

ACMD

Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs

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29th October 2010

The Rt Hon Theresa May
2 Marsham Street
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Dear Home Secretary,

Re: Advice on 2-DPMP - 'Ivory Wave' – concerning the Open General Import Licence

The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) has been keeping the harms of 'Ivory Wave' under review since the Council was made aware of its sales and the subsequent presentations to accident and emergency units.

The ACMD has considered some of the available evidence on the constituents, harms and sales of 'Ivory Wave' from organisations making 'legal high' test purchases, forensic providers, the National Poisons Information Service, National Programme on Substance Abuse Deaths, accident and emergency units and Government Departments.

The ACMD consider that the evidence concerning the constituents of 'Ivory Wave', based upon independent test purchasing and forensic testing, is strong enough to consider Desoxypipradrol (also known as 2-diphenylmethylpiperidine (2-DPMP)) as one of the common psychoactive constituents. 2-DPMP is not a controlled drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. Other constituents of samples of 'Ivory Wave' have previously included Methylendioxypropylvalerone (MDPV) and mephedrone, both of which are controlled drugs.

The compound 2-DPMP is closely related to methylphenidate (Ritalin) (controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 as a Class B drug) and exhibits similar pharmacological actions to compounds of the amphetamine

family. The compound was initially developed as a treatment (for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and narcolepsy), however, it was found that the elimination half life was longer than other related compounds. Self reported data from callers to the National Poisons Unit helpline, and assessment of accident and emergency admissions suggest that products branded as 'Ivory Wave' typically cause prolonged agitation (lasting up to 5 days after drug use which is sometimes severe, requiring physical restraint), paranoia, hallucinations and myoclonus (muscle spasms/twitches). A product marked as 'Whack' in Ireland has also been found to contain 2-DPMP and the adverse effects observed are identical to those described above.

The ACMD consider that the Government should take immediate steps to curb the import of 2-DPMP thereby reducing the supply of drug for sale of this harmful substance as a public health measure. The ACMD recommend that an immediate ban is made on the import of 2-DPMP under the Open General Import Licence (OGIL). The prohibition on the import of 2-DPMP would provide powers to seize illegal imports of this substance to prevent harm to those in the UK.

The ACMD is not recommending control under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 as it is not yet clear if the samples of drugs containing 2-DPMP are indicative of a wider prevalence of this drug. So far there have been only isolated seizures and cases of apparent use. However, the ACMD must make clear that there are serious harms associated with 2-DPMP. The ACMD will, of course, keep the situation under review, particularly evidence around use and availability. The ACMD will look towards providing a more detailed update within 12 months, unless there are further developments.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Les Iversen'.

Professor Les Iversen FRS

Cc: James Brokenshire