A comprehensive analysis of the drug threat in the Midwest HIDTA region during the 2012 Calendar Year. The Midwest HIDTA region consists of 72 counties in a six state region (Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota), as well as Rock Island County, Illinois.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Midwest High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) is unique in that its area of responsibility encompasses 72 counties in a six state region (Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota), as well as Rock Island County, Illinois. Located in the middle of the country, the Midwest HIDTA region has an overall population of approximately 15.35 million people, who are spread out over an area in excess of 428,000 square miles. The Midwest HIDTA region includes metropolitan areas, medium and small-sized cities, and many rural areas. Located within the Region are more than 4,300 miles of interstate highways and an international border covering approximately 300 miles. Given the make-up of the Midwest HIDTA region, the drug threat varies by area, but there are many common concerns facing law enforcement throughout the Region.

DRUG THREAT

A plethora of drugs continued to be abused in the Midwest HIDTA region during 2012. The top drug threat in the Region continued to be ice methamphetamine. Ice methamphetamine is generally sourced in the Region by highly organized Mexican Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTOs). According to results from the 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey, ice methamphetamine was the drug type most linked to both property and violent crime in the Midwest HIDTA region. Ice methamphetamine was also one of the most highly available drug types in the Region during 2012.

Though crack cocaine ranked in the middle of drug types in terms of availability on the 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey, it ranked second and third highest, respectively, for its effect on violent and property crime. Crack cocaine is especially available in the larger urban centers of the Midwest HIDTA region.

Controlled Prescription Drugs (CPDs) are among the most highly available drug types in the Region and the diversion and abuse of CPDs continues to be a serious and dangerous threat throughout all parts of the Midwest HIDTA region. Several areas have seen a rise in the number of overdoses and fatalities directly attributable to CPD abuse. In Nebraska, CPD deaths are now surpassing motor vehicle fatalities.

The threat that powder methamphetamine poses within the Midwest HIDTA region is highly variable amongst communities, but is especially high in the St. Louis metropolitan area and some smaller, rural regions. Where powder methamphetamine availability is high, the gravity of its threat to life and property is also high.

The powder cocaine threat in the Midwest HIDTA region has stayed largely consistent, though some areas within the Region reported a shortage of powder cocaine during the latter half of 2012. Wholesale distribution channels for powder cocaine in the Midwest HIDTA region are dominated by highly-organized Mexican DTOs.
Heroin continues to be an increasing threat, particularly in the primary market areas of the Midwest HIDTA region, including the St. Louis metropolitan area. Black tar, brown, and white heroin are all seen in the Region. Much of the heroin in the St. Louis area is now white heroin and has increased to greater than 50% purity. Especially disconcerting is the continued growing number of overdoses related to heroin abuse in the Region.

Marijuana continues to be the most highly available drug type in the Midwest HIDTA region. The Region has seen a significant increase in the availability and abuse of high grade marijuana due to changing laws in some of the Region’s top source states, including: Colorado, California, Oregon, and Washington. According to the 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey, high grade marijuana has a greater effect on both property and violent crime than commercial grade marijuana, which formerly dominated the Region.

Synthetic cannabinoids and cathinones continue to be abused in the Region during 2012. Prosecution for synthetics violations can often be difficult, as laws are largely untested and chemical components utilized in making synthetics are often changed by drug makers in the attempt to evade existing drug laws. Operation Log Jam was a large multi-agency investigation culminating in 2012 that led to a large number of synthetics-related seizures and arrests across the country and within the Midwest HIDTA region. Phencyclidine (PCP) is also abused in some areas in the Midwest HIDTA region, particularly in the Kansas City area.

CRIMINAL ORGANIZATIONS

Highly-organized Mexican DTOs are predominant in the Midwest HIDTA region as wholesale distributors for almost all drug types, particularly for ice methamphetamine, powder cocaine, commercial grade marijuana, and heroin. The Mexican Cartels that have the most significant influence in the region include the Sinaloa Cartel, the Juárez Cartel, and La Familia out of Michoacán.

Hispanic retail distributors, which are generally more loosely organized than their wholesale counterparts, are the greatest influence in retail drug distribution in the Region, followed by Caucasian/White and African-American/Black retail distributors. Street gangs and Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs (OMGs) also influence drug distribution in the Midwest HIDTA region.

DRUG TRANSPORTATION METHODS

DTOs exploit the extensive interstate highway network and central location of the Midwest HIDTA region within the U.S. to transship wholesale quantities of ice methamphetamine, cocaine, marijuana, and heroin from the Southwest Border to national-level markets in the Midwest and Northeast.

The Region is also vulnerable from the north, based upon the 300 mile border shared by North Dakota and Canada. This border has 18 official land ports of entry (POEs).
An increasing amount of drugs, particularly high grade marijuana and methamphetamine, are being shipped into the Midwest HIDTA region utilizing the United States Postal Service (USPS) and other commercial parcel services, such as UPS and FedEx.

**DRUG CONSUMPTION**

During 2012, marijuana continued to be the most consumed drug in the Midwest HIDTA region. Marijuana is abused by all demographic groups in the Midwest HIDTA region. High grade marijuana obtained from states where marijuana has been legalized at the state level was consumed in the Region in increasing quantities during 2012.

Non-medically-related CPD consumption has become ubiquitous throughout the Midwest HIDTA region. Prescription drug abuse of opioids, such as oxycodone, hydrocodone, fentanyl, and methadone, is particularly widespread in the Region.

Powder and crack cocaine are both consumed at high levels in the Midwest HIDTA region. While powder cocaine is seen throughout the Midwest HIDTA area and is abused by persons from a multitude of demographic backgrounds, crack cocaine consumption appears to be highest among African-Americans in the urban centers of the Region.

Consumption of both powder and ice methamphetamine are extremely high in the Midwest HIDTA region. Ice methamphetamine, primarily brought into the region from Mexico through the Southwest Border, is generally consumed in the larger urban centers of the Region across a multitude of demographic groups. Powder methamphetamine, produced in the Region by consumers increasingly utilizing the “One-Pot” method of production, is also consumed across the Region.

Heroin consumption is increasing throughout the Midwest HIDTA region, particularly in the St. Louis area. Black tar, white, and brown heroin are all seen in the Region. However, much of the heroin in the St. Louis area is now white heroin.

Synthetic cannabinoids, synthetic cathinones, PCP, and MDMA were all consumed in the Midwest HIDTA region during 2012. A new synthetic drug with similar effects to LSD, referred to as “N-Bomb” or “Smiles,” also emerged as a threat in the Region during 2012.

**DRUG PRODUCTION**

Marijuana production in the Midwest HIDTA region is relatively low. When asked to describe the level of marijuana production in their respective areas of responsibility (AORs), over 60% of survey respondents indicated that marijuana production was “low,” and, on average, survey respondents indicated that nearly 90% of marijuana was imported into their AORs from another region. The drought affecting the Region during 2012 is believed to have affected outdoor marijuana production throughout the Region. The legalization of marijuana in other states has also affected the level of marijuana production in the Midwest HIDTA region.
Methamphetamine production poses a great drug threat in the Midwest HIDTA region. Methamphetamine has caused a social services crisis in parts of the Region. Affecting the popularity of methamphetamine production in the Midwest HIDTA region is the relative ease with which user-quantities of powder methamphetamine can be produced in small, so-called “Mom & Pop,” “Shake-N-Bake,” or “One-Pot” method clandestine laboratories, which have been seen in increasing numbers throughout the Region.

**PRESCRIPTION DRUG DIVERSION**

Prescription drug diversion in the Midwest HIDTA region is a significant and growing threat. Doctor shopping remains the most-used CPD diversion method in the Region. Other diversion methods utilized include theft, prescription fraud, and pill mills. Multiple areas within the Midwest HIDTA region reported an increase in the number of CPD overdoses in their AORs during 2012.

**BULK CASH SMUGGLING AND MONEY LAUNDERING**

The most prevalent way for DTOs to transfer drug proceeds back to sources of supply is through bulk cash smuggling. Most DTOs continue to utilize private vehicles with non-factory installed hidden compartments to transport drug proceeds back to source cities both within the United States and Mexico. DTOs also smuggle bulk cash in commercial vehicles, such as tractor trailers, where drug proceeds are commingled with legitimate cargo.

DTOs in the Midwest HIDTA region wishing to “launder” drug proceeds generally utilize high-cash businesses such as restaurants or night clubs, so that drug proceeds can be commingled with legitimate profits and effectively laundered. Other popular businesses through which drug traffickers launder money in the Midwest HIDTA region are: laundromats, convenience stores, auto sales businesses, small retail stores, and music recording companies.

**OTHER DRUG THREATS AND EMERGING TRENDS**

Complicating the methamphetamine production threat in the Midwest HIDTA region, laws related to pseudoephedrine remain inconsistent among communities within the Region. For instance, the close proximity of communities with pseudoephedrine prescription laws to communities that do not have such laws may be inhibiting the effectiveness of the laws that do exist.

Synthetic LSD, also referred to as “N-Bomb” or “Smiles,” has begun circulating the Midwest HIDTA region and, in particular the St. Louis area. N-Bomb looks like and has effects similar to LSD and has been compared to a more potent combination of MDMA and LSD. N-Bomb is an extremely potent, hallucinogenic drug that can create violent, uncontrollable, psychotic episodes in people. N-Bomb overdoses have been known to cause deadly seizures, kidney failure, and fatally high blood pressure. N-Bomb has been linked to multiple deaths in North Dakota.
DESCRIPTION OF THE NEEDS

The most pressing needs of law enforcement in the Region fall under the categories of specialized equipment, training, intelligence and information sharing, and drug treatment/prevention.

Specialized Equipment

Specialized equipment is necessary to both conduct effective drug investigations and to ensure officer safety. Commonly-used and important equipment is needed by Midwest HIDTA initiatives, particularly due to reduced law enforcement budgets in many communities.

Training

Budgetary constraints have caused many law enforcement agencies and training providers in the Midwest HIDTA region to cut both training opportunities within the Region and travel budgets for law enforcement officers to obtain training outside of the Region. Therefore, Midwest HIDTA initiatives are in desperate need of high-quality training that will result in enhanced investigations.

Intelligence and Information Sharing

Continued and improved sharing of information and intelligence in the Midwest HIDTA region is vital to furthering investigations and ensuring officer safety. Related to this is the need for continued deconfliction, including training for law enforcement and ongoing maintenance and improvements to the Midwest HIDTA deconfliction systems. A comprehensive meeting for Midwest HIDTA region intelligence analysts to share both strategic-level and investigational intelligence would benefit the entire Region. Also, support for Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs (PDMPs) is needed throughout the Midwest HIDTA region.

Drug Treatment/Prevention

As addiction levels increase, adequate treatment programs are required to help reduce levels of addiction, as well as the violent and property crime that is associated. Of particular need in the Midwest HIDTA region are drug treatment programs in the prison system and for CPD addicts. Prevention programs in schools and in other youth organizations can hopefully decrease the addiction levels of the next generation, particularly for CPD and heroin addiction, which are affecting increasing numbers of teenagers and young adults.
OUTLOOK

It is believed that ice methamphetamine imported from Mexico will continue to be the greatest drug threat in the Midwest HIDTA region, with the highest relationship of all drug types to violent and property crime.

High grade marijuana abuse will continue to rise and will be directly related to the legalization of marijuana by some states. USPS and commercial parcel post will continue to be utilized in increasing amounts to ship high grade marijuana into the Region.

The abuse of CPDs will continue to increase and some abusers, looking for a cheaper, similar “high,” will turn to heroin abuse.

New types of synthetic drugs will continue to emerge and will be chemically-formulated in order to try to evade synthetics laws passed both federally and by states in the Region.
DESCRIPTION OF THE THREAT

A plethora of drugs continued to be abused in the Midwest HIDTA region\(^1\) during 2012. Ice and powder methamphetamine, powder and crack cocaine, marijuana, heroin, controlled prescription drugs (CPDs), phencyclidine (PCP), and synthetic drugs such as synthetic cannabinoids and synthetic cathinones are all available and abused in varying degrees throughout the Midwest HIDTA region. Drug abuse threatens the life and property of the abusers themselves, as well as their families, friends, and communities.

In ranking the top drug threats in the Midwest HIDTA region, responses by representatives from 45 different Midwest HIDTA initiatives\(^2\) to the *2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey*\(^3\) were considered. Survey respondents were asked a variety of questions related to the drug threat in their respective areas of responsibility (AORs). Particular attention was paid to the availability and prevalence of each drug type as well as each drug type’s relationship to violent and property crime throughout the Midwest HIDTA region. Based on the responses to questions related to these issues, the top drug threats in the Midwest HIDTA region, beginning with the top threat, are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Drug</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ice Methamphetamine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Crack Cocaine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Controlled Prescription Drugs (CPDs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Powder Methamphetamine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Powder Cocaine</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Heroin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Marijuana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Synthetics/Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) The Midwest HIDTA region includes all of the following six states: Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota; it also includes Rock Island County, IL.

\(^2\) The facilitation of operational interaction by the Midwest HIDTA amongst Federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement in the Region is completed through HIDTA-funded initiatives. HIDTA-funded initiatives are co-located and jointly staffed law enforcement task forces led by a Federal, state, local, or tribal agency. These multi-agency initiatives carry out the investigative, interdiction, and prosecution activities to implement the Midwest HIDTA Executive Board’s stated strategy. During 2012, the Midwest HIDTA supported 53 initiatives, including: 39 Task Forces, 6 Domestic Highway Interdiction Programs, 4 Intelligence Initiatives, and 4 Support Initiatives.

\(^3\) This year the Midwest HITDA Investigative Support Center (ISC) asked all law enforcement initiatives for responses to two separate survey components: a qualitative survey, which requested open ended responses to a series of questions; and an online quantitative survey, which requested respondents to choose the most appropriate given response to a series of questions. Forty-five Midwest HIDTA initiatives completed surveys; however, only 43 of those 45 initiatives completed the quantitative portion of the *2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey*. 
Survey responses to the *2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey* clearly show that ice methamphetamine remained the Region’s top threat in 2012. With 47% of survey respondents’ stating that ice methamphetamine’s effect on property crime in their AORs was “high,” ice methamphetamine ranked as the drug type most related to property crime in the Midwest HIDTA region (See Figure 1). The drug type receiving the second most responses in this category was CPDs, which received 28% “high” responses. Powder methamphetamine and heroin followed in the rankings, with 23% of survey respondents indicating that each drug type’s effect on property crime was “high.” The remaining drug types and their percentages of survey respondents who indicated that the drug type’s effect on property crime was “high” are as follows: crack cocaine (14%), high grade marijuana (9%), synthetic cathinones (7%), commercial grade marijuana (5%), synthetic cannabinoids (5%), and powder cocaine (5%).

**Figure 1: Effect on Property Crime, 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey**

Moreover, 44% of survey respondents indicated that ice methamphetamine was “highly” related to violent crime in their AORs, also ranking at the top of that category, compared to 33% for the next highest drug type, crack cocaine (See Figure 2). Other drug types and their corresponding percentages of “high” effect on violent crime responses were: Powder methamphetamine (23%), CPDs (21%), heroin (19%), powder cocaine (12%), synthetic cannabinoids (7%), high grade marijuana (5%), synthetic cathinones (5%), and commercial grade marijuana (2%).

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4 Percentages reported from *2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey* responses are rounded to the nearest whole percentage point.
Not only was ice methamphetamine ranked as the drug type having the greatest effect on both violent and property crime in the Midwest HIDTA region, but it also ranked close to the most highly available drug type in the Region, as 67% of survey respondents indicated that ice methamphetamine availability was “high” in their respective AORs, which ranked it second highest in that category (See Figure 3). The drug type receiving the highest percentage of “high” availability responses was commercial grade marijuana with 77%. Other drug types receiving a majority of “high” availability responses include CPDs at 65% and high grade marijuana at 63%. Following high grade marijuana, there was a significant gap in the percentage of survey respondents who indicated that the availability of the next drug type, synthetic cannabinoids (35%), was “high” in their respective AORs. Rounding out the percentage of “high” availability survey responses were: powder methamphetamine (30%), crack cocaine (30%), powder cocaine (28%), synthetic cathinones (26%), and heroin (23%).
DRUGS TRAFFICKED

Description of the Top Drug Threats in the Midwest HIDTA Region

1. Ice Methamphetamine

Ice methamphetamine trafficking and abuse continued to plague the Midwest HIDTA region during 2012. In an open-ended response to a question posed by the 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey, the survey respondent from the Central Nebraska Drug & Safe Street Task Force in Grand Island, NE, stated, “Ice methamphetamine is our greatest threat and the cost to our community is staggering. In addition to expenses for arrests, incarceration, and prosecution of users and distributors is the cost of medical and rehabilitation efforts of arrestees. The area has seen increased theft and property crimes as users attempt to obtain funds to purchase the drug. When subjects are under the influence [of ice methamphetamine], there is an increase in assaults, domestic violence, child abuse, neglect, and endangerment.” Much like 2011, during 2012 the Midwest HIDTA region experienced a continued growth in availability and abuse of the more pure form of methamphetamine known as “ice” methamphetamine. In fact, though during 2011 ice methamphetamine ranked just below cocaine in availability, responses to the 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey showed that ice methamphetamine has elevated in
availability and has now surpassed powder cocaine in availability in the Midwest HIDTA region (See Figure 4).  

**Figure 4: Drug Availability During the Past Year, 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey**

Survey respondents were asked to indicate whether a particular drug type “decreased,” “increased,” or “remained the same” in availability during 2012. Ice methamphetamine ranked second only to heroin in the number of survey respondents who indicated that the drug type was “increasing” in availability during 2012. In fact, no survey respondents reported that ice methamphetamine had decreased in availability in their AORs during 2012, joining high grade marijuana as the only drug types for which that was the case (See Figure 5).

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5 Survey responses to the Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey CY2011 showed ice methamphetamine ranked fourth of all drug types in availability, behind: CPDs, marijuana, and powder cocaine. According to survey responses to the 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey, ice methamphetamine now ranks above powder cocaine when comparing responses related to availability in the Region. Whereas 67% survey respondents to the 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey stated the availability of ice methamphetamine was “high” in their respective AORs, only 28% stated that the availability of powder cocaine was “high.” (2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey)

6 Survey respondents could also choose “None in AOR” or “Unknown.” However, no survey respondents indicated either of these responses when addressing the availability of ice methamphetamine during the past year. (2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey)

7 Of 43 respondents, 18 indicated that ice methamphetamine had increased in availability during 2012; 25 indicated that availability of ice methamphetamine had remained the same during 2012. (2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey)
Ice methamphetamine is abused in the Midwest HIDTA region across persons from a multitude of racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds. Ice methamphetamine is not generally produced in the Midwest HIDTA region, and is primarily transported into the area’s larger urban centers by highly-organized Mexican Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTOs), who then sell it to retail-level dealers, usually more loosely organized groups of individuals of Caucasian descent, throughout the Region. In fact, survey respondents reported that ice methamphetamine, more than any other drug type, is sourced from Mexico. A total of 84% of survey respondents indicated that the amount of ice methamphetamine in their respective AORs sourced from Mexico was “high.” That was a larger percentage than any other drug type, with powder cocaine ranking second (65%) and commercial grade marijuana ranking third (58%) (See Figure 6).
Ice methamphetamine is a highly addictive stimulant.\(^8\) Because of its addictive qualities, users become desperate for their next “high,” which leads to property crimes as addicts resort to burglary, theft, and fraud/forgery to fund their addictions. Though methamphetamine trafficking in Mexico has been linked to murder and extreme violence,\(^9\) with several Mexican DTOs competing for territory and transportation routes for trafficking into the United States, the majority of the violent crime associated with methamphetamine in the Midwest HIDTA region is not related to “turf” battles for customers but, rather, is a result of robberies, home invasions, and the use of other violent means to steal either drugs or drug proceeds.\(^10\) Violent crime such as assault, battery, and domestic abuse also occurs as a result of ice methamphetamine abuse, as abuse often causes violent and erratic behavior.\(^11\)

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\(^8\) The National Institute of Health Medline Plus states that “Methamphetamine is a very addictive stimulant drug.” (http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/methamphetamine.html)

\(^9\) 60,000 people have been killed in drug-related violence in Mexico from 2006 through 2012, according to Human Rights Watch. (http://www.cnn.com/2013/03/27/world/americas/mexico-violence)

\(^10\) For example, when expanding upon the violent crime attributable to ice methamphetamine, the survey respondent from the Kansas City/Overland Park DEA Combined Task Force stated: “Not turf battles in the drug trade, but robberies, home invasions, and other violent means to steal either drugs or drug proceeds.” (2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey)

Crack cocaine continued to pose one of the most dangerous threats to communities within the Midwest HIDTA region during 2012. Though crack cocaine ranked near the middle of drug types in terms of availability by survey respondents, the ranking crack cocaine received by survey respondents in rating the effect crack cocaine has on both property and violent crime makes crack cocaine the second most dangerous drug threat in the Midwest HIDTA region. Crack cocaine ranked second in number of survey respondents who indicated that its effect on violent crime was “moderate” or “high” (See Figure 2, above). Moreover, when asked to describe the effect of various drug types on property crime, crack cocaine ranked third in percentage of “moderate” and “high” responses received (See Figure 1, above).

Though crack cocaine is clearly a strong threat in the Midwest HIDTA region, it is a threat for which law enforcement has observed no major changes during the past year. Although, according to the survey respondent from the Topeka Regional Drug Task Force, crack cocaine in that area “seems to be on the rise,” most survey respondents throughout the Region reported that crack cocaine availability was relatively stable during 2012. When asked whether the availability of crack cocaine “decreased,” “increased,” or “remained the same” during the past year, 77% of survey respondents indicated that availability “remained the same,” while 12% stated availability had “decreased” and 9% stated availability had “increased” during 2012 (See Figure 7).

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When comparing the number of respondents indicating that a drug type’s availability was either “moderate” or high,” crack cocaine ranked fifth amongst given drug types with 72% of survey respondents. This ranked behind the following drug types: (1) Marijuana (both Commercial and High Grade) (Commercial: 93%, High Grade: 91%), (2) CPDs (91%), (3) Ice Methamphetamine (88%), and (4) Powder Cocaine (81%).
Crack cocaine distribution in the Midwest HIDTA region is dominated by African-American street gangs, which generally obtain powder cocaine from Mexican DTO sources of supply. These Mexican DTOs work in concert with organization members outside of the Region and coordinate the transportation of powder cocaine from Southwest Border states, such as Arizona, California, and Texas, into the Midwest HIDTA region. African-American street gang members purchase retail-levels of powder cocaine from Mexican DTOs, then “cook” the powder cocaine into the often-times more profitable form of crack cocaine for distribution throughout the Region. Crack cocaine distribution in the larger cities of the region, such as Kansas City, St. Louis, and Omaha, is especially influenced by street gangs.

3. Controlled Prescription Drugs (CPDs)

CPDs are designated as Schedule II drugs in the Controlled Substances Act. Schedule II drugs may not be dispensed without a written prescription from a healthcare provider. CPDs are pervasive throughout the Midwest HIDTA region, as 91% of survey respondents indicated that CPD availability is either “moderate” or “high” in their respective areas. Only commercial grade

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13 In addition to survey responses indicating that the availability of crack cocaine had “decreased,” “increased,” or “remained the same” over the past year, one survey respondent indicated that crack cocaine does not exist in the respondent’s AOR. Therefore, percentages displayed in the graph do not total 100%. (2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey)

14 21 USC § 801-890 is commonly referred to as the “Controlled Substances Act” (CSA). The CSA provides a mechanism for the Drug Enforcement Administration to place drugs and substances into one of five “Schedules,” based on “whether it has a currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States and its relative abuse potential and likelihood of causing codependence.” (See 21 USC § 801-890 and http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/schedules/index.html)
marijuana received a higher percentage of “moderate” and “high” responses in this category. Not only are CPDs highly available throughout the Midwest HIDTA region, but CPD availability is also on the rise throughout the Region: 40% of survey respondents indicated that CPD availability “increased” during 2012. CPDs ranked third in that category, behind only heroin (58%), and ice methamphetamine (42%). By contrast, only one survey respondent (2%) stated that CPD availability had “decreased” during the past year (See Figure 8).

Figure 8: Availability During the Past Year: CPDs, *2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey*

![Availability During the Past Year: CPDs](image)

The most commonly abused CPDs in the Midwest HIDTA region are opioids, such as oxycodone, hydrocodone, fentanyl, and methadone. Other CPDs – including depressants, stimulants, and steroids – are abused throughout the Region. Opioid abuse is also believed to serve as a “gateway” to heroin abuse, as heroin is often a cheaper alternative for an abuser to obtain a similar “high.” Though some DTOs distribute CPDs, the distribution channels for CPDs tend to be less organized than those for other drugs, such as ice methamphetamine and powder cocaine, which are dominated at the wholesale level in the Midwest region by highly-organized Mexican DTOs.

Though CPDs, by their legal definition under the Controlled Substances Act, have legitimate medical purposes, many problems result from legitimately-made controlled substances being “diverted” from their lawful purposes into the illicit drug trade. The diversion and abuse of CPDs continues to be a serious and dangerous threat throughout all parts of the Midwest HIDTA region. For instance, in addition to the increased availability of CPDs in the Region, several areas have also seen a comparable rise in the number of overdoses and fatalities directly

attributable to CPD abuse. The survey respondent from the Omaha Metro Drug Task Force stated, “CPD deaths are passing motor vehicle fatalities in our state; in January 2012, the entire state of Nebraska (93 counties) had 23 traffic fatalities. During that same month in our AOR (2 counties), there were 20 overdose deaths from CPDs.” Likewise, when asked to describe its greatest drug threat, the survey respondent from the Bootheel Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Prescription Drug Task Force stated, “Prescription drug abuse continues to rise, causing an increase in overdoses and deaths. Local law enforcement and medical personnel indicate that overdoses caused by prescription medication continue to increase and has resulted in numerous emergency room incidents and deaths.”

4. Powder Methamphetamine

Like ice methamphetamine, powder methamphetamine is highly addictive and an abuser’s desperation for the next “high” leads to both violent and property crime. Though methamphetamine production is discussed more thoroughly later in this report, most of the powder methamphetamine available in the region is locally produced. Supplementing its availability in the Region is the relative ease with which user-quantities of powder methamphetamine can be produced in small, so-called “Mom & Pop,” “Shake-N-Bake,” or “One-Pot” method clandestine laboratories.

The threat powder methamphetamine poses to communities is highly variable within the Midwest HIDTA region. For instance, when considering all survey responses, only 30% reported that the availability of powder methamphetamine in their respective regions is “high.” However, a staggering 86% of all St. Louis-area respondents stated that powder methamphetamine availability is “high.” By comparison, in another designated primary market area in the Midwest HIDTA region, only 17% of Kansas City-area respondents...
indicated that powder methamphetamine availability in their AOR is “high” (See Figure 9). Furthermore, the effect that powder methamphetamine has on both violent and property crime appears to be directly correlated to its availability in a given area. Overall, 23% of survey respondents indicated that powder methamphetamine’s effect on property crime in their respective AORs is “high.” However, in the St. Louis area, where powder methamphetamine is more widely available, 43% of survey respondents indicated powder methamphetamine’s effect on property crime is “high.” Likewise, whereas 23% of all survey respondents indicated that powder methamphetamine has a “high” effect on violent crime, 43% of St. Louis-area respondents indicated the same.

Figure 9: Powder Methamphetamine Availability by Market Type, 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey

In areas where powder methamphetamine is highly abused, law enforcement and other government agencies are overwhelmed with problems that are directly related to its abuse. For instance, the survey respondent from the Franklin County Narcotics Enforcement Group, a St. Louis-area Midwest HIDTA initiative, stated, “The greatest drug threat continues to be the clandestine manufacture of [powder] methamphetamine, with over 100 lab incidents reported in IA, and Sioux Falls, SD and I-29 importation corridor; Rapid City, SD and I-90 importation corridor; Fargo, ND metropolitan and I-29 to Canadian border importation corridor.

21 The Midwest HIDTA initiatives from the Kansas City-area that participated in the 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey include: Kansas City FBI Squad 1; Kansas City, MO Street Crimes; Kansas City DEA Interdiction Task Force; Kansas City, MO Metro Task Force; Jackson County Drug Task Force; Kansas City Overland Park DEA Task Force
2012; clandestine [powder] methamphetamine labs and the black market sale of pseudoephedrine continue to affect our community the greatest: We have no available space for children in our local foster care system, we receive numerous calls each week for clandestine dump sites, and [we receive] intelligence on local manufacturing locations.”

Complicating the methamphetamine production threat in the Midwest HIDTA region, laws related to pseudoephedrine, which is a key ingredient in the clandestine manufacture of powder methamphetamine, remain inconsistent between communities within the Region. This problem is discussed more fully in other sections of this report.

5. Powder Cocaine

The cocaine threat in the Midwest HIDTA region has stayed largely consistent in 2012 when compared to the previous year. For instance, during calendar year 2011, 87% of survey respondents indicated that powder cocaine availability was either “moderate” or “high” in their respective AORs. Similarly, in 2012, 82% of survey respondents indicated a “moderate” or “high” availability level. Moreover, 79% of survey respondents to the 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey indicated that availability of powder cocaine “remained the same” during 2012, the largest percentage for any drug type. In some parts of the Midwest HIDTA region, there were reports from law enforcement of a cocaine shortage that surfaced during the spring and early summer months of 2012. In most areas, that shortage eventually appeared to have dissipated during the fall, and 86% of survey respondents indicated that overall powder cocaine levels “remained the same” during 2012 from 2011 levels. However, the St. Louis-area has continued to experience a powder cocaine shortage into early 2013.

Powder cocaine continues to have a modest impact on both property crime and violent crime, with 73% of survey respondents indicating that powder cocaine either had “no effect” (7%), a “low” effect (33%), or a “moderate” effect (33%) on property crime (See Figure 10), and 72% indicating that powder cocaine had either “no effect” (2%), a “low” effect (23%), or a “moderate” effect (47%) on violent crime (See Figure 11). In fact, of all drug types, powder cocaine had the largest percentage of survey respondents indicating that it had a “moderate” effect on violent crime in their respective AORs.

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22 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey
23 http://www.justice.gov/archive/olp/methawareness/
24 The DEA St. Louis Division Drug Trends Report for July – December 2012 stated that, “…the cocaine shortage noted in the earlier half of 2012 seems to have stabilized, with exceptions noted in the Kansas City District Office, Topeka Post of Duty, and Fairview Heights Resident Office AORs. Kansas City indicated that they had conflicting reports from within their AOR, while Topeka and Fairview Heights both reported an ongoing shortage during this period.” (DEA St. Louis Division Drug Trends (July – December 2012)
Figure 10: Effect on Property Crime: Powder Cocaine, 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey

Effect on Property Crime: Powder Cocaine

- No Effect: 7%
- Low: 23%
- Moderate: 32%
- High: 33%
- Unknown: 5%

Figure 11: Effect on Violent Crime: Powder Cocaine, 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey

Effect on Violent Crime: Powder Cocaine

- No Effect: 2%
- Low: 23%
- Moderate: 47%
- High: 12%
- Unknown: 16%
Wholesale distribution channels for powder cocaine in the Midwest HIDTA region are dominated by highly-organized Mexican DTOs,\textsuperscript{25} who transport powder cocaine into the United States from Mexico through the Southwest Border, primarily from the source states of Arizona and Texas.\textsuperscript{26} Typically, retail-level distributors of powder cocaine are Mexican DTOs and African-American street gangs.

6. Heroin

Heroin continued to increase as a threat in the Midwest HIDTA region during 2012. Although heroin was the drug type indicated by the largest number of survey respondents as having a “low” availability level,\textsuperscript{27} 58\% of survey respondents stated that heroin availability has “increased” during the past year – the highest percentage for any drug type. However, heroin remains a greater threat in the primary market areas of the Midwest HIDTA region than in other areas. This is clearly shown in a graphical depiction displaying the survey responses related to the levels of availability of heroin in both primary and secondary market areas, as well as areas in the Region that are not designated as either primary or secondary market areas (See Figure 12). Whereas only 23\% of survey respondents overall indicated that heroin availability was “high” in their respective AORs, 40\% of primary market area respondents indicated such. In fact, as Figure 12 shows, only 12\% of secondary market area respondents stated heroin availability was “high,” and no respondents from areas not designated as primary or secondary stated such. In comparison, 67\% of secondary market area survey respondents and 77\% of survey respondents from areas not designated as a primary or secondary market areas indicated that heroin availability was “low” in their AORs, while only 30\% of primary market area respondents stated the same.

\textsuperscript{25} 65\% of all survey respondents indicated that a “high” amount of the powder cocaine in their respective AORs was sourced from Mexico. Powder cocaine ranked second only to ice methamphetamine (84\%) in this category. \textit{(2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey)}

\textsuperscript{26} According to statistics obtained from the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) National Seizure System (NSS), the leading non-Midwest HIDTA region source states for cocaine destined for Midwest HIDTA region states during 2012 were Texas, with 20 arrests, and Arizona, with 7 arrests.

\textsuperscript{27} 54\% of all survey respondents stated that availability of heroin was “low” in their respective AORs. \textit{(2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey)}
The heroin threat remains particularly concerning in the St. Louis area. Not only is heroin availability extremely high in the St. Louis area (See Figure 13), but survey respondents in the St. Louis area have indicated a high correlation between heroin and both property crime and violent crime. In fact, all survey respondents from St. Louis-area initiatives indicated that heroin had a “high” effect on property crime, and 86% indicated heroin had a “high” effect on violent crime in their area. By comparison, even in other primary market areas within the Midwest HIDTA region, only 45% of survey respondents indicated heroin had a “high” effect on property crime and only 35% stated that it had a “high” effect on violent crime in their respective areas.

Said the survey respondent from the St. Louis Violent Traffickers Task Force, “The greatest drug threat for the AOR is heroin; the availability of user amounts has spread throughout the greater metropolitan area and continues to grab a hold of young people; the addiction to heroin has resulted in the consistency of violent and property crime and overdose deaths…the availability of the drug has led to the increased experimental use by young people with detrimental results.”

St. Louis has instituted a three-pronged approach – involving education, enforcement, and treatment – in attempt to combat the heroin problem in the area. The implementation of this approach has continued into 2013.

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28 Of 7 St. Louis-area survey responses (see Footnote 20 for a detailed list of St. Louis-area survey respondents), 86% of survey respondents indicated that heroin availability is “high” in their respective AORs, while 14% stated heroin availability is “moderate.” Only 23% of all 43 survey respondents stated that heroin availability was “high,” with 21% stating heroin availability was “moderate,” 54% stating heroin availability was “low,” and 2% of all survey respondents stating heroin was not available at all in their respective AORs. (2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey)
Of especially grave concern in the Midwest HIDTA region is the continued growing number of overdoses related to heroin abuse in the Region. The survey respondent from the Cedar Rapids DEA Task Force stated, “In the greater Cedar Rapids area, we have seen approximately 40 fatal overdoses in the past two years.” Heroin overdoses in the Cedar Rapids/Quad Cities area led to the formation of the Ad Hoc Heroin Task Force by the United States Attorney’s Office in Cedar Rapids, IA, in 2011. This task force is run out of the Cedar Rapids DEA Resident Office. The survey respondent from the Kansas City, MO Metropolitan Task Force noted that detectives there had investigated five heroin overdose deaths in 2012, and that there has been an increase in heroin overdose deaths in the Kansas City area.29

Heroin in the Midwest HIDTA region is primarily sourced from Mexican DTOs based out of Chicago, who then sell it to mid-level African-American DTOs. In turn, these mid-level retailers distribute heroin to local street gangs for further distribution. Black tar, white, and brown heroin are all seen in the Midwest HIDTA region. Much of the heroin in the St. Louis area is now white heroin and has increased to greater than 50% purity. Some areas in the Region are also reporting an increase in Colombian-sourced heroin. The survey respondent from the Quad City Metropolitan Enforcement Group, for example, stated: “In the last year we have seen a significant increase in Colombian heroin…several overdose deaths [have been] linked to 49% pure Colombian heroin.”

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29 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey
7. Marijuana

Marijuana continued to be the most highly available drug type in the Midwest HIDTA region during 2012. Both commercial grade marijuana, generally transported into the United States by Mexican DTOs via the Southwest Border, and high grade marijuana are readily available in the Midwest HIDTA region. Other types of marijuana that are available in the Midwest HIDTA region are “BC Bud” and Hashish.

High grade marijuana is typically either shipped via parcel post or transported via private or commercial vehicle into the Midwest HIDTA region from jurisdictions where marijuana has been legalized at the state level. The survey respondent from Kansas Interdiction Support stated, “The transportation of illicit black market domestic marijuana grow operations and legalization in several…states has taken up a substantial amount of the enforcement activities of the road troopers; the arrests from the illegal marijuana transportation is requiring a large amount of [Kansas Highway Patrol] resources being utilized in enforcing the marijuana laws, creating a fiscal burden to law enforcement, county jails, county prosecutors, courts, and corrections facilities.”

Currently, despite marijuana being listed as a Schedule I substance in the Controlled Substances Act, so-called “medical” marijuana has been legalized in 18 states and the District of Columbia. “Medical” marijuana is typically extremely high grade and hydroponically-grown in states where it is legal. Additionally, despite the fact that the Supremacy Clause in the United States Constitution makes clear that federal law supersedes state law when a conflict arises, the states of Colorado and Washington passed legislation legalizing some recreational use of marijuana in their states in November 2012.

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30 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey
31 According to the DEA Office of Diversion Control, substances categorized under Schedule I, “have a high potential for abuse, have no currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States, and there is a lack of accepted safety for use of the drug or other substance under medical supervision.” [http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/schedules.index.html]
32 States where “medical” marijuana has been legalized include: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Michigan, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington; during 2012, Connecticut and Massachusetts also passed legislation legalizing “medical” marijuana. Also, “medical” marijuana has been legalized in the District of Columbia. [http://medicalmarijuana.procon.org/view.resource.php?resourceID=000881]
33 Article 6, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution is known as the Supremacy Clause and states, “This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof; and all Treaties made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land; and the Judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding.” [http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Supremacy+Clause and U.S. Constitution]
The Midwest HIDTA region has seen a significant increase in the availability and abuse of high grade marijuana due to changing laws in the adjacent state of Colorado, which borders two of the six states of the Region, and the Western states of California, Oregon, and Washington. The availability of commercial versus high grade marijuana is now nearly the same throughout the region: 93% of survey respondents stated that commercial grade marijuana availability is either “moderate” or “high” in their respective regions, while 91% stated high grade marijuana availability is either “moderate” or “high.” This has signaled a drastic shift over the last several years as, previously, commercial grade marijuana was much more highly available and abused in the Region. When addressing issues related to high grade marijuana abuse, the survey respondent from Iowa Interdiction Support stated, “The single biggest and ever-changing issue is the legalization of marijuana. We are seeing a substantial rise in...hydro[ponic] marijuana loads...the legalization of marijuana has produced a more potent and more profitable product, allowing more opportunity and therefore encouragement for kids to take up drug dealing.”34 This shift is particularly concerning because high grade marijuana is seen as being more connected to both property and violent crime in the Midwest HIDTA region than commercial grade marijuana. In fact, approximately double the number of survey respondents indicated that the effect of high grade marijuana on both property and violent crime is “high” in their respective AORs when compared to the number that indicated that the effect of commercial grade marijuana on property and violent crime is “high.”35

8. Synthetics/Other Drugs

Relatively few other drugs are available in significant quantities in the Midwest HIDTA region. Of these, synthetic cannabinoids (synthetic marijuana) and synthetic cathinones (bath salts) are the most significant, followed by 3,4-methylenedioxy-N-methamphetamine, commonly known as MDMA or ecstasy, and, in a more regionalized threat, phencyclidine, which is also known as PCP. When asked to indicate the level of availability of synthetic cannabinoids and synthetic

34 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey
35 9.3% of survey respondents stated that high grade marijuana has a “high” effect on property crime, whereas 4.7% survey respondents stated commercial grade marijuana has a “high” effect on property crime; 4.7% of survey respondents stated that high grade marijuana has a “high” effect on property crime, whereas 2.3% of survey respondents stated that commercial grade marijuana has a “high” effect on property crime. (2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey)
cannabinoids in their respective AORs, 70% of respondents stated that synthetic cannabinoid availability was either “moderate” or “high,” while 61% of respondents stated that synthetic cathinone availability was either “moderate” or “high.” Moreover, 35% of survey respondents stated the availability of synthetic cannabinoids had “increased” in their AORs during 2012, whereas 30% stated that synthetic cathinones had “increased” in availability. While synthetic cannabinoids tied for fourth out of all drug types for “increased” availability responses, synthetic cathinones ranked fifth.

One of the hurdles law enforcement faces in combating the threat posed by synthetic cannabinoids and synthetic cathinones is that prosecution related to trafficking and abuse of these drug types can often be difficult. Synthetics manufacturers continue to change chemical components of the drugs, attempting to avoid coverage by current synthetics laws. Laboratory analysis of synthetics can be difficult and time consuming. Prosecutors, particularly at the state and local level, also may be loath to test the relatively new laws that cover synthetics. For instance, the survey respondent from the Kansas City/Overland Park DEA Combined Task Force explains, “State and local law enforcement has still faced challenges in getting successful adjudication, as many prosecutors don’t want to be ‘out front’ on the law.”

Despite those hurdles, during July 2012 there was a coordinated multi-agency investigation involving seizures and arrests related synthetics, designated Operation Log Jam. DEA Administrator Michele Leonhart called Operation Log Jam “the first nationwide, coordinated U.S. law enforcement strike specifically targeting designer synthetic drugs.” Administrator Leonhart went on to say, “Operation Log Jam has resulted in 91 arrests around the country and a staggering amount of drug seizures – 4.8 million packets of synthetic cannabinoids and the products to produce nearly 13.6 million more, as well as 167,000 packets of synthetic cathinones, 36 Synthetic cannabinoids and synthetic cathinones ranked 7th and 8th out of all drug types in percentage of “moderate” and “high” availability responses, ranking behind the following: commercial grade marijuana (94%), high grade marijuana (91%), CPDs (91%), ice methamphetamine (88%), powder cocaine (82%), and crack cocaine (72%). (2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey)

37 Other drug types receiving a higher or equal percentage of survey responses stating that a drug type availability “increased” during the past year are: heroin (58%), ice methamphetamine (42%), CPDs (40%), and high grade marijuana (35%). (2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey)

and the products to produce an additional 392,000. Additionally, $36 million in cash, 53 guns, and almost $6 million in assets have been seized to date...over 265 search warrants were executed, which included 29 manufacturing facilities." 39 Several of the arrestees from Operation Log Jam are likely to be prosecuted under the Controlled Substance Analogue Enforcement Act of 1986 (AEA), since the specific chemical compounds utilized in some of the substances seized may not be specifically prohibited under the Controlled Substances Act. 40 Multiple jurisdictions within the Midwest HIDTA region were involved in Operation Log Jam (See Appendix 3), including numerous locations in the Kansas City and St. Louis areas. Several survey respondents indicated that Operation Log Jam has affected the overall availability of synthetics in their areas during the latter half of 2012. For instance, the survey respondent from the Sioux Falls Task Force observed, “Synthetic marijuana was a problem but has decreased since the DEA Raid this last summer.” The long-term effect of this large-scale investigation related to synthetic cannabinoids and cathinones abuse in the Midwest HIDTA region is unknown at this time.

To a lesser extent, MDMA and PCP are also available in the Region. MDMA is available in varying quantities throughout the Midwest HIDTA region. When abused, MDMA is typically abused by Caucasian teenagers and young adults, both in urban and more rural areas of the region. 41 The threat that PCP poses in the Midwest HIDTA region appears to be mostly isolated to the Kansas City area. Overall, only 14% of survey respondents indicated that PCP availability was either “moderate” or “high” in their respective areas. However, of the six Kansas City-area survey respondents, approximately 84% stated that PCP was available at either “moderate” or “high” levels. Moreover, 50% of Kansas City-area survey respondents stated that PCP availability had increased during 2012. In fact, the only survey respondents in the Midwest HIDTA region to state that PCP availability had increased during 2012 were from the Kansas City area. Of concern to law enforcement in the Kansas City area, 50% of survey respondents from the Kansas City area stated that PCP had either a “moderate” or “high” effect on violent crime. This is significantly higher than what was reported overall by survey respondents, as only 14% of all survey respondents indicated the same.

40 In the DEA press release related to Operation Log Jam, it states, “While many of the designer drugs being marketed today that were seized as part of Operation Log Jam are not specifically prohibited in the Controlled Substances Act (CSA), the Controlled Substance Analogue Enforcement Act of 1986 (AEA) allows these drugs to be treated as controlled substances if they are proven to be chemically and/or pharmacologically similar to a Schedule I or Schedule II controlled substance. A number of cases that are part of Operation Log Jam will be prosecuted federally under this analogue provision, which specifically exists to combat these new and emerging designer drugs.” Operation Log Jam Press Conference, DEA Headquarters, Administrator Michele M. Leonhart, July 26, 2012. (http://www.justice.gov/dea/pr/speeches-testimony/2012-2009/120726_op-log-jam.pdf)
41 Of survey respondents who stated MDMA availability was either “moderate” or “high,” 8 respondents represented Primary Market Area initiatives, 7 respondents represented Secondary Market Area initiatives, and 1 respondent represented an Initiative that is not considered part of either a Primary or Secondary Market Area. (2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey)
CRIMINAL ORGANIZATIONS

Highly-organized Mexican DTOs are predominant in the Midwest HIDTA region as wholesale distributors for almost all drug types, particularly for ice methamphetamine, powder cocaine, commercial grade marijuana, and heroin. The Mexican Cartels that have the most significant influence in the region include the Sinaloa Cartel, the Juárez Cartel, and La Familia out of Michoacán. When asked to rate the involvement of specific DTOs in their respective AORs, 28% of survey respondents rated the Sinaloa Cartel’s involvement as “high,” which was more than any other DTO. The Juarez/Vicente Carrillo Fuentes (VCF) and La Familia drug cartels ranked second and third in that category, with 19% and 12% “high” responses, respectively (See Figure 14). Moreover, when asked to describe the level to which persons of given racial/ethnic backgrounds are involved in the wholesale distribution of drugs, 65% of survey respondents indicated that Hispanics have a “high” level of involvement, versus 47% for African-Americans/Blacks, and 44% for Caucasians/Whites (See Figure 15). Asians/Pacific Islanders and Native Americans are only involved in the wholesale distribution of drugs to a very small degree in the Midwest HIDTA region.

Figure 14: Involvement of International DTOs in Drug Trafficking in the Midwest HIDTA Region, 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey
Drugs are sold from wholesale distributors to retail organizations who, in turn, distribute drugs directly to abusers. Hispanic retail distributors, which are generally more loosely organized than wholesale Hispanic DTOs, are the greatest influence in retail drug distribution in the Region, followed by Caucasian/White and African-American/Blacks distributors.42

Street gangs and Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs (OMGs) also influence drug distribution in the Midwest HIDTA region. Street gangs – particularly those affiliated with the Sureños, Crip Nation, and Blood Nation – are most heavily involved in the retail distribution of marijuana, crack cocaine, and powder cocaine. Street gangs in larger urban centers, such as St. Louis, are also heavily involved in and dominate heroin distribution channels. OMGs are most involved in powder and ice methamphetamine distribution, with some involvement in marijuana distribution. The OMGs with the most influence on drug distribution in the Midwest HIDTA region are the Outlaws, Sons of Silence, and Hell’s Angels.43

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42 When asked to describe the involvement of given racial/ethnic groups in the retail distribution of drugs in their respective AORs, 61% stated that Hispanics had a “high” involvement, versus 51% for Caucasians/Whites and 49% for African-Americans/Blacks. (2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey)

43 When asked the level to which persons affiliated with given OMGs are involved in the distribution of drugs in their respective AORs, 19% said the involvement of the Outlaws was either “moderate” or “high,” with 16% saying the same for Sons of Silence and Hell’s Angels. These three OMGs received the highest percentages of “moderate” and “high” responses. (2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey)
DRUG TRANSPORTATION METHODS

The Midwest HIDTA region consists of 72 counties in a six state area that stretches from North Dakota to Missouri. Though some areas have seen an increase in the use of smaller, rural roads to try to avoid highway interdiction, drug traffickers generally exploit the extensive interstate highway network and central location of the Midwest HIDTA region to transship wholesale quantities of ice methamphetamine, cocaine, marijuana, and heroin from the Southwest Border area to national-level markets in the Midwest and Northeast, including Chicago and New York City. The major interstate highways utilized by drug traffickers into the Region, totaling 4,312 miles of highway, are (see Figure 16):

- East-West
  - I-94 (through North Dakota)
  - I-90 (through South Dakota)
  - I-76 (through Nebraska)
  - I-80 (through Nebraska)
  - I-70 (through Kansas and Missouri and linking Kansas City and St. Louis, the Region’s largest cities)
  - I-44 (through Southwest Missouri to St. Louis)

- North-South
  - I-55 (begins in New Orleans, LA, and goes through Memphis, TN, into St. Louis and Illinois)
  - I-49 (from Southwest Missouri to Kansas City, MO)
  - I-35 (begins in Laredo, TX, and goes through Missouri – including Kansas City – and Iowa)
  - I-29 (through Missouri and up the border of Nebraska and Iowa, through South Dakota and North Dakota; links Kansas City and Omaha, two of the Region’s Primary Market Areas)

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44 During 2012, U.S. Highway 71 from Pineville, MO, northward to Kansas City, MO, was upgraded to interstate highway standards, a project that took decades to complete. Eventually, I-49 south of Kansas City and I-29 north of Kansas City will encompass approximately 1,630 miles through Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, South Dakota, and North Dakota. (http://www.modot.org/southwest/news_and_information/District8Release.shtml?action=displaySSI&newsId=179269)
The central location of the Midwest HIDTA region makes it a transportation hub for the trafficking and distribution of drugs. For instance, Kansas City, located near the geographic center of the United States and at the intersection of several of the nation’s busiest interstate highways (I-29, I-49, I-35, I-70), is a major transit point for the transportation of drugs and drug proceeds to and from significant market areas across the country. Furthermore, the convergence of I-44, I-55, I-64, and I-70 in St. Louis provides easy access for the transportation of drugs and bulk cash via commercial and private vehicles. According to El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) National Seizure System (NSS) statistics for 2012, the most drug interdiction stops for drugs destined for Midwest HIDTA region states occurred on I-70 (See Figure 17), followed by I-80 and I-40, which is located south of the Region.
Interstate 35 is particularly useful as a transportation route for Mexican DTOs. I-35, which converges with I-70 and I-29 in Kansas City, covers approximately 1,568 miles in the United States, from Laredo, TX, to Duluth, MN and runs directly through the Midwest HIDTA region in Kansas, Missouri, and Iowa. However, the highway also extends into Mexico as Mexican "Federal Highway 85." Federal Highway 85 runs southward from Nuevo Laredo, just across the Mexican border from the United States, through Monterrey, Cuidad Victoria, Pachuca, and to the southern edge of Mexico City. “From that point the highway changes names, but can be connected all the way through Central America, to its ending point in Panama. This route, in general, has seen more narcotics than any other land route in the world." 

The Midwest HIDTA region is also vulnerable to drug trafficking from the Northern Border, since North Dakota shares a 300 mile long border and 18 official land ports of entry (POEs) with Canada (See Figure 18). The area between Northern Border POEs is isolated, rural, and rife with opportunities for drug traffickers and criminal groups to smuggle Canadian marijuana, MDMA, and methamphetamine precursor chemicals, such as pseudoephedrine and ephedrine, into the Midwest HIDTA region.

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45 Entry from Uncut-Reports.com from February 22, 2013. (http://www.hellonearthblog.com/?view=classic)
A majority of drugs are transported into the Midwest HIDTA region utilizing private vehicles, often equipped with non-factory installed hidden compartments, or tractor trailers, in which drugs are generally secreted within shipments of legitimate cargo. An increasing amount of drugs, particularly high grade marijuana and methamphetamine, are being shipped into the Midwest HIDTA region utilizing the United States Postal Service (USPS) and other commercial parcel services, such as UPS and FedEx. When describing the use of particular drug transportation methods over the past year, commercial parcel services and USPS received the highest number of “increased” responses by survey respondents, with 30% and 28%, respectively. For instance, the survey respondent from the Quad City Metropolitan Enforcement Group stated, “This agency’s postal interdiction efforts have identified many individuals who have received postal packages containing high grade cannabis.”\textsuperscript{46} Current trends dictate that multi-agency postal and commercial parcel post interdiction efforts by law enforcement will be vital to future high grade marijuana seizures, arrests, and investigative efforts in the Midwest HIDTA region. Some distributors utilize commercial transportation, such as airplanes, trains, and bus lines, to bring drugs into the Region.

\textsuperscript{46} 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey
DRUG CONSUMPTION

Marijuana

During 2012, marijuana continued to be the most consumed drug in the Midwest HIDTA region. Marijuana far outweighed all other drug types when comparing the amount of drug seizures in the Region. As reported by Midwest HIDTA initiatives through Performance Management Process (PMP) statistics,47 Midwest HIDTA initiatives seized 14,838 kilograms of commercial grade marijuana and 4,901 kilograms of high grade marijuana during 2012. The next most seized drug type by Midwest HIDTA initiatives was synthetic cannabinoids,48 554 kilograms of which were seized, followed by powder cocaine with 315 kilograms seized. PMP arrest statistics also show that marijuana possession-related arrests greatly outnumbered possession-related arrests for all other drug categories. In 2012, Midwest HIDTA made 3,631 marijuana possession-related arrests, compared to 1,951 methamphetamine possession-related arrests, which was the next highest drug type. Marijuana-related arrests by DEA in Midwest HIDTA region states remained consistent during 2012.49 In 2011, DEA made 267 marijuana-related arrests in Midwest HIDTA region states;50 263 marijuana-related arrests were made in 2012, a difference of only approximately 1%. According to PMP statistics, marijuana-related arrests by Midwest HIDTA initiatives were down in 2012 from 2011 levels.51 However, this decrease is not believed to be caused by any significant decrease in consumption of the drug in the Midwest HIDTA region.

47 All Midwest HIDTA initiatives are required to complete certain specified statistical data related to drug-related seizures and arrests; that data are compiled into the Midwest HIDTA Performance Management Process (PMP) Data.
48 Synthetic cannabinoids are classified in Midwest HIDTA PMP Data as "K2," which is a specific name brand of synthetic cannabinoids that has grown popular in both law enforcement and public forums as a generic term for all synthetic cannabinoids.
49 Information on DEA arrests was obtained through DEA Statistical Management and Reporting Tools System (SMARTS), a "suite of applications that provides an overview of DEA cases and personnel;" SMARTS is used to query information from various DEA databases. (DEA SMARTS User Manual)
50 DEA marijuana-related arrest statistics from Rock County, IL, which is part of the Midwest HIDTA region, were not able to be obtained and are not included in any of the statistics utilized in this report from DEA SMARTS.
51 Midwest HIDTA PMP Data indicates that there were 3,710 marijuana possession-related and 1,908 marijuana trafficking-related arrests in 2011. In 2012, there were 3,631 marijuana possession-related and 1,832 marijuana trafficking-related arrests, a decrease of 2% and 4%, respectively. (Midwest HIDTA PMP Data)
Marijuana is abused by all demographic groups in the Midwest HIDTA region. However, high grade marijuana obtained from states where marijuana has been legalized at the state level was consumed in the Midwest HIDTA region in increasing quantities during 2012. The average price$^{52}$ for a pound of high grade marijuana in 2012 ($4,196.15) was approximately 189% higher than the average price for a pound of commercial grade marijuana ($1,451.85). Similarly, the average price for a half-pound of high grade marijuana ($2,153.85) was 255% higher than for commercial grade marijuana ($606.58) (See Figure 19). The drastically higher prices for high grade marijuana compared to commercial grade marijuana may relegate high grade marijuana consumption to more affluent demographic groups in the Region.

Figure 19: A Comparison of Average Prices for Commercial and High Grade Marijuana, 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey

$^{52}$ All average prices stated in this Report were derived by adding all non-zero responses to the 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey for the appropriate weight/drug type and dividing by the number of non-zero responses. Several zero (0) responses were reported in error by survey respondents and were eliminated from average price calculations.
CPDs

Non-medically-related CPD consumption has become ubiquitous throughout the United States, and the Midwest HIDTA region is no different. Prescription drug abuse of opioids, such as oxycodone, hydrocodone, fentanyl, and methadone, is particularly widespread in the Region. DEA arrests for opioid treatment pharmaceuticals in Midwest HIDTA region states were up by 81% in 2012, from 42 arrests in 2011 to 76 arrests in 2012.53 Other prescription drugs – including depressants, stimulants, and steroids – are also abused throughout the Region.

Due to a change in the way PMP statistics were compiled for CPDs in 2012,54 a direct comparison with CPD drug seizures in 2011 is unable to be completed. However, the number of dosage units seized by Midwest HIDTA initiatives makes it clear that non-medically-related CPD consumption remained at high levels in 2012. In 2012, Midwest HIDTA initiatives seized 6,480 dosage units of hydrocodone; 3,440 dosage units of oxycodone; 2,211 tablets of OxyContin; 8,948 units of steroids; 863 dosage units of Xanax; and 100,738 units of other prescription drugs. Additionally, pharmaceutical arrests were tracked for the first time by Midwest HIDTA initiatives in 2012. Initiatives made 433 pharmaceutical possession-related arrests in the Midwest HIDTA region in 2012.55

Powder and Crack Cocaine

Powder and crack cocaine are both consumed at high levels in the Midwest HIDTA region. While powder cocaine is seen throughout the Midwest HIDTA area and is abused by persons from a multitude of demographic backgrounds, crack cocaine consumption appears to be highest among African-Americans in the urban centers of the Region. Though powder and crack cocaine are consumed at a high level in the Midwest HIDTA region, seizures of each by Midwest HIDTA initiatives were down again in 2012.56 In 2012, Midwest HIDTA initiatives seized 315 kilograms of powder cocaine, down from 343 kilograms in 2011 – an 8% decrease. Likewise, seizures of crack cocaine by Midwest HIDTA initiatives were down by approximately 38%, from 23 kilograms seized in 2011 to 14 kilograms seized in 2012. This decrease may be partially related to the reported shortage of cocaine during the latter half of 2012 in some areas of the Region. However, the decrease in cocaine seizures by Midwest HIDTA initiatives in 2012 may also have been caused by the increased focus of Midwest HIDTA initiatives on other

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53 DEA SMARTS
54 In 2011, Midwest HIDTA PMP Data tracked only seizures of Oxycontin (Tablets), Steroids (Units), and Prescription Drugs Other (Units); no pharmaceutical arrest categories were tracked. In 2012, Midwest HIDTA PMP Data tracked the additional seizure categories of hydrocodone (dosage units), oxycodone (dosage units), OxyContin (tablets), Vicodin (dosage units), and Xanax (dosage units); Additionally, Pharmaceuticals possession, trafficking, and money laundering arrest statistics were added to PMP Data in 2012.
55 2012 Midwest HIDTA PMP Data
56 As reported in the 2011 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment, seizures by Midwest HIDTA initiatives of powder cocaine in 2011 were down by approximately 75% from 2010 seizures, while seizures of crack cocaine were down by approximately 73%. (2011 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment)
significant drug threats, including: methamphetamine, synthetics, and heroin. The investigative focus of Midwest HIDTA initiatives may have changed in part due to changes in federal sentencing guidelines for crack cocaine that have affected prosecution rates for crack cocaine traffickers and abusers. The survey respondent from the Kansas City, Missouri Street Crimes Task Force stated, “Changes in federal guidelines for crack cocaine have decreased the amount of prosecutions.”

**Powder and Ice Methamphetamine**

Consumption of both powder and ice methamphetamine are extremely high in the Midwest HIDTA region. Ice methamphetamine, primarily brought into the region from Mexico through the Southwest Border, is generally consumed in the larger urban centers of the Region across a multitude of demographic groups. Powder methamphetamine, produced in the Region by consumers increasingly utilizing the “One-Pot” method of production, is also consumed across the Region. EPIC NSS data indicates that 99% of methamphetamine-related laboratory seizures in Midwest HIDTA region states during 2012 occurred in the states of Missouri, Iowa, and Kansas. Overall, methamphetamine laboratory seizures were down approximately 10% in Midwest HIDTA region states during 2012, from 2,632 seizures during 2011 to 2,371 in 2012 (See Figure 20). This may indicate a shift of abuse from powder methamphetamine grown locally to ice methamphetamine from Mexican sources of supply in the Region during 2012.

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58 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey

59 EPIC NSS data show that 2,338 of the Region’s 2,371 methamphetamine-related laboratory seizures occurred in Kansas, Iowa, and Missouri during 2012. *(EPIC NSS)*
Figure 20: A Comparison of all Methamphetamine-Related Laboratory Seizures in the Midwest HIDTA Region from 2011 to 2012

Data indicates that there were more amphetamine/methamphetamine-related arrests by DEA in the Region during 2012 than for any other drug type. Additionally, possession-related methamphetamine arrests by Midwest HIDTA initiatives were up by 24% during 2012, from 1,574 arrests during 2011 to 1,951 arrests in 2012. Possession-related arrests by Midwest HIDTA initiatives for methamphetamine were second-most only to marijuana during 2012. Moreover, seizures of methamphetamine by Midwest HIDTA initiatives in 2012 were up approximately 65%, from 143 kilograms in 2011 to 236 kilograms in 2012.

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60 Methamphetamine incidents include seizures of laboratories, dumpsites, and chemicals/glass/equipment and were obtained from EPIC NSS. (EPIC NSS)

61 In 2011, DEA made 629 arrests in Midwest HIDTA region states under the drug type category “amphetamine/methamphetamine.” The drug type with the next-most number of arrests by DEA within Midwest HIDTA region states was “cannabis” at 263 arrests. (DEA SMARTS)

62 Midwest HIDTA PMP Data

63 Midwest HIDTA PMP Data
**Heroin**

Heroin consumption is increasing throughout the Midwest HIDTA region, particularly in the St. Louis area. PMP statistics show that heroin seizures by Midwest HIDTA initiatives were up by approximately 159% in 2012.\(^{64}\) Midwest HIDTA initiatives seized 60 kilograms of heroin in 2011. The amount rose to 156 kilograms of heroin seizures by Midwest HIDTA initiatives in 2012.\(^{65}\) Though the greatest consumption of heroin in the Midwest HIDTA region is in the St. Louis area, consumption is also high in the Kansas City area. According to PMP statistics, heroin seizures by Kansas City-area initiatives rose 110% during 2012.\(^{66}\) Black tar, white, and brown heroin are all seen in the Midwest HIDTA region. Much of the heroin in the St. Louis area is now white heroin. The price of white heroin is generally much higher than that of brown or black tar heroin. On average, survey respondents indicated that the price per kilogram for white heroin is $80,000, versus $58,750 for brown heroin and $35,000 for black tar heroin (See Figure 21).\(^{67}\)

**Figure 21: Average Midwest HIDTA Region Heroin Prices, 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment**

![Average Midwest HIDTA Region Heroin Prices](chart.png)

\(^{64}\) Midwest HIDTA PMP Data  
\(^{65}\) Midwest HIDTA PMP Data  
\(^{66}\) According to Midwest HIDTA PMP Data, heroin seizures by Kansas City-area initiatives increased to 83,412 grams in 2012 from 39,812 grams in 2011, accounting for a 110% increase. (Midwest HIDTA PMP Data)  
\(^{67}\) 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey
Some areas in the Region are also reporting an increase in Colombian-sourced heroin. Some heroin abusers in the Midwest HIDTA region are believed to have first been addicted to opioids, such as oxycodone, hydrocodone, fentanyl, and methadone. Once their opioid addictions became too expensive, these abusers may have turned to heroin as a cheaper alternative to obtain a similar “high” to the prescription opioid drugs.

**Synthetics/Other Drugs**

Synthetic cannabinoids, synthetic cathinones, PCP, and MDMA were all consumed in the Midwest HIDTA region during 2012. A new synthetic drug with similar affects to LSD, referred to as “N-Bomb” or “Smiles,” was also seen in the Region during 2012 and is discussed more thoroughly under the “Other Drug Threats and Emerging Drug Trends” section of this report.

Midwest HIDTA initiatives began tracking synthetic cannabinoid seizures in 2011 for the first time. In 2012, seizures of synthetic cannabinoids by Midwest HIDTA initiatives rose 249% from 2011 levels. Midwest HIDTA initiatives seized 158 kilograms of synthetic cannabinoids in 2011, compared to 554 kilograms in 2012.

Both synthetic cannabinoids and synthetic cathinones are sold under a variety of trade names in the Midwest HIDTA region. PCP seizures were also up in 2012, though to a lesser extent: PCP seizures went from 32 kilograms in 2011 to 37 kilograms in 2012, a 14% increase. PCP abusers often use PCP with marijuana. For instance, PCP abusers sometimes “dip” a marijuana “joint” in PCP prior to smoking the drugs.

MDMA seizures by Midwest HIDTA initiatives were also up in 2012. In 2012, Midwest HIDTA initiatives seized 14,108 units of MDMA. Only 8,948 units of MDMA were seized in 2011.

**MARIJUANA PRODUCTION**

Marijuana production in the Midwest HIDTA region is relatively low. When asked to describe the level of marijuana production in their respective AORs, over 60% of survey respondents (61%) indicated that marijuana production was “low.” In fact, only 2% of survey respondents stated that marijuana production was “high” in their respective areas, while 35% indicated that marijuana production was “moderate” (See Figure 22). The drought that affected nearly the entire Midwest HIDTA region during 2012 is believed to have affected outdoor marijuana production in the Region. The survey respondent from the Topeka Regional Drug Task Force stated, “Marijuana production has slowed in our AOR, mainly due to the severe drought that has

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68 Seizure data only – not including arrest data – is captured for “K2” within Midwest HIDTA PMP Data.

69 Midwest HIDTA PMP Data

70 Common brand names in the Midwest HIDTA region for synthetic cannabinoids include: K2, Mad Hatter, Syn, Spice, Scooby Doo Snaxx, and White Rabbit. Common brand names in the Midwest HIDTA region for synthetic cathinones include: Pump It, Blizzard, Bliss, Diamond Cleaner, and Plant Food. (2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey)

71 Midwest HIDTA PMP Data

72 Additionally, 2% of survey respondents stated that the amount of marijuana production in their respective areas was “unknown.” (2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey)
spread across Kansas the past couple of years.”\textsuperscript{73} The legalization of marijuana in other states has also affected the level of marijuana production in the Midwest HIDTA region. Growers are thought to choose to maintain grow sites in states where marijuana has been legalized at the state level in order to alleviate some of the risk associated with illegal grows. For instance, the survey respondent from the Cooperative Operation for Drug Enforcement (C.O.D.E.) Task Force stated, “Due to the availability of medical marijuana from Colorado...marijuana production has been drastically reduced in [our AOR].”\textsuperscript{74} As a result of these and other factors, PMP statistics show that Midwest HIDTA initiatives seized over 38,000 fewer outdoor plants in 2012 than they did in 2011.\textsuperscript{75}

Figure 22: Level of Marijuana Production, 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey

Marijuana that is produced in the Region is typically produced by independent growers, though some instances of larger grows by more organized groups have occurred, generally in the more rural areas of the Region.\textsuperscript{76} Indoor marijuana production appears to be slightly more prevalent in the Midwest HIDTA region than outdoor production. For example, 14\% of survey respondents indicated that the availability of indoor marijuana plants was “high,” versus 12\% for outdoor marijuana grows. Similarly, while only 5\% of survey respondents indicated that outdoor marijuana grows were increasing, 12\% stated that indoor grows were increasing. The survey

\textsuperscript{73} 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey
\textsuperscript{74} 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey
\textsuperscript{75} In 2011, Midwest HIDTA initiatives seized 56,101 outdoor marijuana plants; in 2012, 17,985 plants were seized – a reduction of 38,116 from the year before. (Midwest HIDTA PMP Data)
\textsuperscript{76} The survey respondent from Iowa Interdiction Support stated, “More large scale grows are being located in remote areas.” (2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey)
respondent from the Franklin County Narcotics Enforcement Unit stated, “Almost all marijuana production is now indoor.”

A survey respondent from the Omaha Metro Task Force stated that, “indoor marijuana grow operations are increasing and are more sophisticated and elaborate.”

Though marijuana is produced in the Midwest HIDTA region, a majority of marijuana is transported into the Region from other areas, including Mexico, Canada, and states where marijuana has been legalized at the state level. In fact, on average, survey respondents indicated that nearly 90% of the marijuana in their respective areas was imported into their AORs from another region. Law enforcement has seen an increase in the number of Mexican nationals that are living illegally in the United States and growing marijuana. Though some of these grow sites organized by Mexican nationals are in the Midwest HIDTA region, most of these grows occur outside of the Region, particularly in the state of California. Domestically-grown marijuana is either transported into the Midwest HIDTA region from the states where it is grown via private or commercial vehicle, or it is shipped to the Region using either USPS or commercial parcel post, such as FedEx or UPS.

**METHAMPHETAMINE PRODUCTION**

Methamphetamine production poses a great drug threat in the Midwest HIDTA region. In fact, according to EPIC NSS statistics, Missouri ranked as the state with the most methamphetamine laboratory incidents during 2012. While ice methamphetamine in the Region generally comes from Mexican sources, powder methamphetamine is the drug type produced most in the Midwest HIDTA region. More than any other drug, 47% of survey respondents to the 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey stated that powder methamphetamine is sourced from within their respective AORs. Furthermore, approximately 53% of survey respondents indicated that methamphetamine production in their AORs is either “moderate” or “high” (See Figure 23).

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77 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey
78 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey
79 Survey respondents were asked: “Of the marijuana available in your AOR, what is the percentage that is locally produced versus imported?” On average, respondents stated that 88% of marijuana availability in their AOR was imported to their AOR, while 12% was produced in their AOR. (2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey)
80 EPIC NSS statistics show that there were a total of 1,985 reported methamphetamine laboratory incidents during 2012; the state with the next highest number of reported methamphetamine laboratory incidents during 2012 was Indiana with 1,647 incidents. (EPIC NSS)
81 84% of survey respondents stated that a “high” amount of ice methamphetamine distributed in their respective AORs was sourced from Mexico, the highest percentage for any drug type. (2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey)
The cost of methamphetamine production is felt in many ways in communities throughout the Region. Methamphetamine abuse leads addicts to commit both property and violent crimes. Methamphetamine production also causes property damage, injuries, and death as a result of fires and explosions which often occur during the production process. Methamphetamine production has caused a social services crisis in parts of the Region. For instance, “To protect the children found at meth lab sites from further harm and neglect, social service agencies [in Missouri] remove the children from their homes and place them in foster care…From January 2006 through December 2011, the Missouri Department of Social Services substantiated 702 reports of children exposed to meth labs, involving a total of 1,279 children. Of those 1,279 children, 653 required placement in departmental custody. The total cost of providing custodial care to children exposed to meth labs in Missouri since August 2005 was approximately $3.5 million according to the department. In one Missouri county, so many children were being removed from meth lab homes and placed in state custody that there are now no longer any foster care families available to care for them.”

Affecting the popularity of methamphetamine production in the Midwest HIDTA region is the relative ease with which user-quantities of powder methamphetamine can be produced in small, so-called “Mom & Pop,” “Shake-N-Bake,” or “One-Pot” method clandestine laboratories, which have been seen in increasing numbers throughout the Region. In fact, this method of methamphetamine production is by far the most popular in the Midwest HIDTA region (See Figure 24). Approximately 47% of survey respondents stated that the use of the “One-Pot” method is “high” in their AORs, nearly triple the number of respondents that stated that the use

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of the next most popular method, lithium ammonia, was “high.” By utilizing the “One-Pot” method, abusers can produce small, inexpensive quantities of methamphetamine quickly utilizing relatively few ingredients and a small space, oftentimes a vehicle or residence. Despite the ease and relative low-costs to producers of methamphetamine utilizing this method, all methods of producing methamphetamine create hazardous waste that is harmful to humans, including law enforcement officers who come into contact with it, and it is extremely expensive to adequately clean up. During this time period of ever-decreasing law enforcement budgets and, in many areas, a reduction in the number of law enforcement officers, methamphetamine production clean-up poses a large problem for many law enforcement agencies. Methamphetamine clandestine laboratory processing clean-up requires specialized training and equipment, which is difficult for law enforcement agencies to afford. Limited federal financial support for clandestine laboratory clean-ups is supplied by Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) funds that are administered by DEA. “COPS Methamphetamine grants assist state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies in combating methamphetamine production and distribution, to target drug ‘hot spots,’ and to remove and dispose of hazardous materials at clandestine methamphetamine labs.” During fiscal year 2013, approximately $12.5 million has been appropriated legislatively for “anti-methamphetamine-related activities.”

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83 The lithium ammonia method was presented to survey respondents as “Lithium Ammonia/Anhydrous Ammonia/Nazi Birch/Ephedrine.” (2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey)
84 Approximately 17% of survey respondents stated that the use of the Lithium Ammonia/Anhydrous Ammonia/Nazi Birch/Ephedrine was “high” in their respective AORs. (2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey)
87 Information obtained from DEA HQs Hazardous Waste section, which is responsible for distribution of COPS funding, indicates that the amount of funds distributed under the COPS program during fiscal year 2013 may be less than that which was appropriated legislatively due to sequestration.
PRESCRIPTION DRUG DIVERSION

Prescription drug diversion in the Midwest HIDTA region is a significant and growing threat. As stated previously, 91% of survey respondents indicated that CPD availability is either “moderate” or “high” in their respective areas. Moreover, 91% of survey respondents also stated that CPD availability either remained the same (51%) or increased (40%) over the past year. Multiple survey respondents indicated that CPD overdoses have risen in their AORs. It is clear that CPD abuse is an increasing threat to the Midwest HIDTA region.

Much of the abuse of CPDs in the Region is due to the “diversion” of CPDs from their lawful purposes. CPDs are most commonly obtained for illicit use in the Midwest HIDTA region through so-called “doctor shopping,” theft, prescription fraud, and pill mills. Doctor shopping is defined as the practice of a “patient obtaining controlled substances from multiple healthcare practitioners without the prescribers’ knowledge of the other prescriptions,” (http://www.cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalsafety/Poisoning/laws/dr_shopping.html)

A pill mill is a “doctor’s office, clinic, or healthcare facility that routinely colludes in the prescribing and dispensing of controlled substances outside the scope of the prevailing standards of medical practice in the

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88 For example, as stated previously, the survey respondent from the Omaha Metro Drug Task Force stated, “CPD deaths are passing motor vehicle fatalities in our state.” The survey respondent from the Bootheel DEA Prescription Drug Task Force stated, “Prescription drug abuse continues to rise, causing an increase in overdoses and death.” (2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey)

89 Doctor shopping is defined as the practice of a “patient obtaining controlled substances from multiple healthcare practitioners without the prescribers’ knowledge of the other prescriptions,” (http://www.cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalsafety/Poisoning/laws/dr_shopping.html)

90 A pill mill is a “doctor’s office, clinic, or healthcare facility that routinely colludes in the prescribing and dispensing of controlled substances outside the scope of the prevailing standards of medical practice in the
shopping remains the most-used CPD diversion method in the Region. When survey respondents were asked to what level several diversion methods were utilized in their AORs, more respondents said the level was “high” for doctor shopping than for any other method (56%). The methods receiving the next highest number of “high” responses were: stolen from personal associates/family (44%), prescription fraud (42%), stolen from unassociated persons (23%), and pill mills (14%) (See Figure 25). Legitimately-obtained CPDs may be used for non-medical reasons by prescription holders or their friends and relatives. Teenagers and young adult abusers commonly steal CPDs from their parents or other adult relatives. Pharmacy burglaries and robberies are also seen in the Region, though at lesser levels. Pharmacy burglaries and robberies are often difficult to track in the Midwest HIDTA region because they are generally reported to local police departments as burglaries/robberies and are not investigated as drug-related crimes.

**Figure 25: Level of Use of CPD Diversion Methods, 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey**
When prescription drugs are diverted in the Region, they are typically narcotics, such as Vicodin or OxyContin, or depressants, such as Valium or Xanax. In fact, when asked the level that each CPD category is abused in their respective AORs, 51% of survey respondents stated that the level of abuse was “high” for narcotics, with 47% stating the same for depressants. To a lesser extent, stimulants and steroids are also diverted and abused in the Midwest HIDTA region. Only 28% of survey respondents stated that the level of abuse of stimulants was “high” in their respective AORs, while even fewer – 14% – stated that the abuse of steroids was “high.” In fact, 37% of survey respondents stated that the abuse of steroids was “low” (See Figure 26).

Figure 26: Level of Abuse of CPD Categories, 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey

In order to tackle the problems posed by the diversion of CPDs in our communities, the DEA Office of Diversion sponsors the National Take-Back Initiative. During Take-Back events, DEA’s state, local, and tribal law enforcement partners work at thousands of locations across the country to collect unneeded and unused prescription drugs from members of the public. During 2012, two Take-Back events were held, one on April 28th and the other on September 29th. During the Take-Back event on April 28th, 276 tons of prescription drugs were collected nationwide, while on September 29th 244 tons were collected. Law enforcement in the DEA St. Louis Field Division AOR collected a total of 42 tons of prescription drugs during Take-Back events


92 The DEA St. Louis Field Division covers all states in the Midwest HIDTA region with the exception of North Dakota.
in 2012, including 23 tons in April and 19 tons in September. The annual total of prescription
drugs collected by the DEA St. Louis Field Division in 2012 was up by 53% from 2011 levels.
In sum, there were 689 participants and 958 sites for Take-Back events by the DEA St. Louis
Field Division in 2012.

One unique challenge faced by law enforcement in the Midwest HIDTA region is the lack of a
Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) in the state of Missouri. According to the
Alliance of States with Prescription Monitoring Programs, PDMPs are “tools utilized by
government officials for reducing prescription drug abuse and diversion. [PDMPs] collect,
monitor, and analyze electronically transmitted prescribing and dispensing data submitted by
pharmacies and dispensing practitioners. The data are used to support states’ efforts in education,
research, enforcement and abuse prevention. [PDMPs] are managed under the auspices of a state,
district, commonwealth, or territory of the United States.” Currently, Missouri is the only state
in the country that has neither enacted nor passed legislation requiring a PDMP. Nebraska is
also one of only eight states (including the District of Columbia) that have enacted PDMP
legislation, but who does not yet have an operational program (See Appendix 4). Law
enforcement investigators in all other states of the Region benefit by having operational PDMPs
in their respective states.

**BULK CASH SMUGGLING AND MONEY LAUNDERING**

The most prevalent way for DTOs to transfer drug proceeds back to sources of supply is through
bulk cash smuggling. Most DTOs continue to utilize private vehicles with non-factory installed
hidden compartments to transport drug proceeds back to source cities both within the United
States and Mexico. DTOs also smuggle bulk cash in commercial vehicles, such as tractor
trailers, where drug proceeds are commingled with legitimate cargo. When survey respondents to
the 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey were asked the level to which different
methods were utilized to smuggle bulk cash, 70% of survey respondents stated that the use of
private vehicles to smuggle bulk cash in their respective AORs was “high.” Commercial
vehicles received the second largest percentage of “high” responses, with 37%.

Bulk cash is smuggled using the reverse routes on interstate highways of drug shipments coming
into the Region. As is typical in the United States, drugs generally flow west to east or south to
north, while money proceeds flow east to west or north to south. In addition to private and
commercial vehicles, DTOs also utilize trains, buses, and plans to transport bulk cash, placing
the cash either on a designated courier’s person or in the courier’s luggage. Money couriers for
DTOs may be only loosely associated to the DTOs and may know little or nothing about the
organization for which they are hired to smuggle bulk cash. DTOs also utilize money transfers
and money orders to transfer drug proceeds to sources of supply. For example, 77% of survey

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93 DEA St. Louis Field Division Take-Back Statistics were obtained from the DEA Kansas City District Office Diversion
Group.

94 http://www.pmpalliance.org/content/prescription-monitoring-frequently-asked-questions-faq
respondents stated that the use of money transfers to transfer drug proceeds was either “moderate” or “high” in their AORs, while 58% stated that the use of money orders was either “moderate” or “high.”

DTOs in the Midwest HIDTA region wishing to “launder”\(^95\) drug proceeds generally utilize high-cash businesses such as restaurants or night clubs, so that drug proceeds can be comingled with legitimate profits and effectively laundered. Other popular businesses through which drug traffickers launder money in the Midwest HIDTA region are: laundromats, convenience stores, auto sales businesses, small retail stores, and music recording companies. Drug traffickers in the Region also launder money through real estate purchases and management companies.

**OTHER DRUG THREATS AND EMERGING TRENDS**

**Lack of State-Level Pseudoephedrine Prescription Laws**

Complicating the methamphetamine production threat in the Midwest HIDTA region, laws related to pseudoephedrine, which is a key ingredient in the clandestine manufacture of powder methamphetamine,\(^96\) remain inconsistent among communities within the Region. Moreover, while five out of six states in the Midwest HIDTA region have legally-mandated pseudoephedrine electronic tracking by pharmacies,\(^97\) there are no state-level pseudoephedrine prescription laws in the Midwest HIDTA region. Where they exist, pseudoephedrine tracking laws are believed to have helped law enforcement develop investigations against methamphetamine producers. For example, the survey respondent from the Quad Cities Metropolitan Enforcement Group stated, “Methamphetamine conspiracy cases are easier to track due to the IL/IA laws tracking the ingredients used in the production of that substance.”

However, in a Report to Congressional Requesters by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) in January 2013 titled, “Drug Control: State Approaches Taken to Control Access to Key Methamphetamine Ingredient Show Varied Impact on Domestic Drug Labs,” researchers concluded, “Electronic tracking systems help enforce pseudoephedrine sales limits, but they have not reduced meth lab incidents and have limitations related to smurfing…Electronic tracking systems can help law enforcement investigate potential pseudoephedrine diversion, find meth

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\(^95\) According to the United States Internal Revenue Service, “The term ‘money laundering’ refers to the activities and financial transaction that are undertaken specifically to hide the true source of the money. In most cases, the money involved is earned from an illegal enterprise and the goal is to give that money the appearance of coming from a legitimate source.” (http://www.irs.gov/compliance/enforcement/article/0,,id=112999,00.html)

\(^96\) http://www.justice.gov/archive/olp/methawareness/

\(^97\) Pharmacies are mandated to track pseudoephedrine and other methamphetamine precursor drug sales in five out of six states of the Midwest HIDTA region, including Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, and North Dakota; mandated precursor reporting also exists in Illinois. Information from pharmacies in these states, as well as from some other states outside the Midwest HIDTA region, populates a real-time database called the National Precursor Log Exchange (NPLEX), which can be accessed by approved law enforcement personnel at no charge. (http://nplexservice.com/index.html)
labs, and prosecute individuals. However, meth cooks have been able to limit effectiveness of such systems as a means to reduce diversion through the practice of smurfing.”98

Despite evidence of their effectiveness in reducing methamphetamine lab incidents, only “Oregon, Mississippi, and select Missouri cities and counties have passed laws or ordinances requiring individuals to obtain a prescription from a healthcare provider in order to purchase pseudoephedrine products.”99 The limited data available related to pseudoephedrine prescription laws seem to show that these laws may be much more effective in combating methamphetamine production than pseudoephedrine tracking laws. The same GAO report stated, “The prescription-only approach for pseudoephedrine appears to have contributed to reductions in lab incidents…The implementation of prescription-only laws by Oregon and Mississippi was followed by declines in lab incidents. Law enforcement officials in Oregon and Mississippi attribute this reduction in large part to the prescription-only approach.”100

Within the Midwest HIDTA region, no states and only 63 cities or counties within Missouri, primarily located in southeastern Missouri, require a prescription in order to obtain pseudoephedrine.101 Statistics have shown pseudoephedrine laws in Missouri have been effective. The GAO stated, “The communities in Missouri that have adopted local prescription-only requirements also experienced a decline in the number of meth labs. For example, while lab incidents statewide in Missouri increased nearly 7% from 2010 to 2011, the area in southeastern Missouri where most of the communities have adopted prescription-only ordinances saw lab incidents decrease by almost half.”102 However, the close proximity of communities with pseudoephedrine prescription laws to communities that do not have such laws may be inhibiting the effectiveness of the laws that do exist. It seems clear that the lack of state-level pseudoephedrine prescription laws has had a detrimental effect on methamphetamine production in the Midwest HIDTA region. For example, the survey respondent from the Jasper County Drug Task Force, located in southwestern Missouri, stated, “change in law to control sales of pseudoephedrine in the City of Joplin has had limited success; neighboring cities and states have

101 According to the GAO, “63 cities or counties have passed laws or ordinances requiring individuals to obtain a prescription from a healthcare provider in order to obtain pseudoephedrine products.” Drug Control: State Approaches Taken to Control Access to Key Methamphetamine Ingredient Show Varied Impact on Domestic Drug Labs, GAO-13-204, Government Accountability Office, January 2013. (http://www.gao.gov/assets/660/651709.pdf)
Additionally, the survey respondent from the Jefferson County Municipal Enforcement Group stated more specifically, “Many local governments have enacted laws restricting the sale of pseudoephedrine to prescription-only. This has forced people that trade/sell pseudo[ephedrine] to purchase pseudoephedrine pills in St. Louis City and St. Louis County, where there are no such restrictions. This network of pseudo[ephedrine] couriers has become increasingly more organized…The production of methamphetamine is likely to grow in 2013 due to the availability of pseudoephedrine without a prescription requirement in neighboring communities.”

**Synthetic LSD/N-Bomb (“Smiles”)**

During 2012 and into 2013, a new synthetic drug called “N-Bomb” or “Smiles” has begun circulating the Midwest HIDTA region and, in particular, the St. Louis area. Within the Midwest HIDTA region, N-Bomb has caused multiple deaths in North Dakota. One North Dakota teen who fatally overdosed on N-Bomb was, “shaking, growling, [and] foaming at the mouth.” More deaths have been linked to N-Bomb from outside the Region, in states such as California, Louisiana, Minnesota, and Virginia. Like other synthetics, N-Bomb is untraceable in urinalysis tests, making it both challenging for doctors to treat and appealing to those wanting to circumvent mandatory urinalysis tests, such as those on parole or probation, people entering the military, and college athletes.

N-Bomb looks like and has effects similar to LSD and has been “compared to a more potent combination of MDMA and LSD.” N-Bomb, like LSD, can be absorbed through the skin. Typically, N-Bomb has been created from chemicals from the “2C family.” During July 2012, Congress agreed to legislation adding nine of the chemicals from the “2C family” (dimethoxyphenethylamines) as Schedule I banned substances under the Controlled Substances Act. However, similar to synthetic cathinones and cannabinoids, chemical formulas used to create N-Bomb are being altered to develop new substances that may fall outside of those substances already banned. According to DEA St. Louis Acting Special Agent in Charge, James Shroba, “[N-Bomb] is an extremely potent, hallucinogenic drug that can create violent, uncontrollable, psychotic episodes in people.” N-Bomb overdoses have been known to “cause deadly seizures, kidney failure, and fatally high blood pressure.”

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103 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey
104 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey
106 http://www.journalreview.com/opinion/article_78c9e7c8-1eec-11e2-bf4e-001a4bcf887a.html
107 http://www.journalreview.com/opinion/article_78c9e7c8-1eec-11e2-bf4e-001a4bcf887a.html
108 http://www.journalreview.com/opinion/article_78c9e7c8-1eec-11e2-bf4e-001a4bcf887a.html
111 http://www.journalreview.com/opinion/article_78c9e7c8-1eec-11e2-bf4e-001a4bcf887a.html
example of drug makers altering chemical compounds in the attempts to evade current local, state and federal drug laws.

DESCRIPTION OF THE NEEDS

While the Midwest HIDTA region has seen an increase in both the complexity and sophistication of drug trafficking methods and organizations, particularly by highly-organized Mexican DTOs, the continued economic downturn and concurrent decreasing federal, state, and local government budgets has caused financial support of law enforcement agencies in the Region, especially in smaller rural areas, to be drastically reduced. This has resulted in a lack of specialized equipment, training, and information sharing capabilities necessary to disrupt and dismantle DTOs. A decrease in funding to drug abuse treatment and prevention programs has also affected the ability of communities in the Region to solve the drug threat at the abuser level. In addition to a general need throughout the Region for funding of additional personnel and overtime required to properly and thoroughly conduct complex drug investigations, the needs of Midwest HIDTA initiatives can be separated into several categories, including: specialized equipment, training, intelligence and information sharing, and drug treatment/drug prevention. The most pressing needs of law enforcement in the Midwest HIDTA region fall under the categories of specialized equipment and training, followed by intelligence and information sharing and drug treatment/prevention.

SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT

Specialized equipment is necessary to both conduct effective drug investigations and to ensure officer safety. Commonly-used and important equipment is needed by Midwest HIDTA initiatives, particularly due to reduced law enforcement budgets in many communities. For instance, many Midwest HIDTA initiatives are in need of high-quality, high-resolution surveillance cameras (still and video/“pole” cameras); density meters; covert transmitter/recorders; laptops/iPads/air cards; and portable hand-held radios.

The use of court-authorized GPS trackers is especially important to HIDTA initiatives conducting drug investigations in the Region. Budgetary cuts have caused law enforcement personnel contractions in many communities of the Midwest HIDTA region. Personnel contractions have a palpable and negative effect on drug investigations. The use of court-authorized GPS trackers can help lessen this effect on agencies and serve as an efficient way to identify target and source locations.

Newer, more specialized equipment has also been identified as a need for initiatives in the Midwest HIDTA region. For instance, transportation routes could be better identified and investigations enhanced with portable license plate readers. The increased use of smartphones by drug traffickers has also increased the need for equipment to exploit the plethora of information that exists on these telephones. Cellebrite is a company that offers both hardware and software devices that are commonly used by law enforcement to obtain legally-authorized
content downloads of target cellular telephones. Cellebrite offers both a hardware and a software upgrade that provides law enforcement with the ability to extract GPS location information, bypass password requirements that often prevent law enforcement from accessing information from cellular telephones, and better exploit information on smartphone “apps” that are commonly used by drug traffickers. The Cellebrite upgrades also may allow investigators to download deleted content from target telephones and includes an analyzer software tool to decode and analyze reports with search capabilities. The cost of the upgraded tools from Cellebrite is prohibitive to many law enforcement agencies in the Midwest HIDTA region.

Finally, the local production of methamphetamine has created a significant community hazard throughout the Midwest HIDTA region. Officer and community safety is dependent upon law enforcement having the proper clandestine laboratory safety and decontamination equipment.

TRAINING

Budgetary constraints have caused many law enforcement agencies and training providers in the Midwest HIDTA region to cut both training opportunities within the Region and travel budgets for law enforcement officers to obtain training outside of the Region. Therefore, Midwest HIDTA initiatives are in desperate need of high-quality training that will result in enhanced investigations. Specific training needed by Midwest HIDTA initiatives is training in financial investigations, which would allow for more complete criminal investigations and would better track the financial component of criminal investigations, leading to taking more drugs off the street, decreasing drug-related crime, and increasing drug-related asset forfeitures.

Training in clandestine laboratory identification and processing is also a high-priority need in the Midwest HIDTA region. The abuse of CPDs has also been identified as a growing threat in the Midwest HIDTA region. An identified area of need by HIDTA initiatives is diversion training from DEA Diversion Investigators on how to prepare and successfully prosecute doctors who are over-prescribing medications.

Training on how drug traffickers utilize new technologies like smartphones, computer tablets, such as iPads, and social networks – and how law enforcement can use those same technologies to successfully investigate drug traffickers – would be greatly beneficial to Midwest HIDTA initiatives. Other training that would enhance the effectiveness of drug investigations in the Region include training in how to gather and analyze intelligence, including telephone toll analysis; Mexican drug cartel training; and ongoing training in proactive drug investigation techniques.

INTELLIGENCE AND INFORMATION SHARING

Continued and improved sharing of information and intelligence in the Midwest HIDTA region is vital to furthering investigations and ensuring officers safety. Related to this is the need for continued deconfliction, including training for law enforcement and ongoing maintenance and
improvements to the Midwest HIDTA deconfliction systems. A comprehensive meeting for Midwest HIDTA region intelligence analysts to share both strategic-level and investigational intelligence would benefit the entire Region.

Currently, with the exception of South Dakota, all states in the Midwest HIDTA region mandate the tracking of pseudoephedrine sales by pharmacies through the real-time NPLEx system, accessible and searchable by law enforcement personnel and offered to states that have enacted appropriate legislation free of charge. However, a better notification process is needed to track drug overdoses, since many overdose deaths are not being brought to the attention of law enforcement. This is particularly important for areas in the Region, such as St. Louis, that have experienced an increased in heroin and CPD-related overdose deaths.

Also, support for Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs (PDMPs) is needed throughout the Midwest HIDTA region. A PDMP is a “statewide electronic database which collects designated data on substances dispensed in the state…It is a tool used by states to address prescription drug abuse, addiction, and diversion.” According to the Alliance of States with Prescription Monitoring Programs, Missouri is the only state in the United States that has not passed legislation requiring a state PDMP. Additionally, another state in the Midwest HIDTA region, Nebraska, is one of eight states (including the District of Columbia) that have enacted PDMP legislation, but whose program is not yet operational (See Appendix 5). In all states of the Midwest HIDTA region, further support for PDMPs is necessary in order to address the growing threat that the diversion and abuse of CPDs poses throughout the Region.

Finally, access to intelligence tools and databases, such as Lexis Nexis, CLEAR, PenLink, and i2 Analyst’s Notebook is necessary throughout the Region to assist in investigations, particularly in the identification of targets, related addresses, and assets.

**DRUG TREATMENT/DRUG PREVENTION**

As addiction levels increase due to increased abuse of highly physiologically addictive substances, such as crack cocaine, heroin, and CPDs, adequate treatment programs are required to help reduce levels of addiction, as well as the violent and property crime that is associated. Of particular need in the Midwest HIDTA region are drug treatment programs in the prison system and for CPD addicts.

Additionally, growing drug threats, especially CPD and heroin addiction, are affecting increasing numbers of teenagers and young adults. By providing prevention programs in schools and within other youth organizations, addiction levels of the next generation of teenagers and young adults can hopefully be decreased.

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112 See Drug Enforcement Administration Office of Diversion Control, State Prescription Monitoring Programs website. (http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/faq/rx_monitor.htm)
OUTLOOK

Based upon an exhaustive examination of the current status and trends in the Midwest HIDTA region and in other regions of the United States, the Midwest HIDTA believes the following:

- Ice methamphetamine imported from Mexico will continue to be the greatest drug threat in the Midwest HIDTA region, with the highest relationship of all drug types to violent and property crime. Mexican DTOs will continue to dominate the wholesale distribution of ice methamphetamine, powder cocaine, and commercial marijuana in the Region. The Southwest Border routes are expected to continue being used extensively.

- High grade marijuana abuse will continue to rise and will be directly related to the legalization of marijuana by some states, including Colorado, California, Oregon, and Washington. High grade marijuana traffickers will continue to violate federal laws due to the perceived lower risk of federal interdiction, arrest, and prosecution as a result of these state laws, and the levels of high grade marijuana imported into the Midwest HIDTA region will continue to increase during 2013. USPS and commercial parcel post will continue to be utilized in increasing amounts to ship high grade marijuana into the Region.

- The abuse of CPDs will continue to increase and some abusers, looking for a cheaper, similar “high,” will turn to heroin abuse. This will contribute to the increase of heroin abuse in larger urban areas of the Midwest HIDTA region and will also contribute to the expansion of heroin abuse to the smaller, more rural areas in the Region, especially as street gangs and other organizations establish trafficking routes and methods for the distribution of heroin in these smaller communities.

- New types of synthetic drugs will continue to emerge and will be chemically-formulated in order to try to evade synthetics laws passed both federally and by states in the Region.

METHODOLOGY

Data used to compile this report fall into two categories: original and secondary. The 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey, a two-part survey that was developed by staff of the Midwest HIDTA Investigative Support Center (ISC), is the primary source of the original data. The two parts of the 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey are as follows: (1) A qualitative portion of the survey, which requested survey respondents to answer a series of open-ended questions; and (2) A quantitative survey, through which survey respondents were asked to indicate which of the provided answer options was most appropriate in describing the drug threat in their respective AORs. Midwest HIDTA PMP Data and data from DEA SMARTS were also used. Public sources were utilized for the secondary data. A discussion of each type follows.
ORIGINAL DATA

Federal, state, and local agencies that have been designated as Midwest HIDTA initiatives were surveyed to collect original data pertaining to the availability and perceived threat of controlled substances in the Midwest HIDTA region for 2012. Direct questions regarding specific drug types provide the quantitative data that are used for statistical comparisons of the intrastate drug activity in the Region. Qualitative data obtained from Midwest HIDTA initiatives comprised of brief narratives regarding the drug threat in their respective AORs. This information was obtained from the two-part 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey. Additionally, all Midwest HIDTA initiatives are required to report specific statistics relating to drug arrests and seizures by their agencies, which are then compiled into the Midwest HIDTA PMP Data. This Midwest HIDTA PMP Data was also utilized in this report. Finally, this report utilized data maintained by DEA in DEA SMARTS that relates to the number of arrests made by DEA and reported by state.

SECONDARY DATA

Federal Government Agencies: Data from different units in DEA were sought for this report. Reports from operations monitored by the EPIC NSS were included in this report. These seizures are reported for quantitative purposes, as a means for identifying the types of substances being transported, the types of transportation in use, the concealment methods, the travel routes, and the groups operating the smuggling organizations.

State Government: Each of the six states of the Midwest HIDTA region conduct surveys or other assessments to evaluate the drug abuse situation in their respective areas. A variety of intrastate reports were reviewed for applicability to the overall drug threat assessment in the six-state area.

Law Enforcement: Original data was obtained from participating agencies of the Midwest HIDTA region. Secondary data from these and other agencies are also included in this report. Federal agencies, such as the DEA and the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) publish drug specific reports. Data from these journals is enlightening with respect to overall availability, use, and source locations. Information of this type is important in assessing the impact of external factors on drug abuse in the Region. Agencies within the Midwest HIDTA region prepare similar journals. This allows assessment of the Midwest HIDTA region, resulting in the information that is included in this report.
APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Geographic Depiction of the Midwest HIDTA Region
APPENDIX 2: Survey Respondents, 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey

PRIMARY MARKET AREAS

St. Louis City/St. Louis County Metropolitan

Frankly County Narcotics Enforcement Group
Jefferson County Municipal Enforcement Group
St. Charles County Drug Task Force
St. Louis County Multi-Jurisdictional Drug Task Force
St. Louis DEA Intelligence Group
St. Louis DEA Major Investigations/Conspiracy Group 37
St. Louis DEA Violent Traffickers Task Force
St. Louis FBI Group 5

Kansas City, Missouri/Kansas Metropolitan

Jackson County Drug Task Force
Kansas City DEA Interdiction Task Force
Kansas City FBI Squad 1
Kansas City, MO Metropolitan Task Force
Kansas City, MO Street Crimes
Kansas City/Overland Park DEA Combined Task Force

Wichita

Wichita DEA Task Force

Omaha/Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area

Omaha DEA Drug Task Force
Omaha Metropolitan Drug Task Force

Des Moines Metropolitan Area

Des Moines DEA Task Force

Cedar Rapids/Quad Cities Metropolitan Area

Cedar Rapids DEA Task Force
Muscatine Task Force
Quad Cities Metropolitan Enforcement Group

115 This Initiative completed only the Quantitative portion of the 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey.
SECONDARY MARKET AREAS

Springfield, MO (I-44 Importation Corridor)

Jasper County Drug Task Force
Missouri Interdiction & Information Exchange
Springfield DEA Task Force

Topeka & Garden City, KS (I-35 & I-70 Importation Corridor)

Garden City DEA Task Force
Kansas Intelligence and Information Exchange
Kansas Interdiction Support
Southeast Kansas Drug Enforcement Task Force
Topeka Regional Drug Task Force

Lincoln & Grand Island, NE (I-80 Importation Corridor)

Central Nebraska Drug & Safe Street Task Force
Lincoln-Lancaster Drug Task Force
Nebraska Interdiction Support
Western Intelligence Narcotics Group (WING) Drug Task Force

Sioux City, IA & Sioux Falls, SD (I-29 Importation Corridor)

Sioux Falls Task Force
Tri-State Sioux City (DEA) Task Force

Rapid City, SD (I-90 Importation Corridor)

Pennington County Drug Task Force

Fargo, ND (I-29 to Canadian Border Importation Corridor)

Fargo DEA Task Force
Grand Forks County Task Force

OTHER INITIATIVES

Bootheel DEA Prescription Drug Task Force
Cooperative Operation for Drug Enforcement (C.O.D.E.) Task Force
Iowa Interdiction Support
Jefferson City DEA Task Force
Metro Area Narcotics Task Force
North Dakota Highway Interdiction
Southeast Missouri Drug Task Force

116 This Initiative completed only the Quantitative portion of the 2012 Midwest HIDTA Threat Assessment Survey.
APPENDIX 3: *Operation Log Jam* Map

APPENDIX 4: Midwest HIDTA Region Interstate Highways and International Border Ports of Entry (POE’s)
APPENDIX 5: Status Map of Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs (PDMPs) as of October 17, 2012\textsuperscript{118}

\textsuperscript{118} Obtained from the Alliance of States with Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs website. (http://www.pmpalliance.org/pdf/pmp_status_map_2012.pdf)
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*One-Pot Methamphetamine Cooks Pose New Danger*, West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection.

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El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) National Seizure System (NSS)

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Midwest HIDTA Performance Management Process (PMP) Data


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National Take-Back Initiative, United States Department of Justice, DEA Office of Diversion Control

DEA Kansas City Diversion

Alliance of States with Prescription Monitoring Programs

United States Internal Revenue Service

National Precursor Log Exchange (NPLEx)


State Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs, United States Department of Justice, DEA Office of Diversion Control