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National Drug Intelligence Center Releases National Drug Threat Assessment 2005

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The National Drug Intelligence Center, a component of the U.S. Department of Justice, released the Annual National Drug Threat Assessment 2005 which details national drug trafficking and abuse trends within the United States.

Overall key findings of the report are as follows:

- Mexican criminal groups exert more influence over drug trafficking in the United States than any other group. Mexican criminal groups smuggle most of the cocaine available in domestic drug markets into the country. Moreover, Mexican criminal groups produce and subsequently smuggle into the country much of the heroin, marijuana, and methamphetamine available in U.S. drug markets.
- Mexican drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) appear to be gaining control of a larger percentage of the cocaine smuggled into the United States. The estimated percentage of cocaine smuggled into the United States via the Mexico-Central America corridor increased sharply from 72 percent in 2002 to 77 percent in 2003, and preliminary data indicate that the percentage may be higher than 90 percent for 2004.
- Domestic drug markets appear to be increasingly supplied with methamphetamine produced in superlabs in Mexico.
- Production and distribution of ice methamphetamine – a higher purity, more addictive form of methamphetamine – by Mexican criminal groups has increased sharply over the past 2 years in many drug markets.
- Colombian DTOs are increasingly relying on Mexican DTOs and criminal groups to transport South American heroin to the United States much as they rely on Mexican DTOs to transport cocaine.

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- The threat posed to the United States by the illegal diversion and abuse of prescription drugs has increased sharply since the mid-1990s and is now among the leading drug threats to the country.
- Law enforcement reporting indicates that transportation of bulk currency out of the United States – primarily overland across the U.S.- Mexico border – is the principal form of money laundering by DTOs.

The Assessment is a comprehensive annual report on national drug trafficking and abuse trends. It identifies the primary drug threats to the nation, monitors fluctuations in consumption levels, tracks drug availability by geographic market, and analyzes trafficking and distribution patterns of illicit drugs within the United States. It evaluates the threat posed by illegal drugs such as cocaine, methamphetamine, marijuana, heroin, MDMA, pharmaceuticals and other dangerous drugs comparing availability, demand, production and cultivation, transportation and distribution.

The National Drug Intelligence Center produces the National Drug Threat Assessment in partnership with federal, state, and local agencies. This year's report draws on information from more than 3,400 state and local law enforcement agencies that responded to our National Drug Threat Survey 2004 as well as thousands of personal interviews with law enforcement and public health officials.

A copy of the National Drug Threat Assessment 2005 can be found at www.usdoj.gov/ndic under NDIC products.