

**An Assessment of the Multijurisdictional  
Drug Task Forces in Texas: A Case Study**

By

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## **Abstract**

For many years numerous public policy efforts have been initiated at the national and state level to combat drugs and crime. Among these efforts has been the formation of multijurisdictional drug task forces. In Texas, these task forces have been very active in fighting crime. In recent years, however, these task forces in Texas have been under heavy criticism and scrutiny for their questionable operations.

In 1998, in an effort to combat the drug problem in the U.S., Congress passed legislation in the form of the Anti-Drug Abuse Act. The legislation authorized the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)—which is under the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)—to administer the Edward Byrne Memorial State Grants. This grant is available for programs in the various states to combat problems associated with crime, drug addiction, and drug trafficking. The multijurisdictional drug task force programs are funded under this grant

The purpose of this research project is to examine and assess the performance of the multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas. The objectives of the study are (1) the development of a model that describes the ideal characteristics of the operational structure and policies and procedures of the multijurisdictional drug task forces; (2) the assessment and comparison of the operational structure, policies and procedures, and organizational culture of the multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas to this model; and (3) the development of public policy implications and recommendations for the multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas. This project also provides a general

description, perspectives on management practices, organizational culture, and oversight and command and control of the multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas.

The purpose of this study is to observe how close the multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas are to the practical ideal type developed through information provided in the literature review. The research design for this study consists of a case study technique. The study consisted of a survey instrument developed to collect data and information on the multijurisdictional drug task forces. The survey instrument consisted of questionnaire that was developed and applied to a sample of 49 multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas. Among the research techniques utilized in the research was content analysis. Because of the low response rate of the survey questionnaires, statistical testing was not feasible.

Multijurisdictional drug task forces in the sample were compared to the practical ideal type. Although the data was limited it did provide some useful insights into the nature of these task forces in Texas. In the analysis of the policies and procedures, the task forces in terms of management and asset forfeitures usually supported the practical ideal type. Nevertheless, the content analysis showed that there was weak support for the ideal type in terms of some issues associated with management, oversight and command and control and other elements.

The findings in the study were inconclusive because of the small sample size. However, the research project did provide a better understanding of the workings of multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas. In spite of the limitations of the study, the preliminary findings did provide information to

develop recommendations on the subject matter. The preliminary findings of the pilot study found that as a whole the drug task forces in Texas do support the ideal type. There are, however, some elements that either weakly supports, or fails to support the ideal type.

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**Chapter I  
Introduction**

Background

For many years numerous public policy efforts have been initiated at the national and state level to combat drugs and crime. Among these efforts has been the formation of multijurisdictional drug task forces (hereafter referred to as drug task force or task force). In Texas, the task forces have been very active in fighting crime. In recent years, however, these task forces in Texas have been under heavy criticism and scrutiny for their questionable operations. The questionable actions of undercover narcotics officers have led to the arrest of

many “innocent” individuals (Aldred, 2001; Grisales, 2000; Henson, 2001). The unsuccessful drug raid operations of several drug task forces have also led many to question the managerial style of the command supervisors and the professionalism of the narcotics officers. In many instances, these practices have reduced the level of participation of the various governmental entities in drug task forces. For example, recently several incidents led to the departure of four counties (which include Travis county) from their participation in the Capital Area Narcotics Task Force. Their departure was associated with their reaction to these incidents that included the following: the accidental killing of an innocent 19-year old boy from Del Valle during a raid; a deputy was killed during a raid; ragweed was mistaken for marijuana and unlawful arrests were made; and recently an unarmed man was killed at his home during a raid (Osborne, 2002; Flynn, 2002).

The purpose of this project is to examine and assess the performance of multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas. This project provides a perspective on the operation and practices of the drug task forces. This chapter will provide (1) a historical perspective of drug policy and programs in the U.S. and Texas (2) statement of purpose and (3) the objectives of the study. This chapter traces the development of drug policies and programs since the 1800’s to the War on Drugs and the present. It also provides a rationale for the creation of the multijurisdictional drug task forces. Chapter two provides an insight on the how and why multijurisdictional drug task forces were created. It also examines the common practices of drug task forces as well as the success and failure of these programs. Chapter three includes a review of literature and the development of the conceptual framework of this study. The research methodology and design

for the study is discussed in chapter four. Chapter five provides an analysis of the findings, and chapter six provides conclusions and recommendations on this research study.

## Historical Perspective

For many decades, drugs have been considered a serious problem in American society. Previous literature shows that drug abuse has been widespread as early as the 1860s (Shenkman, 1989). In recent years, various studies have shown that drugs have been seen as the major cause of violence and crime (Office of National Drug Control Policy, 1998). Other studies have shown that drugs have led to increased violence, the soaring prison population, and the worsening crisis in race relations (Shenkman, 1989, Walker, 2001). Elliot and Donziger (as cited by Walker, 2001) state that drugs, either directly or indirectly, has been responsible for the dramatic rise in the murder rates among gangs since the 1980's.

The correlation between drugs and crime, however, is complex, and because of the complexity, drug policies seem to have a “pushdown-popup effect” (Belenko, 1997: 1). This means that if policy has a successful effect in reducing illegal drug use, there should not be a similar effect in reducing crime to the same degree. Crimes related to drug trafficking might be reduced, but the impact on crimes associated with deviant lifestyles—i.e. burglaries and robberies—would be very limited (Walker, 2001).

Drug policies that emphasized enforcement started with the 1914 Harrison Act (Prohibition). This policy criminalized many drugs but also



contributed to the rise of organized crime (Salus, 1999). The war on drugs intensified between the 1960's to the 1980's and also contributed to civil disobedience. With the rise of American pop culture and "drugs, sex, and rock and roll," the issue of drug abuse grabbed national attention. The War on Drugs took shape in the 1990's as interdiction of drugs became the U.S. "top national security priority" (Bennett, DiIulio, Walters, 1996). According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) 1997 report, federal agencies increased their enforcement, which contributed to major drug seizures by federal and local officials. Such evidence showed that greater enforcement did play a role in reducing the flow of illegal drugs. Nevertheless, Walker (2001) argued that interdiction policy has been a total failure, particularly, since successful seizures only account for about 10 to 15 percent of the total supply. Furthermore, there are concerns among critics that the enforcement of drug policies target minority males—whose arrest rate for drug use are several times greater than whites (Schneider and Ingram, 1997).

During the Reagan Administration, the war on drugs was not only fought overseas but also in American communities. New anti-drug campaigns were developed in cities throughout the U.S. in the form of programs like "Just Say No", and the school-based D.A.R.E. program. These two programs focused on teaching children about the dangers of drugs.

Past research has centered on the effectiveness of anti-drug programs. One research study is very critical of interdiction policy in the United States. Walker (2001) argues that the 2000-mile U.S.-Mexico border leaves room for numerous methods to smuggle drugs. Furthermore, several research studies

have found that school-based programs such as D.A.R.E. are ineffective in steering children away from drugs and considered counterproductive.<sup>1</sup>

Liberal policymakers over the last few decades have stressed more drug treatment as a method of prevention and reduction (Walker, 2001). Nevertheless, a study in Texas has found that offenders who participate in substance abuse treatment programs have a higher recidivism rate than a comparison group not participating in the program (Texas Criminal Justice Policy Council, 1999).

The War on Drugs in the U.S. took a new form in 1998 with the passage of the Anti-Drug Abuse Act, which was designed to reduce drug abuse, crimes, and drug trafficking. The new legislation called for the development of multijurisdictional drug task forces, which have the capabilities of fighting drug crimes with limited barriers and oversight. Throughout the U.S. and Texas, multijurisdictional drug task forces have been created to increase coordination and enforcement among federal, state, and local law enforcement in the fight against illegal drugs.<sup>2</sup>

## Statement of Purpose

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<sup>1</sup> See Tolber and Stratton (1997), Lynam, Milich and Clayton (1999) and Hallfors, et al. (2000).

<sup>2</sup> Three major types of drug task forces currently operate in the United States. One is administered locally and funded through the Byrne federal grant. The second is operated under the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), and the third type is the federal High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Task Forces (HIDTA), which operates with the highest level of resources and expertise available (IHHSR, 2000).

The purpose of this research project is to examine and assess the performance of multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas. The objectives of the study are (1) the development of a model that describes the ideal characteristics of the operational structure and policies and procedures of the multijurisdictional drug task forces; (2) the assessment and comparison of the operational structure, policies and procedures, and organizational culture of the multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas to this model; and (3) the development of public policy implications and recommendations for the multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas. This project also provides a general description, perspectives on management practices, organizational culture, and oversight and command and control of the multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas.

The next chapter examines the nature and formation of multijurisdictional drug task forces in the U.S. and Texas. It also provides a better understanding on the past experiences of these task forces in Texas and the U.S.

## **Chapter II**

### **The Multijurisdictional Drug Task Forces**

## Introduction

This chapter provides a perspective on the nature and formation of these multijurisdictional drug task forces. It discusses the mission, objectives and the common practices of the task forces. Lastly, this chapter reviews the past experience of these programs in the U.S. and Texas in terms of successes and failures.

## The Edward Byrne Memorial State Grant

In 1998, in an effort to combat the drug problem in the U.S., Congress passed legislation in the form of the Anti-Drug Abuse Act. The legislation authorized the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA)—which is under the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)—to administer the Edward Byrne Memorial State Grants<sup>3</sup>. This grant is available for programs in the various states to combat problems associated with crime, drug addiction, and drug trafficking. The multijurisdictional drug task force programs are funded under this grant (Appendix H).

The Byrne grants are awarded to the different states. The BJA determines the grant appropriation and determination of this entitlement based on a modified population-based formula. States are required to match these programs by 25 percent. In addition, states must develop strategic, multiyear violence prevention and drug control plans to demonstrate that funds will be used in accordance with the purpose of the law (U.S. Bureau of Justice, 2001). In Texas,

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<sup>3</sup> Originally, this grant was designed under the Omnibus Crime Control and Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3711 et seq., Section 501). The first multijurisdictional drug task force in Fairfield, Connecticut was funded under this Act in May 1968 (Gilianan and Domahidy, 1995: 139).

the Governor's Criminal Justice Division administers the Byrne grant used to fund multijurisdictional drug task forces. The Texas Department of Public Safety (TxDPS) oversees the program.

### The Multijurisdictional Drug Task Forces in the U.S. and Texas

The multijurisdictional drug task forces were designed with the premise that drug trafficking has no natural boundaries (Schlegel and McGarrell, 1991). For example, the Gulf Cartel, a notorious drug trafficking ring, works from Matamoros, Mexico, through the Rio Grande Valley, and channels its illegal activities throughout the state (Schwartz, 2001). The nature of drug trafficking is a problem for local law enforcement agencies as well as state and federal agencies because of fear of crossing jurisdictions. Therefore, the development of multijurisdictional drug task forces allows for the assistance and cooperation of federal, state and local law enforcement agencies and prosecutors in multi-jurisdictions and improves the

## Multiagency Drug Enforcement Task Force Participation by Population, 1997

Percent of agencies participating	Number of officers assigned full time	
	Total	Average*
31 %	6,205	2
94 %	412	27
88 %	308	15
83 %	345	9
82 %	554	4
74 %	708	3
65 %	699	2
50 %	1,122	2
34 %	1,305	1
15 %	750	2
50 %	2,886	2
61 %	190	10
68 %	264	7
63 %	254	4
76 %	496	2
67 %	494	2
55 %	515	2
46 %	548	2
27 %	124	1

having a unit with full-time officers.

*Departments 1997, NCJ 173429, February 2000 and Sheriffs' Departments 1997, NCJ 173428, February 2000 effectiveness of their efforts in the anti-drug war (Schlegel and McGarrell, 1991).*

The size of a drug task force varies by the population they represent. For example, in a drug task force that represents a population of more than a million people, the average number of participating officers of local police departments and sheriffs' departments is 37 (BJS, 1999). For a population between 100,000 to 249,999, the average number of officers from local police departments and

sheriffs' departments is 6. The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) (1999) reported that in 1997 about a third of local police departments in the United States had one or more officers assigned to a task force (p.12), and half of sheriffs' departments in the United States assigned one or more officers to a drug task force (p.12). Other examples of the varying sizes of multijurisdictional drug task forces are indicated in Table 2.1. According to another BJS report (1996), 46 percent of all prosecutors' offices in the United States indicated that at least one prosecutor has been a member of a multijurisdictional drug task force in 1994 (p.2).

### Past Experience: Successes and Failures

Drug task forces in Texas and other states have been relatively effective in drug seizures. For instance, after a successful raid, the South Texas Specialized Crimes and Narcotics Task Force seized more than 10,000 pounds of drugs hidden inside an unsuspected neighborhood home (Schwartz, 2001). A multijurisdictional drug task force in Georgia seized 30 pounds of marijuana cash-valued at \$141,000 (Harper, 2000; B1), and with the assistance of the Harris County Organized Crime and Narcotics Task Force, the drug task force seized 120 pounds of marijuana valued at an estimated \$540,000 (Daniels, 2000, C1). Drug task forces have also been effective in fighting drug abuse and drug trafficking in colleges and universities such as at Purdue University where four students were arrested (Lafayette Online, 2000). Oftentimes, these were confiscated drugs that could have gotten within reach of our youth. But, as

reported by Schwartz (2001), law enforcement agencies only confiscate a fraction of the drugs that enters the U.S. without detection.

There have been numerous cases in Texas and California where drug task forces have been less effective and associated with abuse of authority where officers have dishonestly seized and forfeited the assets and property of innocent individuals (Blumenson and Nilsen, 1997). One infamous California case, known as the Donald Scott case, which occurred ten years ago, involved a drug bust that went bad. Based on an aerial surveillance by DEA and a U.S. Border Patrol search, cultivated marijuana was reported in the multi-millionaire's 200-acre estate<sup>4</sup>. With reasonable suspicion, the drug task force was able to obtain a search warrant of the property. Comprised with 30 law enforcement officers, the task force breached into Scott's mansion (Scott, 2001)<sup>5</sup>. After searching the property, no trace of marijuana was found (Grantland, 1992).

In Texas, a well-known case involved the uncorroborated testimony of an undercover narcotics officer in the arrest of 43 drug-dealing suspects—39 of whom were African American—in Tulia, Texas (Aldred, 2001: B1). A similar case took place in Hearne, Texas where 38 African Americans were arrested for drug trafficking (Grisales, 2000; B3). In Wilson County, a grand jury recently found a drug task force officer guilty for falsely reporting and fabricating evidence on 28 innocent people who were sentenced for drug trafficking (Hunger, 2001; 2B; Henson, 2001; 7). Many of these indicted individuals are still

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<sup>4</sup> During the search, the U.S. Border Patrol found no trace of marijuana cultivation at the Scott estate.

<sup>5</sup> Two deputies of the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department's asset forfeiture unit were among the 30 task force officers who breached into Scott's mansion. It is common to have the asset forfeiture unit present to seize money and documents that might lead to other assets; however, this shows that the motive was more than just seizing the cultivation.



in prison serving time because of the sole testimony of a corrupt narcotics officer.<sup>6</sup>

The unfavorable experiences of some drug task forces in Texas have raised concern about the integrity and effectiveness of these programs. In Texas and elsewhere, organizations like the ACLU have criticized the practices of the drug task forces in terms of mismanagement, and that in practice some of the policies and procedures have resulted in promoting corruptive behavior. Furthermore, several state and local elected officials have raised concern on the management and operations of these drug task forces (Osborne, 2002).

Therefore, the purpose of this project is to examine the performance and to assess the multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas, and compare the findings with the practical ideal type gathered from previous research. The following chapter provides the basis for the model used to assess the Texas multijurisdictional drug task forces (practical ideal type). It also provides a review of literature on the subject matter.

## **Chapter III Review of Literature**

### **Introduction**

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<sup>6</sup> The 77<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature (2001) passed legislation (HB 2351) that requires an officer to have corroborated evidence connecting the defendant with the offense.

Chapter three provides a review of past and present research on the subject matter. It also examines scholarly research that prescribes how a multijurisdictional drug task force can be improved. Further, the chapter develops a framework to analyze an existing drug task force so that recommendations towards improvement can be made. Previous research provides useful information on the effectiveness of multijurisdictional drug task forces in terms of arrest practices, organizational characteristics, performance objectives and practices.<sup>7</sup> In addition, there is other research that examines the priorities of drug task forces in terms of promoting drug awareness, prosecution, the seizure of assets and crime fighting (Coldren, et al, 1993).

### Operational Policies and Procedures

Extensive research has been conducted on operational policies and procedures. Several studies have shown that multijurisdictional drug task forces are encouraged to establish clear and concise written operational policies and procedures that include the purpose, objectives, goals, department responsibility, chain of command, equipment, funding, reporting procedures, asset seizure procedures and other issues (Kirchener, et al, 1994; IHHSR, 2000; MCTFT Program, 2001). Goals and objectives within the operational policies and procedures should recognize accountability, coordination, and efficiency (Blumenson and Nilsen, 1997; Office of Gov. Rick Perry, 2001). Belenko (1997) maintains that policies should also focus on constructing criminal penalties on the scale of drug problems. Drug awareness and the removal of drugs from the

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<sup>7</sup> See Schlegel & McGarrell (1991), Coldren, et al (1993), Smith, et al (2000), IHHSR (2000); Silva and Peters (1991), Gilianan & Domahidy (1995), Blumenson & Nilsen (1997).

community are considered to be important element in a drug task force's operational policies and procedures (JRSA, 1991). Furthermore, the policies and procedures should include a standardized job performance evaluation criterion for each officer (More, Wegener, and Miller, 1999) of the drug task force. Multijurisdictional drug task forces should avoid policies that encourage arrest capacities (JRSA, 1991), encourage asset seizures (Blumenson and Nilsen, 1997), or promote loyalty within the task force (GAO report, 1998). Several criminologists have commented that more meaningful manuals and operational policies should ensure responsibility and accountability to the local community (ASA, 1995).

### Asset Forfeiture Procedures

Previous research on drug task forces has also examined the issue of asset forfeitures. Although drug task force supervisors and officers might practice integrity and ethical behavior, existing legal procedures allow drug task forces to seize anything that is considered connected to drug money such as homes, cars, personal financial assets, etc. The Comprehensive Crime Control Act of 1984 and the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986 created new forfeiture laws and new civil penalties. Because of limited funding, drug task forces often resort to other

sources of funding such as asset forfeitures to fund their operations<sup>8</sup> (Coldren, et al, 1993; Silva and Peters, 1991; GAO, 1998). State laws authorize drug task forces to turn any forfeiture contrabands into money and use it to purchase new police cars, equipment and buildings.<sup>9</sup> Seizure and forfeiture of property is an important aspect of the Byrne funded drug task forces (IHHSR, 2000), because it allows them to be self-sufficient. This privilege, however, has drawbacks because it creates an incentive for law enforcement to overstep their bounds. Critics like Kaplan (2000) claim this practice leads to illegal or improper forfeiture of assets *believed* to be drug related. Asset forfeitures penalize the offender. It also has the potential to destroy the lives of innocent families.

Past research has also shown that the major priority for many of these drug task forces has changed to seizure of assets over promoting drug awareness (Coldren, 1993). In many instances, the different direction of these drug task forces has resulted in the increased attraction towards asset forfeiture. For example, in Idaho, a drug task force reported seizing approximately \$251,000 in 1990; this amount is approximately \$182,000 more than that reported in 1987 (Silva, et al, 1991: 20).

The availability of external funds may be the primary goal of program participation for police agencies (Smith, et al, 2000). Numerous drug task forces rely on forfeitures to fund their operations (Blumenson and Nilsen, 1997). Blumenson and Nilsen (1997) argue that federal laws have made it possible for

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<sup>8</sup> The Harris County Organized Crime and Narcotics Task Force reported seizing approximately 823 thousand dollars in FY2000 (Office of Governor Rick Perry, 2001); twenty-five percent of this is used primarily for the drug task force.

<sup>9</sup> Civil forfeiture laws apply indiscriminately to property, regardless of the innocence of the property owner (Reed, 1992). Further, once the assets are seized it is very difficult for the average citizen to get their seized property back. They only have 10 days to file a claim and are required to post a 10 percent bond (up to a maximum of \$5,000) to even contest the seizure. If the property is returned, the government is not liable for any damage incurred during handling and storage (Dickinson, 1999, pg. 23).

law enforcement to increase in profitability, and allowed law enforcement to be an unaccountable self-financing entity without oversight.

In Texas, a specific guideline for asset forfeiture procedures is found in the Code of Criminal Procedure. The law states:

(b) Seizure of property subject to forfeiture may be made without warrant if... (3) the property subject to seizure has been the subject of a prior judgment in favor of the state in a forfeiture proceeding under this chapter; or (4) the seizure was incident to a lawful arrest, lawful search, or lawful search incident to arrest. (c)...A peace officer who has custody of property shall provide the attorney representing the state with a sworn statement that contains a schedule of the property seized, an acknowledgement that the officer has seized the property, and a list of the officer's reasons for the seizure. Not later than 72 ours after the seizure, the peace officer shall: (1) place the property under seal; (2) remove the property to a place ordered by the court; or (3) require a law enforcement agency of the state or a political subdivision to take custody of the property and move it to a proper location.

TEX.CRIM.PRO., art. 59.03 (2001).

Furthermore, state law requires the multijurisdictional drug task forces to submit an annual audit report of proceeds and property seized or forfeited to the Texas Attorney General's Office (TEX.CRIM.PRO. art. 59.06 (g), 2001). The drug task forces are also required to submit a copy of their audit report to the Texas Governor's Criminal Justice Division, who administers the federal grant.

IHHSR report (2001) recommend the initial decision to seize an item be made by the command supervisor. This discretion holds the command supervisor of the drug task force accountable for the seizure rather than the officer, and can help prevent an officer from overstepping their bounds.

By having specific guidelines, descriptive reporting procedures, documented records of seizures and forfeitures, and designating the command supervisor to initiate the final decision to seize an item, can improve operational and fiscal accountability of a drug task force. Implementing fiscal accountability

procedures can prevent a drug task force from seizing the property and assets of an innocent individual.

The Multi Counterdrug Task Force Training (MCTFT) program (2001) provides training to drug task forces on how to develop seizure guidelines and manage forfeiture guidelines. Yet researchers recommend DOJ develop specific guidelines for the seizure of assets to set a national standard and regain public confidence (Albanese and Finceknauer, 1997). In addition, Blumenson and Nilsen (1997) suggest a federal reform that would require forfeited assets to be deposited into the U.S. Treasury's general fund (p. 22).

## Management

Extensive research on the management of the drug task forces emphasizes the importance of goals and objectives. Setting goals and objectives are mandatory for Byrne funded drug task forces. Oftentimes, drug task forces define new objectives by reviewing objectives for the previous fiscal year and making adjustments based on needs and priorities (IHHSR, 2000). For example, marijuana trafficking might be a priority goal for one year, but change to combating designer drug trafficking the other year. For the most part, drug task forces change their operations to fit the changing size and goals within short periods (Coldren, et al, 1993).

Previous research indicates that clearly stated goals and objectives helps members and officers of the drug task force understand what needs to be accomplished. Goals and objectives stressed by drug task forces include: educating America's youth of the dangers of drugs; reducing drug related crimes and violence; disrupting drug trafficking, and arresting and prosecuting drug traffickers, dealers, and users; employing communication and coordination

among other federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies; and detecting, disrupting, deterring, and seizing illegal drugs (Schlegel and McGarrell, 1991; Office of National Drug Control Policy, 1999). Further, in order to increase accountability, past researchers recommend drug task forces recognize communication, coordination, collaboration, and efficiency (Office of Governor Rick Perry, 2001, More, Wegener, and Miller, 1999).

Research on multijurisdictional drug task forces has also emphasized and recommended that these organizations promote integrity, command accountability, ethics, and establish independent monitoring oversight<sup>10</sup> (U.S. GAO, 1998). The MCTFT program, which provides an in-depth training to drug task forces, has a course on corruption, ethics, and integrity. The program addresses the supervisor's role in ethics and integrity as well as the enforcement of departmental standards (MCTFT program, 2001).

Previous research has also emphasized the importance of oversight, ethics, and integrity to these task forces. Without oversight or control, drug task forces can fall victim to corruption. As reported by the GAO (1998), police culture that supports corruptive behavior do so by setting standards that loyalty to others in the organization comes first and officers should cover up fellow officer's criminal behaviors. To avoid this, drug task forces should adopt and implement standards setting integrity and honesty as priorities.

Research has also shown that drug task forces should promote ethics and integrity (GAO report, 1998: 18). According to Delattre (2002), a person of

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<sup>10</sup> The way drug task forces are designed makes it easy to avoid oversight, because they are not tied to any local constituency and are engaged in enforcing victimless crimes (Blumenson and Nilsen, 1997: 5). In other words, no third person accountability exists.

integrity is the same person in public and in private.<sup>11</sup> In addition, the integrity of a law enforcement agency should never be compromised (More, Wegener and Miller, 1999: 16). Further, organizations should develop administrative ethics where moral principles are applied to everyone (Thompson, 1985: 555) in the drug task force. An organization should have an ethical commitment to do the right thing, especially when behaving ethically imposes financial, social or emotional costs (Josephson Institution, 2001). Menzel (1999) states that ethics and morals exist on a value continuum that defines right and wrong behavior in all facets of one's life. A code of ethics must be sustained by departmental policies and by the conduct of command personnel (Delattre, 2002: 33). The ethical commitment of an organization should include ethical and moral values important to the drug task force and the community they serve (Appendix I).

### Organizational Culture and Other Elements

Past research has also been conducted on the organizational culture of the drug task forces. The definition of organizational culture is the personality of the organization comprised of assumption, values, norms and tangible signs of the members and their behaviors (McNamara, 1999, database). Wilson (1989) asserts that an organization needs to acquire a sense of mission in order to develop culture. The drug task forces should not only follow the operational policies and procedures, but also develop a sense of collective goals.

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<sup>11</sup> Delattre (2002) discusses a simple test to examine how much integrity matters to an individual. The question is, "How would you behave differently if you could make yourself invisible?" When people do wrong, they try to make themselves invisible because they are motivated more by fear of detection than by integrity (p.14).



Many consider drug task forces as a “club culture”<sup>12</sup> where members of the drug task force must fit in the group in order to be effective. In this type of culture, communication and leadership is essential for the organization to succeed. Furthermore, loyalty plays a key role. Although, this culture might unite members, it may create an environment where ethical dilemmas flourish. Leaders should cultivate a culture that helps them avoid or manage problematic situations.<sup>13</sup>

Drug task forces should emphasize several elements that can strengthen a culture of integrity and accountability. Jobs and Berman (1993) state that policies and procedures should be readily available to the employees and employers of an organization. Further, training and retraining of the officers should be practiced (GAO report, 1998). Training officers of drug task forces can reduce any lack of professionalism, incompetence and failure to coordinate with other agencies (Albanese and Finckenauer, 1997). The GAO report (1998) notes that inadequate training, particularly integrity training is a factor associated with corruption. The MCTFT program (2001) provides drug task forces training on issues relating to professionalism, competence and communication, which set a standard in law enforcement training.

Coldren, et al (1993) found that drug task force commanders rank communication and coordination as a high priority (90%). Further, in another research survey, task force members saw interagency communication to be an essential quality (Smith, et al, 2000). Good communication skills are essential for police agencies to practice in order to perform the complex and demanding tasks

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<sup>12</sup> This is a term defined by Researcher Jeffrey Sonnenfeld to identify four different organizational cultures: Academy Culture, Baseball Team Culture, Club Culture, and Fortress Culture.

<sup>13</sup> Leaders can influence cultures by either example or through policies and procedures and implementation (More, Wegener and Miller, 1999).

of law enforcement (More, Wegener and Miller, 1999). According to Schlegel and McGarrell (1991) the drug task forces were designed to facilitate communication and coordination both within the drug task force and between the drug task force and outside law enforcement agencies. Unfortunately, many drug task forces have proven otherwise, such as the case in Tulia, Texas. The Institute for Health and Human Services Research (IHHSR) at Florida State University (2000) states that coordination across local law enforcement and other government law enforcement agencies is important in order to build collaboration, consensus, coalitions, and cooperation.

Moreover, when recruiting new officers, drug task forces should conduct background checks (MCTFT program, 2001) that focus on the candidate's age, education level, and employment history. Some commission reports reviewed by the GAO (1998) found that in recruitment policies, lower-age and minimal-education requirements might be related to corruption. Their findings were that the younger the officer and the less educated the officer is, the more likely the officer is prone to corruption. This might be the case for drug task forces who recruit young inexperienced officers to join the drug task force. Furthermore, those officers who join the drug task forces are oftentimes those who failed to be recruited by other law enforcement agencies (Anonymous, 2002). Delattre (2002) suggests that law enforcement agencies that recruit officers with postsecondary or higher education backgrounds might improve policing. Further, selective recruitment, adequate supervision, and effective training forms the policing style of the drug task force and can help ensure the quality of its service (More, Wegener and Miller, 1999: 438).

Informants and undercover officers should be held accountable for information they provide and the actions they commit (GAO report, 1998). The misuse of informants by drug task forces can create unaccountability of authority that can lead to public distrust. One fundamental principle stressed by Delattre (2002) of undercover and informant use is that the police officer must be in control, not the informers or dealers. Further, Albanese and Finckernauer (1997) recommend the DOJ establish technical assistance programs to train state and local police in the proper development, use, and management of criminal informants.

### Summary of Conceptual Framework

A practical ideal type conceptual framework is utilized in this research. Shields (1998) notes that ideals specifies something with which the real situation of action is compared and surveyed for the explanation of certain significant components; in effect, provides benchmarks to understand and improve reality.

Past research provides useful information on the effectiveness of drug task forces in terms of arrest practices, organizational characteristics, performance objectives and practices (Schlegel & McGarrell, 1991; Coldren, et al, 1993; Smith, et al, 2000; IHHSR, 2000; Silva and Peters, 1991; Gilianan & Domahidy, 1995; Blumenson and Nilsen, 1997). This information is used as the basis for the practical ideal type for the multijurisdictional drug task force assessment. The practical ideal type is arranged using criteria outlined in Table 3.1. The assessment criteria are based on the following categories: (1) operational policies and procedures, (2) asset forfeiture procedures, (3) management practices, oversight and control; and (4) organizational culture and other elements.

**Table 3.1 Conceptual Framework**

Practical Ideal Type Criteria	Sources
<b>FIRST COMPONENT: Operational Policies and Procedures</b>	
1. Policies and procedures clearly stated	Kirchener, et al, 1994
2. Goals and objectives clearly stated	IHHSR, 2000
3. Goals and objectives recognize a. accountability, b. coordination and c. efficiency	Office of Gov. Rick Perry, 2001; Blumenson and Nilsen, 1997
4. Reporting procedures clearly stated	MCTFT program, 2001
5. Asset forfeiture/seizure procedures clearly stated	MCTFT program, 2001
6. Drug awareness in the community	JRSA, 1991
7. Removal of drugs from the community	JRSA, 1991
8. Criminal penalties on scale of drug problems	IHHSR, 2000; Belenko, 1997

9. Chain of command and responsibility addressed	MCTFT program, 2001
10. Job performance evaluation procedures stated	More, Wegener, and Miller, 1999
<b>Policies to Avoid</b>	
1. Be designed to improve arrest capacity	JRSA, 1991
2. Encourage asset seizures	Blumenson and Nilsen, 1997
3. Encourage loyalty	GAO report, 1998
<b>SECOND COMPONENT: Asset Forfeiture Procedures</b>	
1. A justified percentage of asset forfeiture exist	Blumenson and Nilsen, 1997; IHHSR, 2000
2. Specific guidelines exist	Albanese & Fincherneaur, 1994
2a. Forfeiture of Contraband	TEX.CRIM.PRO. Chapter 59
3. The Command Supervisor makes the initial decision to seize any item, real or personal	IHHSR, 2000
4. Fiscal accountability procedures exist	Blumenson and Nilsen, 1997; PATC, 2001-02; MCTFT program, 2001
5. Training on how to handle asset seizures	MCTFT program, 2001
6. Training on how to manage asset forfeiture	MCTFT program, 2001
<b>THIRD COMPONENT: Management</b>	
<b>Priorities</b>	
1. Target middle to upper level drug crimes	Coldren, et al, 1993
2. Promote awareness	Coldren, et al, 1993
3. Communication, coordination, and collaboration should exist among other agencies	IHHSR, 2000; Coldren, et al, 1993, Smith, et al, 2000; GAO report, 1998; Schlegel & McGarrell, 1991; Office of Gov. Rick Perry, 2001
<b>Priorities to avoid</b>	
1. Improve capacity to prosecute	Coldren, et al, 1993
2. Seizing assets	Schlegel & McGarrell, 1991
<b>Goals and Objectives</b>	
1. Clearly state goals and objectives	IHHSR, 2000
2. Goals include disrupting drug trafficking, arresting and prosecuting dealers, and users.	Schlegel & McGarrell, 1991
3. Educating America's youth about the dangers of drugs	ONDPCP, 1999
4. Recognize accountability, coordination, and efficiency	Office of Gov. Rick Perry, 2001
5. Detecting, disrupting, deterring and seizing illegal drugs	ONDPCP, 1999
<b>Goals to Avoid</b>	
1. Asset seizures	Schlegel & McGarrell, 1991; Blumenson & Nilsen, 1997
<b>Oversight and Command and Control</b>	
1. Local advisory board that provides input and direction	Bonczek, 1999; Office of Gov. Rick Perry, 2001
2. Presence of independent oversight	MCTFT program, 2001
3. Field supervision exist	MCTFT program, 2001
4. Trust exist between the command supervisors and	Bonczek, 1999; More,

officers	Wegener and Miller, 1999
5. Command has a defined standard of integrity	Bonczek, 1999; Delattre, 2002
6. Command emphasizes operational accountability	GAO report, 1998
7. Command emphasizes ethical behavior	MCTFT program, 2001; Delattre, 2002
<b>Avoid</b>	
1. Emphasis on loyalty	GAO report, 1998
<b><u>FOURTH COMPONENT: Organizational Culture and Other Elements</u></b>	
1. Clear sense of mission	Wilson, 1989
2. Policies and procedures readily available to members	Jobs & Berman, 1993
3. Training and retraining exist	GAO report, 1998
4. When recruiting, task force conduct background check, which focuses on candidate's age, education-level, and history	MCTFT program, 2001; More, Wegener and Miller, 1999; Delattre, 2002; GAO report, 1998
5. Informants and undercover officer held accountable for information they provide and actions they commit	GAO report, 1998; Delattre, 2002

**Operational policies and procedures** is the first component to be addressed in a practical ideal type of multijurisdictional drug task force. Several studies have shown that task forces are encouraged to establish clear and concise written operational policies and procedures that include the purpose, objectives, goals, department responsibility, equipment, funding, reporting procedures, asset seizure procedures and other issues (Kirchener, et al, 1994; IHHSR, 2000; MCTFT Program, 2001). **Goals and objectives** within operational policies and procedures should recognize **accountability, coordination, and efficiency** (Blumenson and Nilsen, 1997; Office of Gov. Rick Perry, 2001). Belenko (1997) states that policies should also focus on constructing **criminal penalties on the scale of drug problems**. **Drug awareness** and the **removal of drugs** from the community are considered to be important element in a drug task force's policies and procedures (JRSA, 1991). The **chain of command and responsibility** should

be addressed in the policies and procedures (MCTFT program, 2001).

Furthermore, policies and procedures should include a **standardized evaluation** criterion for each officer (More, Wegener, and Miller, 1999) of the drug task force. Multijurisdictional drug task forces should **avoid** policies that **encourage arrest capacities** (JRSA, 1991), **encourage asset seizures** (Blumenson and Nilsen, 1997), or promote **loyalty** within the task force (GAO report, 1998).

The second component of an ideal multijurisdictional drug task force is that of **asset forfeiture procedures**. Because of limited funding, task forces often resort to other sources of funding such as asset forfeitures to fund their operations (Coldren, et al, 1993; Silva and Peters, 1991; GAO, 1998). There should be **standard and specific guidelines** in place for asset forfeiture for drug task forces to follow (Albanese and Fincherneur, 1994; MCTFT Program, 2001). Such information should include reporting procedures of asset forfeitures and seizures, which are outlined in the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure Chapter 59, that include information such as why the peace officer forfeited or seized a property, a schedule of the property seized, an acknowledgement that the peace officer seized the property, the approximate value of property, and disposition and distribution of property (TEX.CRIM.PRO. chapter 59; IHHSR, 2000).

The initial decision to seize property should be made by the **command supervisor** of the drug task force and not the officer (IHHSR, 2000). Moreover, **management and training** should be provided for officers and members of the task forces on how to handle asset seizures and how to manage asset forfeitures (MCTFT Program, 2001).

The **management** of the multijurisdictional drug task forces is the third component in this study. **Priorities, goals and objectives and control** are

important elements to the management of the multijurisdictional drug task forces. Priorities must be established with no room of misinterpretation; goals should be meaningful; and objectives should be achievable (More, Wegener and Miller, 1999: 241). The ideal **priorities should target middle to upper level drug crimes and promote awareness** and should also include **communication, coordination, and collaboration** among the participating agencies (Coldren, et al. 1993; IHHSR, 2000; Smith, et al, 2000; GAO report, 1998; Schlegel and McGarrell, 1991; Office of Gov. Rick Perry, 2001). The drug task forces **should not** have as priorities the **seizure of assets** and the promotion of **improving prosecuting capacity** (Coldren, et al, 1993; Schlegel and McGarrell, 1991). Multijurisdictional drug task forces vary in priorities but basic goals remain similar (Schlegel and McGarrell). The **goals and objectives should be clearly stated** in order for the members and officers of the drug task forces to understand what needs to be accomplished. Goals include disrupting drug trafficking in targeted areas through the arrest, prosecution, and conviction of drug traffickers, dealers, and users (Schlegel and McGarrell, 1991). To improve accountability within the task forces, **field supervision** should be an ideal standard (MCTFT program, 2001). Further, **trust** among the officers and members of the task force should exist (Bonczek, 1999; More, Wegener and Miller, 1999: 72) to ensure proper execution of enforcement.

Another aspect of management in a multijurisdictional drug task force is the command level and the role of the command supervisor. Within the command level of the drug task force, several elements should be present and ideal. The command level should have a defined standard of **integrity** (Bonczek, 1999; Delattre, 2002), **accountability** (GAO report, 1998), and **ethical behavior**



(MCTFT program, 2001; Delattre, 2002) among the drug task force members and officers. One element that the task force command level **should not** encourage is **loyalty** (GAO report, 1998), because this can invite corruptive behavior among the members and officers. For oversight on multijurisdictional drug task forces, the ideal type of task force would have a **local advisory board** that provides input and direction regarding drug enforcement (Bonczek, 1999; Office of Gov. Rick Perry, 2001). Further, **independent oversight**, other than the board, should monitor the progress and procedures of the drug task forces (MCTFT program, 2001).

The fourth component of an ideal multijurisdictional drug task force emphasizes **other elements** that should be practiced within the organization in order to strengthen its **sense of mission** (Wilson, 1989). **Policies and procedures** should be readily available (Jobes and Berman, 1993) to the members and officers of the drug task force. **Training and retraining of the officers** should be practiced (GAO report, 1998). When **recruiting** new officers, task forces should conduct **background checks** that focus on the candidate's age, education level and history (MCTFT program, 2001; Delattre, 2002). Background checks or the consideration of these factors can eliminate any chances of corruptive behavior. Selective recruitment, adequate supervision, and effective training forms the policing style of the task force and can help ensure the quality of its service (More, Wegener and Miller, 1999: 438). Finally, in an ideal type of task force, **informants and undercover officers should be held accountable** for information they provide and actions they commit (GAO report, 1998; Delattre, 2002).

The next chapter provides the research design and methodology. It also provides information on the research and sampling techniques as well as the sources of data and information.

## **Chapter IV Methodology**

### Introduction

This chapter provides the methodology and research design for this project. It also provides a perspective on the sampling techniques and survey instrument. The chapter discusses the research techniques utilized in the analysis of the data. The purpose of this study is to observe how close the multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas are to the practical ideal type developed through information provided in the literature review. The research design for this study consists of a case study technique. Yin (1994) defines case study as a comprehensive research strategy that investigates an empirical topic that involves data collection and data analysis strategies. This case study examines the unique characteristics of the multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas.

Data triangulation is used for the data collection of the case study. Yin (1994) states a unique strength of the case study design is its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence. The weaknesses of the case study design include: bias views might influence the direction of the findings and, the study takes long to administer (Yin, 1994). To address these weaknesses, surveys, structured interviews and content analysis of task force documents were utilized.

### Survey Instrument

The study consisted of a survey instrument developed to collect data and information on the multijurisdictional drug task forces. The survey instrument consisted of a questionnaire that was developed and applied to a sample of 49 drug task forces in Texas. Babbie (1998) notes that survey instruments are useful in describing characteristics. The strengths of implementing a survey are its

insightfulness on the case study topic (Yin, 1994). A weakness described by Babbie (1998) is that the survey researcher seldom develops the feel for the total life situation of the respondent. Further, questions might be poorly constructed that they may reflect biased opinions (Yin, 1994). In order to avoid this problem, random structural interviews were also conducted and utilized in the study. Prior to the study, the survey was pre-tested with two individuals with expertise in the operations of the drug task forces.

The survey questionnaire was mailed to program directors of 49 multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas as shown in figure 4.1.<sup>14</sup> However, not all directors replied. The Office of the Governor's Criminal Justice Division provided data on the program directors and commanders of each drug task force in Texas. With respect to sampling, a single-stage sampling was utilized. According to Babbie (1998), the sampling units are the same as the units of analysis applied in the multijurisdictional task forces in Texas. The sample used in the analysis consisted of all 49 multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas.

The respondents in the survey sample represented all the different regions of the State of Texas as illustrated in Appendix G. Regions were divided by north, south, east and west. The multijurisdictional drug task forces that represented counties north of Gaines County, and west of Wichita County were designated as the north region. Drug task forces that represented counties east of Palo Pinto and Colorado County, and north of Matagorda County were designated as east. Any drug task force that represented counties south of Bexar County were determined being in the south region. Drug task forces west of Burnet and Brown County were determined as west. Two surveys were received

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<sup>14</sup> See Appendix C for Sample Letter and Appendix E for Follow-Up Letter.

from the north region, three from the east region, three from the south region, and one from the west region. Although the sample size was small, the task forces that responded were very much representative of the state of Texas by region.

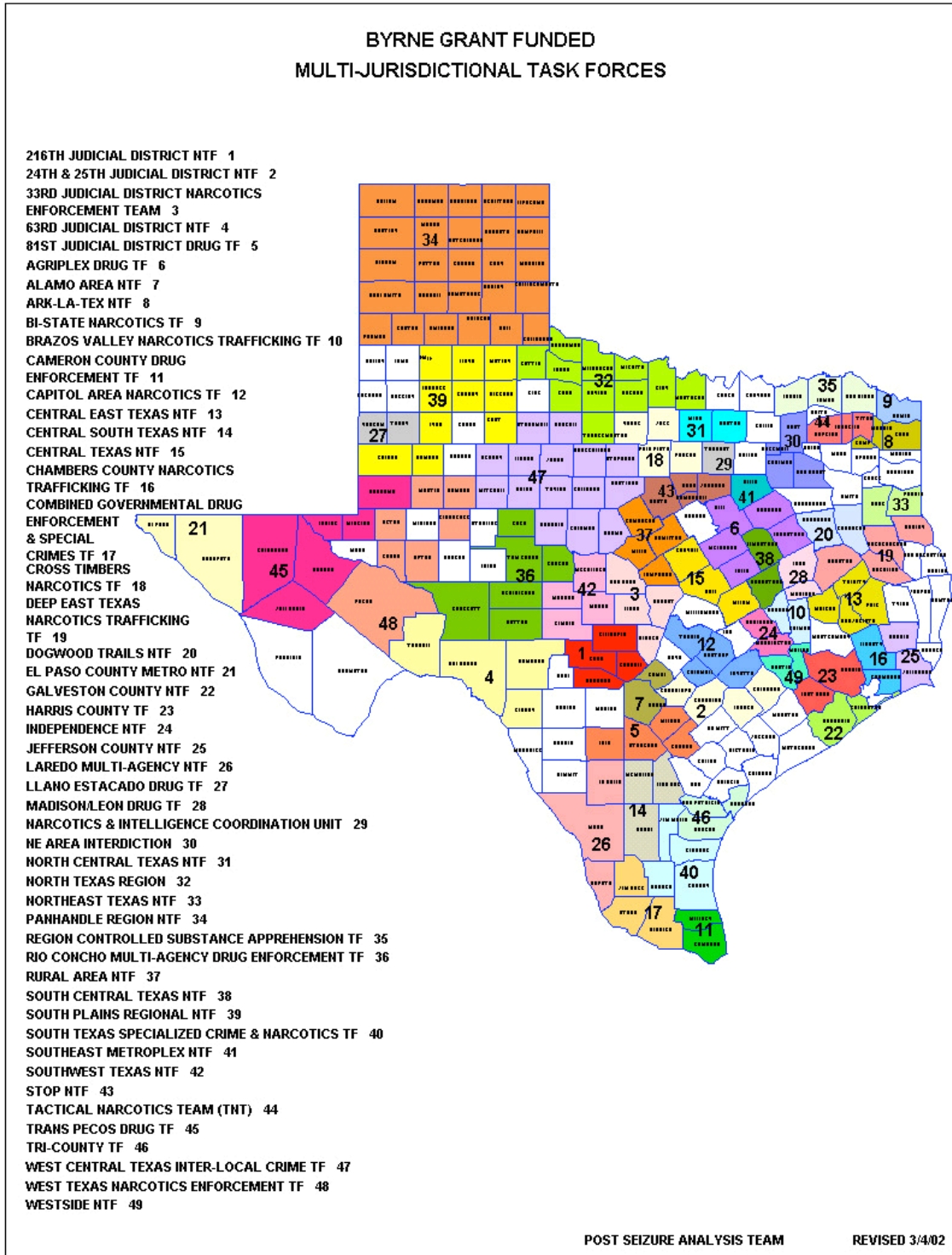
Program directors were asked to respond to the survey and provide a copy of their (1) operational policies and procedures manual and (2) an organizational chart of their multijurisdictional drug task force. The sample survey questionnaire is provided in Appendix A.

### Structured Interviews

Structured telephone interviews were also conducted with 4 commanders of different drug task forces. The commanders interviewed were randomly selected from a list of the 49 drug task forces in Texas. The purpose for conducting structured interviews was to corroborate the data provided in the mailed survey, and to gain further insight into the drug task forces. See Appendix F for a sample of the structured interview. Structured interviews strengthen the validity of the research. One strong point for conducting an interview is that the respondent tends to welcome interviews rather than mail surveys (Babbie, 1998). In other words, the respondent will provide more information through an interview rather than a mail survey. A weakness to an interview is that a respondent might give what the interviewer wants to hear

(Yin, 1994). An open-ended and closed-ended interview was performed (Babbie, 1998) using the survey questionnaire as a guide. Geographically, the structural interviews conducted represented East Texas (2) and West Texas (2). See Appendix G.

FIGURE 4.1



## Content Analysis

Several research techniques were used for the analysis of the data. Among the research techniques applied in this project was content analysis. Program directors were asked to provide additional information for use in the content analysis of this program. Program directors were requested to submit their drug task force's operational policies and procedures and organizational chart along with their completed survey. Upon receiving the documents, a content analysis of the policies and procedures was employed. This information was very useful in comparing the policies and procedures to the practical ideal type gathered from previous research. Content analysis is useful for this type of study because it assists in corroborating information from other sources (Yin,1994). A disadvantage of this type of analysis is that an examination of the contents of documents may be limited (Babbie, 1998). A coding sheet for the content analysis using the conceptual framework as its foundation is provided in Appendix B.

## Operationalization of the Conceptual Framework

The criteria for the operationalization of the conceptual framework are provided in Table 4.1. The survey responses have been coded relative to the



practical ideal type (Appendix B). For example, the operational policies and procedures were coded accordingly to see if it was clearly stated, had clearly stated goals and objectives, and if the goals and objectives recognized accountability, coordination, and efficiency, etc. A coding sheet was applied to every returned survey. The structured interviews were also coded similar to the survey but color-coded in blue for distinction (Appendix D).

The project has also provided an analysis of general information on the characteristics of the multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas in terms of population served, number of counties served, number of officers, average number of cases and other information as shown in the survey (Appendix A). Wherever appropriate, descriptive statistics was applied to the analysis of the study. The results chapter explains whether drug task forces in Texas are close to the model designed using previous research.

The results were based on 9 responded surveys and 4 interviews of the drug task force program directors and commanders with knowledge of the operation and management. The findings are based on the responses to the survey and interview. Further, a content analysis was utilized to assess the operational policies and procedures. The findings are based on the researchers perception and measured against the ideal type gathered from previous research.

Several tables were utilized to present the results of the findings. For the operational policies and procedures, the findings are presented in a summary table. Assessment for each component are “yes”, “no” or “somewhat.” The assessment is “yes” if the subcomponent meets the ideal type. The assessment is “no” if the subcomponent does not come close to the ideal type, and “somewhat” implies that the subcomponent did not completely meet the ideal type.







## General Characteristics

The multijurisdictional drug task forces in the sample consisted of an average of four counties with an average population of 324,327. In terms of size, the Southwest Texas Narcotics Task Force in Mason, Texas was the smallest in the sample with a population of 18,771. The Harris County Organized Crime and Narcotics Task Force in Houston, Texas was the largest in the sample with a population of over 3.7 million as shown in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2**

N=49	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
<b>COUNTIES</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>4.08</b>
U.S. Census 2000	18,771	3,755,030	324,327.82

Law enforcement agencies play a very important role in the composition of the drug task forces as shown in Table 4.3. The results show that all respondents indicated that local law enforcement agencies, such as the city police and sheriff's department, are very well represented in the task forces. The data shows that the Texas Department of Public Safety was represented in seven of the task forces in the sample; similarly, local or state prosecutors were represented in five of the task forces in the sample. However, the data showed that federal law enforcement agencies were formally attached in only one of the drug task forces in the sample. This is an interesting finding because federal law enforcement agencies in cooperation with state and local enforcement agencies are also very active in curbing crime and drugs.

<b>Table 4.3</b>			
Law Enforcement Agencies that are formally attached to the task force	Yes	No	Total
Local Law Enforcement	9	0	9
State Law Enforcement	7	2	9
Federal Law Enforcement	1	8	9
International Law Enforcement	0	9	9
Local or State Prosecutors	5	4	9
Federal Prosecutors	0	9	9

Data collected on the average number of cases and asset forfeitures in the respective task forces for fiscal year 2001 is shown in table 4.4. The average number of cases reported by the respondents for fiscal year 2001 was 743. The average amount of forfeited assets for fiscal year 2001 collected by the narcotic task forces was approximately \$270,000 as shown in table 4.4.

**Table 4.4 Average Cases and Forfeitures for fiscal year 2001**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Mean</b>
<b>Average number of cases for FY2001</b>	7	210	1,862	743.29
<b>Total amount of Forfeited assets for FY2001</b>	7	\$2,680.00	\$755,442.10	\$270,013.63

The next chapter provides an analysis of data and results. Information is provided on the content analysis of the policies and procedures of the task forces and analysis of data from the survey instrument and interviews will be not limited to asset forfeiture and management issues.

## **Chapter V Analysis of Data and Results**

### Introduction

The purpose of this study is to assess multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas by comparing their practices to the practical ideal type developed using previous research. This chapter provides an analysis of the data and discusses the limitations of the study. This analysis is based on the 9 survey questionnaires and 4 structured interviews completed by program directors and commanders.

Among the limitations of the study was the low response rate to the survey questionnaire. The reasons for the low response rate are uncertain. It is

possible that the length of the questionnaire might have been a barrier in responding. Nevertheless, the data does provide useful insights into the nature and operation of multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas. The goal of this research study was to assess 20 or more multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas. Because of the small sample size (13), the focus of the research changed from gauging the drug task forces to exploring preliminary findings.

### Operational Policies and Procedures

On January 1, 2002, the oversight of the multijurisdictional drug task forces was moved from the Office of the Governor's Criminal Justice Division and Texas Narcotics Control Program (TNCP) to the Texas Department of Public Safety (TxDPS). This agency provided the task forces with standard operational policies and procedures. Although the task forces were asked to submit their operational policies and procedures, only two of the respondents did. This small number limits the content analysis of the study; however, the structured interviews (4) did assist in learning more about the nature of these task forces. Because of the small number of task forces submitting the policies and procedures, the findings of content analysis are inconclusive. The limited data, however, does provide useful information to gain a better understanding of these task forces.



Data on content analysis shown in Table 5.1 does indicate that the policies and procedures in this sample do measure up to the ideal type. The goals and objectives of these task forces do recognize accountability, coordination, and efficiency. Asset forfeiture/seizure procedures and reporting procedures are also addressed in the policies and procedures. The task forces also addressed other issues like the removal of drugs from the community, the chain of command and responsibilities, and job performance evaluation procedures.

Drug awareness in the community was somewhat emphasized in the operational policies and procedures. One program director interviewed stressed that eradicating drugs is everyone's responsibility, and that drug awareness education is also the responsibility of narcotic task forces. Another element that was somewhat encouraged in the policies and procedures was improving arrest capacities.

The narcotics task forces failed to address certain elements in their policies and procedures such as a description of criminal penalties, encouraging asset seizures, or promoting loyalty. Nevertheless, one commander interviewed indicated that their operational policies and procedures did encourage ethics rather than promoting loyalty.

<b>Table 5.1 Assessment of the Operational Policies and Procedures<sup>15</sup></b>				
	<b>Method Used</b>			<b>Assessment</b>
	<b>Content Analysis N=2</b>	<b>Interview N=4</b>		
	<b># Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	
Operational Policies and Procedures clearly stated	2	--	--	Yes
Goals and Objectives clearly stated	2	--	--	Yes
Goals and Objectives recognize Accountability	2	4	0	Yes
Goals and Objectives recognize Coordination	2	4	0	Yes
Goals and Objectives recognize Efficiency	2	4	0	Yes
Reporting Procedures clearly stated	2	4	0	Yes
Asset Forfeiture/Seizure Procedures clearly stated	2	4	0	Yes
Drug Awareness in the Community	0	3	1	Somewhat
Removal of Drugs from the Community	2	4	0	Yes
Criminal Penalties on Scale of Drug Problems	0	0	2	No
Chain of Command and Responsibility Addressed	2	--	--	Yes
Job Performance Evaluation Procedures Stated	2	3	1	Yes
Improve Arrest Capacity	0	2	2	No
Encourage Asset Seizures	0	0	4	No
Encourage Loyalty	0	0	4	No

<sup>15</sup> The shift in the sample is due to the content analysis and structured interviews of this research. Since only two drug task forces sent their operational policies and procedures, a portion of the structured interview inquired the respondents whether their operational policies and procedures had the elements being assessed. Some of the respondents at times did not have an answer to a question due to unavailable statistics or information. These elements were left blank and not included in the assessment.

## Asset Forfeiture Procedures

Asset forfeitures are relatively important to the operation of task forces as shown in Table 5.2. Two task forces indicated that they relied completely on forfeited assets for their program as shown in Table 5.2. Three respondents indicated that 25 percent of their program was funded by asset forfeiture procedures. Whereas, two other drug task forces do not rely on asset forfeitures at all for the existence of their program. Six of the respondents chose not to answer the question—the reason might be because the commanders of the task force felt either uncomfortable or unsure of the importance of asset forfeitures to the operation of the task forces.

<b>Table 5.2 The Percentage of Asset Forfeitures Relied on to Operate</b>	
N=7	Frequency
.00	2
.25	3
100.00	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>

Eight respondents indicated they had guidelines or reporting procedures for asset forfeitures. Only one respondent indicated no reporting procedures or guidelines (Table 5.3). Five respondents clearly indicated a reliance on the Texas Criminal Procedure Code Chapter 59, as their basis for reporting procedures or guidelines. Others indicated that their forfeitures are reported quarterly and annually to the grant administrator and Texas Attorney General’s Office (Table 5.4).

<b>Table 5.3 Guidelines and/ or reporting procedures for asset forfeiture present</b>

N=9	Frequency
Yes	8
No	1
Total	9

<b>Table 5.4 Guidelines or Reporting Procedures for Asset Forfeitures</b>	
N=7	Frequency
TEX.CRIM.PRO. Chapter 59	5
Market value for seizures, auctioned value of forfeitures. Reported Quarterly to CJD	1
Quarterly and Annual reports to Grant administrators in Austin, and annual report to OAG.	1

The majority of the respondents (8) indicated that the task force supervisor / commander has the ultimate authority on decisions related to seizures of items such as cars, homes, currency, drugs, etc., (Table 5.5). Whereas, four respondents said the case agent/investigator was given such authority and discretion. One commander interviewed stated that although the commander makes the initial decision to seize an item, different counties have different guidelines that give this discretionary authority to the local investigators. With respect to fiscal accountability, all respondents indicated that their drug task force had such procedures in place as shown in Table 5.6.

<b>Table 5.5 Who makes the initial decision to seize an item?</b>	
	Frequency
Task force supervisor / Commander	8
Case agent	4
Total	12

<b>Table 5.6 Presence of fiscal accountability procedures</b>	
	Frequency
Yes	12

No	0
Total	12

Table 5.7 shows that all respondents indicated that their officers are trained on how to handle asset seizures.<sup>16</sup> Only seven respondents said their officers were trained on how to manage asset forfeitures. During an interview, a commander indicated that the responsibility of managing asset forfeitures is usually given to the county treasurer or the district attorney, and is not the responsibility of the narcotics task forces.

<b>Table 5.7 Officers are trained on how:</b>			
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>To handle asset seizures</b>	12	0	12
<b>To manage asset forfeitures</b>	7	5	13

## Management

The top priority among the narcotic task forces was communication, collaboration, and coordination as shown in Table 5.8. Management issues are very important to drug task forces in Texas. Only a few of the respondents valued, as a priority, promoting awareness, improving the capacity to prosecute, targeting middle to upper level drug crimes<sup>17</sup>, and seizing assets.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> During an interview, a commander stated that under the Texas Commission Law Enforcement Officer Standard and Education (TCLEOSE) the drug task force has a limited amount of time to seize and report an item. Therefore, the process must be swift and errorless.

<sup>17</sup> Commanders of the drug task force indicated, during interviews, that TxDPS mandated their drug task force to primarily focus on street-level crimes.

<sup>18</sup> One drug task force indicated seizing assets as their secondary priority.

The findings also showed that the respondents considered disrupting drug trafficking, arresting drug users and dealers, and recognizing accountability, coordination, and efficiency as their task force’s goals and objectives. Six respondents indicated that their goals and objectives have changed since first receiving the Byrne federal grant.

The majority of the respondents indicated that the task force has a local advisory board and independent oversight that provides input and direction. Four of the respondents indicated TxDPS as their independent oversight. Other indicated oversights are presented in Table 5.8. The majority of the respondents did indicate that field supervision existed. All respondents said trust existed between the command supervisor and the officers of the task force. Further, the majority of the respondents indicated that the command supervisor have a defined standard of integrity, emphasizes operational accountability, ethical behavior, and loyalty. During an interview, however, one commander stressed that loyalty is indeed emphasized, but the loyalty is directed to the mission of the drug task force rather than covering up other officers and their unethical behaviors.

<b>Table 5.8 MANAGEMENT<sup>19</sup></b>			
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>PRIORITIES IMPORTANT TO THE TASK FORCE</b>			
<b>Target middle to upper level drug crimes</b>	3	10	13
<b>Promote awareness</b>	4	8	13
<b>Communication, coordination, and collaboration</b>	11	2	13
<b>Improve capacity to prosecute</b>	5	8	13
<b>Seizing assets</b>	1	12	13
<b>OBJECTIVES AND GOALS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2002</b>			
<b>Disrupting drug trafficking</b>	5	4	9

<sup>19</sup> The shift in the sample size is due to the questions asked in the survey and during the structured interviews. Some questions were not asked either because of time or repetitiveness. At times, some of the respondents did not have an answer to a question due to unavailable statistics or information.

Identify	2	7	9
Recognize accountability, coordination, and efficiency	5	4	9
Arrests of drug users and dealers	5	4	9
Seizures	3	6	9
Other: Increase metamphetamine enforcement and education programs, and conforming with released convicted drug traffickers.	3	6	9
HAVE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES CHANGED SINCE FIRST RECEIVING THE BYRNE GRANT	3	6	9
DOES THE TASK FORCE HAVE A LOCAL ADVISORY BOARD	9	0	9
DOES INDEPENDENT OVERSIGHT EXIST	6	2	8
<i>Local Police Department</i>	1	0	1
<i>State Prosecutors, Federal Prosecutors, Advisory Board</i>	1	0	1
<i>Texas Department of Public Safety</i>	4	0	4
FIELD SUPERVISION EXIST	13	0	13
TRUST EXIST BETWEEN COMMAND SUPERVISOR AND OFFICERS	13	0	13
COMMAND SUPERVISORS HAVE A DEFINED STANDARD OF INTEGRITY	8	1	9
OPERATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY	9	0	9
ETHICAL BEHAVIOR	13	0	13
LOYALTY	6	2	8

## Organizational Culture and Other Elements

The survey and structured interviews also provided information on the organizational culture and other elements. The fourth component of the study focuses on the organizational culture and other elements of the drug task forces. Data collected in Table 5.9 shows the task forces have a sense of mission and also make available the policies and procedures for their members and officers. The data shows that training is also provided for members and officers. Training is provided for officers on constitution law, federal and state law, basic narcotics investigation and other topics (Subtable 5.9a).

All respondents indicated conducting background checks on their employees.<sup>20</sup> Experience, employment history, and criminal history are important elements considered when recruiting new officers. The majority of the respondents indicated education as an important element, and only a few respondents thought age was as an important element. During an interview, one commander mentioned that education and employment history are not as important as experience and criminal history. Another drug task force commander shared that when he recruits new officers, he looks for whether the person has integrity.

	Yes	No	Total
<b>Sense of mission present</b>	9	0	9
<b>Organizational Policies and Procedures available to members/ officers</b>	9	0	9
<b>Training is required for members/ officers</b>	9	0	9
<b>Background checks conducted</b>	10	0	10
<i>Age</i>	2	7	9
<i>Education</i>	8	2	10
<i>Experience</i>	10	0	10
<i>Employment History</i>	10	0	10
<i>Criminal History</i>	10	0	10
<b>Hold Informants and Undercover officers accountable for information and actions they commit</b>	10	0	10

	Yes
<b>Constitutional Rights/ 4<sup>th</sup> Amendments/ State and Federal Law/ Legality Issues</b>	4
<b>Basic Narcotics Investigations</b>	3
<b>Officer Safety</b>	3
<b>Professional Skills Development/ Accountability/ Preparation of good quality cases/ Operational procedures/ Ethics/ Search and Seizures</b>	3

## Limitations and Conclusions

<sup>20</sup> Two commanders indicated that their task force officers are not hired but rather assigned from other participating law enforcement agencies, such as the sheriff's department, police agencies, etc. This is most common in counties where the jurisdiction of the task force covers more than four counties.

<sup>21</sup> The shift in the sample size is due to the questions asked in the survey and during the structured interviews. Some questions were not asked either because of time or repetitiveness. At times, some of the respondents did not have an answer to a question due to unavailable statistics or information.



Although the findings are inconclusive because of the small sample size, the preliminary findings of this pilot study do provide useful information on the nature of the multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas. Because of the size of the sample, statistical testing was not plausible. The results were measured against the ideal type created by utilizing the conceptual framework in the data collection tools. The pilot study did, however, find an overall agreement when comparing the respondents to the ideal type (See Table 5.10 through 5.12 for a comparison of results to the ideal type). Although the sample size was too small to generalize and reach a scientific conclusion, the pilot study did find some elements that strayed from the ideal type. For example, the majority of the respondents indicated loyalty as being emphasized by the command level of the task force. Further, discrepancies were present in the responses in the priorities and goals and objectives set by the drug task forces. These elements are discussed further in chapter six.

The next chapter provides recommendations for those elements that strayed from the ideal type. The conclusion chapter will also indicate future research implications. Finally, a summary and concluding remarks are provided towards the end of the chapter.

**Table 5.10**

**Table 5.11**

**Table 5.12**

**Chapter VI  
Conclusion**

## Introduction

The purpose of this research project was to examine the performance and to assess the multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas. The objectives of this study are (1) develop a model that describes the ideal characteristics of the operational structure and policies and procedures of the multijurisdictional drug task forces; (2) the assessment and comparison of the operational structure, policies and procedures, and organizational culture of the multijurisdictional drug task forces to the ideal model; and (3) develop public policy implications and recommendations on the multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas.

Chapter six provides an assessment of the findings of the research project and provides recommendations for those elements that strayed from the ideal type. Future research implications are also discussed for further potential studies. Because of the limited size of the sample and the fact that the findings were inconclusive it is indeed difficult to develop public policy recommendations on this issue. Nevertheless, the preliminary findings did provide insights into the operations and practices of multijurisdictional task forces in Texas.

## Assessment

Table 6.1 through 6.3 assesses and provides recommendations on the three components of the research study namely asset forfeiture procedures, management, and organizational culture and other elements. Because of the

small sample size, no scientific conclusions could be drawn, however, the preliminary findings do offer an opportunity to provide recommendations.

The preliminary findings of the pilot study found that as a whole the drug task forces in Texas do support the ideal type. There are, however, some elements that either weakly supports, or fails to support the ideal type. Moreover, several elements provided inconclusive findings when measuring against the ideal. Recommendations are offered for those elements that did not entirely support the ideal in the next section.

In the assessment of the asset forfeiture procedures component (Table 6.1), all except two elements supported the ideal type. Elements that proved to be a weak support to the ideal type include: designating the command supervisor in the decision to seize an item; and training officers on how to manage asset forfeitures.

With respect to the management component there was weak support to the ideal type as shown in Table 6.2. The weak support is due to the elements that did not entirely measure to the ideal. Under priorities, the respondents failed to support targeting middle to upper level drug crimes, and promoting awareness in the community. Weak support was found in the goals and objectives when assessing whether the task forces recognize accountability, coordination, and efficiency.

Under oversight and command and control, results found strong support for the ideal type in the majority of the issues. The exception was weak support for the presence of independent oversight. Further, there was weak support in avoiding emphasizing loyalty.

When assessing the organizational culture and other elements component (Table 6.3), there was an overall support to the ideal type. Only two elements strayed from the model. The results found weak support in considering the education-level of an applicant when recruiting new task force officers. Further, the assessment found a failure to support the ideal type when considering age of the applicant when recruiting new task force officers.

<b>Table 6.1 Recommendations for the Asset Forfeiture Procedures Component</b>		
<b>Practical Ideal Type</b>	<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	Support; Weak Support; Inconclusive; Fails to support	
<b><u>SECOND COMPONENT: Asset Forfeiture Procedures</u></b>		
1. A justified percentage of asset forfeiture exist	Support	The drug task forces should not forget their mission is to stop narcotics, not to find ways to seize an item to buy new patrol cars or new firearms.
2. Specific guidelines and or reporting procedures for asset forfeiture exist	Support	The drug task forces should employ the asset forfeiture procedures outlined in the Texas Criminal Procedure Code Chapter 59.
2a. TX.CRIM.PRO. Ch. 59 Forfeiture of Contraband cited		
3. The Command Supervisor makes the initial decision to seize any item, real or personal	Weak Support	To ensure accountability and credibility, the command supervisor should initiate the final decision to seize an item, real or personal, not the case agent or

		investigator.
4. Fiscal accountability procedures exist	Support	
5. Training on how to handle asset seizures	Support	
5a. Training on how to manage asset forfeiture	Weak Support	Narcotic Officers should be trained that their function is primarily on handling asset seizures and not concern themselves on managing forfeited assets.

<b>Table 6.2 Recommendations for the Management Component</b>		
<b>Practical Ideal Type</b>	<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	Support; Weak Support; Inconclusive; Fails to support	
<b><u>THIRD COMPONENT: Management</u></b>		
<b><u>Priorities</u></b>		
1. Target middle to upper level drug crimes	Fails to support	Whether it is targeting middle to upper level drug crimes or fighting neighborhood drug rings, society needs honest law enforcement entities to fight drug crimes.
2. Promote awareness	Fails to support	Promoting awareness should be a priority for the drug task force.
3. Communication, coordination, and collaboration should exist among other agencies	Support	
<b><u>Priorities to avoid</u></b>		
4. Improve capacity to prosecute	Support	Improving the capacity to prosecute might be misinterpreted by officers as meaning a contest to arrest the most "drug traffickers" or "dealers".
5. Seizing assets	Support	Seizing assets should not be a priority. The task force was designed to fight drug crimes not to make seizing assets a sport.



<b>Goals and Objectives</b>		
1. Clearly state goals and objectives		
2. Goals and objectives include: Disrupt drug trafficking	Inconclusive	
3. Recognize accountability, coordination, and efficiency	Weak Support	The drug task forces should address accountability, coordination, and efficiency in their goals and objectives.
4. Arrest of drug dealers and users	Inconclusive	
<b>Goals and Objectives to avoid</b>		
5. Seizures	Inconclusive	Seizures should not be a goal for the drug task forces. Encouraging seizures may allow room for corruptive behavior.
<b>Oversight and Command and Control</b>		
1. Local advisory board that provides input and direction	Support	
2. Presence of independent oversight	Weak Support	Independent oversight is needed in order to monitor the progress and procedures of the drug task force.
3. Field supervision exist	Support	
4. Trust exist among members of the task force	Support	
5. Command has a defined standard of integrity	Support	
6. Command emphasizes operational accountability	Support	
7. Command emphasizes ethical behavior	Support	
<b>Avoid</b>		
1. Emphasis on loyalty	Weak Support	The loyalty to the mission is acceptable, however, promoting the loyalty to cover the unethical actions of a fellow officer should not be encouraged.

<b>Table 6.3 Recommendations for the Organizational Culture and Other Elements Component</b>		
<b>Practical Ideal Type</b>	<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	Support; Weak Support; Inconclusive; Fails to support	
<b><u>FOURTH COMPONENT: Organizational Culture and Other Elements</u></b>		
1. Clear sense of mission	Support	
2. Policies and procedures readily available to members	Support	
3. Training exists for the members/ officers	Support	
4. When recruiting, task force conducts background check.	Support	
When recruiting, task force should consider the following:		
4a. Age	Fails to Support	Although some task forces do not hire their officers, those that do employ their officers should consider age, the education-level of the individual, experience, and employment and criminal history. Studies have found to correlate corruptive behavior with younger inexperienced officers. <sup>22</sup>
4b. Education-level	Weak Support	
4c. Experience	Support	
4d. Employment History	Support	
4e. Criminal History	Support	
5. Informants and undercover officer held accountable for information they provide and actions they commit	Support	

## Recommendations

The findings of the research are analyzed in Tables 6.1 through 6.3.

Recommendations are offered for those elements that strayed from the ideal type. Although it was impossible to assess the operational policies and

<sup>22</sup> It is not the intent of the researcher to promote age discrimination but rather make aware of the correlation.

procedures and compare it to the practical ideal type, some recommendations can be made for the respective task forces.

The goals and objectives in the **operational policies and procedures** should strive to recognize accountability<sup>23</sup>, coordination, and efficiency. Drug awareness in the community should be emphasized in the operational policies and procedures.<sup>24</sup> Outreach should focus on juveniles in elementary, junior high, and high school. Criminal penalties associated with drug problems should also be address in the policies and procedures.

As for **asset forfeiture procedures**, the drug task forces should not forget their mission is to stop narcotics, not to find ways to seize an item to purchase new patrol cars or new firearms. In an effort to ensure accountability and credibility, the command supervisor of the drug task force should be given the sole authority on decisions related to seizures.<sup>25</sup> Narcotics officers should be trained that their responsibility is handling asset seizures and not concern themselves in managing or expecting money from forfeitures.

In the **management** of the drug task forces, the priorities should be developed according to the guidelines provided under the Byrne federal grant. Promoting awareness should become a major priority for the drug task forces. Although this might be left to the city police, or because of the limited amount of funds, the task forces should increase their community outreach efforts and public relations. It is understandable that narcotics agents need to be covert,

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<sup>23</sup> At its strict meaning, accountability is holding drug task force officers and command supervisors responsible for any actions committed. It also includes providing the toughest penalty for the corruptive and unethical behavior committed by the individual.

<sup>24</sup> A section of the Byrne Federal grant program requests for the applicant (drug task force) to provide outreach programs to educate the youth about the dangers of narcotics (Appendix H).

<sup>25</sup> Drug task forces were designed to fight drug crimes. Oftentimes, these task forces may become far removed from their mission and concerned more about playing the numbers game in terms of statistics on arrests, seizures, and their ability to raise more money.

however, there are other methods of promoting drug awareness in the community such as pamphlets, newsletters, etc.

As for the **organizational culture** of the drug task force, those who hire their officers should consider age, the education-level of the individual, experience, and employment and criminal history. Studies have found to correlate corruptive behavior with younger inexperienced officers.<sup>26</sup> Further, employment history can give the commander of the task force a sense of whether the applicant has a history of integrity.

### Future Research Implications

This study provides a multitude of issues for further study. More research needs to be conducted at the national, state and local level on the nature and operation of these drug task forces. Furthermore, research needs to be conducted on the effectiveness of these programs on reducing crime. A comparative analysis of drug task force and non-drug task force effectiveness should be employed. Further research not limited to case studies or field research should be expanded on the problems and issues confronting these task forces. Moreover, the federal government and Congress should take a closer look as to the management and operations of these programs. Further research studies can indicate whether drug task forces need more funding for their operations, or if the program should be rid of in order to save taxpayer money.

### Concluding Remarks

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<sup>26</sup> It is not the intent of the researcher to promote age discrimination but rather make aware of the correction.

Although the multijurisdictional drug task forces have been under scrutiny of bad press and allegations, this research project indicates that these task forces, as a whole, do not promote or emphasize unethical or corruptive behavior.<sup>27</sup> Many drug task forces have made positive contributions in fighting drug crimes. Although the data was limited, it does provide us with a better understanding of the nature and operations of these task forces. The policy implications are such that if more federal and state dollars are to be spent in curbing drug crimes, there is need for more research and program evaluation to ensure the drug task forces are more effective in combating the mission they were designed to accomplish.

## Appendix A

### Survey of the Multijurisdictional Drug Task forces in Texas

*Surveys are kept confidential*

Name of multijurisdictional drug task force: \_\_\_\_\_

#### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

1. How long have you been with the Task force? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Total number of board members: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Total number of task force officers: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Population served: \_\_\_\_\_
5. No. of Counties served: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Date task force was created: \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Month/Year
7. Date task force received the Byrne Federal grant: \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Month/Year
8. (If applicable) The last date the task force received the Byrne Federal grant: \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Month/Year
9. Please indicate which agencies are formally attached with the task force:  
(Bubble all that apply)  
 Local law enforcement  
 State law enforcement  
 Federal law enforcement

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<sup>27</sup> The unscrupulous actions of one task force officer not only give a black eye to the drug task forces but every other law enforcement agency in the state.

- International law enforcement
- Local or state prosecutors
- Federal prosecutors
- Other If so, please describe:\_\_\_\_\_.

10. Average number of cases for FY2001:\_\_\_\_\_
11. Total amount of forfeited assets for FY2001:\_\_\_\_\_

ASSET FORFEITURE PROCEDURES

12. What percentage of asset forfeiture does the task force rely on to operate?\_\_\_\_\_
13. Are there guidelines and or reporting procedures for asset forfeiture?  
 Yes  No

*If so, please describe:*

14. Who makes the initial decision to seize an item?\_\_\_\_\_
15. Are there fiscal accountability procedures?  
 Yes  No
16. Are officers trained on how to handle asset seizures?  
 Yes  No
17. Are officers trained on how to manage asset forfeiture?  
 Yes  No

MANAGEMENT

18. Write the 3 top operational priorities that are important to the taskforce.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

19. Write the task force's goals and objectives for this fiscal year.

20. Have the goals and objectives changed since it first received federal drug act monies?

Yes  No

21. Does the task force have a local advisory board that provides input and direction?

Yes  No

22. Does independent oversight on the task force exist?

Yes  No

*If so, please indicate whom.*

23. During an operation, is there field supervision?

Yes  No

24. In general, does trust exist between the command supervisors and the task force officers?

Yes  No

25. Do command supervisors have a defined standard of integrity?

Yes  No

26. Do command supervisors emphasize operational accountability?

Yes  No

27. Do command supervisors emphasize ethical behavior?

Yes  No

28. Do command supervisors emphasize loyalty?

Yes  No

#### ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

29. Does the organization have a sense of mission?

Yes  No

30. Are the drug task force's organizational policies and procedures available to the members/officers of the task force?  
 Yes  No

31. Are the members/officers required to go through training?  
 Yes  No

*If so, please indicate what elements are stressed.*

32. Does the task force conduct background checks on employees?  
 Yes  No

33. What does the task force consider important when recruiting new officers?

	Yes	No
a. Age	___	___
b. education-level	___	___
c. experience	___	___
d. employment history	___	___
e. criminal history	___	___

34. Does the task force hold informants or undercover officers accountable for the information they provide or actions they commit?  
 Yes  No

35. Additional information you would like to share about your task force:

Your name/ title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone number: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your time. Along with the survey, please provide a copy of (1) policies and procedures (2) organizational chart (3) goals and objectives if available.

Return the completed survey in the enclosed envelope by \_\_\_\_\_ . If you have any questions, please call Gabriel G. Cardenas at (512) 689-7933.

*Surveys are kept confidential.*

**Appendix B**



Code Sheet for Content Analysis and Survey

Multijurisdictional Drug Task Force Name \_\_\_\_\_

Content Analysis

Survey

<b>General Descriptive</b>	
1. How long with the task force	_____
2. # of board members	_____
3. # of task force officers	_____
4. Pop. served	_____
5. No. Counties served	_____
6. Task force created	_____/____
7. Task force received Byrne Federal grant	_____/____
8. (If applicable) last day of Byrne funding	_____/____
9. Agencies attached with the task force:	
a. local law enforcement	____ Yes ____ No
b. state law enforcement	____ Yes ____ No
c. federal law enforcement	____ Yes ____ No
d. international law enforcement	____ Yes ____ No
e. local or state prosecutors	____ Yes ____ No
f. federal prosecutors	____ Yes ____ No
g. other if so, please describe (ie. Private or nonprofit organizations)	____ Yes ____ No
10. Avg. no. of cases for FY 2001	_____
11. Total amount of forfeited assets for FY 2001	_____
<b>Policies and Procedures</b>	
1. Policies and procedures clearly stated	____ Yes ____ No
2. Goals and objectives clearly stated	____ Yes ____ No
3. Goals and objectives recognize	
d. accountability,	____ Yes ____ No
e. coordination and	____ Yes ____ No
f. efficiency	____ Yes ____ No
4. Reporting procedures clearly stated	____ Yes ____ No
5. Asset forfeiture/seizure procedures clearly stated	____ Yes ____ No
6. Drug awareness in the community	____ Yes ____ No
7. Removal of drugs from the community	____ Yes ____ No
8. Criminal penalties on scale of drug problems	____ Yes ____ No
9. Chain of command and responsibility addressed	____ Yes ____ No
10. Job performance evaluation procedures stated	____ Yes ____ No
<b>Policies to avoid</b>	
1. Be designed to improve arrest capacity	____ Yes ____ No
2. Encourage asset seizures	____ Yes ____ No
3. Encourage loyalty	____ Yes ____ No
<b>Asset Forfeiture Procedures</b>	
12. The % task force relies on asset forfeiture	_____

13. Guidelines and or reporting procedures for asset forfeiture a. TEX.CRIM.PRO. Chapter 59	___ Yes ___ No ___ Yes ___ No
14. Who makes initial decision to seize an item	
15. Fiscal accountability procedures exist	___ Yes ___ No
16. Officers are trained in handling asset seizures	___ Yes ___ No
17. Officers are trained in asset forfeiture management	___ Yes ___ No
<b>Management</b>	
18. 3 top priorities	_____ _____ _____
19. Goals and objectives	_____ _____ _____ _____
20. Have goals and objectives changed	___ Yes ___ No
21. Local advisory board	___ Yes ___ No
22. Independent Oversight	___ Yes ___ No _____
23. Field Supervision	___ Yes ___ No
24. Trust between command supervisor and officers of the task force	___ Yes ___ No
25. Command Supervisor (CS) standard of integrity	___ Yes ___ No
26. CS emphasize operational accountability	___ Yes ___ No
27. CS emphasize ethical behavior	___ Yes ___ No
28. CS emphasize loyalty	___ Yes ___ No
<b>Organizational Culture and Other Elements</b>	
29. Sense of mission	___ Yes ___ No
30. Organizational PP available to members/officers	___ Yes ___ No
31. Members/officers required to training	___ Yes ___ No _____ _____
32. Background checks	___ Yes ___ No
33. Task force consider important when recruiting: a. Age b. Education-level c. Experience d. Employment history e. Criminal history	___ Yes ___ No ___ Yes ___ No ___ Yes ___ No ___ Yes ___ No ___ Yes ___ No
34. Undercover officers and informants are held accountable	___ Yes ___ No
35. Additional information	

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## Appendix C

*Sample of letter to be sent  
February 6, 2002*

Mr. Mark Smith  
Program Director  
North Central Task Force  
Arlington, Texas

Dear Mr. Smith:

As a graduate student in public administration at Southwest Texas State University, I am conducting a survey of multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas as part of my applied research project. The purpose of the survey is to examine the operational structure, policies, and procedures of the multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas. Your expertise and leadership in this field brings me to you for assistance.

I intend to compile and utilize the survey results in my report, and share a copy with all respondents upon completion. I believe you will find the survey results relevant and useful in your work as a drug task force project director.

Should you choose to participate, please complete and return the attached survey to me no later than February 28, 2002. Furthermore, please include a copy of your drug task force policies and procedures and your organizational chart. Enclosed please find a self-addressed stamped envelope for your convenience.

Any information provided to this research is strictly confidential and will only be used for this research. Your responses and documents will not be publicly released. My professor, Dr. Patricia Shields, and I are the only individuals who will have access to the information and responses you provide.

I thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions regarding the survey instrument, this letter, or my research, please feel free to call me at 512 / 689-7933. Thank you.

Gabriel G. Cardenas  
MPA Graduate Student

### Appendix D

Code Sheet for Structured Interview

Multijurisdictional Drug Task Force Name \_\_\_\_\_

Structured Interview

<b>General Descriptive</b>	
1. How long have you been with the Task Force	
2. How many counties does the task force serve	
3. Approximately, how many cases did the task force average for FY2001	
4. Approximately, what was the total amount of forfeited assets for FY2001	
<b>Policies and Procedures</b>	
5. In the Operational Policies and Procedures of your drug task force, do the goals and objectives address: Accountability: Coordination: Efficiency:	 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5a. What other goals and objectives are recognized	

6. Are there guidelines in the operational policies and procedures that address reporting procedures for seizures and forfeitures?	___ Yes ___ No
7. Do your operational policies and procedures address asset forfeiture and/or seizure procedures?	___ Yes ___ No
8. Do your policies and procedures address promoting drug awareness in the community?	___ Yes ___ No
9. Do your policies and procedures address promoting the removal of drugs from the community?	___ Yes ___ No
10. Are criminal penalties on scale of drug problems addressed in the policies and procedures?	___ Yes ___ No
11. Are job performance evaluation procedures addressed in the policies and procedures?	___ Yes ___ No
12. Do the policies and procedures promote improving arrest capacity?	___ Yes ___ No
13. Is loyalty to the task force encouraged in the policies and procedures?	___ Yes ___ No
14. Are asset seizures encouraged in the policies and procedures?	___ Yes ___ No
<b>Asset Forfeiture Procedures</b>	
15. Who makes initial decision to seize an item	
15. Are there fiscal accountability procedures?	___ Yes ___ No
16. Are officers trained on how to handle asset seizures?	___ Yes ___ No
17. Are officers trained on how to manage asset forfeiture?	___ Yes ___ No
<b>Management</b>	
18. As for management operational priorities, which of these items are important to the task force:	
a. Target middle to upper level drug crimes	___ Yes ___ No
b. Promote awareness	___ Yes ___ No
c. Improve capacity to prosecute	___ Yes ___ No
d. Communication, coordination, and Collaboration among other law enforcement agencies	___ Yes ___ No
e. Seizing assets	___ Yes ___ No
20. During an operation, is there field supervision?	___ Yes ___ No
21. In general, does trust exist between the command supervisors and the task force officers?	___ Yes ___ No
22. Do command supervisors emphasize ethical behavior?	___ Yes ___ No
<b>Organizational Culture and Other Elements</b>	
23. Does the task force hold informants or undercover officers accountable for the information they provide or actions they commit?	___ Yes ___ No
24. Does the task force conduct background checks on employees?	___ Yes ___ No
25. What does the task force consider important when recruiting new officers?	
a. Age	___ Yes ___ No
b. Education-level	___ Yes ___ No
c. Experience	___ Yes ___ No
d. Employment History	___ Yes ___ No
e. Criminal History	___ Yes ___ No
Any additional information you would like to share about your	

task force and its operations:	
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## Appendix E

### *Sample follow-up letter*

February 25, 2002

Mr. Mark Smith  
Program Director  
North Central Task Force  
Arlington, Texas

Dear Mr. Smith:

Thank you for participating in the applied research project on the multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas. The information you have provided will benefit the research at its findings.

However, if you have not had the opportunity to complete the survey, I encourage you to participate in this important project. The purpose of this research is to examine the operational structure, and policies and procedures of the multijurisdictional drug task forces in Texas. Further, as part of the research, I will contact five project directors at random for an interview.

Also, if you have not done so, please provide a copy of your drug task force's policies and procedures that includes the purpose, objectives, goals, department responsibilities, equipment, funding, etc. A content analysis of these policies and procedures will be useful for the research.

A copy of the report will be shared with all respondents upon completion of the research. I believe you will find the survey results relevant and useful in your work as a drug task force project director.

Any information provided to this research is **strictly confidential** and will only be used for this research. Your responses and documents will not be publicly released.

If you have not received a copy of the questionnaire, please contact me at 512/689-7933. Your time and assistance are sincerely appreciated.

MPA Graduate Student  
Gabriel G. Cardenas

**Appendix F**  
**Structured Interview**  
**Multijurisdictional Drug Task forces in Texas**

*Interviews are kept confidential*

Name of multijurisdictional drug task force: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

**GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

1. How long have you been with the Task Force? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many counties does the task force serve: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Approximately, how many cases did the task force average for FY2001: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Approximately, what was the total amount of forfeited assets for FY2001: \_\_\_\_\_

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

5. In the Operational Policies and Procedures of your drug task force, do the goals and objectives address:
 

Accountability:	Yes	No
Coordination:	Yes	No
Efficiency:	Yes	No

What other goals and objectives are recognized:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

6. Are there guidelines in the operational policies and procedures that address reporting procedures for seizures and forfeitures? Yes No
7. Do your operational policies and procedures address asset forfeiture and/or seizure procedures? Yes No
8. Do your policies and procedures address promoting drug awareness in the community? Yes No
9. Do your policies and procedures address promoting the removal of drugs from the community? Yes No

10. Are criminal penalties on scale of drug problems addressed in the policies and procedures? Yes No
11. Are job performance evaluation procedures addressed in the policies and procedures? Yes No
12. Do the policies and procedures promote improving arrest capacity? Yes No
13. Is loyalty to the task force encouraged in the policies and procedures? Yes No
14. Are asset seizures encouraged in the policies and procedures? Yes No

**ASSET FORFEITURE PROCEDURES**

15. Who makes the initial decision to seize an item? \_\_\_\_\_
16. Are there fiscal accountability procedures? Yes No
17. Are officers trained on how to handle asset seizures? Yes No
18. Are officers trained on how to manage asset forfeiture? Yes No

**MANAGEMENT**

19. As for management operational priorities, which of these items are important to the task force:
- a. Target middle to upper level drug crimes Yes No
  - b. Promote awareness Yes No
  - c. Improve capacity to prosecute Yes No
  - d. Communication, coordination, and Collaboration among other law enforcement agencies Yes No
  - e. Seizing assets Yes No
20. During an operation, is there field supervision? Yes No
21. In general, does trust exist between the command supervisors and the task force officers? Yes No
22. Do command supervisors emphasize ethical behavior? Yes No

**ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE**

23. Does the task force hold informants or undercover officers accountable for the information they provide or actions they commit? Yes No
24. Does the task force conduct background checks on employees? Yes No
25. What does the task force consider



	important when recruiting new officers?	Yes	No
f.	Age	Yes	No
g.	education-level	Yes	No
h.	experience	Yes	No
i.	employment history	Yes	No
j.	criminal history	Yes	No

Any additional information you would like to share about your task force and its operations:

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## REGIONAL MAP

### Appendix H

#### Byrne Formula

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##### **Byrne Formula Purpose Areas**

The Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, 42 U.S.C. 3711et seq., Section 501, provides a general statement of the overall purposes of the Byrne Formula Grant Program and established 26 purpose areas which define the nature and scope of programs and projects which might be funded under it. Two other purpose areas have since been added. Frequently, Congress also uses other legislation (e.g., appropriations bill) to provide additional authorizations for limited periods (usually the current year only).

Together, these laws provide substantial authorization for programs addressing drug control, violent and serious crime, all aspects of criminal justice processing including incarceration and treatment of offenders, and general improvements in the justice system operations. There is, however, some degree of overlap within several of these purpose areas and the program examples following each.

This listing is, in part, an attempt to distinguish among them.

- (1) Demand reduction education programs in which law enforcement officers participate
- (2) Multijurisdictional task force (MJTF) programs that integrate federal, state, and/or local drug law enforcement agencies and prosecutors for the purpose of enhancing interagency coordination and intelligence and facilitating multijurisdictional investigations
- (3) Programs designed to target the domestic sources of controlled and illegal substances, such as precursor chemicals, diverted pharmaceuticals, clandestine laboratories, and cannabis cultivations
- (4) Providing community and neighborhood programs that assist citizens in preventing and controlling crime, including special programs that address the problems of crimes committed against the elderly and special programs for rural jurisdictions
- (5) Disrupting illicit commerce in stolen goods and property
- (6) Improving the investigation and prosecution of white-collar crime (e.g., organized crime, public corruption crimes, and fraud against the government with priority attention to cases involving drug-related official corruption)
- (7A) Improving the operational effectiveness of law enforcement through the use of crime analysis techniques, street sales enforcement, schoolyard violator programs, and gang-related and low-income housing drug control programs
- 7B) Developing and implementing anti-terrorism plans for deep draft ports, international airports, and other important facilities
- (8) Career criminal prosecution programs, including the development of model drug control legislation
- (9) Financial investigative programs that target the identification of money laundering operations and assets obtained through illegal drug trafficking, including the development of proposed model legislation, financial investigative training, and financial information sharing systems
- (10) Improving the operational effectiveness of the court process by expanding prosecutorial, defender, and judicial resources and implementing court delay reduction programs
- (11) Programs designed to provide additional public correctional resources and improve the corrections system, including treatment in prisons and jails, intensive supervision programs, and long-range corrections and sentencing strategies
- (12) Providing prison industry projects designed to place inmates in a realistic working and training environment which will enable them to acquire marketable skills and to make financial

payments for restitution to their victims, for support of their own families, and for support of themselves in the institution

(13) Providing programs which identify and meet the treatment needs of adult and juvenile drug-dependent and alcohol-dependent offenders

(14) Developing and implementing programs which provide assistance to jurors and witnesses and assistance (other than compensation) to victims of crime

(15A) Developing programs to improve drug control technology, such as pretrial drug testing programs, and programs which provide for the identification, assessment, referral to treatment, case management and monitoring of drug-dependent offenders, and enhancement of state and local forensic laboratories

(15B) Criminal justice information systems to assist law enforcement, prosecution, courts, and corrections organizations (including automated fingerprint identification systems)

(16) Innovative programs which demonstrate new and different approaches to enforcement, prosecution, and adjudication of drug offenses and other serious crimes

(17) Addressing the problems of drug trafficking and the illegal manufacture of controlled substances in public housing

(18) Improving the criminal and juvenile justice system's response to domestic and family violence, including spouse abuse, child abuse, and abuse of the elderly

(19) Drug control evaluation programs which state and local units of government may utilize to evaluate programs and projects directed at state drug control activities

(20) Providing alternatives to prevent detention, jail, and prison for persons who pose no danger to the community

(21) Programs of which the primary goal is to strengthen urban enforcement and prosecution efforts targeted at street drug sales

(22) Prosecution of driving while intoxicated charges and the enforcement of other laws relating to alcohol use and the operation of motor vehicles

(23) Addressing the need for effective bindover systems for the prosecution of violent 16- and 17-year-old juveniles in courts with jurisdiction over adults for (certain enumerated) violent crime

(24) Law enforcement and prevention programs that relate to gangs or to youth who are involved in or are at risk of involvement in gangs

(25) Developing or improving forensic laboratory capabilities to analyze DNA for identification purposes o DNA Database Identification System

(26) Developing and implementing anti-terrorism training programs and procuring equipment for use by local law enforcement authorities

(27) Programs to enforce child abuse and neglect laws, including laws protecting against child sexual abuse, and promoting programs designed to prevent child abuse and neglect.

(28) Programs to establish or support cooperative programs between law enforcement and media organizations, to collect, record, retain and disseminate information useful in the identification and apprehension of suspected criminal offenders.

Congress has authorized the use of Byrne funds to support the following type of program; this authorization applies to the current award (FY 2001) and may or may not be available in future funding cycles: Assisting in the litigation processing of death penalty federal habeas corpus petitions.

## **Appendix I**

### **Law Enforcement Code of Ethics**

**The International Association of Chiefs of Police**

As a law enforcement officer, my fundamental duty is to serve the community; to safeguard lives and property; to protect the innocent against deception, the weak against oppression or intimidation and the peaceful against violence or disorder; and to respect the constitutional rights of all to liberty, equality and justice.

I will keep my private life unsullied as an example to all and will behave in a manner that does not bring discredit to me or to my agency. I will maintain courageous calm in the face of danger, scorn or ridicule; develop self-restraint; and be constantly mindful of the welfare of others. Honest in thought and deed both in my personal and official life, I will be exemplary in obeying the law and the regulation of my department. Whatever I see or hear of a confidential nature

or that is confided to me in my official capacity will be kept ever secret unless revelation is necessary in the performance of my duty.

I will never act officiously or permit personal feelings, prejudices, political beliefs, aspirations, animosities or friendships to influence my decisions. With no compromise for crime and the relentless prosecution of criminals, I will enforce the law courteously and appropriately without fear or favor, malice or ill will, never employing unnecessary force or violence and never accepting gratuities.

I recognize the badge of my office as a symbol of public faith, and I accept it as a public trust to be held so long as I am true to the ethics of the police service. I will never engage in acts or corruption of bribery, nor will I condone such acts by other police officers. I will cooperate with all legally authorized agencies and their representatives in the pursuit of justice.

I know that I alone am responsible for my own standard of professional performance and will take every reasonable opportunity to enhance and improve my level of knowledge and competence.

I will constantly strive to achieve these objectives and ideals, dedicating myself before God to my chosen profession . . .  
law enforcement.

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