

NORTHWEST HIDTA

Serving the needs of fourteen Northwest Counties:
Benton, Clark, Cowlitz, Franklin, King, Kitsap,
Lewis, Pierce, Skagit, Snohomish, Spokane,
Thurston, Whatcom, and Yakima.



Message from the Director



Dave Rodriguez

I believe the biggest news to break not only in this past quarter but perhaps during the existence of the HIDTA program is the proposal by the Administration to transfer the HIDTA program from ONDCP to the Department of Justice and decrease the budget from \$226,000,000 to \$100,000,000. By now most of you have received the position paper by the National HIDTA Directors Association that factually states why this should not happen as well as the successes of a fully funded HIDTA program. The HIDTA program is receiving much needed support from the National Narcotics Officers Association Coalition, The National Alliance of State Drug Enforcement Agencies, Major Cities Chiefs of Police, and key Congressional representatives. On March 10, 2005, several HIDTA Directors and high

ranking Law Enforcement Officers testified before the Committee on Government Reform Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources. Their testimony on behalf of the HIDTA program was most compelling and was well received by the Committee. I will keep you advised as this process goes forward.

In 2004, the Northwest HIDTA received supplemental funding for the following Initiatives: DEA CPOT Investigation - \$245,000; Yakima Accelerated Domestic Market Disruption - \$150,000; WSP Highway Interdiction Program - \$250,000; and the WSP Marijuana Eradication program - \$300,000. We are also expecting to receive supplemental funding for 2005. It is also expected that the 2005 award letters for all base funded Initiatives will be received by the beginning of April. If this changes for any reason all Initiatives will be notified.

Lastly I would like to thank all participating agencies, task forces, community organizations and interested individuals who expressed their support for the continuation of the HIDTA program in its present configuration.

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Training Opportunities

April 25-May 6, 2005	Basic Narcotic Investigations
May 2-6, 2005	Highway Drug Investigations for Patrol
June 15-17, 2005	Financial Investigative Techniques
July 12-14, 2005	Interview/Interrogation

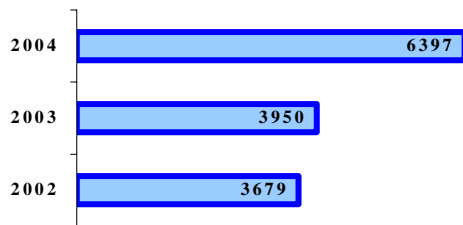
To register for the Interview/Interrogation class, please call Sherrie Funston at (206) 352-3648.

To register for all other classes, please go online to www.counterdrugtraining.com.

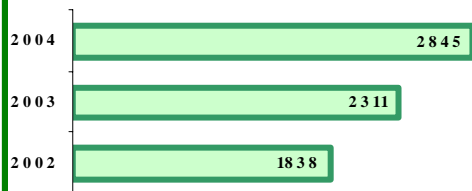
SAFETY BULLETINS

<u>SENT</u>	<u>TITLE</u>
1/27/2005	FN 5.7 HANDGUN
1/27/2005	Seized Money Contaminated with Viral Agent
2/1/2005	Water Bottle Concealment
2/9/2005	Concealed Hypodermic Needle
2/10/2005	Light Fixture Concealment Method
2/10/2005	Update on Black Cocaine
2/17/2005	Knife/Handcuff Key Disguised as Ordinary Key
2/17/2005	Officer Safety-Open Handcuffs with Comb
2/22/2005	ASP Handcuffs Safety Warning
2/28/2005	Automatic Shotgun Extended Mag
3/17/2005	Electric Prod
3/17/2005	Counter-Surveillance Technique

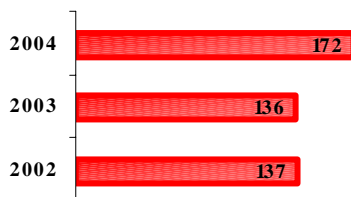
INQUIRIES



CRITICAL EVENTS



METH HOTLINE CALLS



Prevention/Treatment Initiative

2005 Legislative Session in Brief

This edition of the Northwest HIDTA affords an opportunity to provide a brief recap of the 2005 Session of the Washington State Legislature to date, particularly regarding the proposed bills and budgets that would affect our strategy and our partners.

Several bills were introduced as the Session opened in January concerning methamphetamine-related issues. However, bills that would have made methamphetamine manufacturing a “strike” offense, that would have funded pilot enforcement/mitigation/services projects in Pierce and Snohomish counties, and that would have increased penalties for methamphetamine manufacturing have all failed to advance through the process. The remaining legislation, ESHB (Engrossed Substitute House Bill) 2266, has passed the House and been referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee. This bill will require that products containing ephedrine, pseudoephedrine or phenylpropranolamine as the only active ingredient be sold only by pharmacists, authorized health care practitioners or their employees; and establishes age, identification, written log and accessibility restrictions on products that contain the aforementioned ingredients. The Judiciary Committee will have until April 1 to act on the bill.

Also of interest is E2SSB (Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill) 5763, an “omnibus” bill that addresses the treatment of mental and substance abuse disorders. This legislation addresses a wide range of issues bearing on Chemical Dependency treatment services, including changes to Involuntary treatment, expansion of capacity to serve up to 60% of eligible low income and indigent persons (at least doubling the current capacity) and the authority of counties to establish mental health and drug courts. This bill has passed the Senate and has been referred to the House Health Care Committee, where it also must be acted on by April 1.

In addition, Governor Gregoire has recently issued her proposed budget (to be followed by the Senate and the House), which appropriates approximately half of the

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Enforcement Highlights

On February 13, 2005, an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) investigation, termed Operation Replacements, began making arrests of twenty-four (24) suspects for conspiracy and possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine and cocaine within the United States in the Spokane, WA area. Operation Replacements is a two and a half year multi-agency investigation into a significant drug trafficking organization involved in bringing large quantities of methamphetamine and cocaine from Mexico through the Tri-Cities, to the greater Spokane area and then distributing these drugs to customers throughout the northwest, to include Idaho and Montana. Agents and officers obtained ten (10) federal search warrants for residences in Spokane and Franklin Counties, Washington, and Kootenai County, Idaho. During the investigation, execution of search warrants and other enforcement operations conducted by agents and officers, they seized 10 pounds of methamphetamine, 8 pounds of cocaine, 1 semi-automatic handgun, 10 vehicles, and approximately \$60,000 in U.S. currency. Also, agents and officers were able to establish a direct link between this criminal organization and drug traffickers operating from Mexico. This joint investigation was spearheaded by the Drug Enforcement Administration Spokane Resident Office Federal Task Force which worked in concert with agents, Sheriff Deputies, and Police Officers from DEA Yakima, Washington State Patrol, Spokane County Sheriff's Office, Spokane Valley Police Department, Tri-Cities Metro Drug Task Force, Spokane City Police Department, Kootenai County Drug Task Force, Internal Revenue Service, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, & Explosives.

A traffic stop for speeding in Monroe, WA by a Monroe Police Officer resulted in the largest seizure of cocaine in Snohomish County in the memory of law enforcement. The officer checked the license plate of the vehicle and determined the driver was being sought by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. A subsequent search of the vehicle discovered approximately 149 kilograms of cocaine valued at \$3 million in luggage found in the vehicle. A member of the Snohomish Regional Drug Task Force opined that the cocaine was probably not meant for distribution in the area of the seizure.

On March 17, 2005, DEA Task Force agents and officers in Yakima, WA conducted an undercover operation to buy

one pound of methamphetamine "Ice" from a male and female suspected of being drug traffickers. In an attempt to arrest the traffickers, suspects fled in a vehicle from a commercial parking lot while the male passenger opened fire on pursuing officers. Approximately 20 bullets were fired in the escape with no officers struck, though some of the pursuing vehicles were hit. The primary suspect stopped at a middle school at one point in the pursuit and attempted to take a young child hostage. The pursuit thwarted the attempt to take the child hostage and shortly after, the male suspect entered a mini-mart and succeeded in taking a clerk hostage. The scene was contained and negotiators from the Yakima Police Dept. subsequently succeeded in convincing the male suspect to surrender. The female suspect was arrested in the vehicle she had been driving.

Northern Border seizures of inbound shipments of marijuana continue with the shipments disguised among legitimate cargo or packaging. One of the larger more recent seizures made on March 10, 2005, was 453 kilos of marijuana found in four large wooden crates alleged to be finished fireplace doors (photos #1 & #2).



Photo 1



Photo 2

Another seizure was made of 132 kilos of marijuana concealed within fish totes (photo #3) on March 7. There was an outbound seizure of 18.7 kilos of ecstasy (MDMA) concealed in bags within a trap door in the bottom of the trunk of a passenger vehicle (photo #4).



Photo 3



Photo 4

Update

The Integrated Border Intelligence Team Pacific Region

The mission of the Integrated Border Intelligence Team (IBIT) is to support the Integrated Border Enforcement Team (IBET) and the partner agencies by collecting, analyzing and disseminating tactical, investigative and strategic intelligence information pertaining to cross border crime between the United States and Canada. This intelligence information is shared with participating agencies to target international/national/criminal organizations, de-conflict international investigations and facilitate joint enforcement operations. The priority for IBIT is bi-national security targets but often the by-product relates to narco-terrorism.

IBIT's tactical/investigative activities include the exchange of cross border crime intelligence information and the coordination of law enforcement activities such as searches, surveillance and arrests for the IBET. The IBIT will produce law enforcement strategic, yearly threat assessments and quarterly trend/statistical reports. The area of responsibility for IBIT – Pacific covers the entire British Columbia border and includes the state of Washington, and the Idaho Pan Handle to Glacier National Park in Montana. This provides a clear North / South vision and facilitates the West to East perspective of traveling criminals.

The IBIT is comprised of analysts and intelligence officers from a variety of Canadian and U.S. law enforcement agencies. Full time participants include the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Department of Homeland Security Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and U.S. Customs & Border Protection (CBP). Other participating agencies include the Vancouver (BC) Police Department (VPD), U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), and Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC).

These analysts are currently co-located at the ICE Headquarters in Blaine, Washington. Each agency is responsible for the installation, maintenance, electronic security, and operation of their respective database systems. Participating agencies policies and regulations will limit access to agency systems. The dissemination of information is under the authority of the originator and existing Memorandum of Understandings (MOU). All members will abide by that agency's dissemination policy, including third party rule.

For further information, please contact:

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amount needed to “close the treatment gap” articulated in E2SSB 5763, but targets persons with co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders; includes an enhancement for Community Mobilization funding (affecting several NW HIDTA partner agencies); and eliminates funding for the Family Policy Council/Community Networks as well as the Governor’s Council on Substance Abuse. It is expected that these and other budget issues will remain in play until at least the end of the regular Legislative Session.

For more information on Legislative Session activity, go to <http://access.wa.gov>, and for more information regarding the NW HIDTA Prevention/Treatment Initiative, contact Steve Freng at 206.352.3603 and sfreng@nw.hidta.org.