

# **EMERGING DRUG ABUSE**

**Challenges and Innovations**

**Dallas, Texas  
Conference Report**

**MARCH 29-30, 2012**



## **Acknowledgements**

Thanks to all of the Conference attendees for their valuable input and participation. This document is an attempt to combine the attendees' input into a format that can be used to address this country's drug abuse problem.

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*Darrel W. Stephens, Executive Director, Major Cities Chiefs Association*

*Kathy D. Doran, Technical Writer, National HIDTA Assistance Center*

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## Preface

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The Administration's inaugural *National Drug Control Strategy* released in 2010 represented a new direction in our approach to reducing illicit drug use and its consequences in the United States, one that strikes a balance between public health and public safety. When I took the position as Director, National Drug Control Policy, President Obama's directive to me was to seek input from all sectors of society, including the myriad of professionals who have first-hand experience with the drug issue: judges, health care providers, prevention and treatment providers, educators, and law enforcement. The Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) engaged in an unprecedented consultation process, collecting input from Congress, our Federal, state, local, tribal, territorial, and international partners, nongovernmental organizations, and the American public.

As a former chief of police and career law enforcement officer, I understand the inherent weight borne by law enforcement officers in communities throughout the country. Historically, the country's drug problem has been treated solely as a law enforcement responsibility -- a societal issue strictly in the purview of the criminal justice system. We believe that it also must be recognized as a public health issue.

As part of our mission, ONDCP has taken every opportunity through public awareness and policy development to advance policies based upon science and best evidence, thereby changing the national conversation. For example, ONDCP supported a special session, convened in January 2011, of the Harvard Kennedy School of Government's *National Executive Session on Policing and Public Safety (2008 – 2014)* to discuss drug use and its consequences and the need for public health and public safety collaboration. *The Executive Session* program, originally established in 1985, convenes a diverse group of practitioners, experts, academics and researchers from criminal justice, law enforcement and social sciences, to address the current and more importantly, future challenges facing police executives and policing agencies. I felt it was imperative to include how policing agencies and policing executives address the drug issue in this national discussion. It is in the spirit of the *National Drug Control Strategy* consultation process and as a continuation of what we began at Harvard, that we convened the *Emerging Drug Abuse Challenges and Innovations* forum.

As drug commanders, police chiefs, drug enforcement agents and HIDTA directors, you understand the nexus between drugs and crime. You see the emerging threats and meet the challenges to address them on a daily basis. With drug-induced deaths continuing to exceed deaths from motor vehicle accidents, marijuana use increasing, and high incarceration rates, law enforcement, as "can-do people" are integral to our public health and safety approach to reducing drug use and its consequences.

I appreciate the open and frank exchange of ideas from the participants. I am especially appreciative of Dr. Timothy Condon for his presentation on Addiction as a Brain Disease and that substance use disorders can be prevented, treated, and people can recover. His comments underscored the importance of blending law enforcement and criminal justice with effective prevention and treatment systems to optimize outcomes.

We remain steadfast in our commitment to reduce the rate of drug use by 15 percent by 2015 as we continue to pursue a balanced approach to improve public health and safety. The perspectives offered by the Forum participants surrounding current trends and innovations in narcotics enforcement were informed by real world experiences, shared ideas, and practical conclusions. These contributions underscore the benefit of collaboration and make the case for continuing these conversations. I thank The Major Cities Chiefs Association for its vision and support in convening the conference.

R. Gil Kerlikowske  
Director of National Drug Control Policy

## Executive Summary

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The Conference on Emerging Drug Abuse Challenges and Innovations, sponsored by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) and held March 29 – 30, 2012 in Dallas, Texas brought together the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA), Major Cities Drug Commanders, and ONDCP to discuss drug abuse challenges and innovations. In his opening remarks, Director of National Drug Control Policy Gil Kerlikowske talked about the Obama Administration's approach to the country's drug problem. He noted that historically the drug problem has been treated solely as a criminal justice issue. He further stated that the Administration believes the drug problem should be treated as both a public health and public safety issue. The approach is based on the belief that addiction is a disease that is diagnosable and treatable and that a greater focus should be placed on prevention and treatment. The conference focused on three important topics held as roundtable discussions: **CURRENT TRENDS**, **INNOVATIONS**, and **EMERGING THREATS IN NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT**. The Office of State, Local, and Tribal Affairs' Deputy Director, Benjamin Tucker, and Dr. Timothy Condon, Visiting Research Professor at Center on Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Addictions at the University of New Mexico also shared a number of observations, which are recapped in Appendix A along with Director Kerlikowske's remarks.

**CURRENT TRENDS** focused on the impact of budget cuts on narcotics enforcement. Many participants indicated that reduced funding has resulted in long-term investigations declining and a shifting of focus to street-level narcotic arrests. Fewer officers are available and they must spend most of their time responding to calls for service since that is the priority for most agencies. The net result is fewer resources available for narcotics investigations. Nearly every participant spoke about the importance of task forces with HIDTA, (including HIDTA's Domestic Highway Enforcement initiative) and DEA in dealing with illegal drugs. Many departments have furloughed civilian positions to reduce personnel costs. Even agencies that have not experienced significant budget cuts have not been able to increase narcotics enforcement activities.

The **INNOVATIONS IN NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT** roundtable discussion focused on a unified approach involving all sectors of society. Many participants agreed that a unified approach was the most effective method of dealing with the country's drug problem. Medical, legal, prevention and treatment communities, the prison system, postal inspectors, the health department, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), fire departments, hazardous materials (HazMat) teams, building inspectors, public works departments and law enforcement would work together to address the drug problem. This echoes the Obama Administration's holistic methodology.

The discussion about **EMERGING THREATS** focused primarily on prescription drugs, heroin, marijuana (grow houses, legalization and dispensaries), methamphetamine, synthetic drugs, and drugged driving, with certain regional threats being tied directly to crime.

This report summarizes the common trends, innovations and threats identified and discussed during the meeting with the hopes of establishing an on-going relationship between the Major Cities Chiefs Association Drug Commanders, HIDTA and DEA that can facilitate a unified, multi-dimensional approach to the drug problem in a time of shrinking resources.

## Emerging Drug Abuse Challenges and Innovations – An Overview

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The Conference on Emerging Drug Abuse Challenges and Innovations sponsored by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) was held March 29 - 30 in Dallas, Texas. Although the Major Cities Drug Commanders have been meeting annually for several years, this was the first time DEA, HIDTA, ONDCP and the Drug Commanders have had the opportunity to come together to discuss drug abuse challenges and innovations. The conference was timely in the sense that almost all agencies are facing continued budget cuts that have had some impact on narcotics enforcement initiatives. The conference was facilitated by Major Cities Chiefs Executive Director Darrel Stephens and focused on three major areas:

- **Current Trends in Narcotics Enforcement.** This session included a discussion about the impact of budget cuts on enforcement and other drug programs. In addition, participants were asked to describe the enforcement issues and what, if any, collaborative efforts were being implemented that help to mitigate the challenges. Participants from cities with DEA or HIDTA representatives collaborated on developing responses to those questions.

“We cannot arrest or incarcerate our way out of a problem this complex: ‘War on drugs’ is too simplistic an approach to be effective.”

Gil Kerlikowske, Director  
Office of National Drug Control Policy
- **Innovations in Narcotics Enforcement.** This session focused on innovative programs and ideas for dealing with drug abuse problems and enforcement. Participants were asked to identify and discuss innovative initiatives in their communities. If participants were affiliated with HIDTA, DEA and drug commanders, they were asked to explain how they collaborated on these programs. If not already affiliated with DEA or HIDTA, it was suggested that they look into such an affiliation. Participants were also asked about the types of non-enforcement programs that are making a difference and how such programs could be improved.
- **Emerging Threats in Narcotics Enforcement.** This session covered the emerging threats in narcotics enforcement such as prescription drug abuse, drugged driving, pharmacy robberies, pill mills, heroin, and synthetic drugs including “bath salts” and synthetic marijuana (known as “Spice” or “K2”). Participants were asked to describe how these issues are impacting narcotic enforcement. They were also asked to describe to what extent they represent a problem in their respective areas, to include what level of resources are dedicated to these threats, and, specifically, how they are addressing the problem.

The conference included remarks from National Drug Control Policy **Director Gil Kerlikowske**, State, Local, and Tribal Affairs **Deputy Director Benjamin Tucker**, and Visiting Research Professor at Center on Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Addictions at the University of New Mexico **Dr. Timothy Condon**. A summary of those remarks can be found in Appendix A.

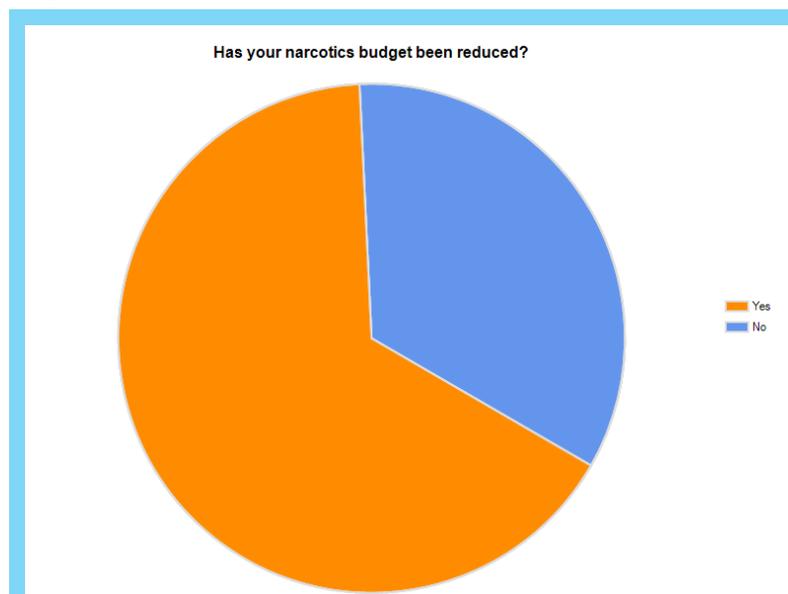
## Current Trends in Narcotics Enforcement

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*This session included a discussion about the impact of budget cuts on enforcement and other drug programs and the related challenges caused by the budget cuts.*

Nearly every participant spoke about reduced funding and what it meant to their region. In many cases, budget cuts meant that resources are devoted to street-level narcotic arrests with long-term investigations taking a back seat. (See Figure 1)

Figure 1



MCCA Member Survey 2012

For most agencies, fewer officers are available because of layoffs, hiring freezes and furloughs. Since calls for service are always a priority, fewer resources are available to deal with investigations. A few agencies have disbanded their narcotics enforcement units entirely in favor of patrol officers handling street enforcement and are relying on task forces and federal agencies to handle long-term investigations and higher level dealers. (See Figure 2)

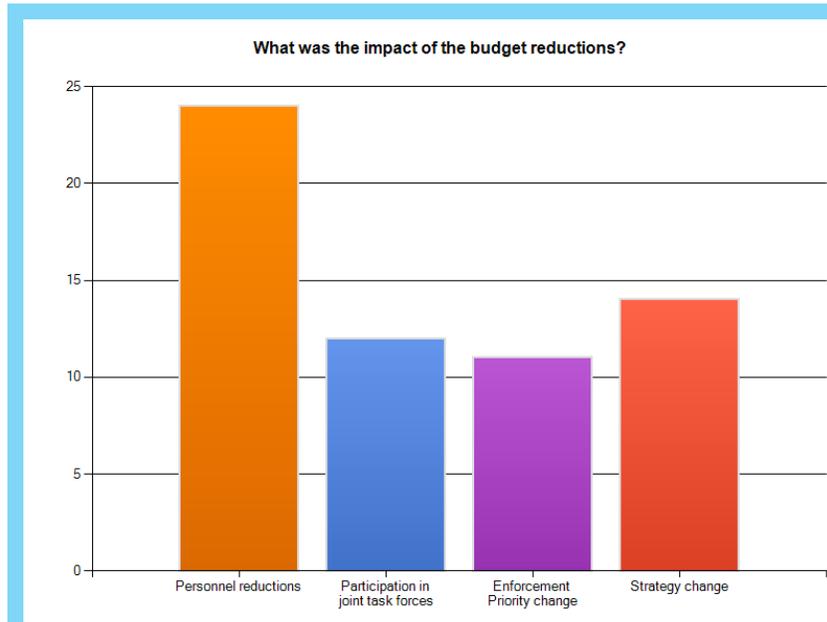
Even in agencies where budget cuts have been limited, investigations are hampered because of the inability to add personnel. Task forces have been combined in some cases and the net result is an overall reduction in resources for long-term investigations.

Following are some of the challenges faced by various agencies and departments due to budget cuts:

- **Reduced Task Forces**

- Specialized task forces have been reduced and combined into fewer groups with more specialists.
- Resource reductions have required agencies to focus on short-term, street-level (“buy-busts” and arrests) because of the higher visibility of these activities and the impact on neighborhoods. Mid- and higher-level dealer investigations have been reduced and/or made the responsibility of task forces.

**Figure 2**



**MCCA Member Survey 2012**

## Innovations in Narcotics Enforcement

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*This session focused on innovative programs and ideas for dealing with drug abuse problems and enforcement.*

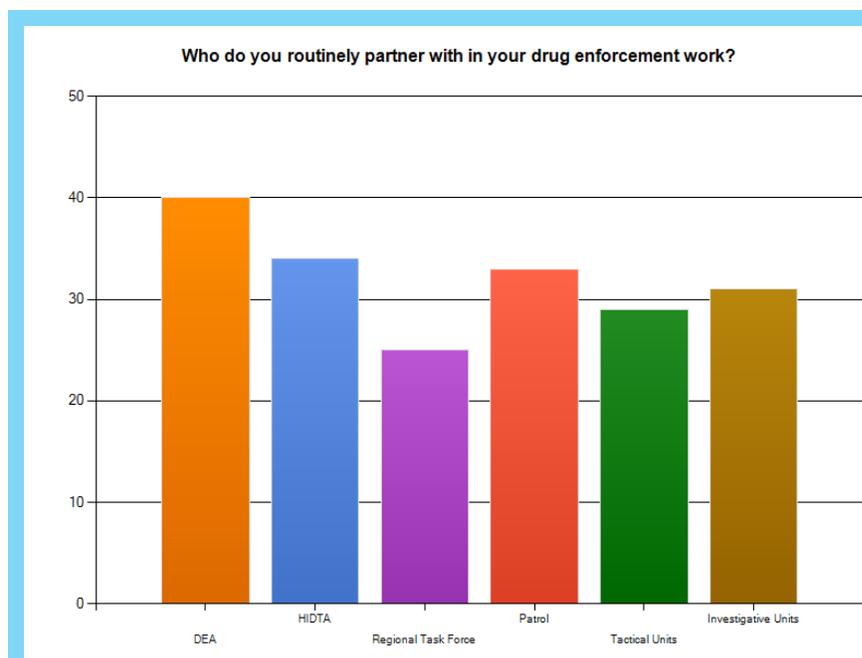
Conference participants agreed that enforcement alone is a short-sighted method for dealing with the country's drug problem. As Director Kerlikowske pointed out, the drug problem can no longer be considered strictly a law enforcement issue and must include a multi-faceted, locally-based, and holistic response. Also, the public's concern about the drug problem has declined. "In a Gallup poll, only 31 percent of Americans said they thought the government was making much progress dealing with illegal drugs, the lowest share since 1997. But fewer people say they worry about drug abuse than 10 years ago. Only 29 percent of Americans think it is an extremely or very serious problem where they live, the lowest share in the last decade (Porter, 2012)."

Partnerships and collaboration with other agencies are an important part of effectively responding to the increasing challenges of dealing with drug abuse. Participants shared the following collaborative approaches and suggestions for dealing with the challenges of drug abuse in a world of shrinking resources and public concerns.

- **DEA, HIDTA and other task forces offer a viable approach to enhancing enforcement efforts through collaboration.**

It has become increasingly clear that drug enforcement efforts will require that agencies work in partnership to share information and resources to effectively respond to the policing aspects of the drug problem. (See Figure 3) **Andrew Accord** (Deputy Chief of Dallas Police Department) described his department's newly created HIDTA Domestic Highway Enforcement squad. He said the group was created because he knew from reading regional interdiction reports that they were missing a lot of contraband on Dallas highways. He also indicated the partnerships are an important tool for successful deconfliction.

**Figure 3**



MCCA Member Survey 2012

- **Law Enforcement should develop a much stronger relationship with the medical community to combat drug abuse.**

The medical community is an area where there is tremendous opportunity for partnerships and improving the overall community response to substance abuse. Meeting participants reported these opportunities range from being a helpful source of information about abuse trends to providing statistics collected on hospital admissions and treatment. The medical examiner can also be a source of statistics on deaths from overdoses of legal and illegal drugs. Also, given the growth in prescription drug abuse, it only makes sense for law enforcement to cultivate relationships with pharmacists and the pharmaceutical companies.

Participants also raised the need to engage in more educational programs for the medical community, as well as the community at large. Physicians and pharmacists need to be encouraged to use Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) databases, which can help to prevent doctor shopping. There is a need to provide more training to physicians on substance abuse to ensure they are aware of the issues involved with prescription drug abuse.

- **Law enforcement should be engaging in efforts to inform the community and policy makers about the continuing challenges with substance abuse.**

Members of the community generally hold the police in high regard. A June 2012 Gallup poll places police third on the list of institutions in which the public has a lot of confidence just below the military and small business (Gallup 2012.) The police have historically held a relatively high position over the years in this poll. Given this overall credibility, greater efforts should be made to inform the public about substance abuse in their communities. These efforts can come in the form of op-ed pieces, information on websites, educational programs for schools, neighborhoods and the business community. The public has become less concerned about substance abuse as the violence associated with it has declined. Unfortunately, the problem continues to be a serious contributor to crime and a negative impact on the economy.

- **Law enforcement should ensure there are strong relationships with federal and state prosecutors and the court system.**

Conference participants stressed the importance of a collaborative and ongoing relationship with prosecutors to ensure the development of high quality cases for prosecution. Most prosecutors' offices and court systems do not have the capacity to handle all of the cases that law enforcement brings to them. A solid working relationship can help ensure that the best and most important cases are prosecuted.

Drug courts are an example of an initiative that seems to be working in communities across the United States. Participants agreed that they should be continued. "...the Washington State Institute for Public Policy found that statewide, drug courts saved Washington taxpayers \$7,651 *per participant* over that participant's lifetime" (Sanders, 2011). Seattle Captain Les Liggins has witnessed firsthand the operation of drug courts and indicated that they have had an impact on recidivism.

- **Law enforcement should participate in drug offender re-entry programs as they offer the opportunity to help offenders transition from prison to a life free of drug use.**

Police can play an important role in helping re-entry programs work in their communities. By encouraging family members and responsible friends to become actively engaged in the transition process, offenders' potential for success improves.

"...offenders who participated in the Offender Re-entry Program had a 33% drop in recidivism as measured by re-arrest compared to offenders who did not participate in the program. Participants in the program also show a 27% drop in recidivism as measured by overall charges and a 33% drop in recidivism as measured by felony charges."

Oregon Criminal Justice Commission

- **Prevention and Treatment programs are critically important pieces of an effective overall response to drug abuse in a community.**

Many participants described prevention and treatment initiatives in their communities including some who supported educational programs with seizure money. Seattle Police Captain Les Liggins described Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD), which is a pilot program to restore public safety.

Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) is a new innovative pilot program that was developed with the community to address low-level drug and prostitution crimes in the Belltown neighborhood in Seattle and the Skyway area of unincorporated King County. LEAD will divert low-level drug and prostitution offenders into community-based treatment and support services, instead of processing them through traditional criminal justice system avenues.

A unique coalition of law enforcement agencies, public officials, and community groups collaborated to create this pilot program. These groups make up LEAD's Policy Coordinating Group, which governs the program.

LEAD's goal is to improve public safety and public order, and to reduce the criminal behavior of people who participate in the program. The program will be thoroughly evaluated to determine whether it has been successful.

(<http://leadkingcounty.org/about>)

- **Package or Parcel Interdiction Teams' partnerships with postal inspectors or shipping companies are helpful in the interdiction process.**

Several participants discussed establishing relationships with postal inspectors in order to set up parcel interdiction teams or task forces. For example, Commander Gary Gingell (Cleveland Police Department) learned from a HIDTA conference he attended about a package interdiction task force that led to his establishing a relationship with a local postal inspector. The Task Force was successful in seizing large amounts of synthetics through the post office, FedEx and UPS.

- **A partnership with Poison Control can serve as an early warning system for law enforcement.**

Philadelphia/Camden HIDTA Director Jerry Daley suggested that a strong partnership with Poison Control Centers can provide important indicators of a potential problem. He pointed out that synthetic drugs are an example of a trend first identified because they were reported to Poison Control.

- **Building Inspectors and Public Works Departments can also be important partners in addressing drug problem locations.**

Participants reported that building inspectors can be very helpful in the seizing and abatement of properties used in drug trafficking. Additionally, they suggested that code violation enforcement can be helpful as well in dealing with drug-related problem properties in neighborhoods. Los Angeles Police Department Commander **Kevin McCarthy** described a Narcotics Abatement Unit (L.A. Impact) charged with bulldozing houses seized from drug raids.

- **Law Enforcement can improve their understanding of the drug problems in their communities through the use of regular surveys.**

Atlanta HIDTA Director **Jack Killorin** indicated that they have been surveying treatment providers for ten years. By connecting with the treatment providers through the surveys, they learned early on that nearly every person seeking treatment was using pharmaceuticals. Seattle Police Captain **Les Liggins** indicated his department is using a survey to investigate the correlation between medical marijuana and crime.

- **Town Hall Meetings may be an effective way of reaching community members and neighborhoods in terms of dealing with a variety of drug problems.** It was suggested that Town Hall meetings might be timely following an overdose situation or violence associated with drug dealing. Successful Town Hall meetings require a strong effort to publicize the event and then work with the community on follow-up activities.
- **The DEA National Prescription Drug Take-Back program is an excellent opportunity for state and local agencies to partner in a coordinated national program.** On September 29, 2012, the fifth Take-Back event collected 488,395 pounds (244 tons) of unwanted or expired prescription drugs - from more than 5,263 locations. When added to the collections from DEA's previous four Take-Back events, more than 2 million pounds of prescription medications were removed from circulation. DEA Director Michele Leonhart said, "While a uniform system for prescription drug disposal is being finalized, we will continue to sponsor these important take-back opportunities as a service to our communities. Our take-back events highlight the problems related to prescription drug abuse and give our citizens an opportunity to contribute to the solution (DEA, 2012)." "Take-Back" initiatives are opportunities for law enforcement to prevent access to unused prescription medicine and provide a solid platform for educating community members about the growing problem.

- **Law Enforcement should partner with Drug Endangered Children Organizations to break the cycle of abuse and neglect of children.** Drug endangered children organizations across the United States are encouraging government and social service agencies to join with the community to help children who are found in situations where parents are involved with substance abuse.

Economic stress and declining resources present significant challenges, but they also provide an opportunity to be innovative and collaborative. It is during these times that agencies should align their missions and work more closely to seek strategic solutions to drug abuse. Partnerships with law enforcement, the medical community, social service agencies, drug treatment and others are required and will grow increasingly more important in the future.

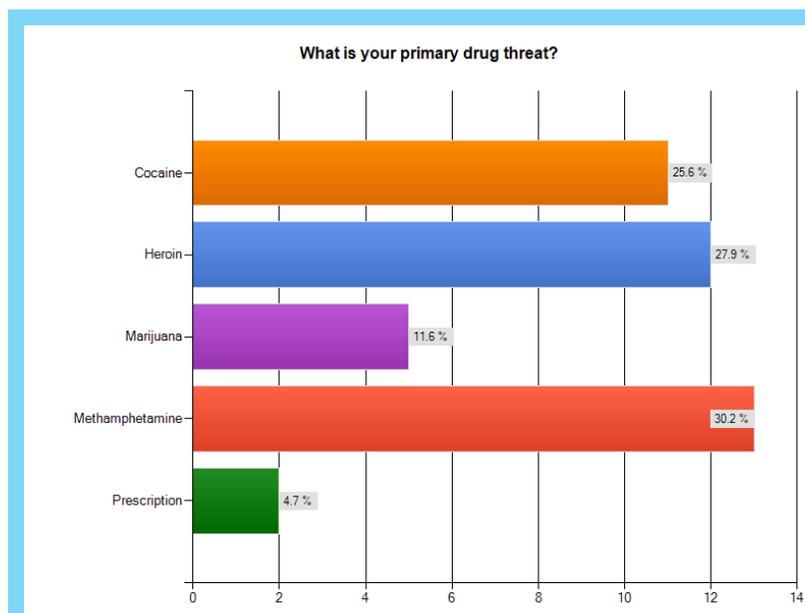
“...drug endangered children are at risk of suffering physical or emotional harm as a result of illegal drug use, possession, manufacturing, cultivation, or distribution. They may also be children whose caretaker’s substance misuse interferes with the caretaker’s ability to parent and provide a safe and nurturing environment.”

National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children

## Emerging Threats in Narcotics Enforcement

This session focused on the emerging threats in narcotics enforcement including specific drug threat, crimes and related topics. See Figure 4.

Figure 4



MCCA Member Survey 2012

- **Although lagging behind illegal drugs in the MCCA survey, prescription drugs have become a significant problem across the country.**

Problems from prescription drugs come in many forms. Philadelphia/Camden HIDTA Director Jerry Daley indicates that drug overdoses in his region account for more deaths than homicides. Director of National Drug Control Policy Gil Kerlikowske stated that during his tenure, prescription drug deaths exceeded gunshot deaths. He further indicated that in 2007, approximately one in eight weekend, nighttime drivers tested positive for illicit drugs (ONDCP, 2012). LAPD Commander Kevin McCarthy talked about the challenges of dealing with high profile Hollywood stars who die from prescription drug overdoses. He also discussed that

“...people tend to think that because they are prescribed by doctors, prescription drugs are safe – ‘medicine’ rather than ‘drugs.’”

Commander Kevin McCarthy -  
Los Angeles Police Department

mixing prescription drugs has disastrous consequences and many people have no idea about the inherent dangers of simultaneously taking several different types of prescription drugs.

Some of the issues participants mentioned involving prescription drugs include:

- Doctors are over-prescribing medications.
- Opiates like Oxycodone are very expensive and contribute to heroin abuse because of heroin's increased purity and decreased price.
- "Pill mills" are a major problem in many regions.
- Pharmacy robberies are becoming more common.
- Because of the intrinsic value of legal drugs, drug trafficking organizations are diverting pharmaceuticals (cancer drugs among many others).

- **Heroin continues to be a significant challenge for law enforcement.**

Drug Commanders report that heroin has increased in purity and the price is lower which has contributed to an increase in both use and overdoses. They report that heroin is also preferred over prescription drugs like Oxycodone and other opiates because prescription drugs are becoming more expensive and more difficult to obtain. They are also seeing young adults from affluent neighborhoods increasingly turning to heroin.

"We estimate that the cost of heroin addiction in the United States was US\$21.9 billion in 1996. Of these costs, productivity losses accounted for US \$11.5 billion (53%), criminal activities US \$5.2 billion (24%), medical care US\$5.0 billion (23%), and social welfare US\$0.1 billion (0.5%). The large economic burden resulting from heroin addiction highlights the importance of investment in prevention and treatment."

The Economic Costs of Drug Addiction in the United States (2001)

- **Enforcing marijuana laws continues to be a significant challenge for law enforcement.**

Whether dealing with grow houses, the legalization issue, or with medical marijuana and dispensaries, nearly every region is confronting some aspect of marijuana enforcement. Eighteen states and the District of Columbia have enacted medical marijuana laws in America (Governing 2013). Colorado and Oregon have also legalized recreational use. The enormous confusion over marijuana has added to the burden of law enforcement in trying to deal with this issue. Conference participants discussed the challenges of enforcing inconsistent application of medical marijuana laws from one part of a state to another.

- **Methamphetamine was the primary threat most frequently reported by respondents to the MCCA survey.**

Despite methamphetamine being high on the threat list, lab incidents declined nationally by 10% from 2010 to 2011 (DEA, 2012). New Mexico HIDTA Director Ernie Ortiz suggests that funding to deal with labs has been reduced which may have contributed to seizures declining. Other drug commanders suggest that state law changes have impacted the numbers, but many believe that a key reason lab incidents declined is because more methamphetamine is being produced in super labs in Mexico.

- **Synthetic drugs are an emerging as a significant challenge for drug enforcement.**

Substances such as “Spice” and “K2” are sold legally as incense and bath salts and are suspected of causing erratic, and sometimes, violent behavior. Conference participants report that manufacturers evade arrest because they change the formulations that are specified in the law. Some states (Georgia, for example) have passed laws that ban all compounds with most of the precursors that are not exempted. A new federal law signed by President Obama is encountering the same difficulty that state laws have encountered according to some experts. “There are several compounds out there now, in mixtures that I’ve tested myself, that would not fall under this ban,” said Kevin Shanks, a forensic toxicologist at AIT Laboratories, an Indiana-based chemical testing company. The law just can’t seem to keep up” (Keim, 2012).

DEA, however, took action in collaboration with other federal, state and local agencies to enforce the law through “Operation Log Jam” when they made 90 arrests in a national synthetic drug initiative. It is reported they seized over \$36 million in cash and 19 million packages of synthetic drugs (Lupkin, 2012).

Synthetic drugs are expected to continue to be a drug enforcement challenge.

- **Violence and drug related criminal activity**

Conference participants also discussed the connection between substance abuse and crime. They noted that it will continue to be a threat going forward and may become even more of a problem because of the resource reductions. Violence is a part of the drug trade. Although drug related homicides have declined from the peak in 1989 of 7.4% (1402), they accounted for 3.9% (578) in 2007 (BJS, 2012). And 30% of property offenders in 2004 indicated they had committed their crimes to get money for drugs (BJS, 2006).

- **Border issues - Canada and Mexico**

Participants discussed the challenges of drugs coming into the United States from both the northern and southern borders. They indicated that ecstasy and marijuana entering the U.S. from Canada and other drugs are expected to be a continuing threat. The southern border presents enormous issues as drugs and guns flow both ways and the violence in Mexico has reached a level that was unimaginable.

**“There were over 50,000 organized crime murders in Mexico from 2006 through 2011.** The Mexican government documented 12,903 organized crime homicides in the first three quarters of 2011, bringing the total official tally to 47,515 such killings since President Felipe Calderón took office on December 1, 2006. Adding 2,624 drug-related homicides documented by the daily newspaper *Reforma* in October, November, and December 2011, there were just over 50,000 organized crime homicides from December 2006 through last year.” Molzahn, 2012

West Texas HIDTA Director **Travis Kuykendall** suggested the struggling economy (in part from the drug-related violence) would continue to present challenges for law enforcement all along the southern border.

## **In Conclusion: The Way Forward**

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This conference brought together MCCA drug commanders, ONDCP staff, HIDTA and DEA with the following goals in mind:

- Develop a sense of the state of narcotics enforcement in this country's largest cities.
- Determine what police agencies are doing to address increasing concerns about abuse of prescription drugs.
- Identify and share ideas for minimizing the impact of budget cuts on enforcement initiatives.
- Identify approaches to sustain a collaborative effort among ONDCP, HIDTA, DEA and MCCA to ensure narcotics enforcement continues to be a high priority for police agencies.

The presentations, discussions and both formal and informal conversations among participants contributed to a strong sense that national collaboration is required to deal with the continuing drug abuse challenges impacting the United States.

Conference participants identified the following action items for further consideration:

- Expand the participation in meetings by including MCCA Drug Commanders, HIDTA, DEA as well as ONCDP and NIDA. A comparison was made to the MCCA intelligence Commanders Group and the influence they have had on national policy.
- The meetings should be held at least once a year.
- Consider sessions presented by DEA and other participating organizations on operational tactics.
- Include the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) in future meetings.
- Include more prevention and treatment sessions in the meetings and involve participants from that community.
- Become more engaged in an effort to inform and educate political leaders on the importance of efforts to address drug abuse and the impact of resource reductions.
- Think more broadly about the role of law enforcement to include solutions and responses to drug problems not exclusively focused on the criminal justice system.
- Embrace and seek collaborative relationships to support treating drug abuse more holistically.

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## Appendix A - Summary of Remarks

### National Priorities

#### R. Gil Kerlikowske - Director, Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP)

Director Gil Kerlikowske opened his remarks by stating that as a country, we cannot arrest or incarcerate our way out of a problem this complex: 'War on drugs' is too simplistic an approach to be effective and in fact, the Administration no longer calls it a "War on Drugs." He went on to say that everyone attending the meeting should be "frank among friends." Director Kerlikowske asked for every participant's help and input. He explained President Obama's original directive to him: to go all over the country and obtain input from all sectors of society and include the following professionals who have first-hand experience with the drug problem:

- Judges
- Medical personnel
- Prevention and treatment program providers
- People in recovery
- Education professionals
- Mental health workers
- Law enforcement personnel

Director Kerlikowske emphasized that mayors and governors, as well as Congress, look to law enforcement as "can-do people," but that even though they are at the table, they should no longer be at the head of the table. He added that other components of society need to step up and be involved. The Director explained that the President is calling for a balanced strategy and noted that the landscape has changed. The media is constantly bringing up marijuana legalization and decriminalization, but he made it clear that President Obama is not in favor of legalization. The Director explained that the target for the failure of the "drug war" must be removed from the backs of law enforcement.

Director Kerlikowske described his law enforcement background and his lack of knowledge about addiction as a brain disease. He spoke about the effect of drugs on international (Mexico and the Southwest Border as well as Russia) and domestic communities in their entirety. The elderly as well as the youth are impacted and people from all walks of life are affected. There is strong support from the Administration including Vice President Biden, but they are all extremely busy with competing issues. He noted that there is a need to change the dialog so that the drug problem is cast in a new light. For example, the drug problem impacts healthcare because of emergency room visits, and the country, at large because young people who do not complete high school have very limited options. Superintendants speak of a distinct correlation between kids dropping out of school and the increase in usage of the so-called "benign" drug, marijuana.

Director Kerlikowske spoke of the alarming fact that under his watch, prescription drug deaths have dramatically increased killing more people than gunshot wounds or car accidents. He made the point that runaway Toyotas brought out NASA scientists, yet drug overdoses have not received the same focus.

In speaking about the inherent weight that law enforcement carries, the Director made the point that Drug Unit Commanders have a great deal of power and influence. The public trusts the military, first; small business owners, second; and local law enforcement, third. State and local agencies have an incredible amount of power when it comes to affecting change and influencing behavior on a local level.

To further the point about the effectiveness of law enforcement, Director Kerlikowske mentioned James Q. Wilson, author of "Broken Windows." Wilson was introduced to President Johnson as "the smartest man in America," and was among the first to recognize a correlation between downtrodden neighborhoods and crime. He also studied bureaucracies and made the observation that he wished every organization was as innovative and forward thinking as law enforcement.

Director Kerlikowske also said that in times like these with budgetary issues causing criminal justice and prison cutbacks and the competing need to build roads, pay teachers and invest in prevention and treatment programs, law enforcement personnel are the innovators and can share and replicate success stories such as those identified in this forum.

### **Innovative Programs and Challenges**

#### **Benjamin B. Tucker - Deputy Director, State, Local, and Tribal Affairs (OSLTA)**

Deputy Director Tucker discussed the importance of everyone working together to collaborate around innovation within the confines of budgetary challenges and decreased personnel. He referenced the adage about necessity being the mother of invention and said that these are precisely the times that encourage and demand innovation and creativity.

Deputy Director Tucker discussed the problems of those who are compelled by their addiction and the associated costs of incarceration, as well as the societal impact. He emphasized the fact that treatment works and focused his discussion around recovery and alternatives to incarceration. Additionally, he stressed that there are unique approaches that can be shared and tailored to each jurisdiction.

Deputy Director Tucker discussed the need to share what is working related to the trends in heroin and prescription drug overdoses, marijuana grow houses and the importance of collaboration between DEA, HIDTA, and state and local police departments. He suggested options such as town halls, public service announcements, prescription drug monitoring systems and multi-agency task forces. Director Tucker also reiterated the need to bring physicians and healthcare providers into the mix.

**Addiction as a Brain Disease Timothy Condon, Ph.D.** - Visiting Research Professor at Center on Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Addictions at the University of New Mexico.

Dr. Timothy Condon is an authority on brain science and presented some of the latest research at the conference. Dr. Condon opened his presentation with the iconic 1970s, “This is your brain on drugs” public service announcement using the symbolic egg in the frying pan. He very effectively contrasted this image with modern PET scan technology showing the specific areas of the brain affected by drugs. Dr. Condon explained that this new technology and a focus on brain science allow us to develop targeted strategies for understanding, preventing, and ultimately, treating drug abuse and addiction.

Dr. Condon described what has been learned in the area of brain science: 1) Drug abuse is a preventable behavior, and 2) Drug addiction is a treatable disease. He cited statistics about drug abuse such as: “In 2010, an estimated 22.6 million Americans, or 8.9 percent of the population aged 12 or older were current illicit drug users.”<sup>1</sup> He also indicated additional research shows that one in ten people becomes addicted. A side issue is that legalization would lead to more use and more use means more addiction.

Discussing addiction within the framework of disease, Dr. Condon explained that there is a genetic component to drug abuse and addiction and that it is a very complex issue. He explained that most abused substances enhance the brain’s reward pathway and that is the primary reason people take drugs - they like what it does to their brains. There is now scientific evidence to prove that prolonged drug use fundamentally changes the brain in long-lasting ways that may compromise cognitive functioning. Dr. Condon explained, “Addiction is a brain disease that is expressed as compulsive behavior” and that “both developing and recovering from it depend on behavior and social context.” He went on to say, “Addiction is the quintessential bio-behavioral disorder and, therefore, the most effective intervention strategies must attend to all aspects of addiction: biology, behavior and social context.”

Drawing a comparison to other diseases and using diabetes as an example, Dr. Condon said addicts should receive ongoing treatment like patients would for any other illness. He compared the relapse rate to other chronic illnesses and made the point that treatment for any other disease would not stop if the symptoms did not subside. Dr. Condon provided the following comparison of relapse rates among chronic illnesses and included drug dependence: Drug dependence: 40%-60%; Type I Diabetes: 30%-50%; Hypertension: 50%-70% and Asthma: 50%-70-%.

In terms of Dr. Condon’s recommendations for dealing with drug abuse, he spoke of the importance of integrating public health with public safety by blending functions of law enforcement and criminal justice and treatment systems in order to optimize outcomes.

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<sup>1</sup> 2010 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH); SAMHSA

This approach would combine community-based treatment and close supervision so that the drug offender could avoid incarceration and a criminal record with consequences for noncompliance.

## Appendix B – Agenda

### Conference on Emerging Drug Abuse Challenges and Innovations

#### March 29, 2012

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| 8:30 – 9:00AM      | <b>Welcome – Introductions</b>  |
| 9:00 – 9:30AM      | <b>ONDCP Director Gil Kerlikowske</b><br>National Priorities  |
| 9:30 – 10:15AM     | <b>Current Trends in Narcotics Enforcement</b><br><br><b>Roundtable Discussion – Darrel Stephens Facilitator</b><br><br>Focus: Budget impacts, Major Challenges, Enforcement Issues, Collaborative Efforts  |
| 10:15 – 10:30AM    | <b>Break</b>  |
| 10:30AM – 12:00 PM | <b>Current Trends in Narcotics Enforcement (Continued)</b>  |
| 12:00 – 1:15PM     | <b>Addiction as a Brain Disease - Dr. Tim Condon, NIDA</b><br><br><b>Working Lunch</b>  |
| 1:30 – 3:00PM      | <b>Introduction: Innovations in Narcotics Enforcement</b><br><br><b>Roundtable Discussion, Deputy Director, Ben Tucker (OSLTA)</b><br><br><b>Facilitator: Ellen Scrivner, National HIDTA Director</b><br><br>Focus: Innovative Programs and New Ideas<br><br>Major Challenges to Innovation |
| 3:00 – 3:15PM      | <b>Break</b>  |
| 3:15 – 5:00PM      | <b>Innovations in Narcotics Enforcement (Continued)</b><br><br>HIDTA, Drug Commanders, DEA Collaboration<br><br>Sustaining Successful Programs<br><br>Preparing for Emerging Threats<br><br><b>Evening – Dinner on your own</b>   |

**March 30, 2012****8:30 – 10:00AM Emerging Threats in Narcotics Enforcement****Facilitators: Darrel Stephens and Ellen Scrivner**

This session will identify and discuss the emerging threats in narcotics enforcement such as prescription drug abuse, drugged driving, pharmacy robberies, pill mills, synthetics, “medical” marijuana and other threats. How are these issues impacting narcotic enforcement? To what extent are they a problem in your area? What levels of resources are devoted to these challenges? What are you doing to address the problem?

10:00 – 10:15AM

**Break**

10:15 – 11:15AM

**Emerging Threats in Narcotics Enforcement (Continued)**

11:15 – 12:00PM

**Maintaining Connections – Darrel Stephens Facilitator**

Sustaining the conversation going forward

## Appendix C – Participants

### Office of National Drug Control Policy Drug Enforcement Administration High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas Major Cities Chiefs Association

## Conference on Emerging Drug Abuse Challenges and Innovations

### Participants

- Andrew Acord, Narcotics Division/Deputy Chief of Police-Dallas Police Department
- Abraham L. Azzam, Executive Director-Michigan HIDTA
- Donald Baker, Commander - Organized Crime Division-Austin Police Department
- Jose L. Bañales, Operations Support Commander/Assistant Chief-San Antonio Police Dept
- Adrienne Bergh, Lieutenant / Commander - Narcotics Unit-St. Louis Police Department
- Mike Brown, Deputy Chief-Salt Lake City Police Department
- Chris Burbank, Chief of Police-Salt Lake City Police Department
- Gary Cameron, Narcotics Bureau Commander-Columbus Ohio Division of Police
- Cynthia Caporizzo, Senior Advisor for Criminal Justice-Office of National Drug Control Policy
- Laz Chavez, Narcotics Lieutenant-Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
- Timothy Condon, Ph.D., Director-National Institute on Drug Abuse
- Cynthia D. Dorsey, Chief Inspector-Philadelphia Police Department
- Jay Fallon, Director-New England HIDTA
- Curtis Garbett, Media Manager-National HIDTA Assistance Center
- Richard A. Gerstner, Captain/Division Commander - HPD Narcotics-Houston Police Dept
- Gianni Ghilespi, Tactical Investigations / Captain-Fort Worth Police Department
- Gary Gingell, Commander-Cleveland Police (Ohio)
- Albert James Guaderrama, Investigations Captain-San Diego Police Department
- Vito Guarino, Acting Special Agent in Charge-DEA - Philadelphia Field Division
- Ed Hamann, Drugs and Vice Division, Captain-Portland Police Bureau
- Mike R. Hoskins, Major/Office of the Chief-Special Investigations-Oklahoma City Police Dept
- R. Gil Kerlikowske, Director-Office of National Drug Control Policy
- John C. Killorin, Atlanta HIDTA Director-Atlanta HIDTA Program
- Brett, Assistant Chief / Investigative Services Bureau-Tucson Police Department
- Travis B. Kuykendall, Director-West Texas HIDTA
- Kevin L. Lane, Acting Special Agent in Charge-DEA - New England Field Division
- Thomas Lawrence, Narcotics Division/Assistant Chief-Dallas Police Department
- Les Liggins, Captain - Narcotics Commander-Seattle Police Department
- Stephen G. Luebbe, Police Captain-Cincinnati Police Department
- William I. Martin, Director-National HIDTA Assistance Center
- Kevin McCarthy, Commander-Los Angeles Police Department
- Mike McDaniel, Director-Houston HIDTA
- June Miller, DEA Liaison to ONDCP-Drug Enforcement Administration
- George Rodriguez, Captain-Tucson Police Department
- Daniel R. Salter, Assistant Special Agent in Charge-DEA - Dallas Field Division
- Dr. Ellen M. Scrivner, National HIDTA Director-ONDCP

- William R. "Bill" Sherman, Acting Special Agent in Charge-DEA - San Diego Field Division
- James P. "Jim" Shroba, Acting Special Agent in Charge-DEA - St. Louis Field Division
- Bryan Smith, Deputy Director-Houston HIDTA
- Marco Spalloni, Commander-El Paso Police Department
- Darrel W. Stephens, Executive Director-Major Cities Chiefs
- Lance Sumpter, Director-North Texas HIDTA
- Benjamin B. Tucker, Deputy Director for State, Local and Tribal Affairs-ONDCP
- Jennifer White, Deputy Chief-Arlington Police Department
- Patricia Williams, Conference Director-Major Cities Chiefs
- Chris Woodruff, Special Projects Group Commander, Captain-Oklahoma City Police Dept