



Drug Trafficking Organizations Adaptability to Smuggle Drugs across SWB after Losing Key Personnel

(U//FOUO) Scope

CBP BorderStat drug seizure information was used to evaluate seizure statistics in relation to the arrest or death of key DTO personnel. The drug seizure data was collected from January 2009 through January 2010. This data was analyzed to determine if the arrest or death of key personnel had a direct impact on the flow of U.S.-bound drugs. This research indicates that there is no perceptible pattern that correlates either a decrease or increase in drug seizures due to the removal of key DTO personnel. (See Attachment)

(U//FOUO) Background

(U//FOUO) Since 2008, Mexican Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTOs) have lost key personnel due to arrest or death. This assessment addresses the primary presumptive question:

- Does the arrest or death of key Drug Trafficking Organizations affect drug flow?

(U//FOUO) There is the assumption that marijuana trafficking from Mexico decreases annually in the summer months due to it being the end of the harvest cycle. Subsequently, the only marijuana available for trafficking is the remainder from the previous year's harvest in the fall.

(U//FOUO) Generally, a steady stream of drugs are trafficked across the Southwest border (SWB) as long as they are available in Mexico.

(U//FOUO) Key Findings

- There was no change in the seizure rates when a key DTO member was arrested or killed.
 - If the weight of drugs seized was increasing prior to the event, the trend continued.
 - If the weight of drugs seized was decreasing prior to the event, that trend also continued.
- Availability due to agricultural growth cycles had the greatest impact.
- The lowest seizure rates correlate directly with major religious holidays.
- Arresting one or two individuals from a DTO does not significantly impact drug trafficking flows.



(U//FOUO) Intelligence Gaps

(U//FOUO) The total amount of drugs trafficked across the SWB is unknown.

(U//FOUO) DTO line of succession operational capabilities is unknown.

(U//FOUO) Conclusion

(U//FOUO) The removal of key personnel does not have a discernable impact on drug flows as determined by seizure rates. DTO operations appear to have built in redundancy and personnel that perform specific duties to limit the damage incurred by the removal of any one person. By sheer volume alone, drug operations would require more than one individual to coordinate and control the process. While the continued arrest or death of key DTO leadership may have long-term implications as to the control and viability of a specific DTO, there is no indication it will impact overall drug flows into the United States.

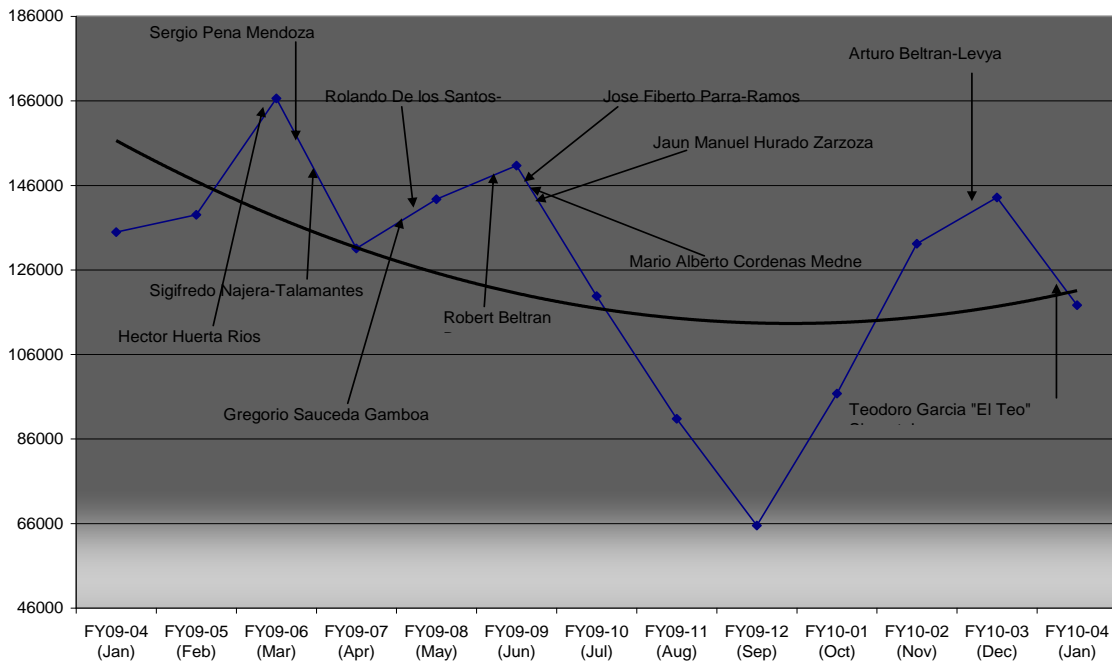
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Attachment

(U/FOUO) The graph below depicts the monthly average of drugs seized on the SWB by CBP. The dates of arrest/death of key personnel are identified by arrows from the principal's names. A linear regression trend line has been added (dark black) to display the overall trend of the drug seizures. The largest decline (August through October) occurs coincidental with the months just prior to marijuana harvest in Mexico.

CBP Total SWB Drugs by Weight Jan 09-Jan10



(U/FOUO) The graph below depicts the daily seizures by CBP on the SWB. The linear regressive trend line (red line) shows no discernable variation due to the removal of key DTO personnel.

