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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
MAINE DRUG ENFORCEMENT AGENCY



ANNUAL REPORT 2020

A STATEWIDE DRUG TASK FORCE

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I. Executive Summary

All Maine communities are affected by the distribution of and use of drugs. The availability of illegal drugs, diverted prescription medications, related crime, medical and legal costs and the lives they impact are evidence of this. An effective enforcement program that disrupts the drug market is required to undermine the ability of drug suppliers to meet, expand, and profit from drug demand. This effort strengthens the State's ability to support prevention efforts by making initiation to drug use more difficult and contributes to treatment efforts by eroding the ability of users to sustain their habits and to alternatively seek treatment. The Maine Drug Enforcement Agency through its regional multi-jurisdictional task forces is the lead state agency confronting drug trafficking crime.

Maine Drug Enforcement, as a cornerstone of the State's enforcement strategy to address drug trafficking, provides the administrative platform for the effective and efficient use of limited resources through partnerships with federal, state, tribal and local law enforcement agencies. It is through Maine Drug Enforcement that the skills, expertise, and experience of officers assigned to its task force groups are brought together as a statewide drug task force. Maine Drug Enforcement has applied its investigative resources to the ongoing heroin, fentanyl, other opiate, cocaine, and methamphetamine threat.

MAINE OPIOID RESPONSE STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

Strategy #13: Strengthen law enforcement efforts to intercept and reduce illicit
opioid supply

MAINE DRUG ENFORCEMENT AGENCY is the statewide
enforcement program to confront the health and safety posed by drug
trafficking to undermine drug suppliers' ability to meet, expand, and profit from
illicit drug demand.

Highlights of 2020 activity, productivity, and cost-effectiveness by Maine Drug Enforcement District Task Forces include **coordinating information sharing** and **assisting numerous departments**, conducted **501 drug-related offense** investigations, the **participation of 42 law enforcement agencies** with **70 federal, state, and local public safety members** comprising the Maine Drug Enforcement Agency, participated in **awareness and prevention efforts**, removed **106 firearms** connected to illegal activity, made **341 drug offense arrests**, recovered over **\$307,990 in illegally gained cash and assets** from drug traffickers, and removed **illicit drugs with over \$963,089 in wholesale value** from the marketplace.

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II. Introduction

Maine Drug Enforcement provides a central administrative structure for the establishment, coordination and oversight of specialized narcotics and narcotics-related investigative units within the State of Maine employing a multi-jurisdictional drug task force approach. The investigative component of its task forces is comprised of law enforcement officers drawn from state, county, local and tribal law enforcement agencies. Maine Drug Enforcement operates two field divisions with four task force groups in each division thereby providing drug law enforcement throughout all of Maine's sixteen counties. This framework address the upper and mid-level drug dealers that operate below the interest of the Federal law enforcement authorities that focus on international, interstate and substantial violators, and the street level efforts that focus on the small dealers and those caught in possession.

Every Maine Drug Enforcement's District Task Force (DTF) office works closely with the Maine State Police, the sheriffs' offices, and area police departments. Geography, population and caseload require that good working relationships, partnerships, communication, and information exchanges with all drug investigative entities working together to maximize the utilization of limited resources and personnel.

Specifically, the Maine Drug Enforcement applies its investigative resources to the ongoing heroin, fentanyl, other opiate, cocaine and methamphetamine threat. Maine Drug Enforcement Task Force Supervisors engage in dynamic casework utilizing the most sophisticated investigative techniques to dismantle drug trafficking organizations throughout Maine.

Maine Drug Enforcement employs a Records Management System (RMS) to report and manage its investigations. The statewide RMS permits the interconnectivity of all Maine Drug Enforcement case information among its eight (8) task force groups. Case and intelligence analysis are critical in the Agency's goal to strengthen heroin, other opiate and other drug-related intelligence and information sharing and ensure that there is adequate analytical support to meet policy and investigative requirements as we aggressively pursue drug reduction efforts.

Maine Drug Enforcement employs a toll-free telephone number, reporting form on its website and social media platforms, and a Smartphone application (both iOS and Android) for the receipt of drug tips by the public. All information is documented and forwarded to the task force supervisor having jurisdiction for review.

Maine Drug Enforcement has very detailed and encompassing policies and procedures serving to guide its investigations. Policy and procedures cover such topic areas including, but not limited to, source management, undercover buys, warrant service evidence management, surveillance, etc.

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Maine Drug Enforcement drug seizures are documented internally and reported to the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) National Seizure System (NSS). Representatives of Maine Drug Enforcement have also attended regional and national conferences and meetings to keep abreast of the current national and regional trends and to share observations of Maine's experiences.

III. Task Forces

Maine Drug Enforcement is one of nine bureaus of the Maine Department of Public Safety with a statutory charge of addressing the threat to the health and safety of Maine's residents resulting from the distribution and manufacture of drugs into, out of and within the State. The task force was created by the Intergovernmental Drug Enforcement Act of 1987 and was reaffirmed by the state legislature in 1992 – [Title 25, Chapter 353: MAINE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 1992 \(mainelegislature.org\)](https://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/2019/2019-bills-act/2019-bills-act-001-050/2019-bills-act-001-050-001.html). The Public Safety Commissioner is charged with establishing and operating within the MDEA such regional investigative task forces as the Commissioner determines, in consultation with the MDEA Advisory Board, are required for effective drug law enforcement throughout the State.

The investigative component of each task force is comprised of law enforcement officers drawn from municipal, county, tribal and state law enforcement agencies – all with statewide authority. Maine Drug Enforcement's budget funds the salary and benefits of forty-nine officers from thirty-five law enforcement agencies. By statute their salary is established as that of a Maine State Police detective, sergeant or lieutenant depending upon their assignment within Maine Drug Enforcement. This full reimbursement allows the assigning agency to replace the officer assigned to the task force. Of the forty-nine positions, forty-three are funded through the State of Maine General Fund and six through the U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance's Edward Byrne Justice Assistance Grant program (Federal Aid #2017-DJ-BX-059).

Maine Drug Enforcement's partnership effort does not end there. This central approach to multi-jurisdictional drug law enforcement in Maine has resulted in three law enforcement agencies assigning a total of five officers full-time to a task force group to address the drug trafficking problem in their jurisdictional area with no reimbursement of the officers' salary or fringe benefits. These departments include Hancock County Sheriff, Portland Police, and Washington County Sheriff. Another nine law enforcement agencies assign an officer through our Resident Agent Program to develop drug investigations in their jurisdiction while working closely with Maine Drug Enforcement staff and adhering to Maine Drug

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Enforcement's operational policies and procedures. These departments include Augusta Police, Bangor Police, Bath Police, Brunswick Police, Maine State Police, Oakland Police, Paris Police, Portland Police, and Westbrook Police. Maine Drug Enforcement also enjoys the assignment of 3 Federal agents to its Aroostook and Downeast District Task Forces that share an international border with Canada. Two agents are assigned by the U.S. Border Patrol and the third by Homeland Security Investigations. In addition, the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs has assigned a special agent with a focus of serving Maine's tribes. Finally, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (USDEA) has a Post of Duty for the northern section of Maine housed within Maine Drug Enforcement's North Central District Task Force office with two special agents who work daily with Maine Drug Enforcement's special agents. Maine Drug Enforcement works collaboratively with the FBI's Safe Streets Task Force, U.S. DEA's Portland, ME Resident Office, and the New England High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area initiative (Southern Maine Task Force) that is led by U.S. DEA assigning agents on a case by case basis for joint operations.

Maine Drug Enforcement works closely with the Maine Attorney General's Office in the development and prosecution of targeted drug cases in nine of Maine's sixteen counties with the local District Attorney prosecuting Maine Drug Enforcement cases in the remaining counties.

Maine Drug Enforcement task force commanders, supervisors and agents are recognized throughout the Maine law enforcement community for their considerable expertise in the investigation of drug trafficking organizations and the fostering of federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement collaboration. Maine Drug Enforcement staff engage in community and professional outreach representing the Maine Drug Enforcement and their agency to increase awareness of the heroin, fentanyl, and other opioid challenge.

Maine Drug Enforcement task force commanders and supervisors monitor case investigations to establish

PARTICIPATING AGENCIES

Auburn Police
Augusta Police
Bangor Police
Bar Harbor Police
Bath Police
Belfast Police
Biddeford Police
Brewer Police
Brunswick Police
Ellsworth Police
Fairfield Police
Gorham Police
Hampden Police
Houlton Police
Maliseet Tribal Police
Kennebunk Police
Lewiston Police
Oakland Police
Paris Police
Portland Police
Sanford Police
Scarborough Police
Skowhegan Police
South Portland Police
Waterville Police
Westbrook Police
Aroostook County Sheriff
Cumberland County Sheriff
Hancock County Sheriff
Kennebec County Sheriff
Knox County Sheriff
Lincoln County Sheriff
Oxford County Sheriff
Penobscot County Sheriff
Piscataquis County Sheriff
Sagadahoc County Sheriff
Somerset County Sheriff
Waldo County Sheriff
Washington County Sheriff
Maine State Police
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Dept. of Homeland Security
U.S. Border Patrol

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priorities and investigative focus aimed at producing qualitative and quantifiable results consistent with the mission, goals and objectives of Agency.

Maine Drug Enforcement task force supervisors utilize the services provided by the Regional Information Sharing System for event deconfliction requests – RISS SAFE. All task force operation plans require that the operation be deconflicted against all other law enforcement reported events prior to approval by supervisory personnel. This operational requirement enhances information sharing and investigation coordination ensuring a higher level of officer safety.

Maine Drug Enforcement task force groups have frequent interaction with the Maine Information & Analysis Center and New England High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Heroin Response Strategy representatives for the sharing of intelligence information impacting Maine and New England.

Mission Statement

The mission to the Maine Drug Enforcement Agency is to reduce the distribution, availability, and use of illicit drugs through a collaborative statewide enforcement effort.

Finally, Maine Drug Enforcement task force groups coordinate with the Maine State Police to identify and disrupt drug traffickers that utilize the interstate highways and secondary roads to smuggle drugs into and transport drugs throughout the state.

Administration: Maine Drug Enforcement provides a central administrative structure for the establishment, coordination and oversight of specialized narcotics and narcotics-related investigative units within the State of Maine through a multi-jurisdictional drug task force approach. The administrative office is located at 45 Commerce Drive, STE 1 in Augusta. The director, a law enforcement officer, serves as the administrator reporting directly to the Commissioner of Public Safety.

Maine Drug Enforcement operates two field divisions with four task force groups in each division thereby providing drug law enforcement throughout all of Maine's sixteen counties. Each division is led by a task force commander. Division 1 encompasses York, Cumberland, Western and Mid-Coast District Task Force led by a Portland Police Department lieutenant. Division 2 encompasses South Central, North Central, Downeast, and Aroostook District Task Force is led by a Aroostook County Sheriff's Office Lieutenant.

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Maine Drug operates a central evidence facility serving both Divisions for the long-term care and custody of all evidence that is obtained. The Evidence Division is led by a Cumberland County Sheriff's Office deputy who tracks all evidence from the time they take custody until it is appropriate disposition.

Maine Drug Enforcement has two full-time Department of Public Safety non-sworn administrative associates to support its operations. These positions are funded by the state with one in Augusta and the other in Bangor. In addition, the National Guard Bureau's Counterdrug Program assigns six investigative case support analysts to the Aroostook, Cumberland, Downeast, Mid-Coast, South Central, Western, and York Task Force groups in support of Maine Drug Enforcement's task force operations.

York District Task Force

The task force, located in Kennebunk, is staffed by 6 full-time collocated members. Full-time members included: 1 Biddeford Police Department Sergeant, 2 Biddeford Police Department Officer, 1 Kennebunk Police Department Officers, 1 Sanford Police Department Officer, and 1 Saco Police Department Officer. One task force investigative agent vacancy exists.

Cumberland District Task Force

The task force, located in Portland, is staffed by 8 full-time collocated members. Full-time members included: 1 Portland Police Department Lieutenant, 1 Gorham Police Department Officer, 1 Cumberland County Sheriff's Office Deputy, 2 Portland Police Department Officers, 1 Scarborough Police Department Officer, 1 South Portland Police Department Officer, and 1 Westbrook Police Department Officer. A Portland Police Department Officer and Westbrook Police Department Officer work on a case-by-case basis with this task force through the Resident Agent Program.

Western District Task Force

The task force, located in Lewiston, is staffed by 6 full-time collocated members. Full-time members included: 1 Lewiston Police Department Sergeant, 2 Auburn Police Department Officers, 1 Jay Police Department Officer, 1 Lewiston Police Department Officer, and 1 Oxford County Sheriff's Office Deputy. A Maine State Police Detective and Norway Police Department Officer work on a case-by-case basis with this task force through the Resident Agent Program.

Mid-Coast District Task Force

The task force, located in Thomaston, is staffed by 5 full-time collocated members. Full-time members included: 1 Lincoln County Sheriff's Office Deputy, 1 Belfast Police Department Officer, 1 Knox County Sheriff's Office Deputy, 1 Sagadahoc County Sheriff's Office Deputy, and 1 Waldo County Sheriff's Office Deputy. A Bath Police Department Officer and Brunswick Police Department Officer work on a case-by-case basis with this task force through the Resident Agent Program.

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South Central District Task Force

The task force, located in Augusta, is staffed by 7 full-time collocated members. Full-time members included: 1 Kennebec County Sheriff's Office Sergeant, 1 Augusta Police Department Officer, 1 Fairfield Police Department Officer, 1 Piscataquis County Sheriff's Office Deputy, 1 Skowhegan Police Department Officer, 1 Somerset County Sheriff's Office Deputy, and 1 Waterville Police Department Officer. An Augusta Police Department Detective, Maine State Police Troop Detective, and Oakland Police Department Captain work on a case-by-case basis with this task force through the Resident Agent Program.

North Central District Task Force

The task force, located in Bangor, is staffed by 8 full-time collocated members. Full-time members included: 1 Bangor Police Department Sergeant, 2 Bangor Police Department Officers, 1 Brewer Police Department Officer, 1 Hampden Police Department Officer, 2 Penobscot County Sheriff's Office Deputies, and 1 U.S. Department of Interior – Indian Affairs Special Agent. A Maine State Police Troop Detective works on a case-by-case basis with this task force through the Resident Agent Program. During the summer months, the University of Maine Police Department assigned a detective to the task force.

Downeast District Task Force

The task force office, located in Ellsworth, is staffed by 8 full-time collocated members. Full-time members included: 1 Hancock County Sheriff's Office Lieutenant, 1 Bar Harbor Police Department Officer, 2 Hancock County Sheriff's Office Deputies, 1 Ellsworth Police Department Officer, 1 U.S. Border Patrol Agent, and 2 Washington County Sheriff's Office Deputies. A Maine State Police Troop Detective works on a case-by-case basis with this task force.

Aroostook District Task Force

The task force office, located in Houlton, is staffed by 7 full-time collocated members. Full-time members included: 1 Aroostook County Sheriff's Office Sergeant, 2 Aroostook County Sheriff's Office Deputies, 1 Houlton Police Department Officer, 1 Presque Isle Police Department Officer, 1 U.S. Border Patrol Agent, and 1 U.S. Homeland Security Investigations Special Agent.

IV. Funding

For 2020, Maine Drug Enforcement's funding sources were a General Fund allocation, Federal Fund – Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program and US Department of Justice Community Oriented Police Service's Anti-Heroin Task Force grant award – and Special Revenue Fund – equitable shared forfeited drug assets from its many drug trafficking investigations. The state and local assistance federal JAG program funds reimburse the local departments for an assigned officer's salary and benefits permitting the

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department to replace that officer at the local level, and in effect placing more officers in Maine communities – Grant Award 2017-DJ-BX-0059.

Initially Maine applied JAG funds in support of a statewide multi-jurisdictional task force agency and complementary prosecution support of the Maine Office of the Attorney General (AG) to overcome obstacles to full-local and tribal participation in the number of operating task forces to realize full statewide coverage. Over the years, that funding source has decreased so that in 2020 only six special agent positions are funded through this program.

Maine Drug Enforcement develops investigations working closely with drug prosecution assistant attorney generals. This model achieves a high level of coordination and intelligence sharing within a Maine Drug Enforcement district drug task force area between the AG, District Attorney's Office, and law enforcement agencies. This coordinated effort results in high-quality felony drug cases.

In 2020, Maine Drug Enforcement was one of ten state agencies in the nation to be awarded a U.S. Department of Justice Community Oriented Police Service's Anti-Heroin Task Force (AHTF) competitive grant. AHTF award (2020HPWX0006) of \$931,880 will further MDEA's goals of reducing the availability of drugs; strengthen the state drug law enforcement infrastructure; information and intelligence sharing; enhance collaboration and coordination with all law enforcement agencies; and protect communities by stemming the increase of these drugs in its heroin and other opioid drug reduction effort. The award funds eight TruNarc™ analyzers and training for the field identification of narcotics and dangerous drugs, a MX908 – a next-generation handheld high-pressure mass spectrometry unit that provides trace drug analysis for field detection of drugs and pharmaceutical-based agents such as other opiates (fentanyl and fentanyl analogues), along with other high priority drugs-of-abuse such as heroin, and other investigative equipment.

V. Maine's Drug Threat

The overall drug threat to Maine continues to be of significant concern. The top drug threats to Maine and New England were heroin, fentanyl, controlled prescription drugs, cocaine, and methamphetamine.

The threats associated with heroin and fentanyl, and increasingly cocaine and fentanyl, continue to be more interrelated. Samples of purported heroin and cocaine now routinely contain fentanyl, making them difficult to distinguish absent laboratory analysis. Heroin, fentanyl, and cocaine all contribute to the drug related fatalities across New England.

Street criminal drug trafficking organizations remain the primary mid-level distributors of heroin, fentanyl, and cocaine in New England, while Mexican organized crime/drug cartels serve as sources of supply. At the retail level of the trade, national street gangs and

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national neighborhood-based street gangs are actively involved with illicit and controlled prescription drug trafficking, and these activities contribute to violent crime.

Although overall levels of trafficking remained low compared to other illicit drugs, methamphetamine production occurs primarily in Maine as compared to the other New England states in the form of “one-pot” laboratories. In 2020, Maine experienced another reduction in lab incidents – a total of 8, down from an all-time high of 126 in 2016. Of the 8 lab-related incidents this year, 7 were active labs, two involved at least one child present at the crime scene and have occurred in seven Maine’s counties from Aroostook to York with two labs discovered in Aroostook County.

A high profit margin is encouraging out-of-state drug distributors and their organizations to establish distribution networks in Maine. Previously, these organizations would travel to Maine with a modest amount of drug, rent a motel room and sell their product for a day or two then either leave the state to return another day or receive multi-ounce quantities of drugs every few days. That trend has been replaced with the distributors traveling to Maine with kilogram quantities. The distributors then supply local distributors who are often addicts themselves. These dealers collect their money and re-supply the local distributor. This activity decreases the risk to the out-of-state distributors of encountering law enforcement in undercover capacities. It also alleviates single location seizures of the drugs and cash in instances of law enforcement intervention. Absent the presence of out-of-state based and supplied traffickers in their communities, area drug dealers are still able to get in the car and drive to southern New England source cities to obtain drugs for transportation into Maine.

Drug-related violence continues. Debriefings of defendants and intelligence information continue to indicate the propensity for violence in drug trafficking networks. This is especially true in cases involving robbery of drugs and cash, and the collection of outstanding drug debts. The violent collection of drug debts through intimidation, weapons display, and severe beatings appears to be quite prevalent, especially relating to cocaine and crack distribution. The possession and use of firearms and sometimes their exchange for drugs is a reminder of the threat these groups pose to Maine.

VI. Accomplishments & Challenges

Operating in a task force environment readily yields accomplishments while also having distinct challenges. Personnel are constantly rotating in and out of the task force groups creating training challenges and impacting abilities to further long-term more complex investigations. Advances in technology and adaptations by the drug trafficking groups present another set of distinct challenges. At the same time, equipment necessary to fulfill

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Maine Drug Enforcement's mission must be acquired and staff trained to further the Agency's mission.

Challenges include that posed by members of out-of-state drug trafficking organizations establishing themselves in Maine communities, who join forces with Mainers drug users and those who deal to support their substance use, to sell heroin, fentanyl cocaine powder and crack cocaine at significant profit margins, and the manufacture, importation and sale of high purity methamphetamine also at significant profit margins. The challenge with these out-of-state drug trafficking organizations establishing themselves in Maine is that the enforcement effort may disrupt the organization with the arrest of several within the group. However, a failure to arrest and successfully prosecute even one member leaves a foothold for the organization to continue operating in the community.

To address this threat requires maintaining a balance between creating disruption by enforcement action while focusing intently on the "group" traffickers to ensure the dismantling of the organization. Investigative successes resulting from a more focused "targeting" approach by the task force groups have led to significant cases and removal of drugs from Maine's communities.

The topic of 2020 challenges would not be complete without a discussion about the COVID-19 pandemic. Our Department issued operational memoranda to address policy and procedure on personal protection guidance while in a MDEA facility and when conducting Task Force operations/investigations. This provided guidance for staff when interacting with co-workers, witnesses, sources of information, suspects, and defendants. The pandemic did impact the overall effectiveness of the task force effort resulting in lower outputs.

A challenge identified over the past year was the increased presence of fentanyl in other illegal drug types to include stimulants. Investigations have revealed instances where stimulants such as cocaine and crack cocaine that had been seized tested positive for containing fentanyl. Fentanyl is also increasingly being manufactured and distributed in the form of prescription Oxycodone and Xanax pills. This trend has impacted the number of accidental overdoses throughout the state. Interviews and debriefings have revealed instances where non-users of depressant drugs have experienced opiate overdoses after consuming what they believed to be cocaine, crack cocaine and prescription pills. The increased presence of fentanyl in these types of drugs has caused an increase safety concern for agents during the field testing and handling of these unknown substances.

MDEA being a "Task Force" model requires task force offices to be staffed by local, county and state law enforcement agencies. These agencies have been experiencing challenges in their hiring processes. Throughout the state agencies are competing for a limited pool of qualified candidates which has drastically effected staffing, particularly in their patrol divisions. This challenge has and will continue to affect agents' assignments for MDEA. Over the past year, assigned agents have been temporarily called back to their departments to fill

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minimum staffing positions. In some instances, MDEA agent positions have been left unfilled due to agencies being unable to assign officers due to staffing shortages.

In 2020, the MDEA documented 2,371 incidents of which were 501 drug offense investigations, 51 other criminal investigations, and 730 investigative assists to other law enforcement agencies. MDEA investigations resulted in charging 369 individuals with 341 of those charged were for drug offenses including possession (43) and sale/manufacturing (298).

A sampling of such successes includes:

- Aroostook Task Force group identified a group of out of state traffickers from Rhode Island travelling to Houlton and trafficking in amounts of fentanyl. Utilizing cellphone tracking data, agents were able to identify three individuals traveling in two separate cars from Rhode Island to Houlton to distribute wholesale amounts methamphetamine. The suspect vehicles were eventually stopped and searched. Seized from one of the vehicles was 2.7-pounds (1232-grams) of a heroin/fentanyl mix with an Aroostook County street value \$245,000. One of the individuals charged was determined to have entered the country illegally following a previous deportation.
- Agents from the Cumberland and York Task Force groups combined resources into an investigation into firearms and fentanyl distribution throughout Cumberland and York Counties after several fatal fentanyl overdoses deaths occurred in York County. A suspect was identified and utilizing search warrants and arrests of several people agents were able to seize two pounds of fentanyl in powder and tablet form valued at \$90,000, four firearms and \$15,000 in suspected drug proceeds.
- As an example of the (largely unreported) targeting of local drug traffickers by other criminal groups, Aroostook agents assisted an Aroostook County police department in a drug-related home invasion in which masked intruders broke into the home of a suspected drug dealer in the Limestone with the apparent intent of stealing drugs/money. The would-be robbers were foiled as the police arrived during the home invasion. As part of this investigation, agents executed a search warrant on the home targeted by the alleged thieves. Seized in connection with this search was approximately 100-grams of methamphetamine, \$22,000 in suspected drug proceeds and a 9mm handgun. The homeowner was subsequently charged with drug and firearms offenses by MDEA agents.
- Agents from the Mid-Coast Task Force group conducted a four- month investigation into the statewide distribution of methamphetamine. A group of Maine residents routinely traveled out of state picking up three to five pounds of methamphetamine each time which was then distributed throughout Maine. Agents seized four pounds

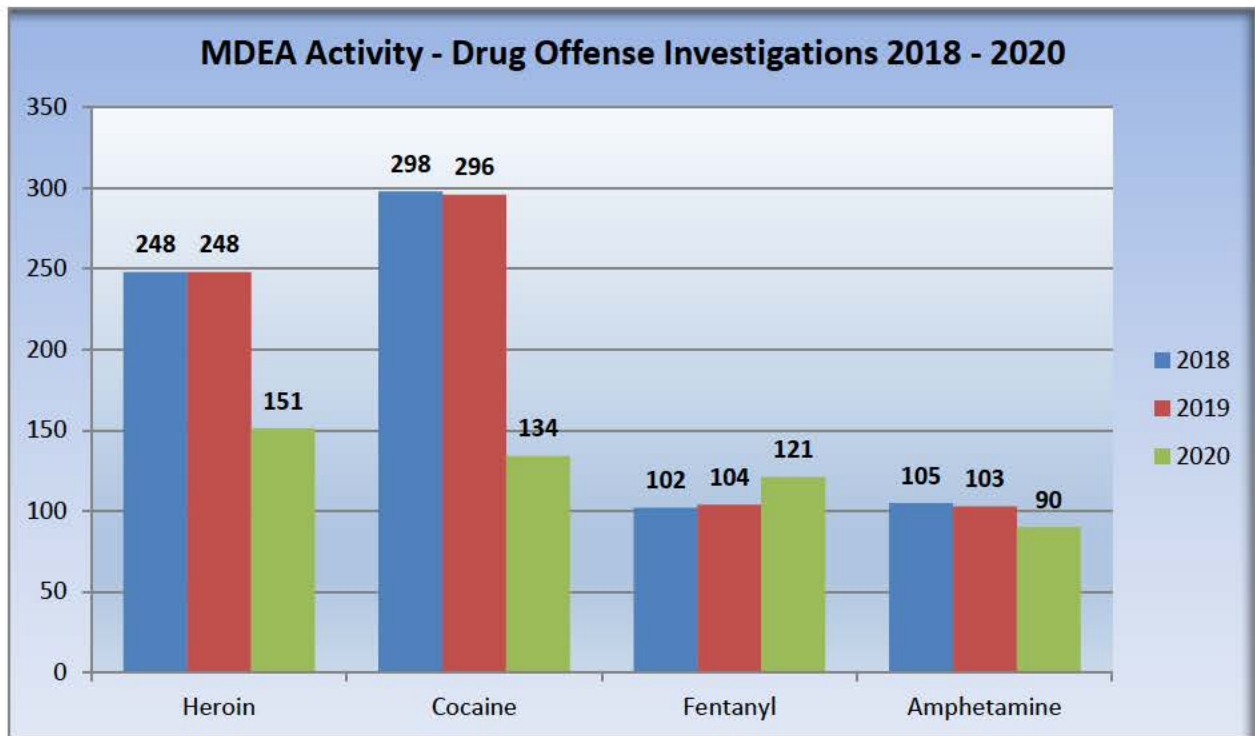
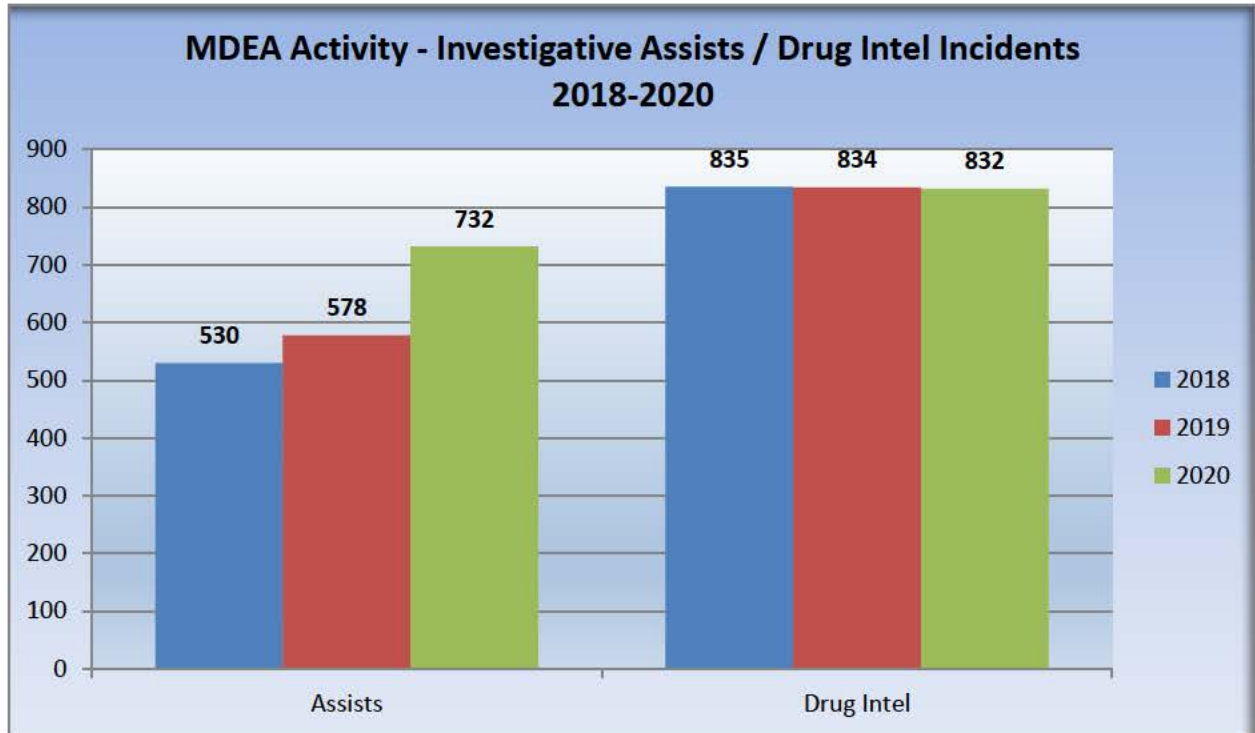
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of methamphetamine, a pound of cocaine and a loaded handgun as the group returned to Maine from New York. Three people from Maine were arrested and the New York source of supply was identified. The arrests and seizure significantly impacted and reduced the availability of methamphetamine throughout Maine.

- South Central Task Force group, working with Homeland Security investigators, identified a package that originated in the Netherlands coming to Maine via California. Inside the package was approximately 60-grams of heroin and one-kilogram of methamphetamine. The investigation revealed that the drugs were paid for using Bitcoin. Following a controlled delivery, two individuals were arrested.
- Responding to community complaints of drug trafficking in the Western part of the state, agents conducted a month-long investigation into cocaine trafficking. Agents conducted undercover purchases of cocaine. During the investigation it was revealed the suspect was actively seeking firearms to be traded for cocaine. The firearms would then be traded or sold to out of state sources of supply. During the execution of a search warrant agents seized over pound of cocaine, \$15,000 in suspected drug proceeds and sixteen firearms.
- Downeast Task Force group identified a New Bedford, MA based organization that was trafficking quantities of cocaine, cocaine base and heroin/fentanyl in Hancock and Washington counties. During the investigation agents identified out of state dealers that traveled to rural areas of Washington and Hancock Counties to recruit local retail distributors. The investigation, which included undercover buys of illicit drugs and the execution of three search warrants, resulted in the arrest of seven individuals - two from New Bedford, Mass along with five others from Washington and Hancock Counties. Seized in connection with this investigation was 263-grams of fentanyl, 110-grams of cocaine powder and 80 grams of crack cocaine.
- North Central Task Force group assisted the Bangor Police Department in a drug overdose death investigation of a female from Bangor. From witness statements provided by an individual who was using heroin with the victim the night she died, supported by victim and witness cellphone data, agents were able to identify the suspected local source of the drugs which caused the death. Posing as the cellphone owner, agents were able to manipulate the phone and contact the male source who had provided the pair with the heroin on the previous evening. Valuable corroborating evidence was obtained during this text message conversation. In addition, agents posing as the victim's friend, were able to order from the suspect "the same stuff as last night" as further proof of the crime. Soon after, this individual was arrested in possession of heroin they thought was destined for the cooperator and her now deceased friend. The suspect was charged with Aggravated Trafficking in Schedule Drugs resulting in death and sentenced to 20 years, with all but 8 years suspended followed by 4 years of probation.

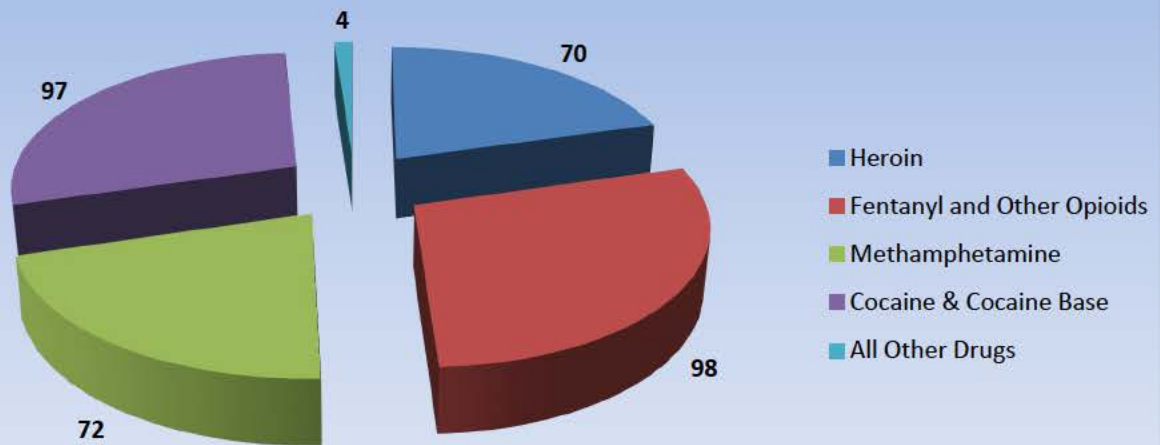
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VII. Outcomes



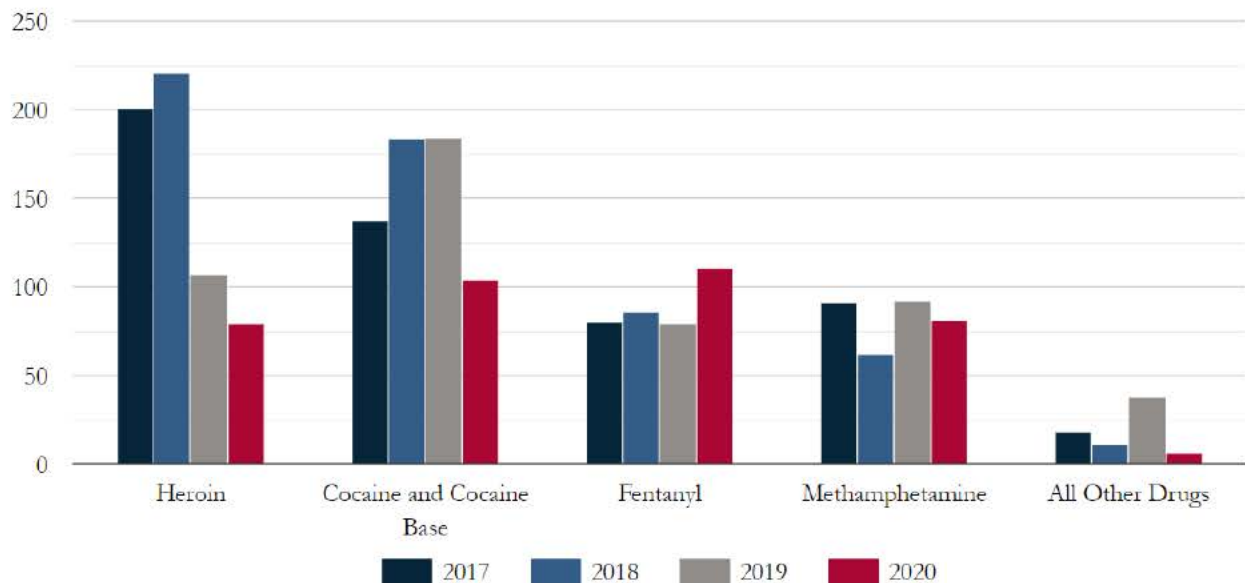
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2020 MDEA Drug Arrests by Substance

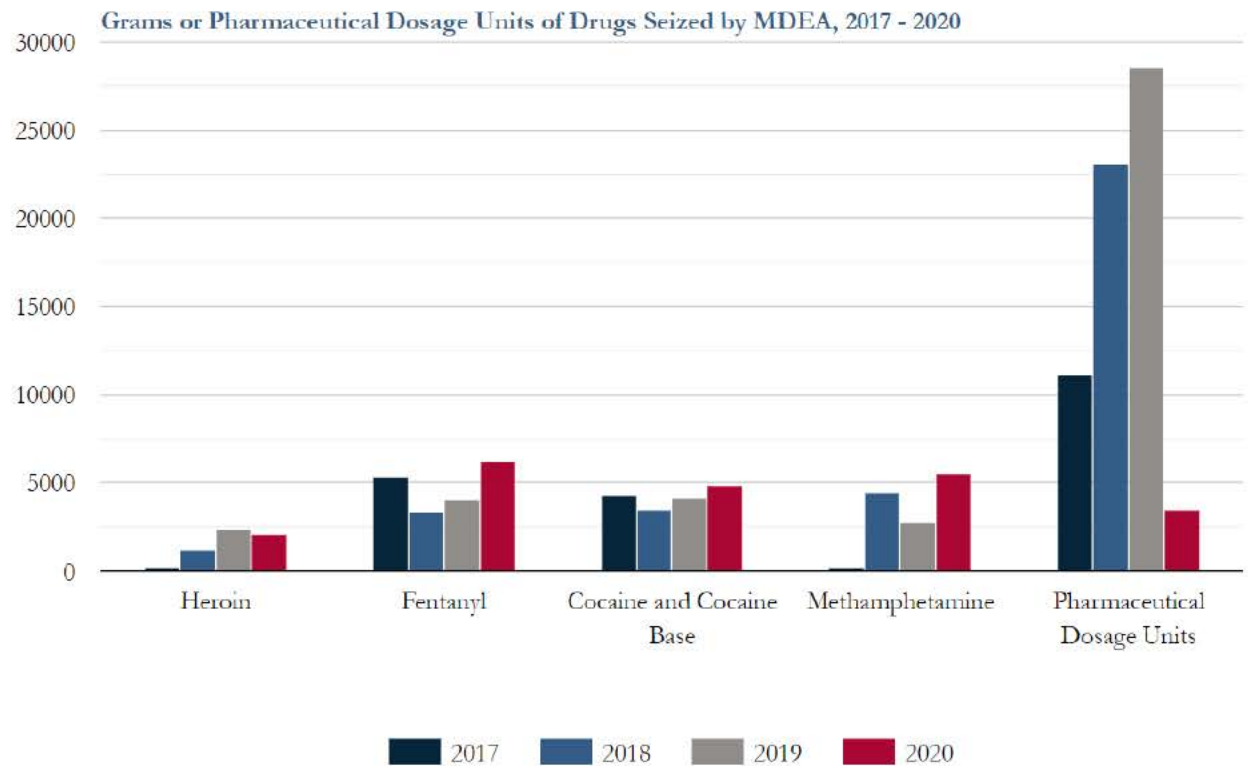
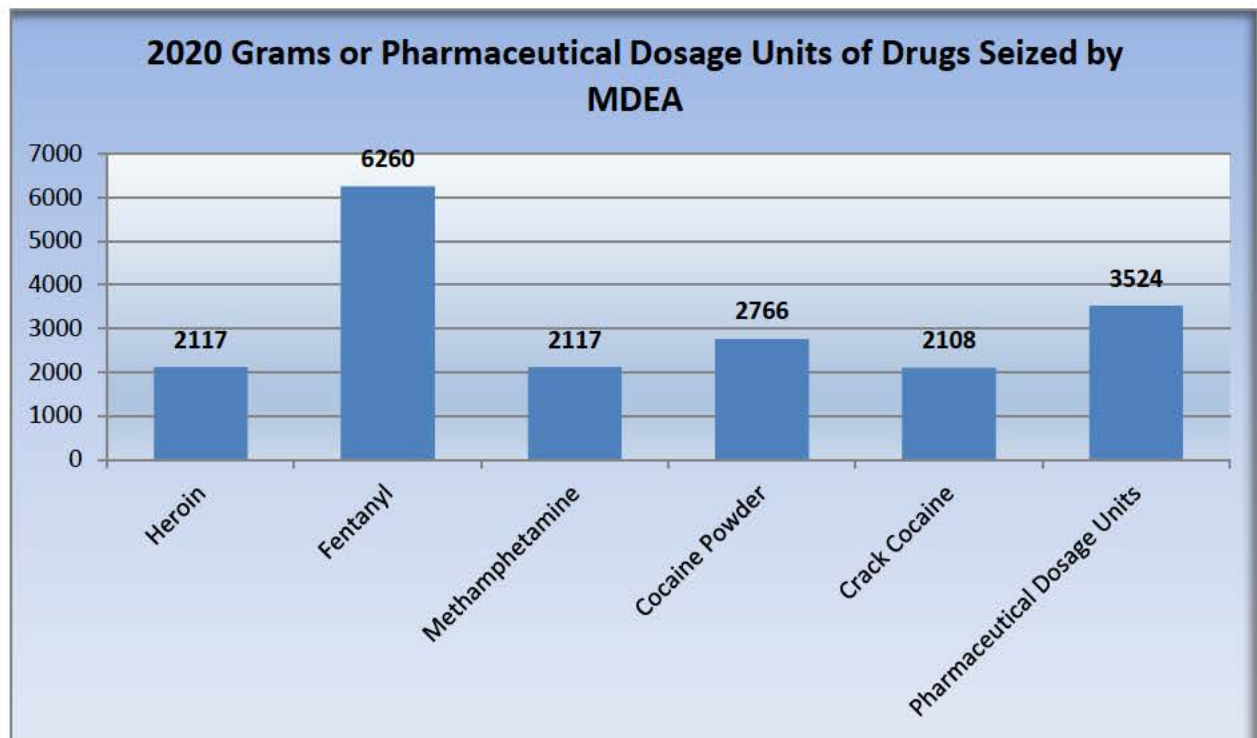


In 2020 there were 341 drug offense arrests. Heroin, fentanyl, and all other opioid drugs represent 49% of all drug offenses, followed by cocaine and cocaine base at 28%, methamphetamine at 21% and all other drugs the remaining 2%.

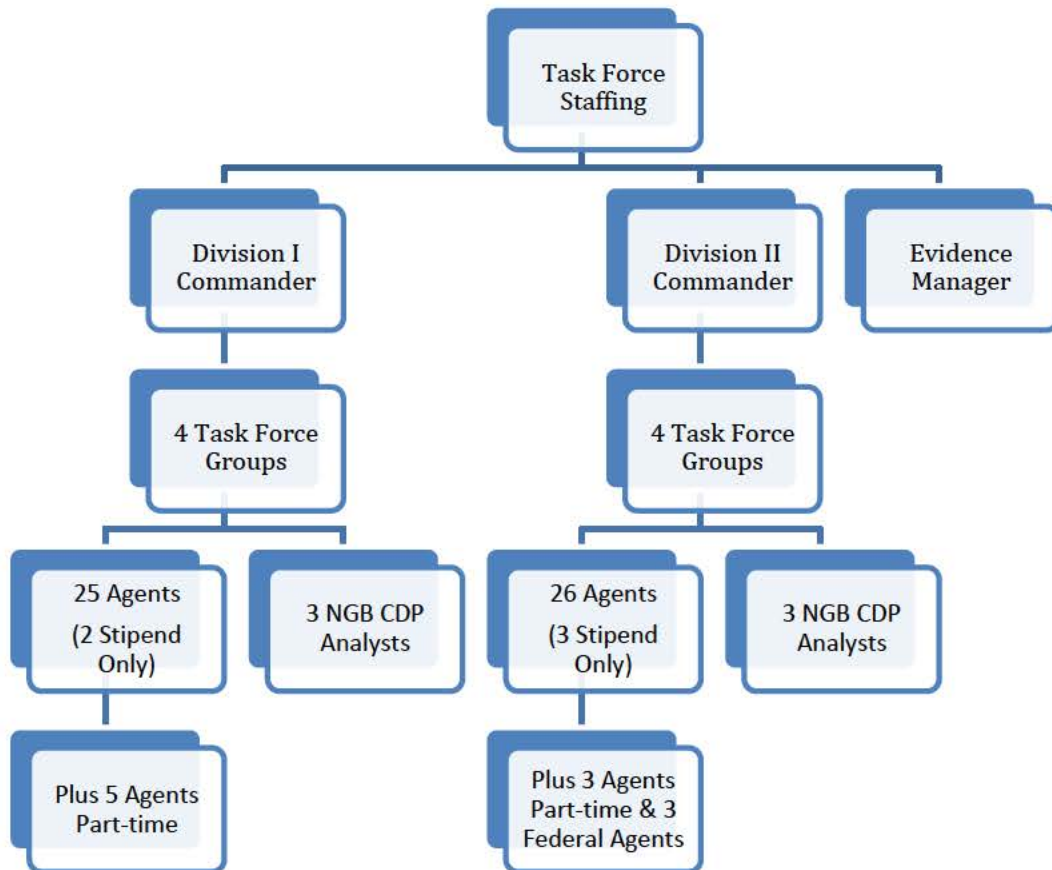
MDEA Drug Arrests by Substance, 2017 - 2020



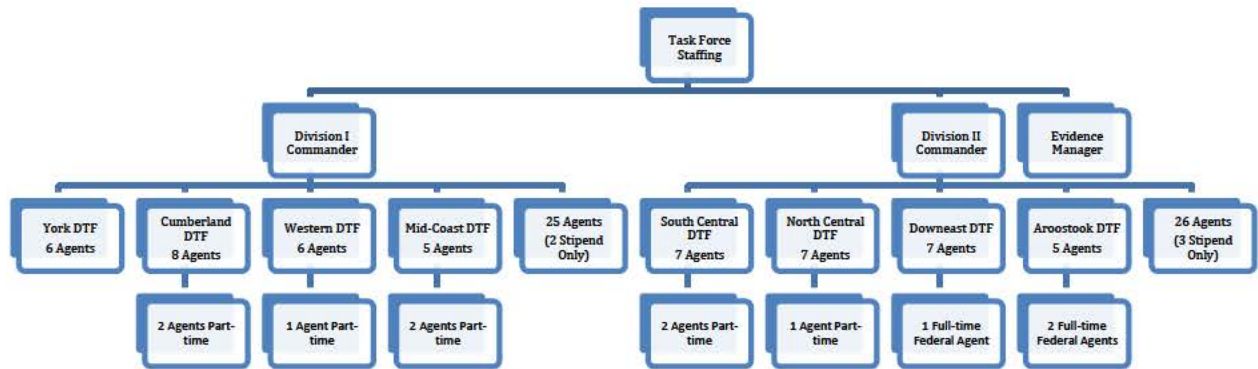
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MYPD
MY POLICE DEPARTMENT



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