

Annual Summary – 2013

1. Introduction

Drug Free Australia has continued to work with its dedicated group of volunteers and growing numbers of affiliates to achieve its mission in 2013. The following is an update on activities undertaken this year, as well as projections for 2014.

2. Who we are:



Dr Margaret Court
Patron

Major Brian Watters AO
President

Gary Christian
Secretary/Research

Herschel Baker
Affiliates Liaison

Dr Ross Colquhoun
Financial/Strategy

Jo Baxter
Executive Officer

10-Point Plan

PART A – INTERNAL / MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT

Point 1	To establish a national database of organisations and individuals who are committed to the Federal Governments anti drugs policy.
Point 2	To communicate with these organisations and individuals on a regular basis through online and printed publications (eg. <i>newsletters, websites, journals and other correspondence</i>) and to mobilise them when there is media debate regarding drugs issues.
Point 3	The establishment and maintenance of a comprehensive web-site

PART B - EXTERNAL – PUBLIC AND MEDIA

Point 4	To conduct and coordinate research activities regarding the drug issues generally both here and overseas and produce appropriate papers and publications regarding same.
Point 5	To co-ordinate visits of overseas anti drugs experts and to facilitate seminars and media activities for these people. Regular seminars and media activities to be arranged for local experts.
Point 6	To co-ordinate a national media response to pro drug activists when they are active in the media. For this purpose appropriate expert spokesman to be made available to the media.
Point 7	To facilitate regular media releases to all suburban and metropolitan media regarding local anti-drug issues. Local members of parliament to be fully informed and resourced as appropriate.

PART C - EXTERNAL – GOVERNMENT, GOVERNMENT AGENCIES & OTHER POLITICAL REPRESENTATIVES

Point 8	As required liaise with and assist Government and other Government agencies (including Police) regarding the Government anti drugs message and other anti drugs initiatives.
Point 9	To prepare documentation and submissions to parliamentary inquiries
Point 10	To inform and resource local members of parliament as appropriate. Also to assist with the coordinating of visiting local and international anti drugs experts to meet with members of all levels of government, and other departmental and government agency representatives.

3. Key Achievements - 2013

Child Safety booklets

A new initiative has been undertaken this year, which has been fully sponsored by an increasing and diverse range of community/business sponsors. This is the production of three (3) Child Safety booklets, which have been distributed to schools and community groups.

The books are now available on our website at the following links:

http://www.drugfree.org.au/fileadmin/Media/Newsletter/DFA_Booklet_March_2013.pdf

http://www.drugfree.org.au/fileadmin/Media/Newsletter/DFA_Booklet_June_2013.pdf

http://www.drugfree.org.au/fileadmin/Media/Newsletter/DFA_Handbook-E3-2013_.pdf

Hard copies are available on request.

Affiliations

Thanks to the dedicated hard work of our Queensland Director, Herschel Baker, Drug Free Australia's national and international affiliate list is growing in support of DFA's Position Statement on illicit drug legalization. Herschel has provided the following summary:

- DFA has 205 Affiliates
- DFA has 150 names of supporting organizations and individuals
- NGO logos on the home page has reached 126
- DFA has affiliates in 57 countries.

Go to http://www.drugfree.org.au/fileadmin/Media/Global/NGO_Affiliates_20131121.pdf

Links with Dalgarno Institute and School Seminars

Through our close links with the Dalgarno Institute and the formation of a South Australian campus, two large seminars were conducted at Golden Grove High School in April and August each for 200 + Year 9 students. Feedback was very positive from both students and teaching staff. DFA is also linked to Dalgarno's NSW campus.

DFA has also thrown its support behind Dalgarno's 21 Be There program – MLDA21 project. Jo Baxter has taken on the role of Campus Coordinator and participated in the National Forum in Canberra on June 18. After a successful outcome, and great community feedback she then coordinated a South Australian Forum at the Hive Youth Centre in Modbury on 17 October.

On 21 October Professor John Toumbourou, from Deakin University and Jo Baxter, representing Drug Free Australia and as Dalgarno's coordinator in SA, presented to the Social Development Committee's South Australian Parliamentary Inquiry into the Sale and Consumption of Alcohol. The submission was received positively by the Committee, with great interest in what could be done to curb underage binge drinking and particularly Professor Toumbourou's range of research.

Submission to the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into the Use of Marijuana for Medical Purposes

DFA made two major submissions to the NSW Parliament in 2013. There was significant success in the one related to The Use of Marijuana for Medical Purposes, by virtue of the fact that the NSW Parliament has rejected 'medical marijuana' as a safe option for such purposes.



Research Paper on Cannabis Harms Accepted by International Journal

Members of DFA joined together to produce a paper which was published in the Journal of Global Drug Policy and Practice early 2013. It was entitled 'The Use of Cannabis for Medical Purposes', J. Baxter, H. Baker & A. S. Reece MD. To access the publication go to:

<http://globaldrugpolicy.org/Issues/Vol%207%20Issue%201/The%20Use%20of%20Cannabis%20for%20Medical%20Purposes%20sm.pdf>

Submission to the NSW Parliament on Drug Treatment Services

DFA made a comprehensive, evidence-based submission to the NSW Parliament's General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2 – 'Enquiry into Drug and Alcohol Treatment in NSW' on 1 March 2013. It related to the delivery and effectiveness of treatment services for those addicted to drugs and/or alcohol, including naltrexone treatment, with reference to the welfare and health of individuals dependent on illicit drugs and the impact on their families, carers and the community. A copy can be made available on request or accessed at our website: www.drugfree.org.au

Other Approaches to Government

When DFA funding was provided by the Howard Government under their 'Tough on Drugs' policy in 2006, DFA was **able to achieve every objective on its 10 point plan** and develop a constructive way forward for prevention from the use and harms of illicit drugs. However when funding was not renewed in 2009, despite a very positive independent evaluation, it was decided that a new approach should be made with the recent change of Federal Government. A comprehensive submission entitled 'Towards a Healthier Australia', was produced, which offered a diverse range of prevention project opportunities. While it is expected that, in the current economic climate, there will be little funding made available, DFA wants to continue the conversation with government and high profile government links. In so doing is hoped that the many highly qualified professionals and research Fellows who support DFA's stance on primary prevention and protection for our children and youth will be consulted on crucial issues in the not too distant future.

Future projections – 2014

- To build on and grow our supporter/affiliate base, establishing working projects where appropriate
- To seek funding through government and corporate sponsorship
- To implement objectives set out in the Project Submission developed in September/October 2013