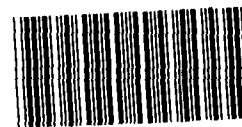


April 1992

# DRUG CONTROL

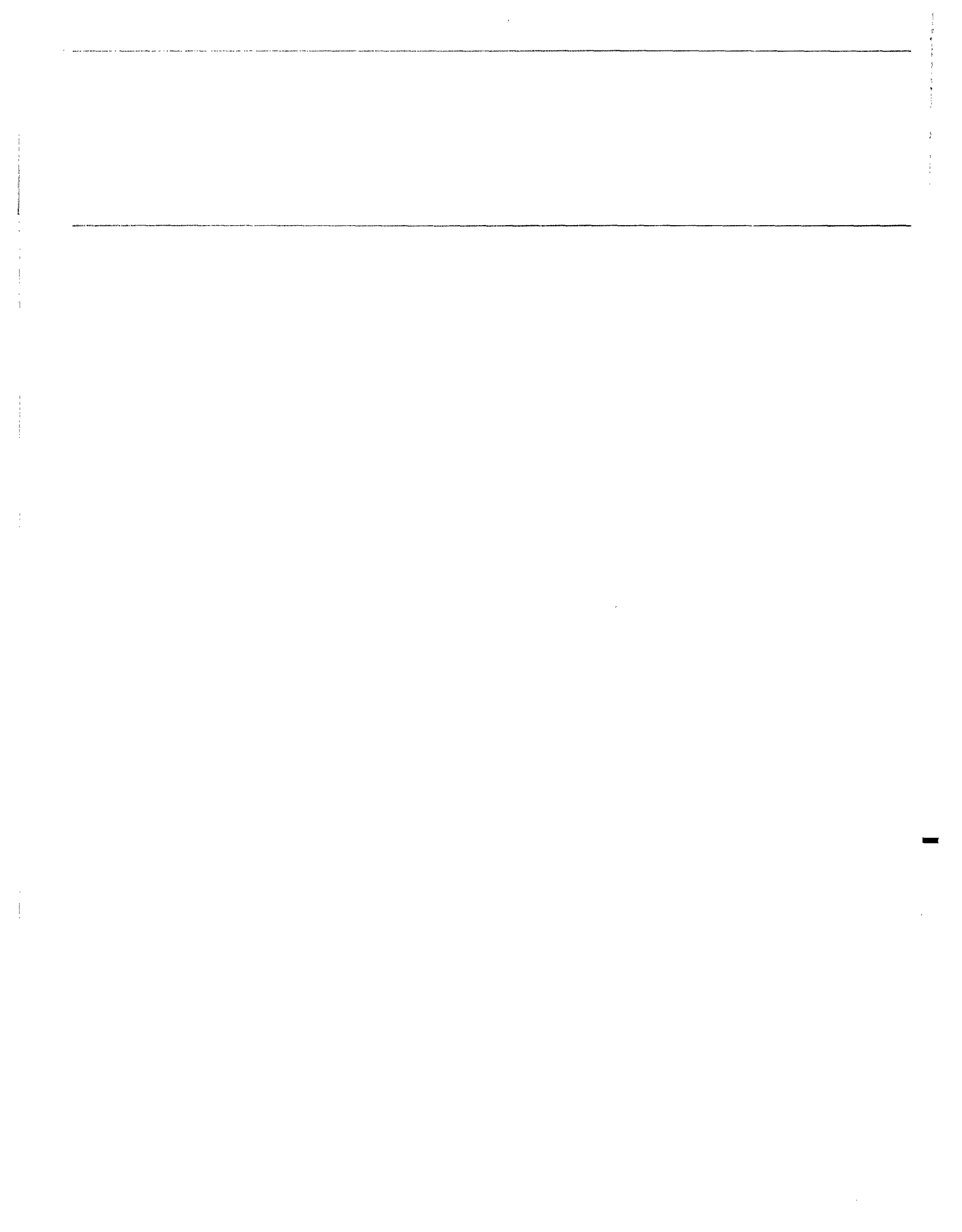
## Inadequate Guidance Results in Duplicate Intelligence Production Efforts



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**National Security and  
International Affairs Division**

B-242554

April 14, 1992

## Congressional Requesters

This report responds to a request from the Chairman, House Committee on Government Operations, and the requirements of section 1007 of the fiscal year 1991 National Defense Authorization Act. It addresses DOD's efforts to increase the availability and usefulness of drug-related intelligence to the law enforcement agencies (LEA) and identifies duplicate reporting and analysis efforts among the various counternarcotics organizations. In addition, this report describes the roles of the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) and the Director of Central Intelligence's Counternarcotics Center in coordinating counternarcotics activities. Finally, this report addresses overall authority for directing intelligence collection, analysis, and reporting by counternarcotics organizations. Report addressees are listed at the end of this letter. The classified version of this report is being provided separately.

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**Background**

The President's National Drug Control Strategy, issued annually by ONDCP, identifies the systematic, deliberate, and thorough dismantling of drug trafficking organizations as the overarching goal of drug law enforcement. The strategy links the success of this effort to the U.S. intelligence program that includes intelligence collection, production (analysis and reporting), and dissemination. The Director, ONDCP, is responsible for establishing policies, objectives, and priorities for the National Drug Control Program, including intelligence to support counternarcotics efforts. The Director of Central Intelligence, through the Counternarcotics Center, coordinates activities of the counternarcotics intelligence community.

In declaring the smuggling of illegal drugs into the United States a national security threat, the President directed DOD to provide the necessary information to support counternarcotics efforts to disrupt and/or dismantle major drug producing and trafficking organizations. As part of the fiscal year 1989 National Defense Authorization Act, the Congress directed DOD to increase its support to LEAs involved in counternarcotics efforts—e.g., the Drug Enforcement Administration, Federal Bureau of Investigation,

Customs Service, and Coast Guard—including intelligence to promote detection and monitoring of drug traffickers to support LEA interdiction<sup>1</sup> efforts. Appendix I provides additional information on DOD's involvement, and appendix II provides information on organizations supporting counternarcotics efforts.

Within DOD, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Command, Control, Communications, and Intelligence develops overall policy for drug-related intelligence activities. In February 1989, the Assistant Secretary tasked the Director, Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), in coordination with the Director, National Security Agency, to develop an intelligence collection strategy and a plan for the production and dissemination of drug-related intelligence.

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## Results in Brief

DOD has contributed significantly to the drug intelligence collection capabilities that exist today and increased the overall understanding within the U.S. counternarcotics community of the nature and scope of drug producing and trafficking organizations. Although the volume of drug-related intelligence being collected has increased, no single individual or organization is directing the collection, analysis, and reporting of counternarcotics intelligence by both DOD and law enforcement agencies.

Even though the Director, ONDCP, establishes priorities for intelligence functions and encourages agency cooperation in coordinating and sharing intelligence information, he does not have the authority to direct agency intelligence activities. As directed by the President, the Director of Central Intelligence established the Counternarcotics Center to coordinate activities of the counternarcotics intelligence community. DOD, since assuming its new responsibilities, has brought unique and increased intelligence collection, analysis, and reporting capabilities to the drug war. However, neither the Counternarcotics Center nor DOD has issued adequate guidance on the relative priority of the two primary but differing national objectives—(1) collecting, analyzing, and reporting information on major drug trafficking and producing organizations and (2) detecting and monitoring individual drug shipments.

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<sup>1</sup>Interdiction typically includes (1) detection of suspect aircraft or vessels by radar, possibly in conjunction with information obtained from informants or other intelligence sources; (2) monitoring the suspects in transit until they can be intercepted and the presence of illegal drugs determined by searches or other means; and (3) apprehension of the smugglers, ideally with arrest of the smugglers and seizure of their drugs and aircraft or vessel.

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DOD's collection efforts do not appear to unnecessarily duplicate those of the drug LEAs. However, the lack of overall guidance has resulted in duplication within and among DOD and LEA organizations in the critical production phase that follows intelligence collection.

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## Lack of Central Guidance

No one individual or organization has the authority to direct what specific intelligence will be collected, analyzed, and reported, and by whom, to support efforts to disrupt drug organizations and detect and monitor drug traffickers. ONDCP recognizes that federal drug intelligence capabilities must be coordinated and focused to provide a complete picture of drug trafficking organizations. However, it has no direct authority to enforce this coordination. It has only indirect leverage to influence coordination through its budget review and certification responsibilities.

In January 1990, the Counternarcotics Center issued an Intelligence Community<sup>2</sup> Counternarcotics Strategy that identified the key roles of federal agencies involved in drug intelligence. The strategy included a description of DOD and LEA intelligence collection and analysis activities. It also identified the Center's responsibilities for providing overall guidance and support to the Intelligence Community's counternarcotics effort and designated the Center as the lead organization for coordinating counternarcotics intelligence collection and analysis by drug intelligence producers. However, we found no evidence that the Center has issued or intends to issue guidance to facilitate the coordination of drug-related intelligence production activities or that it is taking steps to identify the potential for duplication.

DIA has not formalized guidance either. DIA officials drafted two documents to address DOD's intelligence role in counternarcotics—a Counternarcotics Baseline Architecture and a Counternarcotics Intelligence Collection Strategy. The architecture was intended to describe the existing roles and relationships among DOD intelligence, the Intelligence Community, and LEAs involved in the national counternarcotics effort in terms of what drug-related intelligence was to be collected, analyzed, and reported. It was envisioned as the first step in the DOD counternarcotics intelligence

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<sup>2</sup>The Intelligence Community refers to the following executive branch organizations and activities: Central Intelligence Agency, National Security Agency, DIA, offices within DOD for the collection of specialized national foreign intelligence through reconnaissance programs, the Bureau of Intelligence and Research of the Department of State, intelligence elements of the military services and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Departments of the Treasury and Energy, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and staff elements of the Office of the Director of Central Intelligence.

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planning process and the foundation for future planning efforts. The collection strategy outlined in general terms the roles and responsibilities of both DOD and LEA collection organizations. These documents have been in process since at least February 1990. According to DIA officials, because of the changing nature of the counternarcotics threat, these documents have never been finalized. DIA has no immediate plans to complete the architecture and is still developing the collection strategy.

DIA has developed a matrix of drug-related information needed to support the development of a counternarcotics data base—known as EMERALD—which is scheduled for initial operation in late April 1992. However, it has not obtained agreement on which DOD or LEA organizations will provide the information for the data base. Finally, DIA has not issued guidance detailing the intelligence analysis and reporting expected from individual DOD organizations involved in the counternarcotics effort.

Appendix III provides additional details on individual agency roles and responsibilities in directing counternarcotics intelligence activities.

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## Overlap and Duplication of Efforts

DOD has contributed significantly to the drug intelligence collection capabilities that exist today and has increased the overall understanding within the U.S. counternarcotics community of the nature and scope of drug producing and trafficking organizations. Valuable drug intelligence is being collected, produced, and disseminated; however, overlap and duplication between and among DOD and LEA organizations exists in intelligence analysis and reporting.

Of the 23 DOD and LEA headquarters and field organizations we visited during our review, we found that most were analyzing various types of drug intelligence to support their individual operations. Since there is no overall guidance on what specific analyses should be performed by individual counternarcotics organizations, and because areas of responsibility overlap within DOD, between DOD and the LEAs, and among the LEAs themselves, we found that many of the resulting analyses and reports were duplicative and generally lacked the benefit derived from cooperative efforts. Appendix IV lists the counternarcotics organizations included in our review.

From the 23 organizations, we collected samples of the routine and special reports they produce as well as sample reports and message traffic they receive. We found that 8 of the 23 organizations were analyzing key drug organizations operating within their areas of responsibility. Officials from

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most counternarcotics organizations told us that these analyses were not being conducted in response to specific tasking. Rather, organization officials said they believed the analyses needed to be done and, to their knowledge, no one else was conducting that particular analysis. Only one of the eight locations had coordinated with or notified other organizations of its efforts during the data gathering and analysis phase.

Similarly, 9 of the 23 organizations were performing threat assessments within their geographic areas and 12 were doing area and/or movement trend analyses. Where areas of responsibility overlap, we found that some of the analyses being performed were duplicative. For example, at least four DOD organizations have responsibility for DOD counternarcotics activities along the southwest border of the United States. The Commander in Chief, Forces Command, coordinates all DOD operational support to counternarcotics activities on the ground; Joint Task Force 6 provides counternarcotics support to federal, state, and local LEAs along the southwest border; the Commander in Chief, North American Aerospace Defense Command, detects and monitors aerial drug trafficking across U.S. land borders and coastal borders; and Joint Task Force 4 plans and conducts operations to detect and monitor drug traffickers transiting the Caribbean, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Pacific Coast of South America. Because of this overlap, we found five DOD and LEA counternarcotics organizations analyzing the movement of illegal drugs into Mexico by aircraft. Each analysis repeated data such as the type of aircraft used, aircraft flight times, routes being followed, and potential landing sites.

Where areas of responsibility were not the same, we found that many of the analyses were contradictory and resulting conclusions tended to support the continued mission of the organization performing the analysis. For example, analyses by Miami-based organizations tended to conclude that the primary threat continued to be through the Caribbean, whereas analyses by more centrally located organizations concluded that more emphasis should be focused on the southwest border of the United States. Although the threat continues through both the Caribbean and the southwest border, coordinated analyses would better ensure agreement on the various drug threats being faced by the United States and how to counter them.

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## Recommendations

To coordinate counternarcotics intelligence efforts and reduce duplication in the intelligence analysis and reporting phase within the defense community, we recommend that the Secretary of Defense direct the Defense Intelligence Agency to (1) finalize its counternarcotics baseline architecture and intelligence collection strategy, (2) pursue final agreements from both DOD and LEA organizations on responsibilities for providing drug-related data to ensure the April 1992 operation target is met for EMERALD, the drug-related data base, and (3) develop production guidance detailing the intelligence analysis and reporting expected from individual DOD organizations involved in the counternarcotics effort.

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## Matter for Congressional Consideration

The Central Intelligence Agency disagrees with other members of the counternarcotics community on whether additional guidance is necessary to coordinate counternarcotics activities and eliminate duplication. Therefore, the Congress may wish to consider directing the Counternarcotics Center, through the Director of Central Intelligence, to develop overall guidance for analyzing and reporting counternarcotics intelligence. This guidance should be consistent with the Center's management and coordination responsibilities as specified in its January 1990 Intelligence Community Counternarcotics Strategy. Further, in developing this guidance, the Counternarcotics Center should obtain input from all members of the counternarcotics intelligence community, as well as from the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

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## Scope and Methodology

On June 12, 1991, we delivered the first in a series of reports to the House Committee on Government Operations on DOD's implementation of its new counternarcotics mission.<sup>3</sup> That report provided an overview of DOD's counternarcotics organization, its intelligence and communications networks, and budgeting and funding in support of its counternarcotics mission. Based on the audit work that led to that report, the Chairman of the Committee requested that we perform detailed reviews of each of the above areas.

Subsequently, section 1007 of the fiscal year 1991 National Defense Authorization Act directed us to review defense spending for counternarcotics activities and report to the congressional defense committees, the Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control, and the

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<sup>3</sup>Drug Control: Status Report on DOD Support to Counternarcotics Activities (GAO/NSIAD-91-117, June 12, 1991).



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House Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control. Because the legislative requirement closely paralleled the request of the Chairman, House Committee on Government Operations, this report and each of the follow-on reports is being addressed to the Chairman, the Caucus, and the cognizant select and defense committees.

Our work focused on DOD's ability to increase the availability and usefulness of drug-related intelligence to the law enforcement agencies. We gathered data from various DOD and law enforcement organizations as well as from ONDCP. We identified and compared the intelligence collection capabilities of the various LEAs as well as DOD. In addition, we compared various drug-related products, including threat assessments and trend and pattern analyses, to identify duplicate efforts among the various organizations.

We gathered data from ONDCP; Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Command, Control, Communications and Intelligence; DIA; National Security Agency; Commanders in Chief of the Atlantic, Forces, and North American Aerospace Defense Commands; DOD joint task forces established specifically for counternarcotics in Key West, Florida, and El Paso, Texas; headquarters and field offices of the Drug Enforcement Administration, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Customs Service, and Coast Guard; and the El Paso Intelligence Center, El Paso, Texas.

We asked to meet with the Director of Central Intelligence's Counternarcotics Center staff to obtain information on its counternarcotics strategy and discuss its lead organization role in coordinating counternarcotics intelligence collection, analysis, and reporting within the counternarcotics intelligence community, but our request was denied. At the conclusion of our work, we provided the Central Intelligence Agency with those sections of our draft report describing the activities of the Counternarcotics Center, including our observation that the Center has done little toward implementing its responsibilities as called for in its January 1990 Intelligence Community Counternarcotics Strategy.

In a letter dated January 24, 1992, the Agency responded, stating that our draft report did not take into account the coordinating role of the Counternarcotics Center in eliminating duplication and boosting efficiencies in pursuing a joint counternarcotics strategy employed by law enforcement, intelligence, and DOD organizations. This letter also stated that our report did not give adequate consideration to the community working groups that have coordinated taskings and eliminated rivalries.

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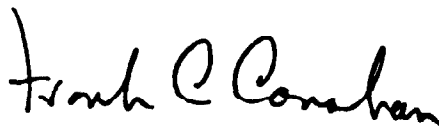
Agency officials provided us with no documentation to support this position. Moreover, the Agency's assessment of the situation appears to be in isolation. Its views are not shared by senior officials in ONDCP or DOD, nor are they consistent with the findings and conclusions of our report.

We conducted our review between October 1990 and October 1991 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. As directed, we did not request written agency comments on this report. However, we discussed the information in this report with officials from DOD, ONDCP, and the LEAs included in our review, and incorporated their comments where appropriate.

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Unless you announce its contents earlier, we plan no further distribution of this report until 30 days from its issue date. At that time, we will send copies to the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence. We will make copies available to others on request.

This report was prepared under the direction of Louis J. Rodrigues, Director, Command, Control, Communications, and Intelligence Issues, who may be reached on (202) 275-4841 if you or your staff have any questions concerning the report. Other major contributors to this report are listed in appendix V.



Frank C. Conahan  
Assistant Comptroller General

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List of Addressees

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.  
Chairman, Committee on  
Government Operations  
House of Representatives

The Honorable Sam Nunn  
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services  
United States Senate

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Defense  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden  
Chairman, Senate Caucus on  
International Narcotics Control  
United States Senate

The Honorable Alfonse M. D'Amato  
Co-Chairman, Senate Caucus on  
International Narcotics Control  
United States Senate

The Honorable Les Aspin  
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services  
House of Representatives

The Honorable John P. Murtha  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Defense  
Committee on Appropriations  
House of Representatives

The Honorable Charles B. Rangel  
Chairman, Select Committee on  
Narcotics Abuse and Control  
House of Representatives

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**The Honorable Lawrence Coughlin  
Ranking Minority Member  
Select Committee on  
Narcotics Abuse and Control  
House of Representatives**



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**Abbreviations**

DEA	Drug Enforcement Administration
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
DOD	Department of Defense
LEA	law enforcement agency
ONDCP	Office of National Drug Control Policy

# DOD's Involvement in Counternarcotics Efforts

Since fiscal year 1981, federal spending to reduce the supply and use of illegal drugs has increased significantly—from nearly \$1.5 billion in fiscal year 1981 to a requested total of nearly \$12 billion in fiscal year 1992. Before fiscal year 1989, counternarcotics responsibilities belonged entirely to LEAs. Until then, DOD supported these agencies by providing training, equipment, aircraft, and other assistance that complemented DOD's regular mission. DOD also provided intelligence support to a limited extent.

In declaring the smuggling of illegal drugs into the United States a national security threat, the President directed DOD to provide the necessary information to LEAs to support counternarcotics efforts. DOD provides drug intelligence to support these agencies' efforts to dismantle drug trafficking organizations, and it collects, analyzes, and reports drug intelligence to support the law enforcement interdiction process and its own detection and monitoring activities.

DOD was reluctant to increase its participation in the war on drugs due in part to the restrictions placed on it by the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878 (18 U.S.C. 1385) and Executive Order 12333, United States Intelligence Activities. The Posse Comitatus Act precludes the use of federal troops in the enforcement of civilian laws, but it does not prevent providing military assistance to civilian law enforcement.

Executive Order 12333 authorizes agencies within the U.S. Intelligence Community to collect information on foreign narcotics activities; however, it limits the ability of DOD, as a member of the Intelligence Community, to collect, retain, or disseminate domestic intelligence or information concerning U.S. persons.<sup>4</sup> DOD Directive 5240.1, DOD Intelligence Activities, which implements Executive Order 12333 within DOD, emphasizes protecting the constitutional rights and privacy of U.S. persons; however, it authorizes DOD organizations, under certain circumstances, to collect information about any U.S. person reasonably believed to be engaged in international narcotics activities.

Concerned about the apparent lack of coordination among LEAs and the limited progress made in interdicting drug smugglers, the Congress assigned DOD certain counternarcotics responsibilities as part of the fiscal

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<sup>4</sup>The term U.S. person includes a U.S. citizen, an alien known by the intelligence agency concerned to be a permanent resident alien, an unincorporated association substantially composed of U.S. citizens or permanent resident aliens, or a corporation incorporated in the United States, except for a corporation directed and controlled by a foreign government or governments.



year 1989 National Defense Authorization Act. Specifically, the act made DOD responsible for

- serving as the single lead federal agency for detecting and monitoring aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs into the United States;
- integrating U.S. command, control, communications, and technical intelligence assets dedicated to drug interdiction into an effective communications network; and
- approving and funding state governor plans for expanded use of the National Guard to support drug interdiction and enforcement operations.

The Congress also directed DOD to increase its support to drug LEAs, including intelligence to promote detection and monitoring to support interdiction efforts.

To carry out the legislative mandate, DOD designated a DOD Coordinator for Drug Enforcement Policy and Support. The Drug Coordinator, who is also the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, serves as the Secretary of Defense's principal staff assistant and advisor for drug control policy, priorities, systems, resources, and programs.

# Organizations That Support U.S. Counternarcotics Efforts

Those organizations involved in the counternarcotics effort agree that any effort to interdict the supply of drugs depends to a great extent on the availability of good intelligence. LEAs have conducted intelligence collection activities for many years. Their capabilities include human source<sup>5</sup> intelligence obtained primarily through drug investigations within the United States and abroad, and some limited imagery capability. DOD's involvement has increased the type and quantity of available counternarcotics intelligence. Additional details on intelligence collection by both DOD and LEA organizations are included in the classified version of this report.

## Types and Sources of Intelligence

Agencies involved in drug law enforcement commonly refer to three categories of intelligence—tactical, operational, and strategic. Each of these is defined somewhat differently at times. The following definitions are used for this report:

- Tactical intelligence is actionable information that is of immediate tactical use in effecting investigations and interdiction, such as information about current or imminent location, mode, and movement of specific drug smuggling shipments. This information can be used as a basis for repositioning resources to interdict a smuggling vessel.
- Operational intelligence is information that can provide analytic support to the criminal investigation and prosecution process. For example, operational intelligence can include information about specific persons, organizations, and facilities (such as laboratories and production sites) that are engaged in illegal drug activities.
- Strategic intelligence is evaluated information from various sources about broad patterns and trends that can be used to make strategic planning and programming decisions. This includes, for example, information on drug production and availability.

Information that forms the basis of drug intelligence is collected from four principal sources—communications, imagery/photographs, people, and electronic signals. These intelligence types, which can support tactical, operational, and/or strategic intelligence, are described as follows:

- Communications intelligence is information derived from the interception of foreign communications by someone other than the intended recipient.

<sup>5</sup>A human source is any person who conveys by any means information of potential intelligence value to an intelligence activity.

- Imagery intelligence includes representations and interpretations of objects reproduced electronically or by optical means on film, electronic display devices, or other media.
- Human intelligence is all intelligence information derived from human sources, including tips from agents and informers and results of investigations.
- Electronic intelligence is data obtained from the interception and processing of foreign noncommunications transmissions.

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## Intelligence Collection Capabilities Within the Law Enforcement Community

The four LEAs included in our review and brief descriptions of their intelligence collection capabilities are described as follows.

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### Drug Enforcement Administration

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) collects tactical intelligence for immediate interdiction of drug shipments, operational intelligence on organizations and individuals involved in drug smuggling, and strategic intelligence on trafficking patterns and similar data used for decisionmaking. DEA, which is the only federal agency dedicated to drug law enforcement, has the ability to collect imagery and human intelligence.

DEA has approximately 95 aircraft in its inventory, some equipped with cameras and with forward-looking infrared systems.

DEA agents obtain intelligence both in the United States and abroad and report this information through their investigative reports. Its analysts review and analyze this investigative information to fulfill specific intelligence information requests. In addition, DEA conducts electronic surveillance of individuals and organizations.

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### Federal Bureau of Investigation

The Federal Bureau of Investigation has concurrent jurisdiction with DEA over federal criminal drug laws. The Bureau primarily collects human intelligence to support its role in various areas, which, in addition to counternarcotics, includes organized crime, counterterrorism, white-collar crime, foreign counterintelligence, and violent crime. It focuses its drug intelligence collection on that information necessary to disrupt and dismantle drug organizations and prosecute their leaders. Its human intelligence sources include informants, cooperating witnesses, and

information obtained through undercover operations. The Bureau also conducts court-authorized electronic surveillance to penetrate sophisticated drug trafficking organizations.

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### Customs Service

The Customs Service is the nation's principal border enforcement agency. Among other things, it is responsible for interdicting and seizing contraband, including narcotics and illegal drugs; processing persons, carriers, cargo, and mail into and out of the United States; and administering certain navigation laws. It is the lead agency for interdicting drugs being smuggled into the United States and its territories by land, sea, or air. Customs' drug intelligence focuses on tactical information that can provide support to its interdiction efforts and operational intelligence that provides information such as methods used to conceal drugs for shipment.

Customs' in-house collection capability is heavily weighted towards human intelligence. This intelligence is derived from various sources, including an 800 number hotline intended to obtain information from citizens on drug smuggling activity. In addition, much of Customs' human intelligence comes from its officers learning information during their normal duties. A primary responsibility of Customs officers is to collect and report tactical drug smuggling intelligence that will assist other Customs Service agents in interdicting illegal drugs and arresting drug smugglers at the U.S. border.

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### Coast Guard

The Coast Guard, the lead agency for maritime drug interdiction, collects air and maritime intelligence to support tactical and operational activities. Similar to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Customs Service, Coast Guard intelligence collection capabilities support missions other than counternarcotics, such as maritime safety and fisheries violations. Its intelligence collection programs include such things as human and imagery intelligence.

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### DOD's Role in Providing Needed Intelligence

For years, DOD routinely distributed intelligence to employees throughout the department who required the information. When it assumed a lead role in counternarcotics, however, DOD was not immediately prepared to provide needed information to LEAs. Much of the drug-related intelligence

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**Appendix II  
Organizations That Support U.S.  
Counternarcotics Efforts**

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DOD has collected over the past 2 years is highly classified. Since existing processes for sanitizing<sup>6</sup> and distributing this information were time consuming and cumbersome, DOD has worked to streamline these processes to more effectively assist LEA organizations to obtain actionable<sup>7</sup> information.

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<sup>6</sup>Sanitization is the process of editing or otherwise altering information to protect sensitive intelligence sources and methods to permit wider distribution at lower classification levels.

<sup>7</sup>Actionable information is information that could result in surveillance or investigative operations such as checking a motel registry, tracing ship movements to determine anticipated port arrival, etc. This information is considered directly useful to the customer without having to go through the full intelligence production cycle.

# Overall Guidance for Counternarcotics Intelligence

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ONDCP, the Counternarcotics Center, and DOD have each been assigned some responsibility for ensuring that sufficient information is available to support the national counternarcotics effort. However, no individual or organization has been given clear authority to direct what specific intelligence will be collected, analyzed, and reported, and by whom, throughout the counternarcotics intelligence community in support of counternarcotics endeavors. As a result, unnecessary overlap and duplication exists in counternarcotics intelligence analysis and reporting efforts.

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## ONDCP's Role in Setting National Strategy

The National Narcotics Leadership Act of 1988, which established ONDCP, gave the Director, ONDCP, responsibility for establishing policies, objectives, and priorities for the National Drug Control Program and for coordinating and overseeing their implementation by program agencies. In addition, presidential direction on programs to suppress the flow of narcotics from the Andean region—Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru—notes that the Director, ONDCP, is to ensure effective coordination among all agencies involved in the international counternarcotics effort, recognizing that the strategy will succeed only if the programs are effectively coordinated and managed.

To support ONDCP's responsibilities, the act gave the Director authority to review agency drug control budgets and to certify in writing whether or not those budgets adequately reflect priorities established in the National Drug Control Strategy. However, the act only allows the Director to recommend changes to agency budgets. Therefore, although some coordination has been achieved, the Director has only indirect leverage to foster cooperation among agencies.

The National Drug Control Strategy recognizes that federal drug intelligence capabilities must be coordinated and focused to provide a complete picture of drug producing and trafficking organizations and activities. Even though the strategy identifies dismantling major drug trafficking organizations as the principal objective in reducing the supply of drugs entering the United States, it notes that LEA drug intelligence and analysis activities, in almost all cases, are largely oriented toward arrests, prosecutions, and convictions.

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## National Drug Intelligence Center

Since its first strategy was issued in September 1989, ONDCP has recommended that a National Drug Intelligence Center be established to link information resources with analytic skills and provide strategic analytic intelligence to various federal agencies. The 1990 National Drug Control Strategy recommended creation of the Center under the supervision of the Attorney General. In its September 11, 1990, discussion paper on the Center, the Department of Justice provided information on the Center's planned functions and cost. According to this paper, the Center was intended to focus primarily on domestic drug intelligence and formulate a domestic drug law enforcement strategy addressing the activities of criminal drug organizations. Among other things, the Center was intended to

- coordinate and identify priorities for collecting and producing domestic drug-related intelligence by LEAs,
- promote information sharing among LEAs,
- identify key gaps in drug intelligence and ways to address these gaps, and
- produce intelligence assessments concerning primarily the domestic but also the foreign activities of major U.S. drug organizations, drawing on information collected by all LEAs with appropriate input from foreign intelligence agencies.

ONDCP requested funding to support the National Drug Intelligence Center in fiscal year 1991. However, according to ONDCP officials, the Congress provided conflicting and contradictory responses to this request. The Congress provided funds to DOD, rather than the Department of Justice, to establish the Center. Although DOD is developing the necessary structure to house the Center, it will rely on the LEAs and ONDCP to staff it. In the interim, ONDCP, in its third strategy issued in February 1991, tasked the Attorney General to create and chair a Law Enforcement Drug Intelligence Council to coordinate the development and prioritization of drug intelligence collection and analysis requirements for the federal law enforcement agencies. As of February 1992, the Attorney General had not created this Council, according to ONDCP officials.

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## ONDCP Efforts to Encourage Intelligence Sharing

One way that ONDCP has tried to effect greater sharing and coordination of drug intelligence is through the designation of high-intensity drug trafficking areas. As authorized by section 1005 of the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988, the Director, ONDCP, in January 1990, designated five areas in which drug trafficking was considered a serious threat, not only to the area itself, but to other parts of the country as well. The areas designated were

(1) New York, (2) Los Angeles, (3) Miami, and (4) Houston, and their surrounding counties and municipalities, as well as (5) the U.S. southwest border and selected adjacent counties and municipalities. By being designated high-intensity drug trafficking areas, these areas became eligible for federal support in a range of programmatic categories. This support includes funding for intelligence efforts geared toward establishing common policies among the areas on targeting groups, collecting and processing intelligence, and improving communication, interaction, and cooperation among all the groups with intelligence-gathering responsibilities.

Funds for the high-intensity drug trafficking area program are included in the ONDCP appropriation and, according to the National Drug Control Strategy, provide a unique opportunity for ONDCP to influence federal, state, and local law enforcement efforts designed to dismantle drug trafficking organizations and their operations. According to ONDCP officials, this program funds numerous intelligence initiatives that (1) emphasize multi-agency coordination and sharing and (2) target the most significant trafficking organizations; continued support is contingent upon area initiatives meeting these criteria. Appropriations for high-intensity drug trafficking areas have grown from \$25 million in fiscal year 1990 to \$86 million in fiscal year 1992.

ONDCP has also coordinated the production of some strategic intelligence. In March 1991, ONDCP began coordinating an effort to pull together information and produce an integrated assessment of the flow of cocaine from South America into the United States. ONDCP hopes that the resulting assessments, published initially in May 1991<sup>8</sup> and updated in October 1991,<sup>9</sup> will result in additional interagency analytic efforts.

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## Counternarcotics Center's Role in Coordinating Intelligence

In response to presidential direction and the President's National Drug Control Strategy, the Director of Central Intelligence established the Counternarcotics Center to centralize and expand the Intelligence Community's support to the counternarcotics effort. In January 1990, the Counternarcotics Center issued the Intelligence Community Counternarcotics Strategy. This strategy (1) focused on counternarcotics

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<sup>8</sup>Interagency Assessment of Cocaine Movement, VP-2550-84-91, May 1991.

<sup>9</sup>Interagency Assessment of Cocaine Movement, VP-2550-84A-91, Oct. 1991.



activities to support LEAS, (2) provided direction on drug intelligence priorities, (3) stated the Center's responsibilities for providing overall guidance and support to the counternarcotics intelligence community's effort, and (4) recognized the need for interagency planning and coordination.

The Counternarcotics Center's strategy is generally prescriptive when it discusses the Intelligence Community's coordination and leadership roles and responsibilities in the national counternarcotics effort. It explains lead agency responsibilities within the Intelligence Community, i.e., it specifies the Intelligence Community focal point for planning the use of Intelligence Community assets in a counternarcotics function or area. However, the strategy is generally descriptive in discussing the roles and responsibilities of organizations not within the Intelligence Community, e.g., the LEAS.

The strategy identifies intelligence collection, analysis, reporting, and dissemination problems in the overall management and coordination of intelligence activities. However, to discuss solutions to these problems and how the solutions are to be implemented, the strategy instructs the Counternarcotics Center to establish a steering group composed of representatives from the Intelligence Community and members of the law enforcement and policy communities.

Since Counternarcotics Center representatives would not talk with us about their activities, we discussed its role and leadership in analysis and reporting with ONDCP and DOD officials. We were told that the Center issues a quarterly list identifying (1) analyses that have been issued in the prior quarter and (2) what specific analyses are planned to be issued by counternarcotics organizations in the upcoming quarter. We were not provided copies of these quarterly lists, but we were told they did not include any formal guidance directing counternarcotics organizations to coordinate their efforts in these analyses. Additional details on the Counternarcotics Center's role in coordinating intelligence are included in the classified version of this report.

In a letter dated January 24, 1992, the Central Intelligence Agency informed us that the Counternarcotics Center, in pursuing a joint counternarcotics strategy employed by law enforcement, intelligence, and DOD organizations, has worked to eliminate duplication and boost efficiencies. However, the Agency provided us no documentation to support this position. Moreover, the Agency's assessment of the situation appears to be in isolation. Their views are not shared by senior officials in

ONDCP or DOD, nor are they consistent with the findings and conclusions of our review.

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## DOD's Role in Coordinating Counternarcotics Support

In February 1989, the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Command, Control, Communications, and Intelligence tasked the Director, DIA, in coordination with the Director, National Security Agency, to develop an intelligence collection strategy and a plan for the production (analysis and reporting) and dissemination of drug-related intelligence. DIA is still developing the intelligence strategy. Additionally, while DIA has developed a matrix of drug-related information needed to support the development of a counternarcotics data base—known as EMERALD—it has not issued guidance detailing the intelligence analysis and reporting expected from individual DOD organizations involved in the counternarcotics effort.

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## EMERALD Intelligence Data Base

The direction that has been provided by DIA to DOD organizations for collecting, analyzing, reporting, and disseminating counternarcotics intelligence has been in the form of various memorandums, conferences, meetings, and informal agreements. For example, in January 1990, DIA transmitted a message to various DOD organizations proposing responsibilities for supporting the development of the EMERALD data base of drug-related information. On the basis of (1) the responses DIA received to this message, (2) a counternarcotics conference held in March 1990, and (3) the final Counternarcotics Center intelligence strategy, DIA issued a revised counternarcotics production matrix in April 1990 and again requested comments. Even though this is referred to as a production matrix, it only specifies the data elements to be provided. It does not address actual production, which is the conversion of information into finished intelligence through integration, analysis, evaluation, and/or interpretation, i.e., analysis and reporting.

Since that time, DIA has hosted numerous counternarcotics conferences to discuss refinements and has issued numerous iterations of the proposed EMERALD matrix. In September 1991, DIA issued a confidential report<sup>10</sup> proposing the roles of DOD and the LEAS, within their respective capabilities and missions, in supporting EMERALD by providing specific data elements. The matrix included in this report identifies requirements for inputting data to 14 general categories. Within the 14 categories, 6 have been assigned to DOD organizations, 1 has been assigned to the Coast

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<sup>10</sup>The EMERALD Program Data Element Assessment Final Report, DDB-2550-88-91, Sept. 1991.

**Appendix III  
Overall Guidance for Counternarcotics  
Intelligence**

Guard, 6 are proposed for either the Drug Enforcement Administration or the El Paso Intelligence Center, and 4 are unassigned, as shown in table III.1.

**Table III.1: Coordinated EMERALD Matrix**

<b>Data category</b>	<b>Office with primary responsibility</b>
Country profile	DIA
Biographies	DIA (counterintelligence/military) and DEA (proposed for criminal)
Organizations	DEA (proposed)
Aircraft identification	El Paso Intelligence Center (proposed)
Vessel identification	El Paso Intelligence Center (proposed)
Bank account identification	Unassigned
Communications	Unassigned
Chemical movements events	Unassigned
Transportation events	DIA (air), U.S. Coast Guard (sea), and El Paso Intelligence Center (proposed for land)
Vessel activity	Unassigned
Facility data	Unified and specified commands will have primary responsibility based on area of responsibility
Government association	DIA
Insurgent terrorist group association	DIA
Membership identification	DEA (proposed)

DOD officials do not agree on the data to be entered and the organizations responsible for entering and maintaining these data. Further, DOD officials told us that DIA does not have the authority to task DOD organizations to provide these data elements.

DIA officials noted that the EMERALD data base is scheduled for initial operation in late April 1992. By that time, they hope to agree on which participating DOD and LEA organizations will provide and maintain the information to be included.

# Counternarcotics Organizations Included in This Review

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## Law Enforcement Agencies

### Drug Enforcement Administration

- Headquarters, Washington, D.C.
- Miami Field Division, Miami, Florida
- El Paso Intelligence Center, El Paso, Texas

### U.S. Customs Service

- Headquarters, Washington, D.C.
- Southeast Regional Intelligence Division, Miami, Florida
- Blue Lightning Operation Center, Miami, Florida
- Field Location, Bay St. Louis, Mississippi
- Customs National Aviation Center, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

### Federal Bureau of Investigation

- Headquarters, Washington, D.C.
- Miami Field Division, Miami, Florida

### U.S. Coast Guard

- Headquarters, Washington, D.C.
- Law Enforcement Support Group, Miami, Florida
- Maritime Intelligence Center, Miami, Florida

Joint U.S. Coast Guard/Customs Service, Command, Control, Communications and Intelligence Center, Miami, Florida

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## Department of Defense

### Defense Intelligence Agency

- Headquarters, Washington, D.C.
- Joint Tactical Intelligence Center, Washington, D.C.

National Security Agency, Fort Meade, Maryland

North American Aerospace Defense Command, Colorado Springs, Colorado

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**Appendix IV  
Counternarcotics Organizations Included in  
This Review**

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**U.S. Atlantic Command**

- Headquarters, Norfolk, Virginia
- Joint Task Force 4, Key West, Florida

**Forces Command**

- Headquarters, Atlanta, Georgia
- Joint Task Force 6, El Paso, Texas

**Homestead Air Force Base, Miami, Florida**

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**Executive Branch**

**Office of National Drug Control Policy, Washington, D.C.**

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