

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



This past quarter we completed the review of all the HIDTA Initiatives. The results of the review will be briefed to the Executive Board at the January meeting and then forwarded to ONDCP. I wish to thank all the participants for taking the time out of their busy schedules to ensure this requirement is executed in a timely and professional manner.

I also wish to announce the new Chair of the Executive Board is Chief Jim Scharf of the Everett Police Department. We also have two additions to the Executive Board, Chief Gil Kerlikowske, Seattle Police Department and Sheriff Ken Irwin, Yakima County. Both will serve on the Board for a period of three years. Gentlemen, Welcome Aboard.

Lastly, the Federal Government is still in a continuing resolution until January 11th. The remainder of the Appropriation Bills will be addressed by the new Congress. It appears that we will be level funded. I do not expect the award letters for the 2003 Initiatives to be issued until March. If this changes I will let everyone know.

2003 Planning Calendar—*Jerry Adams*

1-9-03	Law Enforcement Advisory Committee Briefing by WSP-SIRT & Thurston County Task Force
1-22-03	Executive Board Briefing by WSP-SIRT & Thurston County Task Force
3-13-03	Law Enforcement Advisory Committee Briefing by Yakima DEA, CCNU, LEAD
4-9-03	Executive Board Briefing by Yakima DEA, CCNU, LEAD
4-25-03	Completed 2004 initiative proposals due to Director from LE Agencies -
5-1-03	Law Enforcement Advisory Committee Briefing on Investigative Support Unit
5-14-03	Executive Board Briefing on Investigative Support Unit
6-5-03	Law Enforcement Advisory Committee Briefing by Northern Border Initiative, Snohomish County Task Force
6-11-03	Executive Board Briefing by Northern Border Initiative, Snohomish County Task Force
9-11-03	Law Enforcement Advisory Committee Brief by Tacoma DEA, Integrated Task Force, Transportation Group
9-17-03	Executive Board Brief by Tacoma DEA, Integrated Task Force, Transportation Group
10-30-03	Law Enforcement Advisory Committee Brief by Expansion County Initiatives
11-12-03	Executive Board Brief by Expansion County Initiatives

Inside this issue:

Message from the Director Dave Rodriguez	1
Jerry Adams 2003 Planning Calendar	1
Prevention/Treatment Steve Freng	2
NIN Conference Bill wittenberger	2
Watch Center Jon Thorpe	2
Enforcement Highlights Bill Wittenberger	3
Drug Trends Jerry Adams	3
Carrier Information From the FCC Christopher Downie	3
Training Jon Thorpe	4

Prevention/Treatment Initiatives

Steve Freng

In an effort to broaden the scope of the NW HIDTA Public Education/Awareness initiative, the Office of the Washington State Lieutenant Governor implemented a very “public” project in July of this year.

As a NW HIDTA partner agency, and an invaluable, tireless contributor to substance abuse prevention activities throughout Washington State, the Lieutenant Governor has previously developed the “Say It Straight” curriculum and materials focusing on the consequences of marijuana use, and continues to serve as the webmaster for the “M-Files” website (www.mfiles.org), focusing on methamphetamine-related issues as well as those associated with marijuana. As an enhancement to these efforts, the Lieutenant Governor proposed a Meth Billboard Program for the NW HIDTA region that was heartily approved to run through the end of the calendar year.

As depicted in the reproduction below, the billboards convey a very simple and pointed message – and provide the M-Files’ address as well as the NW HIDTA Methamphetamine hotline number. Billboards were posted in Whatcom and Pierce counties in July/August; Thurston, Yakima and Pierce counties in September/October; and Snohomish, King and Skagit counties in November/December. Together with the NW HIDTA Retailers’ Precursor poster and our many other print materials, this latest project has increased the volume of calls and visits to the M-Files, improving our ability to *get the message out*.

For further information regarding the NW HIDTA Prevention/Treatment initiatives, Steve Freng can be contacted at 206.352.3603 or sfreng@nw.hidta.org.



Narcotic Information Network Conference

Bill Wittenberger

The San Diego Narcotic Information Network sponsored an Intelligence Working Group Meeting on December 4-5 on the drug smuggling problem along the Interstate 5 Corridor. Representatives from five West Coast HIDTA’s, DEA, FBI, U.S. Customs, WSIN, EPIC, NDIC and the Canadian Organized Crime Agency (OCA) attended. The NW HIDTA reported information showing a flow of B.C. Bud, Ecstasy, Pseudo and Money moving south along the corridor and the movement of Black Tar Heroin, Cocaine, Meth, Marijuana and Money north from the state from California along the corridor.

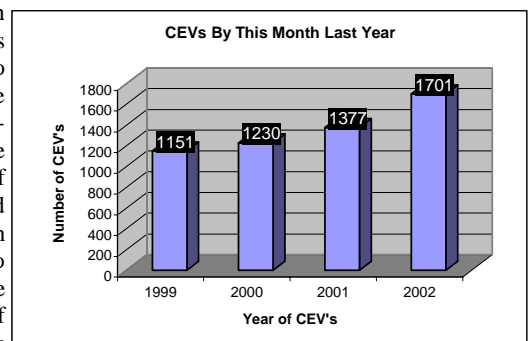
It was noted most of the drug smuggling from Mexico was crossing the border in hidden compartments in POV’s and being staged in the Los Angeles area prior to being further transported north along the I-5 corridor to destinations all the way to Canada. Commercial vehicles entering the U.S. at the Canadian border are more frequently used to smuggle drugs hidden among legitimate cargo. Cocaine from California (often purchased or traded with the proceeds from B.C. Bud) has saturated the British Columbia market and now appears to be moving to Eastern Canadian provinces. Though they have fewer clandestine labs in total numbers than other parts of the country, the Central Valley HIDTA counties produce an estimated 80% of all Meth from labs operations in the U.S., because of the significant presence of “superlabs.” The I-5 corridor is used to move this product north and south as well as to other points throughout the country. There are indications that as enforcement is increasingly effective in the Central Valley that the “superlabs” will be moving to other sectors of the country. It was predicted that Yakima County could possibly see more “superlabs” because of the immigrant labor pool and a similar agricultural economy. Ninety-five percent of the Pseudoephedrine used at the “superlabs” in the Central Valley is coming from Canada, but to date most the major interdictions have occurred in the Mid-West. The Northwest, Oregon, Northern California and Central Valley HIDTA’s and OCA all noted what appeared to be a growing involvement of Vietnamese Drug Trafficking Organizations in drug trafficking in their respective areas. The “wealth” gained by Vietnamese groups from the B.C. Bud trade has allowed the groups to expand “business” in other drugs and other crime activity. It also appeared some Vietnamese suspected of being involved in drug activity that had previously operated in Canada had re-located south into Washington and Oregon. Highway interdictions on the highways in California have significantly decreased because of court challenges diminishing the ability to disrupt the flow drugs in that state. Public lands further from the main land routes were also seemingly being exploited in California and Oregon for major marijuana grows. In the state of Washington 6000 plants worth an estimated street value of \$9 million was found in an isolated area on state land in October and appears to match this trend.

Watch Center Statistics

Jon Thorpe

The Watch Center is experiencing an increase in the number of critical event (CEV) and inquiry phone calls coincidental with the expansion of the NWHIDTA from 7 to 14 counties. The approximate 22% increase in CEV’s and the 20% increase in inquiries are expected to continue to grow in the coming year as the counties expand their operations.

The Watch Center statistics are available to the separate agencies regarding the total number of CEV’s and inquiries. In regards to CEV’s, the primary drug of mention data is



also available for comparison with extant initiatives. Of the 127 meth hotline calls, 69 (54.3%) have come from Pierce, Thurston, and Spokane Counties.

Enforcement Highlights – *Bill Wittenberger*

The Border Task Force reported several quarterly highlights. On September 5, 2002, a commercial truck that arrived at Lynden POE was referred to secondary. Inspectors found 495 lbs of marijuana concealed in a compartment created by enclosing the space between the two I-beams running the length of the trailer (see photo). On November 9, 2002, a US citizen female returning from Canada was found with \$116,522 currency concealed between the pages of magazines and then sealed in manila envelopes. The envelopes were then hidden within clothing in her suitcase. On November 25, 2002, a rental Cessna entered US air space and dropped 3 sports bags containing approximately 38.9 kgs of marijuana. US Customs Agents at a Skagit County gravel pit (see Photo) retrieved the marijuana. The RCMP arrested the pilot and passenger, both Canadian citizens, when the plane returned to Canada.



On September 13, 2002, The L.E.A.D. Task Force in Yakima County discovered a meth superlab being operated at a home outside of Wapato. DEA and the Yakima City/County Narcotics Unit also responded and executed a search warrant. The lab was in the extraction process. Approximately 30 pounds of ephedrine in solution was discovered and three persons were arrested. One farm supply co-op that sells Anhydrous Ammonia to farmers said that farmers have experienced unprecedented increases in thefts from their tanks.

The L.E.A.D. Task Force also responded to a marijuana grow location at the Yakima/Klickitat County line on Yakima Indian Reservation closed land just east of SR 97 on October 31. Several grow locations there had recently been harvested with an estimated 1500 – 2000 plants. Also in October in Klickitat County, 6000 plants (see related news article on page 2) were discovered in a remote public land area. In September, the Thurston County Narcotics Task Force dealt with a 500 plant outdoor grow on Department of Natural Resources land. At the campsite at the Klickitat grow, journals recording progress of the plants in Spanish along with canned foods from Mexico were found. It was speculated the Klickitat grow is part of a trend of “Corporate Grows” seen from “Washington to South Carolina.” Financing and organization for the operations is suspected of coming from Mexico, with drug lords who have trafficked in marijuana for years deciding it is more profitable to move the growing operations rather than continuing to try to smuggle marijuana into the U.S. It also appears such “Corporate Grows” make use of Public Lands in remote and difficult to access areas. Immigrant labor pools that can make more money tending marijuana grows versus doing other labor or farm work is associated with the trend.

DEA, U.S. Customs, U.S. Coast Guard, the Olympic Peninsula Narcotics Enforcement Team, Seattle PD, King County Sheriff’s Office and the Eastside Narcotics Task Force were all involved in one of the largest seizures of cocaine on September 27, 2002. On this occasion officers stopped a rental vehicle driven by a Canadian who had met with an individual wearing a Canadian Native Fisheries uniform at Neah Bay, WA. A subsequent search of the rental vehicle revealed three locked plastic containers that later was determined to contain 36 kilograms of cocaine.

The Clark/Skamania Drug Task Force reported significant sentences for three Methamphetamine cooks in Clark County during October and November. The sentences — seven and ½, nine, and sixteen and ½ years — were for separate cases, but were associated with other factors endangering the public such as the labs being near a school bus stop, the presence of a 10-month old baby and the presence of weapons.

Getting Information about Telecommunications Carriers from the FCC *Christopher Downie*

Last time we looked at identifying telephone company service providers using area code and prefix (NPA-NPX) assignment data available from the North American Numbering Plan Administrator (NANPA). This time we take the next step and get information about telecommunications companies from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

Since April 2001, the FCC has required all new and existing interstate and certain other telecommunications carriers file the Telecommunications Reporting Worksheet, FCC Form 499-A with the National Exchange Carrier Association. The telecommunications carrier registration information is now available to the public online at <http://gulfoss2.fcc.gov/cib/form499/499a.cfm>. This makes it easy for law enforcement personnel to access pertinent contact and/or background information on telecommunications carriers. Specifically, you can view such things as the carrier’s business names and primary addresses, names and business addresses of certain of the carrier’s officers, the carrier’s designated agent for service of process, all names under which the carrier has conducted business in the past, and the states in which the carrier is certified to provide telecommunications service. You will need to contact the carrier to obtain the law enforcement designated agent for service of process.

Drug Trends *Jerry Adams*

A recent publication prepared for the Office of Community, Trade and Economic Development, offers some informative trends regarding drug abuse in Washington State. The report notes that Washington’s total societal cost of drug and alcohol abuse exceeds \$2.5 billion per year. For the ten-year period from 1990 to 2000, arrests for drug sales increased 47%. For juveniles, over half of all drug sales in the year 2000 were for the sale or distribution of marijuana. The juvenile rate of arrest for marijuana sales surpassed the adult rate starting in 1993. A shift in drug use was found among adults where they moved from marijuana, cocaine and heroin to drugs such as methamphetamine. Also, the growing percentage of possession arrests for marijuana among juveniles may indicate changing preferences among juveniles away from hard drugs or other factors. In Washington State, there was \$418 per person spent on criminal justice related costs in 1999, \$24 less than the national average. Many more interesting and informative details are in this report which was prepared by the Northwest Crime and Social Research, Inc. Their website is www.nwcsr.com.

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PREVENTION/TREATMENT/ENFORCEMENT



Training - Jon Thorpe

For calendar year 2002, the Northwest HIDTA was able to provide training to 172 individuals from various Federal, state, and local agencies. Our goal is to continue to provide opportunities throughout the year to help support counter-drug operations. Several training events have already been set up for CY2003. January's Rave /Club Drugs Awareness Seminar will be held at the SEATAC Marriott Hotel and provide valuable information to law enforcement officers on strategies for regulating rave events and for conducting drug enforcement operations at raves.

If you are interested in any of the upcoming training, please contact the Training Coordinator, Hunter Floyd, at 206-352-3679.

January 2003

1/13/2003	to	1/13/2003	CJTC Burién, WA RAVE Club Drugs - IIR
1/13/2003	to	1/17/2003	CJTC Burién, WA Analytical Techniques 1 - MCTFT

February 2003

2/18/2003	to	2/20/2003	CJTC Burién, WA Interview and Interrogation - MCTFT
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May 2003

5/12/2003	to	5/16/2003	CJTC Burién, WA Financial Investigative Techniques - MCTFT
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July 2003

7/28/2003	to	7/30/2003	CJTC Burién, WA HIGHWAY INTERDICTION - MCTFT
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August 2003

8/19/2003	to	8/21/2003	CJTC Burién, WA International Money Laundering - MCTFT
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September 2003

9/8/2003	to	9/10/2003	Interview and Interrogation (Tentative) - JTF6
9/10/2003	to	9/12/2003	Link Analysis (Tentative Class) - JTF6

Specially prepared for the ONDCP High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Program.