

## Organization Attributes Sheet: West End Gang

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

- The term, "West End Gang", was first used in the 1950s to refer to criminal bands of Irishmen in Montreal. A Ukrainian Canadian, Frank Pretula, was a gangster who employed these groups of Irishmen to act as "muscle" to harass his competitors.<sup>1</sup>
- This group went on to acquire the "West End" nickname, and it stuck ever since. It grew into a mostly Irish group of criminals that interacted with the French, Italian, Jewish, and biker-gang members of Montreal. The group's criminal operations were most active from the 1970s through the early 2000s, and is still active, but to a lesser extent, today.<sup>2</sup>
- One former member, Peter J. MacAllister, in an interview described the gang's formation as "a collage of old bank robbers and English-speaking criminals... they went on into a period of hijacking trucks and then dealing drugs."<sup>3</sup>

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

#### a. In general

- Robbery (including banks and armored-trucks), truck-hijacking, drug importation and distribution, money laundering, extortion and racketeering, assault, contract killing.<sup>4</sup>

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

- 22.5 tons of hashish being shipped along the coast of Angola by West End Gang members was intercepted by the Canadian navy and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police on May 10, 2006. The hashish was from **Pakistan**, and was destined towards Canadian markets.<sup>5</sup>
- One West End Gang member, Raymond Desfosses, ran a drug trafficking ring that was busted in September, 2004. A cargo ship sailing from **Venezuela** was intercepted by Canadian police on April 22, and the United States Coast Guard seized 750 kilograms of cocaine from another one of his shipments on a sailboat in the **Caribbean**.<sup>6</sup>
- In 2006, a West End Gang member, Richard Griffin attempted to smuggle 1,300 kilograms of cocaine into Canada from **Venezuela**. After a few troubles, the cocaine was purchased from a **Colombian** cartel, but then the shipment was seized by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in a South Shore, Nova Scotia warehouse controlled by Griffin.<sup>7</sup>
- A Montreal man with ties to the West End Gang was arrested on December 7, 2006. His gang was distributing cocaine all across Canada, and his supplies were reported to have come from **Colombia** and been transferred to the gang members in the **Caribbean** as a mid-way point.<sup>8</sup>
- Christopher Tune, who has ties to the West End Gang, was arrested in 2006 for conspiring to import 500 to 1,000 kilograms of cocaine into Canada, from a **Colombian** supplier. Tune claimed a **Venezuelan** general was using the army to guard the supply while it was warehoused in **Venezuela**. The shipment was supposed to be transferred off the coast of **St. Martin**.<sup>9</sup>

### C. Scope and Size

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

- Before his death in 1984, Frank "Dunie" Ryan boasted having 300 men working for him.<sup>10</sup> Estimates of current numbers have not been reported in recent open source materials.
- The network of the gang is international. One West End Gang ringleader, Raymond Information derived from several sources and searchable databases.

All research conducted according to the project manual.

Desfosses, was reported to have contacts and operations in **Cuba, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Colombia, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, St. Martin**, Thailand and Germany. The drugs traveled to Canada via South America by sea.<sup>11</sup>

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

- Canada (based out of Montreal)
- **Cuba, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Colombia, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, St. Martin**, Thailand and Germany.<sup>12</sup>
- Pakistan<sup>13</sup>
- South Africa, **Panama**<sup>14</sup>

**D. Leader Characteristics**

a. Who is/are the leader(s)

- Frank Peter "Dunie" Ryan (former)
- Allan Ross (former)
- Gerald Matticks

b. Leadership timeline

- Frank Peter Ryan, after a series of small crimes and arrests in his youth and early adulthood, was convicted in 1966 for a bank robbery in Massachusetts. After his parole in 1972, he started moving into the narcotics trade, importing hashish, heroin, and cocaine. Due to the profits of his narcotics trade, he became the leader of the West end Gang in 1979, and he expanded their drug network. He contracted a Hells Angel hit-man, Yves "Apache" Trudeau, who completed his contract in killing a West End gang member Ryan wanted to make an example of. Ryan was killed by rival gangsters in a hotel room on November 13, 1984.<sup>15</sup>
- Allan Ross replaced Ryan as the leader after his death in 1984. He revenged Ryan's death by hiring Hells Angels assassins who used an explosive in an apartment building. He was arrested and has been serving a life sentence in prison since 1992.<sup>16</sup>
- When Ross was imprisoned, Gerald Matticks took over.<sup>17</sup> He was then sentenced to 12 years in prison after pleading guilty for drug trafficking in August 2002.<sup>18</sup> As of 2010, Matticks was set to be released on parole.<sup>19</sup>

c. Leadership style (autocratic, diffuse, etc.)

- Leadership was autocratic during the times of Ryan and Ross, but due to the cellular nature of the gang, and especially more recently, leadership style is more diffuse amongst the cells and their ringleaders.

**E. Organizational Structure**

a. Topology (cellular, hierarchical, etc.)

- Cellular
- Peter Toman's group operating the intercepted shipment of 22.5 tons of hashish in 2006 was described by authorities and in reports as being a West End Gang "import cell".<sup>20</sup>

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?

- Membership is informal, loosely based on Irish and familial ties.
- Known to employ a variety of biker gang members to carry out the street-level crimes and "tough-guy" labor.<sup>21</sup>

c. Command and Control (decentralized or centralized)

- Decentralized
- Former member, Peter J. MacAllister, once claimed in an interview that "there is no

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hierarchy where you've got somebody running the gang."<sup>22</sup>

- This was supported by West End Gang researcher and author, D'Arcy O'Connor, who claimed in his book that to refer to this crime group "as either a 'gang' or the city's 'Irish mafia' is somewhat of a misnomer, since, even if there are several familial ties, few of the subjects... are bound to one another by a down-from-the-top hierarchy, or by any code of omertà" (or code of honor in Italian Mafia terms).<sup>23</sup>

## F. Resources

### a. Financial

- Former leader, Frank "Dunie" Ryan, was estimated to be worth \$50 to \$100 million dollars at the time of his death due to the amount of cash he was estimated to have buried from drug proceeds.<sup>24</sup>
- Seven drug shipments monitored by police between 1999 and 2001 put the wholesale shipment value of the West End Gang's imports at \$278 million, with the street value then at \$2.1 billion.<sup>25</sup>
- Another intercepted shipment of hashish that was intended for West End Gang markets in Canada was valued at \$225 million.<sup>26</sup>
- When Raymond Desfosses's drug trafficking ring was busted in 2004, authorities seized \$1.4 million in cash.<sup>27</sup>

### b. Human

- Consisted of, but not limited to, mostly Irish Canadian criminals. These included: planners, conspirators, smugglers, covert port checkers, enforcers, etc.
- Had a vast array of contacts ranging from foreign militaries for securing drugs, to street-level biker gangs for distribution.

### c. Logistical

#### i. Forgery, safe-houses, etc.

- Owned multiple warehouses in Canada for drug storage after shipments made it past ports.<sup>28</sup>
- Used foreign contacts for warehouses in other countries, such as **Venezuela**.<sup>29</sup>

#### ii. Key routes

- Said to "control" the passage of drugs through Montreal's port.<sup>30</sup>
- Drugs traveled to Canada via South America by sea.<sup>31</sup>
- One route was **Colombia** (for purchasing), to **Venezuela**, to Nova Scotia and Canada.<sup>32</sup>
- Another route had supplies coming from **Colombia**, being transferred to West End Gang dealers in the **Caribbean**, and then making its way to Canada.<sup>33</sup>
- South Africa and **Panama** to Canada.<sup>34</sup>

### d. Transportation

#### i. Land

- Specific information was not found, but it is assumed that once shipments got past ports, land transportation was used to deliver shipments to the street-level distribution gangs.

#### ii. Sea

- Sailboat or container ships.<sup>35</sup>
- West End Gang was said to "control" the passage of drugs through Montreal's port.<sup>36</sup> This was the most utilized method.

#### iii. Air

- Information not found.

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iv. Intermodal container
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hid drugs in cargo containers to smuggle through the port of Montreal.<sup>37</sup></li></ul>
<b>G. Trafficking Methods and Modalities</b>
a. Corruption
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Port of Montreal employees were used as co-conspirators to help smuggle drugs hidden in cargo containers for years up until their bust in 2002.<sup>38</sup></li><li>• <b>Venezuelan military</b> members were reportedly used to guard shipments in storage waiting for transport.<sup>39</sup></li></ul>
b. Concealment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hid drugs in cargo containers to smuggle them through the port of Montreal.<sup>40</sup></li><li>• Peter Toman's cell hid its 22.5 tons of hashish from Pakistan in individually wrapped coffee packets.<sup>41</sup></li></ul>
c. Deception
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gerald Matticks worked at the Montreal ports to get through hundreds of kilograms of cocaine to supply the Hells Angels.<sup>42</sup> So too did his son, Donald Matticks, arrested in 2002.<sup>43</sup></li></ul>
d. Circumvention (avoiding border entry points)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The gang was able to smuggle drugs into Montreal from the 1970s onwards by having many contacts at the docks and ports.<sup>44</sup> These port checkers would "whisk" the containers past checkpoints and move them to secure warehouses.<sup>45</sup></li></ul>
<b>H. Prior / Existing Relationships</b>
a. Other criminal organizations (cooperative and conflictual)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Had relations with Vito Rizzuto's Sicilian crime family in Canada and collaborated on drug shipments.<sup>46</sup></li><li>• Early West end Gang leader, Frank "Dunie" Ryan, contracted a Hells Angels hit-man, Yves "Apache" Trudeau to kill a member of the gang who "screwed" Ryan out of drug money.<sup>47</sup></li><li>• The West End Gang, the Sicilian mafia, and the Hells Angels were said to discuss with each other importing drug shipments and setting retail prices in Canada.<sup>48</sup> The West End Gang was said to be a major supplier of the Hells Angels.<sup>49</sup></li><li>• Known to employ a variety of biker gang members to carry out the street-level crimes and "tough-guy" labor, such as the Satan's Choice gang.<sup>50</sup></li><li>• A Colombian cartel was the supplier of a 1,300 kilogram purchase of cocaine in 2006.<sup>51</sup></li><li>• In the past, the West End Gang has collaborated with the Rock Machine gang, by supplying the drugs that the bikers would in turn sell on the street.<sup>52</sup></li><li>• One West End Gang associate wanted by Interpol, William J. Blackledge, was known as a go-between for the gang and suppliers of the <b>Colombian Cali cartel</b>.<sup>53</sup></li><li>• The West end Gang was believed to have ties with New York crime families, and Irish mobs in Boston.<sup>54</sup></li></ul>
b. Corrupt politicians, law enforcement , political parties and other state entities, etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Former RCMP inspector Claude Savoie was on the West End Gang's payroll and leaked information to the gang before he committed suicide in 1992.<sup>55</sup></li><li>• Donald Matticks, son of leader Gerald Matticks, worked as a container checker at the Port of Montreal and was arrested in 2002.<sup>56</sup></li><li>• A <b>Venezuelan general</b> was claimed to be using military members to guard large cocaine supplies bound for the West End Gang. These were stored in warehouses in the country.<sup>57</sup></li></ul>

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<p>c. <i>Specific detail: Any alliances / past dealings with terrorist groups.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The West End Gang leader, Frank “Dunie” Ryan, who has been deceased for over 26 years, was said to have connections with the Irish Republican Army.<sup>58</sup> No recent connections have been made between these two groups, but ties might exist due to common Irish decent.</li><li>• The 2006 intercepted shipment of 22.5 tons of hashish was said to originate from <b>Pakistan</b>, where many terrorist groups thrive on the drug trade, but no specific supplier was named.</li></ul>
<p><b>I. Ideological / Ethnic / Familial Orientation (if any)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Irish (but not limited to)<sup>59</sup></li></ul>
<p><b>J. Technical Sophistication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Information not found.</li></ul>
<p><b>K. Penchant for Innovation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One West end Gang associate imprisoned since 2006, Piero Arena, was arrested again in April 2011 for allegedly conspiring to smuggle cocaine from <b>Colombia, Venezuela, and the Dominican Republic</b> into Canada while still in prison.<sup>60</sup></li><li>• Drugs were transferred from foreign supplier to West End Gang members mid-sea, usually in the <b>Caribbean</b>, or off the coast of Africa.<sup>61</sup></li></ul>
<p><b>L. Activities in United States</b></p> <p>a. Includes both criminal and non-criminal activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Former leader Allan Ross was arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment in Florida for drug trafficking and hiring contract killers to kill a gang member named David Singer.<sup>62</sup></li></ul> <p>b. <i>Specific detail: trafficking activities ; logistical activities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Specific information not found, but former leader Allan Ross was convicted in Florida on drug trafficking charges twenty years ago (see above section), so this seems likely given the West End Gang’s modus operandi as wholesale dealers, and subsequently street-level distribution would eventually reach the United States.</li></ul> <p>c. Linkages with US groups</p> <p>i. Market/transaction links</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Information not found, but this seems most likely as the Hells Angels has chapters in the United States and was a major distributor for the West End Gang.<sup>63</sup></li></ul> <p>ii. Stable supplier</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Was reported to be a stable supplier of the Hells Angels, which has chapters in the United States.<sup>64</sup></li></ul> <p>iii. Franchise arrangement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Information not found.</li></ul> <p>iv. HQ and Branch office</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Information not found.</li></ul>
<p><b>M. Evaluations</b></p> <p>a. Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One of the West End Gang’s strengths was primarily acting as large shipment smugglers and wholesalers, rather than street level dealers. Using smaller groups and biker gangs for distribution made connecting sales to the West End Gang more difficult, and instead of sellers they were pegged as suppliers.</li><li>• A second strength of the gang is their decentralized nature. The West End gang has been reported to act in small groups and cells with very loose ties, if any at all. This</li></ul>

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	<p>makes their activities, leadership, and other members hard to connect and discover, but also means interrupting one operation would most likely disrupt an entire cell.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A third strength was the gang's establishment of a vast array of foreign contacts for drug supplies, including supposedly corrupt military officials for protection.</li><li>• The gang also handled most transfers and transportation on open waters, which would make detection more difficult.</li><li>• The West End Gang had many members in key positions at the port of Montreal, which allowed for substantial amounts of drugs to be smuggled through into Canada.</li></ul>
b.	<b>Weaknesses and vulnerabilities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Notoriety has made the West End Gang targets for law enforcement in Canada. Many shipments and conspiracies are exposed before the drugs even reach Canadian shores.</li><li>• The gang's ties and close partnerships with the Hells Angels and other well-known biker gangs in Canada also makes the gang easy targets for law enforcement, as working up the drug chain from the street-level distributors will lead to the West End Gang members as suppliers.</li><li>• With Montreal historically acting as the gang's main center of operations, pressuring members there can disrupt operations abroad that ultimately lead back to the city.</li></ul>
c.	<b>Additional insights</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li></ul>
<b>Other Notes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li></ul>	

<sup>1</sup> O'Connor, D'Arcy and Miranda O'Connor. *Montreal's Irish Mafia: The True Story of the Infamous West End Gang* (Ontario, Canada: John Wiley & Sons Canada, Ltd., 2011) p.p. 45 and 46.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. xi.

<sup>3</sup> Gravenor, Kristian. "Smuggler's Secrets," *Montreal Mirror Archives*, July 16, 2003.

<http://www.montrealmirror.com/ARCHIVES/2003/071003/news3.html>.

<sup>4</sup> O'Connor, 2011, p. xi.

<sup>5</sup> Gilmour, Sarah. "Drug Seizure at Sea," *The Maple Leaf*, June 27, 2006. <http://www.forces.gc.ca/site/commun/ml-fe/article-eng.asp?id=2897>.

<sup>6</sup> Banerjee, Sidhartha. "Cocaine 'Broker' a Hero to Some: Desfosses among 25 Arraigned," *The Gazette (Montreal)*, September 10, 2004. Available online via: LexisNexis (Academic).

<sup>7</sup> Cherry, Paul. "Mob Linked to N.D.G. killing; Richard Griffin. Cops Sniffed Out Cocaine Shipment," *The Gazette (Montreal)*, September 19, 2008. Available online via: LexisNexis (Academic).

<sup>8</sup> Cherry, Paul. "Smugglers Carried Coke on Ship Hulls: RCMP arrest 19; Network Distributed Drugs throughout Eastern Canada, Investigators Say," *The Gazette (Montreal)*, December 8, 2006.

<sup>9</sup> Cherry, Paul. "Dealer Bragged of Military Aid, Trial is Told," *The Gazette (Montreal)*, September 25, 2009.

<sup>10</sup> Wally, Wiseguy (moniker). "Frank Peter ("Dunie") Ryan Leader of Montreal's West End Gang," *Rick Porrello's American Mafia*, October 1999. [http://www.americanmafia.com/Feature\\_Articles\\_14.html](http://www.americanmafia.com/Feature_Articles_14.html).

<sup>11</sup> Banerjee, 2004.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Gilmour, 2006.

<sup>14</sup> Stone, Martin. "Montreal Police make \$2 Billion Drug Bust," *United Press International*, December 5, 2002. Available online via: LexisNexis (Academic).

<sup>15</sup> Wally, 1999.

<sup>16</sup> Marsden, William. "Gang Boss Ross Jailed for Life; U.S. Court Orders \$10-million Fine," *The Gazette (Montreal)*, August 1, 1992. Available online via: LexisNexis (Academic).

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- <sup>18</sup> Ha, Tu Thanh. "Mob Crime Flourishes Despite Arrests," *The Globe and Mail*, January 26, 2004. [http://www.nicaso.com/pages/doc\\_page161.html](http://www.nicaso.com/pages/doc_page161.html).
- <sup>19</sup> Cherry, Paul. "Freedom Near for Reputed Crime Boss," *The Gazette (Montreal)*, July 28, 2010. Available online via: LexisNexis (Academic).
- <sup>20</sup> Sutherland, Anne. "Hash Haul Worth \$225M," *CanWest News Service*, June 06, 2006. <http://s14.invisionfree.com/GangstersInc/ar/t40.htm>.
- <sup>21</sup> Langton, Jerry. *Showdown: How the Outlaws, Hells Angels and Cops Fought for Control of the Streets* (Ontario, Canada: John Wiley & Sons Canada, Ltd., 2010) p. 34, 51.
- <sup>22</sup> Gravenor, 2003.
- <sup>23</sup> O'Connor, 2011, p. xi.
- <sup>24</sup> Wally, 1999.
- <sup>25</sup> Gordon, 2002.
- <sup>26</sup> Gilmour, 2006.
- <sup>27</sup> Banerjee, 2004.
- <sup>28</sup> Stone, 2002.
- <sup>29</sup> Cherry, "Dealer Bragged of Military Aid, Trial is Told," 2009.
- <sup>30</sup> Livesey, Bruce. "Reorganized Crime," *The Globe and Mail*, September 26, 2008. <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/rob-magazine/reorganized-crime/article712012/singlepage/#articlecontent>.
- <sup>31</sup> Banerjee, 2004.
- <sup>32</sup> Cherry, "Mob Linked to N.D.G. killing; Richard Griffin. Cops Sniffed Out Cocaine Shipment," 2008; and Cherry, "Dealer Bragged of Military Aid, Trial is Told," 2009.
- <sup>33</sup> Cherry, "Smugglers Carried Coke on Ship Hulls: RCMP arrest 19; Network Distributed Drugs throughout Eastern Canada, Investigators Say," 2006.
- <sup>34</sup> Stone, 2002.
- <sup>35</sup> Banerjee, 2004.
- <sup>36</sup> Livesey, 2008.
- <sup>37</sup> Stone, 2002.
- <sup>38</sup> Stone, 2002.
- <sup>39</sup> Cherry, "Dealer Bragged of Military Aid, Trial is Told," 2009.
- <sup>40</sup> Stone, 2002.
- <sup>41</sup> Sutherland, 2006.
- <sup>42</sup> Cherry, "Freedom Near for Reputed Crime Boss," 2010.
- <sup>43</sup> Stone, 2002.
- <sup>44</sup> Gordon, 2002.
- <sup>45</sup> Stone, 2002.
- <sup>46</sup> Livesey, 2008.
- <sup>47</sup> Wally, 1999.
- <sup>48</sup> Ha, 2004.
- <sup>49</sup> Cherry, "Freedom Near for Reputed Crime Boss," 2010.
- <sup>50</sup> Langton, 2010, p. 34.
- <sup>51</sup> Cherry, "Mob Linked to N.D.G. killing; Richard Griffin. Cops Sniffed Out Cocaine Shipment," 2008.
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- <sup>54</sup> Gordon, 2002.
- <sup>55</sup> Gordon, 2002.
- <sup>56</sup> Stone, 2002.
- <sup>57</sup> Cherry, "Dealer Bragged of Military Aid, Trial is Told," 2009.

<sup>58</sup> Marsden, William. "West End Gang Hits Mob Big Time," *The Gazette (Montreal)*, October 12, 1991. Available online via: LexisNexis (Academic).

<sup>59</sup> Langton, 2010, p. 51.

<sup>60</sup> Cherry, Paul. "5 Held on Smuggling Charges; Man Allegedly Hatched Plan While Still in Jail," *The Gazette (Montreal)*, April 28, 2011. Available online via: LexisNexis (Academic).

<sup>61</sup> Cherry, "Smugglers Carried Coke on Ship Hulls: RCMP arrest 19; Network Distributed Drugs throughout Eastern Canada, Investigators Say," 2006; and Gilmour, 2006.

<sup>62</sup> Marsden, 1992.

<sup>63</sup> Cherry, "Freedom Near for Reputed Crime Boss," 2010.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.