



DEA Years



1970–1975

The long history of federal drug law enforcement began in 1915 with the Bureau of Internal Revenue. In the following decades, several federal agencies had drug law enforcement responsibilities. By the 1960s, the two agencies charged with drug law enforcement were BDAC and FBN. It was a period of significant change in the United States. Drugs entered American culture in new ways and efforts to normalize certain kinds of drug use affected Americans' health and safety.

In 1960, only four million Americans had ever tried illicit drugs. In 2021, more than 138 million people (aged 12 or older) had. Behind these statistics are the stories of countless families, communities, and individuals adversely affected by drug use and drug trafficking. By the early 1970s, drug use had not yet peaked, but challenges associated with increases in illicit drug use and addiction warranted a serious response. Consequently, DEA was created in 1973.

At that time, well-organized international drug trafficking syndicates headquartered in Colombia and Mexico had not yet become preeminent drug suppliers. All heroin and cocaine, and most of the marijuana, that entered the United States was trafficked by lesser international drug dealers who targeted American cities and towns. Major law enforcement investigations, like the French Connection, made by agents in DEA's predecessor agency, BNDD, illustrated the complexity and scope of nationwide illicit drug use and addiction.

In the years prior to 1973, several important developments took place that would ultimately affect DEA and federal drug control efforts for years to come. When DEA was created by Executive order in July 1973 to establish a single unified command, Americans were experiencing increases in recreational illicit drug use and a surge in violent crime. To appreciate how DEA has evolved into an important law enforcement institution, it must be understood that many of its programs have roots in predecessor agencies.

BNDD

With the introduction into Congress of Reorganization Plan No. 1 of 1968, President Johnson proposed combining two agencies into a third new drug enforcement agency. The action merged FBN—which was in the Treasury Department and responsible for the control of marijuana and narcotics, such as heroin— with BDAC—which was in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and responsible for the control of dangerous drugs, including depressants, stimulants, and hallucinogens, such as LSD. The new agency, BNDD, was placed under the Department of Justice, the government agency primarily concerned with federal law enforcement.



On December 14, 1970, at the White House, the International Narcotic Enforcement Officers' Association (INEOA) presented to President Nixon a "certificate of special honor in recognition of the outstanding loyalty and contribution to support narcotic law enforcement." Standing with President Nixon are (from left) John E. Ingersoll, Director of BNDD; John Bellizzi, Executive Director of INEOA; and Matthew O'Conner, President of INEOA. Courtesy, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum

According to the Reorganization Plan, "the Attorney General will have full authority and responsibility for enforcing the federal laws relating to narcotics and dangerous drugs. The BNDD, headed by a Director appointed by the Attorney General, would:

1. consolidate the authority and preserve the experience and manpower of the Bureau of Narcotics and Bureau of Drug Abuse Control;
2. work with state and local governments in their crackdown on illegal trade in drugs and narcotics, and help to train local agents and investigators;
3. maintain worldwide operations, working closely with other nations, to suppress the trade in illicit narcotics and marijuana; and
4. conduct an extensive campaign of research and a nation-wide public education program on drug abuse and its tragic effects."

BNDD became the primary drug law enforcement agency, concentrating efforts on both international and interstate activities. By 1970, BNDD had nine foreign offices responding to the dynamics of the drug trade—in Italy, Turkey, Panama, Hong Kong, Vietnam, Thailand, Mexico, France, and Colombia. Domestically, the agency initiated a task force approach involving federal, state, and local officers. The first task force was in New York City.

In addition, BNDD established MEGs, which were based on the regional enforcement concept that provided for sharing undercover personnel, equipment, and other resources from partnering jurisdictions. BNDD provided



In February 1972, the New York Joint Task Force seized \$967,000 during a Bronx arrest. New York City Police Captain Robert Howe (left) and BNDD agent Theodore L. Vernier are counting the money.

training and operational support for these units. By February 1972, BNDD's agent strength had grown to 1,361, its budget had more than quadrupled, and its foreign and domestic arrest totals had doubled. BNDD also had regulatory control over more than 500,000 registrants licensed to distribute licit drugs, and it had 6 sophisticated forensic labs.

New York Task Force (1970)

In 1970, BNDD established the first narcotics task force in New York to maximize the impact of cooperating federal, state, and local law enforcement elements working on complex drug investigations. Bruce Jensen, former Chief of the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force, described it "not as a monument . . . but a foundation firm enough to withstand the test of time." Heroin use was a significant problem, and law enforcement officials were seeking ways to reduce availability and identify and prosecute those responsible for trafficking. Federal, state, and municipal law enforcement organizations put aside rivalries and agreed to collaborate within the framework of the New York Joint Task Force. The task force program also became an essential part of DEA's operations, reflecting the belief that success was only possible through cooperative efforts. BNDD, the New York State Police (NYSP), and the New York City Police Department (NYPD) contributed personnel to work with Department of Justice lawyers and support

staff. Each representative brought different and valuable perspectives and experiences to the table and close collaboration resulted in more opportunities for cross-training and the sharing of expertise. The Task Force expanded from the original 43 members to 172 in 1971, and by 2003 it had 211 law enforcement personnel assigned.

Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act (1970)

When Congress passed the CSA, Title II of the Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act of 1970, it replaced more than 50 pieces of drug legislation. The new law went into effect on May 1, 1971, and was enforced by BNDD, DEA's predecessor agency. Along with its implementing regulations, the CSA established a single system of control for both narcotic and psychotropic drugs for the first time in U.S. history.

Congress also established five schedules that classify controlled substances according to how dangerous they are, their potential for abuse and addiction, and whether they possess legitimate medical value. Decades later, the CSA, though amended on several occasions, remains the legal framework from which DEA derives its authority.



Bruce E. Jensen, Chief, New York Drug Enforcement Task Force.

Diversions Control Program (1971)

In the 1969 U.S. Senate hearings on the CSA, witnesses estimated that 50 percent of licit amphetamine produced annually in the 1960s had found its way into the illicit drug traffic. Following the CSA's passage in 1970, it was imperative that the U.S. Government establish mechanisms to ensure that this growing diversion of legal drugs into the illicit market be addressed. In 1970, over two billion dosage units of amphetamine and methamphetamine were producing excessive amounts of pharmaceuticals. Thus, the controls mandated by the CSA encompassed scheduling, manufacturing, distributing, prescribing, importing, exporting, and other related activities.

They also provided BNDD with the legal tools necessary to deal with the diversion problem. Prior to the CSA, investigations involving the diversion of legitimate pharmaceuticals were conducted solely by special agents as part of their enforcement activities. However, shortly after the law's implementation, BNDD management recognized that the investigation of diversion cases differed significantly from investigation of traditional narcotics cases.

In late 1971, the Compliance Program, later renamed the Diversions Control Program, was created to provide a specialized workforce that could focus exclusively on diversion and take full advantage of the controls and penalties established by the CSA. This workforce developed an in-depth knowledge of the legitimate pharmaceutical industry and investigative techniques to identify organizations and professionals engaged in drug diversion. The program was placed under BNDD's Office of Enforcement and staffed by compliance investigators, later called diversions investigators.

The first major challenge these investigators faced was the extraordinary amount of amphetamines and barbiturates being diverted at the manufacturer and distributor levels. The year the CSA went into effect, over 2,000 provisional registrations were issued to manufacturers and distributors who had been operating under the Harrison Narcotics Act of 1914 and the Drug Abuse Control Amendments. To stem the diversion problem, it was necessary to enlist the support of manufacturers, wholesalers,

distributors, and pharmacists for regular inspections of records and premises. It was also necessary to establish a system of registration to ensure that law enforcement investigators had access to the records and physical plants maintained by those responsible for the manufacture and distribution of drugs.

The first inspections of registrants revealed instances where drug handlers were operating out of basements and garages with little or no security and were unable to account for the receipt or distribution of the drugs they handled. To ensure that the diversion of dangerous drugs ceased, it was critical that meaningful punitive measures could be taken against the minority of registrants responsible. Offenders were given the option of either surrendering their controlled substances registration or instituting strict controls necessary to prevent diversion in their offices and organizations. Establishments and individuals who continued to violate the law were subject to criminal, civil, or administrative actions.

As the program developed, it became clear that the diversion of drugs was not simply a domestic issue. Controls on international supplies of legal drugs were also established. In the early 1970s, there were several examples of foreign subsidiaries of U.S. drug manufacturers becoming the main suppliers of illegal drugs, such as amphetamine, to the black market in the United States. Through revocation of drug manufacturers' export licenses, BNDD, and eventually DEA, successfully reduced the influx of illegal licit drugs into the country.

The French Connection and International Cooperation

Illegal heroin labs were first discovered near Marseilles, France, in 1937. These labs were run by the infamous Corsican gang leader Paul Carbone. For years, the French underworld had been manufacturing and trafficking illegal heroin, primarily to the United States. This heroin network eventually became known as the French Connection.

Historically, the raw material for most of the heroin consumed in the United States came from Turkey. Turkish farmers were licensed to grow opium poppies for sale to

legal drug companies, but many sold their excess to the underworld market, where it was manufactured into heroin and transported to the United States. Corsican laboratories refined the drug in Marseilles, one of the busiest ports in the western Mediterranean. Marseilles served as a perfect shipping point for all types of illegal goods, including Turkish farmers' excess opium.

The convenience of Marseilles' port and the frequent arrival of ships from opium-producing countries made it easy to smuggle morphine base from the Middle East and Asia. The French underground would then ship large quantities of heroin from Marseilles to Manhattan, New York.

The first significant post-World War II seizure was made in New York on February 5, 1947, when seven

pounds of heroin were seized from a Corsican seaman disembarking from a vessel that had just arrived from France. It soon became clear that the French underground was increasing not only its participation in the illegal opium trade, but also its expertise and efficiency in heroin trafficking. On March 17, 1947, 28 pounds of heroin were found on the French liner *St. Tropez*. On January 7, 1949, more than 50 pounds of opium and heroin were seized on the French ship *Batista*.

The first major French Connection case occurred in 1960. In June, an informant told a drug agent in Lebanon that Mauricio Rosal, the Guatemalan Ambassador to Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg, was smuggling morphine base from Beirut, Lebanon, to Marseilles.



Bureau of Narcotics agents who worked on Mauricio Rosal's case pose with suitcases filled with heroin.



These suitcases from a 1973 French Connection seizure in France were filled with 210 pounds of heroin worth \$38 million.

Narcotics agents had been seizing about 200 pounds of heroin in a typical year, but intelligence showed that the Corsican traffickers were smuggling in 200 pounds every other week. Rosal alone, in one year, had used his diplomatic status to bring in about 400 pounds.

FBN's 1960 annual report estimated that from 2,600 to 5,000 pounds of heroin were coming into the United States annually from France. French traffickers continued to exploit demand for their illegal product, and by 1969, they were supplying the United States with 80 to 90 percent of heroin consumed illicitly. The heroin they supplied was approximately 85 percent pure.

Because of this increasing volume, heroin became readily available throughout the United States. In an effort

to limit the source, U.S. officials went to Turkey to negotiate the phasing out of opium production. Initially, the Turkish government agreed to limit their opium production starting with the 1968 crop.

Following five subsequent years of concessions, combined with international cooperation, the Turkish government finally agreed in 1971 to a complete ban on the growing of Turkish opium, effective June 30, 1972. During these protracted negotiations, law enforcement personnel went into action. One of the major roundups began on January 4, 1972, when BNDD agents and French authorities seized 110 pounds of heroin at a Paris airport. Subsequently, traffickers Jean-Baptiste Croce and Joseph Mari were arrested in Marseilles.



February 14, 1973, a 20-kilogram heroin seizure in Paris, France. Pictured left to right: SA Pierre Charette, SA Kevin Finnerty, and French antidrug counterparts.

In February 1972, French traffickers offered a U.S. Army sergeant \$96,000 to smuggle 240 pounds of heroin into the United States. He informed his superior, who in turn notified BNDD. As a result of this investigation, 5 men in New York and 2 in Paris were arrested with 264 pounds of heroin, which had a street value of \$50 million.

In the 14-month period beginning in February 1972, 6 major illicit heroin laboratories were seized and dismantled in the suburbs of Marseille by French national narcotics police in collaboration with U.S. drug agents. On February

29, 1972, French authorities seized the shrimp boat *Caprice de Temps* as it put to sea near Marseille heading toward Miami. It was carrying 415 kilograms of heroin. Drug arrests in France skyrocketed from 57 in 1970 to 3,016 in 1972. The French Connection investigation demonstrated that international trafficking networks were best disabled by the combined efforts of drug enforcement agencies from multiple countries. In this case, agents from the United States, Canada, Italy, and France had worked together to achieve success.

Creation of DEA (July 1, 1973)

President Richard Nixon declared “an all-out global war on the drug menace” and sent Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1973 to Congress. “Right now,” he pointed out, “the federal government is fighting the war on drug abuse under a distinct handicap, for its efforts are those of a loosely confederated alliance facing a resourceful, elusive, worldwide enemy. Certainly, the cold-blooded underworld networks that funnel narcotics from suppliers all over the world are no respecters of the bureaucratic dividing lines that now complicate our anti-drug efforts.”

That spring and summer, the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate heard months of testimony on President Nixon’s Reorganization Plan, which proposed the creation of a single federal agency to consolidate and coordinate the government’s drug control activities.

At the time, BNDD, within the Department of Justice, was responsible for enforcing federal drug laws. However, the U.S. Customs Service and several other Justice entities, including ODALE and ONNI, were also responsible for various aspects of federal drug law enforcement. Of great concern to the Nixon Administration and Congress were the growing availability of drugs across the country, the lack of coordination and cooperation between the U.S. Customs Service and BNDD, and the need for better intelligence collection on drug trafficking organizations.

According to the final report from the Senate Committee on Government Operations issued October 16, 1973, the benefits anticipated from the creation of DEA included:

1. putting an end to the interagency rivalries that undermined federal drug law enforcement, especially the rivalry between BNDD and the U.S. Customs Service;
2. giving FBI its first significant role in drug enforcement by requiring DEA to draw on FBI’s expertise in combatting organized crime’s role in the trafficking of illicit drugs;
3. providing a focal point for coordinating federal drug enforcement efforts with those of state

and local authorities, as well as with foreign police forces;

4. placing a single administrator in charge of federal drug law enforcement to make the new DEA more accountable than its component parts had ever been, thereby safeguarding against corruption and enforcement abuses;
5. consolidating drug enforcement operations within DEA and establishing the Narcotics Division in Justice to maximize coordination between federal investigation and prosecution efforts and eliminate rivalries within each sphere; and
5. establishing DEA as a superagency to provide the momentum needed to coordinate all federal efforts related to drug enforcement outside the Justice Department, especially the gathering of intelligence on international narcotics smuggling.

Early Developments in DEA

When John R. Bartels, Jr., was confirmed as DEA’s first Administrator on October 4, 1973, he had two goals for the new agency: (1) integrate narcotics agents and U.S. Customs agents into one effective force; and (2) restore public confidence in narcotics law enforcement. From the very beginning, Bartels was faced with the unenviable task of unifying the efforts of several drug law enforcement entities. One of the most serious obstacles arose from various agencies’ conflicting philosophies, particularly between BNDD and the U.S. Customs Service. To ease the process, U.S. Customs agents were placed in top positions throughout DEA. For example, Fred Rody, Regional Director in Miami, became DEA’s Deputy Administrator in December 1979; John Lund was appointed as Deputy Assistant Administrator; and John Fallon named as Regional Director in New York. Administrator Bartels issued specific instructions to federal narcotics agents: “This Statement of Policy outlines the measures taken by the Drug Enforcement Administration to prevent incidents which might infringe on individual rights or jeopardize the successful prosecution of a case. The

guidelines require clear-cut lines of command and control in enforcement situations and stress that operations must be carried out in a manner that is legally correct, morally sound, with full respect for the civil rights, human dignity of persons involved, and the sanctity of the home.” The guidelines also restricted vehicular arrests and prohibited participation in raids by non-law enforcement personnel.

First Female Special Agents

While in the minority, women professionals had an early start in federal drug law enforcement, paving the way for DEA’s first female special agents. In 1933, Elizabeth Bass was appointed the first of several female narcotics agents in the United States, serving as District Supervisor in Chicago. A longtime friend of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, she played a prominent role in gaining political support for the Uniform Narcotic Drug Act. In 1971, BNDD became one of the first federal agencies to implement a program for hiring female special agents. Once DEA was established in 1973, Mary Turner became the first female DEA special agent to graduate from the agency’s training program, finishing first in her class. By 1974, 23 female special agents were working in DEA field offices throughout the United States.

Creation of DEA’s Intelligence Program (1973)

Intelligence had long been recognized as an essential element in the success of any investigative or law enforcement agency. Accurate and up-to-date information was required to assess the operations and vulnerabilities of criminal networks, interdict drugs in a systematic way, forecast new methods of trafficking, evaluate the impact of previous activities, and establish long-range drug strategies and policies. Included in DEA’s mission was a mandate for drug intelligence. DEA’s Office of Intelligence was established on July 1, 1973, upon implementation of Nixon’s Presidential Reorganization Plan No. 2. The Code of Federal Regulations charged the Administrator with:

The development and maintenance of a National Narcotics Intelligence system in cooperation

with federal, state, and local officials, and the provision of narcotics intelligence to any federal, state, or local official that the Administrator determines has a legitimate official need to have access to such intelligence.

To support this mission, specific functions were identified as follows:

- collect and produce intelligence to support the Administrator and other federal, state, and local agencies;
- establish/maintain close working relationships with all agencies that produce or use drug intelligence;
- increase the efficiency in the reporting, analysis, storage, retrieval, and exchange of such information; and
- undertake a continuing review of the narcotics intelligence effort to identify and correct deficiencies.

DEA divided drug intelligence into three broad categories: tactical, operational, and strategic. Tactical intelligence provides immediate support to investigative efforts by identifying traffickers and movement of drugs. Operational intelligence provides analytical support to investigations and structuring organizations. Strategic intelligence focuses on developing a comprehensive and current picture of the entire system by which drugs are cultivated, produced, transported, smuggled, and distributed around the world.

To build upon its 1973 drug intelligence mandate, DEA’s Intelligence Program consisted of two major elements: the Office of Intelligence at DEA Headquarters and the Regional Intelligence Units (RIU) in domestic and foreign field offices. The Office of Intelligence’s structure was divided into different entities: International and Domestic Divisions, Strategic Intelligence Staff, Special Operations and Field Support Staff, and the Intelligence Systems Staff. Its structure paralleled that of the Office of Enforcement.

RIUs had four objectives: (1) provide a continuing flow of actionable intelligence to enhance the tactical effectiveness of regional enforcement efforts; (2) support management planning of the overall regional enforcement program; (3) contribute to the Office of Intelligence’s inter-regional and strategic collection programs; and (4) facilitate exchange of intelligence information with state and local law enforcement domestically and with host-country enforcement abroad.

Initially, the Intelligence Program was staffed by DEA special agents, with very few professional intelligence analysts (I/As). In DEA’s first I/A class in 1974, there were only 11 I/As.

The Unified Intelligence Division (1973)

In October 1973, DEA created its first field intelligence unit based on the taskforce concept. The unit, named the Unified Intelligence Division (UID), included DEA special agents and intelligence analysts, NYSP investigators, and NYPD detectives. Along with its unique status as an intelligence task

force, UID was also one of the first field intelligence units to systematically engage all aspects of the intelligence process, specifically collection, evaluation, analysis, and dissemination. This pioneering role expanded the horizons of drug law enforcement field intelligence units, which, at the time, were often limited to collecting information, maintaining dossiers, and providing limited case support. This proactive stance was immediately successful as UID developed and disseminated extensive intelligence on traditional organized crime-related drug traffickers and identified not only the leaders but also those who were likely to become leaders. UID also developed and disseminated intelligence throughout federal, state, and local law enforcement communities on the members, associates, and contacts of infamous heroin violator Leroy “Nicky” Barnes. Significant intelligence operations continued through the 1980s, with UID taking a leading role in providing intelligence on the crack cocaine epidemic and on Cali cocaine mafia operations in New York. UID’s proactive intelligence task force concept continues to build upon successes of the past.



DEA Intelligence Analyst Training School #1, November 1974. Pictured: SA Robert McCall, SA Thomas Shreeve, SA Leonard Rzcpczynski, SA Charles Henry, SA John Hampe, SA Thomas Anderson, SA Robert Janet, SA Christopher Bean, SA Michael Campbell, SA Donald Bramwell, SA Murry Brown, SA Donald Stowell, SA Arthur Doll, SA Frank Gulich, SA Norman Noordweir, SA Lynn Williams, SA Omar Aleman, SA Ron Garribotto, SA Angelo Saladino, IA Beverly Singleton, IA Ann Augusterfer, IA Adrienne Darnaby, IA Beverly Ager, IA Janet Gunter, IA Joan Philpott, IA William Munson, IA Brian Boyd, IA Joan Bannister, IA Jennifer Garcia-Tobar, and IA Eileen Hayes.

Shortly after the creation of UID, the Drug Enforcement Coordinating System (DECS) launched. DECS was a repository index system of all active drug cases in the New York metropolitan area, and it connects agencies that have common investigative targets or addresses. It was created to enhance officer safety and promote greater cooperation and coordination among drug law enforcement agencies by preventing effort duplication on overlapping investigations conducted by member agencies. DECS, which began as a joint venture of DEA, NYSP, and NYPD housed in UID, was the prototype for many similar systems that have since been developed across the country.

National Narcotics Intelligence System (NADDIS)

In 1973, DEA developed the National Narcotics Intelligence System (NADDIS), which became federal law enforcement's first automated index. The creation of NADDIS was possible because DEA was the first law enforcement agency in the nation to adopt an all-electronic, centralized computer database for its records. NADDIS, composed of data from DEA investigative reports, teletypes, and other documents, provided DEA Headquarters and all domestic offices with electronic access to searchable data. NADDIS contained approximately 4.5 million records, with 5,000 new records being added every week. NADDIS remains the largest and most frequently used information system operated by DEA.

Graduation of the First DEA Special Agents

The first DEA Special Agent Basic Training Class (BA-1) graduated on November 16, 1973. Reverend James W. McMurtie, Principal of Bishop Denis J. O'Connell High School in Arlington, Virginia, gave the invocation honoring the 40 men and women of BA-1, and DEA Administrator Bartels gave the welcome and introductions. The Training Division Chief was Paul F. Malherek, and the class counselors were Calvin C. Campbell of the Miami Regional Office, Allen L. Johnson of the New Orleans District Office, and Henry S. Lincoln of the San Diego District Office.

BA-1 GRADUATES

Ralph Arroyo	Dennis F. Imamura
Terry T. Baldwin	James Jefferies, Jr.
Richard J. Barter	Richard C. Kazmar
Richard E. Bell	Anthony V. Lobosco
Donald H. Bloch	Sherman A. Lucas III
Henry J. Braud, Jr.	John W. Lugar, Jr.
Michael E. Byrnes	Edward C. Maher
James W. Castillo	Charles E. Mathis
Andrew G. Cloke	Thomas L. Mones
George L. Coleman	Donald E. Nelson
Cruz Cordero, Jr.	Dennis A. O'Neil
Salvadore M. Dijamco	Juan R. Rodriguez
Clark S. Edwards	Thomas J. Salvatore
John H. Felts	Edward J. Schlachter
Andrew G. Fenrich	Arthur T. Tahuari
Carliese R. Gordon	Frank Torres, Jr.
Annabelle Grimm	Mary A. Turner
Bernard Harry	Robert Bruce Upchurch
Richard Phillip Holmes	Adis J. Wells
Antonio L. Huertas	James Hiram Williams

Joint Efforts with Mexico (1974)

By 1972, the quantity of Mexican brown heroin available in the United States had risen 40 percent higher than the quantity of white heroin from Europe. Traditional international border control was no longer effective against the drug's trafficking, and, in 1974, the government of Mexico requested U.S. technical assistance. On January 26, 1974, Operation Special Enforcement Activity in Mexico (SEA/M) was launched in Sinaloa to combat opium and heroin traffic. One month later, a second joint task force, Operation Endrun, began operations in Guerrero, concentrating on marijuana and heroin interdiction. Meanwhile, a third effort, Operation Trident, focused on controlling the traffic of illegally manufactured dangerous drugs produced in Mexico. Despite some law enforcement successes in Mexico, these early efforts did not, in the long term, prevent the development of powerful drug trafficking organizations based there.



BA-2 graduate Michael Vigil accepts his certificate from William Dirken, Perry Rivkind, and Paul Malherek of DEA Training.

The Collapse of the DEA Miami Office Building (1974)

DEA was still a new agency when tragedy struck the Miami Regional Office. On August 5, 1974, at 10:24 a.m., the roof of the Miami office came crashing down, killing seven and trapping others in a pile of twisted steel and concrete. Between 125 and 150 people worked in the building. Those who died included: Special Agent Nicholas Fragos; Mary Keehan, Secretary to the Acting Regional Director; Special Agent Charles Mann; Anna Y. Mounger, Secretary; Anna Pope, Fiscal Assistant; Martha D. Skeels, Supervisory Clerk-Typist; and Mary P. Sullivan, Clerk-Typist. Although the people who were in the building thought it was an explosion or an earthquake, officials initially theorized that the dozens of cars in the rooftop parking facility were too heavy for the six-inch-thick slab of concrete supporting them. Later, it was found that the resurfaced parking lot, coupled



Rescue workers take injured victims from the DEA Miami Office Building following its collapse on August 5, 1974.

with salt in the sand, had eroded and weakened the building's supporting steel structure. The section that collapsed contained a processing room and a laboratory. The building was erected in 1925, and in 1968 had undergone a full engineering inspection, at which time it was cleared to house DEA offices.

El Paso Intelligence Center (1974)

In 1973, with increasing drug activity along the Southwest border, BNDD found that information on drugs was being collected by its investigators, Customs, FBI, and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), but it was not being coordinated. BNDD and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) were also collecting information on the smuggling of aliens and guns. In 1974, the Department of Justice submitted a report from that BNDD study titled, "A Secure Border: An Analysis of Issues Affecting the U.S. Department of Justice" to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) that provided recommendations to improve drug and border enforcement operations along the Southwest border. One of the recommendations proposed establishing a regional intelligence center to collect and disseminate information relating to drug, illegal alien, and weapons smuggling to support field enforcement agencies throughout the country. As a result, in 1974, the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) was established to provide tactical intelligence to federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies on a national scale. Staffed by representatives of DEA and INS, EPIC has since expanded into a national drug intelligence center supporting U.S. law enforcement entities that focus on worldwide drug smuggling.

Drug Abuse Warning Network (1974)

In 1974, the scientific staff of DEA's Office of Science and Technology designed and developed the Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN). It was created to assist the federal government in identifying and evaluating the scope and extent of drug use and misuse in the United States. DAWN was jointly funded with the National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA). DAWN incorporated data from various sources of intelligence within DEA and from such outside

sources as federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, the pharmaceutical industry, and scientific literature. Initially discontinued in 2011, DAWN was reestablished in 2018 by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), which began administering the public health surveillance system in 1992.

In the early 1970s, DAWN collected information on patients seeking hospital emergency treatment related to their use of an illegal drug or the nonmedical use of a legal drug. Data were collected by trained reporters (nurses and other hospital personnel) who reviewed medical charts. They monitored notations by hospital personnel who treated patients on emergency visits primarily attributed to drug use.

Hospitals participating in DAWN are nonfederal, short-stay general surgical and medical hospitals that feature a 24-hour emergency department with more than 100 visits per month. When operational, DAWN data has been collected from a representative sample of these hospitals



In 1972, DEA brought Timothy Leary (center) to justice. A psychology instructor, Leary was fired from his post at Harvard University as a result of his experimentation with LSD. In 1969 he founded a clandestine drug trafficking ring, known as the Brotherhood of Eternal Love, that became the largest supplier of hashish and LSD in the United States.

located throughout the United States. The data from this sample have been used to generate estimates of the total number of emergency department drug episodes and drug mentions in all such hospitals.

Narcotic Addict Treatment Act (1974)

The Narcotic Addict Treatment Act was passed in 1974 and amended the CSA to provide for the separate registration of doctors and other practitioners who prescribed narcotic drugs to treat addiction. It also provided physicians treating narcotic addiction with specific guidelines and medications. This act aimed to eliminate the indiscriminate prescription of narcotics for addiction and reduced the diversion of pharmaceutical narcotics.

Aviation

In 1971, BNDD launched its aviation program with one special agent/pilot, one airplane, and a budget of \$58,000. The concept of an Air Wing was the brainchild of Marion Joseph, an experienced former U.S. Air Force pilot and a veteran special agent stationed in Atlanta, Georgia. Over the years, Special Agent Joseph had seen how the police used aircraft for surveillance, search and rescue, and the recapturing of fugitives. His analysis led him to conclude that a single plane “could do the work of five agents and five vehicles on the ground.”

As drug trafficking increased nationwide, it became evident that it had no geographic boundaries and that law enforcement needed aviation capabilities. Although Special Agent Joseph convinced his superiors of his idea’s merits, no funding was available. Management told Special Agent Joseph that if he could find an airplane, they would further consider the Air Wing concept. At this point, Special Agent Joseph approached the U.S. Air Force, and under the Bailment Property Transfer Program that allows the military to assist other government entities, he secured one airplane: a Vietnam War surplus Cessna Skymaster.

The benefit of air support to drug law enforcement operations became immediately apparent, and airplane requests grew rapidly. By 1973, when DEA was formally established, the Air Wing already had 41 special agent/

pilots operating 24 aircraft in several major cities across the United States. Most of these aircraft were fixed-wing, single-engine, piston airplanes that were primarily used for domestic surveillance.

Training

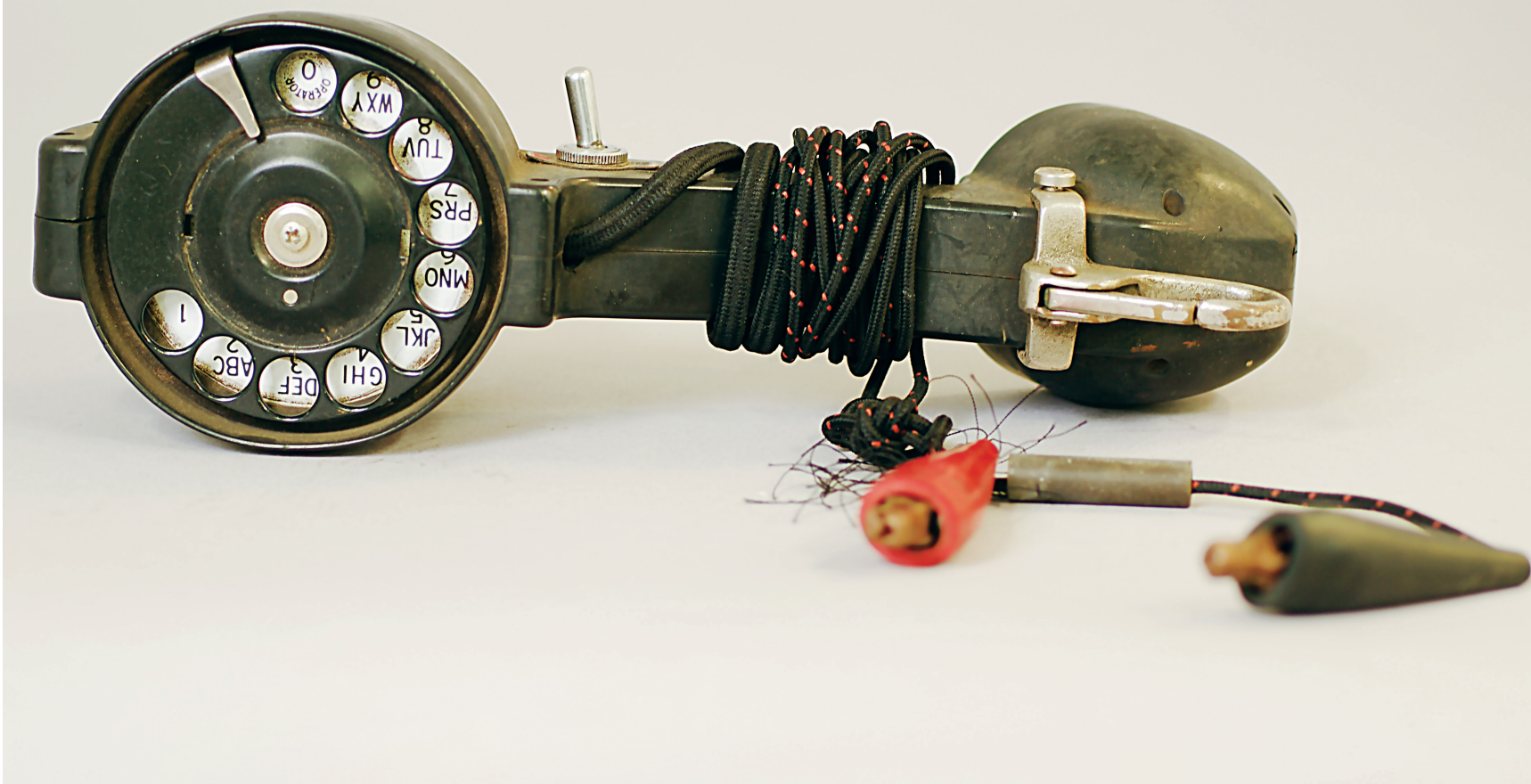
The National Training Institute, DEA’s first training program, was located at DEA Headquarters, 1405 “Eye” Street in Washington, DC. At that time, training was divided into three major divisions: special agent training, police training, and international training.

Training was carried out in a three-story bank building adjacent to DEA Headquarters that had been converted for training purposes. The building had a gymnasium located on the first floor, lockers and showers in the basement, and a five-point firing range on the second floor. Special agent trainees were housed in hotels within walking distance.

In the absence of the realistic “Hogan’s Alley,” a life-sized, simulated neighborhood on today’s Quantico campus, practical training was conducted on public streets. DEA had leased a 20-acre farm near Dulles Airport in rural Virginia as well as a house in Oxon Hill, Maryland, to practice raids and field exercises. Basic Agent Training lasted 10 weeks, and the Training Institute supported 3 nonstop classes with 53 students each. Graduations occurred every three weeks. Coordinators were from Headquarters’ staff, and counselors were brought in from the field for temporary training duty. In addition to training basic agents, DEA also offered training programs for compliance investigators, intelligence analysts, chemists, supervisors, midlevel managers, executives, technical personnel, state and local police officers, and international law enforcement personnel.

Technology

Over the years, the combination of technology and law enforcement have solved some of the world’s biggest criminal cases. By 1998, DEA’s technology ranked among the most sophisticated, but that was not always the case. During DEA’s formative years, technical equipment was limited in both supply and capabilities. In 1971, the entire



A lineman's handset, which can monitor calls by attaching to a telephone line, ca. late 1970s.

budget for investigative technology was less than \$1 million. It was used to buy radio and investigative equipment and to fund the teletype system.

Video surveillance was rare because of the size and expense of camera equipment. Cameras were tube type, required special lighting, and could not be concealed. Early video tape recorders were extremely expensive, and blank tapes were reel-to-reel or U-Matic, an early version of cassette tapes.

Pen registers, or dialed number recorders, were more advanced than older versions, which actually punched holes in a tape, similar to an old ticker tape, per pulses from a rotary dialed phone. Agents could only use pen registers under particular, limited circumstances because federal law required the same degree of probable cause as a Title III Wire Intercept.

Title IIIs were conducted with reel-to-reel tape recorders. However, DEA did not conduct many because they were labor intensive. The agency seldom had sufficient personnel to work the intercepts.

In 1973, agents used body-worn recorders during investigations. The devices had advanced from large belt packs to smaller versions. However, reliability was always a concern. These old belt types, called KELsets, consisted of a transmitter and a belt of batteries worn by the undercover agent. Unfortunately, the belt was not easily concealable, and the batteries would occasionally overheat and burn the agents' backs.

When BNDD was formed it did not have a radio system, but in 1971, the agency began installing a nationwide ultrahigh frequency (UHF) radio system for operations. (DEA's radio system was installed in 1973.) When an early facsimile machine was installed in 1972, it took six minutes to transmit one page, and pages often had to be resent due to communication failures. No paging equipment was available because each pager required a dedicated frequency. Only doctors and a few select individuals could obtain pagers.

Although cellular phones were still in development, there was a mobile telephone service. However, only the

administrator had a mobile phone, and the service was slow and unreliable.

Laboratories

Providing laboratory support has always been one of DEA's essential functions. Cases' success against major drug traffickers often depends upon analysis of drug evidence gathered during narcotics investigations.

DEA's laboratory system, one of the world's finest, has roots in DEA's predecessor agencies. Although BDAC and FBN did not have laboratories under their direct supervision, lab support was available within their respective departments. Ultimately, DEA's laboratory system took shape through the consolidation and transfer of several government lab programs. BNDD's first laboratory personnel transferred from FDA's Division of Pharmaceutical Chemistry and Microanalytical Group in Washington, DC. They were primarily responsible for performing analyses of tablets and capsules, identifying newly encountered compounds found in drug traffic and conducting methods development. According to an agreement with FDA,

the new agency would take control of one of FDA's labs. In August 1968, six chemists formed what eventually became the Special Testing and Research Laboratory.

In December 1968, DEA's first regional laboratory opened in Chicago. The New York, Washington, Dallas, and San Francisco Regional Laboratories were formed in April 1969. The labs' original chemist workforce came from several field laboratories run by government agencies. The laboratories' professional staffing included "bench" chemists, who conducted physical lab research, and supervisory chemists. In 1970—the first full year of operation—the laboratories analyzed almost 20,000 drug exhibits. During the next two years, the laboratories' workload increased by 46 percent and 19 percent, respectively. To meet the rising demand, staffing more than doubled to 94 by 1972 (including laboratory and BNDD headquarters management personnel). In 1971, both the Washington and Dallas Regional Laboratories moved to larger facilities, and in January 1972, BNDD opened its sixth regional laboratory in Miami. After DEA was created, a seventh field laboratory opened in San Diego in August 1974.