

Minneapolis Police Department
Quality Assurance Unit

Audit/Assessment Report
QA Control Number: QA02-01



Minnesota Gang Strike Force-Metro Region

March 2002

Table of Contents

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
Purpose and Scope.....	3-4
Methodology.....	4
Findings.....	4-16
Organization.....	4-5
Management/Supervision.....	5-6
Personnel and Staffing.....	6-8
Data/Record/Timekeeping.....	9-12
Reporting Practices.....	12-13
Adherence to state mandates, mission and other directives...	13
General Operational Effectiveness.....	13-15
Organizational Policies and Procedures.....	15-16
Issues/Recommendations.....	16-20
Summary.....	21
Appendix I (MGSF org charts).....	22



Minneapolis Police Department
Quality Assurance Unit

AUDIT/ASSESSMENT REPORT

QA Control Number: **QA02-01** Approved By: **Chief Robert K. Olson**

Audit/Assessment Subject: **Minnesota Gang Strike Force- Metro Region**

Type of Audit/Assessment: **Operational/Program**

Date Assigned: **2-1-02** Report Date: **4-1-02**

Organizational Units Audited/Inspected:

MGSF- Metro Region

Report Prepared by: **Lt. Scott Gerlicher** Employee #: **2238** Phone: **612-673-2878**

Purpose and Scope

On February 1st, 2002, the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) was asked to perform an operational assessment of the Minnesota Gang Strike Force (MGSF). This request came from MPD Chief Robert Olson, who currently serves as the Chair of the Gang Oversight Council.

This assessment is intended to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency within the MGSF specifically as it relates to the following:

- Organizational structure
- Management and supervision
- Personnel and staffing
- Data/Record/Time keeping
- Reporting practices
- Adherence to state mandates, mission, and other directives
- General operational effectiveness
- Organizational policies and procedures

This assessment is limited to the Metro Region Gang Strike Force office and does not assess the operations of the other Regional Gang Strike Force offices.

Methodology

In conducting this assessment, QAU staff interviewed MGSF staff including Ron Ryan, Statewide Commander, Art Blakey, Metro GSF Commander, and John Boulger, Metro GSF Deputy Commander, and all Metro GSF supervisors.

The QAU also spent several hours on four separate occasions at MGSF headquarters in St. Paul and reviewed internal operational documents, all state legislation relating to the MGSF, and other documents including the 2001 annual report and a 1999 program review of the MGSF.

The QAU also interviewed the office manager, gang analyst, and several attorneys currently assigned to the MGSF.

Findings

Organization:

The MGSF is organized into five regional offices: Southwest, Northeast, Southeast, Central, and Metro. Overall command for these offices is charged to the Statewide Commander, Ron Ryan. The statewide commander's office is located within the Metro GSF headquarters in St. Paul.

The statewide commander's duties, as reported to the QAU, include: coordinating and monitoring enforcement efforts throughout the state, traveling to each regional office, approving of forfeiture purchases, meeting with CLEOs for various agencies within Minnesota, testifying at the state legislature, assuring that the mission of the MGSF is adhered to, preparing an annual report, reporting to the Gang Oversight Council, and speaking at public events as requested.

The statewide commander informed the QAU that much of his job is meeting with and speaking to legislators, chiefs, sheriffs and community groups. He informed the QAU that he tries to travel to each regional MGSF office at least once every month or two. He indicated that he maintains additional contact with regional commanders via telephone and at staff meetings, which are held periodically in St. Paul. There is no written position description for the statewide commander position.

The Metro GSF command structure consists of a commander and deputy commander. There is some duplication in the duties of these two positions. Although having separate job titles, responsibility for command as well as job duties, are shared by both. Although there is some sharing of work, the chain of command within the Metro GSF appears to be clear to other supervisors and staff.

The job duties for the commander and deputy commander, as reported to the QAU, include: acting as a liaison with U.S and county attorneys, maintaining liaisons with law enforcement agencies, reviewing after action reports of incidents, conducting bi-weekly meetings with staff, providing training for staff, approving travel requests, coordinating requests for personnel during special events, and general supervision of personnel and supervisors within the Metro GSF office. Additionally, the deputy commander is responsible for approving spending for confidential informants and acting as a back up for management of confidential funds and evidence. There are no written position descriptions for either the metro commander or deputy commander positions.

The Metro GSF is organized into four operational groups. Each group is headed by a supervisor and staffed by 4-7 officers/agents. A copy of the organizational structure is attached. Three of the groups normally work daytime hours (1000-1800), while one group works evening hours (1400-2200). Each group generally focuses on a particular type of gang, however they do frequently interact and work cooperatively on large cases.

Each group consists of officers/agents from various participating agencies. The group supervisor is someone of a supervisory rank within his or her home agency. The group supervisor is charged with supervision of all officers/agents within their group regardless of where that officer/agent is from. Interviewed supervisors stated that this seems to work well in most cases.

Management/Supervision:

The group supervisor generally works the same hours as his/her group and is responsible for monitoring their activity, assigning cases, approving schedule changes, reviewing reports and search warrants, and general supervision in the field. Supervisors also are present whenever search warrants are executed. In cases where officers/agents may be working late and no supervisor is present, supervisors indicated that they remain in close contact with officers/agents via telephone and pager.

Each supervisor has his/her own method of managing personnel within their group including accounting for time, case reviews, and overall activity. Some of the supervisors interviewed use computer databases to track the activity and hours of their group members. In these cases, supervisors are able to account for hours worked, overtime, and general activity. Other supervisors do not use such extensive methods it however does appear that they are generally aware of the same information. It does, become more difficult to later track and report this information to commanders. Each officer/agent is required to complete a weekly log indicating what he/she has worked on in the previous week. As expected, some officers/agents do a thorough job of completing these logs, while others do not. The logs are forwarded to the group supervisor, who may send them on to the commanders, or summarize the information and forward it. This lack of consistency could make it difficult for commanders to assess the level of activity by specific groups or group members.

The QAU found that management of overtime is not done consistently and commanders are not generally made aware of the overtime hours worked by MGSF personnel. This could result in the potential for abuse of overtime and does not allow for appropriate management of time at the command level. The level of reporting of overtime seems to vary from supervisor to supervisor.

The nature of the MGSF complicates the issue of supervision. This is because MGSF supervisors are tasked with supervision of personnel from various agencies. In most cases, there is also a second layer of supervision and evaluation that takes place. MGSF supervisors usually complete the schedule, evaluations, and do the timekeeping for all personnel from their home agency who are assigned to the MGSF, regardless of their group assignment. If there is no supervisor assigned to the MGSF, a supervisor at the officer/agent's home agency completes the officer/agent's schedule, evaluation and does his/her timekeeping. This creates situations within the MGSF and at the officer/agent's home agency where a supervisor may be doing timekeeping or completing an evaluation without direct knowledge of days/hours worked or the level of performance of the officer/agent. This compounds the issue of time management and does not seem to be an effective method of assessing work performance.

Personnel and Staffing:

Grants/Reimbursement- There are a number of methods for reimbursement of salaries, overtime, and equipment for personnel assigned to the MGSF from local jurisdictions. The salary for the statewide commander as well as his lease vehicle are paid by a State of Minnesota grant from the Office of Drug Policy and Violence Prevention (ODPVP) coordinated through the St. Paul Police Department (SPPD). The salary for the metro commander is partially funded by this same grant as well as overtime and vehicle costs. The deputy commander's salary is paid by his home agency, the BCA.

The current state grant member replacement reimbursement for salaries of personnel assigned to the MGSF is as follows:

Officer/Agent \$35,000/yr
Supervisor \$40,000/yr

Not all participating agencies receive the same type of reimbursement for salaries, overtime, vehicles and other costs. Below is a summary of the Metro GSF participating agencies and what types of costs are reimbursed:

Ramsey County: Member Replacement/Overtime/Vehicle Lease
Hennepin County: Member Replacement/Vehicle Lease
Anoka County: Member Replacement/Vehicle Lease
City of Minneapolis: Overtime/Vehicle Lease
City of St. Paul: Member Replacement/Overtime/Vehicle Lease

+ statewide commander salary
Washington County: Member Replacement/Vehicle Lease

State and federal agencies contribute personnel at their own expense.

One issue brought to the attention of the QAU was in the level of participation by agencies in the grants received, either for personnel replacement, or overtime. As part of the grant, the agency receiving the grant is asked for a two-year commitment to the MGSF and funds are allocated for that two-year period. There has been at least one occasion where the agency receiving the grant has failed to uphold their two-year commitment to staffing a position within the Metro GSF.

Gang Analyst Position-The MGSF has a full time gang analyst assigned to coordinate information and intelligence gathering. Specifically, she manages the databases needed to conduct Title III Wiretaps (Pen-Link, Voicebox), coordinates and manages both the GangNet and Gang Pointer File databases, assists officers/agents in case investigations and hires/supervises all interns and student workers. She is also the designated TAC for the CJIS database.

This position is a vital part of MGSF operations and not only does the gang analyst work with staff from within the MGSF, but she also acts as a liaison with other law enforcement agencies concerning the GangNet and Gang Pointer File databases. The current gang analyst seems to be extremely competent and organized and is able to manage a very heavy workload. One concern of the QAU is that MGSF operations rely heavily on this individual. In her absence, the MGSF would lose important operational capacity and there are no existing back ups for these critical operational functions.

Clerical Staff- The Metro-GSF has only one person assigned in a full-time capacity to clerical duties. The office manager, in addition to being charged with management of the evidence room, informant files and confidential funds, is also responsible for all other clerical duties as well as being the receptionist. Fortunately, the current office manager is extremely competent and driven, and is able to manage all of these duties. The workload for this position seems extremely demanding. It seems difficult for her to devote her full attention to a single project, such as property and evidence, because of her additional responsibilities and the distractions of answering the phone, responding to other requests from commanders, supervisors, and officers/agents. Because of this, there is more of a chance that mistakes could occur.

In 2001, the Gang Oversight Council identified a need within the MGSF for additional clerical and administrative support. Because of this, the council approved the hiring of an administrative assistant to the statewide commander. Unfortunately however, no funds were allocated from the state to pay for this position, and therefore, it hasn't been filled. More important than an administrative assistant to the statewide commander however, seems to be a need for additional general clerical support in order to assist the office manager and Metro GSF staff.

Student Workers/Interns- The Metro GSF has an excellent student worker/intern program. The program is coordinated by the Metro GSF gang analyst, and appears to be very successful. Student workers are students who work on a part-time basis for a period of up to three years while attending college. They are paid and assist with data entry of information into GangNet and the Gang Pointer file. They also assist in gathering and analyzing information for Metro GSF staff.

Interns are non-paid students who generally receive some college credit for working with the MGSF for a short period of time. They assist in data entry and research as well. The limited period of time that they spend as an intern however, causes relatively high turnover and has made training issues somewhat challenging. This is because by the time they have been trained and are comfortable with their duties, their internship is typically over.

All student workers and interns must successfully complete a background check prior to assignment. The BCA conducts background checks on all student workers and interns. Access to data by student workers/interns is limited in scope. They are given specific tasks rather than broad work assignments. This helps assure that their access to confidential and sensitive information is limited. Nonetheless, according to the Gang Analyst, there has been at least one occasion when an intern has known a gang member that had some involvement in an MGSF case. The QAU was told that this situation was monitored carefully to assure that this person did not have access to any information regarding this specific investigation. Student workers and interns have proven to be an important part of MGSF operations. With limited clerical support, they provide critical support to MGSF operations.

Technical Assistance- The MGSF lacks regular and consistent technical assistance for computers, software, and other technological equipment. The office in St. Paul has several different types of computers and databases. It is charged with maintaining both the Gang Pointer File and GangNet. In addition to the desktop computers located in the office, each officer/agent is issued his/her own laptop while assigned to the MGSF. The MGSF has designed and maintains both internal and external databases and manages wiretaps using other types of computers and technology. There is however, no formal agreement to provide technical services and technical support to the MGSF. There is an informal agreement in place which is able to provide some assistance. Ramsey County has been able to provide a technician, when available, to assist with computer related problems. This arrangement however, is informal and does not address the needs of the organization. In some cases, if a computer breaks down or there is a problem with a specific program, staff may have to wait several days before someone is able to respond to repair/remediate the problem. It is clear that a more permanent and formal arrangement should be made to provide ongoing computer and technical assistance to the MGSF.

Data/Record/Timekeeping:

Most forms, administrative procedures, and methods of reporting are taken from the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA). In general, it appears that the MGSF does a thorough job of maintaining case files, managing informants and confidential funds, collecting data, and collecting/maintaining evidence. Systems in place offer appropriate levels of security and accountability and are managed by competent staff. The QAU interviewed the office manager, who also serves as the custodian of confidential funds, manages informant files, and manages the property/evidence room. Access to evidence, confidential funds, and informant files is limited to the office manager, and the deputy commander, who also serves as a backup for these functions. Cash advances must be approved by the commander/deputy commander and are either forwarded directly to the officer/agent, or in some cases, to the officer/agent's supervisor who disperses them. All funds are audited on a monthly basis by the fiscal agent for the Metro GSF, Ramsey County. Additional periodic spot checks are completed by the custodian. Access to seizure funds is limited to the statewide and metro commander.

Evidence- All evidence with the exception of narcotics and vehicles is property inventoried at the MGSF office. Narcotics are inventoried in the jurisdiction where they were seized, with the local PD or Sheriff's Office. Seized vehicles are towed and impounded to one of two contracted sites in Ramsey County, regardless of where seized. All other evidence is inventoried and kept in a secure room within the MGSF office and any funds seized are kept in a safe. Access to the evidence room is limited to the office manager and the deputy commander.

Evidence is destroyed whenever the office manager is notified by an officer/agent that a case has been disposed of through the courts. One supervisor pointed out however, that often, investigators are not regularly apprised of court dispositions of cases and/or they leave their assignment with the MGSF and there is no follow-up in order to determine whether evidence can be released and/or destroyed. This could lead to evidence being held unnecessarily for extended periods of time. Further, there are no routine attempts made to notify owners of seized property of impending destruction. In some cases, this property could be released back to the rightful owner, rather than being destroyed. Without making a reasonable attempt to notify owners of property eligible for release prior to its destruction, it could be possible for property owners to make a financial claim against the MGSF for reimbursement.

Informants- The required forms used for managing informants are provided by the BCA. The MGSF requires that prior to any payments being made, all required information on the forms must be completed and on file. As stated previously, the office manager maintains informant files and assures that necessary information on all informants is maintained. This system appears to work well and access to the information is limited to the office manager and the commanders. Officers/agents are not allowed to view informant files of others. The QAU examined several random informant files and found them to be complete and in accordance with internal policy.

Timekeeping- As previously stated, timekeeping is generally done by the officer/agent's supervisor at his/her home agency, or by a supervisor assigned to the MGSF from the officer/agent's home agency. The reason is that the group supervisor may not be familiar with the various methods of timekeeping and/or specific work rules that may apply for each participating agency. In most cases, the group supervisor reviews and/or approves officer/agent's time sheets, prior to them being forwarded to the supervisor completing the timekeeping. This is not true however, in the case of MPD officers, as all timekeeping and overtime approval is done via the computer. In this case, the group supervisor may not be aware of the exact hours worked, or overtime accrued. Although it may not be practical to have group supervisors do the timekeeping for all officers/agents within their group regardless of home agency, it may be beneficial to have a consistent review/approval process in place so that better and more consistent time management is able to occur.

GangNet-This database consists of intelligence on known/suspected gang members. It is maintained at the MGSF headquarters and consists of approximately 7480 entries. In addition to the computer database, hard files of all persons entered into GangNet are kept on file. If a person were entered into GangNet at the MGSF, the hard file would be maintained at MGSF headquarters. If a person were entered into GangNet by an outside agency, the hard file would be maintained at that agency. Currently, the gang analyst is conducting an audit of all Gang Net files. This is being done to assure that all information entered into GangNet is accurate and verified in the hard file as is required by MGSF policy.

Gang Pointer File-The Gang Pointer file is maintained and updated by MGSF staff at their St. Paul headquarters. This is a database which consists of confirmed gang members which have been identified using the three point criteria mandated by legislation. Additionally, the gang member must be at least 14 years of age and must have committed a felony or gross misdemeanor prior to being entered into the Pointer File. The Pointer File is linked to CJIS so that this information is available to any law enforcement officer who runs a driver's license or warrant check in Minnesota.

Coordination and data entry for the Pointer file is managed by the gang analyst assigned to the MGSF. Data entry is primarily done by student workers and interns. Although information is entered into the database in a timely fashion, it is not removed consistently or in a timely manner. A program to automatically purge the information after three years without additional contact with a known gang member has not yet been incorporated into the program. The MGSF has been attempting to get the program incorporated into the Pointer File without success. The gang analyst believes that with little effort, this could be accomplished; however a programmer assigned at the State of Minnesota to work on the issue has yet to act on it. Currently, information is purged only if the gang analyst charged with maintaining the Pointer File is made aware of a status change, such as a death.

Audits of the Gang Pointer File are conducted twice per year, in July and December. In order to conduct an audit, the MGSF gang analyst selects a random sample of individuals who were

entered into the database since the previous audit. An affidavit is then sent to the agency which completed the initial entry for verification of the minimum three required criteria and any other information. The agency is then required to sign the affidavit and forward it to the MGSF. The last audit conducted of the Gang Pointer File revealed a 100% accuracy rate.

Personnel Records- The QAU learned that the commander maintains a personnel file on each officer/agent assigned to the Metro GSF. These files contain records of all training completed and any complimentary letters and/or commendations received while the officer/agent is assigned to the Metro GSF. They also contain lists of specialized equipment which has been issued. There is however, some inconsistency in both the level and method of documentation of any instances of substandard performance/misconduct on the part of Metro GSF officers/agents and supervisors. Any such records would be dependent on the individual supervisor to maintain. In most cases, Metro GSF supervisors do maintain their own files on each officer/agent within their group, however the two Metro GSF commanders may not routinely receive copies, or be aware of this documentation. Rather, they may receive verbal notification of any substandard performance. The Metro GSF commander and deputy commander indicated that usually, matters of substandard performance are handled informally between themselves and the supervisor from the officer/agent's home agency. In most cases, they are able to resolve such issues without further action or discipline. Such cases however, may or may not be documented.

Evaluations-The QAU noted that there is currently no consistent method of completing performance evaluations on personnel (supervisors and line staff) assigned to the Metro GSF. As it stands, if a performance evaluation is done, it is done either by the supervisor at the officer/agent's home agency, by a Metro GSF supervisor also assigned to the officer/agent's home agency regardless of the group assignment, or not done at all. Additionally, each agency represented has their own method of doing performance evaluations.

If an evaluation is completed by a supervisor from the officer/agent's home agency, it is impossible for that supervisor to do an accurate appraisal of the officer/agent's performance. Even if the supervisor is assigned to the Metro GSF, but supervises a different group, an accurate assessment of the officer/agent's day-to-day work performance may not be possible. In some cases, because of an officer/agent's assignment to the Metro GSF, an evaluation of his/her performance may not be done at all. Performance evaluations seem important for at least two reasons: to identify and recognize excellent performance, and to identify and address poor performance. It seems necessary however, to have regular performance evaluations completed by the officer/agent's Metro GSF group supervisor. Additionally, officers/agents should be evaluated using the same method and criteria while assigned to the MGSF.

Assignment- Personnel selected for assignment to the MGSF are nominated by their Chief Law Enforcement Officer (CLEO) and prior to appointment are approved by the Gang Oversight Council. This process seems to work well in most cases. Although investigative experience is preferred, it is not required for appointment.

Once assigned to the MGSF, an officer/agent is to be solely supervised by MGSF command staff and supervisors. In speaking with commanders and supervisors however, it was learned that this is not always the case. Some officers/agents have had supervisors from their home agency request that they continue to report to them. This creates an uncomfortable and difficult situation for the officer/agent and is not consistent with the guidelines as established by the Gang Oversight Council. Participating agencies need to realize that once they assign an officer to the MGSF, sole responsibility for supervision of that officer/agent while assigned to the MGSF, needs to remain with MGSF commanders and supervisors.

Removal- In the event that an assigned officer/agent is clearly not performing well and needs to be removed from assignment with the MGSF, Metro GSF commanders reported that they would usually contact the officer's supervisor or CLEO and discuss the situation. In most cases, the CLEO has been agreeable to removing the officer/agent and returning them to their home agency. In some cases, however, the CLEO has resisted the removal. The MGSF statewide commander needs to be given full and complete authority for removal of officers/agents from the MGSF.

Command/Control- As stated above and in legislation governing MGSF operations, the strike force is to have complete command and control of officers/agents while they are assigned. In order for their operation to be effective, this principle seems to be important to recognize. An issue was relayed regarding the assignment of an MPD officer who is also a member of the Emergency Response Unit (ERU). Although being assigned to the Metro-GSF, the officer is required to leave his assignment twice each year for a month at a time to return to the MPD to do warrant service. When this happens, the officer/agents cases remain idle and his investigations are put on hold. This causes a lack of continuity and does not meet the needs of the organization. It may be more practical to limit participation in these types of specialized assignments while assigned to the MGSF.

Reporting Practices:

Annual report-State legislation requires that the Gang Oversight Council report to the chairs of the senate and house on the activities of the MGSF by February 1st covering the previous year's activities. The report is to include the following:

- (1) A description of the council's goals for the previous year and for the coming year;
- (2) A description of the outcomes the council achieved or did not achieve during the preceding year and a description of the outcomes the council will seek to achieve during the coming year;
- (3) Any legislative recommendations the council has including a description of the specific legislation needed to implement the recommendations.

The QAU reviewed the current Annual Report completed by the MGSF. However, this document does not appear to be the same document as referenced in the above legislation. The current report is a useful document which outlines the activities and actions taken by the MGSF

for the previous year. It does not however, address any of the items listed above. The annual report does not outline any goals for the strike force nor does it outline any proposed recommendations. It appears that the Gang Oversight Council is responsible for producing such a document. The statewide commander indicated that he is not aware of such a document having been produced or distributed in the past. He did indicate that the MGSF annual report is distributed to legislators and CLEO's of most law enforcement organizations in the state.

Monthly reports- The statewide commander is responsible for producing monthly reports on MGSF activities for the Gang Oversight Council. These documents are useful in providing the council with updates and information on MGSF activities.

Adherence to State mandates, mission, and other directives:

Mission- The Metro GSF appears to be operating consistent with all aspects of its mission. This includes:

- Coordinating proactive, long term, gang related investigations
- Reacting promptly to requests for assistance from other law enforcement agencies
- Providing training to law enforcement personnel and agencies
- Obtaining intelligence information on gang membership and sharing that information with other law enforcement agencies
- Ensuring the community receives information about MGSF activities and acting as a liaison with numerous community groups.

Goals- Although being a proactive and effective organization, the MGSF does not appear to have any clear and documented yearly goals. Although acting within their mission, yearly goals and any evaluation of the level of success of their activities are not available. Although their mission is clear and they appear to be operating within its parameters, it may be helpful to set some yearly goals for the organization. This is also a required component of the report required by current legislation.

General Operational Effectiveness:

After action reports- Any incident which occurs within the Metro-GSF requires the officer/agent involved to complete an after action report. These reports seem to be a valuable communication tool and are very effective at summarizing what actions were taken on a specific incident, and by whom. Each completed after action report is forwarded to the group supervisor as well as the metro commander and assistant commander prior to the end of the officer/agent's shift. These reports provide commanders with necessary information on all Metro GSF activities. Case numbers of any arrests or follow up investigations are referenced in each after action report.

Under-utilization- All supervisors interviewed were asked if they could identify any problems with regards to MGSF operations. All supervisors responded that they feel that the MGSF and

specifically the Metro GSF, is underutilized by local law enforcement agencies. The MGSF has both resources and knowledge to offer however in many cases, the MGSF is not contacted by local law enforcement even though cases may be clearly gang related.

The MGSF has taken numerous steps to provide local law enforcement with information on their operations and to offer their assistance. In some cases, these offers have been well received, in other cases, they have not. The statewide commander indicated that he has sent letters to each CLEO in the state outlining the mission of the MGSF and indicating their willingness to assist. In addition, the MGSF annual report is now being sent to each CLEO in the state. Even with this, commanders believe that some local agencies and officers may not even be aware of the MGSF's existence.

It may be necessary for the MGSF to look to other marketing options in order to increase the level of assistance they are able to provide and to educate local law enforcement on MGSF resources available to assist local law enforcement in gang related investigations.

Geared for daytime activities- The staffing and operations of the Metro GSF are generally geared for daytime activities. Three of four groups generally work daytime hours, as do the clerical staff. The evening group supervisor indicated that at times, a lack of evening clerical or technical support can cause delays in completing reports, inventorying evidence, and in getting confidential funds. He did indicate however, that when additional assistance is needed, whether investigative or clerical, staff is willing to flex their hours and/or come in to assist.

Wiretaps-The MGSF has had occasion in the past to initiate Title III wiretaps as part of long-term, extensive investigations. These projects can involve an extensive commitment of personnel and resources. For this reason, the MGSF usually enlists the help of another law enforcement agency. By sharing the duties involved, it eases the burden of hours necessary to effectively staff and monitor the wiretap. Commanders seem to be very conscious of the time commitment involved in initiating a wiretap and are judicious in their review and approval of this investigative technique.

Prosecutions-The QAU interviewed three members of the Minnesota Attorney General's Office who assist the MGSF in the prosecution of gang crimes throughout the state, Pete Orput, Brent Wartner and Hilary Lindell-Caligiuri. They currently have an office on-site in the MGSF headquarters, which they occupy on a part-time basis. In addition to conducting prosecutions for the MGSF, they also advise the strike force officers on day-to-day activities, train local task force officers throughout the state, act as legal counsel to the Oversight Council, and act as liaisons to the Councils of Color for the MGSF.

During interviews, the QAU asked for their input as to the effectiveness of the MGSF and any areas which they believe could be improved upon. Each stated that the MGSF was a well-run organization, noting no problems dealing with either the officers/agents or management. One issue they did note, however, was in their dealings with the United States Attorney's Office. All believe that the U.S. Attorney's Office does not adopt enough of the MGSF's cases for federal

prosecution. In their opinion, this negates much of the hard work done by MGSF personnel during many of their long-term investigations. Although in their opinion, MGSF officers/agents often presented cases for federal prosecution which clearly met required guidelines, prosecution of these cases was often declined. They believe that a closer relationship and more cooperation between the MGSF and the U.S. Attorney's Office is needed.

Organizational Policies and Procedures:

Policy/Procedure Manual- The MGSF has a policy and procedure manual which is distributed to all MGSF personnel. It includes an overview of the mission of the MGSF as well as numerous internal operating policies and guidelines for the following:

- Duties and responsibilities of staff
- Code of conduct
- Equipment
- Evidence
- Use of Informants
- Firearms
- Pursuit
- Payroll and other records
- Data practices
- Search and seizure
- Sexual harassment and discrimination
- Training
- Towed vehicles
- Gang information

The QAU reviewed the policy and procedure manual and found it to be both comprehensive and clear. It appears that the Metro GSF operates consistently with the policies as outlined in this manual.

Informant policy- The MGSF has specific policies governing the use of confidential informants. These policies are contained within the MGSF policy and procedure manual. The existing policies appear to be clear, concise, and seem to offer appropriate levels of accountability and supervision with regards to the use of confidential informants. The policy also differentiates a concerned citizen informant from a confidential informant. This distinction is helpful and necessary when looking at differing motivations for persons when providing information to law enforcement. Random audits of individual informant files revealed that documents are completed in accordance with existing policies.

Report writing manual- The MGSF maintains a report-writing manual which is distributed to all personnel. This manual describes general report writing requirements and also outlines specifically how to fill out all of the forms used by MGSF personnel. In addition to providing instructions, the manual shows samples of how forms are to be completed. It also outlines the

officer/agent's responsibilities for each form and report. This document is very thorough and would be a very useful tool to those assigned to the MGSF.

Seizure/Forfeiture funds- When monies are seized by officers/agents as part of an arrest or investigation, they are inventoried in an evidence safe. There is an assistant attorney general assigned to coordinate all seizure/forfeitures. When the MGSF statewide commander has been informed that funds have cleared evidence and are available, the statewide commander removes the seizure funds from the evidence safe and places them in a separate safe located in his office. Periodically, these funds are then removed and deposited in a seizure account maintained by the fiscal agent for the MGSF, Ramsey County. The funds then move through the normal forfeiture process and are allocated per state/federal guidelines. The statewide commander hires clerical support on a part time basis to assist him in monitoring and processing seizure/forfeiture funds.

When the statewide commander decides to use seizure funds for a purchase, he makes a written request to the fiscal agent indicating what the funds are to be used for and how they are to be paid. All purchases are made consistent with pre-established state/federal guidelines.

Commander's Contingency Fund- The statewide MGSF commander maintains a contingency fund for unexpected expenses that are incurred as a result of an investigation or unforeseen operational expenses. In FY 2002, \$73,000 was budgeted for the commander's contingency fund. In FY 2003, \$54,000 is budgeted.

The contingency fund has been a useful and necessary fund which has allowed the MGSF to pay for training, purchase equipment, pay for services, and assist with travel and investigative expenses. It is maintained by the statewide commander and the expenditures are clearly documented and forwarded to the fiscal agent for the MGSF, Ramsey County.

Issues/Recommendations:

Below is a summary of issues as identified in this assessment and some recommendations for action.

Issue: Supervisors use varying methods of reporting group activities to commanders including case information, hours worked, and overtime accrual. This results in commanders receiving differing levels of detail on such activity and makes consistent review and accountability difficult.

Recommendation: The MGSF should develop, implement and require supervisors to complete a standard weekly activity summary database which could include and track not only officer/agent activity, but also hours worked, overtime accrual and summarize other general activities such as meetings, training, etc. This would provide MGSF commanders with a consistent level of reporting and allow for better management of resources and time.

Issue: Because of the varying methods of timekeeping used by MGSF personnel, it is sometimes difficult for group supervisors to review and manage time of group members.

Recommendation: Although it may not be practical for group supervisors to do the timekeeping for all assigned personnel, the MGSF should consider standardizing a review process which assures that group supervisors are fully aware of all time worked, accrued, or used.

Issue: In some cases, officers/agents have reporting responsibility to multiple supervisors from both within and outside the MGSF. This could include timekeeping, scheduling, evaluations, and general reporting.

Recommendation: The MGSF should strive to assure that all officers/agents are solely supervised by their assigned group supervisor while assigned to the MGSF. A single supervisor, whenever possible, should be designated to do an officer/agent's schedule, time approval, evaluations, and conduct general supervision and coaching. Additionally, participating agencies need to realize that while personnel are assigned to the MGSF, they are to be solely supervised by MGSF supervisors. Any issues, requests, and/or conflicts should be routed through the officer/agent's supervisor. Agencies that assign officers to the MGSF should limit the amount of other duties that would take them away from MGSF operations while they are assigned.

Issue: There is currently no consistent method of completing performance evaluations on personnel assigned to the MGSF. Officers/agents may be evaluated by another supervisor within the MGSF, a supervisor at their home agency, or not at all.

Recommendation: The MGSF should consider requiring regular performance evaluations for all personnel. An officer/agent's evaluation should be conducted by his/her group supervisor and the commander should conduct evaluations on all supervisors. All personnel should be evaluated using the same method and criteria. A structured form may not be necessary however some level of consistent evaluation would be helpful in identifying poor performance and in recognizing excellent performance.

Issue: In some cases, the statewide commander has recommended the removal of an officer/agent assigned to the MGSF, however the CLEO for that agency has resisted the removal.

Recommendation: The statewide commander needs to be given full and complete authority on the removal of an officer/agent assigned to the MGSF. Just as a CLEO from any other law

enforcement agency, the statewide commander needs to be able to adequately address substandard performance and/or misconduct.

Issue: MGSF operations rely heavily on technical expertise of the gang analyst. In her absence, the MGSF would lose important operational capacity as there are no existing backups for these critical operational functions.

Recommendation: The MGSF should identify personnel who could perform the duties of the gang analyst in her absence. This could include training other MGSF personnel or perhaps working with another agency to partner with for assistance and back up purposes. Many of the computer systems used are specialized and could require extensive training.

Issue: The workload and responsibilities for the MGSF office manager are extremely demanding. In addition to being tasked with general clerical and receptionist duties, the office manager is charged with maintaining supplies, managing the evidence room, and managing the confidential funds and informants for the Metro GSF.

Recommendation: Considering the size of the MGSF, there is very little clerical support. Consideration should be given to hiring a full or part time receptionist in order to reduce the workload of the office manager. This would allow her to focus her attention to duties such as evidence and fund management and would reduce the likelihood of distractions and the potential for mistakes.

Issue: The MGSF lacks regular and consistent technical support for computers, software, and other technological equipment.

Recommendation: The MGSF should establish a formal agreement or contract for computer/technical support. The current informal agreement is not adequate and could result in long delays and inadequate service. The MGSF has a number of computers and technical equipment which require regular service.

Issue: There is currently no formal procedure in place for the release or destruction of evidence. MGSF staff have difficulty in determining the disposition of cases in order to dispose of evidence and property. Additionally, there are no routine attempts made to notify owners of seized property of impending destruction.

Recommendation: The MGSF should attempt to get regular dispositions from the court and or attorneys rather than depending on investigators. This may allow them to release or dispose of

seized property in a more timely manner. Additionally, the MGSF should make a reasonable attempt to notify property owners of released property prior to its destruction.

Issue: There is some inconsistency in both the level and method of documentation of personnel records including any instances of substandard performance. The files contained by the commander contain letters of commendation, training and equipment records, and emergency contact information however they would not normally contain any documentation of substandard performance. Most group supervisors also maintain separate files of officers in their group which may contain duplicate information as well as documentation of substandard performance.

Recommendation: MGSF commanders should maintain a single and complete personnel file for all personnel assigned. These files should contain training records, disciplinary actions, performance evaluations, emergency contact information, equipment records and other types of information and documentation. This would provide consistent levels of documentation and assure that commanders have access to, and are made aware of any potential problems with assigned personnel.

Issue: The current MGSF annual report is not consistent with the report required of the Gang Oversight Council per MN state statute. Although being a useful document, it does not contain the required information and goals as stated in existing legislation. The Gang Oversight Council and the MGSF, do not appear to set yearly goals for the organization. Such goals are required of the Gang Oversight Council per existing legislation.

Recommendation: The Gang Oversight Council and the MGSF should work to set yearly goals for the organization and such goals should be incorporated into the existing annual report. The oversight council should work to assure that goals are met and that the required report is produced and distributed as directed.

Issue: Prosecutors interviewed feel that the U.S. attorney's office does not adopt enough of the MGSF's cases for federal prosecution even though they may clearly fit federal prosecution guidelines.

Recommendation: The MGSF and the Gang Oversight Council should work to involve the U.S. attorney's office earlier and in more cases and incorporate their active participation into the overall organization of the MGSF.

Issue: Supervisors report that they feel that the MGSF is under-utilized by law enforcement agencies throughout the state. Although the MGSF sent letters to all CLEOs and is now distributing the MGSF annual report statewide, these efforts may not be effective.

Recommendation: The MGSF should consider new marketing ideas in order to provide more and better service to law enforcement agencies throughout the state. It is clear that the MGSF needs to increase its name recognition and better define its mission and capabilities to assist the law enforcement community. The MGSF does not currently have a public information officer however perhaps such a position could be considered. The MGSF has valuable resources and knowledge to offer which could be used much more effectively throughout the state.

Summary

In general, the Metro GSF, appears to be operating in a very efficient and effective manner. Considering the complicated and often political nature of this organization, the policies, procedures, and overall management seem to be sound. The MGSF and specifically, the Metro Region GSF office seems to be an organization which is typical, in many ways, of any law enforcement agency. Although any organization could identify areas to improve upon, the QAU found no areas within which would be any cause for great concern.

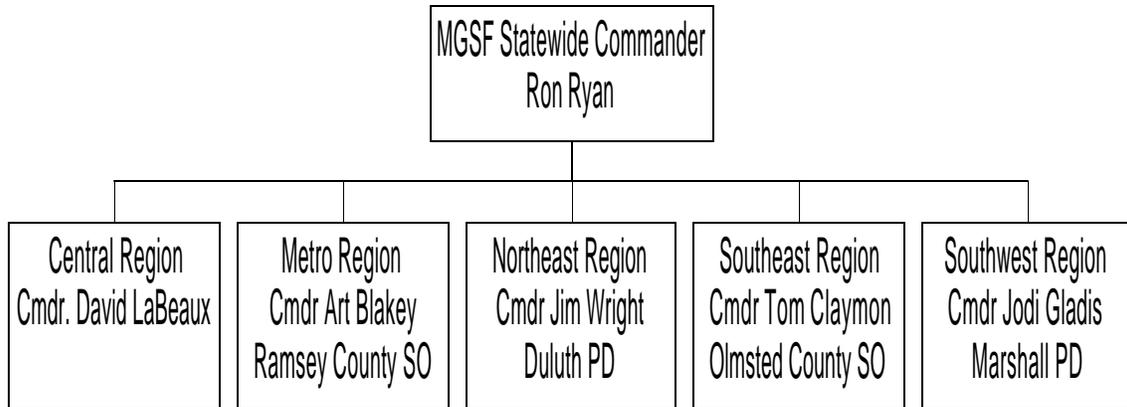
The high profile nature of the MGSF has caused both command staff and line personnel to work to assure that the organization is operating in an effective manner, and in a manner which could hold up to public examination and scrutiny.

One of the things that seems to make the MGSF very effective is the cooperative relationship amongst participating agencies. Some have proposed that the MGSF would be more effective if it was incorporated into a state agency run through the Minnesota Department of Public Safety. Although there could be some advantages to doing this, it is also likely that the MGSF would lose some of its connections with local jurisdictions. The local participation and cooperation from law enforcement agencies is what has differentiated the MGSF from other law enforcement organizations and made it successful. The statewide commander indicated that that the MGSF has been successful in training and educating officers from local jurisdictions on gangs while they are assigned to the MGSF. When those officers return to their home assignment, they have both knowledge and experience in investigating gangs and gang related crimes within their own jurisdictions. If the MGSF were to become a state run function, this valuable training tool could be lost and the MGSF could be at risk of becoming another bureaucracy of its own, or absorbed into the bureaucracy of the state.

The MGSF has demonstrated success in the past and is currently operationally sound. As long as this continues to be the case, the advantages of continuing to operate on a cooperative basis with state, county, and local jurisdictions seem to outweigh any potential benefits of significantly changing the organization.

Appendix I

MGSF Statewide Organizational Chart



MGSF Metro Region Organizational Chart

