



National Drug Threat Assessment 2004

Executive Policy Summary

Product Number 2004-Q0317-008

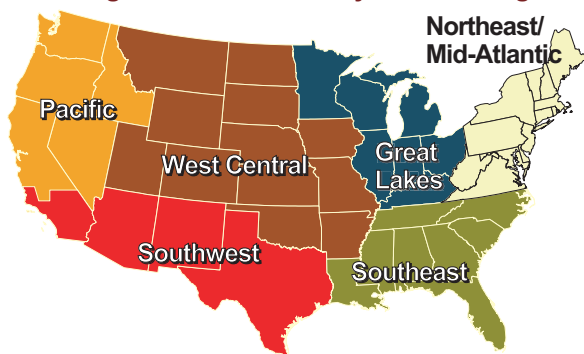
JUNE 2004

New Developments and Continuing Trends

Illicit drugs—including the drug trade’s vast revenues and sophisticated smuggling and transportation infrastructure—remain a direct threat to the United States and its interests. Further, major drug trafficking organizations (DTOs)—headquartered in Mexico and Colombia—and U.S. street gangs pose a grave and evolving threat to the national security of the United States and the hemisphere.

In 2001, 21,683 people died in the United States from licit and illicit drug abuse. In 2000, an estimated \$64 billion changed hands in the United States for illicit drugs, and the societal costs of drug abuse were projected at \$181 billion in 2002. Further, there is mounting evidence that the global drug trade helps to finance many of the world’s terrorist organizations and their activities.

6 Regional Areas of Analytical Coverage

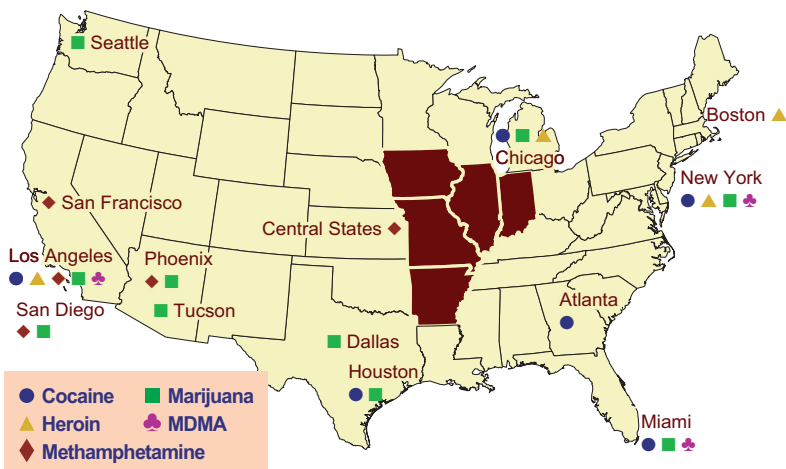


The *National Drug Threat Assessment 2004* indicates that in 2002 an estimated 35.1 million persons aged 12 and older reported using an illicit drug in the last year. Hospital emergency rooms recorded 1.2 million drug mentions. Other new and continuing trends were identified nationally and in six geographic regions (as shown on the map).

- Criminal organizations maintain control over drug distribution. DTOs based in Mexico and Colombia are the primary wholesalers of most illicit drugs in the United States, while street gangs, outlaw motorcycle gangs (OMGs), and prison gangs are the primary retailers.
- Cocaine and methamphetamine are considered the primary drugs behind much of the nation’s drug-related violence, while marijuana remains the most widely available and abused drug in the United States.
- Overall heroin demand appears to be trending downward, but it continues to push into rural and suburban areas in the Northeast; heroin seizures involving federal agencies rose again in 2002 for the fourth year; and low cost, high purity heroin continues to attract new and younger users.
- Pharmaceutical diversion and abuse are on the rise, with hydrocodone and oxycodone drugs considered the greatest threats. While “doctor shopping” and forged prescriptions are among the leading methods of diversion, pharmaceuticals increasingly are being obtained from Mexico and Internet pharmacies.
- Domestic methamphetamine production has increased. Further, reporting indicates that production in Mexico, already substantial, is increasing. Availability of ice methamphetamine is up sharply due to production increases by Mexican groups, who may have supplanted Asian groups as the top producers and distributors of ice nationwide.
- Vast stretches of public lands are being exploited for methamphetamine and marijuana production. Further, law enforcement officials report that growers are becoming more organized, well-armed, and confrontational. Eight of the top ten national forests for cannabis eradication are in California. California alone accounted for more than two-thirds of cannabis plants eradicated from National Forest System (NFS) lands.

Primary Market Areas

Expanded to include Illinois, Indiana, and Dallas



- The NDTA 2004 identifies 14 primary market areas that serve as major centers of consumption and distribution of cocaine, methamphetamine, marijuana, heroin, and MDMA. This year, two new markets were added to the Central States: Indiana and Illinois for methamphetamine. Dallas was added for marijuana. California contains three markets, the most of any state. Los Angeles remains the only primary market for all five major drugs of abuse.

- Most illicit drugs and money in the United States are transported on highways and interstates. This Summary identifies five principal transportation corridors, three of which emanate from the Southwest Border. The primary corridor stretches from the Southwest Border to the Northeast and transits eight primary markets. (See page 8.)

- MDMA (ecstasy) use dropped significantly for eighth, tenth, and twelfth graders during the same period that the perceived risks of using MDMA increased among adolescents. Israeli and Russian criminal groups are the primary wholesale distributors of MDMA in the United States.
- Synthetic drugs are poised to become an escalating threat. They can be simple and cheap to produce and generate vast profits. Their production is relatively unlimited due to an abundance of precursor chemicals. New recipes are proliferating over the Internet.

Primary Drugs

Cocaine and Crack

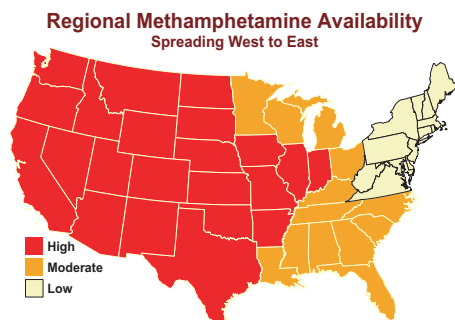
Adult cocaine use stable at high levels; adolescent use trending downward: Adult cocaine use is relatively stable at high levels, according to Monitoring the Future (MTF) data. The rates of past year use for powder cocaine remained unchanged from 2002 to 2003 for eighth, tenth, and twelfth graders. Crack use among tenth graders declined significantly from 2.3 percent in 2002 to 1.6 percent in 2003. The estimated number of cocaine-related emergency department (ED) mentions increased from 193,034 in 2001 to 199,198 in 2002, according to the Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN).

Mexican groups dominate wholesale cocaine distribution; gangs dominate retail distribution: Mexican criminal groups control most wholesale cocaine distribution in the Great Lakes, Pacific, Southwest, and West Central regions and are increasing their wholesale supplies to Dominican criminal groups in New York City. Colombian criminal groups, however, control most wholesale cocaine distribution in the Northeast/Mid-Atlantic and Southeast regions. At the retail level, African American and Hispanic gangs are the predominant retail distributors of both powder and crack cocaine in every region. Other retail distributors of powder cocaine include Mexican criminal groups in the Great Lakes, Southwest, Pacific, and West Central regions and Dominican, Jamaican, and Puerto Rican criminal groups in the Northeast/Mid-Atlantic and Southeast regions.

Cocaine: Primary Market Areas Market Domination and Secondary Markets

	Wholesale	Retail	Secondary Markets
Los Angeles	Mexican, Colombian	African American and Hispanic gangs	Nationwide
Houston	Mexican, Colombian, Dominican	Mexican, Colombian, Jamaican, Dominican criminal groups and local street gangs	Dallas/Fort Worth, Atlanta, Chicago, New York. Crack supplied to Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi
Chicago	Mexican, Colombian	Street gangs	Great Lakes, areas of NE/Mid-Atlantic, Southeast, and West Central regions
New York	Colombian, Dominican, increasingly Mexican	African American, Dominican, Jamaican, and Puerto Rican criminal groups, street gangs, independent dealers	Eastern United States
Atlanta	Mexican, Dominican	African American and Hispanic street gangs, local independent dealers	NE/Mid-Atlantic and Southeast regions
Miami	Colombian	Independent dealers control powder cocaine distribution; Haitian and Jamaican criminal groups and African American street gangs control crack cocaine distribution	Eastern United States

Methamphetamine



Methamphetamine distribution increased in the Great Lakes and Southeast regions, due largely to an expansion in the number of Mexican distribution groups.

In 2003, 123 of the 143 superlabs seized domestically were located in California. Also, in 2003, authorities seized 3,244 laboratories in the Central States; only 4 were superlabs.

Use among most age groups trending downward; consequences of use trending upward: According to MTF, past year methamphetamine use among young adults declined, although not significantly, from 2001 (2.8%) to 2002 (2.5%). According to DAWN, the estimated number of ED mentions for methamphetamine increased steadily from 10,447 in 1999 to 17,696 in 2002. Likewise, Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS) data show that the number of methamphetamine-related treatment admissions to publicly funded treatment facilities increased from 58,777 in 1999 to 66,052 in 2000 (the latest year for which such data are available).

Distribution expanding eastward, largely controlled by Mexican wholesalers: Methamphetamine distribution is widespread in the Pacific, Southwest, and West Central regions, is increasing in the Great Lakes and Southeast regions, and is limited but rising in the Northeast/Mid-Atlantic region. Mexican traffickers control most wholesale distribution in western and southwestern states and supply methamphetamine to Caucasian midlevel distributors in the West Central, Great Lakes, and Southeast regions. OMGs and street gang members distribute methamphetamine, particularly in the Great Lakes, Northeast/Mid-Atlantic, and Southeast.

Increasing lab seizures signal rise in U.S. production; possible increase in Mexico: Domestic methamphetamine production appears to be increasing. The number of reported methamphetamine laboratory seizures increased overall from 2002 to 2003, while the number of reported seizures of high capacity superlabs appears to have remained stable. The number of reported laboratory seizures increased from 9,188 in 2002 to 9,815 in 2003. During that same period, the number of reported superlab seizures remained almost unchanged from 2002 (145) to 2003 (143). Law enforcement reporting indicates that methamphetamine production in Mexico—the source of most foreign-produced methamphetamine in the United States—is significant and may be increasing. Preliminary estimates by an Availability Working Group indicate that the amount of domestically produced uncut methamphetamine available in the United States in 2001 ranged from 98.3 to 131.2 metric tons; estimates for Mexico-produced uncut methamphetamine available in the United States ranged from 9.2 to 13.9 metric tons in 2001.

Methamphetamine laboratory seizures on NFS lands increased from 102 in 2001 to 187 in 2002, despite a drop in seizures of methamphetamine and dumpsites.

Ice methamphetamine availability increased sharply last year primarily because of a significant increase in production by Mexican criminal groups, who appear to have supplanted Asian criminal groups as the primary producers and distributors of ice in the United States.

Production on National Forest System (NFS) lands increasing: Methamphetamine production appears to be increasing on NFS lands. Despite decreases in the amount of methamphetamine and the number of dumpsites seized on NFS lands between 2001 and 2002, the number of clandestine laboratories surged from 102 to 187. U.S. land management agencies also warn of environmental damage to public lands and dangers to both tourists and officials posed by booby traps and armed workers at methamphetamine and marijuana production sites.

Mexican groups rely on Canada-sourced precursors for domestic production: Mexican criminal groups typically produce methamphetamine in the United States using bulk quantities of pseudoephedrine acquired from U.S.-based Middle Eastern criminal groups that obtain the precursors in Canada. Mexican criminal groups also produce methamphetamine in Mexico and, to a lesser extent, in the United States, using ephedrine often produced in China. Independent producers acquire ephedrine and pseudoephedrine through the purchase or theft of over-the-counter medications.¹

Mexican traffickers transport methamphetamine nationwide: Mexican traffickers transport the methamphetamine that they produce in Mexico and California to markets nationwide. OMGs and independent producers transport methamphetamine that they produce, primarily in California and the Central States, as well as methamphetamine supplied by Mexican sources in California.

**Methamphetamine: Primary Market Areas
Market Domination and Secondary Markets**

	Wholesale	Retail	Secondary Markets
Los Angeles	Mexican	Hispanic gangs, independent dealers, OMGs, Asian gangs	Nationwide
San Francisco	Mexican	OMGs, street gangs, independent dealers	Nationwide
San Diego	Mexican	Street gangs	Nationwide
Phoenix	Mexican	Caucasian independent dealers, Hispanic gangs	Eastern United States
Central States (AR, IL, IN, IA, MO)	Mexican and Caucasian independent dealers	Caucasian and Hispanic distributors supply local independent dealers at retail level	Mostly Central States

Marijuana

Rates of past year marijuana use highest among college students aged 19-22: According to 2002 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) data, more than 25 million persons aged 12 or older reported using marijuana in the past year (11% of the U.S. population over age 12). MTF data show that among adult marijuana users, rates of past year marijuana use are highest among young adults aged 19 to 22. Also according to MTF data, among adolescents, the rates of past year marijuana use in 2002 and 2003 decreased significantly from 14.6 percent to 12.8 percent for eighth graders. Rates of use for tenth and twelfth graders trended downward, but changes were not significant.

California and Mexico appear to supply most marijuana; widespread cultivation on U.S. public lands, especially in California: While cannabis is cultivated in every state, California, Kentucky, Tennessee, Hawaii, and the Pacific Northwest (Washington and Oregon) are the primary domestic source areas. Marijuana produced in Mexico, Canada, Colombia, and Jamaica also supplies U.S. markets nationwide. Cannabis

1. Also, see *U.S.-Canada Border Drug Threat Assessment 2003* (LOU-LES), NDIC Product 2003-R0458-002, July 2003.

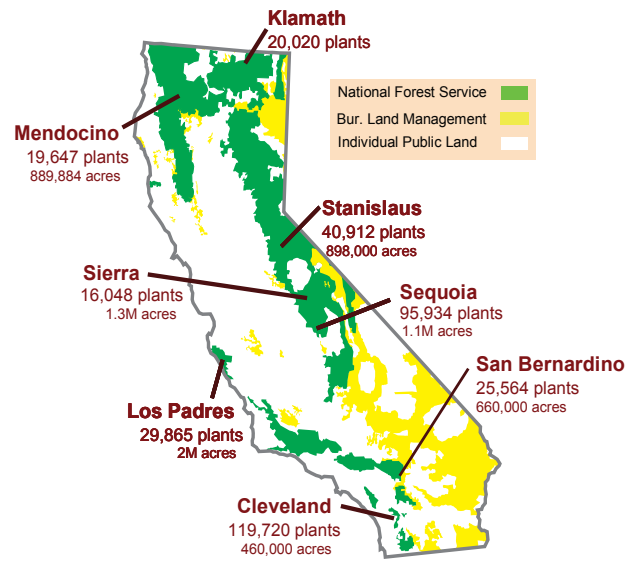
Commercial-grade marijuana, which includes buds, leaves, stems, and seeds from male and female plants, is the most prevalent type available.

In 2002, 1,099 metric tons of marijuana were seized through investigations involving federal agencies. Of that amount, nearly 1,016 metric tons were seized in Texas, Arizona, California, and New Mexico.

cultivation, especially on public lands, is widespread. NFS lands in California accounted for more than two-thirds of cannabis plants eradicated from NFS lands in 2001 (495,536 of 719,985) and 2002 (420,866 of 597,797). Further, 8 of the 10 leading national forests for plant eradication in 2002 were in California. Cleveland National Forest in California and Daniel Boone National Forest in Kentucky are among the leading national forests for eradication.

Mexican traffickers control transportation of wholesale marijuana: Most foreign-produced marijuana available in the United States is transported overland across the U.S.-Mexico border by Mexican DTOs and criminal groups. Colombian DTOs, Asian and Jamaican criminal groups, and Canada-based OMGs also smuggle marijuana into the United States. Within the United States, Mexican traffickers control the transportation of the wholesale marijuana that they produce in both Mexico and the United States. Other marijuana transporters within the country include U.S.- and Canada-based OMGs, Asian and Jamaican criminal groups, and local independent growers and dealers.

**2003 Cannabis Eradication
8 of the Top 10 National Forests are
in California**

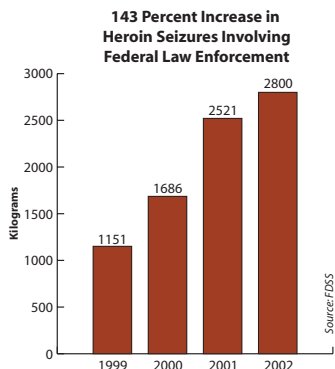


**Marijuana: Primary Market Areas
Market Domination and Secondary Markets**

	Wholesale	Retail	Secondary Markets
Los Angeles San Diego	Caucasian, Mexican, Jamaican	Street gangs and independent dealers	Nationwide
Seattle	Mexican, Caucasian independent dealers	Caucasian, Asian, and African American independent dealers, Mexican criminal groups, street gangs	Alaska, Hawaii, California, Florida, Minnesota, Washington, DC
Phoenix Tucson	Mexican, Jamaican	Street gangs, independent dealers	West Central, Southeast, and NE/Mid-Atlantic regions
Dallas Houston	Mexican	Mexican criminal groups, Hispanic and African American gangs, prison gangs, independent dealers	Great Lakes, NE/Mid-Atlantic, Southeast, and West Central regions
Chicago	Mexican	Street gangs, independent dealers	Great Lakes region
Miami	Jamaican, Bahamian, Mexican	Jamaican, Mexican, Caucasian, African American criminal groups, street gangs, independent dealers	Eastern United States
New York	Jamaican, Mexican, Colombian, Caucasian, traditional organized crime groups	Street gangs, independent dealers	Eastern United States

Heroin

Low cost, high purity heroin continues to attract new and young abusers because it can effectively be snorted or smoked, eliminating the risk and stigma associated with injection.



Heroin demand lower than for other major drugs: The overall demand for heroin in the United States is lower than demand for other major drugs of abuse, and rates of use appear to be trending downward for most age groups. MTF data show that rates of heroin use among college students (aged 19 to 22) and young adults (19 to 28) declined from 2001 to 2002, although the decline was significant only for young adults. MTF data also show that from 2002 to 2003, rates of heroin use among adolescents remained unchanged among eighth graders, declined significantly among tenth graders, and declined among twelfth graders, but not significantly. The nationwide heroin-related ED mentions remained statistically unchanged from 2001 to 2002, according to DAWN.

Heroin expanding in suburban and rural areas of Northeast/Mid-Atlantic: Heroin availability and distribution are rising in many suburban and rural areas, particularly in the Northeast/Mid-Atlantic region of the country.² South American heroin is the primary type available in the eastern United States, and Mexican heroin—primarily black tar and brown powder—is the primary type available in the western United States. Colombian and Mexican traffickers as well as Dominican, Nigerian, and Asian criminal groups are the primary heroin wholesalers in the country. For the fourth consecutive year, heroin seizures by federal agencies increased. Most recently, 2,521 kilograms were seized in 2001 and 2,799 kilograms in 2002.

Heroin: Primary Market Areas Market Domination and Secondary Markets

	Wholesale	Retail	Secondary Markets
Los Angeles	Mexican	Mexican traffickers	Western United States
Chicago	Colombian, Mexican, Nigerian	African American and Hispanic street gangs	Great Lakes and West Central regions
Boston	Colombian, Dominican	African American, Asian, Caucasian, Colombian, Dominican, and Puerto Rican criminal groups, street gangs, independent dealers	New England
New York	Colombian, Dominican, Chinese, Nigerian, Pakistani, Russian	Dominican	Eastern United States

MDMA

MDMA seizures by federal agencies fell from 4,639,540 dosage units in 2001 to 3,495,960 dosage units in 2002.

The rates of past year MDMA use decreased significantly for eighth, tenth, and twelfth graders between 2002 and 2003.

Readily available nationwide: MDMA is available in every region, and law enforcement reporting indicates increasing availability. Conversely, seizure, case, and arrest information indicates stable to slightly decreasing availability overall. The number of MDMA dosage units seized by federal agencies decreased sharply from 4,639,540 dosage units in 2001 to 3,495,960 dosage units in 2002.

Demand for MDMA high, but trending downward, particularly among adolescents: MDMA use among adults appears to be highest among young adults. However, MTF data for 2002 and 2003 show that rates of past year MDMA use decreased significantly for eighth graders (2.9% to 2.1%), tenth graders (4.9% to 3.0%), and twelfth graders (7.4% to 4.5%). Further, MTF data also reveal that the percentage of eighth, tenth, and twelfth grade students who believe that individuals place themselves at great risk by using MDMA once or twice is increasing. The estimated number of ED mentions for MDMA decreased sharply from 5,542 in 2001 to 4,026 in 2002.

2. For fuller analysis, see *Heroin in the Northeast*, NDIC publication 2003-L0390H-001, August 2003.

Most MDMA available in the United States is produced in Europe: Most MDMA available in the United States is produced in the Netherlands and Belgium and transported to the United States by couriers on commercial flights, mail services, air cargo, and maritime vessels. Very limited quantities of MDMA produced in Asia, Canada, Mexico, and South America also are destined for U.S. markets. Israeli and, to a lesser extent, Russian criminal groups control MDMA transportation from Europe to the United States although Asian, Colombian, and Dominican traffickers increasingly are transporting MDMA from Europe as well.

Israeli and Russian traffickers control most wholesale distribution; Caucasian males primary retail distributors: Israeli and Russian criminal groups are the primary wholesale distributors of MDMA in the United States. Asian, Colombian, Dominican, and Middle Eastern criminal groups, as well as traditional organized crime, also distribute wholesale quantities of MDMA. These groups, along with African American and

MDMA: Primary Market Areas Market Domination and Secondary Markets

	Wholesale	Retail	Secondary Markets
Los Angeles	Israeli, Russian	Independent dealers, usually Caucasian males	Pacific, Southwest, West Central regions
Miami	Israeli, Russian, Colombian, Dominican	Caucasian independent dealers	Nationwide
New York	Israeli, Russian, Asian, Colombian, Dominican, traditional organized crime	Independent dealers	Nationwide

Mexican criminal groups, also control most midlevel MDMA distribution. Caucasian males aged 18 to 30, typically independent dealers, control most retail MDMA distribution. Other retail distributors include African American, Asian, and Hispanic street gangs and OMGs.

Pharmaceuticals and Other Dangerous Drugs

The diversion and abuse of pharmaceuticals, including narcotics, depressants, and stimulants, are on the rise. The estimated number of ED mentions for narcotic analgesics rose 20 percent from 2001 (99,317) to 2002 (119,185).

Pharmaceuticals diverted by new and traditional methods: Most pharmaceutical controlled substances abused in the United States are diverted by forged prescriptions, “doctor shopping,” and theft; however, law enforcement agencies report that pharmaceuticals are increasingly being obtained from Mexico and through Internet pharmacies whose sources of supply often are in Mexico and other foreign countries.

Narcotics abuse increasing: Federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies in every region of the country report an increase in the availability and abuse of prescription narcotics such as hydrocodone (Vicodin), oxycodone (OxyContin), hydromorphone (Dilaudid), and codeine. The demand, availability, and abuse of these drugs are high and appear to be increasing, but the abuse of hydrocodone and oxycodone drugs in particular poses the greatest threat.

Prescription stimulant abuse, particularly Ritalin abuse, occurring among school students: Stimulants, particularly dextroamphetamine (Adderall) and methylphenidate (Ritalin), are widely available in most areas. Ritalin abuse is most noted in school settings where students with legitimate prescriptions often share the drug with friends. Young adults also abuse these drugs; however, overall abuse appears to be stable.

Availability and abuse of ODDs stable: The availability and abuse of other dangerous drugs (ODDs) are moderate and relatively stable. Particularly popular among adolescents and young adults, ODDs are most prevalent in metropolitan areas. Some club drugs, particularly GHB and Rohypnol, are used in drug-facilitated sexual assaults because of their sedative properties. Although law enforcement reporting indicates increased availability of hallucinogens within college and rave communities, the most recent drug prevalence data indicate that overall use of these drugs is relatively stable.

Gangs and Organizations

DTOs—particularly those based in Mexico and Colombia—are the primary wholesale distributors of most illicit drugs in the United States. Street gangs, OMGs, and prison gangs are the primary retail distributors of illegal drugs.

There are an estimated 850,000 active gang members in the United States

Drug trafficking organizations—particularly those based in Mexico and Colombia—are the primary wholesale distributors of most illicit drugs in the United States.³ Colombian DTOs control most wholesale distribution of cocaine and heroin in the Northeast/Mid-Atlantic and Southeast regions. Mexican organizations, however, are the dominant force in the wholesale production, supply, and distribution of illicit drugs in the United States.

Mexican DTOs

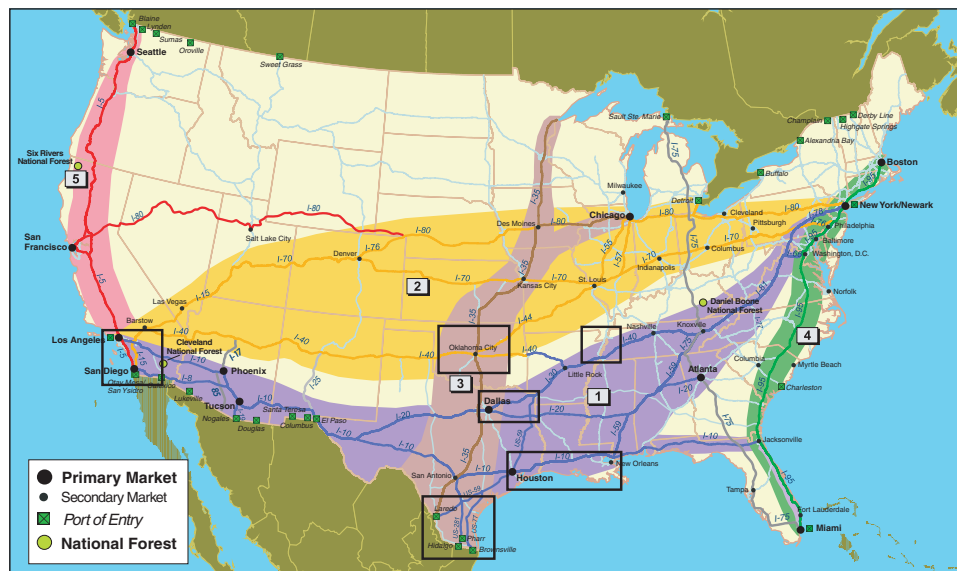
- dominate wholesale cocaine and methamphetamine distribution, wholesale distribution of most foreign- and some domestic-produced marijuana, and wholesale heroin distribution in the western United States;
- control smuggling routes across the U.S.–Mexico border;
- are expanding their transportation of cocaine and heroin into New York City and will continue to make inroads into and expand within eastern U.S. drug markets;
- may be expanding their role in MDMA production and transportation.

Street gangs, OMGs, and prison gangs are the primary retail distributors of illegal drugs in the United States. There are an estimated 850,000 active gang members in the United States. Although concentrated in major urban areas, gangs are proliferating in rural and suburban areas. Gangs obtain powder cocaine primarily from Colombian, Dominican, and Mexican criminal groups and marijuana primarily from Colombian, Mexican, and Jamaican criminal groups. Gangs obtain heroin primarily from Asian, Colombian, Dominican, Mexican, and Nigerian groups and methamphetamine primarily from Mexican criminal groups. Street gangs are responsible for most of the serious violent crime in major cities.

Borders, POEs, and Corridors

Three of the five corridors emanate from the Southwest Border. The primary corridor stretches from Los Angeles to New York and transits eight primary markets.

**Principal Drug Transportation Corridors
Drug and Currency Seizures, 2002**



Corridor	Seizures (number)	Cocaine (kg)	Heroin (kg)	Marijuana (kg)	Methamphetamine (kg)	Currency (USD)
1	2,942	8,317	35	112,257	255	\$48,319,427
2	1,644	5,520	39	63,125	623	\$38,409,257
3	400	852	1	35,045	132	\$10,946,882
4	284	606	15	1,382	1	\$12,910,949
5	107	231	13	2,103	42	\$4,702,446

3. In addition to the *NDTA 2004*, this section is supplemented with information drawn from other NDIC publications. See *Mexican Drug Trafficking Organizations: A National Threat Assessment*, NDIC product 2003-J0403-001, March 2003. Also see *Gangs and Drugs in the United States*, NDIC product 2003-M0465-003, July 2003.



Most drugs are smuggled through or between POEs on the U.S.–Mexico border, through the Southeast POEs, primarily Miami, and ports in New York and New Jersey.

Marijuana is transported to PMAs overland in vehicles via all five corridors to the PMAs of Chicago, Dallas/Houston, Los Angeles/San Diego, Miami, Phoenix/Tucson, and Seattle. Marijuana is smuggled across the U.S.–Canada border primarily at Washington and New York POEs. Once inside the United States, BC Bud is transported along principal U.S. interstates and highways to PMAs in Chicago, Los Angeles/San Diego, Miami, New York, Phoenix/Tucson, and Seattle. Maritime transportation of marijuana to the United States through the Gulf of Mexico is occurring with greater frequency. In 2002 seizures in the Gulf of Mexico represented approximately 24 percent of the marijuana seized at sea, up considerably from approximately 3 percent from 1999 to 2001.

Drugs and money are transported mostly on U.S. highways within five corridors: Illicit drugs and drug revenues are transported to primary and secondary markets throughout the United States by passenger and commercial vehicles, principally within five transportation corridors. Generally, drugs flow north from the Southwest Border and the southeastern United States, while illicit drug currency (usually in bulk) is transported in reverse along the same highways to collection centers in primary markets where it is readied for repatriation to foreign countries, primarily Mexico and Colombia.⁴

Cocaine smuggled to and between ports of entry (POEs) on the U.S.–Mexico border is transported along all five corridors to the Primary Market Areas (PMAs) of Atlanta, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, and New York. The primary POEs for cocaine along the Southwest Border are at and near Hidalgo, Laredo, El Paso, Calexico, and Nogales. In 2002, 64 percent of the cocaine seized at POEs on the U.S.–Mexico border was seized at Texas POEs.

Methamphetamine is transported from California and Mexico to the primary markets of Los Angeles, Phoenix, San Diego, San Francisco, and the Central States along corridors 1, 2, 3, and 5. Of the 1,223 kilograms of methamphetamine seized on the Southwest Border in 2002, most (60%) was seized at or between California POEs. The Detroit POE serves as a primary POE for pseudoephedrine smuggled from Canada.

4. In addition to the NDTA 2004, this section is supplemented with information drawn from other NDIC reports. See *Primary Drug Transportation Corridors*, NDIC product 2003-J0403-003; *Port of Entry Profiles for Laredo, Hidalgo, New York-New Jersey, and Miami* (2003), and *Domestic Drug Flows*, NDIC product 2004-20317-007, March 2004.

Port of New York-New Jersey and Port of Miami: Cocaine and marijuana are the primary drug threats. Colombian DTOs control smuggling into these ports.

Hidalgo POE: Marijuana produced in Mexico and cocaine are the primary threats. Smuggling is controlled by Mexican DTOs. In 2002 more than \$4M was seized in 151 outbound smuggling attempts.

Laredo POE: Marijuana and cocaine are the primary threats. Mexican DTOs control most smuggling. In 2002, \$5.8M was seized in 151 outbound smuggling attempts.

- Miami and Charleston (SC) are leading POEs for commercial maritime seizures. Seizures in Miami dropped from 2001 (17,996 kg) to 2002 (4,178 kg).
- Almost 98 percent of drugs seized at all land POEs in 2002 were seized at POEs on the U.S.–Mexico border.

Heroin produced in South America is smuggled by Colombian trafficking groups using couriers traveling aboard commercial flights destined for international airports, generally in New York or Miami. Colombian and Dominican traffickers transport the drug throughout the eastern United States along corridor 4. Mexican traffickers smuggle Mexican heroin from the border area along corridors 1, 2, 3, and 5 to markets in the Great Lakes, Pacific, Southeast, Southwest, and West Central regions. Mexican heroin enters the United States mostly at the Laredo, El Paso, and San Ysidro POEs.

- South American heroin is transported from Colombia to Miami and New York. Increasing amounts are entering the U.S. overland at and between POEs on the U.S.–Mexico border.
- Southeast Asian heroin enters North America via containerized maritime cargo, commercial flights, and mail services. Some heroin transported from Canada crosses the border to the northwestern United States or through POEs at Buffalo and Detroit.
- Southwest Asian heroin is transported by couriers on commercial flights to New York, Detroit, Chicago, and occasionally Los Angeles.

MDMA: The primary POEs for MDMA include the John F. Kennedy, Miami, Newark Liberty, and Los Angeles International Airports. From these POEs, MDMA usually is transported to surrounding and major market areas along corridors 1, 2, and 4. From New York, MDMA is transported on domestic flights to Kansas City, Los Angeles, Phoenix, San Juan, Seattle, and Tampa markets. From Miami, MDMA is transported nationwide via commercial air, private vehicle, mail services, passenger buses, and trains. From Los Angeles, MDMA is transported on commercial flights to Columbus, Denver, Fort Lauderdale, Las Vegas, Salt Lake City, and St. Louis markets.

Outlook, Indicators, and Warnings

- The number of low capacity methamphetamine laboratories will likely increase in the Great Lakes and Southeast regions, as well as in several states in the Northeast/Mid-Atlantic region, particularly Pennsylvania and West Virginia.
- Overall marijuana availability is stable, and abuse indicators suggest that high levels of demand for the drug will continue. Demand for high potency marijuana will likely fuel increased indoor cultivation.
- Gangs will be responsible for increasing drug production, transportation, and distribution, as well as increasing drug-related violence. One of the nation's most violent and fastest-growing gangs, Mara Salvatrucha (MS 13), may be increasing its coordination with MS 13 chapters in Los Angeles, Washington, D.C./Northern Virginia, and New York City, possibly signaling an attempt to build a national command structure.
- Asian criminal groups and gangs increasingly are distributing MDMA at wholesale and retail levels in U.S. drug markets.
- Texas POEs surpassed California POEs in the number of marijuana seizures in 2002, reflecting a possible shift in either transportation routes or methods used by traffickers.
- While the estimated worldwide production of heroin increased in 2002 due to a resurgence of cultivation in Afghanistan, the impact on U.S. markets will likely be limited as heroin from Afghanistan is consumed in Asian and European markets.

- South American heroin will remain predominant in the eastern United States, and Mexican heroin will remain so in the western United States. Traffickers' attempts to penetrate competing markets may be limited as users appear to prefer the heroin common to their regions. Traffickers, therefore, may target new and younger populations in nontraditional markets.
- Overall MDMA demand will likely remain stable or decline in the near term. Tracking studies show that MDMA use by adolescents and young adults—the primary users—peaked in 2001 and has since declined. Attitudes among adolescents indicate that their perception of risk in using MDMA is increasing, a potential reversal of a previously widespread perception that MDMA is a relatively safe drug.



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