



Quarterly findings

Results presented in this report are for 124,684 individual solid dosage drug items analyzed by 15 State lab systems and 19 local labs between October 1, 2000, and December 31, 2000.¹

There were 313 distinct substances identified among the analyzed items submitted by all reporting labs. Because only four State systems in the West and three State systems in the Northeast have begun to report regularly, the South and Midwest regions are disproportionately represented.

This report begins with findings on drugs of particular interest to drug control and law enforcement agencies, providing specific results for emerging drugs of interest, club drugs, analgesics, and anabolic steroids. Overall, cannabis/THC, cocaine, methamphetamine, and heroin accounted

for approximately 88% of the analyzed items. A more detailed summary of these findings begins on page 6.

Selected drugs of interest

NFLIS captures the results of drugs identified and reported by the participating labs. The database, therefore, provides a window into the prevalence of emerging and other drugs of interest to the drug control community and of drugs that are rarely encountered. Drugs such as methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA), hydrocodone, ketamine, and gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB) can be traced by their frequency of appearance in labs across the country.

Exhibit 1 provides an example of the

potential power of the NFLIS database to highlight emerging trends in infrequently found—but potentially important—drugs. The table shows the number of times a selected drug of interest was identified by the reporting labs. For example, MDMA was identified 1,116 times, while ketamine and GHB were identified 176 and 65 times, respectively.

(continued on page 3)

¹ Results were received for 130,504 items, including 5,820 for which the result was “No Analysis”; these items were excluded from the analyses reported in this report. Additionally, some items may include multiple substances: 1,415 items included results for two substances, 105 items for three. Unless otherwise specified, the results reported here are for the first substance identified in an item.

About the System

Approximately 300 State and local forensic labs in the United States perform several million solid dosage drug analyses each year. The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the drug control community have long recognized that these analyses represent a wealth of information. The National Forensic Laboratory Information System (NFLIS) is a DEA-sponsored project to systematically collect results from these drug analyses into a centralized data system. The NFLIS data system will provide the basis for developing information for local, State, regional, and national drug control and enforcement efforts. NFLIS will also assist the DEA in accomplishing its mission as our Nation’s leading drug control agency.

For more details, please see page 2.

Exhibit 1 Selected drugs of interest, by census region

Number of analytic results^a

Drug	Census Region				Total
	W	MW	NE	S ^b	
Methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA)	107	222	222	565	1,116
Hydrocodone	51	90	60	545	746
Oxycodone	21	85	107	400	613
Methylphenidate	6	63	17	97	183
Ketamine	2	53	44	77	176
Methylenedioxyamphetamine (MDA)	15	49	17	38	119
Carisoprodol	0	9	6	102	117
Gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB) ^c	4	22	0	39	65
Tramadol	0	2	6	14	22
Paramethoxyamphetamine (PMA)	0	1	0	0	1
Subtotal selected drugs					2,553
Total analyzed items					124,684

^aIncludes up to three substances per item.

^bResults for Texas State labs are for the period September 1 - November 30, 2000.

^cIncludes items identified as Gamma-Hydroxybutyric Acid and Gamma-Butyrolactone.

Behind the data

The Research Triangle Institute (RTI), under contract to the DEA, began the planning, design, and implementation of NFLIS in September 1997. A survey of 308 State and local forensic labs conducted in mid-1998 identified 276 individual labs that routinely perform solid dosage drug analyses.* Results from the survey and information from other sources were used to establish a sampling frame to identify the State lab systems and local labs that make up the NFLIS sample.

Thirty-one State lab systems and 31 local labs were sampled for NFLIS. These State systems and local labs include 165 individual labs that analyzed more than 1 million items in 1997. Some labs were considered to be important for strategic reasons, such as geographic location or caseload size, and were included in the sample with certainty. Other labs were randomly selected to generate a sample that will be used to make national and regional estimates. Geographic region, type of lab (State lab system or local lab), and estimated annual drug caseload were used in establishing the sample and sample weights.

Enlistment of labs for NFLIS began in 1998, and efforts to secure participation agreements (memoranda of understanding) are ongoing. The DEA and RTI provide modest assistance to labs to facilitate their

participation in NFLIS. This assistance includes computer hardware and software as well as the design and implementation of basic lab information management systems (LIMS) for use in establishing automated drug analysis databases.

As of February 2001, 42 of the 62 sampled State lab systems and local labs (a total of 117 individual labs) have signed formal agreements to participate in NFLIS. Of the remaining sampled labs, some are in the process of upgrading their LIMS or require another specific data entry system to facilitate their reporting to NFLIS.

In addition to the sampled labs, other labs have volunteered to contribute data to NFLIS. To date, six non-sampled labs have agreed to participate. Because these labs are not part of the NFLIS sample, their data will not be used to generate the national and regional estimates. However, these labs represent an initial step toward the ultimate goal of including data for all State and local forensic labs that conduct solid dosage drug analyses. In some cases, these additional participants will provide NFLIS with the results of all drug analyses conducted in some States, adding to the ability of the system to report on drug analyses at the State and local levels. Data from these additional participants will be included in NFLIS analyses and reports, as appropriate.

The following table presents an overview of the anticipated and current coverage of

NFLIS. As shown, 39 of the State lab systems and local labs (together totaling 112 individual labs) that have joined NFLIS have begun to regularly report their drug analysis data to the System. These reporting labs represent an annual caseload of more than 570,000 cases. Once a sufficient number of sampled labs is reporting regularly, statistically representative national estimates will be generated and reported.

The core NFLIS data elements include lab case number (or other identifier), submission number, lab item/exhibit number, date case received, location of submitting agency, form of item/exhibit (e.g., powder), total quantity of item/exhibit, date case was completed or reported, and substance(s) identified. Optional NFLIS data elements include name of submitting agency, submitting agency case number, how the evidence was acquired (e.g., seized/purchased), origin of drug (legal or illegal manufacturer), name of legal manufacturer, unique packaging and markings, drug purity, secondary active drugs (adulterants) or diluents, and non-controlled substance(s) identified. The data are reported to NFLIS, recoded, reformatted into a standard format, validated and edited as necessary, and stored in a database.

**1998 Survey of State and Local Forensic Laboratories, Research Triangle Institute, August 1999.*

Planned and current NFLIS coverage, by census region

	West		Midwest		Northeast		South		Total	
	No.	Caseload ^a	No.	Caseload	No.	Caseload	No.	Caseload	No.	Caseload
State Lab Systems										
Sampling Frame ^b	10	99,300	13	169,300	10	104,300	16	355,200	49	728,100
Sample ^c	6	85,500	6	136,472	6	83,536	13	298,641	31	604,149
Enlisted ^d										
Sampled	3	50,900	4	122,957	3	41,033	10	258,236	20 ^f	473,126
Non-Sampled	1	1,700	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1,700
Reporting ^e										
Sampled	3	62,500	4	122,957	3	41,033	8	193,693	18 ^g	420,183 ^h
Non-Sampled	1	1,700	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1,700
Local Labs										
Sampling Frame ^b	34	152,800	31	120,300	19	216,300	32	163,900	116	653,300
Sample ^c	9	93,745	8	51,672	6	172,031	9	90,353	31	407,801
Enlisted ^d										
Sampled	5	36,735	5	25,010	5	32,031	7	68,846	22	162,622
Non-Sampled	0	0	0	0	2	15,650	3	11,377	5	27,027
Reporting ^e										
Sampled	3	20,641	5	25,010	4	27,488	6	65,401	18	138,540
Non-Sampled	0	0	0	0	2	15,650	0	0	2	15,650

^a Estimated 1997 caseloads derived from the 1998 Survey of State and Local Forensic Laboratories, Research Triangle Institute, August 1999.

^b Total number of identified State lab systems and local labs that perform solid dosage drug analyses.

^c A statistical sample of State lab systems and local labs that will allow for regional and national estimates of drug analyses results.

^d Sampled and non-sampled State lab systems and local labs that have signed memoranda of understanding agreeing to regularly contribute data to NFLIS, as of February 2001.

^e Sampled and non-sampled State lab systems and local labs that submitted data for at least part of the fourth quarter of 2000.

^f These enlisted State lab systems represent 95 individual labs.

^g These reporting State lab systems represent 91 individual labs.

^h One State system is reporting data to NFLIS but has not signed a memorandum of understanding.

Quarterly findings

(continued from page 1)

Exhibits 2 through 4 present results of analyzed items for three different categories of drugs: club/party drugs, analgesics, and steroids.

Exhibit 2 presents selected “club drug” items analyzed for this quarter. The term “club drugs” refers to drugs that are increasingly being used by young adults at all-night dance parties known as “raves,” and at other dance clubs and bars.

Approximately 75% of the club drugs analyzed were MDMA. Experimental use of MDMA jumped significantly over the past year, from 7% to 10%, and has doubled since 1995 (Partnership Attitude Tracking Study [PATS], 2000). Ketamine accounted for 12% of the analyzed club drugs.

Virtually unknown 5 to 10 years ago, the popularity of illicit ketamine use in nightclub and rave settings has risen dramatically over the past few years. Exhibit 2a presents the distribution of the top four club drugs reported in each region. The West region

had the greatest relative frequency of MDMA, while the Midwest had the least relative frequency compared to the other regions. The Midwest and South regions also reported a greater relative frequency of GHB/GBL than the other regions.²

(continued on page 4)

² The number of analyzed items include items identified as Gamma-Hydroxybutyric Acid (GHB) and Gamma Butyrolactone (GBL).

Exhibit 2

Frequency of club drugs

Number and percentage of total identified club drugs

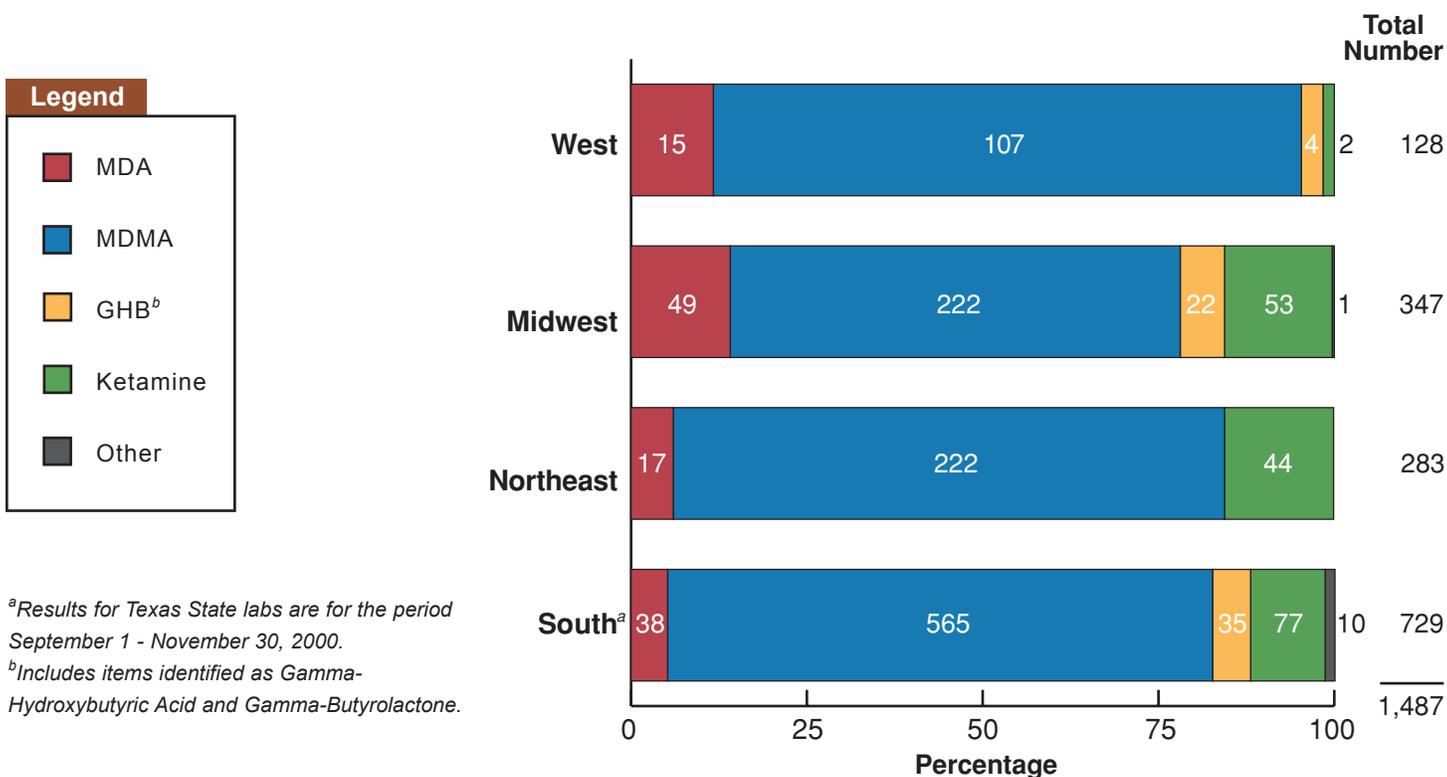
Club Drug	Total ^a	Percentage
Methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA)	1,116	75.05%
Ketamine	176	11.84%
Methylenedioxyamphetamine (MDA)	119	8.00%
Gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB) ^b	65	4.37%
Flunitrazepam	10	.67%
Paramethoxyamphetamine (PMA)	1	0.07%
Total club drugs	1,487	100%
Total analyzed items	124,684	

^aResults for Texas State labs are for the period September 1 - November 30, 2000.

^bIncludes items identified as Gamma-Hydroxybutyric Acid and Gamma-Butyrolactone.

Exhibit 2a

Distribution of club drugs by region



^aResults for Texas State labs are for the period September 1 - November 30, 2000.

^bIncludes items identified as Gamma-Hydroxybutyric Acid and Gamma-Butyrolactone.

Quarterly findings

(continued from page 3)

In recent years, non-medical use of prescription drugs has been increasing across the country (NIDA, NIH Advance Report: Epidemiologic Trends in Drug Abuse: September, 2000). In 1998, an estimated 1.6 million Americans used prescription-type pain relievers (analgesics)

non-medically for the first time (National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, 1999). This represents a significant increase since the 1980s, when there were generally fewer than 500,000 initiates per year.

Exhibit 3 summarizes common pain relievers reported in the NFLIS data this quarter. Hydrocodone made up approximately 42% of the analyzed analgesics, while oxycodone made up 34%. In addition,

codeine and morphine made up approximately 12% and 6%, respectively. Exhibit 3a presents the distribution of reported analgesics in each region. The West and Midwest had the greatest relative frequency of codeine. The Northeast reported the greatest relative frequency of oxycodone, and the South reported the most hydrocodone.

(continued on page 5)

Exhibit 3

Frequency of analgesics

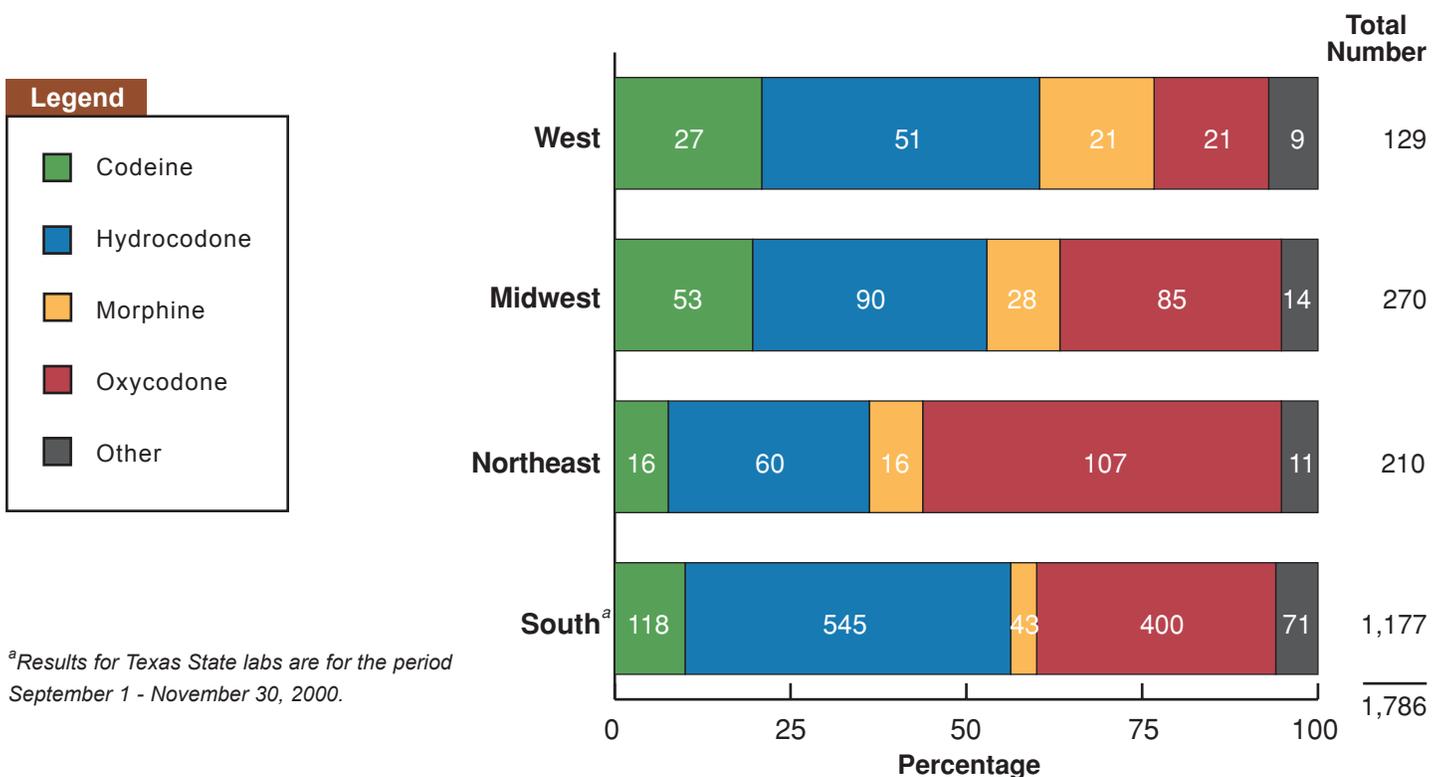
Number and percentage of total identified analgesics

Analgesic	Total ^a	Percentage
Hydrocodone	746	41.77%
Oxycodone	613	34.32%
Codeine	214	11.98%
Morphine	108	6.05%
Meperidine	51	2.86%
Hydromorphone	30	1.68%
Tramadol	22	1.23%
Fentanyl	2	0.11%
Total analgesics	1,786	100%
Total analyzed items	124,684	

^aResults for Texas State labs are for the period September 1 - November 30, 2000.

Exhibit 3a

Distribution of analgesics by region^a



Quarterly findings

(continued from page 4)

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), anabolic steroid abuse is increasing among adolescents, most rapidly among females (NIDA Community Drug Alert Bulletin, 2000). The 1999 Monitoring the Future study, an annual survey of drug abuse among middle and high school students across the

country, showed a significant increase from 1998 to 1999 in anabolic steroid abuse among middle school students. During the same year, the percentage of 12th graders who believed that taking these drugs causes "great risk" to health declined from 68% to 62% (NIDA Community Drug Alert Bulletin—Anabolic Steroids: January 2001). As shown in Exhibit 4, a total of 131 of the analyzed items for this quarter were a type of ana-

bolic steroid. Testosterone made up about 53% of the steroids presented. Methandrostenolone and stanozolol made up 21% and 10%, respectively, of the steroids analyzed. Exhibit 4a shows the distribution of steroids reported in each region.

(continued on page 6)

Exhibit 4

Frequency of anabolic steroids

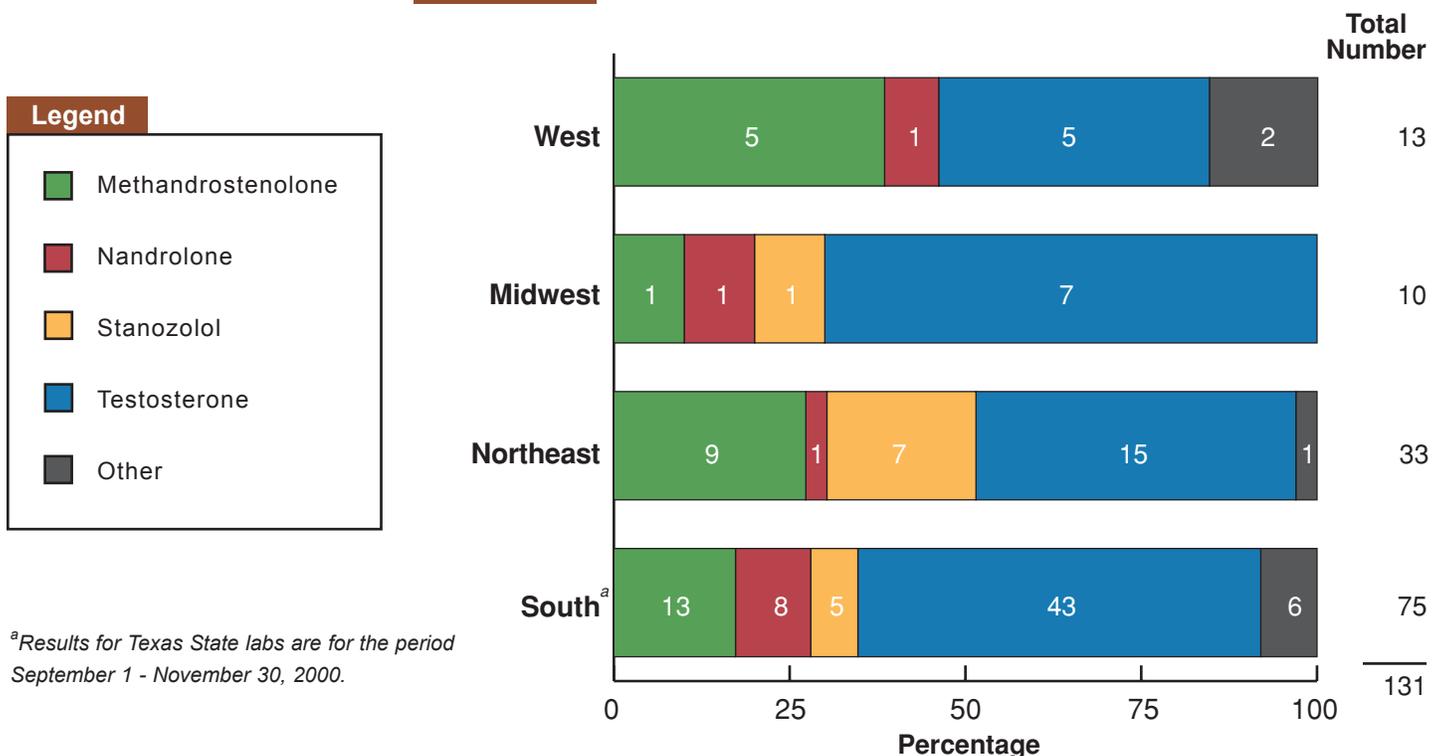
Number and percentage of total identified anabolic steroids

Steroid	Total ^a	Percentage
Testosterone	70	53.44%
Methandrostenolone	28	21.37%
Stanozolol	13	9.92%
Nandrolone	11	8.40%
Anabolic steroids	2	1.53%
Boldenone	2	1.53%
Oxandrolone	2	1.53%
Mesterolone	1	0.76%
Methenolone	1	0.76%
4-androstene-3,17-dione	1	0.76%
Total anabolic steroids	131	100%
Total analyzed items	124,684	

^aResults for Texas State labs are for the period September 1 - November 30, 2000.

Exhibit 4a

Distribution of anabolic steroids by region



Quarterly findings

(continued from page 5)

There were few regional differences in steroid reports since many of the steroids had less than two reports in each region. The Midwest had the greatest relative frequency of testosterone and least amount of methandrostenolone compared to other regions.

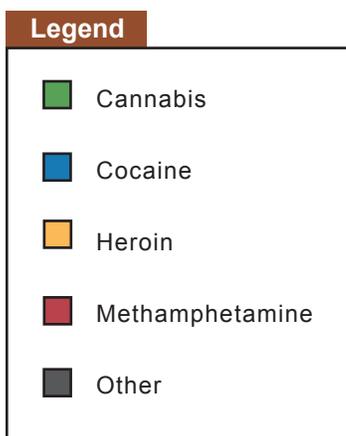
Summary of results

The 25 most frequently identified substances are listed in Exhibit 5. As shown, the top four drugs presented in Exhibit 5a make up almost 88% of these results. A variety of other illegal substances is shown in Exhibit 5, but none of these substances represents more than 1% of the total number of analyzed items.

Drugs representing three categories of interest to enforcement agencies are also included in the "Top 25." Four prescription analgesics—hydrocodone, oxycodone, codeine, and morphine—are among the top 25 drugs reported (see also Exhibit 3). MDMA, with just under 1% of all reported results, was one of several club drugs identified (see also Exhibit 2).

Exhibit 5a presents the frequency distribution of the total drugs analyzed this quarter (top 4 plus "all other drugs") by region. Cannabis/THC and cocaine dominate the results, although there are regional differences. Overall, 39% of the analyzed items were identified as cannabis/THC and approximately 31% as cocaine (including "crack" cocaine). Items identified as heroin constituted about 7% of the sample, and approximately 10% of the items were identified as methamphetamine.

(continued on page 7)



^aResults for Texas State labs are for the period September 1 - November 30, 2000.

Exhibit 5

25 most frequently identified drugs

Number and percentage of total analyzed items

Drug ^a	Number ^b	Percentage
Cannabis/THC	48,746	39.10%
Cocaine	38,562	30.93%
Methamphetamine	12,873	10.32%
Heroin	8,949	7.18%
Non-controlled non-narcotic drug	1,141	0.92%
Methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA)	1,116	0.90%
Hydrocodone	746	0.60%
Alprazolam	742	0.59%
Oxycodone	613	0.49%
Diazepam	527	0.42%
Clonazepam	354	0.28%
Pseudoephedrine	324	0.30%
Phencyclidine	315	0.25%
Lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD)	303	0.24%
Amphetamine	254	0.20%
Acetaminophen	224	0.18%
Codeine	214	0.17%
Methylphenidate	183	0.14%
Ketamine	176	0.14%
Propoxyphene	140	0.11%
Psilocin	136	0.11%
Methylenedioxyamphetamine (MDA)	119	0.10%
Carisoprodol	117	0.09%
Morphine	108	0.08%
Ephedrine	106	0.08%
Total	117,088	93.92%
Total analyzed items	124,684	

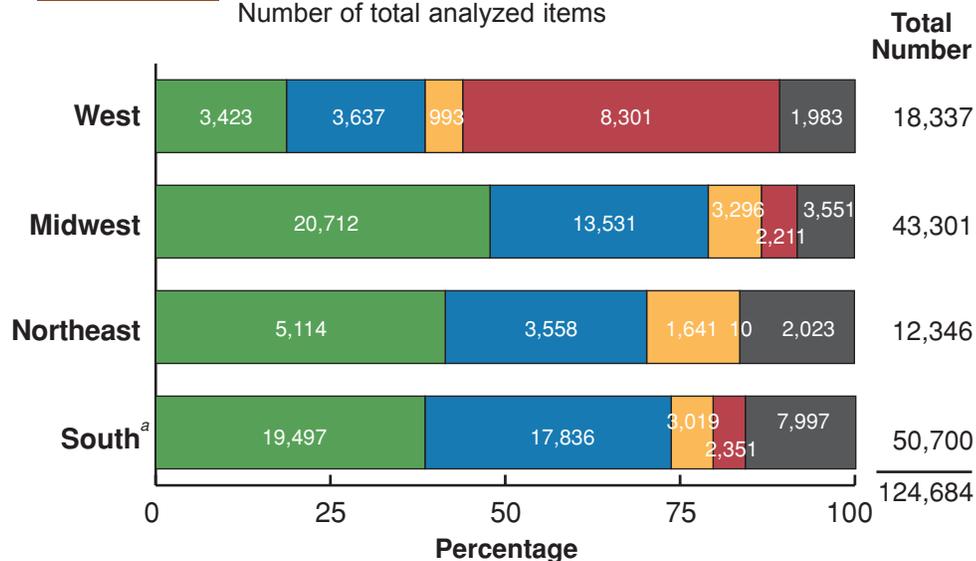
^aSome of the substances listed include more than one form of a drug (e.g., cocaine and crack).

^bResults for Texas State labs are for the period September 1 - November 30, 2000.

Exhibit 5a

Distribution of drug results by region

Number of total analyzed items



Quarterly findings

(continued from page 6)

There was some regional variation among the reporting labs, although the labs are not necessarily representative of their regions. For this quarter, cannabis/THC is the most prevalent substance identified in the Midwest, Northeast, and South, while methamphetamine is the most prevalent drug identified in the West.³ In addition, the prevalence of heroin among these reported results also varies substantially—from about 6% in the Southern results to approximately 13% of the results for the Northeastern labs. These latter findings are consistent with the results from the last quarter.

Exhibit 6 summarizes analysis results reported to NFLIS broken down by nine drug categories. Drugs and other substances were classified by the DEA System to Retrieve Information from Drug Evidence (STRIDE) codes.⁴ Cannabis/THC and cocaine made up 39% and 31%, respectively, of the items ana-

lyzed. Approximately 11% of the items were stimulants and 7% were identified as heroin. Depressants and tranquilizers, hallucinogens, and other drugs totaled about 3%, narcotics totaled about 2%, and no substance was identified in 4% of the items.

Drug combinations

For the majority of analyzed items, only one drug or substance was identified. In 1,415 analyzed items⁵, two different substances were identified. While many combinations occurred only once, six represented about 56% of all of the combinations. The most common combinations and their percentages of all combinations were:

- cocaine (either powder or “crack”) and heroin, 21.6%,
- cannabis and cocaine (either powder or “crack”), 12.9%,

- cocaine (either powder or “crack”) and caffeine, 9.0%,
- cocaine and crack cocaine, 5.7%,
- cocaine (either powder or “crack”) and procaine, 4.9%, and
- amphetamine and methamphetamine, 4.3%.

³Some of the labs in the West do not routinely analyze suspected cannabis; therefore, the number of items found to contain cannabis for the West may not be representative of cannabis usage for that region.

⁴STRIDE codes are used to report the results of analyses of drugs by DEA labs. Therefore, STRIDE data reflect mostly Federal—as opposed to State and local—enforcement activity.

⁵Out of the 130,504 items received, 1,415 items included results for two substances.

Exhibit 6 Frequency of analyzed items, by census region and drug category

Number and percentage of total analyzed items

Drug Category	Census Region				Total
	West	Midwest	Northeast	South ^a	
Cannabis/THC^b	3,423	20,712	5,114	19,497	48,746
	(18.67%)	(47.83%)	(41.42%)	(43.69%)	(39.10%)
Cocaine	3,637	13,531	3,558	17,836	38,562
	(19.8%)	(31.25%)	(28.82%)	(32.5%)	(30.93%)
Stimulants	8,356	2,362	74	2,705	13,497
	(45.6%)	(5.45%)	(0.6%)	(3.54%)	(10.82%)
Heroin	993	3,296	1,641	3,019	8,949
	(5.41%)	(7.61%)	(13.29%)	(5.93%)	(7.18%)
No substance identified	900	784	617	2,898	5,199
	(4.91%)	(1.81%)	(5%)	(5.75%)	(4.17%)
Other substances	596	1,363	492	1,334	3,785
	(3.25%)	(3.15%)	(3.99%)	(2.46%)	(3.03%)
Narcotics other than heroin	146	401	244	1,323	2,114
	(0.8%)	(0.93%)	(1.98%)	(2.51%)	(1.70%)
Hallucinogens	224	536	319	870	1,949
	(1.22%)	(1.24%)	(2.58%)	(1.41%)	(1.56%)
Depressants/Tranquilizers	62	316	287	1,218	1,883
	(0.34%)	(0.73%)	(2.32%)	(2.23%)	(1.51%)
Total	18,337	43,301	12,346	50,700	124,684
	(100%)	(100%)	(100%)	(100%)	(100%)

^aResults for Texas State labs are for the period September 1 - November 30, 2000.

^bIncludes items identified as “Cannabis with Phencyclidine (PCP).”

NFLIS Interactive Data Site Access

In January 2001, the DEA and RTI released the NFLIS Interactive Data Site (IDS) to all labs participating in NFLIS. The IDS allows participating labs to run parameterized queries against the NFLIS database. These queries allow labs to access their own data at the individual case level and provide aggregated regional and national data. Labs that participate in NFLIS but have not begun sending in data files will only be able to run queries to get regional and national statistics.

The IDS is implemented as a secure web site located on a restricted and secured dedicated server that is accessible only through a direct dial-in connection. RTI staff provide a toll-free number for participating labs to use. The IDS is not accessible from the Internet. To access it, lab staff must

dial in to the NFLIS server directly and then use either Netscape or Internet Explorer to view the IDS. Each participating lab is given a lab-specific username and password as well as detailed instructions on how to use the IDS. Labs will not have access to other labs' data except as aggregated regional and national statistics. The multiple labs within a State system, such as the Illinois State Police labs, will have access to each other's data consistent with policies set by the headquarters lab.

The data site provides the capacity to query the data using standard, parameterized queries that generate customized reports. Lab staff can specify the time period, region of interest, types of labs, types of drugs, etc. to customize these queries. For example, Exhibit 7 is a screen shot of an IDS

query that can be used to generate a table of the 25 most frequently identified drugs, similar to Exhibit 5a (shown earlier in this report).⁶

The IDS is continually being further developed and improved. The IDS is ready for labs to use, but NFLIS will be adding new queries and other features, as well as generally improving the IDS over the next few months. Participating labs are encouraged to submit suggestions for improvement by using the feedback page in the IDS, by sending an e-mail to NFLIS@rti.org, or by calling Al Bethke at 919-485-7737.

⁶Data for Exhibit 5a in this report will not match comparable data that are run using the IDS because the database has expanded since the report was prepared and because special arrangements were made for the data used in the report for one State system.

Exhibit 7

A parameterized IDS query

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the National Forensic Laboratory Information System (NFLIS) web interface. The browser title is "National Forensic Laboratory Information System - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by RTI". The address bar is empty. The main content area is titled "25 Most Frequently Identified Drugs" and includes a "Show Me Detailed Instructions" button. Below this, there are three main sections for query specification:

- 1. Specify Time Period**: This section contains two rows of date selection. The first row has radio buttons for "Submission Date" and "Completion Date", with "Completion Date" selected. The "Start Date" is set to "July 2000" and the "End Date" is set to "September 2000".
- 2. Select Labs by Type and Region**: This section has two options: "Select Labs by Type and Region" (selected) and "Select Your Own Lab". Under "Select Labs by Type and Region", there are radio buttons for "State Labs", "Local/Regional Labs", and "Both Types of Labs", with "Both Types of Labs" selected. Below these are radio buttons for "Northeast", "Midwest", "South", "West", and "All Regions", with "All Regions" selected.
- 3. Run the Query**: A button to execute the query.

The left sidebar contains a logo for the U.S. Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Administration and a list of navigation links: "Home", "Database Characteristics", "25 Most Frequently Identified Drugs", "Drug Categories", "DEA Drugs of Interest", "Specific Drug Counts", "Select Data Records", and "Feedback". The status bar at the bottom shows "Internet".

Benefits & Limitations of NFLIS data

Benefits

The systematic collection and analysis of solid dosage drug analysis data from State and local labs will improve our knowledge and understanding of the changes and trends in the Nation's drug problem. Additionally, it will be a major resource for supporting drug enforcement and drug policy initiatives at the national level and in communities throughout the country. NFLIS will help the drug control community achieve its mission by:

- highlighting the extent and variations of controlled substances across geographic areas and over time,
- improving access to recent estimates of drug availability by local, State, and national agencies,
- bringing attention to emerging drug problems, and
- providing current information about the diversion of licit drugs into illicit channels.

The DEA, the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), and other Federal agencies will be served by the NFLIS database. The data will benefit State, regional, and local task forces and single-agency operations as well.

NFLIS is an opportunity for State and local labs and their staff to participate in an important effort that will have high national visibility. Participating labs will receive regular reports summarizing data from their specific lab, as well as regional and national data. Additionally, participating labs have access to the NFLIS database that provides important information about local, regional, and national trends in drug seizures, purchases, and recoveries by law enforcement agencies and in

drug analysis results. Participating labs are able to run specific and customized queries on their own data as well as on aggregated data from other reporting labs. Labs may find NFLIS data useful in planning and managing future workloads and needs.

Limitations

As with all database systems, NFLIS has limitations that should be kept in mind when interpreting the findings presented in this report:

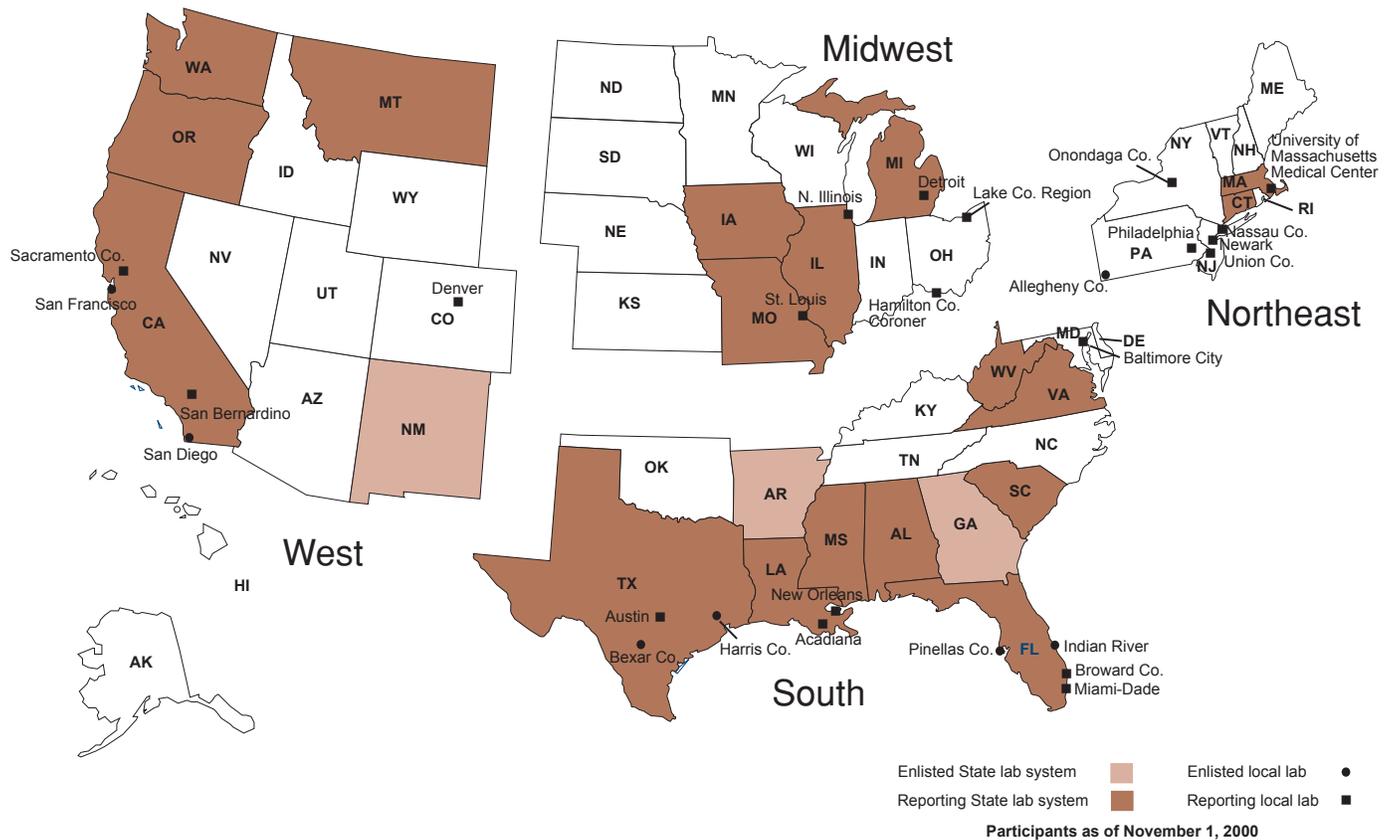
- NFLIS includes results from completed lab analyses only. Evidence secured by law enforcement but not analyzed is not included.
- The absolute and relative frequency of analyzed results for individual drugs may in part be a function of the current pattern of lab participation in NFLIS and state or local policies regarding enforcement and prosecution efforts for specific drugs. For example, CA labs dominate the current data in the West, and most or all CA law enforcement agencies do not actively prosecute misdemeanor cannabis charges. As a result, the frequency of analytical results showing cannabis are almost certainly lower than they would be were policies similar to most States in other regions.
- Lab policies and procedures with respect to the handling of drug evidence vary. Some labs analyze all evidence, while others analyze selected items. For example, a lab may analyze only the items that are likely to contain substances associated with higher legal penalties (e.g., cocaine versus marijuana).
- Lab policies and procedures vary with

respect to record keeping. Therefore, what is reported to NFLIS also varies. For example, some labs' automated records include the weight of the sample selected for analysis (e.g., one of five bags of powder), while others record total weight.

- Chemical analysis practices differ among labs. For example, an unusual substance may be explicitly identified by one lab, while another lab may indicate "no drug found." Although these differences in practice are unlikely to affect findings for common drugs such as cocaine or methamphetamine, they may affect the reported prevalence of unusual or emerging substances such as GHB, ketamine, or other drugs of interest.
- Currently, NFLIS includes only State and local labs. Drug analyses conducted by Federal forensic labs are not included.
- Evidence submitted for analysis reflects not only the "drugs on the street" but also local law enforcement practices that target specific types of drug trafficking.

In the coming months, RTI, with DEA support, plans to conduct special studies that will increase our understanding of these limitations. Information from these studies will enhance our ability to link the reported analytic findings with the true scope of the Nation's illegal and illicit drug markets.

Participating labs, by census region



As of February 2001, 21 State lab systems (96 individual labs) and 27 local labs have joined the NFLIS partnership; that is, they have agreed to regularly report solid dosage drug analysis data to the System.⁷ This Quarterly Report summarizes data for the period of October 1 to December 31, 2000, analyzed by 15 State lab systems (68 individual labs) and 19 local labs and submitted to RTI. (Texas State system data are for the period

September 1 to November 30, 2000.) Participating State lab systems and local labs are identified in the above map.

The State lab systems and local labs that have begun regular NFLIS reporting do not necessarily reflect their respective regions or the Nation. Although the data presented in this report represent all analyses submitted to NFLIS by the reporting labs for the quarter as of February 2001, extrapolation

from these data to national or regional estimates is not currently possible. Statistically representative national and regional estimates of drug analysis results are expected to be available by late 2001, when a sufficient number of labs are regularly reporting their data.

⁷One State system is reporting data to NFLIS but is not counted here because it has not signed a memorandum of understanding.

This report was prepared under contract DEA-97-C-0059, Drug Enforcement Administration, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view or opinions expressed in this document do not necessarily represent the official position of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Enlisted NFLIS State lab systems (sampled and non-sampled)

As of February 2001

State	State System Name
AL	Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences (9 sites)
AR	Arkansas State Crime Laboratory (Little Rock)
CA	California Department of Justice Bureau of Forensic Services (10 sites)
CT	Connecticut Department of Public Safety Controlled Substances/Toxicology Laboratory (Hartford)
FL	Florida Department of Law Enforcement (7 sites)
GA	Georgia State Bureau of Investigation Forensic Sciences Division (7 sites)
IA	Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation Laboratory (Des Moines)
IL	Illinois State Police Division of Forensic Services (8 sites)
LA	Louisiana State Police Crime Laboratory (Baton Rouge)
MA	Massachusetts Department of Public Health Drug Analysis Laboratory (2 sites)
MA	Massachusetts Department of State Police Crime Laboratory (Sudbury)
MI	Michigan Department of State Police Forensic Science Division (7 sites)
MO	Missouri State Highway Patrol Crime Laboratory Division (6 sites)
MS	Mississippi Department of Public Safety Crime Laboratory (4 sites)
MT	Montana State Forensic Science Division Laboratory (1 site)
NM	New Mexico Department of Public Safety Crime Laboratory (2 sites)
OR	Oregon State Police Forensic Services Division (8 sites)
SC	South Carolina Law Enforcement Division Crime Laboratory (Columbia)
TX	Texas Department of Public Safety Crime Laboratory Service (13 sites)
VA	Virginia Division of Forensic Sciences (4 sites)
WV	West Virginia State Police Forensic Laboratory (South Charleston)

Enlisted NFLIS local labs (sampled and non-sampled)

As of February 2001

State	Lab Name
CA	Sacramento County Laboratory of Forensic Services (Sacramento)
CA	San Bernardino Sheriff's Office (San Bernardino)
CA	San Diego Police Department Crime Laboratory (San Diego)
CA	San Francisco Police Department Crime Laboratory (San Francisco)
CO	Denver Police Department Crime Laboratory Bureau (Denver)
FL	Broward County Sheriff's Crime Laboratory (Ft. Lauderdale)
FL	Regional Crime Laboratory at Indian River Community College (Ft. Pierce)
FL	Miami-Dade Police Department Crime Laboratory Bureau (Miami)
FL	Pinellas County Forensic Laboratory (Largo)
IL	Northern Illinois Police Crime Lab (Chicago)
LA	Acadiana Criminalistics Laboratory (New Iberia)
LA	New Orleans Department of Police Scientific Criminal Investigations Division (New Orleans)
MA	University of Massachusetts Medical Center Drugs of Abuse Laboratory (Worcester)
MD	Baltimore City Police Crime Laboratory (Baltimore)
MI	Detroit Police Department Crime Laboratory (Detroit)
MO	St. Louis Police Department Crime Laboratory (St. Louis)
NJ	Newark Department of Police Forensic Laboratory (Newark)
NJ	Union County Prosecutor's Office Laboratory (Westfield)
NY	Nassau County Police Department Scientific Investigation Bureau (Mineola)
NY	Onondaga County Center for Forensic Sciences (Syracuse)
OH	Hamilton County Coroner's Laboratory (Cincinnati)
OH	Lake County Regional Forensic Laboratory (Painesville)
PA	Allegheny County Division of Laboratories (Pittsburgh)
PA	Philadelphia Police Department Crime Laboratory (Philadelphia)
TX	Austin Police Department Crime Laboratory (Austin)
TX	Bexar County Forensic Science Center Criminal Investigation Laboratory (San Antonio)
TX	Harris County Medical Examiner Office (Houston)

Contact us

For more information on NFLIS or to become a participating lab, please use the following contact information.

Research Triangle Institute
Health, Social, and Economic Research Unit
3040 Cornwallis Road, PO Box 12194
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2194

Attention: Valley Rachal, Project Director
Phone: 919-485-7712
Fax: 919-485-7700
E-mail: jvr@rti.org

Drug Enforcement Administration
Office of Diversion Control
600 Army Navy Drive, E-6341
Arlington, VA 22202

Attention: Clyde Richardson, Project Officer
Phone: 202-307-7175
Fax: 202-353-1263
E-mail: cfrich@starpower.net

Research Triangle Institute
Health, Social, and Economic Research Division
3040 Cornwallis Road, PO Box 12194
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2194

