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Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police
Drug Abuse Committee

Chair:

Barry MacKnight

Annual Report of Committee Activities

Prepared for and submitted to
CACP Committee and Function Chairs
Sunday, August 19, 2007
CACF Conference

Calgary, Alta.

Message from the Chair:

I took over the Chair of the Drug Abuse Committee in December of 2006 and since that time the committee has been active and engaged in drug and substance abuse issues across Canada. This committee has been fortunate in having strong and dedicated leadership from the previous Chairs, Deputy Chief Chris McNeil, through Chief Barry King, Chief Mike Boyd, and others. It is my hope to build on the great work that has been done in previous years.

Our membership is strong and diverse, with representation from all regions of the country, with the RCMP participating at a very significant level as committee members as well as through technical advisors, such as S/Sgt. Michel Pelletier. We have identified that Canada's north is not well represented on DAC and that conspicuous absence will be addressed through the RCMP and the SQ.

We continue to monitor legislative issues such as amendments to the Criminal Code regarding Drug Impaired Driving. As well, DAC is contributing to the working group on amendments to the CDSA regarding the disposition of seized property, and the working group that will be developing the upcoming national mass media drug education campaign.

DAC has a long history of working with all stakeholders to promote safer and healthier communities by addressing the harms caused by substance abuse. I would like to acknowledge our partners whose contributions often bring valuable perspectives and balance to DAC discussions. The Department of Public Safety, Department Justice Canada, and Health Canada have long standing relationships with the Committee. I would especially like to acknowledge Michel Perron, CEO of the Canadian Center on Substance Abuse. Michel and his staff have been a constant source of technical guidance for DAC as we make our way through the often-confusing world of substance abuse research.

In closing, I would like to thank Chief Garry Clement, Cobourg Police Service, and Directeur adjoint Gilles Martin, S.Q., both of whom left the committee this year. Their service to DAC has been a fine example to police leaders throughout Canada.

Drug Abuse Committee Mandate and Profile:

Mission:

“Our mission is to promote safer and healthier 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 and healthier communities, through a unified, reasoned and co-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 2007-2008

1. Education/Prevention
 - A. Clear Communication with Canadians about the harmful effects of drugs.
 - B. Development of Drug Awareness Training
 - C. Development of Drug Awareness Toolkit
2. Disposition of Seized Property (CDSA)
 - A. Meaningful Consultation with GC on CDSA amendments
 - B. Development of Best/Current Practices manual on disposition issues
3. CACP Drug Policy
 - A. Development of CACP Drug Policy

Issues Being Tracked

1. Clandestine Labs
2. Marijuana Grow Ops
3. Pharmaceuticals
4. Drug Recognition Expertise
5. Access to Marijuana for Medical Purposes

Overview of Meetings Held

CACP Conference – St. John’s - August 2006

The Committee met at the 2006 Annual Conference in St. John’s. Strategic priorities were reviewed, along with the disposition of seized property related to clan labs. There was a review and discussion of the VPD drug policy. The National Framework for Action on Substance Abuse and a National Alcohol Strategy was also discussed.

DAC Committee Meeting - Toronto-October, 2006

The CACP Drug Policy draft was reviewed and discussed. There were also presentation on the National Alcohol Strategy and High Risk Investigations. Strategic priorities were updated.

DAC Committee Meeting - Vancouver- March 20& 21, 2007

This meeting served two purposes for the committee: first of all, it was time to refocus on priorities in order to ensure that the DAC in its current form will be engaged and efficient. And secondly,

to provide a first hand exposure of the DAC members to the Vancouver drug situation in the downtown east side, including a visit to the Supervised Injection Site.

DAC priorities were pared down to a more manageable number with clear deliverables. This work had started in Toronto in October of 2006 and was completed at this meeting.

In order to have a truly national perspective, DAC must travel a certain amount in order to see and hear from the communities that live with the substance abuse issues on a day-to-day basis. This was an important theme in Vancouver, and part of the reason that DAC went to Vancouver. The drug policy discussion in Canada is impacted greatly by what happens in British Columbia and in Vancouver in particular. This is a source of concern as the Vancouver experience is somewhat of an anomaly in many ways. Their experience is very valuable as there are lessons to be learned, but the particular constellation of factors at play in Vancouver are rather unique.

DAC Committee Meeting- Montreal- May 22-23, 2007

The SQ arranged for a presentation on aboriginal drug issues in northern Quebec, which was very helpful to the committee. As stated earlier in this report, membership from the north is a priority for the committee in the coming year.

Health Canada staff presented to the committee on the status of the amendments to the CDSA regarding the disposition of seized property.

The committee was also hosted by a local community based organization that provides drug prevention programming and deals directly with people who are suffering from addiction. There were examples of innovative programming that is working for this particular community.

Other Events & Activities

Sixth Annual Joint Meeting Of CACP, CPA and CAPB

This meeting was held in March 2007 in Ottawa and I represented DAC in discussions of the National Drug Strategy. The discussion was very lively and there was an encouraging level of alignment in the messages brought by the 3 associations on the issue of drugs in our communities.

Public Education and Prevention was the very highest and clearest of the priorities expressed by the groups.

National Anti-Drug Mass Media Campaign Working Group

This group has been formed by the Department of Justice in their role as the guardian of the new National Drug Strategy. The group will be working to assist in the development of a national campaign on drug awareness and Prevention. I will be representing DAC/CACP on this working group.

Barry MacKnight, Chair
CACP Drug Abuse Committee

**Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police
Drug Abuse Committee
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