



North Carolina Department of Public Safety
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Roy Cooper, Governor

Erik A. Hooks, Secretary

MEMORANDUM

To: Chairs of House Appropriations Committee on Justice and Public Safety
Chairs of Senate Appropriations Committee on Justice and Public Safety
Chairs of Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety

From: Erik A. Hooks, Secretary, DPS *EAH*
Glenn M. McNeill, Jr., Commander, State Highway Patrol *GMM*

Subject: Annual Gang Report

Date: March 1, 2017

Pursuant of General Statute 20-196.5, "The State Highway Patrol, in conjunction with the State Bureau of Investigation and the Governor's Crime Commission, shall develop recommendations concerning the establishment of priorities and needed improvements with respect to gang prevention and shall report those recommendations to the chairs of the House of Representatives and Senate Appropriations Committees on Justice and Public Safety and to the chairs of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Justice and Public Safety on or before March 1 of each year."

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this information and for your support of the safety of North Carolina. If there are any questions regarding this report, please contact the NC DPS Governmental Affairs office at 919-733-2126.

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North Carolina Department of Public Safety

North Carolina State Highway Patrol

North Carolina GangNET



Gangs in North Carolina

An Analysis and Update of NCSHP GangNET Data

January 1, 2016 – December 31, 2016

February, 2017

North Carolina State Highway Patrol

North Carolina GangNET Staff

Sergeant Sean Bridges

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February, 2017

Forward:

The North Carolina Governor's Crime Commission (GCC) administered gang surveys and conducted gang research of law enforcement agencies beginning in 1998. The GCC has since produced several reports on gangs and gang membership trends. Session Law 2008-187 Section 7 stated that the Governor's Crime Commission was to submit an annual update to the General Assembly on the statewide levels of gangs, gang membership and gang associates in the North Carolina

GangNET is a law enforcement database, specific to the individual gang members, which originated in the Durham County Sheriff's Office and was funded through Governor's Crime Commission grants. By 2004, Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department joined Durham to provide service to the western counties in North Carolina. Since 2009, NC GangNET has been the source of gang data used in statewide reports to the General Assembly. In 2012, the Governor's Crime Commission consolidated the system into a single central database to allow for more uniform quality control and training. In 2013, the research unit of the GCC, the North Carolina Criminal Justice Analysis Center, was eliminated and all gang related information is now collected by the NC State Highway Patrol, NCSHP GangNET Project. In 2014, the management of NC GangNET moved to the North Carolina State Highway Patrol to be managed by a certified law enforcement agency. The transition has allowed for a rapid expansion of the project on all fronts. The capabilities of this project have expanded exponentially by utilizing the NCSHP Field Liaison Officer (FLO) program. A GangNet trained Trooper serving as the FLO coordinator from each troop, A-I, instantly fills the void left by smaller agencies who may not have the manpower to participate. The FLO GangNET certification training includes utilization of the system, proper vetting of information being entered into the system and the training of future participants. This will include both the remaining staff at the North Carolina State Highway Patrol and law enforcement officers from agencies within their respective troop jurisdictions.

GangNET is a means for law enforcement officers and agencies to share non-discoverable and non-evidentiary information on validated gang members and affiliates. This information is protected by federal regulations that govern the uses of law enforcement intelligence data. Many other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies also use the GangNET software which facilitates the potential for cross jurisdictional and interstate sharing of information on gang members.

This report will provide analysis of the 2016 Gang data, as well as, law enforcement agencies use of the system. A Gang Fact Sheet offering gang data only, will be provided as Appendix 1 in this report. The intention is to allow the GangNET staff to provide these Fact Sheets once a year or upon request.

Method of Data Collection:

GangNET is a web based database housed on a secure server and managed by the North Carolina State Highway Patrol GangNET staff. This team trains law enforcement personnel statewide to certify users in the laws and protocols of gang member entry into the system. Only certified users may enter or view the information contained in the database. There are multiple user levels ranging from view only, entry and full system administrative rights, which are those of the NCSHP GangNET staff. Data for this report and future Fact Sheets are derived exclusively from the NCSHP GangNET data.

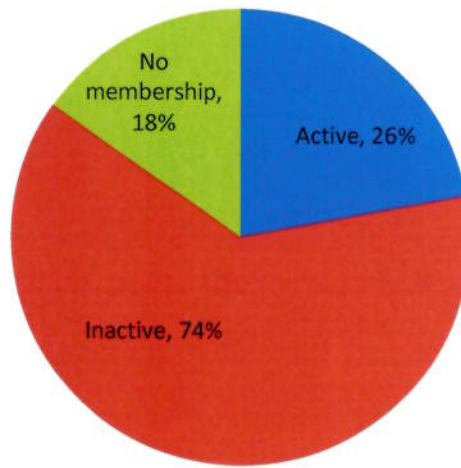
2016 Goals:

A continued goal for 2016 was to ensure that all data was accurate and up to date in compliance with 28 CFR 23 standards. This was evident by the number of reported gang members who remained active in the system. Users continue to witness a dramatic reduction in reported membership as the last of the subjects added during the surge of participation in 2013 were purged from the system. In addition to GangNet certification classes that enabled 426 new users in 2016, NCSHP GangNet staff conducted gang awareness training for 207 citizens at various forums to include gang conferences and community requests. The success of the project continues in 2017 as well. GangNet staff have already received requests for certification training from 7 agencies, as well as, presented at the Eastern NC Gang Conference in Mt. Olive in January 2017. Over 200 local, State and Federal law enforcement officers, along with their civilian counterparts, came together to receive training on various gang topics to include the Highway Patrol's Gang 101 update. As of February 2017 GangNet staff have already certified over 87 new law enforcement personnel to access the system. The overall GangNet certification numbers from the last report have dropped however this is a good thing. The reduction is due to the increased ability for agencies to self-sustain their GangNet in service. By design an agency is initially certified as a train the trainer. From that point they can continue to certify new users with "view only" access. This allows Highway Patrol staff to concentrate on certifying new agencies, as well as, new trainers within existing departments.

Gangs:

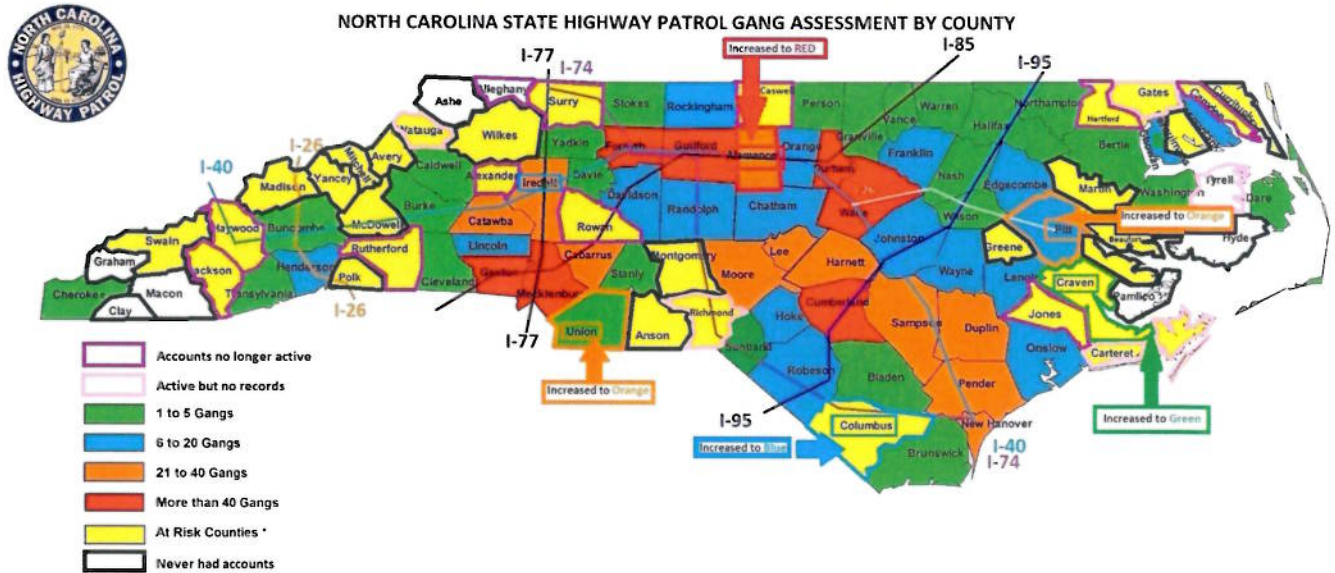
Information retrieved from GangNET data on January 2017 reveals 1,161 gangs reported across the state.

Figure 1
Active/Inactive/Historical Gangs in NC
Jan 2016 Data



It is important to note that although GangNet purges subjects after 5 years of inactivity, it does not purge gangs. The idea is that gang membership can fluctuate widely depending on the criminal climate of any given jurisdiction. Leadership can be imprisoned or killed which can result in subjects consolidating or fleeing to other groups. Because of this the Highway Patrol maintains records on the total number of gangs entered in the system. An active gang is one whose membership is greater than 3 or more subjects represented in the above graph in blue at 26%. Any gang whose membership drops below 3 but still has active members is reclassified as inactive which is represented in red at 74%. The remaining number of gangs entered into the system that no longer has any active membership is indicated in green at 18%. By maintaining a record of every gang entered in GangNet the system allows for users to locate and populate those gangs should new members emerge. It also allows for a reclassification back to an active status.

Figure 2



* At Risk Counties are those counties with no identified gangs, but are adjacent to counties with identified gangs, on an interstate corridor, or that have a significant metropolitan population.

The only notable changes for 2016:

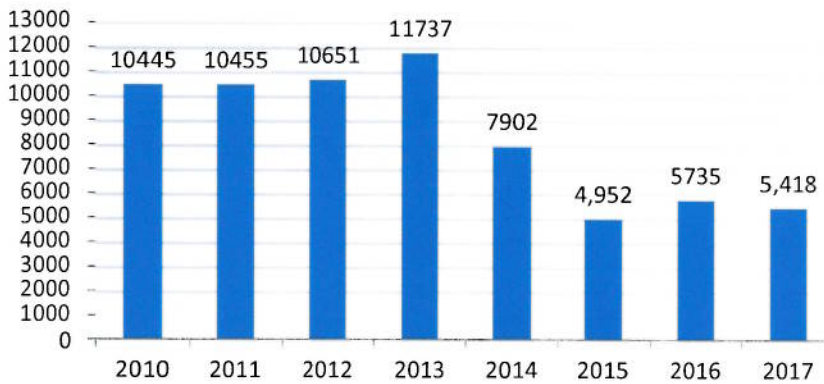
- Iredell County decreased from 21-40 reported gangs to 6-20 reported gangs
- Union County increased from 1-5 reported gangs to 21-40 reported gangs
- Alamance County increased from 21-40 gangs to more than 40 reported gangs
- Pitt County increased from 6-20 reported gangs to 21-40 reported gangs
- Craven County went from no participating to 1-5 reported gangs
- Columbus County went from not participating to 6-20 reported gangs

(The “increases” can be attributed to the jurisdictions having received new or renewed certification and access to input data into the system)

Some data inconsistencies exist due to errors in entry such as a single name with multiple birthdates and absence of race or gender information. These errors account for some of the data being inconsistent with total gang members. The total number of validated gang members currently in GangNET is 4,968 as shown in Figure 3. Data indicates 4,815 male and 161 female gang members. There are an additional 502 non-validated suspected gang members or affiliates in the system.

Attempting to compare the number of gang members in previous reports with this year’s reported levels of gang membership is problematic. As the previous version of GangNET gained popularity, a great number of gang investigators sought to have their information on gang members entered into the system to share and view information from other jurisdictions. This meant that the system was rapidly populated. As a result, each year a number of validated gang members from past years are purged from the system as new gang members are being entered. There has been no tracking of the volume of validated gang members expunged due to five years of inactivity in the system; thus it is difficult to determine how large the rise in validated gang membership is in any given year. Figure 3, depicts the number of validated gang members since 2010. A large disparity shows in the number of validated gang members in the system over several years. Since GangNET was not developed to generate aggregate reports on numbers of gangs or gang members, this data is the product of programming code applied to the data to produce counts. The spike in 2013 was likely due to programming language that included both validated gang members and suspected gang members in the gang member category while the decline in 2015 was due to the automated system wide purge of GangNET.

Figure 3
Gang Involvement



Note: 2016 data indicates the North Carolina State Highway Patrol GangNET’s continued effort to purge all expired records from the system and not a true decrease in gang activity.

Juvenile Gang membership:

Jurisdictions continue to be reluctant to enter juvenile gang members and information on individuals 15 years of age and younger. The ability to determine the level of juvenile involvement in gangs relies on data entered in the North Carolina Juvenile Online Information Network (NC-JOIN) or external information from gang investigators, gang prevention and intervention program staff. This report has little ability to provide a clear picture of juvenile gang involvement. Since the GangNet is governed by 28 CFR part 23 and is a “right to know and need to know” database, it would serve as an effective tool for information on gang involved juveniles. This deficit should eventually be overcome since all

new certified users have been trained on the method for entering subjects less than 16 years of age.

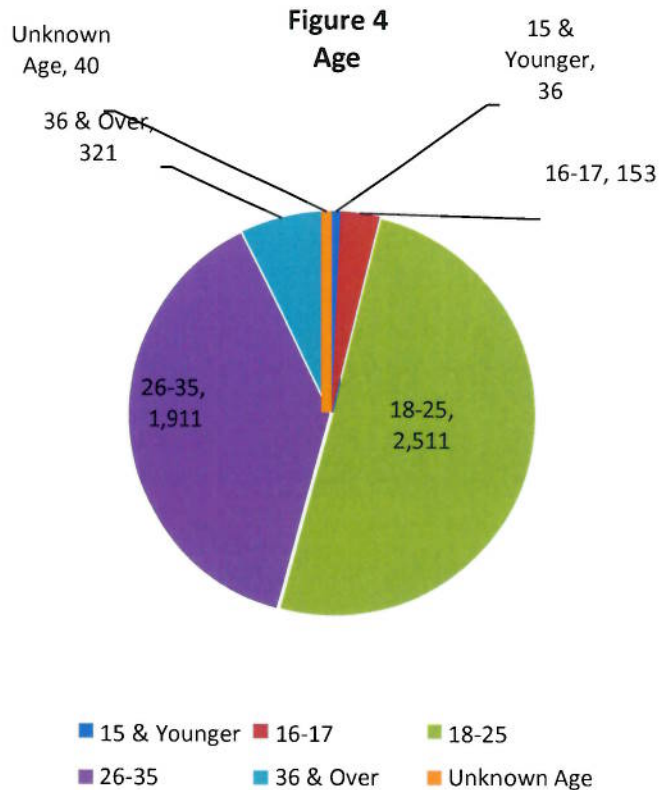
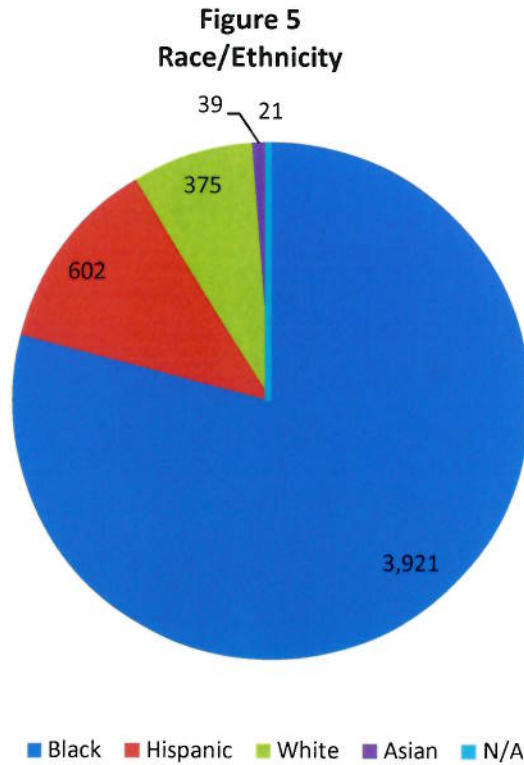


Figure 4 illustrates that the age group of 18 to 25 year olds make up 50 percent of the validated gang members in the system. That same age grouping made up 55 percent of the validated gang members in the February 2016 report. The age group of 26 to 35 years has increased from 33 percent in the February 2016 report to 38 percent in this year’s data. This data was again affected by the system wide purge with the largest portion of purged members in these age bands. This indicates that the reported gang data shows a trend towards the population getting older and better established. However, it is too early to determine what long term effects are occurring in NC since the numbers have varied so greatly from one year to the next. We further continue to expect the juvenile entries to rise with continued training from the NCSHP GangNet staff.

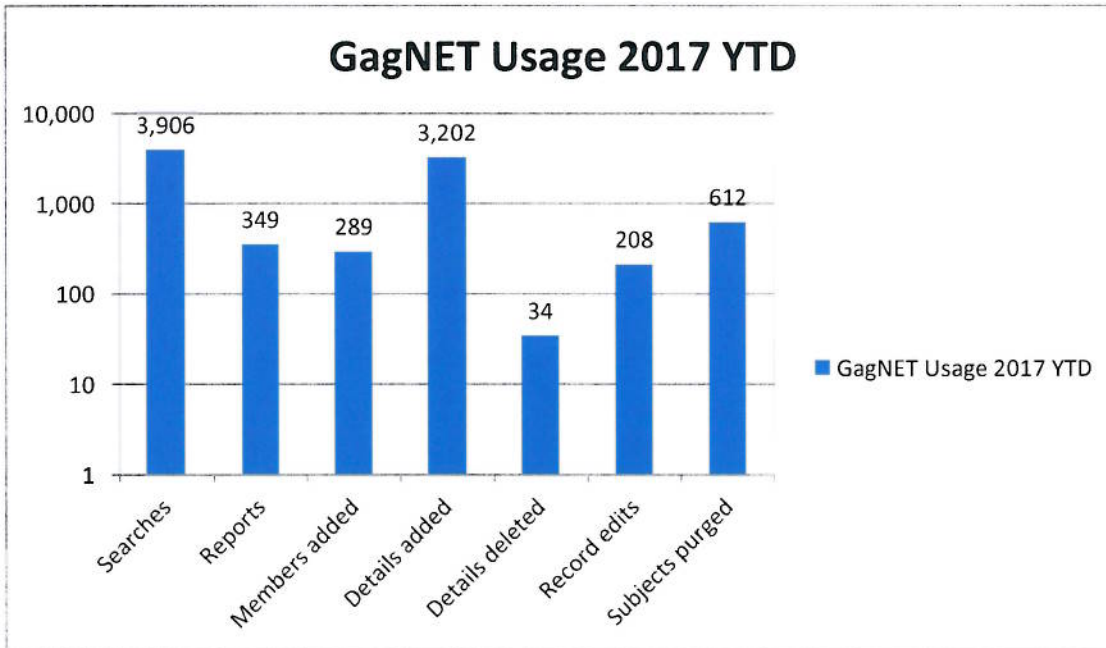


Gang Member Race and Ethnicity:

The demographic breakdown of race and ethnicity provides some interesting data. There continues to be a disproportionate representation of Black and Hispanic involvement as validated gang members. There are 3,921 Black gang members, 602 Hispanic gang members, 375 White gang members, 39 Asian gang members and 21 whose race and/or ethnicity are unknown. This is illustrated in Figure 5.

This disproportionate representation continues and may be due to socioeconomic variables unique to these communities. The proportions still remain consistent despite the ongoing system wide purges. The data emphasizes the need for gang prevention, intervention and suppression programs targeted to the needs of these at-risk populations.

Additional System Information:



In 2016 GangNet saw a significant amount of law enforcement personnel from across the state accessing its data which continues through 2017. Among the highest queries were 3,906 searches performed followed closely by 3,202 details added to the system. These searches included but were not limited to subjects, gangs, locations, vehicles and tattoos. The most active aspect of user input was the number of details added to existing records totaling 3,202. Lastly and most significant as it relates to the compliance with 28 CFR 23, was a total of 612 subject purges. Based upon these numbers it is evident that the efforts of Highway Patrol staff that GangNet will continue to be a viable tool in the sharing of gang information. This will in turn create a more robust situational awareness environment that will keep both officers and citizens safe well into the future.

Summary:

With the continued efforts of the GangNet staff to train law enforcement officers throughout the state and the networking capabilities of troopers, GangNet has achieved many goals. Training was conducted for 65 agencies spanning from the mountains to the outer banks resulting in 426 newly certified users. Several federal law enforcement agencies requested and received GangNet certifications. Jurisdictions who had previously abandoned their use of the system have come back and actively utilize the system and its benefits.

Tracking and suppressing gangs and their members, is but only one tool in dealing with the issue of gangs in North Carolina. The next and most important step in the continued success of GangNet is to increase our intelligence sharing by connected to our partner states. This ensures that officers not only have the benefit of knowing information shared within North Carolina but from neighboring states as well. Due to the transient nature and high mobility of today's modern gangs this next step is paramount.

Recommendation 1 – Connecting to partner states

- NCSHP GangNet is currently connected to Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia via the Washington/Baltimore HIDTA.
- The connection with the highest priority is South Carolina (SLED) GangNet
- The remaining states are Georgia, Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, California and Washington

Recommendation 2 – Establish the North Carolina GangNet User Advisory Body

- The members of the North Carolina Advisory Body will consist of the NCSHP GangNet administrative staff and an ad hoc grouping of certified users (large and small stakeholders) of the system to discuss policies and procedures, system upgrades, changes in laws concerning gangs or the system, and any necessary punitive actions for system misuse.
- Members of the North Carolina GangNet User Advisory Body will review any rules relevant to the operation of the Body. These will include but not be limited to criteria to determine the process for selection of members, establishment of term limits, and assignment of duties associated with service on the Body.

APPENDIX:

The North Carolina State Highway Patrol GangNET staff consists of database administrators that run data reports and audit the use of the system and purge records when necessary; and, trainers who teach the user certification classes. These staff, while understanding the information contained within NCSHP GangNET, are not trained in providing statewide social and policy analysis of the data. For this reason, the GangNET Fact Sheet on the following pages will be updated every six months to show the changes in the data and use of the NCSHP GangNET Project. For contextual purposes, it is suggested that any social or policy analysis of the NCSHP GangNET data rely heavily on this publication and the historical Gang and GangNET reports published by the Governor's Crime Commission.

FACT SHEET North Carolina State Highway Patrol GangNET

Participation in NCSHP GangNET

	2013 *	05/2014	12/2014	06/2015	12/2015	06/2016	12/2016
NC Agencies	230	254	382	N/A	255	276	285
WB HIDTA ¹	NA	114	124	N/A	117	117	117
NC Certified Users	NA	4,982	6,490	N/A	2,845	3,200	3346
NC Counties	59	66	100	N/A	100	100	100
Interstate ²	NA	3	3	N/A	3	3	3

¹Agencies sharing view-only information with NC GangNET via the Washington/Baltimore HIDTA.

²Interstate Compacts: NC GangNET is currently sharing two-way view-only access with Virginia, Maryland and Washington, DC.

*For reference, the NC GangNET Project is providing information from the 2013 Governor's Crime Commission "Gangs In North Carolina" report. NA indicates data was not provided in the GCC report.

Gang, Members, Associates, Monikers, Vehicles, Phone Numbers and Addresses

	2013 *	05/2014	12/2014	06/2015	12/2015	06/2016	12/2016
Gangs	982	1,041	1095	N/A	1,128	1,143	1161
Gang Members	10,651	11,737	7902	N/A	4,952	4,812	4,968
Gang Associates	2,681	3,229	1561	N/A	901	923	502
Gang Monikers ¹	NA	10,765	5657	N/A	3,503	3,319	3,374
Vehicles ²	NA	2,252	1504	N/A	1,226	1,145	1,052
Phone Numbers ²	NA	17,604	11,356	N/A	6,904	5,857	5,228
Addresses ²	NA	26,337	16,855	N/A	13,974	13,177	12,813
WB HIDTA ³	NA	19,256	18,186	N/A	15,383	11,634	10,801

¹Monikers refers to nicknames or street names and not the legal names of gang members.

²Vehicles, Phone Numbers and Addresses that are associated with gang members. There can be multiple entries for each subject.

³Gang members shared with NC GangNET via the Washington/Baltimore HIDTA

*For reference, the NC GangNET Project is providing information from the 2013 Governor's Crime Commission "Gangs In North Carolina" report. NA indicates data was not provided in the GCC report.

Gang Member Age Groupings

	2013 *	05/2014	12/2014	06/2015	12/2015	06/2016	12/2016
15 and younger ¹	79	17	27	N/A	25	30	36
Ages 16 and 17 ²	337	263	202	N/A	162	153	153
Ages 18 to 25	6,681	6,317	5833	N/A	2,770	2,514	2,511
Ages 26 to 35	3,048	4,111	1417	N/A	1,661	1,764	1,911
36 and older	522	796	423	N/A	294	310	321
Unknown	NA	93	0	N/A	48	41	44

¹North Carolina statute provides that individuals 15 years and younger are juveniles.

²While other states consider 16 and 17 year olds to be juveniles, this age grouping added with juveniles provides for comparison to other states.

*For reference, the NC GangNET Project is providing information from the 2013 Governor’s Crime Commission “Gangs In North Carolina” report. NA indicates data was not provided in the GCC report.

Gang Member Race and Ethnicity

	2013 *	05/2014	12/2014	06/2015	12/2015	06/2016	12/2016
Black	7,471	9,596	5,586	N/A	3,823	3,755	3,921
White	831	1,594	558	N/A	381	365	375
Asian	121	167	46	N/A	36	36	39
Hispanic	2,113	3,562	860	N/A	679	621	602
Other	131	47	852	N/A	33	33	21

*For reference, the NC GangNET Project is providing information from the 2013 Governor’s Crime Commission “Gangs In North Carolina” report. NA indicates data was not provided in the GCC report.

Gang Member Gender

	2013 *	05/2014	12/2014	06/2015	12/2015	06/2016	12/2016
Male	10,164	11,338	7750	N/A	4802	4,662	4815
Female	490	388	152	N/A	150	157	161

*For reference, the NC GangNET Project is providing information from the 2013 Governor’s Crime Commission “Gangs In North Carolina” report. NA indicates data was not provided in the GCC report.