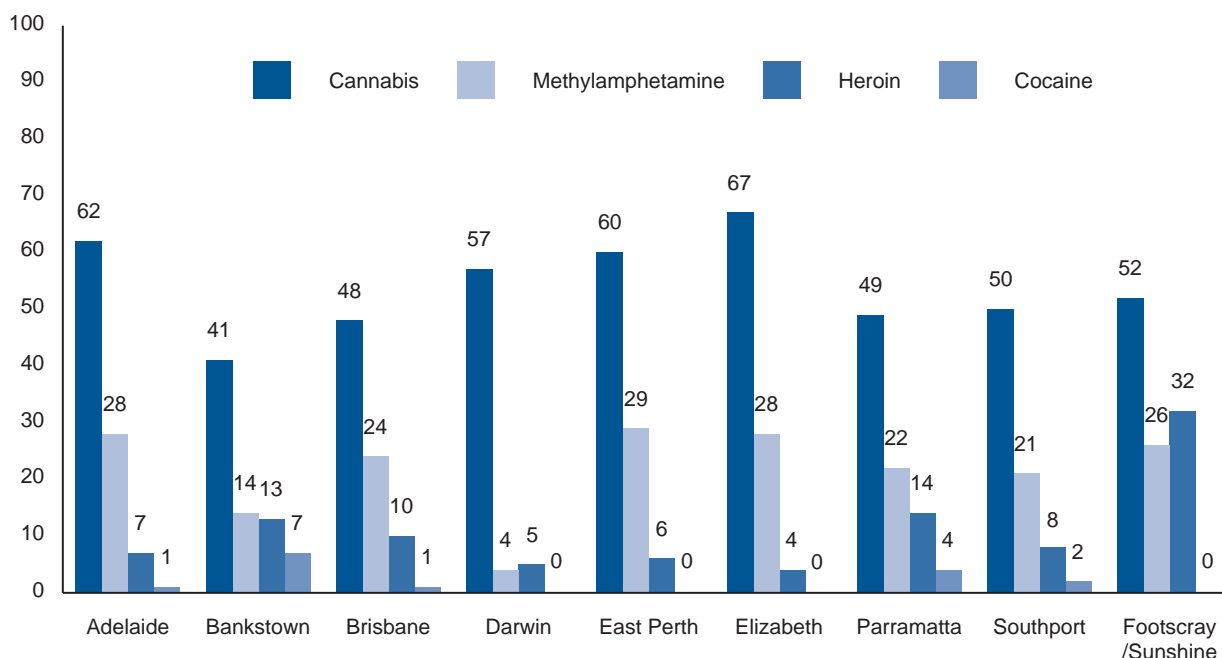


Drug use among police detainees across Australia

The Australian Institute of Criminology's Drug Use Monitoring in Australia (DUMA) program provides information through urinalysis and interviews on illegal drug use among people detained in a police station or watchhouse. The chart below highlights the differences between the nine sites in adult male detainees testing positive to cannabis, methylamphetamine, heroin and cocaine during 2006. Consistent across the sites, cannabis was the most widely used drug, with a range of 41 to 67 percent of detainees testing positive. Compared with the other eight DUMA sites, few detainees in Darwin tested positive to illicit drugs other than cannabis. With the exception of Darwin and Bankstown, a similar proportion of detainees tested positive to methylamphetamine across all sites. The largest variation was in the percentage testing positive to heroin. Four percent of male detainees in Elizabeth tested positive to heroin, compared with 32 percent in Footscray/Sunshine, while most sites returned 10 percent positive tests or less. The unusual percentage of positive heroin tests for Footscray/Sunshine reflects a reputation for drug dealing, particularly heroin, which the Footscray area has acquired in recent years. Victoria Police recently established Project Reduction – in which police request a court order prohibiting an offender from entering the area – to combat the trade.

Adult male detainees testing positive to drug use, 2006 (percent)



Source: AIC DUMA 2006 [computer file]

Further reading

Mouzos J, et al. 2007. *Drug use monitoring in Australia: 2006 annual report on drug use among police detainees*. Research and public policy series no. 75. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology
<http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/rpp/75/>