

The Australian (illicit) drug policy timeline: 1985-2013

The Australian (illicit) drug policy timeline provides a list of key events, policy and legislative changes that have occurred in Australia between 1985 and February 28 2013. Events are listed by jurisdiction, at the national and state/ territory level. All events added in the last six months are highlighted in **blue**.

Here we list events in **Tasmania only**. For events in other jurisdictions please see the relevant timeline.

DPMP will continue to update the timeline every June and December. Please feel free to email through any comments or suggested inclusions.

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Year	Tasmania
2013	<p>Advocacy Tasmania Inc (ATI) released their Consumer Engagement Program Service Development Plan 2013. The priority areas were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer capacity building – including developing and managing a consumer register detailing consumer contacts and topics of interest ; • Service provider consultancy – such as developing tools to formally measure effectiveness of the consumer engagement program; • Sharing the vision across the sector – such as by providing regular updates of consumer engagement activity across the sector on the ATDC e-news; • Support systems-level consumer engagement – including supporting the development of a Tasmanian consumer organisation (Jan).
2012	<p>Tasmania adopted into law the new Poisons Standard (SUSMP) under the <i>Therapeutic Goods Act 1989</i>, including the prohibition of MDPV: Poisons (Adoption of Uniform Standard) Order 2012 (Jun).</p> <p>The Alcohol and Drug Service implemented iPatient Manager (IPM), to improve the management of information for clinicians (Jul).</p> <p>Minister for Health, Michelle O'Byrne released "A Review of Opioid Prescribing in Tasmania -A Blueprint for the Future" (Jul).</p> <p>Minister for Health, Michelle O'Byrne released the "Tasmanian Opioid Pharmacotherapy Program, Policy and Clinical Practice Standards" (Aug).</p> <p>Discussion paper released: Review of the Tasmanian Alcohol and Drug Dependency Act (ADDA) 1968. This sought to critically evaluate the ongoing suitability of the ADDA and to identify a potential way forward, including retaining but amending ADDA or repeal and move parts of ADDA to existing legislation (Sep).</p> <p>The Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention (PPEI) Strategic Framework adopted.</p> <p>A performance review was released into the Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Services, Future Service Directions (FSD) 2008/09 – 2012/13. Key achievements of the FSD were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant investment and growth in the public pharmacotherapy program; • significant investment into the three community based residential rehabilitation services in this State; • implementation of a new client information management system and improved reporting. <p>But, it also noted FSD performance was affected by recruitment issues, internal administrative processes and budgetary pressures. Of note, the uncertainty around ongoing funding has resulted in the delay of service development activities, including all development planned in the fourth year. The major area that has been affected is outreach. Consequently the review noted there remains some considerable work to be undertaken to fully implement the plan but the significant capacity improvements in the sector will be lost unless ongoing funding is secured (Dec).</p> <p>Budget Priority Statements 2013-2013 by the Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs Council Tas Inc (ATDC) noted that while the incoming year marked the end of the Future Service Directions (FSD) funding, continuation of FSD funding was critical to (1) maintain the significant improvements in the sector; (2) to enable the remaining planned steps to be implemented; and (3) to avoid a significant reduction in service provision. It argued that if FSD funds were cut this would lead to a loss of in excess of 20 individuals working in the sector and lead to the closure of at least two ATDC member organisations that provide vital counselling and case management in the sector (Nov).</p>
2011	<p>New discussion paper released: "Everybody's business – A discussion paper for the development of the Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs (ATODs) Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention (PPEI) Strategic Framework" with 6 weeks for public input. Key messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substance use must be understood within the context of many factors – cultural, socioeconomic and political – that can be influenced by government decisions. • Government policy responses in relation to alcohol, tobacco and other drugs have traditionally focused upon individual factors. This needs to be broadened. • Socially inclusive communities and resilient individuals and families are less likely to engage in harmful substance use. <p>Potential strategies identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a model/s for cross-sector collaboration to support social inclusion. • Support and advance the actions identified in the National Health Preventative Strategy. • Develop a mechanism to ensure that all government policy with an impact upon substance use and misuse – e.g. social inclusion, housing, – is informed by an

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	<p>understanding of their potential influence on the substance use (i.e. some form of alcohol, tobacco and other drug impact assessment) (May).</p> <p>Launch of statewide Drug Education Network's resource centre and website. Website sought to fill need for internet and 24 hour information provision (Jun).</p> <p>The Minister for Health approved an extension to the <i>Tasmanian Drug Strategy (TDS) 2005-2009</i> to the end of 2012 (15 Jun).</p> <p>The Minister for Health approved an extension to the <i>Tasmanian Psychostimulants Action Plan 2007-2009</i> to the end of 2013.</p> <p>The Controlled Drugs, Controlled Precursors and Interpretation under the Schedule of the <i>Misuse of Drugs Act 2001</i> was reviewed in the goal of ensuring Tasmania Police had the capacity to appropriately deal with emerging drug issues. This led to amendments, under the <i>Misuse of Drugs Order 2011</i> including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aligning the Interpretation of the Schedule of the <i>Misuse of Drugs Act 2001</i> to that contained in the <i>Poisons Act 1971</i>, in an effort to appropriately capture the broad range of derivative drugs now entering the illicit drug market. Increasing the number of Controlled Drugs banned under the Act, including synthetic cannabinoids including Kronic and Spice, and the Methcathinone derivative drug known as Israelis. Increasing the number of Controlled Precursors under the Act, from 13 controlled precursors to 53 controlled precursors (Aug). <p>A six-month operation undertaken by Tasmania Police uncovered a motorcycle gang-related methylamphetamine trafficking operation worth \$450,000. To date 12 offenders had been charged, with further charges expected (Aug).</p> <p>Funding was reduced to primary NSPs through the cessation of provision of free sterile water (for reasons of cost-saving).</p> <p>JointForces a quarterly e-bulletin started. This sought to promote cross-sector linkages and collaboration between the Tasmanian Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drug (ATOD) and Mental Health (MH) sector (Nov).</p>
2010	<p>Amendments to the <i>Road Safety (Alcohol and Drugs) Act 1970</i> were introduced to increase the penalties for drug driving in Tasmania, in-line with penalties imposed for drink driving offences. Additionally, a person who commits any alcohol or drug driving related offence will be deemed to have committed a subsequent offence, if that person has previously been convicted for either offence (Jan).</p> <p>Southern District Drug Investigation Services (DIS) concluded a major investigation concerning the sale and distribution of amphetamines and cannabis. The investigation resulted in 14 people being charged with trafficking offences, and 13 people being charged with the sale of controlled drugs (Feb).</p> <p>Review of Opioid Prescribing practices in Tasmania commenced. The project seeks to reduce the harm caused through the misuse of pharmaceutical opioids (Aug).</p> <p>New report released: "<i>Tasmanian Drug Strategy (TDS) 2005-2009: Report of actions and achievement,</i>" based on stakeholder consultations with government, local council and community sector organisations. Key findings were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The TDS was deemed an important overarching strategic framework that coordinates Tasmanian activity to alcohol, tobacco & other drugs; The aims and priorities of the TDS were considered still relevant; <p>Yet, concerns were raised about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited awareness of the TDS, its significance & relationship to other strategies (especially the NDS & actions emanating from the TDS); That the review was being conducted during a very volatile time of national reform; and The lack of data available to enable a more comprehensive evaluation of the TDS to be conducted; <p>Recommendations were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The IAWGD should consider reviewing its communication strategy and procedures; The new TDS should align with the new NDS, even if this means delaying the release of the TDS; The new TDS should identify key performance data, to enable evaluation of effectiveness (Aug). <p>The IAWGD sought approval of the Minister for Health to extend the <i>Tasmanian Drug Strategy 2005-2009</i> to the end of 2012. Key reasons were that this would enable time for the IAWGD to progress some matters raised in the review of the TDS while national health reforms were clarified and relevant Tasmanian initiatives finalised (Nov).</p> <p>The comprehensive review of the <i>Tasmanian Psychostimulants Action Plan 2007-2009</i> was completed and report released: "Report on the 2010 review of the Tasmania Pschyostimulants Action Plan 2007-2008." The review was conducted in two-stages by the Department of Police and Emergency Management on behalf of the Inter Agency Working Group on Drugs (IAWGD). Key conclusions were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The aims of the Plan had been met, and had helped lead agencies to implement & coordinate action to psychostimulants; The Plan had contributed towards declines in psychostimulant use; Lead agencies generally supported the continuation of the Plan, but there was also a push to develop a much broader illicit drug plan, to account for the changing drug use trends in Tasmania (particularly reductions in psychostimulant use and increasing harms from other illicit and licit drugs) (Dec). <p>The IAWGD sought approval of the Minister for Health for an extension of the <i>Tasmanian Psychostimulants Action Plan 2007-2009</i> to the end of 2013 (Dec).</p> <p>Cross Sector Bus Tour commenced by the Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drug Council (ATDC) to improve the capacity and knowledge of workers in the area of ATOD and mental health and other community sector and government services, through exposure to different services and opportunities to network.</p>
2009	<p>Tasmanian Corrections Minister introduced a perimeter fence and additional sniffer dogs in efforts to keep illicit drugs out of Risdon prison (May).</p>

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	<p>The Inter Agency Working Group on Drugs (IAWGD) noted that the Tasmania Drug Strategy (TDS) 2005-2009 had come to an end, and therefore needed some form of review or evaluation, but that the NDS 2010-2014 which would also have future implications for the new TDS remained under development. It was decided that while awaiting the outcome of the new NDS an initial report of actions and achievements would be prepared for Government, based on stakeholder consultation about levels of awareness and perceived relevance and achievements of the TDS (Jun).</p> <p>New strategy released: "Building the Foundations for Mental Health and Wellbeing: A Strategic Framework and Action Plan for Implementing Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention (PPEI) Approaches in Tasmania" (Jun).</p> <p>The Tasmanian Institute of Law Enforcement Studies released the <i>Review of the Road Safety (Alcohol and Drugs) Amendment Act 2005</i> (the review). A key finding was that the penalties for drug driving (section 6A) were lenient in comparison to those for drink driving (section 6) (Jun).</p> <p>New governance structure amalgamated the Alcohol and Drug Service, Mental Health Services, Health and Wellbeing Services, Forensic Mental Health Service and Correctional Primary Health Service into the Statewide and Mental Health Services Unit (Jul).</p> <p>Transfer of Part 3 of the <i>Alcohol and Drug Dependency Act (ADDA) 1968</i> to the <i>Poisons Act 1971</i> passed both houses of Parliament. The transferred provisions relate to the prescribing and supply of certain substances, in particular Schedule 8 substances and their prescribing by all health professionals able to prescribe these substances. Also included in the transfer was the requirement for notification of drug dependent persons and the conditions under which such persons may be prescribed Schedule 8 substances under an authority of the Secretary of DHHS. The consolidation of all prescribing aspects of such substances in one piece of legislation was intended to assist practitioners in understanding their requirements and ensure consistency in practice (Sep).</p> <p>An interim review of the actions against the Tasmanian Psychostimulants Action Plan was conducted at the end of 2009. The review indicated a commitment to the aims of the Action Plan by Lead Agencies and those Agencies reported significant activity against the objectives of the Plan. The IAWGD extended the Action Plan until October 2010, in line with the development of the next phase of both the National Drug Strategy and the Tasmanian Drug Strategy. A more comprehensive review of the Action Plan was expected to be undertaken in the second half of 2010 (Sep).</p>
2008	<p>An independent <i>Review of Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Services in Tasmania</i> was completed. The review identified numerous problems in service provision including unmet demand, inadequate systems of referrals, high rates of take away pharmacotherapy doses and poor patient management. The report also identified that the AOD sector in Tasmania had a poor profile and inadequate systems of data collection. Key causes were workforce shortages, insufficient funds, poor training and systems of governance and the lack of a statewide client information system. They recommended establishing a separate A&D unit within the DHHS organisational structure, creating a new governance system to include NGOs and user input, significant investment to expand service provision and training (\$10-15 million per year) and the adoption of a statewide client information system (Jan).</p> <p>Tasmania Police commenced use of drug detection dogs (Feb).</p> <p>The First Annual ATDC Conference: ATOD Practice, Integration & Development held. Conference brought together policy makers and service providers from ATOD and related fields with aim of strengthening relationships, identify priority areas and building skills and knowledge (Apr).</p> <p>\$17.1 million allocated in the 2008-09 Tasmanian Budget towards implementation of the recommendations of the alcohol, tobacco and other drug services review (Jul).</p> <p>Media reports that Tasmania's drug rehabilitation system was in crisis with new clients being unable to receive treatment (Jul).</p> <p>First Needle Syringe Vending Machine trialed in Devonport (Jul).</p> <p>The Pharmaceutical Services Branch of the Department of Health and Human Services received funding from the Commonwealth's Health Connect program to develop and introduce a real time reporting system (RTR). This project enabled the real time secure monitoring of the Schedule 8 medications (such as morphine and oxycodone) that had been dispensed in Tasmanian pharmacies participating in RTR. The move from the previously required monthly retrospective reporting to real time reporting increased the capacity to monitor the prescribing of these medications (as required by legislation) and to provide more accurate advice to patients (Jul).</p> <p>Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Services, Future Service Directions – a five year plan, 2008/09 – 2012/13 adopted. Key initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a whole of government alcohol & drug harm reduction strategy • Establishing a consumer participation framework to ensure that consumers have input into the planning, development & delivery of services and • Undertaking a review of the 1968 Alcohol and Drug Dependency Act to establish a legislative framework that reflects contemporary models of service provision (Dec).
2007	<p>Review of Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Treatment Services in Tasmania commenced.</p> <p>Court mandated drug diversion program introduced (Aug).</p> <p>Tasmanian Psychostimulants Action Plan 2007-2009 adopted to reduce supply & demand of psychostimulants & develop guidelines for safer environments of use (Nov).</p> <p>The Tasmanian Sexually Transmissible Infections and Blood Borne Viruses Action Plan 2007 – 2008 was endorsed by the Minister for Health and Human Services, with the goal of minimising the transmission of HIV, Hepatitis C, and Hepatitis B and other drug related harms to injecting drug users and to the wider community. A number of initiatives commenced at Needle and Syringe Program (NSP) contact points to improve the provision of education, brief intervention and referral for people who inject drugs. These include increased education and training of NSP workers, the implementation of operational guidelines and practice standards throughout NSP primary outlets, and improved permit training and accreditation for NSP workers. Under the plan DHHS also provided hepatitis C blood awareness and drug safety education in prisons, youth detention facilities, schools, and to people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. DHHS continued to support the Needle and</p>

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	Syringe Program (NSP) with an addition to the program on Hobart's Eastern Shore and a trial of needle and syringe dispensing machines in Devonport and Invermay rolled out in 2008-09.
2006	Tasmanian Law Reform Institute published a report titled "The Establishment of a Drug Court Pilot in Tasmania" which examined whether Tasmania needed a drug court. Report concluded that Tasmania should adopt a drug court as well as a comprehensive range of diversionary options (Nov). Hobart City Council's second AOD strategy adopted: "Alcohol and Other Drug Strategy 2006 – 2009".
2005	Tasmanian Drug Strategy 2005-2009 (TDS) adopted. Strategy priorities community safety, prevention and reduction and improved access to treatment. On 1 July new legislation was enacted creating an offence of driving a motor vehicle with illicit drugs in the body. <i>The Road Safety (Alcohol and Drugs) Amendment Act 2005</i> provides authority for police to conduct oral fluid (saliva) tests on drivers to detect the presence of cannabis and amphetamines (Jul).
2004	
2003	
2002	Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs Council, Tasmania (ATDC) established (12 Sep).
2001	Tasmanian Drug Strategic Plan (TDSP) 2001–2004 adopted. Hobart City Council adopted its inaugural AOD strategy: "Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2001". This coincided with a period of heightened concern over youth illicit drug use.
2000	Tasmanian Government signed the COAG-IDDI agreement and introduced Police Drug Diversion Program (Feb) Visit from the International Narcotics Control Board to inspect poppy industry (Apr) Therapeutic use of cannabis investigated by Parliament of Tasmania, Committee on Community Development
1999	
1998	TASTE – a drug user magazine established.
1997	User group established - Tasmanian Users Health + Support League (TUHSL).
1996	Tasmania's first Drug Strategy adopted Alcohol and Drug Foundation of Tasmania, peak body for NGOs disbanded Interdepartmental Committee on Drugs and Alcohol established
1995	
1994	
1993	Introduction of HIV/AIDS Preventive Measures Act established regulatory framework for NSPs in Tasmania - (Needle Availability Program) First official Needle and Syringe Exchange Programs introduced Methadone Program rolled out state-wide post favourable review
1992	Pilot Tasmanian Methadone Program (1 Dec)
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