



## Substance Abuse round-table Day 2 - Friday 16 August

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs is holding a two-day round-table as part of its inquiry into substance abuse in Australian communities.

The round-table, being held at Parliament House in Canberra (Committee Room 2R1), includes presentations from experts in each of the subject areas being examined by the Inquiry, and involves discussions to further draw out evidence.

### DAY 2 - Friday 16 August

Session topics on Day 2 are:

- **Road trauma** (prevalence and costs; drink and drug driving)
- **Crime, Violence and Law Enforcement** (prevalence and costs; controlling the supply of illicit drugs; options for dealing with illicit drug crimes; drug abuse in prisons; law reform)

(Day 1 saw discussion of the first three topics of the round-table - **Health Care, Families and Workplace Safety & Productivity**)

#### Day 2 Sessions:

8.30am **Introductory remarks**, [Mrs Kay Hull MP](#), Chair, House Family and Community Affairs Committee

#### TOPIC 4 - ROAD TRAUMA (8.40am - 10.20am)

##### (a) Prevalence and costs

- [Margaret Smythe](#), Australian Transport Safety Bureau, Commonwealth Department of Transport and Regional Services

##### (b) Drink and drug driving

- [Mark King](#) Principal Adviser (Road User Policy), Road Safety Policy and Advanced Technology, Land Transport and Safety Division, Queensland Transport
- [Dr Philip Swann](#), Manager, Drugs and Fatigue, Road Safety Department, VicRoads

10.20-10.35am *Morning Tea*

#### TOPIC 5 - CRIME, VIOLENCE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT (10.35am - 2.40pm)

##### (a) Prevalence and costs

- [Dr Adam Graycar](#), Director, Australian Institute of Criminology

The Australian Institute of Criminology conducts the innovative *Drug Use Monitoring in Australia (DUMA)* program, and findings from the study will be discussed by Dr Adam Graycar, Director, Australian Institute of Criminology.

The DUMA program tests recent use of illicit drugs by those apprehended by police. Using urinalysis the program ensures the most accurate data on recent drug use patterns is obtained. It provides unique data on patterns of drug use, local drug markets, criminal activity and treatment.

DUMA allows local police to monitor the impact of illicit drugs on their streets with high quality data. Such data enable police, policy makers and criminal justice practitioners to systematically assess and evaluate their street level drug markets.

**For comment from Dr Adam Graycar, Australian Institute of Criminology, tel: 0418 653 462**



HOUSE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
INQUIRY INTO SUBSTANCE ABUSE

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Chair: Mrs Kay Hull, MP  
Deputy: Mrs Julia Irwin, MP

**(b) Controlling the supply of illicit drugs**

- Ben McDevitt, General Manager, Australian Federal Police National Operations

12.20 - 1.00pm      Lunch

**(d) Drug abuse in prisons**

- Dr Richard Matthews, Chief Executive Officer, Corrections Health Service, NSW

**(e) Law reform (1.35pm - 2.40pm)**

- Major Brian Watters Appearing in a private capacity
- Dr Alex Wodak President, Australian Drug Law Reform Foundation

**Major Watters says** recognising the important roles of both health and law enforcement in reducing drug use is vital. He says the national Illicit Drug Diversion Initiative currently being implemented across Australia shows that a legal response that is humane and compassionate to the users of illicit drugs by offering and encouraging treatment and support is far more likely to be effective in dealing with the problems underlying drug use, than by simply accepting or legitimising drug use as normal behaviour.

**For comment from Major Watters, tel: 0400 780 509**

**Dr Wodak** argues the case for drug law reform. He says drugs are now recognised to be primarily a health and social issue, not a criminal issue. He argues that the criminal justice approach to drugs has not worked in the vast majority of countries, and that achieving better outcomes, especially reducing deaths, disease, crime and corruption, is more important than sending 'moral messages'. He says voters now want more effective and less expensive policies based on health and social interventions. Change is inevitable but the nature and timing of reforms is still unclear.

**For comment from Dr Alex Wodak, Australian Drug Law Reform Foundation, tel: 0416 143 823**

2.40pm      **Day 2 sessions conclude**

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**For media comment from the Chair, please contact:**

Mrs Kay Hull, MP (Chair), Tel. 0428 211 591 or (02) 6921 4600 (electorate)

**For further details**, contact: House Family and Community Affairs Committee Secretariat, Tel. (02) 6277 4566, Email: [fca.reps@aph.gov.au](mailto:fca.reps@aph.gov.au)

- The round-table is open to the public, as observers.
  - For access before Parliament House opens to the public at 9.00am, please arrive at the front entrance by 8.15am to be escorted into the round-table by secretariat staff
  - Webcast address: <http://www.aph.gov.au/live/webcast3.asp#>
  - House monitor channel 9
  - Day 2 (Friday) details will be issued tomorrow (Thursday)
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