



ASSOCIATION OF CHIEF POLICE OFFICERS IN SCOTLAND

NEWS RELEASE

NO HIDING PLACE FOR THOSE WHO DRINK AND DRIVE

SCOTLAND'S Police chiefs are warning that there will be no hiding place for those who drink and drive.

Officers from all eight Scottish police forces will be bringing the full weight of their powers to bear on detecting those who risk it by drinking and getting behind the wheel.

As part of the two week Summer Drink/Drugs Driving campaign, launched today (Monday 16 July) by the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS), police officers are being instructed to breath test not only drivers who are involved in road traffic accidents, and drivers who are suspected of being under the influence of alcohol, but also drivers stopped in relation to a moving traffic offence.

There was an increase in drink/drug driving figures across Scotland during the Festive Safety campaign and it emerged that a disproportionate number of young people between 17 and 25 were detected driving while under the influence.

Transport Minister Stewart Stevenson said: "We have all seen the devastating effects caused by those who drink and drive. Every day, it seems, people are prepared to take a risk in the misguided assumption that it either won't happen to them or that they won't be caught. Those people are risking lives and I fully support the police in their efforts to ensure that there is nowhere for them to hide."

Chief Constable John Vine, Chair of the ACPOS Road Policing Business Area, said:

"We are determined that people who drink and then get behind the wheel will be caught and dealt with accordingly. Drivers need to be aware that even if they are stopped for a minor road traffic offence, such as a defective light or tyre, they are likely to be breathalysed.

"There is a clear link between drink driving and involvement in serious and fatal collisions and it is vital that we protect innocent road users from those who put them in danger through their irresponsible behaviour."

The Tayside chief added: "Officers are being fully briefed and will have the support of their respective forces in using their full powers to detect drink drivers.

“The innocent motorist has nothing to fear and we are confident that by detecting more drivers, who are determined to drive while over the limit, we can reduce accidents and even save lives.

In recent years there has been a growing acceptance among law abiding members of the public that drink driving is totally unacceptable and with each campaign there has been an increase in the number of calls to the police identifying drink drivers. We urge the public to continue to support us in this way by using the Crimestoppers number 0800 555 111

Michael McDonnell, Director of Road Safety Scotland, added: “Drivers must remember that there is no failsafe guide as to how to stay under the legal alcohol limit or how much they can drink and still drive safely. It depends on a range of issues such as weight, sex, age, stress levels and the amount and type of alcohol.

“Our message is simple – we are asking people not to risk it and not to drink if they plan to drive.”

The penalties for being caught drink driving include an automatic driving ban of at least 12 months and the risk of a £5000 fine and six months in prison. Drivers can also expect their insurance premiums to triple and to have a criminal record for at least 20 years.

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