

INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE ON DRUGS (IACD) MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held 18 July 2001, 11.30 am to 2.30 pm

WELCOME, APOLOGIES, AND INTRODUCTIONS

Attendees - IACD Agencies

Laurie Gabites, Police
Angela Holmes, Corrections
Ruth Lawton, Education
Meg McKenzie, ALAC
Mike McAvoy, ALAC
Debbie Matoe, TPK
Dale Walker, TPK
Tui Patterson, LTSA
Annie Rainford, Justice
Tae Tu'imukuafe, Pacific Island Affairs

IACD Secretariat / Health (NDP Team)

Paul Marriott-Lloyd, Chair
Brendon Baker
Andrew Zielinski (morning only)
Louise Delaney (Smokefree Bill item only)

Other Health representatives

Chris Laurenson
Terry Huriwai

Apologies

Peter Carr, Ministry of Social Policy
David Negri, Customs
Chris Harrington, Corrections
George Smollet, Customs
Laurie Gabites, Police
Bill Frith, LTSA
David Wilson, Courts
Tony Quayle, Police
Sandra Meredith, Youth Affairs

CLOSED SESSION

Paul Marriott- Lloyd opened the meeting stated his disappointment at the small turnout of agencies. Some had sent apologies on the morning of the meeting to say they were unable to attend. It was emphasised that to make

the IACD work it was imperative that all agencies are represented and that if a particular representative could not attend from an agency then it was their responsibility to find a replacement. Given that these meetings are only held every 3-4 months and are scheduled well in advance there was no real excuse for agencies not attending.

BRIEF UPDATES

1. Future IACD and MCDP Meetings

Paul outlined that Hon Tariana Turia now has responsibility for drug policy.

MCDP and IACD meetings are to now be held every six months in line with the six monthly reporting framework for the National Drug Policy. All participating agencies were encouraged to attend and also to send people of a senior level. Those attending expressed the need to have strong leadership and support within IACD.

Ministers at the last meeting of the MCDP emphasised the need for papers that required decisions to be put to the MCDP rather than simply noting papers and the issues should be suitably large for consideration by a group of Ministers.

2. Drug Policy Update

It was stated that the Drug Policy Update has contributed much to the flow of information between agencies and the community and that the IACD as a whole should make use of what is a very valuable resource for distributing information. There are currently over 700 people / organisations on the Drug Policy Update mailing list. Anyone that would like to be placed on the mailing list should contact Catherine Conland at the Ministry of Health on 496 2000 or by email at catherine_conland@moh.govt.nz

3. NDP Website - www.ndp.govt.nz

The site was launched in March this year. IACD and MCDP minutes and papers will be on the site in order to ensure that the work of the committees is open and transparent. Agencies have already contributed some items for the site, but are encouraged to keep sending new information, documents, media releases etc to Catherine Conland to have them posted on the site.

4. Youth Website - Urge/Whakamanawa - www.urge.govt.nz

Catherine Conland and Meg McKenzie gave an update on the Urge/Whakamanawa website. They once again stressed that the Urge/Whakamanawa fits well with State Services Commission policy and the e-government strategy and is a good example of inter-agency collaboration.

The website has been getting a large number of "hits" and ongoing funding will be required to keep the website going and up to date. Since going live in

November the site has had 26 000 visitors (approximately 85% from New Zealand) who stayed on the site for an average of seven minutes seeking out information on sexuality, drugs and alcohol, emotional health and wellbeing, artistic activities and other sections of interest. On average it costs less than \$3 for every visitor to the site, proving very cost effective as an early intervention strategy. The site is significantly quieter during school holidays, seemingly indicating schools as a major point of access.

Consultation has determined that most young people are happy with the content of the website. A recent focus group with rangatahi indicated a need for more emphasis on issues relating to young Māori as well as livelier colours. With the current \$180 000 budget (current funders are the Alcohol Advisory Council, Ministry of Education, Te Puni Kokiri Ministry of Youth Affairs and the Ministry of Health) some sections on the site will be expanded and the remainder of the funds (or new contributions) will be used for various promotional activities. The corporate and philanthropic communities will also be approached for support in order to continue expanding the site. This will be done in agreement with the steering group.

Action arising:

Agencies will assess future funding opportunities for the website.

5. Implementation of the National Alcohol Strategy

Mike MacAvoy gave an overview of the National Alcohol Strategy

Action arising:

Agencies were asked to provide advice in the form of a one or two pager as to how they propose to implement the National Alcohol Strategy. These action plans will be discussed at the next meeting of the IACD.

6. Monitoring the Impact of the Sale of Liquor Amendment Act 1999

The Ministry of Justice is currently completing a review of readily available statistics (for example: drink driving conviction and motor vehicle injuries) in order to assess the potential impact of the Sale of Liquor Amendment Act 1999 (the reduction of the legal drinking age to 18). This paper will be completed and presented to the Minister of Justice by the end of the year.

The Alcohol and Public Health Research Unit (APHRU) have completed the Decade of Drinking Surveys. These Auckland based surveys, carried out in each of the last 10 years and funded by ALAC and the Health Research Council, found that there has been an increase in the amount that people drink at a typical drinking occasion. There was also a large increase in the amount that 14-19 year olds drank over the decade.

7. Development of a Tobacco, Alcohol and Other Drug Research Strategy

A small working group has been established with officials from ALAC, TPK and the Ministry of Health.

The working group is providing comment on the work currently being undertaken by Peter Adams in this area. The group has links with treatment providers.

8. Proposed Misuse of Drugs Act Amendment

Brendon Baker presented a paper that proposed an amendment to the Misuse of Drugs Act 1975. The amendment would revoke section 13 (1)(aa) of the Act. This would have the effect of legalising the possession of needles and syringes.

Action arising: The IACD agreed with the proposal and recommended that the Ministry of Health undertake this amendment when an appropriate legislative vehicle becomes available. The IACD recommended that this issue should be progressed directly with the Minister of Health rather than going to the MCDP.

9. Smokefree Environments (Enhanced Protection) Bill and SOP

Louise Delaney provided the committee with an overview of the Bill and SOP and highlight potential implications for IACD agencies.

10. Development of the Tobacco and Alcohol and Other Drug Toolkits

Andrew Zielinski updated the committee on the progress with the toolkits. These are to be finalised by September 2001, however, they will be evolving documents based on current evidence.

The Ministries of Pacific Island Affairs, Justice and Te Puni Kokiri expressed an interest in reviewing the toolkits.

11. Expert Advisory Committee on Drugs (EACD)

Robert Smith updated the Committee on progress with the establishment of the EACD. The EACD was established to advise the Minister of Health on drug classification issues. The EACD have met once and have had one teleconference.

The Fantasy range of drugs (for example: GHB, 14B etc) are currently being assessed by the EACD. The EACD will be providing the Minister of Health with a report and recommendation within the next month.

12. Health Select Committee Review of Cannabis

Andrew Zielinski reported that the Health Select Committee had to date held three public hearings (two in Wellington and one in Dunedin). The hearings have been fairly low key to date but with a wide variety of submitters. The

Health Select Committee has so far required very little from the supporting agencies (Health and Justice) during the hearings.

There are further hearings planned for Christchurch, Auckland, Northland, the East Coast. The hearings are scheduled to finish sometime in October.

13. Industrial Hemp Cultivation in New Zealand

Brendon Baker updated the Committee on the work of the Interagency Hemp working group.

In April this year, the Ministers of Health and Agriculture approved a trial process for the cultivation of industrial hemp in New Zealand. Any application and subsequent license for approval to trial the cultivation of industrial hemp is to be bound by strict guidelines. Similar trials are proceeding in Australia.

A key component of any licence to run a trial plot will be allowing officials access to the cultivation site, as well as random sampling and provision of data. This will allow us to ensure THC concentrations in plants in trial plots are well below that which might aggravate potential issues under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1975.

The issue of disposal and destruction of harvested material will also be carefully monitoring.

Applicants will be required to provide full details of disposal and destruction, as well as explain how they will deal with regrowth from harvested plants and plants grown from germination of seed produced by the trial plants.

The trial will be conducted over two years and there will a full evaluation process and report at the conclusion of this period.

14. Drug Paraphernalia

A general discussion was held around drug paraphernalia. The Ministry of Customs are following up on the ability of the Minister of Customs to grant waivers in exceptional circumstances for pipes / bongs.

Action arising: The Ministry of Customs will be asked to up date the Committee on drug paraphernalia issues at the next meeting.

15. Memorandum of Understanding with the Chemicals Industry on Precursors

During August, the National Drug Intelligence Bureau (NDIB) and the New Zealand Chemical Industry Council Inc signed a memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which seeks to prevent the distribution of chemicals and reagents necessary for the domestic manufacture of illicit drugs.

The MoU establishes and promotes cooperation between the NDIB and the New Zealand Chemical Industry Council. The MoU is intended to be used by chemical suppliers, throughout New Zealand and Australia, so that uniform procedures are adopted to facilitate communication with the various government and law enforcement agencies and to protect the welfare of staff of participating companies.

The MOU established a common procedure for manufacturers, importers and suppliers of hazardous substances to:

- Prevent the diversion of selected chemicals into the production of illicit drugs
- Cooperate with government law enforcement agencies in the controlled delivery of hazardous substances destined for the illicit product of drugs - where this is expected to lead to the apprehension and conviction of persons involved in such supply or production.
- Educate and train members of the chemical industry, users of precursor chemicals, and enforcement staff of the problems associated with the diversion of essential chemicals to illegal operations.

Effective co-operation between community, government agencies, and members of the Council will prove effective in reducing the availability of illegal drugs.

The chemicals and ancillary materials known to be used in the illicit manufacture of drugs are divided into three categories within the MoU:

Category 1

Chemicals that require an End User Declaration with each purchase and which may only be sold to 'account customers' or customers known to the suppliers. Supply of these chemicals must be delayed for a period of not less than 24 hours after notifying the NDIB.

Category 2

Chemicals that require an End User Declaration when sold to non-account customers or customers not known to the supplier.

Category 3

Chemicals and apparatus that may be used in the illicit production of drugs. Purchases from this list should alert suppliers to seek further indications of any suspicious orders or enquiries.

The three categories are monitored and records kept by the suppliers. Suppliers must notify the NDIB of any suspicious enquiry or order for all:

- Category 1 chemical substances
- Category 2 chemical substances, when sold to non account customers

- Category 3 suspicious circumstances surrounding the supply of chemical substances.

16. New Zealand Drug Statistics Publication

This publication will be released in the next month and will be available at the National Drug Policy website (www.ndp.govt.nz).

17. Six Monthly Reporting To MCDP

Brendon Baker reminded agencies that he needs the updated six-month report templates by early August. These will go to Ministers before the next MCDP meeting.

Action arising:

Agencies to please note timeframe for contributions.

18. Australian Mortality Database

Laurie Gabites (Police) provided a brief update on this issue. This involves the idea of New Zealand linking with the Australian Mortality Database (Monash University) to enable the collection of more robust figures.

19. Next Meeting Of IACD

No decision was made on when IACD should next meet. However, agencies agreed that it was appropriate IACD meet at six monthly intervals.

LUNCH

OPEN SESSION - NON-GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

ALCOHOL DRUG ASSOCIATION - ADA

Paul Traynor, Manager of the Alcohol Drug Association, outlined the work of the ADA and presented the results of the latest usage survey of the Alcohol Helpline (an 0800 service) run by ADA.

ALCOHOL AND PUBLIC HEALTH RESEARCH UNIT - APhRU

Professor Sally Caswell, Director of the Alcohol and Public Health Research Unit presented a research proposal on monitoring the impact of the Sale of Liquor Amendment Act (1999) on young people. The research proposal is the intellectual property of APhRU and as such cannot be released publicly.

PHARMACEUTICAL SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND - EUAN GALLOWAY

Euan Galloway from the Pharmaceutical Society outlined the patterns of misuse of over the counter medicines in New Zealand and the step in place to prevent this from occurring.

His presentation also included a section on how pharmacist deal with prescriptions where misuse of medicines is suspected.

The ADA and Pharmaceutical Society's presentations can be found at www.ndp.govt.nz.

Meeting closed at 2.30pm.