

► THERE WERE 67,742 CASES REPORTED TO THE UNITED STATES SENTENCING COMMISSION IN FISCAL YEAR 2016.

► OF THESE CASES, 19,222 INVOLVED DRUG TRAFFICKING.<sup>1</sup>

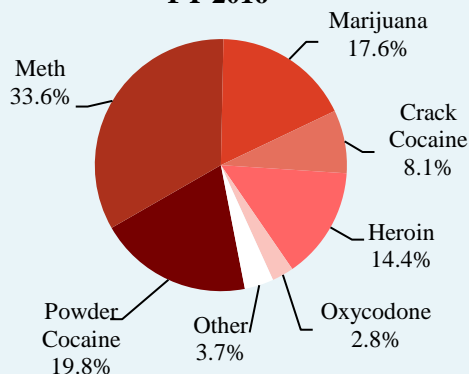
► SIX DRUG TYPES ACCOUNT FOR NEARLY ALL DRUG TRAFFICKING OFFENSES.

# Quick Facts



## Drug Trafficking Offenses

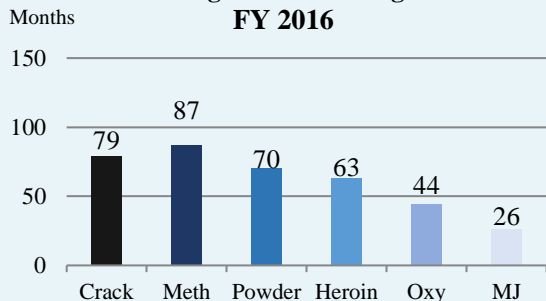
**Distribution of Drug Types  
FY 2016**



**Top Five Districts  
Drug Trafficking Offenders  
FY 2016**

Western District of Texas (N=1,631)
Southern District of Texas (N=1,152)
District of Arizona (N=1,093)
Southern District of California (N=1,064)
District of New Mexico (N=628)

**Average Sentence Length  
FY 2016**



<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).

<sup>2</sup> Offender and offense characteristics as well as the length of punishment differ by primary drug type. Separate Quick Facts publications are available for each primary drug type at [www.ussc.gov/Quick\\_Facts](http://www.ussc.gov/Quick_Facts).

There have been many changes made to the drug guidelines in recent years, with fiscal year 2016 reflecting the most recent changes made to the drug quantity table for all drug types. The information presented below provides an overview of drug trafficking offenses, though this information may vary depending on the type of drug involved in the offense.

### Offender and Offense Characteristics<sup>2</sup>

- In fiscal year 2016, the majority of drug trafficking offenders were male (84.9%).
- Half of the offenders were Hispanic (50.7%) followed by Black (23.6%), White (22.8%), and Other Races (2.9%), although this rate varied by drug type.
- The average age of these offenders at sentencing was 36 years.
- Approximately seventy percent of all drug trafficking offenders were United States citizens (71.5%), although this rate varied substantially depending on the type of drug involved.
- Almost half (49.4%) of drug traffickers had little or no prior criminal history (i.e., were assigned to Criminal History Category I).
- Drug trafficking sentences were increased for:
  - ◆ 17.8% of offenders because the offense involved the possession of a weapon;
  - ◆ 7.6% of offenders for having a leadership or supervisory role in the offense.
- Drug trafficking sentences were decreased for:
  - ◆ 20.8% of offenders because they were a minor or minimal participant in the offense;
  - ◆ 34.3% of offenders because they met the safety valve criteria in the sentencing guidelines.

### Punishment

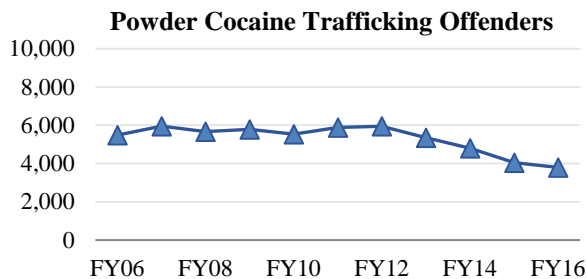
- Most drug trafficking offenders were sentenced to imprisonment (95.7%).
- Three-quarters of drug traffickers were sentenced either within the guideline range (36.7%) or below the range at the government's request (38.9%). An additional 23.1% of drug traffickers received a non-government sponsored below range sentence, with the remaining 1.4% of offenders sentenced above the guideline range.
- The average sentence for drug trafficking offenders was 66 months. The average sentence varied depending on the type of drug trafficked in the offense.
- 45.5% of all drug trafficking offenders were convicted of a drug offense carrying a mandatory minimum penalty; however, less than half of these offenders (48.3%) remained subject to that penalty at sentencing.
  - ◆ 21.6% provided the government with substantial assistance in the investigation or prosecution of other offenders, 21.8% were eligible for relief through the statutory safety valve provision, and 8.3% received both forms of relief.

# Quick Facts

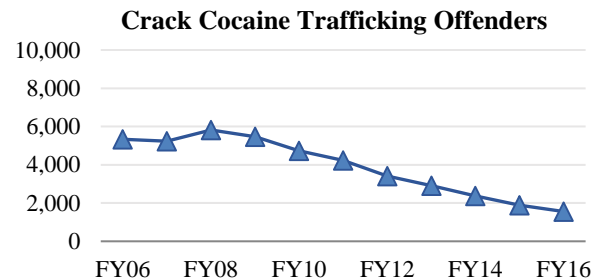
## Drug Trafficking Offenses

Six drug types accounted for 96.3% of drug trafficking offenses in fiscal year 2016.

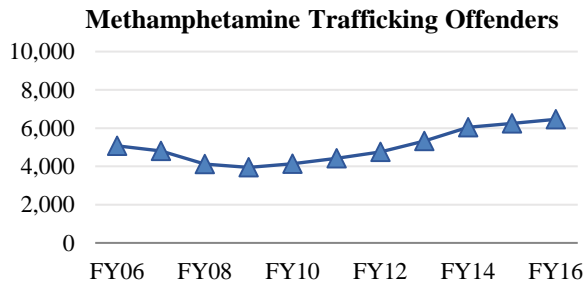
The number of powder cocaine traffickers had been relatively stable until a steady decline began in fiscal year 2013.



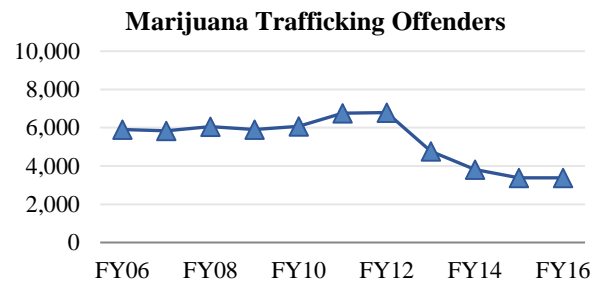
The number of crack cocaine traffickers has decreased substantially since fiscal year 2008 when reductions in crack cocaine penalties were first implemented.



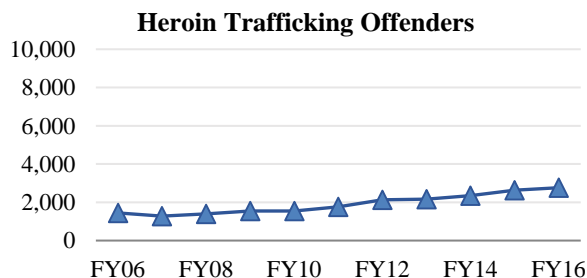
The number of methamphetamine traffickers decreased after fiscal year 2006, but has been increasing since fiscal year 2009.



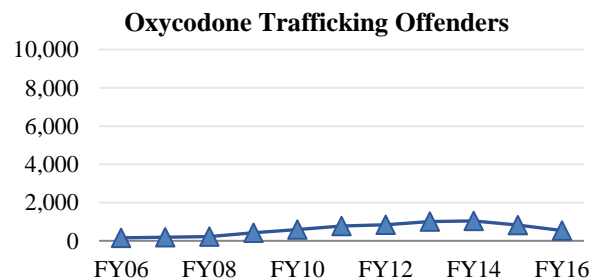
The number of marijuana traffickers rose slightly over time until a sharp decline in fiscal year 2013, which continued through fiscal year 2015 before leveling off in fiscal year 2016.



The number of heroin traffickers has been slowly increasing since fiscal year 2007.



The number of oxycodone traffickers increased from fiscal year 2006 through fiscal year 2014 before declining in each of the past two years. In fiscal year 2016 the number of oxycodone traffickers was only about half of the fiscal year 2014 number.



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