

INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE ON DRUGS (IACD) MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held

7 December 2000, 12.00 pm - 3.00 pm

WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND INTRODUCTIONS

Attendees - IACD Agencies

Hannah Booth, Transport
Laurie Gabites, Police
Phillipa Gaines, HFA
Chris Laurenson, Health
Ruth Lawton, Education
Vivienne Morrell, Justice
Tony Quayle, National Drug Intelligence Bureau (NDIB)
Anne Rainford, Justice
George Smollett, Customs
Brian Thurlow, (NDIB)
David Wilson, Courts

Apologies

Te Puni Kokiri
Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs

ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Laurie Gabites reported the Brendon Baker and himself had met to discuss the issue of prosecutions relating to possession of needles and syringes. Laurie reported that Police had searched their databases and that for the last four years on average there were 100 prosecutions for this offence. Given that the number of needles distributed has grown markedly in the past four years the police don't believe that there is any particular problem and they wouldn't support any amendment to the Misuse of Drugs Act 1975. On average there are eight prosecutions per police district. Customs advised that they had met with Justice over the issue of controlled deliveries and that this work was progressing.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. NATIONAL DRUG POLICY WEBSITE - Health

Kath Edwards and Catherine Conland gave a presentation on the development of the National Drug Policy website.

The website includes the following headings:

- Action Plan
- Current Issues
- Frequently Asked questions / Fact sheets
- Links to other sites
- IACD / MCDP
- Media Releases
- Publications
- Search engine

Catherine asked for agencies to participate in the development of the website and to provide relevant up to date information for posting on to the website. Each agencies would be responsible for getting appropriate sign off before anything goes onto the website.

Catherine will send out a memo to all agencies regarding commitment to the website. This is attached for your information (appendix 1).

2. CANNABIS REVIEW - All Agencies

Health and Justice have been appointed as advisors to the Select Committee inquiry. The Committee will have its first meeting to discuss the review on either the 15 or 22 February 2001. Submissions close on 7 February.

Reports from agencies will most probably be required by the end of February (but possibly by the 15th). Agencies should have completed their reports and forwarded to the Ministry of Health by the end of January.

Agreed that each agency report would be forwarded to the Ministry of Health by the end of Jan and that the Ministry would then develop a summary report with each of the agency reports attached.

Update from agencies on how the Cannabis work is progressing:

Education and Police both stated that their reports were almost completed. NDIB stated that their report would dovetail in with the Police report.

Education

Education stated that their report would focus on the:

- health and physical education curriculum
- role of schools in limitation / limit to what schools could do
- Legal requirements of schools
- Suspensions
- Evaluation of drug programmes
- Review of drug education in schools

Customs

Customs will focus on:

Managing Cannabis at the border (Cannabis importations are large in number but are usually of small personal amounts). Customs have prepared a matrix which they will email to other agencies.

Health

The Ministry of Health will focus on the health effects of using cannabis, including:

- Prevalence of use
- Epidemiology
- Morbidity / Mortality data
- Health promotion strategies
- Treatment services (what is currently purchased / what is proposed to be purchased)
- Impact of decriminalisation on cannabis use
- Impact on mental health treatment services
- Role of primary care

Police

Police will focus on:

- Impact of cannabis offending
- The costs associated with prosecutions (Dealing / cultivating vs. possession)

LTSA

The LTSA will focus on road safety in particular the association between cannabis and road accidents.

Justice

Justice will provide:

- A summary of legal options
- Comparative analysis with overseas models and applicability to the New Zealand environment.

Courts

Courts will focus on:

- Cost / benefit analysis on an instant fine scenario
- Rates of collection
- Overseas infringement models.

3. ALCOHOL AND DRUG FUNDING STRATEGY - Health

The Alcohol Strategy 2000-2003 will be released in January and sent out in early February 2001.

4. SECTOR INVOLVEMENT IN THE WORK OF THE IACD Health

The Ministry of Health will send out a letter to non government organisations and other community groups inviting them to attend future meeting of the IACD and present to the Committee. This letter is attached for your information (appendix 2).

5. NEW INITIATIVES - 2001-2003 - All agencies

Matthew Allen presented a memo to the Committee which asked the participating agencies to undertake a stock take of what had been achieved under the NDP framework. The IACD agencies were asked to take this memo away and think about the work they are / could potentially be involved in. The next meeting of IACD (February) will be dedicated to looking at new initiatives for this period.

6. ITEMS FOR BRIEF UPDATE

Misuse of Drugs Amendment Act – health

The Ministry updated the committee on the Misuse of Drugs Amendment Act that was enacted in November 2000.

A letter outlining the establishment of an Expert Advisory Committee on Drugs for the expeditious scheduling / rescheduling of substances (as set out in the amendment) is attached for your information (appendix 3).