



Additional information for Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs Inquiry into Substance Abuse

I. Increased abuse of amphetamine type stimulants in East and South East Asia

Amphetamine type stimulants (ATS) include mainly amphetamine and methamphetamine, although a range of other substances (for example ecstasy, an amphetamine type derivative with hallucinogenic properties) also fall into this group.

There is increasing evidence of rapidly shifting patterns of drug use in developing countries over the last decade. In 1999, United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reported that methamphetamine was the most commonly used ATS in North America and East Asia while amphetamine was dominant in Europe. But by 2001, UNODC had seen a further change in the global trends with East Asia and Oceania emerging with the highest prevalence amid patterns of stabilisation or decrease in the Americas and Europe.

The UN Global Illicit Drug Trends 2002 includes the annual prevalence of amphetamine abuse as a percentage of the population aged 15 and over for all reporting regions (table attached at 'A'). Thailand shows the greatest percentage (5.9%) of any country.

The system of reporting in Thailand is comparatively more transparent than other developing countries in the region. That system has shown a continuing upward trend in abuse, with repercussions evident in changing government policy toward more direct intervention in supply and demand. The evidence of abuse is reflected in the increasing number of juvenile and adult detainees for drug related offences, and by an increasing number of methamphetamine treatment cases.

The UN Global Illicit Drug Trends 2002 reports that the number of people in treatment for methamphetamine abuse in Thailand quadrupled over the 1996-2000 period. The proportion of methamphetamine users in treatment rose from 0.2% of all treatment demand in 1990, to 2% in 1995 and 46% by 2000 (table attached at 'B').

Connection between trafficking and abuse patterns

In East Asian and Pacific regions, ATS manufacturing, trafficking and use has grown faster than similar activities involving plant-based opiates, like opium and heroin. Heroin manufacturers in the region have diversified to include making synthetic drugs with the production of those drugs in some cases replacing the production of heroin. This shift may be due to the fact that ATS can be manufactured in small and portable laboratories and because of the flexible nature of precursors required for the manufacture of the drug.

Information is limited, but China, Myanmar and the Philippines appear to be the main sources of the finished product with China the largest supplier of precursors for manufacturing ATS. Given the high profits associated with amphetamines, it is very likely that trafficking organisations are actively seeking markets in other countries of the region and among new potential user groups.

House of Representatives Standing Committee
on Family and Community Affairs

Submission No: 288

Date Received: 17/6/03

Secretary: B. Forbes

Global trafficking in ATS increased again in 2000, continuing an upward trend that was in evidence throughout the 1990s. In 2001, China and Thailand accounted for respectively 54% and 19% of world ATS seizures.

Regional and sub-regional approaches are of particular importance in relation to ATS because of the rapid rise in ATS availability in the region and the associated "balloon effects", that reduction in the problem in one area leads to an increase in another. For example, increased abuse of ATS in the East and South East Asia region increases the potential impact on Australia.

The AFP's collaboration with regional law enforcement has led to significant breakthroughs in disrupting key organisations involved in narcotics and ATS trafficking. This has resulted in the seizure of tonnes of narcotics and ATS such as methamphetamine in its crystal form (ice) and MDMA (ecstasy) destined for Australian and other international markets, and ensured the seizure of unlawfully obtained assets. Australia has seen a 456% increase in ecstasy seizures this financial year to date.

References:

United Nations Office of Drug Control and Crime Prevention Update March 2002
United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific 2002 reports
United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime Global Illicit Drug Trends 2002
AFP Drug Seizure Statistics, 27 May 2003

II. AFP Mandatory Drug Testing Policy

The AFP commenced mandatory drug testing programs for its employees in July 2000 under the provisions of the Commissioner's employment powers pursuant to the *Australian Federal Police Act 1979* (the AFP Act) and *Australian Federal Police (Disciplinary) Regulations*. Testing is carried out for the types of drugs set out under the provisions of the section 4A of the AFP Act and Schedule IV of the *Customs Act 1901*, and include cannabis, ecstasy, heroin and cocaine.

There are a number of mandatory testing programs currently utilised:

- Mandatory Targeted Testing (MTT) is used as a random screening program for all employees;
- Mandatory Applicant Testing (MAT) covers all applicants for the AFP;
- Mandatory Investigation Testing (MIT) is used as an internal investigation tool; and
- Mandatory Certain Incident Testing (MCIT) is used when there is a death or serious injury involving a member of the AFP.

The AFP also tests its Contractors and Volunteers.

From 1 July 2002 the MTT was expanded to ensure that 100% of the workforce would be tested within a specific time frame (e.g. during the 2002/03 financial year).

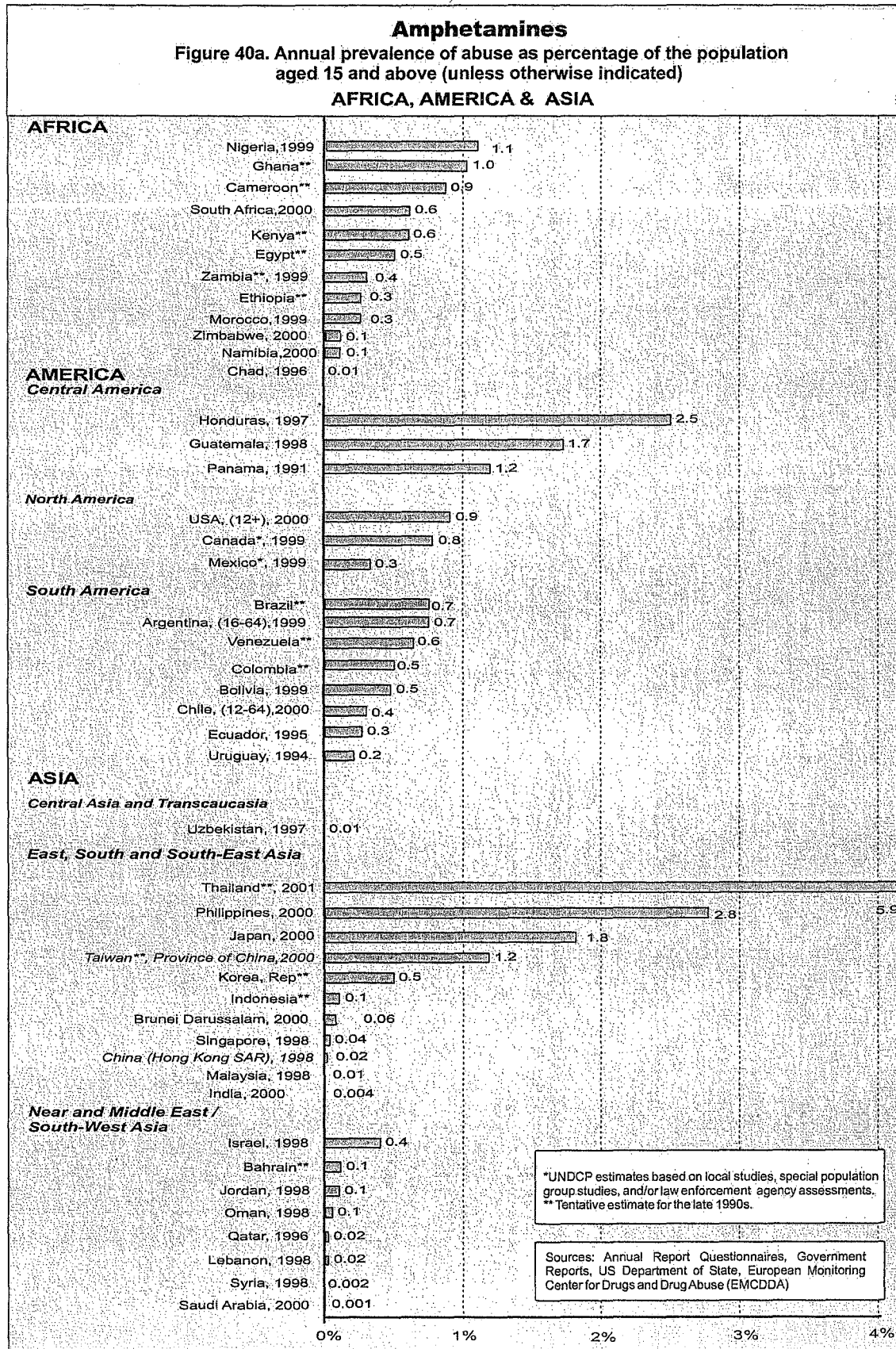
This initiative, called the Expanded MTT, has greatly increased the number of tests conducted.

Employees who come to notice under the testing programs have their suitability for continued employment reviewed.

The AFP does not conduct random testing for alcohol. However under section 40M of the AFP Act, AFP employees may be directed to undergo a breath test under certain circumstances. A corporate National Guideline on Alcohol is currently being drafted to synthesise current formal and informal policies on alcohol use. At this stage some areas have implemented a local Alcohol Free or Alcohol Policy, and the AFP Police College has developed a Practical Guide in relation to alcohol.

NSW Police is the only other police jurisdiction in Australia to have implemented mandatory drug testing, and this is limited to sworn members (section 211A, *NSW Police Act 1990*). The selection of a police officer for testing under the NSW Act may be on a random or targeted basis.

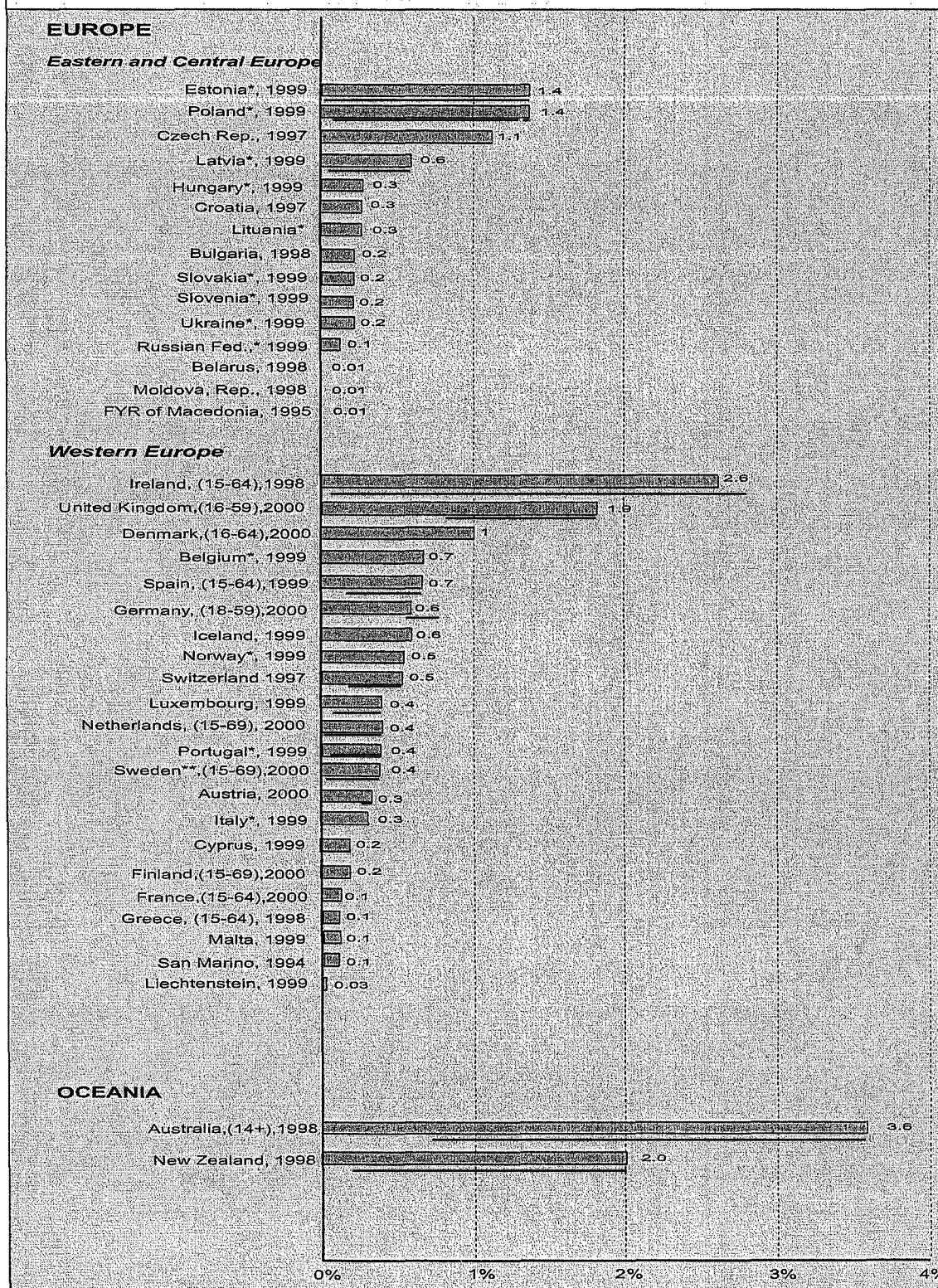
Queensland, Victoria and Northern Territory Police are considering the introduction of mandatory drug testing programs. Tasmania currently has a bill before its parliament which provides for a range of integrity measures for police, including drug and alcohol testing.



Amphetamines

Figure 40b. Annual prevalence of abuse as percentage of the population aged 15 and above (unless otherwise indicated)

EUROPE & OCEANIA



Attachment 'B'
Global Illicit Drug Trends 2002

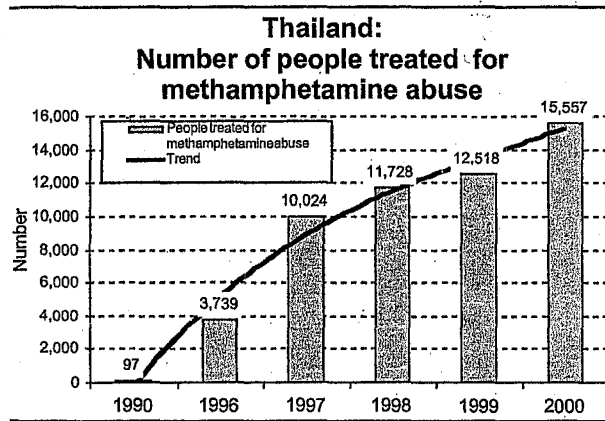


Figure 50

Source: Office of the Narcotics Control Board, *Thailand Narcotics Annual Report 2001* and previous years.