

Australian Crime Commission

Illicit Drug Data Report 2006–07 Snapshot

REVISED EDITION

Introduction

The Australian Crime Commission (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:

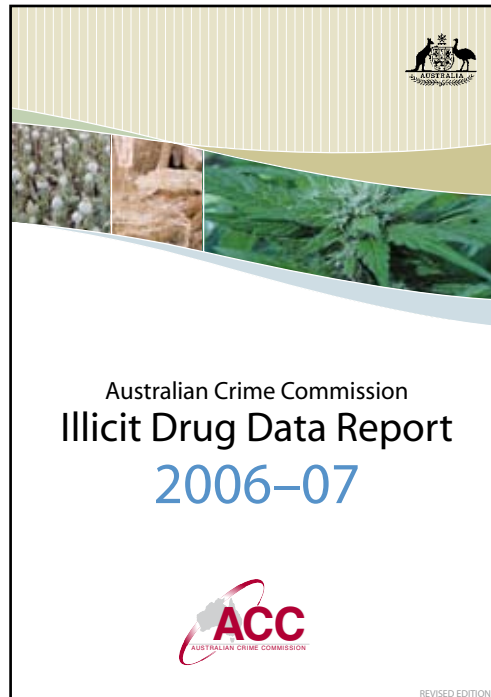
- Improved criminal intelligence and analysis;
- Setting clear national criminal intelligence priorities; and
- Conducting intelligence-based investigations of nationally significant criminal activity including the conduct and/or coordination of investigative and intelligence task forces as approved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

The ACC has special powers that give it an advantage in combating nationally significant crime. These 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.

Illicit Drug Data Report (IDDR)

The Illicit Drug Data Report (IDDR), produced by the ACC, provides a comprehensive overview of the illicit drug situation in Australia for the 2006–07 financial year.

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



Furthermore, the report provides a breakdown of illicit drug types, 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 2006–07 IDDR was officially launched in June 2008. In August 2008, the Australian Federal Police and the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service publicly released details of an investigation which included the seizure of over four tonnes of MDMA tablets. Due to the sensitive nature of the investigation, details of the related national illicit drug seizures, which occurred during the 2006–07 reporting period, were not originally available for inclusion in the report.

Key findings

In 2006–07, nearly 12 tonnes of illicit drugs were seized by Australian law enforcement in more than 62,000 seizures.

This includes 4,782 kilograms of cannabis, 5,443 kilograms of amphetamine-type stimulants, 647 kilograms of cocaine and 86 kilograms of heroin.

Over 82,300 people were arrested for drug offences in the 2006–07 financial year.

Amphetamine-type stimulants

- The largest single detection of MDMA at the Australian border occurred in 2006–07, totalling 4.4 tonnes.
- The majority of detected amphetamine-type stimulant (ATS) importations at the border are through the postal stream.
- Significant amounts of ATS precursors continue to be detected in the air cargo stream.
- Clandestine laboratory detections decreased in comparison to 2005–06 but remain significantly higher than those reported a decade ago.
- ATS seizures accounted for 46 percent of the total weight of national illicit drug seizures, making it the predominant drug seized.
- The weight of national ATS seizures increased by 320 percent compared with 2005–06. The number of seizures increased by 33 percent.

Cannabis

- Cannabis remains the most widely used illicit drug in Australia.
- There were 627 detections of cannabis at the border in 2006–07, 24 percent more than the previous reporting period. However, there was a minor decrease in the weight of cannabis detected.
- Sixty-two percent of all border detections of cannabis involved the importation of seeds.
- In 2006–07, 69 percent of national drug arrests were for cannabis offences.

Heroin

- The number of heroin border detections in 2006–07 is the highest on record.
- The weight of heroin detections at the border increased by 65 percent compared with 2005–06. However, it remains the third lowest weight in the last decade.

- ‘Scatter’ importations through the postal and air cargo streams continue to account for the largest number of heroin detections.
- South-East Asia remains the primary embarkation point of heroin into Australia. India has become a key embarkation point.
- In 2006–07, the weight of national heroin seizures increased by 192 percent.

Cocaine

- The total weight of cocaine detected at the border in 2006–07 increased by over 600 percent. However, it is still lower than the peak detected weight recorded in 2001–02.
- More than half of the total weight of cocaine detected at the Australian border occurred in sea cargo shipments.
- ‘Scatter’ importations of cocaine in the postal stream continue to be the most frequently detected method of importation.
- The total weight of cocaine seized nationally increased by approximately 1,300 percent compared with 2005–06. The number of seizures increased by 70 percent.
- In 2006–07, national cocaine arrests increased by over 75 percent.

Other drugs

- In 2006–07, the number of border detections of anabolic agents and other selected hormones was the highest since the peak in 2001–02.
- The maximum individual weight of a ketamine border detection increased from 500 grams in 2005–06 to 10 kilograms in 2006–07.
- Nationally, there was a 63 percent increase in the weight of steroid seizures and a 57 percent increase in the number of seizures compared with 2005–06.
- In 2006–07, the weight of national tryptamine seizures was at its lowest since 1997–98.



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