EMERGING THREAT REPORT  Mid-Year 2022

The Special Testing and Research Laboratory’s Emerging Trends Program compiled the data for this report through a query of archived seizure and analysis information from drug evidence analyzed by the Drug Enforcement Administration’s laboratory system. This data is representative of drug evidence seized and analyzed in the date ranges annotated. This is not a comprehensive list of all new psychoactive substances and is not representative of all evidence analyzed by DEA. This data is a mid-year snapshot of the new psychoactive substance market in the United States.

SYNTHETIC CANNABINOIDS

There were 10 synthetic cannabinoid identifications in the first half of CY2022. MDMB-4en-PINACA was the most reported synthetic cannabinoid accounting for 50% of the identifications.

BENZODIAZEPINES

There were 166 NPS benzodiazepine identifications this reporting period. Clonazolam was the most reported benzodiazepine accounting for approximately 31% of the identifications.

The term new psychoactive substance (NPS) describes a recently emerged drug that may pose a public health threat. This includes synthetic cannabinoids, substituted cathinones, phenethylamines, opioids, tryptamines, benzodiazepines, and a variety of other chemical classes. Due to the continued increase in seizures, fentanyl is also included in this report.

An identification is made when authenticated reference material is available for comparison. When reference material is not available, the drug evidence is identified as “inconclusive.”

OPIOIDS/ANALGESICS

There were 4418 identifications of fentanyl, fentanyl-related compounds, and other new opioids. Fentanyl accounted for approximately 77% of the opioid identifications. Of the 3413 identifications, fentanyl was found as the only controlled substance in approximately 60% of the identifications and with heroin in approximately 14% of the identifications.

CATHINONES

There were 56 cathinone identifications this reporting period. Eutylone and N,N-dimethylpentylone were the most reported cathinones accounting for approximately 55% of the identifications.

Questions about this data are welcomed and may be directed to the DEA Emerging Trends Program at 703-668-3300 or DEA.Emerging.Trends@dea.gov.

OTHER

The “other” category includes substances that could not be confirmed, psychoactive plants, PCP related substances, benzofurans, hallucinogens, tryptamines, and amphetamines.

There were 41 identifications categorized as inconclusive during this reporting period. Additionally, there was 1 identification each of 5-MeO-DBT and O-Desmethyl-Cis-Tramadol.