

Alaska State Troopers Alaska Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Enforcement

2010 Annual Drug Report





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Table of Contents

Introduction 3

Our Mission..... 3

Staffing and Support 4

Nature of Alaska’s Drug and Alcohol Problem 5

Drugs of Choice 5

 Alcohol 6

 Cocaine 7

 Heroin..... 8

 Marijuana 9

 Methamphetamine 10

 Prescription Drugs..... 11

National Prescription Drug Take Back Day..... 12

ABADE Unit Overview 13

 Alaska Interdiction Task Force 14

 Fairbanks Area-wide Narcotics Team 15

 Major Offenders Unit 16

 Mat-Su Drug Enforcement Team 17

 South Central Area-wide Narcotics Team 18

 Southeast Alaska Cities Against Drugs..... 19

 Western Alaska Alcohol and Narcotics Team 20

DEA Anchorage 21

Emerging Trends in 2010..... 22

 Pacific Region Trends 22

 Alaska Trends 24

Summary..... 26



Introduction

The Alaska State Troopers, Alaska Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Enforcement (ABADE) in authoring this publication, has endeavored to represent the drug situation in Alaska in a manner that provides the broadest possible picture of the true situation.

There are numerous agencies that conduct drug investigations in Alaska. While some agencies have a less formal relationship, most work closely with the Alaska State Troopers. In order to properly represent the true drug situation in Alaska, statistics from as many agencies in Alaska as possible are included in this report. Information provided by all sources should be considered when attempting to measure how drugs are impacting the citizens of this state.

We believe including as much information from all agencies involved in drug enforcement in Alaska is vital when analyzing the needs of the state in the arena of drug enforcement. However, it is important to note that the numbers alone should not be the sole source from which to make a complete assessment of the true drug situation in Alaska. To get the truest picture of the drug situation within Alaska we have attempted to take into account the anecdotal information gathered from conversations with those investigators on the frontlines of Alaska's war and drugs.

Our Mission

ABADE provides a leadership role in coordinating law enforcement's efforts to reduce the availability of alcohol and controlled substances throughout Alaska. ABADE recognizes that a successful alcohol and drug program depends upon a unified effort blending traditional law enforcement techniques with demand reduction programs that address educational, social, and community concerns.

ABADE's mission is to:

- ❖ Interdict and seize alcohol and controlled substances that are illegally distributed throughout Alaska.
- ❖ Identify and arrest distributors of controlled substances and illegal alcohol.
- ❖ Provide training and investigative support to criminal justice agencies.
- ❖ Support and participate in public education programs.



Staffing and Support

ABADE recognizes that because of Alaska's geographical vastness and ethnic diversity, no single law enforcement agency is capable of handling the drug and alcohol issues alone. Using a combination of federal and state funding, the Department of Public Safety helps to fund a number of multi-jurisdictional task forces around the state. ABADE encourages cooperative efforts between federal, state and local law enforcement agencies and has taken a leadership role in fostering and developing many of these cooperative arrangements through multi-jurisdictional and/or multi-agency efforts. The ABADE headquarters office in Anchorage primarily supports eight (8) investigative task forces throughout the state. These teams are broken down by region as follows:

Alaska Interdiction Task Force (DEA sponsored)

Anchorage Enforcement Group (DEA sponsored)

Fairbanks Area-wide Narcotics Team

Major Offender Unit

Mat-Su Drug Narcotics Enforcement Team

South Central Area-wide Narcotics Team

Southeast Alaska Cities Against Drugs Task Force

Western Alaska Alcohol and Narcotics Team

The Alaska National Guard Counter Drug Support Program (CDSP) provides additional personnel support within several ABADE units, as well as other narcotic enforcement groups. They provide operational resources, which include, but are not limited to manpower, equipment, and logistical support to federal, state, and local law enforcement throughout Alaska. Financed under a special congressional appropriation, there is no cost to the state of Alaska for CDSP personnel support. This program contributes numerous resources not normally available to law enforcement agencies for assistance specific to drug investigations.

ABADE participates with and receives assistance from several investigative agencies involved in drug enforcement. These agencies include the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the US Postal Inspection Service, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (BATF) and US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). ABADE also works closely with other law enforcement agencies on a state and local level.



Nature of Alaska's Drug and Alcohol Problem

Members of Alaska's law enforcement community and others who are part of Alaska's criminal justice system have long known that the greatest contributing factor to violent crimes, including domestic violence and sexual assault, is drug and alcohol abuse. It is also widely recognized that many of the accidental deaths that occur in Alaska are related to alcohol use. This is especially true in the western regions of the state and is clearly shown through statistics drawn from the Alaska State Trooper case management system. Of all cases initiated by the Alaska State Troopers in 2010, 37% involved drugs and/or alcohol. Of all violent crime cases, 61.9% involved drugs and/or alcohol.

While there is no question that many aspects of the drug and alcohol problem are unique to Alaska, ABADE strives to provide a continuing and coordinated effort that not only meets the needs of Alaska, but is also dovetailed with the National Drug Control Strategy. The strategy underscores the social and economic costs to society and was developed to provide general guidance and a framework for federal, state, and local agencies in developing a counter drug effort. The strategy's established objectives are:

- Strengthen efforts to prevent drug use in communities
- Seek early intervention opportunities in health care
- Integrate treatment for substance use disorders into health care and expand support for recovery
- Break the cycle of drug use, crime, delinquency, and incarceration
- Disrupt domestic drug trafficking and production
- Strengthen international partnerships
- Improve information systems for analysis, assessment, and local management

Drugs of Choice

Alcohol, cocaine, heroin, marijuana, methamphetamine, and prescription drugs have been identified as the primary substances of abuse and are the focus of most law enforcement efforts.

During 2010, law enforcement officials have observed that the number of local meth labs have remained consistent. Methamphetamine continues to be readily available throughout the state, but is more prominent in the larger populated areas.

Perhaps just as significant are the abuse and sales of prescription drugs and the continued resurgence of the abuse of heroin in the urban areas. Alcohol and marijuana continue to be the overwhelming drugs of choice for Western Alaska.



Alcohol

Alaska's criminal justice professionals recognize that alcohol is the primary substance of abuse in Alaska and is the leading cause of violent, suicidal, and accidental deaths, especially in rural areas. Currently, 107 communities¹ have voted in favor of local option statutes prohibiting the sale, importation, and/or possession of all alcohol. Because alcohol remains legal in many areas of Alaska, illegal bootlegging activities continue to be a problem in the local option communities. Alcohol is easily transported to the villages via the US Postal Service, local air carriers, private aircraft, boat, snow machines and express mailing services. Bootlegging alcohol of all types has become a very lucrative business in rural Alaska.

The United States Postal Inspector continues to support the cross deputation of investigators in ABADE's Western Alaska Alcohol and Narcotics Team. This program is the only one of its kind currently in the United States.

The economics of the illegal sales of alcohol is staggering. For example, a bootlegger can purchase a 750-milliliter bottle of alcohol legally for \$10 or less in an urban liquor store. The same bottle of alcohol in Bethel, Kotzebue or Barrow may sell for \$50. In the more remote communities, alcohol can easily sell for \$150 to over \$300 per bottle depending on the supply and demand. The initial purchase for the bootlegger involves a minimal cash investment, a maximum cash return with little threat of being caught or criminally charged. A dollar-for-dollar comparison of alcohol and drugs purchased in Anchorage and then resold in many Alaskan villages breaks down as follows:

Substance	Investment	Return *
Cocaine	\$1.00	\$1.50
Marijuana	\$1.00	\$4.00
Alcohol	\$1.00	\$15.00

* Calculated at \$150 per bottle

Alcohol seized by ABADE (gallons)

2008	2009	2010
1029	582.29	774.02

Alcohol related charges/arrests by ABADE

2008	2009	2010
517	317	363

¹ <http://www.dps.state.ak.us/abc/docs/localopt.pdf>



Cocaine

Cocaine continues to be a widely used and lucrative drug for sale in Alaska. Cocaine is readily available in most areas of the state and is seen with great frequency in powder form and crack cocaine in the major urban areas such as Anchorage and Fairbanks.

Cocaine is brought into Alaska concealed on passengers or in luggage through ports of entry such as the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport, and it is also shipped via the US Post Office or commercial parcel companies such as FedEx or UPS.

The cocaine brought into Alaska is typically packaged in kilogram quantities and later broken down by dealers into smaller quantities for retail sale. In powder form, it is normally sold in gram quantities for \$100-150 and its primary method of ingestion is by snorting.

Crack dealers use a process involving powder cocaine, water, baking soda and heat to produce crack cocaine, which is then sold in small rocks for \$20. The primary method of use for crack is by smoking.

The statistics below show powder and crack cocaine seized in 2010 by all task forces where ABADE investigators are assigned.

Cocaine seized by ABADE (kilos)

2008	2009	2010
19.54	13.07	10.05

Cocaine related charges/arrests by ABADE

2008	2009	2010
187	96	145



Heroin

Heroin is a highly addictive drug derived from morphine which is obtained from the opium poppy. It is a “downer” or depressant that affects the brain's pleasure systems and interferes with the brain's ability to perceived pain. It is a white to dark brown powder or tar like substance. Heroin can be used in a variety of ways, depending on the user's preference and the purity of the drug. Heroin can be injected into a vein, injected into a muscle, smoked in a water pipe or standard pipe, mixed in a marijuana joint or regular cigarette, inhaled as smoke through a straw, or snorted as a powder via the nose.

The short term effects of heroin abuse appear soon after a single dose and disappears after a few hours. After an injection of heroin, the user reports feeling a surge of euphoria accompanied by a warm flushing of the skin, a dry mouth, and heavy extremities.

Heroin use is not isolated to the metropolitan areas of Alaska. Undercover buys and interdictions of heroin have been reported in several smaller communities. Heroin is primarily imported into Alaska via parcels and body carries. Investigations have shown that heroin use crosses socio-economic boundaries.

Heroin seized by ABADE (grams)

2008	2009	2010
4970.18	1479.60	2107.19

Heroin related charges/arrests by ABADE

2008	2009	2010
99	64	82



Marijuana

Marijuana is available throughout the state and is viewed as a gateway drug to other drugs for young adults and teenagers. Demand for Alaskan-grown marijuana continues to be high as a result of its exceptional tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) content. Because Alaskan produced marijuana is extremely high quality; Alaska is considered a marijuana exporting state. However, there is also a significant market for "BC Bud" brought into Alaska from British Columbia, Canada.

ABADE teams continue to find extremely sophisticated indoor growing operations. Most commercial marijuana growing operations are found in communities along Alaska's road system. It is not unusual for sites to be located in homes with hidden or underground rooms specifically designed for the cultivation of marijuana. These rooms are often equipped with surveillance cameras and state-of-the-art timers controlling temperature, lighting, water, humidity and air purifiers. Many grows are found during and/or after fires. Also, many lease/rental and abandoned houses are damaged by the remodeling and humidity of a grow operation.

In some parts of the state, the local economy is directly affected by the influx of money from illegally produced marijuana. Proceeds from marijuana production are used for a multitude of purchases including fuel, grow equipment/supplies, utilities, vehicles, ATV's and building materials.

Processed Marijuana seized by ABADE (pounds)

2008	2009	2010
253.09	258.23	316.07

Marijuana related charges/arrests by ABADE

2008	2009	2010
852	1,011	1,040

Marijuana grows eradicated by ABADE

2008	2009	2010
72	85	75

Marijuana plants seized by ABADE

2008	2009	2010
4,349	5,165	3,822



Methamphetamine

Methamphetamine use continues to be an issue throughout the United States including Alaska. Methamphetamine, also known as meth, speed, crank, crystal, and ice, produces an increase in energy and alertness and a decrease in appetite. The effects, which include an intense rush, have been reported to last up to 36 hours. It can be smoked, snorted, injected, or taken orally.

DEA has been extremely helpful in assisting in the cost of clean-up at clandestine lab sites. This requires a certified clean-up company to respond to the scene of each location, containerize larger items as well as the containers of chemical. These containers are then transported to a location for safe long-term storage and/or destruction.

However, the meth labs discovered continue to be present in single and multi-family residences in many neighborhoods. In addition to meth labs producing illegal, often deadly drugs, the clandestine nature of the manufacturing process and the presence of ignitable, corrosive, reactive, and toxic chemicals at the sites, have resulted in explosions, fires, toxic fumes, and irreparable damage to human health and to the environment. Frequently children are found residing in meth lab sites and many continue to live in dangerous environments. Loaded firearms are also frequently found at these meth labs, which increases the danger to children living in these residences.

Some of the commonly available items used in the manufacturing of meth include, Ephedrine or pseudoephedrine (found in cold/allergy tablets), lithium batteries, starter fluid, rock/table salt, matchbooks, coffee filters, acetone, aluminum foil and assorted kitchen glassware.

Meth Labs seized by ABADE

2008	2009	2010
12	9	11

Meth seized by ABADE (grams)

2008	2009	2010
3,849.63	20,728.4	2,054.77

Meth related charges/arrests by ABADE

2008	2009	2010
138	163	185

For more information regarding meth education and awareness, go to:

www.montanameth.org, www.mfiles.org,
www.lifeormeth.org, www.metheducation.com



Prescription Drugs

Throughout the state we have seen a significant increase in the illegal prescription drug trade. The number of overall illegal prescription drugs seized in 2010 has increased considerably compared to 2009 seizures. Not only does the abuse of prescription drugs create a health hazard for the users, it creates a financial tragedy in the communities. The drugs vary in price and can cost anywhere from one dollar per milligram to two dollars per milligram depending on availability. With the increased demand for the drugs and a shortening of supply, many abusers may not have the money or insurance to pay for their addiction; thus increasing property and violent crimes in these communities. It has been reported that tens of thousands of dollars are being spent to feed this growing abuse and addiction.

The sale and abuse of prescription drugs such as Oxycontin/Oxycodone and Hydrocodone continued to be significant issue in 2010. These drugs are sought for their pharmaceutical purity and ability to alter the central nervous system. Oxycontin/Oxycodone seizures nearly doubled from the amount seized in 2009 and Hydrocodone seizures have more than doubled over seizures in 2009. The 2010 seizure total for Oxycontin/Oxycodone and Hydrocodone is 6,585 dosage units and reflects a 448% increase over the prior ten year average of 1,469 dosage units.

Prescription drugs have been linked to the following crimes - homicide, assault, prescription fraud, home invasion thefts and pharmacy robberies. People who are addicted to prescription drugs facilitate their addiction by doctor shopping, pharmacy shopping, forgery, and purchasing the drugs via the Internet. Law enforcement is especially concerned for the welfare of particularly vulnerable populations such as the elderly and those with severe long-term illnesses such as cancer.

It is the intent of ABADE to increase pressure on those involved in the non-medical use, abuse, and sales of these addictive drugs, by applying tried and true narcotics investigation techniques, and when ever prudent partnering with the DEA to charge these crimes in the federal system.

Hydrocodone seized by ABADE (dosage units)

2008	2009	2010
534	281	627.50

Oxycontin/Oxycodone seized by ABADE (dosage units)

2008	2009	2010
2,566.5	3,403.50	5,958.25

All other prescription drugs seized by ABADE (dosage units)

2008	2009	2010
3,042.50	2,196.50	2,668.50



National Prescription Drug Take Back Day

This initiative addresses a vital public safety and public health issue. More than seven million Americans currently abuse prescription drugs, according to the 2009 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration's National Survey on Drug Use and Health. Each day, approximately, 2,500 teens use prescription drugs to get high for the first time according to the Partnership for a Drug Free America. Studies show that a majority of abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, including the home medicine cabinet.

In an effort to address this problem, the US Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Administration, Office of Diversion Control, in conjunction with state and local law enforcement agencies throughout the United States, conducted the first ever National Prescription Drug Take Back Day on Saturday, September 25, 2010. The purpose of this National Take Back Day was to provide a venue for persons who wanted to dispose of unwanted and unused prescription drugs. This effort was a huge success in removing potentially dangerous prescription drugs, particularly controlled substances, from our nation's medicine cabinets. There were approximately 3,000 state and local law enforcement agencies throughout the nation that participated in the event. All told, the American Public turned in more than 121 tons of pills on this first National Take Back Day.

In participation with the Alaska Safe Medicine Alliance, numerous agencies and community groups throughout Alaska took part in this event. Pharmacists also participated and were available to answer medication management questions from individuals bringing in medications.

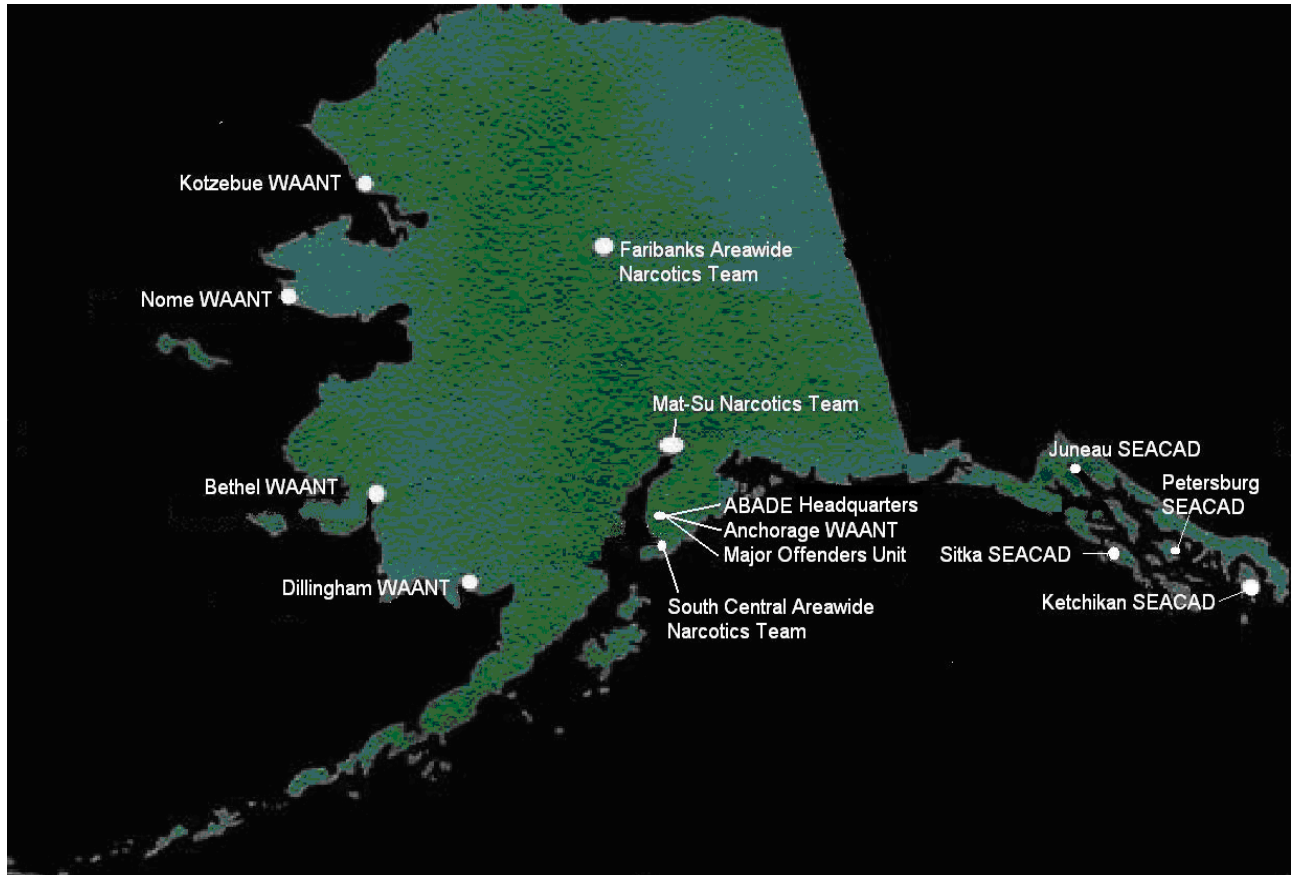
Education/ information for seniors, youth, and environmental protection were given out in the form of pamphlets, brochures and booklets. The information included medication management tools donated from AARP, Health education information from DEA and National Guard, as well as information collected and provided by the Seniors Behavioral Health Coalition. Most program participants reported having heard about the event through TV and radio media. Others reported hearing about the event through word of mouth, or printed media (flyers, articles in the paper).

Over 86 volunteers participated from The National Guard, the Alaska State Troopers, community police departments, girl scouts, the assisted living association and the statewide independent living association and others helped make the first statewide event a great success. Over 45 sites were registered around the state; every trooper post was registered to take back medications on the day of the event. Anchorage had four registered sites with an average of 60 contributors at each site. A total of 1,366 pounds of medications were collected statewide for safe destruction.



Alaska Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Enforcement Overviews

The map below gives a visual overview of the area of responsibility that the Alaska Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Enforcement has throughout the State of Alaska. Each unit represented works hand-in-hand with local and federal law enforcement agencies.



Alaska Interdiction Task Force

The Alaska Interdiction Task Force (AITF) is a federally funded task force sponsored by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). The Alaska State Troopers turned over supervision of the task force to the DEA in July 2002. Prior to that the unit was known as the Airport Interdiction Task Force and the unit's primary mission was focused solely on airport interdiction efforts. The AITF is now responsible for investigations that involve drug trafficking at various ports of entry to include passengers and luggage arriving at airport terminals, packages and cargo shipped through parcel delivery services, and commercial cargo carriers. The AITF is strategically located in Anchorage near the Ted Stevens International Airport, allowing the unit easy access to the airport and shipping companies where most passengers and parcels arrive.

The AITF team members consist of a DEA group supervisor, two DEA agents, one Alaska State Trooper investigator/K9 handler, one Anchorage Police Department officer, one Airport Public Safety officer, one Immigration & Customs Enforcement agent, one member of the National Guard Counter Drug Support Program (CDSP) and an AST criminal justice technician.

In 2010, this unit served 27 search warrants resulting in the seizure of approximately \$1.7 million dollars in illegal drugs.



Fairbanks Area-wide Narcotics Team

The primary area of responsibility for the Fairbanks Area-wide Narcotics Team is interior Alaska, which includes Fairbanks and the surrounding area, north to Barrow, and east to the Canadian border. This team is made up of one AST sergeant, two AST investigators, a Fairbanks Police Department officer, a North Pole Police Department officer, an AST criminal justice technician and a member of the National Guard Counter Drug Support Program. The Fairbanks unit also has an Alaska State Trooper Narcotics detection canine assigned to the team.

The Fairbanks team works closely with Chief Laren Zager of the Fairbanks Police Department and Chief Paul Lindhag of the North Pole Police Department as well as the uniformed patrol section of the Alaska State Troopers to educate, train, and support their efforts related to drug enforcement. The Fairbanks team also works closely with Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) agents and Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) agents assigned to the Fairbanks area. DEA and ATF complement the team's investigative ability by providing additional manpower, resources, and the possibility of federal prosecution of drug traffickers.

Their focus is to identify and investigate street level dealers of crack cocaine as well as the large distributors of powder cocaine. Clandestine methamphetamine laboratories also remain a concern in the Fairbanks area. These labs are being operated in or near single and multi-family homes, where public health and safety is at an extremely high risk.

In 2010, the unit served 58 search warrants resulting in the seizure of over \$135,000 in illegal alcohol and over \$1.9 million dollars in illegal drugs.



Major Offenders Unit

The Major Offenders Unit (MOU) focuses on major alcohol and drug distributors statewide. The team has been historically comprised of one AST sergeant, four AST investigators, an AST criminal justice technician, and a full-time prosecutor from the Department of Law. The unit is also supported by a member of the Alaska National Guard Counter Drug Support Program.

The MOU works independently and supports other ABADE units as well as local departments and federal agencies as needed. Nearly every investigator has been clan lab certified and is called upon to respond to various locations to assist in dismantling clandestine methamphetamine labs.

The MOU is co-located with the Alaska Interdiction Task Force in Anchorage and shares a close working relationship with DEA as well as the Internal Revenue Service; the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; Immigration and Customs Enforcement; and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.



Mat-Su Drug Enforcement Team

The Mat-Su Drug Enforcement team focuses on drug investigations within the Matanuska-Susitna region to include Palmer, Wasilla, Talkeetna, Glennallen, Valdez and Cordova. The team is comprised of one AST sergeant, two AST investigators, one Palmer Police Department officer, one Wasilla Police Department officer, an AST criminal justice technician and one member of the National Guard Counter Drug Support Program. The ABADE Mat-Su team works closely with Chief Russ Boatright of the Palmer Police Department and Chief Mike Hughes of the Wasilla Police Department as well as the uniformed patrol section of the Alaska State Troopers to educate, train, and support their efforts related to drug enforcement.

This team is one of our most experienced. They continue to balance their focus between long-term complex investigations and short term lower level distributors.

In 2010, heroin seizures continued to rise. Approximately 152.21 grams of heroin was seized by the Mat-Su Drug Enforcement team. When compared to the 16.3 grams seized in 2005, this clearly illustrates the resurgence of heroin into today's urban drug culture.

The Mat-Su Valley continues to see numerous marijuana grows, ranging from relatively small grows of twenty plants to grows containing over five hundred plants. Coupled with the Fairbanks area in the number of grows eradicated this year, these two areas are responsible for well over 62% of the grows eradicated statewide.

During 2010, this unit served 66 search warrants resulting in the seizure of more than \$5.3 million dollars worth of illegal drugs.



South Central Area-wide Narcotics Team

The South Central Area-wide Narcotics team focuses on drug investigations primarily on the Kenai Peninsula. The unit consists of one AST sergeant, one AST investigator, one Kenai Police Department officer and one AST criminal justice technician. The team works closely with Soldotna Police Chief John Lucking and Kenai Police Chief Gus Sandahl. Communities within its area of responsibility are Homer, Soldotna, Kenai, Seward, Kodiak Island as well as Girdwood and Whittier. The unit is dedicated to work closely with the local police departments in these communities and the uniformed patrol units of the Alaska State Troopers to educate and support their efforts in drug enforcement. The unit has also provided drug education to other agencies such as Juvenile Services and the Office of Children Services regarding drug endangered children as well as drug and methamphetamine clandestine lab identification.

Over the last few years, the South Central Areawide Narcotics Unit has made an effort to reduce the meth labs on the Kenai Peninsula by monitoring Sudafed logs at the local pharmacies and occasionally some Anchorage pharmacies. There has been a significant decrease in the number of clandestine laboratories discovered on the Kenai Peninsula.

With the decrease in clandestine labs, the South Central Areawide Narcotics Unit has observed an increase in the amount of processed methamphetamine and heroin being imported into the area. Also of note is the increase in the number of firearms seized in the association with the drug investigations.

In 2010, the unit served 20 search warrants resulting in the seizure of more than \$1.6 million dollars worth of illegal drugs.



Southeast Alaska Cities Against Drugs

The Southeast Alaska Cities Against Drugs Task Force (SEACAD) is a pro-active task force who's primary goal is to eliminate drug trafficking in southeast Alaska. SEACAD is comprised of one Alaska State Trooper sergeant, one Alaska State Trooper investigator, two municipal investigators and one criminal justice technician. SEACAD has four offices: The first office located in Juneau, consists of one AST sergeant and a criminal justice technician; the second office in Ketchikan, consists of one AST investigator; the third office in the Sitka Police Department, consists of one municipal investigator; the fourth office at the Petersburg Police Department, consists one municipal investigator.

The AST sergeant oversees and works hand-in-hand with the SEACAD project that is headed by Chief Sheldon Schmitt of the Sitka Police Department. Chief Schmitt along with Chief Jim Agner of the Petersburg Police Department provides narcotics officers to work alongside the AST investigators to focus on street level dealers, major offenders, and manufacturing. Some of the investigative methods used by this team include interdiction activities and undercover operations. SEACAD members are also tasked with teaching drug related classes to the local municipal police department throughout Southeast Alaska.

During the summer of 2010, Sitka Police Department reassigned a drug detection canine to their officer who is located in the Juneau office of SEACAD.

Though the Juneau Police Department and Ketchikan Police Department have their own individual drug units they still hold seats on the SEACAD Board. SEACAD, JPD and KPD investigators routinely work together to investigate the importation, sale and manufacturing of controlled substances throughout Southeast Alaska. Also, the Craig Police Department on occasion provides an investigator to assist the Ketchikan SEACAD office with investigations on the Prince of Wales Island and in Ketchikan. An improved working relationship has also been developed with the DEA High Intensity Drug Trafficking (HIDTA) area task force in Seattle, Washington.

In 2010, the unit served 29 search warrants resulting in the seizure of approximately \$1.8 million dollars worth of illegal drugs.



Western Alaska Alcohol and Narcotics Team

This team's primary area of responsibility is Alaska's western region, to include Kotzebue, Nome, Bethel, Dillingham and the Aleutian Chain. The WAANT consisted of one AST sergeant and two AST investigators in Anchorage, three AST investigators in Bethel, one AST investigator in Nome, one AST investigator in Dillingham, one AST investigator in Kotzebue and local police officers in Kotzebue and Dillingham. In addition, the unit also has criminal justice technicians in Anchorage and Bethel.

Due to the vast number of local option communities in Western Alaska, a significant portion of this team's focus is on alcohol enforcement. They target smugglers and bootleggers through undercover operations and interdictions.

As in previous years, the two most common methods of importing alcohol and illegal drugs into rural communities are via the US Postal system and local airlines. Alcohol shipped legally to regional hubs such as Nome, Bethel, and Kotzebue is then illegally distributed to local option communities that have banned alcohol or have limited the possession of alcohol under the local option laws of Alaska.

Because much of the alcohol and drugs being sold illegally in Alaska are shipped through the US mail, the US Postal Inspectors Service conducts interdictions with direct support from AST and CDSP. These efforts consist of US Postal Inspectors assisted by AST investigators and CDSP personnel monitoring packages en route to outlying villages and communities through postal facilities in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Bethel. Suspicious packages are brought to the attention of the postal inspectors, who then decide how best to investigate the shipment.

The investigations of many of these seizures are coordinated through AST and/or other local law enforcement entities. The Postal Inspectors office relies heavily on support from ABADE. This support includes resources like scent detection canines, intelligence information and follow-up efforts. Not only does this support assist in the seizure, it also helps successfully investigate and prosecute those involved in alcohol bootlegging and drug trafficking. The cross deputation of AST WAANT team members by the Postal Inspectors Office occurred in 2007 and continued in 2010. This cross deputation has given WAANT investigators additional authority to conduct investigations involving postal parcels. Through this program, alcohol seizures with a street value of over \$90,000 and illicit drugs with a street value of over \$475,000 were interdicted in 2010.

Alcohol and marijuana continue to be the overwhelming drugs of choice for Western Alaska; however WAANT investigators have witnessed a significant increase in the level of illegal prescription medication distribution as well as the presence of heroin and methamphetamine. WAANT continues to see mostly opportunistic sellers of alcohol with no real organizational structure to target.

In 2010, this unit served 79 search warrants in 2010, and seized over \$330,000 in illegal alcohol and just over one million dollars in illegal drugs.





DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in Alaska is broken down into the Anchorage District Office (DO) along with a Post of Duty in Fairbanks, Alaska. The Anchorage DO is broken down into the Enforcement Group (EG) and the Alaska Interdiction Task Force (AITF). These groups operate as Task Forces (TF), in that they are comprised of DEA Agents as well as officers from other departments. The EG has federally deputized TF Officers from the Anchorage Police Department (PD) and the Alaska State Troopers (AST) while the AITF, which is housed near the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport, consists of federally deputized TF Officers from the AST, Anchorage PD, and Airport Police, as well as several other federal agencies as needed. The Alaska National Guard Counter Drug Support Program supports the DEA throughout the entire state.

The DEA in Alaska is deeply involved in working with all state and local drug units to enhance and facilitate investigations of major offenders throughout Alaska. The DEA is co-located with the AST Major Offenders Unit at the AITF facility in Anchorage.

The DEA continues to furnish training to state and local agencies. The DEA provided funding for law enforcement personnel to be trained and re-certified in a variety of Drug Law Enforcement related topics. The DEA also provided funding for disposal of clandestine methamphetamine laboratories and marijuana eradication operations.

The DEA continues to facilitate forfeiture proceedings related to assets and funds seized as a result of criminal investigations and drug trafficking. This effort allows state and local law enforcement agencies to receive a portion of the assets seized, which in turn funds additional criminal investigations.

Drug seizures by DEA

	Cocaine (kilos)	Heroin (kilos)	Marijuana (lbs)	Meth (lbs)
2008	11	4.2	106.86	.95
2009	4.57	1.10	53.20	4
2010	8.54	3.71	1589.93	14.24



Emerging Trends in 2010

It is the intent of this section to familiarize the reader with some current and anticipated trends within Alaska. To do so it is important to look at the current Pacific Region picture as Alaska tends to follow suit in the following years. The National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC) breaks the nation down into nine regions. The Pacific Region is made up of Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Nevada, Hawaii, Guam and Northern and Central California.

PACIFIC REGION TRENDS

Methamphetamine

According to the NDIC's 2009 Drug Threat Assessment, methamphetamine continues to be the greatest threat to the Pacific Region. They report that although the domestic production of methamphetamine has declined over the region in large part due to the regulation of precursor chemicals use in its production; it is widely available throughout the region. It is further reported that the majority of methamphetamine within the region is supplied by Mexican drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) entering the country through the ports of entry and along the United States - Mexico borders.

Powder Cocaine

The NDIC identifies powder cocaine as a significant issue in the Pacific Region as well. Also supplied to the United States by Mexican DTOs, the DTOs supply independent dealers and street gangs with the powder cocaine that they often times process into crack cocaine prior to distribution.

Marijuana

Marijuana is the most widely available and commonly abused drug throughout the Pacific Region. The Pacific Region leads the country in marijuana cultivation.

THC Extraction

THC extraction seems to be growing in popularity for a number of reasons. It is perceived as being "more healthy" than smoking marijuana and the claim is that there is no cancer causing carcinogens. There is also very little smell unlike smoking marijuana. Because there is no harsh smoke, there is no irritation to the lungs, and no tar to stain teeth and fingers. But what may be the most attractive reason to those that use the drug is the fact that up to five times more THC enters the bloodstream and the cost associated with that high is much cheaper. For those that grow marijuana it allows them to get more THC out of the marijuana leaves or "shake". Since the marijuana bud holds most of the THC it is usually sold as is. With THC extraction the leaves that hold a relatively lesser amount of THC can be utilized.

Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) is the main active compound found in the marijuana plant. THC extraction simply refers to the process used to extract the compound from the rest of



the plant. Usually the process includes the use of a solvent passing through the marijuana plant, stripping it of the THC and being collected in a glass dish. When the solvent has later evaporated it leaves behind a sticky dark substance known as hashish oil which can contain up to 70% THC. This is a much higher concentration of THC than when it is in plant form. Of samples tested from 1995 to 2009 the average THC content in marijuana cultivated in Alaska is 10.72%. The national average of THC content in marijuana from 1995 to 2009 is 6.70%². The level of THC in marijuana is largely dependent on the quality of the plant strain and the quality of cultivation.

Once the hashish oil is collected, which requires scrapping it from the bottom of the glassware with a razor blade, it can be ingested in a number of ways, from placing it on a cigarette, inhaling the vapors after heating it up, or placing it in food. The health consequence associated with ingesting hashish oil is elevated since the THC levels are so much higher, not to mention the added consequences of ingesting the solvents used in the THC extraction process.

The possession or manufacture of hashish is prohibited in Alaska. It is a class C felony to be in possession of three or more grams of hashish; any lesser amount would be charged as an A misdemeanor. The manufacture of hashish is a class B felony which carries a penalty of up to 10 years in jail and/or up to \$100,000 fine.

Salvia Divinorum and Salvinorin A

The DEA Office of Diversion Control describes *Salvia divinorum* as a perennial herb in the mint family, only found naturally in the Sierra Mazateca region of Oaxaca, Mexico, the plant, can grow to over three feet in height, has large green leaves, hollow square stems and white flowers with purple calyces.³ Although it has only been found naturally growing in Oaxaca, Mexico, the plant can also be grown successfully outside of this region. Sought for its hallucinogenic properties, the plant found its origins of use with the shamans of Mazateca Indians in certain religious ceremonies.

The Alaska Legislature is considering potential legislation restricting this substance in Alaska.

² <http://www.usdoj.gov/ndic/pubs25/25921/marijuan.htm>

³ http://www.dea.gov/diversion.usdoj.gov/drugs_concern/salvia_d/salvia_d.htm



ALASKA TRENDS

Methamphetamine

In July of 2006, pseudoephedrine regulations were adopted by the State of Alaska. This armed law enforcement professionals with a valuable tool to combat meth labs in the state. The table below shows the number of reported meth labs seized by ABADE.

Reported Meth Labs Seized in Alaska *

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
18	11	12	9	11

* Statistic represents labs seized by ABADE only.

Although we have witnessed a consistent decrease in the number of methamphetamine labs since 2006, ABADE has some concern of this number showing significant increase in the years to come due to the recent popularity of a new method in producing methamphetamine known as the One Pot Cook.

Methamphetamine cooks using the single pot method combine the anhydrous ammonia, the pseudoephedrine tablets, water and the reactive metal into one container from the beginning of the process. The intent is to reduce the amount of time needed for the overall process. The dangers to the cooks and to the first responders are due to the mixing of all of the ingredients in one container. The concentration of products builds up the ether pressure within the sealed container to levels beyond which the containers were built to withstand. The building pressure can create a rupture or bursting of the container exposing the ingredients within to the outside air. Beyond the damage that is created by the bursting container, exposure of items such as the reactive metals to the air then creates further explosive danger. As this method begins to gain in popularity within Alaska it will increase the danger to all citizens of Alaska from explosions, fires, and exposure to dangerous chemicals.

As previously mentioned in this publication, methamphetamine abuse remains a significant issue within Alaska. Although the number of labs has remained relatively low, it appears that the use and abuse of the drug lingers. As previously written about in prior reports the anticipated increase in the levels of imported methamphetamine have come to fruition.

Prescription Medication

More and more, pharmaceutical medications are being abused and sold. ABADE continues to see significant increases in the number of pills seized in 2010. It is believed that the largest portion of these medications is being obtained through illegal means.



Heroin

The number of heroin seizures in our urban areas continues to grow. ABADE recognizes that there has been an increase in the availability of heroin throughout state and is no longer isolated to the urban areas.

Synthetic Cannabinoids

Synthetic cannabis is a psychoactive herbal and chemical product which, when consumed mimics the effects of smoking marijuana. Marketed as incense and herbs, it is sold on the internet and in smoke shops.

Although complete studies have not been conducted some of the side effects of synthetic cannabis consumption are heart palpitations, extreme agitation, vomiting, delusions, hallucinations, and panic attacks.

The Alaska Legislature is considering legislation restricting this substance in Alaska.



Summary

The Alaska Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Enforcement, with its unique ability to interdict and investigate cases across the state, recognizing that drug abuse is not confined to any one geographical location or any economic strata in our state. Drug and alcohol abuse affects all Alaskans, despite social, ethnic, racial and economic barriers.

We also recognize that the ill-gotten gains of drug traffickers and alcohol smugglers promote an increase in lawlessness of all types. This lawlessness is not isolated to the use of controlled substances. It includes, but is not limited to, burglary, theft, domestic violence assaults and murder. By the eradication of such activity and the arrest of those who would profit off the misery of others, we will make Alaska and the communities therein a much better and safer place to live and raise a family. The Alaska Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Enforcement, along with our partner agencies throughout the state, diligently dedicate our resources and energy toward that goal.

The Alaska Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Enforcement is committed to working with all interested agencies in the fight against substance abuse throughout the state by using innovative concepts to deal with the illegal sale and distribution of alcohol and drugs. We are also committed to focusing on increased awareness and knowledge of drug abuse through educational presentations to the Public Safety Academy and in public forums, such as schools, service organizations and other community groups.

Resources:

Office of National Drug Control Policy www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/index.html

Office of Diversion Control www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/index.html

National Drug Intelligence Center www.usdoj.gov/ndic/

Center for Substance Abuse Research www.cesar.umd.edu/

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services www.oas.samhsa.gov/nhsda.htm

The Partnership at Drug Free.org www.drugfree.org/drug-guide

The 2010 Annual Drug Report is authored by the Alaska State Troopers, Alaska Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Enforcement. It can be accessed via the Department of Public Safety internet site therefore there is no publication cost. It is intended to inform Alaskans about the type and frequency of drug related crime reported in Alaska during 2010.

The Alaska State Troopers, Alaska Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Enforcement supplied the majority of information presented in this report. Statistical data was provided by the Alaska State Troopers, Alaska Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Enforcement and the Drug Enforcement Administration.

