

Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police

Drug Abuse Committee

Annual Report

Submitted by:

Chief Mark Mander, Chair

Message from the Chair:

The past year's activities within the Drug Abuse Committee have focused our efforts on the priorities identified through the committee. There were several important activities and issues for the committee:

Marihuana Ticketing Resolution:

In August 2014, at the CACP Annual Conference in Winnipeg a resolution sponsored by DAC proposed that a ticketing option be developed to provide police officers with an additional tool to deal with possession of small amounts of marihuana. This would expand the current range of enforcement options available to law enforcement personal so that they can more effectively and efficiently address the illicit possession of cannabis. The resolution sets out our continued firm belief that the illicit use of cannabis has a negative impact on public safety and the health of young persons. We felt however that there are instances when having an alternative to attending court and receiving a criminal conviction for simple possession of cannabis would be beneficial. The resolution was passed by the membership at the AGM. There has been a significant amount of national public debate on the issue, since the resolution was made public. For the most part it has been a positive commentary on the leadership of the CACP and is being seen as an effective alternative to the "legalization" movement in the United States.

Diversion and Abuse of Prescription Drugs:

DAC applied for and received a grant from Health Canada to coordinate the National Prescription Drug Drop-Off Day held on May 10th/2014. Retired Chief Barry MacKnight was hired to coordinate the efforts of police agencies across Canada in the collection and disposal of unwanted medication. The purpose of the initiative was to reduce the risk to the community of these medications being diverted for illicit purposes and being disposed of improperly. Even though from a logistical perspective the hiring of the coordinator was later than anticipated there was good uptake by police agencies across Canada. There was a considerable amount of media attention around this event. By all accounts, from those who participated, it was seen as very beneficial from a community awareness perspective and most importantly nationally we were able to dispose of 2 TONS of unwanted medications. We will be reviewing the success to date and determine what strategy to use in the coming year.

Review of CDSA:

In April of 2014 Health Canada requested submissions for changes to the CDSA. CACP DAC submitted to Health Canada suggested changes in the areas related to: *Supply chain security, Police seized drugs, Possession charge for Schedule 4 drugs, Administrative mechanism for scheduling of drugs, Possession for the purpose of trafficking 5(2) reduce need for drug expert, Section 462.1 and 462.2 sections of the criminal code should be in CDSA, Creation of asset forfeiture section in CDSA; New law to regulate marihuana dispensaries; Create double doctoring offence for medicinal marihuana*

Supervised Consumption Sites:

The members of DAC undertook to develop a position on Supervised Consumption Sites. Our position and briefing note to assist Chiefs of Police was distributed.

Drug Information Resources:

To better assist members of the CACP, the DAC members are continuing work on building a resource that will be available on the CACP web site. It will provide members and the media with access to subject matter experts, current research, crime stats, CACP resolutions and best practice crime prevention initiatives that police services are engaged in across Canada. The information will be divided into common “portfolios” where members can more readily access the information needed. These will include the illicit drugs, synthetic drugs, prescription drugs as well as general information about drugs and related harms to individuals and communities.

Outreach:

Over the past year many members of DAC have played a prominent and proactive role with local and national committees/conferences in addressing issues related to drugs and the impact they are having on our collective communities. CACP DAC members participated in addition to other events the following:

Consultation on Youth drug use prevention (competencies for prevention workers)
Best Brains Exchange on the topic of “Informing the Authorization of Medical Marihuana in Nova Scotia”
Meeting on Novel Psychoactive Drugs
Presented to a meeting of Stakeholders and MP’s on Prescription Drug Abuse
Special Purpose committee to deal with MMPR transition strategies
House of Commons Standing Committee on Health (HESA)
Multiple media events and media requests surrounding the marihuana ticketing resolution and Prescription Drug Drop Off Day

Many of our activities have been covered by local and national media. We will continue to seek opportunities to inform the media and public about the CACP position relative to illicit drugs.

Conclusion

The success of this committee is due to the dedication, commitment and hard work of our committee members. We are especially appreciative of the support and working relationship we have with our committee advisors from the Canadian Centre for Substance Abuse (CCSA), Public Safety Canada, Health Canada and the Department of Justice Canada.

Chief Mark Mander O.O.M., MBA

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 2014-15

- 1) **Drug Information Resources:** To better assist members of the CACP, the DAC members are working to build a resource that will be available on the CACP web

site.

Deliverable: Web based resource

- 2) **Review of CACP Drug Policy:** The CACP drug policy was last reviewed and updated in 2007. To ensure we are in step with current research and best practice standards with regards to dealing with substance abuse issues we will undertake to conduct a review of the 2007 policy.

Deliverable: Updated Drug Policy

- 3) **Prescription Drug Abuse:** Prescription drug abuse has had a significant impact nationally. Our focus will be to ensure that we engage the membership of the CACP in this very important issue. We will develop strategic partnerships and increase awareness within the Justice System. We will review and assess strategies for the National Prescription Drug Drop Off Day.

*Deliverable: National Prescription Drug Take-back Day implementation
First Do No Harm Strategic Plan implementation
Strategic Partnership agreements*

- 4) **Use of synthetically produced drugs:** The use of synthetically produced drugs by Canadians, especially youth continues to be a concern for police and communities. Many incidents have resulted in the tragic deaths of young people who have taken synthetically produced pills such as Ecstasy. We need to review what strategies have been deployed by police services in Canada and abroad and develop best practice strategies for police and communities to use in dealing with this problem.

Deliverable: Report on best practice strategies

Meetings Held

Ottawa - Oct 2013

Halifax - March 2014

Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police
Drug Abuse Committee
Contact information



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