

Appendix 1 – Participant narratives and fieldwork notes supporting the drug detection dog findings

1. General drug detection dog operations transform rather than deter drug consumption

“I was 20. We didn’t have any experience with that so we really didn’t know what would happen. But we realised if we got caught we’d be in trouble. And I’d had one pill before, and I reckoned I could handle two pills at once. I wouldn’t have done that off my own accord, but it seemed like a good idea at the time. [Laughing] So we had them.”
(Interviewee #5)

“I didn’t have a lot of drugs on me but I ended up doing all of them at the start, and all my friends did as well. Which I think is sort of the typical reaction. No one really throws them away. People either risk it or go hard I guess” (Interviewee #8)

“we just fully preloaded before we went, me and my mate, and just went absolutely smashed” (Interviewee #6)

“The time after I was going to an event ... I took somewhat embarrassing precautions to cover myself in case the same thing came up again. I guess to elaborate I concealed them internally. Which, yeah, the whole time I was thinking “This is so fucking ridiculous, I feel like I’m crossing a border here” (Interviewee #8)

“I have been approaching a police stop in a vehicle, not driving, and I have carefully tucked away things that one of the people in the car had... I hid it in my vagina. [laughs]. ... it’s not hard to get past the dogs” (Interviewee #1)

“What I tend to do is take as little as possible or nothing, and buy everything there”
(Interviewee #5)

“I don’t think they dented the intake, you know, any like non-trivial amount, there were still lots floating around, a lot more dangerous drugs than the one I was [caught with]”
(Interviewee #18)

“I still risk it, like the dogs, it’s not really a deterrent, it’s more an obstacle than a deterrent, there’s ways around it... I’m not so brash about it... I probably think about it a bit more, than just winging it” (Interviewee #16)

“It does not make any difference, like there is no difference between, like, people are just more scared, and more cunning in hiding their drugs, it’s not a deterrent, like nobody’s going to stop taking drugs...” (Interviewee #17)

2. General drug detection dog operations increase health-related harms

“when we lined up to get into the event we realised there were dogs and police walking around. And everyone pretty much did the same thing, ate everything at once. It was only the second time I had had ecstasy and it made me extremely nauseous. I was very worried. There were other people that were vomiting. You could see everybody had the same reaction as us, especially the younger ones. What can you do? Just swallow it.”
(Interviewee #5)

"I'll definitely be a lot more careful going into festivals. So, you know, it hasn't stopped my practices... it just drives these things underground... if you fear persecution, you're going to do it in secret, so I think that's a lot more dangerous as a situation, because then people go and hide in tents if they have problems, they don't go and seek help." (Interviewee #18)

"it's made me more paranoid and suspicious about hiding and concealing [my] drug use." (Interviewee #13)

3. General drug detection dog operations increase a range of other harms

"There were sniffer dogs at the gate... and even though I had no drugs on me, I had this sort of sinking feeling, in my stomach, of dread... they were tapping on different points of the car so the dog could jump up, everyone was very tense." (Interviewee #15)

"Even once we got inside the venue we were all kind of jittery and freaked out, and usually, that's how I feel when I see the dogs." (Interviewee #13)

"a housemate of mine was searched a couple of weeks ago at a festival in WA. She didn't have anything on her at all, she didn't even have a bag. But, yeah, she got like full pat-down search... She described it as really, really terrifying, and she was shaking and sweating and stuff, but she didn't have anything on her. So, like, again, really intense fear even if you're not carrying anything." (Interviewee #13)

"I was just in shock, yeah just in disbelief because I was like how – how could they have I guess stopped when I don't have anything on me? ... because I had nothing on me I actually was really angry, really upset" (Interviewee #3)

"I was just annoyed, because I knew there was nothing in the car. So it was just a pointless waste of time for me to be getting accused by the police... [and] I was pretty annoyed that they just leave all your stuff on the side and go 'You alright to pack it up, yeah', and just walk off, and you're like, [that's] pretty shit." (Interviewee #14)

"I felt shit about everything when I got back to the festival. It was, I don't know, I kind of felt annoyed that they wasted my time and I felt like I'd been punished, because it's like a punishment going through the process, and then it's like, "Why did I have to do it twice in a row?" (Interviewee #1)

"with the police I just kind of felt - I felt very intimidated by them and I know that their job is to kind of assume that you're always guilty and yeah I don't really like that. I felt very judged." (Interviewee #3)

"The rest of the time, which was meant to be quite relaxing and enjoyable, was really quite tense, very unenjoyable, really awkward. Scary as well... because that kind of set the tone for the rest of the festival... which was meant to be mostly therapeutic... Instead it obviously created animosity... and also a broader resentment and then a paranoia towards other people in that festival of, 'oh, my God, could they possibly be undercover?' and 'are there any cops around?'" (Interviewee #7)

"And they said to me, 'Well now you know we're going to do a strip search to make sure you don't have anything on you.' So they have all my stuff on the side. Then I start taking

off all my clothes... and I drop my underpants, and everything is done, and then they're like, "Cool. So you know you're free to go." ... And I said, "Well, oh God, this isn't the most like embarrassing and invasive, you know, process in my life." And they're like, "Oh, what was?"; I'm like, "I'm being sarcastic."" (Interviewee #2)

"That was reasonably humiliating... I suppose in my mind at that point I still hadn't really done anything wrong... So being ordered to strip, it felt a bit dehumanising in a way." (Interviewee #8)

"it has contributed to my understanding of the police as not helpful and as harmful or the enemy" (Interviewee #13)

4. General drug detection dogs are not neutral, objective detection instruments

It took me a while to work out what the two guys in cargo shorts and t-shirts were doing hanging around in the entrance hall chatting to the police, but when I saw one of them clearly 'identified' by a dog, without being subsequently questioned or searched, I realised they were both plain-clothed police, carrying some kind of decoy scents for the dogs in order to maintain and check their scent detection capacity. Watching the two men closer, I then realised that their main role in the space was to watch the punters streaming into the entrance hall, paying attention to how they respond when they see the dogs. I watch as one of the men in cargo shorts sees something of interest at the entrance, then suddenly heads over to say something to one of the dog handlers, who then makes a bee-line for a young man in a red t-shirt. The handler walks the dog around the young man twice, and – without the dog sitting down – begins to question him, before two other police come over and lead him to the side for further questioning and searching. I saw this sequence of events clearly happen at least three more times during the next two hours I was watching: twice with the dog sitting down after a direct approach, and one more time without. (Fieldwork notes from the entrance to major one day outdoor festival in Melbourne 2016)

"All it did is walk towards me and then it was, like - I know there's thing about them sitting down and stuff, but I don't think it sat down, I think it just walked towards me and then it was there, and then all of a sudden they were like 'You've got to come with us.' ... But I really felt like - at the time, that it was coming straight at me. But that was because I was all nervous as well, and I could see it, like, in the distance and I was, like, 'No. This is bad news.'" (Interviewee #12)

"we were supposed to be going around to the staff entrance... And we realised that we'd got off at the train side and we're like 'oh shit this is isn't like the side that we're supposed to be on'. So we'd gone through the opening to the building section where they've got the PAD [Passive Alert Detection dog] operation and then we turned right to go out the tram side. Now instantly we had police in front of us being like, "Why are you trying to get out?" ... And they ran the dog over to us and they were like, "Well you look really suspicious trying to come here." And we're like, "Well no we're just trying to get through the side part because you know we're volunteers." They're like, "No, no, no." And they took us over to the side and they're like, "well the dog has identified that you've got drugs on you". And I was like, "Well I don't, like you can check my stuff."" (Interviewee #2)

5. General drug detection dogs are not reliable, effective or efficient at detection

“I have had drugs on me several times when I’ve been somewhere with sniffer dogs, but they’ve never picked up on it, ever.” (Interviewee #13)

“I was walking through like with a group of friends and one of the dogs came up to me and started licking my fingers and then sat down in front of me. And then after that of course the policeman like recited all my rights ... And two of the female police officers took me into like a cubicle that they had created out of like I think it was like rubbish bags or something and they asked me to, like, obviously take my clothes off and like show them that I haven’t got anything on me. And I didn’t have anything on me. So I was really – I was really surprised that the dog actually sat down in front of me.” (Interviewee #3)

“There’s a lot of that intimidation involved and a lot of that like the façade that, you know, the dogs are here to find things on people and stuff like that, but they don’t necessarily... a lot of people go through without detection, and then there’s also a lot of innocent people who you know get put aside for nothing as well.” (Interviewee #3)

Interviewer: “And by that you mean you were carrying drugs into festivals?”

Participant: “Yeah. Yeah.”

Interviewer: “And never getting stopped by the dogs?”

Participant: “Yeah. And almost not feeling like it was even a chance that I could have been. Just it was very much like walking with about 1,000 people around you... more than half with drugs... and you can just see the police and the dog there, and you just give them a little bit of a wide berth. And yeah, that worked many, many times.” (Interviewee #8)

“had 10 pills in my hand, walked straight past the dog, pretty much tapped it on the head, and it didn’t do anything, just walked straight past it.” (Interviewee #16)

6. General drug detection dogs operate in a legal grey-area and their use may not stand up to court scrutiny

My research assistant and I left our festival campsites with our field observation equipment and drove to the roadside operation set up by NSW Police not too far along the road... A police officer in dark blue and a fluorescent yellow vest standing on the road with an orange stick waved the first car in, and then waved us in too... [after administering a breath test and license check]... the officer turned back to me and asked if I had been taking drugs or if I had any drugs in the car, and I said ‘no’. He then explained that they were going to walk the drug detection dog around the car, and asked if I would mind please opening the car doors so the dog could sniff inside. Realising that he was asking for me to consent to a car search, I refused. He looked stunned, and a bit incredulous, and asked me to clarify. I found it very difficult saying no, but I stood my ground. He looked annoyed, and then tried to convince me to open the doors by explaining that opening them would protect the paint-work on the car, because then the dog would not have to jump up at the windows. But I again reiterated my lack of consent. Then he looked even more annoyed. He gestured to the dog handler, who began to walk the dog around the car, while he turned to talk to some other officers standing behind him. From my position in the driver’s seat I could not see the dog clearly as it went around the car, but I did not notice it doing anything particularly interesting. No

mention of any positive identification or alert was made, and the dog was led away. The officer then turned to me and announced that he had reasonable suspicion that there were drugs in my vehicle, and instructed me to drive over to the left and park so they could search my car. I asked if he could please tell me what the grounds for the reasonable suspicion were He said he was not obliged to tell me and directed me again to move the car to the search area, which I did. After my research assistant and I had both had a pat-down body search, and my car and its contents had been fairly thoroughly sifted through, the officer spotted my research clipboard and started reading it. When he realised I was an academic, his mood shifted and he expressed a willingness to help with my research. I asked him about what kind of things can be used as grounds for reasonable suspicion, and this time he was more open and said that it can be a range of things, including people's behaviour and nervousness. I asked if refusing to the dog searching the car counted as grounds for reasonable suspicion, and he said that it can, as it gives them the idea that the person has something to hide. He said that while you do get some people who are into asserting their rights, most people are happy to comply and open their doors... After a bit more discussion, he said that the search was finished and we were free to go. (Fieldwork notes from the NSW Police roadside operation for an outdoor camping festival 2016)

“I was super tense... mind racing, like, lots of different options as to how to deal with this situation. And felt, like, super tight and anxious, and like, you know, in my body. And then when I was talking to the police I was - like, my hands were shaking So even though I knew that I didn't have anything... I was still, like, super, kind of, like, flustered and my hands were shaking and my heart was racing and I was sweating and everything. Which they obviously identified, and they were, like, 'You seem really nervous. Why are you nervous?'" (Interviewee #12)

“you're that flustered and that you don't know, you don't have time to think about what to say to them, or what your rights are, or what people have said to you to say in response to their questions, because like, you're just all worked up.” (Interviewee #4)