



MINUTES OF THE MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE ON DRUG POLICY (MCDP) MEETING

***Tuesday 25 August 1998
6.00pm – 7.15pm***

***Beehive Rm 5.5
Parliament, Wellington***

LIST OF ATTENDEES

Hon Roger Sowry, Associate Minister of Health (Chair)
Hon Wyatt Creech, Minister of Education
Rt Hon Doug Graham, Minister of Justice
Hon Tuariki Delamere, Minister of Customs
Hon Maurice Williamson, Minister of Transport

Apologies

Hon Nick Smith, Minister of Corrections
Hon Tony Ryall, Acting Minister of Youth Affairs
Hon Tau Henare, Minister of Maori Affairs
Hon Jack Elder, Minister of Police

Senior Officials

Dr Gillian Durham, Ministry of Health
Mr Dave Negri, New Zealand Customs Service
Dr Mike MacAvoy, Alcohol Advisory Council (ALAC)
Mr Paora Howe, Te Puni Kokiri

Secretariat

Mr Michael Webb, Ministry of Health
Mr Paul Marriott Lloyd, Ministry of Health
Ms Cathy Scott, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet

SUMMARY OF ACTION ARISING

Agenda item 1 - Procedural Matters

- The Chair referred other Ministers to the short paper on procedural aspects of the way in which MCDP meetings will be run, the services which will be provided by the Secretariat, and the relationship between the MCDP and the Inter-agency Committee on Drugs (IACD).

Agenda item 2.1 - Drug Use in the New Zealand Context

- Senior officials representing the Customs Service, ALAC and Te Puni Kokiri made short presentations on the current drug use situation in New Zealand, plus some emerging trends.

Agenda item 2.2 - Current work by agencies to advance the National Drug Policy

- The Chair referred other Ministers to the various papers under agenda item 2.2 and asked Dr Durham (as Chair of the IACD officials group) to briefly speak to those papers. Ministers agreed to note the papers.

Agenda item 3.1 - Balance between harm prevention and harm minimisation

- Minister endorsed the recommendations made in the paper under agenda item 3.1/ The Chair asked Dr Durham to summarise the main points of the paper, and in particular the current evidence on the efficacy of drug education programmes.

Agenda item 3.2 - Development of an intersectoral work programme

- The Chair introduced the paper under agenda item 3.2 by observing that, while Ministers were not opposed to officials developing a comprehensive intersectoral work programme (along the lines indicated in the paper), there is a need to identify things that could be done more immediately.
- The Chair asked officials to come back to the MCDP (or a smaller group of Ministers) with initial scoping work that reflected Ministers' concerns. He summarised these concerns as:
 1. the cannabis problem in the Far North and on the East Coast
 2. the possible importation of 'hard drugs' such as heroin and cocaine from Australia,

In both cases, the Chair asked that officials exercise their minds on possible strategies to respond to these concerns, including strategies in each of three main areas of supply control (law enforcement), demand reduction (education) and problem limitation (treatment).

Action arising: Secretariat to distribute to IACD members copies of the ERO report and a summary of emerging 'hard drug' trends in Australia from the 1997 Australian Illicit Drug Report [by Friday 28 August].

Action arising: IACD members (or a sub-group if IACD members) to meet as soon as practicable to discuss the initial scoping work requested by Ministers [perhaps on Tuesday 1 September?].

Action arising: The Chair of the IACD to seek direction from the Chair of the MCDP on the desired timeframe and procedure for reporting back to Ministers with the results of this initial scoping work [by Friday 28 August].

Agenda item 4 - Other business

- The Chair spoke briefly to the issue of how to involve non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the work under the National Drug Policy, and in particular the development of a full intersectoral work programme. The mechanics of such consultation with NGOs was left to the IACD to work out, subject to any further direction by Ministers.

Action arising: IACD to consult on the implementation of the National Drug Policy with appropriate NGOs, subject to any further direction by Ministers.