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Abt Associates Inc.

# Evaluation of Multi-Jurisdictional Task Forces Project

## Phase I Final Report

September 27, 2002

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## **Executive Summary**

Over the past decade, nearly 40% of the Bureau of Justice Assistance's (BJA's) Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Program formula grant funds has been allocated by state administrative agencies (SAAs) to support the operations of multijurisdictional drug task forces (MJTFs). There is, however, very little known about actual task force missions and effectiveness. Indeed, rigorous evaluations of MJTFs are scarce.

To encourage the use of meaningful methods of assessing task force performance, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), with support from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, awarded the Evaluation of Multijurisdictional Task Forces Project to Abt Associates in 1999. The project was originally designed to be completed in two phases. The first phase was designed to elaborate evaluation methodologies that could be used by SAAs, individual task forces, independent researchers, and others. During the second phase these methodologies will be field tested to gauge transferability, ease of use and utility at the state and local levels. The project will culminate in the dissemination of a "toolkit" of evaluation options to SAAs and MJTFs across the country. This document represents the final Phase I Report.

This report is organized into five main sections, each reflecting a separate stage in the methodology development process. The first section is a review of the MJTF evaluation literature. The second summarizes the results of SAA and MJTF surveys of data collection activities and past evaluation efforts. The third describes site visits that were made to six states and 18 task forces to better understand actual task force operations and evaluation potential. The fourth and fifth sections describe the

development and initial pre-testing of various methodologies. The final section provides an overview of our approach to Phase II. Each of these sections is summarized below.

**Review of MJTF Evaluation Literature** – The project began with a comprehensive review of prior MJTF evaluations in order to document the kinds of evaluation methodologies that have been used in the past. This literature review revealed the following:

- During the past decade a large number of implementation process studies have been conducted.
- MJTF implementation process studies have generally focused on task force operations, activities, and outputs (arrests, drugs seized, etc.).
- A considerably smaller number of studies addressed outcomes or impacts and most of these employed descriptive designs.
- Only a handful of studies used comparison group or time series repeated measure designs.
- Where impact was examined one or more of the following measures were used: reported crime, community perceptions, price of drugs seized and public health indicators (e.g., emergency room admissions).
- Almost no attention has been paid to the effects of task forces on local and regional environments (institutional and behavioral).

**SAA and Task Force Surveys** – Following the literature review two mail surveys were administered – one of all SAAs (n=56) and the other of all known Byrne funded multijurisdictional task forces (n=757).

The SAA survey had a response rate of 73%

- Almost all SAAs responded that they required task forces to regularly report expenditure information. Almost 84% said they required regular reporting on staffing. Lesser proportions required information on agency agreements, milestones, overtime, policies, and procedures.
- Almost all SAAs responded that they required task forces to regularly report arrest information. Almost 90% said they required regular

reporting on amounts of drugs and weapons seized. Lesser proportions required information on seizures, cases, and convictions.

- Slightly over half of the SAAs responded that they required regular reporting of changes in local drug markets. Thirty-eight percent said they did not require the reporting of any impact information.
- Over 92% of the SAAs responded that they used reported task force information primarily for BJA reporting purposes – Almost 90% said such information was collected for subgrant monitoring purposes.
- 69% of the SAAs responded that they conducted their own evaluations of MJTFs. 56% said they urged task forces to conduct their own evaluations and 49% said they worked with their state Statistical Analysis Center to conduct evaluations. The use of the term evaluation, however, is often confused with activity reporting for monitoring purposes.
- 20 SAAs were found to have conducted actual past program evaluation, although only half included measures of potential impacts. The vast majority of these evaluations were based upon descriptive designs. Only six states reported more rigorous approaches – none indicated using ex post facto case studies or experimental designs.

The MJTF survey had a response rate of 42%, as a result, caution should be exercised in interpreting the following findings as respondents may have been more experienced and supportive of evaluations than non-respondents.

- 59% of the MJTFs were formed since the Byrne Program was authorized by Congress. The rest were formed prior to the Byrne Program
- 52% of the MJTFs reported receiving Byrne funding for 10 years or more
- 70% of the MJTFs reported 10 or fewer agencies being members
- The most common types of information reported to SAAs were said to be expenditures (93%), milestones (79%) and staffing (67%)
- The majority of MJTFs said they regularly collected and maintained data on arrests, drug seizures, amounts of drugs seized, weapons seized, convictions, street value of drugs, cases opened/closed and citizen complaints.
- Fewer than half of the MJTFs reported regularly collecting any type of

crime-related information (changes in markets, drug source, etc.)

- Only 21 MJTFs reported that they have the subject of an implementation process evaluation – 11 said they had been the subjects of an impact evaluation
- Almost all of the MJTFs that provided copies of past “evaluation” reports actually provided just statistical activity summaries or SAA monitoring reports.

**Site Visits** – The two surveys suggested eight states as particularly promising site visit locations due to their data collection practices and experience with task force evaluations. Based upon review and discussion with NIJ and BJA the six states chosen for site visits were Colorado, Illinois, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi and Oregon. Eighteen task forces across these six states were also selected for site visits.

Site visits had three purposes: 1) to obtain more detailed information about data collection practices and capabilities among SAAs and task forces in each state; 2) to determine whether certain SAAs and individual task forces might serve as research partners in pre-testing (Phase I) and then later actually field testing (Phase II) select evaluation methodologies, and; 3) to obtain a better understanding of task force operations and organization in order to inform methodology development.

The site visits revealed a number of important insights into the potential complexities of MJTF evaluations, including the following:

- Most MJTFs play a much more crucial front line drug enforcement role than some believe, mixing street-level and upper-level enforcement strategies. This introduces a degree of complexity into task force missions and operations.
- Rural or semi-rural jurisdictions face special challenges in terms of large coverage areas and competing priorities (e.g. ranging from cannabis and methamphetamine production to significant low and mid-level trafficking in smaller towns).

- Member agency, citizen demands and political pressures further complicate strategic planning. Some task forces have developed separate highly flexible units to deal with both covert and overt operations as a result.
- There is widespread dissatisfaction with quantitative reporting/evaluation measures that do not paint an accurate picture of task forces' actual work. Task forces would like to "tell their story" with more qualitative indicators.
- Most current reporting and evaluation overlook important organizational developments, such as increased full-time personnel deployments and better-prepared cases for prosecution.

**Development of Basic Research Questions, Measures and Designs** – Based

upon the literature review, the two surveys, and the site visits to states and their task forces, Abt Associates developed a set of methodological recommendations for consideration by NIJ and BJA that could be pre-tested through internal and external review in three states.

Given the diverse evaluation needs, a range of process, outcome and impact research questions was developed. It is important to note that a careful distinction was made between outcome and impact questions (the two terms are often used interchangeably). We limited impact to inquiries about effects on drug availability and usage – the ultimate objectives of the Byrne Program. Organizational and community effects – institutional and other types of crime - were included under the outcome rubric.

The primary evaluation questions were:

*Implementation Process*

- What was the implementation process for a MJTF?
- What activities has a task force engaged in and what goals has it set in order to achieve its mission?

*Outcomes*



- To what extent does a task force have effects on drug-related crime?
- To what extent does a task force have effects on other targeted problems within its jurisdiction?
- To what extent does a task force have effects on law enforcement agencies and operations within its jurisdiction?
- To what extent does a task force have effects on other criminal justice agencies within or adjacent to its jurisdiction?

#### *Impacts*

- To what extent does a task force have an impact on drug availability within its jurisdiction?
- To what extent does a task force have an impact on drug use within its jurisdiction?

In order to answer these questions a multi-dimensional “toolkit” of measures and evaluation methodologies was developed that balanced process, outcome and impact assessments. The focus was on the incorporation of relatively easy-to-use options that would be within the expertise and budget constraints of most SAAs (and a significant number of task forces) and that would depend upon relatively easy-to-obtain data. Another factor was having enough variety of tools to account for the diversity of individual task force missions and operations, even within a single state. Finally, every effort was made to include more rigorous research designs, relying primarily upon ex post facto case studies, static group comparisons and time series analyses. After NIJ and BJA review, these research questions, proposed measures and associated research designs were pre-tested internally and externally.

**Pre-testing of Research Questions, Measures and Designs** – Pre-testing of the research questions, proposed measures and research designs took three forms. The first was a series of consultations with select SAAs concerning feasibility of the proposed

methodologies and the availability, as well as quality, of proposed data sources. Colorado, Georgia and Illinois were chosen for pre-testing. They were selected on the basis of the commitment of their SAAs to evaluation (including internal research capabilities), evaluation data availability, and the presence of evaluation oriented task forces with interested commanders in the state. The second approach was an internal review that involved project consultants and senior level research scientists from Abt Associates who were not involved in the project, as well as representatives from NIJ and BJA. Following the internal review we met with the SAAs from the three pre-test sites and convened focus group meetings with five to six local law enforcement personnel (MJTF commanders, police chiefs, sheriffs) and prosecutors affiliated with MJTFs in the three states. Pre-test conclusions were:

#### *SAA Feasibility Consultations*

- Illinois and Georgia reported having more time and resources available for partnering on a Phase II field test of the evaluation methodologies.
- All three states reported having readily available and adequate and easily attainable crime related data.
- Task force reporting data available in Illinois demonstrated how much "value added" can be provided through local level data collection on appropriate measures.
- Apparently well organized and easily obtainable case tracking data are present in all three states, but there may be problems associated with data quality and timeliness (due to data entry backlogs).
- There was a consensus that the proposed research questions, measures and evaluation methodologies were appropriate, and needed, and could be tested accurately both at the state and local levels.

#### *Internal Review*

- Research questions and measures should also focus on identifying non-crime community outcomes generated by task force activities (vandalism,

loitering, etc.)

- The evaluation should carefully distinguish between MJTF member and non-member agencies in terms of outcomes and impacts.
- Given the deficiencies associated with most commonly used measures of drug abuse, alternative measures, particularly EMS and fire department computer aided dispatch data, should be used to estimate drug availability and use.
- Given the costs and logistical problems associated with the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) system, a less intensive data collection approach involving interviews of arrestees about local drug market and use trends should be employed. This is particularly important in rural locations, where ADAM has not been implemented.

#### *Focus Groups*

- Careful attention needs to be paid to the inclusion of qualitative measures, not just quantitative "counts of things."
- The focus on performance to include organizational development measures should be expanded.
- A consensus emerged of a willingness to experiment with the use of EMS and fire department CAD data, price data and arrestee interviewing.
- Groups cautioned that scarce task force resources and capabilities could restrict the use of some of the more ambitious research designs.

**Proposed Phase II Approach** – The pre-testing of the initial research questions, measures, and research designs resulted in the final research methodology shown on the following page. The original project design called for field testing this methodology in two of the states we have worked with during Phase I and two others. We recommended to NIJ and BJA that we partner with the SAAs in Georgia and Illinois for the second phase. This recommendation was based upon the quality of their organizational commitment to evaluation, research capabilities, resources and availability of personnel and data quality and availability. These exemplary states will be counter-balanced with

two others whose capabilities, by design, will be more "average" and representative of most other states around the country.

The Phase II approach will have five distinct phases: 1) site selection of two new states to complement the two already selected; 2) final refinement of the research design, (in consultation with NIJ, BJA and the four partner SAAs), as well as definition of partnership roles; 3) selection of individual task force partners in the four states and definition of partnership roles; 4) data collection and analysis; and, 5) development of the final project deliverables. Current Phase II plans call for an 18-month timetable to completion.

Anticipated Phase II products will include an interim report on site selection; refinement of the research design and selection of task force partners; a final report summarizing activities and findings from Phase II; and a multijurisdictional task force evaluation guide (with "toolkit") that can disseminated and used to practical effect by SAAs and individual task forces nationwide.

## Final Proposed Research Questions, Measures, and Evaluation Designs

Implementation Research Questions	Measures	Comparison Areas ⇒	Evaluation Design
Implementation Process Questions	MJTF self reports (Including grant applications & annual reports)	No ⇒	Ex Post Facto Case Study
Task Force Activities and Output Questions	MJTF self reports (Including grant applications & annual reports)	No ⇒	Ex Post Facto Case Study
Outcome Research Questions	Measures	Comparison Area ⇒	Evaluation Design
Effects on Drug Related Crime	Reported Crime (e.g. burglaries, auto thefts, assaults)	Yes ⇒	Comparison Time Series
		No ⇒	Static Group Comparison Time Series Ex Post Facto Case Study
	Local Police Department Detective Surveys (Both member and non-member agencies)	Yes ⇒	Static Group Comparison
		No ⇒	Ex Post Facto Case Study
Effects on Non-Crime Related Targets	Citizen Surveys  Local Department Chief Surveys (Both member and non-member agencies)	Yes ⇒	Static Group Comparison
		No ⇒	Ex Post Facto Case Study
Effects on Law Enforcement Agencies and Operations	Local Department Chief Surveys (Both member and non-member agencies)	Yes ⇒	Static Group Comparison
		No ⇒	Ex Post Facto Case Study
	Surveys of State and Federal Law Enforcement Personnel (Both member and non-member agencies)	Yes ⇒	Static Group Comparison
		No ⇒	Ex Post Facto Case Study
Effects on Other Criminal Justice Agencies	Case Tracking (Criminal history data)	Yes ⇒	Comparison Time Series
		No ⇒	Static Group Comparison Time Series Ex Post Facto Case Study
	Surveys of Prosecutors	Yes ⇒	Static Group Comparison
No ⇒		Ex Post Facto Case Study	
	Surveys of Sheriffs, Jailers	Yes ⇒	Static Group Comparison
		No ⇒	Ex Post Facto Case Study
Impact Research Questions	Measures	Comparison Area ⇒	Evaluation Design
Effects on Drug Markets	Reported Crime (UCR data)	Yes ⇒	Comparison Time Series
		No ⇒	Static Group Comparison Time Series Ex Post Facto Case Study
	Drug Emergencies (Fire/EMS CAD data)	Yes ⇒	Comparison Time Series
		No ⇒	Static Group Comparison Time Series Ex Post Facto Case Study

## Final Proposed Research Questions, Measures, and Evaluation Designs

	Arrestee Interviewing <i>(ADAM-like anecdotal trend information)</i>	Yes ⇒	Static Group Comparison
		No ⇒	Ex Post Facto Case Study
	Drug Prices <i>(STRIDE data)</i>	Yes ⇒	Comparison Time Series
		No ⇒	Static Group Comparison Time Series Ex Post Facto Case Study
<b>Effects on Drug Use</b>	Arrestee Interviewing <i>(ADAM-like anecdotal trend information)</i>	Yes ⇒	Static Group Comparison
		No ⇒	Ex Post Facto Case Study
	Drug Emergencies <i>(Fire/EMS CAD Data)</i>	Yes ⇒	Comparison Time Series
		No ⇒	Static Group Comparison Time Series Ex Post Facto Case Study

## I. Introduction

Since the inception of the Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Program (Byrne Program) in 1988, a large proportion of formula grant program funds – nearly 40% as measured several years ago (Dunworth, Haynes, and Saiger, 1997) – has been allocated by state administrative agencies to support multijurisdictional drug task forces (MJTFs). MJTFs are a subset of law enforcement task forces more generally. Many different kinds of task forces have been formed to target gangs, illegal firearms, specific crimes and other cross-jurisdictional crime-related problems. However, Byrne funded MJTFs are generally created and maintained in order to target the illegal distribution of drugs at the local and regional levels.

The underlying rationale for funding MJTFs on this scale has been their perceived effectiveness in reducing the availability and usage of drugs in American society. The increasing mobility and sophistication of illegal drug production and distribution has thoroughly transcended local law enforcement jurisdictional boundaries and capabilities. By sharing personnel, equipment, intelligence, and legal/jurisdictional authorities, law enforcement agencies in regions across the country have met this challenge by joining together in MJTFs to expand their investigative and prosecutorial reach in a manner consistent with the special and technical dimensions of criminal activity (Chaiken, Chaiken, and Karchmer, 1990; Levine and Martin, 1992).

While a large proportion of MJTFs have been in existence for seven years or more (*see* Section III.B, *infra*), there is relatively little information in circulation about task force missions and effectiveness. Rigorous studies of task force activities are scarce, and the diversity of task force organization and tactics is underappreciated. Most task force

reporting to state funding agencies consists of numerical tallies of arrests and seizures set against a backdrop of goals that are usually similarly expressed in terms of outputs rather than outcomes. While many policymakers, researchers, and practitioners continue to express confidence in the task force approach generally, there remains insufficient understanding of the possible community or organizational impact of individual MJTFs and the kinds of evaluation methodologies that can elicit such information.

To encourage further development of such MJTF evaluation methodologies and a better understanding of individual task force implementation and operations across the United States, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) awarded the Evaluation of Multijurisdictional Task Forces Project to Abt Associates Inc. in 1999. Through this project, NIJ sought in a first phase to stimulate the elaboration of several methodologies that could be used by state planning agencies, task forces, and others to assess in more meaningful ways the work of MJTFs. In a second phase, it sought to test such methodologies in selected locations in order to gauge validity, transferability, ease of use, and general utility. It is expected that the project will yield innovative measurement approaches, evaluation designs, and data collection techniques, using existing data sources wherever possible.

Abt Associates has completed the first phase of the project, and submits this Phase I Report as documentation of its efforts to develop a number of useful and innovative MJTF evaluation methodologies. Pending review and comments from NIJ, this collection of methodologies will serve as the basis for refinement and testing of a discrete evaluation package in Phase II.



The evaluation package would be designed to address multiple purposes and audiences, and to offer a variety of tools therefor. While NIJ did not specify precisely what kinds of evaluation methods it would like to see developed as part of this package, its solicitation focused on tools that could better illuminate the impact of individual MJTFs' activities on drug use and availability within their respective coverage areas (which we refer to as 'impact' questions). A secondary objective involved better documentation of the impact of individual MJTFs on police operations – those of both member and non-member departments (which we classify – together with certain other inquiries – as 'outcome' questions). The chief audiences or beneficiaries of the project were to be SAAs, although NIJ envisioned other potential users of at least parts of the evaluation package (e.g., individual task forces, BJA, independent researchers, etc.).

The principal goal of the project was not to develop a universal means of comparing task force effectiveness across various MJTFs (which is difficult given differences among task forces and their respective coverage areas), but rather to bolster efforts to track changes in individual task force effectiveness and accomplishments over time – based on alterations in policies, resources, tactics, and the external environment. At the same time, we sought to have SAAs and task forces develop a broader set of objectives and measures and encourage a closer fit between these objectives and actual achievements.

This goal is directly linked to the fundamental conclusions and recommendations of the Policing Research Institute, summarized in "Measuring What Matters" (Langworthy, 1999). Law enforcement scholars and practitioners have come to recognize that the measurement of law enforcement performance must go well beyond

how well an organization controls crime (often measured through Uniform Crime Reports). The effects of policing on the environment, community perceptions and the law enforcement organization itself are also considered important for monitoring police performance.

The proposed package of evaluation methodology options that we have developed in Phase I takes into account the importance of a broad conceptualization of how to measure performance. It also recognizes the multiple potential purposes and audiences that are to be served. While it emphasizes outcome- and impact-oriented evaluation tools that can better assist SAAs in their planning activities, it also includes process- and output-oriented methodologies that can help individual MJTFs as well as SAAs evaluate many different dimensions of task force work. Due to the acknowledged difficulty and complexity of attempting to demonstrate the actual impact of a task force on drug availability and use in a particular area (principally as a result of the large number of confounding factors that exist, ranging from macro-supply trends to activities of other law enforcement agencies), the proposed evaluation package nevertheless offers a rich array of outcome questions and measures that can attempt to provide multiple perspectives on a task force's overall operational effectiveness.

The unifying thread of most of these outcome questions is that they are directed to a wide array of knowledgeable task force beneficiaries – from property crime detectives who may discern beneficial effects on burglaries and auto thefts stemming from drug enforcement activities, to state and Federal drug enforcement personnel who have collaborated with a task force on one or more investigations. While virtually all of the questions or methodologies in the proposed package are relevant, as options, to any given

task force (hence their collective utility as a kind of 'standard' evaluation menu), the prominent evaluative role that can be played by knowledgeable observers of task force activities ensures that a significant share of the evaluation tools will be sensitive to particular task force missions and environments. This is of great importance in distinguishing, for example, between urban, suburban, and rural MJTFs, between affluent and non-affluent areas, and between overt vs. covert task force missions. Few SAAs or task forces are happy with today's evaluative emphasis on abstract, one-size-fits-all measures of arrests, drugs seized or assets forfeited.

The proposed evaluation package is also sensitive to SAA and task force research capacity issues. It acknowledges that most task forces, and even some SAAs, will be unable, as a matter of time, money, and/or skilled personnel, to employ certain of the methodologies addressed in the package – particularly the impact-oriented inquiries. By offering a multiplicity of methodologies, however, the proposed package serves to ensure that at least some basic kinds of evaluation can be feasibly undertaken. Moreover, it is possible that parts of the package could be adapted by SAAs or independent research organizations into modular evaluation templates that could be made even more accessible to SAAs or individual task forces. For example, a professional organization could create evaluation templates, available on a web site, that would permit geographically dispersed SAAs and/or task forces to contribute data to a central source and receive back certain information using specialized analytical tools. We have already designed such a system in connection with a study of the conditions of confinement in juvenile corrections. At the same time, other web-based tools could be utilized to disseminate evaluation news,

including best practices information. We also have experience of this kind relating to a criminal justice information network operated for NIJ.

The Phase I Report is divided into five subsequent sections, each of which reflects a separate stage in the methodology development process. The first deals with the literature review conducted at the beginning of the project, which sought to ascertain what kinds of evaluations and evaluation methodologies had been utilized in the past, and how useful they had been. The second section presents highlights from the two surveys that Abt Associates conducted to determine the kinds of data collection and evaluation activities engaged in by state administrative agencies and individual task forces, respectively. The third section describes the site visits that we made to six states and 18 task forces to gain a better understanding of actual task force operations as well as reporting and evaluation activities. These states and task forces were selected based on their responses to the surveys and their potential to serve as Phase II partner organizations. The fourth and fifth sections respectively describe the development and initial pre-testing of various methodologies based on results of the fieldwork and focus groups conducted in three of the six selected states. They also describe our rationale for selection of two states -- Georgia and Illinois -- as preferred Phase II partner sites and the kinds of modifications to the methodologies that were suggested by our pre-testing. The final section offers an overview of our approach to Phase II.

## **II. Review of Literature on MJTF Evaluation**

As a first step in Phase I methodology work, a comprehensive literature review was conducted on MJTFs and on MJTF evaluations. The review embraced general background information on the Byrne Program and MJTF funding thereunder, as well as government-funded and academic studies of drug task forces. The review reflected the relative dearth of in-depth process or impact studies of drug task forces, particularly since the early- to mid-1990s. In subsequent years, many such task forces have reached a degree of maturity and organizational development that contrasts significantly with their situation in the earlier years. The review also confirmed the investigators' appreciation of the difficulty of measuring drug enforcement impact – with or without drug task force involvement – relative to other law enforcement targets such as violent crime. Finally, the literature review indicated that within the category of impact assessments, there were those whose purpose was to demonstrate the greater effectiveness of task forces over regular local police in handling drug enforcement, others whose objective was to document general changes in the capabilities and accomplishments of one or more task forces over time, and still others whose aim was to demonstrate the effectiveness of a new tactic or enforcement approach. While we were interested in canvassing literature covering all three kinds of evaluations, the goals of this project suggested that prior research experience with the second and third types of evaluation would prove most relevant.

## **A. Background on the Byrne Program and Early Federally-Funded Evaluation Efforts**

The Byrne Program was created under the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988, 42 U.S.C. sec. 3766(a)(2). The Program made Federal funding available in two primary ways through the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA): formula grants awarded to individual states and territories, which can in turn make subgrants to state and local units of government; and a much smaller pool of discretionary grants awarded directly to public and private agencies and private non-profit organizations. Under the formula grant program, MJTFs represent one of 26 legislatively authorized purpose areas, but are by far the largest in dollar terms. Meanwhile, under the discretionary grant program, BJA has made targeted funding available to a number of individual task forces – 46 as of 1998 (BJA, 1998) – through various initiatives under the Organized Crime Narcotics (OCN) Trafficking Enforcement Program.

The Byrne Program led to the creation or enhancement (in the case of already-existing task forces) of over 1,000 MJTFs by 1992 (Coldren and Sabath, 1992).<sup>1</sup> According to one researcher, in 1990, roughly half of the 11,800 local police and sheriff's departments around the country that had primary responsibility for enforcing drug laws participated in a MJTF (Reaves, 1992). Despite this extensive coverage, achieved in a remarkably short period of time, relatively little was known about task force implementation and activities in the years following the Byrne Program's creation.

To remedy that deficiency, BJA commissioned a number of studies under the auspices of the Justice Research and Statistics Association (JRSA). One of the earliest JRSA reports was a statistical summary of the accomplishments of MJTFs from the inception of the Byrne Program through 1991 (BJA, 1992), while a follow-up report

presented a five-year overview of accomplishments between 1988 and 1992 (BJA, 1993). A major subsequent effort was a JRSA nationwide survey of 528 task force commanders published in 1993 (Coldren, 1993). The survey sought to assess task force organization, tactics, and performance and compare them to the situation that existed at the time when the task force began. In addition to presenting comparative information on investigations, seizures, arrests, and information collection, the survey indicated that task force leaders were satisfied with the impact their task forces had on their capacity to target dealers and traffickers. The report also highlighted the dynamic nature of task forces, shifting priorities, and differences between urban and rural task forces.

Building on this study, as well as an earlier study of key elements of drug control strategies (Coldren, et al., 1992a), JRSA used case studies to identify practices that could promote successful implementation and aid in the design of impact evaluations (Coldren, 1993a). The analysis focused on identifying differences in organization (e.g., officer experience and training, prosecutor involvement, data collection, nature of interagency agreements, sources of local funds, asset forfeiture, intelligence tactics, nature of the community), as well as enforcement tactics (undercover operations, creative use of surveillance technology, storefront operations, knock-and-talks, hotlines, and grand jury investigations). The study identified the following as relevant to development of "successful" anti-drug task forces: written agreements, staffing, computerized data, flexibility, prosecutor involvement, regular meetings, asset seizure, and innovative evaluation criteria (Coldren, 1993a).

BJA continued to collect basic operational information about Byrne-funded task forces into the middle of the decade and synthesized its findings in another round of

reports. In 1993, it published a report on the OCN discretionary grant program, focusing on "success stories" and common elements that contributed to successful task force implementation (BJA, 1993a). In 1995, BJA mailed a survey to formula grant-funded MJTFs across 29 states. The results of that survey, which included information on task force expenditures, agency participation and coordination, and various programmatic issues, were incorporated into several reports to the Attorney General including: BJA financial support to MJTFs (BJA, 1995), overtime, task force membership, and discretionary MJTF programs (BJA, 1996), and, a summary of ten years of research on MJTFs (generally implementation process studies) (BJA, 1997).

The last report, widely disseminated (a recent condensed version was published by BJA (BJA, 2000), featured twelve 'critical elements' of success identified by a BJA MJTF Working Group. These elements included: (1) written interagency agreements; (2) prosecutor involvement; (3) computerized information databases and systems; (4) use of specific criteria for planning; (5) frequent and regular effective communications; (6) promotion of coordination; (7) sustained and reliable funding allocations; (8) clearly formulated goals, objectives, and performance measures; (9) monitoring and evaluation; (10) recognized experienced leadership and supervision; (11) effective asset seizure and forfeiture activities; and (12) effective training and technical assistance activities.

The 1997 BJA report specifically acknowledged the evaluative contributions of several reports that collectively comprised the National Assessment of the Byrne Formula Program. That assessment provided national-level information on Byrne expenditures, levels of cooperation, the degree to which resources had been rationally used, the potential for permanent adoption of innovative projects that the Program had stimulated,



and the extent to which monitoring and evaluation systems were satisfactory for assessment (Dunworth, et al., 1995). One discrete part of the assessment featured a description of how seven states applied Byrne program funds to MJTFs and other initiatives, and identified a number of strengths and weaknesses in individual MJTF approaches to local drug problems (Dunworth, et al., 1995a).

## **B. Assessing the Spectrum of MJTF Evaluations and Studies**

Over the years, researchers have conducted a wide range of studies of MJTFs. A large proportion of these studies and evaluations have a process and/or implementation focus, particularly those conducted in the late 1980s and the early 1990s as the task force phenomenon was exploding during the early years of the Byrne Program. Many such process evaluations took the form of descriptive *ex post facto* studies underwritten by state administrative agencies that recapitulated basic operations of task forces and included output statistics.

A relatively smaller number of studies have addressed outcomes or impact. The vast majority of these studies have sought to document organizational impacts – the effects that the advent of task forces have had on drug enforcement operations and participating law enforcement agencies – or the effects that task forces or particular strategies have had on particular outputs (arrests, investigations, seizures, etc.) or related indicators (e.g., prosecutions, convictions, sentences, etc.). Many of these were purely descriptive, but a few employed a comparison group design or a time series or comparison time series design.

Finally, a very small number of studies attempted to examine the impact of task force operations on reported drug crime or drug markets, and on drug use – the ultimate

objectives of the Byrne Program. These studies often had a general focus on process and outputs, yet they also attempted to draw some modest conclusions about community impact through an examination of one or more of the following kinds of indicators: reported crime, community perceptions, prices of drugs seized, and public health measures such as drug-related births. Various research designs figured in these studies, including time series comparisons, comparison groups, and *ex post facto* case studies.

The instant project conducted an exhaustive survey of studies on MJTFs written over the past twelve years to gain an appreciation of the various kinds of evaluation methodologies used thus far to assess the accomplishments and effectiveness of drug task forces. These studies can be classified in rough terms according to the three general categories described above.

### **1. Process and Implementation Studies**

Complementing many of the BJA-supported studies seeking to describe the basic organization, missions, and formation of various kinds of MJTFs, a number of other studies have provided useful insights into the development of different types of drug task force programs and the degree to which certain management, organization, and policy activities were executed as planned.

An early seminal work describing the organization of various kinds of drug task forces was the study by Chaiken, Chaiken, and Karchmer (1990). Using a case-study method, the authors' profiled different types of cooperation that existed among task forces (including local horizontal cooperation among jurisdictions and vertical cooperation between Federal, state, and local agencies), as well as common obstacles and issues regarding implementation. Each case study used descriptive and limited survey

information to highlight three major types of cooperation: case-oriented law enforcement, network-oriented drug law enforcement, and comprehensive problem reduction strategies. The study also included useful information on factors tending to foster cooperation, various kinds of task force organization, and the potential benefits of participation.

Another important early study of implementation issues facing law enforcement agencies in setting up a task force was a 1991 study issued by the Iowa Criminal and Juvenile Justice planning Agency (Wiggins, 1991). The report classified the state's 17 existing task forces according to various criteria and provided a detailed description of implementation challenges, including determinations about mission, governance, size and composition, extension of jurisdictional authorities, policies and procedures, funding, evaluation, and trouble-shooting. The study echoed many of the issues identified by an NIJ Report published the same year (Coldren, 1991) that profiled six sites' efforts to implement a task force, focusing on training, funding, officer rotation, prosecutor involvement, and data collection.

Many other descriptive, process-oriented studies sought to describe major task force accomplishments and system changes. For example, a report on Vermont's Multijurisdictional Drug Task Force Program (Litzelman, et al., 1994) focused on changes in agency responsiveness, communication, and personnel, and documented some dissatisfaction with task forces due to perceived weaknesses in mission definition, interagency communication, and officer reintegration following task force service. Another process study on Montana's drug task forces (Kawano, 1992) examined 12 task forces and found, on the basis of interviews and questionnaires, that task force personnel

were pleased with increased inter-agency cooperation but thought they were under-resourced in terms of personnel and unsupported by the state's judiciary. A significant number of other studies commissioned by state administrative agencies or state statistical analysis centers have employed a similar focus on process, utilizing a descriptive approach through interviews and, in some cases, surveys. Examples include Idaho (Silva and Peters, 1990), Arizona (Arizona Criminal Justice Commission (1998), Illinois (Dewey, 1995), Utah (Bahr, 1994), Minnesota (Minnesota Criminal Justice Statistics Analysis Center, 1994) and Mississippi (Mississippi Crime and Justice Research Unit, 1993).

## **2. Outcome-Focused Studies and Evaluations**

A number of evaluations featuring a large process-oriented component have also sought to document outcomes – in terms of enhanced task force outputs, such as arrests and convictions, or enhanced law enforcement functioning and cooperation.

Several such evaluations have been conducted in recent years. Most have relied on a simple descriptive research design, while occasionally featuring time series information. One example is a study of 12 task forces in West Virginia that examined task force implementation processes while also tracking statistical changes in various outputs over time (Fleischman, et al., 1999). The study looked at arrests, convictions, drugs confiscated, and seizures, in conjunction with interviews of task force staff and other law enforcement agencies, in an effort to try to trace increases in effectiveness over a multi-year period.

In Indiana, McGarrell and Schlegel (1993) conducted a two-year pre/post process and impact evaluation of two Indiana task forces and two comparison regions to

determine task force effectiveness. Using a 'systems design' that documented inputs, activities, and outcomes and their relationships, the researchers sought to make comparisons before and after task force implementation, and across regions. The results of the study suggested that both task forces were successful in meeting their goal of targeting higher quality, longer-duration investigations. However, the researchers highlighted the problem of inadequate baseline indicators of drug activity (e.g., price, purity, number of users etc.) that made it difficult to document reductions in illegal drug use.

Similar ambiguity characterized a report (Purinton, et al., 1997) that sought to measure achievement of task force goals among several Oklahoma task forces by tracking growth in the number of agencies participating in task forces, comparing task force case volume with the number of cases already underway before task forces began operation, and documenting increases in arrests, convictions, seizures, and forfeitures. The report's findings suggested that task forces experienced a higher mean increase in drug arrests in participating versus non-participating counties, but that this could not be considered conclusive.

A significant number of studies have addressed what might be termed 'organizational outcomes' -- the degree to which MJTF structure and operations have transformed the work routines and capabilities of participating and non-participating law enforcement agencies within a task force's coverage area. Most of these studies were descriptive in nature. For example, two successive studies of the impact of the Washington State Patrol's reorganization of that state's task force program (Moran, 1993; Dizon, 1996) focused on program performance data (including training, coordination

activities, task force participation, and financial activity), program outputs (active and closed cases, asset seizure and forfeiture, drugs removed and current year violation level of cases), and participant interviews and surveys (re: staffing, mission, cooperation, resources) to develop a multidimensional picture of task force effectiveness. In Mississippi, researchers used focus groups to learn about task force members' views on organization, communication, missions, and tactics (Dunaway, et al., 1999).

Another illustrative study of this nature, by Pullen and Mande (1991), attempted to measure whether five multijurisdictional drug task forces in Colorado had achieved their goals. The researchers conducted interviews identifying internal and external forces affecting implementation, and collected data on arrests, prosecutions, convictions, and seizures. The assessment focused on changes in operational focus and policy, and organizational strengths and weaknesses. The researchers concluded that task forces enhanced relationships and multiplied available resources that could be used to address the targeted problems.

Still another thoughtful evaluation focused on organizational outcomes involved a study of two prosecutor assistance programs supporting drug task forces in Illinois (Jacoby, et al., 1999). The Illinois study undertook a wide-ranging look at the Multijurisdictional Drug Prosecution Program (MJDP) and the Local Drug Prosecution Support Program (LDP), both of which were established by the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority to help address the higher volume and complexity of drug investigations mounted by Illinois State Police Task Forces and so-called Metropolitan Enforcement Groups (MEGs). Using interviews, surveys, and various statistical analyses, the researchers found that the programs functioned well, and that the quality of

investigations and prosecutions alike benefited from greater specialization and focus on the part of law enforcement and prosecutors.

A few such organizational outcome studies have relied on a comparison group design. The best known is a study by Schlegel and McGarrell (1991) that uses the same research on two Indiana task forces discussed above to assess the impact of task forces on arrest policies. Again using similar jurisdictions to compare changes in arrest data in the task force and non-task force counties, the researchers examined all felony arrests, including type and number of charges, drugs involved, and the arresting agency. When all four counties were compared, increased arrests for more serious drug charges were observed in the task force counties. While the researchers did not believe this phenomenon should necessarily be attributed to task force interventions alone, they did discern a correlation. They also pointedly asked whether policymakers would be willing to spend the resources necessary for this higher-level case targeting when such arrests numbered fewer than 10% of all arrests in the study.

Another important comparison group study seeking to illuminate issues of task force organizational effectiveness was a recent multi-method study by Frank, et al. (1998). Using a wide range of data and blending a descriptive research design with certain comparison group observations, the researchers sought to assess whether law enforcement agencies participating in the task forces performed better than non-task force jurisdictions on matters related to communication, arrests, seizures, fines, and the quality of arrests. Task force agencies reported greater communication with other agencies, and higher levels of arrests, fines, and quality of cases than non-task force agencies. Controlling for agency size and various contextual factors, task force agencies were

found to have made a larger number of higher-level drug arrests. However, agency size and various contextual factors were generally found to be stronger predictors of productivity than task force membership. A related study by some of the same researchers of all 28 Ohio task forces (Jefferis, et al., 1998) found that those task forces reporting higher levels of organization and communication did not produce a higher level of arrests, although they did influence the level of perceived effectiveness.

### **3. *Studies and Evaluations Addressing Community Impact***

In contrast with the numerous process and outcome evaluations of MJTFs, only a very few evaluations have sought to document the more difficult issue of community impact – actual reductions in drug-related crime, drug availability, and/or drug usage. There have been few comparative studies relating objectives to impacts, such as efforts to evaluate accomplishments by comparing task force results with other enforcement modalities or outcomes prior and subsequent to establishment of task forces. Moreover, researchers have rarely applied techniques of statistical inference to collected data. Very few studies have used either a control group or a matched comparison methodology. In most cases, given the difficulty of the endeavor, such analyses represent a smaller part of a larger process- or outcome-oriented study.

Conducting more rigorous research of this type on MJTFs is understood to be complicated by a number of factors. Most fundamentally, task forces are dynamic; they begin as small groups commonly addressing street-level drug dealing and often expand to include more agencies to address higher-end sellers and users (Coldren, Coyle, and Carr, 1990). Furthermore, MJTFs are structured in many different ways, with differing levels of cooperation with criminal justice and other agencies, and varying strategies targeting



different levels of drug distribution or types of crime. It can be exceedingly difficult to isolate the contributions of a single task force or program, and many law enforcement operations have little control over drug demand reduction efforts that may also evidence an appreciable impact on drug trafficking patterns. Other problems include the length of time required for a rigorous evaluation, the need to evaluate both the demand and supply sides of the drug distribution equation, various manifestations of the external environment dynamically reacting to task force activities (including traffickers, sellers, and buyers), lack of comparison information, incomplete data, and the unverified reliability of some data.

For purposes of exposition, impact-oriented studies of MJTFs can roughly be classified as relying predominantly on descriptive designs or more rigorous designs seeking to explain causal relationships.

Four examples of impact evaluations employing basically descriptive research designs are a study on Mississippi task forces utilizing five years of drug task force personnel surveys and community survey data on drug enforcement activities (Gray-Ray, et al., 1996), a study of a single task force in East St. Louis, Illinois (Public Policy Research Centers, 1995), an evaluation of Byrne-funded task forces and state-funded Metropolitan Enforcement Groups (MEGs) in Illinois (Cowles, et al., 1997), and a study of Byrne-funded task forces in Florida (McNeece, et al., 2000).

The Mississippi study asked a random stratified sample of Mississippi residents about their knowledge of MJTF operations, perceptions of drug trafficking problems, as well as observations concerning patterns in drug use and trafficking activity. It also asked task force officers about perceptions of trends in arrests, seizures, and prosecution.

The study suggested that changes noted in the two surveys could be positively associated with task force activities in jurisdictions where they operated, but the descriptive and *ex post facto* design of the evaluation significantly limited its explanatory power (Gray-Ray, et al., 1996).

The East St. Louis study employed a multi-method process and impact evaluation of the Byrne-funded East St. Louis Anti Drug Multijurisdictional Task Force that featured a case flow analysis to assess arrest dispositions, as well as extensive surveys of community leaders and citizens. In addition, the researchers conducted interviews with drug users in treatment and on the street, and persons sentenced to alternative work programs (Public Policy Research Centers, 1995).

The Illinois study involved a process and impact assessment that sought to document implementation and operations of Illinois task forces, as well as the impact of task force activities on illegal drug enterprises in Illinois. While the researchers relied on a wide range of data for both purposes, only a few indicators – drug-related births, and the quantity and purity of drugs sent to state crime labs for analysis – directly addressed the impact of task force activities on drug availability and usage. The researchers concluded that while the evaluation of task force work was positive, there were too many other factors influencing illegal drug activity to state with any confidence that an overall impact on drug availability and usage had been made by such task forces (Cowles, et al., 1997).

The Florida study combined interviews with local law enforcement officials and state and Federal law enforcement officials with a cursory examination of drug crime rates in task force jurisdictions. The study yielded extensive information on task force

organization, activities, planning, and finances, and revealed significant variations in how different task forces approached these subjects. For the period 1990-95, for which significant crime data by individual drug type were available, the study also showed that task forces were responsible for 30 –37% of the total number of drug arrests reported for those counties covered by a task force. The study's most notable aspect was its solicitation of evaluative comments on task force effectiveness from state and Federal law enforcement officials, as well as community leaders. The study also featured extensive inquiries about task force coordination, distinguishing investigations initiated with task force member agencies from those involving non-member agencies (local, state, and Federal (McNeece, et al., 2000)).

A few other studies have attempted to use more ambitious research designs. A 1997 evaluation of a limited number of MJTFs in Georgia (Josi, et al., 1997) sought to compare drug-related activity in counties and communities having MJTFs (experimental group) with similar counties and communities that were not part of the MJTF network (comparison group). Comparing small and medium municipalities in farm, rural, and urban environments, the evaluation consisted chiefly of an analysis of two data sources: a survey completed by each community's chief law enforcement officer, and a personal opinion survey of over 700 community 'stakeholders,' including law enforcement officials, local political and educational leaders, community activists, and other persons ostensibly knowledgeable about drug problems in their communities. Limited statistical data were used to corroborate the survey data. The analyses indicated that compared to jurisdictions without task force support, agencies affiliated with MJTFs generally showed a greater increase in drug arrests and seizures, as well as many other drug-related activity

measures. The researchers acknowledged a number of potential weaknesses in the survey instruments, however, and consequent limits on their ability to reflect task force effectiveness.

A different kind of research methodology, employing a time-series design, appeared in a study of a single Illinois jurisdiction that sought to document effects resulting from a task force shifting to a community policing approach (Bynum, et al., 1999; Decker, et al., 2000). The evaluation of this shift by the MEG in Kankakee, Illinois used a time-series design that measured certain outcome variables during pre- and post-program periods. The researchers showed that a wide range of program results were positively related to the task force's new approach, including the quantity and quality of cases. In particular, the researchers found that more serious penalties and higher-level drug offenses were associated with the work of the task force. An important potential indicator of community impact were changes in the kinds of complaints to which the police responded.

### **C. Promising Methodologies and Measures**

The foregoing survey of studies on MJTFs indicates that well-established methodologies and indicators exist to perform evaluations that analyze process issues and organizational outcomes. Far fewer methodologies and indicators have been employed to demonstrate impact. While the difficulties inherent in conducting impact evaluations are well known, too few efforts in this direction have been undertaken.

Case study methodologies and the use of surveys and interviews have capably shown how certain task forces have evolved over time and have led, in some cases, to

improved productivity, as measured principally by arrests and seizures. To some extent, researchers have also sought to perform better qualitative assessments by tying task force tactics or organizational changes to outcomes occurring at a later juncture in the criminal justice system – for example, increased convictions, enhanced sentences, and the like.

In general, however, most evaluations are notable for what they do *not* address. The process evaluations have tended not to discuss issues of task force governance or field management. Such issues are of considerable interest in themselves, as well as in relation to perceived and actual task force effectiveness. Law enforcement agencies need to know if they are doing their work as they should (Langworthy, 1999). Process evaluations have also tended not to inquire into the way task force funds are spent, (e.g., among personnel, equipment, operating expenses, etc). Such information may provide useful insights into the relationship of objectives to tactics and the maturation of a task force over time. Other omissions from process evaluations include inquiries into goal-setting and strategic planning, and the handling of joint cases with other law enforcement organizations.

These gaps or ambiguities can both distort one's understanding of how task forces operate. For example, an inadequate understanding of a task force's strategic planning process and resulting mission and objectives could lead to a misinterpretation of the reasons why that task force resources are being predominantly deployed in a particular manner or in particular geographic locations. This issue assumes greater importance as more task forces have adopted street-level enforcement as a main objective. An inadequate appreciation of protocols governing arrests and/or seizures (e.g., a task force's adoption of certain patrol arrests or seizures) could lead to confusion about a task force's

statistics in these categories. The latter ambiguities also suggest the need for state administrative agencies and/or state police (where relevant) to consider creating explicit reporting guidelines to increase consistency across task forces.

Other factors may play a significant role in the interpretation of certain task force actions and statistics. With a few exceptions (e.g., Jefferis, et al., 1998; Schlegel and McGarrell, 1993), most studies pay relatively little attention to contextual factors that may affect evaluation results, including task force budgets, number of full-time personnel, predominant types of drug problems, and certain notable environmental features, (e.g., proximity to interstate highways, colleges, airports, tourist attractions, etc.), time of year (e.g, in beach or mountain regions), and the operation of other task forces in the area (e.g., DEA or other Federally-led task forces). All of these factors can significantly influence the particular strategies adopted by different task forces.

As two thoughtful observers have noted, the relative inattention to matters of professionalization represents another major gap in most task force reporting and evaluation (Robinson and Rosenbaum, 1997). One major objective of the Byrne Program is to develop more capable and sophisticated drug enforcement. While most attention may be directed to inquiries that ask *what* is benefited by task forces in the way of additional personnel, equipment, buy money, and productivity as measured in output quantity, greater scrutiny should be trained on issues of *how* task forces perform their work – as reflected, for example, by the quality of police reports, increases in the number of ‘prosecutable’ cases, and fewer rejected search warrants.<sup>2</sup> Also under-appreciated is the influence that trained and experienced task force ‘graduates’ may have on organizations (including their home departments) that they join after leaving a task force.

The more holistic picture of drug task forces painted by these indicators is reflected in studies like Jacoby, et al. (1999).

When it comes to questions of impact, it is clear that tallying outputs such as arrests and drug seizures often reveals little about the impact that task force activities are having on drug availability and usage in a particular area. This remains the case even though arrests may prove somewhat useful in indicating an impact on heroin and cocaine use (Rosenfeld and Decker, 1999). A more meaningful inquiry requires both more qualitative reporting (to better reflect task force objectives, contextual factors, and impact on particular locations or populations) and potential reliance on new and different quantitative measures. Worden (1996) has suggested a number of more effective methods by which the impact of drug enforcement could be gauged. These include drug-related crime, visibility of drug markets, drug-related health problems, resident perceptions of fear of crime and quality of life, and drug market adaptations. As reflected in the studies by Bynum, et al. (1999) and Decker, et al. (2000) discussed above, particular strategies and approaches using problem-solving methods can be compared with traditional policing activities and evaluated using spatial analyses of emergency calls for service in pre-intervention and post-intervention periods (Weisburd and Green, 1995; Green, 1995). Changes in levels of neighborhood crime, recorded and measured with the assistance of Geographic Information Systems, may prove quite useful as an evaluation tool where open air markets or other intensive street-level drug activity exists.

Many specific kinds of measures have already been identified as potentially useful in documenting community impact. These include the quantitative and qualitative analysis of drug-related calls for service or citizen complaints, heroin hotline calls, the

number of voluntary admissions to treatment programs in a particular area, and citizen surveys (Robinson and Rosenbaum, 1997). While citizen awareness and support surveys may be of little value in jurisdictions where task forces are targeting upper-level distributors via long-term investigations, they may be quite valuable evaluation tools in other jurisdictions employing more intensive community policing strategies.

Other possibly useful measures could include numbers drawn from Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) data and/or reports on drug abuse and availability taken from the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) Project, probation drug testing data, school surveys of drug use, and drug-related hospital emergency room admissions. ADAM interviews with arrestees in particular could reveal information about general drug market disruptions, as well as search times for people seeking to buy drugs (although some researchers have increasingly viewed the latter with skepticism as a meaningful concept for drug users). Certain kinds of law enforcement and community survey data drawn from Weed and Seed evaluations could also be consulted for corroborating information.

Finally, drug price and purity data, available through the Drug Enforcement Administration's System to Retrieve Drug Evidence (STRIDE) – which records the price and purity of all illicit drugs purchased or otherwise seized by Federal authorities – could be used to infer some kinds of price and purity trends in task force localities (Rhodes, et al., 1998; Caulkins and Padman, 1994). While attribution of such trends to particular enforcement activities remains highly problematic – even with extremely sophisticated statistical modeling work – price and purity data can serve as one of many potentially revealing indicators that collectively point in the direction of task force influence.



From the vantage point of research designs, it is also clear that, in the right contexts, more ambitious research designs can and should be utilized. The vast majority of task force evaluations conducted to date have utilized descriptive designs. Comparison group methodologies are difficult to employ unless truly comparable, easily defined comparison task forces or task force jurisdictions exist. Yet, as the studies by Schlegel and McGarrell (1991, 1993) demonstrate, these comparison studies can sometimes be attempted under the right circumstances, particularly in relatively rural adjacent counties.

Other more rigorous designs should also be attempted. For example, time-series studies – or, in appropriate cases, comparison time series studies – should also be attempted where relevant data are present. Certain quasi-experimental designs might at least be more aggressively explored where circumstances would permit a new task force unit (e.g., an overt unit) or the introduction of a new strategy to be observed with certain rudimentary controls in place. The opportunity that this project provides is precisely to be more experimental – to test more accurately the limits of evaluation. This can help shape better future decisions about how SAAs and task forces allocate scarce evaluation resources.

At the same time, any effort to embrace new methodologies – particularly more ambitious, impact-oriented tools – must acknowledge the limited skills, time, and resources of most task forces and even some SAAs. Any new evaluation package must ensure that the component questions and measures are reasonably comprehensible and easy-to-use, and offer options for particular organizations and contexts. At least some minimum set of questions and measures will need to be usable by SAAs and others. To

ensure that such a set of tools is available to these users, it may be that certain evaluation templates will need to be developed. These could range from basic survey forms to more elaborate web-based analytical platforms that could collect data from many different task forces and provide ready-made analytical programs and procedures with which to manipulate such information. In fact, it might make both financial and analytical sense for SAAs or BJA to consider use of such a common platform to leverage the limited resources and data of individual task forces and/or states, respectively.

### **III. State Administrative Agency and Task Force Surveys**

Following the literature review, the project turned to conducting two surveys whose goal was to ascertain the extent to which state administrative agencies and individual task forces, respectively, were collecting various kinds of process and outcome information and conducting or commissioning evaluations of task forces. The state administrative agencies were surveyed first, in order to define the universe of existing task forces and obtain information about broader – sometimes statewide – evaluations and studies of MJTFs. The results of the SAA survey provided a framework for obtaining a kind of census of existing task forces – their number and general type (e.g., general missions and grantee and member types) – as well an understanding of the kinds of information collected on task forces to monitor program implementation and impact. The individual task force survey provided an opportunity to collect more detailed information about task force organization and missions and about data collection and evaluation activities.

The combined results of the two surveys painted the first comprehensive portrait of the Byrne-funded task force universe since the early 1990s. These surveys provided a wealth of information about task force composition, and most important to this study, made it possible to assess generally the level of ‘evaluation consciousness’ among Byrne Program grantors and grantees. They also helped with making preliminary decisions about which states might best serve as site visit locations and later, possible Phase I pre-test partners.

## **A. State Administrative Agency (SAA) Survey**

The three-part State Administrative Agency (SAA) Survey was designed to meet three objectives: (1) to identify active Byrne-funded MJTFs; (2) to identify the kinds of information collected by SAAs to monitor program implementation and impact; and (3) to identify characteristics of current or past evaluations of MJTFs. BJA maintains information on current MJTFs in an Individual Progress Report (IPR) database. An examination of the IPR found that 25% of the states were not currently represented in the database. We therefore sought to obtain from the SAAs an up-to-date list of currently-funded task forces in their respective states, together with key information on data collection and evaluation practices. We were interested in examining routine monitoring and data collection in order to assess whether such data might inform future evaluation methodologies. At the same time, an examination of characteristics of current or past formal evaluations was intended to assess the range of process and impact methodologies conducted or commissioned by SAAs, and especially to identify those states that seemed to have implemented more sophisticated MJTF evaluation approaches.

The survey was mailed to each of the directors of 56 SAAs on September 9, 1999 with a response deadline of October 8, 1999 (a copy of the SAA Survey instrument is appended hereto as Appendix B.). The recipients of the mailing included all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and five territories and protectorates. The initial response rate was less than 30 percent. Staff from BJA assisted in improving the response rate by sending follow-up e-mails and making telephone calls to non-responding SAAs to request that they respond to the survey. As of December 3, 1999, after three requests from BJA, 41 SAAs had responded, for a response rate of 73 percent. The findings

presented in this report are based upon these 41 responses, from the states and territories shown below.<sup>3</sup>

**Table 1**  
**States Responding to Survey**

Alabama	√	Kentucky	√	North Mariana Islands	
Alaska	√	Louisiana	√	Ohio	√
American Samoa		Maine	√	Oklahoma	√
Arizona	√	Maryland	√	Oregon	√
Arkansas		Massachusetts		Pennsylvania	√
California	√	Michigan	√	Puerto Rico	√
Colorado	√	Micronesia		Rhode Island	
Connecticut	√	Minnesota	√	South Carolina	
Delaware	√	Mississippi	√	South Dakota	√
District of Columbia		Missouri	√	Tennessee	√
Florida	√	Montana	√	Texas	√
Georgia	√	Nebraska		Utah	√
Guam	√	Nevada		Vermont	√
Hawaii	√	New Hampshire	√	Virgin Islands	
Idaho	√	New Jersey	√	Virginia	
Illinois		New Mexico	√	West Virginia	√
Indiana		New York	√	Wisconsin	
Iowa	√	North Carolina	√	Wyoming	√
Kansas	√	North Dakota	√		

### **1. Part I – Identification of MJTFs**

Abt Associates provided each SAA with a list of what were thought to be active MJTFs based upon BJAs IPR database. Each SAA was then asked to verify task force

background information. Each SAA was also asked to complete an IPR form for each task force that was not listed in the IPR database. The IPR database showed there were 489 active task forces nationwide. This number was amended to 757<sup>4</sup> based upon the results of the SAA survey. This total includes all task forces identified by SAAs responding to the survey (including new task forces from those states), as well as task forces identified in the IPR database that are located in states that did not respond to the survey. Assuming that at least a handful of previously unidentified task forces (i.e., not listed in the IPR database) would have surfaced had the other 15 states and territories responded to the survey, it is likely that the actual number of existing task forces is slightly over 800.<sup>5</sup> The following lists the numbers of MJTFs per state, with those in bold located in non-responding states.

**Table 2**  
**Task Forces by State**

State	N	State	N	State	N
Alabama	28	Kentucky	8	<i>North Mariana Islands</i>	0
Alaska	6	Louisiana	35	Ohio	32
<i>American Samoa</i>	0	Maine	1	Oklahoma	30
Arizona	31	Maryland	0	Oregon	7
<i>Arkansas</i>	29	<i>Massachusetts</i>	0	Pennsylvania	1
California	45	Michigan	22	Puerto Rico	1
Colorado	13	<i>Micronesia</i>	0	<i>Rhode Island</i>	0
Connecticut	8	Minnesota	22	<i>South Carolina</i>	6
Delaware	0	Mississippi	17	South Dakota	2
<i>District of Columbia</i>	0	Missouri	27	Tennessee	37
Florida	25	Montana	8	Texas	48
Georgia	31	<i>Nebraska</i>	0	Utah	14
Guam	3	<i>Nevada</i>	18	Vermont	1
Hawaii	9	New Hampshire	22	<i>Virgin Islands</i>	0
Idaho	25	New Jersey	24	<i>Virginia</i>	2
<i>Illinois</i>	1	New Mexico	9	West Virginia	13
<i>Indiana</i>	36	New York	12	<i>Wisconsin</i>	0
Iowa	24	North Carolina	4	Wyoming	8
Kansas	5	North Dakota	12	Total	762

As noted above, for non-responding SAAs the numbers of task forces reported in BJAs IPR database were used to arrive at the above compilation. Eleven of the SAAs responding to the survey reported that 31 task forces contained in the IPR database were either closed or not actually MJTFs. A total of 304 additional active task forces not listed in the IPR database were identified among 26 of the responding SAAs. Two

SAAs, Delaware and Maryland, completed the survey even though they did not report active task forces.

Of the 304 task forces not previously included in the BJA IPR database, the vast majority are continuations of previous sub-grants awarded over the past decade. Most grantees were county-level jurisdictions (63%), while municipalities comprised nearly 24% of these newly-inventoried task forces. Among this group of task forces, 71% had a county agency as the lead implementing organization, with 47% featuring a city or town in such a role. State-led task forces in this group of 304 MJTFs comprised 27% of the total. Fully 10% of this group of newly-enumerated task forces were identified as having a Federal agency in a leadership position. The overwhelming number of these 304 task forces reported having law enforcement agencies as implementing organizations (95%), while 34% also identified prosecutors' offices as implementing agencies (multiple responses were permitted on this question).

## **2. Part II - SAA Reporting Requirements**

BJA requires the SAAs to conduct fiscal, administrative, programmatic and evaluative monitoring of their subgrantees and to assess progress under statewide plans, the results of which are to be reported annually to BJA. SAAs were asked as part of the survey what types of information they regularly collect from task forces as part of this monitoring. The four main areas of reporting and monitoring examined were goals and objectives, implementation activities, operational activities, and impacts. The frequency of reporting was also examined.<sup>5</sup>

A total of 39 states and territories responded to this part of the SAA survey. Delaware and Pennsylvania no longer fund MJTFs (Pennsylvania provides funds to



another agency which funds a single task force) and were not included in the analysis, despite having returned surveys. Maryland, which no longer funds task forces but did report data collection practices from past task forces, was included in the analysis.

**Reporting on Goals and Objectives.** As shown in Table 3, all of the responding agencies (N=39) require that task forces report on task force goals and objectives at least annually, with 41% asking for the information quarterly (presumably in order to reaffirm or modify them) and almost 31% asking for it yearly. Two agencies require this information to be reported both quarterly and yearly, so that a total of 43.5% require reporting quarterly or annually and quarterly.

**Table 3**  
**Reporting on Task Force Goals and Objectives**

How often are goals and objectives supposed to be reported? (multiple responses permitted)	N	Percent
Weekly	0	0
Monthly	2	2.5%
Quarterly	16	41.0%
Twice a year	7	17.9%
Yearly	12	30.8%
Yearly and Quarterly	2	2.5%

**Reporting on Implementation Activities.** SAAs were also asked about reporting on implementation activities. As Table 4 shows, largest number of agencies (nearly 44%) require task forces to report implementation activities quarterly, while almost 18% require yearly reporting.

**Table 4**  
**Reporting on Implementation Activities**

How often are implementation activities supposed to be reported? (multiple responses permitted)	N	Percent
Weekly	0	0%
Monthly	3	7.7%
Quarterly	17	43.6%
Twice a year	4	10.2%
Yearly	7	17.9%
Yearly and Quarterly	2	5.1%
Yearly, Twice a year, Monthly	2	5.1%
Yearly and Monthly	2	5.1%
No response	2	5.1%

The SAAs were also asked to indicate the particular kinds of process and implementation activities that they require task forces to report. These listed activities included: expenditures; staffing; agency agreements; achievement of milestones; use of overtime; development of policies and practices; organizational meetings; and 'other' activities. The kinds of required activities reported by state are presented in Table 5. Almost all of the states said that they required expenditure information to be reported by task forces. The next largest proportion, almost 84%, reported requiring information on staffing, followed by states requiring information on agency agreements, milestones, overtime, policies and procedures, respectively. Only Hawaii and Puerto Rico reported requiring some other type of information – training. Excluding the “other” category, fourteen states that said they required all of the seven listed categories of implementation activities to be reported. These states were: California, Colorado, Georgia, Hawaii, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, Texas, and Wyoming. The states requiring the fewest categories of implementation information were Florida (1) , Kansas (3), New Hampshire (1), New York (3) , Oregon (3), Puerto Rico (1), and Utah (3).

**Table 5  
Implementation Activities Reported by MJTFs**

State	Expenditure	Staffing	Agreements	Milestones	Overtime	Policies	Meetings	Other
Alabama	√	√	√		√	√	√	
Alaska	√	√	√		√			
Arizona	√		√					
California	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Colorado	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Connecticut	√	√			√			
Delaware								
Florida	√							
Georgia	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Guam	√	√	√	√	√	√		
Hawaii	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Idaho	√	√	√	√				
Iowa	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Kansas	√	√	√					
Kentucky	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Louisiana	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Maine	√	√	√	√				
Maryland	√	√	√	√		√	√	
Michigan	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Minnesota	√	√			√		√	
Mississippi	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Missouri	√	√	√	√	√			
Montana	√	√	√	√		√		
New Hampshire	√							
New Jersey	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
New Mexico	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
New York	√	√			√			
North Carolina	√	√	√	√		√		
North Dakota	√	√	√	√	√		√	
Ohio	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Oklahoma								
Oregon	√	√			√			
Pennsylvania								
Puerto Rico			√	√				√
South Dakota	√	√	√	√		√		
Tennessee	√	√	√	√	√		√	
Texas	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Utah	√			√	√			
Vermont	√	√	√	√	√			
West Virginia	√		√	√	√		√	
Wyoming	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	

**Reporting on Operational Activities.** As shown in Table 6, the largest proportion of agencies require that task forces report operational activities quarterly, followed by 15.4 percent that require reporting twice a year.

**Table 6**  
**Reporting on Operational Activities**

<b>How often are operational activities supposed to be reported? (multiple responses permitted)</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Weekly	0	0%
Monthly	3	7.7%
Quarterly	22	56.4%
Twice a year	6	15.4%
Yearly	5	12.8%
Monthly and Quarterly	1	2.6%
Yearly and Quarterly	1	2.6%
Yearly, Monthly and Quarterly	1	2.6%

SAAAs were also asked to indicate the kinds of operational activities and outputs that they require task forces to report. The listed activities or outputs included: arrests; amount of drugs seized; weapons seized; numbers of drug seizures; cases opened and closed; convictions; street value of drugs seized; assets seized; number of surveillance; drug purity; field interrogations/traffic stops; citizen complaints; complaint dispositions; and search warrants. The kinds of required activities reported by states are presented in Table 7. Almost all of the states said that they required arrest information from task forces. The next largest proportion, almost 90%, reported requiring information on amounts of drugs and weapons seized, followed by states requiring information on numbers of seizures, cases, and convictions, respectively. Four states reported requiring ten or more operational activities to be reported. These states were Colorado, Hawaii, Louisiana, and Mississippi. Florida, Maine, and Vermont reported requiring information on fewer than five operational activities, while the remaining states typically said they required seven to ten activities.

**Table 7  
Operational Activities Reported by MJTFs**

State	Arrests	Drugs	Weapons	Seizures	Cases	Convictions	Value	Assets	Surveillance	Purity	Interviews	Complaints	Disposed	Warrants
Alabama	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							
Alaska	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Arizona	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
California	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Colorado	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Connecticut	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Delaware	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Florida	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Georgia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
Guam	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Hawaii	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Idaho	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Iowa	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Kansas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Kentucky	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Louisiana	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Maine	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Maryland	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Michigan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Minnesota	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓
Mississippi	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Missouri	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Montana	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓
New Hampshire	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
New Jersey	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
New Mexico	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
New York	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
North Carolina	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
North Dakota	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓
Ohio	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Oklahoma	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Oregon	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓
Pennsylvania	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Puerto Rico	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
South Dakota	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Tennessee	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Texas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Utah	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Vermont	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
West Virginia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Wyoming	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					

**Reporting on Impact Measures.** Table 8 reflects data on SAA reporting of impact measurements. The largest proportion of responding agencies (15 out of 39, or 38%) said they did not require impact reporting. Of those states that did require impact reporting, the largest number required it on a quarterly basis, followed by those mandating such reporting on a yearly basis.

**Table 8**  
**Reporting on Impact Measurements**

<b>How often are impact measures supposed to be reported? (multiple responses permitted)</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Weekly	0	0%
Monthly	2	5.1%
Quarterly	11	28.2%
Twice a year	2	5.1%
Yearly	6	15.4%
Yearly and Monthly	1	2.5%
Yearly and Quarterly	1	2.5%
Yearly, Monthly and Quarterly	1	2.5%
Not required	15	38.4%

SAAAs were also asked to indicate the kinds of impact measures that they require task forces to report. The listed measures included: changes in drug markets; improved resource sharing; reported crime; improved agency cooperation; improved agency communication; changes in weapons use; sources of drugs; drug purity; calls for service; crime displacement; changes in gun markets; changes in drug use; interviews with perpetrators; citizen surveys; victim surveys; overdoses, and; emergency room admissions. As reflected in Table 9, slightly over half of the states said that they required measures of changes in drug markets, with 35.9% requiring information on agency resource-sharing. Roughly a third required information on reported crime, enhanced agency cooperation, and enhanced agency communication. Fewer than a third required any of the other impact measures. Four agencies (Colorado, Guam, Mississippi, North Carolina) required ten or more impact measures. Most states (fifteen, or 38%) required between three and eight

measures.

**Table 9  
Impact Measurements Reported by MJTFs**

State	Drug Markets	Sharing Crime	Coop.	Comm. Weapon Use	Drug Source	Purity	Displace	Calls Service	Gun Markets	Drug Use	Perps Interview	Citizen Survey	Victim Survey	Overdose	ER Admits
Alabama	√				√	√									
Alaska															
Arizona															
California															
Colorado	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√				
Connecticut															
Delaware															
Florida															
Georgia															
Guam	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√						
Hawaii	√	√	√	√	√	√	√								
Idaho	√	√	√	√	√								√		
Iowa															
Kansas															
Kentucky		√		√	√		√		√		√				
Louisiana	√	√	√		√		√		√	√					
Maine	√	√		√	√										
Maryland	√	√		√	√										
Michigan	√	√		√	√	√			√						
Minnesota															
Mississippi	√	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√		√	√		
Missouri	√											√			
Montana	√		√		√										
New Hampshire															
New Jersey															
New Mexico	√		√												
New York															
North Carolina	√	√	√	√	√	√		√	√			√			
North Dakota		√	√	√	√			√				√			
Ohio															
Oklahoma	√		√		√					√					
Oregon	√				√	√									
Pennsylvania															
Puerto Rico	√		√					√							
South Dakota															
Tennessee			√											√	√
Texas	√														
Utah															
Vermont	√		√		√	√		√							
West Virginia		√		√											
Wyoming	√	√		√	√	√	√			√	√				



Part II of the survey also asked the agencies to describe how much of the required information was actually provided by task forces, how the data were stored, and how the SAAs used these data. In response to a specific survey question, nineteen of the SAAs reported that task forces were able to supply 100% of the data required to be submitted. Guam and Missouri reported that over 90% of the information was supplied, New Mexico reported 60% was supplied, and Louisiana reported 50% was supplied. The remaining SAAs did not provide a specific proportion. Twenty-one (54%) of the SAAs responded that they maintained the required data in electronic form, while seventeen reported only manual storage. One SAA did not respond.

The general uses to which SAAs put data collected from task forces included: BJA reporting; program oversight; strategic planning; implementation assessments; effectiveness assessments; state policy development; dissemination to MJTFs; dissemination to law enforcement agencies; use by state Statistical Analysis Centers (SACs); dissemination to other criminal justice agencies; dissemination to the public; development of legislation; and dissemination to the media. These uses are presented by state in Table 10. Over 92% of the SAAs reported that they used the data for BJA reporting purposes. The next largest proportion, 89.7%, cited program monitoring, almost 75% mentioned strategic planning, roughly two-thirds referred to both process and impact assessments, and over half noted uses for policy development. Fewer than half reported other uses for the data. Colorado, Georgia, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, N. Carolina, N. Dakota, Oregon, Tennessee, Vermont, and Wyoming all reported ten or more uses of the data. At the other end of the scale, nine states reported fewer than five uses for the data.

Table 10 - SAA Uses of Required MJTF Information

State	BJA	Oversight	Planning	Implement	Effective	Policy	To MJTFs	To Police	SAC use	To CJ	To Public	Legislation	To Media
Alabama	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	✓			
Alaska	✓	✓	✓										
Arizona													
California	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓					✓	
Colorado	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Connecticut	✓	✓		✓		✓							
Delaware													
Florida	✓	✓		✓									
Georgia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		
Guam	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							
Hawaii	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓					✓
Idaho	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓		
Iowa		✓		✓				✓	✓				
Kansas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							
Kentucky	✓	✓	✓	✓									
Louisiana	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓				
Maine					✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
Maryland	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓				
Michigan		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Minnesota	✓	✓				✓	✓						
Mississippi	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Missouri	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Montana	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
New Hampshire	✓	✓	✓										
New Jersey	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							
New Mexico	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓								
New York	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				
North Carolina	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
North Dakota	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ohio	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓								
Oklahoma	✓	✓	✓	✓									
Oregon	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Pennsylvania													
Puerto Rico	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓							
South Dakota	✓								✓				
Tennessee	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Texas	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Utah	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓					
Vermont	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
West Virginia	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓						
Wyoming	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

### 3. Part III – Evaluation Requirements

The third section of the survey focused on evaluation requirements and activities. The SAAs were asked to describe their evaluation requirements and practices with respect to MJTFs. The results of these inquiries are presented in Table 11. Thirty-nine states and territories responded to Part III of the survey.

**Evaluation Practices and Requirements.** Seventeen states and territories (43%) of the responding group said that they require task forces to be evaluated. Twenty-seven of the responding SAAs (69%) reported that they conducted their own evaluations of MJTFs, and 22 responding SAAs (56%) reported that they urged task forces to conduct their own evaluations.<sup>7</sup> Seventeen SAAs (43%) said that they provided some technical assistance to task forces to help them conduct or commission evaluations. Nineteen of the responding SAAs (49%) also reported that they worked with their state Statistical Analysis Center to conduct evaluations. Only 16 states and territories (41%) reported setting aside funds for evaluations to be performed, and an even smaller number (10, or 26%) reported funding independent evaluations. These states included California, Colorado, Florida, Mississippi, New Mexico, Ohio, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, and West Virginia. In optional comments submitted with their survey responses, several SAAs expressed an interest in receiving technical assistance to conduct evaluations or Federal grant assistance in order to do so. Of the 39 SAAs surveyed, 21 provided information on evaluations completed or ongoing in their states over the past decade, as shown in Table 12.

**Table 11 – SAA Evaluation Requirements or Activities**

State	Own Evaluation	MJTF Evaluate	Work with SAC	Provide TA	Require Evaluation	Set aside funds	Fund Independent
Alabama	√	√			√		
Alaska	√						
Arizona	√	√	√	√	√		
California	√					√	√
Colorado	√	√		√	√	√	√
Connecticut	√	√	√	√	√		
Delaware							
Florida						√	√
Georgia	√	√	√	√	√		
Guam	√				√		
Hawaii		√		√	√		
Idaho	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Iowa			√	√		√	
Kansas	√				√		
Kentucky							
Louisiana	√	√	√		√	√	
Maine	√		√			√	
Maryland							
Michigan	√	√					
Minnesota	√		√				
Mississippi	√	√			√	√	√
Missouri	√				√	√	
Montana		√					
New Hampshire			√				
New Jersey	√	√					
New Mexico		√		√	√	√	√
New York	√	√	√	√	√		
North Carolina	√	√	√	√	√		
North Dakota	√	√	√	√			
Ohio	√	√	√	√		√	√
Oklahoma		√	√				
Oregon				√		√	
Pennsylvania			√			√	
Puerto Rico	√				√		
South Dakota			√				
Tennessee	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Texas	√	√		√			
Utah	√						√
Vermont	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
West Virginia		√	√			√	√
Wyoming	√	√			√		

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**Table 12  
Evaluations by State**

State	Status of evaluations	MJTFs in evaluation	Sent copy of report
Arizona	Completed	26	√
Connecticut	Ongoing	2	
Florida	Ongoing	8	
Georgia	Completed	31	
Guam	Completed	4	
Idaho	Completed	15	√
Iowa	Completed	17	√
Louisiana	Completed	6	√
Minnesota	Completed	22	√
Mississippi	Ongoing	18	√
North Carolina	Completed	4	√
New Mexico	Completed	9	
New York	Completed	12	
Ohio	Completed	1	
Oklahoma	Ongoing	30	
Pennsylvania	Completed	1	√
Puerto Rico	Completed	1	
Tennessee	Ongoing	25	
Utah	Completed	14	
Vermont	Completed	1	√
West Virginia	Completed	12	√

Table 12 also provides information on the numbers of task forces included in these ongoing or completed evaluations. Some of the 21 states providing evaluation information sent copies of such evaluations along with their completed survey responses. Summaries of these submitted evaluation reports are noted in Appendix C.<sup>6</sup> The other 18 agencies were unaware of any evaluations during this time. Connecticut reported that an evaluation was currently underway, but did not provide information on the nature of that evaluation

In additional comments to the survey, six SAAs reported that evaluations had been conducted on task forces in their jurisdictions even though they do not require evaluations.

Two states, Connecticut and Mississippi, reported that task force evaluations are conducted annually.

**Types of Evaluations.** Each agency that reported knowledge of a task force evaluation was asked to indicate the type of evaluation, the type of research design, and the funding source. Some agencies responded to these survey questions, while a few others simply sent a copy of the evaluation report, from which answers were obtained. In all, 20 responses were registered. The types of evaluations and research designs reported by the responding agencies are presented in Table 13. All of the responding SAAs said that such evaluations focused on task force implementation and operations. Of those twenty, ten SAAs reported that such evaluations additionally examined task force impacts (Florida, Georgia, Guam, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, and Utah).<sup>7</sup> Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, Ohio, and Tennessee reported that their evaluations focused on process, output, *and* impact.

As to research design, seventeen of the 20 responding SAAs reported that the evaluations in their jurisdictions incorporated a descriptive research design. Four states (Mississippi, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee) reported utilization of a correlational design. Only six states reported a more rigorous design. Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, and Vermont reported using comparison group designs, while Ohio and West Virginia reported time series approaches.<sup>8</sup> No SAA indicated use of an *ex post facto* case study or experimental design.

Table 13 – Type of Evaluation and Research Design

State	Implement	Output	Impact	Descrip.	Correlate	ExPostFacto	Quasi-Exp	Compare	Time Series	Exper
Alabama										
Alaska										
Arizona		√		√						
California										
Colorado										
Connecticut										
Delaware										
Florida	√	√	√					√		
Georgia		√	√					√		
Guam		√	√	√						
Hawaii										
Idaho		√		√						
Iowa	√	√		√						
Kansas										
Kentucky										
Louisiana	√	√	√	√						
Maine										
Maryland										
Michigan										
Minnesota	√			√						
Mississippi	√	√	√	√	√			√		
Missouri										
Montana										
New Hampshire										
New Jersey										
New Mexico	√		√	√						
New York		√		√						
North Carolina		√	√	√	√					
North Dakota										
Ohio	√	√	√		√				√	
Oklahoma	√	√		√						
Oregon										
Pennsylvania	√	√		√						
Puerto Rico		√		√						
South Dakota										
Tennessee	√	√	√	√	√					
Texas										
Utah		√	√	√						
Vermont	√	√		√				√		
West Virginia	√			√					√	
Wyoming										

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## **B. Task Force Survey**

Abt Associates sent out surveys to individual task forces in winter 2000. The Task Force Survey had a three-part structure that was functionally similar to the SAA Survey, and was designed to meet three objectives: (1) to identify the functions and organizational characteristics of individual Byrne-funded task forces; (2) to identify what kinds of operational and crime-related information are collected by such task forces; and (3) to identify what kinds of task force evaluations have been conducted, and how the findings were used.

In addition to providing a valuable perspective on task forces' data collection activities, the survey served as a current collective portrait of basic information about MJTFs, highlighting everything from task force missions to organization and management. While time constraints and the purpose of the survey – aimed at understanding how task forces use information – did not permit the investigators to probe demographic and other background information more deeply, the results nevertheless provided a strong foundation from which to launch subsequent inquiries in these areas.

The survey was sent to 757 subgrantees ( a copy of the Task Force Survey is appended hereto as Appendix D).<sup>9</sup> It was not known beforehand whether these task forces necessarily were receiving Byrne funding at the time. Of the 757 survey recipients, 315, or 42%, answered at least Part I of the survey, which addressed administrative information. Only thirteen states and territories had an overall response rate of less than 25% among their task forces. A slightly lower number – 307 – completed Part I and at least some of Part II, which addressed information collection (only a relatively few task forces did not complete all of Part II). Only forty-one subgrantees completed Part III



(Evaluation Detail Sheet), and an additional four subgrantees submitted copies of evaluation reports but failed to complete Part III for any of these reports.<sup>10</sup> Table 14 below summarizes the basic results of the survey by state.

**Table 14**  
**Individual Subgrantees Responding to Survey (at least Part I), by State**

State	No. of Agencies to which Survey Mailed	Number of Responses Received	State	No. of Agencies to which Survey Mailed	Number of Responses Received
AK	6	2 (33%)	MT	8	5 (63%)
AL	28	10 (30%)	NC	4	0 (0%)
AR	29	7 (24%)	ND	12	10 (83%)
AZ	31	12 (39%)	NH	22	7 (32%)
CA	45	20 (44%)	NJ	24	11 (46%)
CO	13	6 (46%)	NM	9	1 (11%)
CT	8	1 (13%)	NV	18	6 (33%)
FL	25	6 (24%)	NY	11	6 (55%)
GA	31	18 (58%)	OH	32	21 (66%)
GU	3	0 (0%)	OK	30	6 (20%)
HI	9	3 (33%)	OR	7	5 (71%)
IA	24	13 (54%)	PA	1	0 (0%)
ID	21	3 (14%)	PR	1	1 (100%)
IL	1	0 (0%)	SC	6	0 (0%)
IN	36	14 (39%)	SD	2	2 (100%)
KS	6	1 (17%)	TN	36	13 (36%)
KY	8	3 (37%)	TX	48	24 (50%)
LA	35	14 (40%)	UT	14	6 (43%)
MA	0	0 (0%)	VA	2	1 (50%)
ME	1	1 (100%)	VT	1	0 (0%)
MI	22	18 (82%)	WV	13	5 (38%)
MN	22	11 (50%)	WY	8	1 (13%)
MO	27	14 (52%)	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>757</b>	<b>315 (42%)</b>
MS	17	7 (41%)			

A great deal of caution should be used in interpreting the results of the task force surveys due to the very low response rate. The findings may not be representative of the entire identified population of task forces to which surveys were originally sent. In particular, there may be an inherent bias in the results if, as one might suspect, the task forces most experienced and knowledgeable about the benefits of evaluation would be the ones more likely to take the time to respond and return the surveys.

### **1. Part I – Background/Administrative Information**

The first part of the survey sought to collect basic background information on the organization and management of each task force. In addition to asking subgrantees to identify their task forces by their official name, the survey asked respondents to state when the task force was officially formed and when it began receiving Byrne funding. It also asked the respondents to state how many years it received such funding.

Although 12 subgrantees failed to report when their task force was formed, of those responding, only 6% were formed in the 1970s, 42% were formed in the 1980s, and 52% were formed in the 1990s. According to the responses received, about 59% of the task forces were formed since the Byrne Program was Congressionally authorized in 1988 (i.e., since 1989). This was a surprisingly low number, since the Byrne program is widely viewed as having launched the vast majority of task forces. The numbers of task forces reported to have been created since 1970 are summarized in Table 15 by year.

**Table 15**  
**Reported Numbers of Task Forces Officially Formed Since 1970, by Year**

No. of Task Forces	Year of Formation	No. of Task Forces	Year of Formation
2	1970	11	1986
4	1971	34	1987
4	1972	46	1988
2	1973	20	1989
1	1974	38	1990
1	1975	28	1991
1	1976	16	1992
1	1977	17	1993
1	1978	9	1994
1	1979	12	1995
2	1980	11	1996
3	1981	11	1997
3	1982	11	1998
1	1984	6	1999
6	1985	303	TOTAL

Of the 290 subgrantees that responded to the question about the onset of Byrne funding, 38 (13%) reported that they had received funding before 1988,<sup>11</sup> while 153, or 53% of the respondents reported that they began receiving Byrne funds in the first four years of the program. Table 16 below summarizes information received about the dates that Byrne funding purportedly began for multijurisdictional task forces.

**Table 16**  
**Year that Byrne Funding Began, by Numbers of Task Forces**  
**(as reported back by individual task forces)**

Year of Onset of Byrne Funding	Numbers of Task Forces
1972*	1
1978*	1
1986*	6
1987*	30
1988*	55
1989	21
1990	48
1991	30
1992	20
1993	15

1994	9
1995	16
1996	12
1997	10
1998	11
1999	5
TOTAL	290

\* Funding referred to in these responses logically means other than Byrne Program funding

Fifty-two percent (151) of the 292 reporting task forces stated that they had received such funding for 10 years or more. Table 17 shows the results of the question querying MJTFs about the number of years during which they received Byrne funding.<sup>12</sup>

**Table 17**  
**Number of Years of Byrne Program Funding, by Numbers of Task Forces**

<b>Number of Years of Byrne Program Funding</b>	<b>Numbers of Task Forces</b>
0 <sup>13</sup>	22
1	6
2	11
3	12
4	15
5	15
6	12
7	20
8	17
9	33
10	52
11	18
12	57
13	20
14	4
TOTAL	292

In order to help ascertain the mission(s) of the task forces, the survey asked the recipients to identify what kinds of crime types or problems the task force was formed to address. The responses, which could be multiple, were as follows: drugs (307, or 97%); violent crime (78, or 25%); gangs (56, or 18%); organized crime (54 or 17%); weapons offenses (39, or 12%); juvenile crime (16, or 5%); auto theft (12, or 4%); computer/electronic crime (7, or 2%); and white collar crime (4, or 1%). Twenty-four

subgrantees (or 7%) checked the "other" category, examples of which included burglary, fugitives, and money laundering. These results are summarized in Table 18.

**Table 18**  
**Primary Missions of Task Forces by Principal Type of Crime Addressed**

Missions by Type of Crime	% of Task Forces Designating as Primary Mission
Drugs	97%
Violent Crime	25%
Gangs	18%
Organized Crime	17%
Weapons Offenses	12%
Juvenile Crime	5%
Auto Theft	4%
Computer Crime/Electronic Crime	2%
White Collar Crime	1%

The survey also asked about the number of agencies *formally* represented on task forces. Of the 315 agencies that responded, most (70%) said their task forces included 10 agencies or fewer. Thirty-three reported no agencies formally represented on their task force. Of those reporting some formal agency representation (282), the average number was eight. The distribution of reported agency representation appears in Table 19.

**Table 19**  
**No. of Agencies Represented on Task Forces, by No. of Responding Task Forces<sup>14</sup>**

No. of Reporting Agencies	No. of Agencies Represented on Task Force	No. of Reporting Agencies	No. of Agencies Represented on Task Force
33	0	5	16
9	1	3	17
23	2	1	18
24	3	1	19
22	4	1	20
37	5	2	21
29	6	1	22
20	7	1	23
17	8	1	24
16	9	3	25
21	10	1	28
13	11	1	29
8	12	2	40
8	13	1	41
5	14	1	127
4	15	1	141

In a high percentage of cases (71%, or 201 out of 282 responding task forces), local and county law enforcement agencies maintained task force representation. State and Federal law enforcement participation was less common – 57% (160) and 29% (82), respectively. Other law enforcement agencies mentioned as having representation included college police, tribal police, and corrections departments (a total of 18, or 6%, were designated as “other”). These results are summarized in Table 20 below.

**Table 20**  
**Aggregate Percentages of Law Enforcement Agency Participation on Task Forces**

<b>Type of Agency Represented on Task Forces</b>	<b>Percentage of Agency Participation</b>
Local (municipal) law enforcement	71%
County law enforcement	71%
State law enforcement	57%
Federal law enforcement	29%
Other	6%

As for non-law enforcement agency representation on task forces, state and local prosecutor representation was mentioned most frequently by subgrantees responding to the survey (118 or 42%, and 117, or 41%, respectively), followed by probation representatives (44, or 16%), U.S. Attorneys (31 or 11%), parole agency representatives (21, or 7%), court system representatives (16, or 6%), community or citizen groups (11, or 4%), and victim/advocacy service groups (4, or 1%). Thirty-four, or 12% designated “other” agencies, including the National Guard. Eight respondents, or nearly 3%, indicated no non-law enforcement agency representation on their task forces. These results are summarized in Table 21 below.

**Table 21**  
**Aggregate Percentages of Non-Law Enforcement Agency Participation on Task Forces**

Local (municipal) prosecutor	42%
State prosecutor	41%
Probation	16%
U.S. Attorney	11%
Parole	7%
Court System	6%
Community/citizen groups	4%
Victim/advocacy services	1%
Other	12%
No non-law enforcement agencies	3%

The survey also asked subgrantees to identify the primary function of their task force, and were given a choice of five alternatives: law enforcement; prosecution; social services; policy oversight/policy development/strategic planning, and "other." Of the 309 subgrantees that responded to this question, 302 named law enforcement as the primary function, while six named prosecution. One task force checked "other."

Subgrantees were further asked to report on the number of full-time and part-time positions assigned to the task force. Eight subgrantee agencies out of 315 reported that there were no full-time or part-time positions assigned to their task forces, while five reported only part-time and no full-time positions. The following Table 22 identifies the median number of full-time positions assigned to task forces in each state. This may serve as one rough indicator of the formality and/or seriousness with which task forces are regarded by their reporting agencies. Only four jurisdictions—Arkansas, Maine, Puerto Rico, and Virginia—reported a median figure of more than 10 FT positions assigned to task forces.

**Table 22**  
**Median Number of Full-Time Positions Assigned to Task Forces**  
**Reported by Byrne-Funded Task Force Subgrantees, Distributed Across States**

State	Median Number of FT Positions	State	Median Number of FT Positions	State	Median Number of FT Positions	State	Median Number of FT Positions
AK	21	IA	0	MO	4	OK	1
AL	4	ID	4	MS	5	OR	5
AR	4	IN	0	MT	1	RI	11
AZ	0	KA	2	ND	0	SD	0
CA	3	KY	5	NH	0	TN	0
CO	2	LA	1	NJ	7	TX	5
CT	5	MA	2	NM	5	UT	0
FL	2	ME	36	NV	3	VA	19
GA	5	MI	3	NY	1	WV	6
HI	0	MN	1	OH	1	WY	0

Subgrantees were also asked to describe how their task forces were managed. Of the 310 subgrantees that responded to this particular question, 199, or 64%, reported that their task forces are managed by an executive board/steering committee and 117, or 36%, said they were managed by a single task force agency. Twenty-two, or 7%, indicated that all agencies have equal operational oversight over task force operations, while five task forces, or 2% reported that operational oversight rotates among agencies over time. Twenty-seven subgrantees, or 9%, reported "other" arrangements.<sup>15</sup>

Asked about whether they operated from a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or similar agreement "defining responsibilities and operations," 276 out of 310 respondents (89%) reported that the task forces operated from an MOU or similar agreement, and of those, 246 (89%) have formal policies and procedures that complement an MOU. Sixty-one percent of the subgrantees (190) further reported that their task forces had a written strategic plan and 80% of these respondents (151) reported that this



plan is revised or updated regularly.<sup>16</sup> Fully 49% of reporting subgrantees (154 of 315) reported that their task force operates under some kind of statutory requirement or legislation.

As shown in Table 23, subgrantees were also asked to identify which activities were reported to their SAA on a regular basis. Of the 307 subgrantees responding, and with multiple responses permitted, expenditures were identified by 285, or 93% of the task forces, achievement of milestones by 242, or 79%, staffing by 205, or 67%, agency agreements by 164, or 53%, use of overtime by 125, or 40%, organizational meetings by 119, or 39%, and development of policies and procedures by 107, or 35%. Fifty-five task forces, or 18%, indicated that other activities were reported, although many of these could have been included in the existing categories provided by the survey.<sup>17</sup>

**Table 23**  
**Most Common Subjects of Task Force Reporting to SAAs**

Expenditures	93%
Achievement of milestones	79%
Staffing	67%
Agency agreements	53%
Use of overtime	40%
Organizational meetings	39%
Development of policies and procedures	35%

As for the frequency of SAA reporting, of the 309 task forces answering this question, 173, or 55% said they reported on a quarterly basis, and 102, or 32%, said they reported on a monthly basis. Twenty-five subgrantees, or 8%, stated they reported on a semi-annual basis, while six agencies, or 2%, indicated an annual reporting cycle. Three, or 1%, indicated other reporting arrangements,<sup>18</sup> while six subgrantees, or 2%, failed to respond to the question.

## **2. Part II--Collection and Reporting of Information**

In Part II, the task force survey asked subgrantee task forces to summarize information about data collection and reporting. Three hundred seven (307) task forces responded to at least some questions in Part II. Part II information proved useful in determining which task forces collected various kinds of impact measures and/or had experience with impact evaluations. Depending on the specific missions of the task forces involved and the degree to which they clustered in particular states, this information was useful in serving as a rough indicator, along with comparable SAA Survey information, of which states might merit consideration as possible site visit locations. Site visits to particular states and task forces would permit certain suppositions about collection of impact measures and impact evaluation experience on the part of various SAAs and task forces to be verified and in turn facilitate selection of three states for pre-testing of promising new evaluation methodologies chosen by the project.

Synthesizing responses about particular types of information collection, the survey revealed that certain types of operational information were gathered and maintained by a large proportion of task forces. Agencies were given twelve different types of operational information from which to choose, and could provide multiple answers. They could also select a thirteenth option, indicating that "other" types of operational information were collected. Of 306 subgrantees responding to the question about operational information collection, 301 (98%) reported that they collected arrest information, 291 (95%) collected data on the number of drug seizures and amounts seized (by weight), 264 (86%) tracked weapons seizures, 226 (74%) collected data on convictions, 225 (73%) gathered data on the street value of drugs seized, 200 (65%)

maintained data on cases opened and/or closed, and 177 (58%) collected information on citizen complaints. Only 108 (35%) gathered information on field interviews and/or traffic stops, and only 54 (18%) tracked the purity levels of drugs seized. "Other" types of information were reported by 78, or 25% of the task forces.<sup>19</sup> These results are summarized in Table 24.<sup>20</sup>

**Table 24**  
**Percentage of Task Forces Collecting Various Types of Operational Information**

<b>Type of Operational Information Collected</b>	<b>% of Task Forces Collecting Information</b>
Arrest information	98%
Drug seizures	95%
Amounts of drugs seized (by weight)	95%
Weapons seizures	86%
Convictions	74%
Street value of drugs seized	73%
Number of cases opened/closed	65%
Citizen complaints	58%
Field Interviews/traffic stops	35%
Purity levels of drugs seized	18%
Other types of information	25%

Such operational information was reported to be disseminated by 290, or 94% of the 306 subgrantees responding to this question on the survey. Of those 290, information is reportedly forwarded to SAAs by 258, or 84% of task forces, to task force members by 204, or 66% of task forces, and to local government agencies by 109, or 36% of task forces. Ninety-four, or 31% of responding task forces reported forwarding such information to the Federal Government.

As Table 25 indicates, 75% of the 306 subgrantees responding to the next question stated that they collected 7 or more types of operational information (out of the 12 options offered on the survey). Those collecting nine or more types of information were examined more closely to determine their suitability, together with other task forces, for site visits later in Phase I of the project.

**Table 25**  
**Number of Subgrantees Reporting Collection of**  
**Multiple Types of Operational Information (out of 12 types)**

No. of Task Forces	No. of Types of Operational Information Collected
24	12
19	11
39	10
43	9
52	8
52	7
40	6
17	5
8	4
7	3
1	2
1	1
4	0

In terms of the geographic location of the task forces reporting the highest number of types of operational information collected, Table 26 shows that only ten states or territories (Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Missouri, New Hampshire, Oregon, Puerto Rico, Texas, Utah, and Virginia) had responding task forces that collected a median number of 9 or more types of operational information. While these figures are of limited significance, they did prompt further inquiry into the information collection characteristics of individual task forces within those jurisdictions.

**Table 26**  
**Median Number of Types of Operational Information Collected by Responding**  
**Subgrantees, by Jurisdiction (out of 12 types)**

Jurisdiction	Median No. of Types of Operational Information Collected by Task Forces	Jurisdiction	Median No. of Types of Operational Information Collected by Task Forces
Kentucky	10	Tennessee	8
Puerto Rico	10	Arkansas	8
New Hampshire	9.5	Mississippi	8
Virginia	9	Wyoming	8
Alabama	9	Indiana	8
Missouri	9	North Dakota	7.5

Utah	9	Michigan	7.5
Oregon	9	California	7.5
Texas	9	Nevada	7
Georgia	9	Maine	7
New York	8.5	Montana	7
Louisiana	8.5	Colorado	7
Arizona	8	Iowa	7
Ohio	8	Alaska	6.5
West Virginia	8	Florida	6.5
New Mexico	8	South Dakota	6
Minnesota	8	Hawaii	6
Idaho	8	Kansas	5
New Jersey	8	Connecticut	1

The survey also queried task force subgrantees about their collection of various kinds of crime-related information. Seventeen different types of crime-related information were listed in the survey, along with the option of designating "other" types of information collection. Synthesizing responses about these particular types of information, it is possible to determine that a significant number of task forces collect multiple types of crime-related information.

Of the 306 agencies responding to the question about what types of crime-related information are collected, 135 agencies (44%) reported on changes in drug markets, while 134 (43%) reported on sources of drugs. Regarding law enforcement cooperation, 128 subgrantees (42%) reported that they collected information on enhanced information-sharing between agencies, and 109 (36%) reported on generally enhanced agency cooperation. Ninety-seven (31%) said they reported on enhanced resource-sharing.

Other information collection categories included reported crime (110, or 36%), interviews with/surveys of perpetrators (103, or 34%), calls for service (85, or 28%), drug use (e.g., self-reported, urinalysis, blood testing, 79, or 26%), purity of drugs seized (44,

or 14%), overdoses (44, or 14%), changes in weapons markets (37, or 12%), crime displacement (22, or 7%), crime-related emergency room admissions (19, or 6%), citizen surveys (9 or 3%), and victimization surveys (3, or 1%). Seven percent (21 subgrantees) of the task forces responding to this survey indicated that other kinds of information were collected, including pharmacy records, drug pricing information, destination of drug deliveries, and repeat drug house locations. These results from this question are captured in Table 27.

**Table 27**  
**Types of Crime-Related Data Formally Collected by Task Forces, by Percentage**

Type of Crime-Related Information Collected	% of Task Forces Collecting Information
Changes in drug markets	44%
Sources of drugs	43%
Enhanced information-sharing among agencies	42%
Information on enhanced agency cooperation	36%
Information on reported crime	36%
Interviews with/surveys of perpetrators	34%
Enhanced information on agency resource sharing	31%
Calls for service	28%
Drug use	26%
Purity levels of drugs seized	14%
Overdoses	14%
Changes in weapons markets	12%
Crime displacement	7%
Crime-related emergency room admissions	6%
Citizen surveys	3%
Victimization surveys	1%
Other types of information	21%

As Table 28 indicates, 130 (42%) of the 307 subgrantees responding to the next question stated that they collected 5 or more types of crime-related information (out of the 17 listed types), while 51 (17%) stated that they collected 8 or more types of crime-related information. Those collecting eight or more types of information were examined more closely to help determine whether they might be a suitable organization to meet with as part of site visits to particular states later in Phase I of the project.

**Table 28**  
**Numbers of Task Forces Reporting Collection**  
**of Multiple Types of Crime-Related Information (out of 17 types)**

No. of Task Forces	No. of Types of Crime-Related Data Collected
1	17
1	15
1	14
3	13
5	12
6	11
11	10
9	9
14	8
21	7
29	6
29	5
28	4
37	3
22	2
33	1
57	0

Geographically, Table 29 shows that only six states or territories (Virginia, Minnesota, New Mexico, Wyoming, Puerto Rico, and Alabama) had task forces collecting a median number of six or more types of crime-related information. While these figures are also of limited significance, they did prompt further inquiry into the data collection practices of task forces within those jurisdictions.

**Table 29**  
**Median Number of Types of Crime-Related Information**  
**Collected by Responding Task Forces, by State (out of 17 types)**

State	Median No. of Types of Crime-Related Information	State	Median No. of Types of Crime-Related Information
Virginia	12	Alaska	3.5
New Mexico	11	Colorado	3.5
Wyoming	7	Utah	3.5
Alabama	7	Indiana	3
Puerto Rico	6	West Virginia	3
Minnesota	6	Arkansas	3
Ohio	5.5	California	3
Florida	5.5	Connecticut	3
Louisiana	5	Iowa	3

Hawaii	5	Kansas	3
Oregon	5	Montana	3
Kentucky	5	New York	3
Georgia	4.5	South Dakota	3
Michigan	4.5	Nevada	2.5
Missouri	4.5	New Hampshire	1.5
New Jersey	4.5	Arizona	1
Oklahoma	4	Tennessee	1
Idaho	4	Texas	1
North Dakota	4	Maine	0

Finally, the survey queried subgrantees about the types of supporting information they collect relative to either the operations, or the crime-related impact, of task forces. The respondents were given a choice of four options: (1) press articles/news reports; (2) citizen letters/ remarks/testimonials; (3) government letters/remarks/testimonials; and (4) “other.” Of the 307 subgrantees that responded to this question, 212, or 69% indicated that they used press articles and news reports, 135, or 44% said they relied on citizen letters and testimonials, 131, or 43% stated that they collected government letters or remarks. Fifteen task forces designated other examples of information collection, including case highlight reports and success story compilations, meeting minutes, and letters of support from member institutions.

### **3. Part III--Task Force Evaluations**

Part III of the survey sought to elicit detailed information about formal task force evaluations that have been completed or are being completed.<sup>21</sup> Only 41 subgrantees completed the Evaluation Detail Sheet (EDS) in Part III, so the response totals were quite small and probably unrepresentative. Four additional subgrantees submitted copies of evaluation reports, but did not complete the EDS for any of the evaluations. Fifteen subgrantees responded that the evaluations conducted on their particular task forces were



part of an evaluation of other task forces or agencies, while 26 said their task forces had been subject of stand-alone evaluations.

Two questions posed in the EDS were of great significance in reviewing the evaluations reportedly conducted. The first sought to have the respondent state which of three general types of evaluations were conducted: (1) implementation/process evaluations; (2) operational/outputs evaluations; and (3) impact evaluations (For definitions of these terms as used in the survey, see appendix D). The second question sought to have the respondents identify which type of research designs were utilized. Seven alternatives were offered: (1) Descriptive Research Design; (2) Correlational Research Design; (3) *Ex Post Facto* Research Design; (4) Quasi-Experimental Design; (5) Comparison Group Research Design; (6) Time Series Design; and (7) True Experiment (the definitions of these designs for purposes of the survey appear on pp. 8-9 thereof).

Although it is unclear how well the respondents understood the definitions of, or distinctions between, various kinds of evaluations and research designs, the following responses were obtained. With multiple answers available, 32 of the 41 subgrantees filling out the EDS (78%) said that they had conducted an operational or output-oriented evaluation, while 21 (51%) of the respondents indicated that they had conducted an implementation or process evaluation. Only eleven (27%) stated that they had conducted an impact evaluation. With respect to the funding of these evaluations, 14 (34%) subgrantees indicated that the task force itself provided the funding, followed by responses that an SAA (12, or 29%), the Federal government (8, or 19%), a local government unit (5, or 12%), and a private foundation (1, or 2%) providing such funding.

The survey also canvassed information about the dissemination and use of evaluation results. Answering a query about the recipients of task force evaluation information, and with multiple answers permissible, 26 of the 41 responding subgrantees (63%) said they provided results of the evaluations to SAAs, followed by local government agencies (23, or 56%), task force members (22, or 54%), organizations represented on the task force in another capacity (18, or 44%), Federal government agencies (11, or 27%), the press (7, or 17%), the general public or the community (6, or 15%), and other task force funding agencies (5, or 12%). Three task forces designated other information recipients, including a state Department of Justice and a county court system. As for the use of evaluation results – again, with multiple answers possible – 29 (71%) of 41 subgrantees indicated that results were used to report progress to state or task force funding agencies. In descending order, other designated uses included strategic planning (23, or 56%), programmatic oversight (23, or 56%), policy and procedures development or revision (18, or 44%), and development of legislation (5, or 12%).

The survey also inquired of task forces what kinds of specific task force-and general crime-related information were analyzed for the evaluations, and whether computerized mapping or geographic information systems (GIS) were used for analysis. With multiple answers possible, the following responses in Table 30 about the use of task force-related information in evaluations were obtained from the 41 responding subgrantees.

**Table 30**  
**Task Force-Related Activity Information Analyzed for Reported Evaluations**

<b>Type of Task Force-Related Activity Information</b>	<b>Nos. of Task Forces Using Such Information for Evaluations</b>	<b>Nos. of Task Forces Using Computerized Mapping/GIS for Analysis</b>
Arrests	38 (93%)	3
Convictions	26 (63%)	1
Field Interviews/traffic stops	6 (15%)	0
Surveillance	6 (15%)	0
Cases opened/closed	31 (76%)	2
Number of drug seizures	36 (88%)	2
Amount of drugs seized (weight)	33 (80%)	2
Street value of drugs seized	22 (54%)	1
Purity levels of drugs seized	2 (5%)	0
Citizen complaints/reports	6 (15%)	1
Citizen complaint dispositions	1 (2%)	0
Weapons seizures	26 (63%)	1
Agency cooperation	20 (49%)	N/A.
Resource sharing	13 (32%)	N/A.
Information sharing between agencies	12 (29%)	N/A.
Policies/procedures	15 (37%)	N/A.
Strategic planning	11 (27%)	N/A.
Meeting minutes/notes	10 (24%)	N/A.
MOU's	13 (32%)	N/A.
Other agreements	2 (5%)	N/A.
Legislation	3 (7%)	N/A.
Other (e.g., asset forfeitures)	7 (17%)	0

As for use of general crime-related information, the following responses in Table 31 were obtained from the 41 respondents that reported conducting evaluations.

**Table 31**  
**Use of General Crime-Related Information Analyzed for Reported Evaluations**

Type of General Crime-Related Information	Nos. of Task Forces Using Such Information for Evaluations	Nos. of Task Forces Using Computerized Mapping/GIS for Analysis
Calls for service	7 (2%)	2
Reported crime	10 (24%)	2
Victimization surveys	0 (0%)	0
Citizen surveys	2 (5%)	0
Drug use (self-reported, urinalysis, blood testing )	6 (15%)	0
Overdoses	3 (7%)	1
Changes in drug markets	10 (24%)	0
Purity of drugs seized	2 (5%)	0
Source of drugs (foreign and domestic)	5 (12%)	0
Changes in weapons markets	4 (10%)	0
Weapons use	4 (10%)	0
Crime displacement	2 (5%)	0
Interviews with/surveys of perpetrators	5 (12%)	0
Crime-related emergency room admissions	2 (5%)	0
Other	0 (0%)	0

Due to the limited number of task forces responding to Part III, it was possible to examine the EDSs in detail for the 41 responsive subgrantees, and additionally to examine the evaluations submitted by the four other subgrantees. Of the 45 subgrantees that submitted an EDS and/or evaluation, virtually all of them submitted monitoring or progress reports. A few subgrantees submitted SAA-commissioned reports that dealt with *multiple* task forces within a state, and that were previously identified through the SAA survey. In most cases, the reports received from the task forces indicated that they had not distinguished between monitoring reports and actual evaluations. Indeed, despite the definitions provided by the survey instrument about research designs, a number of the evaluations cited by the respondents turned out to be mere statistical summaries. Only two genuine evaluations were cited by the various responding task forces – two process

and impact evaluations of multiple task forces conducted for the state of Colorado and the state of Georgia, respectively.

### **C. Summary and Recommendations**

The two surveys proved very useful in several regards. First, the SAA survey revealed that there were, as of winter 2000, at least 757 active task forces operating in 41 states and territories, and likely more than 800 in existence across the total number of 56 states and territories. A second benefit of the surveys was the receipt of additional, up-to-date information about task force longevity, missions, and membership. The task forces that returned surveys revealed that they were still overwhelmingly focused on drug enforcement (97%) (some task forces also secondarily identified violent crime (25%) and gangs (18%)); more likely than not received Byrne funding for a decade or more (52%); featured 10 agencies or fewer as members (70%) (the average number being eight); and had significant state (51%) and Federal (26%) agency membership.

The central benefit of the surveys – both from the immediate standpoint of this project and in view of its potential importance to the research community – was to document in some detail the information collection practices of SAAs and task forces, as well as their use and understanding of evaluations. From the vantage point of SAAs, the surveys showed that while virtually all states required reporting on arrests, amount and monetary value of drugs seized, and weapons seized, a much smaller number collected impact-oriented data—chiefly crime data and changes in drug markets. Only 43% of the 41 states and territories responding to the survey reported that they required task forces to be evaluated. Of the 21 SAAs reporting that evaluations were either ongoing or

completed within the past 10 years, fully 85% were described by the SAAs themselves as focusing on task force operations and activities.

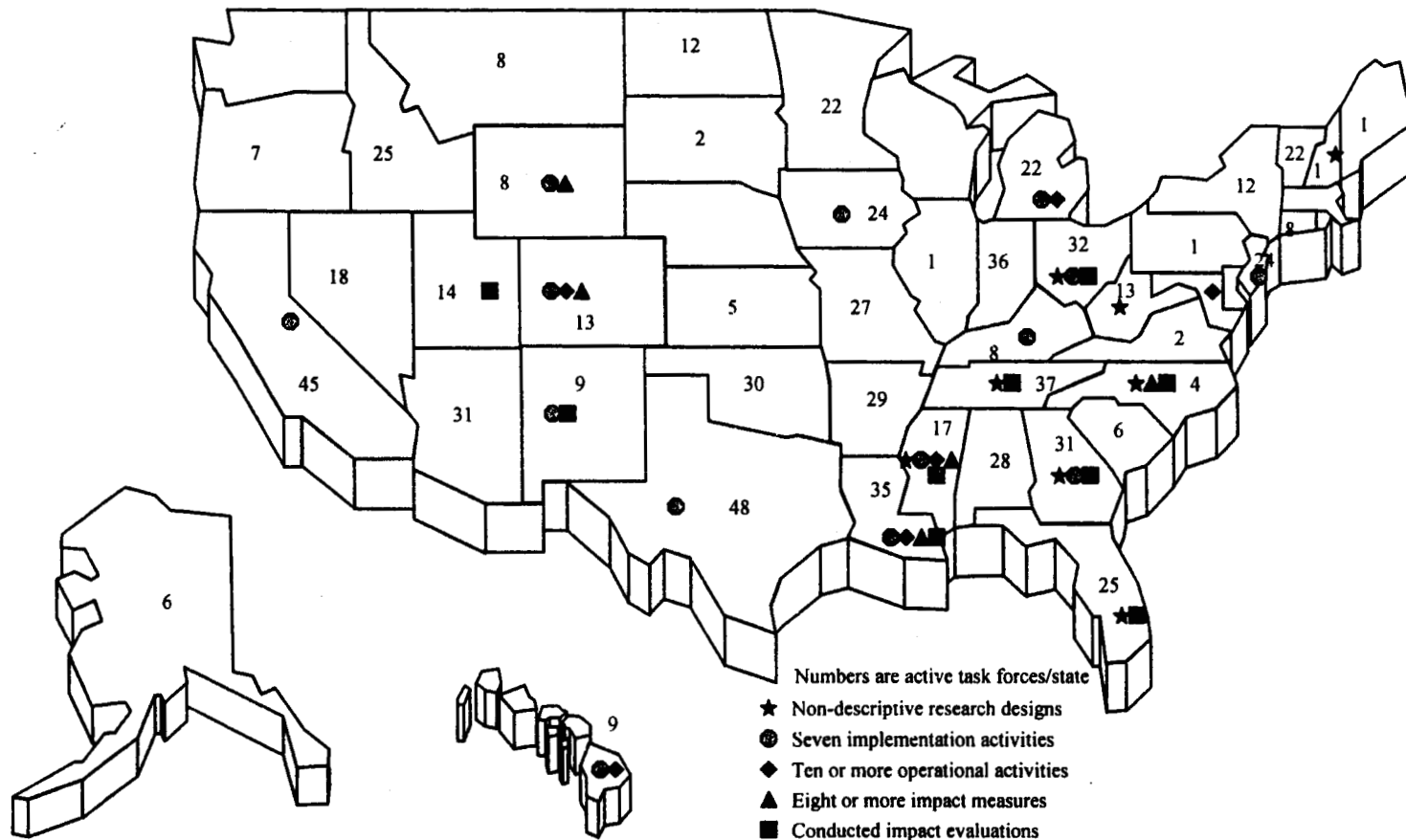
The task force survey painted a similar picture of data collection and evaluations focused on process and outputs. However, while the overwhelming majority of responding task forces said they collected operational information on arrests, drug seizures and amounts, weapons seizures, and cases opened and closed, a surprising 74% said they collected information on convictions. At the same time, responding task forces said that they collected impact-oriented information on changes in drug markets (44%) and reported crime (36%), outcome-oriented data on enhanced information sharing between agencies (42%), and enhanced interagency cooperation (35%). In the end, however, only two of the very few evaluations cited by the 41 responding task forces appeared more rigorous than program monitoring reports or process assessments. This is fully consistent with the relative paucity of outcome and impact-oriented studies encountered during our literature review.

The foregoing information also proved indispensable in helping us, NIJ and BJA determine which states would serve as site visit locations. There was substantial overlap between the two surveys as to the states identified as the most promising data collection sites. The SAA survey identified Mississippi, Louisiana, Illinois, Ohio, North Carolina, Georgia, and Colorado as sites reporting (1) the collection of substantial implementation, operational, or impact measures, (2) the use of non-descriptive research designs, and/or (3) the actual conduct of impact evaluations. The SAA survey also identified Tennessee, New Mexico, and Florida as promising sites that were close behind in these categories.

Meanwhile, the task force survey tended to support Louisiana, Mississippi, Georgia, and Colorado as the most promising sites along these lines. Those states all had reported conducting or commissioning impact-oriented evaluations, and all showed relatively high median numbers for most operational and impact data measure collection by task forces. Moreover, certain individual task forces in those states reported very high numbers in terms of types of data collection. Finally, examination of the impact reports in Georgia and Colorado showed those studies to be serious evaluations.<sup>22</sup> Putting all of these factors together yielded the map on the following page. As is evident from the map, the states of Colorado, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Georgia stood out as having the most indicia relevant to our site selection and overall project goals. Ohio, Florida, Tennessee, North Carolina, and New Mexico also figured as possibilities (with the actual conduct of purported impact evaluations standing out as an influential indicator). Although its submission was received too late to be formally included in the survey results, Illinois' responses clearly put it in the finalist category, based on both data collection issues and experience with multiple impact-oriented evaluations.

The actual process of site selection is discussed in the following section.

## MJTF Site Candidates Evaluation Designs and Measures





## **V. Site Visits**

The purpose of the Phase I site visits was threefold: (1) to obtain more detailed information about data collection practices and capabilities among SAAs and individual task forces; (2) to obtain a general indication of whether certain SAAs – and to a lesser extent, individual task forces – might serve as future research partners in pre-testing and then formally testing various task force evaluation methodologies; and (3) to obtain a better understanding of various task forces' organization and operation, so as to inform the development of evaluation methodologies grounded in the practical reality and diversity of task forces' work.

As discussed below, the states ultimately selected for site visits were Colorado, Illinois, Georgia, Oregon, and Mississippi. These visits turned up a rich store of information about SAA evaluation practices and accomplishments, as well as very significant insights into the actual work of individual task forces and the challenges of devising meaningful and easy-to-use evaluation methodologies. Such information and insights are summarized at the end of this section.

### **A. Site Selection**

Site selection involved decisions about which states, and then which task forces, to visit. As discussed above, as a result of the two surveys, a significant pool of states emerged for site visit consideration. These included Mississippi, Louisiana, Illinois, Tennessee, Ohio, North Carolina, Georgia, Colorado, New Mexico, and Florida. All of these states (1) had SAAs and individual task forces reporting the collection of

substantial implementation, operational, and/or impact measures, (2) reported the use of non-descriptive research designs, and/or (3) the actual conduct of impact evaluations.

The process by which Abt Associates selected six states for site visits, as outlined in its proposal to NIJ, had several stages. First, we again examined survey data showing that the states with the strongest congruence of results among the two surveys were Louisiana, Mississippi, Georgia, and Colorado. We then took another look at our task force evaluation literature and examined where some of the strongest impact evaluations had been conducted. This review suggested that Colorado, Illinois, and possibly Georgia were strong contenders, along with Florida and Ohio, North Carolina, and Tennessee. A third step consisted of soliciting input from BJA, particularly as to the capabilities of various SAAs. This discussion yielded one other suggestion – the state of Oregon – that was viewed favorably by BJA due to the generation of what were reputed to be high-quality Byrne Program evaluations in that state (albeit in other subject areas), as well as geographic location favoring overall site diversity. BJA also recommended Florida and Illinois for site visits based on their organizational leadership (Illinois for evaluation capabilities and Florida for reportedly having an advanced Byrne Program management information system) and their geographic diversity.

Based on all of the foregoing factors, Abt Associates ultimately selected Colorado, Illinois, Georgia, Louisiana, Oregon, and Florida for site visits. When shortly afterward it turned out that Louisiana's SAA apparently could not accommodate a relatively near-term site visit, Mississippi was readily chosen as the sixth state based on strong survey results, including the collection of large numbers of operational activities and impact measures by the SAA and individual task forces, as well as the use of non-

descriptive research designs in task force evaluations and the existence of several impact evaluations.

## **B. Site Visits to Six States**

Site visits were conducted to the six selected states in July and August, 2000. In addition to visits to the states' respective SAAs, the investigators chose 2-4 individual task forces for interviews and background research. Selection of the individual task forces was based on a combination of factors, including (1) the number and types of operational and crime-related information they collected; (2) their missions and the demographic characteristics of their jurisdictions (in order to provide some diversity among the task forces); and (3) their relative physical accessibility given the time constraints of the Phase I schedule. The last factor meant that most of the task forces visited as part of the initial site visits were generally located within an average of 1-4 hours' driving time from the state capital, although in Georgia, Florida, and Oregon, at least one task force in each state was visited that was 5-8 hours' drive from the capital.

The following descriptions briefly summarize the findings from the six initial site visits. After these findings were disseminated among Abt Associates investigators, each of whom had visited 2-3 sites, several telephone and face-to-face discussions were conducted to review the relative organizational and informational advantages and disadvantages of each site in relation to the needs of the project. Abt personnel also discussed which kinds of impact methodologies and measures might be tested in any or all of the six states.

**1. Colorado**

West Metro Multijurisdictional Drug Task Force  
Larimer County Multijurisdictional Drug Task Force

**2. Mississippi**

Adams-Natchez Metro Narcotics Unit  
Capital Cities Metro Narcotics Unit  
Southwest Metropolitan Drug Task Force

**3. Georgia**

East Central Georgia Drug Task Force  
Multi-Agency Crack Enforcement (MACE) Drug Task Force  
West Georgia Multijurisdictional Drug Task Force  
East Metro County Drug Enforcement Team

**4. Illinois**

North Central Illinois Metropolitan Enforcement Group  
DuPage County Metropolitan Enforcement Group  
Lake County Metropolitan Enforcement Group

**5. Oregon**

Regional Organized Crime Narcotics Task Force (ROCN)  
North Coast Anti-Drug Task Force  
South Coast Interagency Drug Task Force

**6. Florida**

Gadsden County Sheriff's Narcotics Task Force  
Jackson County Drug Task Force  
Combined Law Enforcement Against Narcotics (CLEAN) Task Force

**C. Insights Into Task Force Missions and Activities, and the Challenges of Evaluation**

The visits to six SAAs and 18 task forces proved helpful in revealing the diversity of state task force programs and individual task forces. The visits also provided a

preliminary set of impressions about varying degrees of interest in evaluation and the difficulties in mounting serious impact evaluations of the inherently complex and diffuse business of drug enforcement. Among the more interesting insights obtained from these visits were the following:

- **Many MJTFs play a more crucial role in front-line drug enforcement than is commonly believed.** Even though the Byrne program was begun to encourage drug enforcement capabilities in all jurisdictions that wanted to develop them, some observers believe – based on a Federal DEA task force model – that MJTFs should be doing very strategic upper-level drug enforcement since most communities are thought to have an existing drug enforcement capacity within their police forces. In fact, most counties and towns lack the resources and skills to do any drug enforcement. The Byrne program accordingly provides the only drug enforcement resources. Therefore both upper- *and* lower-level drug enforcement strategies are used for hundreds of suburban and rural jurisdictions outside of the larger cities where DEA task forces operate. *This introduces a degree of complexity and diversity into task force missions and operations that any evaluation scheme must acknowledge.*
- **Rural or semi-rural jurisdictions face special challenges.** It is easy for policymakers to assume that rural jurisdictions have smaller drug problems and therefore a less challenging environment. In fact, the strategic and management challenges are often equal to or greater than those faced by suburban task forces. First, rural areas do have significant drug problems, including illegal crops and manufacturing (e.g., marijuana growing, meth labs), drug transport along interstate highways, and sometimes heavy trafficking in small or medium-size cities. These targets present difficult choices about balancing priorities. Second, the coverage areas for rural jurisdictions are sometimes enormous. One Mississippi task force we visited had a coverage area that was 100 miles long and 120 miles wide.
- **Citizen and member agency demands and political pressures complicate strategic planning.** Priority-setting reflects a dynamic tension between the targets that the public and local police departments may know nothing about (involving more undercover work) and targets that are in the public eye (open air drug markets, night clubs, high school drug dealing, etc.). Task force commanders wrestle every day with these competing demands, which are sometimes hard to capture in strategic plans. If they have sufficient resources, some task forces have created distinct overt and covert units to meet these very different needs.

- **There is widespread discomfort with certain quantitative measures.** While most task forces are willing to report quantitative measures to comply with monitoring requirements, they are not comfortable with some of these indicators, which do not capture the actual day-to-day work of task forces and over which the task forces often have little control. Few task force commanders want to be held accountable for needing to demonstrate a higher level of seizures than that obtained during the previous year if current tactical needs point in another direction. Most task forces would like to emphasize more qualitative reporting that lets them “tell their story” with greater nuance.
- **Most reporting and evaluation overlook important organizational developments.** Lost amid the output statistics are often valuable indicators reflecting the growth of capacity, professionalism and sustainability on the part of task forces. Evaluations should pay more attention to issues like expansion in full-time staff contributions by member agencies, improved skill development on the part of task force personnel, and increases in the number of joint cases worked on by task forces and other law enforcement units.
- **Most task forces cannot undertake evaluations or analyses themselves.** Most task forces remain precariously financed, with local agencies contributing inadequate funds to produce self-sufficiency. Consequently, most task forces cannot afford to hire full-time or part-time analysts who could conduct serious evaluations. Consequently, it is up to the SAAs to devote more of their overall Byrne program funding to support evaluation activities.

These insights and other made a significant impression on the Abt Associates investigators when they collected together all of the information obtained from the site visits. They created an important foundation for creation of the major research questions that would guide the development of practical methodologies in Phase I.

## **V. Development of Basic Research Designs and Measures**

Following analysis of the information obtained from the six sites, as well as a second review of the task force evaluation literature, the investigators began to focus on a number of broad, but discrete research questions and measures that could become the basis of a more refined set of methodologies through pre-testing. These conclusions underlay a set of recommendations for pre-test methodologies, which were submitted to NIJ for review on October 12, 2000. The investigators simultaneously presented their recommendation that Colorado, Illinois, and Georgia be selected as sites for pre-testing.

The rest of the fall and early winter 2000 were devoted to two tasks. First, Abt Associates investigators visited the SAAs in the three states to secure their cooperation in assisting with the pre-test and potentially participating in Phase II of the project, and to elicit initial reactions to the basic research design. Second, the investigators returned several weeks later to follow up with specific questions about research questions, troubleshoot potential problems with particular proposed measures, and seek documentation necessary to determine the availability of particular kinds of data.<sup>23</sup>

In January, 2001, based on the initial pre-testing of the research design and questions in the three states, Abt Associates investigators met with each other (with NIJ and BJA program representatives present) to comment on and winnow down a very detailed compendium of possible research questions to be used in proposed evaluation methodology. The meeting was also designed to appraise critically the validity of various kinds of measures proposed to be used in connection with various research designs.

Following this meeting, the Abt investigators returned to the three SAAs for one more visit whose purpose was twofold: to review the compendium of research questions and measures with SAA personnel and to conduct a focus group meeting with up to 8 task force personnel or task force member organization representatives to obtain further insights as to the desirability and feasibility of conducting certain kinds of evaluations and measuring certain phenomena.

Each of these stages in the pre-testing process is discussed below.

### **A. Selection of Illinois, Georgia, and Colorado as Pre-Test Sites**

Based on site visits to Colorado, Illinois, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi and Oregon as potential pre-test sites, we recommended that the pre-test sites be Colorado, Illinois and Georgia. Below is our rationale for these recommendations, most of which revolved around the quality of the SAA in question, and its research experience and capacity.

#### **1. Illinois**

The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority has a well-deserved reputation as capable research organization and has a successful history of task force data collection and evaluation efforts. Since the mid-1980s the Authority has required all of its task forces (including those task forces called Metropolitan Enforcement Groups (MEGs), begun by the state in the 1970s) to complete extensive monthly data collection forms. Currently, task forces report monthly figures in several categories, including UCR totals, arrests, weapons, gangs, drug seizures, and cases, as well as several case tracking categories. The Authority has developed a comprehensive reporting process that can help



them paint an accurate statistical picture of the work each task force is doing.

In an effort to understand whether task forces in Illinois are truly effective, the Authority has developed aggressive evaluation processes. Included are periodic surveys to assess drug prevalence and prices across the state, and formal individual task force evaluations. Prior to 1997 they also conducted local profiles of task forces using not only monthly task force data but also criminal and non-criminal local coverage area data. In recent years, the Authority has commissioned a number of important evaluations of task forces, including a statewide process and outcome evaluation (Cowles, et al., 1997) and several studies of a MEG in the city of Kankakee that had consciously shifted to a community policing focus in its approach to drug enforcement (Justice Research Associates, 1999; Decker, et al. 2000).

More recently, Authority representatives, including Robert Bauer from Loyola University, applied for and received a BJA grant to develop a methodology to examine the impact of several task forces within the state. The grant is currently funding as many as eight staff members to focus on task force targets and arrestees to assess whether the task forces are fulfilling their mission of arresting mid- to upper-level dealers. This project, as well as earlier evaluations conducted for the Authority, solidified our belief that the Authority has thought through much of the evaluation processes and is extraordinarily committed to evaluating Illinois task forces. Moreover, the Authority has extensive resources committed to evaluation, and multiple analysts are currently involved in research projects.

Another factor that makes the state unique is the Authority's and many Illinois task force commanders' understanding of the difficulty of measuring impacts and

effectiveness. It was impressive to us that representatives of both the SAA and several task forces have struggled with measurement techniques. Both have wondered whether using these techniques would really give an accurate measure of task force effectiveness. The Authority has also grappled with two schools of thought on what constitutes general effectiveness in a local context – one that emphasizes an exclusive or nearly-exclusive focus on arresting mid- to high-level dealers, and the other favoring a more locally-responsible mission that may be more responsive to requests to target lower-level dealers and users.

The Authority's experience in collecting comprehensive data in electronic format, extended evaluation experience, and a willingness to participate in this project made Illinois an excellent state in which to move forward. We also felt strongly that we would be able to take their lessons learned to inform our methodology development.

## **2. Georgia**

We selected Georgia as a pre-test site due to several key factors. These included (1) the high degree of professionalism and organizational consciousness of each of the individual task forces we visited (in many cases due to the capable leadership role played by the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) in the task force program), as well as the very solid organizational and monitoring capabilities of the SAA (the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, or CJCC); (2) the CJCC's interest in, and commitment to, evaluation; (3) the unifying involvement of the GBI in organizing and leading several task forces, which has led to good record keeping and reporting, and which could facilitate certain inter-jurisdictional comparisons; (4) the existence of several similarly situated adjacent counties that might at some point facilitate limited comparison group

analyses of task force-and non-task force jurisdictions; (5) the abundance and quality of most kinds of crime data at the state level (including state-required statistics on drug-related crime and fairly extensive and well-organized criminal history data that would facilitate case tracking work); and (6) the presence of two highly qualified and enthusiastic SAA consultants (one a former task force commander in the state) who are uniquely positioned to assist with the pre-test and engage in a variety of preparatory and trouble-shooting activities in connection therewith. Georgia also features a wide variety of types of task forces and crime environments, and the ADAM site in Atlanta was earlier thought to be able to generate arrestee drug information that could prove valuable to certain aspects of our methodological approach.

### **3. Colorado**

We selected Colorado as the third state on several grounds. First, it requires a significant amount of reporting data from its task forces and has supported evaluations in the past, most notably a two-part process/outcome evaluation of six task forces in 1990-1991. There was also a significant amount of interest in conducting task force evaluations among task forces and the SAA, particularly since heroin is currently considered a big problem in the state (although ADAM has not shown this to be the case for Denver).

The Department of Public Safety has its own internal research unit led by Kim English, who has done considerable work for NIJ in the past and is the site researcher for ADAM. This unit's interest included the possibility of using state data collectors to support the forthcoming field tests; the collectors have for several years gathered extensive disposition data from Colorado courts, which reportedly could be matched up

with task force arrestee data to provide useful case tracking information. In addition, task forces were already performing a high level of case tracking and entering such data into the state's new integrated Criminal Justice Information Service (CJIS). CJIS is one of the few such systems in the country and has significant cooperation from most participating state agencies, (although reportedly there are quite a few gaps in data at this time).

An additional SAA interest in the project is the possibility of adding an ADAM data collection effort in one of the task force counties. The SAA is interested in collaborating on future field tests and would be willing to transfer existing data to Abt Associates, as well as to assist in new data collection efforts.

## **B. Key Research Design Considerations**

The development of basic research questions and measures in Phase I occurred with two important considerations in mind: maintaining a commitment to the most important objectives of individual task force evaluation, and utilizing the conceptual and research issues identified through the six site visits.

While evaluations could take many forms and have many different purposes, most SAAs and task forces will want or be able to focus on evaluations that trace individual task force effectiveness over time, and that attempt to correlate tactical or organizational innovations, or changes in the external environment, with certain outputs and outcomes. The key is encouraging task forces to take a more individualized approach to establishing and monitoring objectives that fits their particular mission and coverage area. This may entail a particular mix of evaluation tools.

For example, a suburban task force close to an inner city may be seeking to document and evaluate its fidelity to a covert strategy directed at high-level drug targets and coordinated closely with DEA task forces. Such a task force may find it most useful to evaluate its work on an *ex post facto* case study basis by focusing on the effects of managerial or tactical changes on the organization itself, the degree to which its work may have resulted in the disruption of a major drug trafficking organization, and the extent to which collaboration with Federal officials was successful and well managed. If ample time, funding, and appropriate, reliable data and skilled researchers are available, the task force (or relevant SAA) may also seek to analyze DEA STRIDE data on drug prices or EMS CAD data to see if they reflect changes in drug availability that can possibly be correlated with task force activities. By contrast, a particular rural task force may want to focus on marijuana crop eradication, the disruption of a migrant worker supply chain, and its ability as a secondary objective to eliminate open air drug markets in two medium size towns within its coverage area.

These differing circumstances demand a variegated set of evaluation tools and the adoption of different evaluation frames. The purpose of Phase I has been to develop valid questions and measures with which to evaluate these disparate objectives, while leaving for early Phase II refinement the question of what kind of time and resources would be necessary to deploy such methodologies properly, and what particular mix of methodologies might be appropriate for some or all task forces.

It is clear that the difficulty of locating comparable task forces or task force coverage areas makes the use of comparison groups to isolate particular approaches inherently problematic. At the same time, budgetary and political pressures may make it

difficult for SAAs to mount longer-term evaluations of individual task forces or task force programs as a whole; as a result, we anticipate that the greatest demand will be for short-term evaluations of individual MJTFs. Even these, however, will consume a considerable amount of time in order for various outcomes and trends to become apparent. One of the most important tasks in Phase II of the project will be determining what minimal amounts of time will be necessary to generate meaningful evaluative data in connection with particular methodologies.

Feasibility of methodologies and ease of use are critical considerations as we look forward to Phase II and beyond. To increase the utilization of these new evaluation tools, it is possible that parts of the overall package could be adapted by SAAs or independent research organizations (like Abt Associates) into modular evaluation templates that could be made even more accessible to SAAs or individual task forces. For example, a professional organization could create evaluation templates available on a web site that would permit geographically dispersed SAAs and/or task forces to contribute data to a central source and receive back certain information using specialized analytical tools. Abt Associates has already designed such a system in connection with a study of the conditions of confinement in juvenile corrections. At the same time, other web-based tools could be utilized to disseminate evaluation news, including best practices information. We also have experience of this kind, relating to a criminal justice information network operated for NIJ.

Against this background, a number of pertinent insights informing the research design were gleaned from the SAAs and individual task forces. Among the most important were the following:

- ***Diversity of task force missions and operations.*** Task forces are tremendously diverse in terms of their missions, organization, and the jurisdictions they serve. Methodologies must similarly be varied enough to accommodate such differences, or different methodologies must in some cases be utilized to provide useful information. Ultimately, a menu of evaluation options will likely prove most useful to the majority of SAAs and task forces.
- ***Recognition of the need for methodologies to be adapted to both covert and overt approaches and operations.*** In particular, there need to be distinct methodologies tailored to those task forces that predominantly or partly employ strategies and tactics aimed at lower-level targets or street sales, or that have dedicated overt units.
- ***Fluidity of task force priorities also calls for flexibility in evaluation approaches.*** Task force operations appear to be even more fluid and opportunistic than has been previously documented, in that priorities can change very rapidly due to investigative leads, political demands of constituent jurisdictions, and new drug challenges (e.g., appearance of a serious Ecstasy problem). Evaluation research designs must also be flexible to accommodate such rapid changes in direction.
- ***Problems with comparison group methodologies or comparison time series data.*** Using comparison group methodologies is difficult given the diversity of task forces and task force jurisdictions. Still, such comparisons may be feasible in certain adjacent rural jurisdictions or between certain smaller cities and surrounding areas with roughly comparable demographics and task force approaches.
- ***The need and desire for more qualitative measures of task force achievement.*** Most quantitative measures used to capture task force outputs say very little about either the priorities or strategies employed by a task force, or about the kind of community impact that it has achieved. These measures are also often serendipitous and beyond the power of task forces to control consistently over time (e.g., seizures). There is a simultaneous need – and desire on the part of task forces – for more qualitative reporting about task force objectives and challenges facing the coverage area (of the kind found only in some grant applications, rather than in most quarterly or annual reports) and about specific task force accomplishments.
- ***The need to pay more attention to task force capacity-building.*** At the same time that elected officials and SAAs are focusing on certain outputs, relatively little attention is usually paid to the collaborative capacity-building of task forces – their increasing ability and willingness to share information, engage in joint problem-solving, and undertake more sophisticated and proactive investigations. Evaluations need to be designed to capture this information.

- ***Nature of most task force data.*** Most available task force data are time-based, rather than incident-based. This may prevent certain kinds of conclusions from being drawn about task force operations and tactics in particular contexts.
- ***Longevity of task forces.*** Most task forces have existed for several years and are funded annually. This significantly complicates or undermines the use of pre-post testing methodologies generally. Evaluating the early work of task forces also necessarily involves making certain assumptions (and adopting certain statistical models) about their start-up periods and - in the case of task forces formed seven or more years ago- certain assumptions about the impact of the crack cocaine explosion and high crime rates generally on early task force operations and achievements.
- ***Limited knowledge of task force work among citizens.*** Most citizens and elected officials know little or nothing about anti-narcotics work or local drug problems, which are generally invisible. Even in the case of jurisdictions with open drug markets, most citizens will only be familiar with a small part of the drug problem or drug enforcement activities. This extends even to certain public health officials. Care must therefore be exercised in developing research designs and measures that rely heavily on surveys of certain community groups.
- ***Knowledgeability of other audiences.*** By contrast, certain audiences are in a position to comment knowledgeably about the work of task forces. These audiences include prosecutors, police chiefs (including members and non-members of task forces), and other police investigators whose work may be influenced by task force drug enforcement activity (e.g., burglary or auto theft detectives).
- ***Limited evaluation capacity and funding.*** A good share of whatever evaluation methodologies are tested in Phase II must be relatively inexpensive and easy to use. Most task forces and even some SAAs do not have ready access to capable analysts or researchers. Although certain rigorous designs need to be experimented with to push forward the frontiers of evaluation, only some of these designs will be appropriate for most SAAs and task forces.

These considerations figured prominently in the initial research designs and measures developed in the fall of 2000. As discussed below, it was especially important to develop a variety of methodologies, both for purposes of experimentation and eventually to provide task forces with potentially as diverse a group of evaluation tools as possible. A larger menu of evaluation options not only accommodates diverse evaluation needs but



also, depending on the circumstances, offers greater potential corroboration of particular findings and interpretations.

### **C. Development of Basic Research Questions**

Given the diverse evaluation needs of SAAs and task forces, as well as the interests of the academic research community, it was felt that a wide range of research questions should be posed as part of the overall research design. These questions comprise implementation process, outcome, and impact inquiries. The distinction between outcome and impact questions (the two terms are often used almost interchangeably in many studies) was drawn to sharpen the proposed definition of the latter as limited to inquiries about effects on drug availability and drug usage – the ultimate objectives of the Byrne Program. All other outcomes or types of community impact were grouped under the outcome rubric. Each of the key process, outcome, and impact questions forming our basic research design is discussed below.

#### **1. Implementation Process Questions**

- **What was the *implementation process* for an MJTF?** Documentation of the process of implementing a task force can provide important lessons learned for policy makers and practitioners considering the implementation of a task force in their jurisdictions. Of importance is the documentation of “who, what, when, where, and how” questions showing how a task force was created and sustained. In addition, descriptions of successes and obstacles encountered, as well as how a task force grew and changed over time can provide significant insights into task force growth and systems development for those interested in MJTF operations. While implementation process

questions have been the subject of past evaluations in many jurisdictions, we discerned a need to document more closely some of the key inter-organizational obstacles and benefits that can be encountered during the development of a task force. These include matters of governance and day-to-day management, strategic planning, use of technology, communication and cooperation, work relationships, and personnel recruitment, training, and rotation.

- **What *activities* has a task force engaged in and what goals has it set to achieve its own mission?** All MJTFs share certain activities such as arrests and prosecutions. However, there are also variations in the kinds of activities they engage in, depending on their missions, goals and priorities. For example, task forces focusing on street drug dealing may engage in reverse stings, street sweeps and other such tactics. Those task forces focusing on mid- to upper-level dealers, on the other hand, are more actively involved in surveillances and undercover buys of large amounts of illegal substances. Tracking activities associated with the differing missions is particularly important for policy makers and practitioners considering the task force approach. So too is a clear articulation of goals and priorities. What task forces do over time, and how they do it, can greatly enhance realistic expectations of task force activities. Tracking of activities is also useful for impact evaluation purposes. It may be very useful for a task force to be able to aggregate and compare various kinds of activities by geographic location, type of tactics employed, and agencies involved. Changes in tactics and amounts of activities can be viewed in terms of resource allocation and can be compared to observed impacts. These supposed linkages were critically examined in the Phase I pre-test.

## 2. Outcome Questions

- **To what extent does a MJTF have effects on *drug-related crime* within its jurisdiction?** It has been thought that consumers of illegal substances often support their drug abuse through the commission of crimes – not only drug possession and trafficking crimes, but related offenses, such as property crimes and crimes of violence. One would assume that property crimes such as burglary might decline if a task force were effective in reducing local supply and use. Furthermore, crimes of violence are often thought to be associated with the drug trade. If markets are disrupted, robberies and assaults associated with drug trafficking should be reduced. Of course, an opposite effect on violence is possible. Market disruptions could also lead to battles to re-control the disrupted markets among competing individuals or distribution organizations.

- **To what extent does a MJTF have effects on *other targeted problems* within its jurisdiction?** There are a host of problems associated with illegal drug distribution beyond crimes *per se* that affect the quality of life in communities served by a task force. Examples of these problems include loitering, vandalism, traffic congestion, noise, and other disturbances. Some task forces have engaged in proactive activities to solve these problems independently, or as a subsidiary aspect of targeting drug distribution or use. Responses to these problems can include collaborations with other agencies and citizen groups. Of particular concern to many task forces in the western half of the country are problems associated with clandestine methamphetamine laboratories. Increasingly task forces in this part of the country have had to solve serious ancillary problems with hazardous materials (“hazmat”) cleanup.

• **To what extent does a MJTF have effects on law enforcement agencies and operations within its jurisdiction?** Multi-law enforcement agency task forces are thought to have effects on the ability to engage in strategic planning, information-sharing, and operational collaboration across police departments, functions (e.g., between law enforcement and local prosecutors' and/or probation offices), and other local jurisdictions ("horizontal" collaboration). Collaboration with more specialized state and Federal law enforcement agencies charged with investigating and prosecuting illegal drug activity is also thought to be enhanced ("vertical" collaboration). Surveillance and other crime related information-sharing are also viewed as outcomes of task forces.

By sharing investigative resources and pooling other law enforcement tools and data, costs to individual agencies may be reduced due to increased efficiencies, a broader repertoire of capabilities, and various economies of scale. These advantages may be discernible in the kinds of outputs generated by task forces (e.g., arrests, seizures, and forfeitures), and possibly in reported crime as well as in effects on other community problems. In addition, local police departments often assign officers to the task force on a rotating basis and these officers receive special or unique investigative training opportunities and experience that may ultimately redound to the benefit of their individual departments. This may improve the overall skill levels of the officers in departments that join the task forces.

These additional capabilities may favorably impact the work of state and Federal law enforcement agencies as well. Better drug enforcement capabilities and the potential for superior cases may, for example, benefit a state bureau of narcotics or the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration working collaboratively on high-profile or multi-

jurisdictional investigations. Task forces can serve as reliable and often indispensable partners in supplying the knowledgeable personnel and intelligence necessary for such investigations.

- **To what extent does an MJTF have effects on *other criminal justice agencies within or adjacent to its jurisdiction*?** Due to superior information sharing, resources, and tactical flexibility, task forces are generally thought to develop investigations that result in better reports being filed, fewer search warrants being “kicked back,” and more and higher quality cases being accepted for prosecution. Such cases may also end up producing better dispositions than could have been developed by individual police departments. This means that task force cases are more easily able to be prosecuted (usually based on better evidence), result in a higher proportion of guilty verdicts (or pleas) and potentially result in a higher incidence and severity of punishment. Thus, there are multiple potential effects that task forces can have on local prosecution. Of course, indirectly, local probation, jails and prison systems could be adversely affected by the rising client population generated by “better” and more numerous prosecutions.

### **3. *Impact Questions***

- **To what extent does a MJTF have impacts on *drug availability within its jurisdiction*?** While MJTFs may have somewhat different goals and missions, the fundamental theoretical rationale for task forces is that their activities will disrupt local drug markets. The assumption is that by developing cases concerning illegal drug activity, making arrests, and prosecuting those charged with drug crimes, illegal substance distribution systems will be disrupted or displaced. In smaller jurisdictions,

such disruption may be dramatically more effective than would be the case if no task force existed and/or if only regular police forces (many of them understaffed or without specialized personnel and equipment) were responsible for anti-narcotics work. Similarly, seizures of significant quantities of illegal substances and the assets of dealers will reduce availability, and will be a deterrent to other would-be distributors.

- **To what extent does a MJTF have impacts on *drug use* within its jurisdiction?** By disrupting local drug markets and reducing the supply of illegal substances, the amount of drugs consumed and overall drug usage should be reduced. Furthermore, it is presumed that MJTF enforcement activities will have secondary preventive and deterrent effects on would-be users, thereby reducing not only actual use, but potential use as well. In this regard, an effect to be considered would be “keeping the lid on drug use,” such that drug usage, particularly among youth, does not increase.

## **D. Development of Basic Measures**

In order to answer any of the previously described research questions, one needs to measure variations in activities, outcomes, and impacts over time. In addition, the data collected under each measure must be valid and reliable. Finally, since the methodologies to be utilized are targeted toward SAA and local use, the data need to be readily available or relatively easy to collect. SAAs and task forces themselves generally do not have extensive resources available to support original large-scale data collection efforts. We examine below a number of possible measures or indicators associated with the research questions outlined above and discuss the utility and feasibility of collecting data on these measures.

### **1. Implementation Process Measures**

Based on the SAA and task force surveys and our site visits, it is readily apparent that most states already collect fairly detailed implementation process data. These are usually self-reported routinely as part of the Byrne monitoring process. While documenting the process of implementing a particular task force largely requires an analysis of annual sub-grant applications and regular progress reports, there may be new or different questions relating to task force management and governance – particularly Control Board composition and operation and matters of communication, training, and strategic planning – that could benefit from more in-depth scrutiny and evaluation. Some of these matters may be described in self reports, but it may also prove useful to collect such information through surveys of task force commanders and other personnel. Depending on the scope of the inquiry, such a survey could be mounted at modest expense by an SAA.

In the case of older task forces, where clarification of certain events or activities involving might be important due to the organization's longevity, we have found that a close content analysis of existing records should be sufficient to document implementation processes for these task forces. Since most task forces have been in existence for quite some time, implementation process evaluation designs will necessarily have to be *ex post facto* descriptive case studies.

## **2. Task Force Activity Measures**

Most task force activities, such as arrests, seizures, cases, surveillances, and other task force outputs are routinely collected and reported to the states. Documenting activities over time requires analyses of these regular progress reports and annual applications. Accordingly, there should be sufficient activity information available on

individual task forces for longitudinal tracking through the use of existing records. To compare task force activities with those of other jurisdictions or a state as a whole, crime data can readily be obtained in most states, although in some instances reporting systems may not distinguish between particular kinds of drug crime.

As with documentation on implementation processes, however, there may be additional inquiries that need to be made about certain activities, including information-sharing among agencies and assistance rendered (case cooperation) by particular units. These kinds of data can also be derived from surveys and/or interviews of task force personnel. Once again, since most task forces have been in existence for quite some time, outcome evaluation designs will necessarily have to be *ex post facto* descriptive case studies.

### **3. Drug-Related Crime Measures**

The measurement of drug-related crime incidents has typically relied upon either officially-reported (UCR) crime or victimization surveys. While imperfect, measuring official reported incidents of such crimes as burglaries and robberies is relatively straightforward and easily accomplished in both rural and urban settings. We therefore recommended incorporating it into the evaluation methodologies

Until recently, crime victimization surveys have only been done with nationally representative samples. City-specific victimization estimates have not been available. This has recently changed in a select number of cities where the Bureau of Justice Statistics has re-instituted city-level victimization surveys. But the only city survey from the three proposed pre-test states was Chicago. This kind of jurisdiction-wide survey approach



would be cost-prohibitive for most MJTFs, particularly those in rural locations, and we therefore did not recommend its use in this evaluation.

During our task force site visits a number of task force commanders pointed to what they thought were useful signs of task force efforts contributing to reductions in drug-related criminal activities. These were reports from local police detectives that breakups of drug rings reduced the incidence of property crimes (principally burglaries and auto thefts) in their local municipalities. The reason suggested was that drug users relied on property crimes to fund their drug purchases. These qualitative and possible quantitative estimates of task force effects appear very useful and represent a value-added measurement approach not previously employed in task force evaluations. We therefore recommended the incorporation of surveys of property crime detectives in local municipalities and cities to monitor changes in their perceptions of the incidence of drug related crime that could be attributable to task force activities. It is possible that such a methodology could also be extended to police officers familiar with assaults or other violent crimes, which similarly have been understood to rise and fall in some jurisdictions in tandem with the incidence of drug trafficking and use.

#### **4. Measures of Other Targeted Problems**

The easiest way to measure the effects that task forces have on drug-related problems other than serious crime, such as loitering, would be to conduct on-site observations of problem-solving activities. On-site observations could also be made of the effects of these activities on the targeted problems. Interviews and surveys of task force members could also inform the measurement of potential effects, as could surveys

of citizens affected by the targeted problems. This approach was incorporated into the basic research design.

Another source of information on problem-solving efforts toward drug-related community nuisances are the yearly sub-grant funding proposals and periodic progress reports submitted by task forces for monitoring purposes to the states. We found that some of these progress reports contain rich descriptive narrative information on local problems and how the task force is attempting to solve them. Usually this narrative information is not analyzed in any systematic way to make inferences about effects. But systematic content analyses of these progress reports is possible in an evaluation and should be considered. Also to be considered are surveys or intensive interviews of law enforcement personnel, other law enforcement officials, and citizens about progress in addressing particular drug related problems.

Still, proactive problem-solving is not a universal goal of Byrne-funded task forces. Indeed, such an approach is relatively rare. Most task forces concentrate their work on drug markets through traditional surveillance, undercover buys, and arrests. With the growth of police problem-solving and community policing in general, however, we believe the solving of drug-related problems is steadily increasing, especially among those task forces that have consciously embraced such work as a priority and/or have created a special overt unit to deal with such issues. While we did not believe use of such measures was appropriate at this stage, we reserved judgment as to whether their application might be incorporated into the Phase II research design pending the results of our pre-testing work. We thought it might turn out that problem-solving work of this nature was sufficiently widespread among certain task forces to warrant its inclusion

following input received through our meetings with the SAAs and task force focus groups.

#### **5. Measures of Effects on Law Enforcement Agencies/Operations**

A neglected area of research and analysis concerns the effects that task forces have on law enforcement agencies' operations and perceptions of impact in their jurisdictions, as well as actual accomplishments in those jurisdictions. One way to probe these effects would be to collect traditional crime data and examine trends that might be associated with task force activities. This could prove especially illuminating in the case of a new task force or the shift of an existing task force to a new strategy. Inferences might be made about how drug-related crime trends in an area served by the task force are influenced.

In addition to these incidental effects, however, our work in Phase I suggested that there are a wide variety of other consequences stemming from the creation and operation of task forces that should be highlighted, and that have been only modestly examined in previous research. In fact, some police practitioners we spoke with indicated that they thought that these effects – ranging from operational advantages and achievements registered by task forces in their jurisdictions to indirect effects of task force activities and organization on their own agencies or other agencies (e.g. non-participating local police departments, as well as state and Federal law enforcement) – were significantly more important and far-reaching than effects hypothesized under many of the other broad research questions. These indirect effects could themselves extend from enhanced skills development (in the case of participating police departments) to improved information-sharing, operational flexibility, and resource utilization

(potentially for all agencies that collaborate regularly, whether formal members of a task force or not).

The primary method of measuring these kinds of effects—including assessments of strategic planning, collaboration, and information sharing across agencies—has thus far been to conduct interviews or surveys of direct task force participants. These interviews and assessments, however, tend to lack a certain degree of objectivity and may in some instances even be self-serving. We thought that a far better means of assessing both the collaborative effects themselves and indirect impacts on member and non-member agencies in various jurisdictions served by task forces was to interview and survey appropriate individuals outside of the task forces.

In particular, we believed that surveys of chiefs of the local departments served by the task forces (whether or not their agencies are task force members), as well as local administrators of state and federal law enforcement agencies charged with drug enforcement in overlapping jurisdictions, would prove particularly illuminating. For example, we learned that many rural areas have no capabilities among their various police and sheriff's departments to undertake any narcotics investigations. In many instances, task forces afford local law enforcement authorities the ability to pool their resources to conduct proactive drug investigations for the first time, and allow state and Federal law enforcement authorities to have a knowledgeable local collaborator with intelligence that might otherwise never be developed or shared. Interviews and surveys aimed at eliciting more information about these matters would yield a rich understanding of what task forces mean not only to drug operations *per se*, but also to their own law enforcement constituencies.

One particularly neglected area of study concerns the potential benefits of task force training and experience that come to an individual department through the rotation of detectives in and out of task forces. The levels and benefits of resource enhancement from task force asset seizures and forfeitures could similarly be tapped through interviews or surveys.

The typical task force is made up of an average of four to seven local departments and some have over forty represented. On-site interviews by state administrative agencies, or others would be cost-prohibitive. However, surveys could be easily managed under future evaluation efforts. We therefore proposed the development and pre-testing of questions that could form the basis of law enforcement surveys. Again, given that the express purpose of MJTFs was to facilitate collaborative cross-jurisdictional activity, we felt strongly that the examination of this broad research question was extremely worthwhile for practitioners and policymakers considering the implementation of task forces in the future.

#### **6. *Measures of Effects on Other Criminal Justice Agencies***

The final broad outcome question focused on the potential effects that task force activities have on other criminal justice agencies, including prosecutors' offices, jails, and prisons. There has been relatively little previous evaluation research directed to this issue. As noted earlier, task forces are thought to be able to build "better" cases that are of higher evidentiary quality, easier to prosecute, more likely to result in a finding of guilt, and more likely to involve incarceration and longer sentences. To test this presumption, one needs to be able to track cases from time of their opening by the task forces, through arrest, prosecution and sentencing. Task forces do not necessarily

routinely, or as a formal matter, collect such case tracking data themselves. Indeed, they most often merely report to the states -- for monitoring purposes -- the numbers of cases opened, arrests made, and cases sent to prosecution for a particular period (usually quarterly). These events are not related in any systematic way, since they are not reported on an incident basis. Changes in their progress reporting systems could be made, however, and we recommended doing so in jurisdictions where it is feasible.

Moreover, some states, such as Colorado, have begun systematic efforts to collect case tracking data and maintain it in electronic form in a database that links together different institutions in the criminal justice system. Even in imperfect systems, some case tracking may be feasible by comparing task force arrest data (using criminal history identification numbers) to disposition data maintained elsewhere in a state. In some states, minor changes in how cases are identified (so that they could be linked to task force vs. non-task force law enforcement) would need to be made in these tracking or other record systems. Once such changes were made, cases could be tracked through the criminal justice system in order to make inferences about whether or not task forces indeed make "better" -- or at least 'prosecutable' -- cases. Of course, "better" cases may not necessarily be cost-beneficial to the criminal justice system (additional increments of time and resources spend on case improvement might be better spent elsewhere).

Interviews of prosecutors, sheriffs (or jailers) and prison officials could also yield additional insights into the possible effects that task forces have on these other participants in the criminal justice system and their operations. While again, on-site interviews or observations would be cost-prohibitive in most states, surveys could be developed and administered in a periodic fashion to examine perceptions of these other

key criminal justice stakeholders as to the effects of task forces on their organizations. Prosecutors should be able to offer valuable insights into the relative quality of task force-generated cases as opposed to normal police department-generated cases. Sheriffs and other authorities responsible for jail operations could comment on the volume and types of individuals turned over to their care as a result of task force-generated prosecutions. We recommended inclusion of case tracking investigations in those states where it might prove feasible, and, pending further pre-test information about feasibility in other states (e.g., Georgia), specifically recommended that case tracking be incorporated into the pre-test research design for use in Colorado. We also suggested the use of surveys of prosecutors, sheriffs, and jailers in all three states in the pre-test research design.

#### **7. Measures of Impact on Drug Markets**

The measurement of changes in local drug markets is extremely difficult. This is because the target of most MJTFs is the distribution of illegal substances, which is an inherently secretive activity. Thus, the volume of drugs imported into a jurisdiction, amount distributed and sold, numbers of dealers, and distribution methods, are simply not well known and cannot be effectively observed over time for changes that may be attributable to task force activities. Moreover, drug trafficking impacts may be relatively short-lived, in many cases generating displacement and other transitory effects that are exceedingly difficult to detect. Instead, researchers must rely on other measurement approaches to draw inferences about drug markets and changes over time.

One common approach uses traditional crime incident data that are reported to the police, such as reported transactions and citizen tips. These data are generally readily

available and often in computerized form. However, there are obvious reliability and validity issues associated with these data that are well documented in the literature. There have been some recent advances in mapping incident data and using spatial analyses to track market changes over time through GIS. Our experience with the individual task forces, however, showed that few of them kept incident-specific data with location indicators other than in manual case files. Location analyses are also not necessarily very useful with rural task forces that often make transactions in locations of their own choosing (e.g., for officer safety), rather than in distributor-selected "hot spots." Despite all of these problems, given the availability and ease of use of such basic drug crime data, these data can be incorporated in different formats as necessary into basic methodologies seeking to answer the pre-test research questions.

Some previous research attempts have sought to measure changes in drug markets through citizen surveys. Again, there are serious reliability and validity issues that arise from citizen surveys. The most serious of these is the fact that most citizens are not involved in or witnesses to illegal drug trafficking and really know nothing about its incidence. Their perceptions about markets are probably influenced more by the media and acquaintances than their own personal observations. Researchers utilizing citizen surveys in past task force evaluations have found them to be of little use in answering questions about drug market impact. We did not recommend consideration of citizen surveys in the test methodologies.

In the absence of sound information about drug markets from citizens or robust data from law enforcement officials, an alternative approach has been to use proxy measures. Commonplace measures in national estimates of drug market changes are



hospital admissions for drug overdoses and reported drug use of arrestees under the ADAM program. In addition, measurements of price and drug purity fluctuations have been used in national level estimates of drug market changes. Finally, monitoring the volume of sales of precursor drugs has been used as an estimate of volume of the manufacturing of illegal substances. These proxy measurement approaches are of only limited utility in research designs developed for task forces. The most common type of task force funded by the Byrne program today is located in a suburban or rural jurisdiction. Drug-related hospital admissions are much rarer than in large cities, and the quality and collection of such data on a comprehensive basis is difficult and typically beyond the resources of the individual task force. The same can be said about drug treatment and precursor chemical data. The former in particular is often incomplete and scattered among public and private providers, with no clear data on how individuals came to need or seek treatment.

Price and purity data are also not regularly collected in task force jurisdictions. However, some states, such as Illinois reportedly have collected drug price data as part of routine task force reporting for quite some time. We therefore proposed to use these data to estimate potential impacts of task forces on drug markets solely in Illinois.

While ADAM data are not normally collected in rural or suburban areas and their capture would generally be beyond the capabilities of some smaller and many rural task forces at present, some urban or suburban task forces may be in a position to benefit from information collected at current ADAM sites. For example, Atlanta is a current ADAM site and data on drug markets and use could be employed on a supplemental basis in Illinois and Georgia to examine changes over time that may be coincidental to certain

suburban MJTF activities.<sup>24</sup> While we shortly thereafter learned that Chicago had recently dropped out of the ADAM program, at the time (in October 2000), we proposed for our pre-test relying not only on official drug crime reports as the primary measure of changes in drug markets, but also ADAM measurements in Chicago and Atlanta. Based on a long-standing request by one suburban task force in the Denver area to pilot ADAM in a suburban setting, and based on the Colorado SAA's willingness to assist in such an effort,<sup>25</sup> we also preliminarily recommended deploying the ADAM data collection instrument in the interested Denver suburban area or in another suburban or rural area in the state.

#### **8. Measures of Impact on Drug Use**

The measurement of drug use is similarly difficult. At the national level the most common approaches are citizen surveys, surveys of arrestees under ADAM, and the use of certain proxy measures. Most of the proxy measures of drug use do not seem feasible in suburban and rural locations due to the low cost-benefit ratios in trying to collect such measures. Their feasibility in rural jurisdictions is also hampered by the relatively low incidence of data points. Citizen surveys, such as replication of the high school senior reported use survey, are cost prohibitive for use in evaluations of MJTFs, particularly those in rural locations. There are also sometimes significant problems in obtaining school district or individual school permissions to conduct such surveys.

Alternatively, surveys of arrestees using the validated ADAM interview protocols appeared more feasible. Accordingly, we recommended using these data in Chicago and Atlanta insofar as they could provide useful information about drug use trends and circumstances affecting suburban MJTFs (again, we made this recommendation just

before learning that Chicago dropped out as an ADAM site). We also recommended that such data be used on a pilot basis in at least one suburban or rural jurisdiction in Colorado where local resources could support its application.

### **E. Evaluation design constraints**

Ideally, the use of a true experimental design is necessary in order to accurately make attributions of observed effects to individual task forces and their work. Such designs require random assignments of interventions and the use of experimental and control groups to control for sources of both internal and external invalidity. Impact measures also need to be made before and after task force interventions. Unfortunately, there are numerous constraints on the ability of researchers to utilize experimental designs to evaluate MJTFs.

First, as noted earlier, our surveys of task force commanders showed that the majority of Byrne-funded task forces were created quite some time ago, in several cases prior to the inception of the Byrne program. Indeed, the earliest reported creation of a task force was in 1970 and fully three-quarters of the task forces we surveyed were created prior to 1993. To obtain any pre-task force impact measures would require a substantial amount of retrospective data collection. Further complicating pre-creation measures in the area of drug crime and use is the advent of the use of crack cocaine in the late 1980s, as discussed above. This market change emerged as a serious problem in the early stages of the development of most task forces nationwide, introducing a very significant confounding phenomenon. We have, however identified a few individual task forces in each of the pre-test states that were not created until after 1994. By including

them in our pre-test, we plan to identify or secure pre-post implementation impact measures, particularly drug and drug-related crime data.

Second, task forces were generally implemented based on local perceptions of needs in particular jurisdictions. The development of their missions and interventions did not take into consideration factors associated with sound experimental evaluation designs. One critical research design factor never considered was randomization of targets and interventions, for obvious practical reasons. It is impossible to recreate randomization after the fact with task forces that have been in existence for such long periods of time.

Third, many of the task forces, particularly those in rural locations, have assumed all narcotics enforcement activities for the jurisdiction served. That is, local police departments that have joined task forces do not engage in any narcotics enforcement themselves aside from certain busts that may be incidental to other regular patrol work. There is also some evidence that in many instances, these departments did not engage in much or any of this work in the past. Task forces were specifically created to fill this enforcement void, and to provide both skills and material resources that were lacking.

The problem with this situation from a research standpoint is that an evaluation design cannot use comparison groups within the jurisdiction served, at least in the case of the majority of task forces that are rural or suburban in nature. Such comparisons may, however, be possible to some degree in those urban, and to a lesser extent, suburban, areas where city police departments have continued to conduct narcotic investigations through dedicated units. In the case of rural task forces, comparisons would need to be made with roughly similar jurisdictions elsewhere in the state (e.g., county or multi-

county locations) or with the state as a whole. It may be much more difficult to make valid comparisons between most kinds of suburban areas, where there are very different approaches to managing drug enforcement operations.

Given these important constraints, our evaluation methodology options are limited to quasi-experimental or pre-experimental designs. We intend to attempt the use of comparison group quasi-experimental designs where feasible. Where comparison groups are possible, static group comparison designs or repeated time-series comparison designs will be used. In the absence of comparison groups, we will be limited to simple repeated measure time series or *ex post facto* case study designs. The use of the latter designs, of course, has serious implications for attribution. There will be numerous threats to validity and many rival hypotheses that cannot be discounted. However, given the nature of conducting social science evaluation in the real world of program implementation and the constraints faced with task force duration, random assignment and comparison areas, this may be the best that can be realistically implemented.

## **F. Recommended Pre-Test Research Questions and Measures**

The following chart summarizes our recommended MJTF evaluation research questions, design options, and impact measures, as well as the states where the methodologies were pre-tested. Note that our overall methodological approach was significantly informed and unified by the notion that the effectiveness of task forces can often be best assessed by those most immediately affected by task force activities – local law enforcement chiefs, selected state and Federal law enforcement agents (including those concerned with drug crime and drug-related crime), prosecutors, and those

responsible for local jails. Most of these audiences have only to a limited extent been canvassed for their opinions on task force effectiveness. Bringing them together for a more encompassing view of task force operations in areas under their purview represents a significantly different approach to evaluation. As 'consumers' of task force activity and collaboration (whether or not they are official task force members), these groups are generally better situated to render such opinions than task force commanders or officers, and are significantly more informed about drug enforcement work than, say, ordinary citizens, elected office holders, or most community groups. We believe that in addition to the reported crime and case tracking measures that are to be utilized as part of the pre-test methodology, this use of 'interested party' surveys should prove to be both highly innovative and useful.

As can be seen in the chart, we proposed to seek answers to seven of the discussed research questions. The kind of research design implemented will depend on our ability, in collaboration with the SAAs, to develop comparison locations or survey respondents. We proposed to examine implementation processes and task force activities in all three states using a case study design. Task force outcomes would be assessed in all three states with the exception of case tracking, which will be concentrated in Colorado given its ability to ensure good case tracking by task forces and the possibility of utilizing its integrated criminal justice information system in the process. Task force impacts will also be examined in all three states, although drug prices would only be measured in Illinois due to data availability there. The designs for answering outcome and impact questions will depend on the availability of comparison areas and thus may vary from state to state.

## Preliminary Proposed Research Questions, Measures, and Evaluation Designs

<b>Implementation Research Questions</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Comparison Areas ⇒</b>	<b>Evaluation Design</b>	<b>State</b>
<b>Implementation Process Questions</b>	MJTF self-reports	No ⇒	Ex Post Facto Case Study	All Three
<b>Task Force Activities and Output Questions</b>	MJTF self-reports	No ⇒	Ex Post Facto Case Study	All Three
<b>Outcome Research Questions</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Comparison Area ⇒</b>	<b>Evaluation Design</b>	<b>State</b>
<b>Effects on Drug Related Crime</b>	Reported Crime	Yes ⇒ No ⇒	Comparison Time Series Time Series	All Three
	Local Police Department Detective Surveys	Yes ⇒ No ⇒	Comparison Time Series Time Series	IL GA
<b>Effects on Law Enforcement Agencies and Operations</b>	Local Department Chief Surveys	Yes ⇒ No ⇒	Static Group Comparison Ex Post Facto Case Study	All Three
	Surveys of State and Federal Law Enforcement	Yes ⇒ No ⇒	Static Group Comparison Ex Post Facto Case Study	All Three
<b>Effects on Other Criminal Justice Agencies</b>	Case Tracking	Yes ⇒ No ⇒	Comparison Time Series Time Series	CO
	Surveys of Prosecutors	Yes ⇒ No ⇒	Static Group Comparison Ex Post Facto Case Study	All Three
	Surveys of Sheriffs, Jailers	Yes ⇒ No ⇒	Static Group Comparison Ex Post Facto Case Study	All Three
<b>Impact Research Questions</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Comparison Area ⇒</b>	<b>Evaluation Design</b>	<b>State</b>
<b>Effects on Drug Markets</b>	Reported Crime	Yes ⇒ No ⇒	Comparison Time Series Time Series	All Three
	ADAM	Yes ⇒ No ⇒	Static Group Comparison Ex Post Facto Case Study	GA
	Drug Prices	Yes ⇒ No ⇒	Static Group Comparison Ex Post Facto Case Study	IL
<b>Effects on Drug Use</b>	ADAM	Yes ⇒ No ⇒	Static Group Comparison Ex Post Facto Case Study	GA

## **VI. Pre-Testing of Research Questions and Measures**

Pre-testing of the basic research questions and measures took three forms: meetings with SAA representatives on basic research design and feasibility issues (including a review of data quality and availability matters); a critical 'internal' and 'external' review of the questions and measures (the internal review involved discussions with project investigators and other knowledgeable specialists in research designs from Abt, while the external review included consultations with SAAs and a meeting of Abt investigators with representatives from NIJ and BJA); and focus group meetings composed of individuals involved in task forces in the three pre-test states who were asked broad questions about redirecting task force evaluation.

### **A. SAA Discussions and Data Availability and Quality**

In the course of meeting with the SAAs of the three respective states in the fall and winter, the Abt investigators sought to determine the level of commitment of the SAA's to Phase II participation and the feasibility of partnering with their states, both with respect to the time and resources available to the SAA's, and the availability and quality of existing data. Discussions regarding time and resources were conducted over the course of two visits with SAA representatives in each of the states. All SAA's were enthusiastic about partnering, but Illinois's and Georgia appeared to have more depth in terms of the availability of personnel.

Discussions with the SAA's about data availability and quality, (and the relative ease with which they could be used and manipulated in support of the basic research design developed in the fall) also were conducted over two visits. The investigators did



not, however, ignore other kinds of data that might in themselves have stimulated thinking about other approaches or research questions. It was understood that data availability was one of several important factors in determining which states would be recommended as partners in carrying out Phase II testing of the various selected methodologies. Data considerations for each of the three states are discussed below.

### **1. Illinois**

Illinois has abundant data relevant to the proposed research design, starting with the extensive monthly task force reporting information that goes well beyond the minimum Byrne Program requirements. In addition to basic output data, the reports require information on:

- Number of investigations
- Number of arrests resulting in prosecution
- Number of prosecutions resulting in conviction
- Number of not guilty findings

These data have been used to perform task force-level analyses, as well as unit surveys on various outcome indicators. The Authority has also conducted analyses that combine task force data with local data in an effort to compare task force and local enforcement impacts on drug problems. In addition, the Authority conducts a short survey periodically to assess the relative availability of drugs and their prices. There are also price data available going back several years, but the organization of these data are somewhat problematic. Finally, Authority researchers have been looking at EMS trauma registry data and Chicago ambulance data to use as proxy measurements. The quality of fire and EMS CAD data generally is not well known.

Several other data sets are well organized and would be of considerable value.

These include:

- *Arrests for Property Index Offenses.* This shows the number of arrests for property offenses and rates by county from 1982-1999 (2000 may be ready shortly) and is reportedly highly reliable.
- *Drug Arrests in Illinois by County.* This is essentially a UCR-generated data set broken into two key categories—cannabis arrests and rates and controlled substance arrests and rates. It is also usefully broken down into county *and* local-level data. It does not, however, distinguish between possession and sale, or between various kinds of controlled substances.
- *Adult New Court Commitments to the Illinois Department of Corrections.* This data set includes sentences by county, and is of very high quality. It is in SPSS format and there are a significant number of other variables, although it does not contain information on convictions or probation. It would be useful for doing case tracking or looking at sentences.
- *Illinois State Police's Operation Cash Crop Data.* This set includes county-level data on the number of plants seized and/or confiscated. This would be helpful in activity reporting and for those task forces for which such seizures are a major priority.
- *Illinois State Police Drug Analysis Data.* This data set includes information on drugs sent for analysis to the state's crime labs, both by weight and by county of offense. As sample data, it can be quite useful; however, because not all drugs seized are sent for analysis, it cannot paint a picture of actual drug seizures.

Overall criminal history information is spotty in the state system; only about 60% of arrestees have accurate information, making comprehensive case tracking difficult unless done manually. Local law enforcement data is generally quite poor, and the Authority does not have access to individual agency data. A significant overarching problem is the difficulty of lining up certain task forces' coverage areas with particular county boundaries, and making comparisons where several municipalities may not be participating in the task force.

## 2. Georgia

Georgia appears to have high quality, highly differentiated data sets in some basic areas. First, there is solid UCR crime data reported to the Georgia Crime Information Center (run by the Georgia Bureau of Investigation). We have been given UCR data going back 15 years. There are nine different kinds of drug types able to be recorded, and there are 632 separate offense codes available to break down across various incidents. One very interesting feature is a box allowing the reporting law enforcement agency to indicate if a crime is drug-related, and to link this designation to one or more of the nine drug types. This is obviously of great help to our research design.

One of the most important potential research vehicles is a relational database maintained by the GCIC that on a quarterly basis links up various kinds of criminal history information from different agencies. This reconciliation process, begun several years ago with the help of a contractor, Applied Research Services Inc. of Atlanta, has now caught up to July 2000. This Criminal History Record (CHR) database takes criminal history data from the various agencies based on a unique identifier given to an offender at the time of fingerprinting. While the CHR is not as clear about a specific charge as is the UCR data, it is reasonably specific, and can assist in looking for both career criminals and the co-occurrence of particular kinds of crime (i.e., 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> offenses, and their patterns). Corrections, parole, and probation are linked into the system, which could allow us to look at what kinds of drug crimes were linked to property crimes (at the time of sentencing, anyway). So far, ARS believes it is seeing only about a 5% data loss across the system, from the rap sheet to the correctional system data (although there are greater gaps with respect to probation data).

Also of some interest is an electronic system used in about 40 counties around the state that permits automated submission of dispositions in both Superior Courts and District Attorneys' offices. The quality and accuracy of the data is reportedly very high.

By the same token, case tracking data in general is quite well organized within each task force. The CJCC (and in GBI-led task forces, also the GBI) actively audits case tracking and case management systems, so that manual case tracking work in this state would be feasible if it were called for. CJCC has lately been focusing on task force dispositions and sentencing outcomes. Cases are considered open until they are resolved in court.

There is no local collection of price and purity data as a systematic matter, although some purity information is available from the GBI based on state drug lab testing. DEA STRIDE data would have to be the main source for these data. While at one point some work with ADAM data from the Atlanta site was considered so as to probe possible connections with some of the impact that the East Metro County Drug Task Force was having near the city limits and/or the DeKalb County border, we later determined that the problems with data at that site were too significant and attribution problems too difficult to warrant reliance on this source of information. More likely is that we will develop some kind of interview protocol and research methodology that could be used to conduct certain arrestee interviews potentially reflecting the effects of task force activities or changes in tactics, etc. Finally, EMS and fire CAD data are reported to be quite well organized in several jurisdictions across the State. However, further investigation is required.

CJCC is very well organized and has both a modest in-house research capability, a SAC, and access to ARS for special data analysis projects. In addition, CJCC has on staff two nearly full-time consultants devoted almost exclusively to task force monitoring and trouble-shooting. One of them is a very well respected former task force commander who has excellent relationships with task force personnel across the state. In general, the human resources available for partnering in a Phase II are very strong, and the CJCC enthusiastically communicated its willingness to work on Phase II early in the site visit process.

### **3. Colorado**

In general, Colorado appeared not to have as much quality data as the other two states, and the SAA appeared to have fewer human resources. The basic information collected from task forces by the Colorado Division of Public Safety is quite comprehensive (including potentially valuable information on citizen complaints and complaint disposition), and basic UCR reporting data is solid. Many task forces also appear to be doing a good job of tracking cases and reporting such information to the state. However, statewide case tracking is complicated by the fact that while Colorado has a new integrated criminal justice database, it is still subject to many problems and significant gaps in information. We were advised that we should not rely on it at this time for criminal history information.

Perhaps the best additional source of relevant data would be samples of felony case filing data that are collected annually by interns and other short-term workers for the state. This has been done for the past 20 years, although it was last done in 1998 (it is planned to be done again this year, however). These data would be useful in depicting

case trends in jurisdictions served by task forces. However, as sample data they would not be useful for case tracking purposes. Instead, case tracking would have to be done by hand through use of physical files or in the case of some task forces, through use of their individual electronic databases.

The state does not do any of its own gathering of drug price or purity data, but instead relies on DEA data. While the state has some interesting public health data sets, we explained to the SAA that the validity of these data were often problematic. The SAA did not know anything about EMS/Fire CAD data, and we made efforts to find individuals knowledgeable about this subject. However, as of this time we have been unable to determine what kind of record keeping requirements exist for such data, or what their quality was. There was definite interest expressed by the South Metro Drug Task Force in having the Arapahoe County jail serve as a new ADAM site, but it is not likely that this can be done from a resource standpoint or in terms of the existing ADAM program. A more likely scenario, discussed with the SAA, is having some lower-cost, less rigorous ADAM-type methodology (e.g., intensive arrestee interviews primarily for the purpose of eliciting anecdotal, qualitative information about task force awareness and effectiveness) deployed on an experimental basis in one of the task force counties in the state.

Human resources at the SAA are stretched fairly thin. While the division is well organized, there are no individuals working full-time on task forces in an administrative or research capacity, and site visits indicated that the existing staff was under considerable pressures much of the time from the executive and legislative branches in the state. The Research Director is quite busy and it was not clear that she or the unit as a

whole could serve as a full research partner. Most likely, Abt Associates would have to do a large share of the Phase II work on its own due to these time constraints.

## **B. Review of the Research Questions and Measures**

In January, 2001, Abt project investigators gathered in Washington, D.C. for a two-day series of meetings designed to evaluate critically the basic research questions and measures described in Section V above, as well as more detailed subsidiary research questions and measures that had been developed for purposes of discussion during the previous month. The meetings were an opportunity for the research team to contribute fresh ideas about task force evaluation as a group, based on additional information obtained in the two previous site visits to the three SAAs in November and December 2000.<sup>26</sup> They also afforded the opportunity for the investigators to have Bill Rhodes, Principal Research Scientist at Abt Associates and an expert on drug use and drug enforcement research, evaluate the logic and feasibility of certain proposed measures. Finally, the investigators invited two external representatives – project officer Winnie Reed from NIJ and Maggie Shelko from BJA – to attend the meetings, in order to provide additional critical perspectives.

The meetings proved extremely useful in refining individual research questions and identifying problematic measures. These insights led to the drafting of a revised set of questions and measures, appended hereto as Appendix E, that were pre-tested in meetings with SAA representatives in the three states in February, 2001. These additional meetings elicited some of the same reactions on the part of the SAA's, and led to further comments concerning the ways in which ultimate survey questions would be

phrased. These comments were noted carefully, and will be used as reference tools when such questions are generally drafted in Phase II.

Together, this process of internal and external review yielded additional *broad and detailed* questions and new measures whose use in the Phase II research design was strongly recommended. The points described below capture the major conclusions of the group based on the two sets of meetings.

- ***Background Questions.*** It was decided to add certain other background questions to the list already presented in the detailed research questions. These additional questions largely concern matters pertaining to budgets, funding levels, and how funds are allocated among key categories (equipment, salaries, operating expenses, etc.).
- ***Implementation Process Questions.*** The meeting participants recommended including questions concerning strategic planning and priority-setting. Additional questions were also recommended concerning governance and management of task forces, as well as personnel development (recruitment, turnover, co-location of personnel). Finally, a number of questions were sharpened concerning the application of technology and methods of increasing intra-task force communication and cooperation.
- ***Questions about Task Force Activities.*** The meeting participants felt it was important to ask additional questions about specific kinds of task force outputs, especially in the case of distinguishing between overt and covert tactics. Several questions were suggested about the proportion of cases featuring use of overt vs. covert tactics (to be defined with some concreteness), and the nature of the arrests made by the task force (e.g., seriousness based on proportion of trafficking, production, and manufacturing charges).
- ***Questions about Drug-Related Crime.*** Those at the meetings were generally satisfied with the questions and measures in this area, but it was recommended that in addition to crime data and survey data, case tracking information should be consulted to discern additional links between drug offenses and other crimes.
- ***Questions about Effects on Law Enforcement Agencies.*** The group thought it important to ask police departments and sheriffs not only about the benefits of task force participation, but about possible detriments, including specific disadvantages (e.g., financial contributions, loss of personnel, etc.). Additional questions were also added here about task force communication and



cooperation (so as to compare them to comparable questions asked of task force commanders and other full-time task force personnel). There was also agreement that a question should be asked specifically about whether the task force had concentrated on higher-level drug activity. Finally, clearer distinctions were drawn between questions directed at participating vs. non-participating law enforcement agencies.

- ***Questions about Effects on Other Criminal Justice Agencies.*** The group had only a few suggestions here about additional questions on the quality of drug task force cases and about the costs to various jurisdictions of not being involved in a task force.
- ***Questions about Impact on Drug Markets.*** The group was very helpful in clarifying what could and could not be expected of ADAM data and ADAM program logistics in the three states. The cost of collecting data under the ADAM program and the care that must be taken in ensuring a proper sample of arrestees based on jail population flows was reviewed in some detail, leading the participants to conclude that such procedures could be quite difficult to support in most suburban and rural sites. However, a lower-cost, less rigorous ADAM-like data collection tool – through intensive interviewing by lower-paid researchers or interns – could provide much of the qualitative, impact-oriented data about geographic effects that is desired by most SAAs and task forces. Finally, the utility and reliability of Fire and EMS computer-aided dispatch (CAD) data – depending on local record-keeping requirements – could serve as an excellent additional piece of data on drug market impact.
- ***Questions about Impact on Drug Use.*** Perhaps the most useful part of the meetings was a methodical critique of various drug use impact measures by Bill Rhodes, Senior Scientist and Abt Associates Fellow. Emergency room or other hospital admissions data were shown to suffer from frequent incompleteness and interpretational handicaps (hospital admissions often do not present a clear picture of the reasons for hospitalization), even though they may have some validity in terms of short-term trends. Vital statistics data, meanwhile, seems susceptible to too many confounding causes and interpretations (not to mention incomplete or evasive responses to various inquiries). Drug treatment center data can be incomplete and misleading insofar as it may reflect the supply, rather than the demand, for treatment, and may also be growing in response to the aging of the user population rather than due to a reduction in drug use itself. Here too, however, fire and/or EMS CAD data was viewed as a more reliable and promising indicator, depending on local record-keeping practices.

## C. Focus Groups

In visits to Illinois, Colorado, and Georgia in February 2001, Abt investigators conducted three focus group meetings with 5-7 representative criminal justice system professionals involved in task forces. The purpose of the focus groups was to test – indirectly – the utility and validity of the broad research questions developed in the fall and winter, and to probe more generally the receptivity of the participants to different and potentially more meaningful evaluation methods and measures. These reactions would serve as a useful pre-test of the basic research approach and as a gauge of the kind of time and resources that task forces could be expected to expend – on their own or with outside assistance – in undertaking new kinds of evaluation techniques.

With the agreement and cooperation of the three SAA's, Abt investigators sent invitations to as many as 10-12 representative law enforcement and other professionals in each state who were identified by the SAA's and who hailed from a variety of types of organizations and geographic regions. While these individuals were likely to be more articulate and more supportive of task forces than a random sample of task force participants, the purpose of the task force meetings, as focus groups, was to elicit diverse and penetrating insights into task force participants' views on their work and on evaluation. As it turned out, the SAAs helped to select a highly representative group of individuals from the following categories of task force participants: task force commanders, police chiefs served by task forces, sheriffs served by task forces, and prosecutors working with task forces. In addition, the SAA's helped select representatives from a diverse group of task force types, including those located in both

suburban and rural environments. Only the Illinois task forces tended to be concentrated in predominantly suburban or rural-suburban locations outside of Chicago.

Each focus group consumed approximately 5 – 5 ½ hours, with a 45-minute or hour break for lunch. As reflected in the focus group questions (an example of the basic protocols utilized for the focus group meetings is appended hereto as Appendix F), the general approach consisted of having the participants react to 15 questions grouped around four major themes: (1) managing strategic planning and priority-setting (deciding what's important) and communication of priorities (to the task force, to the community, to the SAA); (2) defining task force effectiveness; (3) measuring task force effectiveness; and (4) communicating/reporting task force effectiveness. Generally speaking, the first two themes were addressed in the morning of the focus group sessions, and the other two themes were dealt with in the afternoon. Participants were informed that their comments were not for attribution and were encouraged to be as candid as possible.

The discussions met their goal of providing trenchant and memorable details about task forces' varying priorities and tactics, community support and outreach, their vision of themselves and their work, definitions of success, and a keen understanding of the potential limits to the use of new success indicators and their attribution. As the brief descriptions of the three focus groups below demonstrate, the discussions went a long way toward helping the investigators envision what kinds of research design modifications might be necessary in Phase II to ensure maximum acceptance among the several task forces that will be utilized to test the new methodologies.

## 1. *Illinois*

The focus group meeting, held on February 2, 2000 in the ICJIA's offices in Chicago, featured five participants affiliated with two suburban Chicago task forces (Lake County Metropolitan Enforcement and DuPage County Metropolitan Enforcement Group). Attendees included the two task force commanders, two senior police officials in municipalities served by the respective task forces, and a prosecuting attorney responsible for prosecuting Lake County MEG cases. Officials involved in another task force, including a sheriff, had been invited but were unable to attend at the last minute. Both task forces represented at the focus group covered counties that are relatively affluent, which was taken into account in analyzing the comments made at the meeting.

***Priority-Setting.*** Both task forces represented in the focus group have fairly well-developed systems that are transparent and participatory for purposes of priority-setting. Goals and drug trends are communicated clearly to the relevant communities at these quarterly meetings. However, the communities often do not want to hear about drug enforcement in their midst, preferring to deny that there are problems. The policy boards are strong and remarkably, a very high percentage of jurisdictions in each of the counties belong to the task force. All have an equal voice at the policy board meetings. There is a carefully delineated formula for financial contributions that makes participation attractive, as well as an ethos of cooperation that goes back many decades to the founding of the MEGs in the late 70s and early 80s. This ethos and tradition means that there is significant pressure for all jurisdictions to 'get along with each other' as a matter of professionalism.

The priorities of the two task forces differ; the Lake County MEG has emphasized much more street-oriented, overt, community-responsive work, although it has a separate covert unit that tackles higher-level trafficking. It actually refers to its constituencies as 'customers.' The DuPage MEG adheres to a much more traditional strategy of addressing mid- to upper-level traffickers and utilizing covert methods. Despite the fluid nature of task force work, both task forces apparently manage to maintain a congruence between stated and actual priorities through active decision making and communication with the policy boards.

***Benefits/Indicators of effective task forces.*** Asked to describe task force effectiveness, the participants mentioned the following:

- Crime reduction (even though this is hard objectively to measure)
- Specialized enforcement serving community/local agency needs
- Community education
- 'Big picture' understanding of drug problems in the community
- Providing better intelligence to local agencies
- Better trained officers
- Significant increases in local drug arrests
- Better quality cases presented for prosecution

***Measures of task force effectiveness.*** All participants thought that community satisfaction, measured by both elected politician and citizen support, was among the most important measures (which could be ascertained through surveys or questionnaires, which the Lake County MEG actually uses), although the DuPage MEG is more interested in traditional output measures of success as well. All thought that a more refined set of surveys directed to a wider group of constituencies (e.g., other law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, etc.) would be useful. Most participants were generally uncomfortable with quantitative measures, particularly given serendipitous swings in things like seizures, etc. Two individuals thought that the number of

informants given to MEGs from local agencies would be an interesting indicator. The reliability of fire and EMS CAD data was viewed somewhat skeptically; many citizens (esp. wealthier ones) may be reluctant to call EMS, while fire CAD data may be poorly maintained in many rural jurisdictions with volunteer departments. All participants supported expanded opportunities to explore more qualitative information about impacts. One task force member catalogued drug-related disorder measures such as the longevity of tenants in certain buildings and the frequency of evictions or other turnover (as e.g., reflected by furnishings piled on the curbside). Drug treatment counselors and students represent groups that several individuals thought should be questioned about drug trends, if not about enforcement activity.

*Reporting on task force effectiveness.* The Illinois participants were supportive of presenting a more qualitative picture of task force effectiveness in quarterly and annual reports, although both task forces already do this to a significant degree. There should be more use of web sites and press releases, according to participants, although risks to task force covert work were acknowledged. The participants reiterated the usefulness of expanding policy board surveys as the most effective way to evaluate overall task force performance in their state.

## **2. Georgia**

The focus group meeting took place on February 23 in the CJCC's offices in Atlanta. Six task force commanders, police chiefs, and prosecutors attended, representing agencies participating in five different task forces – the West Georgia Drug Task Force, the Rome/Floyd Metro Drug Task Force, the Ocmulgee Task Force, the East County Metro Drug Task Force, and the Northern Multi-Agency Narcotics Squad

(MANS). Two of the task forces were suburban/rural task forces and the other four represented predominantly rural areas. Two sheriffs who were invited and RSVP'd were unable to attend at the last minute.

*Priority-Setting.* There were considerable variations in the frequency and methods by which different task forces set priorities. Most policy boards meet on a monthly basis, and priorities are explicitly reviewed at those meetings. Some task forces invite other interested parties (e.g., DEA, state senators, etc.) to quarterly meetings and ask them for their input. One task force established an overt unit that is responsive to street trafficking needs and that turns over follow-up work to a uniformed street patrol staffed by one of the police departments and a sheriff's office. Many of the rural task forces have very different drug problems in one corner of their coverage area as opposed to others. Most participants said priorities ended up being quite fluid, and that they can be reshuffled rapidly, in some cases based simply on the outcome of a sheriff's election. Some new drug trends, like those involving methamphetamine and Ecstasy, require a significant and flexible shift in resources and priorities.

*Benefits/Indicators of Effective Task Forces.* Members of the focus group felt that task forces had made a tremendous difference in drug enforcement in their jurisdictions, and that there would be virtually no such enforcement without the task forces. Breaking down turf barriers over time and getting the cooperation and respect of DEA have been major accomplishments. Organizationally, the training of personnel and experience gained in sophisticated law enforcement techniques has been impressive. So has the sharing of intelligence and assistance rendered in investigations by various agencies. Public acceptance and support is another important benefit. The quality of

investigations and prosecutions has increased. By contrast, several of the participants said that an unsuccessful task force could be characterized by poor management and intra-organizational communication, as well as a tendency to go after bad cases, often simply for the purpose of running up statistics or seeking forfeitures.

*Measuring Task Force Effectiveness.* There was virtual unanimity that case cooperation would be very useful to measure—as gauged by ‘assistance rendered’ cases (which would involve only a small change to the existing reporting form). One task force uses a control board questionnaire to obtain feedback from key constituencies; certain representatives from other task forces were open to the idea. Several individuals said they would be happy to use certain methodologies to document linkages between drug enforcement and reductions in other types of crime (e.g., burglaries). Several also said something like an ADAM interview protocol would be helpful to get feedback on certain kinds of enforcement efforts. One person mentioned using data mapping to target property condemnations. Fire and EMS CAD data were viewed as generally reliable and promising to use as indicators. Drug price and purity should also be more systematically analyzed. The participants said they would like to be able to do more analysis of precursor chemicals and their locations. Having funds for trained analysts would probably permit much more creative use of data. For example, the particular color or style of bags used for storing drugs might reflect certain ‘signatures’ whose locations could be systematically tracked.

*Reporting on Task Force Effectiveness.* Participants welcomed more opportunities for qualitative, anecdotal reporting, and more expansiveness in describing their goals and objectives. There was frustration in not being able to quantify in



economic terms the value to a community of a significant bust. Everyone was concerned, however, about the additional burdens that might accompany expanded reporting requirements. CJCC participants in the meeting agreed with the task force representatives that the state could play a more useful role in aggregating the reported information, analyzing it with powerful computing tools, and reporting back to the task forces with useful synthesized data. The state also has an obligation, several people said, to make it easier to use criminal history information to track dispositions.

### **3. Colorado**

The focus group meeting took place on February 16, 2000 in the offices of the Denver Metro Gang Task Force in Aurora, Colorado. Attendees involved in task force work included a district attorney, a sheriff, two police chiefs, and two task force commanders. Six task forces were represented by these individuals, including the Larimer County Drug Task Force, the Denver South Metro Drug Task Force, the Denver Metro Gang Task Force, the Denver West Metro Task Force, and the Eastern Colorado Plains Task Force. One other sheriff and district attorney had been invited, and signaled their intention to participate but were ultimately unable to attend.

**Priority-Setting.** The participants clearly distinguished between 'internal' and 'external' priority-setting—the former consisting of control boards making policy and the latter embracing all kinds of outside requests and pressures, including those from elected officials, non-member local agencies, and state and Federal law enforcement. The media also creates its own pressures and priorities, they said, citing the example of a local girl's death at a 'rave' from Ecstasy, and the ensuing demand for action. There was a candid admission that state reporting and state law enforcement expectations also create

pressures for making arrests and running up other statistics. Most participants felt that the process of priority-setting was a balancing act, but no task force in the group had gone so far as to create a special overt unit to explicitly address street-level enforcement needs. In most cases, there was no clear explanation to the public about key principles or priorities, in part because most task forces' highest or only priority is making upper-level trafficking and manufacturing cases. In terms of communicating priorities, two individuals expressed frustration in not having their fluid priorities captured in grant reporting (since they are usually based on earlier grant applications). There was a wide difference of opinion concerning the media. Some individuals favored lots of media attention so long as it didn't interfere with operations, while others saw it either as compromising undercover work or creating confusion when their priorities were strictly handling upper-level undercover cases.

*Benefits/Indicators of Task Force Effectiveness.* There was general agreement that task forces had vastly improved drug enforcement capabilities and outputs. Relationships among agencies had improved, pooling of resources and intelligence had increased, and better quality cases had been made for prosecutors. Task force personnel view themselves as highly accountable to the public and to the SAA, and perhaps even more accountable overall than local agencies. Rotation did sometimes serve to diffuse expertise among local agencies, but most viewed rotation as harmful to task force teamwork and continuity. Still, task force graduates, if they return to their home agencies, generally do ensure better agency relations with the task force. The following attributes were mentioned as reflective of an effective task force:

- Clear written policies
- Good personnel selection

- Attention to training needs
- Frequent financial and evidence audits
- Established chain of command and good mid-level (sergeant) supervision
- Supportive executive/control boards
- Sharing of leadership roles across agencies
- Adequate technical assistance and training

***Measuring Task Force Effectiveness.*** The participants were quite resistant to using quantitative impact measures, and were very sensitive to attribution issues. Overselling their impact or having the media critically review the methodologies used would be highly unwelcome. Greater opportunities for qualitative reporting would, however, be useful. There was only lukewarm enthusiasm for surveys of law enforcement agencies and others involved in their task force work, as they thought it would simply recapitulate – in less helpful form – information they already share with those agencies on an ongoing informal basis (it still might prove useful to external audiences, however). Surveys of executive boards might be the most useful type of feedback in this category. ADAM-like interview information was viewed very positively, as was case tracking (although there are problems keeping track of plea-bargained cases). Incident mapping was not viewed as being particularly useful, and the problem of determining what type of location to analyze was discussed (arrest, home, drug market, other).

***Reporting on Task Force Effectiveness.*** There was substantial resistance to increasing any reporting burden to the state. There was, however, significant dissatisfaction with current reporting formats and the insistence on arrest and seizure weight numbers over which they often have little control. It was not easy to discern whether there was support for articulating more holistic community-oriented objectives and being held accountable for making progress toward relevant indicators.

#### **4. General Focus Group Conclusions**

Despite plenty of locally-specific concerns and issues, there was remarkable consistency among the three focus groups about the fundamental need to broaden the framework for task force evaluation and reporting and to capture more of the capacity-building benefits that task forces bring to drug enforcement. Not only was strict output-type reporting unanimously viewed as narrow and unhelpful in reflecting the overall work of task forces, but it tended to make task forces accountable for measures often out of their control. This had the effect of skewing task force incentives and possibly causing poor judgment to be exercised in pursuing certain targets simply to drive up statistical totals.

More qualitative reporting was supported, although many task forces appear to be doing this already. The same is true of flexible systems permitting task force objectives to be adapted or amended within a reporting period. There was some support for evaluating task forces on the basis of public outreach, but only as a significant measure, it seemed, for those task forces for which street-level work was a major priority. Most task force participants also seemed to support outcome-oriented reporting based on surveys or questionnaires sent to interested law enforcement and other parties (although there was some concern about unnecessarily critical comments being made by non-task force police chiefs and sheriffs who might have political axes to grind with task forces that did not meet their particular agendas). Everyone supported more attention to organizational development indicators, as well as indicators of cooperation (e.g., joint cases or 'assistance rendered' cases, or informants turned over by local agencies) and communication (frequency of contact, etc.). Evaluation of case tracking data was

generally supported, but only if there was proper assistance and support from SAAs. Many seemed to see this as an important way to show not only task force effectiveness but the way in which many cases may not be pursued aggressively by prosecutors or dealt with effectively by judges.

Impact measures were viewed with caution generally, but there was substantial support for exploring the use of Fire and EMS CAD data, price data, and ADAM-type arrestee interviewing. Virtually everyone mentioned, however, that reporting burdens should not be increased as a general matter, and that use of many of the impact measures would necessarily require the assistance of trained analysts and possible additional financial support. Only two task forces – one in Illinois and one in Georgia – stated that they had any analytical capability. This suggests the need for such capabilities and financing to be explicitly provided for in the design for Phase II.

#### **D. Pre-Test Conclusions**

The pre-test activities confirmed the utility of proceeding with the basic research design, research questions, and measures developed in the fall of 2000. The internal and external review of the research questions and measures demonstrated that it would be problematic to proceed to Phase II by relying on many kinds of contemplated public health measures. Instead, we decided to attempt to utilize alternative EMS and Fire CAD data to attempt to provide some insight into the public health dimension. We did not actually assess the usefulness of these data during Phase I and the decision on their use will ultimately depend on a determination of accessibility and data quality at the local level during Phase II.

Most of the adaptations to our research design that we embraced in the wake of the pre-test concern the detailed questions and measures that will be used in connection with the surveys of law enforcement agencies and other criminal justice system organizations under the 'outcomes' section of our design methodology. That is, our internal/external review and SAA and focus group meetings identified a number of new or modified questions to be asked as part of the specific outcome inquiries, as well as a number of new quantitative measures that could be supplied by states and task forces either within or outside the contemplated outcome-oriented surveys. Another subsidiary change will be to clarify for research design purposes the distinctions between task force member agencies and non-task force member agencies in the outcome question surveys: it is important to underscore this distinction in our overall approach, even though it was already clear from our research questions matrix. Substantively, we also plan to place more emphasis on research questions that address strategic planning and goal-setting.

A more significant design change based on the focus groups and internal review was our decision to include as an optional category of questions those inquiries directed at non-crime outcomes of task force work, such as reduced vagrancy, spillover effects of open air drug markets, and other visible indications of disorder. We felt that while citizen views on drug enforcement are usually quite problematic, to the extent that certain task forces adopted a community policing or street-level emphasis, it would make sense for these jurisdictions to consider the possibility of collecting information from citizens on these particular matters.

The other very important conclusion reached during the pre-test period was that the best two state partners for Phase II work would be Illinois and Georgia. There are

several reasons for this conclusion, based on SAA visits, focus group meetings, and data quality and availability. In general, we believed it was important, looking ahead to Phase II to select two strong partners that had superior capabilities in terms of personnel, interest in evaluation, and reliable, accessible data. This would give Abt, BJA and NIJ more freedom in selecting the two other Phase II sites whose qualifications, by design, might be quite different. Data quality and availability were strongest in Illinois and Georgia. There were more varied data sets of higher quality in both states, and Georgia's nascent efforts at creating a unified criminal history information database in the past few years represents a very important research tool. While all three states had good task force reporting systems and content, Georgia's and Illinois' were somewhat more extensive, and the use of data in those states (for research and/or auditing functions) appeared significantly more ambitious.

SAA capacity was solid in all three states, but Illinois and Georgia appeared much better able to function as a full research partner in Phase II activities. Not only are dedicated full-time staff available to work on task forces matters in Illinois and Georgia, but both SAAs have expressed a greater interest than did the Colorado SAA in the full range of research questions to be asked in the proposed research design.

Finally, several of the task forces in Illinois and Georgia exhibited an interest in, and sensitivity to, various evaluation issues and pitfalls that surpassed in sophistication that of most of the Colorado task forces with which we met. In addition, we received several specific expressions of interest in cooperating in an evaluation from Georgia and Illinois task forces, as compared to what could be viewed as more simply acquiescent attitudes toward evaluation on the part of the Colorado task forces.

## VII. Proposed Phase II Methodology and Workplan

Phase II of the Multijurisdictional Task Forces Evaluation Project represents the opportunity to conduct a multi-dimensional test of the evaluation methodologies developed and refined in Phase I. It is the culmination of many months of information-gathering from, and consultation with, evaluation 'suppliers' and 'consumers,' as well as a synthesis of some of the more inventive and compelling evaluation methodologies discussed and/or deployed by researchers over the past decade. Based on this work, Phase II of the project offers the promise of developing a solid package or menu of evaluation options for future use by SAAs, other researchers, and task forces themselves. These options will collectively advance a common understanding of the diversity of task force missions and organizational contexts and more closely link evaluation methods to questions and measures that are meaningful to the particular states and task forces being studied.

Phase II will provide the opportunity for the development of a comprehensive "toolkit" of evaluation options for use at multiple levels – from federal policy inquiries and state level performance monitoring to individual task force investigation into "what works?" These evaluation options will focus directly on "measuring what matters," rather than the traditional approaches of just counting MJTF activities or documenting implementation processes and best practices.

Such an approach will help insure that MJTFs are doing what they should be doing and are having the desired outcomes and impacts. This approach will also help to answer the larger policy question of whether the considerable investments that are made yearly in the development of new tasks forces and the continuation of hundreds of others



## Final Proposed Research Questions, Measures, and Evaluation Designs

<b>Implementation Research Questions</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Comparison Areas ⇒</b>	<b>Evaluation Design</b>
<b>Implementation Process Questions</b>	MJTF self reports <i>(Including grant applications &amp; annual reports)</i>	No ⇒	Ex Post Facto Case Study
<b>Task Force Activities and Output Questions</b>	MJTF self reports <i>(Including grant applications &amp; annual reports)</i>	No ⇒	Ex Post Facto Case Study
<b>Outcome Research Questions</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Comparison Area ⇒</b>	<b>Evaluation Design</b>
<b>Effects on Drug Related Crime</b>	Reported Crime <i>(e.g. burglaries, auto thefts, assaults)</i>	Yes ⇒ No ⇒	Comparison Time Series Static Group Comparison Time Series Ex Post Facto Case Study
	Local Police Department Detective Surveys <i>(Both member and non-member agencies)</i>	Yes ⇒ No ⇒	Static Group Comparison Ex Post Facto Case Study
<b>Effects on Non-Crime Related Targets</b>	Citizen Surveys	Yes ⇒ No ⇒	Static Group Comparison Ex Post Facto Case Study
	Local Department Chief Surveys <i>(Both member and non-member agencies)</i>		
<b>Effects on Law Enforcement Agencies and Operations</b>	Local Department Chief Surveys <i>(Both member and non-member agencies)</i>	Yes ⇒ No ⇒	Static Group Comparison Ex Post Facto Case Study
	Surveys of State and Federal Law Enforcement Personnel <i>(Both member and non-member agencies)</i>	Yes ⇒ No ⇒	Static Group Comparison Ex Post Facto Case Study
<b>Effects on Other Criminal Justice Agencies</b>	Case Tracking <i>(Criminal history data)</i>	Yes ⇒ No ⇒	Comparison Time Series Static Group Comparison Time Series Ex Post Facto Case Study
	Surveys of Prosecutors	Yes ⇒ No ⇒	Static Group Comparison Ex Post Facto Case Study
	Surveys of Sheriffs, Jailers	Yes ⇒ No ⇒	Static Group Comparison Ex Post Facto Case Study
<b>Impact Research Questions</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Comparison Area ⇒</b>	<b>Evaluation Design</b>
<b>Effects on Drug Markets</b>	Reported Crime <i>(UCR data)</i>	Yes ⇒ No ⇒	Comparison Time Series Static Group Comparison Time Series Ex Post Facto Case Study
	Drug Emergencies <i>(Fire/EMS CAD data)</i>	Yes ⇒ No ⇒	Comparison Time Series Static Group Comparison Time Series Ex Post Facto Case Study

## Final Proposed Research Questions, Measures, and Evaluation Designs

	Arrestee Interviewing <i>(ADAM-like anecdotal trend information)</i>	Yes ⇒	Static Group Comparison
		No ⇒	Ex Post Facto Case Study
	Drug Prices <i>(STRIDE data)</i>	Yes ⇒	Comparison Time Series
		No ⇒	Static Group Comparison Time Series Ex Post Facto Case Study
<b>Effects on Drug Use</b>	Arrestee Interviewing <i>(ADAM-like anecdotal trend information)</i>	Yes ⇒	Static Group Comparison
		No ⇒	Ex Post Facto Case Study
	Drug Emergencies <i>(Fire/EMS CAD Data)</i>	Yes ⇒	Comparison Time Series
		No ⇒	Static Group Comparison Time Series Ex Post Facto Case Study

are really paying off, if so how, and if not, why not? In the absence of answers to such questions, millions of dollars will likely be continued to be spent on MJTFs nationwide with little being learned about what they are doing, how well they are doing, and what difference they are making.

This section describes our proposed approach to Phase II. It provides an overview of (1) the proposed methodologies to be used in implementing Phase II based on our Phase I pre-testing; (2) a proposed workplan; and (3) a proposed management plan. Each of these aspects of our proposed Phase II approach is subject to modification based on consultations with NIJ and BJA and further research and reflection.

### **A. Proposed Research Methodology**

The proposed methodology for Phase II, shown in the following matrix, includes only modest modifications from the basic research design developed for pre-testing in Phase I. The basic alterations and refinements have been discussed above. The overarching goal is to develop tested methodologies that can constitute a kind of 'evaluation toolkit' for SAAs and task forces. This toolkit will likely include both basic methodologies applicable to all, or virtually all task forces, as well as more tailored methodologies relevant to particular kinds of task forces.

The principal challenge in Phase II is to determine, in consultation with the SAAs in Illinois, Georgia, and the two new states, which task forces to partner with, and which task force coverage areas will afford the possibility of utilizing more ambitious and/or specialized methodologies, including comparison groups. Site selection considerations are discussed below.

A subsidiary challenge is to determine more precisely how many states and task forces will deploy certain of the more ambitious research designs or research questions, as this would implicate a certain kind of task force environment or mission, or access to particular kinds of data. While we cannot provide a definitive answer at this time, it is likely that we would utilize a 'standard,' more conservative research design as a basic platform for each of the major research question areas relative to *all* of the task force jurisdictions we selected in the four states. This is to obtain as much comparative information as possible about the experience of using such methodologies in diverse task force environments. By contrast, of necessity we would only employ more ambitious research designs and utilize more specialized measures in the smaller number of task forces jurisdictions where it was feasible to do so. Here too, however, we would seek to test out such methodologies with at least three task forces so as to achieve some confidence in the efficacy of the research methods in several different environments.

## **B. Proposed Workplan Approach**

The proposed Phase II workplan has five distinct phases: (1) site selection of two new states; (2) final refinement of the research design, in consultation with NIJ, BJA, and the four SAAs, as well as definition of partnership roles; (3) selection of task force partners in the four states and definition of their partnership roles; (4) data collection and analysis; and (5) development of final research products, in consultation with BJA and NIJ.

While NIJ envisioned Phase II as an 18-month undertaking, the practicalities of data collection and analysis across multiple evaluation methodologies and sites suggest

that at least a two-year project is required. Indeed, in the case of research designs involving time series utilized prospectively, well over a year or more might be necessary in order for certain types of data to be collected properly. As discussed below, our proposed timetable is aggressive insofar as it adheres to NIJ's 18-month schedule. Depending on the number and kinds of research designs used in Phase II, however, this timetable could be significantly extended.

### **1. Site Selection: Two New States**

The project solicitation called for the contractor to deploy the methodologies developed in Phase I in four states—two that were utilized in Phase I, and two entirely new states, so as to determine the transferability of the methodologies to diverse environments. Site selection in Phase II must remain faithful to the basic purpose of the solicitation while acknowledging the potential utility of working with states that have well organized SAAs, some research capacity (including access to, or a history of working with, outside or academic researchers), and an interest in partnering on the project. While maximum transferability or applicability of an evaluation 'toolkit' might be undermined by partnering only with SAAs having the above attributes, it should be recognized that selection of SAAs without such characteristics could involve practical costs in terms of time, money, and the quality of the ultimate research findings.

With these issues in mind, we would recommend a selection process that balances various state criteria, including geographic diversity (suggesting possible states in the Northeast and West) and other types of diversity (e.g., states where there is a smaller role in task forces played by the state police or state bureau of investigation), with some of the SAA factors noted above.<sup>27</sup> We would not discount the possibility that at least one of the

two new states could be drawn from the other three states in which we conducted Phase I site visits (i.e., Florida, Mississippi, or Oregon), or from the list of other states that appeared, based on the SAA survey, to place a premium on data collection and/or evaluation (e.g., North Carolina, Ohio, or Tennessee). The most likely scenario for site selection would be to have Abt Associates, BJA, and NIJ meet to narrow the list of potential states to three or at most four, and then to have Abt investigators conduct three or four one-day site visits for purposes of becoming acquainted with those states' SAAs. In the end, the selection process should be the product of active discussion between Abt Associates, BJA, and NIJ, drawing upon the information and recommendations of each as to site desirability.

## **2. *Refinement of the Research Design***

Selection of the other two states will permit an additional opportunity to revisit the research design based on input from the SAAs in those states and from Abt Associates, BJA, and NIJ. To better inform that decision making process, Abt investigators will plan on making 2-day site visits to the two new states to meet with the SAAs to (1) discuss specific data collection or other issues that could arise in the course of conducting task force evaluations in their state, particularly those issues that would attend use of more ambitious methodologies, (2) obtain an overview of various task forces in the state, including various factors – ranging from logistics and leadership qualities – that would be relevant to ultimate selection of particular task forces as research partners, (3) obtain more specific information about the availability and quality of relevant task force, crime, criminal history, and other data in the state, and (4) define with some precision the roles and responsibilities of the SAAs in the Phase II research.

This last point is especially important in terms of defining the scope of the Phase II research effort and the allocation of the budget. It is quite possible that the interests and capabilities of some SAAs will necessitate a scaling-back of data collection efforts across the project as a whole. It is our intention, however, to work with states that are committed and have the resources to serve as active research partners.

Armed with this information from the two new states, Abt Associates, BJA, and NIJ will be in a better position to discuss which of the more ambitious or specialized methodologies will be used in particular states. The goal, again, will be to deploy the basic research design in all states and potentially all task forces, while selecting a mix of the more ambitious research methodologies to be tested in appropriate individual task force jurisdictions (e.g., where possible comparison groups exist).

### **3. Selection of Task Force Partners**

Selection of particular task forces as research partners must draw on the expertise and experience of the four SAAs, as informed by input from Abt Associates as to task forces in Georgia and Illinois. Criteria will include factors of jurisdictional and tactical diversity (e.g., predominantly rural vs. suburban areas; use of overt and/or covert tactics), as well as the leadership, cooperation, and overall capabilities of particular task forces. Once again, ensuring a balanced mix of jurisdictions and affording the opportunity to deploy more ambitious research methodologies in a few strategic locations will serve as guiding principles.

Pending further discussion with NIJ and BJA, our intention at this point is to assume that we will work with two task forces in each state, resulting in a total of eight task force research partners. This can provide balance and experimentation within each

state and across the four states. Depending on the circumstances and the attributes of particular task forces and task force jurisdictions, as well as the budgets and capabilities of each SAA, three task force partners could be considered in a particular state. For example, based on the capabilities of the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority and the research study already underway there involving five task forces, it is quite possible that three appropriate task force research partners could be identified to address the more specialized or ambitious research methodologies beyond the those of the basic research design.

#### **4. *Data Collection and Analysis***

Data collection and analysis will depend critically on a clear definition of the roles and responsibilities among Abt Associates, the four SAAs, outside researchers (where relevant), and the various task force partners. While these specific roles and responsibilities will vary by state and cannot be predicted in advance, it is clear that designated research liaisons will need to be identified at each of the SAAs, each of the task forces (in most cases this will be the task force commander), and at each of any relevant outside research institutions. The allocation of tasks and level of effort will depend on the resources available to these organizations and the data collection challenges present at each site. Some survey work will constitute a discrete, one-shot effort, while other data collection activities, including surveys and tabulation of various quantitative data, will necessarily extend over several months. Indeed, in some cases, especially with regard to prospective impact research, data collection might need to occur over at least an 18-month period in order for certain impacts to be discerned and verified.



Our hope is that we can draw on significant resources in each of the states, but particularly in Georgia and Illinois, where we know that able and willing SAA and individual task force partners exist. Where possible, we will oversee efforts to have as much data collection as possible undertaken by local partners, including the handling of both surveys and quantitative data sets. Such collection will be monitored carefully according to a predetermined schedule, and there will be regular monthly status calls by phone to assess progress and identify any problems. In addition to any ongoing data collection work undertaken by Abt Associates, there will also be quarterly visits by Abt Associates personnel as necessary to the states to confer with the SAAs about any fine-tuning of data collection efforts that may need to occur to keep the process running smoothly.

Data analysis activities also cannot be precisely defined at this time, and will similarly emerge as the product of extensive discussion between Abt Associates and its research partners. There will, however, be ongoing communication of results where appropriate, and continuous sharing of methodological questions and concerns via email and conference calls. At an appropriate juncture mid-way through the data collection process, Abt will convene a meeting in Washington, D.C. of the SAA research partners, BJA, and NIJ, that will allow a fruitful sharing of views on the research efforts thus far, problems encountered, and most important – the kind of analytical products and formats that would be most beneficial to them and to the wider task force and research communities. Based on this meeting, and subject to budgetary constraints, plans will be drawn up to ensure that the most important of these desired products are generated in a timely and appropriate manner.

## **5. Anticipated Products**

Products will consist of an interim report on site selection, refinement of the research design, and selection of task force partners, a final report summarizing all of the activities and findings of the Phase II methodology testing, and, subject to the remaining available budget, a multijurisdictional drug task force evaluation guide that sets forth (1) the varied uses and purposes of evaluation, (2) the kinds of evaluation tools that may be used for particular purposes, (3) the logistical, budgetary, and other constraints that may attend use of particular evaluation tools, (4) special considerations that task forces need to keep in mind in conducting or commissioning evaluations, and (5) recommendations for improved data collection and analysis that can advance the state of the art across the United States. If funds to complete this guide are limited, we will give consideration to producing a less elaborate document and will seek additional funding to have the guide appear in a more streamlined and more visibly attractive format.

## **C. Management Plan**

Wherever possible, Abt Associates will ensure maximum continuity of personnel and management systems between Phase I and Phase II of this project. This entails continuity of project leadership and a logical but flexible task timeline, as discussed below.

### **1. Management Structure**

Leadership of this project in Phase II will continue to reside with David Hayeslip and Malcolm Russell-Einhorn of Abt Associates. Mr. Russell-Einhorn will, however, assume the position of Project Director, while Dr. Hayeslip will continue to play the

leading technical role in the project as Principal Investigator. This division of labor builds on the successful experience in Phase I in having Mr. Russell-Einhorn serve as the chief liaison with various SAAs and task forces, thereby freeing up Dr. Hayeslip to focus on developing and refining the principal research methodologies to be deployed in the project.

Joining Messrs. Russell-Einhorn and Hayeslip on the Abt Associates team will be Scott Decker, Ph.D., and possibly Tim Bynum, Ph.D. Abt Associates envisions these consultants serving as both overall technical advisers to the project and as resources for particular types of research efforts with which they have special familiarity. For example, Dr. Decker has worked on earlier task force evaluations that have respectively used times series data to assess a shift in task force strategy and employed case tracking data and a variety of citizen and other surveys to assess the impact of a task force on a single community.

## **2. Task Timeline**

The following task timelines provides a general overview of the major activities and sequencing of tasks envisioned for Phase II of this project.

Evaluation of Multijurisdictional Task Forces Project																			
Phase II Task Timeline																			
Task	Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
<b>0. Administration</b>																			
<b>1. New Site Selection</b>																			
1.1	Discussions with BJA and NIJ re: site suggestions	█																	
1.2	Site visits to 3-4 potential sites		█																
1.3	Selection of two new sites (SAAs)		█																
<b>2. Refinement of the Research Design</b>																			
2.1	Site visits/Consultations with four SAA partners		█																
2.2	Discussions with BJA/NIJ re: research design refinement		█																
<b>3. Selection of Task Force Partners</b>																			
3.1	Selection of new task force partners				█														
3.2	Site visits to new task force partners				█														
3.3	Site visits to task forces in existing partner states (if required)				█														
<b>4. Data Collection and Analysis</b>																			
4.1	Allocation of roles & responsibilities among SAAs & MJTFs				█														
4.2	Data collection						█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
4.3	Site visits							█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
4.4	Washington, D.C. meeting on interim findings/issues									█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
4.5	Data analysis																		
<b>5. Products</b>																			
5.1	Interim Report						█												
5.2	Final report																		
5.3	Task force evaluation guide																		

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<sup>1</sup> Since many task forces have not been new creations but rather renewals of existing task forces (sometimes under a different name), it has often been unclear how many MJTFs have actually been created using Byrne funds or how many task forces have been in operation at a given time.

<sup>2</sup> A contrary view holds that in many instances, such professionalization may not be cost-effective, e.g., some lawyers may spend very large increments of time building a handful of better individual cases, only to discover that their overall conviction rate has only increased slightly or not at all, and/or that fewer total convictions have resulted.

<sup>3</sup> Illinois' response was apparently lost in the mail and was not received by Abt until after the time that responses were tallied. While the Illinois response was not used for statistical purposes in Phase I, it was relied on heavily in making determinations about potential site visit locations and assessing the relative sophistication of SAAs in collecting and analyzing task force information provided by individual MJTFs.

<sup>4</sup> The initial number was 762; however, it became clear that the number was actually 757 based on redundancy (survey responses that featured a task force name only slightly different from the one recorded in the IPR) or certain task forces having expired.

<sup>5</sup> This number is based on estimates of task forces existing in the particular states that did not respond to the survey, or whose responses were received late. For example, Illinois and Virginia together have some 35 task forces, while the other states and territories likely have about 40-50 task forces combined.

<sup>6</sup> Subsequent to the SAA survey being conducted, however, Abt Associates received a number of completed evaluations from SAAs, task forces, and independent experts that proved useful in analyzing various methodologies.

<sup>7</sup> Lack of responses hindered completeness and accuracy with respect to these inquiries. For example, Colorado did not respond to this question, yet it had commissioned a process and impact study of its task forces in 1991.

<sup>8</sup> Misinterpretation or inaccurate usage of the terminology may shape some of these responses. For example, Florida characterized its impact evaluation as a comparison group design, although the researchers conducting the evaluation would not have used that designation and would have characterized the design as descriptive in nature.

<sup>9</sup> Five task forces were dropped from the total of 762 identified through the SAA Survey and the BJA's IPR database. These task forces either had disbanded, or were in some sense duplicative (e.g., they had been identified by different names but were in fact the same organization, or were divisions within a larger unified task force under the same command).

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## **Appendix B: SAA Survey Instrument**

## STATE ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCY SURVEY

As noted in the cover letter, Abt Associates Inc. is conducting a study called "Evaluation of Multijurisdictional Task Forces," under a grant from the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), U.S. Department of Justice. The purpose of the first phase of this study is to identify current and past evaluations which have been undertaken to find out how well task forces "work." That is, we are particularly interested in learning about evaluations which assessed potential task force impacts. We will then examine in detail the kinds of methodologies which have been used, as well as the types of activity and outcome measures various researchers and practitioners have used in these evaluations. On the basis of this assessment we will ultimately develop a variety of methodological approaches to evaluating task forces which can be used by states, localities or task forces themselves.

This survey is designed to meet two objectives. The first is to identify multijurisdictional task forces in your state that are supported by funds through the Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Program (Byrne Program) administered by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), U.S. Department of Justice, or through BJA discretionary program funding. For the purposes of this study multijurisdictional task forces are defined as any cooperative law enforcement effort involving two or more criminal justice agencies with jurisdiction over two or more areas, sharing the common goal of impacting one or more aspects of drug control and violent crime problems.

This survey has been sent to all State Administrative Agencies nationwide. The results will be utilized to identify innovative evaluation methodologies and approaches relative to task forces. Following compilation of survey results a meeting of select state and task force representatives will be held later this year to discuss these methodologies and measurements. A glossary of terms used in this survey is provided in Appendix B.

Participation in this study is voluntary and your responses will be held in confidence. Your name will not be provided to anyone and we only ask for your name and phone number for follow up clarification of your responses. Results of this study will not report your name, nor the name of others being surveyed.

Should you have any questions about the purpose of the survey or use of results you may contact the Project Director, Dr. David Hayeslip at (202) 263-1721 or the Managing Vice President of the Law and Public Policy Area of Abt Associates, Inc., Terry Dunworth at (617) 349-2637.

State Administrative Agency Name: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Person Completing Survey: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THANK YOU FOR AGREEING TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY!**



**PART I - ACTIVE MULTIJURISDICTIONAL TASK FORCES  
SUPPORTED BY BYRNE FORMULA GRANT FUNDS IN YOUR STATE**

Below is a listing of active task force subgrants for your state based upon Individual Project Reports submitted to the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) and maintained in BJA's IPR database. Please review this summary and correct any errors noted. Are there any additional active task forces funded through the Byrne Program which have been omitted from this list? YES NO (Please circle) If you circled yes, please complete a BJA Individual Project Report for each task force which is not listed in the summary below.

Project Title

Grantee Name

Address

Contact Name

Contact Phone Number

**Part II - State Administrative Agency Reporting Requirements**

There are a number of ways that the State Administrative Agencies fulfill the administrative oversight and programmatic and evaluative monitoring requirements of the Byrne Formula Program. In this section, we are interested in learning what information your agency consistently collects from Byrne-funded task forces to monitor program implementation and impact.

Specifically, does your agency require regular reporting from Byrne funded task forces on any of the following?

Task force goals and objectives  Yes  No

If yes, how often are task force goals and objectives supposed to be reported? (check all that apply)

Weekly  Monthly  Twice a year  Yearly  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Implementation activities (check all that apply)

- Achievement of milestones
- Agency agreements
- Staffing
- Development of policies and procedures
- Organizational meetings
- Expenditures
- Use of overtime
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

How often are implementation activities supposed to be reported? (check all that apply)

Weekly  Monthly  Twice a year  Yearly  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Operational activities (check all that apply)

- Arrests
- Convictions
- Field interviews/traffic stops
- Surveillance's
- Cases opened/closed
- Number of drug seizures
- Amount of drugs seized (weight)
- Street value of drugs seized
- Purity levels of drugs seized
- Citizen complaints
- Complaint dispositions
- Weapons seized
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

How often are operational activities supposed to be reported? (check all that apply)

Weekly  Monthly  Twice a year  Yearly  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Impact measurements (check all that apply)

- Calls for service
- Reported Crime
- Victimization surveys
- Citizen surveys
- Changes in drug markets
- Changes in weapons markets
- Drug use (self reported, urinalysis, blood testing)
- Weapons use
- Crime displacement
- Interviews of perpetrators
- Purity of drugs seized
- Source of drugs (foreign versus domestic production)
- Overdoses
- Emergency room admissions
- Enhanced agency cooperation
- Enhanced resource sharing
- Enhanced communication among agencies
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

How often are impact measurements supposed to be reported? (check all that apply)

- Weekly
- Monthly
- Twice a year
- Yearly
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

What proportion of this information are all subgrantees able to provide? \_\_\_\_\_

How are these various measures stored by your SAA?  Manually  Electronically  Both  Not kept

What is done with this information? (check-all that apply)

- Used for programmatic oversight
- Used for reporting subgrantee progress to BJA in State Annual Report
- Used for strategic planning
- Used by State Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) to analyze and compile reports
- Assessments of implementation progress/process
- Assessments of effectiveness of task forces
- State level policy development (which task forces to fund or continue funding, for example)
- Development of legislation
- Dissemination to media
- Dissemination to public
- Dissemination to law enforcement agencies
- Dissemination to task forces
- Dissemination to other criminal justice agencies
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**SAA EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS OR ACTIVITIES**

- Does your agency urge task forces to conduct their own formal evaluations?  Yes  No
- Does your agency require task forces to be evaluated?  Yes  No
- Does your agency set aside a percentage of formula grant funding for evaluation?  Yes  No
- Does your agency fund independent evaluations of task forces?  Yes  No
- Does your agency conduct your own evaluations of task forces?  Yes  No
- Does your agency work with your State SAC to conduct evaluations?  Yes  No
- Does your agency provide evaluation technical assistance to task forces?  Yes  No

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ABOUT SAA TASK FORCE REGULAR REPORTING REQUIREMENTS OR EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS:**

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### Part III - EVALUATIONS OF MULTIJURISDICTIONAL TASK FORCES IN (STATE) SINCE 1988

Instructions: Please complete one page for each independent evaluation of multijurisdictional task forces which you are aware of over the past decade. Independent evaluations refer to examinations of implementation and impacts conducted by organizations other than the actual task force. They do not include internal reports or assessments by task forces themselves. We have included forms for up to ten separate evaluations. If you are aware of more than ten please photocopy this form for additional evaluations. If you do not know the information, please leave the cell in the form blank.

Name of Task Force Evaluated	Who Directed the Evaluation?	Where Can We Obtain a Copy of the Proposal, Progress Report, or Final Report?
Name: _____ Contact Name: _____ Telephone: _____ (If more than one task force is being evaluated, please provide the above information for additional task forces on a separate piece of paper.)	Name: _____ Agency: _____ Address: _____ Telephone: ( ) _____ E-mail: _____	Source: _____ Contact Name: _____ Telephone: _____
<b>Period of Evaluation</b> ⇒⇒⇒⇒⇒	<b>Started:</b>	<b>Ended:</b>
<b>Type of Evaluation</b>	<b>Type of Research Design</b>	<b>Funded by</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Implementation Process <input type="checkbox"/> Operational Activities/Outcomes <input type="checkbox"/> Impact	<input type="checkbox"/> Descriptive <input type="checkbox"/> Correlational <input type="checkbox"/> Ex Post Facto <input type="checkbox"/> Quasi-Experimental <input type="checkbox"/> Comparison Group <input type="checkbox"/> Time Series <input type="checkbox"/> True Experiment	<input type="checkbox"/> Task Force itself <input type="checkbox"/> Local unit of government <input type="checkbox"/> State SAA <input type="checkbox"/> Other state agency <input type="checkbox"/> Private Foundation <input type="checkbox"/> University <input type="checkbox"/> Federal government <input type="checkbox"/> Other

**Bureau of Justice Assistance  
Byrne Formula Grant Program  
INDIVIDUAL PROJECT REPORT**

The State Administrative Agency will submit this report to the Bureau of Justice Assistance immediately after awarding a subgrant to a state agency or local unit of government. This report's purpose is to collect basic information on subgrant recipients and projects. This data is used for program reports to the Administration and Congress and for feedback to states.

For help in completing this form, see the attached instructions or call the Bureau of Justice Assistance.

1. Subgrant Number	2. Federal Fiscal Year of Funds	3. Purpose Area	4. Is Subgrant Part of CJRI Program? Yes / No
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5. Program Title:	6. Program Code
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7. Project Title:	8. Age of Target Population (check all that apply)				
	All	0-12	13-17	18-24	25 & older

9. Subgrantee/Recipient

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Fax Number: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Federal Funds \$ _____	11. Pass-thru Funds \$ _____	12. Matching Funds \$ _____	13. Project Start Date ____/____/____	Project End Date ____/____/____
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14. Type of Award: \_\_\_\_\_ New \_\_\_\_\_ Continuation  
 (First award of Byrne funds for this project) (Second or subsequent award of Byrne funds)

Total number of months of Byrne funding, including this award: \_\_\_\_\_

If award is a continuation, provide: Fiscal year of previous subgrant: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous year subgrant number: \_\_\_\_\_

15. Subgrantee's Level of Government (check one)

\_\_\_\_ State      \_\_\_\_ County      \_\_\_\_ City/Town      \_\_\_\_ Indian Tribe

16. Level of Implementing Agency(ies) (check all that apply)

\_\_\_\_ State      \_\_\_\_ County      \_\_\_\_ City/Town      \_\_\_\_ Indian Tribe      \_\_\_\_ Federal      \_\_\_\_ Non-Government

17. Type of Implementing Agency(ies) (check all that apply)

\_\_\_\_ Law Enforcement      \_\_\_\_ Prosecution      \_\_\_\_ Public Defense      \_\_\_\_ Courts      \_\_\_\_ Corrections  
 \_\_\_\_ Treatment      \_\_\_\_ Prevention/Education      \_\_\_\_ Non-Government

## **Appendix B: Glossary of Terms**

**Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Program (Byrne Program):** established by the 1988 Anti-Drug Abuse Act to assist State and local criminal justice agencies control violent and drug-related crime, improve operations, and build coordination and cooperation within the criminal justice system. The program is administered by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) and offers funding in two ways, through formula and discretionary grant program.

**Byrne Formula Grant Program:** the component of the Byrne grant program that awards funds directly to states, which in turn make sub-grants to State and local units of government.

**Byrne Discretionary Grant Program:** the component of the Byrne grant program that awards funds directly to public and private agencies and private non-profit organizations.

**Multijurisdictional Task Forces:** any cooperative law enforcement effort involving two or more criminal justice agencies with jurisdiction over two or more areas, sharing the common goals of impacting one or more aspects of drug control and violent crime problems.

**Individual Project Report (IPR) database:** a database maintained by the BJA to track sub-grants awarded under the Byrne Formula Grant Program.

**Implementation Activities:** documentation of activities associated with implementing and sustaining a multijurisdictional task force.

**Operational Activities:** documentation of activities conducted by task force members to address the targeted drug and violent crime problem.

**Impact Measurements:** measures gathered to assess the impact of implementation and operational activities on the targeted drug and violent crime problem.

**Independent Evaluations:** examinations of implementation and impacts conducted by organizations other than the actual task force; it does not include internal reports or assessments by task forces themselves.

**Implementation/Process:** type of research that focuses on measuring and analyzing data on task force processes and procedures.

**Operational Activities/Outcomes:** type of research that focuses on measuring and analyzing data on task force activities.

**Impact:** type of research that focuses on measuring and analyzing data to assess the impact and effectiveness of a task forces in a jurisdiction.

**Descriptive Research Design:** designed to factually and systematically describe a situation or area of interest; the researcher is not seeking to explain relationships. For example, a case study that is written using task force activity and decision logs, survey responses, and field observation to document the process of implementing a task force or the "lessons learned" by a specific jurisdiction.

**Correlational Research Design:** designed to investigate the extent to which variation in one factor corresponds with variations in one or more other factors, based on correlation coefficients. For example, research to investigate the relationship between changes in arrest rates and the level of task force activities in a given jurisdiction, using correlation coefficients to measure the strength of the association.

**Ex Post Facto Research Design:** designed to investigate the possible cause and effect relationships by observing some existing consequence and searching back through the data for plausible causal factors. For example, research seeking to explain trends in average sentence length before and after a task force was implemented using investigation and seizure reports from local criminal justice agencies.

**Quasi-Experiment:** designed to investigate possible cause and effect relationships using an experimental approach that accounts and adjusts for the "real world" constraints that hinder control and/or manipulation of all relevant variables. This type of research would typically involve an experimental group and a control group or control period, and measurement of specific variables before and after treatment is in place.

**Comparison Group Research Design:** a quasi-experiment that is designed to enhance the confidence in measuring cause and effect relationship by using a comparison group to control for alternative causes. For example, research measuring a set of impact measures before and after implementation of a task force in a jurisdiction and comparing observed change to results in a similar jurisdiction that did not implemented a task force.

**Time Series Design:** a quasi-experimental design that examines a series of observations on some variable for a period before and after the treatment, using the period before treatment as the control period. For example, research documenting the number of gang related deaths over a two-year period before and after the implementation of a gang task force.

**True Experiment:** designed to investigate cause and effect relationships by measuring the effects of treatment on groups randomly assigned to a treatment or control group. For example, a research project that identifies two similar jurisdictions, randomly assigns participation in a task force to one jurisdiction, and collects impact measures in both jurisdictions before and after implementation.



Mississippi Crime and Justice Research Unit, Social Science Research Center, Mississippi State University (April, 1996), *An Impact Analysis of Mississippi's Multijurisdictional Drug Task Forces on Drug-Related Crime and Violence: Year Five*. The report contains two surveys: one, a community crime survey, seeks public knowledge of MJTF operations, perceptions of trafficking, violent crime, gang-related activities and criminal justice sanctions. The other, a survey of task force officers, seeks to collect perceptions of trends in arrests, drug seizures and prosecution. Both surveys are supplemented by quarterly progress report data – investigations, arrests, violent crimes, equipment purchased, training and other performance indicators such as seizures.

North Carolina Criminal Justice Analysis Center (1994), *SystemStats: Multi-Jurisdictional Drug Task Force A Policy Impact Assessment*. The report covers N. Carolina MJTF activities from 1989-1992, including arrests, drug types, seizures, non-drug seizure values, conviction rates, sentences by race and gender, criminal history before and after arrests. The report also contains data on statewide drug arrests, case filing, admissions to prison, sentence lengths, releases from prison due to prison population cap, recidivism and time served, and violent crime rates.

Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (1993), *The Justice Analyst: Multi-Jurisdictional Task Forces in Pennsylvania*. A summary report containing basic data on Federal funding for MJTFs and the number of task forces per year 1988-1991. The report also contains a survey of 41 task forces on organization, goals and target, geographic area, arrests by drug type, drugs seized, and non-drug assets seized.

Development Associates, Inc. (1999), *Process Evaluation of West Virginia's Drug and Violent Crime Task Forces Volume 1: Summary of Findings, Volume 2: Case Studies*. A thoughtful and detailed process evaluation featuring interviews of staff from 12 MJTFs and various kinds of progress report data, including staffing, funding, organization, characteristics of control boards, task force activities, and outputs (arrests, convictions, drugs seized, plant destroyed, non-drug assets seized). The report also surveys staff perceptions of effectiveness (arrests, better evidence, convictions, drugs seized, assets forfeited).

## **Appendix C – Summary of Evaluation Reports Submitted by SAAs**

Arizona Criminal Justice Commission (1998), *Enhanced Drug and Gang Enforcement 1998*. Chiefly a statistical and information compendium. For each of the 16 MJTFs, the report covered yearly reported expenditures, yearly and cumulative drug arrests, weights of drug seizures, estimated value of drug-traffickers' non-drug assets. In addition, the report examined numbers of drug violators convicted and percentage involving felonies, as well as numbers sentenced to prison, jail or probation. Expenditures on additional projects were also covered, with overall dollars expended compared to expenditures (roughly 1:3).

Idaho Department of Law Enforcement (1997), *Total Drug Seizures in Idaho, 1992-1997*. Also a basic statistical compilation with limited narrative analysis. Covers trends in weights of drugs seized, percentage of total funding by year to MJTFs, total Byrne funds per year, total drug arrests compared to arrests by Byrne funded MJTFs (% of all arrests by MJTFs), and the location of task forces in the state. For each MJTF, the report breaks down statistics into total arrests, cases opened, cases closed, assisting cases, and weight of drugs seized.

Iowa Department of Human Rights (1991), *Multi-Jurisdictional Drug Law Enforcement Task Forces*. The report surveys 17 MJTF staff members, as well as a random sample of non-grant funded law enforcement agencies. There is a significant implementation study of three grant funded task forces. Detailed descriptions are presented of task force longevity, task force size, targets, participating agencies, governing boards, financial administration, and operational models (decentralized, centralized). There are also fairly detailed descriptions of task force accomplishments, overviews of drug problems, perceived impacts on intelligence, quality of drug cases, task force communication, drug availability, prosecution and community relations. These are looked at comparatively as between task forces and non-funded law enforcement agencies.

Louisiana (n.d.). Grant progress reports from five MJTFs. Each report briefly summarizes the local drug problems, goals and objectives, activities, impacts (perceptions and opinions of commanders on drug prices, indictments, arrests, weight of seizures, value of assets seized, meth labs uncovered, plants confiscated or destroyed), and prospects for task force continuation.

Minnesota Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center (1991), *Minnesota 1990 Narcotic Task Force Survey*. The report features a survey of 44 task force members (1/2 commanders, 1/2 officers) from 26 MJTFs. The survey asks about perceptions of identification, apprehension and prosecution of street level dealers, nature of drug problems, benefits of MJTFs, number of officers, how long officers stay with task force, benefits of loaning officers, investigative procedures used, assaults and weapons used by drug offenders, cooperation between MJTFs, access to prosecutors, adequacy of jail space and awareness of drug treatment programs, need for training and funding.

Minnesota Criminal Justice Statistical Analysis Center (1996), *1994 Narcotic Task Force Survey*. The format and information are the same as the above report.

Mississippi Crime and Justice Research Unit, Social Science Research Center, Mississippi State University (April, 1996), *An Impact Analysis of Mississippi's Multijurisdictional Drug Task Forces on Drug-Related Crime and Violence: Year Five*. The report contains two surveys: one, a community crime survey, seeks public knowledge of MJTF operations, perceptions of trafficking, violent crime, gang-related activities and criminal justice sanctions. The other, a survey of task force officers, seeks to collect perceptions of trends in arrests, drug seizures and prosecution. Both surveys are supplemented by quarterly progress report data – investigations, arrests, violent crimes, equipment purchased, training and other performance indicators such as seizures.

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Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (1993), *The Justice Analyst: Multi-Jurisdictional Task Forces in Pennsylvania*. A summary report containing basic data on Federal funding for MJTFs and the number of task forces per year 1988-1991. The report also contains a survey of 41 task forces on organization, goals and target, geographic area, arrests by drug type, drugs seized, and non-drug assets seized.

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## Appendix D: TF Survey Instrument

# Survey of Byrne Program Funded Task Forces

## INFORMED CONSENT

As noted in the cover letter, Abt Associates, Inc. is conducting a research study called "Evaluation of Multijurisdictional Task Forces," under a grant from the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), U.S. Department of Justice. The study will begin with an assessment of current and past task force evaluation methods and will be followed by the development of a variety of model methodological approaches to evaluating task forces which can be used by states, localities, and task forces themselves. The first portion of the study includes two surveys. The first survey of all state administrative agencies overseeing task forces funded by the Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Program (Byrne Program) has been completed. We are now surveying all Byrne funded multijurisdictional task forces across the country that have been identified as active by their state administrative agencies. This survey is attached. Following the completion of both surveys, we will examine in detail the kinds of methodologies which have been used (*particularly those which measure task force impacts*), as well as the types of information and data collected by various practitioners and researchers in these evaluations. A meeting of select state and task force representatives will be held in the near future to discuss these methodologies and measurements.

This study is not an evaluation of the effectiveness or impact of your task force or other Byrne funded task forces. This study is an assessment of the ways in which task forces and independent organizations collect information and use this info to evaluate and assess the impact of task forces. The information we collect will only be used to develop model evaluation methods for future use in the field by you and other organizations or agencies.

For the purposes of this study, multijurisdictional task forces are defined as any cooperative law enforcement effort involving two or more criminal justice agencies with jurisdiction over two or more areas, sharing the common goal of impacting one or more aspects of drug control and violent crime problems. A glossary of terms used in this survey is provided in Appendix B.

Participation in this study is voluntary and your responses will be held in confidence. You can skip any question you are unable or unwilling to answer. Your name will not be provided to anyone and we only ask for your name and phone number for follow up clarification of your responses. Results of this study will not report your name, nor the name of others being surveyed.

Should you have any questions about the survey questions, Evaluation Detail Sheet, or return instructions please contact Shawn Ward at (202) 263-1720 or by email at [sward@dc.abtassoc.com](mailto:sward@dc.abtassoc.com) If you have questions about the purpose of the survey or use of results you may contact the Project Director, Dr. David Hayeslip at (202) 263-1721 or the Managing Vice President of the Law and Public Policy Area of Abt Associates, Inc., Terry Dunworth, at (617) 349-2637. Please complete and return the survey by **March 15, 2000**.

Task Force Name: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Person Completing Survey: \_\_\_\_\_ Agency: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THANK YOU FOR AGREEING TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY!**

## Part I - Administrative Information

1. *What is the official name of your task force?* \_\_\_\_\_
2. *When was the task force officially formed? Year* \_\_\_\_\_
3. *How many years has your task force received Byrne grant funding?* \_\_\_\_\_  
*What year did Byrne funding begin?* \_\_\_\_\_
4. *Is the task force still receiving Byrne grant funding?*  
 yes  
 no
5. *What agency/organization is the direct recipient of the Byrne funding and has responsibility for financial reporting to the state administrative agency?* \_\_\_\_\_
6. *What type(s) of crime/problem was the task force formed to address? (Check all that apply)*  
 drugs  
 violent crime  
 auto theft  
 gangs  
 organized crime  
 weapons offenses  
 juvenile crime  
 computer/electronic crime  
 white collar crime  
 other \_\_\_\_\_
7. *Please list the primary goals and objectives of the task force:*  
  
Goals: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
  
Objectives: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. *How many agencies (governmental and non-governmental) are formally represented on the task force?* \_\_\_\_\_

9. *What type(s) of law enforcement agencies are represented? (Check all that apply)*

- local (municipal) law enforcement
- county law enforcement
- state law enforcement
- federal law enforcement
- other \_\_\_\_\_

10. *What type(s) of non-law enforcement agencies are represented? (Check all that apply)*

- local (municipal) prosecutor
- state prosecutor
- United States Attorney
- probation
- parole
- court system
- victim/advocacy services
- community/citizen groups
- other agencies \_\_\_\_\_
- none

11. *Which best describes the primary function of your task force? (Check only one)*

- law enforcement
- prosecution
- social services
- policy oversight/policy development/strategic planning
- other \_\_\_\_\_

12. *How many full-time and part-time positions are assigned to the task force (as of January 1, 2000)?*

Full-time \_\_\_\_\_

Part-time \_\_\_\_\_



13. *How are task force operations managed?*

- executive board/steering committee
  - one agency permanently oversees task force operations  
Which agency? \_\_\_\_\_
  - operational oversight rotates among agencies over time
  - all agencies have equal operational oversight
  - other arrangement (please describe)
- 
- 
- 

14. *Does the task force operate from a Memorandum of Understanding or similar agreement which defines responsibilities and operations?*

- yes
- no

15. *Are there formal task force policies and procedures or operating guidelines beyond the MOU?*

- yes
- no

16. *Does the task force have a written strategic plan?*

- yes
- no

17. *If yes, is the strategic plan revised or updated regularly?*

- yes
- no
- n/a

18. *Are there any statutory requirements or legislation under which the task force operates?*

- yes
- no

19. *Are direction setting/strategic planning discussions or meetings recorded?*

- yes
- no

20. *Which activities do you report to your state administrative agency on a regular basis? (Check all that apply)*

- achievement of milestones
- agency agreements
- staffing
- development of policies and procedures
- organizational meetings
- expenditures
- use of overtime
- other \_\_\_\_\_
- other \_\_\_\_\_
- none

21. *How often do you report these activities to your state administrative agency?*

- monthly
- quarterly
- semi-annually
- annually
- other \_\_\_\_\_

## Part II - Information Collection

1. *What types of operational information related to specific task force activities does your task force formally collect? (check all that apply) In what format is it collected [circle (M) for manual (C) for computerized or circle both]?*

- |                          |   |   |   |
|--------------------------|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | arrests   | M | C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | convictions                                     | M | C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | field interviews/traffic stops                  | M | C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | surveillance                                    | M | C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | cases opened/closed                             | M | C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | number of drug seizures                         | M | C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | amount of drugs seized (weight)                 | M | C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | street value of drugs seized                    | M | C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | purity levels of drugs seized                   | M | C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | citizen complaints (reporting illegal activity) | M | C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | citizen complaint dispositions                  | M | C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | weapons seizures                                | M | C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | other _____                                     | M | C |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | other _____                                     | M | C |

2. *Does the task force disseminate these operational statistics?*

- yes  
 no

3. *Which organizations, groups, or individuals receive these statistics?*

- local government agencies  
 state administrative agency  
 federal government  
 other task force funding agency (ies)  
 task force members  
 organizations represented on the task force  
 press  
 public/community  
 other \_\_\_\_\_  
 other \_\_\_\_\_

4. ***What types of general crime related information does the task force formally collect? (This information may be related to specific jurisdictions or broad geographic areas.)***

- calls for service
- reported crime
- victimization surveys
- citizen surveys
- drug use (self reported, urinalysis, blood testing)
- overdoses
- changes in drug markets
- purity of drugs seized
- source of drugs (foreign versus domestic production)
- changes in weapons markets
- weapons use
- crime displacement
- interviews with/surveys of perpetrators
- crime related emergency room admissions
- enhanced agency cooperation
- enhanced resource sharing
- enhanced information sharing between agencies
- other \_\_\_\_\_
- other \_\_\_\_\_

5. ***What types of supporting information does the task force collect related to either operations or impact of the task force?***

- press articles/news reports
- citizen letters/remarks/testimonials
- government letters/remarks/testimonials
- other \_\_\_\_\_
- other \_\_\_\_\_

## Part III - Task Force Evaluations

We would like to gather detailed information on formal task force evaluations which have been or are being completed. *Formal evaluation* is defined for the purposes of this survey as any assessment of task force processes, activities, or impacts characterized by a formal research design, systematic collection and analysis of data and/or information, and subsequent description of the results. These evaluations may have been completed internally by your task force or externally by independent organizations such as universities, government agencies, non-profit agencies, or private research companies.

In order to gather this information, we would like you to complete the Evaluation Detail Sheets included in this packet. One Detail Sheet should be completed for each formal evaluation which has been or is being conducted by or for your task force over the past ten years. We have included three in the packet. If there are more than three evaluations please make as many copies as necessary.

### Evaluation Detail Sheet Description

The Evaluation Detail Sheet is designed to gather information in several categories including type and design of evaluation, organization/individual conducting the evaluation, time frame of evaluation, use of evaluation results, and specific data and information analyzed in the evaluation. We have described each response box below to assist you in completing the Detail Sheet. We advise you to contact the person in charge of the evaluation to help answer these questions since some are technical research design questions. If you have Detail Sheet questions please email or call us.

#### Box 1 - Type of Evaluation

There are three general evaluation types we will focus our survey on - implementation/process, operational/outcome, and impact. Evaluations frequently include more than one type in the same study. Please select the type(s) that best fits the evaluation. If the following basic definitions do not fit your evaluation type, check *other* and list the type. You can describe the type in Part IV (Additional Information).

*Implementation/Process* - research that focuses on measuring and analyzing task force management structure, strategy and policy development and implementation, organizational and personnel issues, and delivery of task force services.

*Operational/Outputs* - research that focuses on measuring and analyzing targeted task force operational/activity goals. (e.g. number of arrests, cases generated, or convictions) Were there demonstrable operational outputs?

*Impact* - research that focuses on measuring and analyzing information and data to assess the broader impacts of task force operations such as whether drug use or violence in the target area has declined as a result of task force operations. This research focuses on tying task force processes and outcomes to impacts. Was the task force effective in achieving desired impacts?

#### Box 2 - Type of Research Design

Each evaluation should have a specific research design. Please select the one which most accurately represents the evaluation plan.

*Descriptive Research Design* - designed to factually and systematically describe a situation or area of interest; the researcher is not seeking to explain relationships. For example, a case study that is written using task force activity and decision logs, survey responses, and field observation to document the process of implementing a task force or the "lessons learned" by a specific jurisdiction.

*Correlational Research Design* - designed to investigate the extent to which variation in one factor corresponds with variations in one or more other factors, based on correlation coefficients. For example, research to investigate the relationship between changes in arrest rates and the level of task force activities in a given jurisdiction, using correlation coefficients to measure the strength of the association.

*Ex Post Facto Research Design* - designed to investigate the possible cause and effect relationships by observing some existing consequence and searching back through the data for plausible causal factors. For example, research seeking to explain trends in average sentence length before and after a task force was implemented using investigation and seizure reports from local criminal justice agencies.

*Quasi-Experiment* - designed to investigate possible cause and effect relationships using an experimental approach that accounts and adjusts for the "real world" constraints that hinder control and/or manipulation of all relevant variables. This type of research would typically involve an experimental group and a control group or control period, and measurement of specific variables before and after treatment is in place.

*Comparison Group Research Design* - a quasi-experiment that is designed to enhance the confidence in measuring cause and effect relationship by using a comparison group to control for alternative causes. For example, research measuring a set of impact measures before and after implementation of a task force in a jurisdiction and comparing observed change to results in a similar jurisdiction that did not implemented a task force.

*Time Series Design* - a quasi-experimental design that examines a series of observations on some variable for a period before and after the treatment, using the period before treatment as the control period. For example, research documenting the number of gang related deaths over a two- year period before and after the implementation of a gang task force.

*True Experiment* - designed to investigate cause and effect relationships by measuring the effects of treatment on groups randomly assigned to a treatment or control group. For example, a research project that identifies two similar jurisdictions, randomly assigns participation in a task force to one jurisdiction, and collects impact measures in both jurisdictions before and after implementation.

### **Box 3 - Who conducted the evaluation?**

Please provide the requested information on the individual and organization conducting the evaluation. If there was more than one organization involved list the them in Part IV. If the evaluation was conducted internally list the contact information of the task force person in charge of the evaluation.

### **Box 4 - Who funded the evaluation?**

Please check the organization funding the evaluation. If the funding came from more than one source please check all that contributed funding. If the task force provided funding to conduct the evaluation from its budget check the task force box.

**Box 5 - Performance Period of Evaluation**

List the month and year the actual evaluation work started and the month and year it ended. If the evaluation is currently being conducted please write "ongoing".

**Box 6 - Time Frame Evaluation Addressed**

List the time period (month and year) the evaluation concentrated on.

**Box 7 - Dissemination of Results**

It is important that we learn which agencies receive the results of the evaluation. Please check all agencies which have received the results and use Part IV to list the agencies more extensively.

**Box 8 - Use of Results**

We would like to find out what operational and/or strategic uses the evaluation has provided.

**Box 9 - Other Agencies or Task Forces Evaluated**

Frequently, evaluations will focus on more than one organization to determine the overall impact or effectiveness of operations and policies. Please identify if other task forces or agencies were studied as well and list them.

**Box 10 - Process and Operational Information Analyzed for This Evaluation**

There are a large number of data sets and information which evaluators can collect to help them complete process/implementation and operational/outcome components of an evaluation. We have listed some of the major categories. Please check the data or information that was analyzed for this evaluation. These data should only be related to TASK FORCE SPECIFIC processes or operations. For example, arrests would correspond to arrests made by your task force.

We also would like you to circle MAP if there was computerized mapping/GIS used as part of the analysis of the data.

List any other data or information analyzed in "other" and use Part IV for additional information.

**Box 11 - General Crime/Safety/Quality of Life/Disorder Information Used for Analysis**

There are also a large number of NON-TASK FORCE SPECIFIC data or information relating to assessing impact which evaluators analyze. Please check all data or information analyzed in this evaluation. The information may cover multiple jurisdictions or specific target areas.

If applicable, please circle MAP if there was computerized mapping/GIS used as part of the analysis of the data.

**Box 12 - Agency(ies) Encouraging Completion of Evaluation**

Please list all agencies which either initiated or supported the evaluation process. Who approached the task force or requested an evaluation be completed?

**Box 13 - Copy of Evaluation**

We would like to be provided a copy of the evaluation. If possible, send a copy of each evaluation for which you complete an Evaluation Detail Sheet along with the survey. Place them in the self-addressed stamped envelope and make sure the packet is returned by January 18, 2000.

If you do not have access to the evaluation please list the contact information of the person/organization so we can obtain a copy.

**Part IV - Additional Information**

In the space below please provide any additional information you feel may help clarify your responses. If you are providing additional detail for any of the questions, please provide the section and question number prior to your information. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

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## **Appendix: Glossary of Terms**

**Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Program (Byrne Program)**: established by the 1988 Anti-Drug Abuse Act to assist State and local criminal justice agencies control violent and drug-related crime, improve operations, and build coordination and cooperation within the criminal justice system. The program is administered by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) and offers funding in two ways, through formula and discretionary grant program.

**Byrne Formula Grant Program**: the component of the Byrne grant program that awards funds directly to states, which in turn make sub-grants to State and local units of government.

**Byrne Discretionary Grant Program**: the component of the Byrne grant program that awards funds directly to public and private agencies and private non-profit organizations.

**Multijurisdictional Task Forces**: any cooperative law enforcement effort involving two or more criminal justice agencies with jurisdiction over two or more areas, sharing the common goals of impacting one or more aspects of drug control and violent crime problems.

**Individual Project Report (IPR) database**: a database maintained by the BJA to track sub-grants awarded under the Byrne Formula Grant Program.

**When you have completed Parts I-IV of the survey and all necessary Evaluation Detail Sheets, please place them in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope and return to Abt Associates, Inc. by March 15, 2000. Remember to include any completed evaluations if possible. Also, remember to fill in the contact information on the bottom of page 1.**

**Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this study!**



**Abt Associates, Inc.  
Attn: Shawn Ward  
1110 Vermont Ave., NW Suite 610  
Washington, DC 20005  
(202) 263-1720  
(202) 263-1802 (fax)**

## Evaluation Detail Sheet

**PLEASE COMPLETE ONE EVALUATION DETAIL SHEET FOR EACH EVALUATION PERFORMED OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS. PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED EVALUATION DETAIL SHEETS AND COPIES OF THE EVALUATIONS (IF AVAILABLE) ALONG WITH THE COMPLETED SURVEY.**

<p><b>1</b>      <b>Type of Evaluation:</b> (Check all that apply)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Implementation/Process</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Operational/Outputs</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Impact</b></p>	<p><b>2</b>      <b>Type of Research Design:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Descriptive</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Correlational</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Ex Post Facto</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Quasi-Experimental</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Comparison Group</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Time Series</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>True Experiment</b></p>	<p><b>3</b>      <b>Who Conducted the Evaluation?</b></p> <p><b>Name:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Agency:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Address:</b> _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p><b>Telephone:</b> _____</p> <p><b>E-mail:</b> _____</p>
<p><b>4</b>      <b>Funded by:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>task force itself</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>local unit of government</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>state administrative agency</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>federal government</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>private foundation</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>university</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>other</b> _____</p>	<p><b>5</b>      <b>Performance Period of Evaluation:</b></p> <p><b>From:</b>    mm/yy    _____</p> <p><b>To:</b>        mm/yy    _____</p>	<p><b>6</b>      <b>What time frame did the evaluation address?</b></p> <p><b>From:</b>    mm/yy    _____</p> <p><b>To:</b>        mm/yy    _____</p>
<p><b>7</b>      <b>Dissemination of Results:</b></p> <p><b>What organizations or individuals have been provided access to the evaluations? (Check all that apply)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>local government agencies</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>state administrative agency</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>federal government</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>other task force funding agency (ies)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>task force members</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>organizations represented on the task force</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>press</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>public/community</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>other</b> _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>9other</b> _____</p>	<p><b>8</b>      <b>Use of Results:</b></p> <p><b>What has the task force used the evaluation results for? (Check all that apply)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>used for programmatic oversight</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>used for reporting progress to state or task force funding agency (ies)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>used for strategic planning</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>policy and procedure development or revisions</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>development of legislation</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>other</b> _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>other</b> _____</p>	<p><b>9</b>      <b>Were Other Task Forces or Agencies Evaluated as Part of This Evaluation?</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>yes</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>no</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>If Yes, Please List Task Forces or Agencies:</b></p> <p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p> <p>4. _____</p> <p>5. _____</p>

**10 Please Check All Specific Task Force Related Activity Information Analyzed For This Evaluation and Circle (MAP) if Computerized Mapping/GIS Was Used For Analysis:**

- |                                     |   |     |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | arrests   | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | convictions                                     | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | field interviews/traffic stops                  | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | surveillance                                    | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | cases opened/closed                             | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | number of drug seizures                         | MAP |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | amount of drugs seized (weight)                 | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | street value of drugs seized                    | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | purity levels of drugs seized                   | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | citizen complaints (reporting illegal activity) | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | citizen complaint dispositions                  | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | weapons seizures                                | MAP |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | agency cooperation                              |     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | resource sharing                                |     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | information sharing between agencies            |     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | policies/procedures                             |     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | strategic planning                              |     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | meeting minutes/notes                           |     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | MOUs  |     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | other agreements                                |     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | legislation                                     |     |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | other _____                                     | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | other _____                                     | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | other _____                                     | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | other _____                                     | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | other _____                                     | MAP |

**11 Please Check All General Information Analyzed For This Evaluation and Circle (MAP) if Computerized Mapping/GIS Was Used For Analysis:**

- |                          |  |     |
|--------------------------|--|-----|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | calls for service                                    | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | reported crime                                       | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | victimization surveys                                | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | citizen surveys                                      | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | drug use (self reported, urinalysis, blood testing)  | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | overdoses  | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | changes in drug markets                              | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | purity of drugs seized                               | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | source of drugs (foreign versus domestic production) | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | changes in weapons markets                           | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | weapons use  | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | crime displacement                                   | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | interviews with/surveys of perpetrators              |     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | crime related emergency room admissions              | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | other _____  | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | other _____  | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | other _____  | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | other _____  | MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | other _____  | MAP |

**12 What has been the driving factor(s)/agency(ies) encouraging your task force to perform any of these types of evaluations?**

- |                                     |                             |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | task force itself           |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | local unit of government    |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | state administrative agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | other state agency          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | university                  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | federal government          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | other _____                 |

**13 Can We Get a Copy of This Evaluation?**

If possible, please send a copy of the evaluation with the completed survey.

If this is not possible please list contact information so we can request a copy.

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Agency: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix E: TF Design Project - Outline of Research Questions**

## TF Design Project – Outline of Research Questions

### Background/Foundational Questions:

- Official name of the task force
- When was the task force formed?
- How many years has the task force received Federal funding? When did funding begin?
- Which entity is the direct recipient of the funding/responsible for financial reporting?
- Coverage area information (# of counties, square miles, population, % of state population)
- Type of jurisdiction (mostly urban, mostly suburban, mostly rural)
- No. of cities with population over 25,000 within the task force coverage area
- Notable jurisdictional features (interstate highways, airports, colleges, tourism, etc.)
- Size of TF (# of FT & PT officers, undercover investigators, other staff)
- Budget of TF
- No. of local law enforcement agencies in TF coverage area
- No. of local law enforcement agencies in TF coverage area that handle other than incidental misdemeanor drug cases
- No. of local law enforcement agencies with personnel assigned to TF
- No. of state and/or federal law enforcement agencies in TF
- No. of state and/or federal law enforcement personnel assigned to TF
- Percentage of funds spent on equipment vs. operating expenses vs. personnel
- What percentage of Byrne funding devoted by state to task forces

## Implementation Research Questions

<b>Task Force Goals</b>	<b>Research Questions</b>	<b>Measures</b>
	<p>What are the principal goals of the task force?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What were the principal goals of the task force three years ago?</li> <li>• What were the principal goals of the task force when it first began receiving Federal funding?</li> <li>• What are the main reasons for the change in goal(s)?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task force grant applications and reports</li> <li>• Surveys of task force commanders (e.g. ranking priorities now vs. in past; ranking reasons for change in goals).</li> </ul>
	<p>What type of offenders are primarily targeted by the task force? (drug users, street-level dealers, upper-level dealers, major traffickers/distributors)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What kinds of offenders were targeted by the task force three years ago?</li> <li>• What kinds of offenders were targeted by the task force when it began receiving Federal funding?</li> <li>• What are the main reasons for the change in targeted offenders?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task force grant applications and reports</li> <li>• Survey of task force commanders (e.g. ranking priorities now vs. in past; ranking reasons for change).</li> </ul>
	<p>What are the main types of drugs targeted by the task force?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What were the main types of drugs targeted by the task force three years ago?</li> <li>• What were the main types of drugs targeted by the task force when it began receiving Federal funding?</li> <li>• What are the main reasons for the change in types of drugs targeted?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task force grant applications and reports</li> <li>• Survey of task force commanders (ranking of priorities now vs. in past; ranking of reasons for change).</li> </ul>
	<p>How are task force goals usually set by the task force? (by control/executive board; by member agencies in other forum; by task force commander; "other")</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are task force decisions taken (by consensus; majority vote; decision by largest funding agencies)</li> <li>• Are there pressures from sources outside the task force to adopt other goals? From whom? (elected officials, general public, Federal agencies).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> </ul>

<b>Task Force Operations and Tactics</b>	<p>Which law enforcement agency members of TF handle other than incidental misdemeanor drug cases</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What determines whether the task force or the agency handles these drug cases?</li> <li>• Are there special procedures that determine which entity makes drug arrests? Describe these.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> </ul>
	<p>What proportion of task force cases involve long-term investigations?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What proportion of task force cases involved long-term investigations three years ago?</li> <li>• What proportion of task force cases involved long-term investigations during the first year of the task force?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> <li>• Task force reports</li> </ul>
	<p>What proportion of task force cases principally feature covert tactics? Overt tactics?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What proportion of task force cases principally featured overt(covert) tactics three years ago?</li> <li>• What proportion of task force cases principally featured over(covert) tactics during the first year of the task force's existence?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> </ul>
	<p>What proportion of task force investigations feature the use of surveillance?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has there been an increase or decrease in this proportion during the past three years?</li> <li>• Has there been an increase or decrease in this proportion since the task force began receiving Federal funding?</li> <li>• What are the main reasons for this change?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> <li>• Task force reports</li> </ul>
	<p>What proportion of task force investigations feature the use of confidential informants?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has there been an increase or decrease in this proportion over the past three years?</li> <li>• Has there been an increase or decrease in this proportion since the task force began receiving Federal funding? What are the main reasons for this change?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> <li>• Task force reports</li> </ul>



	<p>What tactics does the task force principally rely on? (select one primary and two secondary choices (e.g., street sweeps, buy/bust, undercover operations/infiltration))</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What principal tactics were used by the task force three years ago?</li> <li>• At the inception of the task force?</li> <li>• What are the main reasons for the change in tactics? (multiple choice + "other")</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> <li>• Survey of task force commanders Task force grant applications and reports</li> </ul>
	<p>Describe any new or unusual tactics that your task force has used in the past three years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> <li>• Task force reports and grant applications</li> </ul>
	<p>What number of arrests did the task force register?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What have been the number of arrests each years since the task force began operation?</li> <li>• Are these numbers reflective of any major changes in strategy and/or tactics?</li> <li>• How do these arrests compare with the total number of drug arrests in the coverage area?</li> <li>• How do these arrests compare with the numbers of drug arrests in comparable neighboring counties without a task force? (if comparison group counties are available)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task force reports</li> <li>• Crime data (incl. comparison group data if available and valid, and depending on ability to identify TF arrests)</li> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> </ul>
	<p>What is the nature of the arrests made by the task force?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What proportion of task force arrests were for distribution, manufacturing, or production versus possession?</li> <li>• How has this proportion varied over time?</li> <li>• Are these proportions associated with any major shift in strategy and/or tactics?</li> <li>• What proportion of task force arrests were for felonies?</li> <li>• How has this proportion varied over time?</li> </ul> <p>Are these proportions associated with any major shift in strategy and/or tactics?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task force reports</li> <li>• Crime data (incl. comparison group data if available and valid, and depending on ability to identify TF arrests)</li> <li>• Survey of task force commanders.</li> </ul>

	<p>What number of seizures and forfeitures did the task force register?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What have been the number of seizures and forfeitures each years since the task force began operation?</li> <li>• Are these numbers reflective of any major changes in strategy and/or tactics?</li> <li>• How do these seizures and forfeitures compare with the total number of seizures and forfeitures in the TF coverage area?</li> <li>• How do these seizures and forfeitures compare with the numbers of drug arrests in comparable neighboring counties without a task force? (if comparison group counties are available)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task force reports</li> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How many Federal cases has the task force been involved in?</li> <li>• Has this number increased or decreased in the past five years?</li> <li>• What were the principal reasons for this increase or decrease in Federal cases?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task force reports</li> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> </ul>
<b>Implementation Process Questions</b>	<p>What has been the experience of the task force with member agency turnover?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No. of agency members now and at inception of task force?</li> <li>• No. of agencies withdrawing from the task force at any time?</li> <li>• What were the reasons for the withdrawal?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> <li>• Task force documentation</li> </ul>
	<p>Has there been an increase in the financial self-sustainability of the task force over the past three years? Since the inception of the task force?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has there been an increase/decrease in the local match percentage over the past five years?/since the inception of the task force?</li> <li>• If there has been an increase in the local match percentage, what sources (agencies) have contributed to the increase?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task force reports showing increase in local match percentages over time</li> <li>• Task force commanders survey</li> </ul>

	<p>Are task force personnel co-located?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where are they located? Are there multiple office locations?</li> <li>• Describe benefits, if any, of co-located personnel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> <li>• Survey of task force personnel</li> </ul>
	<p>What are the major responsibilities of the control/executive board?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List the three most important functions of the control board</li> <li>• How frequently does the control/executive board meet?</li> <li>• How often did the board meet three years ago?</li> <li>• How often did the board meet when the task force first began receiving Federal funding?</li> <li>• To what can this change be principally attributed?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> <li>• Task force reports</li> </ul>
	<p>Which agency(ies) have responsibility for management of day-to-day task force operations?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which agency(ies) have responsibility for administration of the task force?</li> <li>• Does this responsibility rotate?</li> <li>• Is there shared responsibility for field operations?</li> <li>• Does this responsibility rotate?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> <li>• Task force reports</li> </ul>
	<p>How frequently does the task force commander communicate with the heads of other agencies that are members of the task force</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How many contacts did the task force commander have with each of the police chiefs and sheriffs during the last month? (e.g., never, one to five times, six or more times)</li> <li>• How many contacts did the task force commander have with key representatives of the state police/state bureau of investigation (TF members) during the last month?</li> <li>• How many contacts did the task force have with the FBI or DEA (if TF members) during the past month?</li> <li>• How many of these contacts did the task force commander have, on average, three years ago?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> </ul>

	<p>How many times did the task force work with other agencies that are members of the task force on investigations or other matters during the past six months?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How many times over the past six months did the task force work with each of the police departments and sheriffs' offices that are members of the task force?</li> <li>• How many times over the past six months did the task force work with state police/state bureau of investigation agencies that are members of the task force?</li> <li>• How many times over the past six months did the task force work with the DEA or FBI (if TF members)?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> </ul>
	<p>Does the task force engage in strategic planning?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which agencies participate in this planning?</li> <li>• How often does such strategic planning take place?</li> <li>• Is there a written strategic plan?</li> <li>• How often is the plan revised or updated?</li> <li>• Are strategic planning meetings recorded?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> <li>• Task force reports</li> </ul>
	<p>Does the task force have written policies and procedures?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did the task force have written policies and procedures three years ago?</li> <li>• Did the task force have written policies and procedures when it first received Federal funding?</li> <li>• To what can this change be principally attributed?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> </ul>
	<p>What policies exist regarding staffing of the task force?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there written policies governing the staffing of the task force?</li> <li>• What requirements, if any, are there about assignment of personnel to/rotation in an out of the task force?</li> <li>• What is the average length of assignment of personnel to TF</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> <li>• Task force reports/documents</li> </ul>

	<p>What new management systems have been adopted in the past five years, and what has been the effect on TF activities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What MIS system(s) have been adopted in the past five years?</li> <li>• What case tracking systems have been adopted?</li> <li>• What office technologies have been adopted?</li> <li>• What has been the impact of these innovations on (1) information-sharing within the task force? (2) accessing of outside intelligence/information? (3) case tracking? (4) problem-solving?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> <li>• Task force reports</li> </ul>
	<p>What new field operational technologies and/or equipment have been adopted in the past five years?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What effect has this had on TF tactics and operations(via information-sharing, intelligence-gathering, problem-solving (e.g. mapping)?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> <li>• Task force reports</li> </ul>
	<p>What kinds of training have been conducted by the task force?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What new skills and tactics have been acquired?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> </ul>
	<p>What kinds of external training has the task force facilitated?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What new skills and tactics have been acquired?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of task force commanders</li> </ul>

### Outcome Research Questions

<b>Effect on Core Task Force Member Law Enforcement Agencies (Member Police and Sheriffs'</b>	<i>What effect has the task force had on police departments and sheriffs' offices that are members of the task force?</i>	
	<p>What are the most important benefits provided by the task force to the police department?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have these benefits changed over the past three years?</li> <li>• Have these benefits changed since the task force began receiving Federal funding?</li> <li>• To what can these changes be attributed?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of police chiefs (rank 2-3 benefits; furnish principal reasons for change)</li> <li>• Survey of sheriffs</li> </ul>

<b>Departments)</b>	Do the benefits of being in the task force clearly outweigh the disadvantages? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If no, describe the two major disadvantages (e.g., financial contribution, loss of personnel, other).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey of police chiefs</li> <li>Survey of sheriffs</li> </ul>
	What particular kinds of training and skills have been imparted by the task force? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has this training/imparting of skills changed over the past three years?</li> <li>Has this training/imparting of skills changed since the task force began receiving Federal funding?</li> <li>To what can these changes be principally attributed?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey of police chiefs</li> <li>Survey of sheriffs</li> </ul>
	What community problems, if any, has the task force helped solve in your jurisdiction? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How did the task force provide assistance in this regard?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey of police chiefs</li> <li>Survey of sheriffs</li> </ul>
	How satisfied are you with the task force? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How satisfied are you with the goals of the task force?</li> <li>How satisfied are you with the structure of the task force?</li> <li>How satisfied are you with the management of the task force?</li> <li>How satisfied are you with the composition of the task force?</li> <li>How satisfied are you with the allocation of funds of the task force?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey of police chiefs and sheriffs (sliding scale)</li> </ul>
	How satisfactory is prosecution of task force cases ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is the quality of prosecution services provided to the task force by the local DA's office?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey of police chiefs and sheriffs</li> </ul>

	<p>How frequently has your department communicate with the task force?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How many contacts did your department have with the task force during the past month? (e.g., never, one to five times, six or more times)</li> <li>• Has this frequency changed in the past three years?</li> <li>• Has this frequency changed since the task force began operations?</li> <li>• To what can this change be principally attributed?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of police chiefs and sheriffs</li> </ul>
	<p>How many times does your agency work with the task force on an investigation or other matters?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How many times has your agency worked with the task force on an investigation or other matter in the past six months?</li> <li>• Has this frequency changed in the past three years?</li> <li>• Has this frequency changed since the task force began operations?</li> <li>• To what can this change be principally attributed?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of police chiefs and sheriffs</li> </ul>
	<p>Has the task force increased communication among law enforcement agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has the task force increased communication among local law enforcement agencies?</li> <li>• Has the task force increased communication between local and state police?</li> <li>• Has the task force increased communication between local and federal law enforcement agencies ?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of police chiefs and sheriffs</li> </ul>
	<p>Has the task force increased cooperation among law enforcement agencies?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has the task force increased cooperation among local law enforcement agencies?</li> <li>• Has the task force increased cooperation between local and state police?</li> <li>• Has the task force increased cooperation between local and federal law enforcement agencies?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of police chiefs and sheriffs</li> </ul>

	<p>Has the task force increased intelligence-sharing among law enforcement agencies?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has the task force increased intelligence-sharing among local law enforcement agencies?</li> <li>• Has the task force increased intelligence-sharing between local and state police?</li> <li>• Has the task force increased intelligence-sharing between local and federal law enforcement agencies?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of police chiefs and sheriffs</li> </ul>
	<p>Has the task force allowed local law enforcement agencies to move beyond low-level dealers and focus on highly organized drug activity?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of police chiefs and sheriffs</li> </ul>
	<p>Has the task force had a positive effect on the morale of those responsible for drug enforcement in your department?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of police chiefs and sheriffs</li> </ul>
	<p>Has the task force been successfully implemented?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of police chiefs and sheriffs</li> </ul>
	<p>How would you rate the overall effectiveness of the task force?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has the quality changed over the past three years?</li> <li>• Has the quality changed since the task force began receiving Federal funding?</li> <li>• To what can this change be principally attributed?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of police chiefs and sheriffs</li> </ul>
	<p>What would be the three most important problems that would arise if you were no longer a member of the task force?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of police chiefs and sheriffs</li> </ul>
<p><b>Effect on Other Law Enforcement Agencies (Member and Non-Member)</b></p>	<p><b><i>What effect has the task force had on law enforcement agencies in the jurisdiction generally? (Basic Questions)</i></b></p>	
	<p>What is the relationship of your agency to the task force?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is your agency a member of the task force?</li> <li>• Since what date?</li> <li>• What personnel contribution does your agency make to the task force?</li> <li>• What financial contribution does your agency make to the task force?</li> <li>• Is your agency represented on the control/executive board of the task force?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of organization representatives</li> </ul>



	<p>How often does your agency work with the task force on investigations or other matters?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How many times did your agency cooperate with the task force on an investigation or other matter in the past six months?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of organization representatives</li> </ul>
	<p>How frequently does your agency communicate with the task force?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How many contacts did your agency have with the task force during the past month? (e.g., never, one to five times, six or more times)</li> <li>• Has this frequency changed on in the past three years?</li> <li>• Has this frequency changed since the task force began?</li> <li>• To what can this change be principally attributed?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of organization representatives</li> </ul>
	<p>How frequently does your agency share intelligence with the task force?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How many times in the past month has your agency shared intelligence with the task force?</li> <li>• Has this frequency generally changed in the past three years?</li> <li>• To what can this change be principally attributed?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of organization representatives</li> </ul>
	<p>What principal benefits, if any, has the task force provided to your department or community?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did the task force provide assistance?</li> <li>• How have the benefits changed over the past three years?</li> <li>• To what do the departments principally attribute such changes?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of organization representatives</li> </ul>

	<p>How satisfied are you with the task force?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How satisfied are you with the goals of the task force?</li> <li>• How satisfied are you with the structure of the task force?</li> <li>• How satisfied are you with the management of the task force?</li> <li>• How satisfied are you with the composition of the task force?</li> <li>• How satisfied are you with the allocation of funds of the task force?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of organization representatives</li> </ul>
	<p>(If the agency is a member of a TF) Do the benefits of being in the task force clearly outweigh the disadvantages?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If no, describe the two major disadvantages (e.g., financial contribution, loss of personnel, other).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of organization representatives</li> </ul>
	<p>How satisfactory is prosecution of drug cases in your jurisdiction?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the quality of prosecution services provided to the task force by the local DA's office?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of organization representatives</li> </ul>
	<p>How does your organization rate the overall quality of the task force's work?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How has the quality changed over the past 3 years?</li> <li>• To what do the departments attribute these changes?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of organization representatives</li> </ul>
	<p>What would be the three most important problems that would arise if you were no longer a member of the task force? (for members). What would be the three most important problems that would arise if the task force no longer existed? (for non-member agencies)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of organization representatives</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>What effect has the task force had on local law enforcement agencies (police and sheriffs departments)</i></b></p>		
	<p>Has the task force increased communication among local law enforcement agencies in the jurisdiction regarding drug enforcement matters?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of police chiefs and sheriffs</li> </ul>
	<p>Has the task force increased cooperation among local law enforcement agencies in the jurisdiction regarding investigations and other matters?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of police chiefs and sheriffs</li> </ul>

	<p>Has the task force increased intelligence-sharing among local law enforcement agencies in the jurisdiction regarding drug enforcement?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of police chiefs and sheriffs</li> </ul>
	<p>What effect have task force activities had on the level of drug-related crime within the task force's jurisdiction?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What effect have task force activities had on the level of drug-related crime in a particular county or district within the jurisdiction?</li> <li>• What level of drug-related crime prevailed in the jurisdiction three years ago?</li> <li>• What level of drug-related crime prevailed in the jurisdiction at the time task force operations began?</li> <li>• To what are the changes in levels attributable?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime data re: assaults</li> <li>• Crime data re: auto thefts</li> <li>• Crime data re: burglaries</li> <li>• Crime data re: robberies</li> <li>• Surveys of task force commanders and/or police chiefs re: levels of burglaries, auto thefts, and assaults</li> <li>• Surveys of police officers/detectives responsible for auto theft, burglary, and assault crimes</li> <li>• Case tracking data showing linked offenses</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>What effect has the task force had on federal law enforcement agencies in the area?</i></b></p>		
	<p>What effect has the task force had on DEA's work in the task force's jurisdiction or surrounding areas?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What benefits has the task force provided to the DEA?</li> <li>• How does the office rate the overall quality of the task force's work? How has this changed in the past three years? Since the task force first began receiving Federal funding? To what can these changes be principally attributed?</li> <li>• Has the task force increased communication between federal law enforcement agencies and local law enforcement agencies?</li> <li>• Has the task force increased cooperation and joint task work between federal and local law enforcement agencies?</li> <li>• Has the task force increased information sharing between federal and local law enforcement agencies?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of DEA SAC's</li> <li>• DEA and/or task force reports where relevant</li> </ul>

	<p>What effect has the task force had on the work of the U.S. Attorneys whose jurisdiction covers all or part of the task force's coverage area?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What benefits has the task force provided?</li> <li>• How does the office rate the overall quality of the task force's work? How has this changed in the past three years? Since the task force first began receiving Federal funding? To what can these changes be principally attributed?</li> <li>• Has the task force increased communication between federal law enforcement agencies and local law enforcement agencies?</li> <li>• Has the task force increased cooperation between federal and local law enforcement agencies?</li> <li>• Has the task force increased information sharing between federal and local law enforcement agencies?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of U.S. Attorneys (and AUSA's where relevant)</li> </ul>
	<p>What effect has the task force had on the work of other Federal law enforcement agencies whose jurisdiction covers all or part of the task force's coverage area (e.g., IRS, ATF, INS, Customs Service, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What benefits has the task force provided?</li> <li>• How does the agency rate the quality of the task force's work? How has this changed in the past three years? Since the task force first began? To what can these changes be principally attributed?</li> <li>• Has the task force increased communication between federal law enforcement agencies and local law enforcement agencies?</li> <li>• Has the task force increased cooperation between federal and local law enforcement agencies?</li> <li>• Has the task force increased information sharing between federal and local law enforcement agencies?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of Federal agency personnel</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>What effect has the task force had on state police or investigative agencies?</i></b></p>		

	<p>What effect has the task force had on state police or state investigative agencies?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What benefits has the task force provided to the agencies?</li> <li>• How does the agency rate the quality of the task force's work? How has this changed in the past three years? Since the task force first began? To what can these changes be principally attributed?</li> <li>• Has the task force increased communication between state and local law enforcement agencies?</li> <li>• Has the task force increased cooperation between state and local law enforcement agencies?</li> <li>• Has the task force increased information sharing between state and local law enforcement agencies?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of state police and bureau of investigation representatives</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>What effect has the task force had on local prosecutors and prosecutions of drug cases in jurisdictions served by the task force?</i></b></p>		
	<p>What is the overall quality of police reports received from the task force?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How has the quality of reports changed in the last three years?</li> <li>• Since the inception of the task force?</li> <li>• To what can this change be principally attributed?</li> <li>• What is the average overall quality of police reports received from the police in the jurisdiction?(for comparison)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of local prosecutors (e.g., 5-pt. Scale)</li> </ul>
	<p>How would you rate the overall quality of the working relationship you have with the task force?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How has the quality changed over the last three years?</li> <li>• Since the inception of the task force?</li> <li>• To what can this change be principally attributed?</li> </ul>	<p>Survey of local prosecutors (e.g., 5-pt. Scale)</p>

	<p>How would you rate the evidentiary strength of the majority of felony drug cases brought to you by the task force?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has the strength of the cases changed in the last 3 years?</li> <li>• Since the inception of the task force?</li> <li>• To what can this change be principally attributed?</li> <li>• How do these proportions compare to those of any police departments with narcotics divisions from which drug cases are also received?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of local prosecutors (e.g., 5-pt. Scale)</li> </ul>
	<p>What proportion of task force investigations result in filed (i.e., 'prosecutable') cases?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How has this proportion changed in the last 3 years?</li> <li>• How has this proportion changed since the task force began receiving Federal funding?</li> <li>• To what can this change be principally attributed?</li> <li>• How do these proportions compare to those of any police departments with narcotics divisions from which drug cases are also received?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task force reports</li> <li>• Survey of local prosecutors</li> </ul>
	<p>What proportion of task force cases result in convictions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How has this proportion changed in the last 3 years?</li> <li>• How has this proportion changed since the task force began receiving Federal funding?</li> <li>• To what can this change be principally attributed?</li> <li>• How do these proportions compare to those of any police departments with narcotics divisions from which drug cases are also received?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task force reports</li> <li>• Criminal history information (case tracking)</li> <li>• Survey of local prosecutors</li> </ul>
	<p><b><i>What effect has the task force had on the activities of sheriffs and jailers?</i></b></p>	
	<p>What effect have task force operations had on the numbers of drug offenders in local jails?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How have these numbers changed in the past three years?</li> <li>• How have these numbers changed since the task force began operations?</li> <li>• To what can these changes be principally attributed?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of sheriffs and jailers</li> </ul>

### Impact Questions

<b>Effects on Drug Markets</b>	<p>What effect have task force activities had on the availability of drugs within the task force's jurisdiction?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What effect have task force activities had on the availability of drugs within a particular district or county within the jurisdiction?</li> <li>• What has been the availability of drugs/particular kind of drug within the jurisdiction during the past year?</li> <li>• Three years ago?</li> <li>• Five years ago?</li> <li>• To what are these changes attributable?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reported drug crime</li> <li>• Drug prices (DEA data and local data where available)</li> <li>• ADAM –like data (through intensive interviews) at new rural or suburban site (Colorado)</li> <li>• Survey of other drug enforcement authorities</li> <li>• Survey of drug force commanders</li> <li>• Fire CAD data</li> <li>• EMS CAD data</li> </ul>
<b>Effects on Drug Use</b>	<p>What effect have task force activities had on drug usage within the task force's jurisdiction?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What effect have task force activities had on the availability of drugs within a particular county or district within the jurisdiction?</li> <li>• What level of drug usage (incl. Particular types of drugs) prevailed in the jurisdiction three years ago?</li> <li>• What level of drug usage (incl. Particular types of drugs) prevailed in the jurisdiction at the time task force operations began?</li> <li>• To what are the changes in levels attributable?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ADAM-like data (through intensive interviews) at new rural or suburban site (Colorado)</li> <li>• Fire computer-assisted dispatch data (CAD)</li> <li>• EMS CAD data</li> </ul>

## **Appendix F: Focus Group of Georgia Task Force Participants**



**FOCUS GROUP of GEORGIA TASK FORCE PARTICIPANTS**  
*Criminal Justice Coordinating Council*  
*February 23, 2001*

**Introductions (10:00 a.m.)**

**Research Team**

**Purpose and History of the Study**

**Preliminaries/Description of Agenda and Procedures**

**Opening Questions (10:15 a.m.)**

1. *Go around table and tell us your name and where you work, your connection to a task force, and a brief description of your professional background.*

**Introductory Questions**

2. *How does your task force go about setting priorities?*
3. *Once established, are priorities communicated to other law enforcement agencies in the jurisdiction, and how?*
4. *What would you consider to be the most significant benefits that task forces have contributed to communities in your jurisdiction? (be as expansive as you'd like)*
5. *What would you consider to be the most significant benefits that task forces have provided to local law enforcement agencies, including prosecutors' offices?*
  - a. *For example, increased communication? How?*
  - b. *Increased cooperation on investigations? How?*
  - c. *Increased sharing of intelligence? How?*
  - d. *Increased cooperation with state and federal agencies?*
  - e. *Transfer of skills?*

*f. Better prepared cases for prosecutors? Better reports?*

**(12:00 p.m.)**

**6. *What do you consider to be some of the key attributes of a successful and effective task force?***

*a. In terms of activities?*

*b. Accomplishments?*

*c. Quality of personnel and their development?*

*d. Funding?*

*e. Cooperation and communication?*

***What are some key attributes of an unsuccessful task force, in your judgment?  
Or stated differently, what would the systemic or organization issues be that  
would lead to unsuccessful outcomes?***

**(12:15 p.m.)**

**7. *Are there evaluation criteria that you would like to see made part of your annual or quarterly reporting that are not part of the current reporting process?***

**(12:45 –1:35 p.m. Lunch)**

**(1:40)**

- a. *What kinds of criteria would you like to look at to understand if a task force is doing a good job?*
  - b. *What would make your job as task force leaders or participants easier in terms of justifying your participation?*
  - c. *Is there one thing about the work of your task force or task forces generally that you think needs to be better communicated to elected officials, state funding agency officials, or the general public to present a more complete or accurate picture of that organization, what would it be? (particularly if something is ignored or misunderstood).*
8. *What kinds of criteria or measures do you presently rely on to evaluate the effectiveness of your task force? What other kinds of measures might you like to be able to use to evaluate effectiveness?*
- a. *Crime and arrest data?*
  - b. *Calls for service data, including both police and fire/EMS? In your jurisdiction, are these data available in automated form from CAD?*
  - c. *Are there indicators of prosecutorial success? Cases filed? Convictions Obtained? How hard would it be to obtain, track this data?*
  - d. *Surveys of task force participating agencies about accomplishments, interagency communication, contacts made, organizational development, skills transfer, etc?*
  - e. *Surveys of police and sheriffs involved in assault, auto theft, burglaries who may perceive important linkages between drug enforcement and other types of enforcement activity?*
  - f. *Other types of information?*

**(2:00 p.m.)**

9. *Ideally, impact information should be collected and reported to the state as part of the normal progress reporting? Is this feasible?*
10. *Could you, or would you be willing to set certain task force-related goals based on these criteria? Would you make them part of your annual application and annual reporting? Which ones strike you as most useful and feasible?*

**(2:15 p.m.)**

11. *Do you see any benefits coming to a task force as a result of having this kind of broader reporting and evaluation? Any value to the community? Individual member departments or agencies?*
12. *Are there any dangers in moving to some of these kinds of broader types of evaluation and measures? What are they?*

(2:30)

13. *Ideally, some of this implementation process, outcome, and impact information could and should be transmitted electronically for ease of communication and more transparent evaluation. Do the task forces you're familiar with have the necessary Internet access and other systems necessary to accomplish this kind of information-sharing?*

(2:40)

**Summary of major points made during the discussion**

14. *In our efforts to help state officials and task force commanders develop more meaningful ways of evaluating the work of task forces, do you have any other suggestions for us?*

**Thanks to participants; our contact information**

**(3:00 p.m. End of session)**

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