

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

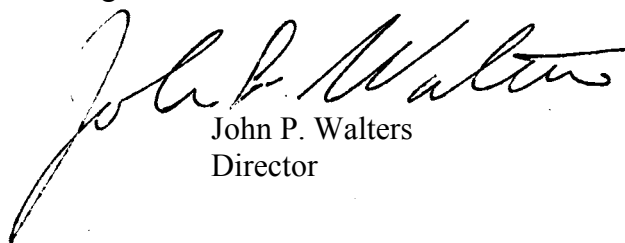
The Counterdrug Research and Development Blueprint Update provides a periodic report on the efforts of the Counterdrug Technology Assessment Center (CTAC) on the research and development program and the Technology Transfer Program.

Technology plays a crucial role in making progress toward our National Drug Control Strategy goals of achieving a 10 percent reduction in current use of illegal drugs in two years and a 25 percent reduction in current use of illegal drugs in five years. Through CTAC sponsorship of advanced neuroimaging and genetics instrumentation, substance abuse researchers are revealing the processes in the brain that result in addiction, and what can be done to reverse or mitigate these processes. New neuroimaging facilities dedicated to addiction research will be opened at the University of North Dakota, Roskamp Institute at the University of South Florida, Brookhaven National Laboratory, and National Institute on Drug Abuse Intramural Research Program in Baltimore, Maryland. This knowledge will provide for the development of better treatments to heal America's drug users, and will provide a better understanding of why addiction takes place so that we can stop use before it starts.

To disrupt the market, the U.S. Customs Service, Border Patrol, and U.S. Coast Guard are installing new capabilities and systems to interdict illicit drugs at our borders and on the high seas. Since September 11, 2001, this equipment has been used to search for chemical and biological agents and weapons of mass destruction. These searches also have led to dramatic increases in the seizure of drugs. We look forward to working closely with the Department of Homeland Security to continue developing advanced inspection technology that will further tighten border security.

The ability of our federal, state, and local agencies to communicate and share information is crucial to combating the drug trafficking organizations. An operational testbed for communications interoperability developed in conjunction with the Drug Enforcement Administration field office and Denver metro regional drug task forces, successfully demonstrated a capability to communicate effectively during joint operations with each agency using its own dissimilar and incompatible radio. One of CTAC's more successful programs, the Technology Transfer Program, relies on technical and operational performance testbed evaluations and outreach to industry to acquire additional items for law enforcement. Over the past five years, this program has brought advanced drug crime-fighting technology and associated training to over 20 percent of the state and local police departments and sheriffs offices.

The successes reported in this Blueprint Update result from the dedicated efforts of the industrial, academic, and national laboratory sectors. ONDCP, the substance-abuse research teams, and law enforcement personnel across the country who have benefited applaud their accomplishments. We are confident that with continued efforts, we will be able to meet our national goals of reducing illicit drug use in America.



John P. Walters
Director