

▶ THERE WERE 71,003 CASES REPORTED TO THE UNITED STATES SENTENCING COMMISSION IN FISCAL YEAR 2015.

▶ OF THESE CASES, 19,792 INVOLVED DRUG TRAFFICKING.<sup>1</sup>

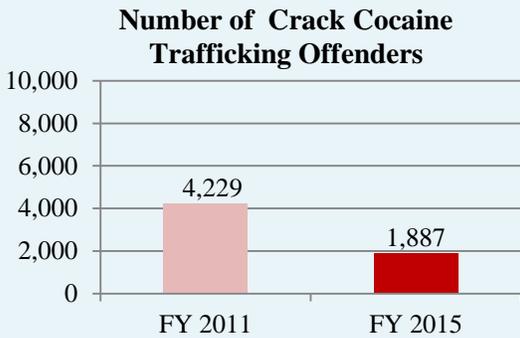
▶ 9.5% OF DRUG TRAFFICKING OFFENSES INVOLVED CRACK COCAINE.

# Quick Facts



## Crack Cocaine Trafficking Offenses

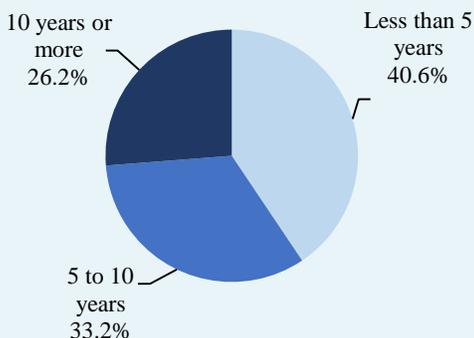
In fiscal year 2015, there were 1,887 crack cocaine trafficking offenders, who accounted for 9.5% of all offenders sentenced under the drug trafficking guidelines. The number of crack cocaine offenders has decreased by 55.4% since fiscal year 2011.



**Top Five Districts Crack Cocaine Trafficking Offenders FY 2015**

Southern District of New York (N=173)
Western District of North Carolina (N=73)
Southern District of Florida (N=64)
Western District of Texas (N=60)
Northern District of West Virginia (N=58)

**Sentence Length of Crack Cocaine Trafficking Offenders FY 2015**



### Offender and Offense Characteristics

- In fiscal year 2015, the majority of crack cocaine trafficking offenders were male (91.3%).
- More than three-quarters of crack cocaine trafficking offenders were Black (80.3%) followed by Hispanic (13.1%), White (5.9%), and Other Races (0.7%).
- The average age of these offenders at sentencing was 34 years.
- Nearly all crack cocaine trafficking offenders were United States citizens (98.0%).
- More than one-quarter (28.9%) of crack cocaine traffickers were in Criminal History Category VI.
- One-fifth (20.8%) of crack cocaine offenders were classified as Career Offenders (\$4B1.1). This is nearly twice as high as the rate in heroin trafficking offenses, the drug trafficking offense with the second highest rate (12.9%).
- The median base offense level in these cases was 24. This corresponds to a quantity of drugs between 28 and 112 grams of crack cocaine.
- Crack cocaine trafficking sentences were increased for:
  - ◆ 30.2% of offenders because the offense involved the possession of a weapon;
  - ◆ 6.0% of offenders for having a leadership or supervisory role in the offense.
- Crack cocaine trafficking sentences were decreased for:
  - ◆ 4.3% of offenders because they were a minor or minimal participant in the offense;
  - ◆ 7.9% of offenders because they met the safety valve criteria in the sentencing guidelines.

### Punishment

- Most crack cocaine trafficking offenders were sentenced to imprisonment (97.3%).
- The average sentence for crack cocaine trafficking offenders was 79 months.
- Nearly half of all crack cocaine trafficking offenders were convicted of an offense carrying a mandatory minimum penalty (49.1%).
  - ◆ However, one-third (33.7%) of these offenders were not subject to any mandatory minimum penalty at sentencing because:
    - ◇ 26.0% provided the government with substantial assistance in the investigation or prosecution of other offenders, 5.1% were eligible for relief through the statutory safety valve provision, and 2.6% received both forms of relief.

<sup>1</sup> Drug trafficking offenses include cases with complete guideline application information in which the offender was sentenced under USSG §§2D1.1 (Drug Trafficking), 2D1.2 (Protected Locations), 2D1.5 (Continuing Criminal Enterprise), 2D1.6 (Use of a Communication Facility), 2D1.8 (Rent/Manage Drug Establishment), 2D1.10 (Endangering Human Life), or 2D1.14 (Narco-Terrorism).

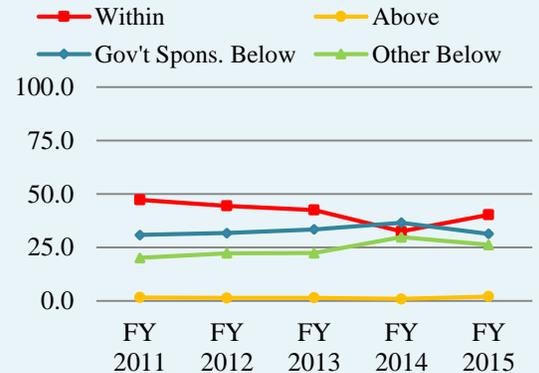
# Quick Facts

## Crack Cocaine Trafficking Offenses

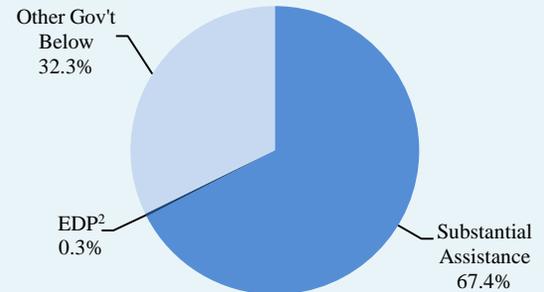
### Sentences Relative to the Guideline Range

- The rate of within range sentences for crack cocaine trafficking offenders in fiscal year 2015 was 40.3%.
- The rate of government sponsored below range sentences for crack cocaine trafficking offenders in fiscal year 2015 was 31.4%.
  - ◆ Substantial assistance departures were granted for approximately a quarter of offenders since fiscal year 2011 but decreased to 21.1% in fiscal year 2015.
    - ◇ In fiscal year 2015, these offenders received an average reduction in their sentence of 55.8%.
  - ◆ The rate of crack cocaine trafficking offenders receiving a below range sentence sponsored by the government for reasons other than substantial assistance or participation in an Early Disposition Program increased in recent years, but decreased to 10.1% in fiscal year 2015.
    - ◇ In fiscal year 2015, these offenders received an average reduction in their sentence of 41.3%.
- The rate of non-government sponsored below range sentences for crack cocaine traffickers increased in recent years, but decreased to 26.2% in fiscal year 2015.
  - ◆ In fiscal year 2015, these offenders received an average reduction in their sentence of 38.7%.
- The average guideline minimum and average sentence imposed fluctuated in recent years.
  - ◆ The average guideline minimum decreased from 130 months in fiscal year 2011 to 110 months in fiscal year 2015;
  - ◆ The average sentence imposed decreased from 101 months in fiscal year 2011 to 79 months in fiscal year 2015.

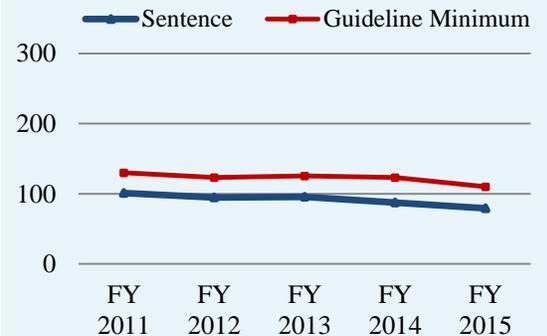
### Sentence Relative to the Guideline Range



### Government Sponsored Below Range Sentences FY 2015



### Average Sentence and Average Guideline Minimum (in months)



<sup>2</sup> “Early Disposition Program (or EDP) departures” are departures where the government sought a sentence below the guideline range because the defendant participated in the government’s Early Disposition Program, through which cases are resolved in an expedited manner. See USSG §5K3.1.

