



## Drug Trend Bulletin ISSUE 20 – JUNE 2019

**THIS IS A REDACTED COPY OF AN INTERNAL POLICE DOCUMENT THAT PROVIDES INFORMATION AND ADVICE ON SOME OF THE LATEST DRUG TRENDS AROUND SCOTLAND.**

The Festival season is currently in full swing with revellers all over the country attending events with some undoubtedly consuming controlled substances. This edition of the bulletin will hopefully increase your awareness of some of the substances that you may encounter at festival events in addition to other emerging and current trends.

### TERMINAL V – April 2019

Terminal V – The Rising, was an all-day electronic music festival held on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2019 at the Royal Highland Festival Centre, Edinburgh. This year's event had up to 13,000 attendees. STOP officers provided on site advice on all drug seizures and presumptively tested drugs recovered. A significant amount of drugs were recovered with the vast majority being personal quantities. The drugs recovered were as follows,

- 54 Cocaine cases - 0.25g, 0.5g and 1g deals were most common.
- 37 Ecstasy cases - Logo's included - Fanta, EA sports, Supreme, Dice, Gold bars, Punisher, Minion, Lucky 7, Tic Tac, Illuminati amongst others.
- 27 recoveries of what is suspected to be MDMA powder/crystals – a variety of deals from 0.2g 'bombs' to 1g deals. One dealer had 50 x 0.25g capsules.
- 18 recoveries of what is suspected to be Ketamine - 0.5g and 1g deals most common.
- 1 recovery of 2 Xanax tablets (likely to be either Alprazolam or Etizolam).
- 1 LSD/Nbome recovery (2 tabs).
- 9 x Cannabis/Resin recoveries.

Some images of the Ecstasy tablets recovered



## Drug Trend Bulletin – ISSUE 20



MDMA capsules & 'bombs'



## SPOTLIGHT ON ECSTASY TABLET PRODUCTION



Scottish based Organised Crime groups continue to dominate drug supply within this country and they increasingly produce their own products especially tablets that can be easily made and sold on for a high price. In December 2017 the pill press shown in this image was recovered within the Forth Valley area in a shed/outhouse building.

# Drug Trend Bulletin – ISSUE 20



## TDP 5 Desktop Tablet Press



9 Review(s) | Add Your Review

**£1,900.00**



As can be seen from the image, a brand new press shown can be purchased for a relatively small amount over the internet. The press recovered in the case is a small industrial machine which can produce up to 5,000 tablets per hour (large industrial presses can produce up to 200,000 tablets per hour) but it is almost 2ft tall and weighs 125kg!! Inside the funnel on the recovered press was in excess of quarter of a kilogram of a green coloured MDMA mixture that literally covered the inside of the wooden shed/outhouse where the machine was stored. Clearly a large amount of tablets were being produced within this building. The tablets produced at the time had the Stone Island clothing brand logo on them.

The potential financial gain from this operation can be illustrated as follows;

When used for only one hour per week and if it only worked at 50% capacity then 2,500 Ecstasy tablets could be produced with a maximum street value of up to £25,000.

If all raw products cost around £5,000 then a potential profit per week is £20,000!!!

Annually this could be up to £1,040,000. Remember this is a small scale machine, there are much larger machines in circulation.

Other items that are essential in order to produce Ecstasy tablets are coloured powders which contain binding and flowing agents to help the tablets bond together and flow through the machine and not block it as well as the important 'die's'. Two of these are required to press the tablets into the desired shape and logo. Images of these and their purchase cost are below,

 <p><b>Pre-order</b></p> <p><b>Grenade 9mm PRE-ORDER</b></p> <p><b>£195.00</b></p> <p>Pre-order the 9mm Grenade punch die set for the TDP 0, TDP 1.5 and TDP 5 tablet press machines and VICE</p>	 <p><b>Gold Bar 11mm x 7mm</b></p> <p><b>£195.00</b></p> <p>11mm x 7mm gold bar / 199.9 shaped punch die set for the TDP 0, TDP 1.5, TDP 5 and TDP 6s tablet press machines and VICE Handheld Press.</p>	 <p><b>Insta 9mm</b></p> <p><b>£195.00</b></p>	 <p><b>Jordan 9mm</b></p> <p><b>£195.00</b></p>	 <p><b>Supreme 11mm x 6mm</b></p> <p><b>£195.00</b></p> <p>11mm x 6mm Supreme C   P bar shape punch die set for the TDP 0 and TDP 1.5 and tablet press machines.</p>
		 <p><b>Light Bulb 8mm x 11mm</b></p> <p><b>£195.00</b></p>	 <p><b>Mitsu 8mm</b></p> <p><b>£175.00</b></p>	

## Drug Trend Bulletin – ISSUE 20

Virtually any type of stamp can be purchased for around £200. Custom made die's can be specifically manufactured for the customer with a cost from £400 to £4,000.

Three persons have recently been convicted of being concerned in the supply of Ecstasy from this case.

### KETAMINE

Ketamine is a common drug consumed regularly by club and festival goers. Ketamine was made a Class C controlled drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 in 2006 however after reviewing the harms caused by its misuse it was re-classified as a Class B drug from 2014.

Medically Ketamine is used as an anaesthetic and sedative. When used as a recreational drug it is most common for Ketamine to be consumed by taking a 'bump' which is snorting a small amount or by 'bombing' where a small amount is swallowed in a wrap. The feelings associated with the drug include<sup>1</sup>

- Dream-like and detached
- Chilled, relaxed and happy
- Confused and nauseated

Some of the adverse effects of Ketamine use include increased heart rate and blood pressure, confusion, agitated, delirious and disconnected from reality. Serious health issues from misuse of this drug include Kidney and bladder issues in addition to it potentially being fatal.



All of the suspected Ketamine from the Terminal V – The Rising event were similar in that they were recovered as a fine white powder with weights of between 0.5 grams and 1 gram, all contained within small clear snap-bags as shown in the image opposite.

The Forth Valley and the Edinburgh area have each recently had seizures of a quarter kilogram amount of Ketamine from suspected suppliers. These are the largest recoveries by Police Scotland over the last year.

There is a general rise in the amount of this drug being recovered, however it is still a relatively small market as Police Scotland only recovered a total of 100 grams of the drug from April 2017 to March 2018<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> WWW.talktofrank.com

<sup>2</sup> Scottish Government – Drug Seizures and offender characteristics, 2017-18

## Drug Trend Bulletin – ISSUE 20

### CANNABIS PRODUCTS

The police continue to recover a wide variety of Cannabis based products. A recent recovery in the Edinburgh area revealed a varied range of these. The products and images below will help provide some information and should assist officers in being able to identify them should they be observed at a drugs search.



## Drug Trend Bulletin – ISSUE 20



These types of Cannabis based product are generally sold as having a high THC content and can cost up to and sometimes in excess of £100 per gram. Please contact your local STOP unit for an accurate price should any similar type Cannabis based products be recovered.

The capsules, containers and stickers are easily purchased over the internet, making the products to be sold look very professional.

Mirroring what we currently find in Scotland, a very recent publication from the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) has highlighted the greater diversity of Cannabis products, its increasing potency and the need to monitor the health effects closely.



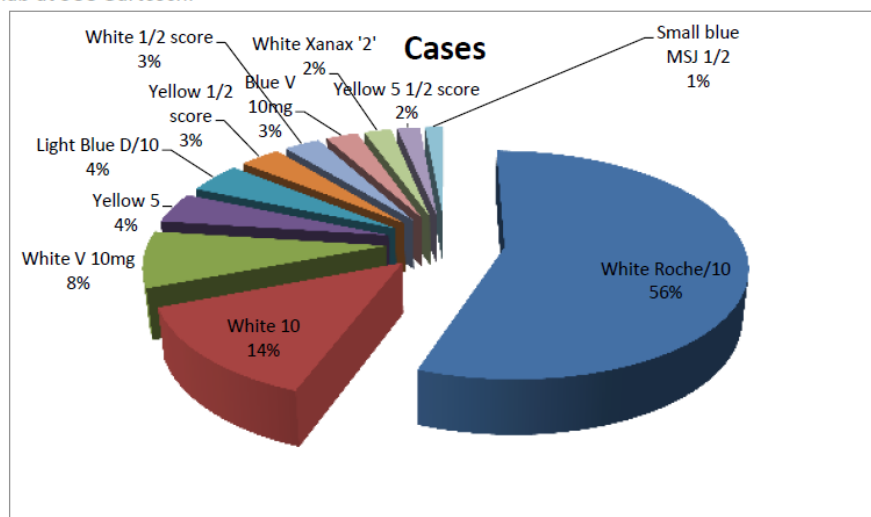
[http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2019/5/developments-in-the-european-cannabis-market\\_en](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/news/2019/5/developments-in-the-european-cannabis-market_en)

## Drug Trend Bulletin – ISSUE 20

### STREET DIAZEPAM

#### Operation Borzoi Intel Result – May 2019

The figures below represent a breakdown of the most commonly recovered, non-custody submissions of illicitly manufactured 'street diazepam' tablets submitted to the SPA Forensic lab at SCC Gartcosh.



Operation Borzoi is the Police Scotland response to the continuing street Diazepam issue and this project continues to forensically analyse and monitor street Diazepam trends. The latest tablets to be tested at the Scottish Crime Campus at Gartcosh during May 2019 reveals that white coloured Roche 10 tablets with a half-score on the reverse continue to be by far the most commonly recovered Street Diazepam tablet in the West and Forth Valley areas of Scotland during May 2019. All of these tablets contained the drug Etizolam. The vast majority of all the street Diazepam tablets recovered contained Etizolam with a small quantity containing Diazepam. The Xanax tablets recovered contained either Alprazolam or Etizolam.

Operation Borzoi results have shown that until May 2019, white MA - D 10 had almost disappeared in favour of the re-emergence of the Roche branded tablets during 2019. The results of the table above show what is currently being found around the West of Scotland and Forth Valley areas in particular.

Recent analysis of white coloured MA – D 10 branded tablets in the Forth Valley area during June 2019 revealed that a 5,000 recovery of these tablets contained Diclazepam and not Etizolam or Diazepam. This is likely to be replicated across the country in the weeks and months ahead.

**DICLAZEPAM** – This is a substance that is believed to be up to 10 times stronger than Diazepam which is similar to the strength of Etizolam. It is not a well-researched drug and therefore little is known about its effects. It is not approved for medical a purpose and is obtained online as a 'research chemical'. It became a Class C controlled drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 from 31/05/2017.

The North of Scotland currently has more recoveries of the small blue MSJ branded tablets which generally contain Diazepam in addition to more Xanax tablets than other parts of Scotland.

## Drug Trend Bulletin – ISSUE 20

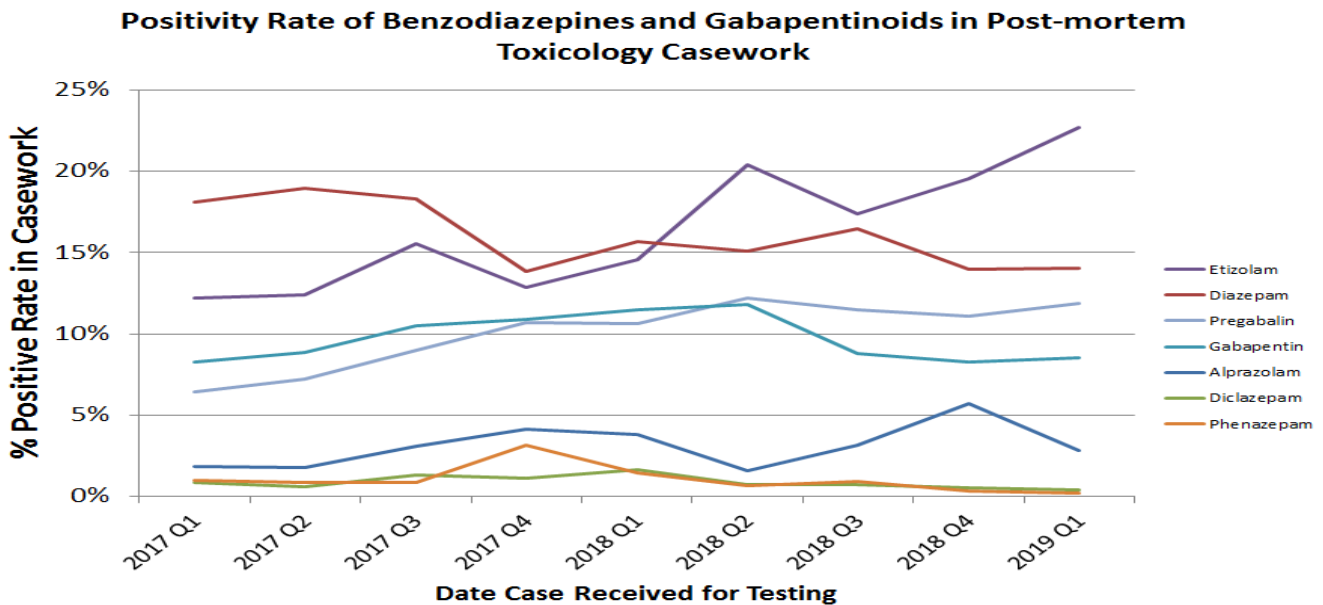
The above results continue to show big variations in the Street Diazepam market in all areas of Scotland with a variety of sizes, colours, brands and most worryingly active drug content within the tablets currently in our communities!!

A recent Special Bulletin which was published highlighting the potential for the Roche 10 tablets to contain Fentanyl has so far proved to have not materialised, however we are still concerned about this potential threat and we continue to advise extreme caution around the consumption of any street Diazepam.

Similarly the risk of Hypoglycaemia from street Diazepam consumption was also highlighted in a recent special bulletin and this also continues to be a serious health risk to all street Diazepam users.

### POST MORTEM TOXICOLOGY

The graph below from post-mortem casework submitted to the Forensic Toxicology Service at the University of Glasgow, includes any sudden, unexpected or unexplained death investigated by COPFS and covers 90% of the Scottish casework (excluding Aberdeen and Highlands and Islands).



What is clear from this data is that the general trend of more Etizolam and less Diazepam being found in post-mortem toxicology is similar to what the SPA forensic laboratory and police recoveries are currently finding. This statistical information will become a regular feature of future Drug Trend Bulletins so that the post-mortem trends and Operation Borzoi material will show the latest and most accurate picture for Benzodiazepines in Scotland.



## Drug Trend Bulletin – ISSUE 20

### DRUG PURITIES

After concern that a dealer supplying street Heroin was linked to drug related deaths in the East of Scotland, some of the drug was recovered following a search and submitted to the forensic laboratory. Analysis provided that the purity was 23%, although slightly above the national average (15-20%) this confirmed that the Heroin recovered was not adulterated with dangerous drugs or neither was it significantly stronger than normal street purity Heroin which greatly reduced any wider community concern and impact.

### LEAN or PURPLE DRANK

The substance known as Lean or Purple Drank was recovered in the North of Scotland recently. Initial analysis revealed that this purple syrup contained an unknown amount of Codeine.

This substance is more commonly encountered in the USA and south of England and has gained notoriety on the rap music scene. It can be home made using over the counter medicines and other easily purchased/obtained ingredients. The image below is from one of the 9 bottles of the substance recovered in the North of Scotland. This is one of the first reported recoveries of this substance by Police Scotland.



An information sheet on this drug can be found here;

[http://thedrugswheel.com/drugwatch/Lean\\_Infosheet\\_DrugWatch\\_1\\_0\\_Pro.pdf](http://thedrugswheel.com/drugwatch/Lean_Infosheet_DrugWatch_1_0_Pro.pdf)

### FURTHER READING

ACMD (Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs) Reports

1. Ageing Cohort of Drug Users

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/acmd-report-ageing-cohort-of-drug-users>

2. Drug Related Harms in Homeless Populations

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/acmd-report-drug-related-harms-in-homeless-populations>

3. Custody-Community Transitions

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/acmd-report-custody-community-transitions>

EMCDDA (European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction) Reports

1. European Drug Report

[http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/edr/trends-developments/2019\\_en](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/edr/trends-developments/2019_en)

## Drug Trend Bulletin – ISSUE 20

2. Drugs in Syringes in European Cities (including Glasgow)

[http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/rapid-communications/drugs-in-syringes-from-six-european-cities\\_en](http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/rapid-communications/drugs-in-syringes-from-six-european-cities_en)

**Thank you for taking the time to read this.**

Many thanks to all those who contributed and assisted with this edition of the Bulletin including Hazel Torrance, Head of Forensic Toxicology at the University of Glasgow.

Produced by:  
Police Scotland STOP Units