



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement

Annual Reports 2020-21 and 2021-22

Public hearing –25 November 2022

Questions Taken on Notice

Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission

1 HANSARD, p. 4

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: What was the reason for limiting the number of respondents in this survey, as against the last survey?

Mr Rippon: It was less about limiting and more about identifying the clients that are actually using our services more than others. Focusing on senior police and state police and Commonwealth agencies that are using our services and receiving benefit from the ACIC on a regular basis so they're in a better position to make commentary. That would probably be the reason.

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: In providing the answer, can you identify those entities that were asked last time but weren't asked this time?

Mr Rippon: I don't have them at hand.

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: Can you provide that on notice?

Mr Rippon: I can absolutely provide it on notice.

ACIC response:

In 2020–21, the ACIC sent a quantitative online survey to 109 entities. The 2021–22 survey was targeted primarily at ACIC Board-member agencies, National Intelligence Community and industry partners, and international partners which have police liaison officers based in Canberra. The intent was to gain more qualitative feedback from stakeholders on the ACIC's performance that had not been received through a purely quantitative survey, and to focus the survey on entities that had greater interactions with the ACIC on a regular basis to gain an insight into performance.

Agencies approached through the survey across both years of the survey are listed below:

Stakeholder	2020-21	2021-22
ACT Policing	Yes	Yes
Attorney Generals Department	Yes	Yes
AUSTRAC	Yes	Yes

Australian Border Force	Yes	Yes
Australian Federal Police	Yes	Yes
Australian Securities and Investments Commission	Yes	Yes
Australian Security Intelligence Organisation	Yes	Yes
Australian Security Intelligence Service	No	Yes
Australian Signals Directorate	Yes	Yes
Australian Taxation Office	Yes	Yes
Department of Home Affairs	Yes	Yes
National Police of the Netherlands	No	Yes
New Zealand Police	Yes	Yes
Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services	Yes	Yes
NSW Police Force	Yes	Yes
Office of National Intelligence	Yes	Yes
Queensland Police Service	Yes	Yes
Royal Canadian Mounted Police	Yes	Yes
South Australia Police	Yes	Yes
Sport Integrity Australia	No	Yes
Tasmania Police	Yes	Yes
Telstra Corporation Ltd	Yes	Yes
UK National Crime Agency	No	Yes
US Drug Enforcement Administration	Yes	Yes
US Homeland Security Intelligence	No	Yes
Victoria Police	Yes	Yes
Western Australia Police Force	Yes	Yes

In 2020–21 the percentage of respondents from each entity was as follows:

Agency	% of Respondents					
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
	%	%	%	%	%	n=
ACT Policing	0%	3%	2%	1%	2%	3
Attorney-General's Department	7%	4%	3%	1%	2%	4
Australian Border Force	6%	3%	3%	1%	3%	6
Australian Federal Police	17%	17%	13%	17%	16%	29
ASIO	1%	0%	3%	0%	-	0
ASIC	2%	1%	1%	3%	1%	2
Australian Taxation Office	8%	4%	11%	3%	5%	9
AUSTRAC	3%	10%	5%	3%	5%	9
Department of Home Affairs	-	-	4%	6%	6%	12
New South Wales Police Force	5%	13%	5%	6%	8%	15
Northern Territory Police Force	5%	3%	7%	3%	6%	11
Queensland Police Service	2%	9%	5%	7%	10%	19
South Australia Police	7%	5%	7%	5%	4%	7
Tasmania Police	5%	4%	10%	2%	4%	8
Victoria Police	13%	6%	6%	6%	11%	21
Western Australia Police	5%	4%	2%	20%	3%	5
All others	14%	13%	13%	15%	14%	25
	n=132	n=139	n=149	n=233		n=185

There were entities in the category of 'All Others' who were not surveyed in 2021–22 but were surveyed in previous years. In 2020–21 the percentage of responses received from these entities was 14% of total responses received to the survey. This category included entities such as Australian Communications and Media Authority, Australian Financial Markets Association, Australian National Audit Office, Chemistry Australia, Clean Energy Regulator; Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, Gudjuda Rangers Townsville, The Dugong Collective and Suncorp Insurance.

4. HANSARD, p. 5

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: What's the street value of the overall illegal drug market in Australia?

Ms Hartley: For the fifth year of the wastewater program, the street value of the four major illicit stimulant drugs consumed by Australians for that period was \$10.3 billion.

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: That doesn't include cannabis, does it?

Ms Hartley: No, it does not.

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: Do some of your seizures include cannabis?

Ms Hartley: Yes, they would, but I don't have the breakdown.

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: Do you have a breakdown by drug of the seizures?

Ms Hartley: Not to hand.

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: Can you provide that on notice for the two years?

Ms Hartley: Yes, I think we can do that.

ACIC response:

The most current available data to answer this question is derived from the 2019–20 Illicit Drug Data Report estimated the street value of amphetamines, MDMA, cannabis, cocaine and heroin seized nationally was \$9.72 billion.

The breakdown of the \$9.72 billion is as follows:

Drug	ESV (\$AU)
Amphetamines ^a	8.46 billion
Cocaine	629 million
MDMA	249 million
Cannabis	293 million
Heroin	89 million
TOTAL	9.72 billion

a. Amphetamines include amphetamine, methylamphetamine, dexamphetamine and amphetamines not elsewhere classified. The majority of amphetamines seized in Australia is methylamphetamine. The price for crystal methylamphetamine was used to calculate the estimated street value (ESV) for amphetamines.

The 2020–21 Illicit Drug Data Report is scheduled for release in early 2023.

5. HANSARD, p. 6

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: I'm not saying it's easy. But the ACIC is a sophisticated organisation. I assume it has an understanding of the illegal markets it's trying to disrupt. I'm trying to get what, if any, understanding you have of the cannabis market, one of the illegal markets you're trying to disrupt.

CHAIR: Perhaps they can take that on notice, if they don't have that information, and come back to the committee.

Mr Rippon: We'd be happy to take it on notice, because I know it is a focus of yours, Senator, and we are happy to take that on notice.

ACIC response:

Cannabis continues to be the most consumed illicit drug world-wide, and this is also the case in Australia with cannabis accounting for the greatest proportion of national drug seizures and arrests. It is the largest illicit drug market in Australia.

It is difficult to quantify the exact size of any illicit drug market. The ACIC uses a range of data sources including (but not limited to) arrest and seizure data, National Wastewater Drug Monitoring Program (NWDMP) data, the National Drug Strategy Household Survey, Australian Institute of Criminology data from the Drug Use Monitoring in Australia program and other self-reporting surveys to assess the scale of illicit drug activity in Australia.

The ACIC has been measuring cannabis consumption in Australia through our NWDMP since August 2018. The current lack of reliable dose data prevents a like for like comparison between the consumption of cannabis and other illicit drug markets.

Based on NWDMP data obtained in April 2022, approximately 0.015 kilograms of THC per thousand people per day was consumed in capital cities and 0.025 kilograms of THC per thousand people per day was consumed in regional areas. This would equate to approximately 14.6 kilograms per thousand people over a year.

6. HANSARD, pp. 6-7

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: And the seizures that you have contributed to—assuming we wash cannabis out of that amount—is 10 per cent or less? That's the order of the quantum of drugs that are being seized of the overall drugs?

Mr Rippon: Are you talking about the amount that's being seized?

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: Yes, that's right. I'm going off your figures: it's about 10 per cent.

Mr Rippon: I wouldn't want to mislead the committee with my poor maths, but—

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: But you must do this analysis? You must think: 'We've spent the whole year doing this. Did it work?' So did you get 10 per cent, 20 per cent, five per cent?

Mr Rippon: In terms of seizures?

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: Seizures of the quantum of drugs coming in.

Mr Rippon: It's not a matter for the ACIC to talk about whether or not we got 10 per cent et cetera.

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: Well, did your intelligence contribute to the seizure?

Mr Rippon: Yes.

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: About 10 per cent?

Mr Rippon: I'd have to take that on notice to give you an accurate answer

ACIC response:

The most recent data we have on this relates to 2019–20 and compares national law enforcement seizure data for methylamphetamine, cocaine, MDMA and heroin and estimated annual consumption for those drugs.

Comparison of the weight of methylamphetamine, MDMA, heroin and cocaine seized nationally in 2019–20 and estimated consumption

Drug	Estimated consumption ^a (kilograms per annum)	2019–20 national seizures (gross kilograms)	Percentage of total estimated consumption seized (%)
Methylamphetamine	11,147	9,408 ^b	84
MDMA	2,630	3,214	122
Heroin	1,021	210	21
Cocaine	5,675	1,573	28

a. Consumption estimates are based on data derived from Year 4 of the National Wastewater Drug Monitoring Program.

b. At this time it is not possible at a national level to provide a further breakdown of drugs within the amphetamines category, as such national seizure figures reflect the weight of amphetamines seized. Amphetamines include amphetamine, methylamphetamine, dexamphetamine and amphetamine not elsewhere classified. Based on available data, methylamphetamine accounts for the majority of amphetamines seized.

****During the AFP Annual Report hearing on Friday 25 November 2022, the AFP took a question on notice about the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) wastewater research ****

CHAIR: I was wondering if you could take on notice in relation to the water analysis that's been done. I know some states have increased in terms of the use of drugs. Could you take on notice a trend for the last five years in terms of the water testing that's been done, the states that have increased or registered in particular drugs, like heroin, or whatever categories of drugs that you test? Can you take that on notice so we can see whether there's a trend happening and whether or not there has been a significant change. I know there has been in Tasmania, so I have some concerns there. If you wouldn't mind taking that on notice.

ACIC response:

The following tables describe consumption of the 4 major illicit drugs (cannabis excepted) over the past 5 years of the NWDMP.

Table 1: Estimated methylamphetamine consumption per jurisdiction in Year 1 to Year 5 of the Program.

Jurisdiction	Estimated consumption (kilograms per annum)					% Change	
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 4 to Year 5	
Australian Capital Territory	80.3	93.0	119.4	122.1	93.2	⬇️	-23.7
New South Wales	2,298.3	2,604.5	3,337.4	3,409.7	2,877.0	⬇️	-15.6
Northern Territory	65.5	75.5	84.8	66.6	54.7	⬇️	-17.9
Queensland	1,277.5	1,893.3	2,247.7	2,246.8	1,608.8	⬇️	-28.4
South Australia	1,005.3	1,159.5	943.2	980.5	838.5	⬇️	-14.5
Tasmania	92.0	127.1	177.1	155.0	88.5	⬇️	-42.9
Victoria	2,039.2	2,477.7	3,124.6	2,980.2	2,307.9	⬇️	-22.6
Western Australia	1,547.3	1,416.8	1,482.7	1,186.2	969.9	⬇️	-18.2

Table 2: Estimated cocaine consumption per jurisdiction in Year 1 to Year 5 of the Program.

Jurisdiction	Estimated consumption (kilograms per annum)					% Change	
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 4 to Year 5	
Australian Capital Territory	67.8	81.2	83.4	113.9	91.9	⬇️	-19.3
New South Wales	1,812.3	2,397.8	2,548.0	2,988.2	2,374.5	⬇️	-20.5
Northern Territory	19.0	27.4	22.8	20.9	12.4	⬇️	-40.7
Queensland	319.4	576.6	714.1	918.5	845.3	⬇️	-8.0
South Australia	107.1	129.2	173.1	243.8	170.5	⬇️	-30.1
Tasmania	10.9	15.5	16.6	26.8	35.1	⬆️	31.0
Victoria	676.5	819.9	968.0	1,216.0	1,083.9	⬇️	-10.9
Western Australia	43.9	67.9	110.0	147.0	98.3	⬇️	-33.1

Table 3: Estimated MDMA consumption per jurisdiction in Year 1 to Year 5 of the Program.

Jurisdiction	Estimated consumption (kilograms per annum)					% Change	
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 4 to Year 5	
Australian Capital Territory	28.4	14.4	36.5	38.6	17.8	⬇️	-53.9
New South Wales	462.8	450.5	834.7	986.1	446.1	⬇️	-54.8
Northern Territory	37.8	24.1	32.4	46.4	32.1	⬇️	-30.8
Queensland	216.5	223.2	502.4	627.6	301.3	⬇️	-52.0
South Australia	56.5	66.6	70.8	127.8	79.6	⬇️	-37.7
Tasmania	30.6	16.7	54.9	54.1	31.0	⬇️	-42.7
Victoria	319.6	291.3	511.9	479.0	232.0	⬇️	-51.6
Western Australia	99.0	74.9	182.4	271.3	91.5	⬇️	-66.3

Table 4: Estimated heroin consumption per jurisdiction in Year 1 to Year 5 of the Program.

Jurisdiction	Estimated consumption (kilograms per annum)					% Change	
	Year 1 ^a	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 4 to Year 5	
Australian Capital Territory	14.7	15.3	10.3	16.9	15.3	⬇️	-9.5
New South Wales	264.6	222.2	307.0	323.9	356.9	⬆️	10.2
Northern Territory	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.4	1.6	⬆️	14.3
Queensland	65.5	66.2	66.4	77.7	84.8	⬆️	9.1
South Australia	47.8	34.8	30.5	41.8	37.5	⬇️	-10.3
Tasmania	3.3	4.5	2.8	4.3	5.4	⬆️	25.6
Victoria	402.1	359.4	469.7	464.4	424.4	⬇️	-8.6
Western Australia	31.1	46.8	53.8	91.4	58.7	⬇️	-35.8

^a Annual heroin consumption estimates for Year 1 are informed by data from only one collection period.

The next annual comparison will be released in late February 2023 in Report 18 of the NWDMP.