

Consultations with the Romanian National Anti-drug Agency

On a Sunday just before Christmas, Bob Wicklund and I stepped off a plane and into the vibrant city of Bucharest, Romania. Our journey, however, actually started last July, when a study group of Romanians representing their Ministry of Justice and the *Agentia Nationala Antidrog* (ANA, or National Anti-drug Agency) visited and received a detailed briefing about the Northwest HIDTA. The group's tour was arranged by Timothy Ohms, an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Washington who for the past two years has been serving as a Legal Advisor in the U.S. Embassy in Bucharest. The Northwest HIDTA apparently made a very positive impression on the delega-



Pictured: ANA President Abraham (center), Bob Wicklund, Steve Freng, Tim Ohms and ANA staff

tion and, with about a month's notice and some complex logistics, Bob and I were on our way to Bucharest to consult with ANA as well as U.S. Embassy management and staff.

Romania (together with Bulgaria) is an "acceding" country within the European Union (E.U.), scheduled to become a full member on January 1, 2007. The accession process requires candidate countries to meet a wide range of political, economic and social criteria and conditions, not the least of which address drug control policies. The ANA was thus formed two years ago in accordance with E.U. expectations – prior to that time, Romanian citizens found to be involved with drugs in any manner were simply subject to criminal sanctions. An initial step in the formation of ANA was to conduct an assessment of drug consumption across Romania that found, in Bucharest alone (population approx. 2 million), at least 24,000 heroin addicts – with estimates of a like number outside the city, throughout the country. Romania occupies one of two primary trafficking routes into Europe for Turkish and Afghan heroin and, with a rising standard of living and an increasingly cosmopolitan social climate, the country is experiencing significant, wide-spread problems.

ANA has to date established 47 local centers for drug prevention, evaluation and counseling (41 in each Romanian county and 6 in Bucharest) and has implemented a nationwide public education campaign. They have yet, however, to establish a viable treatment system and are currently engaged in the difficult task of developing working partnerships with Ministry staff representing law enforcement, corrections, health care, education and several other disciplines – thus their interest in the Northwest HIDTA operations and philosophy.

Over the course of three very full days, our visit entailed thorough briefings on the many aspects of the ANA organization, the provision of presentations to ANA staff about the Northwest HIDTA as well as our methamphetamine threat, visits to other Ministries and offices, lengthy conversations with U.S. Embassy staff and attendance of a reception at the residence of the U.S. Ambassador.Continued on page 5

2006 Scheduled Training Classes

<u>Date</u>	<u>Course</u>	<u>Location/Provider</u>
April 10-14 2006	Interview & Interrogation	CJTC/MCTC
April 24-28, 2006	Drug Unit Supervisor	Camp Murray / MCTC
May 8-10 2006	Informant Development	CJTC / MCTC
May 8-10, 2006	Basic Spanish for Law Enforcement	Spokane SO / MCTC
May 10-12, 2006	Basic Spanish for Jail/Corrections	Spokane SO / MCTC
May 22-26 2006	High Risk Event Planning	Richland PD/MCTC
August 14-16, 2006	Introduction to Intelligence for LE	Cowlitz CO / MCTC
September 13-15 2006	Video Techniques for LE	Richland PD/MCTC
TBD	Highway Drug Investigations for Patrol	Puyallup/MCTC
TBD	U/C Ops	TBD/MCTC
TBD	Clan Lab Investigator Certification	TBD/MCTC

...**Street Gang Tracking Group** continued from page 1

The participants recognized that there were a lot of new gang members and associates that were not being added to WSIN and that adding new members and gangs would greatly enhance the sharing process. Attending participants that were not already active members of WSIN were encouraged to enroll and use the database to research gang members and to add new data that resulted from their investigative efforts.

WSIN is a regional element of the national RISS Program and the potential for sharing is magnified nationally. Since many of the street gangs, such as MS-13, the Bloods or the Crips, have ties to other gang members operating out of other law enforcement jurisdictions in the state of Washington as well as in other states, it is an excellent platform to store gang members and associates and allow access to only authorized officials with clear rules and regulations regarding dissemination. The efforts of the SGTG participants to update and enhance the data in WSIN system recognizes that sharing this information across many jurisdictions can improve coordination and result in identifying links between gang membership and criminal activity.

At the start of the SGTG Project, the WSIN database had identified only 305 street or motorcycle gang members in the state. As of the date of this publication, there are now more than 91 street gangs and 1,601 street gang members identified within Washington State. Entry of gang members and associates into the database has resulted in increased notifications, or deconfliction, to several participating law enforcement agencies of common investigative interests. The data has also been critical to several recent investigations on gangs involved in criminal activity, such as Operation Crippler that targeted the 74 Hoovers. The WSIN database assisted in alerting the investigators to the violent activity of some targets that would be an officer safety issue and it also assisted in identifying additional associates of the primary targets.

At the January 2006 SGTG meeting three members of the SGTG were recognized for their particular support and contributions to enhancing the WSIN database with current data. NW HIDTA Director Dave Rodriguez presented Certificates of Appreciation to:

- Robert Luke – Community Liaison Officer, Tacoma Police Department
- Gabriel Rodriguez – Classification Officer, King County Department of Corrections
- Roger Rusness – Sergeant – Seattle Police Department Gang Unit,