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National Drug Intelligence Center Releases National Drug Threat Assessment 2007

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The National Drug Intelligence Center, a component of the Department of Justice, has released the National Drug Threat Assessment 2007 detailing national drug trafficking and abuse trends within the United States. The assessment identifies the primary drug threats to the nation, tracks drug availability throughout the country, and analyzes trafficking and distribution patterns of illicit drugs within the United States. It evaluates the threat posed by illegal drugs comparing availability, production and cultivation, transportation, distribution, and demand.

The National Drug Threat Assessment 2007 details these emerging threats based on the most currently available law enforcement, intelligence, and public health reporting and data.

Key findings of the report are as follows:

- Following a sharp decrease in methamphetamine production within the United States, Mexican drug trafficking organizations (DTO), who produce ice methamphetamine in Mexico, have gained considerable strength and expanded their presence in drug markets throughout the country, including smaller communities in Midwestern and eastern states.
- The expanded presence of Mexican DTOs in drug markets throughout the country have enabled some to introduce Mexican black tar and brown powder heroin in southeastern and Midwestern states. Although South American heroin is still the predominant heroin in most eastern drug markets, Mexican DTOs' ability to sell Mexican heroin beyond traditional western state heroin markets presents new challenges to law enforcement.
- Although coca cultivation is higher than previously estimated, cocaine availability and use in the United States have not significantly changed.
- MDMA (ecstasy) availability and distribution have increased significantly. Asian DTOs based in Canada have gained control over most MDMA distribution in the United States and have expanded distribution to a level similar to that of 2001.
- Asian criminal groups based in Canada have contributed significantly to both the increase in potency of marijuana and its distribution throughout the United States.

- While rates of pharmaceutical drug abuse exceed that of all other drugs except marijuana, recent successes in reducing the illegal diversion of pharmaceutical drugs, particularly pharmaceutical narcotics such as OxyContin, have caused some individuals addicted to such drugs to substitute other drugs, such as heroin for prescription narcotics.
- Most Mexican and Colombian DTOs have resorted to consolidating illicit drug proceeds into large bulk cash shipments and smuggling them into Mexico primarily through south Texas. U.S. regulatory and law enforcement efforts have made it increasingly difficult for drug traffickers to launder illicit proceeds in U.S. financial institutions.

The National Drug Threat Assessment 2007 was prepared in partnership with federal, state, and local agencies. The assessment also has incorporated information collected through the administration of the National Drug Intelligence Center's national survey of more than 3,200 state and local law enforcement agencies and thousands of field interviews with law enforcement and public health officials.

A copy of the National Drug Threat Assessment 2007 can be found at our web site:
www.usdoj.gov/ndic

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