

Ohio's Emerging Drug Trends

A Summary Report From Ohio Task Force Commanders

May 6, 2003

A meeting of the Ohio Task Force Commanders Association provided the following information regarding the continued use, manufacture, and sale of illegal drugs in Ohio. It was established that there are emerging trends in the use of illegal drugs that must be addressed.

Methamphetamine continues to be a developing problem in Ohio. Pete Tobin of BCI & I states, "last year there were 114 known meth labs in Ohio. This year BCI & I predicts that there will be 250 meth labs in the state. The manufacture and use of meth continues to be a large problem in the southern part of the state, as well as in the northeast (Ashtabula County especially). The transportation of meth into Ohio by dealers from southwestern states e.g. Texas, is a large problem in counties such as Summit and Lake, and there are indications of involvement by biker gangs.

Ohio is still seeing distribution of powder cocaine, crack cocaine, and marijuana. An alarming trend throughout the entire state is the use of heroin. Many task forces are seeing heroin coming into rural areas from larger urban cities like Youngstown, Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati. Many local dealers are getting heroin from Detroit, Chicago and New York. In areas where there are incidents of oxycontin use, heroin is typically found. There are high incidents of heroin usage in Clermont, Clinton Tuscarawas, Colombiana, and Fairfield Counties. The common thread between each of the aforementioned counties is the high distribution of Oxycontin in each area. In Lorain County, heroin is the most commonly used street drug in both urban and rural populations. Many of the users are of high-school age, and several overdoses have been reported throughout the state. It appears that heroin emerges as the drug of choice within a year after the supply of Oxycontin is diminished through enforcement efforts.

Submitted by Mike Davis and Mike Blass, May 8, 2003