

I. Introduction

The purpose of this technical report is to provide detailed documentation of all programming and statistical activities involved in the construction of the price and purity series presented in *Price and Purity of Illicit Drugs: 1981 Through Second Quarter of 2003*, a companion report prepared for the Office of National Drug Control Policy (henceforth referred to as the main report). This technical report contains information on the precise steps taken to (a) acquire the data, (b) assess the quality of the data, (c) clean the data, (d) use the data to generate city-specific price and purity series, and (e) build national indices of price and purity from city-specific estimates. It serves as a roadmap for anyone interested in replicating the results presented in the main report. Because decisions had to be made at various stages about which data to use and how to use them, this document also provides a justification for the decisions made throughout the development of the main report. Many of these decisions were made on the basis of additional analyses not presented in the main report and follow-up discussions with key Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) personnel who are responsible for maintaining the System to Retrieve Information from Drug Evidence (STRIDE) database and who are knowledgeable about how these drug transactions occur. We would like to thank the various DEA staff for all of their time and assistance in educating us about how things get recorded in STRIDE.