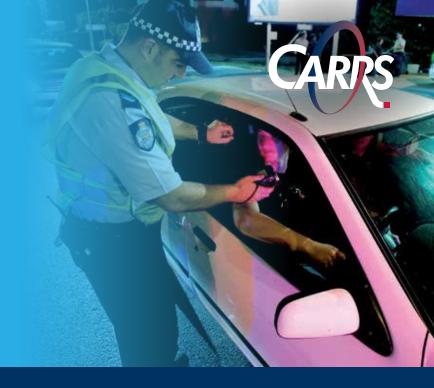
Drink driving

- Drink driving is the number one contributing factor in approximately 30% of fatal crashes in Australia.¹
- Over 1 in 4 drivers and riders killed on Australian roads have a BAC exceeding the legal limit.

Image source: Queensland Police Service



State of the Road A Fact Sheet of the Centre for Accident Research & Road Safety - Queensland (CARRS-Q)

THE FACTS

- Drink driving remains a major contributor to fatalities and injuries on Australian roads, even though an illegal Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) limit has been in place for over 25 years.
- In 2015, the Queensland Police Service conducted approximately 3.65 million breath tests and detected over 22,000 drink driving offences – representing an offence rate of approximately 0.6%.
- A high proportion of repeat drink drivers have clinical alcohol dependence problems.²
- Casualty crash risk doubles when driving with an alcohol level just in excess of 0.05 BAC, and the risk of involvement in a fatal crash increases even more sharply.¹

How does alcohol affect me?

- Alcohol is one of the most widely used drugs. It is a potent depressant which slows down the body by acting on the central nervous system, affecting both physical and mental functioning. Excessive drinking can cause cognitive impairment, which can affect judgement, memory and reaction time. The time it takes to remove alcohol from the body can also impinge on work and driving performance. An individual can drink a large quantity of alcohol in the evening and still have alcohol present in his or her body the next day.
- Drinking alcohol can affect drivers and the driving task by:
 - ° Slowing down the reaction time this can be crucial in an emergency situation.
- Dulling the thinking process making it difficult to multi-task – an essential skill necessary for safe driving.

- Reducing attention span not noticing other drivers and/or vehicles.
- Causing blurred vision and reduced hearing – reducing your ability to drive safely and identify driving hazards.

How much can I drink?

- BAC is a measurement of the amount of alcohol in your body. In Queensland, it is illegal to drive a vehicle with a BAC of 0.05 or more. However, other drivers, such as novice drivers (who hold a Learners permit or Provisional licence) and professional drivers (e.g., taxi, bus and heavy vehicle drivers), are required to maintain zero BAC.
- A standard drink is said to contain 10g of alcohol. The following table shows drinks which are approximately one standard drink:



NB: A glass of champagne (11.5% alcohol), a 375ml stubby or a can of full strength beer (4.9% alcohol) are all 1.5

- To keep under the BAC limit, males can drink no more than 2 standard drinks in the first hour (10g of alcohol in each) followed by 1 standard drink every hour after that. However, females can drink no more than 1 standard drink every hour (10g of alcohol in each).
- It is important to also remember that these are only guidelines and a BAC will

also be affected by other factors such as body size, age, level of fitness, liver state, and whether you are a male or female. A person's reaction to alcohol can also be affected by medication, the duration since food consumption, and the food eaten.

If you plan to drink, plan ahead. Don't wait until you're intoxicated to decide how to get home.

TIPS FOR STAYING SAFE

The best advice regarding alcohol use is simply "do not drive" under the influence, however, if you are going to drink:

- Organise a driver who will not be drinking or using any other drugs.
- Make alternative transport plans.
- Use public transport or 'grab a cab'.
- · Stay overnight.

Penalties for drink drivers

The consequences of alcohol-affected driving include not only a fine and loss of licence, but also the potential loss of insurance cover and WorkCover. In addition, prosecutions can be commenced as a result of breaches of the Workplace Health and Safety Act³ for any worker (under the influence of alcohol) who has been found negligent in his or her duties. Management, supervisors or fellow workers could also be legally liable if they were aware of a driver's alcohol affliction and failed to report or amend the situation (e.g. send the driver home and/or suspend his/her driving tasks).



CARRS-Q'S WORK IN THIS AREA

- Review of drink driving rehabilitation and new developments.⁴
- A profile of first time drink driving offenders and the development of a brief computer based intervention for first time offenders.⁵
- A profile of the characteristics of Indigenous drink drivers and the development of a culturally sensitive drink driving prevention program for use in rural and remote areas with this population.⁶
- The development, implementation and evaluation of the Under the Limit (UTL1) drink driving education and rehabilitation program for drink drivers.⁷ The program has been completed by over 11,000 offenders throughout Queensland and was awarded the 2009 Australian Crime and Violence Prevention Awards Recognition

- of Excellence and the 2008 Emergency Management Australia Queensland Safer Communities Award.
- An evaluation of the distance education module of UTL.
- CARRS-Q hosted T2013: the 20th International Council on Alcohol, Drugs and Traffic Safety (ICADTS) Conference in August 2013 in Brisbane.
- A Queensland trial of alcohol ignition interlocks (UTL2) to determine their effectiveness in reducing drink driving by high risk repeat offenders. Interlocks restrict vehicle use to drivers with a preset BAC.
- Comprehensive reviews of RBT and vehicle-based sanctions for drink drivers.⁸
- A submission to the Travelsafe parliamentary enquiry in Queensland regarding the effectiveness of vehicle impoundment and other countermeasures

- in managing the behaviour of recidivist drink drivers.
- An examination of current best practice approaches to drink driving rehabilitation and an assessment of the degree to which this is reflected in current Victorian policies and practices.
- An examination of the QPS Drink Rite Program to identify opportunities for police and community interaction in promoting an anti-drink driving message.⁹
- An evaluation of the 'Skipper' designated driver program.¹⁰
- An examination of risk perception in drink walking.¹¹

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The National Road Safety Strategy¹ is focussed on:

- Collaborating with police to strengthen the deterrence effects of RBT programs and to improve public awareness of these programs.
- Undertaking research on extending the use of alcohol interlocks to cover a wider segment of drink driving offenders, particularly high-risk road users, and investigating the option of requiring demonstrated rehabilitation from alcoholdependence before interlock conditions can be removed.
- Expanding the use of other vehicle-based sanctions for repeat and high-risk drink driving offences.
- Reviewing international best practice and identifying the cost-effectiveness of interventions for dealing with high risk and repeat traffic offenders.
- Investigating drink driving in the female population.

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