



## ISC UPDATES

Our previous ISC Manager, IRS Ana Pino (picture right), has taken a foreign assignment in the Dominican Republic. She served as the ISC Manager for the last 2 years, and did an outstanding job managing intelligence collection, exploitation, and sharing with the inter-agency community. She also coordinated the expansion of the ISC to include the Drone Exploitation capabilities. Please join us in saying thanks to Ms. Pino, and we wish her much success in her new assignment.



### Introducing new HIDTA/ISC Manager Veronica Martinez



Veronica Martinez began her career with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in 2004, as an Intelligence Research Specialist (IRS) assigned to the Caribbean Division (CD). Prior to DEA, she worked with the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) from 1997-2004. As a DEA IRS for over 19 years, Ms. Martinez has been dedicated to the analysis of intelligence and investigative efforts, providing support to numerous enforcement groups and the Intelligence Program. As a senior analyst, she served as the pillar in most intelligence programs, including being the first Strategic Analyst for the CD and Collection Manager (CM).

Ms. Martinez has served as a Group Supervisor (GS) in an acting capacity for all DEA intelligence groups, the CM and the Field Intelligence Manager (FIM). On August 25, 2023, she was promoted to GS and Manager for the HIDTA/ISC.

## INVESTIGATIVE SUCCESS

### ST. THOMAS HIDTA

During the month of August 2023, the DEA St. Thomas Resident Office (STRO-HIDTA) continued to investigate a large-scale drug trafficking organization that was sending large amounts of narcotics to the British Virgin Islands (BVI). These narcotics would then be further processed and sent to the United States for further distribution.

On August 19, 2023, aerial and electronic surveillance monitored an aircraft that was near Anegada, BVI. Information received from other sources indicated that the aircraft was loaded with an undetermined amount of narcotics. Based on the information, law enforcement monitored the aircraft as it landed at the airport on Anegada, BVI.

Surveillance units were able to observe a Ford pickup truck arrive at the location, and began to load suspected bales of cocaine that were transferred from the aircraft. The truck then departed the area onto an off-road trail and appeared to get stuck in the sand. The occupant(s) began offloading the suspected bales of cocaine in an effort to lighten the weight of the truck. The pickup was unable to get free and both occupant(s) fled the scene on foot. As the aircraft attempted to leave, law enforcement officers blocked the aircraft and arrested the occupants. A search of the brush area revealed approximately 800 kilograms of cocaine. The airplane was also seized which is valued at over \$500,000. This investigation is ongoing.



Pictures above: Aircraft and pick-up truck interdicted at the airport; 800 Kg of cocaine seized.



## PONCE District Office

The Ponce District Office (DO), HIDTA Task Force Group-3 (TFG-3), Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-S), the Cartagena Resident Office – Group 1, U.S. Customs and Border Protection - Air and Marine Operations (CBP-AMO), Homeland Security Investigations - Mayaguez Office and United States Coast Guard (USCG) continue targeting a Transnational Criminal Organization (TCO) smuggling multi-hundred quantities of cocaine from Colombia (CO)/Venezuela (VZ) to Puerto Rico (PR). On August 27, 2023, at approximately 10:30 p.m., a JIATF-South maritime patrol aircraft (MPA), while conducting a routine patrol, detected a surface target of interest (STOI) approximately twenty-six (26) nautical miles south of Lajas, Puerto Rico (PR). The STOI was described as approximately 28 foot-in-length, fiberglass homemade vessel, powered with two (2) outboard motors and occupied by two (2) individuals. The individuals were later identified as Eduardo Rafael MARCANO-Adrian and Hernaurys Dubinis CARABALLO-Mata (Venezuelan Nationals).

On August 28, 2023, at approximately 12:30 a.m., the CBP patrol vessels approached the STOI, while energizing lights and sirens and announcing law enforcement presence. The STOI quickly stopped approximately seven (7) nautical miles southwest of La Parguera, Lajas, PR, and both, Eduardo Rafael MARCANO-Adrian and Hernaurys Dubinis CARABALLO-Mata, were detained without incident. Subsequently, CBP Marine Interdiction Agents (MIAs) recovered forty-one (41) burlap sack bales from the STOI containing brick like-packages of a white powdery substance that field tested presumptively positive to the properties of cocaine and weighed approximately 1,210.8 kilograms.



Pictures above: seized panga (speed boat) and traffickers communication devices.

Picture on the left: 1210 Kg seized by members of the PONCE DO.

## OVERDOSE RESPONSE STRATEGY

### *2023 Overdose Response Strategy (ORS) Region 3 Meeting/Training, Raleigh, North Carolina*

From September 13th to 15th, 2023, HIDTA's Drug Intelligence Officers (DIO's) and CDC Foundation's Public Health Analysts (PHA's) assigned to Region 3, participated in an annual meeting/training in Cary, North Carolina. Invited guest presented on numerous topics relevant to DIO's and PHA's overall objective in their positions; included were "Lived Experience", "Naloxone Vending Machine in Jails" and the "Science Behind Addiction", among other important topics.

DIO's and PHA's discussed best practices and what's working well and discussed potential regional networking projects. Networking, in person, is very important; it gave all an opportunity to connect and share their thoughts and ideas in reaching the goals and objectives of the ORS.



Picture: PR-USVI HIDTA PHAs Amulen Wirsy and Francisco Torres-Cardona, and DIOs Jose Rodriguez and Rodney F. Querrard join Overdose Response Strategy (ORS) staff for a group picture at the 2023 ORS Region 3 Meeting in Raleigh, North Carolina.

## Engagement in Puerto Rico

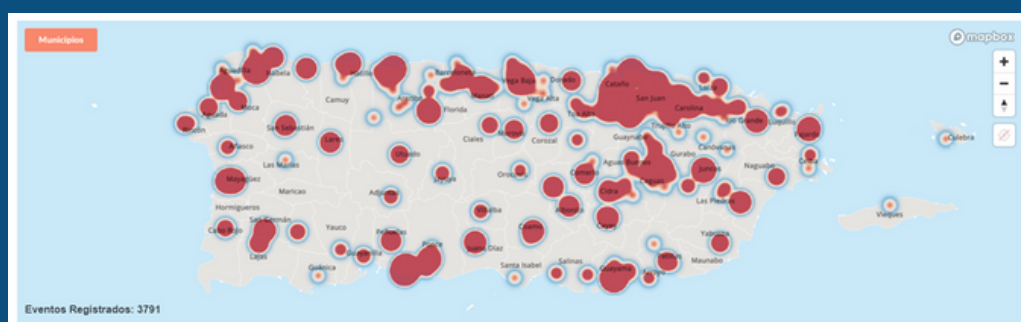
### *Suspected overdose dashboard*

The Puerto Rico Prevent Prescription Drug/Opioid Overdose-related Deaths (PR PDO), housed at the Mental Health and Against Addiction Services Administration (ASSMCA in Spanish), have a web-based dashboard to disseminate up-to-date information on suspected overdose events. It compiles data from 2019 to present (September 2023), shown through a hotspot map format and graphics.

Previously under ASSMCA's First Responders-Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act grant (FR-CARA), the dashboard compiles basic demographic information, place and time, suspected substances, naloxone administration and mortality. Data collection is possible through an electronic form, available at <http://frcara.assmca.pr.gov/eventoPublico>. Most of the entities providing data are municipal emergency management and state emergency medical system, correctional institutions, community-based organizations, federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) and community leaders.

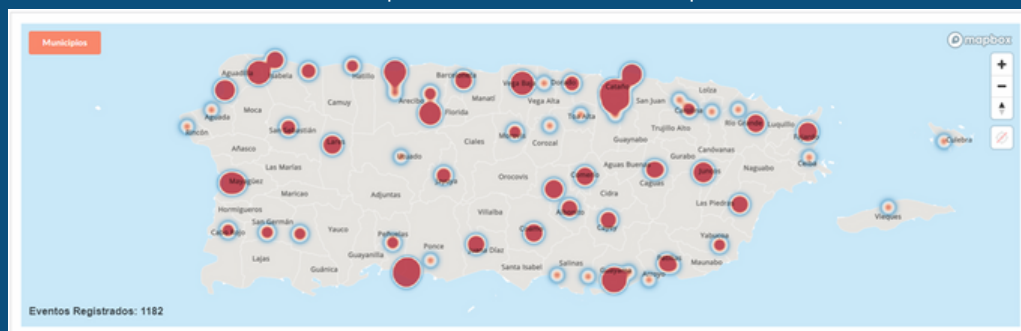
The following maps and graphics show data on suspected overdose events registered since 2019 and during the last 9 months of 2023. In summary, 3684 suspected overdose events were registered from 2019 to September 2023, with 139 fatal cases; during the present year of 2023, a total of 1182 suspected overdoses, from which 36 were fatal.

Map 1: Fatal and non-fatal suspected overdose events from 2019 to present (September 28, 2023) (heat map).



(Registered events: 3791)

Map 2: Fatal and non-fatal suspected overdose events from January to September 28, 2023 (heat map)

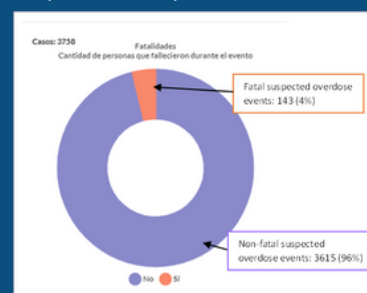


(Registered events: 1182)

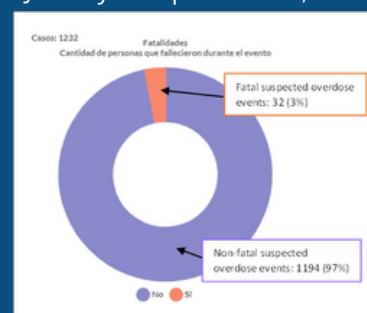
Source: <http://frcara.assmca.pr.gov/>



Graph 1: Fatal and non-fatal suspected overdose events from 2019 to present (September 28, 2023)



Graph 2: Fatal and non-fatal suspected overdose events from January to September 28, 2023



Click the link or scan the QR code and tell us how are we doing:  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JBWT5LY>



## Death by Fentanyl Intoxication in Puerto Rico

A 10-year (2012-2022) fentanyl fatal intoxication data report from the Forensic Science Institute of Puerto Rico reveals that in 2016 to 2017, fentanyl fatal intoxications went up by 67 cases (from 7 to 74 deaths), an increase of 957.14%. Thereafter, deaths nearly doubled in two (2) time periods: 2017-2018, from 74 to 145 (95.95% increase); and 2019-2020, from 196 to 380 (93.88% increase) deaths. In 2021, fentanyl related deaths reached its peak of 544 victims, 164 additional cases since 2020. However, a drop in fatal Fentanyl intoxication is registered for 2022, with a 40.63% deaths reduction, with 221 less victims compared to the previous year.

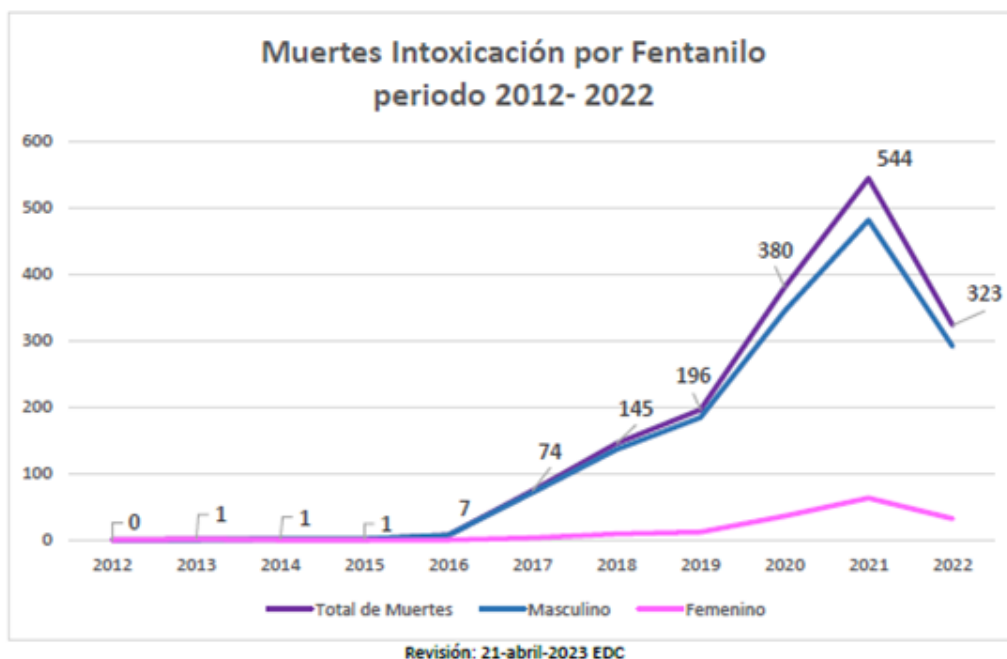


### Gobierno de Puerto Rico Instituto de Ciencias Forenses



#### Informe Muertes Intoxicación por Fentanilo Periodo 2012 hasta 2022

Año	Total de Muertes	Masculino	Femenino
2012	0	0	0
2013	1	0	1
2014	1	1	0
2015	1	1	0
2016	7	7	0
2017	74	71	3
2018	145	136	9
2019	196	184	12
2020	380	344	36
2021	544	481	63
2022	323	291	32



Source: Instituto de Ciencias Forenses, April 2023



## USVI HIDTA Prevention Initiative

- Substance Abuse: overindulgence in or dependence on an addictive substance, especially alcohol or drugs
- Violence: behaviors ranging from physical fighting to more severe forms of physical assault that can result in serious injury or death
- Peer Pressure: a feeling that one must do the same things as other people of one's age and social group in order to be liked or respected

The Prevention Initiative formed a committee who posted the announcement, manage submissions, answer questions, and manage access to students through Department of Education leadership. Submissions opened September 11th and will close on October 16th at 11:59pm, in alignment with the timetable for Red Ribbon Week. The judging committee will select the winners and announce them on October 23rd to kick off Red Ribbon Week, October 23rd- 31st, 2023.














USVI HIDTA PREVENTION INITIATIVE PRESENTS

# PREVENTION PSA COMPETITION

September 11th-October 16th

**Substance Abuse**

**Violence**

**Peer Pressure**




Learn more at:



All USVI students in grades 6-8 are invited to show their talent and leadership through a public service announcement (PSA) video competition!

**CASH AND SPONSOR PRIZES**

**1ST** \$500

**2ND** \$350

**3RD** \$200

PLACE PER CATEGORY

**SEND QUESTIONS TO [VIHIDTA@GMAIL.COM](mailto:VIHIDTA@GMAIL.COM)**

## PREVENTION

**ALIANZA INITIATIVE**

ALIANZA personnel engaging with students.

The project "Prevention in Action" of the Alliance for Drug Free Puerto Rico, sponsored by HIDTA starting in FY2021, began this week with a series of life skills workshops. As part of this program students will also develop a script and film a prevention ad. HIDTA Prevention representatives are working closely with students in public schools across the Island to help them develop life skills and make positive life choices. The prevention ad these kids are developing will be broadcast on a several media outlets across Puerto Rico.

## ALIANZA CELEBRATES 30 YEARS OF DEDICATED COMMITMENT TO PREVENTION, EDUCATION AND TRANSFORMATION TO THE PEOPLE OF PUERTO RICO

The Alliance for a Drug-Free Puerto Rico thanks its sponsors for 30 years of commitment to prevention, education, and transformation of their communities. It has reached over one million persons and have been in over 1,300 schools.

In the last six years the Alliance have signed collaborative agreements with the government sector to guarantee continued access to schools. They have strengthened their presence to achieve a greater reach. They've added new strategies in digital format. Four drug capsules were recorded that obtained a reach of more than 800,000.00 impressions. Alianza have reached 61 towns with 60 projects and have distributed over 2,500 Prevention Modules in the School Social Work program of the Department of Education. They have recorded 11 life skills capsules. The content of their page was expanded to include videos, karaoke songs and virtual games that promote the learning of values in childhood. Alianza have fully complied with and met the goals of their Strategic Plan.

Alianza's Development Officer Raquel L. Muñiz stated, "HIDTA is a great ally of the Alliance, together we have promoted with great responsibility, social commitment, leadership and empowerment from an early age."

We, at Puerto Rico-Virgin Islands HIDTA congratulate Alianza and their hard-working team for achieving this milestone, and for their continued service to the people of Puerto Rico. Together we will continue to do what is right for the people we serve each and every day.



Picture above: sponsors from federal and state governmental and non-governmental agencies, gather to celebrate the Alliance 30th anniversary; below: John Kanig (HIDTA Director), Rebecca González (HSI SAC), Katiana Pérez (Alianza Director), and Stephen Muldrow, (US Attorney, PR)



## Partner Engagement with the US Virgin Islands FUSION CENTER



**THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS**  
**1<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL**  
**EMERGING THREATS SYMPOSIUM**  
**AT THE RITZ CARLTON – ST. THOMAS, VI**  
**NOVEMBER 30—DECEMBER 1, 2023**

**GUEST SPEAKERS FROM:**



**To Register, Scan the QR Code or Visit:**  
<https://forms.office.com/r/VM99M2y5w>

**HOSTED BY: THE VITEMA | THE VIRGIN ISLANDS FUSION CENTER**



**DO YOU HAVE A LEEP ACCOUNT ?**

**THE VIRGIN ISLANDS FUSION CENTER AND  
THE PUERTO RICO FUSION CENTER  
NOW HAS A LEEP COMMUNITY OF INTEREST (COI)  
AVAILABLE FOR ALL LAW ENFORCEMENT AND  
INTELLIGENCE ANALYST**



**ACCESS SITUATIONAL AWARENESS BULLETINS  
OFFICER SAFETY AWARENESS  
WANTED POSTERS  
LINKS TO PUBLIC SAFETY WEBSITES  
AND MUCH MORE**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION,  
CONTACT THE PUERTO RICO FUSION CENTER at [PRFC@dsp.pr.gov](mailto:PRFC@dsp.pr.gov)  
OR THE VIRGIN ISLANDS FUSION CENTER at [fusioncenter@vi.gov](mailto:fusioncenter@vi.gov)**