

INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE ON DRUGS (IACD) MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held 23 April 2002, 1.00 pm to 4.00 pm

1. Welcome, Apologies and Introductions

Graeme Gillespie opened the meeting. He requested that member's names be updated and that a second person is nominated by each agency.

Attendees - IACD Agencies

David Negri, Customs
George Smollet, Customs
Abba Fidow, Pacific Island Affairs
Reno Paotonu, Pacific Island Affairs
Sandra Meredith, Youth Affairs
Mike McAvoy, ALAC
Dale Walker, TPK
Grant Strachan, LTSA
Turei Reedy, Corrections
Paul Young, Corrections
Lael Sharland, Child Youth and Family Services
James McKone, NDIB
Richard Schurr, NDIB
David Burgon, Education
Rachael Cole, Justice
Alison Stephens, Justice

IACD Secretariat / Health (NDP Team)

Graeme Gillespie, Chair
Brendon Baker
Andrew Zielinski
Nicola Holden
Vicki Blake

Other Health representatives

Terry Huriwai (A&D treatment)
John Boyd (Communicable Disease)
Fiona Turnbull (Communicable Disease)

Apologies

Chris Laurensen, Ministry of Health
Peter Carr, Ministry of Social Policy
Meg McKenzie, ALAC
Paul Marriott-Lloyd, Police

Sara Harrow, Transport
Inna Koning, Treasury
Debbie Matoe, TPK (will no longer be attending IACD - changed jobs)

2. Matters Arising

Implementation of National Alcohol Strategy by agencies

Each IACD agency agreed to prepare a one-page outline on how they currently implement and intend to implement the National Alcohol Strategy.

Action:

One-pagers to be forwarded to Brendon Baker by 7 May.

Drug Paraphernalia

George Smollett (Customs) explained that currently all forfeited paraphernalia was seized. The Misuse of Drugs Act stops the Minister of Customs from being able to release any of the paraphernalia under exceptional circumstances (such as to return a family heirloom) as is possible under Customs legislation. Police, Customs and Health have met to discuss an amendment to the Prohibition of Cannabis Utensils Notice.

Action:

Ministry of Health to progress this matter as soon as practicable.

3. Drug Policy Update

Drug Policy update has been issued quarterly, but the last planned issue was not produced due to other priorities. After some discussion it was agreed the next issue would be published in July.

Action:

(1) ALAC to write the editorial.

(2) contributions to the document to the MoH by 30 June.

4. Working Groups

Hepatitis C Action Plan

John Boyd and Fiona Turnbull (MoH) presented the action plan and handed out copies of the discussion document.

The incidence of Hepatitis C could be up to 15 times the reported rate.

The MoH has therefore developed a discussion document entitled "Action on Hepatitis C Prevention".

Main headings of the plan are:

- Primary preventive strategies,
- Secondary preventive strategies
- Surveillance and research.

Action:

Feedback by IACD members requested by 15 May 2002.

Needle Exchange Programme

Two significant pieces of work are currently being undertaken.

(1) A full programme review of the Needle Exchange Scheme is being undertaken by the Centre for Harm Reduction based in Melbourne. The review will report back to the Ministry of Health in July 2002.

(2) A serological survey of needle exchange attendees aims to assess the rates of HIV, Hep C, and Hep B among this community. This work will be undertaken in the 2002/03 financial year.

Action:

Brendon Baker (MoH) to forward terms of reference to agencies.

Community based Initiatives

Sandra Meredith (Youth Affairs) explained that the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Te Puni Kokiri had met to put together a paper. In the light of the Youth Development Strategy, the concept had been amended to include a stronger health and well being focus. The group plans to have the paper available for discussion at their next meeting.

Action:

Working Group to develop discussion paper by the end of June.

Drug Related Research Working group

This group (TPK, Customs, Police, ALAC, and MoH) has monitored and commented on a discussion document written by Peter Adams Towards a National Strategy for the Development of Research on Tobacco, Alcohol, other Drugs and Gambling.

Andrew Zielinski (MoH) reported that while the document provides useful contextual information, the working group felt it was written at too high a level and did not give enough direction. Importantly, the document did not outline a strategy for prioritisation of research. In addition, the group did not believe the inclusion of gambling was appropriate, nor did they think it was necessary to set up another group with responsibility for overseeing drug and alcohol-related research concerning government agencies, given the existence of the IACD.

The group had responded to Peter Adams on behalf of the IACD outlining its concerns, and would need to meet again to discuss future action. The group also stressed the importance of more outcome based research (i.e. what works in drug/alcohol policy) rather than descriptive research.

Action on Youth Drinking

The working group had not met however a number of other projects have recently contributed to understanding on this issue.

Three key components:

- Drinking in NZ survey, comparison 1995 and 2000 issued by APHRU
- Justice report, which looks at readily available statistics (issued Feb 2002)
- ALAC - Health impact assessment of the change to the drinking age (issued April 2002)

5. Drug Information Needs

Good information was the basis for good policy and there was concern about the lack of co-ordination and the ad hoc nature of drug-related information across agencies. Many of the agencies represented had good intelligence, but it is not centrally accessible or co-ordinated.

The NDIB was identified as an appropriate potential agency to act in an information coordination and provision role.

Action:

- 1) Secretariat to write a letter on behalf of the IACD to the NDIB Board identifying the issues and seeking their comment.**
- 2) Customs to provide a schedule for attachment to the letter.**

6. Methamphetamine

It was noted that Methamphetamine has become a significant issue in NZ and it was suggested that the pattern of use is also linked to a rise in violent crime. The classification of Methamphetamine is to be considered at the EACD at their next meeting on the 13th June. Police are leading development of the methamphetamine paper for the EACD.

The IACD discussed other ways of minimising harm including development of information/education sheets and stronger controls over precursor drugs for Methamphetamine. The process of methamphetamine's consideration by the EACD would provide an opportunity for an information sheet to be produced.

Action:

MoH to include specific reference to Methamphetamine in the review of the Dance Party Guidelines.

7. Future of NDP

It was noted that the National Drug Policy is a 5 years policy scheduled to conclude in 2003. However the importance of minimising harm from drugs remains and the IACD needs to look to the future consider how best to assure momentum is maintained and new initiatives developed and implemented.

There was general feeling from the IACD that the National Drug Policy has been useful as an overarching framework for a lot of the work agencies do in this area. However, agencies would like to see the development of more specific targets to be met within a specified timeframe along the lines of drug strategies from overseas jurisdictions.

A key requirement for this to happen would be to identify and bring together all available information sources. It would then be possible to develop hard targets for inclusion in a new 5 year National Drug Policy.

IACD needs to develop more significant policy proposals to put to the MCDP as Government's joint Ministerial Committee overseeing the direction of drug policy.

NGO's role in IACD Meetings

The IACD acknowledged that NGO's have a valuable role regarding information exchange and should appropriately be involved in policy development. While IACD needs to ensure that government business is discussed in confidence, NGO's have an important role to play in working groups.

What has NDP Achieved?

Indicators and targets on which to gauge achievements were not set at the commencement of the NDP. A stocktake was needed of what has been achieved against the outcomes set in the NDP. It may be necessary to seek direction from the MCDP as to whether there should be a new policy and continued existence of this group.

A question was raised about the inclusion of gambling in the addiction framework. This issue requires consideration in the further development of drug policy. If gambling is included it would dilute the alcohol and drug focus and raise the question as to the inclusion of other addictions in the framework.

Action:

Secretariat will write to all IACD members asking for feedback on what is wanted. Agencies will be asked:

- What is your agency getting from this?
- How well do you feel the NDP is achieving it's objectives
- Are the objectives still valid?
- How would you like to see it continue?
- What would you like to see covered in the future?

Indicators and Targets

The project identifying indicators and targets for NDP outcomes is incomplete, but some valuable information has been obtained. It linked some indicators to specific agencies.

Action:

The secretariat will arrange for a sub-group of interested agencies to look at the work and determine the next steps. This could involve contracting a specialist agency to enable the IACD to report back on status of work to MCDP and measure it's effectiveness.

8. Drug Destruction Standard (Standards New Zealand)

Police and Health had been involved in consideration of a joint Australian/New Zealand drug destruction standard and a contract had been signed with Standards NZ for its development. Customs expressed concerns over the differences between the two countries in the way in which drug destruction occurs.

Action:

The secretariat would initiate discussions between Health, Police and Customs on this matter.

9. Performance Enhancing Drugs - Customs

While this is not top priority for Customs, they would like to see penalties increased in line with the Australian approach.

Action:

Customs will consult with Ministry of Sport and Recreation and will put a paper to IACD on this issue at the next meeting.

10. Updates

NDP Website

Members were reminded that the NDP website is available for all agencies to contribute their policy documents on Drug Policy.

Cannabis Health Strategies and Legal Status Issues Inquiry

The Select Committee on Education and Health had finished hearing submissions and was currently considering its report. The Ministries of Health and Justice have presented an analysis of submissions to the Committee. There was no firm indication about when the Committee would report back to Parliament. Fantasy Classification Fantasy has been classified as a class B1 controlled drug. The law would come into effect on 31st May 2002.

URGE Website

The URGE website continues to grow at a rapid rate. URGE has between 6000 to 8000 visitors per month. Marketing has significantly expanded URGEs reach. ALAC have provided URGE with 'moderation radio time'

sponsorship. The advertising campaign recently commenced and it is expected to significantly increase the number of visitors to the site.

Drug Education

The Associate Minister of Health (Tariana Turia) has requested an overview of what Government departments are doing in the area of drug education.

11. Next Meeting

Week of the 12th August.