



Wastewater Drug Testing in New Zealand: National Overview

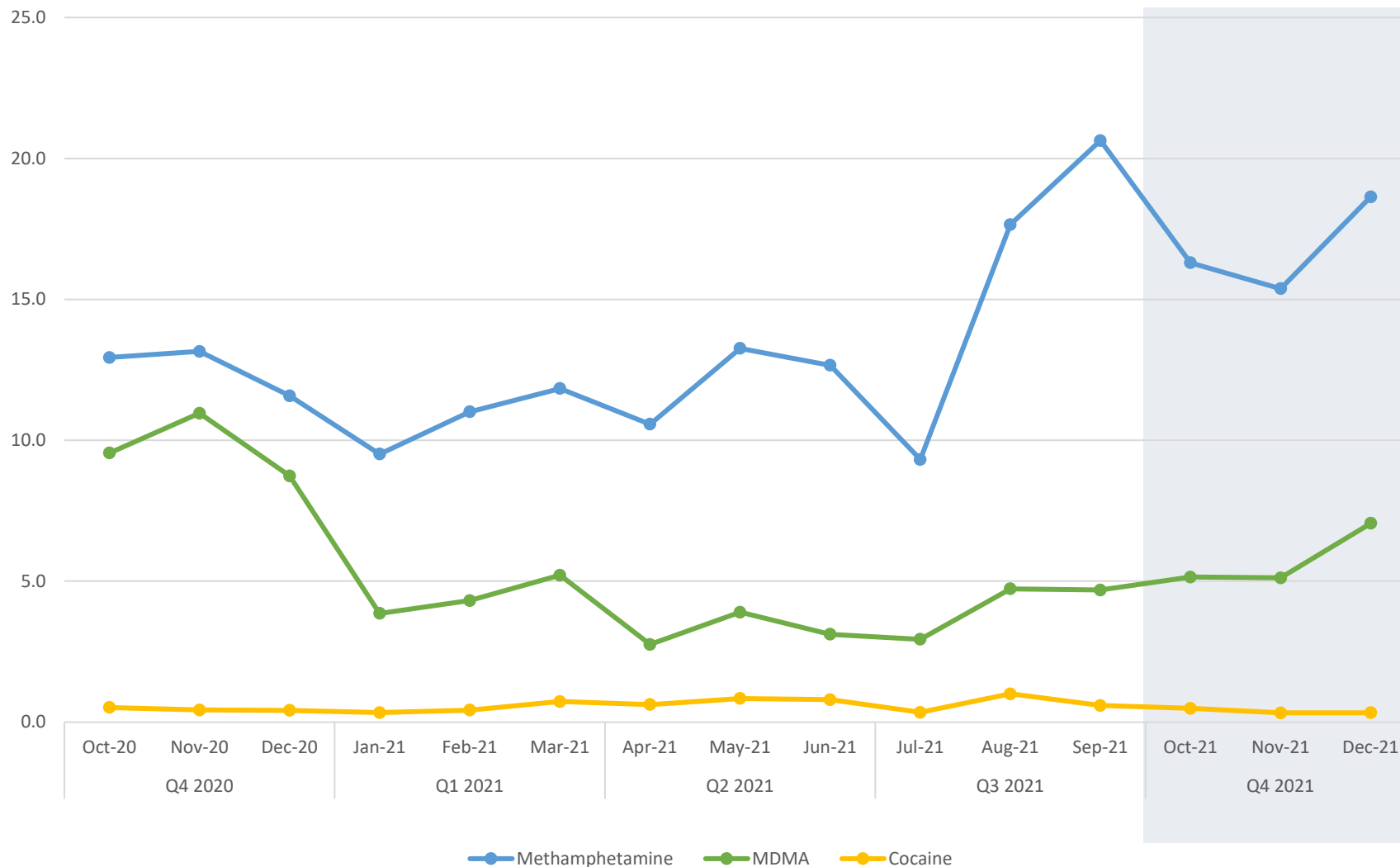
Quarter Four: October - December 2021



NOTES

- Wastewater testing occurs during one week each month, however the frequency of testing varies between sites. Nationwide testing started in November 2018, with current testing sites covering up to 75 percent of the total New Zealand population. While the nationwide programme tests for indicators of consumption of methamphetamine, MDMA, cocaine, heroin, and fentanyl, the three commodities routinely detected in sufficient quantities to accurately report on are methamphetamine, MDMA and cocaine.
- Q4 2021 covers the three month period between October and December 2021 (inclusive).
- All data is representative of the sites tested only. It is not possible to extrapolate this data to nearby communities that are not tested.
- One Tāmaki Makaurau site was unable to be sampled in October and November 2021. On average this site contributes approximately four percent of the national total load of methamphetamine, one percent of MDMA, and approximately three percent of the national total load of cocaine. Accordingly, imputed estimates for November and December 2021 have been used to calculate total load averages over the quarter.
- The estimated dollar value generated from illicit drug distribution takes into consideration the estimated national drug use and the typical street price (per gram) of each commodity.
- Drug use is calculated from the concentration of each drug biomarker detected in the wastewater. This is reflective of the amount of pure drug being consumed and does not include fillers, binders or adulterants.

ESTIMATED NATIONAL DRUG USE
(kilograms/week)



KEY FINDINGS

METHAMPHETAMINE

- Average national weekly methamphetamine use during Q4 2021 was 17.3 kilograms. This was approximately 32 percent or 4.2 kilograms above the average quantity detected over the previous four quarters.
- Of the sites tested, Northland district consumed the most methamphetamine per capita (1085 mg/day/1000 people), above the national average of 721 mg/day/1000 people. In 2021, methamphetamine consumption has steadily increased each quarter in the Waikato, Tāmaki Makaurau and Central districts.
- Approximately \$8.7 million per week was generated from methamphetamine distribution across New Zealand sample sites in Q4 2021.

MDMA

- Average national weekly MDMA use during Q4 2021 was 5.7 kilograms. This was an increase when compared with Q3 2021 but was consistent with the average amount detected over the previous four quarters.
- Of the sites tested, Canterbury district consumed the most MDMA per capita (361 mg/day/1000 people), above the national average of 255 mg/day/1000 people.
- Approximately \$1.1 million per week was generated from MDMA distribution across New Zealand sample sites in Q4 2021.

COCAINE

- Average national weekly cocaine use during Q4 2021 was 0.6 kilograms. This was approximately 36 percent below the average quantity detected over the previous four quarters.
- Of the sites tested, Tāmaki Makaurau continued to consume the most cocaine per capita (36 mg/day/1000 people), above the national average of 16 mg/day/1000 people. However, all districts recorded a decrease in cocaine consumption in Q4 2021.
- Approximately \$240,000 per week was generated from cocaine distribution across New Zealand sample sites in Q4 2021.

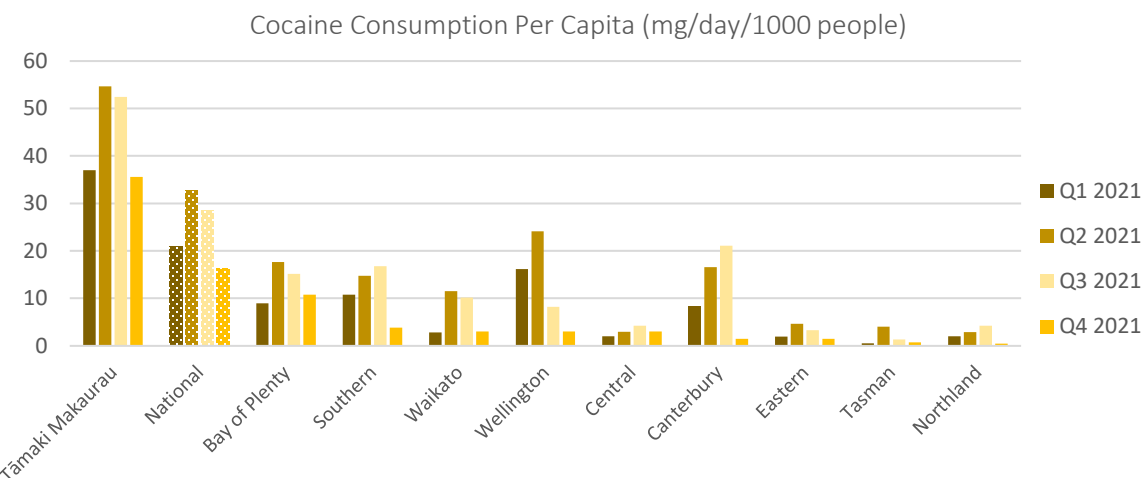
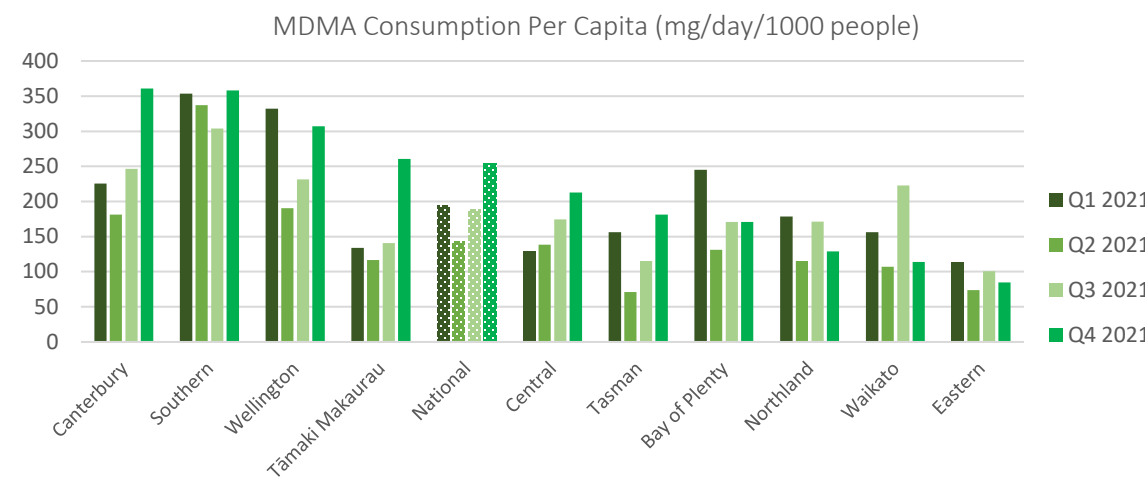
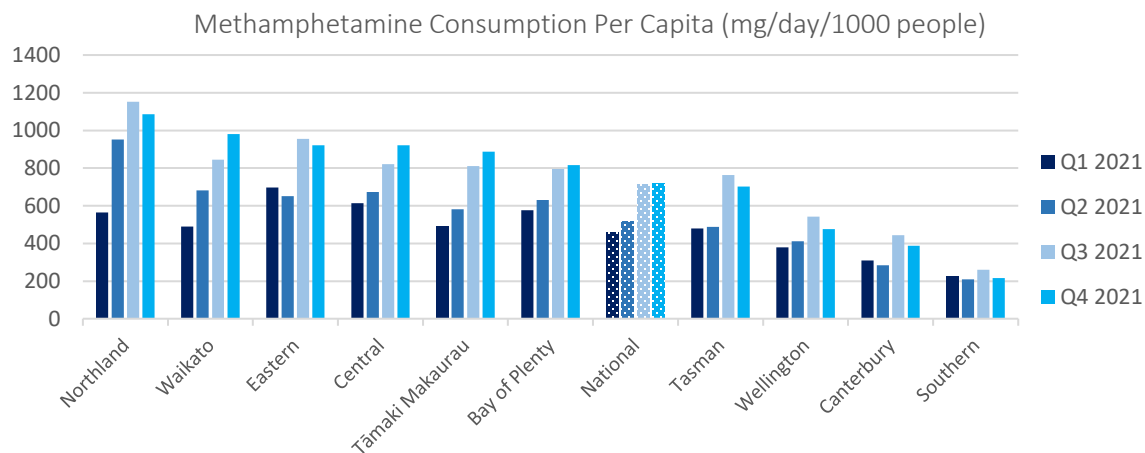
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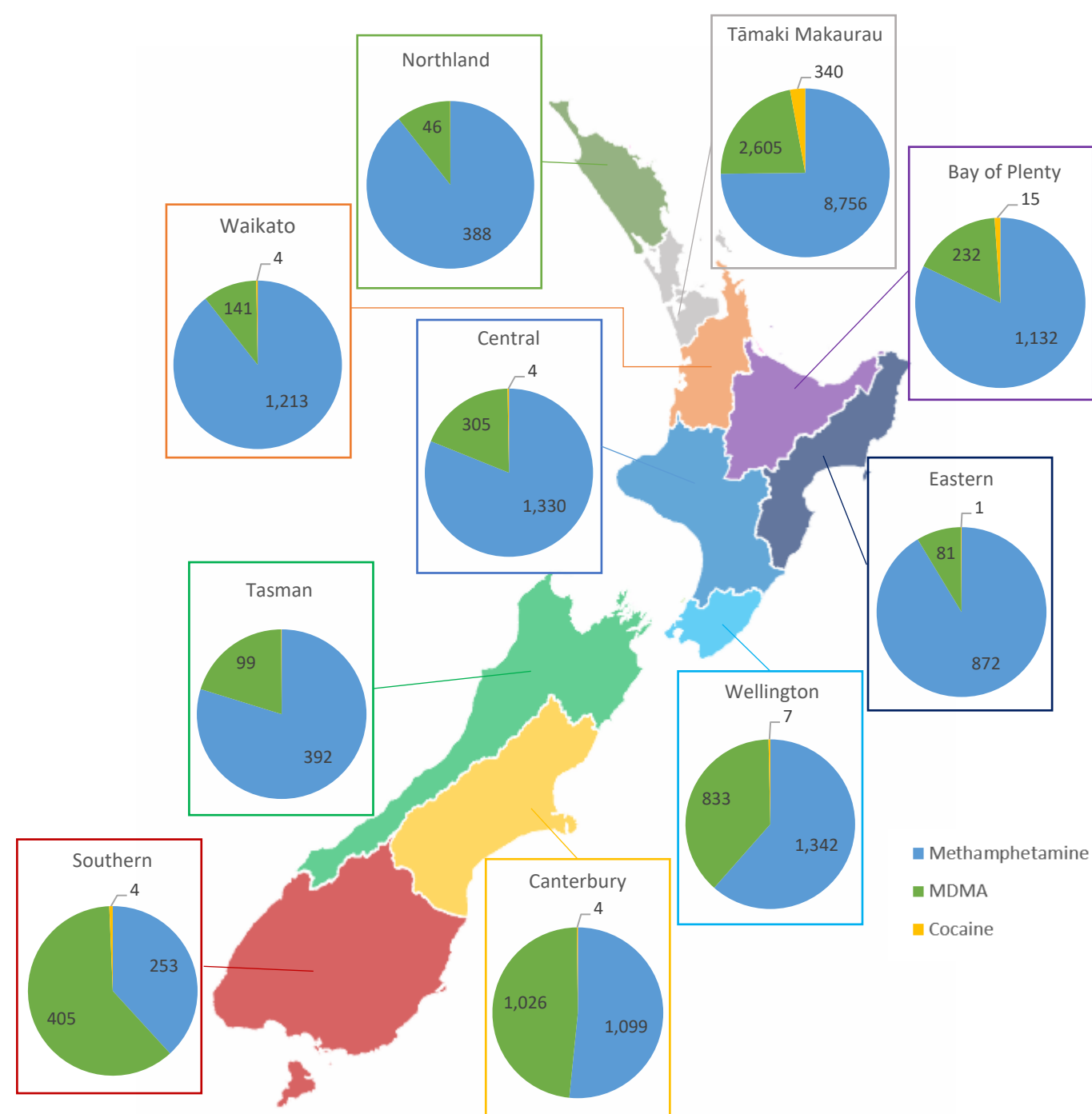
NOTES

- Per capita drug consumption is shown as milligrams consumed per day, per 1,000 people. As a number of locations are tested every second month, the presence or absence of data from some sites within a district will affect the total load and per capita consumption rates reported each quarter.
- The average weekly drug use pie charts show the average estimated drug use (in grams) for each commodity per district during Q4 2021. As this data is not adjusted for population, larger metropolitan areas record higher quantities of drug use per week due to the larger number of people in the catchment zone.

QUARTERLY PER CAPITA DRUG CONSUMPTION BY DISTRICT: 2021



AVERAGE WEEKLY DRUG USE BY DISTRICT Q4 2021 (GRAMS)





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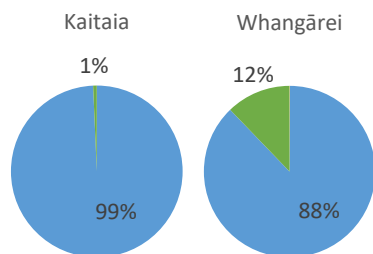
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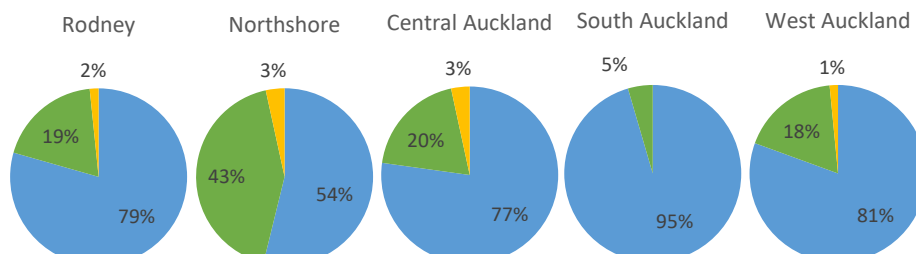
NOTES

➤ The graphs below illustrate the proportion of drug use detected within catchment areas during Q4 2021. Taupō was unable to be sampled during Q4 2021.

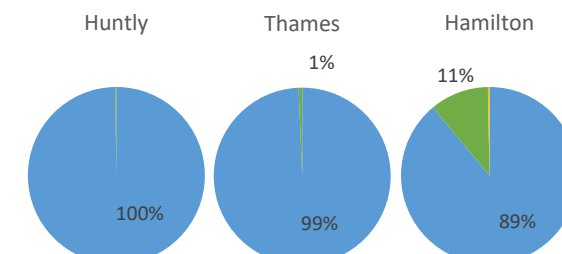
NORTHLAND



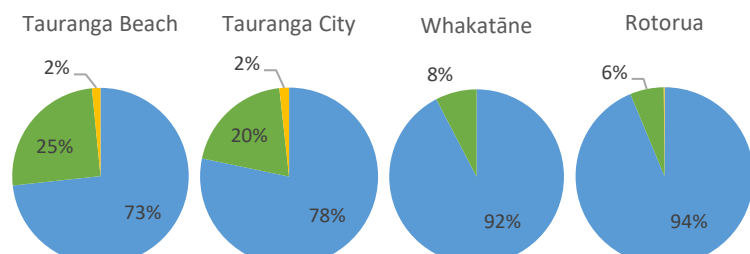
TĀMAKI MAKAUURAU



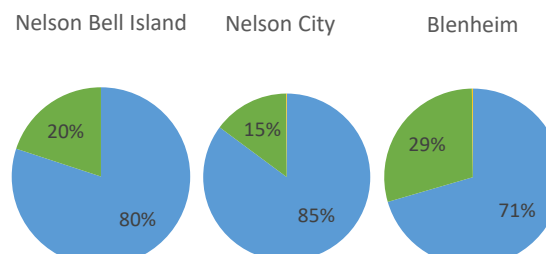
WAIKATO



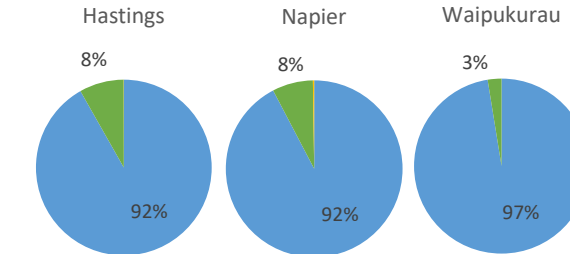
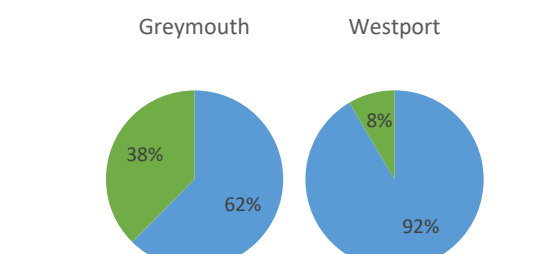
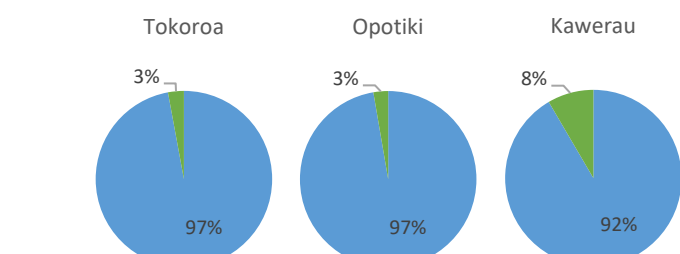
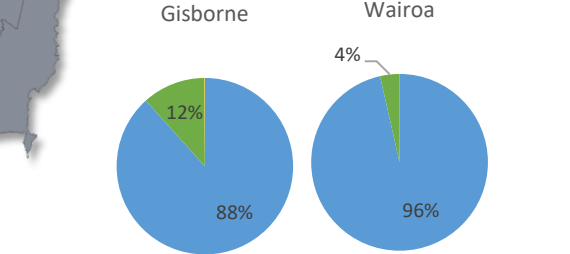
BAY OF PLENTY



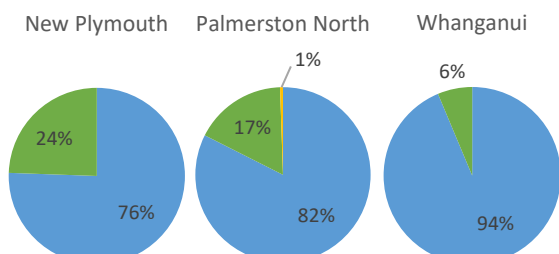
TASMAN



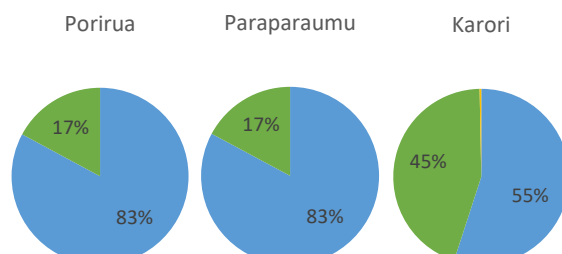
EASTERN



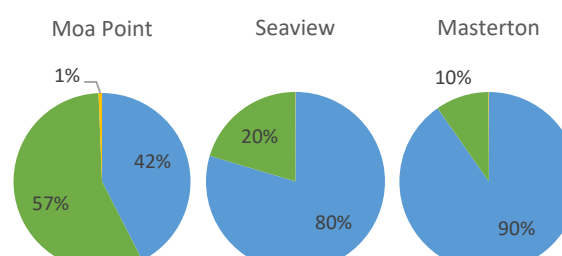
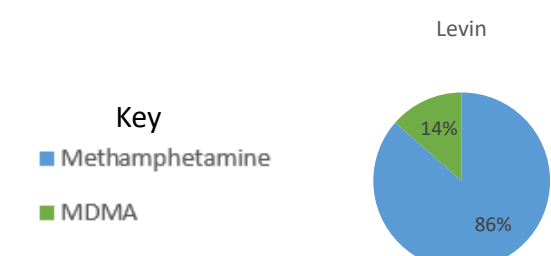
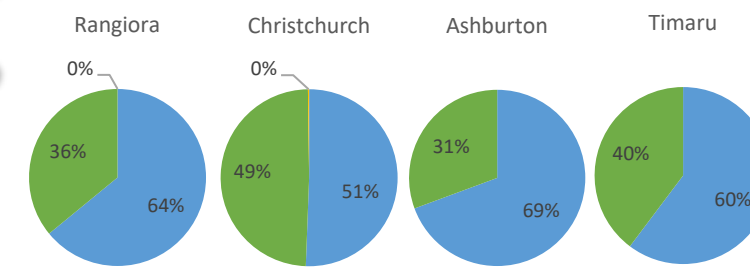
CENTRAL



WELLINGTON



CANTERBURY



SOUTHERN

