

Australian Crime Commission

# Illicit Drug Data Report 2005–06 Snapshot

## Introduction

The Illicit Drug Data Report (IDDR), produced by the Australian Crime Commission (ACC), provides a comprehensive overview of the illicit drug situation in Australia for the 2005–06 financial year.

This is the fourth edition of the IDDR. The report was previously known as the Australian Illicit Drug Report (AIDR).

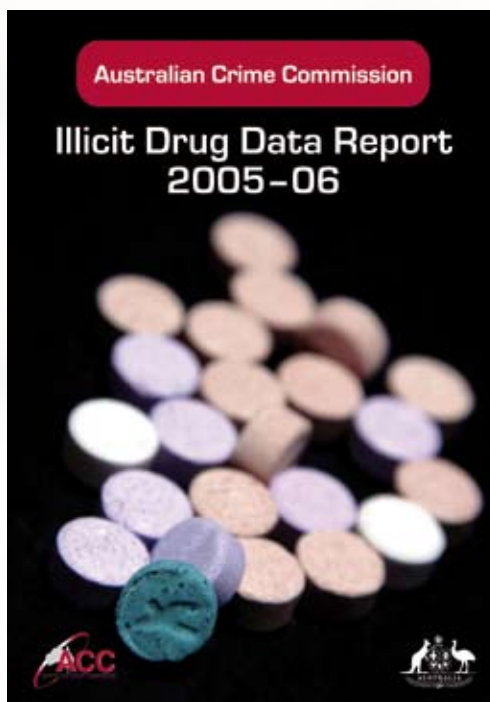
Specifically, the report provides information on arrests, seizures, detections, purity levels and prices of illicit drugs over the period.

Furthermore, the report provides a breakdown of each drug type, an overview of the current national impact, and information on emerging trends.

The IDDR is the only report of its type in Australia and provides law enforcement, governments and interested stakeholders with a national picture of the illicit drug market. The statistics and analysis provided in the report assists decision-makers in developing illicit drug supply and harm reduction strategies. The data also assists the Australian Government to meet national and international reporting obligations.

## The Australian Crime Commission

The ACC is a Commonwealth statutory body working nationally with other Commonwealth, state and territory agencies to counter serious and organised crime. The ACC has both intelligence and investigative functions and capabilities.



The ACC is empowered to provide an enhanced national law enforcement capacity through:

- Improved criminal intelligence and analysis;
- Setting clear national criminal intelligence priorities; and
- Conducting intelligence-based investigations of national significant criminal activity including the conduct and/or coordination of investigative and intelligence task forces as approved by the ACC Board.

The ACC has special powers that give it an advantage in combating nationally significant crime. These special powers include the ability to summons a person to an examination under oath, the power to demand documents and the power to demand information from Commonwealth government departments and agencies.

## Key Findings

In 2005–06, over 6 tonnes of illicit drugs were seized by Australian law enforcement in more than 55,000 seizures. This includes 4,482 kilos of cannabis, 1,296 kilos of amphetamine-type stimulants, 46 kilos of cocaine and 29 kilos of heroin.

Over 78,500 people were arrested for drug offences in the 2005-06 financial year.

## Amphetamines

- The number of clandestine laboratories detected in Australia has stabilised. This may be partially due to several initiatives designed to reduce diversion of pseudoephedrine from the licit market.
- Restrictions on the sale of pseudoephedrine are likely to result in increased importation attempts as criminal groups attempt to source offshore supply. Alternatively, criminals may resort to other crimes to source pseudoephedrine domestically.
- Amphetamine-type stimulant (ATS) arrests continued to increase and accounted for 15 percent of all drug arrests nationally. The number of ATS arrests was second only to cannabis arrests.

## Phenethylamines

- The majority of the world's MDMA ('ecstasy') continues to be produced in Western Europe, with increases noted in Eastern Europe, South East Asia and Canada.
- The majority of MDMA border detections (by number) occurred in the postal stream, whereas the largest proportion (by weight) was detected in sea cargo.
- What appears to be a large reduction in the weight of border detections of MDMA is attributable to the high weight of seizures in the previous reporting year.

## Cannabis

- Cannabis arrests accounted for around 70 percent of all drug arrests in Australia. This has remained stable since 1998–99.
- The majority of cannabis consumed in Australia is domestically cultivated. Importations of cannabis are not generally economically viable.
- Cannabis is the most commonly used illicit drug in Australia.

## Heroin

- The weight of heroin detections at the Australian border in 2005–06 was at its lowest point in 10 years. However, the number of detections was the highest on record.
- Despite attempts to establish supply routes for Afghan heroin, South East Asia remained the predominant source for heroin in Australia.
- The number of heroin arrests continued to decline and accounted for less than three percent of all drug arrests in Australia.

## Cocaine

- While the number of cocaine seizures in Australia remained stable, the weight of seizures significantly decreased.
- Seizures of cocaine in countries which have not traditionally been viewed as having established cocaine markets may be indicative of attempts to develop new global trafficking routes.
- Border detections of cocaine decreased significantly from the previous year, with the majority of detections (by number) occurring in the postal stream.

## Other drugs

- The number of border detections of anabolic agents and selected hormones increased marginally from the previous year. The majority of these detections involved small quantities for personal use or small scale trafficking.
- The number of border detections of anaesthetics such as gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB), gamma-butyrolactone (GBL) and ketamine increased.
- The majority of border detections of illicit pharmaceuticals occurred in the postal stream.



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