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Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police

Drug Abuse Committee

Chair/ Vice Chair:

**Barry MacKnight
Tom Bucher**

Annual Report of Committee Activities

2010-2011

September 2011

Message from the Chair:

While there is always a natural churn in the membership of committees, we experienced an extraordinary loss this year with the passing of Chief Myles Burke. Myles' presence on the committee brought a perspective that will be missed.

The past year's activities within the Drug Abuse Committee have focused our efforts on the priorities identified through the committee. The meeting following the conference in Edmonton was hosted by the Canadian Center on Substance Abuse in November 2010 in Ottawa, and was coordinated with the Canadian visit of Director Gil Kerlikowske, who was appointed to his position as head of the US Office of Drug Control Policy by President Obama. The director was the keynote speaker at the CCSA Board of Directors dinner and the DAC committee members were also in attendance. During the committees meetings the following day, Director Kerlikowske and members of his staff sat in to discuss the our committees work, with particular attention to the issue of Medicinal Marijuana, which is the subject of much interest at this time in the United States as well.

There were several important activities and issues for the committee in 2010-2011:

National Scope Report on Canadian Police Experience with Health Canada's (HC) Medical Marijuana Access Regulations (MMAR): This report, and its recommendations were reviewed at the Ottawa meeting in November 2010, and was subsequently presented to the CACP Board of Directors in December 2010, where it was accepted and endorsed as CACP's official consultation submission to Health Canada on the Marijuana Medical Access Regulations reform project. The report has been submitted to the Minister of Health. Health Canada is currently conducting targeted consultations with key stakeholders on this issue and DAC will be meeting with HC staff on at least 2 occasions in the fall of 2011. Our clear focus is to have this regulatory process move at an aggressive pace.

Research Project-Policing People Suffering From Addiction: In March of 2009 the CACP (through DAC) and the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, in collaboration with Public Safety Canada, hosted a workshop on the enforcement priority of the *National Framework for Action to Reduce the Harms Associated with Alcohol and Other Drugs and Substances*.

The objectives of the workshop were to:

1. Build an understanding of the issues related to enforcement from several perspectives, including that of consumers (people who use illicit drugs)
2. Start to identify best practices in enforcement
3. Determine which issues an action plan should focus on, including further research as necessary

Representatives were present from police services (national, provincial and regional), consumers, treatment organizations, provincial and federal government departments, and the host organizations.

One of the key steps in the action plan that was developed through the workshop was research into effective programs and practices that are in place in Canada at this time. To that end, Public Safety Canada released a request for proposals to identify best practices on police responses to those suffering from addiction. The general purpose of this project is to conduct a review of best practices and lessons learned in the area of an integrated approach to policing those suffering from addiction in Canada and abroad. The CACP DAC has been involved in preparing the RFP and helping to set the overall direction of this research project. The contract was awarded, and a summary document is currently being developed by Public Safety Canada, and will evolve into a practical handbook for the law enforcement community of best and promising practice for policing people suffering from addiction.

Research Project- Drug Endangered Children: The issue of Drug Endangered Children was adopted by DAC as a priority in 2009 and since that time we have reviewed some of the current practices relating to the legal response to the issue in some jurisdictions. The focus of the work has been to determine the area where CACP can best engage on this issue. To that end the committee sought funding through the CACP Research Foundation and was successful in receiving a \$20,000 grant for the conduct of research on this issue. The Students Commission- Centre for Excellence in Youth Engagement has been hired for this project and their report is expected to be delivered prior to the DAC meeting in the fall of 2011.

CACP Adoption of Portfolio of Canadian Standards for Youth Substance Abuse Prevention:

In 2007, the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA), launched *A Drug Prevention Strategy for Canada's Youth* as part of the federal government's National Anti-Drug Strategy (NADS). The goal of this five year strategy is to reduce illicit drug use by Canadian youth between the ages of 10 and 24. Prevention programs are often the first line of defence in preventing, reducing and stopping drug use among youth. When done well, they are the best investment Canadians can make. However, there is no national consensus on what works in prevention. Efforts are often inconsistent, contradictory and disjointed. CCSA and the Canadian Standards Task Force, a team of Canadian prevention experts that include DOCAS, developed Canada's first national resource for drug abuse prevention: *a Portfolio of Canadian Standards for Youth Substance Abuse Prevention*.

The Canadian Standards Portfolio is comprised of standards for prevention in schools (*Building on our Strengths*) and communities (*Stronger Together*), along with guidelines for families (*Strengthening our Skills*). An essential guide for those participating in drug prevention activities for youth, this new resource provides teams with step-by-step guidance on how best to plan, implement, and evaluate their prevention efforts.

DAC has maintained representation on the YSAP National Advisory Committee with retired Chief Barry King representing CACP-DAC, and Insp. Dan Quirion representing both the RCMP DOCAS and CACP-DAC.

The Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA) has a legislated mandate to provide national leadership and evidence-informed analysis and advice to mobilize collaborative efforts to reduce alcohol and other drug-related harms. RCMP DOCAS and CACP Drug Abuse Committee (DAC) have collaborated in partnership with CCSA since 1988.

The portfolio was presented to the CACP Board of Directors in the April 2011 meeting and the following recommendation was adopted:

That the CACP endorses the Portfolio of Canadian Standards for Youth Substance Abuse Prevention, which includes evidence-informed standards developed by the CCSA-led Drug Prevention Strategy for Canada's Youth as part of Canada's National Anti-Drug Strategy, and further supports the adoption of the Canadian Standards for Youth Substance Abuse Prevention by police agencies in Canada.

Adoption of New Priority- Synthetic Drugs: The message was made very clear by several DAC agencies that the issue of synthetic drugs must be addressed as a priority by CACP and so the committee has adopted this issue as a priority.

Disposition of Seized Property Priority: The long standing DAC priority had been a priority within Health Canada because the resolve is primarily reached through amendments to the CDSA. There is a CACP resolution from 2007 seeking the appropriate legislative and regulatory amendments, but the file has been on the back burner with HC for some time, with little or no attention. In late 2010 there was progress as Public Safety agreed to take on the work to advance the amendments, on behalf of Health Canada.

Conclusion

The success of this committee in moving issues and priorities forward is due to the dedication of our members; and so, in closing, I would like to thank all of the members of the Drug Abuse Committee, past and present, for their devotion to this work.

Thank you,

Barry MacKnight

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 2011-12

1. **Education/Prevention:** develop clear and consistent communication about the harmful effects of selected drugs.
 - **Deliverables:**
 - Communications Plan- *Portfolio of Canadian Standards for Youth Substance Abuse Prevention:*
 - Drug Awareness Network (DAN)

2. Disposition of Seized Property (CDSA): disposition and storage of property seized and managed by police as a result of drug investigations.
 - Deliverable:
 - CDSA Amendment
3. Drug Endangered Children: advocate for federally legislated additional penalty when endangering children in the commission of the substantive offence.
 - Deliverable:
 - National Scope Report
4. Medical Marijuana: Through an examination of the impacts of the Medical Marijuana Access Regulations across Canada, influence Health Canada in the reform of the current regulations.
 - Deliverable:
 - MMAR Reform
5. Synthetic Drugs: Under development

Overview of Meetings Held

Edmonton- August, 2010

Ottawa- November, 2010

Montreal- May 2011

Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police
Drug Abuse Committee
Membership List

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