

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 began a program of briefing the Executive Board on the Enforcement Initiatives. The briefings they have received have been comprehensive and well organized. We will continue with these briefings into the new fiscal year. These briefings also assist us in the preparation and implementation of the self review program which will begin in October. A schedule to all participants will be sent via e-mail.

I expect to have the award letters out to the expansion counties by mid-October. Funding for additional projects in the ISU and for the IBIT in Blaine has already been received.

I also wish to announce that the Federal Manager for the ISU, Christopher Downie has reported. Chris is a supervisory intelligence analyst that has been detailed to the ISU by DEA. Chris' last duty assignment was Nashville, Tennessee. Welcome aboard.

Intelligence Managers Meet in Northwest HIDTA

Jerry Adams

The NW HIDTA will host the HIDTA Investigative Support Center (ISC) managers national conference on October 28-30th. This invitation-only meeting will be held at the Sea-Tac Marriott hotel, and approximately 75 law enforcement intelligence professionals are expected to attend this conference. The HIDTA program has 28 intelligence centers located throughout the country. As required by the General Counterdrug Intelligence Plan (GCIP) that was enacted two years ago, each HIDTA intelligence center requires dual management by federal and state/local agency representatives. Attendees will also include representatives from the National HIDTA Program Office, the Counterdrug Intelligence Executive Secretariat (CDX) and other key individuals whose task is to link the HIDTA ISC's into a coordinated effort. Agenda topics will include the new HIDTA wide area network that is under development, Regional Information Sharing System (RISS) project connectivity and use, and Homeland Security issues.

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Prevention/Treatment Initiatives—*Steve Freng*

Drug Sentencing Reform in Washington State

As evidence of the growing national attention to drug policy, several states including Florida, Ohio and Michigan (and perhaps Missouri as well as several others) may join California and Arizona in placing “diversion-to-treatment” initiatives on statewide ballots. Most of these measures are written to require courts to send first- and second-time drug offenders into treatment and intervention programs rather than jail or prison. But while they address a range of political and fiscal concerns, such drug-reform plans have been criticized for removing accountability and sanctions for offenders as well as reducing the authority of judges.

During this past session, however, the Washington State Legislature proactively implemented an important drug policy change in our state by passing the Sentencing Reform Act (SSHB 2338).

The Sentencing Reform Act involves several elements including:

- A reduction in standard sentencing ranges for adults convicted of drug offenses (except involving Methamphetamine) effective this past July 1; for instance, reducing a first offense from 21-27 to 15-20 months, a second offense from 36-48 to 21-27 months and a third offense from 67-89 to 26-34 months;
- Directing the resultant state savings in prison costs to alcohol/drug treatment, both in the criminal justice system and within the community;
- The development of a new drug sentencing grid that will distinguish between ordinary sales and more serious sales involving weapons, minors, Methamphetamine manufacture and similar factors, to be effective July 1, 2004.

The bill goes on to articulate minimum standards for Drug Court programs throughout the state, directs the development of a methodology for calculating biennial savings in prison costs, establishes statewide Panels to oversee distribution of the funds and calls for county-level groups to develop community expenditure plans for the funds.

Twenty-five percent of the funds will go to the Department of Corrections for prison-based alcohol/drug treatment and seventy-five percent will be administered by the Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, with 70% of this share to be distributed to counties by formula and 30% to be awarded to counties through a grant process. The availability of such funding for local substance abuse services, although capped at \$8.25 million, holds great promise as a sustainable and predictable source of revenue. Counties may choose to support operational Drug Court programs, may decide to implement similar “special” courts or programs, and can provide treatment services to offenders in a manner that best meets local needs.

Of additional note is the bill’s requirement for the Washington State Institute for Public Policy to evaluate the effectiveness of both the sentencing grid and the state’s Drug Court programs in terms of cost savings and offsets as well as impacts on recidivism. In proceeding with these evaluation efforts, the Institute will build on the Drug Court Evaluation funded by the Northwest HIDTA and conducted by the University of Washington, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Institute in 1999-2001.

If you have any questions or would like additional information about the topic of this article, Steve Freng can be contacted at 206.352.3603 or sfreg@nw.hidta.org.

Newly Reported Drug Trafficking Trends

Jerry Adams

The latest "Intelligence Digest" (April-June 2002) published by the Western States Information Network contains informative drug enforcement trends and supports the need to share information between agencies. Washington State remains one of the top three states for methamphetamine laboratory seizures. There was a reported 29% increase of injured and neglected children in meth labs during 2001. Eastern Washington reported a considerable increase in meth labs possibly due to displacement effects from Western Washington counties. The flood of B.C. Bud (marijuana) into Washington State may be coming from 20,000-25,000 grow farms in the Province of British Columbia. It's reported that 95% of the Canadian harvest is destined for U.S. markets. Oregon enforcement agencies reported finding their 3rd GHB laboratory in Multnomah County. A DEA-Idaho investigation recently led to the discovery of a LSD laboratory in the Portland, Oregon area. Elsewhere in Oregon, authorities reportedly seized a major meth laboratory capable of producing 100 pounds of meth in one production batch. Other Oregon/WSIN intelligence reports note that use of Ecstasy is increasing and one source for Ecstasy is Canada where 19% of the Canadian clan labs are manufacturing Ecstasy.

Watch Center -*Jon Thorpe*

Use of the Watch Center for event deconfliction and inquiries continues to exceed 2001 figures. Current figures through August 31 show an increase of 12% over the comparable period in 2001 (1128 vs. 999). The average monthly increase of 16 reports is the result of critical event deconfliction reports being newly received from Spokane, Lewis, Clark, and Cowlitz Counties. Inquiries also are outpacing 2001 by 23% (2386 vs. 1859). The Watch Center will begin revision of the Threat Assessment Survey that will be sent to all NWHIDTA agencies and Bryne Grant projects in December. A key reporting element will be on Drug Trafficking Organizations within the agency jurisdiction. These data will be used in both the Threat Assessment and Annual Report.

Enforcement Highlights - *Bill Wittenberger*

On March 26 and 27, 2002, the Financial Investigation Unit (FIU) Task Force under IRS-CI direction, arrested three targets and executed five federal search warrants in a case involving money laundering of narcotic proceeds. Three of the search warrants were executed simultaneously. One of the search warrants and one of the arrest warrants were executed in Arizona. A federal indictment charged five defendants with money laundering, structuring currency transactions, bank fraud, bankruptcy fraud and other charges. Also indicted were four properties purchased with the proceeds of money laundering. Additional properties and several vehicles are still being investigated for potential forfeiture.

On April 9, 2002, the FIU arrested a fourth target. On April 12, 2002, the FIU arrested the fifth or (primary targets). These last two arrests were executed successfully due to, in large part, the strong PC and potential lengthy sentences (relating to money laundering charges) in the indictment that persuaded the targets' attorneys to convince the targets to turn themselves in to the FIU.

As of September 10, 2002, all but one defendant has pleaded guilty to various charges including money laundering, bank fraud and bankruptcy fraud.

Assisting agencies included: IRS-CI office in Phoenix, Valley Narcotics Enforcement Team (VNET), Washington State Patrol, Pierce County Sheriff's Office, Federal Way Police Department, Kent Police Department, Puyallup Police Department, Seattle Police Department, INS and DEA.

On July 11, 2002, a two-year investigation that spanned from New Jersey to California to Washington and into Canada culminated with the arrest of 11 suspects involved in the international trafficking of cocaine and money-laundering. All together, the operation netted 330 pounds of cocaine, almost \$2 million in cash, 15 firearms (including multiple assault weapons) and about 12 pounds of marijuana. The head of the organization had amassed enough profit to purchase and furnish a palatial horse ranch in rural Thurston County and had three "stash" houses located in Skyway, Renton and Woodinville.



The ranch in Thurston County was filled with secret compartments full of automatic weapons (see photo). The four properties have been criminally indicted, and seven fugitives are still at large. U.S. and Canadian Customs teamed with DEA, the King County Sheriff's Office, Thurston County Sheriff's Office, Internal Revenue Service and the U.S. Marshal's Service in developing this case.

On August 13, 2002, the DEA Spokane Task Force, with representatives from the Washington State Patrol, Spokane PD, Spokane SO, IRS-CI and the U.S. Customs Service, culminated an investigation focused on the illegal distribution of pseudoephedrine that commenced in November 2001. In this period, 1240 cases of pseudoephedrine (8 million tablets) capable of producing 300 lbs. of pure Meth and 3,000 lbs. of "thinned" street Meth were sold by two distributors to several Spokane convenience store operators. Surveillance of some of the stores traced customers taking cases of pseudoephedrine to homes where Meth labs were found, including one 30 feet from a schoolyard. Fifteen arrests were made and 40 cases of pseudoephedrine were seized in the home of one suspect. A superseding indictment by a Federal Grand Jury included additional charges of money laundering as authorities moved to seize two Spokane convenience stores and \$456,000 in cash.

The LEAD Task Force and DEA concluded a three-month investigation that included two undercover purchases of Methamphetamine. On July 17, 2002, a delivery of four pounds of Meth was set up and when the officers converged on the suspect's car, she attempted to flee and struck a cement curb and tree. Three suspects were arrested and three lbs. of Meth and a small amount of cocaine were seized. A consent search of an apartment where the suspect's were observed departing prior to the delivery resulted in the seizure of a large amount of "cut," three weapons and paraphernalia.

The Border Task Force reported that on July 20, 2002, the U.S. Coast Guard boarded an 18' boat west of Speiden Channel in the San Juan Islands that was moving north about 2 miles from the U.S./Canadian border. The Washington State registered boat (see photo) was operated by two Canadians who were transporting 11.58 kilograms of cocaine. The task force also reported two separate seizures of Ecstasy coming from Canada to the United States (one on July 23 and the other on August 26, 2002).



On August 13, 2002, Seattle Operation JETWAY Task Force officers seized a total of \$111,293 U.S. currency from two male residents of Seattle, Washington. The suspects were traveling on one-way tickets, purchased with cash at the ticket counter, from Atlanta, Georgia, to Seattle via Phoenix, Arizona, on America West Airlines flight number 75. During consensual interviews and searches, \$16,760 was found on their persons. One piece of luggage had not arrived on the flight with the suspects and a State search warrant was obtained. Later that evening, agents intercepted the luggage and found \$5,000 concealed inside, secreted inside a pair of pants; four Express Mail receipts were also found. Task Force officers obtained search warrants for the parcels and found them to contain chrome truck wheels. An additional \$89,533, which was packaged inside padded envelopes, was found taped inside the wheels.

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PREVENTION/TREATMENT/ENFORCEMENT



Getting Information about Telecommunications Companies

Christopher Downie

Now it's easier to get information about telecommunications companies. Let's say you have uncovered a telephone number called by a suspect during the course of an investigation, but which telephone company is the service provider? and how do you contact them for service of process? You might have several old in-house lists that you have relied on, or perhaps you have relied on your regional Bell telephone company to inform you which telephone company to subpoena. Keeping up with the constant changes in the telecommunications industry is sometimes a challenge and can consume valuable time. With a couple of simple tools, you can have the latest information to help you identify telephone number service providers.

The North American Numbering Plan Administrator (NANPA) assigns and maintains area code and prefix (NPA-NPX) assignments for the United States, Canada, and many Caribbean nations. NANPA follows assignment guidelines developed by the industry and makes the assignment data available online. From the NANPA web site, <http://www.nanpa.com/>, you can download the central office code assignments for the United States and its territories. Text files and Excel files by region, or an Access database file containing all the NPAs for the U.S. and its territories, are available. After you have this data on your computer, you can search for a prefix assignment by area code, resulting in a telecommunication company name and the geographic area (rate center) in which the code is assigned.

Next time, we'll look at getting information about telecommunications companies from the Federal Communications Commission.