

HEROIN

➤ KEY POINTS

- Global opium cultivation and heroin production increased between 2016 and 2017, with increases in the number and weight of heroin seized globally. Afghanistan remains the largest cultivator of opium in the world.
 - Drug profiling of both border and domestic seizures indicates that the vast majority of heroin seized in Australia originated in South-East Asia; however, there is an increase in the proportion of domestic seizures originating from South-West Asia.
- Overall, indicators of heroin supply and demand in Australia suggest the market remains small and relatively stable.
 - The number of heroin detections at the Australian border increased in 2017–18, while the weight detected decreased.
 - Both the number and weight of heroin seized nationally increased in 2017–18, with the number of seizures the second highest on record.
 - The number of national heroin and other opioid arrests increased in 2017–18 and is the second highest recorded in the last decade.
 - Using data from the National Wastewater Drug Monitoring Program, the ACIC estimates that 750 kilograms of heroin is consumed in Australia each year, with the estimated weight of heroin consumed nationally decreasing from the first to the second year of the program.



MAIN FORMS

Heroin (diacetylmorphine or diamorphine) is a derivative of morphine—an alkaloid contained in raw opium.

- Illicit cultivation of opium occurs on a large scale in three primary regions:
 - South-West Asia, known as the ‘Golden Crescent’, which encompasses large areas of Afghanistan and parts of Pakistan.
 - South-East Asia, known as the ‘Golden Triangle’, which encompasses the border regions of Myanmar, Thailand and Laos.
 - Latin America, primarily Mexico and Colombia.
- Of the four main ‘grades’ of heroin, grades 1 and 2 refer to heroin base, not commonly found in Australia. Grade 3 heroin is more refined than heroin base and less granular. Unsuitable for injection, it is most commonly heated and the vapours inhaled. Grade 4 powdered heroin is the most common grade used in developed countries. It is the purest form and is suitable for injection.
- In Australia, heroin is most commonly found either as a powder or a hard granular material, usually white or off-white in colour (though colour is not a reliable indicator of origin or purity).
- The most common route of administration for heroin is injection, followed by snorting, inhalation (through smoking), swallowing or as an additive to cannabis or tobacco (ADF 2017; EMCDDA 2017; UNODC 2016).

INTERNATIONAL TRENDS

One of the key drivers affecting international heroin supply in 2017 was the significant expansion in the area under opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan, the world’s largest opium and heroin producer. The total area of opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan increased over 60 per cent, from an estimated 201,000 hectares in 2016 to 328,000 hectares in 2017. While the total area under cultivation decreased 20.0 per cent in 2018 (to 263,000 hectares), it is the second largest area reported since 1994 when the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) commenced systematic opium poppy monitoring and recording. Owing to decreases in both the area under poppy cultivation and opium yield per hectare, Afghanistan’s total estimated potential production of opium in 2018 was 6,400 tonnes—a 28.9 per cent decrease from the 9,000 tonnes reported in 2017. Drought conditions affecting Afghanistan’s Northern region and parts of the Western region contributed to the decrease in opium cultivation in 2018 (UNODC 2018a).

The area under opium cultivation in Myanmar has continued to decrease since 2014. The total area under opium poppy cultivation in Myanmar decreased from 41,000 hectares in 2017 to 37,300 hectares in 2018. Due to increases in average opium yield, the estimated production of opium in 2018 was 520 tonnes—a decrease from the 550 tonnes reported in 2017 (UNODC 2018b).





Preliminary 2017 figures from the 2018 World Drug Report indicate that global opium cultivation increased, from 204,800 hectares in 2016 to 418,000 hectares in 2017. Global production of opium increased, from 6,380 tonnes in 2016 to 10,500 tonnes in 2017. The UNODC estimates that between 700 and 1,050 tonnes of heroin was produced globally in 2017 compared to 448 tonnes in 2016 (UNODC 2018c).

According to the 2018 World Drug Report, 658 tonnes of opium and a record 91 tonnes of heroin were seized globally in 2016. By comparison, 587 tonnes of opium and 80 tonnes of heroin were seized in 2015. Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran accounted for the greatest proportion of the weight of opium seized globally in 2016. Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran were also the predominant countries for the weight of heroin seized globally in 2016, followed by China, the United States and Turkey (UNODC 2018c; UNODC 2017).

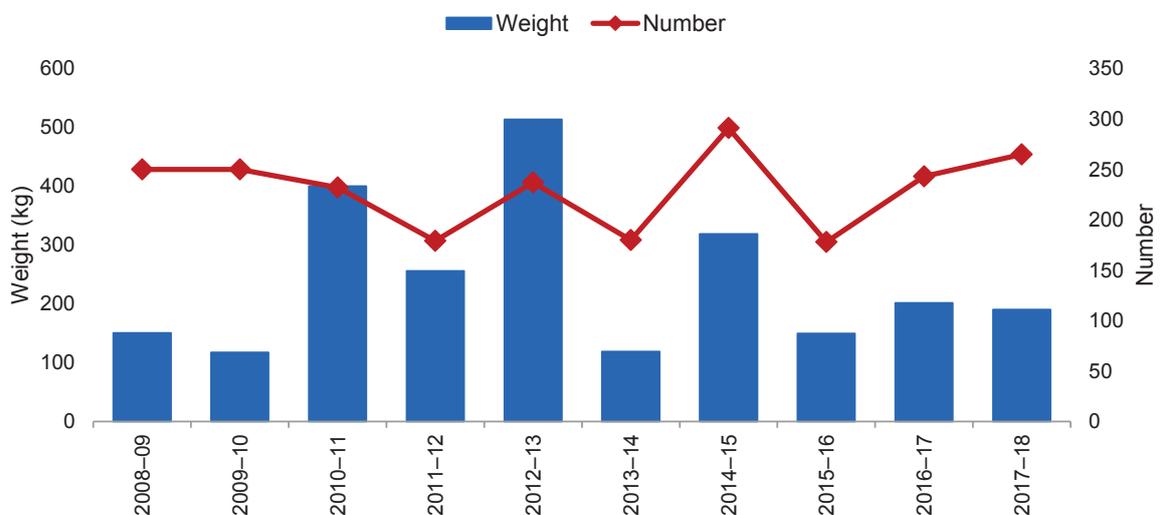
According to the World Customs Organization (WCO), heroin accounts for the greatest proportion of the number and weight of global opiates seizures. In 2017, both the number and weight of heroin seized globally increased. The number of heroin seizures reported by WCO agencies increased to 1,308 in 2017, with the weight seized increasing to 9,289 kilograms (WCO 2018).

DOMESTIC TRENDS

AUSTRALIAN BORDER SITUATION

The number of heroin detections at the Australian border increased 9.0 per cent this reporting period, from 243 in 2016–17 to 265 in 2017–18. The weight of heroin detected decreased 5.7 per cent this reporting period, from 201.6 kilograms in 2016–17 to 190.1 kilograms in 2017–18 (see Figure 14). In 2017–18, 52 detections (or 19.6 per cent), weighed one kilogram or more. With a combined weight of 170.6 kilograms, these 52 detections account for 89.7 per cent of the weight of heroin detected in 2017–18.⁵⁹

FIGURE 14: Number and weight of heroin detections at the Australian border, 2008–09 to 2017–18 (Source: Department of Home Affairs)



⁵⁹ See Appendix 1 for significant border detections of heroin in 2017–18.

IMPORTATION METHODS

In 2017–18, detections of heroin at the Australian border occurred in the air cargo, air passenger/crew and international mail streams. By number, the international mail stream accounted for the greatest proportion of detections (84.9 per cent), followed by air cargo (14.3 per cent) and air passenger/crew (0.8 per cent). By weight, international mail also accounted for the greatest proportion of heroin border detections (68.0 per cent), followed by air cargo (29.9 per cent) and air passenger/crew (2.1 per cent).⁶⁰

EMBARKATION POINTS

In 2017–18, 24 countries were identified as embarkation points for heroin detected at the Australian border, compared to 18 countries in 2016–17. By weight, Thailand was the primary embarkation point for heroin in 2017–18. Other key embarkation points by weight this reporting period include Laos, Malaysia, Cambodia, Vietnam, Philippines, Singapore, Iraq, United Arab Emirates and South Africa.

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 enables the identification of the regions of origin and manufacturing trends for samples of heroin 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. The following data relate to seizures investigated by the AFP between 2005 and June 2018, from which samples were submitted to the NMI for routine analysis and profiling.⁶¹

In contrast to Europe, where heroin mostly originates from South-West Asia, the vast majority of heroin seized in Australia originates from South-East Asia (see Tables 7 and 8).

- Heroin originating from South-East Asia continues to dominate AFP seizures.
- In 2017, samples from 17 seizures were sent to NMI for analysis and chemical profiling, accounting for a total bulk weight of 141.8 kilograms.
- Although an increase from 2016, overall the amount of heroin seizures made by the AFP has significantly decreased over the last few years. Data from the first six months of 2018 indicates a continuation of this decline.
- Only one heroin seizure of South-West Asian origin was identified in 2017. It was seized in December 2017 and was the first heroin seizure from South-West Asia identified since February 2016.

60 Figures for importation methods of heroin detections in 2017–18 will be available on the Crime Statistics Australia website. See <<http://crimestats.aic.gov.au/IDDR/>>.

61 Profiling data relate to seizures investigated by the AFP between 2005 to June 2018, and from which samples were submitted to the National Measurement Institute (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 represent 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. 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.



- In the first six months of 2018 only two seizures with a combined bulk weight of 17.7 kilograms were viable for chemical profiling. Both seizures were profiled to be of South-East Asian origin.

TABLE 7: Geographical origin of heroin samples as a proportion of analysed AFP border seizures, 2008–June 2018⁶² (Source: Australian Federal Police, Forensic Drug Intelligence)

Year	South-East Asia %	South-West Asia %	South America %	Unclassified %	South-East Asia and Unclassified %	South-West Asia and Unclassified %
Jan–Jun 2018	100.0	–	–	–	–	–
2017	94.1	5.9	–	–	–	–
2016	95.2	4.8	–	–	–	–
2015	77.8	18.5	–	3.7	–	–
2014	52.2	37.0	–	2.2	4.3	–
2013	74.6	18.2	5.5	–	1.8	–
2012	70.7	25.9	–	3.4	–	–
2011	49.0	51.0	–	–	–	–
2010	63.8	27.5	–	5.8	–	2.9
2009	53.9	42.6	–	3.4	–	–
2008	44.1	44.1	–	11.8	–	–

TABLE 8: Geographical origin of heroin samples as a proportion of total bulk weight of analysed AFP border seizures, 2005–June 2018⁶² (Source: Australian Federal Police, Forensic Drug Intelligence)

Year	South-East Asia %	South-West Asia %	South America %	Unclassified %	South-East Asia and Unclassified %	South-West Asia and Unclassified %
Jan–Jun 2018	100.0	–	–	–	–	–
2017	99.9	0.1	–	–	–	–
2016	100.0	<0.1	–	–	–	–
2015	97.4	1.8	–	0.8	–	–
2014	89.9	7.8	–	<0.01	0.2	–
2013	84.3	8.9	4.3	–	2.5	–
2012	98.4	1.3	–	0.3	–	–
2011	39.4	60.6	–	–	–	–
2010	93.3	5.8	–	0.9	–	–
2009	48.2	40.9	–	10.9	–	–
2008	26.0	66.3	–	7.7	–	–
2007	47.9	50.6	–	1.5	–	–
2006	70.1	27.4	–	2.7	–	–
2005	78.9	18.0	–	3.1	–	–

⁶² This data may also include seizures destined for Australia which occurred offshore.



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

Heroin samples submitted to the ENIPID project in 2017 continue to reflect the dominance of heroin of South-East Asian origin in the Australian market (see Appendix 2, Tables 3 and 4). However, contrary to analysed AFP border seizure data, a considerable increase in the proportion of heroin of South-West Asian origin was observed in state and territory samples. An increase in the proportion of 'Mixed/Unclassified' samples when compared to previous reporting periods was also noted in 2017.⁶³

DOMESTIC MARKET INDICATORS

No single data set provides a comprehensive picture of illicit drugs, or the Australian illicit drug market. Each has benefits and limitations, and it is only through the layering of multiple data that we are able to enhance our understanding of the extent of the supply and demand trends in Australia's illicit drug markets.

The National Drug Strategy Household Survey (NDSHS) collects self-report information on alcohol, tobacco and illicit drug use among the general population and also surveys people's attitudes and perceptions in relation to these. Conducted approximately every three years, the related report presents estimates derived from survey responses weighted to the appropriate Australian population. According to the 2016 NDSHS:

- The proportion of the Australian population aged 14 years or older who reported having used heroin at least once in their lifetime increased, from 1.2 per cent in 2013 to 1.3 per cent in 2016.
- The proportion of the Australian population aged 14 years or older who reported having recently⁶⁴ used heroin increased, from 0.1 per cent in 2013 to 0.2 per cent in 2016 (AIHW 2017).

The National Wastewater Drug Monitoring Program (NWDMP) collects wastewater samples every two months in capital city sites and every four months in regional sites. Aimed at acquiring data on the population-scale use of substances causing potential harm, the program provides a measure of the consumption of 12 illicit and licit drugs.⁶⁵ According to data from the NWDMP:

- Heroin consumption remains low in comparison to other illicit drugs monitored by the program, with heroin consumption higher in capital city sites than regional sites.
- The population-weighted average consumption of heroin decreased in both capital city and regional sites when comparing data from August 2017 and August 2018.

63 Due to a lack of seizure data in 2018, Tables 3 and 4 of Appendix 2 may not provide an accurate representation of the overall trend.

64 In the NDSHS, recent use refers to reported use in the previous 12 months.

65 The public NWDMP reports are available on the ACIC website. See <<https://www.acic.gov.au/publications/intelligence-products-national-wastewater-drug-monitoring-program-report>>.



- Using data from the NWDMP, the ACIC estimates that 750 kilograms of heroin is consumed in Australia each year, with the weight of heroin consumed nationally decreasing from the first to the second year of the program (ACIC 2019).

The below data reflect drug use within sentinel groups. As such, they are not representative of all people who use drugs, or drug use in the general population. However, they provide valuable insight into patterns of drug use and market trends and can assist in the identification of emerging issues that require further monitoring.

The Illicit Drug Reporting System (IDRS) collects self-report information on drug use and related harms annually from individuals in Australian capital cities who regularly inject drugs. According to the national study of injecting drug users:

- The proportion of respondents reporting heroin as their drug of choice decreased, from 46.0 per cent in 2017 to 41.0 per cent in 2018.
- While heroin remains the most commonly reported drug of choice within this population, in 2018 methylamphetamine was reported as the drug injected most often in the last month.
- The proportion of respondents reporting the recent use⁶⁶ of heroin decreased, from 57.0 per cent in 2017 to 54.0 per cent in 2018.
- The reported median number of days of heroin use in the six months preceding interview increased, from 72 days in 2017 to 74 days in 2018⁶⁷ (Peacock et al. 2018a).

The Ecstasy and Related Drugs Reporting System (EDRS) collects self-report information on drug use and related harms annually from individuals in Australian capital cities who regularly use ecstasy and other stimulants. According to the national study of regular ecstasy users:

- The proportion of respondents reporting the recent use of heroin increased, from 2.0 per cent in 2017 to 3.0 per cent in 2018.
- The reported median number of days of heroin use in the six months preceding interview increased, from 2 days in 2017 to 3 days in 2018⁶⁸ (Peacock et al. 2018b).

The Australian Needle and Syringe Program Survey (ANSPS) collects self-report information and capillary blood samples⁶⁹ annually to monitor blood borne viral infections and associated risk behaviour among individuals who inject drugs. According to the ANSPS National Data Report 2013–17:

- Methylamphetamine (41.0 per cent) continued to exceed heroin as the most commonly reported drug last injected in 2017.
- Nationally, the proportion of respondents reporting heroin as the drug last injected increased, from 28.0 per cent in 2016 to 30.0 per cent in 2017.
- The proportion of respondents reporting heroin as the drug last injected varies between the states and territories, ranging between 3.0 per cent in Tasmania and 62.0 per cent in Victoria in 2017 (Heard et al. 2018).

66 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.

67 A figure for this data will be available on the Crime Statistics Australia website. See <<http://crimestats.aic.gov.au/IDDR/>>.

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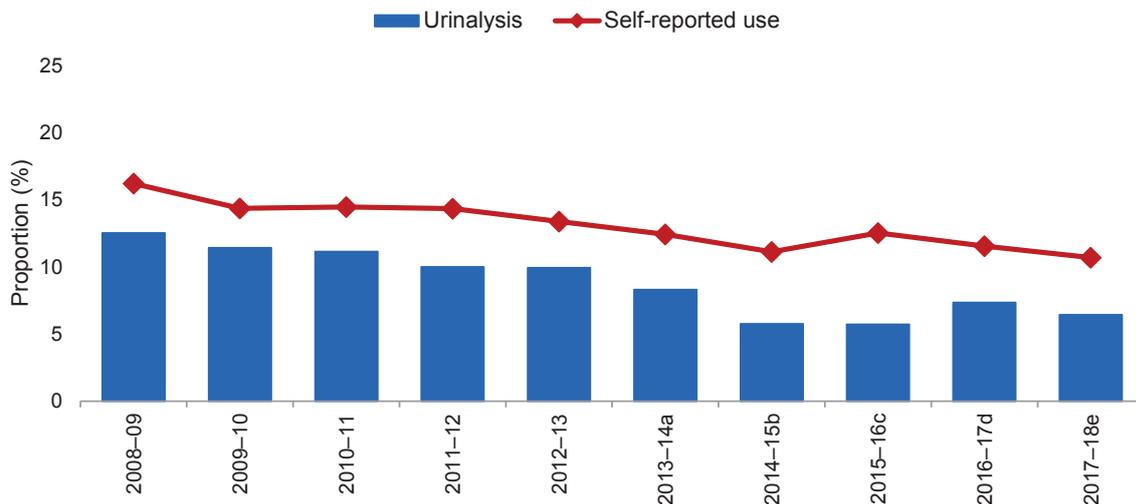
69 Individuals participating in the survey are invited to provide a blood sample for HIV and HCV antibody testing.



The Drug Use Monitoring in Australia (DUMA) program collects criminal justice and drug use information on a quarterly basis from police detainees and 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.⁷⁰ According to data from the DUMA program:

- The proportion of detainees testing positive⁷¹ to heroin decreased, from 7.3 per cent in 2016–17 to 6.4 per cent in 2017–18.
- The proportion of detainees testing positive for methylamphetamine this reporting period continued to be higher than the proportion testing positive to heroin.
- Overall, the proportions of detainees testing positive to heroin via urinalysis and self-reporting recent⁷² heroin use have decreased over the last decade.
- In 2017–18, 10.7 per cent of detainees self-reported recent heroin use, a decrease from 11.5 per cent in 2016–17 (see Figure 15).

FIGURE 15: National proportion of detainees testing positive for heroin compared with self-reported recent use, 2008–09 to 2017–18 (Source: Australian Institute of Criminology)



- Urine was collected in the third and fourth quarter of 2013 and the first quarter of 2014.
- Urine was collected in the third quarter of 2014 and the first and second quarter of 2015.
- Urine was collected in the third quarter of 2015 and the first and second quarter of 2016.
- Urine was collected in the third quarter of 2016 and the second quarter of 2017.
- Urine was collected in the third quarter of 2017 in Adelaide, Brisbane and Perth; the fourth quarter of 2017 in Bankstown; and the first quarter of 2018 in Adelaide, Brisbane, Perth and Surry Hills.

The Australian Secondary Students Alcohol and Drug Survey (ASSAD) collects self-reported information on alcohol, tobacco, over-the-counter drugs and illicit substance use among Australian secondary school students (aged 12 to 17) and is conducted every three years. According to the 2017 ASSAD survey:

- In 2017, 1.0 per cent of respondents reported heroin use at least once in their lifetime.
- In 2017, 1.0 per cent of respondents reported having used heroin at least once in the past month (Guerin & White 2018).⁷³

⁷⁰ Detainees can participate in the survey without providing a urine sample. Cases with missing data are excluded from the relevant analysis.

⁷¹ Heroin and its metabolite can be detected in urine for 6 hours after administration.

⁷² Recent use in the DUMA program refers to self-reported use in the 12 months prior to arrest

⁷³ Due to changes in the ASSAD questionnaire between 2014 and 2017, data specific to heroin consumption are not available for previous reporting periods, which previously focused on opiates. Reported opiate use in 2014 was 1.5 per cent for lifetime use and 0.6 per cent for past month use.



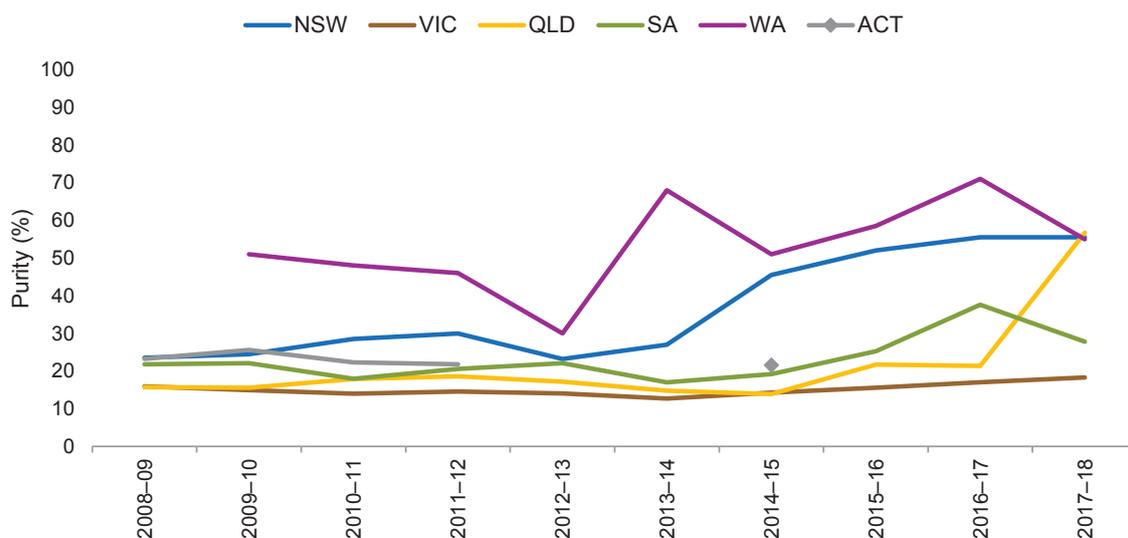
PRICE

Nationally, the price for 1 gram of heroin ranged between \$200 and \$700 in 2017–18, compared with a price range of \$100 to \$700 in 2016–17. Nationally, the price for an 8-ball⁷⁴ of heroin ranged between \$500 and \$1,300 in 2017–18, compared with a price range of \$750 to \$2,000 in 2016–17. New South Wales and Victoria were the only jurisdictions to report a price for 1 kilogram of heroin in 2017–18, which ranged between \$160,000 and \$195,000.

PURITY

Figure 16 illustrates the annual median purity of analysed heroin samples over the past decade. Since 2008–09, the annual median purity of heroin has ranged from 12.7 per cent to 71.0 per cent. In 2017–18, the annual median purity of heroin ranged from 18.3 per cent in Victoria to 56.7 per cent in Queensland. This reporting period the annual median purity of heroin increased in Victoria and Queensland, remained stable in New South Wales and decreased in South Australia and Western Australia. In 2017–18, the quarterly median purity of heroin ranged between 17.4 per cent in the third quarter of 2017 in Victoria and 69.0 per cent in the first quarter of 2018 in Western Australia.⁷⁵

FIGURE 16: Annual median purity of heroin samples, 2008–09 to 2017–18



AVAILABILITY

In a 2018 national study of regular injecting drug users, the proportion of respondents reporting heroin as being easy or very easy to obtain remained stable at 89.0 per cent (Peacock et al. 2018a).

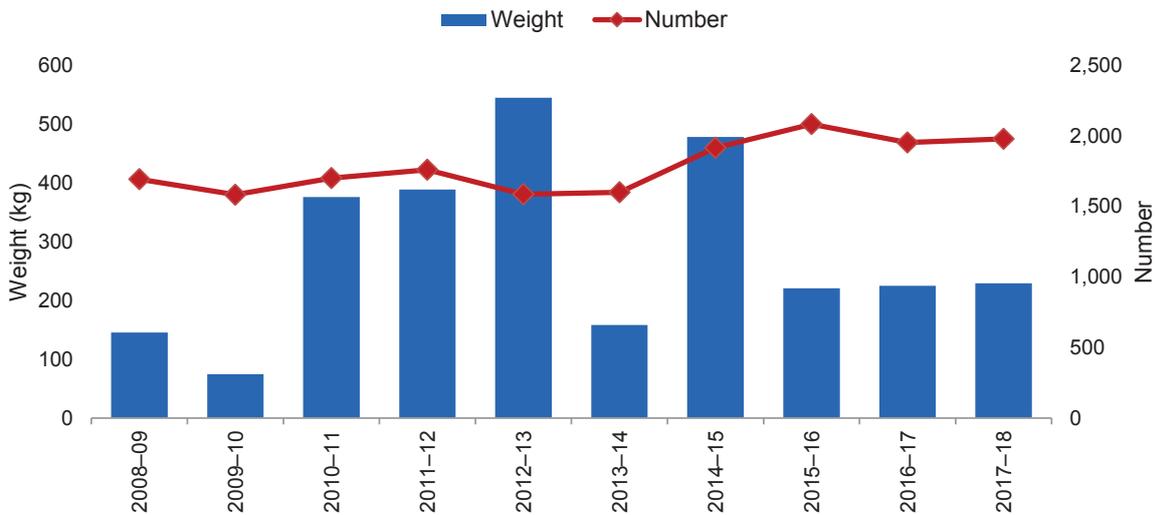
SEIZURES AND ARRESTS

The number of national heroin seizures increased 1.3 per cent this reporting period, from 1,951 in 2016–17 to 1,977 in 2017–18, the second highest number reported in the last decade. The weight of heroin seized nationally increased 1.9 per cent this reporting period, from 224.9 kilograms in 2016–17 to 229.3 kilograms in 2017–18 (see Figure 17).

⁷⁴ An 8-ball equates to 3.5 grams.

⁷⁵ A figure for this data will be available on the Crime Statistics Australia website. See <<http://www.crimestats.aic.gov.au/IDDR/>>.

FIGURE 17: National heroin seizures, by number and weight, 2008–09 to 2017–18



The Australian Capital Territory reported the greatest percentage increase in the number of heroin seizures in 2017–18, while Queensland reported the greatest percentage increase in the weight of heroin seized. This reporting period New South Wales accounted for the greatest proportion of both the number (51.3 per cent) and weight (70.1 per cent) of heroin seized nationally (see Table 9).

TABLE 9: Number, weight and percentage change of national heroin seizures, 2016–17 and 2017–18

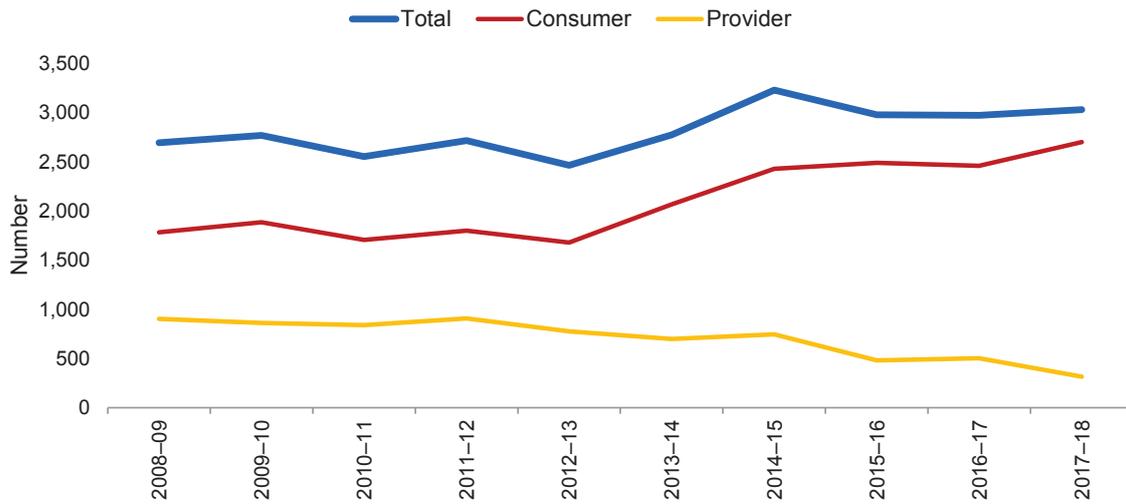
State/Territory ^a	Number			Weight (grams)		
	2016–17	2017–18	% change	2016–17	2017–18	% change
New South Wales	1,018	1,015	-0.3	85,622	160,692	87.7
Victoria	320	329	2.8	127,858	46,252	-63.8
Queensland	169	186	10.1	3,211	20,205	529.2
South Australia	28	22	-21.4	2,537	569	-77.6
Western Australia ^b	355	372	4.8	4,153	1,432	-65.5
Tasmania	27	9	-66.7	46	114	147.8
Northern Territory	8	2	-75.0	21	1	-95.2
Australian Capital Territory	26	42	61.5	1,477	41	-97.2
Total	1,951	1,977	1.3	224,925	229,306	1.9

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

b. The 2017–18 data provided by the Western Australia Police Force reflects improvements made to the quality of the drug seizure and offender dataset. As a result, caution should be exercised in comparing data from previous reporting periods.

The number of national heroin and other opioid arrests increased 2.0 per cent this reporting period, from 2,970 in 2016–17 to 3,029 in 2017–18, the second highest number reported in the last decade. Consumer arrests continue to account for the largest proportion of arrests, accounting for 89.5 per cent of national heroin and other opioid arrests in 2017–18 (see Figure 18). There were no consumer or provider heroin and other opioid arrests reported in the Northern Territory this reporting period.

FIGURE 18: Number of national heroin and other opioid arrests, 2008–09 to 2017–18



The Australian Capital Territory reported the greatest percentage increase in the number of heroin and other opioid arrests in 2017–18. Victoria accounted for the greatest proportion of heroin and other opioid arrests this reporting period (44.9 per cent), followed by New South Wales (29.3 per cent). Combined, these two states account for 74.1 per cent of national heroin and other opioid arrests in 2017–18 (see Table 10).

TABLE 10: Number and percentage change of national heroin and other opioid arrests, 2016–17 and 2017–18

State/Territory ^a	Arrests		
	2016–17	2017–18	% change
New South Wales	852	887	4.1
Victoria	1,315	1,359	3.3
Queensland	309	325	5.2
South Australia	115	135	17.4
Western Australia ^b	311	265	-14.8
Tasmania	52	32	-38.5
Northern Territory	4	0	-100.0
Australian Capital Territory	12	26	116.7
Total	2,970	3,029	2.0

a. The arrest data for each state and territory include Australian Federal Police data.

b. The 2017–18 data provided by the Western Australia Police Force reflects improvements made to the quality of the drug seizure and offender dataset. As a result, caution should be exercised in comparing data from previous reporting periods.



NATIONAL IMPACT

A record 91 tonnes of heroin was seized globally in 2016. Despite decreases in both the area under opium poppy cultivation and opium yield per hectare in 2018, Afghanistan remains the largest cultivator of opium in the world.

Indicators of heroin demand and supply in Australia provide a mixed picture. Overall, they suggest the heroin market remains small and relatively stable.

Indicators of heroin demand include surveys of drug users, police detainees and wastewater analysis.

- According to the 2016 NDSHS, both the reported recent and lifetime use of heroin increased.
- According to a national study of secondary school students, 1.0 per cent of respondents reported recent heroin use and use at least once in their lifetime in 2017.
- According to a national study of regular injecting drug users in 2018, the reported recent use of heroin decreased, while the reported median days of use increased.
- According to the ANSPS, the proportion of respondents reporting heroin as the last drug injected increased in 2017.
- According to a national study of ecstasy and related drug users, both the reported recent use of heroin and median days of use increased in 2018.
- According to the NWDMP, when comparing wastewater data from August 2017 to August 2018 the population-weighted average consumption of heroin in both capital city and regional sites decreased, with capital city average consumption higher than regional consumption.
- According to a national study of police detainees, both the proportion of detainees testing positive to heroin and the self-reported recent use of heroin decreased in 2017–18.

Indicators of heroin supply include border detection, seizure, arrests and purity data.

- In 2017–18, the number of heroin detections at the Australian border increased, while the weight detected decreased.
- Forensic profiling indicates that South-East Asia remains the predominant source of analysed heroin in Australia.
- The median purity of analysed heroin samples fluctuated this reporting period.
- The number and weight of heroin seized nationally increased this reporting period, with the number of seizures in 2017–18 the second highest reported in the last decade.
- The number of heroin and other opioid arrests increased in 2017–18 and is the second highest number reported in the last decade.



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