

U. S. Department of Justice
National Drug Intelligence Center

National Drug Threat Survey 2011 (DRAFT)

Survey Question Testing Protocol and Summary

Overview

In response to input from Office of Management and Budget staff, the National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC), a component of the U.S. Department of Justice, pre-tested several questions that are contained in the National Drug Threat Survey (NDTS) 2011 data collection form. A test plan and testing protocol were developed and a test group of nine potential NDTS respondents was selected for the testing. The results of the testing are summarized below.

Testing Plan

A testing plan was developed to obtain feedback from a sample of potential NDTS respondents. The plan included the following:

- Develop a testing protocol to obtain feedback on various aspects of the NDTS 2011 survey instrument
- Select a group of potential NDTS respondents to review the testing protocol and provide feedback
- Have each tester review the test question protocol and provide either written or verbal responses to the questions listed for each survey item
- Contact each tester for a follow-up telephone interview to elicit any additional feedback
- Summarize tester feedback
- Modify NDTS 2011 survey instrument based on tester feedback

Question Testing Protocol

To lessen the time burden on the test participants, a subsample of NDTS 2011 questions was chosen for evaluation by the test sample members. The Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) recommended additional questions on drugged driving be added to the NDTS 2011 questionnaire and that a “Don’t Know” response category be added to all applicable existing and new survey questions. Further, OMB recommended that NDTS items that contained Likert-type response categories (e.g., “Low”, “Moderate”, “High”) have defined categories. NDIC was able to provide category definitions for the existing NDTS item on drug availability (Question 2). Thus Question 2 and Question 12 that contains several sub-items on drugged driving were chosen for review by the test group.

- Question 2-Drug Availability – This question was selected for testing to elicit feedback on three aspects of this survey item:
 - Indicate if the definitions for “Low”, “Moderate”, “High” response categories that were added to this question were understandable and enabled the respondent to provide consistent responses for each of the drugs listed in this item
 - Indicate if the “Don’t Know” response category added to the question is a valid response that can be used by respondents when they do not know the availability of a specific drug in their jurisdiction
 - Ensure that respondents are familiar with the drugs listed in the item, especially “Controlled Prescription Drugs,” previously listed as “Pharmaceuticals”

- Questions 12a, b, c-Drugged Driving – This three-part question was selected for testing to elicit feedback on three aspects of this survey item:
 - Assess respondent familiarity with the term “drugged driving”
 - Determine if respondents can provide drugged driving data in response to the question and the timeliness of providing such data
 - Determine the appropriate ranges for response categories for Question 12c

A copy of the testing protocol is appended to this report.

Question Testing Participants

A sample of nine potential NDTS respondents was chosen for the testing with one respondent from each of the nine Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) regions in the United States. NDTS results (statistical estimates) are presented at the OCDETF region level as well as state and national levels. The table below lists the participants, their law enforcement agency, type of agency, and the date of the follow-up interview with NDIC.

NDTS 2011 Question Testing Participants			
OCDETF Region	Test Participant	Agency Type	Interview Date
Florida/Caribbean	Lieutenant Whitney Burnett Alachua County, Florida, Sheriff's Office and Gainesville-Alachua County Drug Task Force	Metropolitan County Sheriff	7/16/10
Great Lakes	Jeff Capretto, Special Agent in Charge Westshore Enforcement Bureau (Ohio)	Suburban City Police Departments	7/14/10
Mid-Atlantic	Sergeant Scott Haymaker Johnstown, Pennsylvania, Police Department	Rural City Police Department	7/15/10
New England	Roy McKinney, Director Maine Drug Enforcement Agency	State Drug Enforcement Agency	7/26/10
New York/New Jersey	Detective Anthony Sickinger Union Township, New Jersey, Police Department	Suburban City Police Department	7/29/10
Pacific	Captain Frank Romanaggi Regional Organized Crime Narcotics Task Force	Metropolitan County Sheriff/Police Department	8/3/10
Southeast	Sergeant Frank Young New Orleans, Louisiana, Police Department	Metropolitan City Police Department	7/13/10
Southwest	Sergeant Cole Lester Houston, Texas, Police Department Targeted Narcotics Enforcement Team	Metropolitan City Police Department	8/2/10
West Central	Lieutenant Pat Downs La Plata County, Colorado, Sheriff's Office Southwest Drug Task Force	Rural County Sheriff	7/26/10

Summary of Question Testing Results

The NDTS 2011 Testing Protocol was emailed to eight of the nine testers – Sergeant Scott Haymaker of the Johnstown, Pennsylvania, Police Department is on temporary duty at NDIC through the National Guard and was able to complete the protocol in person. Additionally, Sergeant Haymaker reviewed the entire NDTS 2011 data collection form and provided feedback on all survey items and the overall accuracy and readability of the instrument.

Question 2 – Availability

The written protocol and follow-up interview focused on five specific aspects of this survey item that had been included in the NDTS since 2003, although several modifications were made for 2011 – definitions of the low, moderate, and high response categories were added and a “Don’t Know” response category was added to the item.

Responses to the five tester questions are summarized below:

- *Are you familiar with all of the drugs listed?*

All respondents were familiar with the 12 drugs listed for each of the sub-items of the question.

- *When assessing the availability of a drug in your jurisdiction, what specific drug trafficking activities come to mind?*

Responses focused on the accessibility of drugs in community, the volume of street sales of drugs, the number of drug dealers in the community, the ease and frequency of “street buys” by law enforcement, and the pattern of drug distribution by drug trafficking organizations – all recognized components of the broader term of “drug availability.”

- *Do the definitions of low, moderate, and high availability make sense to you?*

All respondents agreed that newly-added definitions of the “Low”, “Moderate”, “High” response categories made sense to them as a scale to rate the availability of the 12 drugs listed for each of the sub-items of the question.

- *Do the definitions of low, moderate, and high availability allow you to accurately indicate the availability of each drug in your jurisdiction?*

All respondents agreed that newly-added definitions of the “Low”, “Moderate”, “High” response categories allowed them to accurately rate the availability of the 12 drugs listed for each of the sub-items of the question. Three of the nine

respondents further commented that the category definitions were relative to their jurisdictions.

- *Are the “Not Available” and “Don’t Know” response categories self explanatory?*

All respondents understood the “Not Available” and “Don’t Know” response categories. One respondent added that the “Don’t Know” categories is particularly useful as drug trends change within a jurisdiction and respondents might not be able to rate the availability for a specific period of time.

Question 12 – Drugged Driving

The written protocol and follow-up interview focused on three specific aspects of this survey item that was added to the NDTs for 2011 at the request of the Office of National Drug Control Policy. The tester questions were designed to obtain information from potential NDTs respondents concerning their awareness of the issue of drugged driving and their ability to provide drugged driving incident data for their jurisdictions.

Responses to the three tester questions are summarized below:

- *Are you familiar with the term “drugged driving?”*

All respondents were familiar with the term drugged driving with one commenting the he is in the process of becoming more familiar with it in terms of a specific definition. He further added that as a result of being asked to review this question, he plans address the issue with the law enforcement agencies within his task force in terms of awareness and officer training and will discuss the subject with courts within his agency’s jurisdiction.

- *Were you able to provide the number of violations in you jurisdiction easily, or did it require research to obtain an answer?*

All respondents generally indicated that they would not be able to respond to this question, citing a number of reasons:

- **Driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol is not designated on the agency’s DUI citation**
- **Drug task forces (that provide drug enforcement activities for member agencies) are not responsible for DUI enforcement**
- **This information would be tracked by another unit within the agency (e.g., vehicular crimes unit)**
- **It would require extensive manual research of all DUI citations to determine those that are drug-related**
- **State-level drug agencies do not track such data**

- *Are the response categories for question 12(c) too narrow or too broad?*

Four of the six respondents who provided feedback for this item indicated that the response categories were too narrow as their responses would be based on estimates of the number of incidents due to the fact that their jurisdictions do not collect or report this information routinely. One respondent thought the categories were acceptable and one respondent thought that incidents that involve driving under the influence of drugs and alcohol need to be distinguished from incidents of driving under the influence of drugs only. The three respondents who did not provide feedback included two task forces that do not have drugged driving enforcement responsibility and an agency that has yet to address the issue of drugged driving.

NDTS Modifications Based on Tester Feedback

The feedback received from the sample of testers was used to modify the NDTS 2011 survey data collection form to enhance the data received through the instrument. Specifically several modifications were made to the drugged driving questions requested by ONDCP. The modifications discussed below have been approved by ONDCP and are incorporated in the draft NDTS 2001 questionnaire.

- Adding the parenthetical qualifying sentence (highlighted below) to Question 12 to address feedback that many NDTS respondents may not be able to respond to the sub-items in Question 12, especially sub-item 12c. The qualifying sentence was added to encourage respondents to use the “Don’t Know” response category, if applicable, thereby providing important feedback for ONDCP for this first attempt to gather information on drugged driving.

Drugged Driving

12. Drugged driving is a serious consequence of illicit drug use. For purposes of this survey, drugged driving is defined as driving after recent use of illegal drugs, including the non-medical use of controlled prescription drugs. *(Your responses to this question, even in the negative, will assist NDIC and federal policymakers in guiding future research regarding drugged driving.)*

- Reducing the number of response categories for Question 12c and providing wider numeric categories that, based on tester feedback, will enable respondent to provide an “approximate” response to the number of drugged driving violations based on available data.

Please indicate the approximate number of drugged driving violations that occurred in your jurisdiction in the past year:

None 1–100 101–500 501–1,000 1,001 or more Don’t Know

Appendix – Question Testing Protocol

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Survey Question Testing

The National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC), a component of the U.S. Department of Justice, conducts the National Drug Threat Survey (NDTS) annually. The NDTS is designed to elicit information from state and local law enforcement agencies related to the threats posed by the trafficking and distribution of various illicit drugs in their jurisdictions. To ensure that NDIC collects relevant and accurate information through the NDTS, we are asking for your assistance in evaluating several new questions for the NDTS 2011 survey instrument (questionnaire). As a member of the NDTS target audience, your insights and feedback are critical to our efforts to continually improve the NDTS.

Participation in the NDTS 2011 Testing consists of two distinct phases:

1. Complete the two attached NDTS 2011 survey questions as if you were actually responding to the survey. Review the Tester Questions for each question and formulate any thoughts or suggestions to improve the questions that you may have. If you prefer, you can type your thoughts and suggestions into the test question document or you can provide your feedback verbally.
2. Participate in a follow-up interview with the NDTS administrator to provide feedback and any additional information or suggestions for improvement.

The feedback obtained through the NDTS Testing Protocol will be used to refine the NDTS 2011 survey instrument that is scheduled for dissemination in December 2010.

Thank you for your assistance.

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Drug Availability

2. Indicate the level of availability of the following drugs in your jurisdiction using the following definitions:

Low availability – drug is difficult to obtain most of the time; Moderate availability – drug is easily obtained most of the time;

High availability – drug is easily obtained at any time.

	Low	Moderate	High	Not Available	Don't Know		Low	Moderate	High	Not Available	Don't Know
Powder cocaine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	MDMA (ecstasy)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Crack cocaine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	GHB	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Heroin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	LSD	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Powder methamphetamine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	PCP	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ice methamphetamine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	GBL	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marijuana	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Controlled prescription drugs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Tester Questions

- Are you familiar with all of the drugs listed?
- When assessing the availability of a drug in your jurisdiction, what specific drug trafficking activities come to mind?
- Do the definitions of low, moderate, and high availability make sense to you?
- Do the definitions of low, moderate, and high availability allow you to accurately indicate the availability of each drug in your jurisdiction?
- Are the “Not Available” and “Don’t Know” response categories self explanatory?

Consequences of Illicit Drug Use

13. Drugged driving is a serious consequence of illicit drug use. For purposes of this survey, drugged driving is defined as driving after recent use of illegal drugs, including the non-medical use of controlled prescription drugs.

a. Do you believe that drugged driving poses a safety threat in your jurisdiction?

Yes No Don't Know

b. Does your agency provide drugged driving recognition training for your officers?

Yes No Don't Know

c. Please indicate the approximate number of drugged driving violations that occurred in your jurisdiction in the past year:

None
1-25
26-50
51-75
76-100
101-500
501-1,000
1,001 or more
Don't Know

Tester Questions

- Are you familiar with the term “drugged driving”?

- Were you able to provide the number of violations in you jurisdiction easily, or did it require research to obtain an answer?

- Are the response categories for question 12(c) too narrow or too broad?