

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2011 MBI Annual Report

In the year 2011, the agents of the Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation (MBI) continued their long tradition of cooperative law enforcement to apply problem-solving approaches to community issues involving organized criminal activities. And, the agents of the MBI continued to give real meaning to their motto of “*Integrity, Perseverance, and Investigative Excellence*” and continued to be a resource for all law enforcement agencies in Central Florida who requested assistance. In year 2011, the City of Winter Garden Police Department joined the MBI as a member agency, with an agent assigned to the MBI, and the Florida Highway Patrol also joined the effort by assigning agents to the MBI Narcotics Section.

Three broad based initiatives were pursued against community problems – combating the growing menace of prescription opiate-based pain pills over-prescribed in a growing number of pain management clinics, the evils of modern slavery and human trafficking engaged in to profit from the prostitution of young females for personal gain, and the spread of electronic game promotions and raffles used to disguise slot machine and gambling businesses.

Early in 2011, the MBI joined with law enforcement around the State to seek and obtain new tools in the state-wide Prescription Drug Monitoring Program that was passed into law, and created a data base of prescription pain drug prescribers and users. Undercover agents of the MBI Narcotics Section continued to put mid-level cocaine, cannabis, and heroin drug traffickers in prison – but were also aggressive, and successful in obtaining evidence to support charges against illegal dealers of pain pills – but also against doctors and owners of medical clinics who were improperly profiting from the indiscriminant over-prescribing of opiate based pain pills. The MBI Director, General Counsel, and Commander of the Physician-Pharmaceutical Unit also served on Orange County’s Task Force to develop the best possible local ordinance to control the spread of pain management clinics, and control how certain dangerous drugs are prescribed and dispensed in Orange County.

The MBI Vice and Organized Crime Section continued its efforts against prostitution and to identify and jail the pimps and female associates who seek to force young women to prostitute themselves for the profit of the pimps. Successful efforts in rescuing the victims of trafficking, and obtaining evidence to bring the pimps to justice have brought convictions in state and federal courts and recognition and awards to MBI vice agents and prosecutors from the *Florida Coalition Against Human Trafficking*.

In addition, MBI Vice unit investigations have resulted in Orange and Osceola counties not experiencing the influx of gambling establishments masquerading as “electronic game promotions” that has plagued communities all throughout the state. As a result, the MBI has been asked to, and has provided testimony in, the Florida Legislature regarding making Florida’s gambling laws into even more effective tools to assist other jurisdictions to combat the problem.

Overall, illegal drugs valued at \$5,884,397 were seized as evidence, and removed from the community. Currency or money totaling \$2,596,715 was seized as evidence, with most of it as being subject to forfeiture, and \$389,530 was returned to member agencies, having been forfeited from previous investigations. MBI agents arrested 126 drug dealers, 82 for mid-level trafficking offenses.

The MBI approach to investigation, skills at electronic surveillance, and mutual cooperation with any law enforcement agency, or government agency, that needs assistance continues to ensure that Central Florida is not a safe place for criminal enterprises to operate.

Joseph A. Cocchiarella, Director

METROPOLITAN BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION