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April to June 2015

Organized Crime in Canada: A Quarterly Summary

Organized Crime Activities

- [Auto Theft](#)
- [Contraband Tobacco](#)
- [Corruption](#)
- [Cyber-Crime](#)
- [Drug Trafficking](#)
 - [Fentanyl](#)
 - [Hashish](#)
 - [Heroin](#)
 - [GHB](#)
 - [Marijuana](#)
- [Fraud](#)
- [Human Trafficking and the Sex Trade](#)
- [Money Laundering](#)

Organized Crime Genres

- [Italian Organized Crime](#)
- [Mexican Drug Cartels](#)
- [Organized Street Gangs](#)
- [Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs](#)

Organized Crime Activities

Auto Theft

In May, police in Ottawa and Gatineau charged two men from Montreal with various offences related to what police are calling an organized auto theft network in the national capital region. Some 25 cars – mostly Lexus and Toyota models collectively worth more than \$800,000 – were stolen from driveways in various Ottawa neighborhoods from April to September, 2014, according to police. Six of the stolen vehicles were found in shipping containers at the Port of Montreal while the other stolen vehicles had already been shipped overseas, sold domestically, or dismantled for parts. In total, the two men face almost 100 counts of vehicle theft, possession of break-in instruments, theft over \$5,000, attempted theft, and possession of property obtained by crime.

Also in May, Calgary police recovered 74 vehicles, worth approximately \$1.9 million, from an alleged auto theft ring in that city. Numerous arrests were also made. According to Calgary police officials, an investigation was launched in February 2015 following a significant increase

in vehicle thefts in the Calgary area. Police speculated that the vehicles were sold for profit or used in other serious crimes. Early in the investigation, police arrested two individuals in connection to the thefts. Following the arrests, the number of cars stolen locally dropped by an estimated 40 a week. Police laid a total of 168 criminal charges against four people, all of whom are from Calgary. The charges include possession of stolen property over \$5,000, theft of a motor vehicle, theft over \$5,000, property damage over \$5,000, breaching a court order, possession of drugs for the purpose of trafficking, and possession of the proceeds of crime.

Sources: [CTV Ottawa, May 8, 2015, Two charged in alleged organized auto theft network](#); [CTV Calgary, May 14 2015, Calgary police recover 74 vehicles from alleged auto theft ring](#)

Contraband Tobacco

To mark “World No Tobacco Day,” which took place on May 31, the Ontario Convenience Store Association highlighted the problem of contraband tobacco in the province. According to the OCSA, contraband tobacco accounts for approximately 33 percent of all cigarettes purchased in that province. Further, according to the association representing convenience store owners, including many that sell legitimate tobacco products, more than 70 organized crime groups are involved with the illegal tobacco trade.

Citing RCMP estimates, the National Coalition Against Contraband Tobacco states there are 175 criminal gangs “that profit from smuggling illegal cigarettes in Canada, and they use these profits to fund other criminal activities such as trafficking in guns, drugs and even human trafficking.” The Coalition also estimates there are 50 illegal cigarette manufacturing plants in Canada. “Each of these factories is capable of producing as many as 10,000 cigarettes a minute, meaning millions of illegal cigarettes a year make their way across the country, with the profits lining the pockets of criminals,” said Gary Grant, a spokesperson for the Coalition.

In Atlantic Canada, the Atlantic Convenience Stores Association estimated that 24 percent of cigarettes smoked in New Brunswick are illegal. The estimate is based on a study conducted by the Montreal research firm NIRIC, which collected cigarette ends from 27 sites across the province in late May and early June of 2015 for analysis. Of the almost 4,000 cigarette ends that were collected as part of the study, 24 percent were illegal. Twenty-six percent of those collected at 11 high schools were illegal.

The illegal trade in contraband cigarettes costs federal and provincial governments billions of dollars every year in lost taxes on the sale of legitimate cigarettes. In June, data from the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission indicated that, over a five year period, the provincial government lost around \$4.5 million in taxes as a result of contraband tobacco.

In April, Federal justice minister Peter MacKay told the media that a new federal law against contraband tobacco – the *Tackling Contraband Tobacco Act* – will help provide federal authorities more power to combat the trafficking and cross-border smuggling of contraband tobacco by creating a new Criminal Code offence with mandatory penalties of imprisonment for repeat offenders. MacKay said the mandatory minimum penalties include 90 days in jail for a second conviction, 180 days for a third and two years less a day for subsequent convictions.

To combat the trade in black market cigarettes, the Ontario government also recently introduced several measures. These include making it easier for police to stop, detain and search vehicles suspected of smuggling tobacco and increasing powers and resources to the OPP to focus the smuggling, manufacturing and trafficking of contraband tobacco.

The CEO of Ontario Convenience Store Association, Dave Bryans, applauded governments' efforts to crack down on the contraband tobacco problem but also insisted that proposed legislation that will ban the sale of flavoured tobacco will also drive customers to make purchases in the illegal market.

Contraband tobacco is not just a problem limited to Canada. A June 1 story on the NewEurope.eu blog stated that tobacco industry's figures indicate 58.6 billion illicit cigarettes were smoked in the European Union in 2013. "The huge majority of these cigarettes is smuggled. Only 5.8% of consumed illicit cigarettes are counterfeit, the rest is contraband ... On top of the consumed illicit cigarettes, around 4 billion of illicit cigarettes are seized each year. The consumed illicit cigarettes make up for around 10.5% of overall consumption in the EU, which is at around 560 billion cigarettes per year."

Sources: [Postmedia Network, May 30, 2015, World No Tobacco Day shines spotlight on illicit tobacco trade in Ontario](#), The Moncton Times & Transcript, April 15, 2015, MacKay says law tough on contraband tobacco; [Metro News, June 18, 2015, Contraband tobacco seizures decline sharply in Alberta](#); [The Canadian Press, July 8, 2015, N.B. convenience store owners want crackdown on illegal smoke sales](#); [New Europe blog, June 1, 2015, Tobacco smuggling: The Canary in the Coal Mine of Organized Crime](#)

Corruption

In a four-part series in May, the Vancouver Sun alleged that more than two dozen Hells Angels, their associates as well as "other gangsters or people with serious criminal records" are working at the Port of Vancouver in a variety of capacities. The Sun claims it has documented "27 active longshoremen with gang or criminal links from various sources of information, including public records and union membership lists."

Among the 27 are at least six full-patch Hells Angels from B.C. chapters who are members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union.

According to the articles, written by crime reporter Kim Bolan, "The infiltration of gangsters and criminals into the port workforce is perpetuated by a long-time employment practice that allows existing union members to nominate friends, relatives and associates when new jobs become available. Police say organized crime maintains this foothold on the waterfront for strategic purposes — so drugs and other contraband can be smuggled in some of the more than 1.5 million containers that pass through the four container terminals at Port Metro Vancouver every year."

The article goes on to quote Detective Sgt. Isnor of the OPP Biker Enforcement Unit who remarked that the Hells Angels have had a presence in Canada's three largest ports (Vancouver, Montreal and Halifax) for the past 30 years.

Indeed, the findings of the Sun series are nothing new; various investigative news stories as well as government reports and academic research going as far back as the 1980s have documented how members and associates of the Hells Angels have worked on had access to the docks, in part to facilitate their smuggling activities.

The Sun accuses the Metro Vancouver docks as remaining “relative porous” in the post-911 world and implicitly blames numerous entities for not cracking down on their infiltration by organized crime. These responsible entities include government regulatory agencies, such as Transport Canada, as well as unions and professional associations representing the companies that hire the workers who have access to the docks.

According to Bolan, “Andy Smith, president of the B.C. Maritime Employers Association, said his agency is aware of the Hells Angels and others with gang connections on the docks. But he also said his association’s role is to ensure longshore workers are properly trained, not worry about their criminal histories.”

More highlights from Bolan’s articles are provided below.

Some have worked on the docks for years, like Al DeBruyn, a senior White Rock Hells Angel who started in 1981 — two years before the HA was set up in B.C.

Other Hells Angels joined the longshoremen more recently. Rob Alvarez of the elite Nomads chapter and Kelowna Angel Damiano Dipopolo started on May 24, 2012. West Point Hells Angel Ryan Sept started just last year, nominated by another full-patch member of his chapter.

Gill is in jail after police issued a warrant for him several months ago on some outstanding charges.

That number doesn’t include the “inactive” members of the union who are also Hells Angels — East End president John Bryce, Nomads Angel Gino Zumpano, Haney member Vince Brienza, West Point member Larry Amero and former Vancouver president Norm Krogstad.

Some of the thousands of dock workers in B.C. also possess a higher-security Transportation Security Clearance pass issued by Transport Canada that allows them inside restricted zones on the waterfront.

Bikers aren’t the only people with links to crime working on the waterfront.

Others who police have publicly identified as gangsters, such as Mani Buttar and Bobby Tajinder Gill, are also longshoremen, as are some of their associates.

Buttar has been a member of Local 502, a Vancouver local of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, since 1998. The local provides hundreds of workers a day to Fraser Surrey docks and Deltaport. And Buttar, whose two brothers died in gangland shootings, is on his union’s executive committee despite a lengthy criminal history.

A series of government and police reports about organized crime on the waterfront and obtained by the Sun show authorities have been documenting concerns for two decades.

A 2012 Transport Canada report obtained by the Sun under the Access to Information Act identified the potential “exploitation of the commercial marine transportation system to smuggle narcotics from the Americas to Canada’s Pacific Coast.”

The report acknowledges that Mexican cartels use ships to transport their drugs to Canada and elsewhere.

“The presence of numerous members of organized crime groups (OCGs) as dockside employees of the Port of Vancouver, coupled with the ability to access the port by members of OCGs employed in the trucking industry creates a high-risk for smuggling at the port,” says a September 2010 internal Border Services Agency report.

The 2010 CBSA report, also obtained under the Access to Information Act, said that while the Mafia and Hells Angels “have exerted the most significant criminal influence at major Canadian marine ports, many other international OCGs, including Asian, East Indian, Persian, Middle Eastern, Eastern European and local groups have developed a presence in Canada.”

The report says the gangs use shipping containers to smuggle cocaine, codeine (poppy powder), ephedrine, GHB, heroin, hashish, hashish oil, khat, marijuana, opium and precursor chemicals to make ecstasy and crystal meth.

The CBSA clearly links the smuggling to the Hells Angels and other gangsters working at the port “in key positions — longshoremen, equipment operators, foremen and truck drivers.”

“Joint forces operations by Canadian law enforcement agencies, which have included the CBSA, have succeeded in dismantling smuggling operations and temporarily disrupting the movement of drugs, cigarettes and other contraband. However since OCGs are adept at quickly re-establishing their presence at the ports, these successes are typically shortlived.”

The 2010 report echoes two others prepared by police in the mid 1990s and obtained from Sun sources.

A 1995 report done by the Criminal Intelligence Section of B.C. says “Hells Angels have numerous members in the longshoremen’s union, employed in a variety of port jobs. This has provided them with the direct means of transporting narcotics and other drugs internationally.”

“Hells Angels employees have access to a variety of ports in various locations, access to vessels, containers, scheduling and their own trucking companies to load and unload product. The Hells Angels East End chapter’s relationship with traditional organized crime not only serves in expanding the parameters for economic opportunities through illegal means but unites these two organizations in a partnership of strength,” the report says.

“Organized crime access and control of ports for movement of drugs and other illegal products is in place.”

A 1994 report titled Organized Crime and the Port of Vancouver describes an environment on the docks that could have come straight out of the classic film *On the Waterfront*.

The report, prepared by the now-disbanded Ports Canada Police, said “the Port of Vancouver has been extensively infiltrated by organized crime elements and is also extensively manipulated from the outside by local and international organized criminals.”

“For many years, it was known that a number of longshoremen on the port were affiliated with the Hells Angels. Numerous times, thefts of containers and their goods had been attributed to the Angels and their inside men. Unfortunately, a detailed list of these past incidents would take up too much room,” the PCP report said.

“Angels are among the first to board arriving ships. They unload goods, place them for storage, load them onto trucks and prepare the necessary documents for shipping.”

They also bully co-workers to prevent complaints about them, it said.

“They intimidate fellow workers, both on the docks and in the offices, with threats of violence and death, and have successfully imposed a forced code of silence on the port.”

Sources: [Vancouver Sun, May 9, 2015, Drug pipeline: How crime groups infiltrate and exploit Metro Vancouver’s docks \(Part 1 of 4\)](#); [Vancouver Sun, May 11, 2015, Crime & the waterfront: Smuggler’s messages reveal drugs easily pass through our port, Part 2 in a series about crime groups and Metro Vancouver’s docks](#); [Vancouver Sun, May 13, 2015, Crime & the Waterfront: Longshoreman by day, smuggler by night, Part 3 in a series about crime groups and Metro Vancouver’s docks](#); [Vancouver Sun, May 14, 2015, Crime & The Waterfront: When a Hells Angel nominates another Hells Angel. Part four in a series: Longshore union rules help perpetuate criminal influence on the docks of Port Metro Vancouver.](#)

Cyber-Crime

A report released by the Quebec Government in April indicates that cybercrime increased by 52 percent between 2012 and 2013 in that province. The report on Quebec’s overall crime rate issued by the provincial Ministry of Public Safety is based on the number of crimes reported to Quebec police forces, including the province’s municipal police forces, the Sûreté du Québec, and several first nation police forces.

According to the report, in 2013 police investigated 1,939 cases that are classified as cybercrime compared to 1,276 cases in 2012. Based on the Ministry’s analysis, the most noteworthy increases in reports of cybercrimes include fraud (39 per cent), child pornography (93 per cent) and harassment (50 per cent). In total, 51 per cent of all cybercrimes documented in the report involved some type of online fraud.

That same month the computer security firm Symantec released its annual global Internet threat report for 2015. The report indicated that in 2014 data breaches against organizations and individuals increased 23 percent over 2013 and external attackers “were responsible for the majority of these breaches.” The so-called “external attackers” accounted for 153 breaches in 2013 (compared to 67 incidents that can be blamed on data “accidentally made public,” 66 in which there was a theft or loss of a computer hard drive and 26 percent involving insider theft).

In 2014, according to the report, “cybercriminals continued to steal private information on an epic scale, by direct attack on institutions such as banks and retailers’ point-of-sale systems.” Health-care companies were a major focus of hackers, with 37 per cent of breaches in that sector, compared with 11 per cent in retail and 10 per cent in education.

Sources: [Ministère de la Sécurité publique, 2015, *Statistiques: Criminalité Au Québec Principales Tendances 2013*, Québec: Ministère de la Sécurité publique, Direction de la prévention et de l’organisation policière;](#) [Symantec, 2015, *Internet Security Threat Report, 2015*, Mountain View, CA: Symantec Corporation](#)

Drug Trafficking

Fentanyl

In May, police in Saskatchewan laid another 113 charges against nine men as part of Project Forseti – an investigation that was initiated in November 2013 targeting the Hells Angels and its puppet club, the Fallen Saints in Alberta and Saskatchewan. The nine men, along with five others, were already facing charges of trafficking in cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine and fentanyl, which were laid in January of this year ([see January to March 2015](#)). Nearly 3,360 fentanyl pills, produced to resemble oxycontin, were seized. The new charges include unsafe storage of prohibited firearms, possession of a prohibited device, possession of a controlled substance and carrying a weapon for a purpose dangerous to the public.

Police in Alberta have been seizing record amounts of illegally-produced fentanyl in recent months. In a more recent case, a 33-year-old man in Edmonton was arrested and charged after police seized 824 fentanyl pills (along with 14 grams of cocaine and \$8,300 in cash) in April of this year.

Police and health authorities have expressed repeated concern about the increased illicit use of fentanyl in Alberta and Saskatchewan. In Alberta, fentanyl has contributed to or caused more than 100 deaths in 2014, a significant increase from the six overdose deaths attributed to the drug in 2011, according to RCMP estimates.

In March, Chief Charles Weasel Head and the council of the Blood Tribe in Alberta passed a resolution declaring a local state of emergency in response to at least 10 deaths stemming from fentanyl use on the first nation over the prior six months to draw attention to the situation and bring more services and support to the community.

In a number of recent fentanyl overdose cases, there have been other drugs present in the deceased's blood, including a veterinary medicine used on animals during castration procedures. "No matter what you think you're buying, when it comes to street drugs, you really don't ever know what you're getting," said Dr. Mark Yarema, an emergency room physician and medical director of Alberta's Poison and Drug Information Service.

Sources: [RCMP News Release, March 18, 2015, Growing use of illicit fentanyl cause for concern in Alberta](#), [CTV News, May 15, 2015, Over 100 new charges laid in Project Forseti](#); [Global News, April 24 2015, Man charged after large fentanyl seizure in central Edmonton](#); [Windspeaker, May 1, 2015, Street drug forces state of emergency on Blood reserve](#)

Hashish

In May, Canada Border Services Officers at Montréal-Trudeau Airport Commercial Operations intercepted a shipment of 344 kilograms of hashish from air cargo. On May 8, CBSA officers inspected 18 cardboard boxes, sent from Lahore, Pakistan destined to an address in Montréal. Inside the boxes, which were declared as shoe soles, officers found bags of coffee containing a pasty brown substance. Laboratory tests revealed that the substance was hashish. This was one of the largest hash seizures ever made at the airport. A CBSA spokesperson said normally such large seizures of hashish are made at the Port of Montreal, in containers sent by ship. Border services officers have made 1,342 drug seizures in Quebec so far this year, which is 10 more seizures that they made in that province for 2013 and 2014 combined.

Sources: [CBSA News Release, June 4, 2015, CBSA seizes 344 kg of hashish in air cargo at Montréal-Trudeau Airport](#)

Heroin

In May, the RCMP in B.C. announced that 28 people were arrested following the seizure of 37 kilograms of heroin in Canada, Belgium, and South Africa. The RCMP characterized those arrested as participating in a "major heroin trafficking and importation operation" that spanned several continents.

The investigation, code-named Project Phototaxis, began in June 2013 when members of the RCMP Federal Serious and Organized Crime unit identified a group of Vancouver area-based individuals involved in importing large quantities of heroin. Shipments originated in Afghanistan, and would travel primarily on airlines via Africa, then onwards into Canada. The drugs were transported in suitcases and concealed on the bodies of passengers. Once the shipments reached Canada, they would be distributed in various cities, including Vancouver.

Investigators enlisted the assistance of numerous international agencies including the South African Police Service and the Belgium Federal Police in order to share intelligence, information and resources necessary to identify, target and dismantle the operation.

Among those 28 arrested was a 52-year-old Vancouver man, formerly from Tanzania. He has already been found guilty of trafficking stemming from his role in the conspiracy, and is now serving a 15-year sentence in South Africa.

Sources: [Government of Canada News Release, May 11, 2015, Transnational Heroin Distribution Network Dismantled, 28 arrested](#); [Vancouver Sun, May 11, 2015, Police bust international heroin smuggling ring with Vancouver connection](#)

Marijuana

Police in the Niagara region of Ontario busted a major marijuana grow operation in June and arrested two members of Assassins motorcycle gang in the process. Police say they seized nearly 2,370 pot plants that they estimated to be worth around \$2.4 million. The raid was the result of an investigation launched in the spring by members of a street crime unit into the Assassins.

According to the Hamilton Spectator, “West Niagara is a hotbed for marijuana grow operations. Since 2005, police have conducted a number of raids in Grimsby, Lincoln, West Lincoln and Wainfleet and seized tons of plants. In 2008, police raided a Lincoln residence and seized \$16 million worth of pot. In 2011, \$11 million worth of pot was found in a greenhouse complex in Wainfleet. In 2013, police found \$1 million worth of pot in a rental truck in Beamsville.”

Sources: [Norfolk News, June 17, 2015, \\$2.4M in pot seized in Grimsby raid](#); Niagara Falls Review, June 17, 2015, Multimillion-dollar pot bust in Grimsby

GHB

On June 18, the Alberta Law Enforcement Response Teams (ALERT) in Edmonton seized 8.5 litres of gamma-Hydroxybutyric acid (GHB) as well as other drugs from a northeast Edmonton home. The GHB seizure is the largest of its kind by ALERT; the single seizure surpassed the 8 litres of GHB seized by ALERT teams from across the province for 2014.

According to an ALERT press release, “GHB is colourless and odourless, and is commonly referred to as the “date-rape drug” but is usually abused as a party drug. In this instance, the GHB was being sold in water bottles and would be almost indistinguishable for the untrained eye. Even a small drink from an unsuspecting person or child could lead to fatal results.”

In addition to the GHB, ALERT also seized 47 grams of methamphetamine, 131 Percocet pills, 121 Valium pills, 6 firearms, ammunition, and \$16,110 in cash proceeds of crime. All of the guns were seized from a vehicle at the home; two of the guns – a shotgun and a handgun – were previously reported stolen from Edmonton and Calgary, respectively. A total of 44 charges relating to drugs, guns, stolen property, and breaches, have been laid against four individuals.

Source: [ALERT News Release, June 26, 2015, GHB Seizure in Edmonton prompts Warning](#)

Fraud

In April, the OPP announced they had dismantled a sophisticated crime network that stole the identities of hundreds of victims and then robbed them of at least \$2 million from their bank accounts.

The joint forces investigation — code-named Operation Springston — resulted in police raids in Toronto, Hamilton and Montreal. Ninety-eight charges were laid against 33 people. Fourteen were arrested and 19 were still being sought at the time. Four face the charges of participation in a criminal organization — three from Hamilton and one from Toronto. Seven police services played a role in an investigation the OPP described as “complex” and “far reaching.”

Police say the criminal organization, based in the Toronto and Hamilton areas, used malware, phishing and other means to obtain personal information which allowed it to take over bank accounts belonging to individuals and businesses. Members of the conspiracy would order new cheques and bank cards using the stolen personal information and then send “runners” with fake IDs to withdraw money.

“They were siphoning millions from hundreds of victims and institutions,” said Hamilton police acting Supt. Ryan Diodati.

Among those involved in the criminal operation was a Toronto man who served as the “master forger.” His job was to produce fake identification in the victims’ names using the photographs of freelance “runners” who were then tasked with going from bank to bank to withdraw money from victims’ accounts before the bank or victim caught on.

One of the big breaks in the investigation occurred in April when police raided a Toronto residence associated with one of their suspects. There, police found what they called an ID theft lab that was used to create the counterfeit government identification. Some of the fake id the organization was able to create included drivers licences, permanent resident cards, health cards, and bank cards.

“Gone are the days when you needed a huge space with a giant industrial printing press,” said lead investigator Det. Sgt. Rob Kryzaniak of the OPP’s anti-rackets branch. Gesturing to a couple of dozen machines and devices spread over two tables he said, “this was all found in one room of the building.”

Police said the forger worked for many different criminal clients and had a reputation for “quality work.”

“He was difficult to track because he had different residences under different names,” Kryzaniak said.

Sources: [CHCH News, April 24, 2015, Fraud ring bust involves identity theft](#); [Hamilton Spectator, April 25, 2015, Hamiltonians at heart of \\$2-million ID fraud ring that victimized](#)

[hundreds; Canadian Press, April 25, 2015, Police make 33 arrests in alleged nationwide fraud scheme](#)

Human Trafficking and the Sex Trade

At the beginning of April, federal authorities announced that in recent days they had moved against two cells of an international human trafficking network and arrested six people in the greater Montreal and Toronto areas. The accused face an array of human smuggling, prostitution charges, and criminal organization charges. Arrests were made after 16 raids in Toronto and the greater Montreal area between March 27 and April 1.

Police said seven suspects are allegedly part of two cells of an Asian-based organized crime ring that operated bawdy houses in Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver. As many as 500 women, mostly from Korea and China, were purportedly smuggled into the country to take part in a nation-wide prostitution ring. The women received assistance from a “criminal organization” to enter Canada either illegally through land crossings or with student and visitors visas obtained under false pretences. They were then put to work in brothels across the country.

“They were supported, controlled and exploited by a prostitution ring that operated across Canada,” a RCMP spokesperson said. “The victims were exploited for several weeks in one place and then transported across the country to continue the same line of work, still in appalling conditions.” After a few weeks or months, the girls were returned to their country of origin. “A good number of the women have already returned to their countries ... because there was a certain rotation. There are still women in other cells in Canada.”

The RCMP spokesperson told reporters the women were aware they were coming to Canada to work in prostitution, but were told the working conditions would be safe and sanitary.

Although this case highlights the transnational nature of the trafficking of women for sexual purposes, research and police investigations suggest that most women forced into the sex trade in this country are from Canada. Aboriginal women and girls are particularly vulnerable. And Anupriya Sethi says a nation-wide strategy is needed to address this issue. In March, Sethi delivered a keynote address at a public forum organized by the Winnipeg Sexually Exploited Youth Community Coalition. In 2007, Sethi published a study on the topic of domestic sex trafficking of aboriginal girls in Canada, documenting what makes indigenous women and girls more vulnerable to being trafficked.

She said victims are being recruited at airports after coming from small, remote communities. They are often susceptible to the advances made by pimps and are offered a place to stay. That is when they are forced into the sex trade, Sethi told CBC News. Sethi said recruitment spots include schools and bars, and it’s often boyfriends who are the traffickers. Other girls are involved in recruiting, she added. Sethi identified a trafficking route for aboriginal girls and women between Saskatoon, Regina and Winnipeg. “One girl said she would go to sleep in Winnipeg and wake up in Regina,” Sethi said.

Elise Wohlbold, who is studying the pimping of young women in Ottawa, told CBC News that she has identified 140 women who said they had been forced into the sex trade in that city, with 90 per cent of them born in Canada.

“We knew human trafficking was happening, but the extent is surprising ... they range from the age of 12 to 25.”

Wohlbold estimates the human trafficking industry in Ottawa is worth \$26 million, with prostitution making up the bulk of that illicit revenue. Ottawa police said the average price for an escort is \$200 an hour.

In Montreal, police say pimps are targeting young women at malls, schools, youth centres, metro stations and bus terminals. The pimps often try to manipulate victims into thinking that they are entering the sex trade on their own volition, then forcing them to remain in the trade through intimidation and violence. “The victim doesn’t feel like she’s being exploited at first,” according to Montreal police officer Josée Mensales, who co-created the Survivors program, focused on sexual exploitation. “She feels like she’s actually working for a common plan — buying a condo, buying a car, within a couple of months it’s paid for, that’s what these traffickers, these pimps are presenting to their victims.” The pimp will also befriend and impress the young women, buying them expensive meals and thousands of dollars’ worth of clothes and shoes.

Sources: [Canadian Press, April 4, 2015, RCMP Bust Canada-Wide Human-Smuggling, Prostitution Ring](#); [Associated Press, April 12, 2015, Canada police: 7 arrested in massive Asian prostitution ring](#); [CBC News, April 1, 2015, Prostitution ring arrests in Montreal and Toronto](#); [CBC News, March 12, 2015, Domestic trafficking an issue for aboriginal women and girls, says Canadian author](#); [CBC News, March 24, 2015, Ottawa police target human trafficking, a \\$26M industry](#); [CBC News, April 1, 2015, Pimps target teens at Montreal malls](#);

Money Laundering

Vancouver is “emerging as a critical money laundering hub” for transnational criminal organizations looking to “wash” the proceeds of crime, Kim Marsh was quoted as saying in a story published in the Province newspaper at the end of April. Marsh, who the newspaper describes as a Vancouver-based financial crime specialist, made the comments of the eve of a presentation to a group of anti-money laundering professionals. He argues that Vancouver is vulnerable due to a convergence of factors including the high volumes of locally-produced drug money, international connections, an active port, and a hot real estate market.

One can’t look at money laundering in Vancouver without considering property investment, Marsh said. And a more active market means more opportunity for funds to be washed.

“What’s happening here in the real estate market is pretty remarkable,” said Marsh, who is an executive with IPSA International, a private fraud protection firm after 25 years with the RCMP. He mentioned an “increase in value of property across the board” and “non-stop residential building.”

“Part of that is the success story of Vancouver. But there’s a lot of dirty money washing around with these purchases,” said Marsh.

The Province story also quotes Christine Duhaime, a Vancouver lawyer who is the co-chair of the Western Canada branch of the Association of Certified Anti-Money-Laundering Specialists.

Duhaime concurred that Vancouver’s thriving real estate market is a key attractor to those seeking to launder the proceeds of crime, adding that dirty money in Vancouver is brought in from overseas in addition to illicit funds that is locally generated, often from drug trafficking.

“Based on reports by the United States Department of State, Canada is a major money laundering country, and in particular, British Columbia is of concern, because it is a major producer globally of ecstasy and marijuana,” she said.

Source: [The Province, April 29, 2015, Vancouver a ‘critical’ money laundering hub for transnational criminals, experts say](#)

Organized Crime Genres

Italian Organized Crime

A series of raids executed across Greater Toronto in early June resulted in the arrests of almost 20 people, which police said were connected to the Toronto cells of the ‘Ndrangheta.

According to a Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit press release, on the morning of June 2, 2015, police “arrested 19 men for numerous offences related to criminal activity of several cells of a criminal organization, the ‘Ndrangheta.” The raids seized 8.5 kilos of cocaine, 7 kilos of marijuana as well as cash and three guns.

More than 25 search warrants were executed in and around the GTA, with approximately 260 police officers participating in the raids. The arrests were part of Project Ophoenix, an investigation that began in May of 2013 and targeted “the highest levels of the ‘Ndrangheta criminal organization operating within the GTA,” according to the press release.

The CFSEU said the two alleged cells were involved in importing drugs, trafficking firearms, “extreme violence” and extortion. Most of those arrested were charged with drug trafficking, extortion, possession of the proceeds of crime and committing an offence for a criminal organization.

“The lengthy, challenging, two year, joint-forces investigation revealed several specific organized crime cells that were involved with such criminal offences as drug importation and trafficking, firearms trafficking, extortion, possession of the proceeds of crime, laundering the proceeds of crime and organized crime related offences,” according to the CFSEU news release.

Those arrested are believed to have connections with the ‘Ndrangheta criminal organization based in Calabria, Italy, a CFSEU spokesperson said.

The two ‘Ndrangheta cells were led by Carmine Verduci and Giuseppe Ursino respectively. At the time of the raids, Verduci was in fact dead, after being shot several times outside the Regina Sports Café in Woodbridge, Ontario in April of 2014. Before his death, Verduci was the subject of an arrest warrant issued by Italian authorities for his involvement in mafia activities in that country. The Vaughn Citizen reported that when Verduci was murdered, he was under surveillance by the CFSEU.

(On June 24, just a few weeks following the raids, another deadly shooting took place in Woodbridge at the Moka Espresso Bar and Gelato shop on Islington Avenue. Two people were killed in an apparent gang-related attack when they were shot from a black car with tinted windows. Police released surveillance photos of a suspect they say entered the café “with a purpose.” Woodbridge is located in the Toronto suburb of Vaughn, which has experienced eight gang-related murders since 2013. That year, Sam Calautti and his associate James Tusek were gunned down while in their vehicle outside a banquet hall. Police believe Calautti was a member of the ‘Ndrangheta and was also a suspect in at least five unsolved murders targeting the Sicilian mafia in Montreal, including that of Nicolo Rizzuto Sr. Some believe Calautti’s murder was revenge for the assassination of the 86-year-old Rizzuto and the October 2000 slaying of Vito Rizzuto’s former lieutenant in Toronto, Gaetano Panepinto).

The sixty-two year old Ursino of Bradford, Ontario was charged with trafficking in cocaine, possession of proceeds of crime, commission of an offence for a criminal organization, conspiracy to import cocaine, conspiracy to commit extortion, counselling an offence (not committed) and instructing to commit an offence for a criminal organization.

Also arrested was Diego Serrano, who police characterized as a “significant facilitator” for the ‘Ndrangheta cells in Ontario. The 66-year-old resident of Vaughn was charged with five counts of trafficking in cocaine, six counts of possession of proceeds of crime as well as other drug trafficking and firearms offences.

“There are two key cells of the ‘Ndrangheta, and I would say they are significantly dented. Today, they are no longer effective,” said RCMP Supt. Keith Finn, the officer in charge of the Combined Special Forces Enforcement Unit for the GTA. Despite these raids, he added that elements of the criminal operation remain active and the investigation is ongoing.

Police say the two cells operated independently of one another but routinely cooperated to import cocaine and marijuana from Caribbean countries including Jamaica, Costa Rica, Guyana and Dominican Republic, via Toronto and Halifax ports. “There was a degree of competitiveness and co-operation, it really depended on the winds of the day to see how collegial they were,” Finn remarked.

A few days following the arrests, only Ursino and Serrano remained behind bars; all the others were released on bail.

According to a CFSEU News Release, “the ‘Ndrangheta is a specific confederation of mafia families that have their origin in southern Calabria, Italy. This organization has spread to various international regions including Canada. Here we have seen several dozen members grouped into various mafia ‘families’ that are often insular and secretive. Several of these criminal cells operate in the GTA and were the focus of this investigation.” The ‘Ndrangheta cells in Ontario “combined their efforts regionally, nationally and internationally in order to elude enforcement, expand territorial influence and secure sources of income.”

The ‘Ndrangheta has cells in numerous countries including Canada, mostly Ontario. It is arguably the largest crime syndicate in Europe and one of the largest in the world, making billions annually from drug trafficking and other criminal activities.

In Canada, the ‘Ndrangheta had risen to a “Tier 1” national threat, Supt. Kevin Harrison of the RCMP was quoted as saying in 2012. Around the same time, the Toronto Star printed condemnations from senior Italian law enforcement officials who accused Ontario of becoming an international “penal colony” for alleged members of the ‘Ndrangheta who had fled Italy for the sanctity of Canada. As part of a sweeping investigation into the ‘Ndrangheta in Italy, prosecutors there presented documents alleging there were at least seven Calabrian mafia cells in Ontario.

Speculation has been rampant for a number of years that the Ontario-based ‘Ndrangheta clans were behind the murders of members and associates of the Sicilian Rizzuto family in Montreal. In the absence of Vito Rizzuto, the long-time head of the Sicilian mafia in Canada who was serving time in an American prison, the ‘Ndrangheta clans apparently had already begun moving in on other mafia rackets in Montreal, including gambling, bookmaking and extortion. They were also supposedly interested in exacting some influence over the Port of Montreal to facilitate the importation of cocaine and other illegal drugs into Canada.

Sources: [Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit Press Release, June 3, 2015, CFSEU dismantles ‘Ndrangheta criminal organization](#); [Toronto Star, June 3, 2015, 19 arrested in GTA raids targeting ‘Ndrangheta crime families](#); [CTV News, June 2, 2015, 19 arrested in GTA bust targeting Italy’s ‘Ndrangheta crime syndicate](#); [CBC News, June 3, 2015, RCMP raids in GTA made ‘significant dent’ in ‘Ndrangheta crime group](#); [Vaughan Citizen, June 4, 2015, Police make several arrests in crime family probe](#); [Vaughan Citizen, June 6, 2015, 5 of 7 York Region-area suspected gangsters released on bail](#); [Yorkregion.com, June 24, 2015, UPDATED: 2 dead after Vaughan café shooting](#); [The Globe and Mail, June 26, 2015, Residents near Toronto-area café face long-term impact of shooting](#); Peter Edwards and Antonio Nicaso, 2015, *Business or Blood: Mafia Boss Vito Rizzuto’s Last War*. Toronto: Random House Canada, p. 99; [CBC News, June 28, 2013, Ontario man accused of Mafia links faces prison in Italy](#); [Toronto Star, June 28 2013, An Italian crime clan’s reach into Canada](#); [Toronto Star, October 3, 2012, Mafia figures find refuge in Ontario, Italian police warn](#); [CBC News \(Thunder Bay\), October 18, 2012, Few Mafia members in Thunder Bay, expert says](#)

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In July, Raynald Desjardins, a former associate of Montreal mafia boss Vito Rizzuto, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to murder to Salvatore Montagna, who was killed in Quebec in November of 2011.

Sal (the Ironworker) Montagna, whose bullet-riddled body was found on a small island in the Assomption River in Laval, was the acting boss of New York's Bonanno mafia family at the time of his death. Montagna had come to Montreal from New York in an audacious effort to take over the city's crime family while Vito Rizzuto was in jail in Colorado. There were even reports that Montagna had tried to convince Nicolo Rizzuto to anoint him the leader of the Montreal family, a request that Rizzuto steadfastly refused. The elder Rizzuto was assassinated just a few months later.

At one point in his criminal career, Desjardins was considered Vito Rizzuto's top deputy and a major drug trafficker in his own right who contributed millions to the Montreal mafia's coffers. Desjardins previously spent 12 years in prison starting in 1993 on drug charges. Some believe Desjardins was a made member of the Rizzuto mafia family despite being French Canadian. Whether he was an official wise guy or not, some observers ventured that Desjardins had sided with the Ontario-based 'Ndrangheta to depose Vito Rizzuto.

Montagna's murder may have been a turning point in the conflict over who would lead the Montreal mafia. As one Canadian Press article put it, the killing "signalled the disintegration of the faction working to unseat the long-dominant Rizzuto clan, with that group having since splintered into new rivalries." In December 2011, the splintering of at least one faction may have been revealed when Desjardins and six other men were arrested for Montagna's murder.

Desjardins was initially charged with first-degree murder in connection. However, Desjardins' lawyer said his 61-year-old client worked out a plea bargain with the Crown, which included having some of the charges against his client dropped.

Desjardins was himself the target of an assassination attempt in September 2011. Jonathan Mignacca, one of Desjardins' bodyguards at the time, was sentenced to a seven year term in June of this year for acting recklessly in discharging his gun when returning fire from the attempted assassins. Mignacca was convicted in January of 2015 of various charges in relation to the shooting.

On September 16, 2011, the 30-year old Mignacca and Desjardins were seated in their respective vehicles near the toll bridge that connects Laval to Highway 25 in Montreal, when a man suddenly opened fire on both vehicles using an AK47. Desjardins was not injured and tried to leave the area before police found him. Mignacca used a Glock semi-automatic pistol to fire back from inside his vehicle. He was arrested a short while later while emerging from a wooded area several metres away from where the shooting took place. He had suffered a small injury to his chest.

The mystery shooter left, apparently without being injured and was never arrested. Police believe he used a small watercraft to escape across the river.

Prosecutor Juliana Côté argued that Mignacca fired his Glock pistol in broad daylight in the middle of the afternoon across a bike path and put the lives of other people in danger.

Sources: [CBC News, July 6, 2015, Raynald Desjardins pleads guilty to conspiracy in Salvatore Montagna murder](#), [Montreal Gazette, July 7, 2015, Raynald Desjardins pleads guilty to murder conspiracy](#); [La Presse, June 17 2015, Le pénitencier ou la prison pour Jonathan Mignacca?](#); [Montreal Gazette, June 19, 2015, Alleged ex-bodyguard of Rizzuto associate sentenced to 7 years in prison for shooting](#); [The Globe and Mail, November 24, 2011, Shot down in a 'sloppy' hit, another Montreal mobster dies](#); [Canadian Press, March 27 2013, Another arrest in connection with 2011 killing of Mafia boss in Montreal](#)

Mexican Drug Cartels

In May, the Alberta Law Enforcement Response Team announced that a Mexican national with ties to drug cartels in that country has been extradited to the United States to answer to drug trafficking charges.

Thirty-five year old Javier Batista Cervantes, who resided in Lethbridge, was deported to the United States for his role in a cocaine importation investigation that involved ALERT and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. Cervantes has been wanted by the DEA in Colorado since 2010.

That year, Cervantes, along with six others, was indicted in the U.S., for the importation of cocaine into the United States from Mexico. The cocaine was brought to Colorado, where it was then later sent to Canada. Co-accused Hector Armondo Chavez was extradited from Lethbridge on January 15 of this year.

The investigation dates back to April 30, 2010 when Calvin Wayne Skidmore of Coalhurst, Alberta was arrested at the Del Bonita Port of Entry, along the Alberta-Montana border, by U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers. A search of his vehicle yielded 46 packages containing 16.5 kilograms of cocaine, concealed in hidden compartments.

Hector Armondo Chavez, another Mexican national who was also living in Lethbridge, was extradited to the U.S. in January of this year from Lethbridge for his role in the operation.

Police allege Cervantes is connected to Mexican cartels. Since around 2010, police intelligence has indicated that the Mexican crime groups had begun to station operatives in B.C., Alberta and other parts of Canada to coordinate cocaine shipments into the country. In 2014, members of the La Familia gang – which police describe as an international support arm for the Mexican drug cartels – were arrested in Edmonton following an ALERT investigation.

Sources: [ALERT New Release, May 14, 2015, Javier Batista Cervantes has been extradited to the United States for his role in a cocaine importation investigation](#); [Canadian Press, May 15, 2015, Mexican national extradited from Alberta to U.S. in drug case](#), [Drug Enforcement Administration web site](#), [Denver Fugitives, Javier Batista Cervantes](#)

Organized Street Gangs

Police in Toronto arrested 35 alleged gang members and associates during pre-dawn raids across the GTA in early June. The arrests were part of “Project Pharaoh,” an investigation into a criminal group called the “Monstarz” that police say are involved in drug and weapons trafficking.

The group was primarily operating in northwest Toronto, but their reach extended across southwestern Ontario, according to police. Nearly 750 police officers from the RCMP and forces in Toronto, York, Guelph, Durham and Hamilton executed 50 search warrants. As part of the raids, police made 60 arrests and 45 people are currently facing 379 gun, drug and criminal organization-related charges. Police also seized 34 kilograms of cocaine, six firearms and \$45,000 in cash.

In a news conference, a Toronto police investigator described the Monstarz as a mid-level gang from that city’s northwest Rexdale neighbourhood that has been connected to 44 violent incidents since May 2011. Toronto police Acting Chief Jim Ramer said the gang “engaged in extensive criminal activities that posed real danger to the community.”

Project Pharaoh began in September of 2014 after police learned the gang may have been involved in up to eight homicides with a rival gang. In one incident that took place on May 30, 2014, a Monstarz gunman allegedly opened fire in an apartment complex and shot two men and one woman. A friend drove one of the shooting victims to Etobicoke General Hospital. As the friend was leaving the hospital, he was shot when the gunman sprayed bullets into the hospital.

The investigation into the gang led police to various other criminal groups, including one in Hamilton that allegedly involved a police officer in that city, 41-one-year-old Craig Ruthowsky. He faces four charges, including breach of trust, conspiracy to traffic cocaine and two criminal organization counts. Ruthowsky has been suspended with pay since June 2012 for allegations from a separate investigation, according to Hamilton police Supt. Dan Kinsella. Before his suspension, Ruthowsky was a gang and weapon enforcement officer with the Hamilton police.

Ruthowsky and the other Hamilton suspects were arrested as part of an “affiliated criminal organization in Hamilton” not part of the Monstarz gang itself, Toronto police Inspector Bryan Bott told the media.

Sources: [CBC Toronto, June 4, 2015, The Monstarz, alleged gang members, arrested in massive pre-dawn raids](#); [Canadian Press, June 10, 2015, Hamilton cop arrested in police raid targeting Toronto gang](#); [Hamilton Spectator, June 6, 2015, Suspended Hamilton cop nabbed in Toronto gang raids](#)

Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs

In May, 14 members of the Hells Angels in Quebec, as well as associates of the outlaw motorcycle club, pleaded guilty to taking part in a general conspiracy to murder their rivals over

an eight-year period. The guilty pleas of the 14 men, most of who were from the gang's Trois-Rivières chapter in Quebec, were made in an agreement with Crown prosecutors who in return agreed to drop first-degree murder charges.

The guilty pleas were the result of charges stemming from Operation SharQc, a major police investigation in that province that resulted in the arrests of 156 people in 2009. The various charges laid included murder, conspiracy to commit murder, drug trafficking and participation in a criminal organization. Led by the Sûreté du Québec, Operation SharQc eventually culminated with the arrest of almost every member of the Hells Angels in the province. The men who pleaded guilty admitted they were part of a plot by the Hells Angels to kill members of opposing crime groups who were competing against them in the drug trade.

Among those who entered guilty pleas were at least two HA members who served as presidents of the Trois-Rivières chapter at some point in the past 15 years.

Only four of the men who pleaded guilty have been sentenced at the time of this report. Alain Biron, the 59-year-old former president of the Trois-Rivières and a member of the HA since 2004, received an sentence of 11 years and four months. With time served factored in, Biron has only one day left to serve.

Jean-Damien Perron, 57, received a sentence of 12 years and seven months. He was credited 116 months for time already served, leaving him with a 35-month prison term. Daniel Royer, 58, received the same overall sentence as Perron, but has only 24 months left to serve.

Forty-four-year-old Marc-André Hinse, a Hells Angel member who was already serving a 10-year prison term he received in 2009, received another sentence of 12 years and seven months.

The 10 other men will be sentenced later this year.

In addition to the guilty pleas, the court heeded a request by the Crown to raze two of the Hells Angel's clubhouses in Quebec – one in Trois-Rivières and another near Quebec City. CBC News called the clubhouses “significant symbols of the biker gang's defiance, especially between 1994 to 2002, the time frame referred to in the murder conspiracy charge.” The judge also ruled that the Hells Angels would have to forfeit the land in Trois-Rivières that was the site of that chapter's clubhouse.

To date, of the 156 charged as a result of Operation SharQc, 101 have pleaded guilty. This includes nine full patch HA members who pleaded guilty to various charges in March of this year (see: [January to March, 2015](#)). Thirty-one of the accused were released in 2011 after a judge ruled there were unreasonable delays in their cases. Eight others are still at large while three people have died since being charged.

Only 12 of the 156 arrested elected to go to trial. A trial for 10 of those is scheduled to begin August 3. This trial is expected to last between 18 and 24 months. The final two accused have a trial date set for January 2016.

Sources: [Montreal Gazette, May 7, 2015, Another group of Hells Angels plead guilty](#); [CBC News, May 30, 2015, Hells Angels biker mega-trial set to begin Aug. 3](#); [CBC News, June 20, 2015, Hells Angels' Trois-Rivières bunker demolished for unpaid taxes](#)

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In May, the Vancouver Sun reported that The Devil's Army Motorcycle Club, which police believe is associated with the Hells Angels, opened a second chapter on Vancouver Island in the Victoria suburb of Langford.

Neighbours reported that a tall black fence was erected in front of the building with the number "41" displayed in large text. The number stands for D and A (the fourth and first letters in the alphabet), which is modelled after the Hells Angel's use of 81 as its numerical symbol.

The Devil's Army first came to police attention in the summer of 2009 when members were spotted at an anniversary party of the Haney chapter of the Hells Angels, which is located in the Vancouver suburb of Maple Ridge. This first chapter is believed to have been founded around 2009 in Campbell River.

According to Kim Bolan of the Vancouver Sun, the Devil's Army has been headed by long-time Hells Angel associate Ricky Alexander.

The establishment of the second chapter of the Devil's Army is part of a larger pattern by the HA "to create a much larger network that HA members can use criminally, while insulating themselves from law enforcement," according to Kim Bolan.

An article in the Victoria Times Colonist indicated that the new clubhouse is in close proximity to the Spencer Middle School, which has some local parents worried.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the country, the Halifax Chronicle-Herald reported in June that the Pariahs, a motorcycle club located in the Yarmouth area of Nova Scotia, held their official opening on June 6. According to RCMP Cpl. Mike Kerr of the combined forces intelligence unit, the Pariahs are a puppet club of the Halifax chapter of the Bacchus Motorcycle Club, who are the only Nova Scotia motorcycle club to self-identify as "One Percenters." Kerr was quoted as saying, "Anybody that's recognized as 1 per cent, we see them as being directly or indirectly involved with organized crime."

Kerr said that members of the Pariahs have been seen in the area for several months but planned this social event to formally acknowledge their existence. He added that police are uncertain as to what exactly the Pariah members will be doing for the Bacchus MC.

The Bacchus MC is the largest one-percenter motorcycle club in Atlantic Canada and the second largest in Canada after the Hells Angels. It has chapters in all four provinces as well as three chapters in Ontario.

The establishment of the Pariahs by the Bacchus MC may be in reaction to the numerous puppet clubs the Hells Angels have established in Nova Scotia and other Atlantic provinces. According to the Chronicle Herald, “Bacchus is not affiliated with Hells Angels, who have ties to four Nova Scotia chapters of the Gate Keepers as well as the Dartmouth Darksidiers. The Darksidiers expanded to New Brunswick by opening a Bathurst chapter this March. Kerr said they do not expect to see any Gate Keepers, Darksidiers or Hells Angels at the Pariahs clubhouse, but they will keep an eye out for other supporting bikers.”

Sources: [Vancouver Sun, May 1, 2015, HA puppet club sets up second Island chapter](#); [Times Colonist, May 1, 2015, Reports of Hells Angels clubhouse in Langford sparks community concern](#); The Chronicle Herald, June 2, 2015, Officers plan to check out biker fete; Pariah club partying in Yarmouth area on weekend; police will gather information

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Two members of the Edmonton Hells Angels and another member from Red Deer were arrested and placed in custody in Greece after they were accused of viciously beating a man, who was sent to the hospital in critical condition. The three Alberta men are currently charged with attempted murder.

According to police in Canada, two of the Hells Angels arrested are members of the Westridge chapter in Edmonton and the other is a member of the Nomads chapter, based in Red Deer.

The victim’s sister told Postmedia news that he was randomly attacked June 7. She said he received serious brain and skull injuries, and that it was “highly unlikely” the 41-year-old will survive.

Dozens of Canadian Hells Angels had travelled to Greece in June for an international biker run and convention in Athens that was purportedly attended by more than 2,000 Hells Angels from chapters throughout the world.

When interviewed for a comment, Det. Sgt Len Isnor of the OPP Biker Enforcement Unit he doesn’t know how many members of Canadian HA chapters attended, but he did say “Every chapter in Canada — and there are 31 chapters — has to send at least one representative and some send two because they don’t like to have one guy travelling alone.”

He said the “world run” happens once a year and includes a procession with bikers from around the world riding their Harleys through the street with their country’s logo on their backs. “It is in a different country every year,” said Isnor, who has attended world runs in the past. “They also have what’s called their world meeting.”

Only Hells Angels executive members from each country attend the meeting, Isnor explained. “World meetings are to resolve world motions. A lot of motions come forward that would change the constitution and the way they do business on the surface,” Isnor said.

Such a world run is unlikely to be held in Canada or the U.S., Isnor said. Canadian immigration law “doesn’t allow any members of a criminal organization into Canada, so they can’t have a world run in Canada.” He added, “They can’t have a world run any longer in the United States also because they also created a law similar to what we have in Canada that won’t allow international members of the Hells Angels into the United States.”

Sources: [Edmonton, Journal, June 23, 2015, Two Edmonton Hells Angels face attempted murder charges in Greece](#); [Postmedia News, June 18, 2015, Hells Angels travel to Greece to join parade but three full-patch members from Alberta haven’t returned](#)