



U.S. - Mexico At a Glance

Major Counter-Drug Initiatives

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No country in the world has more of an impact on the drug trafficking situation in the U.S. than does Mexico. Geographic proximity and a high volume of cross-border traffic provide ample opportunities for drug smugglers to deliver their illicit products to U.S. markets.

The mission of the DEA in Mexico is to help bring to justice those individuals involved in growing, manufacturing, or distributing controlled substances and chemicals destined for illicit traffic.

Click here for the Embassy Fact Sheet on Reducing U.S. Drug Consumption.

A primary mission of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in Mexico is to assist with the identification, disruption and disarticulation of the command and control elements of the illicit narcotics, chemicals, and money laundering organizations. Through enhanced cooperation with DEA, Mexican counterparts have tackled many complex multinational investigations with very successful results. In 2008, drug enforcement efforts by Mexican law enforcement and military achieved phenomenal results. DEA Mexico offices reported seizures equivalent to over \$180 million dollars in revenue denied to traffickers. This amount represents the value of seized drugs, currency, vehicles, aircraft, property, and other assets.

A few cooperative investigative efforts from 2008 are summarized below:

- In March 2008 Mexican federal authorities at the Manzanillo seaport seized 20 boxes with nearly \$20 million U.S. dollars. The boxes were in shipping containers on a Liberian flagged ship that was destined for Panama.
- In April 2008, Mexican Federal Prosecutors seized eight large parcels of land in Tulum, Quintana Roo, that had been purchased for the purpose of laundering drug proceeds belonging to a major Colombian drug trafficker. The total value of the land was approximately \$40,000,000.
- In July 2008, the Mexican Navy seized a self-propelled semi-submersible vessel off the coast of Oaxaca. Four Colombian crew members onboard were detained and 5.8 metric tons of cocaine were seized. The drugs were wrapped in 257 plastic bundles. In recent years, semi-submersibles have become a popular means of transporting cocaine from Colombia to Mexico and typically carry between 4 and 10 metric tons. Vessels can average 60 feet in length.
- In October 2008, the last original member of the Arellano-Felix drug trafficking organization, Eduardo Arellano-Felix, was arrested in Tijuana, Mexico. The other founding members have either been captured or killed. The Arellano-Felix cartel was, at one time, one of the most powerful and dominant poly-drug trafficking organizations in Mexico. It operated not only in Tijuana but also in parts of Sinaloa, Sonora, Jalisco, Nuevo Leon, and the United States.



31' wood and fiberglass semi-submersible vessel seized by the Mexican Navy in July 2008. The U.S. Coast Guard estimates the cost of building semi-submersible vessels at \$2 million.



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Drug Enforcement Administration
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