



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of the Deputy Attorney General

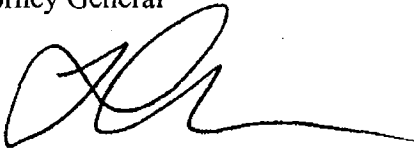
The Deputy Attorney General

Washington, D.C. 20530

July 16, 2001

MEMORANDUM

To: Janis Sposato
Acting Assistant Attorney General
for Administration

From: Larry D. Thompson 

Subject: Reorganization of the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force Program
(OCDETF)

Please take all necessary and appropriate steps as soon as possible to effect the transfer of the OCDETF program from the Criminal Division to a separate component position that reports directly to the Deputy Attorney General. It is my understanding that this reorganization will not impact personnel caps in the leadership offices.

Upon removal of the Executive-OCDETF office from the Criminal Division, that office should be administratively supported by JMD, with appropriate reimbursement from OCDETF. Associate Deputy Attorney General, Karen Tandy, will remain in my office serving as Acting Director of the OCDETF program. Please discuss with Ms. Tandy and my Chief of Staff, David H. Laufman, any physical facility changes or other issues that may be associated with this reorganization of OCDETF.

Because the reorganization requires OMB clearance and Hill notification, your immediate attention to the steps needed to accomplish this as expeditiously as possible will be appreciated.

Justification:

In 1982, President Reagan created the OCDETF program in order to provide the additional, collaborative law enforcement and prosecution resources necessary to conduct the complex drug and financial investigations necessary to dismantle the most sophisticated drug/money laundering organizations. The program, with its nine member agencies - the Executive Office of the United States Attorneys, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the United States Marshal's Service, the United States Customs Service, the Internal Revenue Service, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, and the United States Coast Guard Service - is responsible for identifying, targeting and disrupting and dismantling those drug/money laundering organizations.

The Attorney General has stated that combating drug trafficking is one of his major priorities and the Department's Strategic Management Council has identified the disruption and dismantlement of major drug trafficking organizations as one of the Department's major objectives. To that end, the OCDETF program is the structure already in place to coordinate the Department's strategic efforts against drug trafficking.

This nationwide program can drive the coordinated federal counterdrug efforts through the Executive Committee, which is comprised of the heads of all nine member agencies, using the OCDETF resources deployed in all ninety-four United States Attorneys Offices and all offices of its member law enforcement agencies. A Management Study of the program, recently conducted, noted that "[t]he OCDETF" structure is uniquely positioned to fill the sorely needed function of coordinating drug enforcement strategy within the DOJ. The need for such coordination is clearly evident – no one is currently doing it. At present, there is no other entity that has the credibility, infrastructure, and access to the law enforcement community equal to OCDETF." Study at 53.

With Attorney General support and the direction of the Office of the Deputy Attorney General, DOJ leadership will be able to guide the international and national drug/money laundering policy and companion enforcement and training initiatives, through the DAG-chaired Executive Committee. OCDETF provides the vehicle to respond to emerging drug trends and to drive the regional counterdrug strategies as well, because OCDETF has nine Regional Advisory Councils chaired by United States Attorneys, that also include the Special Agents-in-Charge in each region.

The movement of the program back to the Deputy Attorney General's Office, where it had been from 1982 through 1993, is necessary to accomplish these goals. First, it is essential that the counterdrug policy of this administration be driven by leadership at the very highest level within the Department. It is appropriate that the strategy be developed and monitored at this level since it is the agency heads, in consultation with my office, who can focus the necessary resources within their agencies to accomplish the agreed-upon goals. Moreover, full accountability for those OCDETF resources and their allocation will be ensured by ODAG. Further any conflict resolution among the components in OCDETF will be resolved more efficiently at this level.

Beyond policy reasons, there are strong administrative reasons to move the program from the Criminal Division to ODAG. While technically it might be possible to have my office provide the leadership for the program and yet leave its administrative offices within the Criminal Division, the bifurcation of OCDETF leadership and administrative functions creates needless inefficiencies. For example, the computer system used by JMD/ODAG is incompatible with the system used by CRM/OCDETF. This means that ODAG has no direct access to the OCDETF Management Information System, which contains vital information about the functioning of the program. Reports cannot be generated by ODAG from the MIS system, and monitoring trends reflected in the system is impossible. The incompatible systems also mean

that ODAG has no access to documents on the OCDETF shared computer drive; thus, the exchange, retrieval and editing of documents between ODAG and the Executive Office for OCDETF is unnecessarily cumbersome and complex.

Additionally the consolidated OCDETF budget, which seeks resources for EOUSA, DEA, FBI, INS, USMS, the Tax Division and the Criminal Division, is currently placed within the budget for the Criminal Division. This leads to needless technical and administrative difficulties for a program which has its own freestanding Congressional allocation. Movement of the program to a freestanding component, reporting to ODAG and administratively supported by JMD, would streamline these procedural issues.