



## DEA BULLETIN



# (U) Black Tar Heroin in the New York Division

(U) This DEA Bulletin is based on preliminary reporting and may be subject to updating as additional information becomes available.

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## (U) Event

(U//DSEN) Since February 2010, over 38 kilograms of suspected black tar heroin have been seized by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) New York Division (NYD), which included an October 2014 seizure of 16 kilograms. Historically, the type of heroin seized in the New York area is predominantly South American (SA) white heroin. In some black tar seizures, agents also recovered multi-pound quantities of crystal methamphetamine.

(U//DSEN) DEA reporting indicates Mexican drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) have established a presence in the New York metropolitan area and work closely with well-known Colombian and Dominican drug trafficking networks operating in the area.

## (U) Significance

(U//DSEN) Since approximately 2012, Mexican DTOs have had a substantial impact on drug trafficking in the New York area. The Mexican DTOs are the sources of supply for cocaine, heroin, marijuana, and crystal methamphetamine for already well-known drug trafficking networks operating in the area. The Mexican DTOs' increasing influence on drug trafficking in New York is noted by the Division's rise in seizures of black tar heroin and crystal methamphetamine. Although the quantities of black tar heroin seized are small in comparison to cocaine and powder heroin, black tar heroin and crystal methamphetamine seizures are becoming more common.

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## (U) Details

(U//DSEN) A review of NYD investigations disclosed seven significant seizures involving black tar heroin and are summarized as follows:

- (U//DSEN) On October 21, 2014, the following were seized by a New York Drug Enforcement Task Force (NYDETF) group: 16 kilograms of black tar heroin, 3 kilograms of powder heroin, 6 kilograms of crystal methamphetamine, 5,000 3, 4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA or Ecstasy) tablets, and approximately \$75,000 United States currency (USC). This investigation targeted a money laundering/ poly-drug DTO operating in New York, Florida, Canada, and Colombia and also involved the Miami Field Division.
- (U//DSEN) On September 23, 2014, five kilograms of black tar heroin were seized by a NYDETF group during a vehicle stop in Warren County, New Jersey. A consent search of the vehicle's engine area revealed the heroin secreted in the manifold (see figure 1). The DTO associated with this investigation is responsible for importing large amounts of heroin into the NYC area, as well as moving bulk cash back to source countries.

(U//DSEN) Figure 1: Heroin Secreted in Manifold of Vehicle.



Source: DEA NYD

- (U//DSEN) A NYDETF group seized over seven kilograms of black tar heroin on March 27, 2014 from a Bronx-based dealer.
- (U//DSEN) A Long Island District Office (LIDO) group seized the following on January 12, 2014 during a search of a tractor trailer near Carlisle, Pennsylvania: over two kilograms of black tar heroin, five kilograms of crystal methamphetamine, and \$15,000 USC. This investigation targeted a Mexican DTO that transported large quantities of narcotics via tractor trailer from the Southwest border to New York and New England.
- (U//DSEN) On July 17, 2012, five kilograms of black tar heroin were seized by a NYD group from a target who recently traveled from California.
- (U//DSEN) Nearly two kilograms of black tar heroin were seized on July 20, 2011, by a NYD group from a target who smuggled heroin into the United States from Mexico via a pair of sneakers (see figure 2).

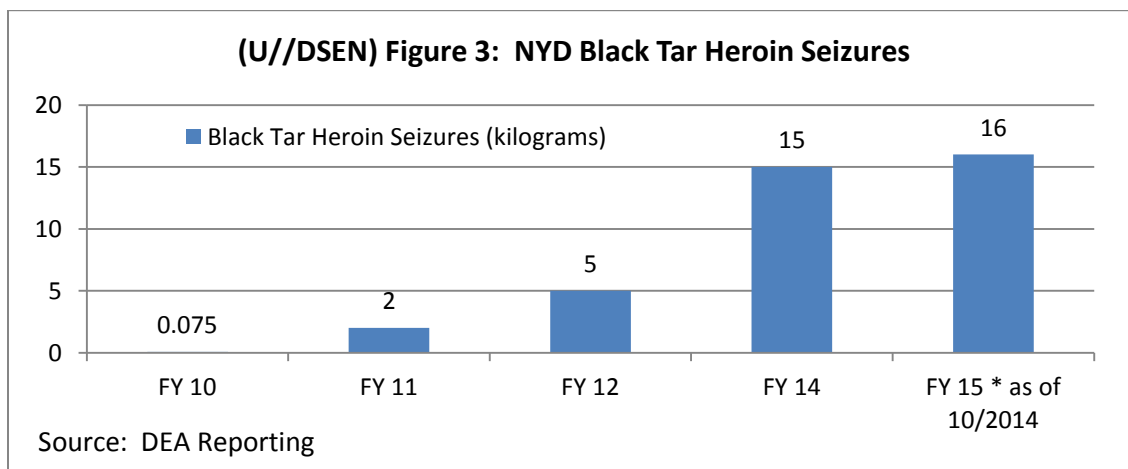
(U//DSEN) Figure 2: Heroin Secreted in Sneakers



Source: DEA NYD

- (U//DSEN) On February 15, 2010, 750 grams of black tar heroin were seized by a NYD group from a target in Freeport, NY.

(U//DSEN) Trend shifts relative to the presence of black tar heroin have not been confirmed within the NYD. A review of NYD Heroin Domestic Monitoring Program data indicate no exhibits of black tar heroin. One possible reason for the limited presence of black tar heroin in the area is the lack of an established customer base and low demand for the type. Of the approximately fifteen kilograms of black tar heroin seized in fiscal year (FY) 2014, about half were the result of negotiations as opposed to market demand. The limited presence may also be attributed to its typically being a lower quality product, and the difficulty dealers in the area have “cutting” the product. According to the DEA Special Testing Laboratory and other DEA investigations, dealers/distributors experience difficulty with the cutting process if they are not familiar with black tar heroin. SA white heroin continues to be the predominate type of heroin within the NYD; however, the increase in black tar seizures and Mexican DTOs’ presence are noteworthy (see figure 3).



(U) This product was prepared by the DEA New York Division. Comments and questions may be addressed to the Chief, Analysis and Production Section at [dea.onsi@usdoj.gov](mailto:dea.onsi@usdoj.gov).