



## Agency Priority Goal Action Plan

# Combat the Opioid Crisis

### Goal Leader(s):

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# Overview

## Goal Statement

- The opioid epidemic affects a broad cross-section of the United States population without regard for age, gender, race, ethnicity, or economic status. Communities across the United States, including those in rural, suburban, and urban jurisdictions, have been hit by the opioid epidemic. By September 30, 2021, the Department of Justice will reduce illicit opioid overdoses by: increasing the percentage of opioid-related Priority Target Organizations (PTOs) disrupted and dismantled by 3% as compared to the FY 2019 baseline (35.7%); increasing the percentage of opioid-related PTO investigations initiated by 3% as compared to the FY 2019 baseline (39.2%); increasing the number of diversion criminal cases initiated by 3% as compared to the FY 2019 baseline (1,725); and increasing the number of training, outreach and public education events completed by 34% as compared to the FY 2019 baseline (3,125).\*

## Challenges

- The proliferation of synthetic drugs requires additional analytical resources in order to accurately identify and schedule the compounds.
- Continued high levels of heroin abuse to put a strain on Department resources, particularly in terms of need for additional outreach and education.
- Increased diversions of pharmaceutical drugs create a challenge for prosecution, as the process is extremely technical, time-consuming and document intensive.
- Illicit drug abuse is both a public safety and public health challenge – leading to drug trafficking, gang violence, and death.
- More than 70,200 Americans died from a drug overdose in 2017, with nearly 68% of all drug deaths being opioid related and 41% of these opioid-related deaths involving a synthetic opioid other than methadone.

*\*The baseline numbers in the goal statement have been revised from those originally published in February 2020, due to a correction to the baseline.*

# Overview Cont.

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## Challenges cont.

- Lawful access impacts the Department's ability to investigate crimes and collect evidence on the operations of drug trafficking organizations and their members.
- Increased use of the dark web and cryptocurrencies challenge the Department's ability to identify and intercept the distribution of illegal narcotics, and affiliated money laundering.
- Globalization continues to create challenges as the location of Consolidated Priority Organization Targets (CPOTs) and other drug traffickers in foreign countries requires increased focus on extradition and international intelligence sharing agreements.

## Opportunities

- To continue extensive collaboration with DOJ components, agencies of the U.S. Federal Government, international, state and local partners in order to achieve results.
- To expand technical capabilities to disrupt and dismantle drug trafficking organizations
- To foster the expansion of DEA's 360 Strategy to support enforcement and community outreach efforts to tackle the cycle of violence and addiction generated by the link between drug cartels, violent gangs and the growing problem of prescription opioid and heroin abuse in U.S. Cities.
- To broaden DEA's partnership with Discovery Education, a division of Discovery Communications, to continue the development and distribution of prevention and educational, opioid and heroin related content curricula for middle and high school students, their teachers, and parents.
- To encourage industry participation in and sponsorship for programs, activities and media campaigns that promote more responsible pain management and dispensing practices.
- To increase public awareness on opioids through training, outreach and other public events.

# Leadership & Implementation Team

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## Core Leadership Team

- Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)
- Office of the Deputy Attorney General (ODAG)
- Criminal Division (CRM)
- United States Attorneys' Offices/Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys (USAO/EOUSA)

## Other Participating DOJ Components

- Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF)
- Civil Division (CIV)
- Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI)
- Office of Justice Programs/Bureau of Justice Assistance (OJP/BJA)
- Community Oriented Policing Service (COPS)

## Other Federal Partners

- Health and Human Services
- Treasury
- Postal Service
- Homeland Security

## Stakeholders

- State and local partners
- The public and government officials (*community safety, death reduction*)
- Pharmaceutical and Drug industry (*compliance, regulation, enforcement*)
- Law enforcement (*information sharing, partnerships*)

# Goal Structure & Strategies

STRATEGIES	GOALS	RISKS <i>(External Factors that may affect goal achievement)</i>
<p><b>Strategy 1:</b> Identify and disrupt organized crime and drug networks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dismantle entire drug networks by targeting and prosecuting drug trafficking organizations' leadership and seizing the profits that fund drug operations through coordinated efforts to disrupt the traffickers' financial dealings and to dismantle the financial infrastructure that supports these organizations. OCDETF investigations strive to determine connections among related investigations in order to identify and dismantle the entire structure of the drug trafficking organizations, from international supply and national transportation cells, to regional and local distribution networks.</li> </ul> <p><b>Strategy 2:</b> Enforce drug trafficking laws including opioid-related healthcare fraud to reduce drug addictions and deaths.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and transition to an effective method of evaluating DEA's work, accomplishments, and impact on public safety and the lives of individuals within the most at risk communities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategy 1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Goal: By 2021, the Department will increase the percentage of opioid-relate Priority Target Organizations (PTOs) disrupted and dismantled by 3%, as compared to FY 2019 (35.7%).</li> <li>➤ Performance Indicator: Percentage of opioid-related PTOs disrupted and dismantled</li> <li>Goal: By 2021, the Department will increase the percentage of opioid-related PTO investigations initiated by 3%, as compared to FY 2019 (39.2%).</li> <li>➤ Performance Indicator: Percentage of opioid-related PTO investigations initiated</li> </ul> <p><b>Strategy 2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Goal: By 2021, the Department will increase the number of diversion criminal cases initiated by 3%, as compared to FY 2019 (1,725).</li> <li>➤ Performance Indicator: Number of Diversion Criminal Cases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing opioid crisis (opioid crisis driven by fentanyl and fentanyl-analogue related deaths continues to have a significant impact in the U.S.)</li> <li>Diversion of pharmaceutical drugs</li> <li>International shipment of fentanyl</li> </ul>

# Goal Structure & Strategies

STRATEGIES	GOALS	RISKS <i>(External Factors that may affect goal achievement)</i>
<p>The Threat Enforcement Prioritization Process (TEPP) increases DEA’s ability to report the impact of DEA’s efforts and balance quantitative metrics (statistics) with qualitative assessments of the impact of casework within communities.</p> <p>Moreover, it represents a change by DEA to a strategic and contextual management and reporting system that is consistent with transitions already implemented by the Department.</p> <p><b>Strategy 3:</b> Engage the community to raise awareness and reduce the demand for opioids and illicit drugs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Department will engage with the community to raise awareness and reduce the demand for opioids and illicit drugs.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategy 3:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Goal: By 2021, the Department will increase the number of training, outreach and public education events completed by 34%, as compared to FY 2019 (3,125).</li> <li>➤ Performance Indicator: Number of training, outreach, and public education events completed</li> </ul>	

# Summary of Progress – FY 20 Q3

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The FY 2020 – FY 2021 Combat the Opioid Crisis Priority Goal tracks performance measures and key milestones, as part of the Department's goal to reduce drug overdose deaths.

The Combat the Opioid Crisis Priority Goal tracks four performance measures. The measures track the progress of the three strategies outlined in the previous slides. All of the measures report progress towards the annual goal. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the federal, state and local guidelines put in place, the Department has only met one of its four quarterly targets for Q3 FY 2020.

Sensitive law enforcement operations typically involve close, publicly-based activities that the COVID-19 pandemic has temporally affected, and therefore, second and third quarters performance for certain metrics have also been impacted. As law enforcement operations have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a reduction in the overall number of cases initiated due to the pandemic, and therefore the number of diversion criminal cases initiated and opioid related investigations have been similarly affected and reduced. However, the DEA have spent the past few months evaluating how to best move the investigations forward and has pivoted to alternate methods where feasible and appropriate, such as conducting scheduled, regulatory investigations virtually. Due in part to these adaptations, the Department anticipates that it will meet all but one of its year-end targets.

The Department's outreach effort necessitates many interactive, publically based activities (meetings, presentations, trainings, etc.). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and in accordance with social distancing guidelines, several outreach events have been postponed. While some events, especially those conducted at the Headquarters level, are capable of being administered virtually, not all events can be done in this manner at this time. In particular, many of the DEA's outreach efforts are done through partnerships between the field offices and local or state entities. Due to state and local COVID-19 guidelines, the majority of these engagements have been cancelled. The second and third quarter performance for this metric have been directly affected.

Additionally, DEA has seen a surge in methamphetamine in the United States, with some areas impacted more heavily. In those areas, the outreach efforts have been more focused on methamphetamine, rather than opioids, as that has been driving overdose deaths in the area. Therefore, the second and third quarter performance for this metric have been directly affected.

# Summary of Progress – FY 20 Q3

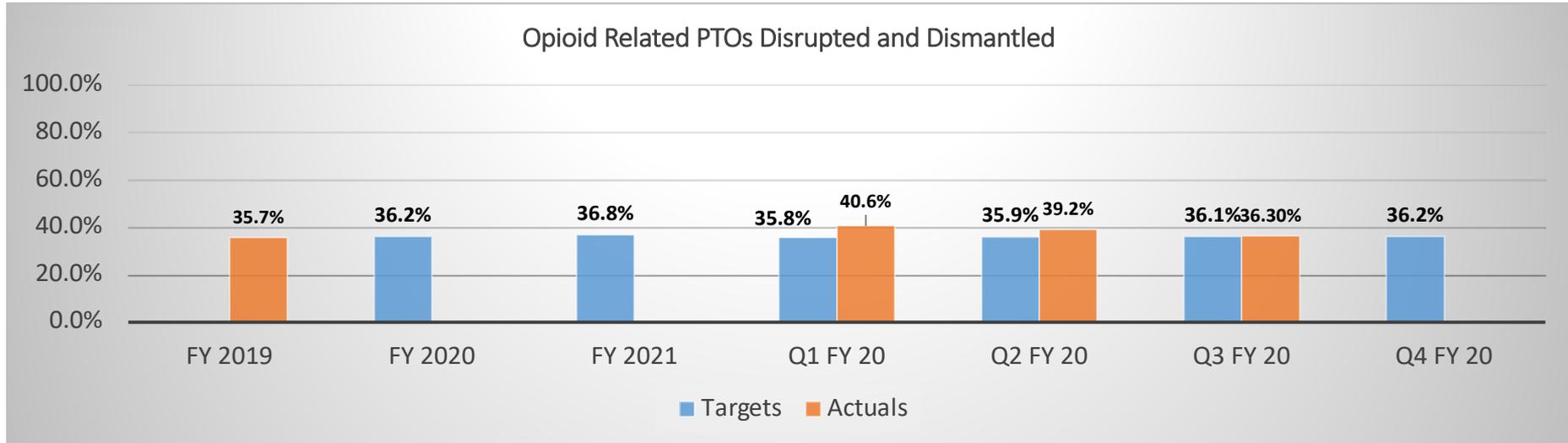
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- For Q3 FY 2020, the Department met its quarterly target for Opioid-related PTOs disrupted and dismantled, and its year to date performance is on track to meet the annual target. Percentage of disruptions and dismantlements of Opioid-related PTOs is a new performance measure, established in FY 2020. The intent of this measure is to increase the overall sum of disruptions and dismantlements of PTOs each fiscal year.
- For Q3 FY 2020, the Department achieved 93 percent of its quarterly target for Opioid-related PTO investigations initiated mostly due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Department's Percentage of Opioid PTOs investigations initiated is a new performance measure established in FY 2020. To date, performance for this measure is 95 percent of the annual target. As such, DEA anticipates it will meet its FY 2020 target for this metric. The intent of this measure is to increase the overall sum of Opioid-related PTO investigations each fiscal year.
- For Q3 FY 2020, DEA initiated 382 Diversion Criminal Cases – 87 percent of the quarterly target due to the COVID-19 pandemic. To date, DEA has initiated 1,194 cases in FY 2020 – 68 percent of the annual target of 1,750. As such, DEA anticipates it will meet its FY 2020 target for this metric.
- For Q3 FY 2020, the Department completed 336 outreach and public education events – 29 percent of the quarterly target. As discussed above, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a large impact on this target. To date, DEA conducted 1,681 outreach events in FY 2020 – 45 percent of the annual target.

# Key Indicators

**Performance Measure:** Percentage of opioid-related Priority Target Organizations (PTOs) disrupted and dismantled [DEA]

## Progress Update – Q3 FY 2020

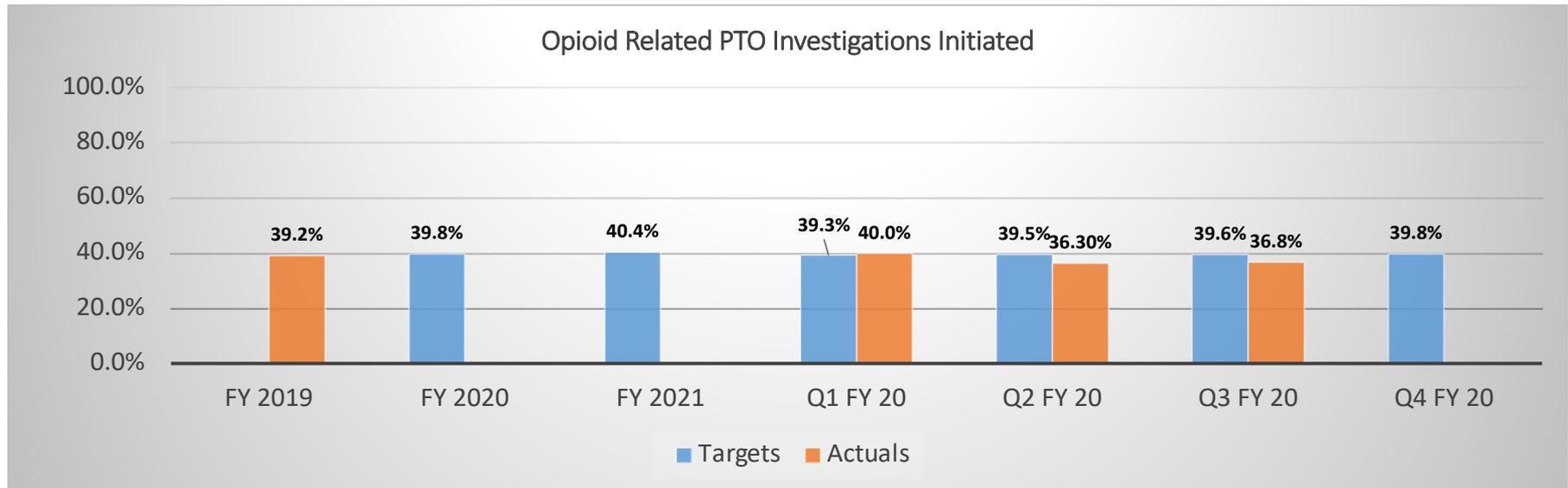


- This is a new DEA measure. Therefore, limited historical data is available.
- For Q3 FY 2020 DEA exceeded its quarterly target, and its year to date performance is on track for opioid-related disrupted and dismantled.
- For Q3, DEA reports 215 of 593 disruptions and dismantlements for the third quarter were opioid related. Priority Target Organizations (PTOs) engage in the highest levels of drug trafficking and/or drug money laundering operations that significantly impact international, national, regional, or local drug availability.

# Key Indicators

Performance Measure: Percentage of opioid-related PTO investigations initiated [DEA]

## Progress Update – Q3 FY 2020



- This is a new DEA measure. Therefore, limited historical data is available.
- For Q3 FY 2020, DEA achieved 93 percent of the quarterly target for opioid-related PTO investigations due largely to the COVID pandemic.
- DEA reports 183 of 498 PTO investigations initiated for the third quarter were opioid related.
- Sensitive law enforcement operations involve close, publicly based activities that the COVID-19 pandemic has temporally affected, and therefore, second quarter performance for this metric has been impacted. There has been a reduction in the overall number of cases initiated due to the pandemic, hence the number of opioid-related cases initiated has been similarly affected and reduced. Since third quarter (YTD) performance is approximately 95 percent to target, DEA anticipates that it will meet its FY 2020 target for this metric.

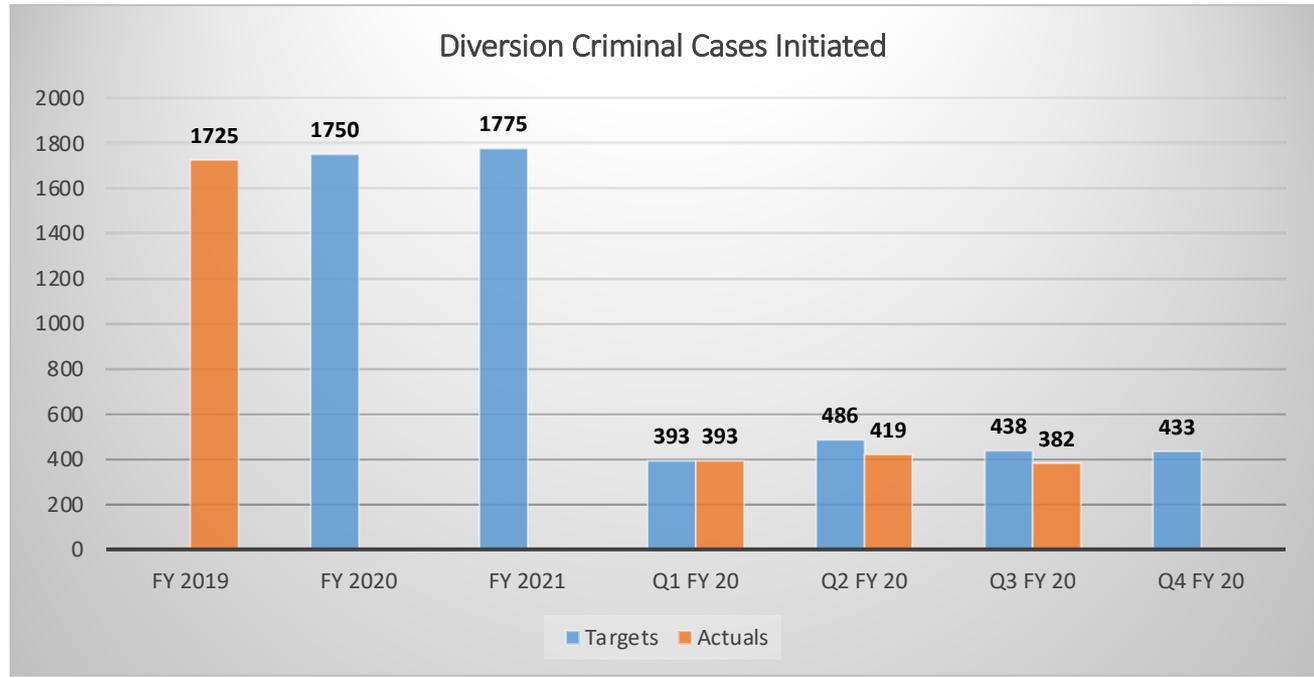
# Key Indicators

Performance Measure: Number of diversion criminal cases initiated [DEA]

### Historical Data

Fiscal Year	Actuals
FY 2014	1,965
FY 2015	1,713
FY 2016	1,748
FY 2017	1,729
FY 2018	1,853
FY 2019	1,850
Baseline (FY 2019 Target)	1,725

### Progress Update – Q3 FY 2020

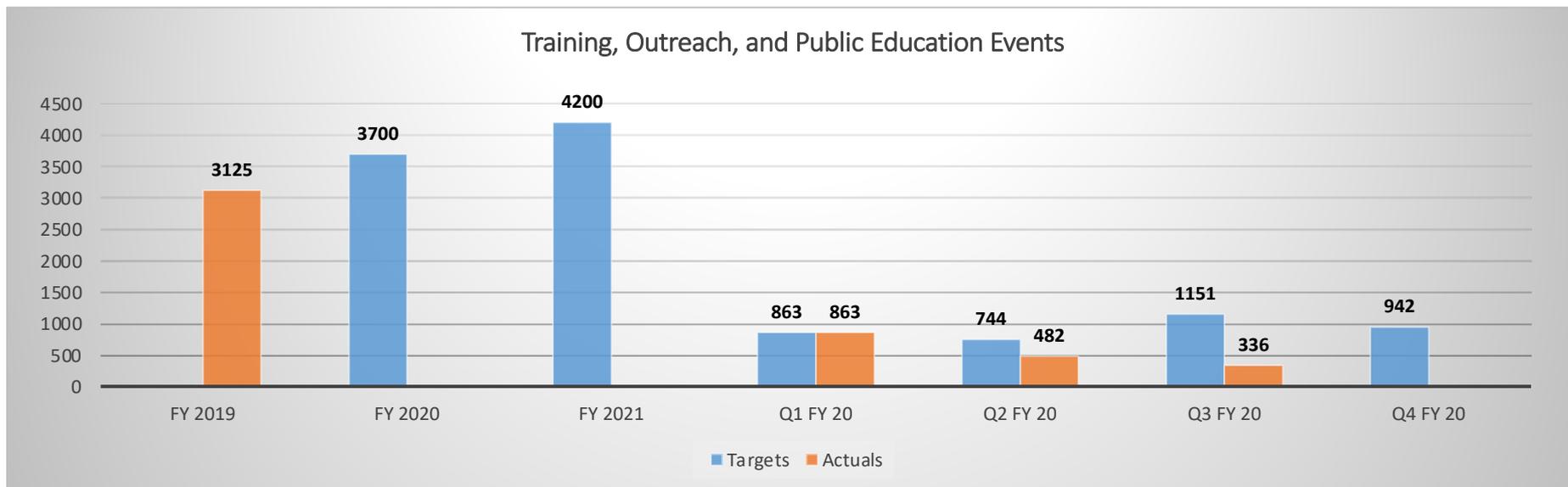


- DEA initiated 382 diversion criminal cases in the third quarter – achieving 87 percent of the quarterly target due largely to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- To date, DEA has initiated a total of 1,194 diversion criminal cases.
- Sensitive law enforcement operations involve close, publicly based activities that the COVID-19 pandemic has temporally affected, and therefore, second quarter performance for certain metrics has also been impacted. There has been a reduction in the overall number of cases initiated due to the pandemic, hence the number of diversion criminal cases initiated has been similarly affected and reduced. Since third quarter (YTD) performance is 68 percent of the annual target, DEA anticipates that it will meet its FY 2020 target for this metric.

# Key Indicators

**Performance Measure:** Number of training, outreach, and public education events completed [DEA]

## Progress Update – Q3 FY 2020



- DEA conducted 336 outreach events in Q3 – achieving 29 percent of its target for the quarterly quarter.
- To date, DEA has conducted 1,681 training, outreach, and public education events, and achieved 45 percent of the annual target.
- This intervention effort necessitates many interactive, publically based activities (meetings, presentations, trainings, etc.). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and in accordance with state and local social distancing guidelines, several outreach events have been postponed or cancelled. While some events are capable of being administered virtually, especially those conducted at Headquarters, not all events can be done in this manner at this time. In particular, many of the DEA’s outreach efforts are done through partnerships between the field offices and local or state entities. Due to state and local COVID-19 guidelines, the majority of these engagements have been cancelled. Both second and third quarter performance for this metric has been directly affected.

# Data Accuracy and Reliability

**Priority Targets [inclusive of Opioid-related PTOs]** – Priority Target Activity Resource and Reporting System provides a means of electronically validating and verifying PTO data through a restrictive chain of approvals. Through DEA's PTARRS, Special Agents (SAs) or Diversion Investigators (DIs) begin the process by creating and proposing a PTO. The GS, ASAC and SAC review the PTO and provide case assessment through a hierarchical approval process, for or against, the nomination of the PTO. Once approved and nominated by the SAC, PTARRS generates and saves a unique identification number for the nominated PTO.

At Headquarters, PTOs nominated by the SAC are assigned to the appropriate sections within DEA's Operations Management, Domestic Operations (DO) and Foreign Operations(FO). Once assigned, the corresponding Staff Coordinator validates all information reported on the PTO nomination. The validation process includes a review of the PTO nomination for completeness, compliance with established criteria, and confirmation of all related case linkages, including links to CPOTs. Staff Coordinators coordinate with DEA's Special Operations Division and Intelligence Division to ensure that available facts exist to support all case linkages. In the unlikely event the documentation submitted is insufficient to validate the reported link(s), the Staff Coordinator will coordinate with the submitting GS to obtain the required information.

**Diversion Criminal Investigations Initiated** – includes but are not limited to criminal investigations targeting registrants and criminal enterprises engaged in the illegal manufacture, distribution, and trafficking of controlled substances, chemicals, counterfeits and analogues synthetics.

The Diversion Investigator and the field office Group Supervisor (GS) are tasked to ensure that timely and accurate reporting is accomplished as the investigative status of a case changes. Both GS and the Diversion Program Manager (DPM) have the ability to view the report of ongoing and completed Investigative actions for their office/division at any time during the quarter or at the quarter's end, since the actions are in real-time. The content of the quarterly reports is restricted to CSA-related Investigative action on controlled substances and chemicals.

All statistics are limited by a lack of a relational link between case files and enforcement outputs (e.g. arrest, seizure, and work hour data). The link is inferred through data manipulation, but some areas are prone to error until all data systems are linked in a relational manner, and errors are prevented through data validation and referential integrity.

# Data Accuracy and Reliability

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**Outreach and Public Education Events Completed** - includes activities in support of the Department's goal to aggressively combat the opioid crisis and reduce licit and illicit opioid overdoses. Specifically, administering and facilitating awareness briefings, PSAs and trainings to community, state, local, federal and key international partners, registrants, member of the pharmaceutical/chemical industry, schools and the general public.

Every DEA field division has a diversion investigator who is assigned as the outreach coordinator, each year an outreach agenda is developed for regularly scheduled outreaches. There are also solicited and headquarters driven events that cannot be anticipated in advance. Each coordinator submits the number of outreach events for their field division on a quarterly basis via spreadsheet to headquarters. These spreadsheets are then compiled and the data is scrubbed for accuracy.