

Organization Attributes Sheet: Jose Maria Figueiro Gomes Gang

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A. When the organization was formed + brief history
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jose Maria Figueiro Gomes operated an international cocaine trafficking organization based in the Northern Amazon region of Brazil from the mid 1990's until 2005.¹• "The King of Cocaine in the North" as authorities came to know him by, owned a number of fishing vessels and a transportation company through which his gang smuggled cocaine to Europe.²• Gomes was arrested by Brazilian federal police in 2005. The operation named "Pescador" ultimately halted his trafficking operation.³• Gomes and other gang members were sentenced in federal court in 2007 for the crime of smuggling narcotics. Gomes received a sentence of 49 years in prison.⁴
B. Types of illegal activities engaged in,
a. In general
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drug trafficking.
b. <i>Specific detail: types of illicit trafficking activities engaged in</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trafficking operations utilized a variety of routes whereby cocaine shipments ultimately ended up in Portugal and Spain for distribution into the European continent.⁵• Gomes owned a transportation busing company and a number of legitimate fishing vessels which were used to transport cocaine from his farm in the Northern Amazon region of Brazil to Brazilian ports or ports in Venezuela and Suriname.⁶• Cocaine shipments were then loaded onto cargo ships and hidden in containers bound for Spain or Portugal.⁷• Gang members also operated import/export businesses through which they bought Brazilian products and shipped them along with cocaine that was hidden in the containers bound for Europe.⁸
C. Scope and Size
a. Estimated size of network and membership
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• From accounts, it can be determined that primary membership was relatively small because only four others were arrested with Gomes for taking part in the smuggling operation; but the informal network was likely larger.⁹
b. Countries / regions group is known to have operated in. (i.e. the group's operating area)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Northern Amazon region of Brazil (mainly Manaus), Venezuela, Suriname, Portugal, Spain.
D. Leader Characteristics
a. Who is/are the leader(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jose Maria Figueiro Gomes – leader.
b. Leadership timeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gomes became wanted by Brazilian authorities in 1995.• Gomes arrested in 2005.
c. Leadership style (autocratic, diffuse, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appears to be autocratic.
E. Organizational Structure
a. Topology (cellular, hierarchical, etc.)

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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hierarchical with Gomes at the top giving orders to transporters at the bottom.
b.	<p>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?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal as gang members appear to have worked directly with Gomes in transportation efforts; but informal membership likely also played a role as the operation depended on legitimate transportation such as fishing vessels and buses.
c.	<p>Command and Control (decentralized or centralized)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It seems that command was centralized and Gomes ran the entire operation.
F. Resources	
a.	<p>Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large shipments of cocaine earned group considerable wealth as it was reported that the gang shipped close to 3 metric tons of cocaine abroad while it was in operation.¹⁰ • Use of legitimate businesses to cover up smuggling profits.
b.	<p>Human</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transporters.
c.	<p>Logistical</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Forgery, safe-houses, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farm owned by Gomes was used as a staging point. Key routes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overland routes from Manaus to different ports in Brazil, Venezuela, and Suriname. • River routes from Manaus to different ports in Brazil, Venezuela, and Suriname. • Trans-Atlantic route from ports in South America to Portugal and Spain.
d.	<p>Transportation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Land <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of legitimate buses that were part of Gomes’s transportation company, Transximango, to transport cocaine to various ports.¹¹ Sea <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of legitimate fishing vessels to transport cocaine through Brazilian rivers to various South American ports. Air <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Packages were sometimes dropped off the coast of Suriname by suppliers and were picked up by fishing vessels owned by Gomes.¹² Intermodal container <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cocaine was hidden in containers aboard cargo ships bound for Europe.
G. Trafficking Methods and Modalities	
a.	<p>Corruption</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information not found.
b.	<p>Concealment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cocaine was hidden in cargo containers aboard ships.
c.	<p>Deception</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of legitimate buses and fishing vessels to transport cocaine. • Transportation businesses were placed in Gomes’s sister’s name to avoid suspicion.¹³ • Use of fake import/export businesses.
d.	<p>Circumvention (avoiding border entry points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information not found.

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H. Prior / Existing Relationships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Other criminal organizations (cooperative and conflictual) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information not found. b. Corrupt politicians, law enforcement , political parties and other state entities, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links were made between Gomes and Dr. Farias, the mayor of Alenquer, Brazil. The mayor gave non-competitive bids to Gomes’s transportation company Transximango, but it is unclear whether the mayor knew of the smuggling operation.¹⁴ c. <i>Specific detail: Any alliances / past dealings with terrorist groups.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No connections were determined.
I. Ideological / Ethnic / Familial Orientation (if any)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gomes’s family members were involved in the operation including his wife, sister, and brother, all of whom were convicted of smuggling narcotics.¹⁵
J. Technical Sophistication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cocaine was hidden in the fuel tanks of buses and fishing vessels.
K. Penchant for Innovation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low – concealment of drugs in fuel tanks is not something new. Moreover, smuggling drugs inside of cargo containers is not new.
L. Activities in United States
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Includes both criminal and non-criminal activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information not found. b. <i>Specific detail: trafficking activities ; logistical activities</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information not found. c. Linkages with US groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of legitimate businesses to deceive authorities was a strength of the trafficking operation. b. Weaknesses and vulnerabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low sophistication and innovation resulted in the disruption of the trafficking operation. c. Additional insights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Other Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The smuggling ring no longer poses a threat due to the fact that most, if not all, the members received lengthy prison sentences.

¹ “Drug Runner Routes in Amazonas Outlined,” *A Critica* (Internet Version-WWW) in Portuguese, October 22, 2005, OSC: LAP20051024020002

² A Critica

³ A Critica

⁴Monte. "Figueiro Sentenced to 49 Years Imprisonment." *UOL Blog*. Mariean Monte, 3 Aug 2007: Web. 23 May 2011. http://marjeanmonte.zip.net/arch2007-03-04_2007-03-10.html

⁵ A Critica

⁶ A Critica

⁷ "PF arrested leader of largest drug trafficking gang in North." *Portal Amazonia* 7 Oct 2005: Web. 23 May 2011. <http://portalamazonia.globo.com/new-structure/view/scripts/noticias/noticia.php?id=26408>

⁸ Portal Amazonia

⁹ A Critica

¹⁰ A Critica

¹¹ Monte. "Fraud and Procurement." *UOL Blog*. Mariean Monte, 8 Dec 2006: Web. 23 May 2011.

http://marjeanmonte.zip.net/arch2006-08-06_2006-08-12.html#2006_08-12_13_20_51-8695642-0

¹² A Critica

¹³ Monte. "Fraud and Procurement." *UOL Blog*. Mariean Monte, 8 Dec 2006: Web. 23 May 2011.

http://marjeanmonte.zip.net/arch2006-08-06_2006-08-12.html#2006_08-12_13_20_51-8695642-0

¹⁴Monte. "Fraud and Procurement." *UOL Blog*. Mariean Monte, 8 Dec 2006: Web. 23 May 2011.

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¹⁵ Monte. "Figueiro Sentenced to 49 Years Imprisonment." *UOL Blog*. Mariean Monte, 3 Aug 2007: Web. 23 May 2011. http://marjeanmonte.zip.net/arch2007-03-04_2007-03-10.html