

Organization Attributes Sheet - Cuban-American Mafia

Author: Stephen Coulthart

Review: Phil Williams

A. When the organization was formed + brief history
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The history of the organization is not evident in reports, there are likely connections with Cuban-American National Foundation (CANF), an anti-Castro organization.¹• Beginning around 2007 the organization has grown immensely. There are two reasons for the growth of the Cuban-American Mafia: First, "Cuban authorities say they believe that smugglers have shifted to Mexico because of increased enforcement in the Florida Straits by the U.S. Coast Guard. By contrast, the Mexican coast is lightly patrolled."² Second, the Cuban Adjustment Act allows Cubans living inside the US have the right to asylum. Therefore, Cubans who fail to immigrate using legal channels (the US promises 20,000 visas a year) are tempted to immigrate illegally and then gain asylum. This situation has helped to increase human trafficking between Cuba and Mexico with the eventual destination being the US.
B. Types of illegal activities engaged in,
a. In general
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Smuggling of Illegal immigrants and kidnapping
b. <i>Specific detail: types of illicit trafficking activities engaged in</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The main activity is human smuggling The Cuban American Mafia charges between 10,000-15,000 USD per person to smuggle a Cuban to Mexico.³ The Cuban-American mafia works, at least in some cases, with Los Zetas (see "collaboration" below).• Reports indicate that there could be kidnapping occurring as a consequence of human smuggling. For example, one report tells the story of a woman brought from Cuba (presumably by the Cuban-American Mafia (?)) and then held ransom by Los Zetas with connections with the Cuban American Mafia.⁴
C. Scope and Size
a. Estimated size of network and membership
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information not found.
b. Countries / regions group is known to have operated in. (i.e. the group's operating area)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cuba, Mexico (specifically Quintana Roo and Yucatan), and United States (specifically Miami)
D. Leader Characteristics
a. Who is/are the leader(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Former high level members (murdered 2008): Luis Lazaro Lara, Manuel Duarte (a.k.a. El Many), and Humberto Febles⁵
b. Leadership timeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information not found.
c. Leadership style (autocratic, diffuse, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information not found.
E. Organizational Structure
a. Topology (cellular, hierarchical, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No information, but the connections with CANF could be a framework for the organization.
b. Membership – is there formal or informal membership in the organization or network? What role do informal or nonmembers play in trafficking and other criminal activities?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information not found.

Information derived from several sources and searchable databases.

All research conducted according to the project manual.

c.	Command and Control (decentralized or centralized)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
F. Resources	
a.	Financial
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
b.	Human
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
c.	Logistical
	i. Forgery, safe-houses, etc.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe-houses could be provided by Los Zetas once the Mafia brings in immigrants to Mexico.⁶
	ii. Key routes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
d.	Transportation
	i. Land
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
	ii. Sea
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speedboats and luxury yachts⁷
	iii. Air
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial flights
	iv. Intermodal container
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
G. Trafficking Methods and Modalities	
a.	Corruption
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Cuban-American Mafia has been known to bribe local officials to either “turn a blind eye” or guard kidnap victims.⁸ “Complicit federal agents have previously stamped [illegal] immigration forms ready, showing that the individuals are in the country legally”⁹
b.	Concealment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
c.	Deception
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
d.	Circumvention (avoiding border entry points)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
H. Prior / Existing Relationships	
a.	Other criminal organizations (cooperative and conflictual)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Los Zetas (cooperative): The Cuban-American Mafia has been found to cooperate with Los Zetas to transport Cuban illegal immigrants from Mexico to the US.¹⁰
b.	Corrupt politicians, law enforcement, political parties and other state entities, etc.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local and Federal officials have been complicit in the Mafia's efforts to illegally smuggle Cuban immigrants.¹¹
c.	<i>Specific detail: Any alliances / past dealings with terrorist groups.</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found
I. Ideological / Ethnic / Familial Orientation (if any)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.
J. Technical Sophistication	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information not found.

Information derived from several sources and searchable databases.
All research conducted according to the project manual.

K. Penchant for Innovation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Information not found.
L. Activities in United States
a. Includes both criminal and non-criminal activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">While reports show no specific involvement in the US, the members all appear to be American citizens. One arrest in Mexico yielded the following Cuban-American Mafia members: José Luis Hernández Alonso, 48, from Florida; Jordy Gutiérrez Piñeros, 29, currently living at Coast Street 5445, Naples, Florida; Gil Hernández Castro, 71, 33177 F. Pinekey Ave., Florida; Carmen Rives Rives, 47, 1749 South Way 42, Terra, Florida; and Julio Rives Rives, 42, 1227 Fuller Lane, Naples, Florida.¹²Based on the above information, it is likely that there is activity occurring in the United States.
b. <i>Specific detail: trafficking activities ; logistical activities</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">No information on this, but based on all available information, it is likely that logistical activities would be occurring to support the main operations between Cuba and Mexico.
c. Linkages with US groups
i. Market/transaction links
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Information not found.
ii. Stable supplier
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Information not found.
iii. Franchise arrangement
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Information not found.
iv. HQ and Branch office
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Information not found.
M. Evaluations
a. Strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Unable to determine from available information.
b. Weaknesses and vulnerabilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Unable to determine from available information.
c. Additional insights
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Unable to determine from available information.
Other Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">

¹ Open Source Center (OSC), "Cuban-American Foundation Tied to Zetas in Cuban Smuggling Ring," Open Source ID LAP20080623470001, *Mexico City La Jornada*, June 23, 2008.

² Roig-Franzia, Manuel. "Smuggling Of Cubans Surges In Mexico" *The Washington Post*, August 4, 2007.

³ Blanch, Hedelberto. "Cuban American National Foundation and People Smuggling," *Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de la República de Cuba*, August 25, 2008. <http://embacuba.cubaminrex.cu/Default.aspx?tabid=8479>.

⁴ Allard, Jean-Guy. "Cuban women kidnapped in Cancun by a prostitution network run by the Zetas," *CubaNews Translation*, September 23, 2009. http://progreso-weekly.com/2/index.php?view=article&catid=36%3Ain-cuba&id=1213%3Acuban-women-kidnapped-in-cancun-by-a-prostitution-network-run-by-the-zetas&tmpl=component&print=1&layout=default&page=&option=com_content&Itemid=59.

⁵ Blanch.

⁶ OSC, "Cancun Airport Called Zone of Organized Crime Run by Los Zetas Cartel," Open Source ID LAP20100816213003, *Merida Por Esto!*, August 16, 2010.

⁷ Blanch.

⁸ Allard.

⁹ "Cancun Airport Called Zone of Organized Crime Run by Los Zetas Cartel," Open Source ID LAP20100816213003.

¹⁰ "Cuban-American Foundation Tied to Zetas in Cuban Smuggling Ring," Open Source ID LAP20080623470001.

¹¹ Blanch; and Allard.

¹² Allard.