

# ALASKA STATE TROOPERS

**Alaska Bureau of Investigation  
Statewide Drug Enforcement Unit**



**2014 Annual Drug Report**

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# 2014 ANNUAL DRUG REPORT

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## INTRODUCTION

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The Alaska State Troopers' Alaska Bureau of Investigation, Statewide Drug Enforcement Unit (SDEU) in authoring this publication, has endeavored to represent the drug and illegal alcohol situation in Alaska in a manner that provides the broadest possible picture of the true illicit drug situation.

There are numerous Municipal, Borough, and Federal agencies that conduct drug investigations in Alaska. While some agencies have less formal relationships with the Department of Public Safety, many work closely and collaboratively with the Alaska State Troopers. In order to properly represent the true drug and illegal alcohol situation in Alaska, statistics from as many agencies in Alaska as possible are included in this report. While we made an effort to provide the most accurate seizure data and made a deliberative effort to avoid duplication, there are instances where a specific seizure may have been counted in more than one report. Information provided by all sources should be considered when attempting to measure how drugs and illegal alcohol are impacting the citizens of this state.

We believe including as much information from all agencies involved in drug and illegal alcohol enforcement in Alaska is vital when analyzing the needs of the state in the arena of drug and illegal alcohol enforcement. However, it is important to note that the numbers alone should not be the sole source from which to make a complete assessment of the true drug and illegal alcohol situation in Alaska. To get the most accurate picture of the illicit drug and alcohol situation within Alaska, we have attempted to take into account the anecdotal information gathered from conversations with those investigators on the frontlines of Alaska's efforts to investigate, document, and apprehend those who have chosen to participate in Alaska's illicit drug and alcohol culture.

## OUR MISSION

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SDEU provides a team-building role in coordinating law enforcement's efforts to reduce the availability of illegal alcohol and controlled substances throughout Alaska. SDEU recognizes that a successful alcohol and drug interdiction program depends upon a unified effort—blending traditional law enforcement techniques with demand reduction programs that address educational, social, and community concerns.

SDEU's Mission is to:

- ❖ Interdict and seize alcohol and controlled substances that are illegally distributed throughout Alaska.
- ❖ Identify and arrest distributors of controlled substances and illegal alcohol.
- ❖ Provide training and investigative support to criminal justice agencies.
- ❖ Support and participate in public education programs.

## STAFFING AND SUPPORT

SDEU recognizes that because of Alaska's geographical vastness, no single law enforcement agency is capable of addressing the illegal drug and alcohol issues alone. Using a combination of federal and state funding, the Department of Public Safety helps to fund a number of multi-jurisdictional task forces around the state. SDEU encourages cooperative efforts between federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies and has taken a leadership role in fostering and developing many cooperative arrangements through multi-jurisdictional and/or multi-agency efforts. The ABI-SDEU Headquarters office in Anchorage primarily participates in six (6) investigative task forces throughout the state. These teams are broken down by region as follows:

- ❖ Alaska Interdiction Task Force / Anchorage Enforcement Group (DEA sponsored)
- ❖ Fairbanks Area-wide Narcotics Team
- ❖ Mat-Su Narcotics Enforcement Team
- ❖ South Central Area-wide Narcotics Team
- ❖ Southeast Alaska Cities Against Drugs Task Force
- ❖ Western Alaska Alcohol and Narcotics Team

State Wide Drug Enforcement Unit Map



*Additional specific information on the individual units can be found at:  
<http://dps.alaska.gov/AST/ABI/SDEU.aspx>*

SDEU participates with and receives assistance from several investigative agencies involved in drug enforcement. These agencies include the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA); Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI); the US Postal Inspection Service; the Internal Revenue Service (IRS); Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (BATFE); Department of Homeland Security (DHS), to include US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and the United States Coast Guard (USCG). SDEU also works closely with other local law enforcement agencies.

## DRUGS OF CHOICE

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Alcohol, cocaine, heroin, marijuana, methamphetamine, and prescription drugs have been identified as the primary substances of abuse and are the focus of most Alaskan law enforcement efforts.

During 2014, the Alaska State Troopers did not investigate or respond to a single report of a methamphetamine lab, down from five the previous year. Despite progress in eradicating methamphetamine labs throughout the state and enhanced methamphetamine precursor laws in 2006, methamphetamine continues to be readily available throughout Alaska and arrives mostly from sources outside of the state.

The apparent increase of the abuse of heroin and continued abuse of other opiates (including various opioid based prescription medications) is of significant concern, primarily in the urban areas. Alcohol and marijuana continue to be the overwhelming drugs of choice for rural Alaska; however, seizures of methamphetamine, heroin, and prescription drugs have been increasing in smaller rural communities in 2014.

# HEROIN

Heroin is a highly addictive drug derived from morphine which is obtained from the opium poppy. It is a "downer" or depressant that affects the brain's pleasure systems and interferes with the brain's ability to perceive pain. It is a white to dark brown powder, or a tar-like substance. Heroin can be used in a variety of ways, depending on the user's preference and the purity of the drug. Heroin can be injected into a vein or muscle, smoked in a water pipe or standard pipe, mixed in a marijuana joint or regular cigarette, inhaled as smoke through a straw, or snorted as a powder via the nose.

The short term effects of heroin abuse appear soon after a single dose and disappear after a few hours. After an injection of heroin, the user reports feeling a surge of euphoria accompanied by a warm flushing of the skin, a dry mouth, and heavy extremities.

Heroin use is not isolated to the urban areas of Alaska. Undercover buys and interdictions of heroin have been reported in several smaller communities. Heroin is primarily imported into Alaska via parcels and body carries. Investigations have shown that heroin use crosses socio-economic boundaries.

## SDEU Heroin Statistics

### *Heroin Seized (Pounds)*

2012	2013	2014
4.93	55.12	22.42

### *Heroin Charges/Arrests*

2012	2013	2014
146	151	209

