



# 1980–1985



In the early 1980s, international drug trafficking organizations began operating on an unprecedented scale. The rise of the Medellín cartel, the influx of cocaine into the United States, and the violence associated with drug trafficking and drug use complicated law enforcement tasks at all levels. Violent crime rates rose dramatically and continued to rise until the early 1990s. Drug use among U.S. citizens remained at dangerously high levels as the population rediscovered cocaine. Many saw cocaine as a benign, recreational drug. In 1981, *Time* magazine ran the cover story “High on Cocaine” with artwork depicting an elegant martini glass filled with the drug. The article reported that cocaine’s use was spreading quickly into America’s middle class: “Today . . . coke is the drug of choice for perhaps millions of solid, conventional and often upwardly mobile citizens.”

## The Rise of the Medellín Cartel

By the early 1980s, the Medellín cartel’s drug lords were well established in Colombia, where they used murder, intimidation, and assassination to keep journalists and public officials from speaking out against them. Law enforcement officers and judges were favored targets of these brutish drug cartels that controlled entire towns and economies to support their criminal business. By 1985, Colombia had the highest murder rate in the world. In Medellín alone, 1,698 people were murdered, and the following year that number more than doubled to 3,500. The Medellín cartel was fast becoming the richest and most feared underworld crime syndicate in modern memory.

As the Medellín mafias looked beyond their home country, they delivered wholesale violence and terror to the United States with their drug trafficking activities. In a grim parody of their campaign to control Colombia, they insinuated themselves into legitimate and useful sectors of the U.S. economy, such as the banking and import industries. Americans suffered from the cartel’s presence as local drug gangs formed, communities were terrorized, and teen drug use climbed.

## Colombian Marijuana

Colombia-based traffickers also brought boatloads of high-potency marijuana to U.S. shores. Consequently, DEA ran several investigations targeting these smugglers, including Operations Grouper and Tiburon.

In 1981, DEA conducted Operation Grouper in cooperation with the U.S. Coast Guard and 21 other federal, state, and local government agencies. It was one of the largest enforcement operations launched against marijuana traffickers from Colombia. The operation targeted



The 1980 arrest of Leroy Butler, one of the most significant heroin traffickers in New York City, also led to the seizure of the \$40,000 Rolls Royce shown here. Posing with the cars are, from left: SA Lewis Rice, SA Thor Nowozeniuk, and GS Fred Gormandy.



Members of the Mexico City Management Team, June 1980, back row, left to right: CA Rudy Ramirez, Costa Rica CO; RAC Richard Canas, Monterey RO; RAC Ruben Salinas, Mazatlan RO; CA Guatemala; RAC William Rochon, Guadalajara RO; RAC William Farnan, Merida RO; and RAC Thomas Telles, Hermosillo RO. Front row: GS Charlie Lugo; Mexico City Asst. Regional Director Frank Macolini, Mexico City; DEA Administrator Peter Bensinger; Regional Director Edward Heath, Mexico City; and GS Frank Cruz, Mexico City.

14 separate Florida-, Louisiana-, and Georgia-based trafficking organizations that smuggled large-scale, multiton quantities of marijuana and millions of dosage units of methaqualone into the United States. For 22 months, 9 DEA special agents operated undercover, some posing as off-loaders to several smuggling organizations. The smuggling network had negotiated deliveries to states as far away as Maine and New York. Agents ultimately arrested 122 out of the 155 indicted subjects. They seized more than \$1 billion worth of drugs and \$12 million worth of assets, including 30 vessels, 2 airplanes, and \$1 million in cash.

The following year, DEA concluded Operation Tiburon, another major operation targeting marijuana smuggling from Colombia. Tiburon resulted in the arrest of 495 people and the seizure of 95 vessels, 1.7 million pounds of marijuana in the United States, and 4.7 million pounds of marijuana in Colombia. U.S. Attorney General William French Smith praised the operation as a “classic example of how agencies, and indeed entire governments, can work together sharing intelligence and expertise and zeroing in on the sea and air routes used by major smugglers.”

### Operation Swordfish

Miami continued to attract drug traffickers from around the world. In December 1980, DEA launched a major investigation aimed against international drug organizations working in South Florida. Operation Swordfish, named for the drug trade’s “big fish” it intended to snare, set up a bogus money laundering operation in suburban Miami Lakes called Dean International Investments, Inc. DEA agents teamed up with a Cuban exile who had fallen on hard times and was willing to lure Colombian traffickers to the bogus bank. The exile had spent time in Cuban prisons after the Bay of Pigs invasion, served jail time in the United States for tax fraud, and was heavily in debt to the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. During the 18-month investigation, agents gathered enough evidence for a federal grand jury to indict 67 U.S. and Colombian citizens. By operation’s end, drug agents seized 100 kilograms of cocaine, a quarter-million methaqualone pills, tons of marijuana, and \$800,000 in cash, cars, land, and Miami bank

accounts. Operation Swordfish was a significant attack on South Florida’s flourishing drug trade.

### International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1981

Congress passed the International Security and Development Cooperation Act, Public Law 97-113, in 1981. Among its provisions, the act authorized appropriations for the International Narcotics Control program under section 482 of the Foreign Assistance Act, specifically, \$37.7 million for each of the fiscal years 1982 and 1983. The act allowed herbicides to be used in drug crop eradication and required the Secretary of Health and Human Services to monitor any potentially harmful effects. Finally, the act directed the president to make an annual report to Congress on U.S. policy for establishing an international strategy to prevent narcotics trafficking. This mandated report was the forerunner of the International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), which the president issues every March highlighting the drug control efforts in every foreign country that receives aid from the United States.

### Concurrent Jurisdiction with the FBI (1982)

In January 1982, Attorney General William French Smith announced a federal law enforcement reorganization. To bolster the drug effort with more antidrug manpower and resources, FBI officially joined forces with DEA. DEA would continue to be the principal drug enforcement agency headed by an administrator, but instead of reporting directly to Associate Attorney General Rudy Giuliani, as Administrator Bensinger had, then Acting Administrator Francis M. Mullen, Jr., would report to FBI Director William H. Webster. Therefore, FBI gained concurrent jurisdiction with DEA over drug offenses. The reorganization increased the human and technical resources available for federal drug law enforcement from 1,900 agents to almost 10,000.

Administrator Mullen was the first FBI special agent to head DEA. Initially appointed in an acting capacity in 1981, he was confirmed as DEA’s third administrator in 1983. Administrator Mullen intended to increase cooperation

between the two agencies by combining DEA agents' street savvy with FBI's unique variety of investigative skills, especially in the areas of money laundering and organized crime.

The previous summer, high-ranking Justice Department officials had formed a committee to study the most effective way to coordinate DEA and the FBI's efforts. Although the committee had considered an outright merger, they decided that formalizing a closer working relationship would be the best way to enhance drug control efforts.

To implement concurrent investigations, the agencies began an intensive cross-training program. Similar programs were established to coordinate intelligence gathering efforts and laboratory analyses. Several DEA executives were reassigned to make room for additional FBI agents who assumed managerial responsibility for DEA.

Over time, FBI and DEA shared many administrative practices. Between 1981 and 1986, both agencies grew and developed. DEA expanded its global responsibilities, placing greater emphasis on conspiracy and wiretap cases.

## Southwest Asian Heroin

After years of aggressive law enforcement efforts aimed at heroin traffickers, addiction and overdose rates significantly improved. During the 1970s, the population addicted to heroin was reduced from over a half million to 380,000 people; heroin overdose deaths dropped by 80 percent; and heroin-related injuries decreased by 50 percent. In 1981, it was estimated that there was 40 percent less heroin available domestically than in 1976.

But, by the early 1980s, a new wave of heroin from the poppy fields of the "Golden Crescent" countries in southwest Asia—primarily Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan—flooded the east coast. Heroin traffickers reopened the notorious French Connection drug route of the 1960s, using many of the same organized crime smugglers across Italy, France, and West Germany. In 1980, DEA and U.S. Customs intercepted one of the largest illicit heroin shipments since the French Connection. In Staten Island, New York, U.S. Customs detector dogs pointed to a shipment of furniture from Palermo, Italy. Inside, officers discovered 46 pounds of 65 percent-pure southwest Asian

heroin. DEA agents then posed as truck drivers to make a controlled delivery of the furniture in New York City and Detroit, resulting in the arrest of a naturalized U.S. citizen from Sicily. Three others were arrested in New York.

## Methaqualone (1982)

Methaqualone (brand name "Quaalude") was first marketed as a sedative in the United States in 1965. By 1972, methaqualone was one of the most popular misused drugs in the country. Its misuse increased suddenly in the late 1970s and early 1980s, jumping nearly 40 percent in 1979 alone per DAWN data. One contributing factor was the rise of "stress clinics" in New York, New Jersey, and Florida. The clinics' sole purpose was to issue prescriptions for methaqualone. Investigation of these sites was complicated by a façade of legitimate medical treatment: patients underwent physical examinations to receive the drug. In response, DEA targeted major stress clinics. By mid-1982, these investigations resulted in 38 indictments.

At the peak of the drug's misuse, an estimated 85 percent of misused methaqualone tablets were counterfeit Quaalude tablets from overseas. In response, DEA's Diversion Control Program (renamed in 1982 from the Office of Compliance and Regulatory Affairs), in cooperation with the Department of State, launched a series of successful diplomatic initiatives with the major drug manufacturing and exporting countries in Europe and Asia. Consequently, five source countries placed more stringent controls on methaqualone's exportation. DEA also conducted cooperative investigations with foreign law enforcement agencies and developed a "Drug and Chemical Watch Manual" with U.S. Customs, resulting in more effective interdiction measures.

By the end of 1982, there were clear signs that the comprehensive effort against methaqualone diversion was working. Then, in 1984, Congress moved methaqualone into Schedule I, effectively eliminating its domestic production and medical use. That same year, the United Nations reported that only two countries were manufacturing methaqualone. By 1985, there were so few methaqualone emergency room mentions (down 83 percent from 1980)



Chemist Romulo Reyes reviews a drug analysis at the Southwest Regional Laboratory.

that it no longer showed up on DAWN's top 20 controlled substances list. Contemporary policy makers and medical professionals touted the coordination of domestic and international actions as a huge victory against methaqualone misuse.

### Centralizing Operations and Reorganizing DEA Headquarters (1982)

With FBI assigned concurrent jurisdiction over drug investigations, Acting Administrator Mullen reorganized DEA's nine-year-old structure to centralize operations. Upper-level management positions were moved from regional offices to Headquarters. Field divisions reported directly to Headquarters per FBI management procedures. Mullen also raised the qualifications for recruits, making college degrees mandatory for new agents, and reorganized the office responsible for investigating internal cooperation. Cross-training programs were developed and each of the 10 field offices received a training coordinator (previously, training coordinators were located only at the 5 regional offices). Most significantly, DEA eliminated quotas, or arrest goals, once mandated for all of its regions and established the pursuit of major traffickers as an agency-wide goal. "In the past," Mullen explained, "we concentrated on arrests. Now we're concentrating on convictions at the highest levels."

CENTAC was replaced with drug-specific operations, and DEA Headquarters' functions were restructured into major drug enforcement investigations sections, known as the heroin, dangerous drugs, cocaine, and cannabis "drug desks." Each desk assumed responsibility for the direction, funding, and coordination of worldwide investigations for a specific drug category. Individual CENTAC investigations were renamed Special Enforcement Operations (SEOs), removed from any central, overall control, and assigned to the drug desks. The new structure replaced geographical organization (domestic and foreign) with the expectation that it would improve the control and coordination of major investigations.

### Task Force in South Florida (1982)

As the drug trade grew in South Florida, murder and crime rates soared. In 1979, there were 349 murders—nearly one drug killing per day in Miami. By 1981, murders had climbed to 621. Local law enforcement and politicians pleaded for help. In February 1982, President Ronald Reagan announced that "massive immigration, rampant crime, and epidemic drug smuggling have created a serious problem" in South Florida. Soon, hundreds of additional federal agents were detailed to the South Florida Task Force. DEA added 20 agents and FBI sent 43 agents to their

Miami offices. The Treasury contributed 20 analysts to track drug money, and, for the first time, the U.S. Armed Forces became involved in drug interdiction. Meanwhile, because drug traffickers were also establishing offshore banks to facilitate money laundering, the U.S. Government heightened its emphasis on financial investigations. Vice President George H.W. Bush stated, “Our investigative efforts will be as stringent on bankers and businessmen who profit from crime, as on the drug traffickers, the pushers, the hired assassins, and others. There will be no free lunch for the white-collar criminal.”

## Domestic Marijuana

By the 1980s, more than 60 percent of American teenagers had experimented with marijuana and 40 percent used it regularly. Supply also continued to increase. In addition to the smuggling of Colombian marijuana across U.S. borders, domestic marijuana cultivation continued to be a problem.



Administrator Mullen cuts cannabis plants during South Dakota seizures, 1983.

As cultivation techniques improved, the potency of marijuana (or its THC content) also climbed from 3.68 percent in 1979 to 7.28 percent in 1985. To counter this trend, the Domestic Cannabis Eradication/Suppression Program, initiated by Hawaii and California in 1979, rapidly expanded to encompass all 50 states by the close of 1985.

## Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (1982)

On October 14, 1982, Attorney General William French Smith announced an 8-point program to crackdown on organized crime, particularly syndicates involved with illegal drug trafficking. One program highlight was the creation of 12 additional Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) modeled after the successful South Florida Task Force, which was initiated under the leadership of Vice President Bush. The President explained, “these task forces . . . will work closely with state and local law enforcement officials. Following the South Florida example, they’ll utilize the resources of the federal government, including the FBI, the DEA, the IRS, the ATF, Immigration and Naturalization Service, U.S. Marshals Service, the U.S. Customs Service, and the U.S. Coast Guard. In addition, in some regions, Department of Defense tracking and pursuit capability will be made available . . . These task forces will allow us to mount an intensive and coordinated campaign against international and domestic drug trafficking and other organized criminal enterprises.”

OCDETF was one of the first multijurisdictional task forces to combat drug trafficking. Over the years, DEA has participated in 85 percent of all OCDETF investigations.

## Scheduling Dangerous Drugs

Scheduling dangerous drugs and precursor chemicals has long been a mainstay in DEA’s arsenal in curtailing drug trafficking. For example, in early 1980, phenylacetone (P2P), a precursor chemical favored by outlaw motorcycle gangs in manufacturing methamphetamine, was placed in Schedule II. The change forced drug traffickers to search for alternative chemicals that were more difficult to obtain and synthesize.

## Operation Bahamas and Turks and Caicos Islands (1982)

Operation Bahamas and Turks and Caicos Islands (OPBAT), launched in 1982, curtailed the flow of illegal drugs into the southeastern United States through the 1990s. Historically, the United States had an excellent working relationship with both the Commonwealth of the Bahamas and the government of the Turks and Caicos Islands (as a dependent territory of the United Kingdom). DEA, along with the U.S. Coast Guard, Department of State, Army, Customs Service, and Southern and Atlantic Military Commands, actively supported the Royal Bahamas Police Force and Royal Turks and Caicos Police Forces in combating drug trafficking through 100,000 square miles of open water surrounding 700 islands that had a total land mass of 5,382 square miles. With increasingly effective law enforcement efforts along the Mexican border, smuggling through the Caribbean resurged. Traffickers used turboprop twin-engine aircraft, large “go fast” high-powered vessels, global positioning systems, cellular telephones, and Cuban territorial air and seas as cover for their trade. All of these factors made OPBAT’s law enforcement operations exceedingly difficult.

## Joint DEA/FBI Special Agent in Charge Conference (1983)

DEA and FBI held their first joint Special Agent in Charge (SAC) Conference in March 1983. Attorney General William French Smith joined the assembly for the conference’s kick-off. In his address, he expressed his personal satisfaction with the progress of the DEA/FBI relationship and commended attendees for working to ensure the program’s success. The Attorney General also spoke about the significance of drug law enforcement in the Reagan administration’s overall crime control program and acknowledged the danger inherent in the drug control mission.

## First Joint DEA/National Narcotics Border Interdictions System (1983)

In March 1983, President Reagan announced the formation of the National Narcotics Border Interdiction System (NNBIS) to interdict the flow of narcotics into

the United States. NNBIS, headed by then Vice President Bush, had an Executive Board of members from the State Department, Treasury, Defense, Justice, Transportation, Central Intelligence Agency, and White House Drug Abuse Policy Office. Acting Administrator Mullen also served on the board.

NNBIS coordinated the work of federal agencies with existing responsibilities and capabilities for the interdiction of seaborne, airborne, and cross-border narcotics importation. The system was designed to complement, not replace, the duties of the Department of Justice’s regional Drug Enforcement Task Forces. NNBIS monitored suspected smuggling activity originating outside national borders that targeted the United States. It also coordinated contraband seizures and the arrest of suspects involved in illegal drug trafficking. DEA committed one agent and one analyst to each of the six regional centers (South Florida, Los Angeles, El Paso, New Orleans, Chicago, and New York City) in liaison capacities.

## Career Board (1983)

Acting Administrator Mullen established the Career Board in 1983 to ensure a more comprehensive career mobility system within DEA. Upon its launch, he explained, “the Career Development Program has been designed to reinforce the concepts of equal opportunity for advancement, mobility, diversity of assignment and centralized selection of managerial personnel. The objective of the special agent career ladder is to assist DEA criminal investigators in attaining the highest level of competence while, at the same time, developing a highly capable managerial corps.” When formed, the Career Board was composed of the Deputy Administrator (as chairman) and three assistant administrators. A senior special agent at the GS-15 level served as executive secretary to provide administrative and technical support. The Board, with its diverse configuration, tried to ensure that the most qualified personnel were selected for promotions, fairly and equitably weighing each employee’s overall record of experience and expertise, personal recommendations from special agents in charge, and DEA’s overall needs.

### Operation Pisces (1984)

In 1984, DEA set up an undercover money laundering operation called Operation Pisces with the IRS and several state and local agencies. This two-year, undercover intelligence investigation revealed a direct connection between Colombian cartels (including drug kingpin Pablo Escobar), street gangs in the United States, and deals negotiated in Denmark and Italy.

During the operation, DEA agents, posing as money launderers, also discovered drug lords moving a ton of cocaine per week and reaping profits of almost \$4 million a month. The organizations used check cashing businesses to launder the enormous proceeds. When the operation ended in 1987, law enforcement had arrested 220 drug dealers and seized \$28 million in cash and assets and more than 11,000 pounds of cocaine in Southern

California. The investigation was further proof of the continuous flow of drugs and money between Colombia and the United States.

### 50th State Joins EPIC (1984)

On October 24, 1984, Pennsylvania signed a participation agreement with EPIC, becoming the 50th state to do so. A signing ceremony and news conference were held at the Pennsylvania State Police Headquarters in Harrisburg. Also announced at the conference was the opening of DEA's new Harrisburg office, comprised of a supervisor and three agents.

### Operation Pipeline

As drug traffickers established networks within U.S. borders, they relied heavily on the highway system to move



SAs Mark Johnson (left) and Dempsey Jones (right) meet with Vice President George Bush during his 1984 trip to the NNBIS at Long Beach, California. Courtesy, George H.W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum

their wares from entry points to distribution hubs around the country. Beginning in the early 1980s, New Mexico state troopers grew suspicious of a sharp increase in motor vehicle violations that resulted in drug seizures and arrests. At the same time, troopers in New Jersey began making similar seizures during highway stops along the Interstate 95 “drug corridor” from Florida to the northeast. Independently, troopers in New Mexico and New Jersey established their own highway drug interdiction programs. Over time, as their seizures mounted, law enforcement officers found that highway drug couriers shared many characteristics, tendencies, and methods. Highway law enforcement officers asked key questions to help determine whether motorists stopped for traffic violations were also carrying drugs. These interview techniques proved extremely effective. The road patrol officers shared their observations and experiences.

The successful New Jersey and New Mexico highway interdiction programs inspired the creation of Operation Pipeline. This DEA-funded, nationwide highway interdiction training program featured state police and highway patrol officers with expertise in highway interdiction who provided training to other officers throughout the country.

Upon its launch, Pipeline was one of DEA’s most effective operations and continues to provide essential cooperation between DEA and state and local law enforcement agencies. The operation was composed of three elements: training, real-time communication, and analytic support. Each year, state and local highway officers delivered dozens of training schools across the country to inform officers of interdiction laws and policies, build their knowledge of drug trafficking, and sharpen their perceptiveness of highway couriers. Training classes focused on the law, policy, and ethics governing highway stops and drug prosecution; and trends and key characteristics, or indicators, that drug traffickers shared. Also, through EPIC, state and local agencies shared real-time information with other agencies, obtained immediate results to record checks, and received detailed analysis of drug seizures to support investigations.

## The Comprehensive Crime Control Act (1984)

The 1984 Comprehensive Crime Control Act targeted various aspects of civil and criminal sanctions related to drug trafficking. Specifically, federal criminal and civil asset forfeiture penalties were expanded and increased. The law also established a determinate sentencing system for drug offenses; amended the Bail Reform Act to target pretrial detention of defendants accused of serious drug offenses; and created the National Drug Policy Board to coordinate international and criminal justice issues related to drugs. Chaired by the Attorney General and composed of members from the Departments of Treasury and Defense, the Policy Board was the forerunner to the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP).

## Tranquilandia (1984)

An important discovery in March 1984 signaled just how sophisticated the Medellín cartel’s operations had become. Colombian law enforcement officials conducted a raid against Tranquilandia, or “Quiet Village,” 160 miles south of San Jose del Guaviare. This fully equipped cocaine factory included living quarters for 100 people, several storage rooms for chemicals and supplies, and workshops for automobiles and airplanes. With such an efficient production line, traffickers were synthesizing 20 tons of cocaine a month, putting \$12 billion in the coffers of the Medellín cartel in only 2 years. Authorities seized more than 10 tons of cocaine and cocaine base at Tranquilandia and found more labs and similar compounds in the surrounding jungle. The police destroyed drugs and material conservatively estimated to be worth \$1.2 billion.

Evidence of Tranquilandia first surfaced when DEA’s country attaché in Bogotá asked for a study on chemical imports, especially ether and acetone entering Colombia. The study determined that 98 percent of imported ether (of which 90 percent originated from the United States and West Germany) was being used to make cocaine. Due to the report’s findings, DEA contacted U.S. chemical companies asking for their cooperation in alerting law enforcement about unusually large chemical orders.



In December 1984, over 1,600 pounds of cocaine were seized in the New York area following a six-month investigation by the New York Drug Enforcement Task Force. Pictured with the cocaine seized are, from left: Raymond Jones, Chief of the Organized Crime Control Bureau, New York City Police Department; Thomas A. Constantine, Deputy Superintendent of the New York State Police; Raymond Dearie, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of New York; Bruce Jensen, SAC, New York Field Division; and John Luksic, U.S. Customs SAC at the JFK airport office.

When an individual from Colombia walked into a chemical company's office in New Jersey requesting to pay cash for nearly two metric tons of ether—equivalent to half of all legitimate ether imports in 1980 for all of Colombia—the company notified DEA.

Seizing this opportunity, DEA set up a sting in Chicago code-named Operation Scorpion. A front company called North Central Industrial Chemical, purposely using the same initials as the National Crime Information Center, was established. It then contacted the suspicious individual with an offer to fill his order. Eventually, 76 drums of ether were sent to New Orleans. Two of the

drums were wired with electronic tracking devices. By satellite, agents monitored the chemicals' movements. After several days, agents traced the chemicals to a dense jungle area in Colombia. DEA worked with the Colombian National Police to raid the site, never anticipating the magnitude of the operation.

DEA had long understood the vital link between chemicals and drugs. Without chemicals, traffickers cannot manufacture drugs. One of DEA's earliest attacks on the chemical trade occurred in 1982 with Operation Chem Con, short for Chemical Control. DEA gradually expanded its efforts to control chemicals essential to the processing of coca into cocaine with governments worldwide, leading to major laboratory seizures in South America, including Tranquilandia.



A cache of precursor chemicals near a South American cocaine processing lab.

## Drug Prevention Programs

Americans noticed skyrocketing drug seizures, trafficker arrests, and drug use. Concerned citizens called on their elected officials to do more. Parents of teens and young children were particularly alarmed, and they created some 4,000 formal parent organizations across the United States. First Lady Nancy Reagan responded by establishing the "Just Say No" program, which was formally announced in February 1985.

DEA realized that the unharnessed energy of parents, teachers, and other concerned citizens in communities

nationwide could be a vital asset in reducing teen drug use. Over the next few years, DEA ventured into prevention and education. The agency had long understood the important equation between drug supply and demand, and its leadership knew that enforcement efforts alone would not curb Americans' illicit drug use.

In September 1984, President Reagan signed a proclamation for National Drug Abuse Education and Prevention Week, saying, "We are on the right track." Three months earlier, DEA had joined forces with the National High School Athletic Coaches Association in a cooperative education and prevention program that focused on 5.5 million high school athletes. The Sports Drug Awareness Program began with Frank Parks, a high school coach in Washington, DC, who believed that high school athletes, with their coaches as leaders, could serve as positive role

models to help young people resist the temptation of drugs. DEA recruited and trained several professional athletes to work with the program, which was joined by more than 40 professional, college, and high school sports organizations. Popular sports figures captured the children's attention and helped spread the message that drug use was dangerous.

### Amendments to the Controlled Substances Act (1984)

Congress amended the CSA in 1984 to address several problems that had emerged since its passage. The most important amendment inserted a "public interest revocation" provision, which provided additional authority for the denial or revocation of a practitioner controlled substance registration contrary to the public interest.



Owners and commissioners of professional sports leagues meet with President Reagan to express their support of, and participate in, prevention efforts. DEA sponsored a series of posters featuring the Washington Commanders (then known as the Washington Redskins) that augmented Nancy Reagan's "Just Say No" campaign. Courtesy, Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum

DEA always had this authority under the CSA with respect to manufacturers and distributors. However, the agency needed tools to eliminate sources of diversion without relying solely on state regulatory action or having to go through a lengthy and labor-intensive criminal prosecution. For the practitioner, this provision could remove controlled substance privileges without affecting medical licenses or establishing a criminal record.

After the Public Interest Revocation (PIR) program's initiation, revocations and surrenders rose from less than 100 per year to more than 400 per year. By 1989, DAWN emergency room mentions for prescription drugs had dropped to 33 percent of total controlled substances mentions.

Under the CSA's original provisions, the formal administrative scheduling process could take years to complete. In the interim, DEA was unable to take effective action against traffickers responsible for new, often dangerous, drugs. The amendments provided for one-year emergency scheduling of drugs which misuse constituted an "imminent hazard to the public safety" while normal scheduling procedures were being pursued. As a result, incidents of controlled substance analogue misuse significantly declined.

## Training

Until 1981, DEA continued its training at DEA Headquarters, 1405 "Eye" Street, NW, in Washington, DC. That year, DEA's Domestic Training Division was moved to the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) in Glynco, Georgia. Beyond Basic Agent Training, the program included subject matter training, such as intelligence collection, executive development, and technical skills, as well as occupational training for compliance investigators, intelligence analysts, chemists, supervisors, mid-level managers, state and local police officers, and international law enforcement officers. With the exception of FBI training, all other federal law enforcement training was conducted at FLETC.

The first FBI/DEA firearms instructor school was held in November 1984 at the FBI Academy in Quantico. Instructors taught FBI firearms training concepts and practical training in various combat shooting courses using revolvers and semiautomatic pistols. Shoulder weapons training included shotgun, M-16, and H&K and K-MP5 machine guns. Additional training comprised stress obstacle shooting courses, building entry and



Participants in DEA's first firearms instructor school held at the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia, 1984.

clearance drills, and arrest and handcuff procedures. Vehicle stops and ammunition ballistics were also addressed and applied to practical situations. This was the first of several such schools that fostered the sharing of ideas and concepts in the application and training of firearms in federal law enforcement.

Special Agent Jerry Jensen, Regional Director of Los Angeles, headed up the new institute in Glynco. Special Agent Frank Monastero, who had served as director of training, was reassigned to the position of chief pilot.

On December 17, 1982, DEA graduated its first class of basic agents from FLETC. BA-18 was composed of 32 men and 2 women who ranged in age from 23 to 35. The class's 34 members were selected from a pool of more than 4,000 candidates. Admission to BA-18 was a highly prized honor because it had been two years since the graduation of the preceding BA-17 class. DEA continued to train at Glynco until it moved its training facilities to the FBI Training Academy at Quantico, Virginia, in 1985.

## Aviation

In March 1980, DEA's Air Wing completed its 20,000th airborne law enforcement mission. Working in close support of domestic regional and district offices, Air Wing personnel provided a unique surveillance and role enhancement capability. Additionally, aviation resources and special agent/pilots were called upon to support domestic and overseas special operations. Focusing on maximum use of current aircraft and assignment personnel, the Air Wing offered invaluable support.

During fiscal year 1983, DEA's Aviation Division logged more than 12,000 hours of flight time in support of domestic and overseas enforcement missions. Because the missions were progressively more complex, demanding, and hazardous, a new safety program was implemented. The Aviation Safety Council, a five-member group composed of four agents and one maintenance specialist, met on a regular basis to eliminate hazardous conditions to DEA aviation operations.



Aviation personnel in a DEA Aero Commander.

## Technology

In 1981, DEA, in coordination with the Department of State, represented by Thomas M. Tracy, Assistant Secretary for Administration, signed an agreement that provided the agency with telecommunication facilities supporting automated data processing (ADP) in DEA's foreign offices.

ADP safeguarded DEA's computerized data holdings worldwide. The program formulated the procedures for the protection of DEA sensitive and administratively controlled information promulgated by other federal agencies. This automated support also rapidly interchanged vast amounts of information with other federal and state law enforcement agencies.

## Laboratories

Field laboratory and Headquarters personnel prepared the Clandestine Laboratory Guide for Agents and Chemists in 1977. It was the first compilation of illicit drug

manufacturing procedures and investigative techniques published in a single volume. The guide was revised and reissued in 1981 and has since been revised several times to keep up with changing clandestine laboratory practices and new illicitly manufactured drugs.

The workload of DEA laboratories increased in the early 1980s. When the U.S. Attorney General announced that FBI would be given concurrent jurisdiction with DEA over federal drug law violations, DEA laboratories became responsible for conducting analysis of all drug evidence purchased or seized by FBI agents in connection with their investigations. Also, a dramatic increase in the number of exhibits submitted by the District of Columbia Metro Police Department from Operation Clean Sweep necessitated a period of mandatory Saturday overtime as well as reinforcement and support from the Special Testing and Research Laboratory in McLean and the North Central Laboratory in Chicago.