



### **Message from Director, Central Narcotics Bureau**

Singapore's comprehensive approach to tackling both drug supply and demand has allowed us to keep the drug situation under control, in spite of the challenging global and regional drug situation. This approach continues to receive strong public support, based on the Public Perception Survey on Singapore Anti-Drug Policies conducted by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in 2018, where almost nine in 10 Singaporeans agreed that our drug laws are effective.

Regional developments, such as the increase in methamphetamine supply, can have adverse downstream implications on our drug situation. Globally, the new psychoactive substances (NPS) market continues to evolve and expand quickly. The push for drug liberalisation in some countries is a cause for concern. We must also not underestimate the impact of social media and mass media in spreading misinformation that normalises drug use, especially among our young. Against this backdrop, the Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB) remains steadfast in its mission for a drug-free Singapore. To this end, CNB conducted intensive enforcement operations in 2019, dismantling 28 drug syndicates. Working closely with other Home Team agencies, CNB also conducted around 1,400 operations across Singapore, including at our land, air and sea checkpoints to intercept drugs entering Singapore.

Our drug situation last year presented several concerns. The proportion of new drug abusers arrested remained high at 41%. The proportion of new drug abusers arrested under 30 years old remained significant at 62%. While there was a decrease in the number of heroin abusers arrested, there was an increase in those arrested for NPS and methamphetamine abuse.

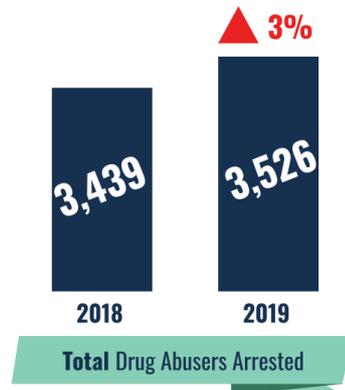
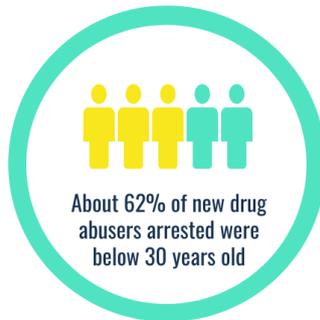
Beyond enforcement, CNB continued to enhance our preventive drug education (PDE) efforts as the first line of defence against drugs. In 2019, we used Augmented Reality technology to reach out to young people. We also ramped up outreach initiatives on social media and through schools, parents and our Anti-Drug Advocates. There were also concerted efforts to expand PDE outreach within the Indian community. Following the "*Dadah Itu Haram*" (DIH) campaign which has seen strong support from the Malay-Muslim community, the "*Bothaiporulai Ethirthu Nirpom*" (BEN) (or 'We Stand United Against Drugs') campaign was launched.

CNB continually reviews our anti-drug strategy to stay ahead of the evolving drug landscape. For example, 31 new NPS were listed as Class A controlled drugs under the Misuse of Drugs Act in 2019 to strengthen our enforcement efforts.

In Singapore, the fight against the scourge of drugs combines PDE, tough laws and effective enforcement, strategic international engagement and evidence-based treatment and rehabilitation. The community can be a strong ally in this fight by spreading the anti-drug message to their own circles of influence. Together, we can keep our homes, streets and communities drug-free for our future generations.

# KEY DRUG STATISTICS

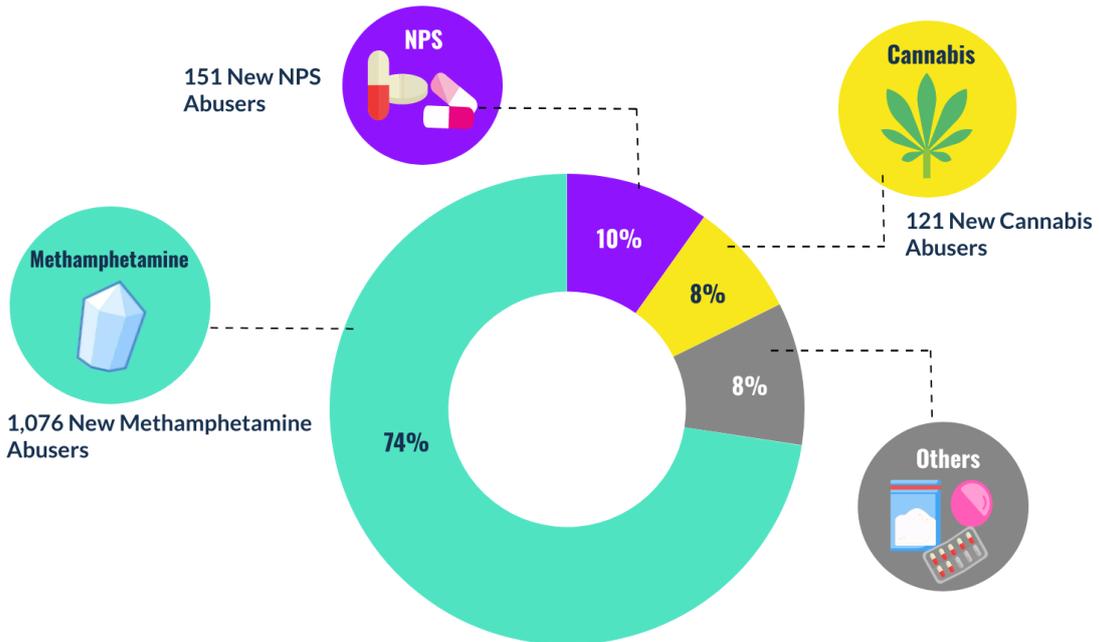
# 2019



Proportion of new drug abusers arrested remained high at 41%

## New Abusers by Drug Type

Methamphetamine, NPS and cannabis were the three most commonly abused drugs by new drug abusers arrested in 2019



# OVERVIEW OF SINGAPORE'S DRUG SITUATION IN 2019

## HIGHLIGHTS

### 1. Areas of concern

- The proportion of new drug abusers remained high - about 41% of drug abusers arrested in 2019 were new abusers.
- 62% of new drug abusers arrested were under 30 years old.

### 2. Sustained enforcement efforts to curb drug supply and demand

- CNB mounted intensive enforcement efforts against drugs and worked closely with Home Team agencies to keep Singapore drug-free.
  - In 2019, together with the Singapore Police Force and the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority, CNB conducted 17 island-wide operations targeting drug traffickers and abusers, as well as 1,434 operations at our checkpoints to intercept attempts to smuggle drugs into Singapore. CNB also carried out major operations which crippled 28 drug syndicates.

### 3. Expanding preventive drug education and outreach

- CNB continued to enhance our preventive drug education (PDE) efforts, with a strong focus on youth. For example, CNB employed Augmented Reality technology to enrich our PDE content. CNB also intensified outreach efforts on social media platforms, as well as through schools, parents and CNB's Anti-Drug Advocates to help spread the anti-drug message.
- CNB expanded its outreach within the Indian community. Adopting the similar model of the "*Dadah Itu Haram*" campaign which has seen strong support from the Malay-Muslim community since its inception in 2017, the "*Bothaiporulai Ethirthu Nirpom*" (BEN) (or 'We Stand United Against Drugs') campaign was launched.

### 4. Amendments to Misuse of Drugs Act (MDA)

- The amendments passed in the Misuse of Drugs (Amendment) Act 2019 were operationalised via two tranches in April and August 2019. Key amendments included the criminalising of contaminative acts which facilitate or promote drug use, and the expanded use of hair analysis for the purposes of determining if a person has been abusing illicit drugs. The amendments also allowed for the use of oral fluid tests during mass operations to detect drug consumption. These new provisions and powers enhance the robustness of our anti-drug framework and ensure that Singapore's drug laws and anti-drug operations remain effective and relevant.

## LOCAL DRUG SITUATION IN 2019

In 2019, CNB arrested a total of 3,526 drug abusers, representing a 3% increase from the 3,439 drug abusers arrested in 2018. This was due to the increase in the number of new psychoactive substances (NPS) and methamphetamine abusers arrested.

The number of repeat drug abusers arrested decreased by 0.4% to 2,066 in 2019, from 2,075 in 2018. The number of new drug abusers arrested increased by 7% to 1,460 in 2019, from 1,364 in 2018. 62% of new abusers arrested were under 30 years old.

The drugs seized in 2019 were estimated to have a street value of about S\$6.49 million. There was a 34% decrease in seizures of heroin to 38.12kg in 2019, from 58.02 kg in 2018. Cannabis seizures saw a 55% decrease to 27.78kg in 2019, from 61.77kg in 2018. Seizures of crystalline methamphetamine (more commonly known as 'Ice') saw a 59% increase to 30.80kg in 2019, from 19.33kg in 2018.

Methamphetamine, heroin and NPS were the three most commonly abused drugs in 2019, with 93% of drug abusers abusing at least one of these three drugs. For new drug abusers, NPS overtook cannabis as the second most commonly abused drug. Methamphetamine, NPS and cannabis were the three most commonly abused drugs for new drug abusers, with 92% of new drug abusers arrested abusing at least one of these three drugs.

## GLOBAL DRUG SITUATION

The regional drug situation remains of great concern. According to data from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) World Drug Report 2019 (WDR 2019), Southeast Asia (SEA) has emerged as the world's fastest growing methamphetamine market.<sup>1</sup> The illicit methamphetamine market in SEA and the wider Asia Pacific region are inter-connected, and is now estimated to worth between USD30.3 billion and USD61.4 billion annually,<sup>2</sup> a figure which the UNODC described as "staggering" and "unprecedented".

The increase in methamphetamine trafficking activities has coincided with a surge in the production of methamphetamine in Myanmar in recent years. Both crystalline and tablet methamphetamine seizures increased more than eightfold to 82 tons over the period of 2007 – 2017.<sup>3</sup> While this is the largest amount ever recorded in the region prior to 2017, the latest available data from UNODC on 2018 has already shown a further substantial increase in methamphetamine seizures, to 120 tons.<sup>4</sup>

With the expansion of the methamphetamine market, there has been a decreased demand in heroin, which is estimated to be worth between USD8.7 billion and USD10.3 billion annually. The NPS market continues to evolve and grow quickly with

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<sup>1</sup> 'World Drug Report 2019 – Booklet 1', page 9, United Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 2019

<sup>2</sup> 'Transnational Organized Crime in Southeast Asia: Evolution, Growth and Impact', UNODC, 2019

<sup>3</sup> 'World Drug Report 2019, Booklet 4', UNODC, 2019

<sup>4</sup> 'Transnational Organized Crime in Southeast Asia: Evolution, Growth and Impact', UNODC, 2019

a cumulative total of 908 individual NPS reported at the global level between 2008 and 2019.<sup>5</sup>

As part of the SEA region, Singapore is also surrounded by other major markets for illicit drugs in the neighbouring regions of East Asia, South Asia and the Oceania.<sup>6</sup> This places Singapore in a vulnerable position, within the reach and influence of transnational organised criminal groups. As such, cross-border anti-drug collaboration is crucial. To this end, CNB actively cooperates with its regional counterparts to tackle the transnational activities of drug syndicates. In 2019, CNB conducted 20 joint operations and joint investigations with our international counterparts.

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<sup>5</sup> UNODC Early Warning System, also shared by UNODC during the 11<sup>th</sup> Global SMART Programme Regional Workshop from 27 to 29 August 2019

<sup>6</sup> 'Transnational Organized Crime in Southeast Asia: Evolution, Growth and Impact', UNODC, 2019

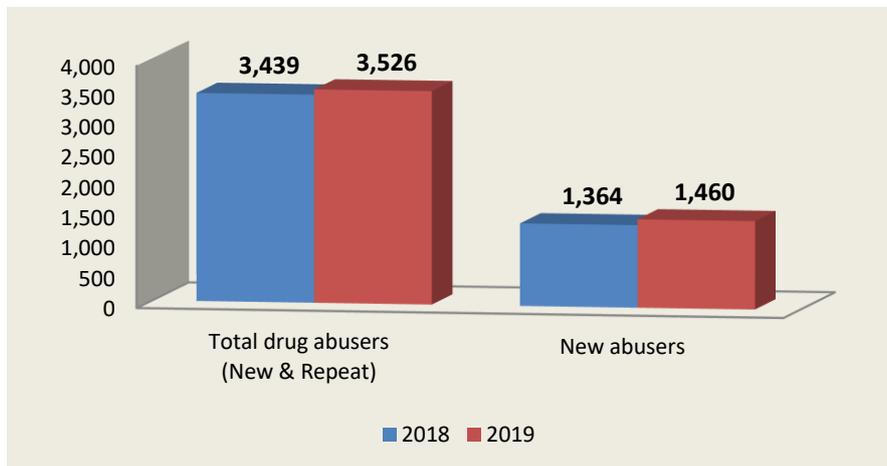
Local Drug Seizures in 2019					
Drug type	2018	2019	% change in seizure	Estimated market value 2018	Estimated market value 2019
Heroin No.3	58.02kg	38.12kg	-34.3%	≈ S\$6.91 million	≈ S\$6.49 million
Methamphetamine ('Ice')	19.33kg	30.80kg	+59.3%		
Cannabis	61.77kg	27.78kg	-55.0%		
Cocaine	2,746.81g	60.35g	-97.8%		
'Ecstasy'	3,898 tablets + 5.50g	5,742 tablets + 469.47g	+47.3% (tablets) +8,435.8% (weight)		
Methamphetamine tablets ('Yaba')	5,236 tablets	691 tablets	-86.8%		
Ketamine	1.14kg	3.00kg	+163.2%		
Nimetazepam	7,873 tablets	8,204 tablets	+4.2%		
Buprenorphine ('Subutex')	NIL	NIL	-		
New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) (e.g. synthetic cannabinoids, synthetic cathinones etc.)	437 tablets + 8,171.50g + 66 bottles <sup>7</sup> + 31 stamps	413 tablets + 9,471.33g + 90 bottles + 1 stamp	- 5.5% (tablets) + 15.9% (weight) +36.4% (bottles) -96.8% (stamps)		

<sup>7</sup> liquid-filled bottles of various volumes

## Local Drug Abusers - Overall

CNB arrested 3,526 drug abusers in 2019. New abusers arrested increased by 7% to 1,460 in 2019 from 1,364 in 2018. New abusers continue to form a significant proportion (41%) of all abusers arrested. Refer to Chart 1.

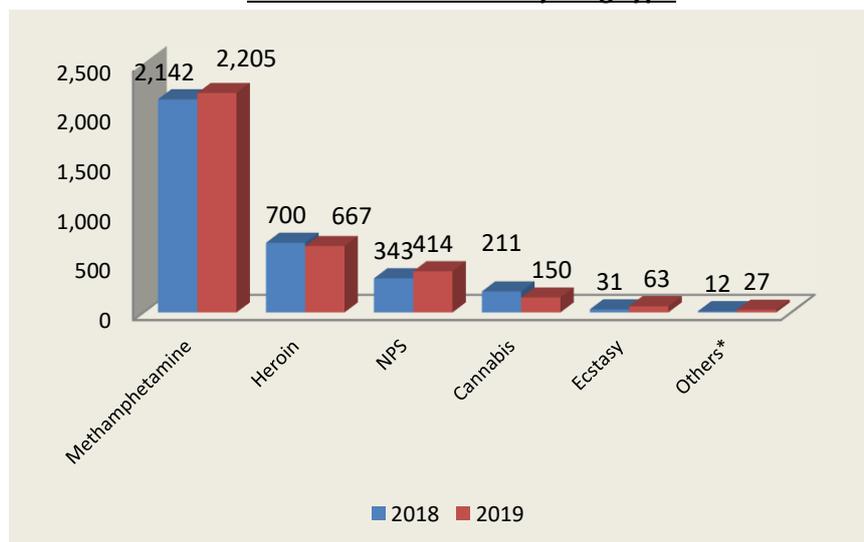
**Chart 1: Total and new drug abusers**



## Drug Abusers - By Drug Type

Methamphetamine, heroin and NPS remained the three most commonly abused drugs in Singapore. 2,205 methamphetamine abusers (63%), 667 heroin abusers (19%) and 414 NPS abusers (12%) were arrested in 2019. Refer to Chart 2.

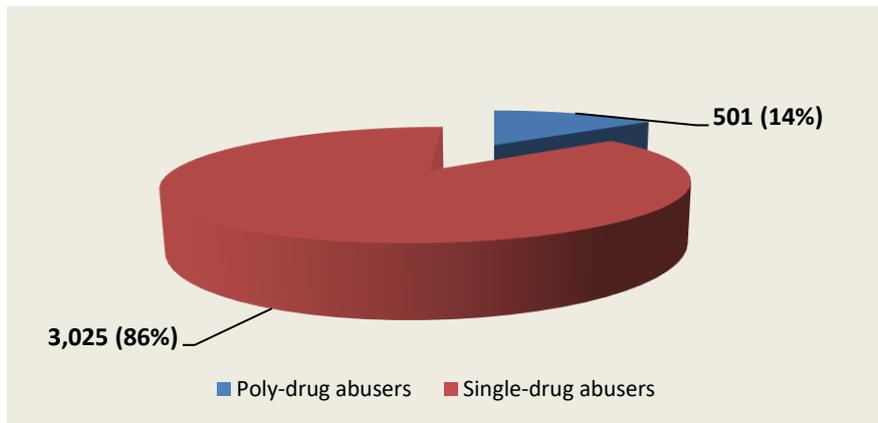
**Chart 2: Total abusers by drug type**



\*Others include Cocaine, Ketamine, LSD and Methadone

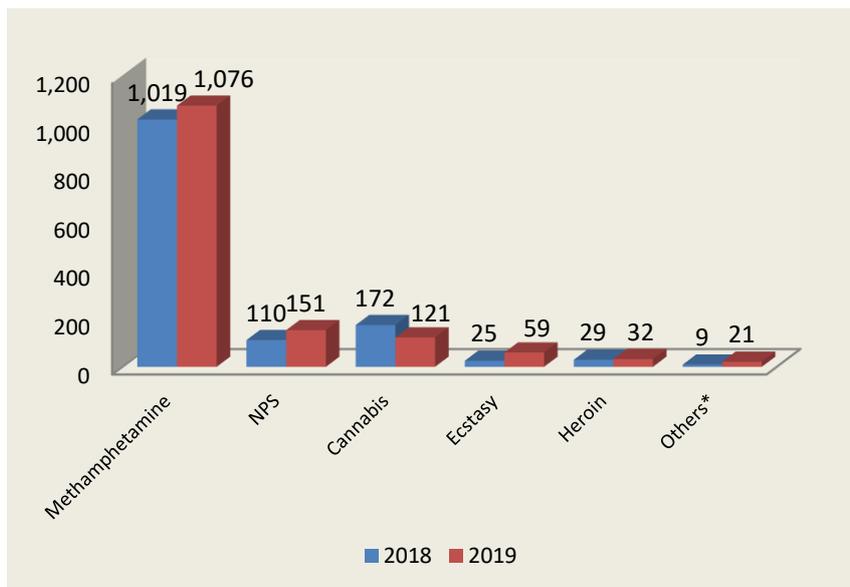
Of the 3,526 drug abusers arrested in 2019, 501 abusers (14%) were poly-drug abusers who abused more than one type of drug. Refer to Chart 2a.

**Chart 2a: Breakdown of single/poly-drug abusers in 2019**



Methamphetamine abusers made up the largest proportion of all new abusers. Of the 1,460 new abusers arrested in 2019, 1,076 (74%) abused methamphetamine. NPS overtook cannabis as the second most commonly abused drug among new abusers. Refer to Chart 2b.

**Chart 2b: Total new abusers by drug type**

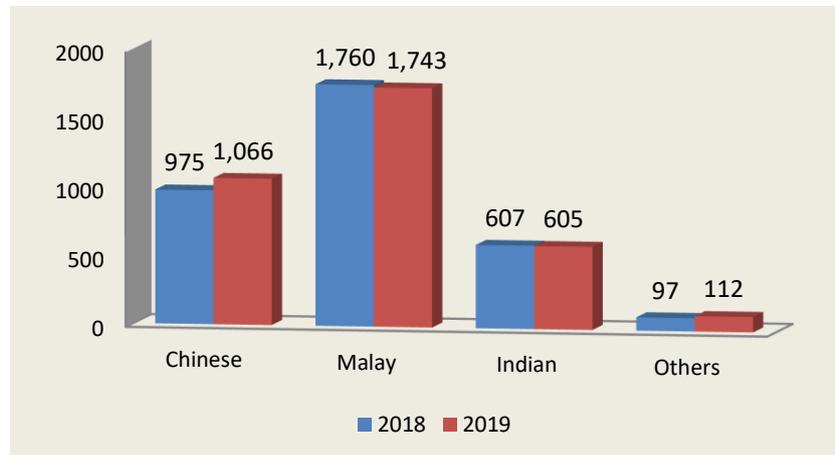


\*Others include Cocaine, Ketamine, LSD and Methadone

## Drug Abusers - By Ethnic Group

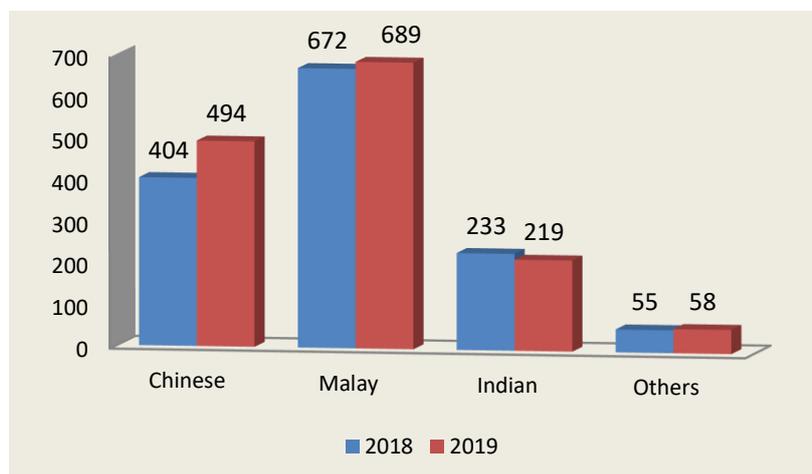
The number of Chinese abusers arrested increased by 9% to 1,066 in 2019 from 975 in 2018. The number of abusers arrested in the other ethnic groups did not register significant changes from the previous year (2018). Refer to Chart 3.

**Chart 3: Total abusers by ethnic group**



The number of new Chinese abusers arrested registered an increase of 22% to 494 in 2019, from 404 in 2018. The number of abusers arrested from the other ethnic groups did not register significant changes from the previous year (2018). Refer to Chart 3a.

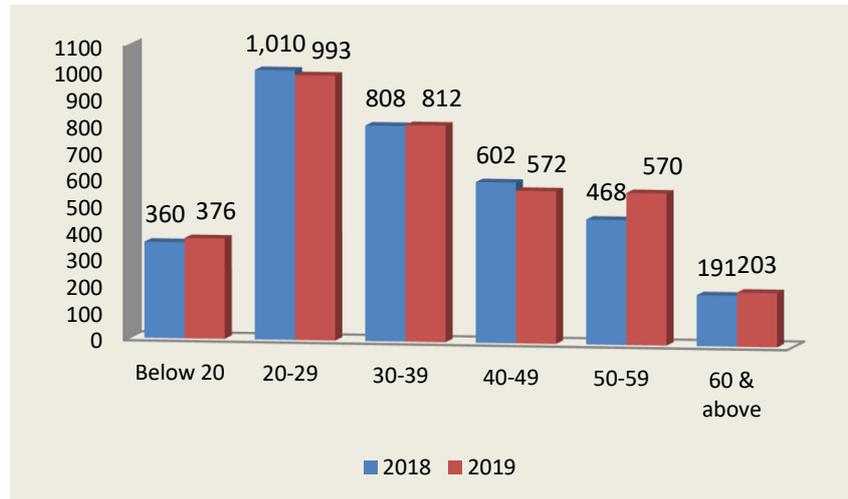
**Chart 3a: New abusers by ethnic group**



## Drug Abusers Arrested - By Age

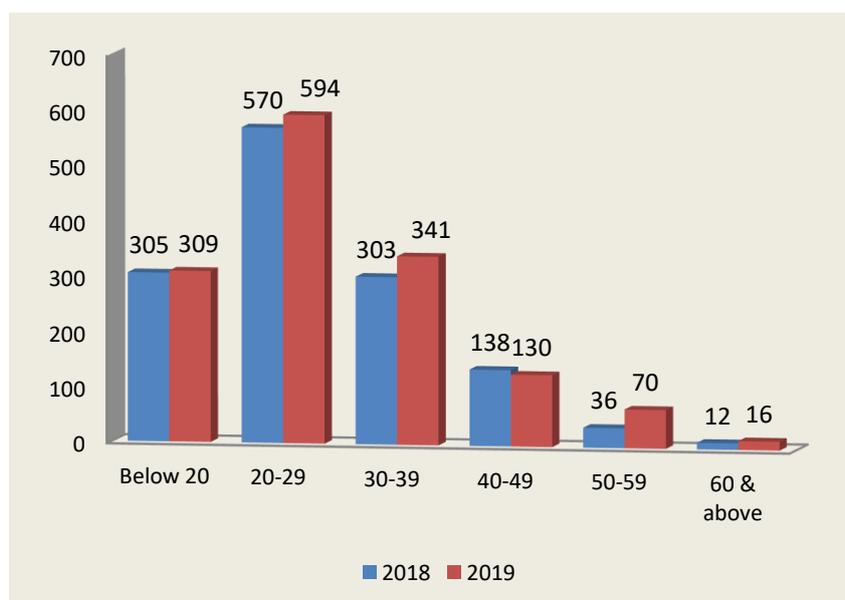
In 2019, 1,369 (39%) of all drug abusers arrested were below 30 years old. Drug abusers in the 20 to 29 age group continued to form the largest group of abusers. There was a 22% increase in the 50 to 59 age group to 570 in 2019, from 468 in 2018. Refer to Chart 4.

**Chart 4: Total abusers by age**



In 2019, 903 (62%) of all new abusers arrested were aged below 30. There was a 13% increase in new abusers arrested in the 30 to 39 age group to 341 in 2019, from 303 in 2018. There was also a 94% increase in new abusers arrested in the age group 50 to 59 to 70 in 2019, from 36 in 2018. Refer to Chart 4a.

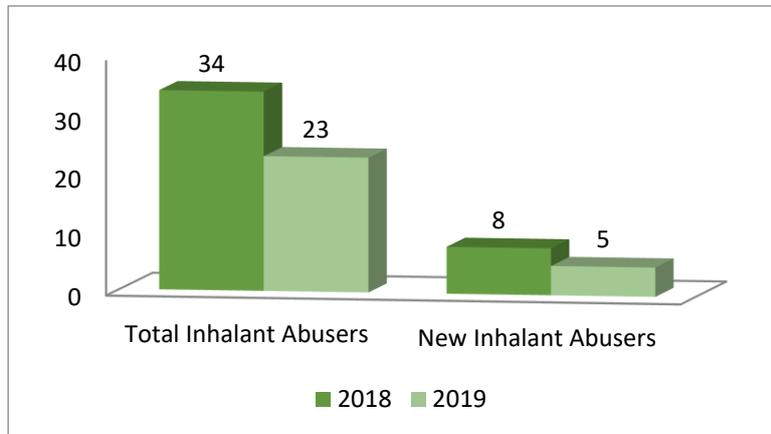
**Chart 4a: New abusers by age**



## INHALANT ABUSE SITUATION IN 2019

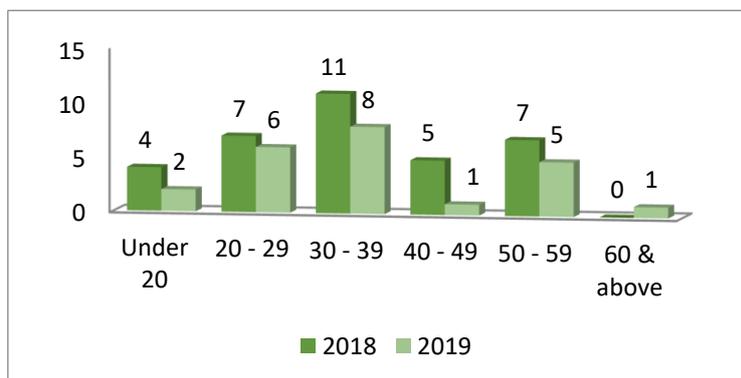
There was a 32% decrease in the total number of inhalant abusers arrested, to 23 in 2019 from 34 in 2018. Refer to Chart 5.

**Chart 5: Inhalant abuse situation**



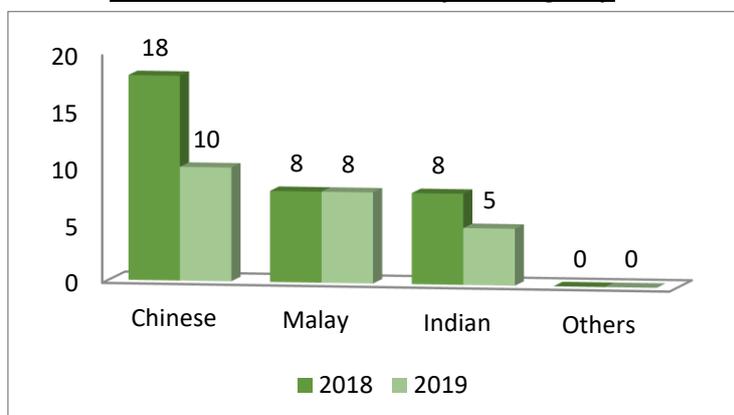
The number of inhalant abusers arrested in 2019 decreased across most age groups, except for the 60 and above age group. Inhalant abusers aged 30 to 39 formed the largest group at 35% (8 abusers) in 2019. Refer to Chart 6.

**Chart 6: Inhalant abusers by age group**



Majority of inhalant abusers arrested in 2019 were Chinese (43%). Refer to Chart 7.

**Chart 7: Inhalant abusers by ethnic group**



## **PREVENTIVE DRUG EDUCATION AS A KEY STRATEGY**

Preventive drug education (PDE) continues to be a key component of our drug control strategy as the first line of defence against drugs. In 2019, CNB continued to enhance our PDE efforts to capture the mindshare of the public and our youths. These include the use of Augmented Reality to enhance PDE content, as well as intensifying outreach to parents, schools and our Anti-Drug Advocates (ADAs) to help amplify the anti-drug message.

Support from the community is crucial and CNB works actively with various groups in the community to boost awareness of the harms of drugs, and to encourage advocacy against drugs. Some examples include CNB's youth ADAs and the United Against Drugs Coalition (UADC) made up of government, non-government and private sector organisations that have committed to partner CNB in the fight against drugs.

A list of highlights of the PDE initiatives in 2019 is attached at [Annex](#).

**ISSUED BY:  
CENTRAL NARCOTICS BUREAU  
12 JUNE 2020**

***NOTE: 2019 figures are confirmed. In this report, 2019 refers to the period 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019.***