



Arizona

High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area

Drug Market Analysis 2009



**NATIONAL DRUG INTELLIGENCE CENTER
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**





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This assessment is an outgrowth of a partnership between the NDIC and HIDTA Program for preparation of annual assessments depicting drug trafficking trends and developments in HIDTA Program areas. The report has been coordinated with the HIDTA, is limited in scope to HIDTA jurisdictional boundaries, and draws upon a wide variety of sources within those boundaries.



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Preface

This assessment provides a strategic overview of the illicit drug situation in the Arizona High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA), highlighting significant trends and law enforcement concerns related to the trafficking and abuse of illicit drugs. The report was prepared through detailed analysis of recent law enforcement reporting, information obtained through interviews with law enforcement and public health officials, and available statistical data. The report is designed to provide policymakers, resource planners, and law enforcement officials with a focused discussion of key drug issues and developments facing the Arizona HIDTA.

Figure 1. Arizona High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area



Strategic Drug Threat Developments

- Mexican drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) that smuggle marijuana across the U.S.–Mexico border in Arizona are an increasing threat to the Arizona HIDTA region; they use the border area in Arizona as the principal U.S. arrival zone for Mexican marijuana.
- Cocaine and ice methamphetamine availability decreased throughout the HIDTA region in 2008, partly the result of increased Mexican law enforcement and military targeting of Mexican DTO activity.
- The amount of heroin seized in the HIDTA region increased significantly in 2008. This increase is partly the result of a decrease in aerial eradication of opium poppy plantations in Mexico and the increase in violence along the Tijuana, Baja California, and Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, smuggling corridors, which previously were the primary corridors for heroin smuggling into the United States. Mexican DTOs seeking to avoid these violence-prone corridors are now using routes in the state of Sonora that lead into Arizona HIDTA counties.
- Drug-related kidnappings are increasingly being reported by law enforcement throughout the HIDTA region, primarily in the Phoenix area.
- Firearms trafficking through the Arizona HIDTA region is a growing threat. Many of the firearms used by DTOs in the neighboring Mexican state of Sonora are either obtained in Arizona HIDTA counties or transit the area en route to Mexico.
- Mexican DTOs are using subterranean tunnels to smuggle illicit drugs from Mexico into Arizona. The majority of smuggling tunnels along the U.S.–Mexico border have been discovered in Arizona, primarily in Nogales.

HIDTA Overview

The Arizona HIDTA region encompasses the western and southern counties of Cochise, La Paz, Maricopa, Mohave, Pima, Pinal, Santa Cruz, and Yuma and includes the entire U.S.–Mexico border in Arizona.¹ (See Figure 1 on page 1.) The HIDTA region also contains a number of federal lands controlled by the U.S. Department of Defense, Forest Service (FS), National Park Service (NPS), and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Large amounts of illicit drugs are smuggled into the area from Mexico, and bulk cash is transported from the area into Mexico. These trafficking activities are facilitated by several factors unique to the region, including the continuing economic and population growth² in Arizona's two primary drug markets (Phoenix and Tucson), the highways that connect major metropolitan areas in Arizona with major illicit drug source areas in Mexico, and a remote, largely underprotected border area between Arizona's ports of entry (POEs).

Vast stretches of remote, sparsely populated border areas are located within the HIDTA region; these areas are especially conducive to large-scale drug smuggling. By the end of January 2009, 108 miles of the 262-mile shared border between Arizona and Mexico will have some type of fencing. However, few physical barriers exist in border areas between POEs, particularly in the West Desert area of the U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) Tucson Sector, to impede drug traffickers, chiefly Mexican DTOs, from smuggling illicit drug shipments

1. The total population residing within the Arizona High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) counties accounts for approximately 90 percent of the total Arizona population. Population numbers are based on U.S. Census annual estimates of population for counties as of July 1, 2008.
2. Between July 1, 2007, and July 1, 2008, the Phoenix metropolitan area experienced a 14.5 percent increase in population, and Tucson experienced a 6.5 percent increase. The population residing in the two metropolitan areas (Phoenix and Tucson) accounts for approximately 79 percent (approximately 5 million residents) of the Arizona population. The two major drug market areas within the Arizona HIDTA region are the Phoenix and Tucson metropolitan areas. Population changes are based on U.S. Census annual population estimates for counties as of July 1, 2008.

into the United States from Mexico. In addition, drug traffickers are able to easily conceal drug shipments among the high volume of legitimate cross-border traffic at the region's POEs, creating significant challenges for law enforcement officers. Thousands of private vehicles, commercial tractor-trailers, and pedestrians that cross the U.S.–Mexico border daily provide ideal cover for drug smuggling operations.

The Arizona HIDTA region's location along the U.S.–Mexico border also makes it vulnerable to homeland security issues, some of which support drug trafficking operations. Drug traffickers and other criminal groups engage in activities such as firearms trafficking and alien smuggling along the U.S.–Mexico border in Arizona. Firearms trafficking is a significant threat to the Arizona HIDTA region; many of the firearms used by DTOs in neighboring Mexican states are either obtained in Arizona HIDTA counties or transit the area en route to Mexico. Traffickers use these firearms to protect their smuggling operations from rival smuggling organizations and law enforcement personnel. Alien smuggling is a concern to law enforcement officials in the Arizona HIDTA region. Some criminal organizations smuggle aliens and gang members into the United States. These particular individuals typically have extensive criminal records and pose a threat, not only to the Arizona HIDTA region but also to communities throughout the United States. Alien smuggling organizations reportedly also smuggle aliens from countries other than Mexico, including special-interest countries.³

Drug Threat Overview

Mexican DTOs are the primary drug-related threat to the Arizona HIDTA region. They regularly smuggle ton quantities of marijuana and

multikilogram quantities of cocaine, heroin, and ice methamphetamine from Mexico into the HIDTA region. According to U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials, marijuana seized along the border in Arizona in 2008 accounted for 42 percent of the total marijuana seized along the Southwest Border; most of this marijuana is seized from Mexican traffickers. Mexican DTOs have established sophisticated and far-reaching drug transportation and distribution networks along the U.S.–Mexico border in Arizona. Most of these networks incorporate operational cells based in communities within Arizona HIDTA counties. Their expansive trafficking networks extend from the Arizona HIDTA region throughout the United States, including to the New England, New York/New Jersey, Southeast, and West Central regions of the country.

Mexican commercial-grade marijuana is the most commonly abused illicit drug in the Arizona HIDTA region. Methamphetamine distribution and abuse, along with the violence associated with them, pose considerable problems for the region, despite domestic law enforcement initiatives and public awareness campaigns as well as Mexican law enforcement and military operations aimed at dismantling Mexican DTOs, including those that produce and smuggle methamphetamine to the United States. Cocaine and heroin are also abused within the HIDTA region, but to a lesser degree than marijuana and methamphetamine.

Illicit drug production in the Arizona HIDTA region is limited—small quantities of powder methamphetamine are produced, some cannabis is cultivated, and small amounts of powder cocaine are converted to crack cocaine. The Arizona HIDTA's proximity to Mexico and the abundance of illicit drugs available in Mexico mitigate the need for large-scale drug production in the area.

3. Special-interest countries are those designated by the intelligence community as countries that could export individuals who could bring harm to the United States through terrorism.

Drug Trafficking Organizations

Mexican DTOs and their smuggling operations are firmly entrenched in border communities within the Arizona HIDTA region. Their influence and control over drug trafficking in the region are unrivaled by any other trafficking group; however, other ethnic drug traffickers also contribute to the threat that drug trafficking poses to the Arizona HIDTA region. (See Table 1 on page 5.) Mexican DTOs operate sophisticated and widespread drug smuggling, transportation, and distribution networks that extend from Mexico, through Arizona, to many regions of the United States; these networks facilitate the DTOs' transportation and nationwide distribution of large quantities of cocaine, heroin, marijuana, and ice methamphetamine. In addition, many Mexican DTOs operating in the HIDTA region either produce drugs themselves in Mexico or maintain direct connections to organizations that produce illicit drugs in Mexico or other foreign areas, such as Colombia. Such production capabilities and connections ensure the flow of Mexican marijuana, methamphetamine, and heroin to drug markets within and outside the HIDTA region.

Caucasian criminal groups, independent dealers, and Jamaican DTOs are active in the Arizona HIDTA region. Prison gangs, street gangs, and outlaw motorcycle gangs (OMGs) also transport and distribute illicit drugs in the region. For instance, the prison-based gang, Arizona New Mexican Mafia, works cooperatively with numerous Hispanic street gangs throughout Arizona Department of Corrections facilities and on the streets in the Arizona HIDTA region. The Arizona Department of Public Safety Gang and Immigration Intelligence Team Enforcement Mission (GIITEM) reports that Arizona New Mexican Mafia and the Barrio Hollywood street gang, operating out of Tucson, transport quantities of marijuana into Tucson and

Drug Trafficking Organizations, Criminal Groups, and Gangs

- **Drug trafficking organizations** are complex organizations with highly defined command-and-control structures that produce, transport, and/or distribute large quantities of one or more illicit drugs
- **Criminal groups** operating in the United States are numerous and range from small to moderately sized, loosely knit groups that distribute one or more drugs at the retail level and midlevel.
- **Gangs** are defined by the National Alliance of Gang Investigators' Associations as groups or associations of three or more persons with a common identifying sign, symbol, or name, the members of which individually or collectively engage in criminal activity that creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation.

Phoenix for distribution throughout the area. GIITEM further reports that East Side Torrance, a Douglas-based street gang, transports wholesale quantities of marijuana from the border for distribution to members of the West Side Brown Pride street gang in the western part of Phoenix. Moreover, law enforcement reporting reveals that numerous Bloods sets distribute wholesale quantities of marijuana throughout the HIDTA region.

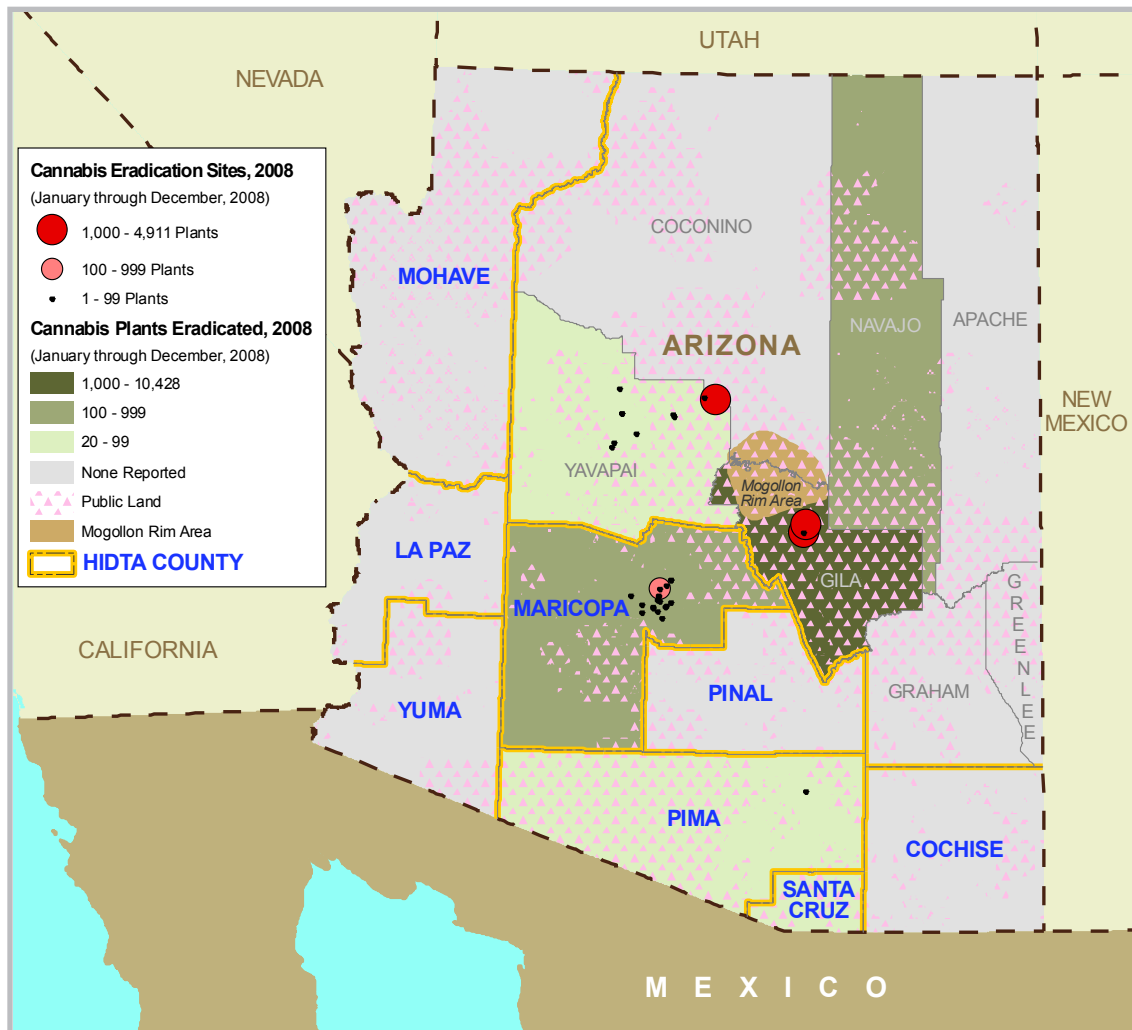
Traffickers in the HIDTA region generally negotiate drug transactions and prearrange meetings with customers using cell phones. Traffickers prefer to conduct business conversations using phones with point-to-point capabilities. Text messaging is also used by traffickers to communicate and arrange meetings between distributors and customers. Traffickers typically use cell phones for a limited time before switching to a new phone with a new number to further reduce the possibility of having calls monitored.

Table 1. Drug Trafficking Organizations Operating in the Arizona HIDTA Region

Drug	Race/Ethnicity/Nationality and Scope of Organization*	Drug Source Areas	Drug Destinations
Cocaine/Crack Cocaine	African American (L, MS) Black (I, L) Brazilian (L) Caucasian (L) Caucasian American (I, L, MS) Cuban Mexican (I) Hispanic (L, MS) Jamaican (MS) Mexican (I, L, MS) Mexican American (I) Native American (L, MS)	Colombia Mexico (Nayarit, Sinaloa, Sonora) United States (Arizona, California)	Atlanta, Georgia Camden, New Jersey Chicago, Illinois Colorado Los Angeles, California New York, New York Phoenix, Sierra Vista, and Tucson, Arizona
Heroin	Caucasian American (I) Hispanic (L) Mexican (I, L) Mexican American (I)	Mexico (Nayarit)	Colorado New York, New York Sierra Vista, Arizona
Marijuana	African American, (L, MS) Asian (L) Black (L, MS) Caucasian (I, L, MS) Caucasian American (L, MS) Caucasian Hispanic (L) Cuban Mexican (I) Hispanic (I, L, MS) Hispanic Mexican (I, MS) Jamaican (I, L, MS) Mexican (I, L, MS) Mexican American (I, L, MS) Native American (L, MS) Puerto Rican (L)	Mexico (Baja California Sur, Chihuahua, Sinaloa, Sonora, Michoacán de Ocampo) United States (Arizona, Michigan)	East Coast Decatur, Georgia, Little Rock, Arkansas Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona Puerto Rico, Ohio
MDMA	Mexican American (L)	Mexico (Baja California Sur)	Unknown
Methamphetamine	African American (I, L) Caucasian (I, L, MS) Caucasian American (I, L, MS) Colombian (I) Cuban Mexican (I) Hispanic (L, MS) Mexican (I, L, MS) Mexican American (L, MS)	Mexico (Baja California Sur, Sonora,) United States (Arizona, California)	Phoenix, Arizona New York, New York

Source: Arizona High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area.

*Organizations are designated as International (I), Local (L), or Multi-State (MS) in scope.

Figure 2. Cannabis Eradication Sites in Arizona HIDTA Region, 2008

Source: Arizona HIDTA; Counternarcotics Alliance, Drug Enforcement Administration Phoenix; Gila County Drug, Gang, and Violent Crime Task Force; Maricopa County Sheriff's Office; Partners Against Narcotics Trafficking Task Force; Phoenix Police Department; Santa Cruz County Metro Task Force; U.S. Department of the Interior, Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management.

Production

Marijuana is produced locally from cannabis cultivated most commonly on public lands in and around the Arizona HIDTA region. Many of these grow sites are located within the Tonto, Coconino, and Prescott National Forests. According to the Arizona HIDTA, 12,822 cannabis plants were eradicated in the region during calendar year 2008; the plants were confiscated from 26 outdoor and 29 indoor grow sites. Of the total number of plants eradicated in 2008, 11,933 were eradicated

from federal public lands. (See Figure 2.) Hydroponically grown cannabis is increasingly being seized throughout the Arizona HIDTA region.

Methamphetamine production occurs in the HIDTA region but is generally limited to personal use quantities. The number of methamphetamine laboratories in the Arizona HIDTA region has been trending downward for the past several years as a result of legislation regulating the sale of precursor chemicals and the wide availability of Mexican ice methamphetamine.

Table 2. Methamphetamine Laboratories Seized in the Arizona HIDTA Region, 2004–2008

Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Laboratories Seized	94	50	24	9	7

Source: National Seizure System, data as of January 13, 2009.

(See Table 2.) Local methamphetamine producers typically obtain required precursor chemicals through smurfing⁴ activity, which they generally conduct in the county where they reside; however, some producers travel throughout the state to avoid law enforcement detection.

Crack cocaine is regularly converted from powder cocaine by retail-level distributors in urban areas of the region, particularly Phoenix. Distributors convert most crack cocaine at or near distribution sites on an as-needed basis in an attempt to minimize their exposure to the severe penalties mandated for the possession and distribution of crack cocaine.⁵

Transportation

Mexican DTOs control the smuggling of cocaine, marijuana, methamphetamine, and Mexican black tar (MBT) heroin from Mexico into Arizona and continually challenge U.S. law enforcement officers responsible for safeguarding the border. Gatekeepers⁶ regulate the drug flow from Mexico across the U.S.–Mexico border into the United States by controlling drug smugglers’

access to areas along the border. Gatekeepers collect “taxes” from smugglers on all illicit shipments that are moved through these areas, including drugs and illegal aliens. The taxes are generally paid to the DTO that controls the area; the DTO then launders the tax proceeds. Gatekeepers sometimes resort to extortion, intimidation, and acts of violence to collect taxes from smugglers. Gatekeepers also reportedly bribe corrupt Mexican police and military personnel in order to ensure that smuggling activities occur without interruption.

According to CBP officials, Mexican DTOs smuggle cocaine, methamphetamine, and MBT heroin into Arizona from Mexico through POEs (see Table 3 on page 11); they generally smuggle marijuana between POEs. (See Table 4 on page 11.) Once traffickers have smuggled illicit drug shipments across the U.S.–Mexico border into Arizona, they often transport them in the HIDTA region on Interstate 19, which connects directly with Mexican Federal Highway 15 at the Nogales POE. CBP agents seized more than 30,000 pounds of marijuana at checkpoints throughout the Tucson Sector in 2008; most of it (18,000 pounds) was seized at the I-19 checkpoint north of Tubac. Mexican DTOs primarily transport wholesale quantities of illicit drugs into Arizona using private and commercial vehicles, often equipped with hidden compartments, using heavily traveled roadways such as I-10 and I-40.

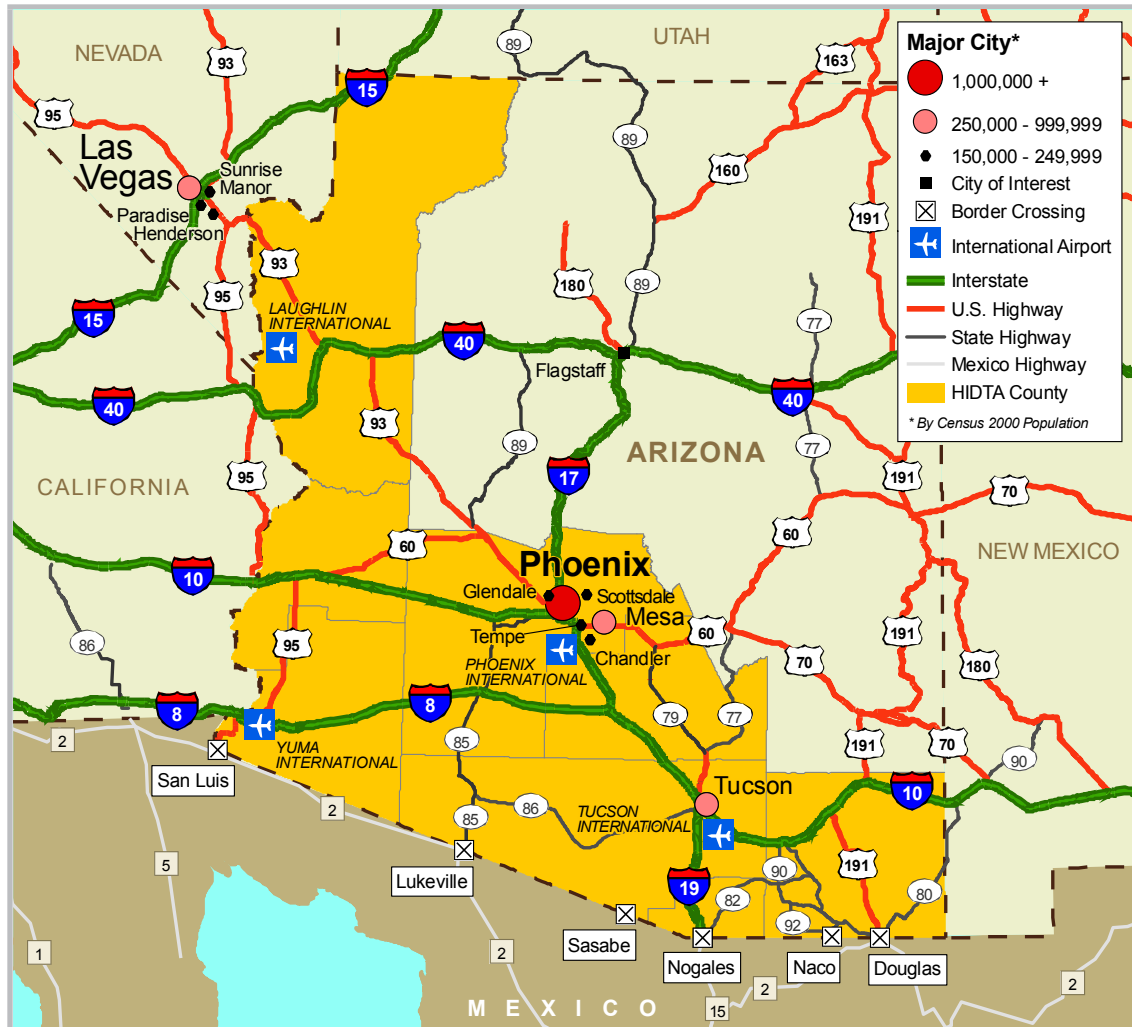
The USBP Tucson Sector reports that Mexican DTOs are increasingly using alternate routes and less-traveled roads in an attempt to avoid the increasing number of law enforcement patrols. For instance, DTOs are increasingly using other Arizona highways, including State Routes 80, 82, 85, 86, 90, and 92, to transport illicit drug shipments from the border area to Phoenix and Tucson. (See Figure 3 on page 8.) Recently law enforcement officials report that Mexican DTOs have also increased their use of State Routes 77, 79, and 60 from Tucson north to I-40 to avoid

4. Pseudoephedrine smurfing is a method used by some methamphetamine traffickers to acquire large quantities of precursor chemicals. Traffickers using this method make numerous small-quantity purchases of cold tablets from multiple retail locations and extract pseudoephedrine or ephedrine from the tablets.

5. Possession of 5 grams of crack cocaine carries a mandatory minimum sentence, whereas powder cocaine must weigh 500 grams before the mandatory minimum sentence can be imposed.

6. Gatekeepers are smuggling organizations that oversee the transportation of drugs into the United States from Mexico. Gatekeepers generally operate at the behest of a Mexican drug trafficking organization (DTO) and enforce the will of the organization through bribery, intimidation, extortion, beatings, and murder.

Figure 3. Arizona HIDTA Transportation Infrastructure



heavy interdiction efforts along I-10 between Tucson and Flagstaff, Arizona.

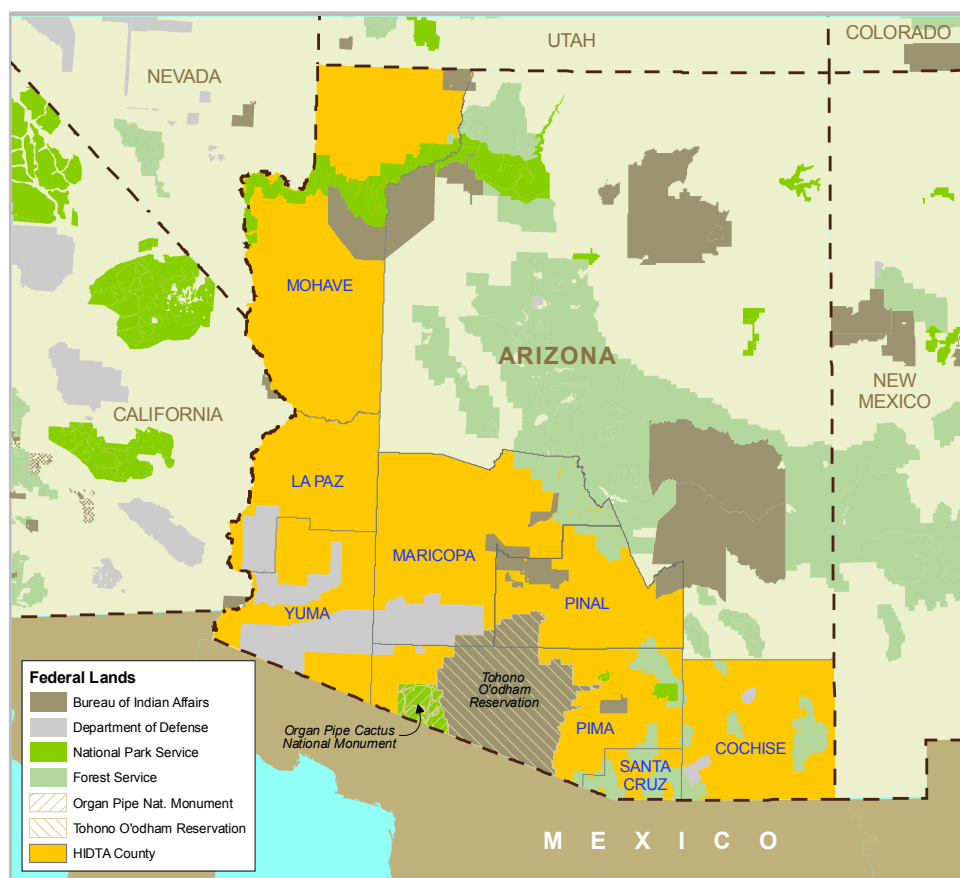
According to USBP officials, the Nogales corridor is the most active corridor for marijuana smuggling activity into and throughout Arizona. Vehicular smuggling activity in the West Desert corridor has increased slightly (from Sasabe to an area west of Lukeville). Traffickers use vehicle platforms or car carriers retrofitted with ramps that can extend over the border fence to allow vehicles to cross into the HIDTA region. The ramps are set up in less than a minute, providing agents with a very small window of time in which to interdict these types of smuggling attempts. Drug

smuggling activity has also increased through the Tucson Sector east corridor, which extends from the New Mexico state line to Naco. USBP officials also report that smuggling of drugs and illegal aliens over the high ranges of the Perilla and Mule Mountains west of Douglas has increased, as these areas are difficult for agents to patrol.

Traffickers use various methods to avoid counterdrug operations in Arizona and Mexico. Mexican DTOs use cloned⁷ commercial or government vehicles to transport illicit drugs. For example, in December 2008 Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) troopers/officers seized

7. Cloned vehicles are vehicles disguised to look like official government or commercial vehicles to deflect law enforcement attention.

Figure 4. Federal and Tribal Lands in Arizona



over 2,000 pounds of marijuana from a cloned United Parcel Service (UPS) delivery truck. The vehicle was disguised to resemble a UPS truck, including the use of reflective UPS decals, an authentic vehicle number, and paint. In recent years Arizona law enforcement officers have seized illicit drugs from cloned Federal Express, U.S. Postal Service, Forest Service, and USBP vehicles. In addition, Mexican DTOs appear to be testing the viability of ultralight⁸ and Cessna aircraft as alternative modes for transporting wholesale quantities of illicit drugs into Arizona. CBP reported three incidents involving ultralight aircraft transporting small amounts (between 100 and 350 pounds) of marijuana across the U.S.–Mexico border between October and December

2008 from airstrips in the Mexican state of Sonora. (See text box on page 10.)

Mexican DTOs also smuggle drugs, particularly marijuana, across the U.S.–Mexico border into Arizona by hiring Mexican nationals to carry smaller loads in backpacks that weigh approximately 50 pounds. The backpackers hike to remote, predetermined locations and either transfer the backpacks to an awaiting trafficker or hide them for later retrieval. The backpackers sometimes hike several days to arrive at predetermined points along the highways. Smuggling attempts frequently take place at night or during periods of limited visibility. DTO scouts or individuals who reside on either side of the border monitor USBP and CBP patrol patterns and determine the best times to conduct illicit drug smuggling operations.

8. Ultralights are relatively inexpensive, hard to detect using radar, and capable of transporting relatively small amounts of cargo per trip.

Operation Tumbleweed Reveals Details of Drug Transportation Operations

Operation Tumbleweed, a multiagency investigation that culminated in December 2008, identified and dismantled a well-organized Mexican DTO operation that smuggled and distributed up to 400,000 pounds of marijuana annually from Mexico into southern Arizona and beyond. Members of the organizations stole load vehicles in the United States and modified them to carry 2,000 to 2,500 pounds of bundled marijuana per trip. Each shipment involved from one to four load vehicles, which were covertly sent at approximately 1-week intervals from Sonoyta, Mexico, through the desert of the Tohono O'odham Indian Reservation. (See [Figure 4 on page 9.](#)) In order to avoid law enforcement detection while crossing the desert, drivers were equipped with tarps to conceal the vehicles from aircraft detection and were outfitted with night vision equipment for night travel. In addition, scouts were deployed in the high ground of the U.S. desert to alert the drivers to any law enforcement presence. Other DTO members dropped off food and supplies for the scouts, enabling them to stay in place for extended periods of time. As many as 20 individuals were involved in various aspects of each operation, from departure in Mexico to arrival at the final destination at a stash house outside Phoenix. Other organization members at the stash house immediately broke down the drug shipments into smaller loads that were later transported by different drivers who drove inconspicuous sport-utility vehicles (SUVs) and pickup trucks to Phoenix, where the drugs were distributed.

Source: Arizona Attorney General's Office.

Ultralight Aircraft Used in Marijuana Smuggling Attempts

In October 2008 CBP Air and Marine Operations in Riverside, California, detected an unidentified, northbound, low-flying aircraft 12 miles west of Nogales, Arizona, just north of the border. A CBP surveillance helicopter was launched from Tucson. The low-flying aircraft was identified as an ultralight. The pilot landed southwest of Marana, Arizona, with 223 pounds of marijuana on board; an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) was waiting to transport the pilot and the marijuana to another location. The pilot, aircraft, ATV, and the marijuana were turned over to Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials for further investigation. In November 2008, near the Arizona border town of San Luis, field workers arriving for work discovered a crashed ultralight, a dead pilot, and 141 pounds of marijuana. In December 2008 the pilot of an ultralight collided with power lines and crashed southwest of Tucson. The pilot had been carrying 350 pounds of marijuana when he crashed.

Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

Significant quantities of illicit drugs are regularly seized by law enforcement officials in the Arizona HIDTA region. (See [Table 5 on page 12.](#)) Forty-two percent of all marijuana seizures that occurred along the Southwest Border took place in the Arizona HIDTA region during 2008, making the Arizona HIDTA region one of the primary arrival zones for marijuana entering the United States from Mexico. Cocaine and methamphetamine also are smuggled through the region in large quantities; however, National Seizure System (NSS) data reveal that cocaine seizures in Arizona HIDTA counties decreased approximately 17 percent, and methamphetamine seizures decreased approximately 16 percent between 2007 and 2008.

Table 3. Illicit Drug Seizures at POEs in Arizona, by Drug, FY2004–FY2008

Year	Cocaine		Heroin		Marijuana		Methamphetamine	
	Number	Pounds	Number	Pounds	Number	Pounds	Number	Pounds
2004	156	10,905	10	294	710	135,308	83	3,304
2005	159	4,597	12	75	521	54,710	100	1,781
2006	153	5,584	27	189	412	47,709	57	884
2007	129	3,966	9	68	566	73,818	51	554
2008	90	2,599	18	217	358	47,951	21	202

Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection, data as of January 14, 2009.

Table 4. Illicit Drug and Firearm Seizures Between POEs in Arizona, by Drug, Fiscal Year 2004–Fiscal Year 2008*

Year	Cocaine		Heroin		Marijuana		Methamphetamine		Firearms**
	Number	Pounds	Number	Pounds	Number	Pounds	Number	Pounds	Number
2004	53	882	7	37.00	2,161	459,328	86	9	52
2005	66	1,206	7	2.00	2,264	523,816	82	17	54
2006	83	106	6	1.00	3,876	661,985	142	8	84
2007	47	177	2	42.00	3,245	874,384	50*	65	65
2008	78	295	9	61.88	7,275	846,690	93	45	133

Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection, data as of March 12, 2009.

*All data (from the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) National Seizure System (NSS), CBP, and Arizona HIDTA Operation COBIJA reporting) consistently indicate a decrease in the amount of methamphetamine seized, with the exception of CBP data between POEs. One explanation for this anomaly may be that methamphetamine seizures between POEs are occurring within the high-number marijuana shipments rather than single seizures of methamphetamine loads, resulting in an increased volume of methamphetamine seized.

**Seized in same event.

The decrease in the amount of cocaine seized most likely can be attributed to large seizures of the drug while in transit toward Mexico as well as law enforcement operations against Mexican DTOs operating within and outside the United States, including extraditions of key members of Mexican DTOs. The decrease in the amount of methamphetamine seized in the HIDTA region may indicate a decreased flow of the drug from Mexico into the region that can be attributed to stronger precursor chemical control regulations and increased drug interdiction efforts in Mexico.

NSS seizure data reveal an increase in heroin seizures between 2007 and 2008. This increase is likely caused by an apparent increase in demand for MBT heroin in East Coast and Great Lakes

regions' drug markets rather than an increasing demand for heroin within the HIDTA region. Increased heroin seizures can also be attributed in part to a decrease in aerial eradication of opium poppy plantations in Mexico since December 2006, as noted by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, 2008 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR). (See Table 6 on page 12.) Counterdrug operations in Mexico and other foreign countries have not been as effective against heroin trafficking networks as they have been with other drug trafficking networks. The INCSR indicates that control of heroin trafficking networks is dispersed and fragmented, unlike cocaine trafficking networks. Heroin trafficking involves opium farmers, heroin processors,

Table 5. Drugs Seized in Arizona HIDTA Counties, in Pounds, 2005–2008

Year	Cocaine	Heroin	Marijuana	Methamphetamine
2005	7,764	96	858,115	1,564
2006	6,525	153	907,101	1,285
2007	5,278	157	1,360,200	1,030
2008	4,385	289	1,045,621	862
Change from 2007 through 2008	-17%	+84%	-23%	-16%

Source: El Paso Intelligence Center National Seizure System, data as of January 13, 2009.

Table 6. Drug Eradication in Mexico, 2005–2007, in Hectares*

Drug	Year				
	2005	2006	Percent Change 2005-2006	2007	Percent Change 2006-2007
Cannabis	30,842	31,161	1	21,357	-31
Opium	21,609	16,889	-22	11,046	-35

Source: PGR National Center for Analysis, Planning, and Intelligence Against Organized Crime statistics as reported in the Department of State Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs 2008, International Narcotics Control Strategy Report.

*Data as of October 25, 2007 (data referenced are the latest available).

Table 7. Tunnels Discovered Within the Arizona HIDTA Region, Fiscal Year 2005–2009*

POE	Fiscal Year				
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009*
Douglas	0	0	0	0	0
Nogales	3	4	10	14	9
San Luis	0	0	1	0	1
Total seized in Arizona	3	4	11	14	10

Source: Department of Homeland Security.

*Data as of December 31, 2008, (data referenced are the latest available).

and small-scale trafficking groups that operate independently or through mutually supportive businesses. In many instances farmers sell their opium harvest to traffickers with access to heroin processors and distribution networks.

Traffickers employ subterranean tunnels in their smuggling operations within the HIDTA region, particularly in the Nogales metropolitan area; the number of tunnels discovered in Arizona is higher than the number discovered in any other

Southwest Border state. According to law enforcement officials, many tunnels discovered in the Nogales area utilized the area's intricate system of underground drainage tunnels and sewage and irrigation systems. During FY2008, 14 tunnels were discovered by the USBP; 10 tunnels have been discovered since October 1, 2008. In November 2008 the Yuma Sector Border Patrol agents discovered an elaborate tunnel under construction in San Luis, Arizona, and arrested the Mexico City engineer responsible for its construction.

Distribution

The Arizona HIDTA region plays a significant role in the transportation and distribution of illicit drugs from Mexico into and throughout the United States. The Phoenix and Tucson metropolitan areas are national-level transportation and distribution centers for drug trafficking and drug availability within the Southwest region, such as California and Texas, as well as throughout the nation, including the New England, Mid-Atlantic, and West Central regions. In addition, smaller border communities such as Douglas, Nogales, and Yuma are significant transshipment and distribution areas for illicit drug shipments primarily destined for the Phoenix and Tucson drug market areas.

Tucson is a primary transshipment area for illicit drugs, followed by Phoenix, because of its proximity to Mexico and its extensive highway system, which connects to I-8 and I-10, major east-west interstates. Mexican DTOs transport large quantities of cocaine, heroin, marijuana, and ice methamphetamine from Sonora into Tucson and Phoenix, often storing the drugs at stash sites. Most illicit drugs transported into Tucson and Phoenix are destined for distribution to markets throughout the nation; however, some are offloaded in either city for local distribution. Mexican traffickers also commonly use national parks, national monuments, and national forests as well as tribal lands located along the U.S.–Mexico border to smuggle illicit drugs into and through the Tucson area.

Mexican DTOs operate wholesale drug distribution networks that extend from Mexico, through the HIDTA region, to drug markets across the United States. Once Mexican DTOs have smuggled cocaine, heroin, marijuana, and methamphetamine shipments into the Arizona HIDTA region, they often store the drugs in stash houses in communities throughout the region, particularly in the Phoenix and Tucson areas.

The drugs, after arrival at the stash location, are typically consolidated into larger shipments for further transport to drug market areas throughout the United States or are divided into smaller quantities for distribution within the region. Additionally, drug distributors from throughout the United States often travel to stash sites in the Arizona HIDTA region to obtain illicit drugs for distribution in their home markets, such as in the New England, Mid-Atlantic, and Southeast regions as well as the Pacific and Great Lakes regions.

Mexican DTOs supply wholesale quantities of cocaine, heroin, marijuana, and methamphetamine, primarily to Mexican, Jamaican, and Caucasian criminal groups as well as prison gangs, street gangs, and OMGs. These groups supply midlevel quantities of illicit drugs to retail distributors—predominantly smaller street gangs and independent dealers in the HIDTA region. Hispanic and African American street gangs dominate retail-level distribution of illicit drugs throughout the Arizona HIDTA region.

Drug-Related Crime

Mexican DTOs that operate in Mexico and Arizona often use violence, corruption, and intimidation to maintain their cross-border smuggling routes. According to law enforcement officials, drug-related violence has increased over the past year along the border. Escalating drug-related violence in the Arizona HIDTA region is most likely a result of the retaliation by Mexican DTOs against U.S. law enforcement personnel participating in heightened counterdrug operations. Within the past year, U.S. law enforcement personnel at the border have experienced assaults by “rocking,” gunfire, Molotov cocktails, vehicular assaults, and physical assaults. Violence directed at law enforcement officers along the border is often intended to deter agents from seizing illicit drug shipments or is used as a diversion to smuggle drug shipments.

Violent conflicts between Mexican DTOs and alien smuggling organizations occur along the U.S.–Mexico border in Arizona. Law enforcement investigation of not only drug trafficking operations but also alien smuggling operations increases the risk of apprehension for drug traffickers, the seizure of drug shipments, and the discovery of drug smuggling routes. As such, drug traffickers are increasingly engaging in violent confrontations—including kidnapping, murder, and theft—with alien smugglers in order to deter them from using established smuggling routes, potentially exposing them to law enforcement scrutiny. In response, as a means of protection, alien smugglers, as well as the individuals they are escorting, are carrying weapons to a greater extent.

Compounding the problems posed to the region by drug-related violence, criminals commonly referred to as border bandits, or *bajadores*, conduct armed assaults of both drug and alien smugglers. They typically identify the location of an intended smuggling operation from informants and attack those running the operation in order to steal whatever “load” is being smuggled by the organization—whether currency, drugs, or illegal aliens. A smuggling organization that loses illegal contraband, such as illicit drugs or groups of individuals being smuggled across the U.S.–Mexico border, to *bajadores* usually attempts revenge, occasionally through execution-style homicides. Most *bajadores* are low-level drug traffickers; however, some reportedly work for high-level Mexican DTOs.

Identity theft is a significant concern to law enforcement officers and community leaders throughout the region. Methamphetamine abusers regularly commit identity theft to acquire funds to pay for the drug. According to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), Arizona ranked first among U.S. states in the number of identity theft victims per 100,000 residents in 2007. (Data referenced are the latest available.)

The Arizona HIDTA is a source area for weapons smuggled into Mexico. Mexican DTOs frequently obtain firearms from Federal Firearms Licensees (FFLs) at U.S. gun shows or pawnshops. They often employ individuals to make firearms purchases to insulate themselves from the transaction. DTOs also obtain weapons at gun shows from private individuals, who are legally permitted to sell personal weapons collections without a license and do not need to conduct criminal record checks or file paperwork to document the transaction, and by way of thefts from private residences and gun stores. Drug traffickers, firearms smugglers, and independent criminals smuggle firearms and ammunition from the HIDTA region to Mexico on behalf of Mexican DTOs and criminal groups, which use these weapons to defend territory, eliminate rivals, enforce business dealings, control members, and challenge law enforcement.

Phoenix Gun Store Supplies Weapons to Mexican DTOs

During the spring of 2008, Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) agents arrested a firearms dealer and two other individuals in Phoenix, who were allegedly shipping hundreds of AK-47s and other long guns and pistols to Mexico. Some of the firearms sold from the gun store were used by Mexican drug cartel gunmen against Mexican police and army personnel. Six guns owned by alleged members of the Sinaloa Cartel were traced to this gun store. In addition, an assault rifle traced to the gun store turned up in a cache found after eight Mexican federal policemen were killed and three others wounded in a gun battle in Culiacán, according to the ATF.

Source: Arizona Attorney General; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Abuse

Methamphetamine abuse poses the most serious drug-related concern to law enforcement officials throughout Arizona because of the drug's widespread availability, highly addictive nature, association with violence, and apparent appeal to youth. According to the National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC) 2009 National Drug Threat Survey⁹ (NDTS), 17 out of 35 respondents within the Arizona HIDTA region who replied to the 2009 NDTS report that methamphetamine was their greatest drug threat; the remainder report that marijuana (10) and powder methamphetamine (6) were the greatest drug threat to their jurisdictions. All of these respondents indicated that many other drugs, including crack cocaine and MBT also were problematic, albeit to varying degrees.

Controlled prescription drug (CPD) abuse is on the rise and is becoming an increasingly serious drug-related concern to law enforcement.

Methamphetamine Use Down Among Arizona Youth

According to the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission's 2008 Arizona Youth Survey, methamphetamine use by students in the eighth, tenth, and twelfth grades statewide has drastically decreased since 2006. The data show that use of the drug increases at higher grade levels, but the overall percentage of student users in 2008 has decreased since 2006. The 2008 results indicate that 1.2 percent of eighth-grade students statewide had tried the substance, compared with 2.6 percent in 2006. Tenth- and twelfth-grade students showed a 2.6 percent decrease in those who had tried the substance at least once from 2006 through 2008.

The Arizona Meth Project is a program created to prevent use of the drug among Arizona youths. The program uses advertisements and community programs to raise awareness of the consequences of methamphetamine use.

Source: Arizona Meth Project.

Illicit Finance

The Arizona HIDTA region's proximity to Mexico and its role in national- and regional-level drug trafficking render the area a significant money laundering center for Mexican DTOs. Mexican DTOs typically consolidate illicit proceeds generated in the region at stash locations, combine them with funds generated in other regions of the country, and transport the proceeds in bulk to Mexico. They generally smuggle bulk cash in hidden compartments of private and commercial vehicles that are driven through POEs. Mexican DTOs also smuggle bulk currency in commercial and private aircraft, by couriers on passenger bus lines, and through the use of package delivery services. During fiscal year (FY) 2008 CBP officers seized \$1.6 million in undeclared currency.

9. National Drug Threat Survey (NDTS) data for 2009 cited in this report are as of February 12, 2009. NDTS data cited are raw, unweighted responses from federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies solicited through either National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC) or the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) HIDTA program. Data cited may include responses from agencies that are part of the NDTS 2009 national sample and/or agencies that are part of HIDTA solicitation lists.

**Table 8. Methamphetamine Laboratories Seized in the Phoenix Drug Market Area
Fiscal Year 2004–2008**

Production Capacity	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Under 2 ounces	15	10	6	3	1
2-8 ounces	9	8	1	0	4
9 ounces-1 pound	4	5	0	0	0
2-9 pounds	0	0	1	0	1
10-19 pounds	0	0	0	0	0
Total Laboratories	28	23	8	3	6

Source: El Paso Intelligence Center National Seizure System, data as of January 13, 2009.

Operation Blank Check

Operation Blank Check was a multiagency investigation of drug traffickers involving criminal fraud in Phoenix that resulted in the arrest of over 100 individuals; 77 of those arrested were gang members from 22 gangs. Law enforcement officers seized 31 firearms; 24 vehicles; \$75,000 cash; and quantities of cocaine, MDMA (3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine, also known as ecstasy), and marijuana. Also seized were several bulletproof vests, fraudulent checks, and equipment used to manufacture fraudulent checks.

During Operation Blank Check, individuals made fraudulent checks on valid checking accounts, solicited coconspirators to act as check cashers who, after cashing the fraudulent checks, brought cash back to the defendants. In each transaction the check casher kept a small percentage of the funds for himself and passed the rest of the money to the defendants, who in turn kept a portion of the funds and passed the remainder to their superiors in the scheme. Officials believe that scheme brought in over \$3 million over a 5-year period.

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation Phoenix Field Division.

Mexican DTOs often launder large sums of illicit drug proceeds through money transmitters throughout the United States. Many wire transmitters send funds to the Southwest Border area, including the Arizona HIDTA region. Once the funds arrive in the HIDTA region, DTO members or accomplices collect the funds and often transport them to local stash houses for consolidation. The funds, in the form of bulk cash shipments, are then smuggled into Mexico. Law enforcement officials report that such wire transfers are common in the region, but they are occurring less frequently than in previous years. The Arizona Attorney General's Office reports that effective law enforcement efforts that targeted drug and alien traffickers who rely on wire transfers for money laundering purposes forced the traffickers to reroute transfers. Many now avoid Arizona and electronically wire transfer their drug proceeds to other U.S. destinations or directly to Mexico. According to the Arizona Attorney General's Office, once bulk cash arrives in Mexico from Arizona, it is often deposited into a Mexican bank and/or a *casa de cambio*¹⁰ and then repatriated to the United States through electronic wire transfers or bulk cash transportation by armored car or courier services.

10. *Casas de cambio* located in Mexico are nonbank financial institutions (currency exchangers) that provide a variety of financial services and are highly regulated by the Mexican Government.

DTOs, gangs, and independent dealers operating in the Arizona HIDTA region also launder illicit proceeds through a variety of other methods. They commonly commingle illicit proceeds with funds from legitimate businesses such as automobile dealerships, retail stores, real estate companies, and restaurants. These groups or individuals also purchase high-value assets such as luxury residences and vehicles.

Phoenix and Tucson Market Areas

Two major drug market areas exist in the Arizona HIDTA region—the Phoenix and Tucson metropolitan areas; both serve as transshipment centers for cocaine, heroin, marijuana, and methamphetamine smuggled into the United States from Mexico and are the most noteworthy areas of illicit drug trafficking and abuse in the HIDTA region.

Phoenix

Overview

Phoenix, the state capital and county seat of Maricopa County, is a regional- and national-level transportation and distribution center for methamphetamine and marijuana and a regional distribution center for cocaine and MBT. The area's well-developed highway system facilitates the shipment of illicit drugs from Mexico to Phoenix for local distribution and transshipment to drug markets throughout the country, including Atlanta, Georgia; Columbia, South Carolina; Columbus, Ohio; Denver, Colorado; Las Vegas, Nevada; Nashville, Tennessee; and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Production

Limited drug production occurs in the Phoenix metropolitan area; small powder methamphetamine laboratories and cannabis cultivation sites are occasionally seized by law enforcement,

and the number of seized methamphetamine laboratories has decreased over the past 5 years, but trended slightly upward from 2007 to 2009 (see [Table 8 on page 16](#)). Most laboratories seized were capable of producing less than 1 pound of low-quality methamphetamine per production cycle; the methamphetamine produced at these laboratories was intended for personal use or very limited, local distribution, according to law enforcement officials.

Personal use amounts of marijuana are produced by independent cannabis growers and marijuana dealers at a limited number of outdoor and indoor cannabis grow sites throughout the Phoenix area. Law enforcement officials occasionally encounter larger grow operations in the region. For example, in December 2008 members of the Arizona DPS GIITEM served a search warrant on a house in Mesa (a suburb of Phoenix), which resulted in the discovery of one of the largest indoor hydroponic cannabis-growing operations ever seized in Arizona. Officials seized dozens of plants at various stages of growth. Also seized was a box of marijuana bagged for sale. The elaborate grow operation included climate-controlled rooms that featured special lighting and electrical tracks.

Transportation

Mexican DTOs and other traffickers operating in the Phoenix metropolitan area primarily transport drugs into Phoenix using private and commercial vehicles such as cars, trucks, and tractor-trailers on heavily traveled roadways, such as I-10 and I-40. However, Mexican DTOs are increasingly using alternate routes and less-traveled roads in an attempt to avoid law enforcement patrols. Moreover, Mexican traffickers smuggling wholesale quantities of marijuana from Sonora into the Arizona HIDTA region through the Tohono O'odham Indian Reservation (see [Figure 4 on page 9](#)) typically transport illicit

drugs north on US 93 to Phoenix for distribution; they also further transport the drugs to Las Vegas, Nevada, and other market areas throughout the country. (See Figure 3 on page 8.)

Distribution

Mexican DTOs dominate wholesale drug distribution in and around Phoenix; they supply large quantities of methamphetamine, cocaine, MBT, and marijuana to various street gangs, prison gangs, OMGs, criminal groups, and local independent dealers for retail-level distribution in the Phoenix area. Mexican DTOs also store wholesale quantities of illicit drugs—particularly marijuana and methamphetamine—at stash locations¹¹ in the Phoenix area until the drugs can be repackaged and transshipped to other drug markets.

Gangs in Phoenix, while predominantly involved in retail-level drug distribution, are also involved in wholesale and midlevel drug distribution, primarily marijuana distribution. According to GIITEM, Westside Brown Pride (WSBP) from Phoenix works in conjunction with East Side Torrance (EST) from Douglas, Arizona, to transport wholesale quantities of marijuana from the U.S.–Mexico border to WSBP in Phoenix. WSBP redistributes the marijuana to other gangs within the city. The prison-based gang Arizona New Mexican Mafia and the Tucson street gang Barrio Hollywood also distribute large quantities of marijuana in both Phoenix and Tucson. Various Bloods and Crips sets distribute up to hundred-pound quantities of marijuana throughout the Phoenix area.

Drug-Related Crime

Much of the violent and property crime in Phoenix is drug- and/or gang-related. According to the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office, members of the Arizona New Mexican Mafia are

being prosecuted for Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act offenses and on several state homicide charges. Additionally, Phoenix Police Department officials indicted 43 members of Westside City Crips on RICO charges in March 2008. Westside City Crips and other African American street gangs, such as Vista Bloods and Park South Crips, have been involved in an increasing number of home invasion robberies in the Phoenix area over the past year. Moreover, violence among African American street gangs in Phoenix is increasing.

Drug-related kidnappings are being increasingly reported by law enforcement in the Phoenix area. Kidnappings in Phoenix occur at the rate of approximately one per day; 358 drug-related kidnappings were reported in Phoenix in 2007, and 357 were reported in 2008 (year-to-date figure as of December 15, 2008). The actual number of kidnapping incidents may be higher, since such incidents are widely underreported because many victims' families are unwilling to report the crime for fear that the victim will be killed, the kidnappers will retaliate against them, and/or law enforcement will discover the family's own drug trafficking activities. Kidnappings provide a lucrative means for DTOs to raise capital; ransom amounts can range from \$50,000 to \$1 million.

Tucson

Overview

Tucson is a regional- and national-level distribution center for illicit drugs, particularly marijuana. Mexican DTOs exploit the area because of its proximity to Mexico; the city is located only 65 miles from the U.S.–Mexico border and is situated near the Tohono O'odham Indian Reservation, the Coronado National Forest, and Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument—vast tracts of remote land commonly used by Mexican DTOs to transport illicit drugs into and through Arizona. Tucson's proximity to the U.S.–Mexico

11. Secured locations often include rented office space, warehouses, houses, and apartments.

border and its access to major interstates and secondary highways render it a key Southwest Border distribution center and stash location.

Production

Drug production is minimal in the Tucson metropolitan area; however, law enforcement officials occasionally seize small-scale methamphetamine laboratories. In 2008, only one methamphetamine laboratory was seized in Pima County; only personal use quantities of low-quality methamphetamine could be produced in it. Additionally, independent dealers cultivate cannabis at indoor and outdoor grow sites in the Tucson area; only limited, personal use quantities of marijuana are produced at such sites.

Transportation

Tucson is a primary transshipment area for illicit drugs because of its proximity to Mexico and its extensive highway system, which connects to I-8 and I-10, major east-west interstates. Mexican DTOs transport large quantities of cocaine, heroin, marijuana, and ice methamphetamine from Sonora into the city, often storing the drugs at stash sites. Most illicit drugs transported into Tucson are destined for distribution to markets throughout the nation; however, some are offloaded in Tucson for distribution in the city. Mexican traffickers also commonly use national parks, national monuments, and national forests as well as tribal lands located along the U.S.–Mexico border to smuggle illicit drugs into and through the Tucson area.

Distribution

Mexican DTOs dominate wholesale drug distribution in and around Tucson; they supply large quantities of methamphetamine, cocaine, MBT, and marijuana to various street gangs, prison gangs, OMGs, criminal groups, and local

independent dealers for retail-level distribution. Mexican DTOs also store wholesale quantities of illicit drugs—particularly marijuana and methamphetamine—at stash locations in the Tucson area pending distribution to markets outside the HIDTA region. They use stash houses to consolidate bulk cash shipments destined for Mexico.

Gangs in Tucson, while predominantly involved in retail-level drug distribution, are also involved in wholesale and midlevel drug distribution, primarily marijuana distribution. According to GIITEM, the largest street gang in Tucson—Barrio Hollywood—works with the Arizona New Mexican Mafia to transport large amounts of marijuana from the U.S.–Mexico border to Tucson and Phoenix for distribution in the cities. Other street gangs operating in the Tucson area are Midvale Park Bloods, Manzanita Lynch Mob Crips, Southside Posse/South Park/Western Hills Bloods, and Eastside and Eastside Mafia Crips.

Drug-Related Crime

Drug-related crime poses a considerable threat to Tucson; most is committed by street gangs involved in drug distribution within the city. For instance, Arizona New Mexican Mafia “taxes” other street gangs that distribute illicit drugs in Tucson; if a street gang does not pay the “tax,” violent retribution usually ensues. Additionally, African American street gangs, such as Bloods and Crips sets, are increasingly conducting home invasions in the Tucson area—home invasions were previously the domain of Hispanic street gangs. Moreover, street gangs in the area are engaging in a rising level of intergang rivalry, including violent offenses against each other.

Outlook

The Arizona HIDTA region's position as the principal U.S. arrival zone for Mexican marijuana will persist. Mexican DTOs active in the HIDTA region maintain large-scale cannabis grow sites in Mexico and have direct connections to organizations in Mexico that provide a ready supply of marijuana. Such production capabilities and connections ensure that the flow of Mexican marijuana will continue, despite law enforcement seizures of large quantities of marijuana in the United States and Mexico.

Heroin smuggling through the Arizona HIDTA region may increase in the near term because of a number of factors. Traffickers will continue to alter their transportation routes away from the traditional heroin smuggling corridor in Baja California because of the violence that will likely persist among DTOs competing for control of that route. Increased heroin seizures in the region may also be affected by increased availability of the drug, occasioned by decreased aerial eradication of opium poppy plantations in Mexico. Moreover, counterdrug operations in Mexico and other foreign countries have not been as effective against heroin trafficking networks, which typically are dispersed and fragmented.

The availability of cocaine and methamphetamine in the Arizona HIDTA region may remain below previous levels for the near term. Continuing law enforcement pressure on Mexican DTOs in both the United States and Mexico will very likely force Mexican DTOs to alter their cocaine and methamphetamine smuggling operations in the region. Additionally, enhanced import and chemical control restrictions in Mexico will not likely continue to hinder the production of methamphetamine as DTOs find alternative precursor sources or alternative production methods.

Mexican DTOs will adapt drug smuggling methods into the Arizona HIDTA region both at and between POEs in an effort to thwart law enforcement. For example, Mexican DTOs will likely increase their use of subterranean tunnels, small aircraft, cloned vehicles, more innovative concealment methods, and alternate smuggling routes in an effort to circumvent law enforcement and military operations against them.

Sources

Local, State, and Regional

Arizona Attorney General's Office
 Arizona Counter Narcotics Alliance
 Arizona State Land Department
 Cochise County Attorney's Office
 Cochise County Sheriff's Office
 Gila County Drug, Gang, and Violent Crime Task Force
 Maricopa County Sheriff's Office
 Phoenix Police Department
 Pima County Sheriff's Department
 Santa Cruz County Metro Task Force
 Sierra Vista Police Department
 State of Arizona
 Arizona Criminal Justice Commission
 Department of Corrections
 Department of Public Safety
 Gang and Immigration Intelligence Team Enforcement Mission
 Gang Interdiction Unit
 Joint Drug Intelligence Group
 Tucson Police Department

Federal

Executive Office of the President
 Office of National Drug Control Policy
 High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas
 Southwest Border
 Arizona High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area
 Investigative Support Center
 Arizona HIDTA Methamphetamine Group
 Office of State and Local Affairs
 U.S. Department of Commerce
 U.S. Census Bureau
 U.S. Department of Defense
 U.S. Department of Homeland Security
 U.S. Customs and Border Protection
 U.S. Border Patrol
 Border Patrol Field Intelligence Center
 U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
 U.S. Department of Justice
 Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives
 Criminal Division
 Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force
 Drug Enforcement Administration
 Domestic Cannabis Eradication/Suppression Program
 El Paso Intelligence Center

 National Seizure System
 Phoenix Field Division
 Federal Bureau of Investigation
 U.S. Department of the Interior
 Bureau of Indian Affairs
 Bureau of Land Management
 Forest Service
 National Park Service
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 U.S. Department of the Treasury
 U.S. Federal Trade Commission
 U.S. Government Accountability Office
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 House Committee on Homeland Security
 Minority Staff of the Committee on Homeland Security
 Subcommittee on Investigations

Other

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The Arizona Republic
Business Journal
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