

Vincent De Luca OAM

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Media Release

De Luca Renews Calls for Education to Stop Ice Epidemic

Following a prison escapee who led police on a high-speed chase while on a crime spree last year blamed his drug addiction to ICE in Court last week (*Manly Daily* 14.4.07 *High-speed chase man blames 'ice'*) youth welfare advocate, Vincent De Luca has renewed calls for more local education on Drug ICE following the surging popularity of the drug.

Mr De Luca who is President of the Curl Curl Youth and Community Centre, Co-Founder of GAPS Inc - Give Anything Prevent Youth Suicide, a former Executive Member of the People's Council on Drug Prevention (High on Hope) and recipient of the Order of Australia for services to youth welfare said "I believe that the estimated 12,000 young Sydneysiders believed to be dependent on ICE is one of the most tragic problems confronting our community".

"ICE" is a street name for crystal methamphetamine hydrochloride, which is a powerful, synthetic stimulant drug. Stimulant drugs speed up the messages going to the brain. Soon after taking ICE, a person may experience a number of psychological and physical effects.

The National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre report found that there has been a 253 per cent rise in the number of people arrested for methamphetamine use in New South Wales.

Mr De Luca said "research shows that the highly addictive drug causes a range of serious health problems such as psychosis, violence, depression and sleep deprivation. The drug can also result in death".

"We as a community need to tackle this problem head on. We cannot risk any person's life being destroyed by this horrific drug".

"I have always believed that the best way to stop young people going down the black tunnel of drugs is to educate them about the catastrophic affects drugs can have on a person".

Mr De Luca proposed to Warringah Council late last year that a Public Educational Forum about the drug be held and all northern beaches Youth and Community Centres, and sporting clubs ensure that Fact Sheets about the drug are readily available for the community. At the Warringah Council meeting of 27 March 2007 Mr De Luca renewed his calls for an education Forum.

Warringah Council's Director of Community Services, Garry Thompson advised: that the proposed forum had been referred to the SHOROC Safe Communities Steering Committee as it was considered to be a regional issue. A strategy to address the problems of drugs and alcohol on the Northern Beaches is being developed by the Steering Committee. A project plan will be taken to the next SHOROC Executive Meeting by the Administrator and the General Manager on 18 April 2007 and then to the Steering Committee on 24 April 2007 (refer Warringah Council Minutes of meeting 27 March 2007).

For more information please contact Vincent De Luca on 0414 990 551