

# **TRI-COUNTY DRUG ENFORCEMENT TASK FORCE**

715 MULBERRY ST WATERLOO, IOWA

**BLACK HAWK AND BREMER COUNTIES**

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Senate Committee Judiciary Hearing

“The New Era in the Fight Against Methamphetamine in Iowa”

Corbin Payne  
Lieutenant- Tri-County Drug Enforcement Task Force  
Waterloo, Iowa

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10:00 a.m.

Thank you for giving me this invitation and the opportunity to appear before you today to speak about the every changing fight against methamphetamine. My name is Corbin Payne I am Lieutenant with the Waterloo Police Department currently assigned to the Tri-County Drug Enforcement Task Force in Waterloo.

Just a little background about myself I was born and raised in Waterloo and received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Wartburg College. I began my Law Enforcement career with the Oelwein Police Department in 1995 and a year later was hired by the Waterloo Police Department.

I have been a member of the Waterloo Police Department for 20 years. I have worked as a patrol officer for several years and then assigned to the Drug Crime Unit (DCU) which was a uniformed drug enforcement unit that focused on street level narcotic dealers in the Waterloo area. After several years of working the DCU, I was assigned to the Tri-County Drug Enforcement Task Force as an investigator. This assignment involved working long-term narcotics cases and undercover operations.

I worked this assignment for approximately 5 years then promoted to Patrol Sergeant and shortly after was assigned to the Citizens Response Unit (CRU) that focused on problem areas in Waterloo. Spending approximately 3 years as the CRU supervisor, I was promoted to Lieutenant and assigned to the Patrol Division as the Watch Commander. After fulfilling these duties for 4 years, I was assigned to the Tri-County Drug Enforcement Task Force where he is currently responsible for day to day operations and supervision of the narcotic investigators and overseeing grant funding for the Task Force.

I have had the honor to be assigned to various duty assignments while employed with the Waterloo Police Department.

Which include:

- Supervisor – High Risk Tactical Unit (TAC TEAM)
- Dignitary Protection Supervisor
- Bike Patrol
- Defensive Driving Instructor

I am also honored to be a graduate of the FBI National Academy. This academy included a 13 week Senior Law Enforcement Administrator training course at the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia. This academy included 266 ranking law enforcement officials from around the world.

#### History of the Tri-County Drug Enforcement Task Force. (TCDETF)

The Tri-County Drug Enforcement Task Force was developed in 1991 to combat illegal drug trafficking in Black Hawk and Bremer counties. The Task Force is federally funded by the Byrne-Justice Assistance Grant Program since its inception.

#### Task Force Agency Involvement and coverage area.

The assigned areas of responsibility for the Task Force are comprised of a lightly populated rural area within the densely populated urban areas. Contained within a geographical area of approximately 200 square miles and a population base of nearly 170,000 with a diverse mixture of ethnic, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. These areas include the cities of Waterloo, Cedar Falls and supported cities within the Black Hawk and Bremer County that also include the following cities of Waverly, Hudson, Evansdale, LaPorte City and also the University of Northern Iowa.

The Task Force is comprised of full-time investigators and supervisory staff from the Waterloo Police Department, Investigator from the Cedar Falls and Black Hawk County Sheriff's Office and an Analyst from the Iowa National Guard. Task Force investigators maintain a close working relationship the Iowa Division on Narcotics Enforcement (DNE), Department of Corrections and a continuous dialogue with the Department of Human Services to better track child endangerment and treatment as it relates to illegal drug offenses.

Investigators within the Task Force maintain a constant working relationship with several Federal Law Enforcement agencies, including ATF, ICE, DEA, US Postal Inspectors, US Attorney's Office and in particular the FBI, due to the fact the FBI maintains a regional office in Waterloo that provides great resources and support in many of the Federal drug cases that the Task Force investigates.

#### Duties and operations of the Tri County Drug Enforcement Task Force.

The Investigators with the Tri-County Drug Enforcement Task Force investigative multiple areas of major narcotics trafficking and manufacturing at both the State and Federal levels. These areas include but are not limited to the illegal sale and distribution of methamphetamine, crack-cocaine, cocaine, high-grade marijuana, heroin, hash-oil, prescription drugs and the investigation of firearms commonly associated with the distribution of illegal narcotics.

Because of the numerous types of drug cases being investigated, considerable resources are needed to investigate, apprehend and prosecute the subjects involved. Different law enforcement techniques, strategies and operations are required as the type of drugs being investigated change.

Through the use of combined resources and technology, the Task Force continues to advance our success rate in crippling and destroying criminal drug distribution organizations and networks. The destruction of these criminal organizations successfully disrupts the importation of significant amounts of methamphetamine (ICE), high-grade marijuana, crack cocaine and cocaine into our area. The shared intelligence, investigations and partnerships continue to reap benefits in our efforts against these organized drug distribution networks.

#### Methamphetamine in Iowa

Over the last ten years the method of methamphetamine manufacture and distribution has changed significantly in our area. Home-based methamphetamine labs have experienced a drastic decline in recent years due in part to the enacted state statutes limiting the sale of precursors specifically pseudoephedrine, but labs do still present a significant threat to local communities when they are discovered.

When the decline of the larger home-based labs began to decrease, the more transportable and concealable One-Pot methods of methamphetamine began to rise. This is a more convenient way of making meth quicker and does not require clandestine lab type items to make the meth. This type of meth cook results in a lower yield of meth with a lower purity level. These One-Pot cooks also became more of a hazard to the public because of the way the chemically laced vessels were being discarded. Due to fact these are transportable they are often times discarded in public areas such as parks and road side ditches.

### Tri-County Drug Enforcement Methamphetamine Labs Stats:

2003- 112 labs submitted  
2004- 117 labs submitted  
2005- 74 labs submitted Pseudoephedrine Control Acts enacted.  
2006- 30 labs submitted  
2007-2011 The labs submitted remained about the same.  
2012- 72 labs submitted, majority of labs submitted were One-Pot labs.  
2013- 31 labs submitted majority of labs submitted were One-Pot labs  
2014- 8 labs submitted majority of labs submitted were One-Pot labs

### The Increase of (ICE) Methamphetamine distribution

Methamphetamine- (ICE) Methamphetamine continues to be one of the largest problem drugs in our area in the recent years. The Task Force has been very active in investigating large Mexican drug trafficking organizations. These organizations have been a major threat not only to our area, but in Iowa and the Midwest. During the investigation we have determined that massive amounts of (ICE) methamphetamine has been either transported by vehicle or shipped to Black Hawk County and surrounding areas from organizations in Mexico and California. During investigations from 2011 to present, the Task Force has seized over 60 pounds of ICE with a street value of nearly 4 Million Dollars. The Task Force is currently working these investigations along with a number of agencies, including the DNE, HSI, FBI and the U.S. Attorney's Office

During our investigation we have learned through the State Crime Lab that the test results coming back from this type of methamphetamine is testing at a rate of nearly 97-98% purity level, which is a substantial difference between the "Home-Based labs" which labs results of a 65-75% methamphetamine purity level.

Prices constant with the sale and distribution of Methamphetamine in our area are as follows

- Ice- Methamphetamine sells for about \$120-\$150 a gram
- Home-based or One-Pot methamphetamine sells for about \$80-\$120 a gram.

In conclusion, as I have indicated clandestine labs and one-pot methods still pose a significant threat not only to the investigators working these cases, but also to the citizens in the community that may come into contact with them. Toxic chemicals, fires and explosions remain a constant concern for the safety of the community and anyone exposed to these types of situations. It is very evident that the importation of ICE methamphetamine into Iowa has become a major issue not only for law enforcement but to the community as a whole. The large amounts of money being made, weapons being seized along with the huge supply and demand of this highly addictive drug, requires that we continue to fund these efforts and remain vigilant.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to present this information.

Lt. Corbin Payne  
Tri-County Drug Enforcement Task Force.