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DRUGS FOR DRUGS – IT DOESN'T WORK LONG-TERM

The Executive Director of the **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime**, Mr. Antonio Maria Costa stated on 7th September, 2006 that:

“Societies have the drug problem that they deserve. In Sweden’s case the commitment to prevention, law enforcement, demand reduction and treatment over the past thirty years has made a significant difference”.

Independent MP Ann Bressington is calling on the Government to look to Sweden for guidance on how to treat and manage the “Ice Epidemic”. **Sweden’s rate of amphetamine use is 1/40th that of Australia’s.**

Mr Torgny Petersen wrote a statement to the South Australian parliament last week after claims were made that Sweden was going back to harm minimisation:

*“Sweden once made the mistake of providing drugs to drug addicts. Between 1965 and 1967 some **4 million doses of amphetamines and more than 300,000 doses of opiates were distributed to drug users.** Luckily the **project was terminated in 1967** and since then no serious attempts have been put forward about providing drug addicts with the drug of their choice”.*

Ms Bressington said that drug replacement therapies should be a last resort, not the first option.

*“The problem is **that treatment and rehabilitation facilities are scarce** and those that do exist **have lengthy waiting lists.** It is just **cheaper** for governments **to provide drugs** than to invest in training drug and alcohol workers for abstinence based approaches and of course to provide the funding for facilities to deliver the services. **Taxpayers will continue to pay** for drug addicts who will not recover – we should be very concerned about the road we are on.”*

Before her election in March, 2006 Ms Bressington was the founder and C.E.O. of DrugBeat of S.A. for 11 years. The drug treatment and rehabilitation program is located in the northern suburbs. The program has specialised in treating amphetamine addicts for the past four years with great success. Some of the most astonishing successes have been clients who have been coerced into treatment either by their families or via the courts.