

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2013 MBI Annual Report



The Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation (MBI) continued its mission to remove criminal organizations engaged in Narcotics, Vice, and Organized Crime from Central Florida. The MBI Task Force unites local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies in a joint effort to combat these criminal organizations. In the year 2013, the MBI member agencies included: the State Attorney's Office for the Ninth Judicial Circuit, Orange County Sheriff's Office, Orlando Police Department, Winter Park Police Department, Apopka Police Department, Ocoee Police Department, Winter Garden Police Department, University of Central Florida Police Department, Osceola County Sheriff's Office, Florida Highway Patrol (FHP), Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE), U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), and the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS), United States Secret Service, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), and the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Support Center (HIDTA).

In 2013, Oxycodone continued to be the biggest killer in Florida, but the number of deaths linked to the drug has significantly dropped. According to an annual report released by Florida's medical examiners, deaths caused by oxycodone plunged by 41 percent last year. Overall, occurrences of prescription drug deaths fell by 9.9 percent.

The MBI Pharmaceutical Crimes Unit continued to obtain positive results in the efforts to confront the prescription drug abuse epidemic. Agents continue to use the new state-wide Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) that was passed into law to create a data base of prescription pain drug prescribers and users.

The MBI also conducted several investigations of organizations that were forging and producing fraudulent prescriptions for narcotic pharmaceuticals. Those investigations led to several pharmacies in Central Florida at which the pharmacists were knowingly and illegally filling prescriptions without a reasonable belief of a medical necessity.

**METROPOLITAN BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION**

The MBI Narcotics Section continued to work with local, state, and federal agencies. Overall, illegal drugs valued at \$12,829,177 were seized as evidence, and removed from the community. Currency or money totaling \$2,945,228 was seized as evidence, with most of it being subject to forfeiture. MBI agents arrested 143 drug dealers; 78 for mid-level trafficking offenses.

In one significant case, Central Florida Law Enforcement had become aware of a violent Jamaican drug trafficking organization as early as 2006. Since that time, hundreds of pounds of cannabis have been interdicted or seized from individuals associated with this organization. Violent crimes, such as homicide, attempted homicide, home invasion robbery, armed robbery, armed narcotics trafficking, and firearms violations, have been linked to many of the members of the organization. In 2013, the Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation (MBI), Orange County Sheriff's Office, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), arrested or obtained warrants for 36 defendants in Central Florida for charges including: Racketeering- RICO, Conspiracy to Commit Racketeering-RICO, Money Laundering, and Trafficking in Cannabis.

In September of 2011, the Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation began to intensely target electronic surveillance at that cannabis trafficking organization, which was led by several persons, most of Jamaican descent. The investigation revealed the organization was smuggling thousands of pounds of cannabis from Mexico into the United States and then to Central Florida using several methods. Their methods used included US Postal packages, private package delivery services, freight shipping services, and private vehicles, including recreational vehicles. The organization used several "stash houses" in the Pine Hills area to store the cannabis before it could be divided up and sold. The organization also used several warehouses in west Orlando to take delivery of shipments of cannabis and to use as bases of operation for distribution. During the course of this investigation MBI seized over 3212 pounds of cannabis, over \$200,000 in cash, 10 firearms, and 6 vehicles.

The MBI Vice and Organized Crime Section continued its efforts against organized prostitution and human sex trafficking. In 2013, the MBI Vice Section conducted 47 human trafficking investigations. With the addition of 1 FDLE Agent, 2 FBI Agents and 1 HSI Agent, the MBI Vice Section has now grown from 4 agents to 8. The MBI has also continued to conduct training for local law enforcement, community groups, and others on the signs and indicators of human trafficking victims.

The MBI Vice Section aggressively investigated several Asian themed massage parlors which were fronts for prostitution. Over 23 arrests were made and 8 massage parlors were closed. In 2013, the Vice Section made a total of 123 prostitution and vice related arrests.

Those investigations, and several other investigations that are mentioned below in the following pages, in the section's reports, reflect the efforts of MBI member agencies to remove narcotics and vice organizations from the Central Florida community and maintain the image of Metro-Orlando as a great place to live, raise a family, and a safe place for families to visit.