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Texting Ban

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

Ohio's texting ban went into effect on August 31, 2012, making it a primary offense to text while driving for those under the age of 18, and a secondary offense for those ages 18 and over. See page 4 for Ohio statistics on texting while driving.



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Statistical Analysis Center

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OCJS Research Brief

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Ohio's Reentry Coalitions: Year 1 Evaluation, Center for Criminal Justice Research University of Cincinnati

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If the previous two decades were defined by "get tough" policies, the next two decades will be identified as the Reentry Era. With over 700,000 offenders returning from prison annually, and another 13 million exiting local jails, the criminal justice system has reached a tipping point in which it can no longer successfully address the needs of offenders as they transition back to their communities (Petersilia, 2003). Recent studies have found that nearly 1 in 2 inmates return to prison within a 3 year period, highlighting the inadequacies of the current system to address future recidivism. At the same time, the traditional mechanism for offender reentry—parole—has undergone changes that have resulted in higher caseloads with less focus on rehabilitation (Travis, Solomon, and Waul, 2001).

Given the limitations of previous research, it is often difficult to glean why some offenders re-integrate successfully, while others fail within the first few months. The current research is an attempt to isolate those characteristics that are correlated with successful reintegration. More specifically, the research questions to be addressed by this project sought to examine several Ohio reentry programs to determine whether or not the programs will be more successful at reducing offender recidivism if they:

- focus on higher risk offenders;
- target criminogenic needs;
- use cognitive-behavioral or social learning interventions;
- address implementation issues such as staff, training, and evaluation; and
- follow program integrity (i.e., adhere to the principles of effective intervention).

The purpose of this report is to describe the procedures, methodology, and

overall findings from the evaluations of the 14 counties that make up the ARRA funded JAG reentry coalitions in the state of Ohio.

In 2009, the Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services partnered with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction to develop the ARRA JAG Reentry Initiative. The Reentry Initiative involved two components; one component concentrated on directly funded projects and another involved research that examined the effectiveness of the ARRA JAG Reentry Initiative Projects through both an outcome and a process evaluation.

The Reentry Initiative allocated 4.7 million dollars to fund 14 community reentry projects through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program. Six counties were awarded Category I grants intended to support existing county or regional reentry task forces. The Category I projects received grant funds specifically for delivery of supportive services or additional programs that would help the local coalition to better accomplish the goals specified in the county's five-year strategic plan. Eight reentry coalition task forces were awarded Category II grants, which supported local counties or regions that wished to develop a formal reentry task force, with the expectation that the primary outcome for this category would be the development of a county five-year strategic plan.

The research component of the ARRA JAG Reentry Initiative allocated funding to a single entity that demonstrated the best proposed plan for conducting both a process evaluation and an outcome evaluation of the ARRA JAG Reentry Initiative Projects. The University of Cincinnati was selected through a competitive grant process as the evaluator of the 14 reentry projects. There were three overall goals for the evaluation:

- Assess the quality of each project's program implementation (Categories I and II) and success in achieving program objectives (Category I).
- Assess each project's ability to compete for Second Chance Act (SCA) funding, including programmatic guidelines and required outcomes.
- Assess each project's consistency with the Ohio Five-year Strategic Plan.

One of the difficulties in evaluating newly designed programs or initiatives is that it takes a while for the programs to work out the “bugs.” Latessa and Lowenkamp (2005) found that programs did not generally show significant effects until they were in operation for at least three years. Therefore, it can be difficult to determine if programs that have been in operation for less than three years are effective in reducing recidivism. For this reason, process evaluations are typically used to determine if the programs are “on track” to reduce recidivism.

The process evaluations of the 14 ARRA JAG Reentry projects consisted of a collection of evaluation procedures including a review of each county’s five-year strategic plan, surveys of community partners, face-to-face interviews of coalition members, agency partners, and ex-offenders, as well as on-site assessments of the service delivery. Information at the coalition level focused on measuring the collaborative relationship with stakeholders, as well as characteristics of individual programs. In order to measure specific programmatic elements of the reentry coalitions, each task force was assessed using the evidence-based Correctional Program Checklist (CPC). The Community Organizational Assessment Tool (COAT) was also used to measure the collaborative relationship between coalition members and stakeholders. Common trends found in both the CPC and COAT survey, across all fourteen reentry sites, are discussed in this report and summarized below.

FINDINGS

Demographics: The majority of the reentry coalitions serve both male and female ex-offenders returning to their communities or surrounding areas upon release. During the evaluation period, 1,785 participants were served by one of the fourteen reentry initiatives. Table 1 provides demographic data related to the ex-offenders enrolled across all counties served by the reentry coalitions.

Table 1: Numbers Served and Demographics of Ex-Offenders Participating in the ARRA Jag Reentry Coalitions

Clients Served	N = 1,785	
	N	Percent (%)
Age		
Below 17	7	.42
18 - 25	350	21.16
26 – 34	465	28.11
35 and Older	832	50.30
Race		
American Indian or Alaska Native	9	.50
Asian	3	.17
Black or African American	809	45.32
White	861	48.24
Unknown	97	4.34
Gender		
Male	1518	85.04
Female	267	14.96

Education		
Associate	51	2.87
Bachelor	19	1.07
GED	471	26.52
High School Diploma	672	37.84
Less than High School Degree/GED	562	31.64

The Community Organizational Assessment Tool: Overall, results indicated the majority of task force members, in general, believe that their group is organized and has effective collaboration. The data also showed that each task force has established goals and ways to achieve those goals. A majority of those surveyed believe that once priorities are established, all of their energy, resources, and activities are focused on these priorities. Additionally, survey takers also said the coalition has translated their priorities into specific desired outcomes and strategies to achieve these outcomes. Finally, it appears that each task force seeks proven programs and best practice principles in all the activities or programs that they design or fund.

Best Practices for Community Support and Accountability: Overall, results indicated that the majority of task force members who responded to the survey rated each principle as moderate to very high. A majority of the respondents indicated that measurable outcomes are defined for the reentry coalition. When asked if evidence-based strategies are used, the ratings tended to be towards the higher end of the scale by almost all respondents. The one area where there was less support was for the principle of family and social support. Finally, the Best Practices for Community Support and Accountability section asks about performance measurement indicators in the coalition. Here, the responses are more varied, but for the most part, the majority of respondents agree that performance measurement is in place to track activities, outputs, and outcomes.

Community Safety Net Collaboration: A majority of respondents indicated that the coalition has led to greater networking and exchange of information among members. Further, all respondents indicated that their coalition has brought together people/organizations who would not have worked together otherwise. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, a majority of respondents indicated that their reentry coalition has directly benefitted ex-offenders in the community and that the coalition has increased public awareness of the needs of the ex-offenders they are serving.

Community Collaboration: One area in which consensus was not met across respondents was the coalition’s focus on the strengths and needs of the community. The survey responses suggested that a smaller proportion of the respondents believed that their coalition accessed the community’s strengths while providing services. It is recommended that the reentry coalitions work together to identify those strengths of the community that they can leverage in supporting the returning offenders. A second area of the assessment that consensus was not met was the identification of a common mission statement. A common mission and/or vision statement ensures that the coalition is committed to the underlying vision and maintains focus on the appropriate population.

The Correctional Program Checklist (CPC): The CPC is divided into two basic areas: CAPACITY and CONTENT. The CAPACITY area is designed to measure whether a correctional program has the capability to deliver evidence-based interventions and services for offenders. There are three domains in the capacity area: 1) Leadership and Development, 2) Staff, and 3) Quality Assurance. The CONTENT area focuses on the substantive domains of 1) Offender Assessment and 2) Treatment Characteristics, and the extent to which the program meets the principles of risk, need, responsiveness, and treatment. There are a total of 77 indicators.

Leadership, Management, and Support

Strengths:

- Within all counties, the director is professionally trained in a helping profession. Regular meetings take place between the director and staff.
- Each director had a significant role in selecting agency staff.
- Funding was rated adequate and stable in the majority of the counties.
- Within every county, staff is rated as knowledgeable on the goals, values, and mission and each are clearly defined.
- There are collaborative processes with all stakeholders.
- Reentry coalitions have good relationships with partners and key stakeholders in the community. Monthly meetings with partners occur and subcommittees have been developed over the last several months.

Areas Recommended for Improvement (focus on in the upcoming years):

- Piloting new aspects to the program
- Delivery of evidence-based practices
- Need to be active in promoting evidence-based practices

Staff Characteristics

Strengths:

- Majority of staff members are sufficiently educated in helping professions
- Have adequate experience in programs with ex-offenders involved in the criminal justice system.
- Staff are selected and promoted based on skills and values such as strong support for ex-offender treatment and change, empathy, fairness, the ability to be non-confrontational but firm, problem solving, and prior life experiences and training.
- Regular meetings take place between management and staff.
- The vast majority of supervisors and staff support the use of evidence-based practices.
- Ethical guidelines dictate staff boundaries and interactions with ex-offenders.

Areas Recommended for Improvement (focus on in the upcoming years):

- Evaluations of program delivery
- Training

Assessment

Strengths:

- Some counties use a validated risk and need assessment with all of the ex-offenders participating in the program.

Areas Recommended for Improvement (focus on in the upcoming years):

- Several counties in the coalitions have not fully adopted a validated, standardized, and objective risk/needs assessment.
- Some members of the reentry coalitions have made the determination that they will serve all types of offenders returning to the community, including sex offenders and domestic violence perpetrators. However, these counties (or one of the providers) do not have access to specialized assessments for unique populations (e.g., sex offenders).
- The majority of the reentry coalitions do not conduct (or refer out to a program to conduct) additional assessments on all participants as they enter the program.
- The majority of the reentry coalitions do not assess for risk on all offenders, so they are unable to provide more intensive services for offenders receiving services. Therefore, a lower-risk offender receives the same level of intervention as does the higher risk offenders.
- The majority of the reentry coalitions have not adopted a policy that ensures that participants are reassessed on a regular basis.
- Currently, if case plans are developed they are developed by each individual program forcing the participant to follow multiple case plans.

Evidence-Based Practices

Strengths:

- The majority of the reentry coalitions have established relationships with community providers to deliver services to ex-offenders.
- In a majority of the counties, the community providers have adopted some services that are identified as evidence based or use cognitive-behavioral models. This indicates that, overall, the majority of the counties are targeting appropriate criminogenic needs.

Areas Recommended for Improvement (focus on in the upcoming years):

- There is limited use of evidence-based programming across the service providers. It is recommended that the coalition as well its partners adopt a range of evidence based practices including curriculum that use a cognitive-behavioral modality.
- The coalitions and their service providers focused a majority of their efforts on employment and housing. They would benefit greatly from addressing a broader range of criminogenic needs including attitudes towards crime, criminal peers and social networks, and substance abuse.
- Recent studies have found that higher risk offenders need a “higher dose” of treatment than moderate risk offenders. There was limited evidence that the coalition and the providers offered more treatment services to higher risk offenders.
- One of the primary functions of the coalition should be to reduce barriers to offenders successfully returning to the community. The coalition should use its relationship with community organizations to develop formal agreements and MOUs to assist the community in supporting a successful return of the ex-offender.
- Many of the coalitions had a drop in policy in which ex-offenders could move in and out of the program and did not have a formal strategy on how to address the broad range of needs. It would be beneficial if these coalitions developed completion criteria that would detail the expectations for the participants to complete the “program” successfully.

- Establish a process to use reinforcers and deliver incentives in a timely fashion to ensure that participant's see the benefits of adopting a prosocial lifestyle
- Family programming should be developed to engage the support people in the offender's life to assist in the transition to a prosocial lifestyle
- Research has shown that offenders often present with limited self-regulation and problem solving skills. It is recommended that the coalition and its' partners adopt a teaching/learning model that focuses on building offender skills.
- Release prevention planning should be expanded so that offenders are assisted in developing a plan for long-term sustainable lifestyle change.

Quality Assurance

Strengths:

- Overall, the majority of the Reentry Coalitions examine clients' re-arrest and

reconviction on a regular basis in order to measure recidivism.

Areas Recommended for Improvement (focus on in the upcoming years):

- One of the major gaps in providing services to offenders is the ability to ensure that offenders are receiving appropriate services, attending an adequate dosage, and are making substantial progress. The Reentry Coalitions and their partners do not currently monitor services being provided to the offender to ensure that the offender's needs are being met.
- One of the benefits of the Reentry Coalitions is they provide a centralized location that all data regarding participants can be submitted and offender progress tracked. Currently, data on the participants are not collected and presented in a fashion that can be used by community providers to understand the effects of the program.

A complete copy of the final study will be available at <http://www.uc.edu/ccjr/reports.html>

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Petersilia, J. (1998). A Decade of Experimenting with Intermediate Sanctions: What Have We Learned? *Federal Probation* 62(2): 3-9.

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Research Supports Ohio Texting Ban

Ohio has become the 39th state to enact a texting ban into law. The ban, which went into effect August 31, 2012, makes it a primary offense for drivers under the age of 18 to text while driving and a secondary offense for those ages 18 and above. While the ban means different things to different age groups, it reflects the reality of driver's behaviors on Ohio's roadways: many people are driving distracted.

According to the 2011 Statewide Telephone Survey of Seat Belt Use and Alcohol-Impaired Driving, an annual study conducted by the Applied Research Center at Miami University, approximately 21 percent of the 3,857 respondents report engaging in some level of text messaging while driving. This is an increase from the 2010 survey that found approximately 16 percent of 4,024 respondents engage in some level of texting while driving. The 2011 survey found unmarried males under the age of 25 were most likely to report texting while driving. Additionally, 59 percent of respondents stated they see drivers other than themselves texting while driving daily or almost daily. Ninety-one percent of respondents believe driving while texting is dangerous, while 11 percent believe they are able to safely adapt their driving while using a cell phone to text. Eight percent of respondents stated 'stop texting while driving' as a driving behavior change they could make to improve their personal safety.

Findings and Recommendations from a Statewide Outcome Evaluation of Ohio Jails

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In Fall 2008, the Bureau of Adult Detention approached research staff from the Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services and the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction about conducting a comprehensive statewide jail evaluation. The Department of Rehabilitation and Correction's Bureau of Adult Detention is charged with the statutory responsibility to create jail standards in addition to their application through inspection activities. The current 285 standards are the result of subject matter input, targeted case law and prison-based standards from the American Correctional Association.

The project was designed to better establish the correlates of high-functioning jails, and to identify a set of best practices for jails that are grounded in empirical research. The project was also designed to evaluate the existing jail standards and current inspection practices in Ohio. The information and results produced from this evaluation

were to be used by Bureau of Adult Detention management to revise and develop new jail standards for Ohio.

The research project utilized multiple methodologies and sources of information to obtain an extensive evaluation of the sources of jail best practices. Data collection activities conducted throughout the project were large in scale and wide-ranging, including focus groups from six different stakeholder groups, a correctional officer task survey of 1,005 respondents about training-related needs and deficiencies, statewide facility-level data collection at 86 full-service jails, an inmate survey with 979 respondents, a jail administrator survey with 12 respondents, semi-structured interviews of key jail operational personnel at a sample of 12 full-service jails, and intensive observational site visits at a sample of 12 full-service jails.

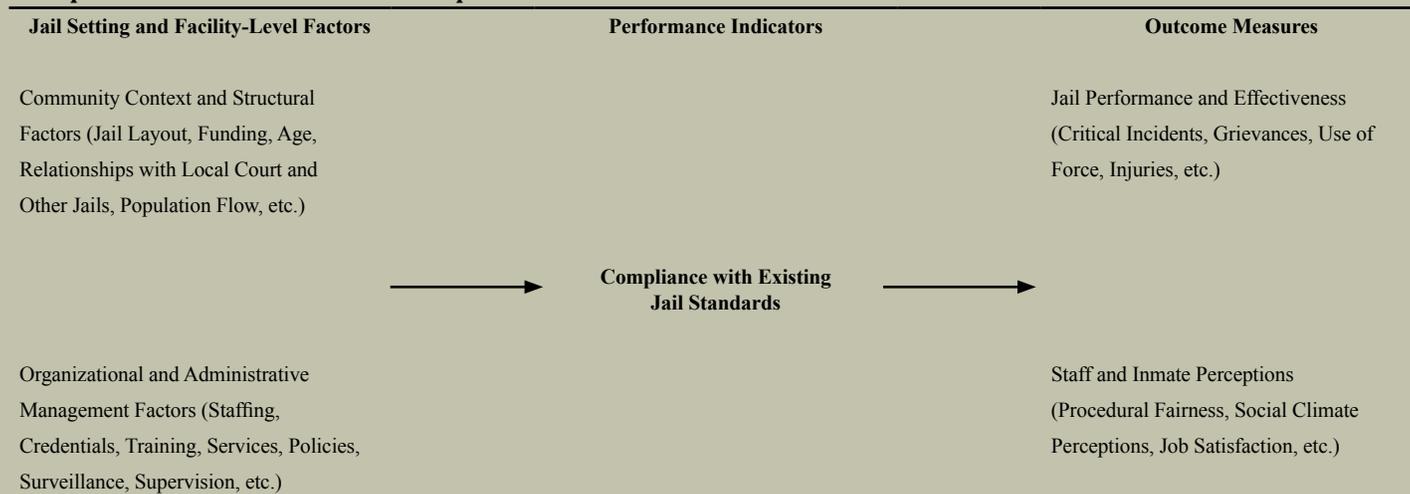
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The study results highlight several key themes and important facility-level characteristics that differentiate between levels of functioning and effectiveness in jails. In particular, a set of recommendations and

identified best practices stemming from actual operational procedures and administrative capacity were identified. Assessing the effectiveness of current inspection activities and jail standards in Ohio were also addressed in the study and included in the results.

Conceptual Model of Jail Performance and Operational Effectiveness.



The study utilized correlational and statistical modeling to examine the strength of the importance of population factors, layout and surveillance characteristics, staffing characteristics, program and service delivery, and compliance with existing standards in shaping jail outcomes.

The results of the evaluation yielded key recommendations and identified best practices

that are categorized within general areas of jail operations, procedures, characteristics, existing standards, and data collection and inspection activities including:

- Admission and booking operations
- Supervision and surveillance
- Bed management and general population
- Staffing
- Healthcare, mental health, and program delivery

- Existing minimum jail standards in ohio
- Data collection and inspection activities

Click here to view the full report.
<http://www.ocjs.ohio.gov/FinalJailReport.pdf>

Overview of Ohio’s Multi-Jurisdictional Task Forces

The Office of Criminal Justice Services provides federal and state grant funds to Ohio’s multi-jurisdictional task forces. Ohio’s multi-jurisdictional task forces generally consist of representatives from local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies and prosecutors. They tend to target mid- to upper-level drug trafficking and organized criminal activity for which it would be difficult for any one jurisdiction to build a case. In this way, they are not duplicative of individual agencies, but are seen as a crucial addition to local law enforcement.

Funding for multi-jurisdictional task forces is available through OCJS from two primary resources—the federal Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) and the state Drug Law Enforcement Fund. Task forces could apply for

both grants. In 2011, 27 task forces received JAG funding for over \$2 million. Thirty-seven task forces received Drug Law Enforcement Fund grants totaling over \$4.9 million. In addition, a few small grants were provided to agencies for special issues such as prescription drug investigations and meth cleanup.

As a requirement of the JAG and Drug Law Enforcement Fund grants, task forces submitted two semi-annual performance reports highlighting their activities and accomplishments for calendar year 2011. This report documents the activities and accomplishments of 30 task forces during CY 2011. This report focuses on street (i.e., non-pharmaceutical) drug activity, pharmaceutical drug diversion, seizures and forfeitures, and other non-drug task force activities.

Street Drug Activity

New Cases

Thirty task forces worked a total of 8,714 new cases in 2011. A case is defined as having a significant potential for prosecution. For this report, cases are based on individuals, not charges.

Search Warrants

The task forces executed a total of 2,729 search warrants. This includes paper search warrants, paper warrants on cars, vehicle searches in which drugs are found, and property consent searches.

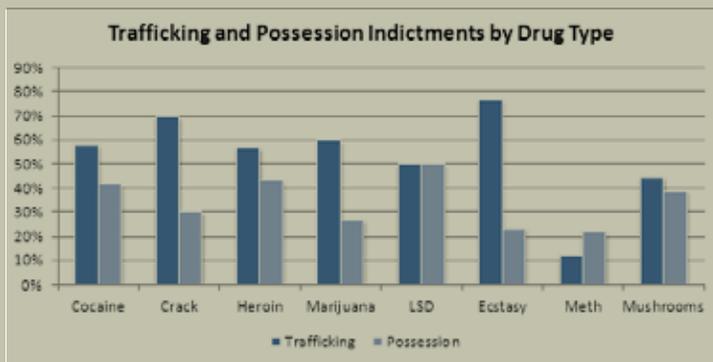
Indictments

The task forces indicted 4,260 individuals. Of these, 4,001 were non-federal indictments and 259 were federal indictments.

Indictments were also reported by felony level. Thirty-six percent were Felony 1, Felony 2, or Felony 3 indictments. In all, roughly 80 percent of indictments were for felonies, suggesting that in general the task forces were focused on upper-level criminal activity.

Task forces were asked to report on all indictments, not just the highest charge. The majority of indictments were for trafficking (N=2,375), followed by possession (N=1,462). Manufacturing/chemical assembly accounted for approximately seven percent of illegal drug indictments (N=316), but was specific primarily to methamphetamine. Likewise, cultivation (N=135) was solely tied to marijuana.

The following chart identifies the two main types of illegal drug indictments, trafficking and possession, by drug type. With the exception of methamphetamine and mushrooms, trafficking made up between 50 percent and 80 percent of indictments across the remaining drugs.



Drugs Removed by Task Force

Task forces reported on the total amount of drugs they took off the streets in 2011. The following table shows that the greatest quantity of drug seized was marijuana (processed and plants). This was followed by cocaine.

Street Drugs Removed		
	Amount	Median Price per Unit
Cocaine	191,223 grams	\$95.00/gram
Crack	50,814 grams	\$97.50/gram
Heroin	55,436 grams	\$106.49/gram
	96 UD	
Marijuana-processed	49,793 pounds	\$1,275/pound
Marijuana-plants	12,494 plants	\$1,000/plant
LSD	1,003 UD	\$8.50/UD
Ecstasy	6,801 UD	\$17.50/UD
Methamphetamine	24,549 grams	\$100/gram
Psilocybin mushrooms	3,578 grams	\$12.12/gram

Pharmaceutical Diversion

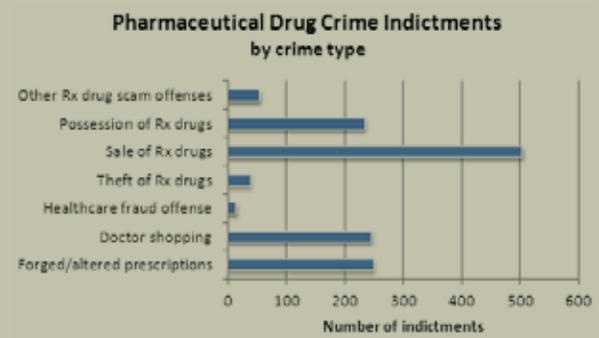
Diversion is defined as any criminal act involving a prescription drug. Fourteen of the 30 task forces reported having a dedicated diversion unit or diversion officer(s). The median number of officers assigned full-time to a diversion unit was one.

Across all task forces, all but one task force reported working at least one diversion investigation during the year. During 2011, 1,651 pharmaceutical cases were initiated, corresponding to a median of 46 cases per task force. Unsurprisingly, task forces with a dedicated diversion unit/officer worked more pharmaceutical investigations than those without a dedicated unit/officer. The median number of cases for those with a dedicated diversion unit/officer was 66.5, whereas the median number of cases for those without a dedicated diversion unit/officer was 18.5.

Indictments

Task forces indicated indictments by felony level. Thirty-nine percent were Felony 1, Felony 2, or Felony 3 indictments. Ninety-four percent of indictments were for felonies.

Individuals were indicted for a variety of crimes, including possession, sale, or theft of prescription drugs, healthcare fraud, doctor shopping, forged/altered prescriptions, and other drug scams. All crimes (not just the most serious crime) in which the individual was indicted were reported. The majority of indictments were for the sale of prescription drugs.



Drugs Removed

The following table identifies the most commonly reported drugs removed upon indictment. Task forces distinguished between drugs seized and diverted. Diverted reflects the amount of prescription drugs that have been identified as diverted dosage units during an investigation, but never seized.

Prescription Drugs Seized and/or Diverted		
	Amount seized	Amount diverted
Alprazolam (Xanax)	11,060	119,568
Amphetamine mixture (Adderall)	614	2,310
Buprenorphine (Subutex, Suboxone)	541	7,787
Carisoprodol (Soma)	4,214	7,628
Clonazepam (Klonopin)	438	15,825
Codeine (Tylenol #3, Tylenol #4, cough syrup)	179	7,281
Dextroamphetamine (Dexedrine)	950	0
Diazepam (Valium)	904	15,735
Fentanyl, fentanyl citrate (duragesic patches, Actiq, Fentora)	217	1,883
Hydrocodone (Vicodin, Lortab, Lorcet)	23,449	218,153
Hydromorphone (Dilaudid)	602	5,845
Lorazepam (Ativan)	1,351	6,789

Meperidine (Demerol)	8	33
Methadone (liquid/wafers/pills)	1,458	36,005
Methylphenidate (Ritalin)	2,174	15,261
Morphine (MS Contin, EMBEDA, Kadian)	2,441	20,359
Oxycodone—ER (Oxycontin)	21,053	75,857
Oxycodone—IR (Percocet, Percodan, Roxicet, Roxicodone)	68,197	279,522
Oxymorphone (Opana)	871	2,559
Pentazocine (Talwin)	30	747
Pheneratamine (Adipex-P, Fastin, Ionamin)	674	330
Tramadol (Ultram, Ultracet)	1,392	33,280
Triazolam (Halcion)	3	300
Zolpidem Tartrate (Ambien)	46	3,210

Criminal Assets Seized and Forfeited

Asset seizure generally refers to the seizure of drug-related assets (such as vehicles, currency, real estate, and electronics) that have been used to facilitate drug trafficking or are derived from drug trafficking. The estimated value of all assets seized was nearly \$11.9 million. Asset forfeiture refers to those seized assets proven in court to have been used to facilitate drug trafficking or derived from drug trafficking and are thus forfeited to government entities. The estimated value of all assets forfeited was over \$4.1 million.

Other Task Force Activity

New Non-Drug Cases

Ohio's multi-jurisdictional task forces engaged in numerous investigations in which the focus was something other than drug-related crime. Examples of

non-drug cases that task forces have either initiated or assisted with include:

- Robbery
- Burglary/breaking and entering
- Murder/attempted murder
- Illegal/stolen firearms
- Weapons violations
- Gambling
- Warrant service
- Obstructing justice
- Forgery
- Assault
- Fraud
- Theft in office
- Tampering with evidence/records
- Counterfeit money
- Money laundering
- Passing bad checks
- Impersonating a police officer
- Internet crimes against children/child porn
- Underage sales
- Prostitution/johns
- Smuggling
- Sex crimes
- Explosives
- Dumping waste

Firearms Confiscated

A total of 1,427 firearms were confiscated by the task forces in 2011.