

NORTHWEST HIDTA



Serving the needs of 14 Northwest Counties

Benton ~ Clark
Cowlitz ~ Franklin
King ~ Kitsap
Lewis

Pierce ~ Skagit
Snohomish ~ Spokane
Thurston ~ Whatcom
Yakima

MAY - AUGUST 2011

SEPTEMBER 12, 2011

Pediatric Interim Care Center (PICC)

by Barbara J. Drennen, Executive Director



ONDCP Director Gil Kerlikowske with an infant being withdrawn from prescription drugs at PICC.

Pediatric Interim Care Center (PICC), The Newborn Nursery, (PICC) is a one-of-a-kind, model program that provides specialized, 24-hour care for drug-exposed and medically fragile newborns. PICC brings babies safely through withdrawal from drugs, including heroin, cocaine, methamphetamines, methadone, and prescription drugs. The pioneering program also facilitates visitation for families, provides caregiver training, follows the babies after they leave, and offers a range of community outreach and education services. PICC was established in 1990 and is located in Kent, Washington, 20 miles southeast of Seattle. PICC is the only 24-hour care center serving drug-exposed infants throughout Washington State. More than 12,000 infants born in Washington State each year have been prenatally exposed to illicit drugs.

In the 1980's, crack cocaine use was widespread in Washington. Hospitals across the state were strained with the medical complications from underweight babies addicted to crack and experiencing withdrawal. Many times, the mother left the hospital and never returned for her baby. In 1990, drug use had changed to opiates. Babies were born full term and at a healthy weight, but suffering severe withdrawal. The family dynamics also changed in that the mother, whether or not she was homeless, would return for her baby. The extended family was also involved in caring for the

baby. By 1995, drug use had changed again. Cocaine and methamphetamine were the drugs of choice. From 2000 to 2009, PICC experienced another change in drug use patterns. This time, prescription drugs use was on the rise and the children were born to middle and upper class mothers. Most of the babies were returned to their mothers. Since 2009, PICC witnessed babies with several drug combinations. A number of babies were found to have up to seven drugs in their system at one time. Over the past 20 years, the average age of the mothers still remain between 25-35 years of age.



David Rodriguez of Northwest HIDTA, ONDCP Director Gil Kerlikowske, and PICC Board Member Harry Hansen.

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This report is specially prepared for the ONDCP High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Program



Director's Message by Dave Rodriguez

On May 27th Director Gil Kerlikowske visited the Pediatric Interim and Care Center (PICC) in Kent (see front page story). Barbara Drennen was as gracious as always and the members of the PICC Board were there as well. A press conference was conducted after the Director's tour. In July, I was also fortunate to be with the Director in Montreal where he was the keynote speaker at the International Symposium on Drug Impaired Driving that was sponsored by the Canadian Center for Substance Abuse and ONDCP. Drugged Driving is becoming of concern for our Canadian and European partners as it is for us.

On June 22nd the National HIDTA Conference had its annual awards banquet in Crystal City, Virginia. I was accompanied by several members of the Executive Board as well as the award recipients. Below are the three categories that the HIDTA Initiatives received awards. Also below is a group photograph of the award recipients and members of the Executive Board. Congratulations to all for this well deserved recognition.

TASK FORCE – INTERDICTION

Northwest HIDTA: Northwest HIDTA Border Task Force

PREVENTION/TREATMENT

Northwest HIDTA: Drug Court Initiative

PREVENTION/TREATMENT OR ENFORCEMENT EFFORT ON TRIBAL LANDS

Northwest HIDTA: Prevention/Public Education Initiative



The Northwest HIDTA Executive Board approved the following initiatives and individuals for awards in recognition for their exceptional performance.

OUTSTANDING INTERDICTION EFFORT

Integrated Task Force – SeaTac Group

OUTSTANDING COOPERATIVE EFFORT

Tacoma Regional Drug Task Force

OUTSTANDING PROSECUTOR

AUSA Sarah Vogel

OUTSTANDING INVESTIGATIVE SUPPORT CENTER

Northwest HIDTA ISC

OUTSTANDING INTELLIGENCE ANALYST

CIS Julia Fisher
CIS Patricia Gosch

In late April, the US Attorney’s Office for the Western District of Washington hosted a meeting of Federal, State, Local and Tribal law enforcement to discuss and familiarize them with the Attorney General’s Law Enforcement Safety Initiative. As part of the briefing, the Northwest HIDTA did a presentation on WatchCenter activities to include RISSafe deconfliction. Thankfully every agency and department in Washington State is familiar with this and the need to deconflict their operations for officer safety.

Northwest HIDTA Board Members	
Local Members	
Chief Bob Lee <i>Auburn Police Department</i>	Sheriff Ken Irwin <i>Yakima County Sheriff’s Department</i>
Sheriff Garry Lucas <i>Clark County Sheriff’s Office</i>	Prosecutor David McEachran (Chair) <i>Whatcom County Prosecutor’s Office</i>
Assistant Chief James Pugel <i>Seattle Police Department</i>	Sheriff Sue Rahr <i>King County Sheriff’s Office</i>
Chief Katherine Atwood <i>Everett Police Department</i>	
State Members	
Chief John Batiste <i>Washington State Patrol</i>	
Federal Members	
United States Attorney Jenny Durkan <i>United States Attorney’s Office</i>	Rear Admiral Keith Taylor <i>United States Coast Guard</i>
United States Marshal Mark Ericks <i>United States Marshal’s Service</i>	Special Agent in Charge Marcus Williams <i>Internal Revenue Service</i>
Special Agent in Charge Kelvin Crenshaw <i>Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives</i>	Special Agent in Charge Laura Laughlin <i>Federal Bureau of Investigation</i>
Special Agent in Charge Matthew Barnes <i>Drug Enforcement Administration</i>	Special Agent in Charge Leigh H. Winchell (Vice Chair) <i>Immigration and Customs Enforcement</i>

Northwest HIDTA Threat Assessment and Strategy for Program Year 2012 by CIS Amy Vradenburg

The Northwest High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) incorporates 14 counties located on both the east and west sides of the Cascade Mountains. The western counties extend from the U.S.-Canada border south to the Oregon border and include Clark, Cowlitz, King, Kitsap, Lewis, Pierce, Skagit, Snohomish, Thurston, and Whatcom County. The Eastern Washington counties include Benton, Franklin, Spokane, and Yakima. Within these vastly divergent jurisdictions, the Northwest HIDTA facilitates cooperation and joint efforts among more than 96 international, federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies, involving over 392 personnel participating in the Northwest HIDTA regional law enforcement initiatives. The Northwest HIDTA works with these agencies to identify drug threats and implement the strategies necessary to address them. This report defines the threats and strategies for the 2012 program year.

Both methamphetamine and marijuana are considered by Northwest HIDTA to be Washington State's greatest drug threats. These two drugs are treated as the greatest threats because of their availability and association to crime. Respondents to the 2011 Northwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey (TAS) ranked methamphetamine as the drug most often associated with violent crime and property crime. Methamphetamine seizures increased in 2010, even though treatment admission numbers for the drug decreased. The exception in this category was the number of Washington State Department of Corrections (DOC) inmates admitted for drug treatment. The majority of these admissions were for methamphetamine addiction.

While marijuana seizures dropped in 2010, the drug is readily available and youth treatment admissions for the drug continue to increase. Marijuana continues to be used as a bartering tool as the drug is often smuggled from Canada into Washington in return for cocaine and weapons.

As heroin and pharmaceutical drug abuse continue to rise, a shift may occur in which methamphetamine and marijuana could be viewed as a lesser threat. Currently, however, methamphetamine and marijuana are seen as Washington's most serious drug threats.

The following provides a brief overview of the magnitude of the overall illegal drug problem within the Northwest HIDTA Region. Each of these drugs will be explained in further detail within the threat assessment portion of this document:

- Methamphetamine production, distribution, and use contribute to a wide range of criminal activities. According to law enforcement officials, methamphetamine contributes more than any other drug to violent crimes in the state.
- Marijuana is the most prevalent drug of abuse in Washington, according to the 2011 Northwest HIDTA TAS. Cannabis cultivation in both indoor and outdoor grows throughout Washington and to a lesser extent Canada-produced marijuana, commonly known as British Columbia (BC) Bud, supply the drug market.
- Heroin seizures increased significantly in 2010, correlating with a striking rise in both adult and youth treatment admissions for the drug. The increase of abuse of heroin may be linked to prescription-type drugs.
- Cocaine is a significant threat and among the most common drugs identified in emergency room reports. Levamisole, sometimes used as cutting agent, is a drug used to deworm animals and continues to show up in cocaine samples in the area. Use and addiction of cocaine are widespread throughout the region, primarily in the north. Seizures of cocaine lowered significantly in 2010.
- Diverted pharmaceuticals and other opiates pose a significant and increasing risk and may be a factor in the rise of heroin abuse. Washington State has among the highest rates of non-medical use of prescription pain relievers in the nation.

- Other Dangerous Drugs, including synthetic marijuana which is sometimes marketed as Spice or K2, made a noticeable mark on the nation and the Northwest HIDTA region. Other chemicals that mimic controlled substances, but are not illegal, such as Mephedrone, MDPV (3,4-Methylenedioxypropylvalerone), and 2C-E(2,2-Dimethoxy-4-ethylphenethylamine) are on the rise because they are viewed by users as legal highs. The chemical 2C-E is a variation of 2C-B (4-Bromo-2.5-dimethoxyphenethylamine), which DEA has listed as Schedule I. MDMA (3,4-methylenedioxyamphetamine, commonly known as ecstasy) is also a significant problem, although most seizures appear destined for other markets.

The Washington-Canada border serves as a major transshipment point for drugs, illicit proceeds, and precursors. Mexican national poly-drug organizations are responsible for most large-scale drug distribution in Washington and use the state as a platform to expand their illicit operations into Canada.

Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTO) in the Northwest HIDTA region utilized novel money laundering techniques and emerging technologies to launder illicit drug proceeds. Bulk cash smuggling and the use of money service businesses have also continued.

Gang membership in street gangs and outlaw motorcycle gangs in Washington has continued to increase over the past few years. These gangs are often violent and participate in a variety of illegal activities including drug and firearm trafficking, prostitution, auto theft, and burglary.

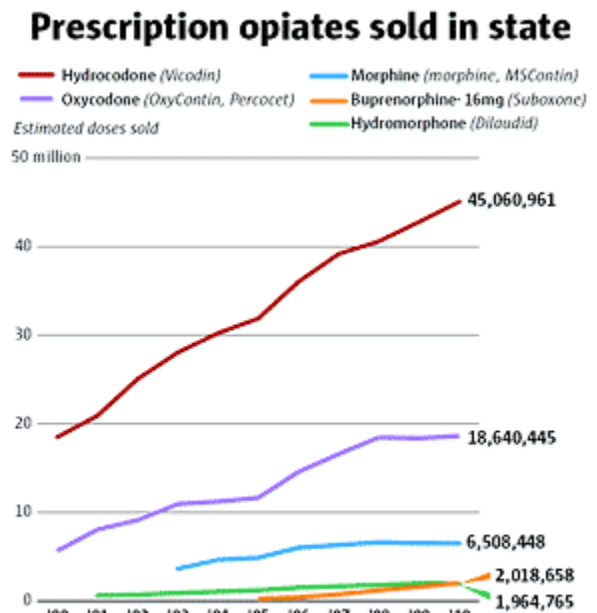
Emerging Trends: Legal Drugs Involved in Overdose Deaths in King County by Theresa P. Blahato, ISC Manager

While illegal drugs still play a major role in drug deaths, a University of Washington study reports that prescription drugs or alcohol accounts for the leading cause of overdose deaths in King County. Of the 240 drug-caused deaths in King County in 2010, 130 involved prescription-type opiates such as methadone, oxycodone, hydrocodone, fentanyl, or morphine. About 85 percent of deaths involving prescription opiates in King County involve more than one drug — often a benzodiazepine sedative such as Valium (generic name diazepam) or Xanax (generic name alprazolam), alcohol, heroin or cocaine.

Of the illegal drugs, cocaine is listed as the major drug of abuse and contributor to deaths (46 in 2010). Of concern, the study mentioned that the number of young adults using prescription opiates and heroin. The number of young adults 18 to 29 in treatment programs for heroin rose 74 percent from 1999 to 2010. Fatal heroin overdoses dropped to 50 in 2010 from a high of 144 in 1998. The decline is attributed to the low purity of heroin in the area.

Alcohol, involved in 62 drug-caused deaths in King County in 2010, were similar to deaths involving methadone (65), while benzodiazepines were involved in 57 deaths and oxycodone (including OxyContin and Percocet) in 33 deaths.

Prescription sales data from the Drug Enforcement Administration show hydrocodone (Vicodin or Lortab) as having the highest sales in Washington. Over 45 million doses were sold in 2010.



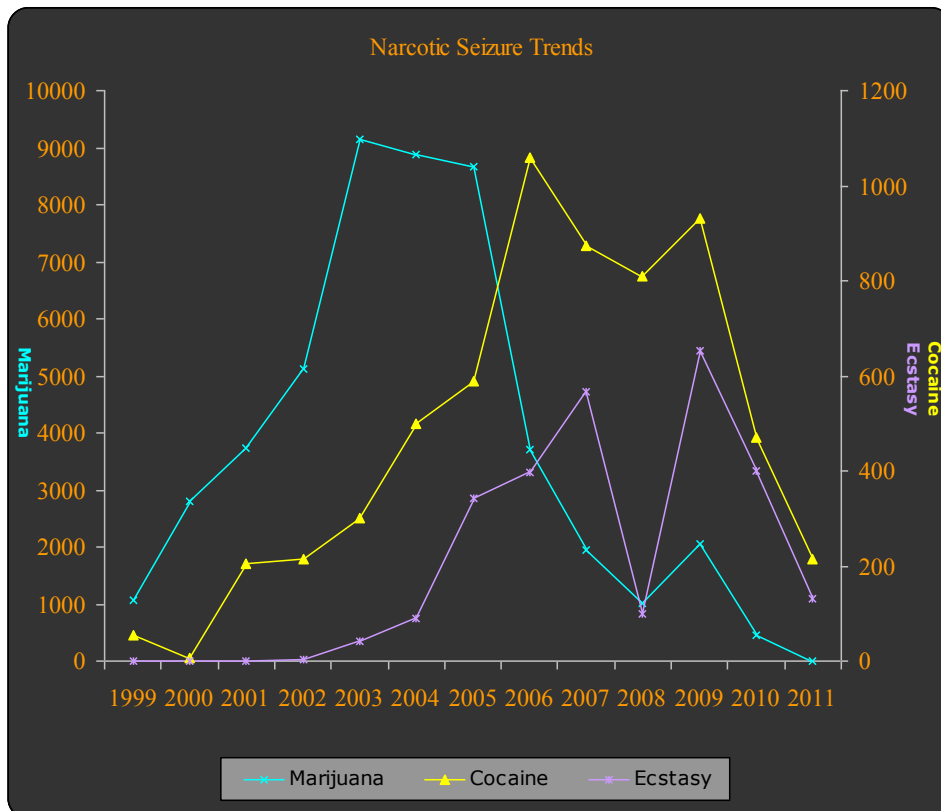
Source: Drug Enforcement Administration Automation of Reports and Consolidated Orders System. Data on Methadone and Fentanyl not available.
Data provided to and analyzed by Caleb Banta-Green Alcohol & Drug Abuse Institute, University of Washington
MARK NOWLIN / THE SEATTLE TIMES

Integrated Border Intelligence Team (IBIT) by Brian Gilbert, Enforcement Analysis Specialist & Mark Kotwicki, IBIT Team Leader

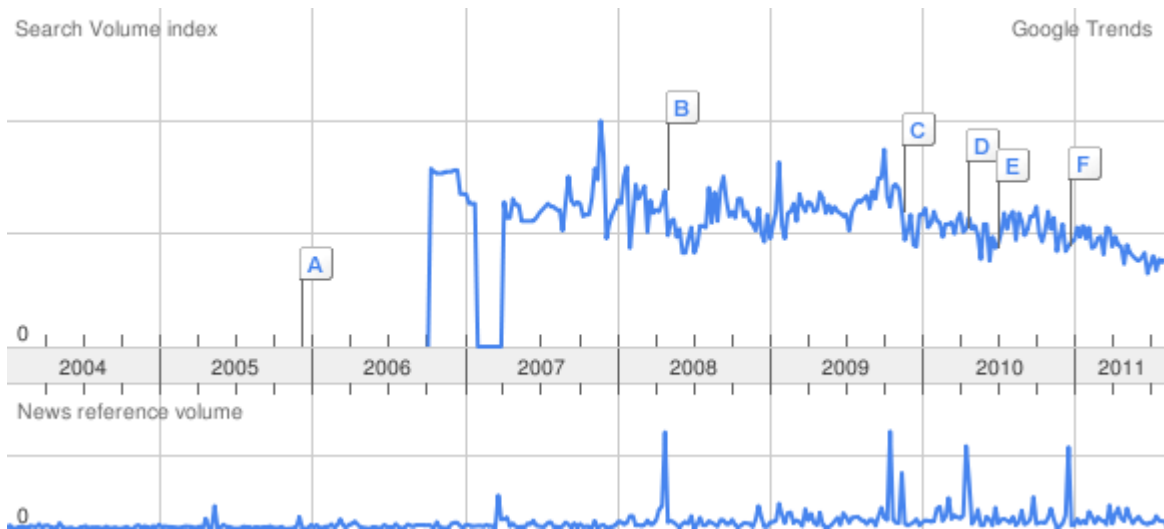
The Integrated Border Intelligence Team (IBIT) is a bi-national law enforcement partnership that serves as a cross-border analytical/intelligence group for the Pacific and Okanagan Integrated Border Enforcement Team (IBET) regions. This area includes the coastal regions of British Columbia and Northern Washington State and the land border eastward to Alberta and Glacier National Park in Montana. The IBIT is currently collocated in Blaine, Washington.

During the months of May through August 2011, IBET member agencies were responsible for the seizure of 216 kilograms of cocaine and 463,000 units of ecstasy. There were no marijuana seizures during this time period. Seizures occurred throughout the IBIT reporting area and were attributed to multiple partner agencies, to include Customs and Border Protection Office of Field Operations (CBP-OFO), Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the Border Patrol (USBP).

The chart below depicts cross border seizure trends for cocaine, ecstasy and marijuana from 1999-2011. The trends for cocaine and ecstasy are extremely similar to each other with rises and falls occurring simultaneously. As the marijuana smuggling trend fell off in 2005, cocaine and ecstasy rose to fill in the gap. Currently, cross-border seizures of all three narcotics are at significantly reduced levels when compared to previous years.



In regards to marijuana, analysis of price and availability of high grade product in the US suggests that even though cross border activity is currently in a lull, high grade marijuana is still plentiful in the domestic market. One probable explanation is that the supply of domestically grown marijuana, to include medical marijuana, has increased to fill the void left by the decrease in smuggled Canadian grown marijuana. An analysis of Google Trends indicates that searches for the term "indoor marijuana" have been at elevated levels since the middle of 2006. Seven of the top ten cities for Google searches of "indoor marijuana" are located in California, Oregon or Washington.



Canadian news sources are reporting that some Vancouver based organized crime groups have moved their marijuana grow operations from British Columbia to the United States in part due to the relatively lower cost of real estate and a perceived softening of US marijuana laws. This was substantiated in 2008, by the DEA's OPERATION GREEN REAPER in which a multi-million dollar grow op supply/fraudulent mortgage ring was dismantled in the Seattle area. The companies were suspected of providing equipment, advice, and even refuse disposal services to individuals running indoor marijuana grows. Ties to British Columbia organized crime were uncovered during this investigation. Additionally, numerous indoor marijuana grow operations have been discovered throughout Washington State in the past several years.

Information readily available on the internet would seem to support this theory as well. An individual in North Bend, Washington posted their home for rent or sale on Craigslist stating that the house is "*set up for specially growing Marijuana.*" The posting claimed "*you can easily grow over \$125,000 in crop per summer and take the winters off or grow indoors during the winter.*" Other Craigslist postings in the Seattle area offer services such as "*Professional & Discrete Grow Room Builders*" with posters offering to install "*hidden and false walls, secret entrances, etc.*"

Although seizures of smuggled marijuana and ecstasy are currently at significantly decreased levels, there are indications that production remains stable in British Columbia. Despite enhancements in the enforcement postures at the ports of entry and along the land border, the possibility that law enforcement has yet to uncover shifting smuggling patterns or techniques cannot be discounted. Canadian and US agencies are working together to develop innovative strategies such as the Integrated Cross-border Maritime Law Enforcement Operations (Shiprider) program to strengthen border security in the Pacific and Okanagan Regions.

Prevention/Treatment Initiative by Steve Freng, Manager

As previously mentioned in the *Director's Message*, the Northwest HIDTA was honored by ONDCP as the recipient of three National HIDTA Program awards at the recent 2011 National HIDTA Conference. It is my privilege to provide more detail about two of the awardees, each of which are associated with the Northwest HIDTA Prevention/Treatment Initiatives.

The recipient of the Outstanding Prevention/Treatment or Enforcement Effort on Tribal Lands award was the Greater Spokane Substance Abuse Council (GSSAC), a community-based coalition that has been in operation since 1982 and was selected in 2003 as a Northwest HIDTA partner agency.

It has become abundantly evident that alarming increases in the availability, use and consequences associated with the abuse of prescription medications continue to occur. The incidence of overdose deaths for instance has increased exponentially, particularly in Washington State, where the rate of approximately 12 deaths per 100,000 population is 50% higher than the national average – and that rate is exceeded significantly when considering our Tribal communities. Therefore, GSSAC in collaboration with the Northwest HIDTA developed and implemented the **WA Rx Watch Presentation**, based on a train-the-trainer model in order to disseminate the prevention curriculum widely across the state. Initial emphasis was placed on providing the curriculum to Tribal communities, given their disproportionate involvement with prescription drug abuse. Eight train-the-trainer events have been provided to Tribal communities to date, including the Spokane, Yakama, Kalispel, Colville, Quinault and Makah tribes. In addition, the one-hour presentations have been provided by GSSAC staff for all Tribal communities in eastern Washington, including the Spokane Healing Lodge (a Tribal treatment agency that supports seven tribes in the inland Northwest i.e., Washington, Oregon and Idaho), and for Tribal prevention conferences conducted by the Kalispel Tribe of Indians, the Yakama Tribal Nation and the Colville Tribe.

During the 2009 National Drug Endangered Children Conference, GSSAC was central to the organization of an inaugural "Tribal Track", providing training and discussions that focused on Tribal communities. Currently, GSSAC is a member of the US DOJ Drug Endangered Children Curriculum Development Working Group, the purpose of which is to develop a nationwide DEC training curriculum for Tribes.

GSSAC staff also assisted the Spokane Tribal Police with the implementation of a prescription medication take-back program for the Tribal community, and conducted a community forum that brought together law enforcement, treatment and prevention leaders including the prevention coordinator for the Spokane Tribe and the Chief of the Kalispel Tribal Police Department which was televised throughout the Spokane region.

The recipient of the Outstanding Treatment or Prevention Effort award was the Northwest HIDTA Drug Court Initiative. The Drug Court Initiative has been a vital element of the Northwest HIDTA mission and strategy since its designation in 1997 and supports the operations of Drug Court programs in 10 of the 14 counties comprising the Northwest HIDTA region. In addition to supporting the purchase of vocational training services, mental health and trauma treatment services, clean and sober housing, and urinalysis services for program participants, as well as employment of Program Coordinators, Case Managers and Counselors, Northwest HIDTA funding in fact provided the initial resources for the implementation of the Drug Court programs in Thurston, Skagit and Yakima counties.

In CY 2010, Northwest HIDTA funding supported the participation of 2,059 Drug Court enrollees throughout the region. Collectively, this participation resulted in a graduation rate of 55% -- far surpassing the rates for non-judicially supervised treatment programs. The re-arrest rate for these graduates was 8%, and the reincarceration rate was 3%. An evaluation of the Drug Court programs in the region conducted by the University of Washington and Drug Abuse Institute and funded by the Northwest HIDTA (and later revisited by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy at the behest of the Washington State Legislature), found that the programs reduce recidivism by a statistically significant 13% and that they generate \$1.74 in benefits for each dollar of costs. They were found and continue to be seen as efficient and cost-effective additions to Washington's criminal justice system.

If you have questions or comments regarding the Northwest HIDTA Prevention/Treatment Initiatives, Steve Freng can be contacted at (206) 352-3603 or sfreg@nw.hidta.org.

Initiative News by William Snyder, Analytical Unit Manager

Investigative Support Center

The Investigative Support Center (ISC) completed two reports: the Northwest HIDTA Annual Report and the Northwest HIDTA Threat Assessment and Strategy for Program Year 2012. The Annual Report details performance measures and Return on Investment (ROI) for the Northwest HIDTA initiatives and compares them to previous years. The Threat Assessment and Strategy documents drug use and patterns of abuse as well as drug trafficking organizations and criminal groups that pose a threat in the state. The strategy portion of the report concerns the enforcement and drug treatment/prevention approach to address the problem. The ISC analysts continue to support the initiatives in their investigations as well as support national HIDTA initiatives such as the Native American Project (NAP), the Methamphetamine, Chemical and Pharmaceutical Initiative (NMCPI), the National Marijuana Initiative (NMI), the Domestic Highway Enforcement Initiative (DHE), Northern Border Strategy, and the National Gang Initiative.

Cowlitz/Wahkiakum Narcotics Task Force (CWNTF)

The CWNTF concluded several investigations of note so far in 2011 to include a large scale methamphetamine trafficking network with a presence spanning the greater King County/Longview, Washington area and Oregon; a multi-pound heroin distribution network operated in the Vancouver and Longview, Washington areas; and a poly-drug regional distribution organization based in Renton, Washington. These are not the only cases the CWNTF has worked, but they represent a large portion of the investigative efforts so far this year.

Operation "Shake the Tree"

On February 23, 2011, CWNTF officers coordinated a series of Knock and Talk contacts at homes in King and Pierce Counties in an ongoing effort to impact a drug transportation network with key links in Kelso and Longview, Washington. Three primary locations were targeted and four additional locations were identified for contact. These locations included homes in Maple Valley, Renton, Auburn, Puyallup, and Edgewood, Washington. This investigation, which has been underway in some part or another for over two years, has included investigative efforts of the DEA Eugene, and DEA Salem, Oregon offices, DEA Tacoma, and the CWNTF. CWNTF was the lead on all Washington locations.

CWNTF agents coordinated resources from DEA Tacoma, ICE Seattle, King County Sheriff's Office, Renton Police Department, Edgewood Police Department, Puyallup Police

Department, Auburn PD, and the Washington National Guard. At the conclusion of the event, eight Mexican National adults and one Mexican National juvenile were taken into custody and placed into deportation proceedings. Evidence and intelligence was gathered during contacts at six residential locations with actual consent searches happening in four of them.

In total, agents contacted 15 adults and five minor children during this event – most of whom speak Spanish as their native language. Many of these people were aliens or children of aliens. ICE agents were able to interview all of the key subjects identified and, due to language skills, were integral to the success of this operation by acting as interpreters. Through these interviews, investigators obtained key information that will assist in the ongoing investigation.

Operation "Try Again"

In May, CWNTF agents concluded a multi-year investigation into the distribution of methamphetamine, heroin, and cocaine. Agents executed search warrant in Renton, Washington. Officers arrested two Hispanic males and seized methamphetamine, cocaine and over \$25,000 cash from the primary target of the investigation. During the last 18 months of the investigation, agents made arrests and seizures in Clark, Cowlitz, and King Counties. Agents seized over 700 grams of methamphetamine (one ¼ lb buy tested at 100% purity), over 35 grams of heroin, 30 grams of cocaine, and a handgun. In total, over 12 persons have been arrested to date with more arrests pending.

Operation Try Again is significant in that agents were able to identify and dismantle a drug network that has been in continuous operation in three states since 2005. The primary suspect in this case Jesus Madrigal-Ceja has been identified in at least three federal investigations during that time but continued to elude prosecution by commuting between Renton and Longview, Washington to conduct the bulk of his drug business. Success in this case was greatly facilitated by the involvement and efforts of DEA Tacoma agents and investigators.

Operation "Pedro"

On June 27, 2011, agents of the CWNTF concluded a six month investigation into the distribution of heroin in the Southwest Washington area. Agents executed two search warrants in Vancouver, Washington. Beginning in December 2010, agents received information of a Hispanic DTO lead by "Pedro" who was providing multiple pounds of powdered heroin per week to a series of mid-level heroin dealers living in Cowlitz County. By the end of the investigation, agents had seized approximately 450 grams

of heroin; \$35,000 cash, and several vehicles. Agents arrested three people.

Northwest HIDTA Border Task Force

Immigration and Customs Enforcement Whatcom County Sheriff's Office

A Whatcom County, Washington man was sentenced in May 2011 to nine years in federal prison on Ecstasy distribution charges, following an investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations (HSI). Harjinder Singh Brar, 36, of Lynden, Washington, pleaded guilty in December 2010 to one count of conspiracy to possess Ecstasy with intent to distribute. At the conclusion of his prison sentence, he will be subject to three years of supervised release.

Court documents describe how Brar negotiated with an undercover HSI agent in October 2010 at a Bellingham, Washington, Starbucks to sell 200,000 tablets of Ecstasy for \$400,000. It is estimated that the street value of a single Ecstasy tablet in the Seattle area ranges from \$10 to \$15. During the meeting at Starbucks, Brar told the undercover officer that he was a part-owner of a berry farm on the Canadian border so he could facilitate drug smuggling between the United States and Canada. The undercover agent made specific requests of Brar, describing the colors and shapes of pills he wanted to buy.

About a week after the meeting, Brar and another man were arrested when they delivered the drugs to the undercover officer. Law enforcement recovered 26 heat-sealed bags weighing more than 85 pounds. In court, the prosecutor described how Brar admitted being involved in several drug smuggling transactions since 2006. One of the drug loads involved transporting as much as 65 pounds of cocaine north to Canada.

Oliver King, aka, Hamid Malekpour, 35, of Vancouver, BC was sentenced in late May 2011 in U.S. District Court in Seattle to 70 months in prison and three years of supervised release for five counts related to the trafficking and possession of nearly two dozen firearms. King was arrested May 19, 2010, after he traveled from British Columbia to McMinnville, Oregon and transporting 21 firearms back to the border region. After a five-day trial in January 2011, the jury found King guilty of unlawful dealing in firearms, being a

non-immigrant alien in possession of firearms, and three counts of making false statements to a government agency. At the sentencing hearing U.S. District Judge James L. Robart highlighted King's "pattern of lying," including some "incredible" testimony King offered at a pretrial hearing.

According to records in the case and testimony at trial, King repeatedly lied to U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers when he crossed over the border into the U.S. from Canada. For example, on May 18, 2010, King stated he was crossing into the U.S. to pick up his wife at the Target store in Bellingham. Instead King drove straight to a storefront in McMinnville, Oregon and picked up boxes of firearms and ammunition. King had used a U.S. citizen to set up a business called McMinnville Hunting and Police Supply. On the morning of May 19, 2010, King loaded approximately 10 boxes from the business and drove straight back to Ferndale, Washington where he unloaded the boxes of weapons and ammunition into a storage facility. King had hidden his role in the McMinnville business from regulators. As a non-immigrant alien, he was prohibited from possessing firearms. King was convicted of providing false information to border officials on three separate occasions. King's trips had aroused the interest of law enforcement who tracked his activities on the May 18 visit. He was arrested at the Ferndale storage facility and 21 high-end firearms were seized.

The case was investigated by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Homeland Security Investigations and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives (ATF). The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Susan Roe and Matthew Diggs.

Two Mexican Nationals were sentenced in June 2011 to prison terms for bulk cash smuggling. Fabian Arias-Ramirez, 39, of Fresno, California, was sentenced to 20 months in prison and Sergio Arroyo-Rivera, 22, also of Fresno, was sentenced to a year in prison. Both men were in the United States illegally and will be deported following their prison terms. The men were arrested December 15, 2010, after crossing the border from Canada on a forest trail seven miles east of Blaine. They pleaded guilty in March 2011. U.S. District Judge Richard A. Jones imposed the sentence.

According to records in the case, the men were contacted by Border Patrol agents after a sensor near the border was tripped. The men were wearing camouflage clothing and carried a special blue light flashlight that could not be seen from a distance. Each man had a backpack. Inside each pack agents found about 30 pounds of currency in shrink wrapped bags. There was \$296,185 in U.S. currency and \$360,760 in Canadian currency. The money is believed to be the proceeds of illegal narcotics smuggling. The cash has been forfeited to the government.

The case was investigated by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) following the initial arrests by the U.S. Border Patrol.

Washington State Patrol Investigative Assistance Initiative

SWAT

In May, SWAT served a high-risk drug-related arrest warrant for Tacoma Regional Drug Task Force in Seattle and provided tactical armored support to Thurston County Sheriff's Office (TCSO) SWAT during a high-risk warrant service they were serving for the Thurston County Drug Task Force. In July, SWAT assisted Thurston County Narcotics Task Force with a drug search warrant with TCSO SWAT on a "compound" in Yelm and processed a "box" lab seized by WestNET during a narcotics-related residential search warrant.

In August, SWAT provided tactical assistance with several high-risk drug-related search warrants. One was for the DEA Seattle Diversion Group, where a weapon was found, several arrests made, and a child was removed for safekeeping; and two other warrants were served in the Moses Lake area for a DEA Spokane investigation.

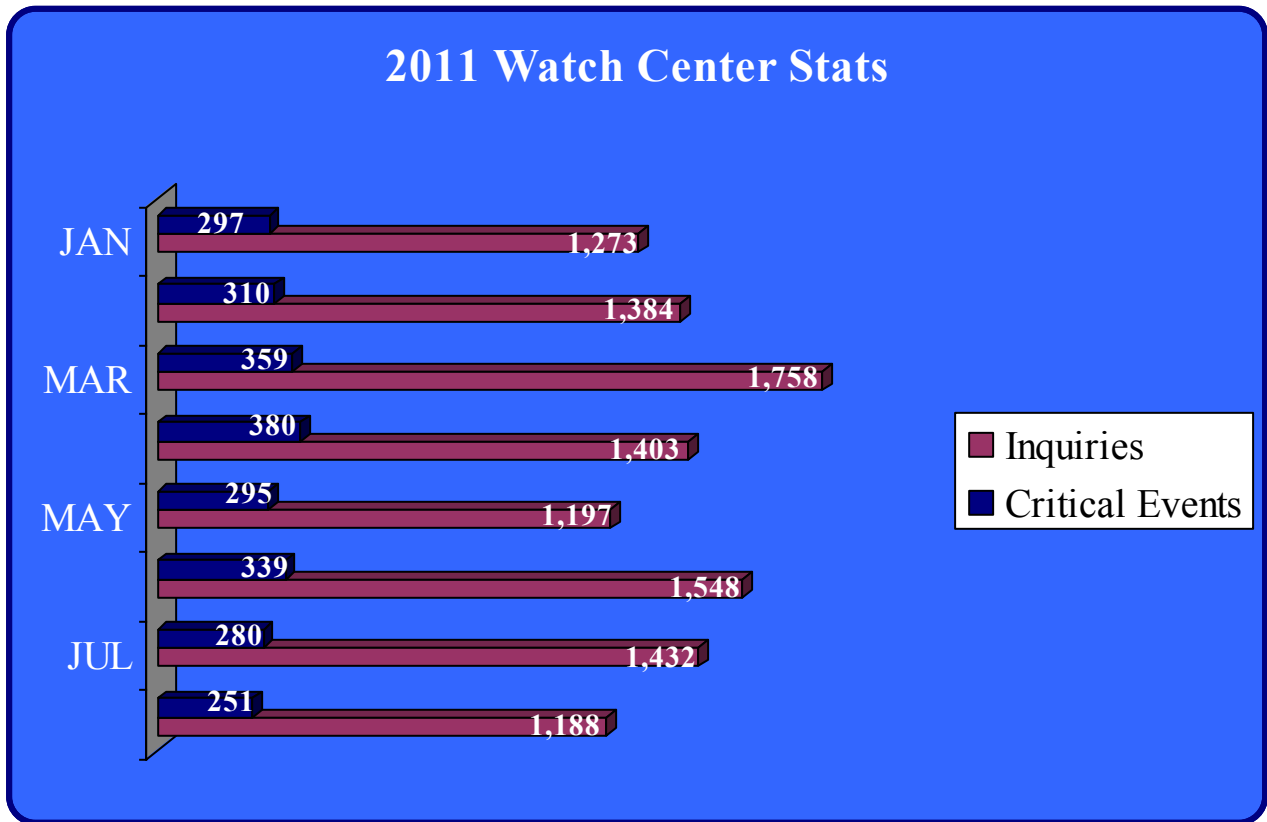
Thurston County Narcotics Task Force (TCNTF)

Over the several months prior to April, detectives from the Thurston County Narcotics Task Force, Tenino Police Department and special agents from Homeland Security Investigations conducted an investigation and purchased large quantities of methamphetamine. As a result of the investigation detectives identified several locations and subjects involved in an ongoing criminal enterprise involved in the sale and distribution of methamphetamine. On April 26th, detectives from participating agencies executed two search warrants in Thurston County. The first was served at a residence located in the 8500 block of Steilacoom Rd SE. The second search warrant was served at a residence location in the 900 block of Garfield Street East in Tenino. Four subjects were arrested, and 5 pounds of methamphetamine, with a street value of \$180,000 was seized, along with a significant quantity of cash. Two young children were also placed into the care of Child Protective Services due to concerns for their safety.

In May, detectives completed an investigation of a meth DTO in Thurston County with the service of two search warrants resulting in the arrest of four people and seizure of four pounds of meth, \$76,000 cash, four cars, and two mobile homes. The case was featured in several local media outlets. Detectives assisted Lacey PD search warrants to recover 25 stolen firearms. A total of eight firearms were recovered along with stolen property, marijuana and meth at both locations.

In June, detectives investigated a Yelm man distributing large quantities of meth in Thurston County after receiving information about traffic and drug sales. The suspect was also allegedly trading stolen property for drugs and has a prior conviction for distribution of meth. Detectives obtained a search warrant for the residence, but due to numerous obstacles on the property and criminal history of the suspect and family members, Thurston County SWAT was requested to serve the warrant. During the warrant service, the suspect and his wife were detained. Detectives seized 2.5 pounds of meth and over \$65,000 cash. Two stolen laptop computers and numerous items of suspected stolen property were also discovered. The suspect was booked on charges of possession of meth with intent to distribute, possession of stolen property, trafficking in stolen property and use of a building for drug purposes. The case was highlighted on KIRO Channel 7.

Watch Center YTD Stats



TRAINING CALENDAR

DATE	COURSE	PROVIDER	LOCATION
9/6-9/7/11	Advanced Vehicle Contraband Concealment	WRCTC	Oroville CBP
9/9/2011	Detecting Deception	WRCTC	CJTC Burién
9/13-9/15/2011	State & Local LE Training Symposium	FLETC	Spokane
9/14-9/16/2011	Gang Prosecution Techniques	WRCTC	Tacoma PD
9/19/2011	Introduction to Grant Writing for Law Enforcement Agencies	WRCTC	Richland PD
9/20-9/22/2011	Criminal Patrol Tactics for the Rural Officer	WRCTC	Bellingham PD
9/22/2011	Introduction to Grant Writing for Law Enforcement Agencies	WRCTC	Arlington PD
10/7/2011	Providing Dynamic & Convincing Testimony	Code 4	Puyallup Best Western

The NW HIDTA coordinates with the National Guard Midwest Counterdrug Training Center (MCTC) and the new Western Region Counterdrug Training Center (WRCTC) located at Camp Murray Washington, and other federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to present these courses.

There is no cost to the attendees or their agencies, except for per diem, if applicable.

The courses are open to federal, state, and local law enforcement officers, criminal intelligence analysts, program analysts, and military personnel assigned to counter-drug activities.

For additional information on these courses please contact Bob Wicklund or Neclisa Floyd at (206) 352-3600.

New WRCTC website!

The Western Regional Counterdrug Training Center has a user friendly registration process to better serve you. Features include a course calendar, real time updates of seats available, on-line certificates, and enhanced email communication. Please take a moment to look around if you have any questions or problems feel free to contact them at registrations@wrctc.org



To receive this newsletter via email,
please request at clbiggs@nw.hidta.org