

Front page

June 8, 2008, 7:33PM

149 arrested in S.E. Texas crackdown on gangs

By **SUSAN CARROLL**
Copyright 2008 Houston Chronicle

A multi-agency crackdown on Southeast Texas street gangs and other criminal activity led to the arrest of nearly 150 people last week, including 67 suspected gang members or associates, authorities said Sunday.

More than a dozen of those were allegedly members of the notorious Mara Salvatrucha organization, officials said.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents teamed with law enforcement agencies in Houston and seven other cities to target gang members wanted on state charges or immigration violations, said Robert Rutt, special agent in charge of the ICE Office of Investigations in Houston.

The suspected gang members are associated with 22 different organizations, authorities said, including the Texas Syndicate and the Mara Salvatrucha, aka MS-13, a violent street gang with roots in Central America and strong ties in Houston.

Authorities said that of the 67 arrested:

- Forty-six are accused of immigration violations.
- Twenty were picked up on outstanding state arrest warrants and turned over to local authorities.
- One was arrested on an outstanding federal drug arrest warrant.

ICE spokesman Carl Rusnock couldn't say Sunday how many of the suspected gang members were U.S. citizens. ICE officials also declined to release the names of the those arrested in the six-day operation, which ended Saturday, citing "pending charges."

The operation is part of a national ICE program called "Operation Community Shield," which involves partnerships with other federal, state and local agencies to target gang members. More than a dozen federal, state and local agencies participated in the operation, including sheriff's offices in Harris and Montgomery counties and the Houston Police Department's Gang Task Force.

Rutt said the enforcement operation allowed ICE to use immigration status as a "force multiplier" for local agencies struggling with gangs.

In addition to those with suspected gang ties, the operation led to the arrests of 82 people accused of criminal or immigration violations not related to gang activity, authorities said, bringing the total number of people arrested to 149. ICE officials said the people detained on immigration violations were from Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Belize, Colombia and Pakistan.

susan.carroll@chron.com

RESOURCES

THE CRACKDOWN

A gang enforcement operation led to the arrest of associates or suspected members tied to 22 Southeast Texas gangs, authorities said:

83 Mob
Brown Pride 13
Hermanos Pistoleros Latinos
Tango Blast Houstone
La Primera
La Quarenta
La Tercera Crips
Latin Kings
Mexican Mafia
Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13)
NICA'S
North Side Crips
PVL (Puros Vatos Locos)
Raza Unida
Ruthless Kings
Sacky Crew
Southside Bloods
Southwest Cholos
Sureno 13
Texas Syndicate
VNS (Barrio North Side)
Westside G.

Cities involved

Houston
Conroe
Galveston
Sugar Land
Bryan
Richmond
Beaumont
Corpus Christi

Source: Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Speak out

[Blog: Immigration watch](#)

Graphics

[Graphic: Locations of new border checkpoints](#)

More

[Complete coverage of immigration issues](#)

COMMENTS

Readers are solely responsible for the content of the comments they post here. Comments are subject to the site's [terms and conditions](#) of use and do not necessarily reflect the opinion or approval of the Houston Chronicle. Readers whose comments violate the terms of use may have their comments removed or all of their content blocked from viewing by other users without notification.

You must be logged in to leave a comment. [Login](#) | [Register](#)

Submit

Most recommended comments



Jeremiah_Wright wrote:

This is a good sign. Stop the silly strip club "busts" and focus more on putting these rats in jail- it's a better use of our tax dollars. Who's going to hurt us more, a gang banger or a h0? Please.

6/8/2008 8:01:14 PM

[Recommend \(52\)](#)

[Report abuse](#)



fariasrr123 wrote:

about time they should do this everyday in different areas cuz they scatter like roaches.... i would pay anything to get rid of roaches

6/8/2008 7:40:38 PM

[Recommend \(37\)](#)

[Report abuse](#)



anita_shingeldecker wrote:

Somewhere, there is a heart bleeding that these poor, misunderstood boys are being sent away.

6/8/2008 7:48:06 PM

[Recommend \(24\)](#)

[Report abuse](#)



BM2KMA wrote:

It is about time a criminal sweep started. It needs to continue until they arrest many more.

6/8/2008 7:50:22 PM

[Recommend \(21\)](#)

[Report abuse](#)



JOKER360 wrote:

ACLU folks can't be too far behind this story. OBTW...doesn't the "A" in ACLU stand for American?

6/8/2008 8:02:28 PM

[Recommend \(17\)](#)

[Report abuse](#)

[Read all comments \(55\)](#) ▶



ADVERTISING: [Contests](#) | [Fraudulent Ads](#) | [Information & Rates](#) | [Place An Ad](#) | [Singles In Houston](#) | [Yellow Pages](#) | [CHRONLINKS](#)

CHRONICLE: [Subscribe Now](#) | [Subscriber Services](#) | [Buy Photos & Page Prints 2005-Present](#) | [Historic Page Prints 1901-2004](#) | [Chronicle in Education](#) | [Public Affairs](#) | [Corrections](#) | [RSS Feeds](#)  [RSS](#)

SERVICES: [Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms & Conditions](#) | [Help](#) | [Registration](#) | [Report a Problem](#) | [Site Map](#) | [News Alerts](#) | [Newsletters](#)



HEARST newspapers