



Drugs and Crime

Outlaw Motorcycle Gang Profile

Product No. 2002-M0148-001

OCTOBER 2002

U. S. D E P A R T M E N T O F J U S T I C E

Bandidos

The Bandidos outlaw motorcycle gang (OMG), with several thousand members in the United States and 12 other countries, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] It is most active in the Pacific, Southeast, Southwest, and West Central regions and is expanding in these regions by forming new chapters and allowing smaller, affiliated OMGs called support clubs to become Bandidos chapters. [REDACTED]

Background

The Bandidos OMG, also referred to as Bandido Nation, was formed in Houston, Texas, in 1966. Many original members had criminal records [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Donald Chambers, founder and first president, led the OMG from 1966 until 1973 when he was convicted of murder and sentenced to life in prison. Under his leadership, the OMG expanded to several states, although most chapters were located in Texas. Since 1973 it has

increased membership in existing chapters and added new chapters in the United States [REDACTED] and abroad. The first international chapter was established in Australia in 1983. Other chapters in Asia, Europe, and Canada have followed. This expansion has created tensions as well as alliances with other OMGs. [REDACTED]

This document must be protected and not released to unauthorized individuals. It is to be used by persons in your agency who have a "need to know" the sensitive information contained in this document in order to perform an identifiable and authorized government function. It may not be released beyond your agency without the permission of NDIC. It must be stored in a limited access area or in a locked container during nonduty hours. It must be destroyed by shredding or burning.

Organizational Structure

Bandidos chapters are governed by elected and appointed leaders at the international, national, and local levels. A president, vice president, secretary, and sergeant-at-arms represent each level. The leaders establish and enforce Bandidos rules, settle disputes, appoint new officers, and often coordinate criminal activities. The international president governs the activities of chapters in the United States and abroad, particularly the Bandidos' foreign expansion. The current international president also serves as the national president of the OMG in the United States. The national president in the United States oversees three regional divisions, each with a vice president, secretary, and a sergeant-at-arms whose duties change according to the OMG's needs.

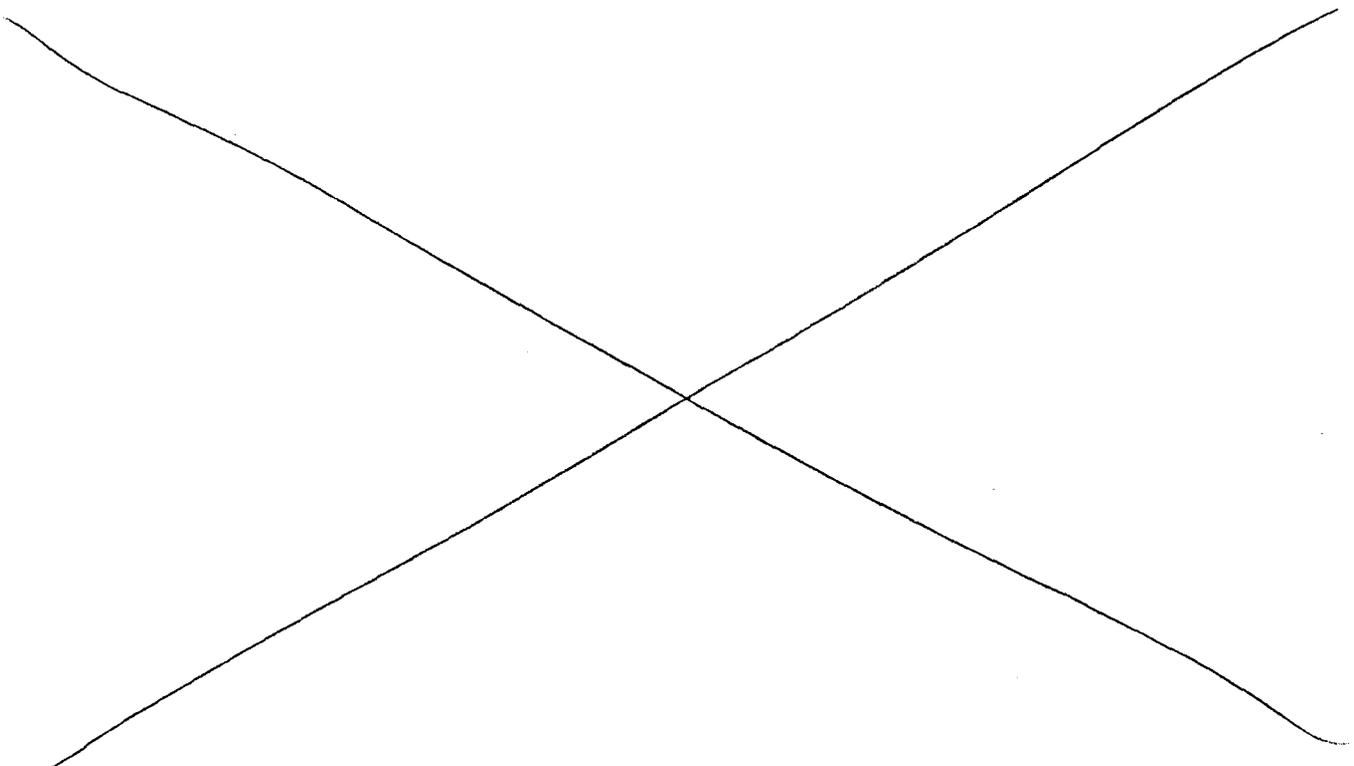
Most chapters are established within a specific geographic area, usually a city, county, or region. However, the OMG has a "Nomad Chapter" not associated with a specific geographic area.



The Bandidos OMG has active chapters in North America (United States and Canada), Europe (Denmark, England, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, and Sweden), Australia, and Asia (Thailand). Membership is estimated to be 700 in the United States and over 2,000 worldwide. Most chapters are based in urban areas and maintain a clubhouse where members meet and plan activities. Chapters have the most influence around the urban areas where they are based; however, members often travel well outside their geographic area,



Bandidos Denmark.



The Bandidos OMG has sought to improve its public image in recent years despite members'

[redacted] Local Bandidos chapters have sponsored charity events, blood drives, and patriotic rallies. Through interviews and speeches, chapter leaders have promoted an image of the OMG as a group of motorcycle enthusiasts working to improve communities.

Membership

Bandidos members typically are Caucasian or Hispanic males, are at least 21 years old, [redacted]

[redacted] Earning membership is a lengthy, phased process designed to measure a potential member's commitment to the OMG [redacted]

[redacted] A person seeking membership is initially recognized as a "hangaround," doing menial jobs for the chapter and working to earn the respect of members. The chapter president determines when a hangaround is eligible to become a prospective member, called a prospect. [redacted]

[redacted] good standing sponsors him for membership. [redacted]

[redacted] The probationary status can last up to 1 year, following which unanimous approval from chapter members is required for the probate to become a "fully patched member."

The Bandidos OMG is recruiting aggressively in an attempt to boost membership. In order to improve its technical sophistication and public image, the OMG has recently begun recruiting members [redacted] who have business and computer skills [redacted]

[redacted] The Bandidos OMG has increased sponsorship of small, independent OMGs, allowing them to become Bandidos support clubs to assist [redacted]

[redacted] Many new members are being

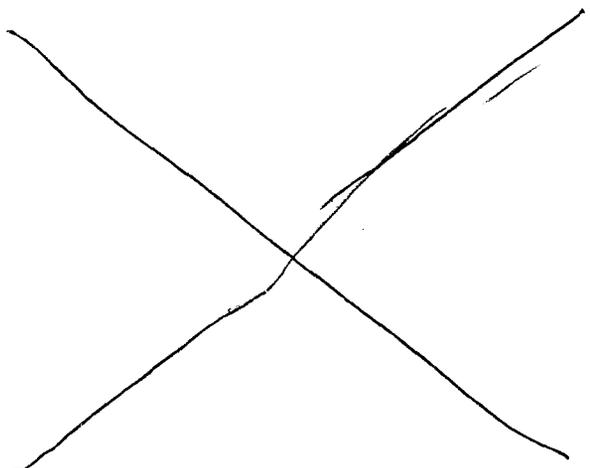
recruited from support clubs as probationary members. [redacted]

[redacted] In some instances, an entire support club is converted to a Bandidos probationary chapter, a process referred to as "patching over."

Bandidos members wear distinctive patches, or "colors," on the back of leather or denim vests called cuts (collars and sleeves are cut off). The center patch is a caricature of a Mexican bandit [redacted]

[redacted] Above the bandit patch is the top rocker—a gold patch with Bandidos spelled in large, red, block letters. Below the bandit patch is the bottom rocker—a gold patch with the chapter's location spelled in red letters. To the right of the bandit patch many members wear an MC (Motorcycle Club) patch. To the left of the bandit, many members wear a 1% patch, referring to a statement made by the former president of the American Motorcycle Association that 99 percent of the motorcycling public are honest, law-abiding citizens and that only 1 percent are troublemakers.

Other patches commonly are worn on the front of the cuts including 13 (the thirteenth letter in the alphabet or M for motorcycle); F.T.W. (f—the world); and BFFB (Bandidos Forever; Forever Brothers). Bandidos members often wear patches with the names of deceased members as well as patches with threatening slogans such as "Expect No Mercy." [redacted]



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Violence

[REDACTED]

A violent feud between the Bandidos and Hells Angels OMGs in Scandinavia between 1994 and 1997 included the use of grenades and antiarmor rockets. The conversion of the Rock Machine OMG to Bandidos in 2000 sparked violence in Canada between the Bandidos and Hells Angels. Violence between the Rock Machine/Bandidos and Hells Angels since 1994 has claimed over 150 lives.

[REDACTED]

Outlook

[REDACTED]

Its effort to increase membership in nearly every country where it has a chapter as well as its expansion to new countries indicates an attempt to grow larger and stronger

[REDACTED]

Intelligence Gaps

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Sources

Federal

U.S. Department of Justice
Drug Enforcement Administration
El Paso Intelligence Center
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force
U.S. Department of Treasury
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms

State

[REDACTED]

Rocky Mountain News

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Houston Chronicle

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Regional

[REDACTED]

International

Associated Press

[REDACTED]

Ottawa Citizen

Reuters

[REDACTED]

