



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DOJ OIG Releases Report on the Federal Bureau of Prisons' Management of the National Gang Unit

Department of Justice (DOJ) Inspector General Michael E. Horowitz announced today the release of a report on the Federal Bureau of Prisons' (BOP) management of the National Gang Unit (NGU). The NGU was established in January 2021 to assist BOP institutions with their efforts to manage their gang populations by confirming suspected gang affiliations and to assist gang-affiliated inmates in disassociating from gang organizations. It also provides operational intelligence and investigative support to BOP institutions and federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies.

The DOJ Office of the Inspector General (OIG) found that the NGU relies on inadequate and outdated policies and quality control measures which significantly impacted its ability to effectively carry out its gang oversight mission. The OIG's findings include the following:

- **The BOP Should Routinely Assess its Security Threat Group Designations.** After it initially designates a gang as a security threat group, the BOP does not routinely reevaluate these designations, potentially resulting in oversight resources being utilized on gangs with waning influence and decreased risk.
 - **The BOP Needs to Develop a Strategy to Better Utilize its Resources.** The BOP has an opportunity to make use of its available validation, disassociation, and intelligence data to analyze trends in the inmate population to better align its limited resources with its most significant threats.
 - **The NGU Should Make Details About its Disassociation Program More Accessible to Inmates.** Gang-affiliated inmates who wish to leave their gang may request to participate in the BOP's Disassociation Program. The Disassociation Program can be an effective tool for both the BOP and gang-affiliated inmates because it can improve the safety of BOP staff and other inmates, help the BOP meet its mission of assisting incarcerated persons with their transition back into the community, and help other law enforcement agencies counter the threat of gangs in their communities. However, to be effective, inmates must be aware of the process and know how to initiate their desire to participate in the program. Yet during our audit, we found that the option to disassociate is not formally shared with BOP inmates.
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- **The BOP Should Strengthen its Quality Controls for Security Threat Group Validations, Disassociations, and Investigative Work.** Our review of inmate validation and disassociation files found a lack of documentation for the BOP's decisions in the majority of those cases. Further, the BOP did not have basic operational guidance or controls for intelligence gathering and information sharing in place to ensure consistency or reliability across the work of the NGU.

The DOJ OIG made 13 recommendations to BOP to improve the operations of the NGU and its management and oversight of the BOP's gang-affiliated population. The BOP concurred with all 13 recommendations.

The redactions in today's report are the result of sensitivity designations we received from the BOP as part of a sensitivity review process formally initiated by the OIG in October 2023. The OIG disagreed with the bases asserted for several sensitivity designations, and after nearly one year of attempts to work with the BOP to ensure maximum transparency, disagreements remain. As a result, the public report includes redactions in which the OIG does not agree. The OIG urges the BOP to reconsider the disputed sensitivity designations so that we can unredact those portions and make the associated information available to the public.

Report: Today's report can be found on [the OIG's website](#).

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