

**ILLICIT DRUG TRENDS IN CANADA 1980-2001:
A REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF ENFORCEMENT DATA**

**PREPARED FOR THE SPECIAL SENATE COMMITTEE
ON ILLEGAL DRUGS**

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**ILLICIT DRUG TRENDS IN CANADA: 1980-2001
THE VALIDITY OF ENFORCEMENT DATA IN
SIZING THE CANADIAN DRUG SITUATION**

INTRODUCTION

Based on data from the RCMP *National Drug Intelligence Estimates* for the years of 1980-1994, as well as an abbreviated form of these yearly estimates entitled *The Drug Situation in Canada* for the years between 1995-2000, this report provides an overview of the drug situation in Canada from an enforcement perspective for the past 20 years. It reviews the trends in seizures, trafficking, importation, and production of illegal drugs such as heroin, cocaine, cannabis and certain chemical drugs in order to provide an idea of the extent of Canada's drug situation.

Prior to reviewing trends in the Canadian drug situation, the first section of this study forewarns the reader that the data reviewed should be treated with some caution. While the information gathered from the RCMP drug reports provides an idea of the drug situation in Canada, there are inherent methodological problems with the data. According to the United Nations' *Global Illicit Drug Trends 2001* report,⁽¹⁾ this is not unusual as "most countries lack the adequate monitoring systems required to produce reliable, comprehensive and internationally comparable data."⁽²⁾ As will be mentioned, there are two broad approaches to sizing drug situations: consumption-based and supply-based approaches.⁽³⁾ Since the RCMP reports primarily focus on "upper-echelon" drug trafficking⁽⁴⁾ in order to decrease the supply of drugs to

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- (1) The UN Global Illicit Drug Trends Report is a yearly report that requests Member States to produce yearly drug statistics in order to study the evolution of Member States' drug situations and the global drug situation overall.
 - (2) *Global Illicit Drug Trends Report, 2001*, United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, p. 1.
 - (3) According to Edward Bramley-Harker (National Economic Research Associates), *Sizing the UK market for illicit Drugs*, RDS Occasional Paper No. 74.
 - (4) This is not to say that the RCMP does not focus any of its efforts on consumption enforcement. Rather, the National Drug Intelligence Estimates and the Drug Situation Reports tend to focus upon supply enforcement.

the Canadian market, this study largely highlights the methodological problems associated with a supply-based approach to sizing the drug situation. For completeness however, methodological problems of consumption-based assessments of drug situations are mentioned.

After reviewing trends in heroin, cocaine, cannabis and certain chemical drugs in Canada, it becomes obvious that while an idea of the Canadian drug situation is provided, supply-based data on its own is unreliable to accurately describe the drug situation in Canada. The final section of the study questions the total usefulness of drug enforcement data. First it questions whether drug enforcement has any impact on the drug situation since it is difficult to overcome the inherent problems in the drug situation. Secondly, it illustrates that assessments of the drug situation are further convoluted by the fact that there are several different sources collecting drug enforcement information in Canada. This makes it difficult to ascertain which estimate may be the most accurate.

Overall, this study tries to draw the attention of policy makers to some of the methodological issues involved in assessing the Canadian drug situation. The paper concludes by recommending that before significant progress towards the control of supply and demand for illicit drugs can be made in Canada, these methodological issues must be addressed in order for policy-makers to make well-informed, empirically-based decisions on drug policy.

PART I – METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

Prior to a review of the drug situation in Canada over the past twenty years it should be noted that while the RCMP *National Drug Intelligence Estimates (NDIE)* and *The Drug Situation in Canada Reports* have been produced to help provide members of the Canadian public with an idea of the scope of the drug situation in Canada, “the impact of many policing strategies is unclear.”⁽⁵⁾ This makes it difficult to ascertain the true availability of illicit drugs in a country as well as trends in the drug situation over a period of time.

In 1994, Solicitor General Herb Gray reported, “The NDIE reveals the complexity and size of the international drug trade and its effect on Canada. It also reveals the increasing sophistication of the drug trade. Drug traffickers continually seek new markets, new methods of

(5) Tiggey May, Alex Harocopos, Paul J. Turnbull & Michael Hough, “Serving Up: The impact of low-level police enforcement on drug markets,” British Police Research Series Paper 133, Home Office, Policing and Reducing Crime Unit Clive House, Petty France, London, p. 1.

distribution, new customers and new products.’⁽⁶⁾ However, it is precisely these grounds that make it difficult to gain a truly accurate reading of the size of the drug situation in any country. Due to the very nature of the market being studied, “the relationships between the supply of illicit drugs, the demand for them and enforcement activities are poorly conceptualised, under-researched and little understood.’⁽⁷⁾

According to a study⁽⁸⁾ written for The Research, Development and Statistics Directorate of the British Home Office, there are two broad approaches for assessing drug situations: consumption (demand)-based approaches and supply-based approaches. The former is to “derive estimates of the size of the market by measuring the number of users, and their frequency and quantity of consumption to build estimates of total consumption and hence the size of the market.’⁽⁹⁾ The latter is to “derive production estimates in producing countries (including domestic production), identifying a portion that is destined for the market of interest and deducting losses from law enforcement, consumption in source and transit, and inefficiencies in distribution.’⁽¹⁰⁾

The Canadian RCMP uses both approaches in the *National Drug Intelligence Estimates* and the *Drug Situation in Canada Reports* to estimate the size of the Canadian drug situation. The resulting estimates are subject to a considerable degree of uncertainty for several reasons.

A. Supply-Based Approaches

At the outset, the “supply of illicit drugs is illegal and therefore inherently unobservable by official bodies.’⁽¹¹⁾ For example, it is often difficult to identify the source of imported drugs to Canada. Specifically, in the case of heroin, the RCMP bases the origin of the heroin on the importer. The RCMP admits that this is not necessarily an accurate testing procedure because importers will obtain their drugs from anywhere in the world they can. Additionally, in recent years organized crime groups of different origins have acted together in order to bring drug shipments into Canada, thus adding more confusion as to where the drug may

(6) RCMP National Drug Intelligence Estimate 1994, p. i.

(7) May, Harocopos, Turnbull & Hough, p. 7.

(8) Edward Bramley-Harker, p. 2.

(9) *Ibid.*, p. 3.

(10) *Ibid.*

(11) *Ibid.*, p. 36.

have first originated. Also adding to the mix, organized crime groups from different countries often work together to make Canada a transshipment point for illicit drugs on route to the United States. This makes it complicated for Canadian authorities to estimate the amount of drugs remaining in Canada for the purpose of the domestic illicit drug population's consumption.

Secondly, there are "adaptations which drug distribution systems make to enforcement."⁽¹²⁾ For instance in order to avoid detection, marijuana grow operation owners are no longer directly affiliated with the marijuana grow operation. RCMP personnel may make drug-related arrests and often find that the person or people it has arrested are not necessarily the owners, but simply the operators who install and manage the marijuana grow operation. RCMP sources comment that more and more of these operations have such hierarchies and well-defined job functions. Thus, it is obvious how this process could undercut the impact of enforcement: removing a few of the people from the lower levels of the hierarchy will not increase scarcity of marijuana because the root of the problem is not eliminated and continues unabated with new personnel hired by the concealed owner.

At best, the disruption of a marijuana grow operation or the interception of any drug destined for the Canadian drug market would stop drug prices from sliding. However, "the very act of sustaining prices may actually stimulate the market, by drawing new "players" into the system."⁽¹³⁾ This is a perverse effect of a supply reduction enforcement strategy. "Enforcement can be successful in sustaining or increasing risks of criminal sanction; however these risks are translated into highly lucrative – if risky – drug business. If this argument holds up, successful enforcement strategies contain the seeds of their own failure."

Thus, prices of drugs are not necessarily a good indicator of the Canadian drug situation. In the past, low price levels and high purity levels have indicated to enforcement authorities the amount of the drug available in Canada. In the early 1980s and 1990s this was the best method of discovering which areas of Canada had larger drug problems than others because areas where the price of a drug was high and the purity low, meant that it was more difficult to access the drug in these areas. Regions such as Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver in which prices of drugs were always low and purity levels high, led authorities to recognize that these were Canada's major ports of entry for illegal drugs. Presently however, this method of assessing the amount of illicit drugs in Canada and the regions where they are most prevalent is also becoming a problem as drug cartels are beginning to see the benefits in controlling the

(12) May, Harocopos, Turnbull & Hough, p. 8.

(13) *Ibid.*, p. 9.

amounts of drugs entering Canada. Recently, drug cartels have been purposely holding back shipments of drugs, in order to control the price of drugs, and make larger profits. This makes it very difficult to draw firm conclusions from price data.

According to Professor Steve Pudney, Public Sector Economics Research Centre, Department of Economics, Leicester University, “seizure data provides the most direct information on availability of drugs even though drugs seized are not contributing to the available supply.”⁽¹⁴⁾ If one looks at RCMP drug seizure trends however, it becomes obvious that the data must be used cautiously because the number of interceptions or the amount seized in one year is not necessarily a true indicator of an increase or decrease in the drug situation. Rather, it is an indication of the impact of active and passive policing.

Seizures are likely to be passive in the sense that there is a more or less constant seizure rate achieved by routine monitoring and investigation. The greater the amount of drugs entering the market, the greater the background level of seizures, on a purely statistical basis. Passive seizures are thus a positive indicator of the size of the market. However, drug policing also has active aspects. Investigations based on criminal intelligence often lead to the closing down of pipelines of supply and the removal of significant quantities of the product from the domestic market. Seizures of this type are negatively related to market size in the sense that a large seizure, rather than being an indicator of supply growth, is a cause of supply contraction. When these two aspects are present, it is difficult to draw any clear conclusion about supply from information on seizures.⁽¹⁵⁾

While passive seizures may indeed be a positive indicator of the size of the drug market, one must remember that passive seizures may also be somewhat inaccurate because the vast shores surrounding Canada make it difficult for Canadian officials to make consistent interceptions and seizures each year. Importers continually find new ways of avoiding authorities by means of different ports of entry, as well as larger, infrequent shipments or vice versa.

Production estimates are also difficult supply-side information to use and can only be indirectly related to Canadian drug availability especially since “export destinations and quantities (and the financial transactions matching them) are exceedingly difficult to

(14) Professor Steve Pudney, Appendix B, “Referee’s Comments,” in *Sizing the UK market for illicit drugs*, RDS Occasional Paper No. 74.

(15) *Ibid.*

measure.”⁽¹⁶⁾ It is often difficult for authorities to determine if, and how much of the many large shipments of drugs that are imported to Canada from other countries are truly destined for Canada or if the production country is simply using Canada as a transshipment point. Additionally, it is difficult to assess the amount of those drugs produced in Canada (marijuana, hash oil and certain chemical drugs) especially since there are vast secluded areas of this country. Enforcement authorities report that presently “there is no mechanism for estimating the area of illicit crops [marijuana], given the vastness of the country and the fact that cannabis is grown among other crops.”⁽¹⁷⁾

It is also necessary to be cautious with raw enforcement data because enforcement priorities can change, adjusting the data. For instance, on the surface, decreases in several drug enforcement categories in the mid-1980s made it look as though the Canadian drug situation was improving. However in actuality, enforcement authorities were changing their focus from the general population to much more sophisticated and lengthy drug operation cases at the higher levels, thus decreasing the enforcement numbers, but focusing on the root of the problem.

In gathering statistical enforcement information for this study, a further problem was discovered with the supply-side approach. It was discovered that the importation, production and trafficking data reported in the *National Drug Intelligence Estimates* and the *Drug Situation Reports* is only the data that is available at the time of publication. Not all statistics for one year can be reported until years later, and thus enforcement statistics may look much different several years later from what was originally reported. According to RCMP sources, this is largely due to delays in court, intelligence gathered after the fact, charges initially laid by local police ending up as RCMP files later on in the process, typos, etcetera. Thus unfortunately, this does not assist in gathering an accurate picture of the Canadian drug situation and adds to the inherent problems already existing in assessing the drug situation.

B. Consumption-Based Approaches

A part of the RCMP method of assessment of Canada’s drug situation includes the use of consumption-based data. Most of this information is derived from surveys and studies produced by provincial Addiction Research Foundations and Health Canada. While this

(16) *Ibid.*, p. 36.

(17) Organization of American States, “Evaluation of Progress in Drug Control – Canada,” 1999-2000.

consumption data provides an idea of the scope of the Canadian drug situation, unfortunately it also has inherent problems due to the nature of the drug markets.

Primarily, the RCMP uses an estimation from these agencies of the population of drug users in Canada in order to assess the yearly amount of drugs that is imported. The estimated drug population is multiplied by the average daily intake required for each drug user in order to determine the consumption level of the drug population. This translates into the amount of the drug that is necessary to be imported each year to satisfy the drug user population.

There are several inherent problems that exist with this type of calculation.⁽¹⁸⁾ To begin, the surveys that are used to determine the drug user population are not necessarily a totally accurate picture. Surveys undertaken to discover the drug user population can under-represent certain groups. For example, many surveys will not reach those persons living on the street who may be a significant portion of the population using drugs. Additionally, some survey respondents may understate or exaggerate their drug use, providing an inaccurate report. Telephone surveys into homes have often been criticized as an example of understated drug use or for measuring only recreational or occasional drug use and for missing problematic drug users.⁽¹⁹⁾ Finally, “sampling error is inherently unpredictable and its scale depends on the design and extent of the survey sampling process.”⁽²⁰⁾

An additional problem in basing an estimation of the yearly amount of illicit drugs imported to Canada on drug populations and consumption levels is the fact that consumption will not necessarily be the same for all users. Several illicit drug users are only recreational or occasional users and will not use the same amounts as dependent users.

Thus, it is difficult to assess both the size of the drug user population as well as the amount consumed by this population and estimations often have to be made. In turn, this means that the calculation determining the amount of certain drugs necessary for importation to Canada is somewhat unreliable.

C. RCMP Project Schooner

As it is obvious that there are several inherent difficulties relating to enforcement in assessing the drug situation, the RCMP has been working on a project entitled *Project Schooner* since 1983, to try to accurately assess the Canadian drug situation. Specifically, over

(18) Pudney, p. 42.

(19) Bramley-Harker, p. 6.

(20) Pudney, p. 42.

the years this project has been active in order to try to assess how much of each type of illegal drug was entering Canada on a yearly basis. According to RCMP sources, originally, the project focused upon marine imports of drugs or “motherships.” But it was soon discovered that the drug situation reality was superior to this and included drug shipments by means of containers, airports, land, marine ports, private jets, conspiracies, etcetera. *Project Schooner* was expanded in the following years to detail all major imports to Canada (seized on Canadian territory, on foreign territory destined to Canada, etc), from all modes. While expansion of the project occurred, RCMP sources report that *Project Schooner* was still a fairly conservative basis to assess the drug situation. However, previous to 1983 there had been no way to assess the drug situation at all.

The last update on *Project Schooner* was in 1998. Using intelligence information from the past twenty years, the RCMP developed estimations of the present importation and production of several of the illicit drugs in Canada. There is no single method of determining how much of each type of drug is imported to, or produced in Canada. Instead, the RCMP has several different methods of conjecturing the amount of each type of drug being imported or grown. Some of the methods used in the most recent update of *Project Schooner* include previous intelligence estimations of drug importation, intelligence of as much of the concealed operations of organized crime groups as can be obtained by enforcement officials and estimated demand/consumption numbers for illicit drugs.

While this is a very cursory description of *Project Schooner*, the point is, much of the information the RCMP has to make these assessments of Canada’s drug situation is derived from estimations.

Since estimations must be made, the raw statistics coming from both supply-based approaches and consumption-based approaches are not necessarily evident of the drug situation or trends in the drug situation and one must be cautious when reading them. Separately, “the existing data resources on both the demand [consumption] and supply sides of the market are very thin.”⁽²¹⁾ In order to obtain a much more comprehensive idea of the drug situation, both approaches for gathering statistical information of the drug situation must be used together.⁽²²⁾

Previously, the RCMP *National Drug Intelligence Estimates* used this kind of an approach in order to assess the drug situation in Canada. However, in 1994 when the *Drug*

(21) Pudney, p. 37.

(22) *Ibid.*

Situation in Canada Reports began to be published in replacement of the *National Drug Intelligence Estimates*, much of the consumption-based approach statistics were eliminated. While the RCMP continues to use the estimations of user population and consumption, no longer are provincial Addiction Research Foundations surveys or studies from Health Canada produced in the RCMP yearly drug situation reports. According to RCMP sources, the reason for this change was largely due to the fact that much of the consumption-based material published in the reports was a replication of information that could be obtained by readers from the original source. However, while it is indeed true that replication was occurring, the inclusion of the consumption-based materials along-side the RCMP supply-based statistics in the *National Drug Intelligence Estimates* provided a much more comprehensive view of the drug situation in Canada than what is presently produced in the new form of the report. It is now much more difficult to ascertain an idea of the drug situation without the consumption-based material.

PART II – DRUG TRENDS

A. Heroin

1. Trends between 1980-1985

There was a significant drop in heroin supply to Canada in the late 1970s, reducing the number of heroin trafficking and importation offence charges, as well as the yearly amounts of heroin seized by the RCMP and Canada Customs. The first half of the 1980s shows the aftershock of a drought in heroin supply in Canada, as well as the new increasing availability of heroin that began to occur.

Over the past twenty years, the main source of Canada's heroin supply has predominantly been the region of Southeast Asia. In 1977, Southeast Asia began experiencing a period of severe drought that would last for about seven years. This drought had a significant impact on the heroin drug trade in Canada and is reflected in the steady decline of "Persons Charged With [Heroin]⁽²³⁾ Trafficking Offences" between 1977-1981. The 1980 figures for the "Number of Persons Charged With [Heroin] Importation Charges" (only 9 persons charged) and

(23) It should be noted that until 1986 the RCMP figures dealing with heroin importation and trafficking offences are reported within the larger category "narcotic" related offences. Therefore, the numbers may be somewhat over-representative of the trends in heroin importation and trafficking offences until 1987 when data specifically for heroin importation began to be published in the RCMP Estimates.

the “Amount of Heroin Seized in Canada” (only 6.587 kg), both of which are the lowest figures for these categories Canada has seen in the past 20 years (see charts), also show this impact.

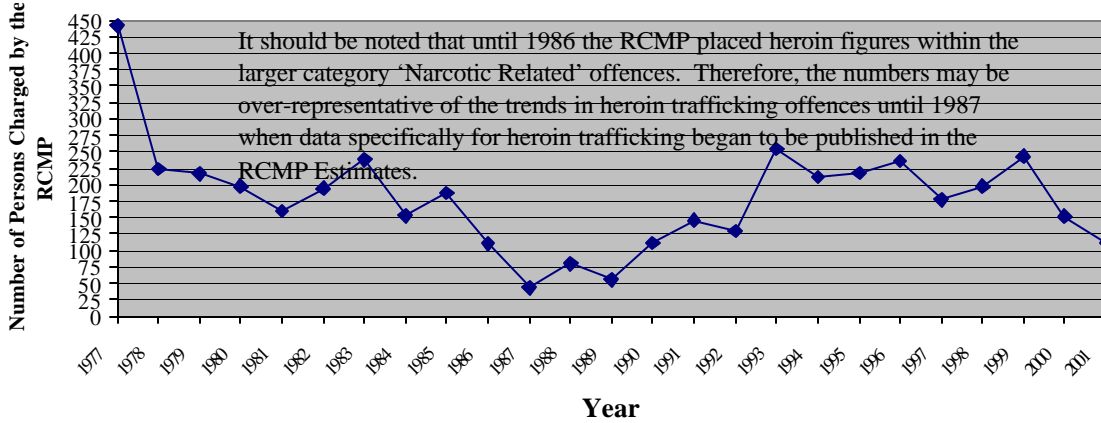
Between 1981-1985 RCMP enforcement data shows that heroin availability once again began to increase in Canada. The “Amount Seized” figures reflect this trend as they steadily increase during this time period to a peaking point in 1985 of 64.915 kg seized. This increase in heroin availability to Canada was a result of the introduction of Southwest Asia as a supplier of illicit heroin to Canada throughout 1981 and 1982 while Southeast Asia continued to experience drought. However, in 1983 Southeast Asia once again took control of the illicit heroin market supply to Canada, and would hold onto this control for the next several years with Southwest Asia continuing as a secondary source.

Between 1980-1985, the RCMP annual drug intelligence estimates report that the Canadian heroin user population remained around 20,000 users each year. The majority of the Canadian heroin user population resided in Vancouver (60%) and the remainder were located in Toronto and Montreal. In order to determine an estimated amount of heroin being imported to Canada each year to satisfy this user population’s demand for the substance, the RCMP based this estimate on the amount of heroin consumed by Canada’s heroin user population. Thus, “this estimate is based on the accepted standard that 24 milligrams of pure heroin is the minimum daily dosage required to produce dependence. However, it is believed that daily dosage levels in Canada range from 30 to 35 milligrams.” Therefore, with a population of around 20,000 heroin users, it was estimated that 175.2 – 255.5 kilograms of heroin was needed by Canada’s heroin user population each year between 1980-1985.

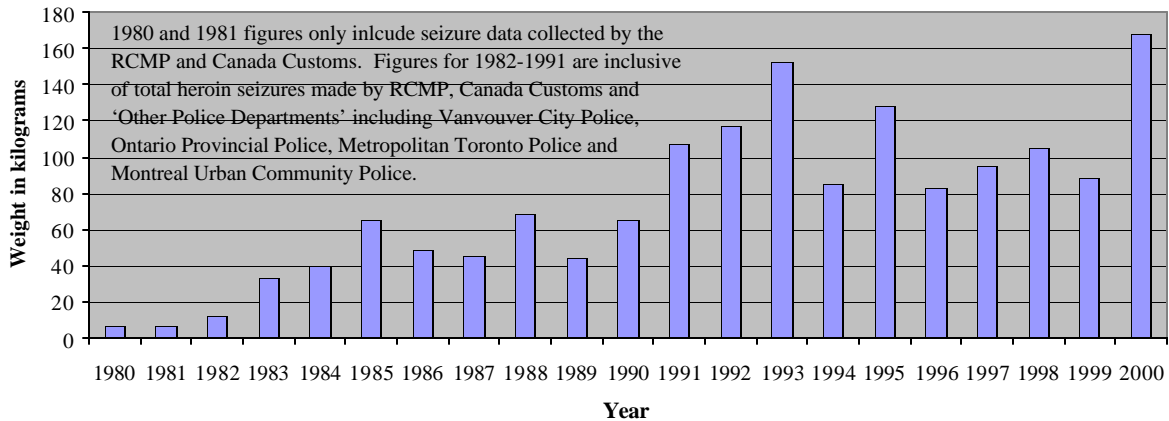
Daily Dosage Level	Annual Requirement of Pure Heroin
24 mg x 365 days x 20,000 users	175.2 kg
30 mg x 365 days x 20,000 users	219.0 kg
35 mg x 365 days x 20,000 users	255.5 kg

Table taken from *RCMP National Drug Intelligence Estimate, 1981*.

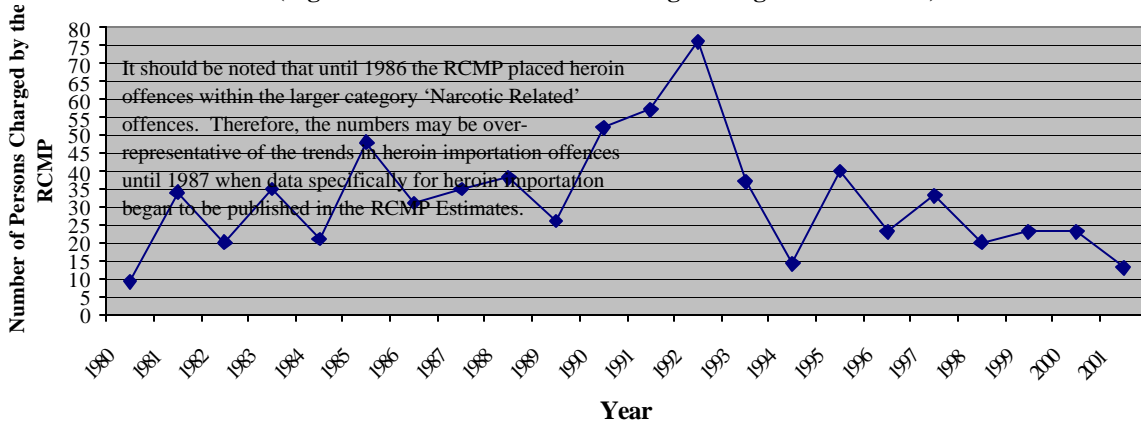
Number of Persons Charged with Heroin Trafficking Offences, 1977-2001
(Figures from RCMP National Drug Intelligence Estimates)



Amount of Heroin Seized in Canada, 1980-2000
(Figures from RCMP National Drug Intelligence Estimates)



Number of Persons Charged with Heroin Importation Offences, 1980-2001
(Figures from RCMP National Drug Intelligence Estimates)



The Canadian heroin user population and its demand for heroin remained steady between 1980-1985⁽²⁴⁾ as source countries struggled to satisfy this demand. The general rise in the RCMP's enforcement figures for importation offence charges between 1980-1985 is indicative both of an increasing supply of heroin and increasing police activity. Source countries were trying to provide as much heroin as possible despite the problems they were experiencing in order to meet the continuing demand of Canada's heroin user population. However, there are two years (1982 and 1984), in which importation offence charges defy this trend. The 1982 figure for importation charges shows a marked decrease against this rising trend, signifying the struggles that were still occurring abroad in source countries. Although the continuing drought in Southeast Asia was the cause of these struggles, a "bumper" opium crop (the base form of heroin) was produced by Southeast Asia in 1981, significantly increasing in the amount of heroin imported to Canada for this year. As well, Southwest Asia also slowly proceeded to take its place as a major heroin supplier to the Canadian market in 1981. However, in 1982 the abundant Southeast Asia crop dwindled once again and the drought continued leaving only Southwest Asia to provide heroin to Canada for this year. Thus, the amount of heroin available for importation to Canada was much less in 1982, creating a sharp decrease in heroin importation offence charges. (The sharp decrease of heroin importation offence charges in 1984 is due to different reasons that will be explained below.)

Between 1981-1983, the number of persons charged with trafficking offences rose, possibly illustrating that more heroin was becoming available within Canada. However, unlike the numbers for "amount seized" and "importation offence charges," which generally show a continuation of this rise until 1985, the number of persons charged with trafficking begins to drop off in 1984 and 1985. Interestingly, the enforcement figures for heroin importation offences show a similar plunge during 1984, despite a general increase as described above until 1985. This trend was not an indication of a decrease in availability. Rather, in 1984 a large number of RCMP drug enforcement personnel were transferred to other duties for a period of about six months, decreasing the number of charges being laid for importation and trafficking offences. Another reason for this decreasing trend in trafficking offence charges in 1984 and 1985 may be the RCMP's shift in targeting traffickers at the higher levels of investigation rather than giving priority to street level trafficking.

(24) RCMP National Drug Intelligence Estimate, 1984-1985, p. 14.

Overall, the RCMP believed at this point during the 1980s that the heroin problem in Canada was extensive and on the rise. While the heroin user population remained stable at an estimated 20,000 users requiring approximately 175.2 – 255.5 kg of heroin per year, the supplier countries were re-establishing themselves, year by year, trying to increase the amount of illicit heroin supplied to Canada. The general increases in heroin importation offence charges, in conjunction with a rise in the amount of heroin seized each year by the RCMP, suggests that heroin availability during this time period indeed reflects a rise in supply from source countries. In 1984 and 1985 RCMP began recording a number of major seizures, suggestive of its new focus on major drug traffickers rather than street level trafficking, but also an indication that Canada was beginning to be used as a transshipment point for heroin destined to the United States.

2. Trends between 1986-1989

After evidence of a struggling increase in heroin availability to Canada between 1980-1985, at first glance the figures for the second half of the 1980s would appear to show a decrease in the heroin situation in Canada. However, a deeper look shows that availability of illicit heroin continued to increase to meet the escalating demands of the Canadian heroin user population, while the small decline in enforcement data arose from a shift in emphasis in RCMP investigations and enforcement.

Following the peak that was seen in 1985, all three sets of data (importation, trafficking and amount seized) declined in 1986. And while figures for trafficking offence charges continued to decline in 1987, the figures for importation offence charges and the amount of heroin seized levelled out somewhat until 1989 with the exception of a small peak period for all three sets of numbers in 1988.

The small decline in seizure and importation figures was nowhere near the decline seen at the end of the 1970s due to the drought experienced by Southeast Asia. Rather these figures stabilized at midlevels illustrating that heroin availability was indeed not a problem. In fact, heroin was continuously supplied in an increasingly vigorous manner to Western Canada predominantly by Southeast Asia, and to Eastern Canada by Southwest Asia. “The number of cases involving Southwest Asian heroin has increased in recent years, although Southeast Asian sources have maintained greater control of the Canadian market through widespread networks and the importation of larger shipments.”⁽²⁵⁾

(25) RCMP National Drug Intelligence Estimates, 1988.

Additionally, in 1986 there were indications that Mexico had been trying for the past few years to make a small niche for itself in supplying Canada's illicit heroin user population. Thus, as there was no evident decrease in the amount of heroin being supplied to Canada, the RCMP point out that the decline in the Canadian figures should not be attributed to a decreasing trend in the use of heroin in Canada, but be recognized as the result of the RCMP's continued emphasis on investigating "upper echelon narcotic traffickers and importers," as opposed to solely focussing enforcement efforts at the user level.

There were also several other indications that the heroin situation in Canada was not declining. Between 1986-1989 the heroin user population was on the rise requiring even further amounts of heroin to be supplied. In 1987, the RCMP estimated that there were now 25,000 heroin users and a further estimated increase to 28,000 in 1988, and 30,000 in 1989. This rising trend was largely a result of the sudden increase in the heroin user population within Montreal. In 1988 Montreal's user population accounted for 50% of the national estimate, a phenomenon attributed to the less expensive heroin that flooded the Montreal market in 1988 by way of a highly organized Southwest Asian crime network. Vancouver and Toronto remained the other two cities containing the remainder of Canada's heroin user population. Since the Canadian heroin user population in 1988 was consuming an estimated 245 to 358 kg (based on the RCMP's formula described previously) and even higher amounts in 1989, an elevated supply of heroin was beginning to be required. This was not a problem for the supplier countries to manage because since 1985, the opium harvest in Southeast and Southwest Asia had steadily increased. In 1989, "1800 to 2400 tonnes were harvested in Southeast Asia and approximately 930 to 1250 tonnes in the Southwest Asia. There was therefore no lack of raw material to abundantly supply illicit world markets with heroin."⁽²⁶⁾

Most likely due to the increase in the heroin user population and therefore the increased necessity for more heroin, signs arose that the Canadian heroin user population was beginning to feel the need to manufacture its own heroin supply. In 1988, the RCMP in Ottawa seized laboratory equipment and precursor chemicals sufficient to manufacture synthetic heroin. The portable clandestine laboratory was contained within three trunks, which were shipped from Los Angeles, California, via Vancouver. This was one of the first instances in Canada of the seizure of heroin manufacturing equipment. However, this would not prove to be a rising trend

(26) RCMP National Drug Intelligence Estimates, 1990, p. 14.

in future years, as foreign heroin source countries would continue to provide sufficient heroin to satisfy the Canadian heroin market.

As mentioned above, there are higher figures for all three categories in 1988, which are misaligned with the rest of the figures, which decreased between 1986-1989. Although these figures indicate that the amount of heroin being supplied to Canada was about to rise in response to an increase in heroin users, there were also other reasons for the peak in the figures seen in 1988. One factor that inflates the figures for “the amount seized” in 1988 is that the RCMP seized a single shipment of illicit heroin from Southeast Asia that weighed 20.5 kg, which significantly increased the final numbers for 1988. Moreover, The *Canada Drug Strategy (1987)*, which was implemented “to address both the supply and demand reduction strategies and programs in enforcement...⁽²⁷⁾” may have been a factor for the increase in both trafficking and importation charges in 1988. The RCMP report comments on “increased enforcement pressures against the production and trafficking of heroin” and “persistent law enforcement crackdowns” during 1988.

Overall, while the figures between 1986-1989 oppose the increasing trend found between 1980-1985, this should not be confused with the idea that the heroin situation in Canada was waning. In all actuality, the evidence behind the figures suggests that the heroin situation in Canada was indeed growing stronger. This decrease in the figures between 1986-1989 is representative of a change in RCMP enforcement priorities. The data for 1988 provides an obvious example that the figures are indeed intrinsically linked to enforcement measures and not simply a direct representation of the drug situation in Canada.

3. Trends between 1990-1994

While the figures between 1986-1989 mask the strengthening heroin situation in Canada because of a shift in RCMP enforcement priorities, the beginning of the 1990s illustrates a strong upward trend in all three categories (seizures, importation and trafficking). As the RCMP continued to focus its efforts on the upper echelon drug traffickers and importers, this new data trend is indicative of the stronger hold that supplier countries and large organized trafficking groups were gaining on Canada’s heroin market in the 1990s, rather than an increase in use and availability.

(27) Diane Riley, PhD, *Drugs and Drug Policy in Canada: A Brief Review & Commentary*, November 1998, <http://www.cfdp.ca/sen8ex1.htm>.

Although it is difficult to state with any certainty the population of Canada's heroin users, between 1990 and 1993 the RCMP reported that the estimated number of heroin users remained fairly stable between 25,000-35,000 users. Availability for this time period was also stable as is indicated by the prices for heroin which remained between \$35-\$60 for 0.1 grams, dependant upon accessibility in different parts of Canada. The main centres of heroin use in Canada were the same as in previous years: Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver. However in 1991, a few heroin consumers could also be found in small urban areas throughout British Columbia, the Prairie Provinces and Southern Ontario. As well, in 1992, for the first time since the 1970s the RCMP reported that heroin availability remained constant on the streets of Winnipeg.

Despite this steady phase of heroin use and availability, the amount of heroin seized increased by 120% between 1989 and 1991 and continued to increase until 1993. In 1990 one of the seizures made was 13 kg of heroin that was destined to the United States. In 1993, 39 kilograms of heroin was seized at the Port of Vancouver, the largest heroin seizure made in Canadian history at the time. According to the RCMP the total increase in amounts of heroin seized was not only indicative of the significance of Canada's domestic heroin situation, but as well, seizures such as the 13 kg destined for the United States illustrate Canada's growing importance as a conduit for heroin on its way to the United States. Due to the stepped up American drug enforcement measures beginning in the early 1980s, by 1990 Canada had become a transit area for West African (Nigerian) heroin that had been supplied to the U.S. market since the mid-1980s. Prior to 1990, smuggling heroin into Canada by West African couriers was virtually unheard of. However in 1990, West African heroin couriers had been implicated in 17 of approximately 50 major Canadian heroin seizures.

In 1990, trafficking groups across Asia were also strengthening their hold on the Canadian heroin market. For instance, enforcement agencies in Canada, the United States and Hong Kong together uncovered a Chinese criminal syndicate, which had imported an estimated 360 to 545 kg of heroin into North America over a two-year period with large quantities destined for the U.S. being transhipped through Canada. In addition, other trafficking groups including Pakistani, Afghan, India, and Sri Lankan organizations were becoming more and more active in Canada at this time. The RCMP's continued emphasis on higher level trafficking groups reflects this increased hold on the heroin trade in Canada by organized crime groups, as the figures more

than doubled in the early 1990s for the number of charges for trafficking offences, and importation offences continued to increase.

Another group that began to take part in the Canadian heroin market, adding to the RCMP enforcement figures, was a Lebanese organized crime group. Prior to 1991, Lebanon had not had a significant share of Canada's illicit heroin market. However, by the end of 1991, Lebanese heroin represented almost one-quarter of all Canadian-related heroin seizures. Additionally, in 1992 for the first time ever, a seizure was made of one kilogram of Colombian heroin on its way to Canada. Prior to this, there had been no reported evidence of Colombian heroin in Canada, although supply lines between Colombia and Canada were well established due to cocaine trafficking. The RCMP suggested that if Colombia could decrease heroin prices, it could potentially rival the Asian competitors for a piece of the Canadian heroin market.

In 1993 and 1994, heroin importation offence charges decreased substantially. According to the 1994 RCMP report, this may have been linked to a decrease in West African courier activity that had been using Canada as a transshipment point for heroin destined to the United States. The RCMP believed that African-based crime groups were starting to use other countries as transit points to the United States and were beginning to develop a European cocaine market.

However, while the numbers of importation offence charges decreased substantially in the mid-1990s, trafficking offence charges and the amount of heroin seized remained high indicating that there was a continuing abundance of cheap, high-purity heroin entering Canada during this time period, creating the right conditions for the heroin user population to potentially rise again in the late 1990s.

4. Trends between 1995-2000

Between 1995-2000, RCMP enforcement statistics indicated that importation offences remained at low levels. However, this was not marked by a decrease in supply from source countries, of changing enforcement priorities, or of a dwindling heroin situation in Canada; the amount of heroin seized in Canada each year continued to remain at very high levels. Rather, the RCMP were discovering larger shipments of heroin being imported, thus reducing the number and frequency of smaller shipments. For instance, a seizure was made in Toronto in 1995, of 58 kilograms of heroin. As well, in 1997, authorities at Toronto's Lester B. Pearson International Airport (PIA) seized 42 kilograms of heroin secreted inside the wall panels

of 6 washrooms of the plane. In 1998, an RCMP investigation culminated in the seizure of 70 kilograms of heroin in the Vancouver area. In 1999, another RCMP investigation culminated in the seizure of 43 kilograms of heroin from a marine container of brown sugar that originated in China and was destined to Burnaby, B.C. And again in August of the year 2000, RCMP authorities seized 57 kilograms of heroin in a marine container in the Port of Vancouver. Immediately following this seizure, in September of 2000, 93 kilograms of heroin was seized from the inside of the structure of a marine container, also in the Port of Vancouver.

In British Columbia where many of these large seizures took place, the RCMP noted that the price for 700 grams of heroin increased to \$55,000 in 1999 from \$48,000 in 1998 and from only \$40,000 in 1997. The increase in price levels for heroin indicated that RCMP seizures were having a sizable effect on the amount of heroin available in this area (higher price levels suggest less availability).

According to the RCMP's 1995 report, Asian-based criminal organizations from Southeast and Southwest Asia were behind most of the large-scale importations. As far as the RCMP was aware, while Colombian organized crime groups had become prominent in the heroin trade in the United States, Colombian heroin trafficking did not appear to be established in Canada, although the potential was there. The RCMP also admit however that "Canada does not have a testing program to establish the origin of heroin seized, because of its prohibitive cost. When there is no intelligence on the importation route, the source of the drug is determined by the ethnic background of the group or trafficker involved. This can be misleading because most trafficking groups will get heroin wherever it is available."⁽²⁸⁾ Thus, there is no real way of knowing for sure if Colombian heroin is entering Canada. Despite this, the increasing size of the quantities being smuggled demonstrated the financial and logistical resources of the importing organizations involved.

Also difficult to assess is the amount of heroin that is actually destined to Canada within the increasingly large shipments of heroin. According to the RCMP, aside from cases of United States based Asian organizations exchanging cocaine for heroin with their Canadian counterparts on a ratio of three kilograms of cocaine for one kilogram of heroin there is little intelligence to demonstrate clearly that large quantities of heroin discovered in Canada are destined to the United States.

(28) RCMP Drug Situation In Canada Report, 1996.

In addition to large quantities of heroin arriving in Canada, in 1997 the RCMP reported a greater incidence of small quantities of heroin arriving in Canada concealed within legitimate cargo, sent through the mail in envelopes or in parcels through commercial messenger services.

The sophisticated means used to bring heroin into Canada, in relation to purity levels in excess of 90%, as well as the lowest prices Canada had seen for heroin in the past twenty years indicate that heroin was in abundant supply in Canada throughout the final years of the 20th century. RCMP reported that by the year 2000 importers were purposely holding back shipments of heroin in order to wait for a period of decreased heroin availability and obtain higher returns.

As RCMP officials rely on the price level of heroin in order to assess the availability of heroin to the Canadian heroin user population, the fact that importation groups are controlling heroin prices in Canada makes it difficult for RCMP officials to make this assessment. Thus, the potential annual demand for heroin continues to be relied upon. According to the RCMP, by the late 1990s, the estimated potential annual demand for heroin ranged between one and two tonnes for an estimated population between 25,000 to 50,000 heroin users (based on estimates from Drug User Population Surveys and Health Canada). Similar to the estimating process used in the early 1980s, this estimate is based on an average daily consumption of 0.2 grams or 50% pure heroin, or 36.5 grams of pure heroin per addict each year.⁽²⁹⁾

Overall, the heroin situation in Canada has increased over the past twenty years and remained stable in the latter part of the 1990s into the year 2000. However, though the heroin situation in Canada is a major concern for police and health officials, in comparison with other illicit drugs such as cocaine and cannabis, heroin is not nearly as widespread.

B. Cocaine

Over the past twenty years, the cocaine situation in Canada has increased substantially at a steady rate. Its availability has become more apparent in smaller cities across Canada, rather than simply large cities with major ports of entry. Enforcement measures to prevent the supply of cocaine have resulted in intricate networks of Colombian cartels trying to avoid prosecution.

(29) According to RCMP sources, this formula for estimating the amount of heroin demanded by Canada's heroin user population and thus an estimate of the amount of heroin imported to Canada each year, originally came from the United Kingdom.

1. Trends between 1980-1989

Throughout the 1980s, the cocaine situation in Canada continued a strong upward trend that had begun in the mid-1970s. Cocaine was progressing to make its way as the drug of choice after cannabis. Previously, members of upper income society tended to be the group that preferred cocaine as their drug of choice, however the glamourization of the drug by the media in the early 1980s created an increased demand for cocaine by all socio-economic groups.⁽³⁰⁾ While the RCMP reported in its 1982 report that it is difficult to gauge the amount of cocaine that the cocaine user population consume each year, it was estimated at that time there were approximately 250,000 cocaine users in Canada (based upon Addictions Research Surveys and RCMP intelligence sources) consuming at least 1 gram per person per year, resulting in a need for at least 250 kg of cocaine to be imported to Canada each year. However, there is evidence that the popularity of cocaine continued to increase in Canada, namely the RCMP's enforcement statistics for cocaine trafficking offence charges as well as the amount of cocaine seized in Canada between 1980-1989. Both sets of figures gradually curve upwards throughout the 1980s illustrating that cocaine use was continuously becoming much more prevalent in Canada (see charts).

The RCMP enforcement statistics for importation offence charges are much less indicative of the growing cocaine situation in Canada. Throughout the 1980s, the suppliers of all of the cocaine destined for Canada were largely from South American nations such as Peru, Bolivia, Colombia and Ecuador. The most common ports of entry were in Montreal, Vancouver and Toronto. Despite law enforcement efforts in the early 1980s in South America to curtail the over-production of coca leaves (which are refined to make cocaine), Canadian RCMP data figures show that the importation of cocaine continued to increase in Canada between 1980-1984. The RCMP theorized in its 1984 report the reason for this was that while enforcement efforts were underway in South America "existing stockpiles of cocaine in source countries may have been released to offset major market disruptions."⁽³¹⁾

In 1985 the RCMP believed that wide coverage by the media on the negative effects of cocaine use might have decreased the demand for cocaine in Canada. The only indicator that at first glance reflects a potential slowing down of the expansionary mode of the cocaine market is the decrease and stabilization of importation offence charges in 1985-1989. However, while enforcement efforts in South America may indeed have put a damper on the ability to export cocaine, as previously mentioned the RCMP data for the amount of cocaine

(30) RCMP National Drug Intelligence Estimates, 1981, p. 34.

(31) RCMP National Drug Intelligence Estimates, 1984-1985, p. 30.

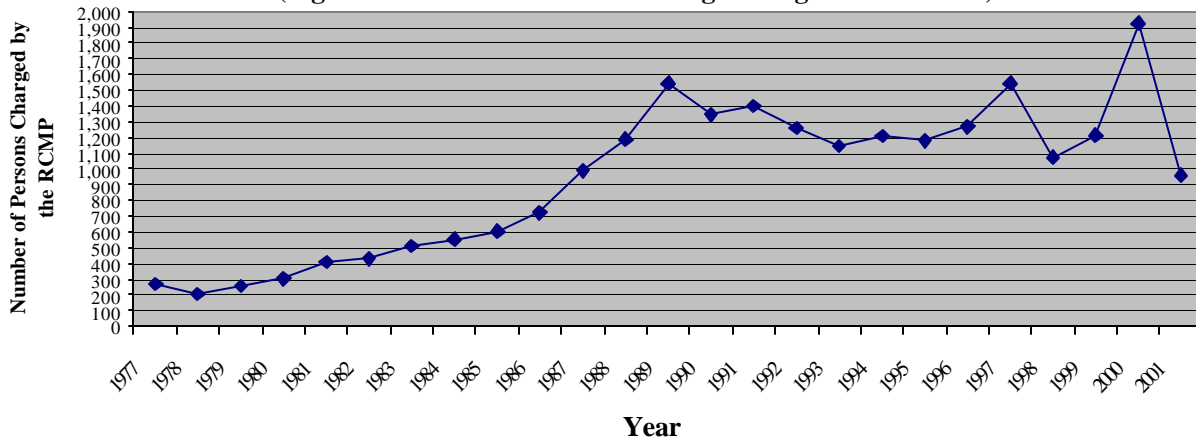
seized and trafficking offence charges continued to increase between 1985-1989, suggesting that the demand for cocaine was not diminishing. Furthermore, cocaine was still entering Canada to meet this demand even though importation offence charges remained low throughout the late 1980s.

Supplier countries were able to manoeuvre around the impediment of the preventative measures put in place to decrease cocaine exportation, and continued to satisfy the increasing demands of Canada's cocaine user population. First, rather than frequent, small shipments of cocaine, exporters tended to send larger shipments of cocaine throughout the late 1980s. For instance, in 1986 the Montreal Urban Community Police Department made one seizure of approximately 50 kg of cocaine. Secondly, the RCMP began dismantling clandestine cocaine laboratories in 1984, an indication that traffickers were attempting to evade enforcement pressures in South America by relocating their operations in non-traditional drug producing countries. By 1989, at least four coca paste conversion laboratories and one synthetic cocaine-manufacturing laboratory had been seized since 1984.

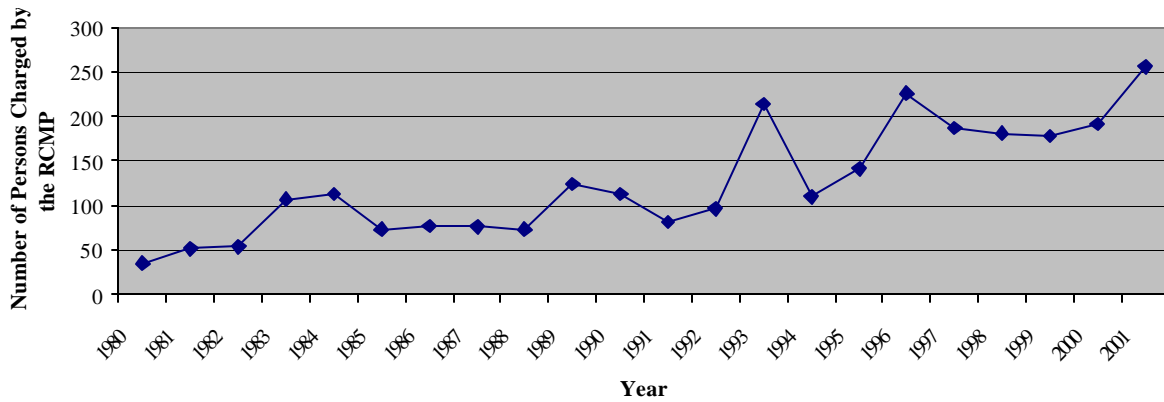
South American traffickers were also evading importation detection by developing a very sophisticated intermediary position. The RCMP estimated that 80% of the cocaine entering Canada was first transiting through Colombian groups based in areas of the United States such as Miami, Florida. Additionally, South American traffickers were placing a number of agents from affiliate Colombian crime organizations in major cocaine distribution centres in the United States as well as in urban centres of Canada, such as Montreal. These affiliate organizations were difficult to track since they created a middleman position between the source and the destination. Furthermore, no one member of an affiliate group acting as the middleman was assigned to an area for more than six months. Very little direct importation was occurring during this time period.

The preceding may be a few of the reasons for the decrease and stabilization of importation charges for cocaine between 1985-1989, illustrating that the cocaine situation in Canada was not necessarily diminishing, but shifting and finding other ways of surviving. Since enforcement numbers are not necessarily a fully accurate estimate of the cocaine situation, it is necessary to base the estimate on other factors such as purity levels and prices at street level. Throughout the 1980s, as well as the 1990s, the purity level of cocaine remained high and the price level decreased. The combination of these two factors illustrates that there must have been a prevalent supply of cocaine and that the drug became more accessible to all socio-economic levels.

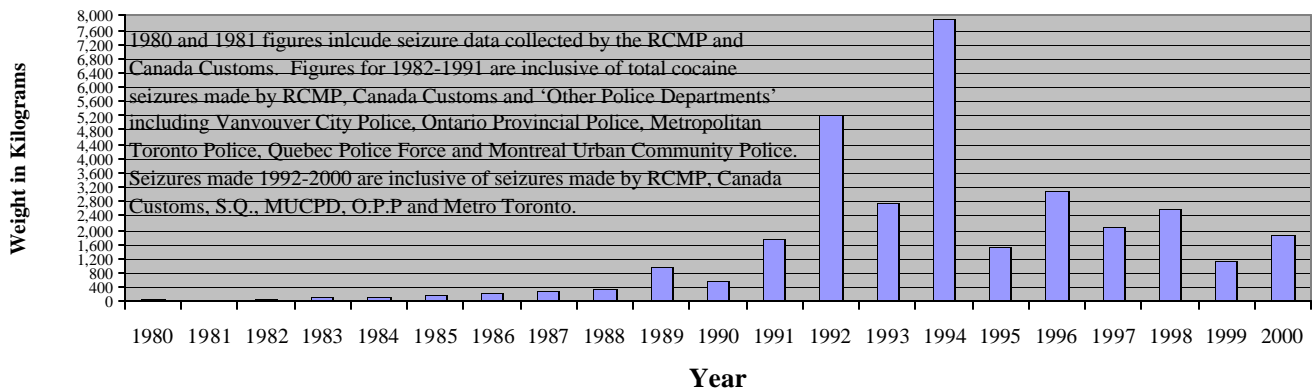
**Number of Persons Charged with
Cocaine-Related Trafficking Offences, 1977-2001**
(Figures from RCMP National Drug Intelligence Estimates)



**Number of Persons Charged with
Cocaine-Related Importation Charges, 1980-2001**
(Figures from RCMP National Drug Intelligence Estimates)



Amount of Cocaine Seized in Canada, 1980-2000
(Figures from RCMP National Drug Intelligence Estimates)



Health Canada has been involved in the analysis of drug samples throughout the years and, as reported in the RCMP National Drug Intelligence Estimates, the average purity of cocaine has been found to be anywhere between 40-70% pure. The level of purity is also highly dependent upon the area. Urban areas such as Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver tend to have higher purity levels than other smaller urban and rural areas. The RCMP uses this as an indication that these highly populated cities are the principal entry points for cocaine into Canada.

The rise in purity levels over the years alongside a steady decrease in the price of cocaine reflects increased availability of cocaine. In 1981, the price for a gram of cocaine was anywhere between \$125-\$225, with lower prices in urban areas where cocaine was most prevalent. In 1984, Canada's key cocaine distribution areas of Montreal, Vancouver and Toronto reported even lower prices (between \$100-\$150) than in 1981, signifying that there was an abundant supply and an increasing level of demand for cocaine. Between 1984 and 1986, RCMP reported that outlaw motorcycle gangs such as the Hell's Angels were becoming increasingly involved in the distribution of cocaine in addition to being involved in trafficking methamphetamine. While cocaine had generally been available in all regions of Canada by 1983, cocaine was being further spread by groups such as the Hell's Angels from major centres in British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec to areas such as the Yukon and North West Territories, where multi-ounce quantities could be bought by 1989. Prices also dropped considerably in 1989 to anywhere between \$60-\$100 per gram depending upon the area and availability factors. This price range remained stable throughout the 1990s, indicating that source countries were easily meeting the demand for cocaine, despite enforcement efforts to prevent supplies arriving in Canada.

Another indicator that the cocaine situation in Canada was on the rise throughout the 1980s is that in 1986, RCMP saw the first development of "crack," a smokable cocaine derivative found as pebbles resembling aquarium gravel, each of which weighs approximately 0.1 gram. As crack is much lower in price than cocaine (in 1986 it was sold in Toronto for \$10-\$15 per 0.1 gram) and the average purity level in 1988 was 90%, many younger drug users could obtain this form of cocaine. Crack had become a major problem in the United States by the mid-1980s and since most of the major crack seizures in 1986 occurred in areas close to the U.S. border such as Windsor, Ontario and North Portal, Saskatchewan as well as a seizure made

at Dorval International Airport in Quebec from a passenger returning from Miami, crack appeared to be entering Canada primarily from the United States.

Between 1986-1989, the main centre of crack availability in Canada was Toronto and in 1988, the Metropolitan Toronto Police made 726 crack seizures, which was a 310% increase over the 177 seizures made in 1987, a sign that crack use and availability was on the rise. Between 1986-1988 crack also became quite prevalent in areas such as Windsor Ontario, Halifax Nova Scotia, and Winnipeg Manitoba. By 1989, crack use was discovered in Quebec City and Montreal, places where it had not been seen before.

Due to its increasing supply and decreasing price, in 1989 cocaine became the primary drug of choice in many regions of Canada, rivalling, if not surpassing, cannabis.⁽³²⁾ By this time, it was available virtually anywhere across Canada at very high purity levels (average of 70-89% pure) indicating that the production of cocaine in source countries was not abating. The data for the number of trafficking offence charges continued to increase sharply, a trend that had begun in 1987. As well, the data for importation offence charges made a dramatic increase of 70% over the stable trend of the past three years to reach the highest number of importation charges that would be seen in the 1980s. According to the RCMP this indicates that “cocaine smuggling across Canada’s borders was continuing to escalate”⁽³³⁾ despite stepped up eradication efforts within Colombia, Peru and Bolivia. Alternatively, the increasing enforcement statistics may be an indication of stepped up eradication efforts by enforcement in Canada due to the inception of the *Canadian Drug Strategy* in 1987.

The most exceptional fact was a 268% increase in the amount of cocaine seized in 1989 over the previous year. However, the reason for this huge increase is due to a single seizure made of five hundred kilograms of cocaine; which at the time was the largest cocaine seizure made in Canadian history. It was made in an operation targeting a Colombian organization involved in airlifting large quantities of cocaine directly into Canada from South America. RCMP Intelligence indicated that Canada was simply a transshipment point for this cocaine that was destined to the United States, although a portion was reserved for the Canadian cocaine market.

(32) RCMP National Drug Intelligence Estimates, 1990, p. 26.

(33) *Ibid.*

2. Trends between 1990-2001

The RCMP enforcement figures are to some extent less indicative of the cocaine situation in Canada throughout the 1990s, and instead illustrate the focus of RCMP enforcement measures. However, according to RCMP intelligence, cocaine availability continued to increase into the beginning of 1991 and continued to thrive throughout the rest of the 1990s. Most evident of a thriving Canadian cocaine situation is the fairly steady number of cocaine trafficking offence charges throughout the 1990s. No longer was there an increasing trend in the number of cocaine-related trafficking offences, but rather a stabilization period indicating that trafficking groups were working at peak levels throughout the 1990s.

In another indicator that the availability of cocaine in Canada had hit unprecedented levels in 1990 and 1991, the RCMP reported the minimum price for a gram of cocaine decreased from \$80 to \$70 in the third quarter of 1990 and purity levels were extremely high (minimum of 75%). According to the RCMP, this was suggestive of a surplus in the overall Canadian cocaine supply. With the exception of some areas where there was a drought in cocaine supply (such as Manitoba in 1992 and Vancouver in 1993), throughout the rest of the 1990s, cocaine remained at these relatively low and stable prices and relatively high and stable purity levels. The RCMP indicate that the droughts in cocaine supply for the areas of Canada mentioned above did not mention a decrease in the amount of Canadian cocaine availability but were more likely a result of traffickers trying to drive prices of cocaine up, by manufacturing a drought.

Throughout the 1980s, coca leaf (the rudimentary form of cocaine) was in abundant supply from (in descending order) Peru, Bolivia and Colombia, and in 1990 Colombia continued to retain its monopoly as the principal centre for processing cocaine. Colombian cartels were the main controllers of the distribution and supply to the Canadian market. However, due to the massive enforcement program started in 1989 to target trafficking strongholds in Colombia, some of the Colombian traffickers moved their coca leaf processing operations to neighbouring countries and surrendered their monopoly to indigenous Peruvian, Bolivian and Brazilian trafficking groups. By 1991, much of the cocaine processing was taking place in Peru and Bolivia and many large shipments were arriving in Canada not only from Colombia, but also from Brazil and Venezuela, both of which had simply been transshipment points prior to 1991. By 1993, Colombia, Venezuela and Brazil became the most important source countries for cocaine on the Canadian market. The RCMP also projected at this point the possibility that since Mexico was a transshipment point for Canadian cocaine, it too had the

potential of becoming a major source for cocaine destined to Canada especially since it was believed that the enactment of the FTA would eventually permit the free movement of goods between Mexico, the United States and Canada.

Multi-hundred kilogram seizures of cocaine were common in Canada throughout the 1990s. Unprecedented numbers of seizures of cocaine occurred in 1991 compared to the previous eleven years. The RCMP suggest in its 1991 report that this might have implied that the dynamics of cocaine smuggling into Canada were undergoing a complete restructuring. Prior to this point, couriers were often used to import a few kilograms of cocaine at a time. However, beginning in 1991, large-scale importation was once again becoming the norm as it had been in the early 1980s. The difference in the 1990s however, was that cocaine shipments were travelling directly to Canada rather than through transshipment points. For instance, in 1992 one of the largest cocaine seizures in Canadian history up until this time occurred when close to 4 tonnes of cocaine was seized from a twin-engine, turboprop transport aircraft, which had flown non-stop from Colombia to Quebec. As well, in 1992 the RCMP reported that Colombian trafficking groups were beginning to restructure their air fleets. Instead of using small executive-type aircraft, they were using larger aircraft that were military surplus stock from the former Soviet Union.

The largest seizure of cocaine in Canadian history occurred in 1994. The RCMP reported in March of 1994, that a ship carrying 5.4 tonnes of cocaine for the U.S. and Canadian markets was intercepted off of Nova Scotia. While the rest of the seizure figures of cocaine for the 1990s pale in comparison to the seizures made in 1992 and 1994, it is obvious that much larger shipments were indeed the trend in the 1990s. The RCMP reported in 1995 that several bulk shipments of hundreds, and even thousands of kilograms of cocaine were arriving by private aircraft and concealed within commercial shipments on board ships, in air and sea containers. For instance, in 1997 the RCMP discovered 420 kg of cocaine in Vancouver in the back of a shipping container load of coffee from Colombia. In addition, in 1998, 264 kilograms of cocaine were discovered in a container of coffee beans arriving at the port of Vancouver from Colombia. This new trend of concealing cocaine within commercial shipments and transporting cocaine directly from source countries to Canada continued to be the primary method of shipment until the mid-1990s. Despite large seizures of a number of these cocaine shipments, the RCMP reported in 1995 that “large seizures do not appear to have an appreciable effect on street level availability.”⁽³⁴⁾ This indicates that the amount of cocaine available to the user population was much greater than the amounts being seized by the RCMP.

(34) RCMP report of *The Canadian Drug Situation: 1995*, p. 3.

Although large shipments of cocaine directly from source countries are still a common occurrence, an alteration in this trend occurred in the late 1990s once again when importation began to occur largely from several transshipment points. For instance, in 1997, there was an increasing trend of cocaine being smuggled into Canada via Quebec transport trucks from Mexico, Texas or Florida. In addition, a common scenario was the use of an unsuspecting young woman to traffic cocaine. In this situation a trafficker in a Canadian city becomes friendly with a young woman and eventually offers her a free trip to a Caribbean region. Once the young woman arrives in the Caribbean region, she is approached by one of the traffickers' associates who pressures her to carry one or two kilograms of cocaine back to Canada with her. If the young woman agrees, the cocaine will be inserted into footwear, toiletries, false-bottomed suitcases or dissolved in liquor. If she is caught, there is nothing to tie the traffickers to the cocaine, and the woman must face the consequences.

By the year 2000, RCMP reported that Haiti had also become a major transshipment point for the importation of South American cocaine into the United States and Canada. In addition, in February 2001, the U.S. Coast Guard intercepted a Canadian fishing vessel in the Pacific Ocean en route to British Columbia with a cargo of 2,000 kg of cocaine. The RCMP report that police suspect outlaw motorcycle gangs orchestrated this shipment, indicating that motorcycle gangs in Canada are still a major group in cocaine importation. The numerous ways cocaine cartels have found to ship cocaine into Canada is reflected in the increase in importation charges throughout the 1990s. Aside from peaks in the number of importation charges for cocaine related offences in 1993 and 1996, which may have been due to different enforcement priorities for those years, the general increase in charges laid for importation offences corresponds with the increasing methods RCMP were discovering that cocaine cartels were using to ship cocaine into Canada.

Colombian-based and outlaw motorcycle gangs are not the only active criminal groups involved in cocaine importation and trafficking in Canada. In the 1990s, there was also an outbreak of Italian-based organized crime groups largely involved in cocaine importation and trafficking. While Colombian and Italian criminals are generally the upper echelon trafficking groups, the RCMP also reports that mid-level traffickers include Asian, Portuguese, Caribbean (mostly Dominicans and Jamaicans) and even some groups of Canadian origin who are also involved in trafficking cocaine in quantities in excess of a hundred kilos.

Jamaican cartels continued to be very involved in the crack-cocaine trade in Canada. In 1992, RCMP officials noted that Jamaican cartels had established themselves in the Kitchener-Waterloo region of Ontario, indicating that crack-cocaine was spreading across Canada. The traditional stronghold regions (Toronto and Windsor Ontario) were no longer the only places where crack-cocaine was available. In addition to seizures made in the Kitchener-Waterloo region of Ontario, seizures were also being made in a few of the large cities in the Atlantic Provinces, Quebec and Ontario.

By 1995, crack-cocaine had established itself in Canada. Since crack-cocaine can easily be produced in Canada, this cocaine derivative was seldom imported to Canada but instead produced by Jamaican drug cartels from the imported cocaine. However, interestingly enough, the RCMP reported in 1996 that five kilograms of crack-cocaine were seized from an individual arriving at Pearson International Airport from Barbados. This was an unusual development as dealers had historically prepared the cocaine derivative on an, “as needed” basis, rather than importing it pre-made. Today, although the crack situation in Canada continues to spread, it has not yet reached the proportions it has in the United States, and RCMP sources state that it is not very significant statistically in comparison to the number of cocaine related enforcement figures.

It has been difficult to discern how much cocaine is being imported into Canada because of the number of trafficking organizations involved and the complicated measures that trafficking organizations will go to in order to delude enforcement agencies such as the RCMP. Aside from an estimate made in the early 1980s (250kg imported per year to satisfy the demand of the estimated cocaine user population), the RCMP did not report an estimate of the amount of cocaine imported to Canada each year until 1998, when an RCMP study was concluded, based on a review of major importations of several different types of drugs for the previous 15 years. Thus in each of the 1998-2000 *Drug Situation in Canada Reports* the RCMP estimate that approximately 15 to 24 tonnes of cocaine currently enters Canada each year. Not all of this is destined specifically for the Canadian market however, as the 1990s have shown Canada is a major transshipment point for cocaine en route to the United States.

Overall, cocaine has been the drug of choice next to cannabis throughout the past twenty years. As will be seen in the next section, cannabis is much cheaper than cocaine (cocaine remained around \$70-\$150 per dosage in the late 1990s) due to its prevalence in Canada since unlike cocaine, it is easily domestically grown. In 1999, the RCMP reported that Canadian marijuana was sometimes used as a currency to purchase cocaine that was warehoused in the

United States. “The exchange ratio is about 3 to 1.”⁽³⁵⁾ However, based on RCMP intelligence from Richmond British Columbia, THC levels of marijuana in British Columbia have become so high that marijuana from this region of Canada can be exchanged with cocaine from the United States on almost a pound for pound basis.⁽³⁶⁾ According to the 1999 RCMP Drug Situation in Canada Report, “exchanges of 1 to 1 have never been substantiated.”⁽³⁷⁾

C. Cannabis

1. Trends between 1980-1985

Between 1980-1985, cannabis derivatives (marijuana, hashish and liquid hashish) were the most readily available and most widely used illicit drugs in Canada. The RCMP reported even during this time period that almost every region of the country could report some sort of cannabis use.

It was in early 1980s, that the cannabis user population began seeking out higher potencies of cannabis derivatives. While marijuana was traditionally the most popular of the cannabis products, according to the National Drug Intelligence Estimate for 1981, there was a shift in consumer preference for the higher potency hashish and liquid hashish over marijuana. This was reflected in a dramatic 79% decrease in the amount of marijuana seized by the RCMP in 1981.

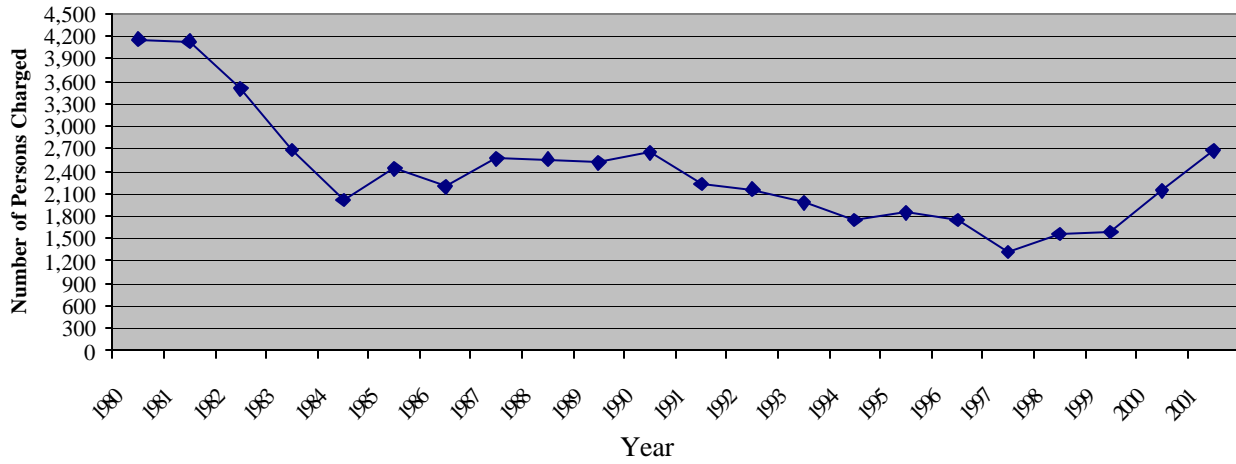
Importation offence charges also dropped in 1981. According to the RCMP this was a result of “new policy guidelines adopted in late 1980 of not charging individuals with importation offences unless they appear to be involved in large commercial ventures.” In total, only 21 682 kilograms of marijuana, hashish and liquid hashish were seized in 1981 as compared to 46,015 kilograms seized in the previous year (see charts). However, despite this new focus, another major factor contributing to the considerable decrease in the amount of marijuana seized in 1981 was the fact that the RCMP did not intercept any large “mothership” operations, which would often contain at least 10 metric tonnes of marijuana. After entering Canadian waters and making a delivery, these mothership loads were not always destined to Canada, but rather to the United States. Nonetheless, when these shipments did reach Canadian soil, cannabis products made their way to the Canadian cannabis user population.

(35) RCMP Drug Situation in Canada Report, 1999, p. 3.

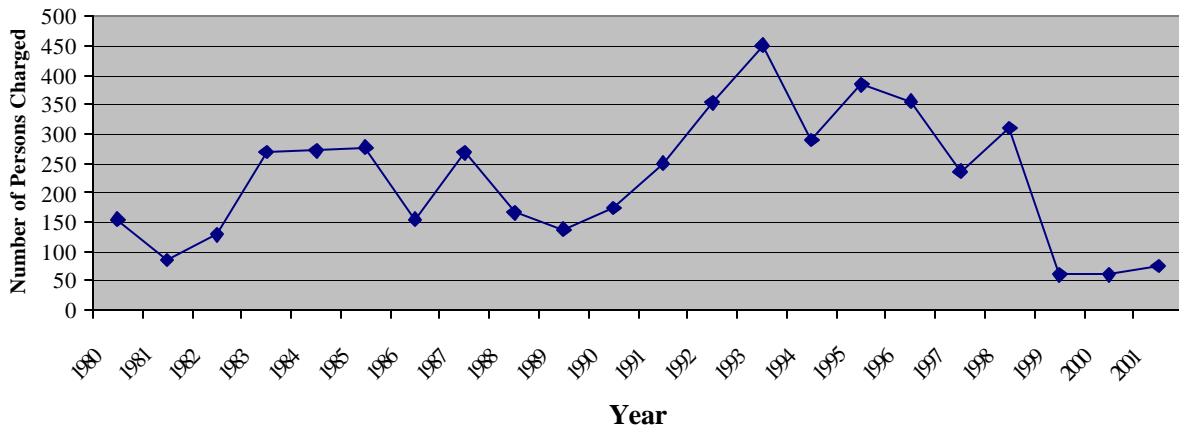
(36) Corporal Stephanie Leitch, Richmond B.C. RCMP Detachment.

(37) RCMP Drug Situation in Canada Report, 1999, p. 3.

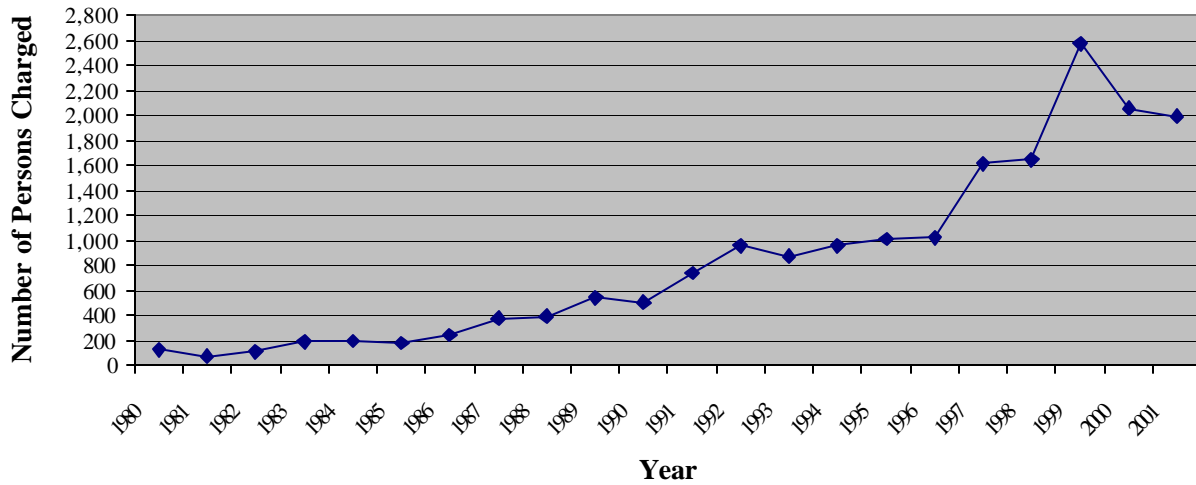
**Number of Persons Charged with Cannabis-related Trafficking Offenses,
1980-2001**



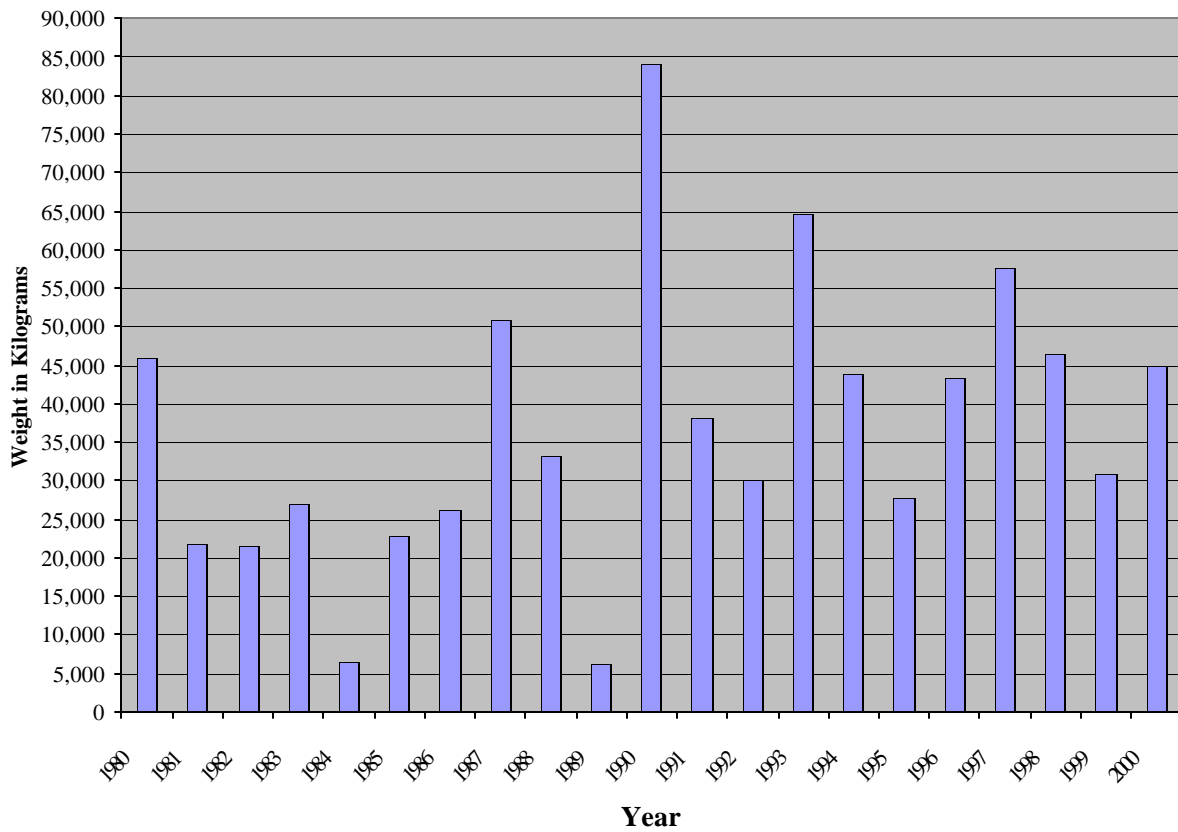
**Number of Persons Charged with Cannabis-related Importation Offences,
1980-2000**



Number of Persons Charged with Marijuana Cultivation Offences



Canadian-related Cannabis Seizures, 1980-2000



The RCMP made a prediction in 1981 that the Canadian cannabis user population would begin to demand higher potency levels of cannabis. However, rather than continuing to favour the higher potency derivatives of cannabis (hashish and liquid hashish), in 1982 the Canadian cannabis user population moved back to using marijuana as the cannabis derivative of choice because of its much cheaper price. While Canadian economic circumstances may have been the factor causing this shift back to marijuana use, this did not deter the cannabis user population from demanding higher potency marijuana. In 1982 the RCMP noted that more potent varieties of marijuana were being developed in producer countries such as Colombia, Jamaica, Thailand, Mexico and even Canada, in order to satisfy the increased consumer demand for higher potency levels. Marijuana was sold on the street based upon the purity levels the country of origin produced. Additionally, "sinsemilla" a type of marijuana that produced extremely high THC levels (14%) because it had no seeds began to be quite popular at this time.

In 1983, the total amount of cannabis products seized increased by 25% over the previous year. According to the RCMP, while hashish was more prevalent than marijuana in certain regions of Canada, marijuana seizures accounted for most of this upward movement. Although this may simply reflect the RCMP's success in discovering marijuana rather than hashish, it was more so indicative in 1983 of a continued growing preference for marijuana over hashish and liquid hashish. It is also a sign that there was an increasing ability to produce higher THC content in marijuana. The RCMP were frequently encountering indoor cultivation and hydroponic installations in British Columbia which produced higher purity levels of marijuana than even the exotic types of marijuana that continued to be imported to Canada in 1983 including sinsemilla, Mexican Red Hair and Thai marijuana.

The amount of cannabis products seized in Canada decreased significantly in 1984, but increased in 1985 to the previous levels found between 1981-1983. In 1984, only 6,430 kilograms of cannabis products were seized in Canada as compared to an average of 23,300 kilograms in 1981-1983 and 1985. The main reason for the decrease in total amount seized was due to an enormous decrease in the amount of marijuana seized (23,361 kilograms seized in 1983 as compared to only 3,844 kilograms seized in 1984). The RCMP attribute this to fewer drug personnel in 1984; emphasis placed on other drugs such as heroin and cocaine; and focusing on higher level targeting. In addition, no mothership seizures were made during the course of the year. Despite this, the RCMP reported that cannabis was still in frequent supply on the Canadian drug market. Even though officials were not aware of any mothership loads of

cannabis entering Canada in 1984, importation from previous years as well as domestic production seemed to maintain the Canadian cannabis population with an abundant supply. The RCMP found that cultivation in Canada was occurring not only in British Columbia where the majority of harvests were still encountered, but throughout the rest of Canada as well.

By 1985, the total amount of cannabis products seized in Canada once again increased to the levels seen once between 1981-1983. However as opposed to previously, the increase was due to multi-tonne levels of hashish being imported on motherships to Canada rather than the importation of large amounts of marijuana. According to the RCMP 1985-1986 Estimate, “two mothership operations were successfully neutralized on Canada’s Atlantic Coast in 1985, while two other similar attempts were suspected to have taken place sooner than drug enforcement personnel could intervene.”

In contrast to hashish which was primarily imported, a mounting supply of domestic and foreign grown marijuana was beginning to be produced within Canada, creating less need for its importation. In 1985, the RCMP reported that Canada was supplying about 10% of the marijuana on the Canadian market especially since as many as three crops can be harvested in the indoor and hydroponic growing stations rather than simply one harvest from areas abroad due to weather changes. Authorities throughout Canada reported increases in users cultivating marijuana for personal consumption in both rural and urban areas.

The modest importation of marijuana that authorities did observe in 1985 was occurring primarily by land transportation rather than sea or air transportation. This may have been due to trafficking organizations closer to Canada, such as Jamaica, Mexico and the United States, trying to take over Colombia’s share of the Canadian cannabis market, since Colombia was being bombarded with enforcement programmes to prevent cannabis and coca cultivation.

These increasingly sophisticated methods of obtaining cannabis products, as well as the consistent amounts of cannabis seized within Canada during the early 1980s correspondingly found drug intelligence officials having to shift their drug enforcement focus. In order to reduce the increasing problem of cannabis consumption in Canada, authorities began attacking the root of the problem. Upper echelon trafficking organizations became the target, rather than users at the street level. Reflective of this shift, the data in the early 1980s shows that importation charges rose by 161% between 1981-1983 and in contrast, trafficking charges decreased by 63% between 1981-1984.

2. Trends between 1986-1990

Cannabis products remained the most widely used drugs in Canada in the late 1980s. Despite major seizures in some years and the lack of seizures in others, the availability of cannabis remained constant in Canada with shortages reported only very occasionally in some areas. Hashish and marijuana rivalled one another as the primary cannabis product of choice, however black hashish (the most potent form of hashish) continued a trend begun in 1984 as the most widely sought after cannabis product. Hashish originated from Lebanon, Pakistan, and Afghanistan and, to a lesser extent India, Nepal and Morocco. Large quantities of marijuana were supplied from source countries in the Americas (predominantly Colombia), the Caribbean and Southwest Asia. Liquid hashish came from Jamaica. Multi-tonne loads of cannabis products were shipped among licit cargo of containers, while smaller quantities of cannabis were smuggled into Canada by land and air, sometimes being smuggled by couriers under the age of 18.

The number of persons charged with cultivation offences in Canada in the late 1980s continued to rise. The RCMP reported in the latter half of the 1980s that there were huge increases in seizures of domestically grown cannabis. By 1987 domestic cultivation was estimated to hold 20% of the total Canadian market, a substantial increase from the previous 10% share. Hydroponic and indoor cultivation became the popular method to produce domestic varieties of marijuana since three to four crops per year could be produced and plants were less detectable than marijuana grown outdoors. In 1986 and 1987 large numbers of indoor and hydroponic cultivation sites were dismantled in British Columbia. By 1986, 17 hydroponic systems had been confiscated since 1982. In 1987, 31 hydroponic cultivation operations within British Columbia alone were confiscated. However by 1990, indoor cultivation activity was also increasingly discovered in Quebec, Ontario, and the Prairie Provinces. While intelligence was able to indicate that domestic marijuana production was increasing throughout the late 1980s by the number of persons charged with cultivation offences and the amount of domestic cannabis being seized, there was no definitive estimate of the amount of domestic marijuana production available at this time.

In addition to increased growth of domestically produced marijuana, another factor in the increasing numbers of persons charged with cultivation offences included the rise of domestically produced liquid hashish. Traditionally, liquid hashish was predominantly supplied to Canada by Jamaica. However, in 1988 the RCMP reported that seven small-scale liquid

hashish laboratories were dismantled in numerous locations across Western Canada (as compared to between 2-5 dismantled per year in previous years).

While domestically grown cannabis derivatives did not prevent source countries from continuing to provide Canada with cannabis products, the increase in domestically produced cannabis products in the late 1980s partially accounts for the decrease in persons charged for cannabis-related importation offences. Aside from 1987, in which the number of persons charged with cannabis-related importation offences increased substantially to 268, importation charges generally decreased in this time frame. However, as mentioned before, domestically produced cannabis products only partially account for this decrease in charges. Importation charges are also highly dependant upon drug enforcement personnel's ability to intercept incoming shipments. In 1987, two mothership operations investigated by the RCMP were intercepted, resulting in an increased amount of importation charges in comparison with the rest of the late 1980s. The RCMP also reported that aside from these interceptions off both Canada's coasts, there was a noticeable increase in the interception of hashish from secondary sources, Afghanistan and Syria.

The amount of cannabis seized in 1989 and 1990 are the record low and high respectively between 1980-2000. However, these two years do not represent a decrease or increase in cannabis availability in Canada. The RCMP attribute the 81% decrease in cannabis seized in 1989 to the lack of interceptions of multi-tonne shipments of cannabis, rather than a decrease in availability of cannabis to Canada. The opposite extreme in 1990 of a tenfold increase in cannabis seizures in comparison to the previous year should also not be misinterpreted as an increase in demand by the Canadian cannabis market. Rather, several seizures were made off the East Coast and in Quebec, including the largest cannabis seizure ever made in Canada until this time, approximately 45 tonnes of hashish floating in barrels in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, near Mingan, Quebec.

Overall, while source countries remained prominent in the Canadian cannabis market, domestically grown cannabis products were on the rise during the latter part of the 1980s. Canadian hydroponic and indoor cultivators developed increasingly sophisticated techniques that assisted in providing higher potencies of marijuana that could compete with foreign grown marijuana. In addition, more liquid hashish production sites were discovered. Canadian cannabis providers were gaining much more control of the cannabis market in Canada,

and thus little disruption in availability to the Canadian market was being experienced when the supply from traditional source countries was disrupted.

3. Trends Between 1991-2000

Cannabis products continued to be the most obtainable and favoured illicit drug in Canada throughout the 1990s. In 1991, in comparison to the 284,000 Canadians who reported use of cocaine, approximately 1.3 million Canadians reported cannabis use.⁽³⁸⁾

As mentioned in the previous section, throughout the late 1980s, marijuana and hashish competed to be the cannabis product of choice. In most years, hashish resulted as the product of choice. However, possibly due to the large hashish seizures made in 1990 (123 tonnes), the first half of 1991 saw a shortage of hashish supply in Quebec and the Atlantic provinces. Thus, hashish prices in Canada began to climb at the beginning of 1991 and stayed that way even when hashish availability began to increase in the second part of 1991.

After this small drought in hashish availability in Canada, marijuana and hashish continued to compete as the cannabis product of choice throughout the rest of the 1990s. However, even though hashish remained in high demand, according to the RCMP *Drug Situation Report 2000* marijuana became the most popular illicit drug in Canada by the end of the 1990s. RCMP data throughout the 1990s reflects a steadily increasing level of marijuana cultivation activity as well as the involvement of organized crime groups maintaining the supply of marijuana to the Canadian market.

As indicated by the high numbers of persons charged with marijuana cultivation offences, in the 1990s marijuana production become increasingly sophisticated, and much more abundant. In 1991 alone over 100 indoor growing operations were dismantled in Canada, mostly located in British Columbia. Not all of these were simply operations for personal use; some were actually 500 plant operations showing an income of \$35,000 every two months. In 1991, the RCMP began to see that some of these large grow operations were producing marijuana not only for the Canadian market but for the U.S. as well. In 1991, U.S. authorities seized 317 kg of Canadian grown marijuana in St. Clair, Michigan. This was the first documented case of a large quantity of Canadian grown marijuana being smuggled abroad for trafficking.

(38) RCMP Drug Intelligence Estimate, 1992, p. 3.

Additionally, in 1992 the RCMP discovered that some marijuana plant operations were financed and owned by certain individuals, but worked and managed by others. Other types of specialization were also noticed in 1992 when several seizures were made of operations solely cloning plants and selling the seedlings to other growers.

By 1993, more than 30% of Canada's marijuana supply was grown in Canada (an increase from 20% in the late 1980s), with more than 1,200 marijuana cultivation operations uncovered during this year alone. While in 1991 the RCMP only had indications that organized crime groups were involved in the cultivation and importation of marijuana, by 1993 the RCMP reported evidence that organized criminal groups were indeed involved in both the cultivation and the importation of cannabis products even at the kilogram level. "Outlaw motorcycle gang members or associates were linked to many marijuana cultivation operations uncovered during the year."⁽³⁹⁾ The RCMP also suggested that cooperation between organized crime groups was essential in order for the large quantities of cannabis to be imported by mothership or by shipping containers.

The RCMP Drug Intelligence Estimates through the mid-1990s indicate that the Canadian marijuana user population was increasingly controlling the Canadian marijuana market and trying to expand it further. In 1994 the RCMP reported further evidence that Canadian grown marijuana was increasingly exported to the United States where one pound could be sold for \$6,000 Canadian rather than the regular \$3,000 Canadian that could be received in British Columbia. An RCMP storefront currency exchange operation in British Columbia established over a three year period, had more than \$10 million dollars linked to the export of marijuana to the United States pass through its offices. BC Bud and Quebec Gold types of marijuana (high THC levels) created a flourishing business for Canadian cultivators selling to the United States, although Canadian marijuana was not the primary source of United States marijuana.

Indoor cultivation facilities were also reported by the RCMP in 1996 to have become increasingly sophisticated and had reached unprecedented levels. A single seizure of a warehouse in Montreal found 11,000 plants in full bloom. The RCMP traced this facility to the Rockers, an outlaw motorcycle gang aligned with the Hells Angels.

RCMP increasingly discovered the high-scale involvement of organized criminal groups in the production of marijuana in the mid-1990s. However in 1997 the RCMP reported

(39) RCMP Drug Intelligence Estimate, 1993, p. 27.

that they were not the only groups running cultivation of marijuana in Canada. Rather, police in Quebec uncovered marijuana “sweat shops” where labourers were brought to secret locations to package marijuana buds and hash oil for market, and to prepare the marijuana residue for processing into hash oil.

As reflected in the number of marijuana cultivation charges, which steeply increased in 1997 and reached unprecedented levels by 1999, Canada’s own share of the marijuana market had increased to 50% by 1998. The RCMP reported in the late 1990s that drug intelligence sources were regularly discovering indoor cultivation sites that could grow more than 3,000 plants. However it was difficult to attack the source managing the operation as the practice of using “crop sitters,” which had initially been seen in the early 1990s, was quite common by 1999.

Thus, in each of its reports between 1998-2000 the RCMP estimated around 800 tonnes of marijuana was being produced per year, representing a harvest of 4.7 million plants per year, given that a mature plant yields on average 170 grams of marketable substance (flowering tops). While the RCMP admit this number seems high, it is supported by intelligence and seizures of marijuana in plant and bulk forms, and in fact RCMP investigators believe this to be a conservative number.

In 1997, the RCMP reported that since marijuana was being produced in an increasingly sophisticated manner, resulting in much higher potency levels, hash oil production in Canada increased throughout the 1990s.

Smuggling of Canadian marijuana to the United States increased significantly throughout the late 1990s. For example, in June and July 1997, nearly \$2 million in cash from marijuana transactions was seized from vehicles returning from the United States. Organized Criminal Organizations were providing their counterparts in the States with Canadian marijuana, often exchanging large amounts of marijuana for smaller amounts of cocaine.

While marijuana production was becoming increasingly sophisticated in Canada, importation still occurred by ship, air and land transport. Regions such as Jamaica, Southeast Asia, Mexico, Colombia and the United States all continued to supply Canada’s marijuana market in the early 1990s. In 1992, the RCMP reported that there was a marked increase in the involvement of Canadian airport personnel, particularly baggage handlers and cleaners, in the importation of marijuana. However, by 1998 when Canada was producing 50% of its own

marijuana supply, only Mexican, South African and Jamaican marijuana was reported by the RCMP as being imported to Canada.

According to the RCMP seizure data, the total amount of cannabis seized each year remained at high levels throughout the 1990s, illustrating that it was becoming much more a part of the “mainstream” illegal drug environment.⁽⁴⁰⁾ For instance, in 1991, for the first time ever the RCMP saw Canada being used as a transshipment point for hashish on its way to Europe. A shipment of 4.5 tonnes of hashish from India concealed in a container shipment of pita bread and chili powder was seized in Toronto. Evidence suggested that the shipment was destined for the United Kingdom.

Hashish and liquid hashish were also imported to Canada throughout the 1990s, most often aboard ships and cargo carriers. In 1993, for example, 150 kilograms of liquid hashish were seized from a ship’s cabin ceiling. Marine containers were also used to transport multi-tonnes of hashish originating from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Lebanon, and Morocco as well as certain African countries. For example, in 1996, two shipments, one of 7.6 tonnes and one of 8.6 tonnes, that had originated from Pakistan were intercepted at the Port of Halifax. In 1998, 19 tonnes of hashish was intercepted on Canada’s West Coast.

The RCMP reported that most often, hashish was imported directly to Canada from the source, however in some cases shipments transited the United States. By 1997, the RCMP estimated that approximately 100 tonnes of hashish was being smuggled into Canada annually. The RCMP based this estimate upon the centralized demand for this product in Quebec, Ontario and the Atlantic Provinces, as well as intelligence of multi-tonne hashish shipments seized in Canada and shipments known to have entered the Canadian market but not intercepted. No incidents were reported over the years of hashish being smuggled through Canada to the United States as it is not sought after in the United States.

The RCMP reported in 1992 that the most sophisticated clandestine laboratory to make synthetic hashish in Canada was seized in 1992. And while no further seizures of hashish laboratories were reported in the RCMP’s reports in future years, the RCMP noted the increasing numbers of importation by individual couriers beginning in 1992. Groups such as the West End Gang (an Italian based organized crime group), and the Hells Angels cooperated in these large-scale importation operations.

(40) RCMP Drug Intelligence Estimate, 1993, p. 40.

In 1999 the RCMP reported that Montreal based organized crime groups had specialized in the large-scale importation of hashish and exercised a monopoly over its wholesale distribution. However there was a decrease in the amount of hashish seized in 1999. The last “mothership” seized dates back to 1998. However, this does not necessarily mean that the importation of hashish decreased. It indicates that a new trend in importation may have been developing in order to avoid police interception. For instance, in the year 2000, the RCMP reported that rather than motherships coming directly from hashish sources to Canada, some shipments had transited the United Arab Emirates, Africa and Europe before reaching Canada.

Throughout the 1990s, the Canadian market for liquid hashish was strongest from Ontario eastward. For instance in 1992, 12 people were charged in St. John’s Newfoundland with conspiracy to traffic. In 1996, the RCMP reported that the most common methods of importation were concealment through ingestion or bodily packing, and larger quantities were also found in abandoned luggage. In addition, the RCMP reported in 1996 and 1997 that there were an increasing number of cases in which liquid hashish had been concealed aboard air carriers, particularly in the toilet compartment and behind panels. In 1997, 75.5 kg of liquid hash was seized in Vancouver from a sea container of Colombian coffee. The RCMP reported that this was an isolated incident in terms of transportation method.

In the early 1990s liquid hashish seizures usually only involved a few kilograms. However, in 1992 the U.S. authorities seized almost half a tonne of liquid hashish, which had been smuggled into Florida from Jamaica by powerboat en route to Southern Ontario. By 1998, the RCMP estimated that six to eight tonnes of liquid cannabis resin was being imported yearly from Jamaica. The majority of liquid hashish seizures were made at Toronto Pearson International Airport throughout the 1990s. In the year 2000, the RCMP reported that Canadian traffickers were not only dealing with brokers in Jamaica, but Florida as well. Florida was becoming a transshipment point for liquid cannabis travelling from Jamaica by boat and on to Canada by land.

Furthermore, on at least two occasions, investigations into numerous seemingly unrelated seizures of Jamaican liquid hashish at ports of entry revealed the involvement of organized crime groups. These organizations recruited couriers to travel to Jamaica on a regular basis to pick up small lots of liquid hashish.

While liquid hashish was largely imported to Canada from Jamaica, the increased production of marijuana led to the increased production of cannabis resin (liquid hashish) in

Canada. By 1999, it was not unusual for the RCMP to discover processing installations when conducting raids on marijuana cultivation sites.

Overall, the cannabis product situation in Canada is flourishing. In the past four years alone the seizure of marijuana plants has doubled. Over one million marijuana plants were seized in 2001. Furthermore, while hash and liquid hashish activity has gone up and down over the past twenty years, in the past four years both types of drugs remain in steady availability. The RCMP continue to try to address the cannabis situation in Canada by targeting growth operations and the upper echelon traffickers rather than targeting people with cannabis products on the streets.

D. Chemical Drugs – Stimulants – Methamphetamine and Ecstasy

According to the RCMP, the chemical drug situation in Canada, inclusive of drugs such as Methamphetamines, Ecstasy, LSD, PCP, Ketamine, as well as several diverted pharmaceutical drugs such as Diazepam, pain killer drugs and steroids, has not posed nearly as much of a threat in Canada in comparison with heroin, cocaine and cannabis use. Nonetheless, the chemical drug situation in Canada has remained a constant problem over the past twenty years. Since “the category of chemical drugs defies easy definition due to the many different types of drugs contained therein, and one chemical drug may be popular in an area one month due to ready availability and the next month be replaced by a different chemical drug which is readily available,”⁽⁴¹⁾ this section will focus principally upon the use of Methamphetamine and Ecstasy (MDMA – methylenedioxy-n-methylamphetamine). Additionally, the discussion in this section will be much more general than the previous three sections, as RCMP data for chemical drugs is not as elaborate given that the RCMP has only recently begun to tabulate synthetic drugs in a systematic manner.

Methamphetamine and Ecstasy (MDMA) were considered Schedule G (controlled drugs) under the former *Narcotics Control Act* and Schedule III drugs under the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*. Both act as a stimulant upon the user. However, according to RCMP Canadian Drug statistics, ecstasy did not emerge on the Canadian drug market until 1991. Prior to this, methamphetamine was the chemical drug of choice of all Schedule G drugs.

Methamphetamine is an addictive stimulant drug that strongly activates certain systems in the brain. Chemically, methamphetamine is closely related to amphetamine, but the

(41) RCMP National Drug Intelligence Estimate, 1985-1986, p. 58.

central nervous system effects of methamphetamine are greater. Both drugs have some medical uses, primarily in the treatment of obesity, but their therapeutic use is limited. Street methamphetamine is referred to by many names, such as “speed,” “meth,” and “chalk.” Methamphetamine hydrochloride, clear chunky crystals resembling ice, which can be inhaled by smoking, is referred to as “ice,” “crystal,” and “glass.”⁽⁴²⁾

In the early 1980s, RCMP yearly enforcement statistics for methamphetamine were erratic. While there were no offences for simple possession of Schedule G drugs at this time, offences did include trafficking and possession for the purpose of trafficking. Seizure statistics for these offences fluctuated substantially throughout the early 1980s. In 1980, 34,969 kg of methamphetamine was seized whereas only 6.384 kg was seized in 1982. However, in 1983 methamphetamine seizures more than doubled 1980s figures with 79.621 kg seized. The RCMP attribute the small amount of methamphetamine seized in 1982 to the increased availability of “look-alike” drugs that were becoming more available on the market in 1981 and 1982. “Look-alike” drugs resembled methamphetamine and other Schedule G drugs, but were legally produced non-controlled drugs.

Methamphetamine has been a constant problem in Canada for the past twenty years because unlike other chemical drugs, which are often imported, methamphetamine is for the most part produced domestically in clandestine laboratories. Consistent with the decrease in seizures of methamphetamine in 1981 and 1982, there was also a decrease in the number of clandestine laboratories seized during this time period as well. And in 1983 when methamphetamine seizures increased far beyond those seen even in 1980, five laboratories were seized in Ontario with a sixth seized in British Columbia.

Throughout the past twenty years, outlaw motorcycle gangs have primarily controlled the manufacture and distribution of methamphetamine in Canada. In 1983 the RCMP reported that “methamphetamine manufactured in Ontario by one chapter of an outlaw motorcycle gang is transported for distribution in British Columbia by an associated chapter of the same motorcycle gang in that province.”⁽⁴³⁾ Furthermore, according to the RCMP methamphetamine was one of the first substances produced and distributed by these gangs, but

(42) <http://www.nida.nih.gov/Infofax/methamphetamine.html>.

(43) RCMP National Drug Intelligence Estimate, 1983.

the development of distribution lines for this substance across Canada, opened the door to trafficking other drugs such as heroin and cocaine as well.

In 1984 and 1985 the RCMP began to report that LSD, a Schedule H (restricted drug) was the most popular drug of all chemical drugs of use. However methamphetamine was still frequently encountered in areas of Canada such as Quebec and Ontario, particularly southern Ontario. Additionally, by 1985 the purity levels of methamphetamine had increased to anywhere between 20-40% over previous levels recorded in 1982, which were only 11%. The RCMP was also encountering new forms of methamphetamine in 1985 such as “green rock and paste” as well as purple coloured and brown coloured speed.

While the RCMP did not report prices for chemical drugs until the late 1980s, in 1984 the RCMP reported that the outlaw motorcycle gangs producing methamphetamine chiefly controlled its price. “The drug is less expensive when sold to other motorcycle gang members than when sold to the “outside.”⁽⁴⁴⁾ As well, in 1984 the RCMP reported it had evidence that some Canadian motorcycle gangs were exchanging domestically produced methamphetamine for American manufactured LSD and cocaine.

In 1986 the RCMP reported an age group between 20 to 40 years of age commonly using methamphetamine, while most other chemical drug usage was confined to teenagers. This indicated that prices for methamphetamine were generally high for one dosage. In 1988, the RCMP reported that one gram of methamphetamine cost anywhere between \$80-\$150, dependant upon availability in certain areas of Canada. LSD remained the most popular chemical drug of use throughout the late 1980s as its average price was anywhere from only \$4-\$15 per dosage unit and thus was available to all age ranges.

Though at the same time, methamphetamine continued to take its place as one of the top chemical drugs used in Canada. In 1987, 424 grams of methamphetamine was seized, and in 1988 the RCMP seized an astounding 6.887 kg. This can partially be attributed to the sharp increase in supply and demand of methamphetamine in the Eastern provinces in 1988. However, the main reason for this large seizure in 1988 was the dismantling of two clandestine methamphetamine laboratories in Kanata, Quebec and Windsor, Ontario. The RCMP also noted a corresponding increase in the number of single dosage units of methamphetamine seized, from only 78 single dosage units seized in 1987 to 307 single dosage units seized in 1988.

(44) RCMP Drug Intelligence Estimate, 1984-1985, p. 52.

For the first time in Canadian history, the RCMP also made a small seizure of “ice” (the crystallized form of methamphetamine that can be smoked). This seizure was made in Edmonton and led to the subsequent investigation and arrest of a person in Korea. This was the first known seizure either in Canada or abroad of “ice” intended for the domestic market, indicating that this form of methamphetamine was becoming more widespread.

In 1989 and 1990 LSD remained the most popular chemical drug of use although methamphetamine ranked close behind. According to the RCMP 1990 National Drug Intelligence Estimate, hardcore methamphetamine users were usually men between 30-50 years of age who could afford to pay between \$80-\$120 for a gram of methamphetamine. Regular methamphetamine substance availability remained unchanged in Quebec and Ontario, and declined in Alberta, however the popularity of “ice” was rising in British Columbia’s lower mainland, mostly Vancouver. The RCMP believed that Asian groups from the United States controlled both the production and distribution of “ice” in North America. The RCMP reported in 1989 that they believed “ice” to still only be in limited supply in Canada as no seizures of “ice” had yet been made in Toronto, a major drug centre in Canada. However a study of street youth drug consumption in Metropolitan Toronto performed by Ontario’s Addictions Research Foundation (ARF) in 1990 found that 24% of street youth interviewed used methamphetamine and 5% of street youth had used “ice,” an indication that “ice” was becoming much more common on the Canadian market.

This was also the first year the RCMP had noted the appearance of Ecstasy (MDMA) on the Canadian illicit market. The same survey in 1990 also found that 13% of the Toronto street youth interviewed had used Ecstasy (MDMA). Later in the same year, RCMP dismantled a major methamphetamine laboratory and an amphetamine analogue laboratory in Toronto. The dismantling of the amphetamine analogue laboratory included the seizure of small amounts of methamphetamine as well as Ecstasy. RCMP also noted that Ecstasy had surfaced in the Yukon Territories. This was the first year the RCMP had noted the appearance of Ecstasy on the Canadian illicit market.

In 1991, RCMP reported an increasing use of ecstasy. While it was confined primarily to British Columbia (the only province with charges laid in 1991), ecstasy was also encountered in other regions of Canada. Ecstasy use is correlated with the increase in “rave” parties in Canada. “These parties, originating in the United Kingdom, are typified by all-night frenetic dance music and use of psychedelic drugs, notably MDMA (Ecstasy), to enhance the

hypnotic effects of the synthesized music.”⁽⁴⁵⁾ MDMA is a synthetic, psychoactive drug with both stimulant (amphetamine-like) and hallucinogenic (LSD-like) properties. Street names for MDMA include Ecstasy, Adam, XTC, hug, beans, and love drug. Its chemical structure (3-4 methylenedioxyamphetamine, “MDMA”) is similar to methamphetamine, methylenedioxyamphetamine (MDA), and mescaline.⁽⁴⁶⁾

While the use of Ecstasy was increasing in the early 1990s alongside the growing “rave” movement, the street price per Ecstasy tablet was \$35-\$45, which made it difficult for the average teenager or university student to buy, compared to the much more common drug of use, LSD, which only cost between \$2.50-\$10. Additionally, Ecstasy was still not produced nearly as much as its cousin, methamphetamine, which remained the most available Schedule G illicit stimulant drug well into 1994. In 1992, RCMP investigators seized in rural Alberta what they believed to be the largest ever methamphetamine laboratory in Western Canada until that time. A total of 8.92 kg of methamphetamine were seized and there were enough chemicals at the site to produce another 10 kg. While methamphetamine was not a popular drug of use in Quebec in the early 1990s, it was produced there. Clandestine methamphetamine laboratories were seized in Quebec in 1992 and in 1993 as well as another in British Columbia. The RCMP noted that outlaw motorcycle gangs still had a monopoly over the methamphetamine trade in all regions of the country in the early 1990s, but police also noticed that courier services and the postal system were also employed to transport small amounts of the drug. Additionally, small amounts of methamphetamine were beginning to be imported from the United States to supplement the amount domestically produced. The production and importation of “ice” continued to be minimal in Canada at this point in time.

In 1993 and 1994 small amounts of Ecstasy were seized in British Columbia, Quebec and Ontario, suggesting a developing market. Additionally, RCMP reported both scheduled and uncontrolled substances were being trafficked as if they were Ecstasy. Over-the-counter stimulant preparations such as caffeine, ephedrine and pseudoephedrine were being counterfeited to resemble controlled substances such as Ecstasy.

The Ecstasy situation in Canada continued to escalate throughout the mid-to late 1990s and began to outgrow the popularity of methamphetamine. While seizures of

(45) RCMP National Drug Intelligence Estimate, 1992, p. 29.

(46) <http://www.nida.nih.gov/Infofax/ecstasy.html>.

methamphetamine clandestine laboratories were made, such as in Windsor Ontario in 1996 where there was the potential to produce 200 kg of methamphetamine, and another laboratory in Alberta, linked to a seizure of 7.2 kg of methamphetamine seized in California, large seizures of Ecstasy also began to occur. Aside from the small seizure of Ecstasy in 1990 previously mentioned in this paper, in September of 1996, one of the largest clandestine laboratories ever discovered in Canada until this time was detected in Port Coquitlam, British Columbia. Police seized several types of drugs including 3.29 kg of ecstasy. Additionally, the RCMP reported in 1996 that police in Montreal were regularly making seizures of Ecstasy.

As “rave” parties continued to become more popular throughout Canada in the late 1990s, by 1998, Ecstasy had become the preferred chemical drug over the traditional LSD and methamphetamine among adolescents and young adults in Quebec, British Columbia and to a lesser extent Ontario. According to the RCMP, although one Ecstasy tablet continued to be sold on the black market for \$35-\$45, the Ecstasy user population seemed to prefer it to cocaine because its stimulant effects last about 8 hours. Additionally, Ecstasy was cheaper than methamphetamine. While several methamphetamine labs continued to be dismantled throughout the late 1990s primarily in Western Canada (19 clandestine laboratories were investigated in 1999, of which 12 were related to the manufacture of methamphetamine), across Canada the demand for methamphetamine decreased in favour of Ecstasy. The RCMP indicated that the high numbers of methamphetamine laboratories investigated were due to several U.S. based manufacturers of methamphetamine taking advantage of Canada’s lack of legislation banning production of precursor chemicals. Some, the RCMP reported in 1999, even stayed to manufacture methamphetamine before returning to the United States.

According to the RCMP, the number of Ecstasy seizures has soared from one thousand in 1996, to about 10,000 in 1997, 70,000 in 1998, 400,000 in 1999 and to more than two million in 2000. In comparison, LSD seizures have significantly decreased from about 25,000 hits in 1997 to a little over 2,000 hits in the last year. Clandestine Ecstasy laboratories have increasingly been dismantled throughout the late 1990s. In June 1999, a chemical laboratory was dismantled in Sainte Julie Quebec where sufficient chemicals were found on site to produce 750,000 Ecstasy tablets. Additionally, in October 1999 in Chiliwack British Columbia, police uncovered another important laboratory with a potential to produce two million tablets of Ecstasy. Further, in 2000, eight MDMA labs were seized in Canada. According to the RCMP, five of these operations were poly laboratories involving the manufacture of more than

one drug. Another one of these eight laboratories was dismantled in a Toronto home resulting in the seizure of 2,000 tablets of ecstasy.

However, despite the ability to manufacture Ecstasy in Canada, the RCMP report that the bulk of Ecstasy available in the North American market is imported mostly from Western Europe. Dutch-based and Israeli-based crime groups have held a monopoly on the International Ecstasy market, although the RCMP report that it foresees that international traffickers of other drug commodities will become more extensively involved in the Ecstasy trade as well.⁽⁴⁷⁾

Since Ecstasy has developed into a significant problem for Canada, the RCMP has begun to focus on Ecstasy trafficking organizations. Ecstasy traffickers range from the individual entrepreneur to organized criminals, including outlaw motorcycle gangs, as well as Asian-based (notably in British Columbia and Ontario) and Italian-based groups. The RCMP also reports that mid-level U.S. traffickers have increasingly crossed the border to purchase Ecstasy from Canadian sources. At higher levels of trafficking, American-based organized crime groups are using Canadian cities as transit points for Ecstasy shipments destined for the United States.

Presently, LSD has taken a back-seat to Ecstasy as the chemical drug of choice. While Ecstasy is still much more expensive than LSD to purchase, it is much less expensive than the traditional drug stimulant (Schedule G Drug) of choice, methamphetamine. Demand for methamphetamine has also decreased due to the rise of Ecstasy on the Canadian illicit drug market. However in the year 2000, the RCMP reported evidence of a possible future increase in demand of methamphetamine.

PART III – USEFULNESS OF DRUG ENFORCEMENT DATA

A. Impact of Drug Enforcement and Drug Policy

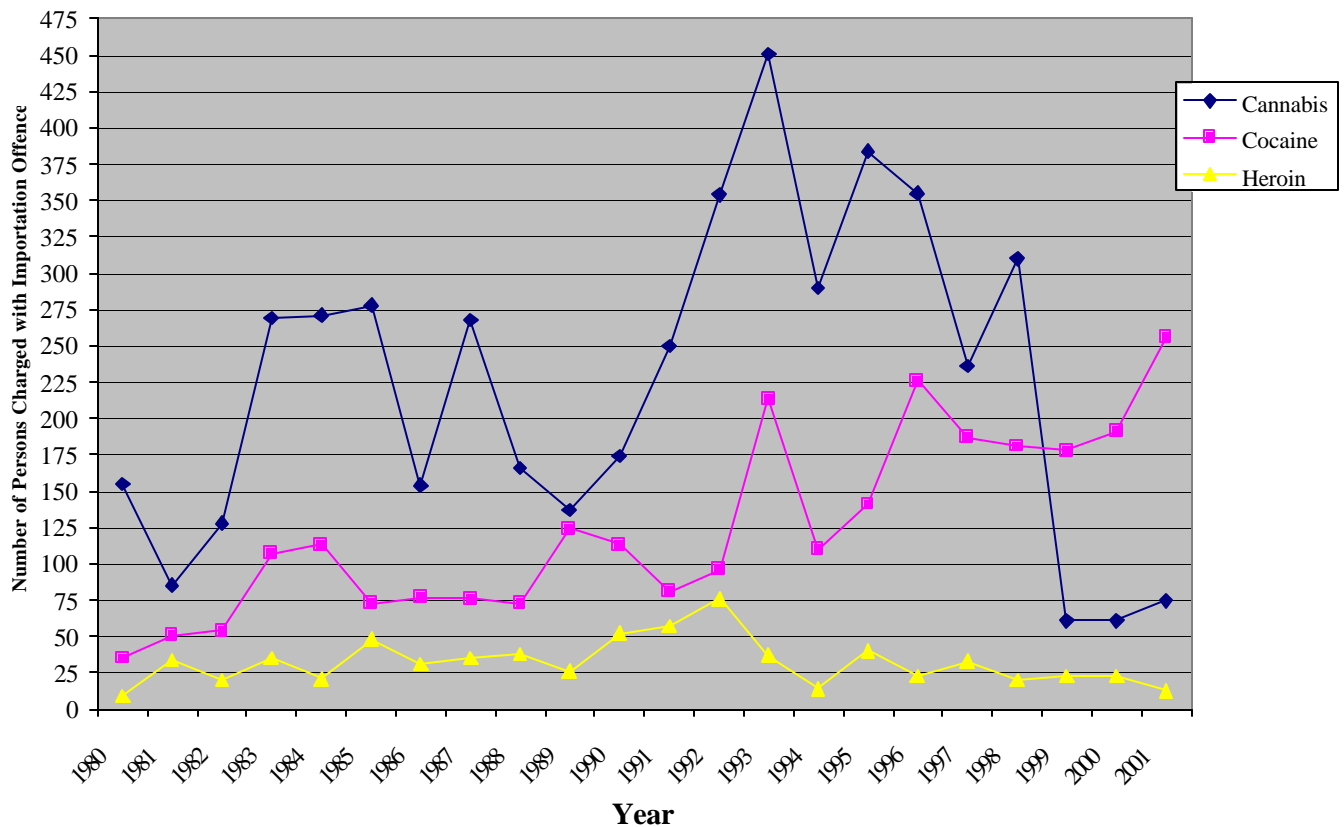
For the majority of the past twenty years, the RCMP has emphasized it has focused efforts upon “upper echelon” drug traffickers in order to try to attack the root of the drug problem. In other words, much of the RCMP enforcement data referred to in this study describes the drug situation in Canada from a supply-based approach. While trends in the drug situation

(47) Chemical Diversion and Synthetic Drug Manufacture, RCMP Report, September 2001, p. 10.

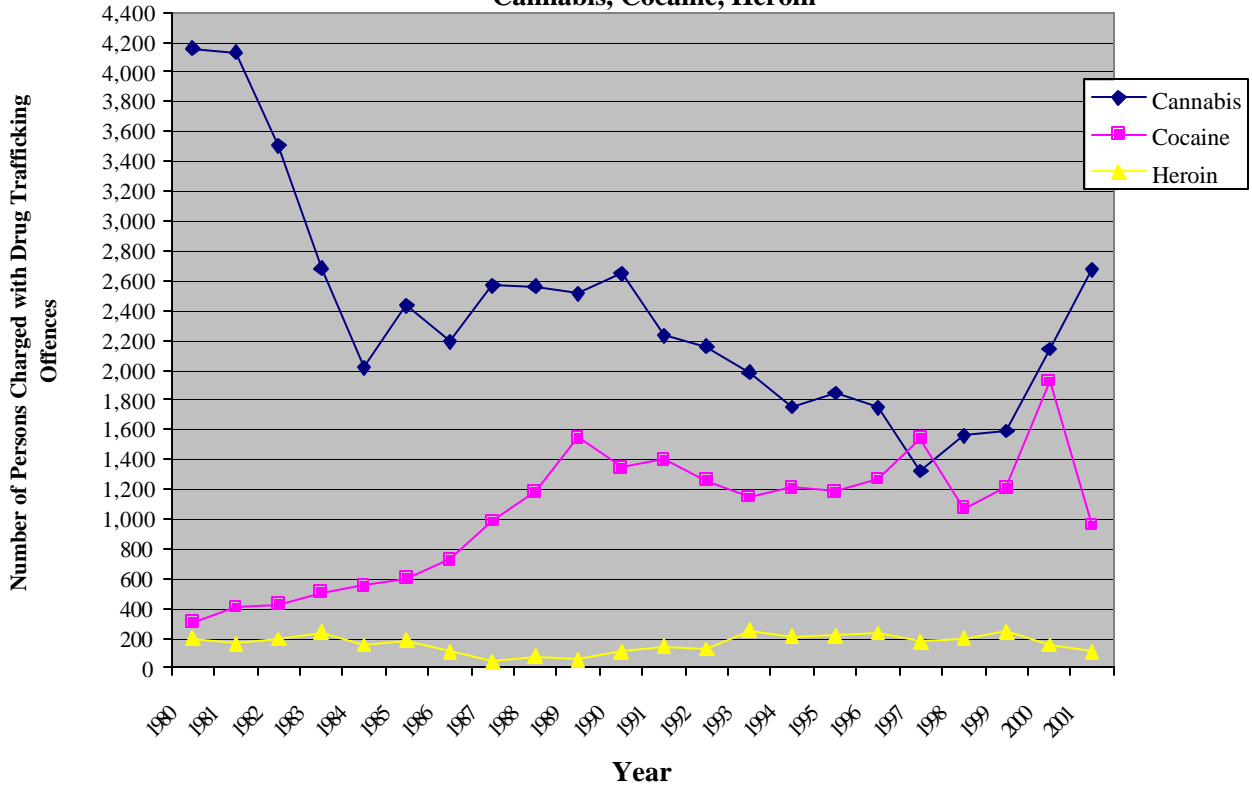
can be conjectured from this, policy-makers must remain aware of the difficulties in using the supply-based approach to draw conclusions and to illustrate trends of the drug situation in Canada. Drug enforcement data is influenced by several factors such as the very nature of the underground drug trade, as well as by changes in focus of drug enforcement measures and the fruition of large drug investigations in some years over others.

This also makes it difficult to determine the impact enforcement efforts have on the drug situation. A comparison of drug enforcement data between cannabis, cocaine and heroin illustrates that other than seizures of cocaine and heroin remaining at fairly low and constant levels, there are no clear patterns across all drug categories in terms of drug enforcement activity.

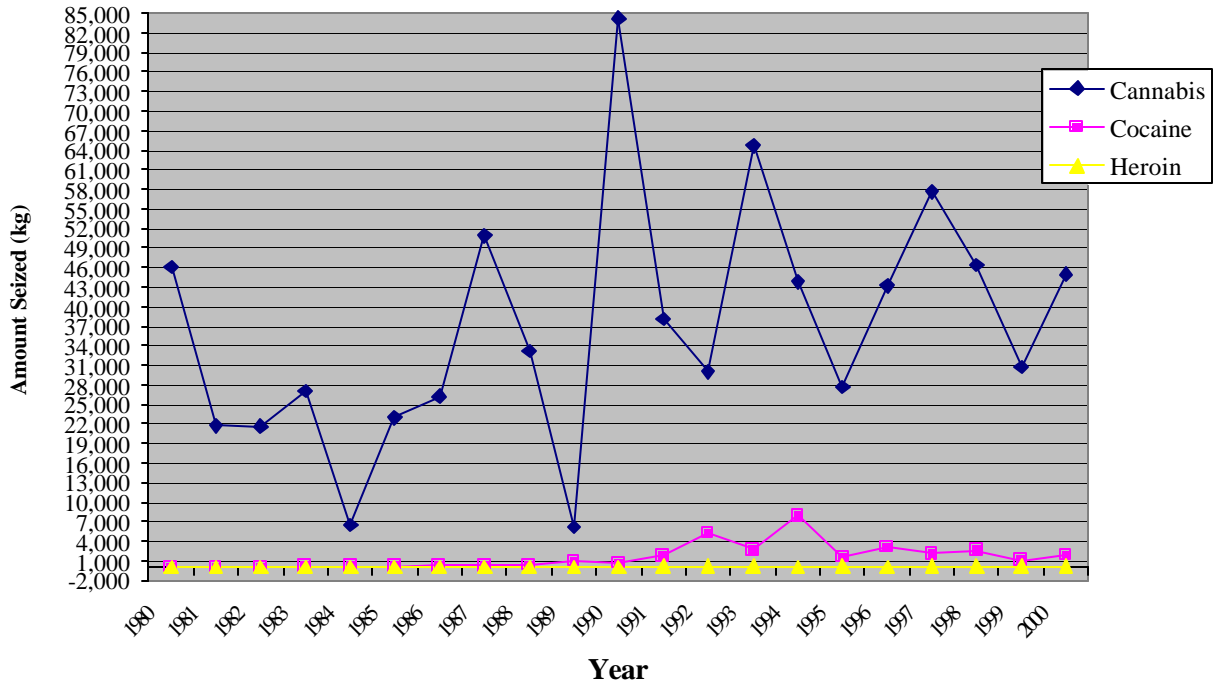
**Importation Offence Charges Compared, 1980-2001:
Cannabis, Cocaine, Heroin**



**Drug Trafficking Offence Charges Compared, 1980-2001:
Cannabis, Cocaine, Heroin**



**Drug Seizures Compared, 1980-2000:
Cannabis, Cocaine, Heroin**



On the surface, the lack of any enforcement trends in the data over the years tends to indicate that enforcement activity does not have much of an impact on the drug situation. Police activity in drug enforcement does not seem to make much of a difference: as was described in the previous sections of this study, there is not necessarily fewer drugs available, prices continue to go down, purity and strength continue to rise, and there is as many (cocaine and heroin) or more (cannabis) users than ever before. However,

while the erratic data suggests that supply is comfortably keeping pace with demand, and may suggest to some that enforcement has had little impact, on the other hand one can speculate that lower levels of enforcement would have resulted in much greater levels of imports; this might result in higher levels of sales and a spiral of demand, at least for drugs of dependency, and a subsequent spiral in prices. One can sketch alternative scenarios. For example less vigorous policing might result in greater ease of supply unaccompanied by any significant increase in demand, resulting in a collapse in prices, less drug-related crime, and so on.⁽⁴⁸⁾

Presently, there is no way to truly ascertain from the data whether drug enforcement efforts are having any sort of impact on the drug situation. Especially disconcerting however is the lack of any discernable enforcement patterns even during the period between 1987-1997 when the *Canada Drug Strategy* was used as a policy measure to assist drug enforcement. The data does not validate whether or not the Canada Drug Strategy helped police make a difference in enforcing the drug situation.

Thus, while the general size of the Canadian drug situation can be gathered from a supply-based assessment, the same methodological problems that prevent an accurate estimation of the drug situation also prevent one from determining the impact of enforcement and policy on the drug situation.

B. Statistical Variances Between Canadian Reports

As it is very difficult to quantify the production, importation, trafficking and price of illegal drugs due to inherent problems the underground drug trade creates, unfortunately, this also leads to statistical variances between Canadian Agencies estimating the drug situation in Canada. For instance, RCMP sources report that often at the end of a reporting year, it must compare its seizure numbers with Canada Customs and Revenue seizure numbers in order to discern the most accurate assessment.

(48) May, Harocopos, Turnbull & Hough, p. 1.

The difficulties that enforcement officials experience in assessing Canada's Drug Situation also occur within other Departments and Agencies. For instance, the Office of Controlled Substances at Health Canada tries to keep track of the number of seizures local police agencies from across Canada make each year. Under section 21(1)(b) of the *Police Enforcement Regulations* under the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*, local police agencies across Canada must request the Minister of Health for permission to "dispose of or otherwise deal with a forfeited controlled substance not later than 60 days after the forfeited controlled substance or precursor is no longer required for the proceeding in respect of which the controlled substance or precursor was seized." However, since police do not report seizures to Health Canada until court proceedings have concluded, yearly seizure data collected by Health Canada is often incomplete until years later, after the original seizures were made.

Despite this problematic method of data capture, the Office of Controlled Substances at Health Canada is requested to provide this data in an "Annual Report Questionnaire" (ARQ) for a report entitled *Global Illicit Drug Trends – 2001* produced yearly by the United Nations' Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention. This report analyzes the evolution of the global illicit drug problem, and Part III of the questionnaire requests countries to report the amount of each type of illegal drug being seized in its own country each year. In its response to Part III of the ARQ, Health Canada admits that

The shortcomings of [our] method of data capture are known, and comments are made on the ARQ to reflect this. It is indicated that "data patterns reflect significant problems with reporting."⁽⁴⁹⁾

Interestingly, the Canadian RCMP Drug Intelligence Unit is also requested to fill out this part of the questionnaire and send its seizure statistics to the Office of Controlled Substances at Health Canada (seizure statistics gathered by the RCMP are from: the RCMP, Canada Customs, Vancouver City Police, Ontario Provincial Police, Metropolitan Toronto Police, Montreal Urban Community Police and Sûreté du Québec).

In a background report from the Office of Controlled Drugs and Substances at Health Canada regarding the seizure numbers reported to the United Nations, the report shows that RCMP data is provided to the United Nations in some years but not in others. The following chart outlines what has been reported by Health Canada to the United Nations in Part III of the Annual Reports Questionnaire for heroin and includes the seizure data that is currently in the Health Canada database:

(49) Letter from Health Canada.

Reported to UN			Currently in Health Canada Database		
Year	Quantity	Number of Seizures	Year	Quantity	Number of Seizures
1996	83kg*	766	1996	74.45kg	1,194
1997			1997	20.76kg	1,096
1998	22.3kg	994	1998	28.29kg	1,403
1999	88kg*	775	1999	9.53kg	1,261
2000	7kg	560	2000	10.63kg	901

*UN report was provided with RCMP data in this year.

(table taken directly from Health Canada, Office of Controlled Substances Background Report.)

Health Canada appears to be making a judgement call as to which figures it will report in any given year and does not explain in the ARQ as to why the RCMP seizure data is used in some years and Health Canada seizure data is used in other years. Regardless, it is a good example of the difficulties experienced in assessing the drug situation in Canada. Canada, like all countries, is experiencing difficulties not only in its reporting mechanisms, but also in deciding what to report as the most accurate assessment of the Canadian drug situation. The numerous estimates of the Canadian drug situation make it difficult to clearly discern trends.

CONCLUSION

Canada, as a Member State to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme along with other Member States has agreed to make significant progress towards the control of supply and demand for illicit drugs by the year 2008 by providing regular assessments of the illicit drug problem. However, in order to progress towards better control of the supply and demand of illicit drugs in Canada, there is a need in Canada (and many other countries) for better methods of estimating importation, trafficking and production of illegal drugs.

While this study has provided a description of the Canadian drug situation over the past twenty years, it has illustrated that Canadian drug enforcement data has several methodological issues. Many of these methodological issues are inherent to the underground nature of the drug situation itself, however several others are related to shortcomings in Canadian data capture. These methodological issues are key concerns that policy-makers must address prior to dealing with the Canadian illicit drug problem. Otherwise, as this study has outlined, three significant problems will persist.

First, it will continue to be difficult to ascertain an accurate picture of the drug situation in Canada or trends relating to it. While an idea of the size of the Canadian drug situation was outlined in this study using RCMP enforcement data primarily related to a supply-based approach, the first section of this study mentioned some of the difficulties inherent to the drug situation that hinder the efforts of drug enforcement. This may be the most difficult problem to overcome, as the inherent underground nature of the drug situation will always persist. However, it is important for policy-makers to at least be aware that it is necessary to be very cautious when reading the data because the erratic nature of the data can lead to several different conclusions.

Secondly, due to methodological issues, the erratic nature of the data also makes it difficult to determine the impact enforcement and policy has had on the drug situation. The cross-comparison of drug enforcement data in the third section of this study makes it quite evident that the data shows no trends in drug enforcement. Even when drug policy was implemented to assist drug enforcement efforts, there was no subsequent change in the data.

Finally, if the difficulties in drug enforcement data were not already apparent, the fact that Canadian Departments and Agencies must rely on one another's supply-based estimations in order to determine the most accurate estimate of the Canadian drug situation should make this quite clear. When researching for this study, the methodological ineptness of supply-based data capture became quite evident when it was discovered that Canada's drug situation is being internationally reported in some instances by using two different data sources in alternating years.

Overall, this study has outlined that in order to make progress on the control of supply and demand of illicit drugs in Canada, there is first a definite need for improved data on the size and trends of the drug situation in Canada. More complete and rigorous data would be an important indicator of the extent of the drug problem and could become one indicator of the success of future drug policies.⁽⁵⁰⁾

(50) David Pyle, Head of the Drugs and Alcohol Research Unit, Research, Development and Statistics Directorate, British Home Office.

APPENDIX

Importation Offence Statistics (number of charges)

Year	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Cannabis	155	85	128	269	271	278	154	268	166	137	174
Cocaine	35	51	54	107	113	73	77	76	73	124	113
Heroin	9	34	20	35	21	48	31	35	38	26	52

Year	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Cannabis	250	354	451	290	384	355	236	310	61	61	75
Cocaine	81	96	214	110	141	226	187	181	178	191	256
Heroin	57	76	37	14	40	23	33	20	23	23	13

Drug Trafficking Offence Statistics (number of charges)

Year	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Cannabis	4,159	4,132	3,505	2,682	2,014	2,433	2,191	2,565	2,559	2,511	2,645
Cocaine	304	410	428	509	554	603	725	987	1,186	1,544	1,343
Heroin	197	160	195	238	153	187	110	44	80	55	111

Year	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Cannabis	2,228	2,160	1,984	1,750	1,845	1,747	1,320	1,562	1,591	2,140	2,671
Cocaine	1,400	1,259	1,146	1,209	1,180	1,270	1,542	1,070	1,210	1,924	958
Heroin	146	129	254	212	217	236	177	197	243	152	112

Drug Seizure Statistics (seizures in kg)

Year	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Cannabis	46,015	21,682	21,569.9	27,012.7	6,430.5	22,939.7	26,250.7	50,882.8	33,173.3	6,194	84,163
Cocaine	43.14	38.528	64.769	116.288	154.433	170.082	247.142	282.796	349.747	959.234	594.658
Heroin	6.587	7.154	12.08	33.011	40.259	64.915	48.108	44.891	68.699	43.847	65.32

Year	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Cannabis	38,115	30,000	64,704	43,745	27,667	43,194	57,626	46,374	30,740	44,916
Cocaine	1,755.43	5,202	2,731	7,915	1,544	3,110	2,090	2,604	1,116	1,851
Heroin	107.36	116.9	153	85	128	83	95	105	88	168

* Statistics taken from RCMP National Drug Intelligence Estimate (1980-1994) and Canada Drug Situation Reports (1995-2001).