

WA DRUG ABUSE STRATEGY OFFICE & NEXT STEP SPECIALIST DRUG & ALCOHOL SERVICES

Statistical Bulletin Number 13, June 2001

DRUG RELATED TELEPHONE CALLS WESTERN AUSTRALIA, 1986 - 2000

Introduction

The Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS) is a 24 hour statewide service operated by Next Step Specialist Drug and Alcohol Services. ADIS may be contacted by email or by phone 1800 198 024 (freecall) or 08 9442 5000.

ADIS was established in April 1986 and provides confidential counselling and referral on alcohol and other drug problems for drug users, relatives and friends of those with problematic drug use.

ADIS operates in conjunction with the Parent Drug Information Service (PDIS), which was launched in October 1996 to provide specialist information, support, counselling and referral to key treatment and support services for parents concerned about drug use by their children.

Non identifying data are routinely collected for each call. This includes the type of drug mentioned, type of caller, age and sex of caller, caller's postcode of residence and outcome of the call. The data contained in this publication has been extracted from monthly reports published by Next Step on the number of drug related telephone calls received by ADIS and PDIS.

Since April 1986 there have been enhancements in data collection that determine the level of detail available. These occurred in 1996 and at the end of August 1999 and provide improved information about additional drugs. It should be noted that as data was not collected about some specific drugs in the period 1986 to 1995, these calls were recorded as 'other drugs'.

Written by Greg Swensen (June 2001)

This publication contains annual and quarterly data on the number of calls for the following drug groups:

- alcohol;
- tobacco;
- cannabis;
- opioids (eg heroin, narcotic analgesics, methadone and non narcotic analgesics);
- hallucinogens and designer drugs (eg ecstasy and LSD);
- psychostimulants (eg amphetamines, dexamphetamine and cocaine); and
- prescribed drugs (eg major tranquillisers, minor tranquillisers and antidepressants).

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This publication is available online at
<http://www.wa.gov.au/drugwestaus/>

This publication was edited by Greg Swensen at the WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office.
The comments and assistance of Monique Berkhout, Manager of the Alcohol and Drug Information Service is

gratefully acknowledged.

Summary

Overall, since April 1986 the number of **illicit** drug related calls has steadily increased. However, **licit** drug related calls peaked in the latter part of 1995 and have since declined. Details of trends in specific drugs are contained below.

Licit drugs

The number of **licit** drug related calls increased to more than 1,600 calls in the June quarter 1989, decreased to 1,000 calls in the December quarter 1993 and then nearly doubled to 1,990 calls in the September quarter 1995.

From the December quarter 1995 the number of **licit** drug related calls received has declined by about half, with less than 1,000 calls being received per quarter since mid 2000.

The variations in the number of **licit** drug related calls that occurred over the period are likely to be due to the impact of extensive public health campaigns. These have at different times targeted prescription drugs, alcohol and tobacco. For instance, the sharp peaks mid 1989 and mid 1990 are closely related to campaigns which targeted over prescribing of minor tranquillisers.

The impact of messages delivered through various QUIT and Drinksafe campaigns undertaken by the Health Department are also reflected in marked short term variations in the number of tobacco and alcohol related calls over the period.

Since the June quarter 1989, when nearly 600 calls were recorded, there has been a marked decline in the number of quarterly **prescribed** drug calls.

There has been a moderate increase in the number of **tobacco** related calls per quarter from 1986 to the present, whereas since the last quarter of 1995 **alcohol** related calls have fallen.

Illicit drugs

There has been a well defined overall upward trend in the quarterly number of quarterly **illicit** drug related calls from 1986 to the present. The number of calls peaked in the March quarter 1995 (just over 2,000 calls), then declined to about 1,400 calls in the March quarter 1998. Since mid 1998 the number of **illicit** drug related calls have steadily increased, to nearly 2,000 calls in the March quarter 2000.

After a peak of nearly 2,000 calls in the March quarter 2000, the number of **illicit** drug related calls has stabilised with about 1,500 calls per quarter up to the present.

A more detailed picture of trends in the number of calls for designer drugs (ie hallucinogens, ecstasy and LSD), psychostimulants, opioids and cannabis is provided in the figure on page 4.

Cannabis

The number of **cannabis** calls increased from 1986 to the September quarter 1995 (nearly 700 calls), then fluctuated between 500 and 600 calls per quarter up to the first quarter 2000, then dropped slightly. Since the March quarter 2000 there has been about 450 cannabis calls per quarter.

Hallucinogens and designer drugs

Calls for this group of drugs have fluctuated over the period, with peaks of nearly 200 calls in the September 1992 and June 1995 quarters. After dropping to 50 calls in the June quarter 1998, there was an increase to just over 180 calls in the first quarter 2000.

Since the March quarter 2000 calls have dropped by more than half to just under 80 calls in the December quarter 2000.

Psychostimulants

There has been a number of cyclical changes in the number of **psychostimulant** calls. There was a steady increase in the number of calls from the September quarter 1986 (when separate data was collected for this drug group) up to the June quarter 1994 (550 calls). However, by June 1996 just under 180 calls were received, a decrease of nearly two thirds from the peak two years earlier.

More recently there has been a resurgence in the number of psychostimulant calls. Since the June quarter 1997 (186 calls) the number of calls have increased nearly five fold, to 851 calls by the December quarter 2000.

Opioids

From 1986 up to mid 1994 there were between 150 and 200 **opioid** related calls per quarter. From the March quarter 1994 (208 calls) calls increased by just over four fold, to 852 calls in the September quarter 1997.

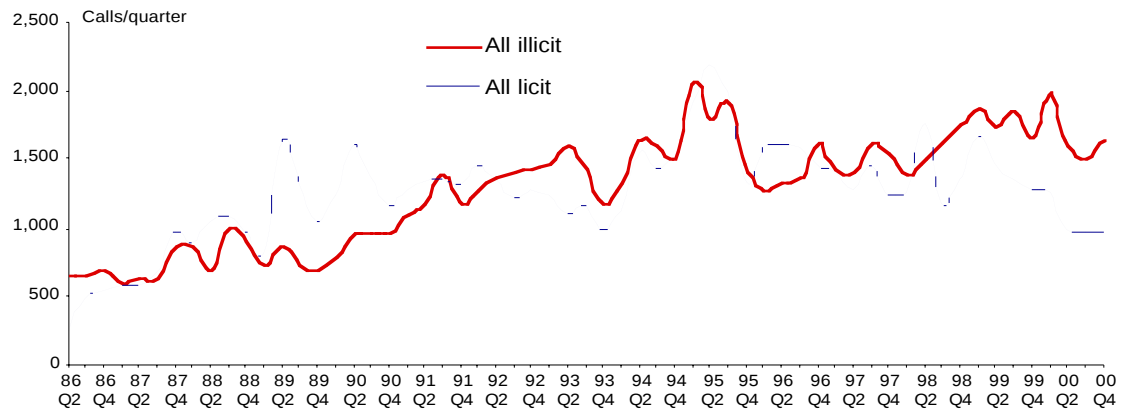
Since a peak of 831 calls in the September quarter 1999 the number of calls has declined by just over half, to 350 calls in the December quarter 2000.

Note

The sharp drop in psychostimulant calls that occurred after mid 1994 is believed to be the result of intense police activity at that time which closed a number of State based clandestine laboratories.

The trends in the figure on page 4 may indicate that there may be a close relationship between the markets for heroin and psychostimulants, with possible substitution of one drug for another by some users.

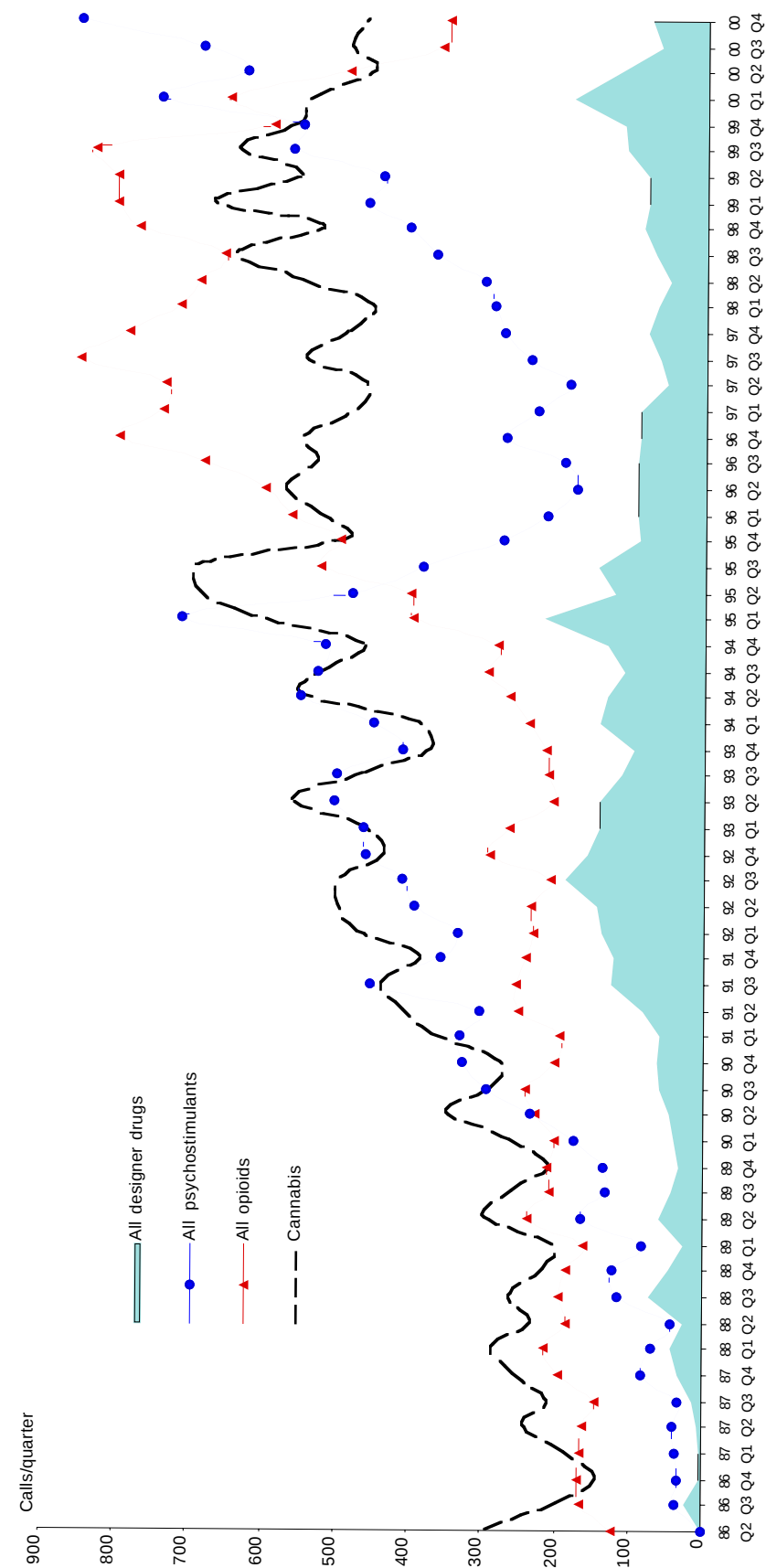
LICIT AND ILLICIT DRUG RELATED CALLS



Year	Quarter	Illicit		Licit		Total
		n	%	n	%	
1986	March	-	-	-	-	-
	June	653		246		899
	September	653		490		1,143
	December	701		541		1,242
	Total	2,007	61.1	1,277	38.9	3,284
1987	March	614		583		1,197
	June	647		591		1,238
	September	648		668		1,316
	December	870		973		1,843
	Total	2,779	49.7	2,815	50.3	5,594
1988	March	874		890		1,764
	June	706		1,041		1,747
	September	1,020		1,081		2,101
	December	919		988		1,907
	Total	3,519	46.8	4,000	53.2	7,519
1989	March	740		807		1,547
	June	883		1,643		2,526
	September	741		1,340		2,081
	December	707		1,040		1,747
	Total	3,071	38.9	4,830	61.1	7,901
1990	March	791		1,248		2,039
	June	964		1,607		2,571
	September	979		1,391		2,370
	December	969		1,167		2,136
	Total	3,703	40.6	5,413	59.4	9,116
1991	March	1,115		1,281		2,396
	June	1,184		1,342		2,526
	September	1,399		1,343		2,742
	December	1,178		1,324		2,502
	Total	4,876	48.0	5,290	52.0	10,166
1992	March	1,284		1,445		2,729
	June	1,362		1,358		2,720
	September	1,422		1,220		2,642
	December	1,432		1,283		2,715
	Total	5,500	50.9	5,306	49.1	10,806
1993	March	1,467		1,234		2,701
	June	1,609		1,107		2,716
	September	1,431		1,167		2,598
	December	1,188		1,000		2,188
	Total	5,695	55.8	4,508	44.2	10,203

Year	Quarter	Illicit		Licit		Total
		n	%	n	%	
1994	March	1,341		1,134		2,475
	June	1,659		1,556		3,215
	September	1,609		1,430		3,039
	December	1,527		1,525		3,052
	Total	6,136	52.1	5,645	47.9	11,781
1995	March	2,081		1,912		3,993
	June	1,815		2,173		3,988
	September	1,931		1,990		3,921
	December	1,416		1,339		2,755
	Total	7,243	49.4	7,414	50.6	14,657
1996	March	1,291		1,589		2,880
	June	1,329		1,600		2,929
	September	1,373		1,595		2,968
	December	1,627		1,447		3,074
	Total	5,620	47.4	6,231	52.6	11,851
1997	March	1,437		1,423		2,860
	June	1,413		1,289		2,702
	September	1,626		1,452		3,078
	December	1,546		1,251		2,797
	Total	6,022	52.7	5,415	47.3	11,437
1998	March	1,410		1,259		2,669
	June	1,497		1,760		3,257
	September	1,624		1,190		2,814
	December	1,761		1,354		3,115
	Total	6,292	53.1	5,563	46.9	11,855
1999	March	1,868		1,670		3,538
	June	1,743		1,469		3,212
	September	1,854		1,352		3,207
	December	1,676		1,291		2,967
	Total	7,141	55.3	7,141	44.7	12,923
2000	March	1,994		1,263		3,257
	June	1,604		1,001		2,605
	September	1,526		977		2,503
	December	1,659		976		2,635
	Total	6,783	61.7	4,217	38.3	11,000
2001	March					
	June					
	September					
	December					
	Total					

QUARTERLY ILLICIT DRUG RELATED CALLS

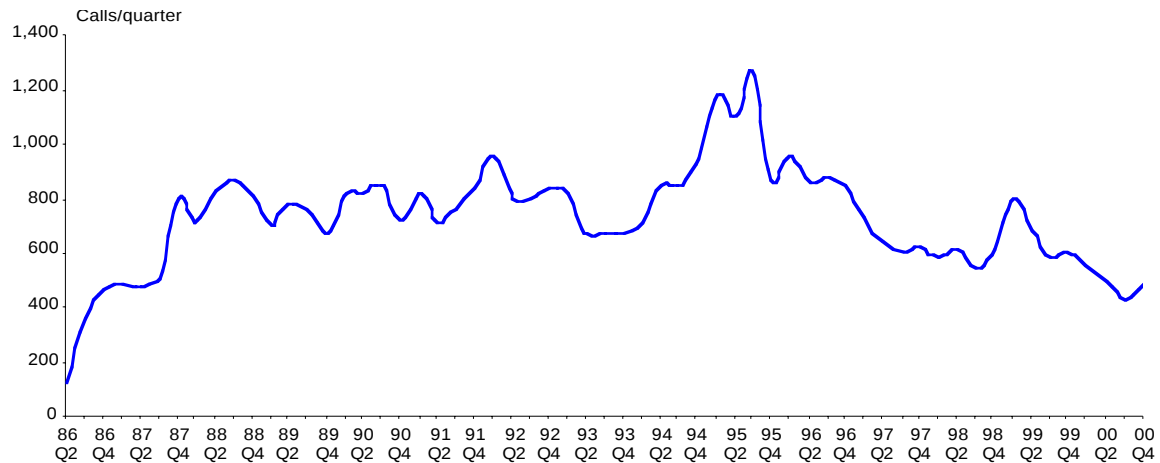


ANNUAL DRUG RELATED CALLS

Drug group	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Alcohol	977	2,288	3,237	2,948	3,226	3,150	3,413	2,853	3,347	4,437	3,561	2,629	2,366	2,690	1,984
Tobacco	47	181	215	568	608	445	513	557	829	1,248	849	1,272	1,851	1,528	1,106
Cannabis	638	905	1,008	978	1,184	1,605	1,906	1,863	1,925	2,489	2,180	1,975	2,172	2,423	1,941
Opioids															
Heroin	459	672	781	731	747	783	817	768	937	1,580	1,911	2,399	2,148	2,142	1,430
Methadone	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	151	151	286	369	202
Buprenorphine	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	na	na	na	162	11
Naloxic analgesics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	384	448	287	280	166
Non narcotic analgesics	-	-	-	90	124	163	151	128	140	235	191	113	109	65	27
Other and unspecified	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	na	na	na	5	13
Sub total	459	672	781	821	871	946	968	896	1,077	1,815	2,637	3,111	2,830	3,022	1,849
Psychostimulants															
Amphetamines (illicit)	68	138	279	406	937	1,351	1,498	1,789	1,957	1,737	657	750	1,176	1,785	2,725
Dexamphetamines (prescribed)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	114	141	140	169	106
Cocaine	-	56	71	69	61	62	74	54	64	71	82	37	47	55	52
Other and unspecified	-	-	-	39	90	35	26	34	24	40	-	-	-	5	5
Sub total	68	194	350	514	1,029	1,448	1,598	1,877	2,045	1,848	853	928	1,363	2,014	2,888
Prescribed															
Major tranquilisers	-	-	-	37	59	71	36	56	65	91	64	63	40	37	53
Minor tranquilisers	253	346	548	736	806	770	585	466	655	699	474	355	291	290	290
Anti-depressants	-	-	-	165	177	234	226	169	258	340	337	198	172	176	121
Other and unspecified	-	-	-	286	413	457	382	279	351	364	220	186	161	121	144
Sub total	253	346	548	1,224	1,455	1,532	1,229	970	1,329	1,494	1,095	802	664	624	608
Hallucinogens & designer drugs															
Ecstasy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
LSD and other hallucinogens	25	40	76	84	134	253	332	331	329	400	232	161	97	53	76
Other and unspecified	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	na	na	na	2	3
Sub total	25	58	189	162	207	388	635	492	516	576	366	284	270	384	439
Other drugs															
Volatile substances	-	-	-	132	163	232	200	205	255	312	179	148	119	110	56
Steroids	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	36	32	26	22	13
Polydrug	266	316	354	178	171	211	111	101	161	158	95	256	194	45	-
Opoid abstinence	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	58	100
Alcohol abstinence	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Other and unspecified	551	634	837	376	202	209	233	389	297	280	-	-	-	1	3
Sub total	817	950	1,191	686	536	652	544	695	713	750	310	436	339	238	172
Total	3,284	5,594	7,519	7,901	9,116	10,166	10,806	10,203	11,781	14,657	11,851	11,437	11,855	12,923	10,987

Note: Data for 1986 relates to the period April - December.

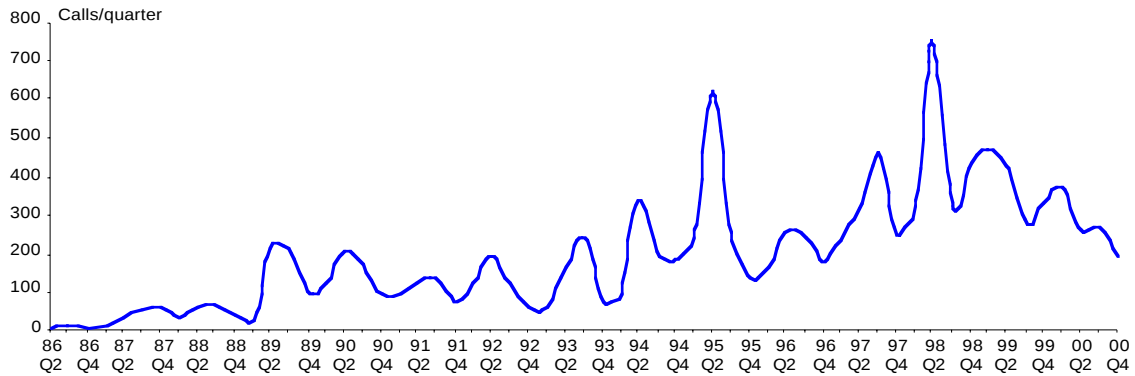
ALCOHOL RELATED CALLS



Year	Quarter	No. calls
1986	March	
	June	132
	September	371
	December	474
	Total	977
1987	March	486
	June	479
	September	515
	December	808
	Total	2,288
1988	March	721
	June	831
	September	875
	December	810
	Total	3,237
1989	March	706
	June	790
	September	767
	December	685
	Total	2,948
1990	March	822
	June	820
	September	859
	December	725
	Total	3,226
1991	March	824
	June	719
	September	770
	December	837
	Total	3,150
1992	March	965
	June	806
	September	805
	December	837
	Total	3,413
1993	March	822
	June	672
	September	677
	December	682
	Total	2,853

Year	Quarter	No. calls
1994	March	719
	June	854
	September	849
	December	925
	Total	3,347
1995	March	1,183
	June	1,101
	September	1,274
	December	879
	Total	4,437
1996	March	963
	June	864
	September	887
	December	847
	Total	3,561
1997	March	739
	June	649
	September	611
	December	630
	Total	2,629
1998	March	585
	June	625
	September	553
	December	603
	Total	2,366
1999	March	805
	June	690
	September	583
	December	612
	Total	2,690
2000	March	557
	June	498
	September	437
	December	492
	Total	1,984
2001	March	
	June	
	September	
	December	
	Total	

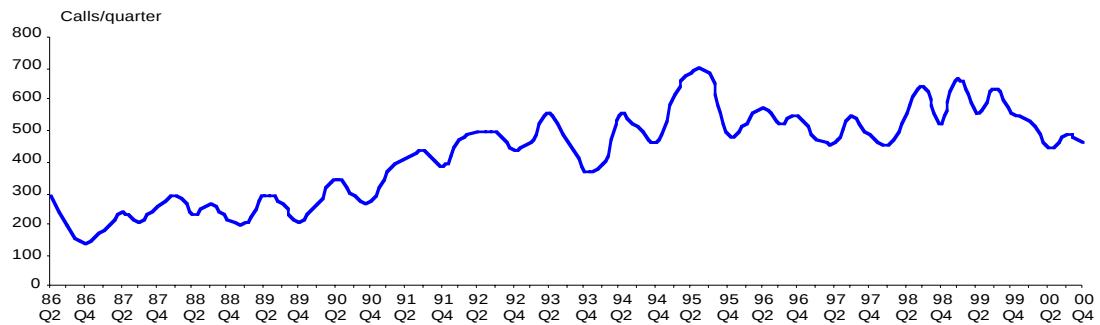
TOBACCO RELATED CALLS



Year	Quarter	No. calls
1986	March	-
	June	12
	September	20
	December	15
	Total	47
1987	March	20
	June	34
	September	62
	December	65
	Total	181
1988	March	35
	June	67
	September	70
	December	43
	Total	215
1989	March	28
	June	217
	September	218
	December	105
	Total	568
1990	March	129
	June	210
	September	172
	December	97
	Total	608
1991	March	103
	June	128
	September	136
	December	78
	Total	445
1992	March	128
	June	196
	September	125
	December	64
	Total	513
1993	March	66
	June	166
	September	246
	December	79
	Total	557

Year	Quarter	No. calls
1994	March	103
	June	343
	September	197
	December	186
	Total	829
1995	March	245
	June	625
	September	241
	December	137
	Total	1,248
1996	March	170
	June	256
	September	245
	December	178
	Total	849
1997	March	241
	June	316
	September	461
	December	254
	Total	1,272
1998	March	327
	June	759
	September	326
	December	439
	Total	1,851
1999	March	473
	June	432
	September	284
	December	339
	Total	1,528
2000	March	375
	June	262
	September	270
	December	199
	Total	1,106
2001	March	
	June	
	September	
	December	
	Total	

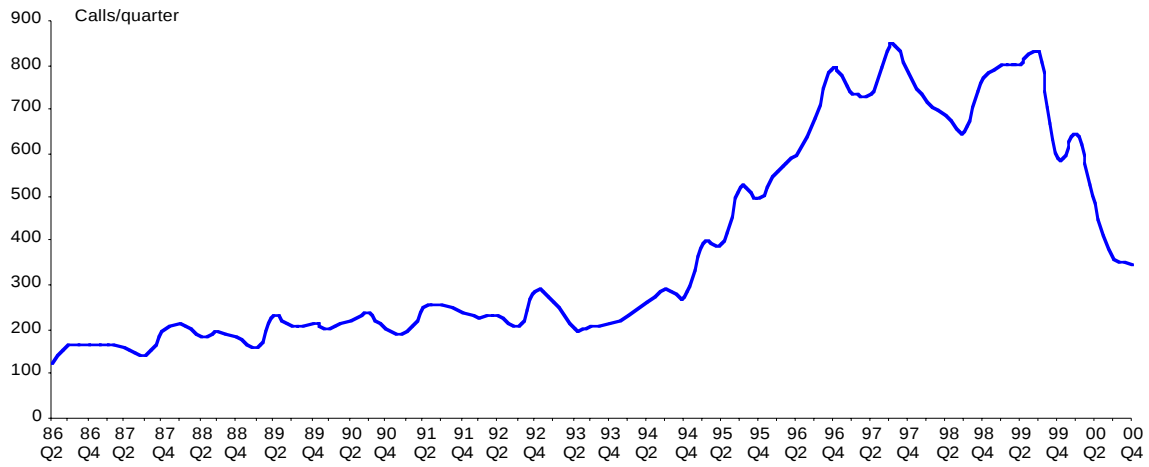
CANNABIS RELATED CALLS



Year	Quarter	No. calls
1986	March	na
	June	293
	September	200
	December	145
	Total	638
1987	March	190
	June	246
	September	212
	December	257
	Total	905
1988	March	289
	June	236
	September	264
	December	219
	Total	1,008
1989	March	206
	June	298
	September	263
	December	211
	Total	978
1990	March	265
	June	350
	September	290
	December	279
	Total	1,184
1991	March	369
	June	411
	September	439
	December	386
	Total	1,605
1992	March	474
	June	500
	September	496
	December	436
	Total	1,906
1993	March	463
	June	563
	September	463
	December	374
	Total	1,863

Year	Quarter	No. calls
1994	March	392
	June	549
	September	518
	December	466
	Total	1,925
1995	March	619
	June	688
	September	692
	December	490
	Total	2,489
1996	March	526
	June	574
	September	530
	December	550
	Total	2,180
1997	March	477
	June	463
	September	547
	December	488
	Total	1,975
1998	March	455
	June	553
	September	642
	December	522
	Total	2,172
1999	March	673
	June	554
	September	638
	December	558
	Total	2,423
2000	March	536
	June	454
	September	488
	December	463
	Total	1,941
2001	March	
	June	
	September	
	December	
	Total	

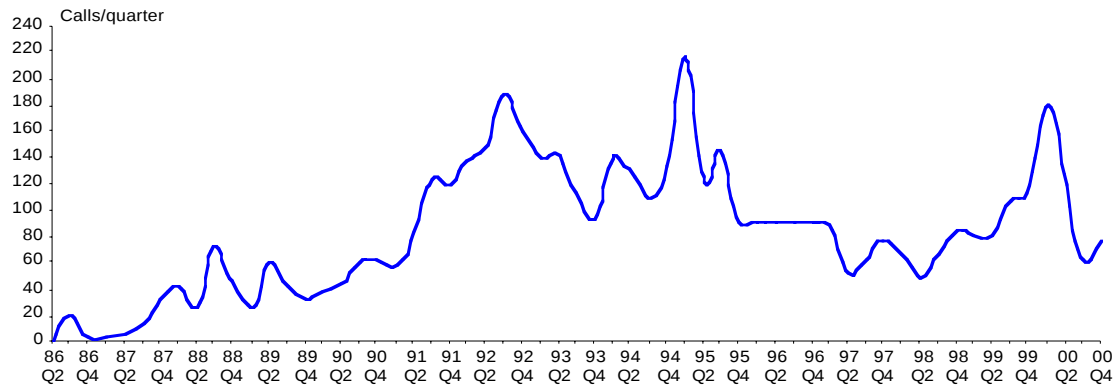
OPIOID RELATED CALLS



Year	Quarter	No. calls
1986	March	
	June	124
	September	166
	December	169
	Total	459
1987	March	166
	June	163
	September	147
	December	196
	Total	672
1988	March	214
	June	185
	September	196
	December	186
	Total	781
1989	March	162
	June	201
	September	178
	December	190
	Total	731
1990	March	169
	June	190
	September	207
	December	181
	Total	747
1991	March	177
	June	201
	September	202
	December	203
	Total	783
1992	March	202
	June	193
	September	183
	December	239
	Total	817
1993	March	215
	June	179
	September	183
	December	191
	Total	768

Year	Quarter	No. calls
1994	March	208
	June	223
	September	254
	December	252
	Total	937
1995	March	335
	June	346
	September	462
	December	437
	Total	1,580
1996	March	561
	June	599
	September	681
	December	796
	Total	2,637
1997	March	739
	June	735
	September	852
	December	785
	Total	3,111
1998	March	716
	June	687
	September	655
	December	772
	Total	2,830
1999	March	801
	June	802
	September	831
	December	588
	Total	3,022
2000	March	649
	June	488
	September	362
	December	350
	Total	1,849
2001	March	
	June	
	September	
	December	
	Total	

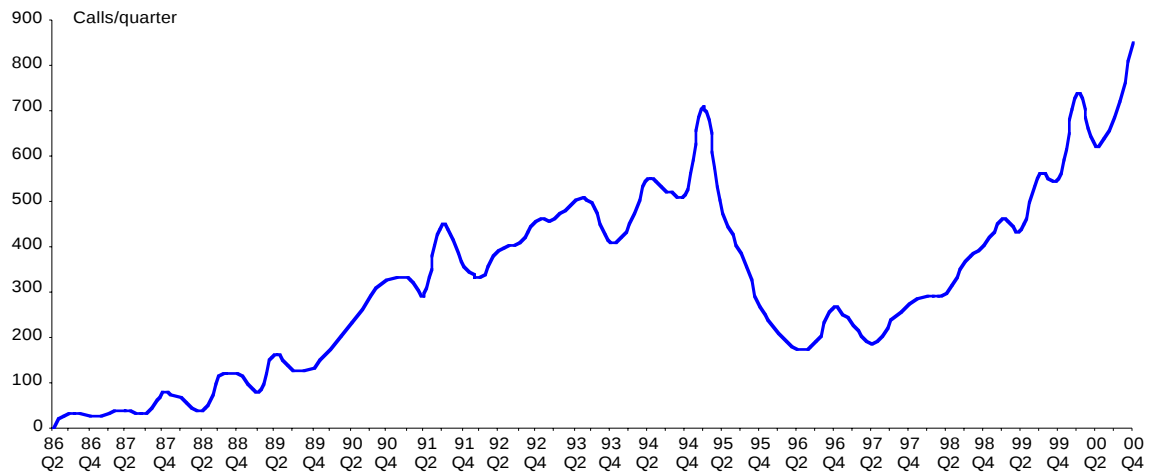
HALLUCINOGENS AND DESIGNER DRUG RELATED CALLS



Year	Quarter	No. calls
1986	March	-
	June	-
	September	22
	December	3
	Total	25
1987	March	4
	June	8
	September	14
	December	32
	Total	58
1988	March	43
	June	26
	September	73
	December	47
	Total	189
1989	March	26
	June	60
	September	43
	December	33
	Total	162
1990	March	40
	June	45
	September	60
	December	62
	Total	207
1991	March	58
	June	84
	September	125
	December	121
	Total	388
1992	March	139
	June	147
	September	189
	December	160
	Total	635
1993	March	141
	June	143
	September	113
	December	95
	Total	492

Year	Quarter	No. calls
1994	March	141
	June	131
	September	110
	December	134
	Total	516
1995	March	217
	June	123
	September	146
	December	90
	Total	576
1996	March	91
	June	93
	September	92
	December	90
	Total	366
1997	March	89
	June	54
	September	63
	December	78
	Total	284
1998	March	67
	June	50
	September	68
	December	85
	Total	270
1999	March	81
	June	81
	September	109
	December	113
	Total	384
2000	March	182
	June	119
	September	62
	December	76
	Total	439
2001	March	
	June	
	September	
	December	
	Total	

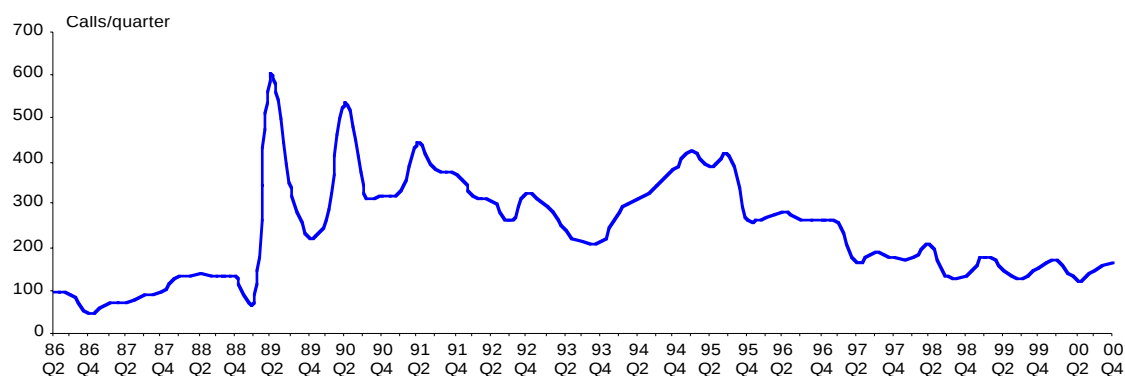
PSYCHOSTIMULANT RELATED CALLS



Year	Quarter	No. calls
1986	March	-
	June	-
	September	36
	December	32
	Total	68
1987	March	36
	June	41
	September	34
	December	83
	Total	194
1988	March	70
	June	42
	September	115
	December	123
	Total	350
1989	March	83
	June	164
	September	131
	December	136
	Total	514
1990	March	175
	June	234
	September	293
	December	327
	Total	1,029
1991	March	332
	June	304
	September	453
	December	359
	Total	1,448
1992	March	335
	June	393
	September	410
	December	460
	Total	1,598
1993	March	463
	June	503
	September	501
	December	410
	Total	1,877

Year	Quarter	No. calls
1994	March	451
	June	550
	September	527
	December	517
	Total	2,045
1995	March	711
	June	481
	September	383
	December	273
	Total	1,848
1996	March	215
	June	177
	September	191
	December	270
	Total	853
1997	March	229
	June	186
	September	237
	December	276
	Total	928
1998	March	289
	June	301
	September	368
	December	405
	Total	1,363
1999	March	461
	June	440
	September	563
	December	550
	Total	2,014
2000	March	740
	June	625
	September	685
	December	851
	Total	2,901
2001	March	
	June	
	September	
	December	
	Total	

PREScribed DRUG RELATED CALLS



Year	Quarter	No. calls
1986	March	-
	June	102
	September	99
	December	52
	Total	253
1987	March	77
	June	78
	September	91
	December	100
	Total	346
1988	March	134
	June	143
	September	136
	December	135
	Total	548
1989	March	73
	June	599
	September	324
	December	228
	Total	1,224
1990	March	265
	June	540
	September	326
	December	324
	Total	1,455
1991	March	335
	June	445
	September	383
	December	369
	Total	1,532
1992	March	321
	June	315
	September	263
	December	330
	Total	1,229
1993	March	295
	June	244
	September	216
	December	215
	Total	970

Year	Quarter	No. calls
1994	March	283
	June	318
	September	343
	December	385
	Total	1,329
1995	March	423
	June	394
	September	413
	December	264
	Total	1,494
1996	March	275
	June	283
	September	271
	December	266
	Total	1,095
1997	March	260
	June	169
	September	194
	December	179
	Total	802
1998	March	177
	June	208
	September	137
	December	142
	Total	664
1999	March	185
	June	151
	September	131
	December	157
	Total	624
2000	March	170
	June	124
	September	149
	December	165
	Total	608
2001	March	
	June	
	September	
	December	
	Total	