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## **PRIME MINISTER**

### **CO-OPERATE ON DRUGS**

I totally reject the NSW Premier's transparent attempt today to offload any blame for rising crime and heroin abuse in NSW onto the Federal Government.

Budget cuts have not restricted the capacity of the Australian Federal Police (AFP) to fight the drug problem.

The effectiveness of Federal law enforcement agencies is increasingly being enhanced by the Federal Government's policy that agencies adopt a more co-operative and strategic focus in the management of law enforcement resources.

In particular, AFP and the Australian Customs Service, in 1997 alone, have seized 51 kilograms of cocaine, 220 kilograms of heroin, and 55 kilograms of amphetamines.

The AFP has arrested and charged over 140 people with more than 240 drug related offences during 1997.

Mr Carr's claims completely distort the reality of modern policing where Australia's Federal forces co-operate with international authorities to effect drug detection and seizures around the globe.

The national problem of illicit drugs is currently under review by a Federal Task force which is examining both supply and demand issues and is due to report soon.

The Australian Customs Service has reshaped its drug intelligence capability and is now working more closely and productively with other Commonwealth and State agencies.

More than \$26 million was allocated in the 1996-97 Budget to purchase the latest in detection technology in the fight against drugs .

Instead of seeking to make cheap political points, the NSW Premier should co-operate with the Federal Government in seeking solutions to the problem.

23 September 1997