

Criminal Intelligence Service Alberta

Provincial Public Opinion Survey on Organized Crime



Unrestricted

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Executive Summary

The goal of the Provincial Public Opinion Survey is to provide the CISA Bureau, its executive, and Alberta Justice with benchmark measures on the public's perception on the extent and severity of organized and serious crime in the province of Alberta.

From January 8, 2001 to January 24, 2001 Research Innovations Inc. completed a total of 1215 telephone interviews with Alberta citizens 18 years of age or over by trained and experienced telephone interviewing personnel.

Organized crime is most frequently viewed as being involved in drug related activities – namely trafficking and importing.

Crimes most often associated to white collar or corporate crimes (credit card fraud, cheating on the stock market, illegally disposing of dangerous waste) were less likely to be identified as definite examples of organized crime.

Sexual exploitation of children, while not necessarily viewed as an example of organized crime, is perceived to be the most serious criminal activity of those identified.

The majority of respondents believe there to be an increase in the amount of organized crime in recent years.

The young and the elderly were identified as the most vulnerable to being victimized by organized crime.

Seventy-one percent (71%) of respondents believe that their local police agency deals effectively with organized crime.

Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs and Asian-based crime are perceived to be the most active examples of organized crime operating in the province of Alberta.

Getting more police officers and tougher sentences were seen as the most effective way to deal with organized crime.

1. Introduction

1.1 Why Public Opinion Surveys?

In order to serve a range of public and government interests, the Criminal Intelligence Service Alberta needs to be well informed about the public's views and perceptions regarding organized crime. The intent of the 2001 Public Opinion Survey On Organized Crime was to explore the current public perception of serious and organized crime and assess the degree of any change in perception that might exist from last year's results.

Results from a 1999 Alberta Justice survey show that the majority of Albertans obtain their crime news from newspapers, television and radio. These sources of information, according to the survey results, were perceived to be accurate reflections of actual criminal activity. In light of these findings, we should be reminded that the public's perceptions of organized crime are not necessarily based on experiential knowledge, but diffused through a media spin on reality and thereby might include some inaccurate stereotypes and misinformation. The 1999 Alberta Justice survey found that more educated respondents more critically evaluate both the medium and the message.

Very few polls have addressed the issue of organized crime and serious crime in Canada. The Department of the Solicitor General conducts a national survey every few years and other than the Public Opinion Survey on Organized Crime of last year no others specifically relate to organized crime in the Province of Alberta. Those that have explored the topic from a national perspective have shown that the public's conception of what constitutes organized crime does not necessarily correspond to reality. The goal of the Provincial Public Opinion Survey is to provide the CISA Bureau, its executive, and Alberta Justice with benchmark measures on the public's perception on the extent and severity of organized and serious crime in the province of Alberta.

2. Methodology

The data collection component of the survey was contracted out to *Research Innovations Inc.*, while the report-writing phase of the survey remained within the CISA Bureau.

The survey was conducted in three distinct phases:

- 1 : Orientation, Questionnaire Design and Sampling
- 2: Telephone Interviews
- 3: Analysis and Reporting

To ensure that the survey continued to be a process that allowed for longitudinal tracking of key pieces of information, the basic design of the 2001 survey followed previous national and provincial surveys on organized crime in terms of both the types of questions and the collection methods. This ensured that the information presented remains reliable and statistically valid as well as allowing for comparison to national results.

Phase 1: Orientation, Questionnaire Design and Sampling

An attempt was made to follow as closely as possible, the wording of questions used on previous national and provincial surveys. Adjustments to the survey instrument were sensitive to benchmarking as well as time specific data needs. Research Innovations Inc. conducted pre-tests on the survey instrument to assess interview length, ensure flow patterns and to identify any difficulties in question wording or comprehension, or areas of respondent resistance. Any adjustments to the wording of the survey instrument were made through a consultative process between Research Innovation and the CISA Research Coordinator. A final copy of the questionnaire is provided in the Appendix.

Research Innovations completed a total of 1215 telephone interviews with Alberta citizens 18 years of age or over. Province-wide results provide a margin of error no greater than $\pm 2.8\%$ in 19 out of 20 samples (the 95% confidence level). Individual regional results provide the following margins of error.

| | | |
|----------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Calgary | 361 interviews | $\pm 5.2\%$ |
| Edmonton | 286 interviews | $\pm 5.8\%$ |
| Smaller Cities North | 124 interviews | $\pm 8.8\%$ |
| Smaller Cities South | 91 interviews | $\pm 10.2\%$ |
| Rural North | 198 interviews | $\pm 7.0\%$ |
| Rural South | 155 interviews | $\pm 7.9\%$ |

Individual regions within the province were coded and the data were weighted to allow for comparisons and analysis.

The sampling involved randomly dialled phone numbers from the most recent white pages telephone directory. Quotas were established to ensure equal proportions of male and female respondents. In order to maximize the randomness of the sample, adult respondents having had the most recent birthday were selected for interviewing. To maximize the representation of the sample, a maximum of ten call back attempts were made to each telephone number chosen prior to excluding it from the sample.

Phase 2: Telephone Interviews

The telephone interviews were conducted at Research Innovations' Call Centre in Edmonton, Alberta, from January 8, 2001 to January 24, 2000 by trained and experienced telephone interviewing personnel. To ensure quality and consistency, a minimum of 10% of all interviews were silently monitored in progress. The supervisor silently listened to the interviews while they were being conducted and checked responses as the interviewer was recording them. The on-line monitoring was made possible by programming the questionnaire into the Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system. The CATI system allows for simultaneous data collection and data entry. It additionally allows the interviewer to directly enter verbatim responses to open-ended questions.

Phase 3: Analysis and Reporting

The remainder of this document will focus on the results of the 2001 Public Opinion Survey.

3. Survey Findings

3.1 Demographics

Basic demographic data was collected for the survey in order to ensure that the sample of respondents mirrors the population as a whole. A comparison of the demographic data is one measure used to assess the validity of the sample.

Table 1: Survey Demographics

| Demographics | Province – Census 96 | Survey Sample |
|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Population 18 yrs + | 1,963,000 | 1,215 |
| <u>Gender</u> | | |
| Male | 49% | 49% |
| Female | 51% | 51% |
| <u>Marital Status</u> | | |
| Single | 30% | 24% |
| Married/Common-Law | 54% | 60% |
| Divorced/Separated | 10% | 11% |
| Widowed | 5% | 4% |
| <u>Age Groupings</u> | | |
| 20-29 | 20% | 20% |
| 30-39 | 26% | 25% |
| 40-49 | 22% | 22% |
| 50-59 | 13% | 16% |
| 60 + | 19% | 16% |

3.2 Perception of Organized Crime

One question on the survey was designed to explore the public's perception of what types of crimes constitute "organized crime". Respondents were provided a list of 26 criminal activities that organized criminals have been known to engage in. For each option, respondents were asked to identify, in their opinion, whether the criminal activity was "definitely an example of organized crime", "possibly an example of organized crime" or "definitely not an example of organized crime". Additional criminal activities were added to this question in 2001 to more accurately reflect the array of activities found to be associated to organized crime groups.

Table 2 summarizes the public's responses over the last two surveys. The results indicate that to the public, organized crime is most frequently associated with and involved in drug related activities – namely trafficking and importing. This result is mirrored in other national surveys asking this type of question. Respondents clearly distinguished between high-level trafficking (89%) and importing (85%) from selling drugs on the street (56%).

Table 2.
Offences as an Example of Organized Crime

| Offence Type | "Definitely OC" | "Definitely OC" | "Possibly OC" | "Possibly OC" | "Definitely Not OC" | "Definitely Not OC" |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 |
| High level drug trafficking | 89% | 89% | 9% | 10% | 1% | 1% |
| Drug importing | 86% | 85% | 13% | 13% | 1% | 1% |
| Running an illegal gambling operation | 70% | 70% | 26% | 25% | 2% | 4% |
| Bringing illegal immigrants into Canada | 65% | 66% | 28% | 28% | 6% | 5% |
| Firearms Smuggling | Not Asked | 66% | Not Asked | 30% | Not Asked | 3% |
| Counterfeiting | 64% | 65% | 31% | 31% | 3% | 3% |
| Putting illegal cash into legal bank accounts | 60% | 62% | 33% | 31% | 5% | 5% |
| Selling drugs on the street | 57% | 56% | 36% | 37% | 7% | 7% |
| Cigarette and liquor smuggling | 56% | 54% | 36% | 38% | 7% | 7% |
| Prostitution | 48% | 52% | 42% | 39% | 9% | 7% |
| Extortion | 52% | 46% | 39% | 43% | 5% | 6% |
| Trading in Endangered Species | Not Asked | 44% | Not Asked | 37% | Not Asked | 15% |
| Credit card fraud | 44% | 43% | 44% | 45% | 11% | 11% |
| Sexual exploitation of children | 43% | 43% | 42% | 43% | 13% | 13% |
| Environmental Terrorism | Not Asked | 39% | Not Asked | 36% | Not Asked | 21% |
| Pornography | 36% | 38% | 45% | 44% | 17% | 15% |
| Car theft | 35% | 35% | 51% | 52% | 13% | 13% |
| Anti-government Activism | Not Asked | 30% | Not Asked | 42% | Not Asked | 22% |
| Internet Fraud | Not Asked | 29% | Not Asked | 52% | Not Asked | 14% |
| Illegally disposing of dangerous waste | 26% | 28% | 41% | 42% | 30% | 27% |
| Intimidation | 25% | 26% | 54% | 50% | 18% | 21% |
| Homicide | Not Asked | 25% | Not Asked | 55% | Not Asked | 27% |
| Armed Robbery | Not Asked | 24% | Not Asked | 49% | Not Asked | 27% |
| Cheating on the stock market | 26% | 22% | 48% | 50% | 21% | 22% |
| Assault, resulting in physical or emotional injury | 15% | 17% | 46% | 49% | 38% | 33% |
| Residential Break, Enter, & Theft | Not Asked | 16% | Not Asked | 44% | Not Asked | 39% |

Running an illegal gambling operation, bringing illegal immigrants into Canada, firearms smuggling, counterfeiting, money laundering, selling drugs on the street,

cigarette and liquor smuggling, prostitution and extortion were still seen as definite examples of organized crime but by a smaller percentage of individuals.

It is interesting to note that the crimes most often associated to white collar or corporate crimes (credit card fraud, internet fraud, cheating on the stock market, illegally disposing of dangerous waste) were less likely to be identified as definite examples of organized crime.

Other criminal activities that were least likely to be seen as examples of organized crime include homicide, armed robbery, break enter and theft, intimidation and assault.

3.3 Public Perception of the Seriousness of Various Organized Criminal Activities

Respondents were also asked to rate the seriousness of each of the illegal activities identified in the previous question using a 10 point scale of crime seriousness, where a "10" is the most serious rating and a "1" is the least serious. While sexual exploitation of children was ranked 14th as an example of organized crime, it is perceived to be the most serious criminal activity of those identified, ranking higher than drug trafficking or drug importing. Similarly, while illegally disposing of hazardous waste was ranked 20th as an example of organized crime activity, it ranked 8th in terms of serious types of crime.

These results are very similar to previous national survey results whereby drug related activities rank more serious than such activities as cigarette and liquor smuggling, or cheating on the stock exchange.

| Table 3: Seriousness of Criminal Activity | 2000 Mean | 2001 Mean |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| Sexual exploitation of children | 9.54 | 9.53 |
| Homicide | Not Asked | 9.39 |
| High level drug trafficking | 9.11 | 9.02 |
| Drug importing | 8.88 | 8.70 |
| Armed robbery, including home invasions | Not Asked | 8.66 |
| Selling drugs on the street | 8.45 | 8.27 |
| Assault, resulting in physical or emotional injury | 8.30 | 8.25 |
| Illegally disposing of dangerous waste | 8.09 | 8.17 |
| Firearms smuggling | Not Asked | 7.91 |
| Extortion | 7.89 | 7.83 |
| Residential break, enter and theft | Not Asked | 7.76 |
| Environmental terrorism | Not Asked | 7.69 |
| Bringing illegal immigrants into Canada: | 7.67 | 7.68 |
| Pornography | 7.64 | 7.62 |
| Counterfeiting documents or money | 7.60 | 7.60 |

| Table 3: Seriousness of Criminal Activity | 2000 Mean | 2001 Mean |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| Trade in endangered species | Not Asked | 7.59 |
| Credit card fraud | 7.73 | 7.50 |
| Prostitution | 7.35 | 7.38 |
| Putting illegal cash into legal bank accounts | 7.35 | 7.16 |
| Internet Fraud | Not Asked | 7.06 |
| Intimidation | 6.99 | 6.97 |
| Car theft | 7.01 | 6.92 |
| Cheating on the stock market | 6.77 | 6.61 |
| Running an illegal gambling operation | 6.72 | 6.49 |
| Anti-government activism | Not Asked | 6.43 |
| Cigarette and liquor smuggling | 6.46 | 6.24 |

When perceived level of seriousness is addressed by geographic region of respondent, it becomes evident that the top three issues are consistent throughout the province. Variations that do exist are most likely a product of local experiences and geographical peculiarities. For example, the southern cities in the province ranked pornography as one of the top ten serious offences and could have something to do with proximity to the U.S. Border.

Table 4: Top Ten Ranked Serious Offences by Region

| | Calgary | Edmonton | Small Cities-North | Small Cities-South | Rural North | Rural South |
|--|----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Sexual exploitation of children | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Homicide | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| High level drug trafficking | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Drug importing | 4 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 |
| Armed robbery, including home invasions | 5 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 5 |
| Selling drugs on the street | 7 | 6 | 8 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| Assault, resulting in physical or emotional injury | 6 | 8 | 6 | 8 | 7 | 7 |
| Illegally disposing of dangerous waste | 8 | 9 | 7 | 7 | 8 | 8 |
| Extortion | 10 | | 9 | 10 | 9 | 9 |
| Residential break, enter and theft | | 10 | 10 | | 10 | |
| Firearms Smuggling | 9 | 7 | | | | |
| Pornography | | | | 9 | | 10 |

Table 5 demonstrates the average score of respondents by region. The colour coding attached to the table is provided to identify the regional variations of seriousness. Red scores denote the highest mean (most serious) and blue scores denote the lowest mean (less serious)

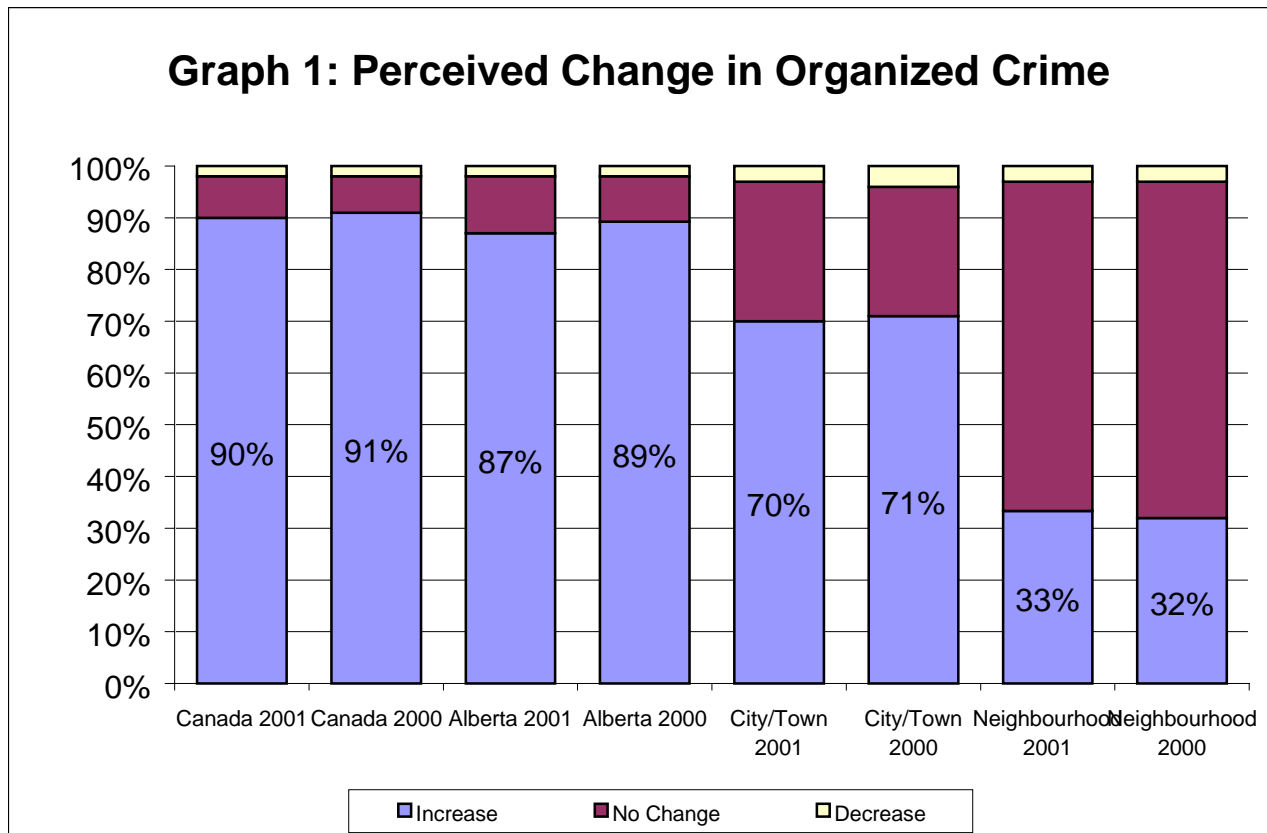
Table 5: Mean Degree of Seriousness of Offences by Region

| Offence Type | Calgary | Edmonton | Small Cities-North | Small Cities-South | Rural North | Rural South |
|--|---------|----------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Sexual exploitation of children | 9.56 | 9.4 | 9.68 | 9.63 | 9.7 | 9.49 |
| Homicide | 9.4 | 9.33 | 9.59 | 9.35 | 9.41 | 9.48 |
| High level drug trafficking | 8.98 | 8.88 | 9.05 | 9.19 | 9.19 | 9.09 |
| Drug importing | 8.68 | 8.51 | 8.78 | 8.64 | 8.79 | 8.8 |
| Armed robbery, including home invasions | 8.6 | 8.57 | 8.88 | 8.71 | 8.71 | 8.63 |
| Assault, resulting in physical or emotional injury | 8.33 | 8.02 | 8.53 | 8.16 | 8.3 | 8.25 |
| Selling drugs on the street | 8.18 | 8.04 | 8.23 | 8.43 | 8.41 | 8.35 |
| Illegally disposing of dangerous waste | 8.17 | 7.93 | 8.36 | 8.24 | 8.11 | 8.24 |
| Firearms smuggling | 7.92 | 8.04 | 7.83 | 8.01 | 7.65 | 7.7 |
| Extortion | 7.83 | 7.63 | 8.02 | 8.03 | 7.81 | 7.85 |
| Residential break, enter and theft | 7.71 | 7.74 | 7.9 | 7.8 | 7.71 | 7.63 |
| Bringing illegal immigrants into Canada: | 7.68 | 7.62 | 7.78 | 7.68 | 7.71 | 7.54 |
| Trade in endangered species | 7.63 | 7.47 | 7.88 | 7.63 | 7.61 | 7.48 |
| Environmental terrorism | 7.62 | 7.64 | 7.88 | 7.9 | 7.69 | 7.39 |
| Counterfeiting documents or money | 7.5 | 7.49 | 7.59 | 7.65 | 7.7 | 7.69 |
| Pornography | 7.49 | 7.39 | 7.6 | 8.09 | 7.56 | 7.76 |
| Credit card fraud | 7.46 | 7.26 | 7.63 | 7.63 | 7.57 | 7.56 |
| Prostitution | 7.4 | 7.39 | 7.38 | 7.73 | 7.04 | 7.38 |
| Putting illegal cash into legal bank accounts | 7.01 | 6.96 | 7.04 | 7.41 | 7.24 | 7.26 |
| Intimidation | 7 | 6.78 | 7.21 | 7.29 | 6.66 | 7.06 |
| Internet Fraud | 6.96 | 6.72 | 7.02 | 7.46 | 7.11 | 7.22 |
| Car theft | 6.77 | 6.82 | 6.95 | 6.99 | 6.88 | 6.95 |
| Cheating on the stock market | 6.58 | 6.45 | 6.46 | 7.1 | 6.54 | 6.57 |
| Running an illegal gambling operation | 6.41 | 6.5 | 6.43 | 6.68 | 6.36 | 6.39 |
| Anti-government activism | 6.32 | 6.3 | 6.54 | 6.89 | 6.45 | 6.33 |
| Cigarette and liquor smuggling | 6.27 | 6.06 | 6.14 | 6.41 | 6.07 | 6.4 |

3.4 Perceptions of Changes in the Incidence of Organized Crime

Respondents were asked about the degree of change in organized crime in recent years. This question was asked in relation to four geographic parameters. On the national and provincial level, the majority of respondents see an increase in the amount of organized crime in recent years (83% and 80% respectively). As the question shifts to the city (66%) and neighbourhood (31%) level, the number of respondents who believe there to be an increase in organized crime diminishes dramatically. As can be expected from the violent incidents on the streets of Edmonton over the past two years, the respondents living in Edmonton had the highest percentage of perceived increase in organized crime at the city and neighbourhood levels.

In general, the closer to “home” the question of organized crime activity comes, the higher the probability that people see “no change” in organized crime activity. This finding very much supports the idea that people believe that organized crime is something that does not impact them personally.



As shown in Graph 1, there is a negligible decrease between the results of the 2000 survey and this year's result in the overall perception of Albertans as to the relative increase in organized crime occurring nationally, provincially, and within

their city of residence or their neighbourhoods. However, when the results are broken out between respondents' residential regions, subtle differences and changes over the past two years emerge.

Table 6: Perceived Change in Organized Crime by Region

| Region of Response: | Change | Organized Crime in Canada | | Organized Crime in Alberta | | Organized Crime in Your City or Town | | Organized Crime in Your Neighbourhood | |
|----------------------|-----------|---------------------------|------|----------------------------|------|--------------------------------------|------|---------------------------------------|------|
| | | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 |
| Calgary | Increase | 87 | 87 | 81 | 94 | 76 | 83 | 35 | 31 |
| | No Change | 10 | 11 | 14 | 13 | 21 | 14 | 62 | 66 |
| | Decrease | 3 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| Edmonton | Increase | 91 | 93 | 88 | 92 | 89 | 88 | 45 | 44 |
| | No Change | 8 | 5 | 11 | 7 | 9 | 8 | 50 | 55 |
| | Decrease | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 1 |
| Smaller Cities North | Increase | 96 | 91 | 95 | 92 | 65 | 71 | 27 | 24 |
| | No Change | 4 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 34 | 29 | 73 | 75 |
| | Decrease | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Smaller Cities-South | Increase | 91 | 90 | 92 | 89 | 66 | 70 | 34 | 31 |
| | No Change | 5 | 8 | 8 | 6 | 29 | 25 | 61 | 61 |
| | Decrease | 4 | 3 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 8 |
| Rural North | Increase | 93 | 90 | 92 | 89 | 53 | 46 | 28 | 27 |
| | No Change | 7 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 44 | 49 | 69 | 69 |
| | Decrease | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 4 |
| Rural South | Increase | 88 | 97 | 85 | 92 | 52 | 48 | 23 | 28 |
| | No Change | 10 | 3 | 13 | 7 | 46 | 49 | 75 | 70 |
| | Decrease | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 2 |

For both the 2000 and 2001 Surveys, there has been a significant difference in the perceived level of increase in organized crime seen at the city and neighbourhood level between Calgary and Edmonton. The consistently higher scores in Edmonton are most likely due to the street level violence associated to the drug wars in the city over the past two years. Respondents from smaller cities north, smaller cities south and rural north believed there to be a larger increase in organized crime in Alberta than the other regions.

3.5 Identification of Specific Groups

For the 2001 Survey respondents were asked to identify which specific organized crime groups were active in Alberta as well as in Canada.

It is interesting to note that there is no perceived difference in terms of the top five groups operating in either Canada or Alberta. A Slightly higher percentage of individuals mentioned Aboriginal Street Gangs for Alberta than for Canada. These results indicate that from the public's point of view there is little variation between organized crime groups in the Province as compared to the rest of the Country.

**Table 7:
Specific Organized Crime Groups Active in Alberta and Canada**

| | Frequency Of Mentions | Percent |
|---|--------------------------|---------|
| Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs | 582 | 28.8 |
| Asian-based Organized Crime | 513 | 25.4 |
| Aboriginal Street Gangs | 115 | 5.7 |
| Italian Mafia (Traditional Organized Crime) | 87 | 4.3 |
| Eastern European Organized Crime Groups | 52 | 2.6 |
| Drug Trafficking | 44 | 2.2 |
| Youth Gangs | 38 | 1.9 |
| Jamaican Organized Crime | 27 | 1.3 |
| Prostitution | 23 | 1.1 |
| Ethnic Gangs | 22 | 1.2 |
| Middle Eastern Organized Crime Groups | 22 | 1.1 |
| Local Gangs | 14 | .7 |
| White Supremacists | 12 | .6 |
| Financial Organized Crime | 11 | .5 |
| Government | 10 | .5 |
| Environmental Groups | 10 | .5 |
| Other | 77 | 3.8 |
| (None) | 31 | 1.5 |
| (Don't Know/Not Stated) | 332 | 16.4 |
| Total | 2022 | 100.0 |

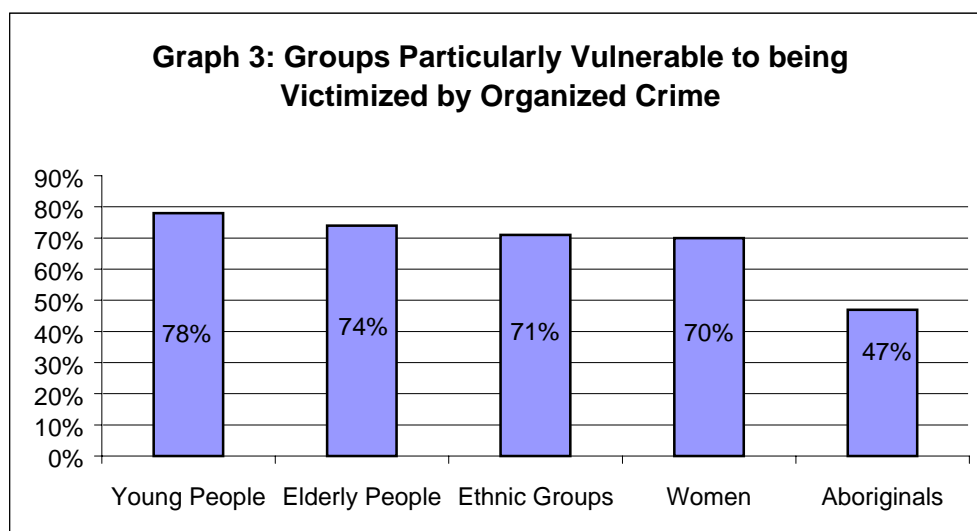
Due to multiple responses there are more than 1215 mentions in both Table 7 and 8.

**Table 8:
Specific Organized Crime Groups Active in Canada**

| | Frequency Of Mentions | Percent |
|---|--------------------------|---------|
| Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs | 656 | 29.1 |
| Asian-based Organized Crime | 499 | 22.2 |
| Italian Mafia (Traditional Organized Crime) | 223 | 9.9 |
| Aboriginal Street Gangs | 129 | 5.7 |
| Eastern European Organized Crime Groups | 108 | 4.8 |
| Drug Trafficking | 38 | 1.7 |
| Jamaican Organized Crime | 33 | 1.5 |
| Immigrant Smuggling Groups | 31 | 1.4 |
| Ethnic Gangs | 22 | 1.0 |
| Middle Eastern Organized Crime Groups | 22 | 1.0 |
| Youth Gangs | 14 | .6 |
| Government | 13 | .6 |
| Environmental Groups | 11 | .5 |
| Prostitution | 9 | .4 |
| White Supremacists | 9 | .4 |
| Financial Organized Crime | 9 | .4 |
| Other | 76 | 3.3 |
| (None) | 30 | 1.3 |
| (Don't Know/Not Stated) | 320 | 14.2 |
| Total | 2176 | 100 |

3.6 Perceptions of Particular Groups Victimized

Respondents were told that some groups of individuals are victimized more than others by organized crime and were asked to state whether they thought certain groups were particularly vulnerable. Respondents were asked about young people under the age of 18, elderly people, Native Canadians, women, and members of ethnic groups. As illustrated in Graph 3, the young and the elderly were identified as the most vulnerable to being victimized by organized crime.



Other groups believed to be particularly vulnerable include: New immigrants; Low-income individuals; People with disabilities; and Business organizations.

3.7 Responding to Organized Crime

Respondents were asked their opinion concerning the degree to which they believe their local police agency is effectively dealing with organized crime.

**Table 9:
Local Police Agency Effectively Dealing With Organized Crime**

| 2001 Results 2000 Results | Calgary | Edmonton | Smaller Cities North | Smaller Cities South | Rural North | Rural South | Total |
|----------------------------------|------------|------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|----------------|------------|
| Total Agreement | 75% 78% | 67% 65% | 73% 83% | 81% 68% | 67% 66% | 67% 67% | 71% 71% |
| Neither Agree or Disagree | 8% 6% | 9% 5% | 8% 5% | 7% 8% | 7% 7% | 7% 6% | 8% 6% |
| Total Disagreement | 15% 15% | 23% 28% | 19% 12% | 13% 24% | 24% 25% | 24% 26% | 20% 22% |

In general, 71% of respondents believe that their local police agency deals effectively with organized crime. The residents of the smaller southern cities have had the greatest increase in confidence and in fact have the highest confidence rating from all five regions. These cities had experienced several high profile drug related cases and a triple homicide over the past year. The media coverage of these incidents and the positive outcome for police could have contributed to such a large increase in perceived police effectiveness. Conversely, the decrease in confidence in smaller cities north could be related to the numerous unsolved homicides in the region.

Calgary has demonstrated a slight decrease in perceived police effectiveness but continues to have more confidence in their local police agency than Edmonton to deal with organized crime issues.

The city of Edmonton has been plagued over the last several years with drug and gang related violence. Confidence has risen slightly over the past year but still remains lower or the same as other regions in the Province.

It is interesting to note that when compared to the 1999 Alberta Justice survey results on the question of confidence with the courts and legal system, the results indicate that 72% of Albertans had confidence in the courts and legal system. Given the most recent challenges to Bill C95, and the stresses these charges are causing the court system, confidence in the courts and confidence in the police to deal with organized crime could very likely be interrelated if not interdependent. This would explain the similarity in results on these two questions.

3.8 Effective Actions to Reduce Organized Crime

A new question on the survey this year is on effective methods to reduce organized crime. For comparative purposes many of the same list of options were presented to respondents on this survey as they were to the respondents of the 1999 Alberta Justice Survey. This comparison should further differentiate the public's opinion between general crime and organized crime.

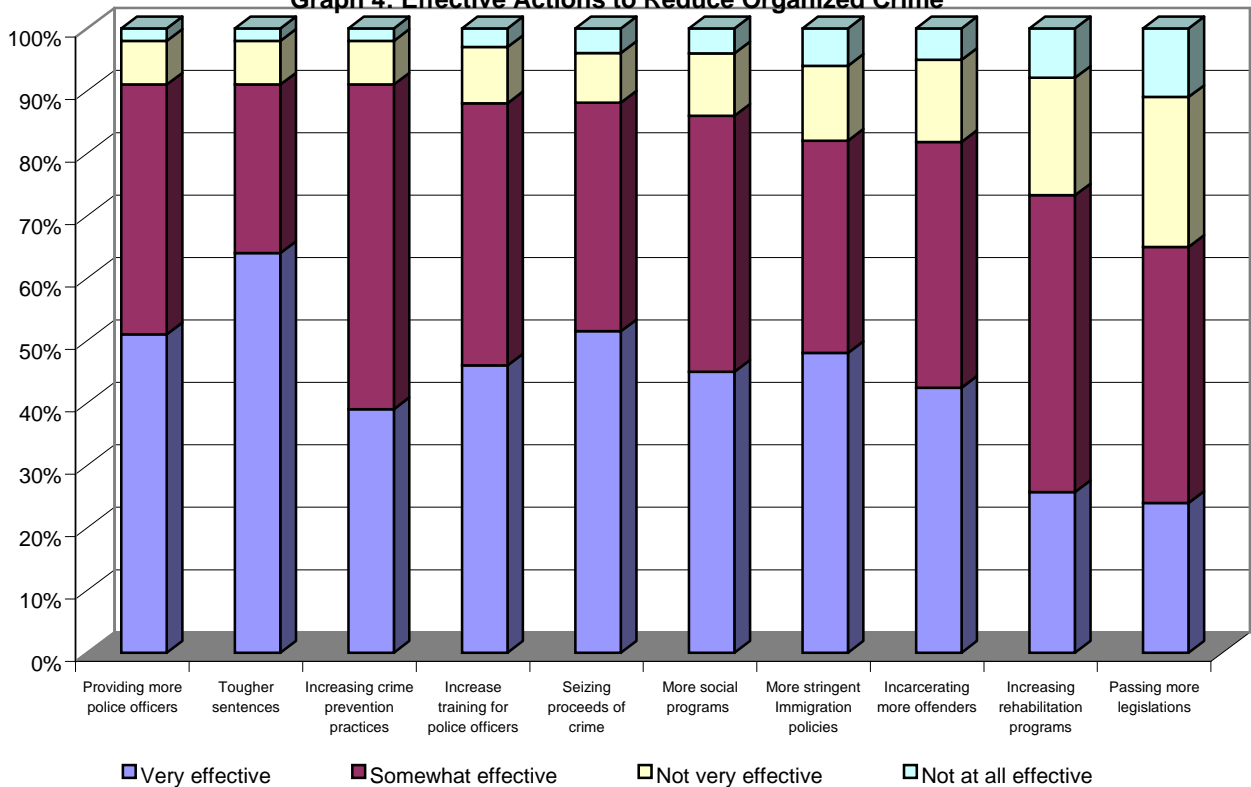
When we compare responses, it is evident that respondents do not view social or rehabilitation programs to be as effective when applied to organized crime as when applied to crime in general. Alternatively, respondents felt that providing more police officers; tougher sentences and passing more legislation would be more effective against organized crime than to crime in general.

Graph 4 ranks the various actions in terms of overall perceived effectiveness.

Table 10: Effective Actions to Reduce Organized Crime

| Action | OC Survey Results | | Alberta Justice 1999 Results | |
|--|-------------------|---------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| | Effective | Not Effective | Effective | Not effective |
| Increasing crime prevention practices | 91% | 9% | 87% | 12% |
| Providing more police officers | 91% | 9% | 86% | 14% |
| Increase training for police officers | 88% | 12% | N/A | N/A |
| Incarcerating more offenders | 81% | 18% | 79% | 19% |
| Tougher sentences | 91% | 9% | 87% | 11% |
| Increasing rehabilitation programs | 74% | 27% | 78% | 21% |
| More stringent Immigration policies | 82% | 18% | N/A | N/A |
| Passing more legislations | 65% | 35% | 57% | 40% |
| Increasing more social programs such as education, job training, drug treatment, recreation and job creation | 86% | 14% | 91% | 9% |
| Seizing proceeds of crime | 86% | 11% | N/A | N/A |

Graph 4: Effective Actions to Reduce Organized Crime



4.0 Conclusions

As the second provincial survey on organized and serious crime, these findings will assist CISA, as well as individual police agencies, in gauging public perception about and support for organized crime related initiatives.

The results tend to suggest that while Albertans differentiate certain organized crime activities from serious crime activities, people primarily associate importing and trafficking of drugs to organized crime. This may be more a reaction to cultural and media stereotypes than by hard information. Getting the media to focus on presenting accurate crime information rather than entertaining the public would further assist the public in understanding the far-reaching effects of organized crime in their neighbourhoods.

The public believes that organized crime is increasing at the national, provincial and municipal levels far more than at the neighbourhood level. Respondents do not necessarily attribute neighbourhood crime with organized crime.

The perceived abilities of police agencies to effectively deal with organized crime is influenced, in part, on the media reports of incidents and the public's interpretation of them.

Respondents believed that getting more police officers on the streets, getting the courts to give out tougher sentences and crime prevention programs were the most effective ways to deal with organized crime. The passing of more legislation was seen as the least effective strategy.

While "Organized Crime" is seen to have increased significantly over the years, both in terms of media reporting on crime and political attention, the term is generally not well understood and its impact is not appreciated. This distortion could quite conceivably give organized crime groups an advantage.

Appendix 1

ALBERTA ANNUAL PUBLIC OPINION POLL ON CRIME

1. Please indicate whether you think each crime is: definitely an example of an organized crime, possibly an example of an organized crime, or definitely not an example of an organized crime.

- 1 Definitely an example of an organized crime
- 2 Possibly an example of an organized crime
- 3 Definitely not an example of an organized crime
- 4 (Don't Know)
- 5 (Refused)

- A. Cigarette and liquor smuggling
- B. Drug importing
- C. Selling drugs on the street
- D. Running an illegal gambling operation
- E. Cheating on the stock market
- F. Putting illegal cash into legal bank accounts
- G. Bringing illegal immigrants into Canada
- H. Illegally disposing of dangerous waste
- I. Car theft
- J. High level drug trafficking
- K. Credit card fraud
- L Internet Fraud
- M. Prostitution
- N. Extortion
- O. Intimidation
- P. Pornography (IF ASKED, SPECIFY: adult)
- Q. Counterfeiting documents or money
- R. Assault, resulting in physical or emotional injury
- S. Sexual exploitation of children, including child pornography
- T Residential break, enter and theft
- U Armed robbery, including home invasions
- V Homicide
- W Firearms smuggling
- X Trade in endangered species
- Y Environmental terrorism
- Z Anti-government activism

Appendix 1

ALBERTA ANNUAL PUBLIC OPINION POLL ON CRIME

2. Please indicate how serious you think each of these crimes are, on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 means the most serious crime (MSC), and 1 means the least serious crime (LSC). Using a scale like the one found below, what score would you give to:

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| A. Cigarette and liquor smuggling:..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| B. Drug importing:..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| C. Selling drugs on the street:..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| D. Running an illegal gambling operation:..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| E. Cheating on the stock market:..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| F. Putting illegal cash into legal bank accounts:..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| G. Bringing illegal immigrants into Canada:..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| H. Illegally disposing of dangerous waste:..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| I. Car theft:..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| J. High level drug trafficking:..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| K. Credit card fraud..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| L. Internet Fraud..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| M Prostitution..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| N. Extortion..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| O. Intimidation..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| P. Pornography (IF ASKED, SPECIFY: adult)..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Q. Counterfeiting documents or money..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| R. Assault, resulting in physical or emotional injury..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| S. Sexual exploitation of children, including child pornography..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| T Residential break, enter and theft..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| U Armed robbery, including home invasions..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| V Homicide..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| W Firearms smuggling..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| X Trade in endangered species..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Y Environmental terrorism..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| Z. Anti-government activism..... | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |

3. Over the past few years, has there been a large increase, a small increase, no change, a small decrease or a large decrease in the amount of organized crime in:

- A. Canada
- B. Alberta
- C. In your city or town
- D. In your neighbourhood?

Appendix 1

ALBERTA ANNUAL PUBLIC OPINION POLL ON CRIME

4. In your opinion, what specific organized crime groups are active in
- A. Alberta?
 - B. Canada?
5. Some groups of individuals are victimized more than others by organized crime. In your opinion, which of the following groups are particularly vulnerable to being victimized by organized crime?
- a. Young people under 18 years old
 - b. Elderly people
 - c. Aboriginals
 - d. Women
 - e. Members of ethnic groups
 - f. Are any other groups particularly vulnerable to being victimized by organized crime? **(IF YES, SPECIFY)**
6. How effective do you believe the following actions will be in reducing the level of organized crime in Alberta?

| Choices | Very effective | Somewhat effective | Not very effective | Not at all effective | Refused, Don't Know |
|---|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| A. Increasing crime prevention practices | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| B. Providing more police officers | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| C. Increased training for police officers | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| D. Incarcerating more offenders | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| E. Tougher sentencing | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| F. Increasing rehabilitation programs | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| G. More stringent Immigration policies | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| H. Passing more legislation | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| I. Increasing social programs such as education, job training, drug treatment, recreation, and job creation | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| J. Seizing the proceeds of crime | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

7. Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement: You have a lot of confidence in your local police agency to effectively deal with organized crime?

- 1 Strongly agree
- 2 Somewhat agree
- 3 Neither agree nor disagree
- 4 Somewhat disagree
- 5 Strongly disagree
- 6 (Don't Know/Not Stated)

The last few questions will help us group the information as part of our statistical analysis. Again, all the information you provide will be kept completely anonymous.

8. What is your current employment status? :

- 1 Employed Full-time outside of home
- 2 Employed Part time outside the home
- 3 Self-employed from home
- 4 a Homemaker
5. Retired
6. a Student
7. Disabled
- 8 or Unemployed
- 9 (Refused)

9. What is your highest level of education?

1. Some grade or high school
2. Graduated from high school
- 3 Some technical school or college education
- 4 Graduated from technical school or college
- 5 Some university
- 6 or Graduated from university
- 7 (Refused)

10. What is your current marital status?

- 1 Single and never married
- 2 Married, or living common-law
3. Widowed
4. or Divorced or Separated
- 5 (Refused)

12. What is the total annual income before taxes, of all persons living in your household? Is it (**READ LIST**)
- 1 Under \$10,000
 - 2 \$10,000 to less than \$15,000
 - 3 \$15,000 to less than \$20,000
 - 4 \$20,000 to less than \$30,000
 - 5 \$30,000 to less than \$40,000
 - 6 \$40,000 to less than \$50,000
 - 7 \$50,000 to less than \$60,000
 - 8 \$60,000 to less than \$70,000
 - 9 \$70,000 to less than \$80,000
 - 10 \$80,000 and over
 - 11 (Don't Know)
 - 12 (Refused)

That's all the questions I have. Thank you very much for participating!