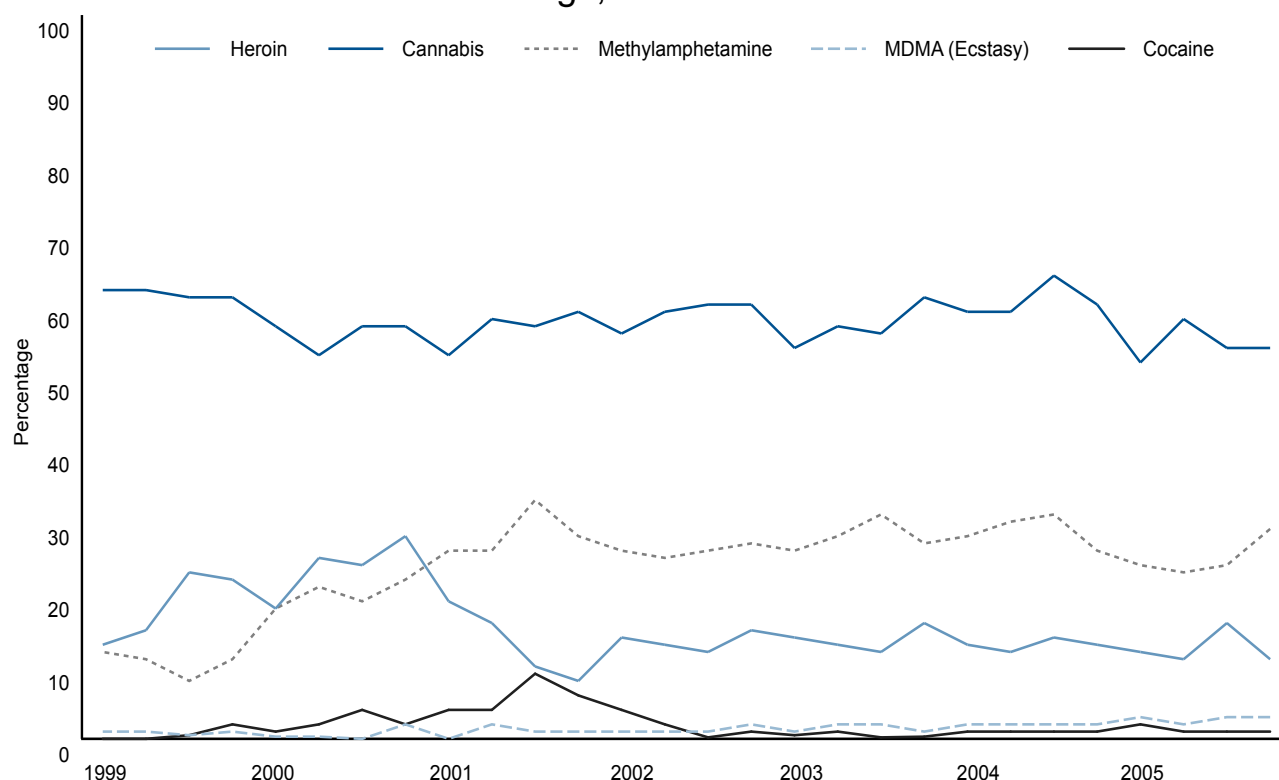


Drug use trends among police detainees

The Drug Use Monitoring in Australia (DUMA) program is a crime monitoring program that focuses on illegal drug use amongst police detainees. It involves the collection of self-report and urinalysis data from people detained in seven police stations and watchhouses across Australia, with reporting on a quarterly basis. The figure below shows the percentage of adult male detainees testing positive to selected illicit drugs between 1999 (when DUMA began) and 2005. Cannabis is the drug detainees are most likely to test positive to, followed by methylamphetamine and then heroin. There have been noticeable changes over the period 1999-2005, with heroin use decreasing and methylamphetamine increasing. Heroin use peaked in the fourth quarter of 2000 at 28 percent, but had declined sharply to 8 percent by the fourth quarter of 2001 (corresponding with the heroin shortage). Since then it has remained relatively stable, at an average of 13 percent. The trend in methylamphetamine has inversely mirrored heroin use, increasing throughout 1999 and 2000 until mid 2001. Since then it has remained relatively stable. It is important to note that many of the heroin users also test positive to methylamphetamines – 40 percent in 2005. Detainees were much less likely to test positive to MDMA (ecstasy) or cocaine. Although small, the proportion testing positive to MDMA has increased steadily from 1 percent in 1999 to 3 percent in 2005.

Trends in percentage of adult male detainees testing positive to selected illicit drugs, 1999-2005



SOURCE: Mouzos J. & Smith L 2006. Drug use among police detainees. *Trends & issues in crime and criminal justice* no. 319.
<http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/tandi2/tandi319.html>