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Washington

Drug Threat Assessment



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Preface

This report is a strategic assessment that addresses the status and outlook of the drug threat to Washington. Analytical judgment determined the threat posed by each drug type or category, taking into account the most current quantitative and qualitative information on availability, demand, production or cultivation, transportation, and distribution, as well as the effects of a particular drug on abusers and society as a whole. While NDIC sought to incorporate the latest available information, a time lag often exists between collection and publication of data, particularly demand-related data sets. NDIC anticipates that this drug threat assessment will be useful to policymakers, law enforcement personnel, and treatment providers at the federal, state, and local levels because it draws upon a broad range of information sources to describe and analyze the drug threat to Washington.

Washington Drug Threat Assessment

Executive Summary

Methamphetamine is a primary drug threat to Washington. High purity, low cost methamphetamine is readily available, and the drug is abused throughout the state. Methamphetamine production in Washington has increased, as has the number of methamphetamine laboratories seized by law enforcement officials. Methamphetamine production is causing serious safety and environmental concerns in Washington. Further, the production, distribution, and abuse of methamphetamine are more commonly associated with violent crime than any other drug. Methamphetamine is produced in Washington primarily by Caucasian criminal groups and local independents, often in ounce quantities using the Birch reduction method. Local independent producers, however, have produced pound quantities using the hydriodic acid/red phosphorus production method. Mexican criminal groups also produce methamphetamine in the state, sometimes in pound quantities typically using the hydriodic acid/red phosphorus method. Methamphetamine produced by Mexican criminal groups in high volume laboratories in Mexico and California and, to a lesser extent, in Oregon and southwestern states, is readily available in the state as well. Mexican criminal groups are the dominant transporters and wholesale distributors of methamphetamine in Washington. Caucasian criminal groups and local independent dealers—primarily Caucasian and Mexican—are the principal retail distributors of methamphetamine in the state.

Marijuana is the most readily available and widely abused illicit drug in Washington. Locally produced marijuana is the predominant type available throughout the state. Marijuana produced in Canada and Mexico also is available in the state. Canada-produced marijuana, commonly known as BC Bud, is more readily available in Washington than Mexico-produced marijuana. Cannabis cultivation occurs throughout the state and may be increasing. Caucasian criminal groups and local independent producers are the primary marijuana producers in Washington. They also dominate the wholesale distribution of the marijuana they produce. Canada-based Asian criminal groups, primarily Vietnamese, and outlaw motorcycle gangs, primarily Hells Angels, as well as Caucasian criminal groups and local independent dealers—both Canada- and Washington-based—smuggle Canada-produced marijuana into Washington for wholesale and retail distribution. Mexican criminal groups are the dominant transporters

and wholesale distributors of Mexico-produced marijuana in Washington. Criminal groups and local independent dealers, both primarily Caucasian, are the principal retail distributors of marijuana produced in Canada and Washington. Criminal groups, local independent dealers, and street gangs, all of which are primarily Mexican, are the principal retail distributors of Mexico-produced marijuana in Washington. Various other criminal groups, local independent dealers, and street gangs also distribute marijuana at the retail level.

Cocaine also is a significant threat to Washington. Powdered cocaine is readily available throughout Washington. Abuse of the drug is common, and powdered cocaine is abused more frequently than crack cocaine. Crack cocaine is generally not available outside the major metropolitan areas of Seattle, Spokane, and Tacoma. Mexican criminal groups are the predominant transporters and wholesale distributors of powdered cocaine in the state. These groups transport wholesale quantities of powdered cocaine from Mexico and California into and throughout Washington. Powdered cocaine is transported from and through Washington, primarily Seattle, to drug markets in other states and Canada. Criminal groups, local independent dealers, and street gangs, all of which are primarily Mexican, are the principal retail powdered cocaine distributors in Washington.

Heroin poses a significant problem to Washington, particularly in larger cities such as Seattle, Tacoma, and Yakima. The drug is readily available, and heroin abuse is a significant problem. Violence associated with heroin distribution and abuse is a concern to law enforcement officials. Mexican black tar heroin is the predominant type available in the state. Mexican criminal groups are the dominant transporters of heroin into and through the state. These groups transport the drug primarily from Mexico and California into Washington and are the primary wholesale heroin distributors in the state. Mexican local independent dealers are the primary retail heroin distributors.

Other dangerous drugs. With the exception of MDMA, other dangerous drugs present a low but increasing threat to Washington. MDMA is readily available and abused in Washington. Other dangerous drugs include the stimulant MDMA, the hallucinogens LSD and psilocybin, and the depressant GHB and its analogs. Various criminal groups transport these dangerous drugs to Washington via private vehicles, commercial aircraft, couriers on foot entering the United States from Canada, and package delivery services. Many of these drugs are sold and abused by middle-class, suburban, young adults at raves and nightclubs and on college campuses. Several Internet web sites advertise weekly rave events in Washington and surrounding states, and the number of rave parties, where these drugs often are distributed, is increasing. Diverted pharmaceuticals such as oxycodone (OxyContin), hydrocodone (Vicodin), hydromorphone (Dilaudid), and methadone (Dolophine) also pose a low but increasing threat.

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Washington Drug Threat Assessment

Overview

The state of Washington ranks fifteenth in population with nearly 5.9 million residents. Approximately one-half of the state's population is concentrated in King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties, all of which are adjacent to Puget Sound. In 2000 Washington had a higher percentage of Caucasian (81.8%), Asian (5.5%), and American Indian (1.6%) residents than the national percentages and a lower percentage of African American (3.2%) and Hispanic (7.5%) residents.

Washington's topography and location render it susceptible to drug smuggling and production. The Washington section of the U.S.–Canada border is approximately 430 miles in length, a significant portion of which is vast, dense forest. Several waterways also are present on the border. The border has 13 official ports of entry (POEs), but the rest of the border is largely unpatrolled. Drug smugglers exploit the national parks and forests, as well as other forestlands and waterways adjacent to the border, to smuggle drugs into Washington. In fiscal year (FY) 2000 U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) agents at the Blaine and Spokane sectors seized almost 5,000 pounds of marijuana, accounting for nearly 70 percent of all marijuana seized at the U.S.–Canada border during that year. Drug producers also use the vast national parks and forests, primarily those in

Fast Facts

Washington

Population (2000)	5,894,121
U.S. population ranking	15th
Median household income (2000)	\$42,024
Unemployment rate (2001)	6.9%
Land area	66,511 square miles
Shoreline	3,026 miles
Capital	Olympia
Other principal cities	Bellevue, Bellingham, Everett, Federal Way, Kennewick, Kent, Lakewood, Seattle, Spokane, Tacoma, Vancouver, Yakima
Number of counties	39
Principal industries	Advanced technology, aerospace, agriculture, biotechnology, food processing, forestry, international trade, recycling, tourism

western Washington, to cultivate cannabis and operate methamphetamine laboratories.

Washington is a distribution center for both licit and illicit commodities in the Northwest due largely to its geographic location—bordered by Canada and the Pacific Ocean—and its multifaceted transportation infrastructure. Private vehicles, boats, and commercial trucks are frequently used to smuggle drugs into Washington and transport drugs into and through the state. Couriers on commercial and private aircraft, commercial buses, and passenger rail cars also are used by traffickers, but to a lesser extent.

Drug transporters primarily use Interstates 5, 90, and 82 as well as U.S. Highways 2, 12, 97, 101, and 395 to transport drugs into and through Washington. I-5, the principal north-south highway on the West Coast, extends from the U.S.–Canada border near Blaine to the U.S.–Mexico border near San Ysidro, California. I-90, the primary east-west highway in Washington, connects Seattle with Spokane and extends to Chicago. I-82, which extends from central Washington through Yakima and the Tri-City area (Kennewick, Pasco, and Richland), connects I-90 to I-84, a major interstate in northern Oregon. US 2, also known as the Hi-Line, connects I-5 in Everett with I-90 in Spokane and extends to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. US 12 extends from Aberdeen, near the Pacific Coast, through southern Washington to Madison, Wisconsin. US 97 extends from the Oroville POE, through Yakima and Oregon, to northern California where it connects to I-5. US 101 is the principal highway on the Olympic Peninsula. US 395 extends from the Laurier POE, through Spokane and the Tri-City area, to Southern California. Law enforcement officials in Washington commonly seize drugs on these highways, often as part of Operation Pipeline initiatives.

Washington has seven international airports: Bellingham International, Grant County International in Moses Lake, William R. Fairchild International in Port Angeles, Jefferson County International in Port Townsend, Seattle-Tacoma International (SeaTac) and Boeing Field/King

Operation Pipeline

Operation Pipeline is a national highway interdiction program supported by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC). Drug seizures from private vehicles are reported to Operation Pipeline by state and local law enforcement agencies nationwide operating along highways and interstates most frequently used to transport illegal drugs and drug proceeds.

County International in Seattle, and Spokane International. SeaTac is the primary air transportation hub for domestic and international passengers and cargo in the state. Forty-four domestic and 13 foreign commercial air passenger and cargo carriers serve the airport. In addition, Washington has over 130 public use airports, 100 heliports, and numerous private airports, seaplane bases, and landing strips. Illicit drugs occasionally are seized from commercial air passengers and air cargo. Illicit drugs also have been seized from noncommercial aircraft, particularly those landing at remote airstrips along the Washington portion of the U.S.–Canada border.

Operation Jetway

Operation Jetway is an EPIC-supported domestic interdiction program. Drug seizures are reported to Operation Jetway by state and local law enforcement agencies across the nation at airports, train stations, bus stations, package shipment facilities, U.S. Post Offices, and airport hotels/motels.

Commercial shipping is prevalent in the Puget Sound area, the third busiest commercial shipping region in the nation. Only the Long Beach/Los Angeles and New York/New Jersey areas have more maritime traffic. Seven ports are situated in the Puget Sound area, including the Port of Seattle and the Port of Tacoma. More than 2.7 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) of container traffic were handled by ports in the region in 1999. The Port of Seattle handled nearly 1.5 million TEUs of container traffic that year, ranking fifth in the United States, while the Port of

Tacoma ranked eighth in the nation in 1999 with nearly 1.3 million TEUs of container traffic. This volume of maritime traffic, in addition to pleasure craft and fishing boats, has rendered the Puget Sound area vulnerable to the transportation of drugs into and through the region.

Mexican criminal groups are the dominant transporters of illicit drugs into Washington. These groups transport wholesale amounts of methamphetamine, cocaine, heroin, and marijuana into the state from Mexico, California, and Oregon. Caucasian criminal groups and local independent dealers as well as Asian criminal groups—primarily Vietnamese—and outlaw motorcycle gangs (OMGs)—particularly Hells Angels—smuggle significant quantities of Canada-produced marijuana into Washington.

Public health data reporting indicates that drug-related treatment admissions in Washington have increased. According to the Washington Division on Alcohol and Substance Abuse, drug-related treatment admissions to publicly funded facilities in Washington for abuse of methamphetamine, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin increased overall from state fiscal year (SFY) 1997 through SFY2001, with marijuana-related admissions increasing each year during this period. The overall number of treatment admissions for methamphetamine abuse increased substantially (153%) during this period from 2,334 in SFY1997 to 5,907 in SFY2001. Large increases also were reported for marijuana, which has risen 75.1% in the last 5 years.

The number of drug-related deaths in Washington likewise has increased. According to the Washington State Department of Health, the number of drug abuse-related deaths increased from 461 in 1995 to 551 in 2001.

The percentage of Washington residents who reported having abused an illicit drug was higher than the percentage nationwide in 2001, the most

recent year for which data are available. According to the 1999 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA), 7.51 percent of Washington residents surveyed reported having abused an illicit drug in the month prior to the survey compared with 6.28 percent nationwide.

Drug-related crimes have increased in Washington. The number of arrests in the state for the manufacture, possession, or sale of illicit drugs increased each year from 13,234 in 1994 to 28,043 in 2001, according to the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs. The Washington State Department of Corrections reports that 21.3 percent of the approximately 15,000 inmates incarcerated in state correctional institutions in 2002 had drug-related crimes as their primary criminal offense.

According to the U.S. Sentencing Commission (USSC), in FY2001 the percentage of federal sentences in Washington that were drug-related increased but remained lower than the national percentage. Drug-related sentences represented 33.2 percent of all federal sentences in the state in FY2001 compared with 41.2 percent nationally. The percentage of federal sentences that were drug-related in Washington increased from 28.1 percent in FY1997 to 33.2 percent in FY2001.

The financial impact on Washington from substance abuse-related costs has been significant. According to the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, Washington spent nearly \$1.4 billion—\$248 per resident—on substance abuse-related costs in state programs in 1998, the most recent year for which these data are available. These costs represented 10.0 percent of the state's total expenditures that year, the twenty-third highest percentage in the nation but below the national average of 12.6 percent.

Methamphetamine

Methamphetamine is a primary drug threat to Washington. High purity, low cost methamphetamine is readily available, and the drug is abused throughout the state. Methamphetamine production in Washington has increased, as has the number of methamphetamine laboratories seized by law enforcement officials. Methamphetamine production is causing serious safety and environmental concerns in Washington. Further, the production, distribution, and abuse of methamphetamine are more commonly associated with violent crime than any other drug. Methamphetamine is produced in Washington primarily by Caucasian criminal groups and local independents, often in ounce quantities using the Birch reduction method. Local independent producers,

however, have produced pound quantities using the hydriodic acid/red phosphorus production method. Mexican criminal groups also produce methamphetamine in the state, sometimes in pound quantities typically using the hydriodic acid/red phosphorus method. Methamphetamine produced by Mexican criminal groups in high volume laboratories in Mexico and California and, to a lesser extent, in Oregon and southwestern states, is readily available in the state as well. Mexican criminal groups are the dominant transporters and wholesale distributors of methamphetamine in Washington. Caucasian criminal groups and local independent dealers—primarily Caucasian and Mexican—are the principal retail distributors of methamphetamine in the state.

Abuse

Methamphetamine abuse is widespread and increasing in Washington. In FY2002 law enforcement officials in Aberdeen, Blaine, Burlington, Hoquiam, Long Beach, Montesano, Pasco, Raymond, South Bend, and Westport reported that methamphetamine abuse was increasing significantly in their jurisdictions and that Caucasians were the primary abusers. Moreover, 45 of the 53 state and local law enforcement agencies that responded to the National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC) National Drug Threat Survey 2002 (see text box) reported that rates of methamphetamine abuse were high in their jurisdictions, six reported medium rates of abuse, and two reported low rates of abuse.

Methamphetamine-related treatment admissions in Washington have increased. According to the Washington Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, the number of treatment admissions for methamphetamine abuse to publicly funded facilities increased overall from 980 in SFY1994 to 5,700 in SFY2001. Admission rates per 100,000 population increased from 18 to 95.4 over the same period. The number of treatment

NDIC National Drug Threat Survey

The National Drug Threat Survey (NDTS) 2002 was administered by NDIC to a representative sample of state and local law enforcement agencies throughout the United States to assess the availability, abuse, and overall threat posed by all major drugs. NDIC received 2,906 survey responses from law enforcement agencies, an overall response rate of 80 percent. Survey respondents were asked to rank the greatest drug threats in their areas and to indicate the level of availability for each major drug type. They also were asked to provide information on specific groups involved in the transportation and distribution of illicit drugs. Responding agencies also provided narrative assessments of various aspects of the overall drug situation and the threat posed by specific drugs in their areas. Survey responses are used by NDIC to substantiate and augment drug threat information obtained from other federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies.

admissions for methamphetamine abuse was higher than any other drug in SFY2000, according to state substance abuse data. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS), the number of methamphetamine-related treatment admissions to publicly funded facilities in Washington increased from 4,146 in 1997 to 8,155 in 2001. (Disparities between state and federal reporting regarding admissions to substance abuse treatment programs are likely a result of differences in data collection and reporting methodologies.)

The number of emergency department (ED) mentions for methamphetamine abuse in the Seattle metropolitan area decreased from 1997 through 2001. According to Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) data, the number of methamphetamine-related ED mentions decreased from 479 in 1997 to 394 in 2001. The Seattle metropolitan area ranked fifth in the number of methamphetamine-related ED mentions per 100,000 population among the 21 metropolitan areas reporting to DAWN in 2001.

Methamphetamine-related deaths in the Seattle metropolitan area increased significantly from 1996 through 1999, then decreased in 2000.

Availability

Methamphetamine is readily available throughout Washington. Most Washington respondents (45 of 52) to the NDTs 2002 reported that methamphetamine was readily available in their jurisdictions. Moreover, the DEA Seattle Division reported that the drug was readily available throughout Washington in FY2001, and the DEA Yakima Resident Office reported that methamphetamine was readily available in ounce to multi-pound quantities in the Yakima Valley area during the same year. Methamphetamine produced in Washington as well as Mexico, Oregon, California, and southwestern states is available throughout the state; however, no particular type dominates. Crystal methamphetamine, a highly

According to DAWN mortality data, methamphetamine was a factor in a total of 11 deaths from 1996 through 1998. Thereafter, methamphetamine was cited in 30 drug-related deaths in the Seattle metropolitan area in 1999 and 15 drug-related deaths in 2000.

Methamphetamine was abused by a significant percentage of adult male arrestees in Spokane and Seattle in 2000. According to the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) Program, in 2001, 20.1 percent of adult male arrestees tested positive for methamphetamine use in Spokane, and 11.5 percent tested positive in Seattle.

In 1999 the percentage of Seattle high school students who reported having abused methamphetamine at least once in their lifetime was statistically comparable to the national percentage. According to responses to the 1999 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), 6.7 percent of high school students in Seattle reported that they had used methamphetamine at least once in their lifetime compared with 9.1 percent nationally. In addition, 6.9 percent of female high school students in Seattle reported using the drug at least once in their lifetime. This was slightly higher than the percentage of males (6.0%).

pure form of the drug known as ice, is also available, primarily in the Seattle-Tacoma area.

Seizure data also indicate that methamphetamine is readily available in Washington. According to respondents to the 2002 Northwest High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Threat Assessment Survey, state and local law enforcement officials in Washington seized 60 kilograms of methamphetamine in FY1998, 145 kilograms in FY1999, 282 kilograms in FY2000, and 114 kilograms in FY2001. In addition, federal law enforcement officials in Washington seized 46 kilograms of methamphetamine in 1998, 48 kilograms in 1999, 58 kilograms in 2000, and 46

kilograms in 2001, according to the Federal-wide Drug Seizure System (FDSS).

The percentage of federal drug sentences that were methamphetamine-related in Washington was higher than the national percentage in FY2001. According to USSC data, 31.5 percent of federal drug sentences in Washington in FY2001 were methamphetamine-related compared with 14.2 percent nationally. In addition, the number of methamphetamine-related federal sentences increased each year from 34 in FY1997 to 106 in FY2001.

In 2002 the price of methamphetamine in Washington varied depending on the area and level of distribution. The DEA Seattle Division reported that wholesale quantities of methamphetamine sold for \$5,500 to \$5,700 per pound in Blaine, \$3,000 to \$5,000 in Seattle, \$4,000 to \$9,000 in Spokane, \$3,000 to \$10,000 in Tacoma, and \$3,500 to \$10,000 in Yakima. Retail prices of methamphetamine also varied throughout the

state. Methamphetamine sold for \$500 to \$800 per ounce in Blaine, \$350 to \$800 in Seattle, \$550 to \$750 in Spokane, \$420 to \$700 in Tacoma, and \$300 to \$600 in Yakima in 2002. The drug sold for \$30 to \$80 per gram in Blaine, \$20 to \$60 in Seattle, \$40 in Spokane, \$75 to \$80 in Tacoma, and \$40 in Yakima in 2002.

The purity of methamphetamine varies in Washington. Law enforcement agencies in Washington reported that the purity of methamphetamine ranged from as low as 14 to as high as 46 percent during 2002. According to the Northwest HIDTA, in 2002 the average purity of methamphetamine produced in Washington using the Birch reduction method was 95 percent compared with an average purity of 75 percent using the hydriodic acid/red phosphorus method. In Seattle the purity of retail quantities of crystal methamphetamine varied during 2002 but was reported as high as 99 percent.

Violence

Methamphetamine-related violence is a significant problem in Washington. The production, distribution, and abuse of methamphetamine are more commonly associated with violent crime than any other drug, and law enforcement agencies throughout the state report that violence associated with methamphetamine production, distribution, and abuse poses a significant threat to their jurisdictions. Moreover, distributors throughout the state have committed violent crimes to protect their operations.

Methamphetamine Laboratory Violence

In June 2002 King County Sheriff's Department officers arrested two individuals in Maple Valley for producing methamphetamine. Another individual arrived at the scene after the arrests were made and began shooting at the law enforcement officers, wounding three detectives. The individual was fatally shot by law enforcement officers during the incident.

Methamphetamine is a powerful stimulant that affects the central nervous system and can induce anxiety, insomnia, paranoia, hallucinations, mood swings, delusions, and violent behavior, particularly during the "tweaking" stage of abuse.

Tweaking

As the euphoric effects of methamphetamine diminish, abusers enter the tweaking stage in which they are prone to violence, delusions, paranoia, and feelings of emptiness and dysphoria. During the tweaking stage the user often has not slept in days and consequently is extremely irritable. The "tweaker" also craves more methamphetamine, which results in frustration and contributes to anxiety and restlessness. In this stage, the methamphetamine user does not need a confrontation or provocation to become violent. Case histories indicate that tweakers have reacted negatively at the mere sight of a police uniform.

Methamphetamine abusers have committed violent crimes to obtain money to purchase the drug.

OMGs known to distribute methamphetamine have committed violent crimes in Washington. In June 2000 a member of the Iron Horsemen OMG fatally shot a Bandidos OMG member in Yakima in a drug dispute. According to law enforcement officials in Yakima, both OMGs were involved in methamphetamine distribution. In Lakewood the Bandidos, Gypsy Jokers, and Iron Horsemen OMGs have distributed methamphetamine and committed violent crimes, including assault and homicide. The Hells Angels and Bandidos OMGs have been involved in methamphetamine distribution and violent crimes in Spokane.

Numerous street gangs that distribute methamphetamine also have committed violent crimes in Washington. According to responses to the NDIC National Gang Survey 2000, street gangs involved in methamphetamine distribution in Washington include the Varrio Sureño Locos and Puro Mexicano Locos in Bellevue, Young Krew

Piru in Longview, Insane Gangster Crips in Spokane, Maniac Gangster Crips in Thurston County, Norteños and Sureños in Vancouver, West Side 18th Street in Walla Walla, and West Side Hustlaz in Yakima. Violent crimes committed by these gangs include assault, drive-by shooting, home invasion, homicide, and robbery.

Wenatchee Residents Sentenced in Teen Overdose Case

A Chelan County Superior Court judge sentenced two Wenatchee residents—one in March 2002 to 8 years and 6 months in prison and another in May 2002 to 10 years in prison—for delivery of a controlled substance to a person under 18 years of age. The two individuals supplied methamphetamine to a 16-year-old girl from Wenatchee who died from a methamphetamine overdose in October 2001.

Source: Columbia River Drug Task Force.

Production

Methamphetamine production is increasing throughout Washington. According to the Northwest HIDTA, federal, state, and local law enforcement officials in Washington seized 308 methamphetamine laboratories in 1998, 525 in 1999, 831 in 2000, and 939 in 2001. Moreover, according to the EPIC Clandestine Laboratory Database, 1,043 methamphetamine-related events were reported for Washington in 2002. A methamphetamine-related event includes laboratories and equipment seized and dumpsites encountered. The state ranked third behind California (1,481) and Missouri (1,094).

Methamphetamine laboratories in Washington often are established in apartments, garages, motel rooms, and private residences as well as in mobile conveyances including stolen vehicles. Methamphetamine laboratories increasingly are being established on public lands such as national parks and national and state forests. The number

of methamphetamine laboratory sites discovered by State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) officers on state trust lands increased from 10 in 1998 to 36 in 2000. In April 2001 the DNR in conjunction with the Washington State Patrol discovered a methamphetamine laboratory in the Tahoma State Forest near Mount Rainier National Park. The DNR reported that this methamphetamine production site was the second largest ever found on state trust lands—the laboratory equipment, precursor chemicals, and toxic waste were spread over 2 acres. State officials closed the 26,000-acre preserve for 6 weeks for cleanup operations.

Caucasian criminal groups and local independent operators—often using the Birch reduction method—are the primary producers of methamphetamine in Washington. Mexican criminal groups and local independent operators produce methamphetamine using the hydriodic acid/red

Methamphetamine Production Methods

Ephedrine/Pseudoephedrine Reduction:

- **Hydriodic acid/red phosphorus.** The principal chemicals are ephedrine or pseudoephedrine, hydriodic acid, and red phosphorus. This method can yield multipound quantities of high quality d-methamphetamine and often is associated with Mexican drug trafficking organizations.
- **Iodine/red phosphorus.** The principal chemicals are ephedrine or pseudoephedrine, iodine, and red phosphorus. The required hydriodic acid in this variation of the hydriodic acid/red phosphorus method is produced by the reaction of iodine in water with red phosphorus. This method yields high quality d-methamphetamine. Another iodine/red phosphorus method, limited to small production batches, is called the cold cook method because the chemicals, instead of being heated, are placed in a hot environment such as in direct sunlight.
- **Iodine/hypophosphorous acid.** The principal chemicals are ephedrine or pseudoephedrine, iodine, and hypophosphorous acid. The required hydriodic acid in this variation of the hydriodic acid/red phosphorus method is produced by the reaction of iodine in water with hypophosphorous acid. Known as the Hypo method, this method yields lower quality d-methamphetamine. Hypophosphorous acid is more prone than red phosphorus to cause a fire and can produce deadly phosphine gas.
- **Birch.** The principal chemicals are ephedrine or pseudoephedrine, anhydrous ammonia, and sodium or lithium metal. Also known as the Nazi method, this method typically yields ounce quantities of high quality d-methamphetamine and often is used by independent dealers and producers.

Phenyl-2-propanone:

- **P2P.** The principal chemicals are phenyl-2-propanone, aluminum, methylamine, and mercuric acid. This method yields lower quality dl-methamphetamine and traditionally has been associated with OMGs.

phosphorus method. They also use the iodine/red phosphorus method, but to a lesser extent.

Most of the laboratories seized in Washington have been small, capable of producing only 1 to 2 ounces of methamphetamine per cook. However, larger laboratories capable of producing pound quantities of methamphetamine also have been seized in the state, particularly in the Yakima and Tri-City areas. For instance, larger methamphetamine laboratories—operated by Mexican criminal groups and capable of producing multipound quantities of methamphetamine—have been seized in the Tri-City area. In May 2001 law enforcement officials in Whitstran (in Benton County near the Tri-City area) seized and dismantled a methamphetamine laboratory and seized 34 pounds of the drug packaged in 34 one-gallon plastic storage bags. This methamphetamine laboratory seizure was the largest ever in Benton

County and resulted from the concerted effort of several law enforcement agencies. The Benton County Sheriff's Department, Tri-City Metro Drug Task Force (Pasco), Law Enforcement Against Drugs Task Force (Zillah), and Washington State Patrol's Incident Response Team all participated in the investigation of the laboratory site and resulting seizure.

Methamphetamine production poses serious safety and environmental concerns to Washington. The production process creates toxic and hazardous waste that endangers law enforcement personnel, emergency response teams, children (particularly those who reside in the homes of methamphetamine producers), and the environment.

Methamphetamine production often occurs in Washington homes, posing a direct threat to the safety of children and adults. Because of the presence of caustic and flammable chemicals used in

methamphetamine production, methamphetamine laboratories in homes typically result in deplorable conditions that render the home unsafe for its residents. In 2001 the state's Child Protective Services took into custody 228 children who were living in residences with methamphetamine laboratories. The average age of the children was 8 years.

Methamphetamine laboratories may contain a variety of highly flammable chemicals and produce 5 to 7 pounds of toxic waste for every pound of methamphetamine. Most of the toxic residue from methamphetamine production is dumped in the local area, often contaminating groundwater and killing vegetation. Cleanup of seized laboratories is costly and difficult because of the hazardous chemicals used in production, and chemical contamination often is detected at laboratory sites 2 years after methamphetamine production has ended.

The number of methamphetamine-related cleanup operations has increased in Washington. The Washington State Department of Ecology (DOE) reported cleanup operations at 789 laboratories and dumpsites in 1999, 1,449 in 2000, 1,886 in 2001, and 1,568 in 2002. Nearly one-half of the cleanup operations in 2001 were in three counties in western Washington: Pierce (407), King (223), and Thurston (111). Pierce County had the most cleanup operations of any county in the state during 2002.

Many chemicals can be purchased legally in Washington, and precursors frequently are stolen. Lithium often is extracted from batteries sold at many retail stores, and iodine often is purchased at local feed stores. Anhydrous ammonia is purchased by laboratory operators from agricultural supply stores and marinas. Thefts of anhydrous ammonia also have occurred from farms and farm

supply stores across the state, especially in eastern Washington. The Walla Walla County Sheriff's Department reported at least 25 thefts of anhydrous ammonia during 2000. Ephedrine or pseudoephedrine is commonly extracted from cold pills by laboratory operators. In July 2001 the Washington State Legislature implemented a law restricting the sale of products containing ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, or phenylpropanolamine. However, illegal sales continue. In December 2001 two Tri-City convenience store owners—one in Kennewick and another in Richland—were cited for the illegal sale of a product containing ephedrine. The store owners allegedly sold bulk quantities of cold medicine containing the drug. Tri-City Metro Drug Task Force officers purchased a total of 60 bottles of decongestant from the stores in a series of undercover transactions. Precursor and other essential chemicals also are smuggled into the state from Canada and other states.

Anhydrous Ammonia

Anhydrous ammonia commonly is used by farmers as a fertilizer. Anhydrous ammonia typically is stored as a pressurized liquid in large tanks on farm fields. Methamphetamine laboratory operators often divert the chemical from these tanks by using garden or vacuum hoses to siphon the chemical into open containers or empty propane cylinders. Anhydrous ammonia also is stolen from agricultural supply stores. Thefts from farms and agricultural supply stores have become so frequent in some agricultural areas of the country that security measures increasingly are being employed, including alarms, surveillance cameras, barricades, fencing, motion detectors, and special locks on tank valves.

Transportation

Methamphetamine is transported into Washington primarily from California. Methamphetamine also is transported into the state from

Mexico, Oregon, and southwestern states, but to a lesser extent. Mexican criminal groups are the primary transporters of methamphetamine into

the state. Caucasian criminal groups, OMGs, and Caucasian and Mexican local independent dealers also transport methamphetamine into and throughout the state.

Methamphetamine typically is transported into Washington in private vehicles on I-5 and I-82, as well as US 97. Methamphetamine also is transported into the state on passenger trains, commercial vehicles, commercial and private maritime vessels, commercial and private aircraft, buses, and via package delivery services. During a routine traffic stop in April 2000, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) seized more than 3 pounds of methamphetamine concealed inside a false compartment of a private vehicle driven by a Mexican national en route to Tacoma on I-5. In February 2000 CHP officers seized nearly 11 pounds of the drug from a Caucasian male in a rental vehicle en route to Washington on I-505—a north-south route that connects I-5 and I-80. The drug was sealed in plastic, covered with baby wipes, and concealed in a backpack. In addition, in January 2000 state and local law enforcement officials in Seattle under Operation Jetway seized more than 5 pounds of methamphetamine from a package mailed from Los Angeles and destined for Everett.

Methamphetamine also is transported from Washington to other states and Canada. Law enforcement officials in Washington and other states report that multipound quantities of the drug are transported from Yakima and, to a lesser extent, Spokane and the Tri-City area to Idaho, Illinois, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota,

Distribution

Mexican criminal groups are the primary wholesale distributors of methamphetamine produced outside the state. Mexican independent dealers also distribute wholesale quantities of methamphetamine in the state, but to a lesser extent. Law enforcement officials in Spokane and Yakima report that Mexican independent dealers are the primary methamphetamine wholesale

In the spring of 2002, United States Customs Service (USCS) agents seized 136 pounds of pharmaceutical grade ephedrine from a white male subject who kayaked to Gooseberry Point in Birch Bay. The subject traveled by ferry to San Juan Island, then kayaked from the Island to the Point where he met up with a female who had driven a van to the beach pickup point. Upon interviewing the subjects, the agents were told that they had made three trips like this with similar amounts of ephedrine. The male subject also stated that he had taken five loads of cocaine into Canada the same way. He also advised that he had smuggled pill presses into Canada by kayak.

Source: USCS.

Wyoming, and Canada. Methamphetamine most commonly is transported from Washington in private vehicles along I-5 and I-90 and US 2 and US 97. In April 2002 the South Dakota Highway Patrol seized 18 pounds of methamphetamine and arrested four Mexican nationals who were transporting the drug from Pasco to Illinois via I-90. The methamphetamine was concealed in hidden compartments in each of the rear doors of the vehicle. In September 2000 the Montana Highway Patrol seized more than 1.5 pounds of methamphetamine and arrested an illegal Mexican national male who was transporting the drug from Washington to Bismarck, North Dakota, on I-90. The methamphetamine was concealed in the speakers of the automobile.

distributors in those cities. Caucasian criminal groups and local independent dealers are the primary wholesale distributors of methamphetamine produced in Washington.

Caucasian criminal groups as well as Caucasian and Mexican local independent dealers are the principal retail distributors of methamphetamine in

Washington. Street gangs, primarily African American and Mexican, and OMGs also distribute the drug at the retail level. Law enforcement officials responding to the NDIC National Gang Survey 2000 reported that numerous street gangs distribute methamphetamine at the retail level in the state. These gangs include Varrio Sureño Locos and Puro Mexicano Locos in Bellevue, Young Krew Piru in Longview, Insane Gangster Crips in Spokane, Maniac Gangster Crips in Thurston County, Norteños and Sureños in Vancouver, West Side 18th Street in Walla Walla,

and West Side Hustlaz in Yakima. The Bandidos, Gypsy Jokers, and Iron Horsemen OMGs in Lakewood and the Bandidos and Hells Angels OMGs in Spokane also serve as retail level methamphetamine distributors.

Methamphetamine packaging varies depending on the amount distributed. Wholesale quantities of methamphetamine are often packaged in large plastic storage bags for distribution, while retail quantities often are packaged in small plastic bags, cellophane, and wallet-size tins.

Marijuana

Marijuana is the most readily available and widely abused illicit drug in Washington. Locally produced marijuana is the predominant type available throughout the state. Marijuana produced in Canada and Mexico also is available in the state. Canada-produced marijuana, commonly known as BC Bud, is more readily available in Washington than Mexico-produced marijuana. Cannabis cultivation occurs throughout the state and may be increasing. Caucasian criminal groups and local independent producers are the primary marijuana producers in Washington. They also dominate the wholesale distribution of the marijuana they produce. Canada-based Asian criminal groups, primarily Vietnamese, and OMGs, primarily Hells Angels, as well as Caucasian criminal groups and

local independent dealers—both Canada- and Washington-based—smuggle Canada-produced marijuana into Washington for wholesale and retail distribution. Mexican criminal groups are the dominant transporters and wholesale distributors of Mexico-produced marijuana in Washington. Criminal groups and local independent dealers, both primarily Caucasian, are the principal retail distributors of marijuana produced in Canada and Washington. Criminal groups, local independent dealers, and street gangs, all of which are primarily Mexican, are the principal retail distributors of Mexico-produced marijuana in Washington. Various other criminal groups, local independent dealers, and street gangs also distribute marijuana at the retail level.

Abuse

The level of marijuana abuse in Washington is high according to law enforcement agencies throughout the state. Most Washington respondents to the NDTs 2002 (46 of 53) reported high rates of marijuana abuse in their jurisdictions, and seven reported medium rates of abuse.

Marijuana-related treatment admissions in Washington have increased. The number of treatment admissions for marijuana abuse to publicly funded facilities in the state increased from SFY1994 (3,143) to SFY2001 (4,647), according

to the Washington Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse. Moreover, admission rates per 100,000 population increased from 59 to 77.8 during the same period. The number of treatment admissions for marijuana abuse in Washington exceeded the number for all illicit drugs except methamphetamine in SFY2000. National reporting also reveals rising treatment admissions for marijuana abuse: according to TEDS data, the number of marijuana-related treatment admissions to publicly funded facilities in Washington increased from 7,437 in 1997 to 9,811 in 2001.

(Disparities between state and federal reporting regarding admissions to substance abuse treatment programs are likely a result of differences in data collection and reporting methodologies.)

According to DAWN data, marijuana-related ED mentions decreased in the Seattle metropolitan area from 1,663 in 1997 to 808 in 1999, then increased to 1,596 in 2001. The Seattle metropolitan area ranked ninth in the number of marijuana-related ED mentions per 100,000 population among the 21 metropolitan areas reporting to DAWN in 2001.

Marijuana was commonly abused by adult male arrestees in Seattle and Spokane in 2001. According to ADAM data, 37.9 percent of adult

male arrestees in Seattle tested positive for marijuana use in 2001, and 44.9 percent tested positive in Spokane.

In 1999 the percentage of high school students in Seattle who abused marijuana at least once in their lifetime was comparable to the percentage nationwide. According to YRBS data, 48.6 percent of Seattle high school students reported that they had used marijuana at least once during their lifetime compared with 47.2 percent nationally. Similarly, 26.2 percent of Seattle high school students reported having abused marijuana at least once in the 30 days prior to the survey compared with 26.7 percent nationally.

Availability

Marijuana is readily available in Washington. Marijuana produced in Washington is the predominant type available throughout the state. Marijuana produced in Canada and Mexico is also available; however, marijuana produced in Canada is more prevalent than that produced in Mexico.

Law enforcement seizure data reflect the ready availability of marijuana in Washington. According to respondents to the 2002 Northwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey, state and local law enforcement officials in Washington seized 2,177 kilograms of marijuana in FY1998, 1,129 kilograms in FY1999, 7,693 kilograms in FY2000, and 5,275 in FY2001. According to FDSS data, federal law enforcement officials in Washington seized 1,193 kilograms of marijuana in 1998, 1,477 kilograms in 1999, 3,304 kilograms in 2000, and 4,164 kilograms in 2001.

The percentage of federal drug sentences in Washington that were marijuana-related was slightly higher than the national percentage in FY2001. According to USSC data, 34.8 percent of federal drug sentences in Washington were marijuana-related in FY2002 compared with 32.8 percent nationally. Further, the number of

Commercial-Grade Marijuana, Sinsemilla, and BC Bud

Commercial-grade marijuana typically is produced in Mexico and is less potent than other types of marijuana. It often contains the leaves and stalks of the cannabis plant, which do not have significant levels of THC (the primary psychoactive chemical in marijuana). Commercial-grade marijuana typically has an average THC content of 5 percent.

Sinsemilla, in Spanish, means without seed. It is produced by growing the female cannabis plant in an environment without the presence of a male cannabis plant. This prevents pollination, resulting in an increase in THC levels and bud growth. DEA reports that the average THC content of sinsemilla grown indoors is approximately 8 to 10 percent. The average marijuana yield for mature sinsemilla is approximately one-half pound per plant compared with 1 pound per plant for commercial-grade marijuana.

BC Bud, which originally referred to sinsemilla grown in British Columbia, has become synonymous with any high-grade marijuana from Canada. The THC content of BC Bud ranges from 15 to 30 percent.

marijuana-related federal sentences in Washington increased dramatically from 32 in FY1997 to 117 in FY2001.

Marijuana prices vary in Washington based on where the drug was produced, the quantity involved, and the place of distribution. Marijuana produced in Canada—commonly known as BC Bud—typically has a higher THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) content than locally grown sinsemilla or Mexico-produced commercial-grade marijuana and, therefore, is sold for higher prices. According

to the DEA Seattle Division, in FY2002 wholesale quantities of marijuana produced in Canada sold for \$2,500 to \$5,000 per pound, domestic sinsemilla sold for \$1,500 to \$5,000 per pound, and Mexico-produced marijuana sold for \$250 to \$2,000 per pound. In FY2002 retail quantities of domestic sinsemilla sold for approximately \$300 per ounce, BC Bud sold for \$125 to \$300 per ounce, and Mexico-produced marijuana sold for approximately \$50 per ounce.

Violence

Violence generally is not associated with marijuana abuse; however, violence has been linked to the production and distribution of marijuana in Washington. Law enforcement officials report that cannabis growers sometimes use firearms, guard dogs, pipe bombs, and trip wires to secure their production sites. According to responses to the NDIC National Gang Survey 2000, numerous street gangs that distribute marijuana commit violent crimes such as assault, carjacking, drive-by shooting, home invasion, and homicide, some of

which are likely related to their marijuana distribution operations. These gangs include the Highrollers, Rolling 60's Crips, Puro Mexicano Locos, and Varrio Sureño Locos in Bellevue; Tiny Rascal Gang in Bellingham; Young Crew Piru in Longview; Black Gangster Disciples in Seattle; Little Valley Locals in Sunnyside; Hustlers Crip Gang, Hilltop Crips, and Lake City Crips in Lakewood; Hilltop Crips in Tacoma; Norteños and Sureños in Vancouver; West Side 18th Street in Walla Walla; and Chicanos Por Vida in Yakima.

Production

Marijuana produced in Washington, Canada, and Mexico is available throughout the state. Cannabis is cultivated in Washington at indoor and outdoor grow sites. All Washington respondents to the NDTs 2002 reported that cannabis was grown both indoors and outdoors in their jurisdictions. Moreover, cannabis was seized from cultivation sites in 32 of Washington's 39 counties in 2001, according to the Western States Information Network (WSIN).

A large percentage of the cannabis cultivation in Washington occurs in the western portion of the state. Cannabis cultivators often use public lands such as national forests and parks, many of which are in the western part of the state, as cannabis cultivation sites because of their remote locations.

Eradication data indicate that cannabis cultivation in Washington is increasing. According to the DEA Domestic Cannabis Eradication/Suppression Program (DCE/SP), the number of cannabis plants eradicated by law enforcement officials in Washington increased from 13,152 in 1999, to 26,851 in 2000, and to 49,246 in 2001. During that period the number of outdoor plots eradicated increased from 58 in 1999, to 91 in 2000, and to 155 in 2001. The number of indoor grow operations seized by law enforcement officials in Washington increased from 93 to 140 to 216 during the same period. In 2001 there were 23,467 outdoor-cultivated plants eradicated compared with 25,779 indoor-cultivated plants.

Caucasian criminal groups and local independent Caucasian producers are the primary cannabis cultivators in Washington. Mexican criminal

groups and local independent Mexican producers also cultivate cannabis in Washington, but to a lesser extent.

Transportation

Marijuana produced in Canada frequently is smuggled into Washington. Canada-based Asian criminal groups, primarily Vietnamese, and OMGs, primarily Hells Angels, as well as Caucasian criminal groups and local independent dealers based in Canada and Washington transport significant quantities of Canada-produced marijuana into the state. Canada-based Indian and Pakistani criminal groups also smuggle wholesale quantities of marijuana into the state, but to a lesser extent. Law enforcement officials in Bellingham, Blaine, Everson, Lynden, Mount Vernon, and Sumas—cities located near the U.S.–Canada border—report that the smuggling of Canada-produced marijuana into and through their jurisdiction is a significant problem. In FY2000 the Northern Border Task Force in Blaine seized 4,400 pounds of marijuana, over twice the amount seized by the task force in FY1999. The USBP Spokane and Blaine sectors accounted for 4,969 of 7,218 pounds of marijuana seized at the U.S.–Canada border in FY2000. Marijuana produced in Canada also is smuggled through Washington, primarily Seattle, en route to drug markets in surrounding states.

Transporters use a variety of means to smuggle Canada-produced marijuana into Washington. They commonly smuggle Canada-produced marijuana into the state by private vehicle on I-5, on National Forest System roads, and on logging roads. Aircraft, all-terrain vehicles, boats, commercial buses, cold drops, commercial trucks, package delivery services, horses, kayaks, couriers with backpacks, and snowmobiles also are used. In January 2002 USCS agents at the Blaine POE seized more than 1,400 pounds of Canada-produced marijuana from a beer truck. The drug was concealed in 34 hockey equipment bags dispersed among the beer. In May 2001 law enforcement officials seized nearly 41 pounds of Canada-produced marijuana

that was being smuggled by boat from Canada to Deception Pass State Park in Washington. The high-potency marijuana—packaged in half-pound quantities in 80 plastic bags and concealed in a hockey equipment bag—was to be exchanged for cocaine. In February 2001 law enforcement officials seized nearly 300 pounds of Canada-produced marijuana and more than \$300,000 and arrested two Vietnamese nationals and a Canadian citizen at the Swinomish Tribal Casino in Skagit County. The Canadian, a tour bus driver, was recruited by a Vietnamese criminal group to smuggle the marijuana and money into Washington from Canada. The Canada-produced marijuana was concealed in the spare tire compartment of the bus. In January 2001 U.S. and Canadian law enforcement officials seized nearly 300 pounds of Canada-produced marijuana and more than \$400,000 in currency, and arrested 13 individuals who had smuggled the drug by helicopter from Canada to a remote landing site near Mount Baker, Washington. One individual arrested was a member of the Hells Angels OMG.

BC Bud Exchanged for Cocaine

Law enforcement agencies situated near the U.S.–Canada border area report that Canadian traffickers exchange BC Bud for cocaine. These transactions occur on both sides of the border. DEA reporting indicates that the exchange ratio is about 3 units of marijuana to 1 unit of cocaine.

Marijuana produced in Mexico also is transported into Washington, but to a lesser extent than marijuana produced in Canada. Mexican criminal groups—often based in the Seattle-Tacoma area—are the dominant transporters of Mexico-produced marijuana into Washington. These criminal groups often transport Mexico-produced marijuana into

the state by private vehicle on I-5 and US 97 and US 101. Mexican criminal groups also use commercial and private aircraft, boats, buses, trains, and

package delivery services to transport Mexico-produced marijuana into the state, but to a lesser extent.

Distribution

Various criminal groups, local independent dealers, and OMGs conduct wholesale marijuana distribution in Washington. Caucasian criminal groups and local independent Caucasian dealers are the primary wholesale distributors of Canada-produced marijuana. These criminal groups and dealers typically are supplied by Canada-based Asian criminal groups, primarily Vietnamese, and the Hells Angels OMG. Caucasian criminal groups and local independent Caucasian dealers also are the primary wholesale distributors of marijuana produced in Washington. Mexican criminal groups and local independent Mexican dealers are the principal wholesale distributors of the Mexico-produced marijuana available in the state. Caucasian criminal groups and local independent Caucasian dealers also distribute wholesale quantities of Mexico-produced marijuana, but to a lesser extent.

Retail level marijuana distribution in Washington is conducted by various criminal groups,

local independent dealers, and street gangs. Caucasian criminal groups and local independent dealers are the primary retail distributors of marijuana produced in Washington and Canada. Street gangs and African American criminal groups also distribute retail quantities of marijuana produced in the state and in Canada. Asian criminal groups also distribute retail quantities of Canada-produced marijuana, but to a limited extent. Mexican criminal groups, local independent dealers, and street gangs are the principal retail distributors of Mexico-produced marijuana.

Marijuana packaging varies depending on the amount distributed. Marijuana produced in Canada typically is packaged in 1-pound quantities in large plastic storage bags. The USBP Blaine Sector reports that these packages frequently have grades or ratings on them such as A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, etc., indicating the quality of the drug. Retail quantities of all types of marijuana commonly are packaged in plastic sandwich bags.

Cocaine

Cocaine also is a significant threat to Washington. Powdered cocaine is readily available throughout Washington. Abuse of the drug is common, and powdered cocaine is abused more frequently than crack cocaine. Crack cocaine is generally not available outside the major metropolitan areas of Seattle, Spokane, and Tacoma. Mexican criminal groups are the predominant transporters and wholesale distributors of powdered cocaine in the

state. These groups transport wholesale quantities of powdered cocaine from Mexico and California into and throughout Washington. Powdered cocaine is transported from and through Washington, primarily Seattle, to drug markets in other states and Canada. Criminal groups, local independent dealers, and street gangs, all of which are primarily Mexican, are the principal retail powdered cocaine distributors in Washington.

Abuse

Cocaine abuse is common in Washington. Powdered cocaine is abused more frequently than

crack cocaine. Nine of 52 Washington respondents to the NDTs 2002 reported high rates of

powdered cocaine abuse in their jurisdictions, while 30 reported medium rates of abuse, and 13 reported low rates of abuse. In comparison, 12 of 47 law enforcement agencies reported that rates of crack cocaine abuse were high in their jurisdictions, 17 reported medium rates of abuse, and 18 reported low rates of abuse.

Cocaine-related treatment admissions in Washington are exhibiting a slight downward trend. According to Washington Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse data, the number of treatment admissions for cocaine abuse to publicly funded facilities in the state fluctuated from SFY1994 (3,046) through SFY1999 (3,854), then decreased to 3,779 in SFY2000 and 3,575 in SFY2001. According to TEDS data, the number of cocaine-related treatment admissions to publicly funded facilities in Washington increased from 4,695 in 1997 to 5,406 in 1999, then decreased to 4,531 in 2001. (Disparities between state and federal reporting regarding admissions to substance abuse treatment programs are likely a result of differences in data collection and reporting methodologies.)

Availability

Powdered cocaine is generally available throughout Washington. In response to the NDTs 2002, 26 of 52 Washington respondents reported that powdered cocaine was readily available in their jurisdictions. Crack cocaine is readily available in larger urban areas such as Seattle, Spokane, and Tacoma.

The amount of cocaine seized in Washington decreased from 1998 to 2000, then increased significantly in 2001 due in large part to a more than 2,500-kilogram seizure. (See text box on page 18.) According to the 2002 Northwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey, state and local law enforcement officials in Washington seized 230 kilograms of cocaine in 1998, 117 kilograms in 1999, 93 kilograms in 2000, and 2,671 kilograms in 2001. Federal seizure reporting follows this trend. According

to FDSS data, federal law enforcement officials in Washington seized 152 kilograms of cocaine in 1998, 108 kilograms in 1999, 58 kilograms in 2000, and 174 kilograms in 2001.

Although cocaine-related treatment admissions in the state appear to be decreasing, cocaine-related ED mentions in the Seattle metropolitan area have increased. According to DAWN data, the number of cocaine-related ED mentions in the Seattle metropolitan area increased from 2,850 in 1997 to 3,410 in 2001. The Seattle metropolitan area ranked eighth in the number of cocaine-related ED mentions per 100,000 population among the 21 metropolitan areas reporting to DAWN in 2001.

Cocaine-related deaths in the Seattle metropolitan area increased over the past several years. According to DAWN mortality data, the number of cocaine-related deaths decreased from 81 in 1996 to 74 in 1997. Thereafter, cocaine-related deaths increased each year to 104 in 2000. Of the cocaine-related deaths in 2000, 31 were cocaine-induced (overdoses).

Cocaine was commonly abused by adult male arrestees in Seattle and Spokane in 2001. According to ADAM data, 32.0 percent of adult male arrestees in Seattle tested positive for cocaine use in 2001, and 18.5 percent tested positive in Spokane.

According to USSC data, the number of federal drug sentences that were cocaine-related was higher than for any other drug each year from FY1997 through FY2000; however, in FY2001 sentences for marijuana and methamphetamine surpassed cocaine-related sentences. There were 125 cocaine-related federal sentences in FY1997, 70 in FY1998, 73 in FY1999, 84 in FY2000, and 68 in FY2001. In FY2001 the percentage of federal drug sentences in Washington that were cocaine-related (20.3%) was lower than the national percentage (42.5%). Powdered cocaine-related federal sentences in Washington were

more common than crack cocaine-related federal sentences; in FY2001, 14.3 percent (48) of drug-related federal sentences were for powdered cocaine compared with 6.0 percent (20) that were crack-related.

Cocaine prices and purity levels varied throughout Washington in FY2002. According to the DEA Seattle Division, powdered cocaine sold for \$10,000 to \$24,000 in Seattle, \$20,000 to \$22,000 in Spokane, \$19,000 to \$22,000 in Tacoma, and \$16,000 to \$20,000 in Yakima in

FY2002. Retail quantities of powdered cocaine sold for \$520 to \$1,100 per ounce and \$30 to \$60 per gram in Washington in the same year. Crack cocaine sold for \$650 to \$1,000 per ounce in the state in FY2002. Retail quantities of crack sold for \$50 to \$60 per gram in Seattle, \$20 per rock in Spokane, and \$10 to \$20 per bag in Tacoma in the same year. Purity levels of powdered cocaine in Washington ranged from as low as 50 to as high as 85 percent in FY2002, while purity levels of crack ranged from 75 to 96 percent.

Violence

Violent criminal activity in Washington has been linked to cocaine distribution, particularly the distribution of crack cocaine. Numerous street gangs in Washington that distribute powdered cocaine and crack also commit violent crimes such as assault, bank robbery, carjacking, drive-by shooting, home invasion, and homicide, some of which are related to their cocaine distribution operations. According to responses to the NDIC National Gang Survey 2000, these gangs include the Highrollers, Rolling 60's Crips, Varrio Sureño Locos, and Puro Mexicano Locos in Bellevue;

Black Gangster Disciples, Hilltop Crips, Lake City Crips, and Lakewood Hustlers Crips in Lakewood; Maniac Gangster Crips in Olympia; Black Gangster Disciples in Seattle; Black Gangster Disciples, Insane Gangster Crips, Palm & Oak, Palmer Block Crips, Play Boy Gangster Crips, Rolling 20's Crips, 83rd Street Gangster Crips, and 104 Underground in Spokane; Hilltop Crips in Tacoma; West Side 18th Street in Walla Walla; and Little Valley Locos and West Side Hustlaz in Yakima.

Production

Coca is not cultivated nor is cocaine produced in Washington. Cocaine is produced in South America, primarily Colombia. Retail distributors,

however, convert powdered cocaine into crack or recock the crack at or near distribution sites within the state.

Transportation

Mexican criminal groups are the predominant transporters of powdered cocaine into Washington. These groups transport wholesale quantities of powdered cocaine from Mexico and California into and throughout the state. Criminal groups, street gangs, and local independent dealers—African American or Caucasian—as well as

Mexican local independent dealers and OMGs also transport powdered cocaine into and throughout Washington, but to a lesser extent. African American criminal groups, street gangs, and local independent African American dealers are the principal transporters of small amounts of crack cocaine into Washington. Caucasian and Mexican

local independent dealers also transport crack cocaine, but to a lesser extent.

Powdered cocaine generally is transported into Washington in private vehicles via I-5, I-82, and I-90. Powdered cocaine also is transported into the state on passenger trains, commercial and private vessels, commercial and private aircraft, buses, and via package delivery services. In 2000 the Northwest HIDTA reported that a Seattle-based Mexican criminal group transported as much as 30 kilograms of cocaine per month into the state in private vehicles. In addition, in March 2000 Operation Jetway Task Force officers in Portland, Oregon, seized 255 grams of cocaine and \$8,100 in currency and arrested a Caucasian male who had traveled from Stockton, California, to Spokane via passenger rail service. The drugs and currency were concealed in the man's baggage.

Powdered cocaine also is transported from and through Washington, primarily Seattle, to drug markets in other states and Canada. Transportation routes for cocaine transiting Washington include I-5 to Canada and I-90 and US 2, which connect

Washington to Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, and states farther east. In June 2000 the Newark Police Department seized 5 kilograms of cocaine and \$25,000 in currency and arrested an individual traveling in a private vehicle from Seattle to Newark. In April 2000 the Sangamon County Sheriff's Office in Illinois seized 6 kilograms of cocaine from an individual traveling in a rental vehicle en route from Seattle to Detroit. The drugs were wrapped in cellophane, covered in grease, and concealed inside luggage.

Massive Seizure of Cocaine From Canadian Vessel

In February 2001 the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) seized more than 2,500 kilograms of cocaine from a Canada-flagged tuna trawler transiting the Strait of Juan de Fuca off the coast of Washington. The cocaine was concealed in 101 bales, each weighing more than 20 kilograms. The bales were labeled *azucar*, the Spanish word for sugar.

Source: USCG.

Distribution

Mexican criminal groups are the primary wholesale powdered cocaine distributors in Washington. African American and Caucasian criminal groups and local independent dealers also distribute wholesale quantities of powdered cocaine in Washington. Seattle is the major distribution center in the state, and Tacoma, Yakima, and the Tri-City area are principal distribution points. Mexican criminal groups operating in the Yakima and Tri-City areas supply most of the powdered cocaine available in the Spokane area. Crack cocaine typically is not distributed in wholesale quantities within Washington.

Mexican criminal groups, local independent dealers, and street gangs are the principal retail powdered cocaine distributors in Washington. African American criminal groups, local independent dealers, and street gangs are the primary retail crack cocaine distributors in Washington. Retail quantities of powdered and crack cocaine typically are distributed at open-air drug markets in urban areas such as Seattle and Tacoma, and at indoor locations in smaller cities and rural areas. Retail quantities of powdered and crack cocaine often are packaged in plastic or small cellophane bags.

Heroin

Heroin poses a significant problem to Washington, particularly in larger cities such as Seattle, Tacoma, and Yakima. The drug is readily available, and heroin abuse is a significant problem. Violence associated with heroin distribution and abuse is a concern to law enforcement officials. Mexican black tar heroin is the predominant type available

in the state. Mexican criminal groups are the dominant transporters of heroin into and through the state. These groups transport the drug primarily from Mexico and California into Washington and are the primary wholesale heroin distributors in the state. Mexican local independent dealers are the primary retail heroin distributors.

Abuse

Heroin abuse is a significant problem in Washington, particularly in larger cities such as Seattle, Tacoma, and Yakima. According to the Washington Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, the number of treatment admissions for heroin abuse to publicly funded facilities increased each year from 2,083 in SFY1994 to 3,664 in SFY2000, then decreased to 3,172 in SFY2001. Admission rates per 100,000 population also increased each year from 39 to 62.2 in SFY2000, then decreased to 53.1 in SFY2001. According to TEDS data, the number of heroin-related treatment admissions to publicly funded facilities in Washington increased each year from 6,118 in 1997 to 6,889 in 1999, then decreased to 5,965 in 2001. (Disparities between state and federal reporting regarding admissions to substance abuse treatment programs are likely a result of differences in data collection and reporting methodologies.)

In the Seattle metropolitan area, heroin-related ED mentions have decreased over the past several years. The number of heroin-related ED mentions decreased from 2,894 in 1997 to 1,927 in 2001. The Seattle metropolitan area ranked ninth in the number of heroin-related ED mentions per 100,000 population among the 21 metropolitan areas reporting to DAWN in 2001.

The number of deaths in which heroin was a factor in the Seattle metropolitan area also decreased from 150 in 1996 to 118 in 2000, according to DAWN mortality data. In spite of this decrease, heroin was a factor in more drug-related deaths in 2000 than any other illicit drug. Of the heroin-related deaths reported in 2000, 16 were heroin-induced (overdoses).

A significant number of adult male arrestees in Seattle and Spokane abused heroin in 2001. According to ADAM data, 10.3 percent of adult male arrestees tested positive for heroin use in Seattle in 2001, and 8.1 percent tested positive in Spokane.

In 1999 the percentage of Seattle high school students who reported having abused heroin at least once in their lifetime was comparable to the national percentage. According to responses to the 1999 YRBS, 2.8 percent of high school students in Seattle reported that they had used heroin at least once during their lifetime compared with 2.4 percent nationally. In addition, the percentage (3.1%) of female high school students in Seattle who reported that they had used heroin at least once during their lifetime was higher than the percentage (2.1%) of males.

Availability

Heroin is readily available throughout Washington, particularly in Seattle, Tacoma, and

Yakima. Mexican black tar heroin is the predominant type. Approximately 95 percent of heroin

purchased in Seattle in 2000 under the auspices of the DEA Domestic Monitor Program (DMP) was Mexican black tar. Mexican brown powdered, Southeast Asian, and Southwest Asian heroin also are available, but in very limited quantities.

The amount of heroin seized in Washington has fluctuated in recent years. According to respondents to the 2002 Northwest HIDTA Threat Assessment survey, state and local law enforcement officials in Washington seized 39 kilograms of heroin in FY1998, 24 kilograms in FY1999, 30 kilograms in FY2000, and 11 kilograms in FY2001. According to FDSS data, federal law enforcement officials in Washington seized 14 kilograms of heroin in 1998, 27 kilograms in 1999, 14 kilograms in 2000, and 15 kilograms in 2001.

The percentage of federal drug sentences in Washington that were heroin-related was higher than the national percentage in FY2001. According to USSC data, 11.9 percent of federal drug sentences in Washington were heroin-related in

FY2001 compared with 7.2 percent nationally. Heroin-related federal sentences decreased from 20 in FY1997 to 16 in FY1998. Thereafter, heroin-related federal sentences increased to 19 in FY1999, to 26 in FY2000, and then to 40 in FY2001.

The price and purity of Mexican black tar heroin varies throughout the state. According to the DEA Seattle Division, in FY2002 Mexican black tar heroin sold for \$35,000 to \$45,000 per kilogram in Seattle and \$12,000 to \$16,000 per kilogram in Tacoma. During that same time frame, 25 grams or “piece” quantities of heroin sold for \$400 to \$800 in Seattle, \$300 to \$800 in Tacoma, and \$500 to \$700 in Yakima. In FY2002 retail quantities of heroin sold for \$50 to \$100 per gram in Seattle, \$180 per gram in Spokane, and \$80 to \$100 per gram in Tacoma. Purity levels of retail quantities of heroin ranged from as low as 5 to as high as 70 percent in Washington in FY2002.

Violence

Violence has been associated with heroin distribution and abuse in Washington. According to responses to the NDIC National Gang Survey 2000, several street gangs that are involved in heroin distribution also have committed violent crimes such as assault, drive-by shooting, and home invasion, some of which were related to their heroin distribution operations. These gangs include the Norteños and Sureños in Vancouver and the West Side 18th Street in Walla Walla.

In January 2002 a West Seattle resident pleaded guilty to five counts of robbery—four bank robberies and one carjacking involving a woman and her two children during an attempt to flee after a robbery. The perpetrator told law enforcement officials he robbed banks to support his heroin addiction. In October 2001 another Seattle resident pleaded guilty to four bank robberies during the summer of 2001 in the Seattle area. This perpetrator also told law enforcement officials he robbed banks to support his heroin addiction.

Production

Opium is not cultivated nor is heroin produced in Washington. Heroin is produced in four primary source regions: Mexico, South America, Southeast Asia, and Southwest Asia. Most of the

heroin available in Washington is produced in Mexico; however, a very limited amount of Southeast and Southwest Asian heroin is available.

Transportation

Mexican criminal groups are the dominant transporters of wholesale quantities of Mexican black tar and brown powdered heroin into Washington. These groups transport the drug primarily from Mexico and California into the Seattle-Tacoma area and Yakima. Mexican independent dealers also transport heroin into the state from California.

Heroin transporters use a variety of means to transport the drug into the state. Mexican criminal groups primarily transport Mexican black tar and brown powdered heroin to Washington in private vehicles on I-5 and US 97 and 101. They also use

commercial flights, buses, boats, passenger trains, and private courier services.

Heroin transporters use Washington as a transshipment point for heroin destined for other states and Canada. Mexican black tar heroin reportedly has been transported from Seattle and Yakima to drug markets in Alaska, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, Wyoming, and British Columbia, Canada. Shipments of Southeast Asian and Southwest Asian heroin transit through the Puget Sound commercial port facilities to drug markets on the East Coast.

Distribution

Mexican criminal groups are the dominant wholesale distributors of Mexican black tar heroin in Washington. Seattle and Yakima are primary distribution centers for heroin in the state, according to the Northwest HIDTA.

Mexican local independent dealers are the primary retail heroin distributors in Washington. Criminal groups, street gangs, and local independent dealers, primarily African American and

Caucasian, also distribute heroin at the retail level in the state.

Heroin generally is sold at the retail level at open-air drug markets. One such open-air market, known as the Blade, is located in a section of Seattle frequented by tourists, according to the Northwest HIDTA. Retail quantities of heroin often are distributed in small, clear cellophane bags.

Other Dangerous Drugs

With the exception of MDMA, other dangerous drugs (ODDs) present a low but increasing threat to Washington. MDMA is readily available and abused in Washington. ODDs include the

stimulant MDMA, the hallucinogens LSD and psilocybin, and the depressant GHB and its analogs. Various criminal groups transport these ODDs to Washington via private vehicles,

Raves

Throughout the 1990s high energy, all-night dances known as raves, which feature techno-music and flashing laser lights, increased in popularity among teens and young adults. Raves typically occur in either permanent dance clubs or temporary “weekend event” sites set up in abandoned warehouses, open fields, empty buildings, or civic centers. Club drugs are a group of synthetic drugs often sold at raves and dance clubs. MDMA is one of the most popular club drugs. Rave managers often sell water, pacifiers, and glow sticks at rave parties. “Ravers” require water to offset dehydration caused by MDMA abuse, use pacifiers to avoid grinding their teeth—a common side effect of MDMA abuse—and wave glow sticks in front of their eyes because MDMA stimulates light perception.

commercial aircraft, couriers on foot entering the United States from Canada, and package delivery services. Many of these drugs are sold and abused by middle-class, suburban, young adults at raves and nightclubs and on college campuses. Several Internet web sites advertise weekly rave events in Washington and surrounding states, and the

number of rave parties, where these drugs often are distributed, is increasing. Diverted pharmaceuticals such as oxycodone (OxyContin), hydrocodone (Vicodin), hydromorphone (Dilaudid), and methadone (Dolophine) also pose a low but increasing threat.

Stimulants

MDMA (3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine), also known as Adam, ecstasy, XTC, E, and X, is a stimulant and low-level hallucinogen. The drug was patented in 1914 in Germany where it was sometimes given to psychiatric patients to assist in psychotherapy, a practice never approved by the American Psychological Association or the Food and Drug Administration. MDMA, sometimes called the hug drug, is said to make users “feel good”; they claim that the drug helps them to be more “in touch” with others and that it “opens channels of communication.” However, abuse of the drug can cause psychological problems similar to those associated with methamphetamine and cocaine abuse, including confusion, depression, sleeplessness, anxiety, and paranoia. Negative physical effects can also result, including muscle tension, involuntary teeth clenching, blurred vision, and increased heart rate and blood pressure. MDMA abuse can also cause a marked increase in body temperature leading to muscle breakdown, kidney failure, cardiovascular system failure, stroke, or seizure as reported in some fatal cases. Researchers suggest that MDMA abuse may result in long-term and sometimes permanent damage to parts of the brain that are critical to thought and memory.

MDMA is readily available and abused by teenagers and young adults in Washington, particularly in Olympia, Seattle, Spokane, and surrounding areas. In November 2000 Harborview Medical Center in Seattle treated six young adults for MDMA overdose following a single rave event. In addition, the King County Medical

Raves in Seattle

Raves in Seattle commonly are called massives because of the large number of attendees. At least five massives were held from November 2000 to March 2002, and the number of attendees ranged from approximately 8,000 to 12,000 per event. These raves are not underground or secretive; they are organized, commercial events with online ticketing and onsite security. MDMA is sold at these raves in personal use amounts.

Examiner’s office reported two MDMA-related deaths in 2001.

MDMA is smuggled into Washington from Canada and Europe by several means. MDMA transporters use couriers on foot entering the United States from Canada, couriers traveling on commercial aircraft, private vehicles, and package delivery services. In November 2001 federal prosecutors in Seattle indicted a female courier who had transported 110,000 MDMA tablets from London to Seattle on a commercial aircraft. During July 2001 USBP officers seized more than 90,000 MDMA tablets that had been left along a trail near the town of Sumas, located on the U.S.–Canada border, by one trafficker for pickup by another. The MDMA was concealed in hockey equipment bags and commingled with 67 pounds of high potency marijuana.

Washington is a transshipment point for MDMA being transported to other states. According to the DEA Seattle Division, MDMA is transported from Seattle and, to a lesser extent, from

Spokane and Tacoma to Alaska, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, and Utah. In the second quarter of 2001, the Anchorage Police Department seized 77 MDMA tablets that had been concealed in an aspirin bottle and sent from Seattle by mail. Also in the second quarter of 2001, law enforcement officials in Prince William County, Virginia, seized more than 5,000 MDMA tablets and arrested several individuals who had transported the drugs via private vehicle from Seattle to northwestern Virginia. The MDMA tablets were stamped with a Rolex logo. In July 2000 during a routine traffic stop, the Utah Highway Patrol seized 400 grams of MDMA and arrested two individuals who were transporting the drug from Seattle to Orem, Utah.

Caucasian local independent dealers and, to a lesser extent, Asian criminal groups, are the primary wholesale and retail distributors of MDMA in

Washington. Many retail level MDMA distributors are middle- and upper-middle class Caucasian high school or college age students. MDMA typically is distributed at colleges, raves, nightclubs, and private parties. In January 2002 federal and local law enforcement authorities in Seattle arrested 29 individuals who allegedly distributed more than 50,000 MDMA tablets per week from a local nightclub. In May 2001 the Quad Cities Drug Task Force seized nearly 40 MDMA tablets and arrested four Washington State University students in Pullman. The students were members of two fraternities and had distributed the drug from their fraternity houses to university and high school students. MDMA distributed in Washington often is stamped with a brand name or a logo. According to DEA, in the fourth quarter of FY2002 MDMA sold for \$11 to \$25 per tablet in Seattle and \$20 to \$25 in Blaine.

Hallucinogens

LSD. The distribution and abuse of LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide) pose a low threat to Washington. LSD, also known as acid, boomers, and yellow sunshine, is a hallucinogen that induces abnormalities in sensory perceptions. The effects of LSD are unpredictable depending upon the amount taken, the environment in which it is abused, and the abuser's personality, mood, and expectations. Abusers may feel the immediate effects for up to 12 hours. The physical effects include dilated pupils, higher body temperature, increased heart rate and blood pressure, sweating, loss of appetite, nausea, numbness, weakness, insomnia, dry mouth, and tremors. Two long-term disorders associated with LSD are persistent psychosis and flashbacks. Typically, the drug is taken orally.

LSD is sold primarily at raves, bars, and nightclubs in large cities and college towns in Washington. The hallucinogen is available in powder and liquid forms, in tablets or capsules, on pieces of blotter paper that absorb the drug, and on small candies. Most abusers are high school and college age individuals, some of

whom hide liquid LSD in breath mint vials or eyedrop bottles. According to DEA Seattle Division, blotter LSD is the most prevalent type available in Seattle and Tacoma. In FY2002 blotter paper with 100 dosage units of LSD sold for about \$100 in Seattle and \$200 to \$300 in Tacoma. A vial of 110 dosage units sold for \$80 to \$100 in Seattle, and single dosage units sold for \$3 to \$8 in Seattle and \$2 to \$3 in Tacoma.

Most LSD distributed in Washington is produced in California and Oregon, and typically is transported into the state by local independent dealers in private vehicles. Caucasian college and high school students are the principal retail distributors of the drug. In March 2001 law enforcement officials at a local rave event in Bellingham seized 150 doses of LSD and arrested one individual.

Psilocybin. Also known as cubes, liberty caps, magic mushrooms, mushies, mushrooms, psilocybes, and shrooms, psilocybin poses a relatively low drug threat to Washington. Psilocybin is the psychoactive ingredient found in certain mushrooms, notably two Mexican species—

Psilocybe mexicana and *Stropharia cubensis*. Psilocybin produces effects similar to those of LSD. The hallucinogenic effects of the drug begin within 20 to 30 minutes of ingestion and last about 6 hours, depending primarily on dosage.

Psilocybin cultivated in Washington is the primary type available; however, psilocybin from sources outside the state is also available. Caucasian local independent dealers are the primary producers, transporters, and distributors of psilocybin in Washington. These dealers often use package delivery services and private vehicles to

transport psilocybin to drug markets in Washington. Psilocybin typically is distributed on college campuses. In May 2001 law enforcement officials in Pullman seized more than one-quarter pound of psilocybin and arrested four college students who distributed the drug from fraternity houses. Psilocybin sells for approximately \$150 per ounce. Psilocybin spores are sold for as little as \$10 by companies over the Internet. In the first quarter of 2001, as part of an investigation, DEA Seattle Division agents purchased five spores for \$50 via the Internet.

Depressants

GHB (gamma-hydroxybutyrate) and its analogs pose a low drug threat to Washington. GHB is a depressant that occurs naturally in the body and is necessary for complete functioning of the brain and central nervous system. GHB analogs are drugs that possess chemical structures that closely resemble GHB. GHB and its analogs are also known as liquid MDMA, scoop, grievous bodily harm, and Georgia homeboy. GHB and its analogs have been increasingly involved in poisonings, overdoses, and fatalities nationwide. Overdoses can occur quickly; some signs include drowsiness, nausea, vomiting, loss of consciousness, impaired breathing, and sometimes death. GHB and its analogs often are used in the commission of drug-facilitated sexual assault because of their sedative properties. The drugs are eliminated from the

body quickly, which makes it difficult for health-care professionals to detect them using blood and urine screenings. In November 2000 hospital officials in Seattle treated three individuals for GHB overdose following a rave event.

GHB is sold and abused in Washington commonly at social venues such as bars, nightclubs, and raves. Young adults, usually Caucasian, are the principal distributors and abusers of the drug. Recipes and do-it-yourself kits for GHB production are available from many Internet sites. GHB analogs are available at disreputable health food stores, gyms, and via the Internet. GHB is sold in liquid quantities in small breath mint bottles containing approximately 100 dosage units and selling for \$100.

Diverted Pharmaceuticals

Diverted pharmaceuticals pose a low but increasing threat to Washington. The most commonly diverted pharmaceuticals in Washington are opiates, including oxycodone (OxyContin), hydrocodone (Vicodin), hydromorphone (Dilaudid) and methadone (Dolophine). These drugs are narcotic pain relievers prescribed to treat moderate to severe pain. Codeine, fentanyl, meperidine, pentazocine, and propoxyphene also are abused

but to a lesser extent. These drugs commonly are prescribed to relieve anxiety and muscle spasms.

According to the Washington Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, the number of admissions to publicly funded treatment facilities in the state for abuse of opiates other than heroin increased overall from 259 in SFY1999 to 399 in SFY2000.

Pharmaceuticals are diverted in a variety of ways in Washington, including pharmacy diversion, “doctor shopping,” and improper prescribing practices by physicians. Pharmacy diversion occurs when pharmacy employees steal products from the shelves or through prescription forgeries. Diversion through doctor shopping occurs when individuals, who may or may not have a legitimate ailment, visit numerous physicians to obtain drugs in excess of what should legitimately be prescribed. Law enforcement authorities report that some abusers also obtain OxyContin legally from suppliers in Canada and smuggle it into Washington. In February 2002 the Northwest Drug Task Force in Bellingham reported that Native Americans from the Lummi Reservation purchase OxyContin in Canada and transport it to Washington for personal use and limited distribution.

Pharmaceutical abuse has led to an increased number of pharmacy and residential burglaries, shoplifting incidents, and healthcare fraud

Outlook

Methamphetamine will continue to pose a primary drug threat to Washington. The production, distribution, and abuse of the drug likely will increase in most areas of the state. Methamphetamine-related violent crimes will continue to be the most significant drug-related threat to public safety and law enforcement officers. The increase in methamphetamine laboratories will continue to pose environmental hazards, tax government budgets, and present safety hazards to law enforcement officers. Caucasian criminal groups and local independent dealers will remain the primary producers of methamphetamine in Washington. However, Mexican criminal groups likely will increase the amount produced at larger laboratory sites, particularly in the Yakima and Tri-City areas, as demand for the drug grows. Mexican criminal groups will remain the primary wholesale distributors of methamphetamine transported into Washington from California, Oregon, and Mexico.

Marijuana is likely to continue as the primary drug of abuse in Washington and will continue to

Hospital Administrator Charged With Forging Prescriptions

In April 2001 law enforcement authorities in Olympia arrested a hospital administrator who had forged more than 80 prescriptions for OxyContin from 1998 through March 2001 for his own use. The forged prescriptions were filled at nine pharmacies throughout the Olympia area.

Source: Lacey Police Department.

incidents in Washington. Law enforcement authorities with the Clark-Skamania Narcotics Task Force, Columbia River Drug Task Force, Grant County Sheriff’s Office, Spokane Police Department, and Washington State Patrol report increased rates of pharmacy and residential burglaries within their jurisdictions. According to DEA, in the fourth quarter of FY2002 most diverted pharmaceuticals sold for \$5 to \$10 per tablet or dosage unit, and OxyContin sold for \$1 per milligram.

be readily available throughout the state. Marijuana production in Washington will continue to increase, particularly at outdoor grow sites. The amount of Canada-produced marijuana smuggled into Washington likely will increase as the demand for higher potency marijuana increases throughout the United States. Canada-based Asian criminal groups, primarily Vietnamese gangs, and Canada-based OMGs, primarily Hells Angels, as well as Canada- and Washington-based Caucasian criminal groups and local independent dealers will remain the principal smugglers and wholesale distributors of Canada-produced marijuana in Washington. Mexican criminal groups will continue to be the principal transporters and wholesale distributors of Mexico-produced marijuana. Caucasian criminal groups and local independent dealers most likely will remain the primary producers, transporters, and distributors of marijuana produced in Washington.

Cocaine likely will remain a significant threat to Washington. Powdered cocaine will continue to

be readily available throughout the state, and crack cocaine will continue to be readily available in Seattle, Spokane, and Tacoma. Mexican criminal groups with well-developed supply and distribution networks likely will remain the principal wholesale cocaine distributors in Washington.

Heroin likely will continue to present a serious threat to Washington, particularly in major cities such as Seattle, Tacoma, and Yakima. Mexican black tar heroin will remain the predominant type available in the state. Mexican criminal groups will remain the principal wholesale heroin distributors, and Mexican local independent dealers will remain the primary retail distributors of the drug.

The availability and abuse of MDMA, particularly in the Seattle area, is likely to increase due to the growing demand for the drug by young adults. Other dangerous drugs will remain a lesser threat to the state than methamphetamine, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin. The diversion and abuse of pharmaceuticals will continue to increase with a corresponding increase in pharmacy and residential burglaries.

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