

## Organization Attributes Sheet: Phantom Squad

Author: Andrew Carpenter

Review: Phil Williams

### A. When the organization was formed + brief history

- The Phantom Squad is believed to have been formed by convicted drug trafficker Shaheed “Roger” Khan.<sup>1</sup> The group was said to be created in response to the escape of five prisoners in 2002, which ushered in an increase in gang violence in Guyana. Shaheed “Roger” Khan claimed that the group was created to combat these gangs, though the group has also been referenced as Khan’s own paramilitary force to support his narcotics trafficking.<sup>2</sup> It is unclear if the Phantom Squad is a single group, or different groups operating together, or multiple groups with no link.<sup>3</sup> The group’s size and membership are unknown, but it is reportedly made up of ex-convicts and ex-police.<sup>4</sup> Some believe that the group worked closely with Guyana’s police, or that the Phantom Squad was even a special branch of Guyana’s police force.<sup>5</sup> This has led to calls by the United States, Great Britain, and Canada to investigate allegations of torture and brutality committed by Guyanese police. Though the group’s alleged leader Shaheed “Roger” Khan claimed to have created the group to defend Guyanese citizens from a vicious outbreak of gang violence, it is suspected that the gang also allowed Khan to take control of Guyana’s drug trade. Special Agent of the DEA, Cassandra Jackson said that:

*“Khan was ultimately able to control the cocaine industry in Guyana, in large part, because he was backed by a paramilitary squad that would murder, threaten, and intimidate others at Khan’s directive. Khan’s enforcers committed violent acts and murders on Khan’s orders that were directly in furtherance of Khan’s drug trafficking conspiracy.”*<sup>6</sup>

- The extent to which the Phantom Squad contributed to Khan’s drug trafficking is unknown. The Phantom Squad might have disbanded when Khan was arrested, and/or when the wave of gang violence quieted down in Guyana with the death of Rondell “Fineman” Rawlins in 2008. It was noted that the number of execution style killings in Guyana decreased dramatically after Shaheed “Roger” Khan was arrested in 2006.<sup>7</sup> However, some suspect that the Phantom Squad is still operating and took the place of Rondell “Fineman” Rawlins’s Buxton/Agricola Gang following his death.<sup>8</sup> The continued existence of the group, let alone the current leadership remains uncertain.

### B. Types of illegal activities engaged in,

#### a. In general

- Intimidation, Murder, Arms Trafficking, Narcotics Trafficking
- Implicated in over 200 to over 400 murders.
- Implicated in murder of Donald Allison and Ronald Waddell and Dave Persaud.<sup>9</sup>

#### b. Specific detail: types of illicit trafficking activities engaged in

- Information Not Found

### C. Scope and Size

#### a. Estimated size of network and membership

- Information Not Found

#### b. Countries / regions group is known to have operated in. (i.e. the group’s operating area)

- Guyana<sup>10</sup>, Suriname<sup>11</sup>, United States<sup>12</sup>

Information derived from several sources and searchable databases.

All research conducted according to the project manual.

<b>D. Leader Characteristics</b>	
a.	Who is/are the leader(s) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shaheed “Roger” Khan is reported to be the group’s leader, or at least benefactor.<sup>13</sup></li> <li>• Paul Rodrigues, Lloyd Roberts, Sean Belfield, Haroon Yahya, Selwyn Vaughn, George Bacchus were all names connected to both the Phantom Squad and Shaheed “Roger” Khan. The individual roles in the group and leadership positions are unknown.<sup>14</sup></li> </ul>
b.	Leadership timeline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shaheed “Roger” Khan was arrested in 2006 and sentenced to 15 years imprisonment in the United States in 2009.</li> </ul>
c.	Leadership style (autocratic, diffuse, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Not Found</li> </ul>
<b>E. Organizational Structure</b>	
a.	Topology (cellular, hierarchical, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Not Found</li> </ul>
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"> <li>• The group is reported to consist of former convicts, and former police officers.<sup>15</sup> Some sources even suggest the group includes active police officers.<sup>16</sup></li> </ul>
c.	Command and Control (decentralized or centralized) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Command is likely centered around Shaheed “Roger” Khan, but it is unclear how much he was involved with the operations of the group.</li> </ul>
<b>F. Resources</b>	
a.	Financial <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Not Found</li> </ul>
b.	Human <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Not Found</li> </ul>
c.	Logistical <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forgery, safe-houses, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Not Found</li> </ul> </li> <li>Key routes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Not Found</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
d.	Transportation <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Not Found</li> </ul> </li> <li>Sea <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Not Found</li> </ul> </li> <li>Air <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Not Found</li> </ul> </li> <li>Intermodal container <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Not Found</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<b>G. Trafficking Methods and Modalities</b>	
a.	Corruption <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Not Found</li> </ul>
b.	Concealment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Not Found</li> </ul>

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c.	Deception
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information Not Found</li> </ul>
d.	Circumvention (avoiding border entry points)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information Not Found</li> </ul>
<b>H. Prior / Existing Relationships</b>	
a.	Other criminal organizations (cooperative and conflictual)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most likely created under influence of convicted drug trafficker Shaheed “Roger” Khan, and likely did his bidding until his arrest in 2006. Worked against gangs in Guyana, most notably Rondell “Fineman” Rawlins’s Buxton/Agricola Gang.<sup>17</sup></li> </ul>
b.	Corrupt politicians, law enforcement, political parties and other state entities, etc.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ronald Gajraj, former Minister of Home Affairs for Guyana, was accused of involvement with Shaheed “Roger” Khan and the Phantom Squad. He was cleared in a special investigative panel setup by president Jagdeo, though opposition groups in Guyana and the United States have raised concern that this decision was premature. Gajraj is currently serving as ambassador for Guyana to India.<sup>18</sup></li> <li>The Phantom Squad is alleged to have cooperated with Guyanese police, with some believing they were actually a special wing of the police</li> <li>They have been accused of being linked to the PPP party in Guyana, to which the current president belongs.<sup>19</sup></li> </ul>
c.	<i>Specific detail: Any alliances / past dealings with terrorist groups.</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no specific evidence linking the Phantom Squad to any terrorist group, however its alleged leader Shaheed “Roger” Khan is accused of having made deals with FARC.<sup>20</sup></li> </ul>
<b>I. Ideological / Ethnic / Familial Orientation (if any)</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Since the Phantom Squad likely operated under control of Shaheed “Roger” Khan there is evidence to suggest that it was linked to Indo-Guyanese in Guyana. Many of the gangs the Phantom Squad confronted were African Guyanese, and the politicians that Shaheed “Roger” Khan was allegedly working with are Indo-Guyanese.<sup>21</sup></li> </ul>
<b>J. Technical Sophistication</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely used AK-47’s stolen via leader Shaheed “Roger” Khan from the Guyana Defense Force in February 2006.<sup>22</sup></li> <li>Leader Shaheed “Roger” Khan was stopped with: “M-16 assault rifles with night vision devices, UZI sub-machine gun with silencer; Glock 9mm pistols; 12-gauge shotgun; other small caliber weapons; bullet proof vests; helmets; a computer and other electronic gadgetry with digitized electronic maps and plans of Georgetown and certain targeted east coast villages.” These were likely intended for, or made available to the Phantom Squad.<sup>23</sup></li> </ul>
<b>K. Penchant for Innovation</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information Not Found</li> </ul>
<b>L. Activities in United States</b>	
a.	Includes both criminal and non-criminal activities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Witness Tampering during Shaheed “Roger” Khan’s trial by his lawyer Robert Simels.<sup>24</sup></li> </ul>
b.	<i>Specific detail: trafficking activities ; logistical activities</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information Not Found</li> </ul>
c.	Linkages with US groups
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Market/transaction links</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Not Found</li> </ul>
ii.	Stable supplier
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Not Found</li> </ul>
iii.	Franchise arrangement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Not Found</li> </ul>
iv.	HQ and Branch office
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Not Found</li> </ul>
<b>M. Evaluations</b>	
a.	Strengths
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible connection with Guyanese police and government officials.</li> <li>• Lack of control exhibited by the government in Guyana, especially in rural areas outside of the capital, Georgetown.</li> </ul>
b.	Weaknesses and vulnerabilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible dependence on Shaheed “Roger” Khan.</li> </ul>
c.	Additional insights
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some individuals in Guyana denounce the Phantom Squad for its role in “death squads”, while others believe that that it was acting to keep Guyana safe from an increase in gang violence in Guyana, and therefore see it as a positive entity.<sup>25</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Other Notes</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Though it is unclear if the Phantom Squad is a monolithic group, or a name that is attributed to different groups, most information suggests that Shaheed “Roger” Khan is in charge of part of the group, or at least one of the more prominent iterations of the group.</li> <li>• The Phantom Squad is not specifically linked to drug trafficking, but its connection with Shaheed “Roger” Khan makes it likely that it did participate in such activities.</li> <li>• The current status of the Phantom Squad is unknown.</li> <li>• The Phantom Squad or at least one member of the group was offered \$1,000 dollars to murder a witness set to testify against Shaheed “Roger” Khan at his trial in the United States. Khan’s lawyer Robert Simels was convicted of multiple counts of witness tampering for his role in the incident.<sup>26</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Korten, Tristram. “Gangs Terror Reign In Guyana Years in Making,” *Pulitzer Center On Crisis Reporting*. June 16, 2006. <http://pulitzercenter.org/articles/gangs-terror-reign-guyana-years-making>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> “Shaheed ‘Roger’ Khan: drugs, dirty money and the death squad,” *Stabroek News*. August 20, 2009. <http://www.stabroeknews.com/2009/guyana-review/08/20/shaheed-%E2%80%98roger%E2%80%99-khan-drugs-dirty-money-and-the-death-squad/>.

<sup>5</sup> Sutherland, Gaulbert. “Gov’t rejects int’l calls for ‘Phantom Squad’ probe,” *Stabroek News*. September 22, 2010. <http://www.stabroeknews.com/2010/news/stories/09/22/govt-rejects-intl-calls-for-phantom-squad-probe/>.

<sup>6</sup> “Roger Khan pleads guilty... may serve 15 years for 3 charges,” *Guyana Observer*. March 17, 2009. <http://www.guyanaobservernews.org/content/view/229/94/>.

<sup>7</sup> “Execution-Style killings down since Roger Khan held- police,” *Stabroek News*. November 9, 2007. <http://www.guyanesereunions.com/guyanaforums/showthread.php?983-Execution-Style-Killing-Down-Since-Roger-Khan-Held>.

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- <sup>8</sup> "Is the Phantom Squad still lurking in Guyana?" *Stabroek News*. October 5, 2008. <http://www.stabroeknews.com/2008/news/stories/10/05/is-the-phantom-squad-still-lurking-in-guyana/>.
- <sup>9</sup> "Explosive revelations at Simel's trial" *Kaieteur News*. July 29, 2009. <http://www.kaieteurnews.com/2009/07/29/explosive-revelations-at-simels%E2%80%99-trial/>.
- <sup>10</sup> "Roger Khan pleads guilty... may serve 15 years for 3 charges," *Guyana Observer*. March 17, 2009. <http://www.guyanaobservernews.org/content/view/229/94/>.
- <sup>11</sup> "Bouterse was involved in drugs after conviction, says WikiLeaks cables," *The Daily Herald*. January 24, 2011. <http://www.thedailyherald.com/regional/2-news/12787-bouterse-was-involved-in-drugs-after-conviction-says-wikileaks-cables.html>.
- <sup>12</sup> "Shocker in Roger Khan saga... Attoreney associate charged with conspiracy to murder main witness," *Kaieteur News*. September 11, 2008. <http://www.kaieteurnews.com/2008/09/11/shocker-in-roger-khan-saga%E2%80%A6-attorney-associate-charged-with-conspiracy-to-murder-main-witness/>.
- <sup>13</sup> "Is the Phantom Squad still lurking in Guyana?" *Stabroek News*. October 5, 2008. <http://www.stabroeknews.com/2008/news/stories/10/05/is-the-phantom-squad-still-lurking-in-guyana/>.
- <sup>14</sup> "Shaheed 'Roger' Khan: drugs, dirty money and the death squad," *Stabroek News*. August 20, 2009. <http://www.stabroeknews.com/2009/guyana-review/08/20/shaheed-%E2%80%98roger%E2%80%99-khan-drugs-dirty-money-and-the-death-squad/>.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>17</sup> "Khan admits conspiracy to traffic 150 kilos of cocaine," *Stabroek News*, March 18, 2009. <http://www.stabroeknews.com/2009/news/stories/03/18/khan-admits-conspiracy-to-traffic-150-kilos-of-cocaine/>.
- <sup>18</sup> "Guyana," *U.S. Department of State*. March 8, 2006. <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61730.htm>.
- <sup>19</sup> Hinds, David. "The PPP has given Democracy a Bad Name," *Guyanacaribbeanpolitics.com*. January 24, 2004. [http://www.guyanacaribbeanpolitics.com/commentary/hinds\\_012404.html](http://www.guyanacaribbeanpolitics.com/commentary/hinds_012404.html).
- <sup>20</sup> "Bouterse was involved in drugs after conviction, says WikiLeaks cables," *The Daily Herald*. January 24, 2011. <http://www.thedailyherald.com/regional/2-news/12787-bouterse-was-involved-in-drugs-after-conviction-says-wikileaks-cables.html>.
- <sup>21</sup> Hinds, David. "The PPP has given Democracy a Bad Name," *Guyanacaribbeanpolitics.com*. January 24, 2004. [http://www.guyanacaribbeanpolitics.com/commentary/hinds\\_012404.html](http://www.guyanacaribbeanpolitics.com/commentary/hinds_012404.html).
- <sup>22</sup> "The Roger Khan Saga," *Stabroek News*. December 1, 2009. <http://www.stabroeknews.com/2009/guyana-review/12/01/the-roger-khan-saga/>.
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>24</sup> "Shocker in Roger Khan saga... Attoreney associate charged with conspiracy to murder main witness," *Kaieteur News*. September 11, 2008. <http://www.kaieteurnews.com/2008/09/11/shocker-in-roger-khan-saga%E2%80%A6-attorney-associate-charged-with-conspiracy-to-murder-main-witness/>.
- <sup>25</sup> "Is the Phantom Squad still lurking in Guyana?" *Stabroek News*. October 5, 2008. <http://www.stabroeknews.com/2008/news/stories/10/05/is-the-phantom-squad-still-lurking-in-guyana/>.
- <sup>26</sup> "Shocker in Roger Khan saga... Attoreney associate charged with conspiracy to murder main witness," *Kaieteur News*. September 11, 2008. <http://www.kaieteurnews.com/2008/09/11/shocker-in-roger-khan-saga%E2%80%A6-attorney-associate-charged-with-conspiracy-to-murder-main-witness/>.