

**For discussion on  
17 March 2025**

**Legislative Council Panel on Security**

**Anti-drug Education and Publicity  
and  
the Prevention and Control of “Space Oil Drug”**

**PURPOSE**

This paper briefs Members on the progress of anti-drug preventive education and publicity (PE&P) in Hong Kong, covering PE&P efforts in general and recent initiatives in respect of combatting “space oil drug”<sup>1</sup>.

**ANTI-DRUG STRATEGY**

2. The Government has been adopting a multi-pronged approach in its fight against drugs. It comprises PE&P, treatment and rehabilitation services, legislation and law enforcement, external cooperation, and research. Adjustments and enhancements would be made from time to time having regard to the local drug situation and feedback from stakeholders.

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<sup>1</sup> The Government has renamed the harmful substance containing etomidate or its analogues, commonly known as “space oil” to “space oil drug”. For details, please see paragraph 22.

3. After years of effort, the drug problem in Hong Kong has been largely contained. According to the statistics maintained by the Central Registry of Drug Abuse (CRDA)<sup>2</sup> since 1977, the total number of reported drug abusers dropped from 17 627 in 1977 to 5 068 in 2024, representing a decrease of 71%. This achievement is attributable to the close collaboration of different sectors in the society in combatting the drug problem. In particular, the Action Committee Against Narcotics (ACAN), established in 1965, has been playing a crucial role.

4. The key statistics are detailed in **Annex A**. As regards “space oil drug”, there were a total of 300 reported abusers of “space oil drug” in 2024, among which, 226 were young abusers under the age of 21.

## **PE&P INITIATIVES**

5. PE&P efforts are crucial in reducing the demand for dangerous drugs and are the first line of defence in tackling the drug problem. The progress of the Government’s PE&P initiatives since our last report to the Panel on Security of the Legislative Council (LegCo) in June 2024 is set out in ensuing paragraphs, and relevant photos are at **Annex B**.

6. PE&P efforts can be broadly categorised into two types: those targeting the general public and those targeting students. The publicity contents primarily seek to raise public awareness of drug harms and drug trafficking, as well as encourage timely help-seeking by drug abusers or those troubled by drug issues.

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<sup>2</sup> Established in 1972, CRDA is a voluntary reporting system recording the details of drug abusers who have come into contact with and have been reported by the reporting agencies, including law enforcement agencies, treatment and welfare agencies, tertiary institutions, hospitals and clinics. Data of individuals recorded by CRDA are protected by law under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance.

## **(I) PE&P initiatives for the general public**

### *Online and offline initiatives working in tandem*

7. For PE&P targeting the general public, to align with the habits of the digital world nowadays, online and offline initiatives work together to deliver correct messages to various target groups. For online publicity, the Narcotics Division (ND) has placed advertisements on popular websites and mobile applications, stepped up the use of digital media (including the ND's social media accounts) to reach out to the public, and produced easy-to-understand and vivid animations, infographics and short videos to alert the public of drug harms and the criminal liabilities of drug offences. For example, the ND launched a special television programme named "Sidewalk Scientist on Narcotics" ("學是學非學毒害") in June 2024 to analyse drug harms from a scientific perspective, such that the audience could receive anti-drug information while watching entertainment programmes. The programme has also been edited into short videos for broadcasting on social media. We also disseminate anti-drug messages to various sectors of the community, including ethnic minorities, through radio programmes.

8. In response to the evolving drug trends, the ND launches suitable and timely publicity campaigns to educate the public on the latest drug situation concerned. For example, in view of the rising trend of drug abuse of cocaine around the world and in Hong Kong, the ND launched an Announcement in the Public Interest (API) entitled "Cocaine drags you down" in January 2024 to educate the public about the harmful effects of cocaine. Besides, we also launched an API entitled "Cannabis is a drug (No doubt smoking weed hurts you)" in July 2024 to convey the message of staying away from cannabis in a format more relevant to the taste of young people.

9. As regards offline publicity, the ND has actively

disseminated anti-drug messages through various physical channels, including digital advertising spaces at MTR stations, outside the cross-harbour tunnels, large-scale billboards at shopping areas where young people gather, and giant television screens on the external walls of shopping malls, etc. Besides, in response to different large-scale events, the ND has placed advertisements at selected locations such as outside the music festivals, and displayed giant banners at places with high pedestrian flow. In view of the trend that members of the public are being recruited into drug trafficking activities through websites and social media platforms by drug traffickers, we have reinforced publicity work on the criminal liabilities of drug offences, including placing advertisements on websites and social media platforms popular with young people, displaying giant banners at various boundary control points, posting large-scale outdoor advertisements, etc., so as to heighten public alertness.

10. Apart from educating the public on drug harms, help-seeking in particular is also strongly emphasised in publicity materials. Help-seeking through the 24-hour “186186” anti-drug telephone enquiry service and the “98186186” instant messaging enquiry service (on WeChat and WhatsApp) has been prominently featured in advertisements and promotion materials such that drug abusers, their family members and the general public can receive immediate professional support.

11. Apart from using the media, the ND and ACAN also reached out to the public by organising roving exhibitions in the community. The “Anti-drug Info Zone: Stride Ahead Into a Drug-free Future” roving exhibition was held from June to November 2024 at the Hong Kong Book Fair, shopping malls and tertiary institutes to disseminate correct anti-drug knowledge to visitors, as well as providing them with information about criminal liabilities of drug offences and help-seeking, etc. The exhibition recorded a total of 430 000 visitors.

*Theme of 2025: the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ACAN*

12. The idea of setting up ACAN was conceived at the time when the drug problem in Hong Kong was severe in the 1950s and 1960s. ACAN held its first meeting on 16 June 1965 to coordinate the exchange of views among government authorities on combatting drug trafficking and rehabilitation work. Since then, ACAN has assisted in addressing the health, social and economic problems caused by drug trafficking and drug abuse, improving the situation from confused information and lack of community involvement to organised and informed progress with enthusiastic participation of members of society.

13. ACAN greets its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2025. To mark this important year, the ND and ACAN are organising a series of events under the theme of “Commemorating 60 Years of Unwavering Anti-drug Efforts: Stride Towards a Drug-free Hong Kong” to consolidate anti-drug awareness in the community. The list of events is set out in the table below:

	<b>Events</b>
1.	Design of the ACAN 60 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Logo, Souvenirs and Commemorative Stamps
2.	ACAN 60 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary – Colouring and Drawing Competition
3.	Interactive Roving Exhibition in Education Institutions and the Community
4.	ACAN 60 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Television Programmes
5.	ACAN 60 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Booklet
6.	Interactive Roving Exhibition at the Hong Kong Book Fair
7.	Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Anti-drug Summit
8.	ACAN 60 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Radio Programmes

14. Among these events, the roving exhibition in commemoration of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ACAN (the exhibition)

has commenced since mid-February 2025 and the opening ceremony of the ACAN's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemorative events was held at the Hong Kong City Hall, the first stop of the roving exhibition. Based on the concept of a time tunnel, the exhibition has fused old and new elements in it, i.e. on the one hand, the exhibition made use of precious historical photos and anti-drug films (e.g. an anti-drug black-and-white film which was produced by ACAN in the 1960s and was once screened in cinemas, with the famous comic character "Old Master Q" making a cameo appearance), to look back on the changes in Hong Kong's anti-drug work over the years as the times evolved, and remind the visitors to stay vigilant through the interesting history of the past 60 years. On the other hand, the exhibition incorporated the elements of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and multimedia, and was divided into different zones including game zones and a photo booth zone. It aimed at disseminating correct anti-drug knowledge, as well as information about criminal liabilities of drug-related offences and ways of seeking help. The exhibition will be held at shopping malls in different districts, tertiary institutions and the Hong Kong Book Fair. The exhibitions was recently held at the Hong Kong Baptist University in late February and will be held at the City University of Hong Kong in mid-March. As for the stop at the Hong Kong Book Fair, we plan to organise a parental talk to educate parents on drug harms and skills to identify drug abuse in their children.

15. To enhance community participation among different age groups, we organised the ACAN 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – Colouring and Drawing Competition to enable primary and secondary school students to give play to their artistic creativity through colouring and drawing, and to raise the children's and the youths' anti-drug awareness. The winning entries will be included in the commemorative stamps marking the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ACAN. Students of the Hong Kong Design Institute have been invited to design the logo and souvenirs of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ACAN to show the determination of the younger generation in the fight

against drugs. The logo and souvenirs have been included as exhibits in the exhibition and distributed to visitors, and are very well-received.

16. In addition, we are preparing the publication of a commemorative booklet relating to the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ACAN, which will cover the major milestones of ACAN in the past 60 years, the multi-pronged anti-drug efforts in Hong Kong, interviews with members of the anti-drug sector and projects of the Beat Drugs Fund. The booklet aims to showcase the achievements of Hong Kong's anti-drug efforts with pictures and illustrations for education, publicity and record purposes. Besides, we will produce television and radio programmes that are informative and entertaining at the same time to publicise anti-drug messages and promote work of ACAN to all sectors of the community.

17. Lastly, we will organise the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Anti-drug Summit as the major event of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ACAN in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2025. During the summit, we will exchange views with various parties on issues such as changes in drug trends and future challenges in anti-drug efforts with anti-drug work among young people as a focus, with a view to promoting mutual co-operation and deepening exchanges in areas such as anti-drug law enforcement, intelligence, research and analysis on new trends, and anti-drug exchanges at the community level. We are discussing with relevant authorities in the Mainland and Macao on the specific arrangements.

## **(II) PE&P initiatives for students**

### *Anti-drug efforts on campuses*

18. Schools have always been an important channel for PE&P. The ND has endeavoured to implement diverse anti-drug

programmes and initiatives in education institutes. The key ones are listed below–

- (a) *Healthy School Programme with a Drug Testing Component*: a school-based anti-drug education initiative aiming at enhancing the physical and mental health and well-being of secondary school students and fostering their resolve to refuse drugs through participating in diversified personal growth activities and voluntary school drug testing, thereby promoting the cultivation of a healthy and drug-free culture. Schools have organised different varieties of activities, including leadership training, adventure activities, emotional management workshops, growth support groups, career planning workshops, skill training workshops and parenting talks. While 43 schools participated in the programme when it was launched in 2011, it now covers nearly half of all secondary schools in Hong Kong. We are processing a new round of programme for the 2025/2026 school year.
- (b) *“Beat Drugs with Sports” Programme*: a school-based student-led preventive education initiative without drug testing components aiming to promote healthy lifestyle and a drug-free culture in secondary schools. The activities are to be designed, organised and implemented by students and should be related to sports and / or health. At the same time, the activities should incorporate anti-drug themes.
- (c) *Strengthening teaching resources*: anti-drug education forms a part of the Values Education Curriculum Framework (Pilot Version) for primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong. The ND has developed in collaboration with the Education Bureau (EDB) teaching resources on anti-drug education.



- (d) *Strengthening anti-drug capacity of teaching staff and school personnel*: in collaboration with the EDB and non-governmental organisations, the ND arranges teachers and school personnel to receive anti-drug training to equip them with the knowledge of drug harms, misconceptions about drugs and common drug traps; techniques and skills in identifying at-risk or hidden drug-abusing students and Hong Kong's anti-drug policy and local legislation, etc.
- (e) *Interactive anti-drug drama*: a drama tour that educates upper primary students in an interactive manner on drug harms, the skills of refusing drugs and the dire consequences of committing drug offences, etc.
- (f) *Anti-drug education programmes for students*: anti-drug education programmes for students are provided. Modules with different contents and modes of delivery suiting respective needs of schools are available to teach students the harms associated with drug abuse, and to enhance the resilience of young people against drug abuse.

19. For tertiary institutions, the ND has maintained, since 2023, close connection and collaboration with tertiary institutions and Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) operating Counselling Centres for Psychotropic Substance Abusers, and promoting anti-drug PE&P in tertiary institutions. Efforts include holding anti-drug education talks, distributing publicity materials and broadcasting promotional videos, etc. The ND will also launch suitable initiatives having regard to the latest drug trends and student needs.

20. Apart from the ND, law enforcement agencies have also devoted efforts to reach out to education institutions and the community. For example, the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF) has produced teaching kits for teachers, interactive drama targeting

primary school students, and hosted interactive sharing sessions and educational talks for schools and universities. In 2024, the Customs and Excise Department (C&ED) also organised anti-drug talks at various schools and institutions to enhance public awareness of drug harms.

### *Proactive engagement with young people*

21. In 2021, the HKPF set up the Leadership Institute on Narcotics (L.I.O.N.) to provide systematic training to raise anti-drug awareness and develop positive values among young people. The C&ED launched a new youth programme Customs YES in 2021 to offer youngsters with diversified learning opportunities. Since 2008, the Correctional Services Department (CSD) has promoted the message of leading a drug-free life to the youth through a series of community education activities under the Rehabilitation Pioneer Project (RPP).

## **CURBING “SPACE OIL DRUG” ABUSE**

### **(I) PE&P for targeted groups**

22. To curb “space oil drug” abuse, the Government has raced against time and expeditiously launched targeted measures on multiple fronts, which include legislation, strengthened law enforcement and PE&P to reduce drug demands. On the front of legislation, the Government has set out the justifications and background for the proposed legislative amendments in the LegCo Brief issued on 12 February 2025<sup>3</sup>. The amendment provisions were implemented on 14 February 2025. As regards PE&P, to counter misleading information circulating among young people, who mistakenly think that taking “space oil drug” is similar to

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<sup>3</sup> The LegCo Brief has been uploaded to the website of LegCo:  
[https://www.legco.gov.hk/yr2025/english/brief/ncr218sf28pt3\\_20250212-e.pdf](https://www.legco.gov.hk/yr2025/english/brief/ncr218sf28pt3_20250212-e.pdf)

smoking ordinary e-cigarettes, and to carry out public education in conjunction with the legislative amendments, we have renamed the harmful substance commonly known as “space oil” to “space oil drug”, so that the public can clearly understand its drug nature and harmful effects.

23. Through close collaboration with anti-drug partners, the ND has a close grasp of the “space oil drug” abuse situation among youngsters from around mid-2024 and immediately accorded priority to raising the awareness of this emerging drug among different sectors. The ND in the first instance, wrote to all primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong in mid-2024, alerting them to the problem of inhaling “space oil drug” through e-cigarettes. After collecting information from frontline social workers and others at a meeting convened in August 2024, the ND organised a seminar jointly with the Hong Kong Poison Control Centre of the Hospital Authority and a frontline social service unit in October 2024. At the seminar, different professionals, anti-drug workers, social workers and teaching staff from over 100 primary and secondary schools shared their observations on the abuse situation of “space oil drug” among young people and the related harms. There were also exchanges of views on how to prevent the abuse “space oil drug” and how to handle abusers. As young people often inhale “space oil drug” through e-cigarettes, the Chairman of the Hong Kong Council on Smoking and Health also gave a presentation on the harmful effects of e-cigarettes at the seminar.

24. In view of the fact that drug traffickers take advantage of students’ curiosity for new things and peer pressure, the Government has also initiated a series of publicity and education programmes in schools. These include the dissemination of infographics to all schools in Hong Kong by the Narcotics Bureau of the HKPF. Recently, to tie in with the legislation on listing etomidate and its three analogues as dangerous drugs on 14 February 2025 and to prevent drug traffickers from selling

“space oil drugs” to young people, the ND and the EDB co-organised the Anti-“Space Oil Drug” Week campaign in all schools in Hong Kong. The campaign aims to enhance the correct understanding among students of the harms of “space oil drug” and strengthen their resolve to stay away from drugs in an intensive manner within a short period of time. Diverse learning activities have been held in schools, including talks, anti-drug videos and drama shows, to disseminate anti-“space oil drug” messages. The EDB has produced and uploaded anti-“space oil drug” “Life Event” Exemplar and a music video entitled “Building Our Dreams – Let’s Knock Drugs Out”, and has issued a circular informing schools of the relevant resources produced by various government departments for reference and deployment. The ND has also provided anti-“space oil drug” publicity materials to schools. Following the campaign, the Government will continue to incorporate knowledge about combatting the “space oil drug” in PE&P in schools.

25. Besides, the ND met with representatives from school sponsoring bodies, principals’ associations, the Committee on Home-School Co-operation and the district Federations of Parent-teacher Associations to discuss different ways to prevent “space oil drugs” from harming young people. The ND’s staff also took part in the continuing professional development programmes arranged by the EDB to explain to teachers the harms of “space oil drug” and how to identify drug-abusing students.

## **(II) Publicity targeting the general public**

26. As regards anti-“space oil drug” publicity initiatives undertaken by the Government curated for the general public, they are set out below:

### *Animations and short videos*

(a) In August 2024, the ND launched a short animation on

the harms of “space oil drug”, stressing that vaping “space oil drug” is the same as taking drugs and dispelling young people’s misunderstanding of vaping “space oil drug” through e-cigarettes.

- (b) In October 2024, the programme “Hong Kong United” broadcasted by Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) elaborated on the harms of “space oil drug”. In December of the same year, while the preparatory work for the legislation was being taken forward, the ND took the early initiative to launch an API entitled “Vaping ‘Space Oil’ is the Same as Taking Drugs”, reminding members of the public that the Government was preparing to list and control etomidate, the main active ingredient of “space oil drug”, as a dangerous drug.
- (c) Starting from December 2024, the ND launched a series of feature stories entitled “The-Talk. Detox.”. Representatives from different sectors were interviewed to look into the reasons for abusing “space oil drug”, the harms of this emergent drug, common misunderstandings of “space oil drug” and the importance of promptly listing etomidate as a dangerous drug in the public interest.
- (d) On 14 February 2025, the ND launched a new API entitled “Don’t fall into ‘space oil drug’ traps!”, sternly stressing that the Government had listed etomidate and its analogues as dangerous drugs and reminding the public of the heavy punishments for committing offences related to “space oil drug”.

### *Multi-faceted publicity campaigns*

27. With reference to the experience gained in the publicity work for the legislation on cannabidiol (CBD) in 2023 and taking into account ACAN’s advice, we believed that intensive publicity

could help the public to quickly grasp the harms of “space oil drug”. As such, the ND put up advertisements at the Hong Kong International Airport, Airport Express trains, bus stops, MTR stations, Light Rail stations, bodies of buses and public light buses, set up dedicated areas for displaying posters and videos at various boundary control points, and released promotional videos on the large-scale outdoor naked-eye 3D display screen in Mong Kok from December 2024 to February 2025, with a view to bringing the message of combatting “space oil drug” to every corner in the community.

28. On 14 February 2025, when etomidate and its three analogues were listed as dangerous drugs, the ND launched a renewed wave of intensive publicity campaigns to reinforce publicity work against “space oil drug” through various channels. The goal was to promote in a high-profile manner that “space oil drug” has been brought under statutory control and showcase the determination of various sectors of the community to jointly combat the vaping of “space oil drug” within a short period of time. Apart from publicity efforts at the locations mentioned in paragraph 27 above, advertisements were placed in cinemas, popular websites and mobile applications, and banners were mounted throughout Hong Kong (including secondary schools, public housing estates, villages in the New Territories, areas with high pedestrian flow and so on). The ND also highlighted the importance of staying vigilant against “space oil drug” through media interviews for coverage by various media organisations. For anti-drug messages to reach out deep into the community, the Government broadcasted publicity videos in a number of shopping malls and has continued to carry out location-based publicity work having regard to the geographic locations of mobile phone users, with a view to disseminating anti-drug messages in a precise manner.

29. Besides, the ND has been collaborating with various government departments and units, encouraging them to expound

on the harmful effects of “space oil drug” to the public through different channels so as to raise self-awareness of drug prevention among the public and seek to reach out to hidden drug abusers through various means. Several NGOs have sustained their efforts in alerting the public to the harmful effects of “space oil drug” through the media.

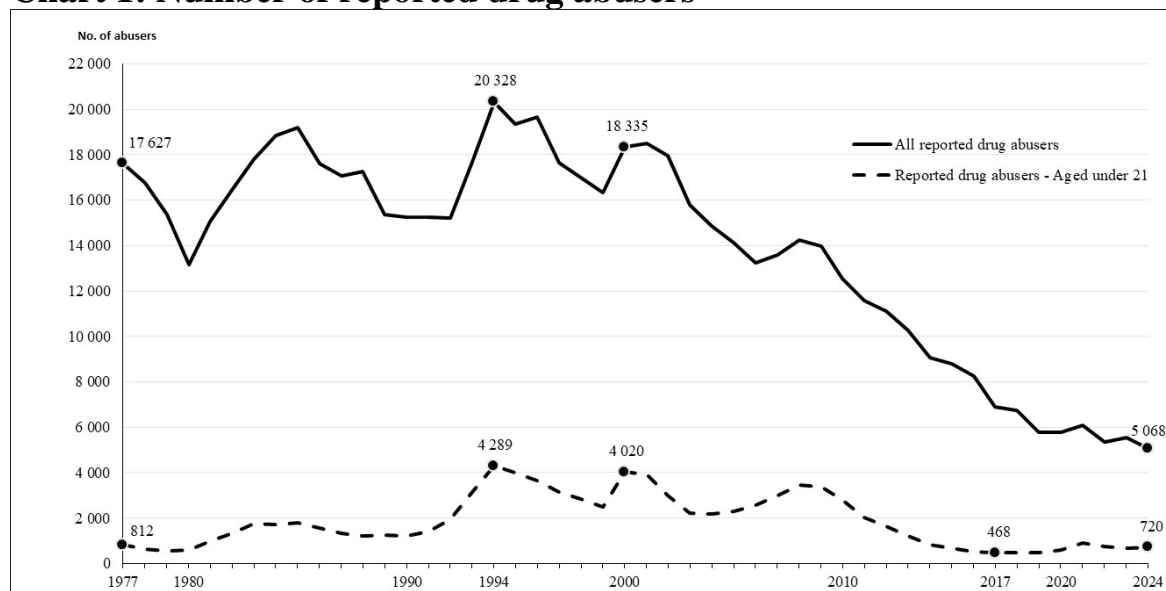
## **CONTINUOUS MONITORING**

30. The Government will continue to closely monitor the drug situation and step up anti-drug publicity and education programmes for different target groups, and disseminate anti-drug messages to the community through online and offline means at the same time. The Government’s overall anti-drug efforts will be reported to this Panel later this year.

**Narcotics Division**  
**Security Bureau**  
**March 2025**

# **Central Registry of Drug Abuse Key Statistics**

**Chart 1: Number of reported drug abusers**



		1977	2000	2024
<b>1</b>	<b><u>All</u> reported drug abusers</b>	<b>17 627</b>	<b>18 335</b>	<b>5 068</b>
1a	Aged under 21	812	4 020	720
1b	Aged 21 and above	16 815	14 315	4 348
<b>2</b>	<b><u>All</u> reported drug abusers*</b>			
2a	Narcotics analgesics abusers	15 598	12 241	2 031
2b	Psychotropic substance abusers	206	5 561	3 454
<b>3</b>	<b><u>All</u> reported drug abusers - by most common type of drugs abused*</b>			
3a	Heroin	14 058	12 188	1 966
3b	Cocaine	-	31	1 064
3c	Methamphetamine (“Ice”)	-	968	802
3d	Cannabis	7	1 434	661
3e	Ketamine	-	1 605	528
3f	Triazolam/Midazolam/Zopiclone	-	927	511
3g	“Space oil drug”	-	-	300
3h	Cough medicine	90	308	202
3i	MDMA (“Ecstasy”)	-	2 333	85



		1977	2000	2024
<b>4</b>	<b>Reported drug abusers <u>aged under 21</u> - by most common type of drugs abused*</b>			
4a	Cannabis	@	736	296
4b	Cocaine	-	9	291
4c	“Space oil drug”	-	-	226
4d	Ketamine	-	1 280	51
4e	MDMA (“Ecstasy”)	-	1 949	39
4f	Methamphetamine (“Ice”)	-	381	23
4g	Cough medicine	-	90	11
4h	Heroin	642	747	7
4i	Triazolam/Midazolam/Zopiclone	-	42	@

\* A drug abuser may take more than one type of drugs. When filing records to CRDA, reported drug abusers may opt for more than one type of drugs. In this connection, the aggregate of items 2a to 2b, 3a to 3i and 4a to 4i would be more than the total number of reported drug abusers of the respective categories.

@ Suppressed as the value is too small.

- Nil

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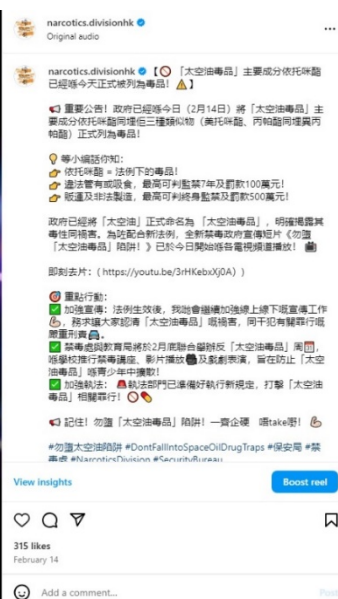
## Annex B

### Highlights of the Government's Anti-drug Initiatives - Preventive Education and Publicity

#### A. Control of “space oil drug” (launched on 14 February 2025)







B. Anti-drug slogan “Let’s Stand Firm. Knock Drugs Out!” (launched in mid-2024)

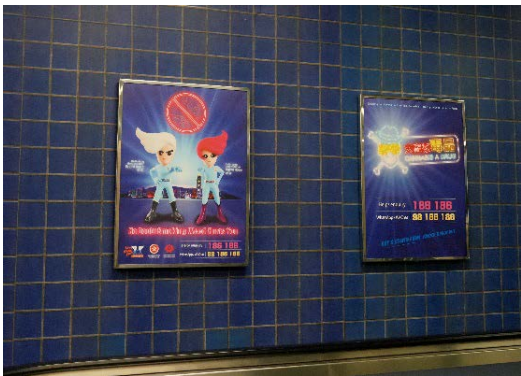


APP 1933 九巴會員	
33A	旺角 (柏景灣) 葵涌街坊會
33A	荃灣 (如心廣場) 健康街 11 分鐘
38	平田 葵興路葵興邨 11 分鐘
43	荃灣西站 健康街 1 分鐘
43	青衣 (長康邨) 葵涌街坊會 10 分鐘
34	荃灣 (灣景花園) 葵涌邨秋葵樓
34	葵盛 (中) 5 分鐘

C. Control of cannabidiol (CBD) (launched in mid-2024)



D. Cannabis is a drug (launched in late 2024)



E. Anti-drug APIs (as short videos on combatting cannabidiol (CBD), cocaine, cannabis and “space oil drug” that are regularly broadcasted)







F. Events launched in commemoration of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ACAN



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