

24 October 2019

English only\*

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**Forty-third Meeting of Heads of National  
Drug Law Enforcement Agencies,  
Asia and the Pacific**  
Bangkok, 22–25 October 2019

**Draft report**

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**Addendum**

**Consideration of topics by working groups**

**(b) New modi operandi in trafficking and trends in concealment methods and transport, and effective investigative techniques in response thereto**

1. The working group on the above topic met during the 4th meeting, held on 23 October 2019. In its consideration of the issue, the working group formulated the following observations and recommendations.

**2. Observations**

(a) Organized criminal groups are benefiting from all methods of trafficking using any means of transportation – sea vessels, small vessels (dhows), containerized shipments, containers, trucks, vehicles, luggage, body concealment methods and courier parcels. Certain types of packaging such as tea packages were frequently registered in the region. Countries also reported cases of body-packing of liquids to avoid x-ray detection;

(b) Controlled deliveries are used as a means of law enforcement mainly on a bilateral basis in the region. Lack of standard operational procedures, differences in legislation as well as lack of resources are obstacles to conducting more frequent international controlled delivery operations;

(c) The platforms and capacities of the international and regional law enforcement cooperation organizations are not frequently used. The network of the liaison officers is used wherever available;

(d) Besides reports of a sharp increase of methamphetamine trafficking in South-East Asia, Afghanistan was also reported as one of the potential new sources

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\* Available only in English, which is the working language of the subsidiary body.



of methamphetamine. A number of significant seizures of this type of drugs originating from Afghanistan have been recorded;

(e) Cases of major shipments of opium poppy seeds and cannabis seeds using misdeclaration as a concealment method have been reported;

(f) Online sale of drugs and online payments (including with use of cryptocurrencies) are increasing;

(g) Incidents of large vessels distributing drugs in the high-seas to smaller vessels for onward travel to the destination are observed more frequently. Large vessels staying at high seas with large volumes of illicit drugs, so-called “mother ships”, are transferring drugs to smaller boats, including fishing vessels, used for delivery of drugs to the coast.

### **3. Recommendations**

(a) Governments should further encourage their law enforcement agencies to coordinate and cooperate with each other to ensure timely exchange of criminal intelligence and to conduct more effective operations at both national and international levels;

(b) Governments should encourage their law enforcement agencies to share their experiences in developing and implementing standard operational procedures on conducting controlled deliveries and other specialized techniques with their partners in other countries, as one of the measures of international cooperation through exchange of best practices;

(c) Governments should continue the regular exchange of information on trafficking routes, concealment methods and *modi operandi* used by criminal groups involved in illicit drug trafficking with a view to undertaking timely preventive law enforcement measures.

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