Role of drugs in crime – Transcript

***What is the role of drugs in relation to crime in Scotland?***

**Sir Stephen House** *:* The issue with drugs, and what we concentrate on drugs in Police Scotland, we divide it, very clearly, into two; we chase down, relentlessly, drug suppliers.

So we spend a huge amount of our time dealing with the crime gangs that supply drugs onto the streets of Scotland, that bring it into the country, distribute it around the country. We chase those down and the courts support us with those and when people are caught for that they get very lengthy prison sentences and it’s quite right that they should do because they’re trading in human misery and destroying lives.

When it comes to personal possession, our view is a different one. Although, possession of illegal drugs is an offence, even for personal use, we do deal with it on a much more appropriate level.

We’re not after chasing down huge numbers of personal drug users. We’re far more interested in those people being dealt with in terms of the damage they’re doing to their health because there’s huge, there’s lots of different stuff and people can read, particularly young people can read, lots of stuff about what drugs does to your body. But there’s no doubt about it whatsoever, you’re better off medically not taking the drugs that are illegal.

[End of transcript]