

## COMBATING DRUG TRAFFICKING

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The mission of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) is to enforce the controlled substances laws and regulations of the United States and bring to the criminal and civil justice system of the United States, or any other competent jurisdiction, those organizations and principal members of organizations, involved in the growing, manufacture, or distribution of controlled substances appearing in or destined for illicit traffic in the United States; and to recommend and support non-enforcement programs aimed at reducing the availability of illicit controlled substances on the domestic and international markets.

DEA establishes and maintains working relationships with host nations by staffing 86 DEA offices located in 67 countries. DEA's foreign offices act as conduits of information to DEA components in the United States and vice versa. In this manner, investigators are able to target DTOs from the source to the end user. DEA's foreign offices are tasked with the following objectives:

1. Conduct bilateral investigations with foreign law enforcement;
2. Coordinate counternarcotic intelligence gathering with host governments;
3. Conduct training programs for host country police agencies;
4. Assist in the development of host country drug law enforcement institutions and develop mutually beneficial law enforcement relationships with foreign law enforcement agencies.

A key element in combating international drug trafficking is the concerted and coordinated efforts of the inter-agency community to jointly identify chokepoints vulnerable to enforcement efforts and simultaneously direct assets to vigorously target the identified chokepoints on a coordinated and sustained basis. To this end, DEA developed an International Drug Flow Attack Strategy which has the primary objective to cause major disruption to the flow of drugs, money, and chemicals between the source zones and the United States. The strategy includes an integrated intelligence-enforcement process that rests on multiple pillars: intelligence-driven enforcement, sequential operations, and predictive intelligence. To stem the flow of drugs into the United States, DEA will continue to implement this successful Drug Flow Attack Strategy by expanding enforcement initiatives with our global law enforcement partners.

Under the Drug Enforcement Administration's Intelligence Program, federal, state, and local agencies collect and exchange information about illegal drug trafficking activities, enabling them to make more arrests. In 1992, the DEA developed the National Drug Pointer Index (NDPIX), a "switchboard" where law enforcement agencies can input information about a current drug investigative target and immediately be alerted if another authority has that target under active investigation.

The DEA collects three types of drug intelligence - tactical, investigative, and strategic. Tactical information is used for arrests, seizures, and interdictions. Investigative data is collected for use during prosecutions. Strategic intelligence enables agents to create effective policies and distribute resources in accordance with worldwide drug trafficking trends and the locations of distribution networks. The DEA has more than 680 Intelligence Analysts in multiple locations around the world, in the Intelligence Division at DEA Headquarters, and in the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC), which targets international drug smuggling and terrorist activities.

The DEA announced the Virtual Enforcement Initiative (VEI). The first major operation of this new initiative was Operation "Cyber Chase," which, in April, resulted in the identification of over 200 web sites that illegally sold pharmaceutical drugs. Because of this year-long OCDETF operation, more than 20 criminals were arrested in eight U.S. cities and four foreign countries. Until they were arrested, these "e-traffickers" had been operating in the United States, India, Asia, Europe and the Caribbean, and were using their rogue pharmacies to distribute drugs world-wide.

DEA also took actions on the enforcement of the Controlled Substances Act within the states which allow the cultivation and use of marijuana for medical purposes. The DEA has initiated several cases and administrative actions against medical professionals. However, certain cases are filed against the DEA also.

Drug Enforcement Administration also known as DEA is a drug law enforcement agency under the United States Department of Justice. Enforcement of the Controlled Substances Act, and control and prevention of drug trafficking and drug use within the nation are the main responsibilities of DEA. DEA also has the sole responsibility for conducting U.S drug investigations abroad. DEA is headed by the

Administrator. DEA, through its various operations and programs strives to enforce the drug laws in the nation and control the illegal drug activities.