

Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police

Drug Abuse Committee

Chair/ Co-Chair:

**Mike Serr
Steve Clegg**

Annual Report of Committee Activities

2015-2016

Message from the Chair:

This was a year of change for the Drug Abuse Committee as Jean Cormier stepped down as the Chair due to reassignment. We also lost long time DAC member Bernie Pannell due to retirement. With change comes new ideas and energy and we were fortunate to identify seven new DAC members who are very dedicated to the committee. In August, Co-chair Steve Clegg will be stepping down as he has been reassigned in the OPP. Steve's leadership and expertise will be missed and we wish him all the best in his new endeavours. The DAC will identify a new Co-chair at our August meeting.

This is a particularly busy reporting period for the DAC. Much of the committee's efforts have been focused on the Fentanyl and W-series crisis as well as the legalization of marihuana. Committee members have been fully engaged in providing guidance and leadership at a national level. Committee members have been asked to participate in several national and provincial working groups, appearing before the Senate Standing Committee and responding to numerous media requests. Both matters will continue to be priorities for the DAC moving forward.

The Committee met in March and, in addition to Fentanyl and marihuana legalization, there were also several presenters on harm reduction strategies. At the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) earlier this year there was a noticeable shift, by most countries, to address drug consumption and addiction via a health care approach. What is clear is that synthetic opioids and novel psychoactive substances are going to have a stronger presence in the world drug markets. Although law enforcement will always be responsible for addressing drug importation, production and trafficking, public health must take a more proactive role to disrupt the cycle of abuse. Arresting drug users has proved to be ineffective when it is not coupled with effective treatment options. In light of the Fentanyl and W-series crisis in Western Canada, and the emerging threat in Eastern Canada, it is important that we explore collaborative approaches with health officials to disrupt the unprecedented number of overdose deaths.

In April, the Organized Crime Committee asked the DAC for information pertaining to the W-series. The research on the W-series was evolving and the DAC reached out to subject matter experts for evidence based information. In May, the DAC provided the CACP membership with the most up to date information on the W-series and details on how to be part of the public information campaign, www.knowyoursource.ca. The DAC also updated the Organized Crime Committee on the status in intra-nasal Naloxone and remediation of contaminated drug sites.

There were several important activities and issues for the committee in 2015-2016:

Marihuana Legalization: The DAC recognized in early 2015 that it was important to start the dialogue on marihuana legalization. With the Liberal Party winning a majority government it was clear that they would move forward with their campaign promise to legalize marihuana. In an

effort to better understand the impacts of marihuana legalization two DAC members participated in the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA) research project in Washington State. CCSA staff, along with members from Public Safety, Justice and Health Canada commenced a research project to learn about the, "...health, social, economic and public safety impact of cannabis legalization for non-therapeutic use." Culminating from this research, CCSA published Cannabis Regulations: Lessons Learned in Colorado and Washington State. This report provides valuable insight and will be instrumental as we move towards legalization.

A DAC member attended a marihuana conference in Colorado which evaluated the lessons they have learned since legalization. This conference was informative and the DAC was provided with valuable insight into some of the issues they are experiencing. In June 2016, Chief Weighill, Peter Cuthbert, Tim Smith and two DAC members were asked to participate in the "Law Enforcement Roundtable on the Legalization and Regulation of Marijuana." This roundtable was hosted by Public Safety Canada and included a small group of police leaders and Directors of Police Services. Mr. Bill Blair was in attendance and this was our first in person opportunity to address law enforcement issues and concerns related to the legalization of marihuana. It is anticipated additional meetings will be held and the DAC will continue to advocate on behalf of the CACP.

Our primary concerns are:

- **MMAR Residential Marihuana Grows:**
 - Advocating no residential marihuana grows; and
 - Marihuana should be provided by government licensed producers.

- **Drug Impaired Driving:**
 - Require approved roadside screening devices;
 - Institute restrictive THC limits for impairment;
 - Make evidence based decision on legal limit; and
 - Require additional Drug Recognition Experts and a Canadian course.

- **Organized Crime:**
 - Ensure legislation is in place to disrupt organized crime involvement; and
 - Institute pricing models that makes marihuana production and trafficking less desirable for organized crime.

- **Youth Use:**
 - Will be an area exploited by organized crime; and
 - Increased penalties for trafficking marihuana to youth.

Actions:

1. Two DAC members have been assigned to the marihuana legalization portfolio;
2. Will continue to engage at a national level to ensure public safety matters are addressed in the new legislation;
3. At the request of the CACP President, continue to engage the media with consistent messaging; and
4. Work with Public Safety Canada to test roadside screening devices in the Fall of 2016.

Fentanyl and W-Series Messaging and Advocating for Legislative Change: This has been identified as a priority for the DAC. Both British Columbia and Alberta are experiencing a record number of overdose deaths attributed to Fentanyl. In April 2016, BC declared a public health emergency as a result of being on pace for over 800 overdose deaths in 2016. Of note, Fentanyl was detected in 56% of the overdose deaths to date in British Columbia. Unfortunately, this trend is now working its way across Canada. The DAC is proactively addressing this issue via messaging campaigns, community outreach, media engagement, advocating for legislative change and endorsing harm reduction strategies.

Actions:

1. Advocating for Intra-nasal Naloxone:
 - Frontline police officers are more receptive to carrying this application of Naloxone;
 - The DAC drafted a letter to Minister Philpott advocating that intra-nasal Naloxone be made available immediately under an Interim Order in the *Food and Drug Act*. Chief Weighill forwarded the letter to the Federal Minister of Health on behalf of the CACP; and
 - In July, Health Canada obtained an Interim Order and intra-nasal Naloxone is now available in Canada without a prescription. DAC is engaged with Health Canada to determine the best way to equip and train frontline officers.
2. Advocating for Naloxone Assessable Without a Prescription:
 - DAC members engaged Health Canada to pursue amendments to make Naloxone available without a prescription; and
 - Health Canada agreed and Naloxone was made available without a prescription in 2016.
3. Scheduling of Fentanyl and W-series Precursors:
 - Senator White tabled Bill S-225 to amend the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*

- to schedule Fentanyl precursors;
 - DAC members accessed subject matter experts to provide Senator White with the list of precursors to be scheduled;
 - A DAC member appeared before the Standing Senate Committee in May to speak to the Bill; and
 - It is anticipated the precursors will be scheduled shortly.
4. Regulating Pill Presses and Pill Sorting Machines:
- Commercial grade pill presses are being imported into Canada and used in the illicit manufacturing of counterfeit Oxycontin (Fentanyl) pills;
 - DAC is advocating that all pill presses and pill sorting machines be regulated; and
 - DAC members participating in national working group with Public Safety, Health Canada and Justice Department to address situation.
5. Know Your Source Campaign: (www.knowyoursource.ca)
- Campaign developed in 2015 by BC police agencies and public health to raise awareness;
 - Endorsed by the DAC in March 2015; and
 - Message sent to CACP membership in June 2016 encouraging them to participate in this campaign and establish their own provincial tab. Manitoba and Correction Canada have participated to date.
6. Good Samaritan Bill:
- Bill C-224 is a private members bill to amend the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*;
 - If enacted the bill exempts persons from possession of narcotic charges if they seek medical attention for a medical emergency;
 - DAC endorsed the Bill with some reservations ;
 - The DAC provided the CACP executive with a letter detailing our endorsement; and
 - The DAC was asked to send a member to appear before the House of Commons Standing Committee. Unfortunately, the invitation was on short notice and our subject matter experts were not available so a written submission was provided on behalf of the CACP
7. Scheduling of W-18:
- At our March DAC meeting this was identified as a priority;
 - Subject matter experts were brought in to inform Health Canada, Public Safety and

Justice of the significant public safety risks posed by W-18;

- Health Canada was engaged; and
- W-18 was scheduled in June 2016.

Prescription Pill Drop Off Day: In 2015, the DAC endorsed turning the Prescription Pill Drop Off Day over to the Canadian Pharmacy Association (CPA). The committee felt that significant awareness was raised over the previous three years and it was time for the CPA to take a leadership role, with the CACP continuing in a support role. Unfortunately, the CPA was not in a position to take this event over in 2016 so the DAC endorsed the event for another year. Barry McKnight was retained as the coordinator.

The 2016 event once again raised significant awareness and a large number of police agencies participated across Canada. Many police agencies, including Sudbury and Vancouver, collected a record number of prescription pills this year. The final numbers are still being tabulated; however, by all account this year's event was a success.

Actions:

1. The DAC will table this item at the August meeting and decide on whether to proceed with future events; and
2. DAC will continue to engage CPA to take the lead moving forward.

United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS): The DAC was asked to present to Minister Philpott at an UNGASS roundtable that took place in January 2016. The roundtable was utilized to inform the Minister of Health of the significant issues posed by synthetic opioids and to speak to what Canada's message should be at UNGASS. As a result of this meeting a DAC representative was asked to join the Canadian delegation attending UNGASS in March 2016. This was a unique opportunity for the DAC to obtain a global perspective of the drug issues.

Disposition of Seized Property: This long standing DAC priority has not gained a lot of traction with Health Canada because the resolution is primarily reached through amendments to the CDSA. In late 2010 there was progress as Public Safety agreed to take on the work to advance the amendments, on behalf of Health Canada. Again, this has seen little traction, but it is now a priority for the DAC. With the introduction of Fentanyl and the W-series it is imperative that these drugs be destroyed as soon as possible for the protection of police officers and exhibit handlers.

Actions:

1. The DAC will reinvigorate dialogue with Public Safety and Health Canada; and
2. DAC will identify project leads at our next DAC meeting August 2016.

Conclusion

I anticipate 2017 will continue to be a busy year for the DAC as we move into a legalized regime for marihuana and continue to address increases in Fentanyl and W-series overdose deaths. Despite the large turnover in the DAC, the committee has not lost momentum and remains committed to addressing our priorities. The success of this committee in moving issues and priorities forward is due to the dedication of our members. I would like to thank all of the members of the Drug Abuse Committee, past and present, for their devotion to this work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "MS", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Mike Serr

Drug Abuse Committee Mandate and Profile:

Mission:

Our mission is to promote safer, healthier, and stronger communities through proactive leadership by addressing and influencing prevention, enforcement, and treatment of substance abuse.

Values:

Integrity: The Drug Abuse Committee believes in adherence to the highest ethical standards to ensure that decisions and positions shall be based on knowledge, research, best practices, legislation, and identified community needs.

Collaboration: The Drug Abuse Committee believes that the expertise and perspectives of partners and strategic alliances enhances the effectiveness of the Committee and will lead to successful outcomes.

Innovation: The Drug Abuse Committee believes in encouraging, enabling, and exploring creative responses consistent with safer, healthier, and stronger communities, through a unified, reasoned, and nationally coordinated voice.

Inclusion: The Drug Abuse Committee believes in a balanced approach to the issues to be examined, the partners with whom we will collaborate, and the strategies to be employed.

Excellence: The Drug Abuse Committee believes in excellence in all that we do through professional standards, best practices, internal and external communications, needs-assessment, and evaluation.

Priorities 2016-2017

1. **Marihuana Legalization:** continue to work with Health Canada, Public Safety, Justice and the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse to provide leadership and expertise as we move towards a legalized regime.
 - **Actions:**
 - Represent CACP at strategic meetings re legalization;
 - Continue to provide consistent public messaging; and
 - Prepare for legalized system.

2. Fentanyl/W-Series: Continue to advocate for new legislation and tools to disrupt the importation and distribution of Fentanyl and W-series drugs. Work with Health Canada to implement strategies to address the rising number over overdoses related to these drugs.
 - Actions:
 - Continue to work with the Law Amendments Committee and Public Safety to amend the *Canada Post Corporation Act* to allow for the search of in transit mail;
 - Advocate for stronger sentences for CDSA offences related to Fentanyl and W-Series;
 - Continue to advocate for the federal regulation of pill presses, pill sorters, dyes and stamps utilized in the production of illicit Fentanyl pills;
 - Continue to inform and educate of the dangers of these illicit drugs;
 - Continue to advocate the use of intra-nasal Naloxone for frontline police officers; and
 - Continue to advocate for changes to the CDSA to provide law enforcement with tools to effectively disrupt Fentanyl and W-series importation and distribution.

3. Prescription Pill Drop Off Day: move to transition the program to the Canadian Pharmacy Association and determine role for CACP moving forward.
 - Actions:
 - Re-engage Canadian Pharmacy Association and again articulate our desire for them to champion the program;
 - Based on Canadian Pharmacy Association's position the DAC will consider reapplying to Health Canada to fund a national coordinator position;
 - Continue to message on the danger of the misuse of prescription drugs.

4. National Prescription Drug Misuse Strategy: work with health sector partners, including pharmacists and physicians, to develop communication on prescription drug misuse, undertake joint efforts to increase awareness, and to develop and disseminate tools and training
 - Actions:
 - Advocate that all members to collect data on pharmaceutical-related incidents, and participate in monitoring and surveillance efforts to track trends in illicit pharmaceutical use;
 - DAC will seek inclusion in the national surveillance project of prescription drug misuse; and
 - Engage the Minister of Health and Health Canada in a process that will enhance and improve the monitoring and surveillance of prescribed and illicit drugs.

5. Disposition of Seized Property: advocate for legislative amendments to allow for safer, faster, more efficient handling and disposition of goods seized under the CDSA. This initiative is more pressing as a result of the dangers posed by the handling and storage of Fentanyl and W-series.
 - Actions:
 - Lobby Minister of Health and Minister Public Safety Minister for legislative change;
 - Work with technical advisors on DAC to effect change; and
 - Establish DAC working group.

Overview of Meetings Held

1. Ottawa - November 2016
2. Vancouver – March 2016
3. Ottawa - August 2016