

THE STATE OF MICHIGAN DRUG STRATEGY

ANTI-DRUG ABUSE ACT OF 1988



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SECTION I

OVERVIEW OF THE STATE

A. NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM

Cocaine remains the number one illegal drug in Michigan. The crack form of cocaine continues to be an increasingly serious problem but diverts attention from the total problem. Crack accounts for only 28% of cocaine hospital admissions, and the percent of users is probably smaller as the chance of an overdose is greater with crack. When taken as a percent of the total substance abuse overdoses, crack only accounts for 6% statewide and 14% in the city of Detroit.

Cocaine use prior to death from all causes in Detroit/Wayne County showed an increase from 13% in 1984 to 38% in 1987. In addition, 50% of all 1987 homicide victims tested cocaine positive.

Cocaine availability and purity for the past several years has continued to increase while the price has decreased. The last year, however, indicates a stabilization of price, purity, and availability. Prices range from as low as \$500 per ounce to as high as \$2,000. Usually, on an average, the lower prices are in the Detroit Metropolitan area. State Police laboratories estimate that the total percent of cocaine analyzed is in the 70% to 80% purity level. The crack form being seized is usually found in what is referred to as crack rocks, which run from \$12 to \$25 apiece.

Cocaine is being imported into Michigan in increased quantities. Data from State Police Crime Laboratories, D.E.A., and Detroit Police Narcotics Unit indicates over 1,254 kilograms of cocaine was seized in 1988. Crack is included in these figures. Little evidence can be found of large quantities of cocaine coming from Canada. In fact, the opposite appears to be true. Several seizures indicate cocaine was bound for Canada.

Michigan State Police and D.E.A. arrests, along with intelligence information, indicate more South Americans are living legally and/or illegally in Michigan, and dealing in cocaine. They are the sources for multi-kilogram supplies. Debriefing of several arrested subjects and witnesses indicates these groups usually have associates or family members in Detroit, Chicago, and New York. Large shipments are transported to one of the three cities, broken down into smaller shipments, and transported to the other two. Colombians have been at the top of the distribution networks, with supplies filtering to other South Americans and/or Chaldeans, or directly to black cocaine distributors.

Cocaine is either picked up in Florida by Michigan residents to get cheaper wholesale prices or purchased in Michigan from loosely organized groups. A recent 100 kilogram seizure by the State Police, U.S. Customs, and D.E.A., is representative of this. The cocaine originated in Colombia and was brought to Michigan by Colombians, who also deal in New York and Chicago.

A. NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM CONT:

Marijuana use has remained relatively stable while the price has increased. It is not known if the price increase is the result of the drought or domestic marijuana eradication efforts which doubled the amount of marijuana seized between 1987 and 1988. There were two large seizures of marijuana plants during the summer of 1988. In one case, a map which had been thrown into a ditch by two persons when their car caught fire on a rural road near Lansing led police to a series of plots in well-hidden areas in several counties; 17,000 plants were seized. In another case, hunters came across plants in a dense swamp in an area north of Detroit; a reported 100,000 plants were seized. State Police indicate seizures have totalled almost 5 tons in 1988 compared to about half of this in 1987. Marijuana accounts for approximately 9% of hospital overdoses statewide and is listed as a secondary drug in another 20% of admissions. An ounce of marijuana sells for about \$100.

Several large law enforcement cases demonstrate the extent of drug trafficking in the Detroit metro area as well as in outstate Michigan. A kilo of cocaine was seized in west Michigan along with several Mexican immigrants/aliens. At the end of June, 1988, a 200 kilo shipment of cocaine was seized that had been trucked from Miami; 5 Colombians and 1 Cuban were arrested. On August 16, 1988 indictments were issued for a group that routinely brought 80 to 100 kilo cocaine shipments into the area. Macomb County recorded it's biggest seizure ever with 44 pounds of cocaine seized. During June, 1988, Canadian officials seized about 45 pounds of pure heroin which was destined for the Detroit Metro area from it's origin in Thailand. At one port of land entry from Canada, at Sault Ste. Marie, 125 vehicles have been seized since spring, 1988 by U.S. Customs because of drug involvement. The United States Attorney in Detroit reported that \$8.8 million in cash or value were forfeitable due to law enforcement activity in the first 7 months of 1988. This does not include the \$5.4 million in cash seized in late November, 1988 by D.E.A., and state and local police at a motel near the airport; Colombians and Cubans again were involved. A 13 year old Lansing youth was found to be carrying 293 rocks of crack at the Detroit bus station on his way back home. There are innumerable other similar individual cases.

Drug dealers are increasingly mobile, assisted by cellular phones and beepers which makes enforcement difficult. Several cases have recently occurred where crack dealers have taken over homes through force of innocent victims, usually single women with children, and are dealing in drugs. This is not just a Detroit problem, but has occurred in Battle Creek and Grand Rapids as well.

Several sources, including the Detroit News, which did an intensive study, believe drugs come to the Detroit area first, and then are distributed throughout the state. This may be more true with cocaine than other drugs. Many Detroit dealers have branched outside the Detroit Metropolitan area, including out-of-state cities of Toledo, Ohio, and Fort Wayne, Indiana. Drug groups in Michigan are still not organized like other areas of the nation. Profit and/or use of drugs is the primary goal and loyalty to individuals or groups rapidly changes.

turned to state and local cooperation

3. DETROIT/WAYNE COUNTY CONT:

A newly created multi-jurisdictional cooperative drug team was established in 1988 with federal funds. This team, known as the Southeast Michigan Conspiracy Investigative Organization (S.E.M.C.O.) is comprised of Michigan State Police officers and officers from nine local law enforcement agencies located in the five Detroit metropolitan area counties of Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Washtenaw, and Monroe. This widely diversified unit has the capability to pursue high-level conspiratorial violators across all jurisdictional boundaries. In addition to officers from D.E.A., State Police, and local departments, a prosecutor on the state level is assigned to this team. S.E.M.C.O. is free to pursue investigative targets as they develop in the metropolitan Wayne County area or on a state level.

4. LOCAL ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS (Excluding Detroit/Wayne County)

There are 240 full-time narcotics investigators at the local level, excluding Detroit/Wayne County. In out-state Michigan, the largest single department team with fulltime narcotics enforcement is the Berrien County Metro Squad, comprised of ten sheriff's deputies funded from a special millage. A few other jurisdictions have full-time narcotics officers. Most larger agencies in out-state Michigan who are not participating in cooperative teams have either vice units which work narcotics on a part-time basis, or assign narcotic related investigations to generalist detectives.

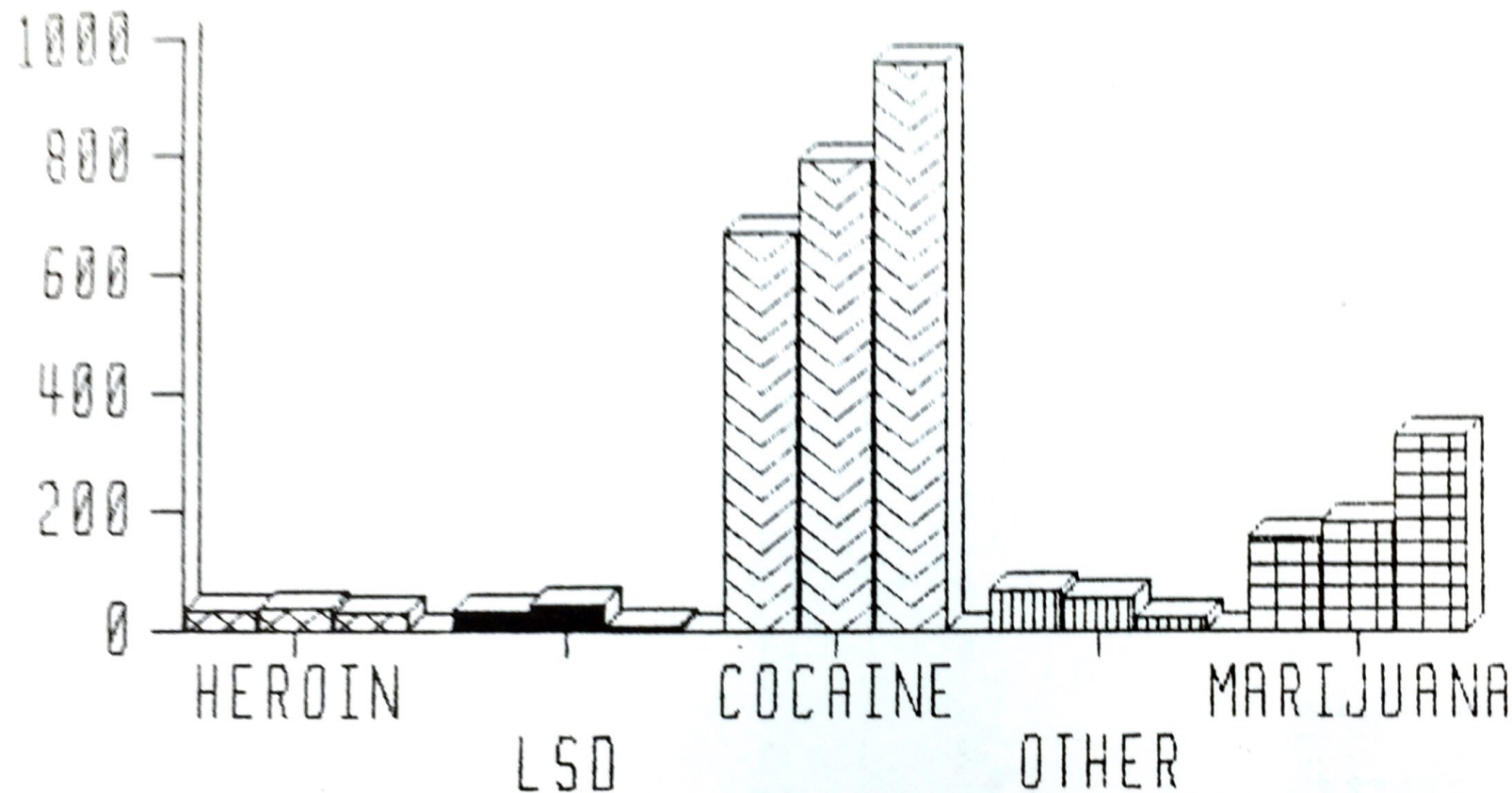
There has been a significant increase in the number of local officers assigned to work narcotics with the inception of cooperative teams throughout the state. Some local departments assign officers to work narcotics within their jurisdiction, and officers to cooperative drug teams within their geographical areas. Flint, Kalamazoo, Lansing and Muskegon are four such departments. This enables those jurisdictions to work the drug houses and smaller street dealers and allows cooperative team personnel time to concentrate on larger dealers. It also improves communication between teams by the exchange of information.

The Grand Rapids Police Department, in cooperation with other local law enforcement agencies, A.T.F., F.B.I., U.S. Marshall, and the State Police will begin a large scale cooperative drug investigative effort on March 5, 1989. Three teams are being formed to focus on street level purchases of cocaine. The U.S. Attorney and Kent County Prosecutor will provide assistance to these teams.

5. FEDERAL AUTHORITIES

The Drug Enforcement Administration has 79 agents in Michigan. There are 70 agents in Detroit and southeast Michigan. The remaining agents are assigned throughout Michigan. D.E.A. participates in two cooperative ventures with local authorities. One of these is in Detroit and the other in Saginaw County with the sheriff's department. Local agency officers have been assigned to the D.E.A. office in Grand Rapids on a temporary basis from time to time.

SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN DRUG ARREST TRENDS



COOPERATIVE DRUG TEAMS

1986 / 1987 / 1988

TOTAL DRUG ARRESTS