve to enhance the existing intelligence based validation system. The implementation of this process will include an STG behavior based disciplinary matrix, which will provide for additional procedural due process safeguards and a system of individual accountability.



- Recognition that STG affiliate levels of influence and threat are different between members, associates and suspects. STG Associates will no longer be considered for direct administrative placement into a Security Housing Unit (SHU) based only upon their validation to an STG, unless there exists corresponding confirmed disciplinary behavior at the time of the original validation.
- Implementation of an incremental four year STG Step Down Program, which by design will replace the existing six year inactive review process for validated STG affiliates. The SDP will be an individual behavior based program for STG affiliates that will provide graduated housing, enhanced programs, interpersonal interactions, as well as corresponding privilege and personal property enhancements for participating STG affiliates.
- The implementation of a new STG Classification Committee, which will be responsible locally for affirming initial STG validations, evaluating potential new STG behavior subsequent to an affiliate successfully completing the SDP, and evaluating STG behavior for offenders on Dropout-Status.
- Incorporation of a STG prevention program for offenders during the intake process and an orientation process for validated affiliates classified to participate in the SDP.
- Recognition that new STG groups/affiliates and corresponding gang type behavior has emerged within the Department's Sensitive Needs Yard (SNY) population; therefore, providing for certification, validation, and placement of these STG affiliates within the SDP.
- The incorporation of a weight based point value system designed to correspond with the existing three evidence source minimum process, and which continues to maintain a requisite for a direct link to an existing validated member or associate.

Minimizing STG behavior and effectively managing high security housing populations are significant major components of this pilot project and are expected to accomplish 1) uniform certification of gangs and disruptive groups by the Office of Correctional Safety into STGs and identifying those that pose the greatest threat to the safety and security of the prisons and public safety; 2) identification and validation of STG affiliates; 3) provide a SDP for offenders placed in segregated housing for validation and/or STG behavior to afford enhanced program and privilege incentives to promote positive behavior; and 4) debriefing for offenders who choose to disassociate themselves from a STG and STG behavior.

Security Threat Group Definitions (Attachment A) are provided for the terms used in this Instructional Memorandum.

#### PILOT PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The STG Identification, Prevention, and Management Pilot Program is being implemented under the authority granted in Penal Code Sections 5058.1. This pilot program is intended to expand upon the requirements set forth in Penal Code Section 5054, 5058, and 5068 by providing a STG Management Plan which was developed in concert with national best practices and input by subject matter experts from around the country.

#### PLACEMENT OF OFFENDERS IN THE SECURITY THREAT GROUP PILOT PROGRAM

Inmates identified for the Security Threat Group Pilot Program will be mandated to:

- Have the new validation source criteria and point system applied to their validation process on a prospective basis;
- Attend a hearing with the STG Unit Classification Committee to afford an administrative review and affirmation of the validation package;



- Be placed in the SDP based upon the level of their validation and/or confirmed STG behavior, as outlined in Section 600 of this Instructional Memorandum;
- Participate in and progress through the SDP.

Inmates currently serving an indeterminate SHU term due to their gang validation shall be afforded a Departmental Review Board (DRB) hearing to determine their appropriate placement and/or retention within the SHU/Step Down Program or potential release to general population. The new validation source criteria and point system will not be applied to those inmates who were previously validated; however, the DRB will conduct an assessment of the preceding four years to determine the existence of on-going STG behavior. Based upon their unique status as not having participated in the Step Down Program, these inmates shall be referred to as inactive-monitored status affiliates upon their release from SHU. An inactive-monitored status affiliate shall be provided a copy of a CDCR Form 128-B STG1, Notice of Conditions of Inactive-Monitored Status (Attachment B) for review and signature prior to appearance before the DRB.

### PILOT PROGRAM LOCATION

The Security Threat Group Pilot Program will be initiated at all CDCR adult institutions; however, will only have a direct impact on those inmates who continue to engage in STG related behavior or activities. A SDP will be initiated at each of the SHU institutions including Pelican Bay State Prison, California State Prison – Corcoran, California Correctional Institution, California State Prison – Sacramento, and California Institution for Women.

This pilot program will remain in effect for a 24-month period from the date it is filed with the Secretary of State, at which time it will lapse by operation of law or will be promulgated through the Administrative Procedure Act.

### BACKGROUND

CDCR manages the most violent and sophisticated security threat group members and associates in the nation. California STGs are routinely and consistently connected to major criminal activities in communities, including such crimes as homicides, drug trafficking, prostitution, human trafficking, and extortion. As such, the responsibility and challenges facing CDCR relative to the management of security threat groups are immense.

Security Threat Group problems throughout the country have grown more serious in both the local communities and correctional settings. STGs are largely responsible for criminal activities within the institutions, to include the trafficking of narcotics, committing and/or directing violence against staff and offenders, and directing criminal activity between the correctional institutions and the community.

Prisons are especially vulnerable to internal disruption by STG members and their influence over affiliates who, through their covert operations, violent nature, routinely victimize each other, uninvolved inmates and staff, in addition to creating heavy demands on personnel and fiscal resources.

Efficient and effective STG management within prisons requires a comprehensive management strategy that includes prevention, identification, interdiction, and rehabilitation. CDCR's current strategy, which was initially developed more than 25 years ago, is a crime prevention strategy through suppression. The Department recognized the need to evaluate the current strategy and has developed new approaches to addressing constantly evolving STG trends.



The continuing evolution of our existing intelligence network is essential in identifying and documenting STG activities/behaviors and tracking trends. A sound strategy supported by reliable intelligence will enhance the prison managers' ability to anticipate, prevent, respond to, and control STG problems proactively rather than relying on defensive or reactive means of suppression and intervention.

This policy includes a weighted intelligence based identification tool used to identify members, associates and suspects who are believed to present a clear threat to the safety of staff, inmates, and the security of the institutions. This, in association with documented STG behavior will provide prison managers the necessary information to make decisions regarding the appropriate housing and program needs for the inmate.

These policy changes are based on recommendations made by subject matter experts within the CDCR as well as consideration of strategies and best practices used by both CDCR and other correctional agencies. In addition, a 2007 study entitled, "Security Threat Group Identification and Management," conducted by the California State University, Sacramento, incorporating ideas generated by five national gang experts who served as consultants to CDCR was also utilized in the development of these policy changes. Documents and related STG information were collected from the Federal Bureau of Prisons and the following States – Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Texas, Connecticut, and New York. As CDCR moved to expand the concepts contained in the 2007 study, a follow-up literature review was conducted in 2011 by the California State University, Sacramento, to identify national studies that evaluated correctional programs, including management and treatment approaches for validated STG members.

These research studies and national reviews of best practices were considered by a combined group of correctional experts in developing this policy for managing STGs in California prisons.

### PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The initial Security Threat Group Identification, Prevention, and Management Pilot Program will include approximately 5,000 inmates:

- 3,150 currently validated members and associates assigned to segregated housing
- Approximately 850 inmates who are reviewed for validation on an annual basis

The Pilot Program will monitor each validated STG affiliate to track their behavior within the general population and/or progress and behavior within the SDP. In addition, it will establish a classification committee which will provide additional review and oversight to the validation process.

### PROGRAM COMPONENTS

This pilot program involves the following components:

- A. Standardized certification process for groups/gangs to be recognized as STG's within the CDCR.
- B. Evaluation of offenders for validation utilizing the weighted point system, including the requirements of three independent source items and a direct link, where required.
- C. Office of Correctional Safety (OCS) reviewing the validation package and making a recommendation for validation or rejection and the level of validation.



- D. The STG Unit Classification Committee reviewing the validation package and making the final decision regarding validation and the level of validation.
- E. The Institution Classification Committee (ICC) making the final decision on program and housing needs for validated affiliates.
- F. Placement into and progression through the SDP.
- G. Validated affiliates will be held individually accountable for STG related behavior or activity as outlined in the STG Disciplinary Matrix.
- H. Voluntary participation in the debriefing process.

## PROCEDURES

This STG pilot program will feature a phased approach for implementing the changes associated with this project. The components of this policy are divided into sections and described in detail in the Instructional Memorandum.

- Section 100:       **Staff Roles and Responsibilities.** Page 6.
- Section 200:       **Certification Process.** Page 8.  
This section will be implemented immediately upon distribution of this Instructional Memorandum.
- Section 300:       **Prevention.** Page 12.  
This section will be implemented immediately upon distribution of this Instructional Memorandum.
- Section 400:       **Validation.** Page 12.  
This section will be implemented in Phase II which is expected to begin December 2012/January 2013.
- Section 500:       **Documentation of STG Involvement and Activity.** Page 21.  
This section will be implemented in Phase II which is expected to begin December 2012/January 2013.
- Section 600:       **STG Disciplinary Matrix for STG Related Behavior or Activity.** Page 21.  
This section will be implemented in Phase II which is expected to begin December 2012/January 2013.
- Section 700:       **STG Step Down Program.** Page 40.  
This section will be implemented immediately upon distribution of this Instructional Memorandum; however, movement between Security Housing Units for placement into various steps is not anticipated to begin until Phase IV (approximately Spring/Summer 2013).
- Section 800:       **Validated Inmate on Monitored Status.** Page 51.  
This section will be implemented in Phase II which is expected to begin December 2012/January 2013.
- Section 900:       **Debriefing.** Page 54.  
This section will be implemented immediately upon distribution of this Instructional Memorandum.
- Section 1000:      **Renunciation Process for Placement on Sensitive Needs Yards.**



Page 56.

This section will be implemented immediately upon distribution of this Instructional Memorandum.

Section 1100: **Changes to Department Operations Manual (DOM), Chapter 6 – Adult Classification.** Page 56.

Section 1200: **Revisions to California Code of Regulations, Title 15.** Page 59.

Section 100. Staff Roles and Responsibilities.

Secretary, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation:

The Secretary, CDCR will be responsible to approve/deny all formal requests for designation of a group or gang as a STG-I within the CDCR.

Director, Division of Adult Institutions (DAI):

The Director, DAI, in conjunction with the Director, Enterprise Information Services (EIS), and the Chief, OCS, shall ensure departmental compliance with this policy.

Director, Enterprise Information Services (EIS):

The Director, EIS, in coordination with the Chief, OCS, shall have management responsibility for the STG data base system.

Chief, Office of Correctional Safety:

- 1) The Chief, OCS, in coordination with the Director, DAI, shall ensure departmental compliance with this policy.
- 2) Supervise and coordinate the CDCR's STG intelligence, identification, validation, and suppression program and coordinate that program with other law enforcement agencies.
- 3) Management responsibility for Special Service Unit's (SSU) Gang Intelligence Operations section and its STG investigators. STG investigators shall be senior special agents, special agents, Correctional Lieutenants, and Correctional Sergeants assigned to the unit.
- 4) Select the SSU STG investigators.
- 5) Management responsibility for meeting the administrative needs of the California Gang Task Force (CGTF).
- 6) Develop and update policy; and management of the data for the STG data base.
- 7) Provide oversight of STG certification.
- 8) Serve as departmental repository for STG intelligence, identification, and certification. Provide oversight, review, and approval for STG validations.
- 9) Provide training and oversight to Investigative Service Unit (ISU) and STG investigative staff in the application of STG identification and behavior management.
- 10) In collaboration with DAI, responsible for providing training and certification of STG Committee Chairpersons.
- 11) Provide essential training to all department personnel in the implementation of this policy.
- 12) Make recommendations for approval/rejection of validation packages for STG Members and Associates.

Associate Director, High Security Mission:

Ensure compliance with this policy as it relates to SHU operations and programs relative to male inmates.



Associate Director, Female Offender Programs and Services, Special Housing and Contract Beds:

Ensure compliance with this policy as it relates to SHU operations and programs relative to female inmates.

Wardens:

- 1) Wardens shall have management responsibility for their respective STG Investigators.
- 2) Each Warden shall ensure a STG Unit Classification Committee is established to review validation packages received from OCS of STG members and associates.
- 3) Implement and manage local STG classification committee activities and follow-up action.
- 4) In collaboration with OCS, establish orientation, practices, and processes to prevent or deter STG membership and activities.
- 5) Each institution shall have a STG investigator. STG investigators shall be Correctional Lieutenants, who shall be designated locally.
- 6) Wardens shall ensure that STG related incidents, intelligence, and information is referred to the appropriate personnel for review and disposition.
- 7) Each Warden shall ensure a Classification Committee reviews inmates who are validated STG affiliates participating in the SDP every 180 days for those in steps 1 through 3 and every 90 days for those in step 4. Inmates in step 5 shall be reviewed on an annual basis.
- 8) In collaboration with OCS, provide training of STG Committee Chairpersons.

Security Threat Group Unit Classification Committee:

- 1) Review all STG validation packages for accuracy, compliance, and to ensure due process requirements have been met in accordance with this pilot program, DOM, and various California Code of Regulations (CCR) Sections.
- 2) Review any Drop-out STG affiliate's new disciplinary behavior for appropriate housing or program due to documented nexus to STG behavior noted in the Rule Violation Report or other items of intelligence.
- 3) Review information/intelligence received from outside law enforcement agencies or which occurred outside CDCR jurisdiction to ensure disciplinary processes or formal documentation were applied, when appropriate.
- 4) Refer validated STG cases to ICC for placement consideration in the Step Down Program.
- 5) Respond to STG validation related inmate appeals.

Classification Services Unit (CSU):

- 1) Evaluate issues related to SHU placement, Classification Staff Representative (CSR) reviews, housing restrictions, etc.
- 2) Ensure department compliance with regulations managing SHU terms and placement.
- 3) Provide feedback to DAI and OCS on issues relating to the application of this policy.
- 4) In collaboration with OCS, provide training of STG Committee Chairpersons.

Security Threat Group Investigator/Lieutenant (formerly known as IGI or ISU Lieutenant):

- 1) Responsible to identify, track and document STG Members, Associates, and Suspects in accordance with this policy. Identify STG trends and report STG intelligence to the prison management and OCS.
- 2) STG investigative staff representative shall attend the classification committee for STG members, associates, and suspects, as a subject matter expert.
- 3) STG Investigators are directly responsible through their chain of command to their respective Wardens and are functionally supervised by the Special Agent in Charge, OCS, and the Senior Special Agent, Gang Intelligence Operations, SSU.



- 4) In coordination with the Chief, OCS, shall join with task forces comprised of local, State, and federal law enforcement personnel to track, monitor and interdict, within the framework of law, the illicit and unlawful behavior of STGs.
- 5) Conducts complex STG investigations and documents STG behavior and intelligence in accordance with this policy.
- 6) Prepare STG validation packages.
- 7) Maintain the local STG data base system.
- 8) Ensure that Gang Intelligence Operations is promptly notified of all arrests or incidents involving STG affiliated inmates.
- 9) Collaborate with the Correctional Counselor II, assigned to the Step Down Program, and other staff to provide updates and clarifications of STG status related to STG affiliates.

#### Correctional Counselor II (Step Down Program)

- 1) Serve as expert classification resource for the Step Down Program including participation in STG Unit Classification Committees and Institutional Classification Committees.
- 2) Complete central file reviews and prepare cases for presentation to the Departmental Review Board.
- 3) Monitor offender participation in the Step Down Program.
- 4) Develop Step Down Program schedule and coordinate coverage for facilitators.
- 5) Act as a Master Trainer in the components of the Step Down Program

#### Special Agent-in-Charge (SAC), OCS:

- 1) Shall have functional supervision of the Senior Special Agent, Gang Intelligence Operations, and STG Investigators (as it relates to validations, debriefings, and STG investigations/intelligence).
- 2) Shall be apprised of all STG management matters affecting, or having a potential to affect, departmental policy or procedure.
- 3) Shall be responsible for the preparation of charts, assessments, statistical reports, and other material as required to provide an accurate portrayal of STG activity.
- 4) Shall disseminate information to departmental and other criminal justice agency managers and STG investigators on a need-to-know basis.

#### Senior Special Agent, Gang Intelligence Operations, SSU:

- 1) Shall report directly to the SAC, OCS.
- 2) Provides supervision of the SSU Gang Intelligence Operations section which includes the SSU STG Investigators (Special Agents), and the Correctional Lieutenants, Sergeants, and support staff of the Gang Intelligence Operations Debriefing Team.
- 3) Maintains a close working relationship with the Chief, OCS; Chief, Classification Services Unit; and Parole Administrator, regarding STG management matters.
- 4) Shall be responsible for coordinating requests for STG activity data, training, and investigative assistance received from departmental as well as other criminal justices agencies.

### **Section 200. Certification Process.**

This section describes the standardized certification process for groups/gangs to be recognized as Security Threat Group's within CDCR.

Prison gangs, disruptive groups, and/or street gangs may be reviewed, categorized, and certified as STGs through the OCS. Initial certification shall be based upon the documented severity of the threat to the security of the institution and safety of staff and inmates.



*Section 200.1. Security Threat Group Certification Criteria:*

The criteria for designation as a Security Threat Group within CDCR may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- a) Information from other state departments of corrections, jail or prison facilities, Federal, State, County, or City law enforcement agencies, as to the potential disruptive nature of the group under consideration.
- b) Consideration with regard to whether the group meets the definition of a STG consistent with Attachment A of this Instructional Memorandum.
- c) History of STG behavior in the community.
- d) Evidence that the group presents a potential threat to the security of the institution and safety of staff and offenders.
- e) History of threatening behavior to staff or offender safety involving such activities as riots, group disturbances, possession or manufacture of weapons, assault/battery, trafficking of narcotics, extortion and/or coercion of other individuals or groups.
- f) Documentation of violent and/or illegal activities which may also include planning, organizing, threatening, financing, soliciting, or committing unlawful acts.
- g) Group evolution, structure, formalized procedures or bylaws, and/or membership characteristics.
- h) Information concerning group meetings and membership criteria.
- i) Chronology of events or other information evidencing a threat to institutional security or safety of staff and offenders through group activities, associations, and potential security alignments.
- j) Tattoo and graffiti documentation.
- k) Group association evidence, including offender and staff interviews.
- l) Available information concerning group philosophy and affiliations.

*Section 200.2. Security Threat Group Designation Levels*

Security Threat Group-I's will consist of groups, gangs, and/or historically based prison gangs that the CDCR has determined to be the most severe threat to the security of the institutions and communities based on a history and propensity for violence and/or influence over other groups. Based upon their individual threat, clandestine operations, and/or influence over other STG affiliates, inmates who are validated as STG-I members will be placed in the SDP and housed in a SHU based solely upon their validation. Validated STG-I associates will normally remain housed in general population unless confirmed STG behavior or activities, as described in Section 600 of this Instructional Memorandum, are present. If these behaviors or activities are present, the STG-I associate will be considered for placement into the SDP.

Security Threat Group-II's will consist of other groups or gangs such as street gangs or disruptive groups comprised of members and associates who may be determined to be in a subservient role to the more dominant STG-I type groups. Validated STG-II members or associates will remain housed in general population unless two or more confirmed STG behavior or activities, as described in Section 600 of this Instructional Memorandum, are present. If these behaviors or activities are present, the STG-II member or associate will be considered for placement into the SDP. As in existing practice, groups identified as STG-II will not be required to be certified.

*Section 200.3. Requests for Certification of a Group*

Certification of a group at the STG-I level shall be accomplished as follows:

- (a) Institution Staff or Division Staff shall:



- 1) Prepare a Security Threat Group Certification Worksheet (Attachment C) requesting that a STG Threat Assessment be initiated of the identified group.
- 2) The worksheet may include, but not be limited to:
  - A. A history of incidents, behavior, and actions of the group
  - B. The number of involved offenders at the institution
  - C. Housing of these offenders – General Population (GP), Sensitive Needs Yard (SNY), Administrative Segregation Unit (ASU)
  - D. Description of History and Philosophies (if known)
  - E. Description of the Ranking Structure
  - F. Description of Recruitment Methods or Strategies
  - G. Description of identifying signs and symbols
  - H. Roster of Members/Associates/Suspects
- 3) The worksheet shall be signed by the Warden and routed through the Associate Director, DAI, and the Director, DAI, prior to submission to OCS.
- 4) Attachments to the worksheet shall include copies of all information obtained by the STG Investigator including Crime Incident Reports (including attachments), Program Status Reports, and institutional threat assessments associated with this group.

(b) Office of Correctional Safety:

- 1) The Chief, OCS, or his/her designee shall assign a Senior Special Agent or Special Agent to complete an official STG threat assessment investigation and position paper.
- 2) The Senior Special Agent or Special Agent may request all STG Investigators to provide information regarding the identified group including:
  - A. Confidential Reports/Non-Confidential Reports
  - B. Information relative to problems associated with the identified group
  - C. Identification (name/CDCR #), status (validated/not validated), and total numbers associated with the group
- 3) The assigned agent may contact institutions for assistance with interviews of these offenders
- 4) The assigned agent may travel to the requesting institution and interview offenders, as deemed necessary
- 5) The assigned agent may develop/research and document in a threat assessment investigation position paper:
  - A. The history of the identified group
  - B. The ranking structure
  - C. The influential members
  - D. The Oath (if applicable)
  - E. The recruitment process
  - F. Common identifying signs and symbols
  - G. Codes used by the identified group
  - H. A roster of members/associates
  - I. The propensity for violence
  - J. List of those interviewed including status and location
  - K. Significant interview information
  - L. Summary of information received from the STG Investigators

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