

COCAINE

KEY POINTS

- There was a record 2 777 cocaine detections at the Australian border in 2015–16.
- Drug profiling data of both border and domestic seizures indicates the continued prominence of Colombia as a source country for cocaine in Australia.
- There was a record 3 951 national cocaine seizures in 2015–16, with the weight of cocaine seized nationally increasing for the second consecutive reporting period.
- There was a record 2 592 national cocaine arrests in 2015–16.



MAIN FORMS

Cocaine is a naturally occurring alkaloid and central nervous system stimulant found in certain varieties of the coca plant (genus *Erthroxylum*). Of the over 200 species in this family, the two main species cultivated for the production of cocaine are *Erthroxylum coca* (*E. coca*) and *Erthroxylum novogranatense* (*E. novogranatense*). The coca plant can grow in widely varied climates and soil conditions. *E. coca* is cultivated along the eastern slopes of Bolivia and Peru. *E. novogranatense* is cultivated in Colombia and countries in Central America (Freye & Levy 2009).

The process of extraction and production of cocaine from coca leaves is a chemical process that typically occurs in three stages—the extraction of crude coca pasts from the coca leaf, purification of the coca paste into cocaine base and conversion of the cocaine base into cocaine hydrochloride.¹ Cocaine is commonly found in two forms—hydrochloride salt and cocaine base. The most common form of cocaine available in Australia is powdered hydrochloride salt, which can be snorted, rubbed into the gums or dissolved in water and injected. Cocaine base, usually referred to as ‘crack’,² is not commonly encountered in Australia. Crack cocaine usually has a rock crystal appearance and is readily converted into vapour with heat, making it suitable for administration via inhalation (ADF 2016; NIDA 2016; EMCDDA 2015).

Cocaine is a stimulant drug that increases the speed of central nervous system activity and dopamine levels. Dopamine is associated with functions responsible for reward, motivation and the experience of pleasure. It is this excess dopamine that is responsible for cocaine’s euphoric effects, including increased energy, alertness and reduced fatigue. Short-term effects of cocaine use may include irregular heartbeat, chest pain, hyperthermia or seizures. Long-term effects of cocaine use may include anxiety, paranoia, tachycardia, kidney failure, increased risk of experiencing a stroke and ongoing respiratory problems. With repeated use, cocaine can cause long-term changes in brain function, particularly related to reward. When used in conjunction with alcohol, the liver converts the combination into a third substance known as cocaethylene, which may increase both the euphoric effects and the risk of death (ADF 2016; NIDA 2016; House of Commons 2010).

INTERNATIONAL TRENDS

Cocaine use has increased globally since 2010, after a period of stability, largely due to increased use in South America. The majority of cocaine is trafficked from the Andean subregion to North America and Europe. The Americas accounted for 90.0 per cent of global cocaine seizures in 2014 (South America accounted for 60.0 per cent). While cocaine is the most commonly used stimulant in Europe, seizures in Western and Central Europe accounted for 9.0 per cent of global seizures in 2014. Used primarily in western and southern Europe, there are signs of increasing availability after a period of relative stability (EMCDDA 2016; UNODC 2016).

1 Cocaine hydrochloride is usually cut with other products to increase volume before it is sold to users. The substances with which cocaine is cut may be non-toxic, such as bicarbonate soda, or toxic, such as levamisole, a veterinary pharmaceutical.
2 The term crack refers to the crackling sound the cocaine produces when heated.



Coca cultivation surveys conducted by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in 2015 indicate that with the exception of Colombia, the total area under coca cultivation in South America has declined. In 2015, the area under cultivation in Peru decreased by 6.1 per cent, from 42 900 hectares in 2014 to 40 300 hectares, while the area under cultivation in Bolivia decreased by 1.0 per cent, from 20 400 hectares in 2014 to 20 200 hectares. The area under cultivation in Colombia increased 39.1 per cent, from 69 000 hectares in 2014 to 96 000 hectares in 2015 (UNODC 2016a; UNODC 2016b; UNODC 2016c).

The total number of cocaine seizures by World Customs Organization (WCO) agencies increased 9.0 per cent, from 5 508 in 2014 to 6 006 in 2015. The weight of cocaine seized increased 69.3 per cent, from 67 503 kilograms in 2014 to 114 310 kilograms in 2015. The United States (US) accounted for the greatest proportion of both the number and weight of cocaine seized in 2015, accounting for 35.1 per cent of the number and 67.8 per cent of the weight (WCO 2016).

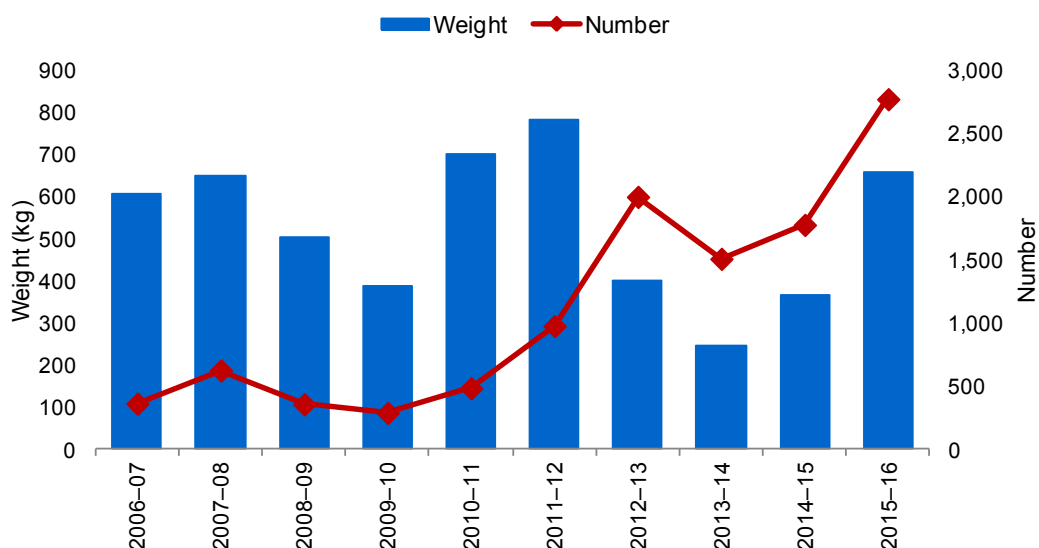
DOMESTIC TRENDS

AUSTRALIAN BORDER SITUATION

There were increases in both the number and weight of cocaine detections at the Australian border this reporting period. In 2015–16, the number of cocaine detections increased 55.9 per cent, from 1 781 in 2014–15 to a record 2 777 in 2015–16. The weight of cocaine detected increased 78.1 per cent, from 368.9 kilograms in 2014–15 to 657.1 kilograms in 2015–16 (see Figure 46).

The vast majority of cocaine detections (95.5 per cent) in this reporting period weighed less than 1 kilogram. In 2015–16, 43 detections of cocaine (4.5 per cent) weighed 1 kilogram or more. Combined, these 43 detections weigh 602.1 kilograms and account for 91.6 per cent of the total weight of cocaine detected at the Australian border in 2015–16.

FIGURE 46: Number and weight of cocaine detections at the Australian border, 2006–07 to 2015–16 (Source: Department of Immigration and Border Protection)



SIGNIFICANT BORDER DETECTIONS

Significant border detections of cocaine in 2015–16 include:

- 100.0 kilograms of cocaine detected on 24 August 2015, concealed in bags, via small craft into Brisbane
- 71.0 kilograms of cocaine detected on 13 September 2015, built into a hydraulic press shaft, via sea cargo from Panama to Sydney
- 24.0 kilograms of cocaine detected on 29 June 2016, concealed in luggage, via air passenger/crew into Sydney
- 20.0 kilograms of cocaine detected on 2 March 2016, concealed in suitcases, via air passenger/crew from the US to Sydney
- 15.0 kilograms of cocaine detected on 23 May 2016, packed into a cardboard box, via air cargo from the US to Sydney.

These 5 detections have a combined weight of 230.0 kilograms and account for 35.0 per cent of the total weight of cocaine detected at the Australian border in 2015–16.

IMPORTATION METHODS

While detections of cocaine at the Australian border occurred across all importation streams this reporting period, the majority occurred within the international mail stream, in weights ranging from 11.7 kilograms to less than one gram.

In 2015–16, the international mail stream accounted for 94.7 per cent of the number and 27.9 per cent of the weight of cocaine detected at the Australian border. Only 1.2 per cent of the number of cocaine detections were identified in the air passenger/crew stream this reporting period, however these detections account for 25.1 per cent of the weight of cocaine detected in 2015–16 (see Figures 47 and 48).

FIGURE 47: Number of cocaine detections at the Australian border, as a proportion of total detections, by method of importation, 2015–16 (Source: Department of Immigration and Border Protection)

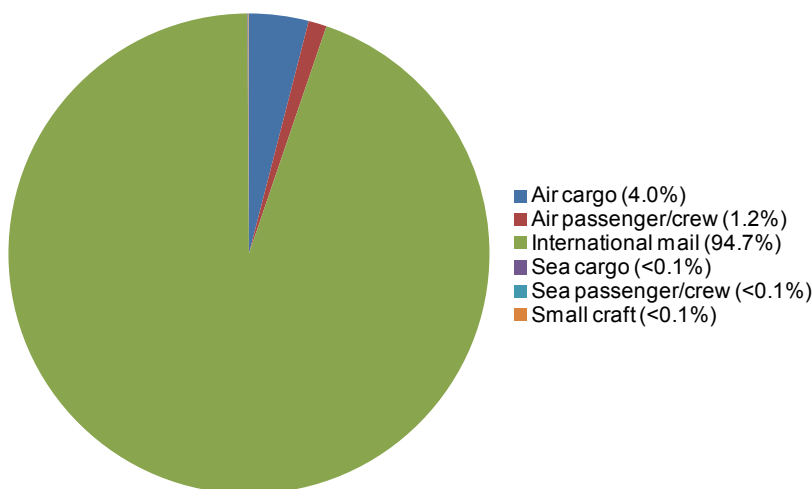
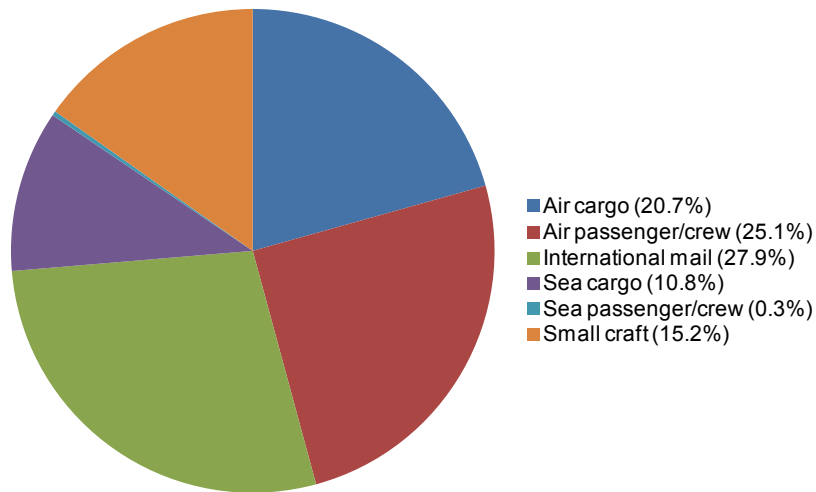


FIGURE 48: Weight of cocaine detections at the Australian border, as a proportion of total detections, by method of importation, 2015–16 (Source: Department of Immigration and Border Protection)



EMBARKATION POINTS

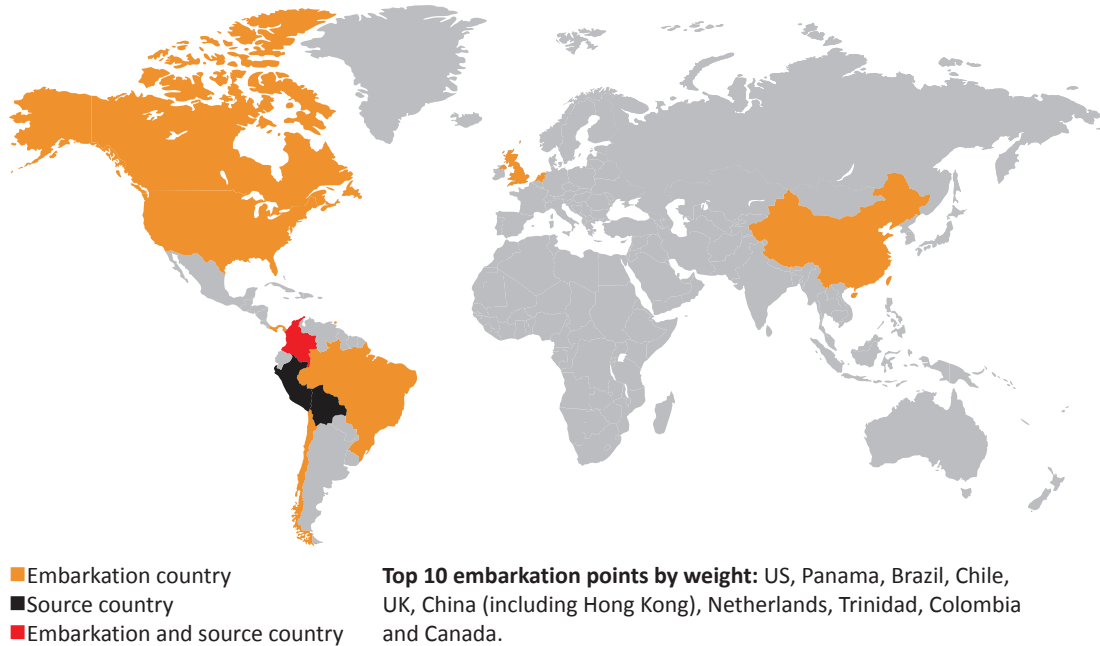
In 2015–16, 54 countries were identified as embarkation points for cocaine detected at the Australian border, compared with 47 countries in 2014–15.

By number, the United Kingdom (UK) was the primary embarkation point for cocaine detections in 2015–16 with 923 detections. Other key embarkation points this reporting period include the Netherlands (580 detections), Canada (440 detections), the US (212 detections), Ireland (128 detections) and Spain (103 detections). Combined, these 6 embarkation points account for 85.9 per cent of the number of cocaine detections at the Australian border in 2015–16.

By weight, the US (315.6 kilograms), Panama (75.4 kilograms) and Brazil (26.8 kilograms) were the most significant embarkation points for cocaine detected at the Australian border this reporting period. Combined, these 3 embarkation points account for 63.6 per cent of the weight of cocaine detected at the Australian border in 2015–16 (see Figure 49).



FIGURE 49: Key source countries and embarkation points for cocaine detections, by weight, at the Australian border, 2015–16



DRUG PROFILING

The Australian Federal Police (AFP) Forensic Drug Intelligence (FDI) team operates a forensic drug profiling capability through the National Measurement Institute (NMI) which is used to identify regions of origin and manufacturing trends for samples submitted from seizures made at the Australian border. The capability also allows for comparisons within and between seizures to identify distinct batches of drugs, the origin of drugs, or to demonstrate links between groups involved in illicit drug manufacture or trafficking. Only certain drug types are examined and not every seizure of drugs is analysed or profiled. The following data relate to seizures investigated by the AFP between 2007 and June 2016, and from which samples were submitted to the NMI for routine analysis and profiling.³

During 2015, Colombia was the dominant growing region of cocaine seized by the AFP, with a significant shift away from Peruvian cocaine seizures of 2011–14. Data for Jan–Jun 2016 indicates a continuation of the trend away from Peruvian cocaine (see Tables 21 and 22).

³ Profiling data relate to seizures investigated by the AFP between 2007 to June 2016, and from which samples were submitted to the NMI for routine analysis and profiling. Improvements in information technology have brought about changes to how the data is collated and presented, and for this reason, care should be taken in comparing figures before 2010 to more recent data. For all reporting years, the data represents a snapshot across the applicable reporting period. These figures cannot reflect seizures that have not been submitted for forensic examination due to prioritisation of law enforcement resources or those that have passed through the border undetected. Certain seizures/samples, such as those containing swabs or trace material, have been omitted from the analysis as they are not amenable to chemical profiling. It is difficult to extrapolate the impact of any observed border trends on drugs reaching consumers i.e. street level seizures in Australia but samples from selected state and territory jurisdictions are submitted for chemical profiling as part of the Enhanced National Intelligence Picture on Illicit Drugs (ENIPID) project.



TABLE 21: Geographical origin of coca leaf used to produce cocaine as a proportion of analysed AFP border seizures, 2007–June 2016 (Source: Australian Federal Police, Forensic Drug Intelligence)

Year	Colombian %	Peruvian %	Bolivian %	Mixed %	Unclassified %
Jan–Jun 2016	75.0	7.1	–	5.4	12.5
2015	53.6	13.1	2.4	5.9	25.0
2014	47.9	43.8	1.4	6.9	–
2013	64.1	28.2	–	5.1	2.6
2012	55.3	29.1	–	5.9	9.7
2011	55.9	35.3	–	5.9	2.9
2010	55.2	30.2	1.0	6.3	7.3
2009	44.9	32.7	2.0	10.2	10.2
2008	67.3	28.6	–	–	4.1
2007	61.7	23.3	–	9.9	3.4

TABLE 22: Geographical origin of coca leaf used to produce cocaine as a proportion of total bulk weight of analysed AFP border seizures, 2007–June 2016 (Source: Australian Federal Police, Forensic Drug Intelligence)

Year	Colombian %	Peruvian %	Bolivian %	Mixed %	Unclassified %
Jan–Jun 2016	59.5	11.6	–	19.9	9.0
2015	49.9	8.9	0.1	34.7	6.4
2014	67.2	31.8	0.9	0.1	–
2013	9.9	90.0	–	–	0.1
2012	23.7	74.3	–	1.3	0.7
2011	51.3	44.2	–	4.4	0.1
2010	96.3	3.2	<0.1	–	0.4
2009	91.3	6.8	<0.1	–	1.9
2008	95.1	4.7	–	–	0.2
2007	86.3	10.6	0.4	–	2.7

The Enhanced National Intelligence Picture on Illicit Drugs (ENIPID) project extends this profiling to include state and territory seizures involving heroin, methylamphetamine, MDMA and cocaine. This enables detection of similarities between supply routes into different jurisdictions; links between different criminal groups; as well as comparison of trends between jurisdictions, including importations seized and profiled from the border.

The data attained from profiling jurisdictional seizures of cocaine indicate that there is a shift away from Peruvian cocaine and a shift back to Colombian cocaine. Mirroring border data, ENIPID data for 2015 shows a decrease in the prevalence of Peruvian cocaine and this has continued into the first half of 2016 (see Tables 23 and 24).





TABLE 23: Geographical origin of cocaine ENIPID samples as a proportion of analysed jurisdictional samples, 2014–June 2016 (Source: Australian Federal Police, Forensic Drug Intelligence)

Year	Jurisdiction	Geographical Origin				Total
		Colombian %	Peruvian %	Bolivian %	Mixed/ Unclassified %	
Jan–Jun 2016	ACT	5.5	–	–	–	5.5
	NSW	75.0	–	–	16.7	91.7
	VIC	2.8	–	–	–	2.8
Total		83.3	–	–	16.7	100.0
2015	ACT	1.1	–	–	–	1.1
	NSW	38.1	16.5	–	15.9	70.5
	NT	0.6	–	–	–	0.6
	SA	2.8	–	–	–	2.8
	VIC	2.8	–	–	3.4	6.2
	WA	5.1	8.0	–	5.7	18.8
Total		50.5	24.5	–	25.0	100.0
2014	NSW	10.0	26.7	–	3.3	40.0
	NT	1.7	1.7	–	0.0	3.3
	QLD	1.7	3.3	–	0.0	5.0
	VIC	10.0	0.0	–	0.0	10.0
	WA	30.0	6.7	–	5.0	41.7
Total		53.3	38.3	–	8.3	100.0

Note: Due to a lack of available data, some samples were classified based on the sample collection date in place of the sample seizure date.

TABLE 24: Geographical origin of cocaine ENIPID samples as a proportion of analysed jurisdictional cases, 2014–June 2016 (Source: Australian Federal Police, Forensic Drug Intelligence)

Year	Jurisdiction	Geographical Origin				Total
		Colombian %	Peruvian %	Bolivian %	Mixed/ Unclassified %	
Jan–Jun 2016	ACT	3.8	–	–	–	–
	NSW	73.2	–	–	19.2	92.4
	VIC	3.8	–	–	–	–
Total		80.8	–	–	19.2	100.0
2015	ACT	1.9	–	–	–	–
	NSW	38.0	14.8	–	20.4	73.2
	NT	0.9	–	–	–	0.9
	SA	2.8	–	–	–	2.8
	VIC	4.6	–	–	4.6	9.2
	WA	2.8	0.9	–	8.3	12.0
Total		51.0	15.7	–	33.3	100.0
2014	NSW	13.5	13.5	–	5.4	32.4
	NT	2.7	2.7	–	0.0	5.4
	QLD	2.7	5.4	–	0.0	8.1
	VIC	16.2	0.0	–	0.0	16.2
	WA	24.3	2.7	–	10.8	37.8
Total		59.5	24.3	–	16.2	100.0

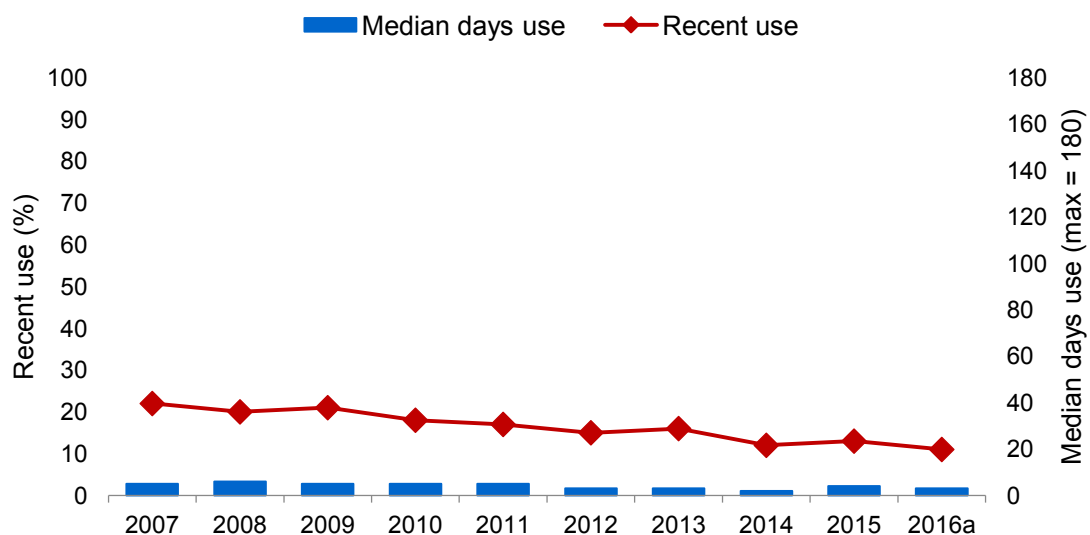
Note: Due to a lack of available data, some samples were classified based on the sample collection date in place of the sample seizure date.

DOMESTIC MARKET INDICATORS

According to the 2013 National Drug Strategy Household Survey (NDSHS), the proportion of the Australian population aged 14 years or older who reported using cocaine at least once in their lifetime increased, from 7.3 per cent in 2010 to 8.1 per cent in 2013. In the same survey, the proportion reporting recent⁴ cocaine use remained stable at 2.1 per cent (AIHW 2014).

In a 2015 national study of regular injecting drug users, the proportion of respondents reporting the recent⁵ use of cocaine increased, from 12.0 per cent in 2014 to 13.0 per cent in 2015. Within this regular drug injecting population, the reported median days of cocaine use in the six months preceding interview increased, from 2 days in 2014 to 4 days in 2015. Early findings from the 2016 study indicate the proportion of respondents reporting recent cocaine use has decreased to 11.0 per cent, with the reported median days of cocaine use decreasing to 3 days (see Figure 50; Stafford & Breen 2016; Stafford et al 2016).

FIGURE 50: Proportion of a regular injecting drug user population reporting recent cocaine use and median days of use, 2007 to 2016 (Source: National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre)



a. Reported figures for 2016 are preliminary.

In the same 2015 study, the proportion of respondents reporting cocaine as their drug of choice remained stable at 1.0 per cent. Early findings from the 2016 study indicate this remains unchanged at 1.0 per cent (Stafford & Breen 2016; Stafford et al 2016).

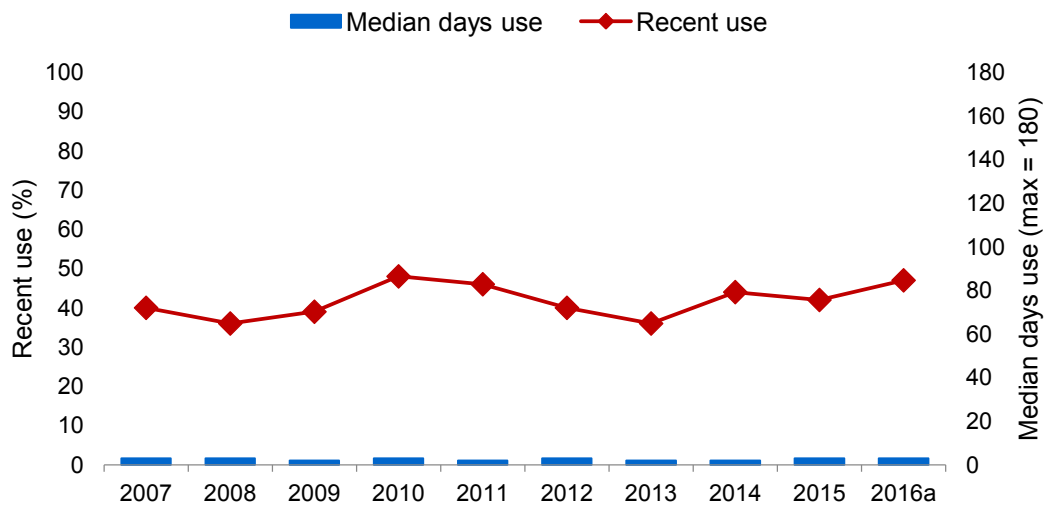
In a 2015 national study of regular ecstasy users, the proportion of respondents reporting the recent use of cocaine decreased, from 44.0 per cent in 2014 to 42.0 per cent in 2015. Early findings from the 2016 study indicate this has increased to 47.0 per cent. Within this regular ecstasy user population, the reported median days of cocaine use in the six months preceding interview in 2015 was 3 days, an increase from the 2 days reported in 2014. Early findings from the 2016 study indicate this has remained stable at 2 days (see Figure 51; Sindicich et al 2016; Stafford et al 2016).

⁴ In the NDSHS, recent use refers to reported use in the 12 months preceding interview.

⁵ In both the Illicit Drug Reporting System (IDRS) and Ecstasy and Related Drugs Reporting System (EDRS), recent use refers to reported use in the six months preceding interview.



FIGURE 51: Proportion of a regular ecstasy drug user population reporting recent cocaine use and median days of use, 2007 to 2016 (Source: National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre)



a. Reported figures for 2016 are preliminary.

In the same 2015 study, the proportion of respondents reporting cocaine as their drug of choice remained stable at 8.0 per cent. Early findings from the 2016 study indicate this remains unchanged at 8.0 per cent (Sindicich et al 2016; Stafford et al 2016).

The Drug Use Monitoring in Australia (DUMA) program, which examines drug use and offending patterns among police detainees in Australia, comprises an interviewer-assisted self-report survey and the voluntary provision of a urine sample, which is subjected to urinalysis to detect licit and illicit drug use.⁶ Cocaine continues to be one of the least commonly detected drugs among detainees. The proportion of detainees testing positive via urinalysis⁷ for cocaine increased, from 0.8 per cent in 2014–15 to 0.9 per cent in 2015–16. Self-reported recent use⁸ of cocaine increased from 14.2 per cent in 2014–15 to 16.0 per cent in 2015–16 (see Figure 52).

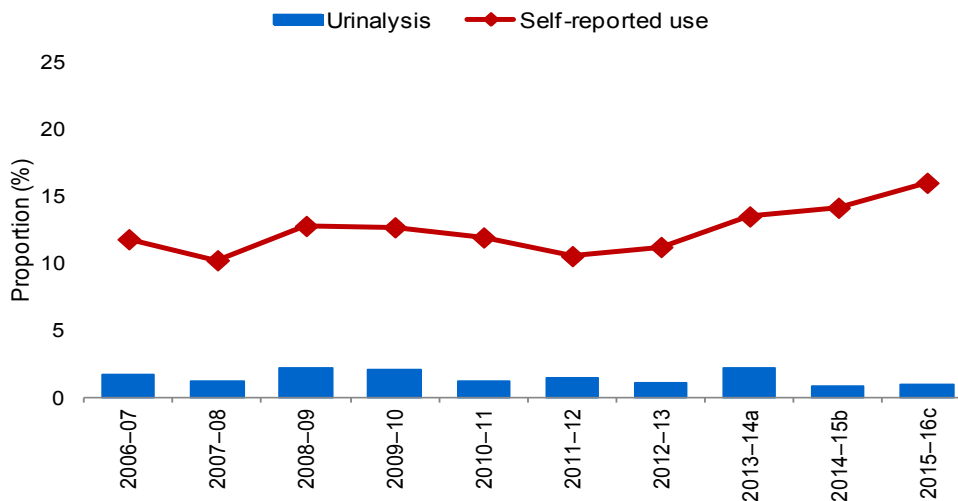
6 Detainees can participate in the survey without providing a urine sample. Cases with missing data are excluded from the relevant analysis.

7 Cocaine and its metabolite can be detected in urine for 24 to 36 hours after administration.

8 Recent use in the DUMA program refers to self-reported use in the 12 months prior to arrest.



FIGURE 52: National proportion of detainees testing positive for cocaine compared with self-reported recent use, 2006–07 to 2015–16 (Source: Australian Institute of Criminology)



- a. Urine was collected in the third and fourth quarter of 2013 and the first quarter of 2014.
- b. Urine was collected in the third quarter of 2014 and the first and second quarter of 2015.
- c. Urine was collected in the third quarter of 2015 and the first and second quarter of 2016.

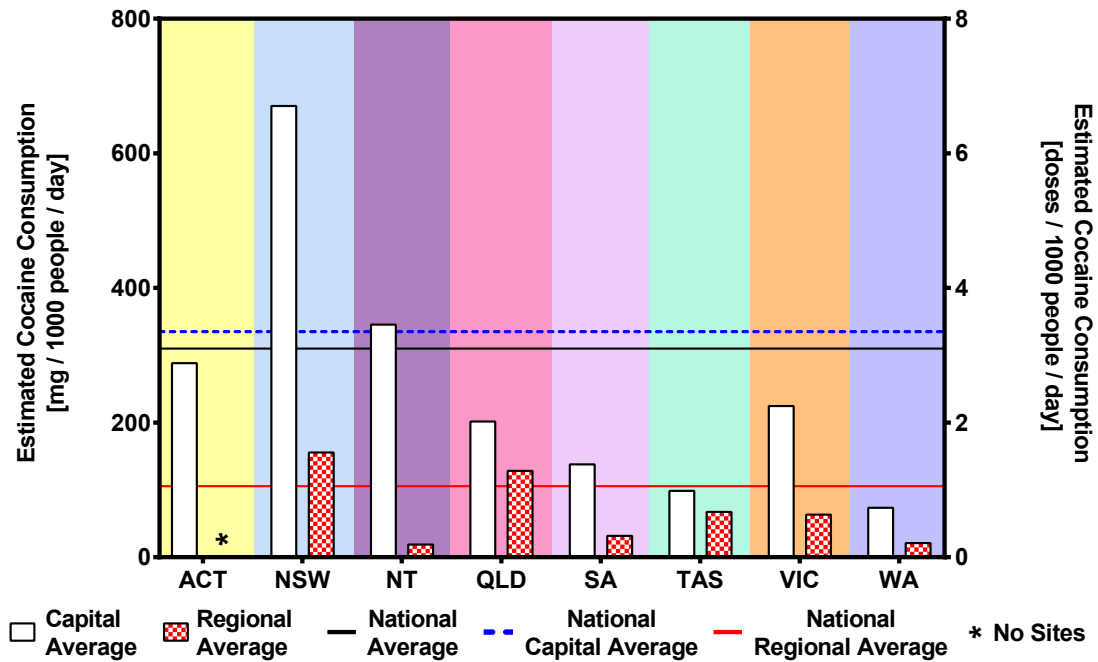
Wastewater analysis has become the standard for measuring population-scale consumption of a range of different chemical compounds. The underlying concepts involved in wastewater analysis are well established in Australia and have been applied to a wide range of licit and illicit drugs. Estimates of drug consumption in a population can be back-calculated from measured concentrations of drug metabolites (excreted into the sewer system after consumption) in wastewater samples. Following on from recommendations from the National Ice Taskforce and National Ice Action Strategy, the Commonwealth Minister for Justice approved \$3.6 million over three years from the Commonwealth Confiscated Assets Account for the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) to develop a national program to monitor drug consumption through wastewater analysis. This program of sampling and analysis is known as the National Wastewater Drug Monitoring Program (NWDMP).⁹

Wastewater analysis conducted in the latter half of 2016 shows on average, cocaine consumption in Australia was noticeably lower than methylamphetamine levels. Cocaine consumption was consistently higher in capital city sites compared to regional sites, with the Northern Territory having the lowest regional consumption of all participating regions. Cocaine consumption in capital city sites in New South Wales dominated the national landscape, being almost double the next highest region in terms of doses consumed per day. The Australian Capital Territory and the capital Northern Territory site showed substantially higher cocaine consumption compared to other states, with Western Australia well below the average (see Figure 53).

⁹ The public NWDMP reports are available on the ACIC website. See <https://www.acic.gov.au/sites/g/files/net1491/f/national_wastewater_drug_monitoring_program_report_1_0.pdf?v=1490333695>.



FIGURE 53: Estimated average consumption of cocaine for capital city sites and regional sites by state/territory (Source: National Wastewater Drug Monitoring Program)



PRICE

Nationally, the price for 1 gram of cocaine ranged between \$50 and \$1 000 in 2015–16, compared with a price range between \$250 and \$900 in 2014–15. Nationally, the price of 1 kilogram of cocaine ranged between \$185 000 and \$300 000 in 2015–16, compared with a price range between \$185 000 and \$240 000 in 2014–15.

PURITY

Figure 54 illustrates the annual median purity of analysed cocaine samples over the last decade. Since 2006–07, the annual median purity of cocaine has ranged between 9.5 per cent and 64.5 per cent. In 2015–16, the annual median purity of cocaine ranged from 31.5 per cent in the Australian Capital Territory to 62.2 per cent in South Australia. This reporting period Victoria, Queensland and South Australia reported an increase in the annual median purity of cocaine, while New South Wales and Western Australia reported a decrease.



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FIGURE 54: Annual median purity of cocaine samples, 2006–07 to 2015–16

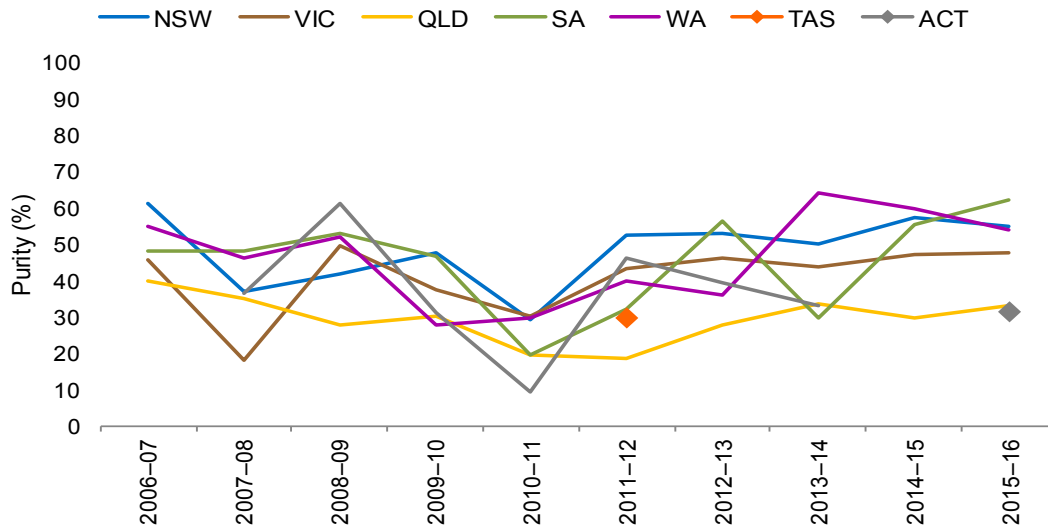
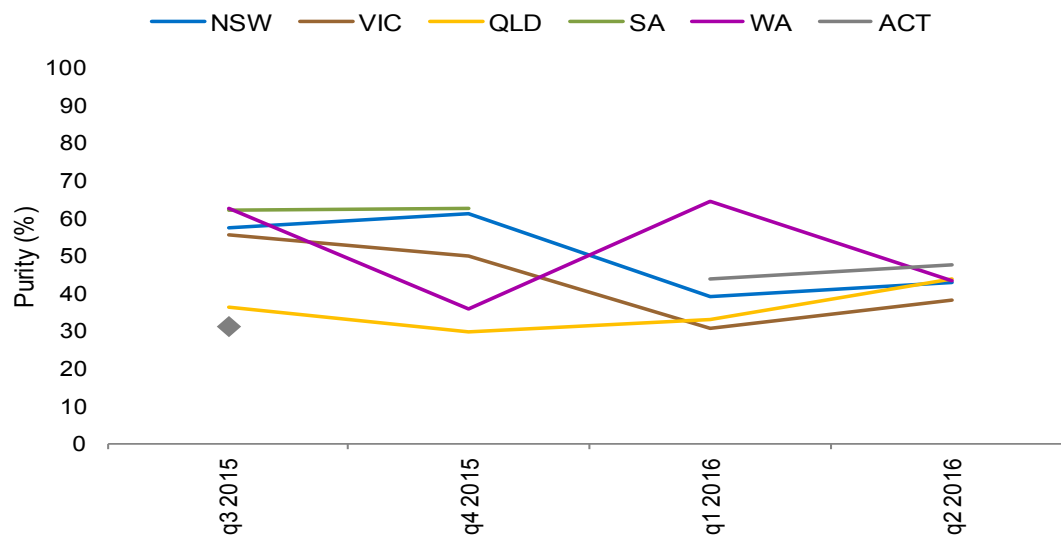


Figure 55 illustrates the median purity of analysed cocaine samples on a quarterly basis in 2015–16. This reporting period the quarterly median purity of cocaine ranged between 29.5 per cent in Queensland in the fourth quarter of 2015 and 64.5 per cent in Western Australia in the first quarter of 2016. Of note, Victoria reported an analysed cocaine sample with a purity of 100.0 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2015.

FIGURE 55: Quarterly median purity of cocaine samples, 2015–16



AVAILABILITY

In a 2015 national study of regular injecting drug users, of the respondents able to comment in the availability of cocaine, 74.0 per cent reported cocaine as easy or very easy to obtain, an increase from 72.0 per cent reported in 2014. Early finding from the 2016 study indicate that this has decreased to 61.0 per cent (Stafford & Breen 2016; Stafford et al 2016).

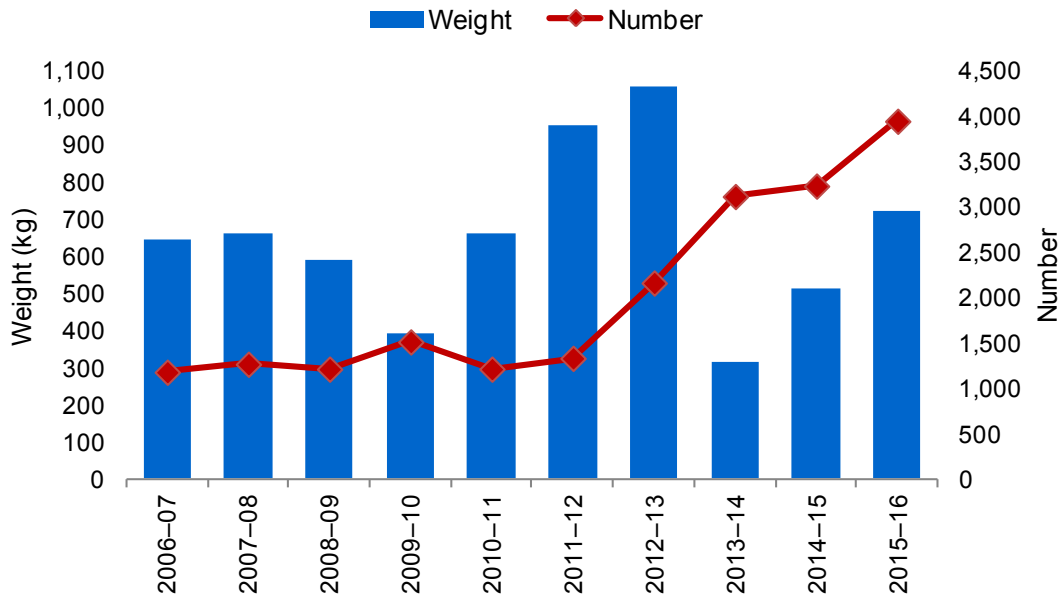
In a 2015 national study of regular ecstasy users, of the respondents able to comment on the availability of cocaine, 61.0 per cent reported cocaine as easy or very easy to obtain, an increase from 57.0 per cent in 2014. Early findings from the 2016 study indicate this has decreased to 55.0 per cent (Sindicich et al, 2016; Stafford et al 2016).



SEIZURES AND ARRESTS

The number of national cocaine seizures increased 22.1 per cent this reporting period, from 3 236 in 2014–15 to a record 3 951 in 2015–16. The weight of cocaine seized nationally increased 40.3 per cent this reporting period, from 514.4 kilograms in 2014–15 to 721.6 kilograms in 2015–16, the third highest weight reported in the last decade (see Figure 56).

FIGURE 56: National cocaine seizures, by number and weight, 2006–07 to 2015–16



The Australian Capital Territory reported the greatest percentage increase (518.2 per cent) in the number of cocaine seizures in 2015–16, while Victoria reported the greatest percentage increase in the weight of cocaine seized (277.9 per cent). New South Wales continues to account for the greatest proportion of both the number and weight of national cocaine seizures, accounting for 68.7 per cent of the number and 71.2 per cent of the weight of cocaine seized in 2015–16 (see Table 25).

TABLE 25: Number, weight and percentage change of national cocaine seizures, 2014–15 and 2015–16

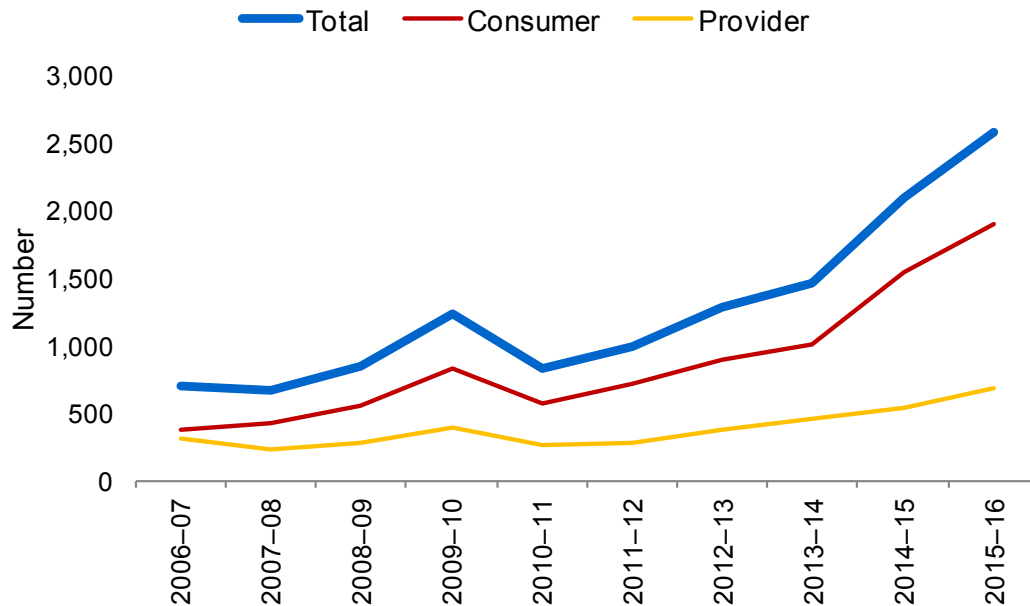
State/Territory ^a	Number			Weight (grams)		
	2014–15	2015–16	% change	2014–15	2015–16	% change
New South Wales	2 017	2 716	34.7	417 207	513 689	23.1
Victoria	434	549	26.5	15 627	59 055	277.9
Queensland	415	336	-19.0	60 400	132 599	119.5
South Australia	52	22	-57.7	1 717	1 341	-21.9
Western Australia	260	230	-11.5	18 754	14 205	-24.3
Tasmania	29	12	-58.6	281	30	-89.3
Northern Territory	18	18	0.0	303	458	51.2
Australian Capital Territory	11	68	518.2	113	321	184.1
Total	3 236	3 951	22.1	514 402	721 698	40.3

a. Includes seizures by state and territory police and Australian Federal Police for which a valid seizure weight was recorded.



The number of national cocaine arrests increased 23.9 per cent this reporting period, from 2 092 in 2014–15, to a record 2 592 in 2015–16. Consumer arrests continue to account for the greatest proportion of arrests, comprising 73.5 per cent of national cocaine arrests in 2015–16 (see Figure 57). However, Western Australia reported more cocaine provider arrests than consumer arrests in 2015–16.

FIGURE 57: Number of national cocaine arrests, 2006–07 to 2015–16



All states and territories reported increases in the number of cocaine arrests in 2015–16. The Northern Territory reported the greatest percentage increase in cocaine arrests this reporting period (600.0 per cent). New South Wales continues to account for the greatest proportion of national cocaine arrests, accounting for 50.2 per cent in 2015–16 (see Table 26).

TABLE 26: Number and percentage change of national cocaine arrests, 2014–15 and 2015–16

State/Territory ^a	Arrests		
	2014–15	2015–16	% change
New South Wales	1 123	1 301	15.9
Victoria	375	455	21.3
Queensland	393	458	16.5
South Australiab	32	114	256.3
Western Australia	142	197	38.7
Tasmania	6	9	50.0
Northern Territory	2	14	600.0
Australian Capital Territory	19	44	131.6
Total	2 092	2 592	23.9

- a. The arrest data for each state and territory include Australian Federal Police data.
- b. For the first time, offender data provided by South Australia Police in 2015–16 included data for offenders participating in its Drug Diversion Program (excluding diversion records not related to a drug seizure).



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NATIONAL IMPACT

Colombia continues to account for the greatest proportion of global cocaine production. Domestically, the predominance of cocaine originating in Colombia is reflected in profiling data of both cocaine seized at the Australian border and cocaine analysed as part of the ENIPID project in 2015 and the first six months of 2016.

Surveys of a regular injecting drug user population indicate that reported recent cocaine use remains low and relatively stable. While surveys of regular ecstasy user and police detainee populations indicate increases in the proportion of respondents reporting recent cocaine use, the reported median days of use within the regular ecstasy user population remained low and stable in 2016, with the proportion of detainees testing positive to cocaine in 2015–16 also low and stable.

Wastewater analysis conducted in the latter half of 2016 as part of the NWDMP measured the presence of 13 substances across 51 sites nationally. On average, cocaine consumption in Australia was noticeably lower than methylamphetamine levels, with cocaine consumption consistently higher in capital city sites compared to regional sites.

Both the number and weight of cocaine detections at the Australian border increased this reporting period. The number of cocaine detections increased from 1 781 in 2014–15 to a record 2 777 in 2015–16. The weight of cocaine detected increased from 368.9 kilograms in 2014–15 to 657.1 kilograms in 2015–16. The international mail stream was the primary importation method by both number and weight for detections of cocaine at the Australian border in 2015–16. The number of embarkation points identified for cocaine detections at the Australian border increased this reporting period, from 47 in 2014–15 to 54 in 2015–16. The UK was the prominent embarkation point by number for cocaine detections in 2015–16, while the US was the prominent embarkation point by weight.

The number of national cocaine seizures increased to a record 3 951 in 2015–16. The weight of cocaine seized nationally increased for the second consecutive reporting period to 721.6 kilograms in 2015–16, the third highest weight reported in the last decade. The number of national cocaine arrests continued to increase this reporting period, with the 2 592 arrests in 2015–16 the highest number on record.



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