

Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police

Drug Advisory Committee

Chair/Co-Chair:

**Mike Serr
Paul Johnston**

Annual Report of Committee Activities

2016-2017

Drug Advisory Committee Mandate and Profile:

Mission:

Our mission is to promote safer, healthier, and stronger communities through proactive leadership which addresses and influences positive change in the areas of substance abuse prevention, enforcement, and treatment.

Values:

Integrity: The Drug Advisory Committee believes in adherence to the highest ethical standards, and will ensure that decisions made and positions taken will be based on knowledge, research, best practices, legislation, and identified community needs.

Collaboration: The Drug Advisory Committee believes that leveraging the expertise and perspectives of partners and strategic alliances will enhance the effectiveness of the committee and will lead to successful outcomes.

Innovation: The Drug Advisory 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 Advisory Committee believes in a balanced approach to the issues to be examined, the partners with whom it will collaborate, and the strategies to be employed.

Excellence: The Drug Advisory Committee believes in excellence in all that it does, through professional standards, best practices, internal and external communications, needs- assessment, and evaluation.

Message from the Chair:

2016-17 was another busy year for the Drug Advisory Committee (“DAC”) with both the fentanyl crisis and marijuana legalization leading the priorities.

Notably, the committee and its Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction (“CCSA”) representatives established that continued use of the word “abuse” in the “Drug Abuse Committee” name was no longer appropriate, and it did not clearly describe the nature of the work conducted by the committee. In March, the CACP Board approved a committee name change to the “Drug Advisory Committee” to better reflect the nature of our efforts and to be more sensitive to persons experiencing addiction.

Once again, we experienced significant transition within the committee membership. Several members, including our co-chair, were reassigned within their agencies, and resigned from the committee. Long-standing committee member Superintendent Paul Johnston from the Ottawa Police Service was elected as the new co-chair. The committee went on a recruiting drive to increase representation across Canada, and the DAC now has representatives from the Atlantic Region, Quebec, the Northern Region and Territories and Manitoba. The Canadian Border Services Agency and Corrections Canada have also joined the committee as special advisors.

In the fall of 2017, Mike Serr will have completed his two year term as Chair of the DAC. A vote will be held at the fall DAC meeting to determine if anyone on the committee is interested in assuming this role.

Unfortunately, the fentanyl crisis experienced in Western Canada now has a grip across the nation. In response, the DAC hosted the *Managing the Fentanyl Crisis* conference in May. This conference focused on senior leadership and provided attendees with information on the complexities of the opioid crisis and the tools required to help disrupt current overdose trends. A variety of subject matter experts from across Canada provided a unique perspective on the current crisis. The conference was attended by over 170 delegates and received positive feedback.

Committee members continued to be fully engaged in consultation regarding the upcoming cannabis legalization, which the Government of Canada has announced will be in place by July 1st, 2018. The DAC will continue to advocate for the combining of recreational and medical cannabis regulations, in an effort to disrupt diversion of cannabis into the black and gray markets. The DAC will also continue to work with other CACP committees on this legislation and the impact it will have on policing and public safety.

DAC members appeared before the Senate Committee on April 6th, 2017 to respond to sections of Bill C37 and their impact on law enforcement and public safety. Bill C37, an Act to amend the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*, included several positive changes supported by the DAC in response to the opioid crisis. The Bill includes changes which streamline the Supervised Consumption Site application process, reducing the criteria from 26 to five. Additionally, Bill C37 now allows CBSA to search packages weighing less than 30 grams that are suspected of containing contraband, requires imported pill presses and encapsulators to be registered, and includes legislative changes to permit the expedited destruction of seized drugs. These are all changes actively advocated for by the DAC. The Bill received Royal Assent on May 18th, 2017.

The DAC provided input on the *Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act* (GSDOA), which also recently received Royal Assent. The GSDOA provides some legal protection to people who experience or witness an overdose and call 9-1-1 for help, and it provides protection (under certain conditions) under Section 4 of the CDSA. The *Act*, along with amendments to the CDSA under Bill C37, will help address the current opioid crisis. The DAC also distributed an information bulletin to assist police agencies and frontline officers in understanding the new legislation and changes to the CDSA.

Enacting changes to the disposition methods of seized drug property was a long-standing DAC priority. The urgency was heightened with the emergence of fentanyl and its analogs, as it placed in harm's way both law enforcement and civilian police staff who come into contact with seized drugs. Bill C37 has now addressed this pressing issue. The streamlining of the disposition protocol for seized chemicals now includes expediting the disposal of seized controlled substances, their precursors, and any chemical offence related property. The changes recognize the importance of destroying seized drugs as soon as possible, for the protection of police officers, evidence control staff and exhibit handlers. The DAC will continue to assess how this is put into practice to ensure safety remains a priority.

The DAC produced and disseminated several information bulletins on behalf of the CACP to educate and inform CACP members. Most notably, bulletins were released which contained sample policy and training material for law enforcement agencies which were considering equipping their members with naloxone, and which provided information regarding the *Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act*. The committee is pleased to see early adoption of naloxone by several law enforcement agencies across the country, and its provision to their frontline members.

The DAC made the difficult decision to discontinue the annual Prescription Drug Drop-off Day in 2017. The DAC initiated this event in 2014 as an event to raise awareness of the dangers of prescription drug diversion and misuse. The event required considerable police resources, and

over the last couple years we recorded diminishing returns. Efforts were made to have the Canadian Pharmacy Association take over the event with the CACP playing a supporting role; however, an agreement between the two associations was not reached. The DAC will continue to promote the return of unused prescription drugs to local pharmacies for destruction, and will continue to speak to the dangers of prescription drug misuse. The DAC would like to thank Barry MacKnight, national coordinator of the program, for his dedication and efforts. Barry's closing evaluation report will be submitted to the CACP Board later this year.

Media requests and interviews kept the committee chairs very busy this year speaking on the above-noted issues on behalf of the CACP.

Planned Initiatives for 2017 - 2018

Bill C-45: Cannabis Legalization

The DAC recognized early that the legalization of cannabis will have a significant impact on law enforcement and public safety. The committee continues to work with Public Safety Canada, the Public Prosecution Service of Canada and Health Canada to address the concerns of law enforcement. The DAC, along with other CACP committees, assisted in the preparation of the CACP "Guiding Principles Regarding the Recommendations of the Task Force on Cannabis Legalization and Regulations", which provided input on the each Task Force recommendation. The DAC continues to address law enforcement concerns as outlined in the discussion paper, including:

- Ensuring legislation is in place to disrupt organized crime involvement;
- Advocating for pricing models that make cannabis production and trafficking less desirable for organized crime;
- Increasing penalties for trafficking cannabis to youth;
- Evaluating possession limits;
- Continuing to advocate for a ban on residential cannabis grows, and limiting cannabis production to vetted, licenced government producers;
- Continuing to provide speakers to educate the public, including attendance at events such as the Cannabis Canada Association National Educational Conference and forums to educate and inform;
- Conducting media interviews to educate the public on public safety and CACP concerns; and

- Advocating for training and equipment funding to address the introduction of Bill C-45 *Cannabis Act* and Bill C-46 (an Act to amend the Criminal Code with respect to impaired driving laws).

Actions:

1. Continue cannabis legalization advocacy, with two DAC members remaining assigned to the portfolio.
2. Continue to engage at a national level to ensure public safety matters are addressed in the new legislation.
3. Continue to advocate for education and public safety, including speaking at the National Educational Conferences held in Ottawa (April) and Winnipeg (May) this year.
4. At the request of the CACP President, continue to engage the media with consistent messaging.
5. Continue to work with the Government of Canada on Bill C-45 (*Cannabis Act*) and C-46 (Changes on Impaired Driving Laws).

Bill C-46: Drug Impaired Driving

Public Safety Canada is leading a pilot project which will test two oral fluid drug screening devices to help combat drug impaired driving in Canada. The testing of oral fluid devices with selected law enforcement agencies is now concluded and a review is underway. The DAC continues its drug impaired driving initiative with:

- Its commitment to a continuing partnership with Public Safety Canada to conduct further research on the use of these devices, to determining whether the devices work in “real life” policing conditions, and to developing a formal training program for user of the devices if they become approved for use in Canada.
- Its continued work with the CACP Traffic Committee on Bill C-46 and advocacy for the introduction of more stringent laws on impaired driving and the introduction of approved road-side screening devices for detecting drugged driving.

Actions:

1. Advocate for Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) training in Canada.
2. Continue to work with internal and external partners to develop public messaging around the dangers of drug impaired driving.

3. Advocate for federal funding for the approved roadside drug screening device training and equipment, and for additional DREs
4. Support and work with the CACP Traffic Committee in guiding the Government of Canada forward with its drugged driving safety initiatives.

Opioid Crisis

The DAC continues to focus on the opioid crisis and its effect on communities across the country. In Western Canada, the crisis is showing no signs of slowing down, and the impact is now being seen nationally. The opioid crisis also poses a significant safety concern for law enforcement officers and civilian police staff, as they regularly come into contact with fentanyl. There have been a few incidents across Canada where members have been contaminated. The DAC continues to advocate for frontline officers and those who handle drug exhibits to be equipped with naloxone.

The DAC will continue to:

- Educate the public and law enforcement;
- Advocate for equipping first responders with intranasal naloxone;
- Participate in national forums (most recently the Knowledge Exchange Event: The Opioid Crisis - Exploring Legal and Policy Frameworks for Addiction and Problematic Substance Abuse);
- Work with Health Canada and Public Safety Canada to address priorities for law enforcement;
- Advocate for stricter legislation and oversight with respect to the importation and possession of pill presses.

Actions:

1. Advocate for the equipping police officers and and civilian staff with naloxone.
2. Develop training and educational material accessible on the CACP DAC and Research Foundation websites.

Canada Post Corporation Act (2015 -08 resolution)

There is currently is an outstanding DAC resolution to amend the *Canada Post Corporation Act* to allow for the search of in-transit mail. This resolution is of renewed importance as opioids are frequently imported by mail. Over the past year the DAC has worked collaboratively with the Law Amendments Committee, the Public Prosecution Service of

Canada and Canada Post Corporation to find a resolution. Legislative changes will be required, and both the LAC and DAC will be taking steps to address this issue.

Actions:

1. Continue to work with the Law Amendments Committee in support of an amendment to the *Canada Post Corporation Act*.

Drug Free Kids Canada

The DAC continues to foster relationships with organizations that produce educational and positive messaging around drug prevention and the use of drugs by youth. The DAC will continue to support Drug Free Kids Canada’s innovative messaging campaign, “The Call That Comes After” (<http://thecallthatcomesafter.com/>), which was developed to deter youth from consuming marijuana and driving. DAC members continue to remain active on the Drug Free Kids Canada Advisory Board.

Overview of Meetings Held

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|---------------|---------------|
| 1. Ottawa | August 2016 |
| 2. Calgary | November 2016 |
| 3. St. John’s | March 2017 |
| 4. Montreal | July 2017 |

Conclusion

The DAC anticipates that 2017 will continue to be a busy year for the committee. The committee now has excellent representation from across Canada which is invaluable as we address regional issues. The fentanyl crisis and the pending legalization of cannabis will continue as the main priorities for the DAC.

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

Sincerely,



Mike Serr

Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police Drug Abuse Committee (Updated June 5, 2017)	
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CACP Drug Advisory Committee**2016/17 Annual Report**

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