

UNCLASSIFIED
AY 2017-2018 PROSPECTIVE RESEARCH TOPIC NOMINATION

*CLASSIFICATION:	Unclassified
*RESEARCH TOPIC TITLE:	Drug Trafficking Organization Network Analysis
*TOPIC DESCRIPTION	Applying network analysis, against what “nodes” and “links/ties” in transnational drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) can the U.S. government and Department of Defense act most effectively? What changes does this analysis suggest for changes to USG and DoD specific counter-drug efforts?
*DATE SUBMITTED (YYYY-MM-DD)	2017-06-19
*EXTENDED TOPIC DESCRIPTION	Scholarly work in network analysis sometimes suggests counter-intuitive findings about how to target threat organizations most effectively. For instance, targeting senior leadership of illicit organizations may not be the most effective use of resources when lower level leaders are more influential in the organization’s daily functions due to their network ties. Nor does simply counting the number of network ties an organization’s member has to other members necessarily indicate influence. Drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) are an important subset of transnational criminal organizations (TCOs). Various U.S. and DoD organizations and agencies may also be particularly well suited to affecting different parts of the DTO network. Applying a rigorous network analysis to DTOs could yield important insights about how to best defeat these organizations. It could also yield generalizable insights about how to counter the full range of transnational criminal organizations (TCOs).
*DESIRED OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH	Use network analysis to maximize U.S. government and DoD effectiveness in countering transnational criminal organizations (TCOs).
*REQUESTING/SPONSORING ORGANIZATION:	Joint Task Force North (JTF-N)
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DESIRED RESEARCH COMPLETION DATE (YYYY-MM-DD):	Standing topic – not time sensitive.
AVAILABLE FUNDING, IF ANY:	JTF-N may be able to support funding for TDY travel on a limited case-by-case basis.
COMMENTS	For a broad overview of network analysis science and methods, see Matthew O. Jackson, <i>Social and Economic Networks</i> (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008).