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## Media release

### Project STOP mandated in WA

The Guild welcomes the decision of the Western Australian Government to mandate the Guild's high-tech weapon against 'pseudo runners' – Project STOP.

By taking this step, Western Australia joins Queensland in requiring the use of electronic real time recording of pseudoephedrine products. The Guild believes it is now time for the other States and Territories to follow suit.

Project STOP assists pharmacists to make decisions about whether a particular sale of a cold and flu medicine containing pseudoephedrine is legitimate. It is a proven aid in the fight against the diversion of pseudoephedrine to manufacture methamphetamines (also known as 'speed' or 'ice').

Project STOP has been available to community pharmacies nationally since August 2007 and in Queensland, where it was developed, since November 2005.

Since the system went online in 2005 pharmacists have denied sales on tens of thousands of occasions. It has actively discouraged criminal elements from attempting to get access to the products via pharmacy.

This decision is timely given that the Australian Chemical Diversion Conference is being held next week in Perth. The Project STOP team is presenting at the conference and, with a number of international and interstate delegates, it is an ideal opportunity to demonstrate the Pharmacy Guild's leadership in this area and the vision of the Western Australian and Queensland governments in mandating this tool.

"Project STOP has been so effective that it is worthy of 100 per cent support across Australia," the National President of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, Kos Slavos, said.

Project STOP provides a real-time database of requests for relevant products containing pseudoephedrine. This helps the pharmacist decide "Should I or shouldn't I supply to this person". It also provides immediate data to law enforcement agencies and health regulators.

All requests for pseudoephedrine based products are entered into a web-based database. The pharmacist requests Photo ID and is instantly able to verify if a purchase has already been made against that ID. From there, they can decide to proceed or decline the sale. Along with the details of the Photo ID, the product requested is also entered into the database.

If the person's ID is presented more than a certain number of times within a certain time period the system will also automatically send a message to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

"I congratulate the Western Australian Government and the WA Branch of the Pharmacy Guild on this important step in the appropriate management of these medicines," Mr Slavos said.

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