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11<sup>th</sup> May 2004

Deputy J. Dorey  
Chairman - Shadow Scrutiny Panel  
Scrutiny Office  
c/o States Building  
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Dear Deputy Dorey

**Review of Implementation of Recommendations of the Imperial College School  
of Medicine Study into Drug Use in Jersey**

The Shadow Scrutiny Panel chaired by Deputy J. Dorey agreed the following terms of reference for its first review.

“To examine the implementation by the Alcohol and Drugs Service of the recommendations contained in the Study of the Imperial College School of Medicine, published in April 2001, in respect of drug use in Jersey”.

This report will reflect the views of the Customs and Excise Department regarding drug importation developments and particularly importations of heroin, since the publication of the Imperial College Report.

Before considering the heroin situation post April 2001 it is worth drawing the Panel’s attention to heroin importation seizures for the period 1992 – 2000. These were as follows:-

1992	-	£12,060
1993	-	£900
1994	-	£6,305
1995	-	£17,250
1996	-	£264,840
1997	-	£5,475
1998	-	£93,125
1999	-	£101,208
2000	-	£143,851

The Imperial College report indicated that there were 780 problematic drug users in Jersey with evidence that the use of heroin was becoming increasingly popular and users were preferring to inject, rather than smoke the drug.

Heroin seizures since the publication of the report have increased significantly and would seem to support the Imperial College view. Heroin seizures for the period 2001-2003 were as follows:-

2001	-	£734,417
2002	-	£1,102,217
2003	-	£712,355

There could, however, be other reasons and these include:-

1. The development of the Joint Police and Customs Intelligence Bureau. This unit was set up in October 1995 with the purpose of targeting Class A drug seizures and the identification and prosecution of the principals behind these importations. The quality of the intelligence disseminated by the unit has continued to improve and since 2001 this unit has been responsible for approximately 50% of the drug seizures made by customs officers. There can be no doubt, therefore, that the unit has achieved its objective.
2. The fact that the profit margins on heroin importations are significantly higher than any other illegal drug imported into the Island. It is worth noting that in the Imperial College report the price of a gram of heroin in Jersey was £300, with a UK average price of £74. Since 2001 this figure has not decreased and current street values for 1 gram of heroin are between £300-£450, with a UK average price being £50.

According to Chapter 7 of “Responding to Substance Misuse”, a strategy to reduce the harm caused by substance misuse 1999-2004, the experience was that the price of heroin had decreased in the previous few years which was indicative of increased availability and accessibility. In relation to prices this is certainly not the case since 2001. It could be argued, therefore, that heroin availability on the streets had not increased, but that the strategies of the enforcement agencies had proved successful.

3. The Substance Misuse Strategy 1999-2004 tasked the law enforcement agencies with the development of a risk assessment based approach to staff deployment. The Customs and Excise department adopted this approach in 2000 as opposed to the previous policy of ensuring that there was some form of customs presence for every ship/aircraft movement. There can be no doubt that this contributed to the increase in drug seizures.

In considering the heroin situation in the Island another aspect relating to heroin purities must also be taken into account. The Substance Misuse Strategy 1999-2004 identified the following performance criteria to measure the success in containing the heroin problem in the Island:-

“to ensure that the quality/purity did not improve over the period of the strategy”.

According to the Imperial College report the average purity for heroin seizures between 1998-2000 was as follows:-

1998	-	42.8%
1999	-	52.4%
2000	-	41.7%

The average purity for heroin seizures by customs officers since has been:-

2001	-	58.5%
2002	-	34.96%
2003	-	31.04%

It can be seen, therefore, that there has been a significant reduction in the quality/purity of the heroin

seized by customs officers over the last few years and this is a trend that seems to be continuing. An argument could be made, therefore, that the heroin situation is being contained.

In relation to the heroin importations over the last 3 years the Panel might be interested to know that 36 are what would be considered as commercial importations and 9 involved small personal quantities. There were 46 people charged in relation to these cases and none of these individuals were found to be suffering from HIV and there was only one case of hepatitis. In fact customs officers have only encountered 1 case of HIV and 3 cases of hepatitis in the last 3 years as a result of individuals being challenged at the ports.

As far as other drug seizures are concerned the facts are as detailed below:-

	2000	2003	% Increase/Decrease
Cannabis	£228,446	£1,952,565	+ 754.7%
Cocaine	£12,637	£25,198	+ 99.3%
Crack	Nil	£32,376	---
Amphetamine Sulphate	350	30	- 91.4%
Ecstasy	3,085	152,385	+ 4839.5%

It can be seen that with the exception of amphetamine sulphate there has been both a significant and concerning increase in the quantity of drugs seized on importation. The local street prices for these drugs, however, has remained at very much the same level as those indicated in the Imperial College report with the exception of Ecstasy where the price has fallen from £12-£15 per tablet to £10 per tablet.

At the time of the Imperial College report customs officers had not encountered any importations of crack cocaine. The first seizure of this nature occurred in 2001 and seizures have continued to increase since that time. In 2001 the street price of a gram of crack was approximately £115. The street price has increased substantially since then and current street prices for crack are £240 per gram. This is not unduly surprising as in 2001 crack was a new drug to Jersey and it has taken a period of time for a street value price to be established. In addition the demand for the drug has increased over the last 2-3 years and as a result the basic rules of supply and demand have applied.

It is not appropriate for me to comment on any of the other issues which are of interest to the Panel, with the exception of the Arrest Referral Scheme.

On average customs officers have been responsible for the arrest and prosecution of 81 people per year for drug offences. All these individuals could be of interest to the Arrest Referral Worker. As there is only one person undertaking this role it is impossible for her to see everyone and for perfectly legitimate reasons this person has identified Police Headquarters as the base for their work. This does mean however that a large proportion of the people arrested by Customs Officers are not being seen by the Arrest Referral Officer and that a rehabilitation opportunity is being missed.

The above information gives an accurate picture of the local drug situation from a Customs and Excise perspective and the recent large seizure of heroin and cocaine continues to indicate that there is a substantial market for Class A drugs in the Island. It will be the responsibility of the Law Enforcement Agencies to continue to review their strategies to ensure that the organisations behind the importation and distribution of drugs in the Island are disrupted as much as possible.

If you require any additional information please do not hesitate to contact me or my Deputy Agent,

Head of Operations, Steven Le Marquand.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Cole  
Chief Executive  
Customs & Immigration