

SENTENCING SPOTLIGHT ON... TRAFFICKING IN DANGEROUS DRUGS

RESOURCE 2

Drug trafficking is one the most serious types of drug offence. Different drug traffickers receive different sentences because factors vary across individual cases.

Learning outcomes

Students will:

- read, identify and describe relevant statistical information
- explain and compare different types of custodial sentences
- describe how custodial penalties have changed over time
- hypothesise the reasons behind trends shown in statistical information.

Focus questions

- What are the different types of custodial sentences?
- How have custodial penalties for trafficking in dangerous drugs changed over time?

Key concepts

- court ordered parole
- custodial penalty
- imprisonment
- intensive correction order
- penalty
- principles of sentencing
- sentence
- suspended sentence (wholly and partially).

Curriculum links

This learning resource has been developed students studying Legal Studies 2019 (General Senior Syllabus) in Year 11 and 12, specifically the core area of criminal law. It ties in with Unit 1: Beyond reasonable doubt, Topic 4: Punishment and sentencing.

Getting started

1. Ask students to stand up if they believe that most adult offenders sentenced for trafficking in dangerous drugs receive a custodial sentence.
2. Between 2005–06 to 2015–16, 99.4% of adult offenders received a custodial penalty. Ask:
 - Does this figure surprise you? Why or why not?
 - Do you think a custodial penalty is the most suitable sentence for adults convicted for trafficking in dangerous drugs? Why or why not?

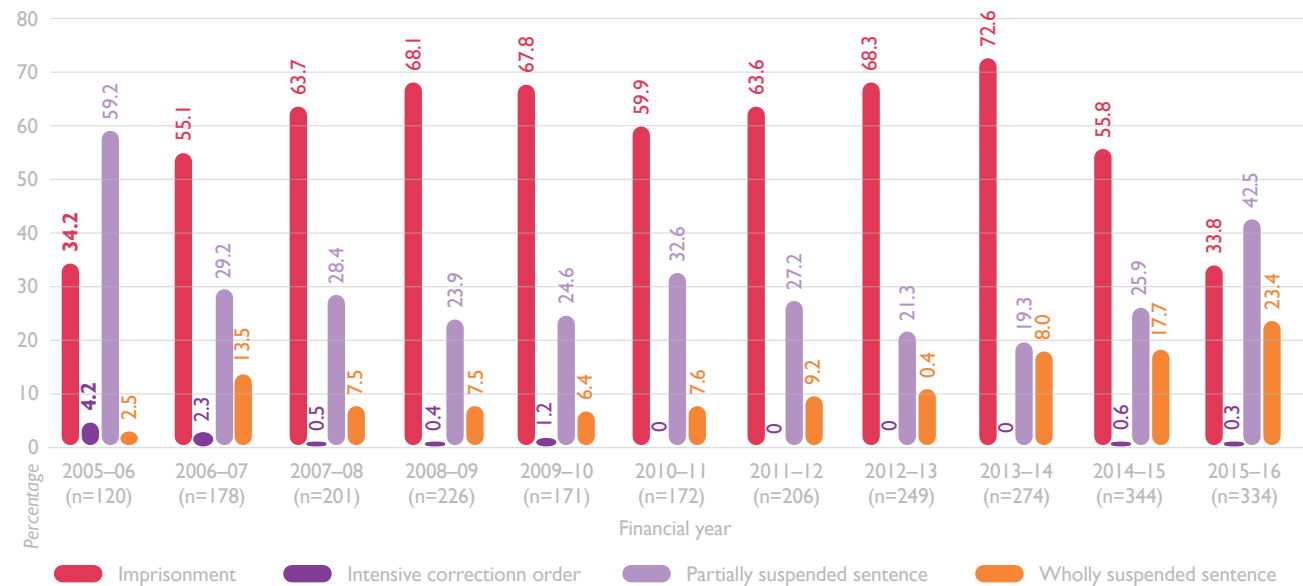
Further resources

The following websites may further enhance the learning outcomes associated with this resource:

- Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council
www.sentencingcouncil.qld.gov.au

LEARNING RESOURCE

Custodial penalty type for trafficking in dangerous drugs (MSO) by year of sentence, adult offenders



Source: Queensland Government Statistician's Office, Queensland Treasury - Courts Database, extracted January 2017

Your turn

- Research and explain in your own words the following legal concepts:
 - imprisonment
 - intensive correction order
 - suspended sentence.
- Identify the years that saw the highest and lowest percentage of adult offenders sentenced to imprisonment.
- Identify the most and least commonly used type of custodial penalty for adult offenders sentenced for trafficking in dangerous drugs from 2012-13 to 2015-16.
- On average, are wholly or partially suspended sentences more commonly used for adult offenders sentenced for trafficking in dangerous drugs?
- Describe the trend for the use of imprisonment from 2013-14 to 2015-16. Hypothesise what may be influencing this trend.
- Do you agree or disagree that drug traffickers should receive a custodial sentence for this offence? Provide reasons to support your point of view.

Extension:

Research and explain the impact of court ordered parole on sentencing of drug traffickers in Queensland.