

but it has sole responsibility for pursuing U.S. drug investigations outside the United States. It seems to me that we need 100 special agents alone to cover El Paso and the criminal activities regarding controlled substances emerging from Ciudad Juarez, let alone all the other hot spots. The mission and responsibilities of the DEA are broad and far-reaching. Let’s review what our 5,000 special agents are trying to achieve.

Overview/Mission

The mission of the DEA is to enforce the controlled substances laws and regulations of the United States and bring to the criminal and civil justice systems of the United States, or any other competent jurisdiction, those organizations and principal members of organizations involved in the growing, manufacture, or distribution of controlled substances appearing in or destined for illicit traffic in the United States, and to recommend and support nonenforcement programs aimed at reducing the availability of illicit controlled substances on the domestic and international markets.¹⁷

Responsibilities

In carrying out its mission as the agency responsible for enforcing the controlled substances laws and regulations of the United States, the DEA’s primary responsibilities include the following:

- Investigation and preparation for the prosecution of major violators of controlled substances laws operating at interstate and international levels
- Investigation and preparation for the prosecution of criminals and drug gangs who perpetrate violence in our communities and terrorize citizens through fear and intimidation
- Management of a national drug intelligence program in cooperation with federal, state, local, and foreign officials to collect, analyze, and disseminate strategic and operational drug intelligence information
- Seizure and forfeiture of assets derived from, traceable to, or intended to be used for illicit drug trafficking
- Enforcement of the provisions of the Controlled Substances Act as they pertain to the manufacture, distribution, and dispensing of legally produced controlled substances