

# CLOSING IN ON METH

## THE CANADIAN ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY (2020 - 2021)

The Canadian Integrated Response to Organized Crime (CIROC)



Intelligence-led

Partnership-based

Operationally-focused

January 2020

# FOREWORD

The overarching goal of this strategy is to disrupt the supply of methamphetamine in Canada. The strategy is intelligence-driven, partnership-based, and operationally-focused. The *Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy* emphasizes the need for a balanced approach in both reducing supply through enforcement, and demand through prevention and intervention. This national strategy recognizes the responsibilities of law enforcement in reducing supply of methamphetamine and suppressing organized crime activity.

Methamphetamine is among the most prevalent substances in the Canadian illicit drug market. The Criminal Intelligence Service Canada (CISC) has identified methamphetamine as having one of the highest levels of threat due to its geographical reach, high burden of harm, and increased involvement of domestic organized crime groups (OCGs). There has been substantial increases in trafficking and use, with a 28 percent increase in OCG involvement over the last three years. OCG involvement is at all levels of production, importation and distribution. This is expected to continue into 2020-2021.

The Canadian methamphetamine market is and will continue to be mostly supplied by domestic labs, with OCGs getting inexpensive, readily available chemicals from hardware, grocery, pharmacy and supplement stores.<sup>1</sup> Domestic methamphetamine production will

continue to expand as long as OCGs can successfully circumnavigate the existing precursor control regulations.<sup>2</sup>

The Canadian Integrated Response to Organized Crime (CIROC), which represents the totality of police services in Canada, was created with a mandate to coordinate a strategic plan for fighting organized or serious crime through the integration of Canadian police efforts at the municipal, provincial/territorial, regional, and national levels. Methamphetamine has emerged as one of the most significant commodities within organized crime; entrenched from production, to importation and distribution. Regardless of the investigation, methamphetamine remains one of the most consistent commodities seized by police and is increasing in popularity.

According to Health Canada's Drug Analysis Services, methamphetamine is the highest controlled substance seized by Canadian law enforcement agencies in 2019.<sup>3</sup> Another indicator of its increasing presence is by the Canada Border Services Agency reporting a 333% increase in methamphetamine seizures from 2017-2018.<sup>4</sup> Its harmful impacts will increasingly be felt beyond the individual user, posing greater risks to communities, including law enforcement and other first responders.



<sup>1</sup> 2018-19 National Criminal Intelligence Estimate (NCIE) on the Canadian Criminal Marketplace - Illicit Drugs Summary (2019). <http://www.cisc.gc.ca/nps-psn/ncie-pnrc-eng.htm>

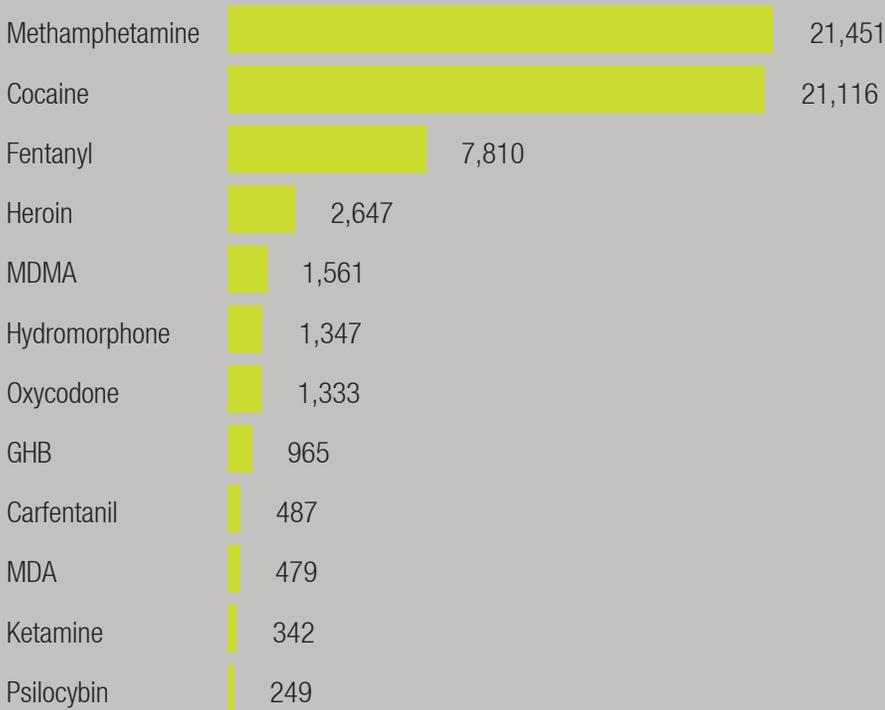
<sup>2</sup> Criminal Intelligence Service Canada (CISC), *2018-19 National Crime Intelligence Estimate on the Canadian Criminal Marketplace*, 2019, CISC Central Bureau, pg. 11. <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/health-concerns/controlled-substances-precursor-chemicals/drug-analysis-service/drug-analysis-service-summary-report-samples-analysed.html>.

<sup>3</sup> Health Canada. Analyzed Drug Report- Canada 2019 -Q3 (July to September), pg. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Canada Border Services Agency. *Drug Analysis Report (DAR) Year-End 2018 (January to December)* pg. 9.

<sup>5</sup> Criminal Intelligence Service Canada (CISC), *2018-19 National Crime Intelligence Estimate on the Canadian Criminal Marketplace*, 2019, CISC Central Bureau, pg. 7.

# HEALTH CANADA DRUG ANALYSIS SERVICE JANUARY - SEPTEMBER 2019 MAIN CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES



**CANADA BORDER  
SERVICES AGENCY  
2017 - 2018**

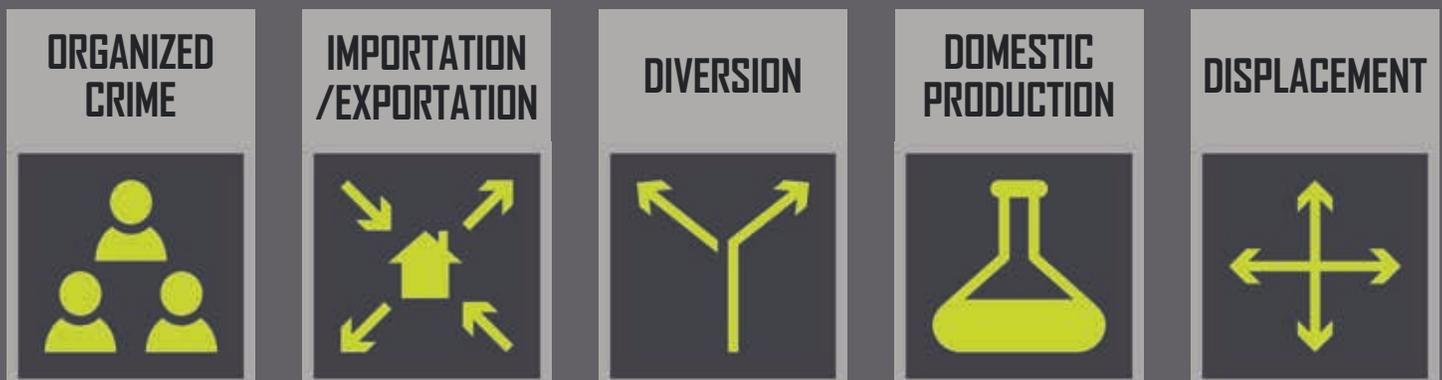
**333%**  
Methamphetamine  
Seizures

Methamphetamine has permeated across Canadian communities, which has a serious impact on community safety, contributing to increasing violent and property crimes.

All police services in Canada are acutely aware of the impacts of methamphetamine. Some have been targeting those who import, produce and distribute this harmful illicit substance. By coordinating

efforts at a national level law enforcement will take advantage of the economy of scale of resources supported by reliable intelligence. This enforcement strategy positions law enforcement for success and will keep us ahead of changing trends. No longer will law enforcement organizations be working in isolation, but will disrupt the availability and supply of methamphetamine across Canada.

The strategy is all-encompassing, progressive and achievable. It focuses on five key components:





# ORGANIZED CRIME

**GOAL:** To nationally coordinate provincial investigations of identified organized crime groups.

**Organized crime is defined as a crime committed by any group of at least three people that involves the commission of a serious offence in pursuit of profit. Section 467.1(1) of the Criminal Code defines a criminal organization as, “a group, however organized, that (a) is composed of three or more persons in or outside Canada; and, (b) has as one of its main purposes or main activities the facilitation or commission of one or more serious offences, that, if committed, would likely result in the direct or indirect receipt of a material benefit, including a financial benefit, by the group or by any one of the persons who constitute the group.”**

Historically law enforcement has been challenged to find ways to work more collaboratively and efficiently. In 2001, the Office of the Auditor General of Canada identified that Canadian law enforcement requires stronger leadership and more consistent coordination to set a strategy, common objectives, and collective performance expectations. It must be able to respond quickly to emerging concerns about illicit drug use or the illicit drug trade.<sup>6</sup> This strategy is constructed to be intelligence driven, partnership based and operationally focused.

Methamphetamine has emerged as one of the most significant market threats with organized crime involvement entrenched at all levels of production, importation and distribution.

At the February 2019 CIROC meeting, the Criminal Intelligence Service Canada (CISC) identified methamphetamine as having one of the highest levels of threat due to its geographical reach, high burden of harm, and increased involvement of domestic organized crime groups. It also provided an in-depth review of organized crime groups related to precursor diversion, importation, production and distribution.

The provinces with the predominant organized crime activity related to the importation, production and distribution of methamphetamine are British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario and Quebec. In addition, Manitoba expressed an interest in contributing to a national coordinated operational initiative.

A Joint Management Team (JMT) representing the participating five provinces has been created. The JMT is comprised of provincial executive leads and partners including CISC and the CBSA. It is also supported by individual provincial case managers who focus on operationalizing CISC intelligence.

**This model challenges the operational structure of organized crime groups,**

**strategically targeting their points of interconnectivity and interdependence. The coordination of provincial initiatives is expected to achieve a greater impact on methamphetamine nationally.**

The CISC has committed to provide quarterly intelligence updates that reflect the current environment. The ability to truly understand the evolving nature of OCG activity is predicated on an enhanced and dynamic intelligence gathering and distribution process. This means increased production and rapid distribution of relevant information amongst operation groups and CISC. An objective to this operational process and oversight is to validate the information analyzed by CISC and increase methamphetamine related information obtained and shared. This collaborative model requires provincial leadership to empower information sharing.

Organized crime is comprised of interconnected networks operating both independently and together to further collective criminal goals (e.g. chemical, financial). Organized crime groups operate with a geographical scope that is often interprovincial and or international. By identifying and collectively agreeing upon disrupting the supply of methamphetamine, law enforcement positively positions itself to diminish the harmful impacts of methamphetamine across Canada.

<sup>6</sup> Office of the Auditor General of Canada, Chapter 11: Illicit Drugs – The Federal Government Role (2001). <http://publications.gc.ca/collections/Collection/FA1-2001-1-11E.pdf>

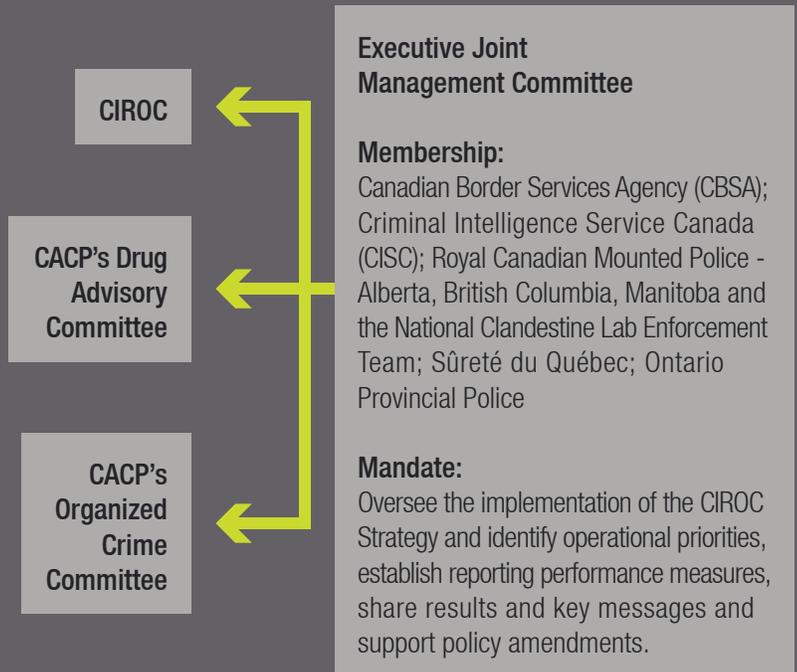
# METHAMPHETAMINE STRATEGY

## Key Activities:

- Identify provincial executive leads and operational managers. Create a Joint Management Team, including representatives from CBSA and CISC.
- Share and regularly update CISC intelligence reports related to OCG involvement in methamphetamine.
- Identify new intelligence opportunities e.g. The Drug Enforcement Administration.
- Develop provincial operational plans and share results on a quarterly basis to the JMT.
- Ensure ongoing collaboration between provincial case managers and analysts.
- In major case investigations with a link to methamphetamine, the flow of money will be considered from funding sources to proceeds.

## Performance Measures:

- Enhanced national methamphetamine intelligence picture through the creation of new intelligence sources and increased police reporting:
  - *Number of new drug analysis data sources, external to CIROC partners, feeding into CISC;*
  - *Number of intelligence products on methamphetamines created by CISC for CIROC members and others; and,*
  - *Increase in methamphetamine investigations and occurrences reported by police to CIROC and CISC.*
- Number of new collaborative enforcement/intelligence frameworks established:
  - *Number of new joint-force initiatives; and*
  - *Number of joint analytical working groups.*
- Increased charges relating to organized crime activity:
  - *Number of investigations opened with both a methamphetamine and OC component/element.*
- Number of methamphetamine-related approved operational plans uploaded to ACIIS at the onset of the investigation.





# IMPORTATION/EXPORTATION

The interception of illicit drugs and precursor chemicals across borders.

**GOAL:** To restrict the importation/exportation of methamphetamine and its precursors.

The CBSA and police agencies are committed to combatting the importation/exportation of illicit substances in and out of Canada. Within the global methamphetamine economy, Canada has a role as both a producer and transit country. The United States is the top transit country by quantity of methamphetamine seizures, but the vast majority is produced in Mexico. The highest number of methamphetamine seizures are in the postal/mail mode, but the largest quantities have been found via land border. The Netherlands is also a key transit country, with the CBSA seizing the highest number of postal seizures originating from there (small quantities suspected for personal use). The CBSA has seen a 70 percent increase in methamphetamine seizures during the first 6 months of 2019, over 2018. In addition, Canada has been identified as a top country of origin (or transit) for methamphetamine imports into Australia and Japan.

Chemical precursors (chemicals used to produce illicit drugs such as methamphetamine) are also imported illegally, or are legally imported but diverted to the domestic production of methamphetamine. Precursors arrive via air cargo, mail and marine modes of transit and are sometimes challenging to identify and interdict. Commonly seized precursors include ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, red phosphorous, hypo phosphorous acid and 1-phenyl-2-propanone (P2P). Opportunities exist, when conducting investigations into the origins of the chemicals used for production, to work with CBSA to identify the supply chain and diversion points.

As an integral partner in this strategy, CBSA can target specific importers and products shared by police services as known or suspected entities of interest. Sharing information amongst the law enforcement community can also help the CBSA Intelligence Division identify high-risk shipments and previously unknown importers or threat actors. CBSA has a number of regulatory and criminal authorities, expertise in border and trade operations, and various international partners that can all support the Canadian Enforcement Strategy on Methamphetamines. In addition, the CBSA is undertaking focused work with its international partners on combatting the importation of methamphetamines from Mexico. This work will likely support our Canadian strategy.

## Key Activities:

- Provide expertise on importations, as well as border and trade-related activities.
- Share intelligence with CBSA for intelligence analysis, production and targeting.
- Increase awareness of CBSA services within law enforcement (particularly in joint force operations).

## Performance Measures:

- Increased seizures of precursor chemicals and methamphetamine:
  - *Number of seizures of precursor chemicals (type and volume in kgs);*
  - *Number of seizures of methamphetamine; and*
  - *Percentage change in the annual number of methamphetamine seizures.*
- Increased CBSA collaboration on domestic investigations:
  - *Number of new collaborative enforcement and intelligence initiatives with CBSA; and*
  - *Number of joint training and awareness initiatives with CBSA.*



# DIVERSION

When chemicals, used for the production of synthetic drugs, are removed from the legal supply chain and used for an illicit purpose.

**GOAL:** To prevent precursor diversion through greater regulation and oversight.

Precursor chemicals required to make methamphetamine domestically may be legally entering Canada, meeting the requirements of the precursor chemical regulations (PCR's). Once they enter, some are diverted by organized crime groups to produce synthetic drugs on a large scale for sale as well as export.

The main precursors used in clandestine laboratory operations to produce methamphetamine (e.g., ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, 1-phenyl-2-propanone) are controlled as Class A precursors under Schedule VI of the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA)*, and also under the Precursor Control Regulations of the *CDSA*. As such, all importations and exportations are regulated and controlled by permits and licenses.

There are two apparent challenges with existing regulations. First, these regulations do not include provisions to monitor who is using these chemicals and for what purpose. Once these chemicals arrive in Canada, there is no monitoring or reporting mechanism to detect and prevent diversion for illicit purposes. Second, the regulations do not allow for the prohibition of suspicious precursor chemicals entering the country. For instance, certain chemicals listed within regulations (e.g., precursors for fentanyl including NPP and propionyl chloride) have no industrial uses in Canada and should, and could, be prohibited.

These loopholes have allowed Canadian OCGs to gain a solid foothold on methamphetamine production in Canada. Clandestine methamphetamine laboratory operations utilize different precursor chemicals (e.g., ephedrine or pseudoephedrine) that are not monitored once they arrive in Canada. The PCR's do little to prevent the diversion or limit importations of chemicals to Canada. Greater intelligence related to incoming shipments and purchases of precursors and laboratory equipment is required.

## Key Activities:

- Assign resources to work with Health Canada to conduct an analysis of importation trends to inform enforcement action (e.g. Review end user declarations, Class A precursor sales and review non-threshold sales/monitoring).
- Increase information sharing between Health Canada and law enforcement. Make all information collected on licensees, businesses, transaction and end user declaration more readily accessible by law enforcement.
- Ensure as new precursors are identified in operations that related PCR's are amended.

- Develop a working group, in collaboration with the CACP's Drug Advisory Committee, to review the existing *CDSA* and associated PCR's to identify potential policy gaps with the aim to comprehensively regulate and prohibit the importation, exportation, possession and use of precursor chemicals for illicit purposes. The working group will include Health Canada, Public Safety Canada and representatives from the chemical industry and police services to develop recommendations to amend PCR's. The working group will report back to CIROC with recommendations by the end of 2020. They will review the intended and unintended consequences of tightened PCR's.

## Performance Measures:

- Modernized PCR's to prevent precursor chemical diversion in the creation of synthetic drugs:
  - *Number of joint working groups with the CACP Drug Advisory Committee (including the Public Prosecution Service of Canada (PPSC) and Health Canada).*
- Improved information sharing between Health Canada and law enforcement:
  - *Number of new collaborative initiatives with Health Canada.*

**This directly supports the CACP August 2019 Resolution: Resolution #01 - 2019**

## EXAMINATION OF PRECURSOR CONTROL REGULATIONS

**WHEREAS** methamphetamine has emerged as one of the most significant illicit drug threats in Canada with entrenched organized crime involvement in importation, production, and distribution, and;

**WHEREAS** organized crime groups circumnavigate existing precursor control regulations to facilitate illicit domestic methamphetamine production, and;

**WHEREAS** the existing Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA) and Precursor Control Regulations does not provide effective measures (e.g., scheduling and monitoring provisions) to comprehensively regulate and prohibit the importation, exportation, possession, and use of precursor chemicals for illicit purposes.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police urges the Government of Canada, specifically Public Safety Canada and Health Canada, in concert with CACP, to conduct a review of existing CDSA and associated regulations to identify gaps and potential amendments that will reduce methamphetamine manufacturing and thereby increase public safety.



# DOMESTIC PRODUCTION

Methamphetamine produced within Canada.

**GOAL:** To identify domestic production of methamphetamine and ensure common practice that all lab investigations include component aimed at identifying precursor chemical sources and potential sources of funding. (Reverse engineering to diversion/importation)

Police services have invested significant resources to effectively investigate and dismantle the domestic production of meth. The objective now is to not only dismantle domestic labs, but to expand the investigation to identify sources of precursor chemicals. This requires backtrack or reverse engineer investigations to occur when labs are dismantled. The identification of a methamphetamine lab will now be the starting point of identifying sources for precursors. This requires a paradigm shift in policing in order to maximize intelligence and investigative capabilities.

A variety of sizes and types of domestic production labs exist. Economic Based lab (profit-driven lab) can produce upwards of five kilograms of illegal drugs per cook cycle, managed by organized crime groups. Whereas, The “One Pot” method of meth production is done in one container, with recipes available on the Internet, taking 1-2 hours. Economic labs require on average three full days to dismantle. Due to the size of these toxic sites, emergency services personnel required for the duration of the remediation which can exceed 45 police/fire and ambulance staff. The cost of remediation is a significant challenge for law enforcement.

Increased awareness of lab investigation teams, including contacts of subject matter experts, is required. It is imperative law enforcement services are aware of who to contact when a methamphetamine lab is suspected. There is a risk of toxic exposure, environmental damage, and chemical explosions associated to the public and first responders, including firefighters, police and other emergency services personnel, who must respond to these scenes.

## Key Activities:

- Develop a common practice to initiate parallel investigation to identify source of precursor chemicals and sources of funding when domestic labs are dismantled. Successful investigations are to be shared at JMT and CIROC meetings.
- Develop a subject matter expert contact list.
- Increase public awareness of clandestine lab indicators through a comprehensive communications plan to encourage reporting.
- Seek necessary funding solutions for the remediation of clandestine labs.

## Performance Measures:

- Number of clandestine labs dismantled and charges laid, including those related to chemical precursors.
- Number of proceeds of crime and offence-related property charges.
- Value of assets seized from methamphetamine producers/traffickers.
- National training and communications strategy implemented.

**This directly supports the 2019 CACP resolution:  
CACP Resolution #02 - 2019**

## COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH CLANDESTINE LABORATORY REMOVAL

**WHEREAS law enforcement is obligated to collect and preserve evidence from clandestine drug laboratories, and;  
WHEREAS significant resources can be required to safely dismantle clandestine drug laboratories to ensure public safety, and;**

**WHEREAS the burden of the initial dismantlement and disposal expenses are currently the responsibility of law enforcement, and;  
WHEREAS the dismantlement and disposal expenses can be significant and are dependent on various factors (e.g., size of site, duration of operation, and geography).**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police urges that the federal government provide the necessary funding to provinces, territories, and municipalities for tools and resource capacity to safely dismantle and dispose clandestine drug laboratories and those drugs produced consistent with its public safety and environmental mandate are readily available, and costs associated to the dismantling of clandestine labs are recovered.**



# DISPLACEMENT

The classic displacement phenomenon occurs when efforts are placed and pressure is applied to restrict a commodity, supply may come from somewhere else.

**GOAL:** To proactively foresee future precursors, organized crime group involvement and production methods and strategically partner and communicate with stakeholders.

Several methods exist to produce methamphetamine, requiring alternate chemical precursors. However, the future of methamphetamine production is largely unknown. If the importation of methamphetamine is not feasible, the market will rely on its domestic production including the availability of precursors. If precursors are further regulated with greater oversight, their availability may also be reduced. It would be neglectful to underestimate the ingenuity of organized crime when market demand and profit exists.

For example, recent years have seen a massive upswing in the production of ephedra and methamphetamine from the mountains and deserts of Afghanistan. Methamphetamine is being produced by ephedra's precursor plant, oman, and distributed across Afghanistan and beyond. This represents a new plant based methamphetamine production option. It also represents a now well-established feature of synthetic drug production, demonstrating the innovation and ingenuity of the producers, is the production of internationally controlled precursors using so-called 'pre-precursor' chemicals that are not subject to such strict controls. Would oman based production be viable in Canada? Maybe not. Perhaps an increase in smaller lab production domestically using ephedrine-based medicine available at pharmacies will prevail. This will require proactive prevention and education based partnerships with retail and governing bodies.

## Key Activities:

- Law enforcement will be diligent in monitoring domestic production methodologies and develop required partnerships.
- Develop proactive educational partnerships with stakeholders e.g. pharmacies.

## Performance Measures:

- Increased public awareness regarding indicators of methamphetamine production:
  - *Number of both conventional and social media campaigns, including number of agencies participating and campaign reach.*
- Increased industry awareness regarding indicators of chemical precursor diversion:
  - *Number and reach of new communication bulletins and initiatives.*
- Improved officer awareness of chemical precursors and methamphetamine production:
  - *Creation of a national training course; and*
  - *Number of officers who have completed the training.*





**METHAMPHETAMINE**