

Organization Attributes Sheet: The Three Franciscos (AKA the Francisco Smuggling Organization)

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A. When the organization was formed + brief history

- The Three Franciscos organization was established in 2004. The group was named after its three leaders, all Guatemalan nationals. Between 2004 and the arrest of key members in 2008, the Three Franciscos functioned as a large and efficient human smuggling organization, moving illegal immigrants from Central America to various cities across the United States. U.S. law enforcement raided the group's safe houses in 2008. Two of the three leaders were subsequently convicted, in effect dismantling the group. One of the Franciscos remains at large. U.S. authorities believe the Three Franciscos organization was motivated solely by profit.

B. Types of illegal activities engaged in,

a. In general

- Human smuggling, kidnapping

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

- Human smuggling: Before the arrest and imprisonment of two of its three leaders, the Three Franciscos group smuggled more than 9,000 illegal immigrants into the United States, at a rate of 100 persons per week.¹ Between 2005 and early 2009, the group reportedly generated at least \$9 million in revenue by transporting illegal immigrants.²
- Kidnapping: The group is reported to have smuggled illegal immigrants across the border on credit and then demand money from relatives, "In effect... holding immigrants hostage to get payment." Immigrants would be monitored by guards and their shoes would be confiscated to prevent them from running away.³

C. Scope and Size

a. Estimated size of network and membership

- The exact size of the group is unknown. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has referred to the group as a "large-scale criminal organization," as "one of the largest human smuggling operations uncovered on the West Coast in recent years,"⁴ and "the largest alien smuggling organization that ICE has detected in the Central District of California."⁵
- The police action of March, 2008 is believed to have significantly degraded and possibly totally destroyed the group's capabilities. The number and activity of remaining members is unknown.

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

- The majority of immigrants smuggled by the group were from Central America, particularly Guatemala and El Salvador.
- However, the group also transported persons from elsewhere in North and South America, including Mexico, and is reported to have contacts as far south as Ecuador.
- The group utilized border crossings near Phoenix, AZ and safe houses in Los Angeles and Lancaster, CA. Immigrants were then moved to cities nationwide with Illinois, New Jersey, and Tennessee constituting important drop-off locations in the Eastern United States.⁶

D. Leader Characteristics

a. Who is/are the leader(s)

- Primary: Francisco Andres-Francisco
- Secondary: Francisco Andres-Pedro

Information derived from several sources and searchable databases.

All research conducted according to the project manual.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary: Francisco Pedro-Francisco⁷
b.	<p>Leadership timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information not found.
c.	<p>Leadership style (autocratic, diffuse, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autocratic: Available information indicates a hands-on role for the leadership.⁸
E. Organizational Structure	
a.	<p>Topology (cellular, hierarchical, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information not found.
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"> • Information not found.
c.	<p>Command and Control (decentralized or centralized)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information not found.
F. Resources	
a.	<p>Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$9 million revenue since 2005⁹
b.	<p>Human</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organization employed recruiters, transporters, and safe house operators.¹⁰
c.	<p>Logistical</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Forgery, safe-houses, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group operated a network of safe houses throughout the United States. Known locations include Phoenix, AZ; Los Angeles, CA; and Lancaster, CA. • The group transported immigrants by vehicle, typically late-model, poorly maintained vans, minivans, or SUVs with tinted windows.¹¹ Key routes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the immigrants smuggled by the Three Franciscos group originated from Guatemala and elsewhere in Central America; however, the group has transported immigrants from South America and Mexico as well. • The group’s smugglers crossed the U.S. border near Phoenix, AZ before moving to Los Angeles and Lancaster, CA. From California, immigrants were transported to cities nationwide. The states of Illinois, New Jersey, and Tennessee were key destinations.¹²
d.	<p>Transportation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Land <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group’s primary method of transportation was by van and SUV. Sea <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information not found. Air <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information not found. Intermodal container <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information not found.
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"> • Two of the group’s safe houses in Los Angeles were discovered to contain more than

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150 immigrants each. The immigrants were maintained in cramped conditions under guard. House windows were boarded-up.

- c. Deception
 - Information not found.
- d. Circumvention (avoiding border entry points)
 - Information not found.

H. Prior / Existing Relationships

- a. Other criminal organizations (cooperative and conflictual)
 - Francisco Andres-Pedro is also reported to be the leader of a U.S. street gang.
- b. Corrupt politicians, law enforcement, political parties and other state entities, etc.
 - Information not found.
- c. *Specific detail: Any alliances / past dealings with terrorist groups.*
 - None found

I. Ideological / Ethnic / Familial Orientation (if any)

- Membership was largely drawn from Guatemalan nationals. The three leaders from which the group draws its name originated from the Guatemalan town of Huehuetenango.¹³

J. Technical Sophistication

- The group was not considered technically advanced.

K. Penchant for Innovation

- Information not found.

L. Activities in United States

- a. Includes both criminal and non-criminal activities
 - Human smuggling, kidnapping, operation of a small convenience store
- b. *Specific detail: trafficking activities ; logistical activities*
 - Human smuggling: Before the arrest and imprisonment of two of its three leaders, the Three Franciscos group smuggled more than 9,000 illegal immigrants into the United States, at a rate of 100 persons per week.¹⁴
 - Kidnapping: The group is reported to have smuggled illegal immigrants across the border on credit, holding them hostage until relatives made sufficient payment.
 - Operation of a small convenience store: Francisco Andres-Francisco and his wife owned a small convenience store, the "San Francisco 99 Cent Store," on South Main St. in Los Angeles. The store was used as a transportation staging area from which immigrants were moved throughout the country.¹⁵
- c. Linkages with US groups
 - i. Market/transaction links
 - Information not found.
 - ii. Stable supplier
 - Information not found.
 - iii. Franchise arrangement
 - Information not found.
 - iv. HQ and Branch office
 - Information not found.

M. Evaluations

- a. Strengths
 - The organization was efficient and tightly run. It was capable of moving as many as 400 immigrants across the border and throughout the United States every month.¹⁶

Information derived from several sources and searchable databases.
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b. Weaknesses and vulnerabilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A three year U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement investigation culminated in March, 2008 with raids on the group's safe houses. Two of the group's leaders, Francisco Andres-Francisco and Francisco Andres-Pedro, and several other group members were arrested and convicted. • According to the ICE, this action effectively "dismantled" the group. However, six other members including Francisco Pedro-Francisco are still being sought by law enforcement.¹⁷
c. Additional insights
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Other Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

¹ Hector Becerra, "Immigrant smuggler given 6 years in prison," *Los Angeles Times*, March 10, 2009. <http://articles.latimes.com/2009/mar/10/local/me-human-traffic10>.

² Ibid.

³ Peter Huck, "Evil trade of the three Franciscos," *New Zealand Herald*, April 4, 2009. http://www.nzherald.co.nz/gangs/news/article.cfm?c_id=217&objectid=10565090.

⁴ U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, "Six in custody as ICE dismantles large-scale human smuggling scheme," Press Release, February 28, 2008. <http://www.ice.gov/news/releases/0802/080228losangeles.htm>.

⁵ U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, "Leader of a ring that moved thousands of illegal aliens across U.S. sentenced to more than 6 years in prison," Press Release, March 9, 2009. <http://www.ice.gov/news/releases/0903/090309la.htm>.

⁶ Huck, "Evil trade of the three Franciscos."

⁷ "Guatemalan who smuggled 9,000 migrants jailed," *Agence France Presse*, March 10, 2009. <http://www.asiaone.com/News/AsiaOne%2BNews/World/Story/A1Story20090310-127444.html>.

⁸ Becerra, "Immigrant smuggler given 6 years in prison."

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Huck, "Evil trade of the three Franciscos."

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, "Six in custody as ICE dismantles large-scale human smuggling scheme."

¹³ Becerra, "Immigrant smuggler given 6 years in prison."

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, "Six in custody as ICE dismantles large-scale human smuggling scheme."

¹⁶ Becerra, "Immigrant smuggler given 6 years in prison."

¹⁷ U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, "Six in custody as ICE dismantles large-scale human smuggling scheme."