

First Do No Harm: What role can journalists play?



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Overview

- AOD Media Watch launched at VAADA in 2017
- Rationale for establishing AOD Media Watch
 - Iatrogenic effects
 - Potential for the media to have a positive influence
- The future...

Potential Iatrogenic Effects

- AOD Moral Panics
 - Increased awareness and use of an obscure drug
 - Impact media “epidemics”
- Stigma
 - Impact on an already marginalised population



20th Century

1960's LSD

1980's Crack (US Only)

1990's Heroin

2000's Ice (Part 1)

METH



BEFORE



AFTER



21st Century – “Legal Highs”

2000's: “legal highs”

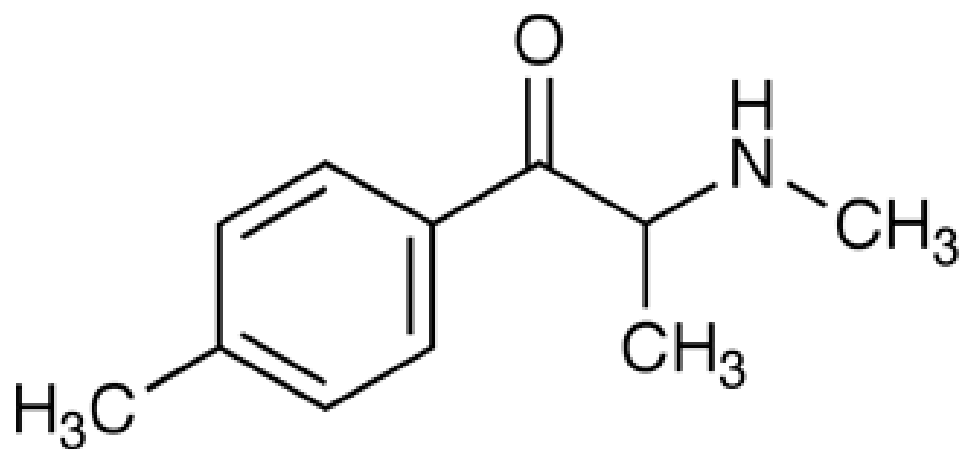
2008/2009: BZP Banned



Mephedrone

4-methylmethcathinone

“Miaow Miaow”



UNION GRIP ON GOVT
 ...

BAN DRUG NOW

MEOW MEOW KILLS 2 TEENS



...
 ...

Thursday, 10 February 2011

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EXCLUSIVE

Lad shoots himself after meow party

By GUY PATRICK
 Published: 07 Apr 2010

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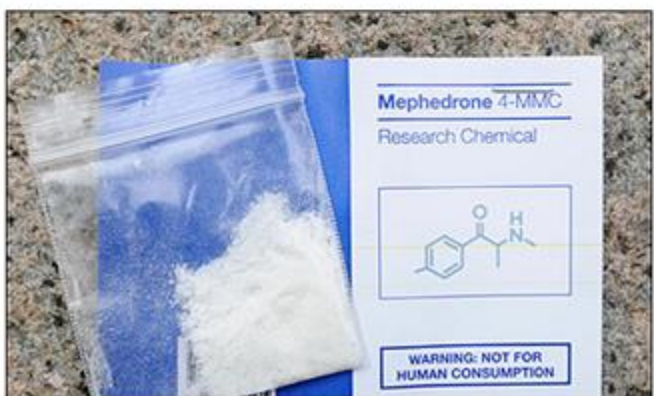
A TRAGIC lad blasted himself to death with a shotgun after a meow meow party with pals.

Wesley Sharples, 23, was found in a pool of blood at his flat and rushed to hospital where he died soon afterwards.

Last night a Greater Manchester Police source said: "There have been reports from his friends that he may have taken meow meow."



Tragic ... Wesley Sharples



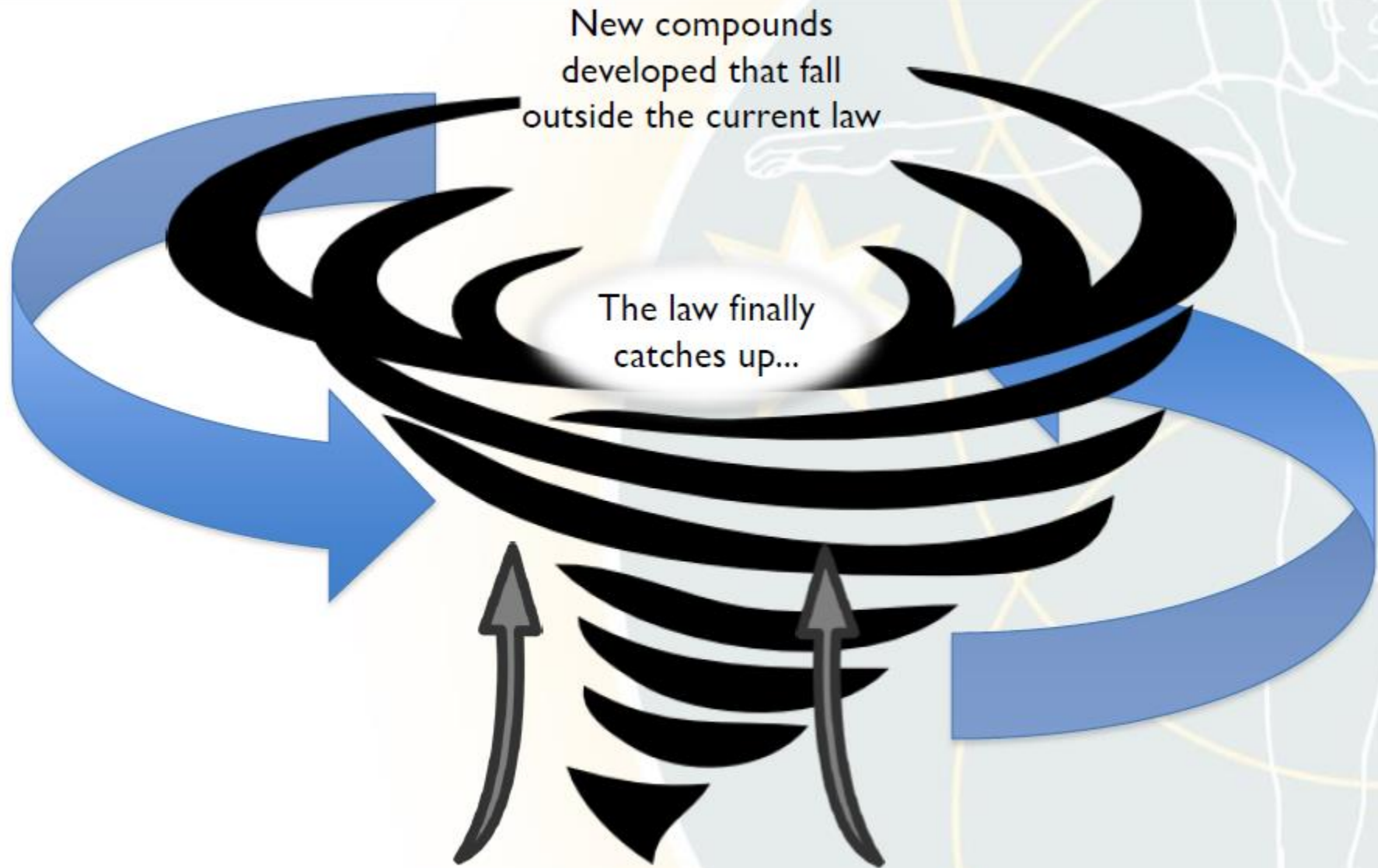
RELATED STORIES



Meow dealer MP's son raided
 QUIZ as police take away £3,000 worth of the 'legal high' linked to at least six deaths

- ▶ Meow meow in impotence link
- ▶ Stars on deadly meow meow
- ▶ NRG-1 will kill more than meow
- ▶ Deadly dither

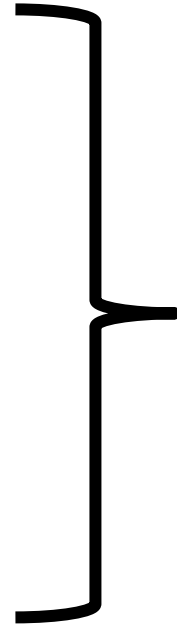
The Vortex of Doom (Caldicott, 2016)



Young people increasingly exposed to growing number of compounds that have never been seen before

Understanding Moral Panic

Trigger/Event



Context

Social Constructionism

AODs might have objective pharmacological effects, but they are also social constructions

These constructions of AODs limit what can be 'reasonably' said about AODs

Since “views of reality are ... culturally embedded, those views dominant at any time and place will serve the interests and perspectives of those who exercise the most power in a particular culture” (Patton, 2002, p. 100).

Who has a Vested Interest?

Say no to drugs.
That way, you'll have
more time to drink.

Budweiser
BREWED BY BUDWEISER



EGGS OUTDOOR SYSTEMS

Q: IS IT TIME TO END THE WAR ON DRUGS?

NO.



NO.



NO.





MEDIA WATCH

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‘Record drug seizure’ headlines highlight uncritical and often sensationalised media reporting

[0](#)

Posted on April 12, 2017 by

The announcement this week of the largest ever seizure of methamphetamine in Australian history has been accompanied by a familiar chorus of uncritical and often sensationalised media reporting. For example, this piece from the [Australian Associated Press](#) cited Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull describing “ice as a ‘scourge’ that destroys lives”. Meanwhile, [news.com.au](#) referred back to last week’s wastewater

Synthetic Cannabis – Event

April 2011: Callers on JJJ

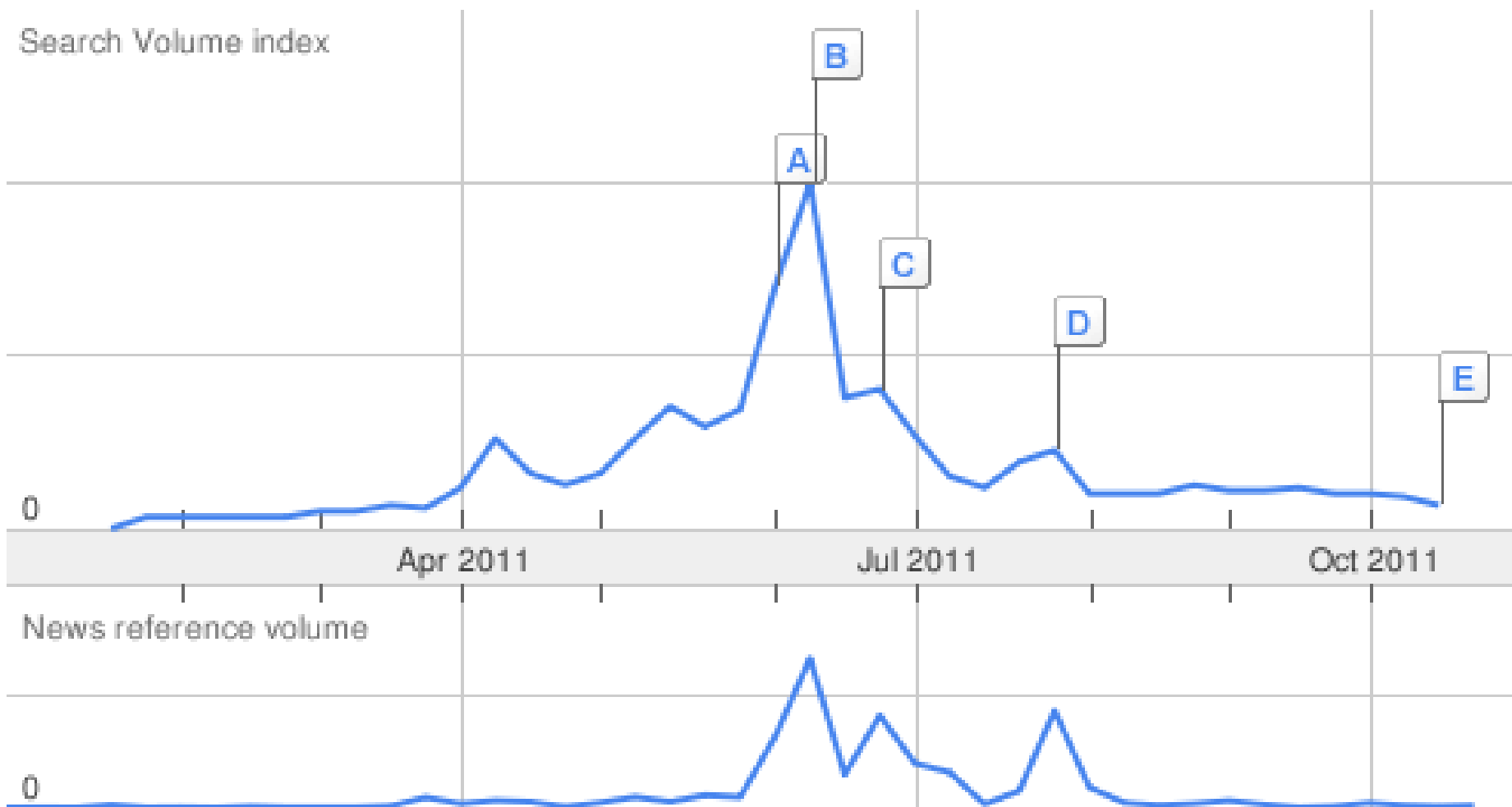
Subsequent moral panic...

WA First to ban



Google Trends: “Buy Kronic” Searches

Search Volume Index



Bright, S. J., Bishop, B., Kane, R., Marsh, A., Barratt, M. J. (2013). Kronic hysteria: Exploring the intersection between Australian synthetic cannabis legislation, the media, and drug-related harm. *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 24, 231-237.

Further Legislative Actions

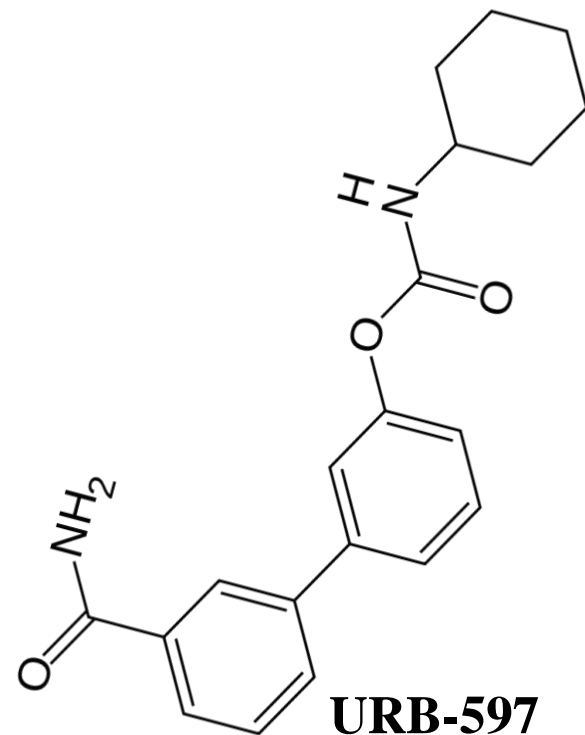
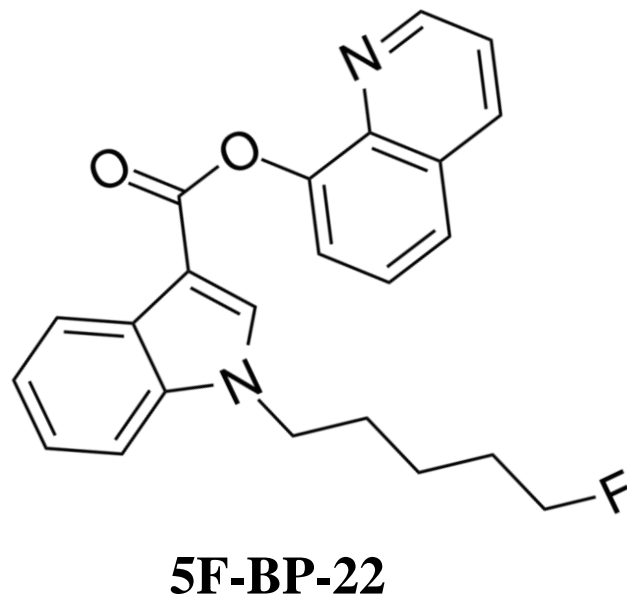
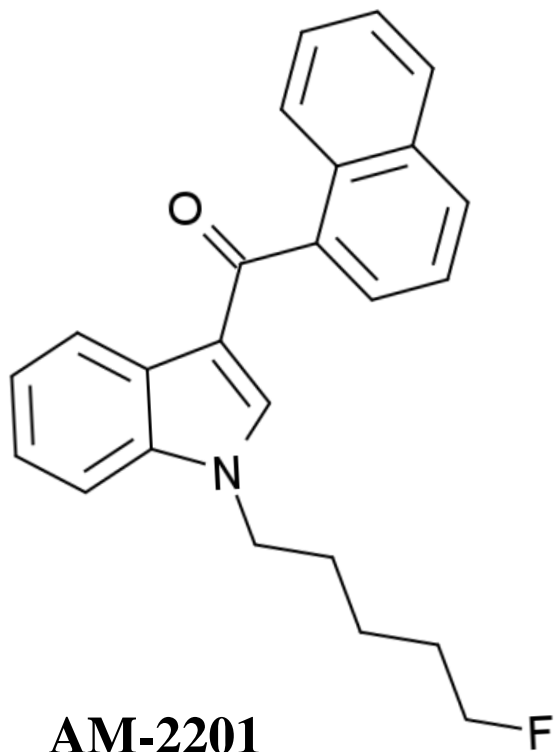
Federal:

- July 2011: 7 individual chemicals
- May 2012: Broad groups + “Synthetic Cannabinomimetics”
- June 2013: Consumer law re: more individual chemicals

State:

- 2011: WA (again), NSW, ACT, SA, NT & VIC
- 2013: TAS, QLD & NSW
- 2015: WA bans things with a “psychoactive effect”
- 2017: Victoria bans things with a “psychoactive effect”

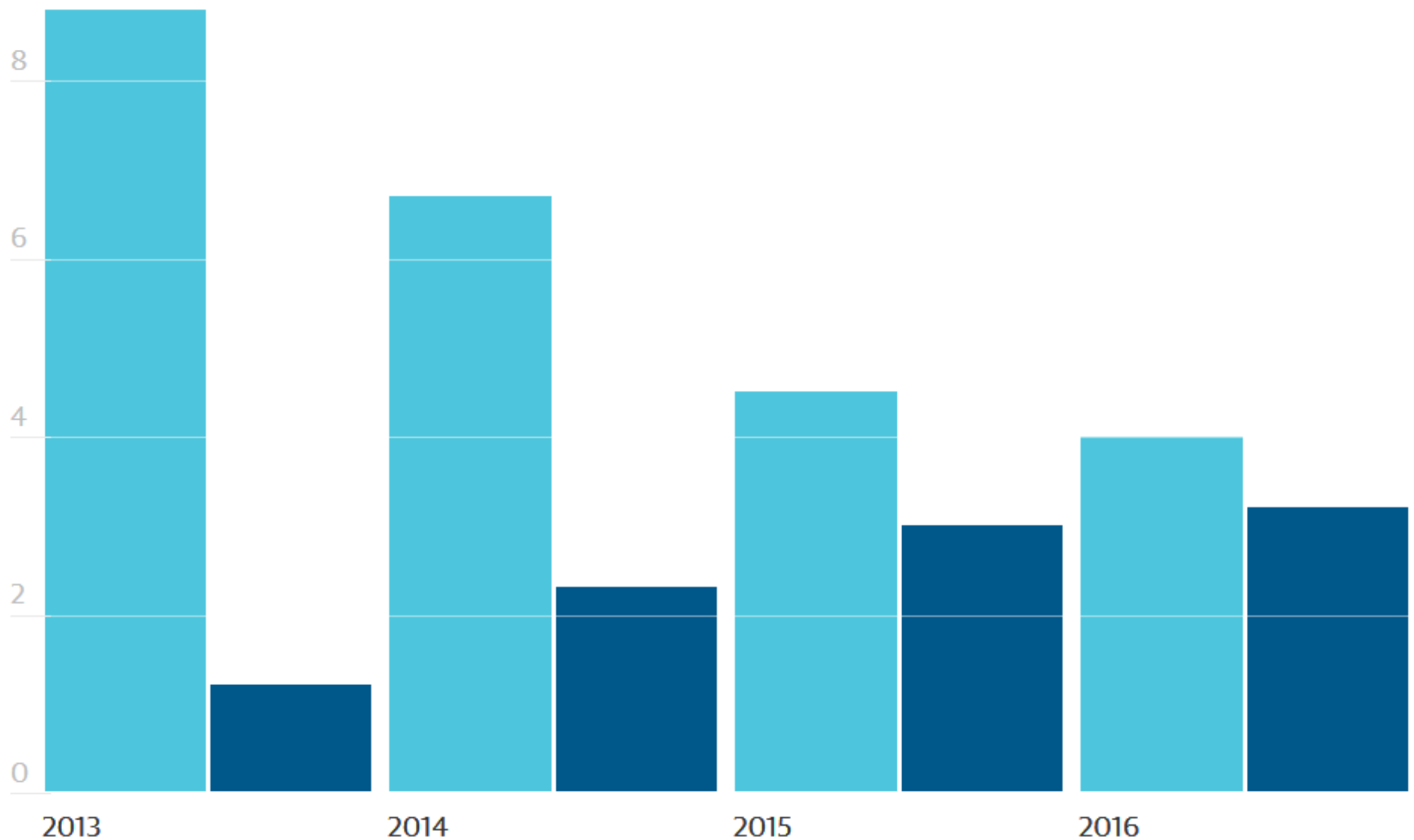
More New Chemicals



Harms (2012+)

■ % purchased 'legal highs' in last 12 months

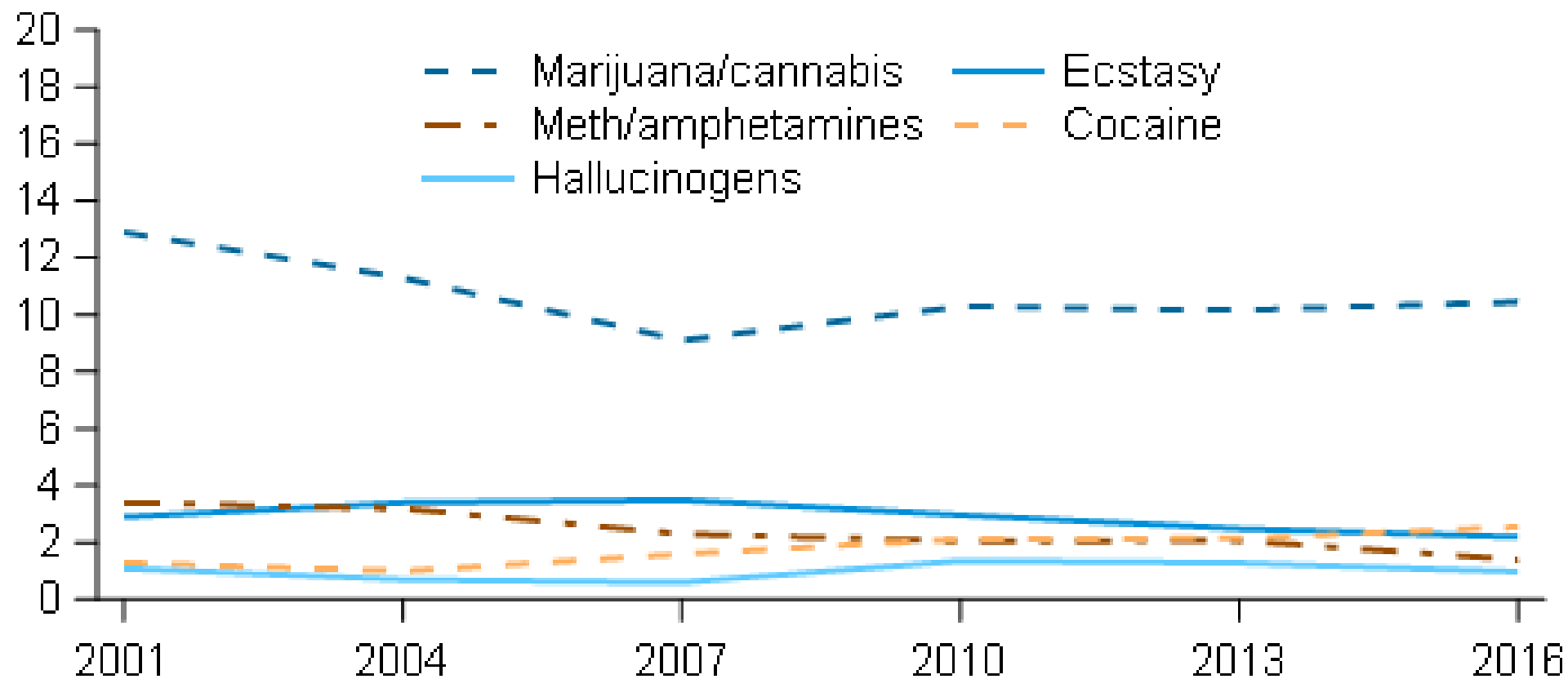
■ % sought emergency medical treatment in last 12 months due to 'legal highs'



The “Ice Epidemic” Part II

“A sudden, widespread occurrence of an undesirable phenomenon” (Oxford Dictionary)

Per cent



Drug report finds WA exceeding averages in 'explosion' in methylamphetamine use

By Nikki Roberts and Tom Wildie

Updated 26 Mar 2017, 2:22pm



PHOTO: ACIC's Chris Dawson and the Federal Justice Minister Michael Keenan discuss the report's findings.
(ABC News: Irena Ceranic)

Methylamphetamine is the most consumed illicit drug in the country and Western Australians and South Australians are the biggest culprits, according to researchers who studied wastewater from 51 sites across Australia.

RELATED STORY: [Tasmania's mixed results in ACIC wastewater drug report](#)

RELATED STORY: [Ice taskforce grapples with drug epidemic, as SA rehab services stretched](#)

RELATED STORY: ['Motivated by reward': Hong Kong man jailed over record WA ice haul](#)



MEDIA WATCH

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Wastewater drug monitoring: Never let the evidence get in the way of a good story

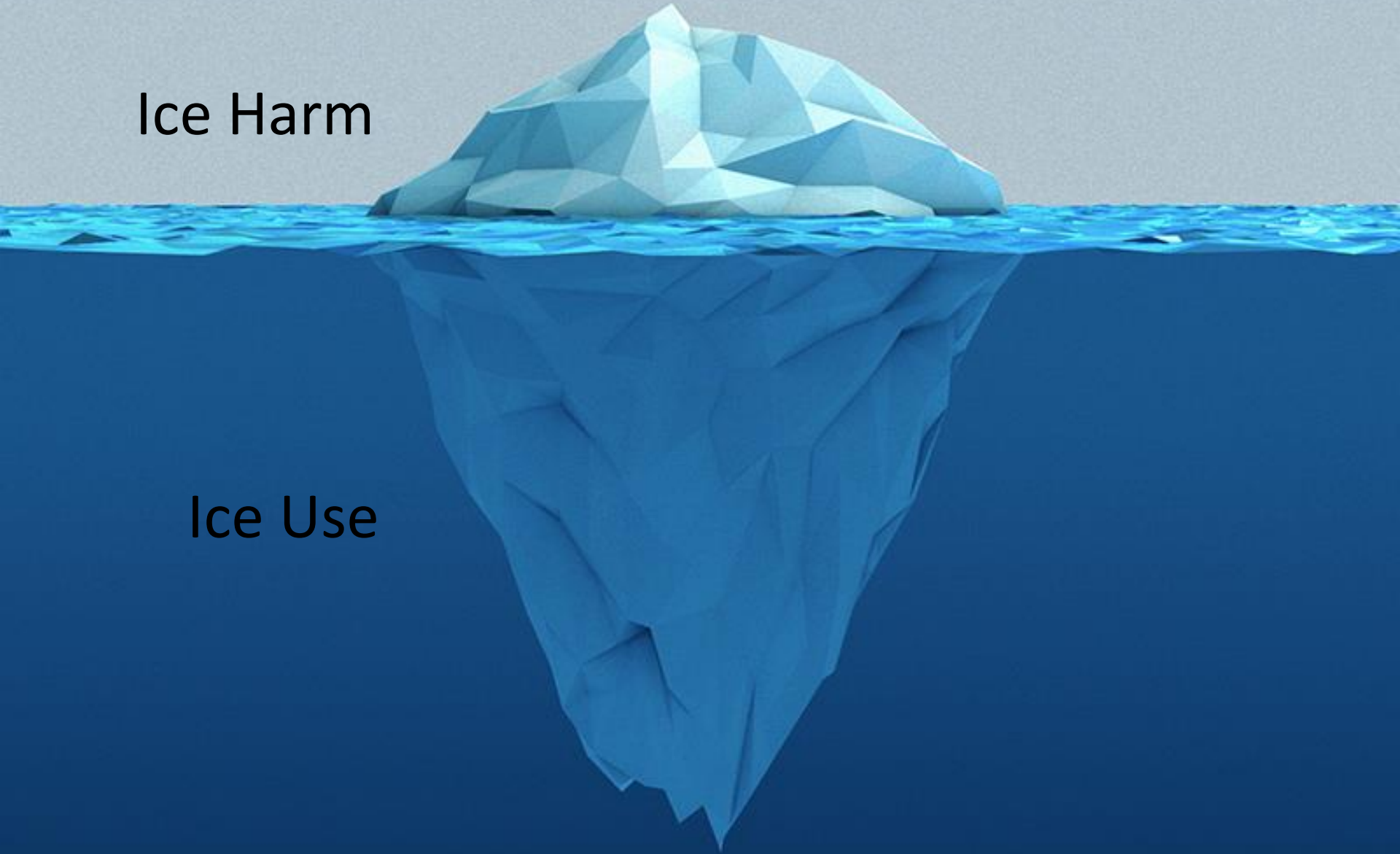
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Posted on April 6, 2017 by

Methamphetamine is back at the forefront of national attention, thanks to the framing of new wastewater analysis data as further evidence of a national 'ice epidemic'. The reality, of course, is more complex. On the 26th of March the Australian Criminal Intelligence Centre (ACIC) disseminated [media releases](#) that were tailored to each state citing findings from the [first National Wastewater Drug Monitoring Program report](#). These media releases led to the latest round of [hyperbolic media coverage](#) about illicit drug use in Australia, predominantly focused on methamphetamine.

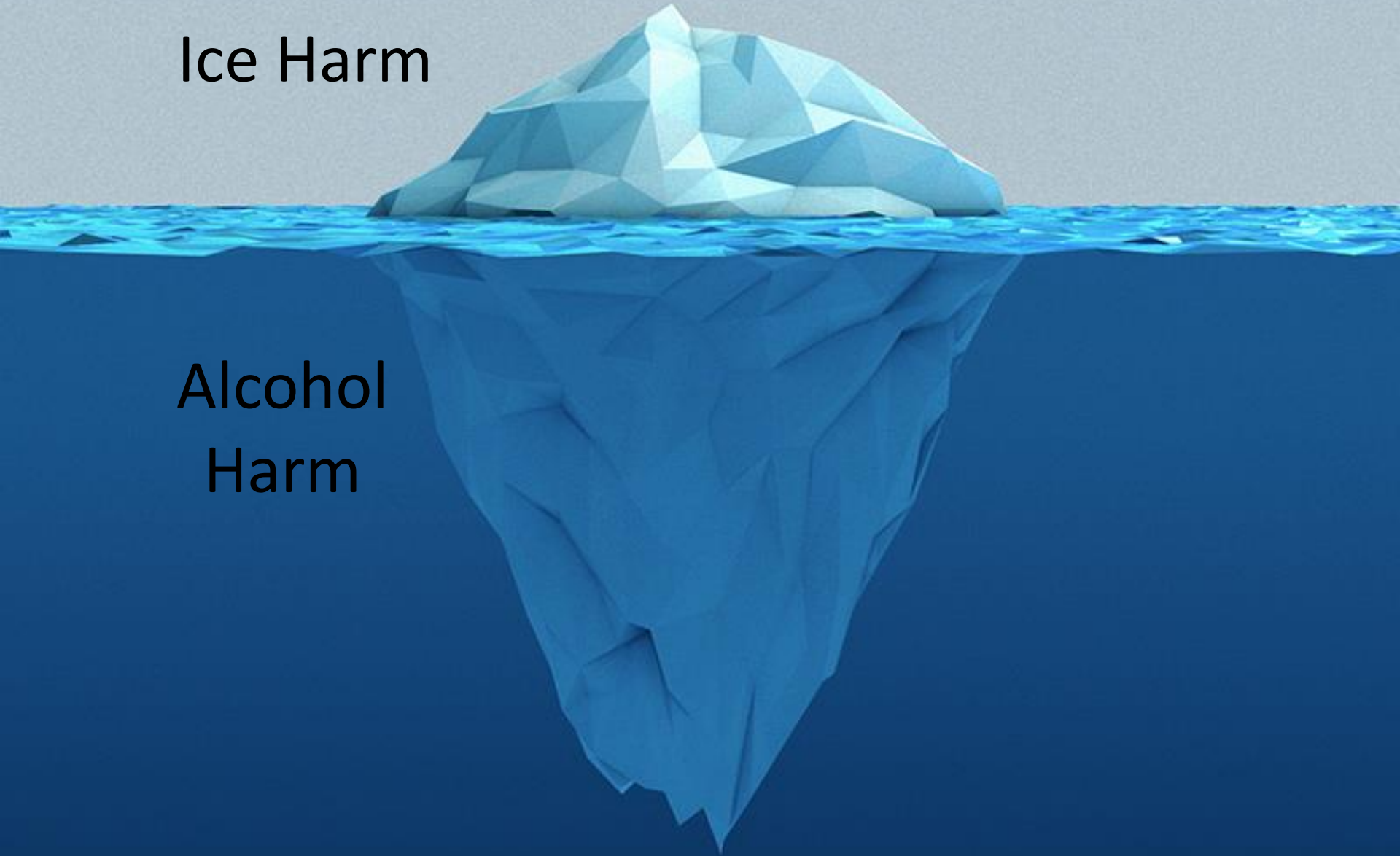
Ice Harm

Ice Use



Ice Harm

Alcohol
Harm



Alcohol-related harm

26% of Australians report that they consumed alcohol consumption at levels that placed them at-risk of acute harm on a monthly basis!!

- accidents, assaults, domestic violence, MVA, Rx, employment issues, relationship problems (e.g., affair)

47% homicides in Australia between 2000 and 2006 were classified as alcohol-related

15.4% of people who try alcohol will develop dependence

Credibility of Media

Flakka the new 'Zombie Drug' taking over Australia

The latest drug to hit Australia sounds like 'slacker' but turns users into 'zombies'. - by [Faye James](#)



What is the drug 'flakka'?

As recently as June this year Alpha-PVP – known on the street as flakka – pronounced Flack-er (like slacker) – has been added to the poisons list in Australia. According to the TGA, Flakka has “significant stimulant and psychoactive effects ... [and] human use has resulted in death.”

How do you take Flakka?

According to the [NZ Drug Foundation](#), flakka can be smoked, inhaled, injected or swallowed, and can even be vaped using an e-cigarette. As harmless as vaping might sound, it allows the drug to enter the bloodstream really quickly making it “particularly easy to overdose” according to [drugabuse.gov](#).



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How does addiction work?

LAW & ORDER

Fears over killer new drug Monkey Dust

ALEKS DEVIC, Herald Sun

January 7, 2019 5:35pm

 Subscriber only



A disturbing new drug called “monkey dust”, which is being passed off as ecstasy on dancefloors and at music festivals nationwide, has triggered a major health alert.

Authorities warn the cheap and potentially lethal drug, also known as bath salts or MDPV, can cause psychosis.

Its hallucinogenic effects are so strong, some users believe they are superhuman and jump off buildings or in front of cars, or bang their heads into walls.

Schoolies on Gold Coast claim they spent thousands on ‘nangs’ and alcohol

Amanda Robbmond, Brianna Morris-Grant, Gold Coast Bulletin

November 29, 2018 10:00pm

 Subscriber only



TEENAGERS are spending thousands of dollars buying canisters, also known as “nangs”, during Schoolies celebrations on the Gold Coast.

The nangs, filled with nitrous oxide, are inhaled and considered the new drug of choice, schoolies in Surfers Paradise this week say.

The canisters are normally used for whipped cream chargers.

Stigma

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PIE-TIGER MATES TO CLASH

TRADES UNPLUGGED

FREE GLOSSY TIGERS POSTER

YELLOW & BLACK

EXCLUSIVE Carpark junkie den metres from Parliament

HIGH END OF TOWN

ANTHONY DOWSLEY

HEROIC junkies are brazenly showing up in a CBD carpark just metres from Parliament House.

The Wilson Parking multi-level lot in the so-called "Paris end of Melbourne" has become a steady den for drug users injecting heroin in full view of dressed shoppers, tourists and workers.

The Herald Sun has captured confronting images of men injecting in Ulice Collins St's Parkade, opposite Lapino restaurant — a popular haunt for nurses and doctors — and a street's throw from Parliament.

FULL REPORT, PAGE 8-9

Shorten defied as TPP angst leaks

ANGST over would-be prime minister Bill Shorten's support for a controversial trade deal has prompted an act of open defiance of the Opposition Leader.

Minutes of a heated meeting of federal Labour MPs last week have been leaked, revealing widespread internal opposition to Mr Shorten's support of the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal.

Speaker after speaker denounced the TPP, saying it was bad for workers and would hurt the party with voters, possibly driving some into the arms of One Nation leader Pauline Hanson.

The leak is a breach of Labor Party discipline unprecedented in recent times.

A "right majority" of the 23 MPs who spoke — from both Left and Right — opposed the TPP.

CONTINUED PAGE 4

The Daily Telegraph

WEST GOES FOR GOLD

8.51am on the streets of Sydney's CBD

A SHOT IN THE HEART

SPECIAL REPORT Our drug crisis laid bare

BALI DEATH RIDE

The Future

AOD Media Watch has published over 50 articles

We have over 1000 FB Followers at 800 Twitter followers

We aim to increase our focus on reinforcing positive media coverage with the inaugural award for good journalism being awarded to Ian Royale at the VAADA dinner

The future

Journalists can create an environment in which there is space for public dialogue about evidence-based policy (e.g., pill testing)

Journalists can provide harm reduction information and demand reduction services

AOD Mainframes will be launching guidelines for the responsible reporting of AOD-related issues

Thank You



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