



ASSOCIATION OF CHIEF POLICE OFFICERS IN SCOTLAND

NEWS RELEASE

Friday, 11 July 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE USE

Drink and drive – and you could suffer the consequences

There are still too many Scottish drivers who do not take their actions seriously enough when they get behind the wheel after consuming alcohol or drugs.

The consequences of doing so can include a criminal record, if convicted, and endorsements on the motorist's driving licence. The criminal record can last for at least 20 years and endorsements on a driving licence can last for 11 years.

To remind drivers about those consequences, officers from all eight Scottish police forces will be participating in a two-week-long campaign starting Monday to be launched today by the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS).

"If you are caught drink-driving, you will be arrested, charged and convicted," said Assistant Chief Constable Jim Green, Secretary of the Road Policing Business Area for ACPOS. "And you stand a good chance of having a criminal record with a number of associated long-term consequences."

These consequences include:

- the need to disclose your criminal record on job application forms;
- the impact on your car insurance – with either your premium being increased or your insurance company terminating its policy with you;
- a limited ability in hiring a car or van after the driving ban finishes;
- potential difficulties entering certain countries, such as the USA.

"And then there are other consequences, such as losing your job, your family breaking up, losing your home or car and, not to forget, the social stigma that goes with it," Mr. Green added.

"Dismissing the idea of being caught drinking or taking drugs and driving as being unlikely to happen is very foolish," ACC Jim Green stressed. "Police forces throughout the country will be emphasising that message during the two-week-long *'Summer Drink/Drugs Driving Campaign'*."

He continued: "Officers have been instructed to breath test not only drivers who are suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs but also those involved in road traffic crashes or anyone stopped for a moving traffic offence."

“There is a clear link between drink / drug driving and involvement in serious and fatal collisions,” Mr. Green concluded. “It is vital that we protect innocent road users from those who put them in danger through irresponsible behaviour.”

Michael McDonnell, Director of Road Safety Scotland, said: “It is over 40 years since the breathalyser was introduced and still people are prepared to put themselves and others at risk by drinking and driving.

“Drugs, too, have become a part of our modern society and many people claim that they do not affect their driving. I wonder about that, since alcohol and other drugs which cross the blood-brain barrier must affect your driving and decision-making.

“Getting caught drink or drug driving will result in a minimum 12-month driving ban and, for most of us, the consequences of that would be disastrous. So, don’t risk it, either when out socialising at night, or the morning after.”

With ‘*T in the Park*’ taking place this weekend, police forces throughout the country have a simple message for all motorists, including those heading to or going home from the annual event: ‘Don’t drink or take drugs if you plan to drive! Don’t risk it!’

-end-

For further information, contact:
Graham MacDonell, Communications Officer, ACPOS,
at 0141 435 1241 or 07771 842 881 out-of-hours.

Notes to Editors:

The launch of the two-week-long ‘Summer Drink/Drugs Driving Campaign’ will be held at the Strathclyde Road Policing Complex on Helen Street starting at 1:00 p.m.

The two-week-long ‘*Summer Drink / Drugs Driving Campaign*’ starts on Monday 14 July at 7:00 a.m. and runs through to Monday 28 July at 7:00 a.m.

Road Policing officers and vehicles and breath testing equipment will be available for the media for simulated breath testing processes.

During the two-week-long ‘*Summer Drink-Drugs Driving Campaign*’ last year:

- 309 motorists were caught for drink driving;
- 9 motorists were found unfit through drink;
- 14 motorists were found unfit through drugs.

TEN FACTS ABOUT SCOTTISH DRIVERS AND DRINKING*

1. Too many drivers think they are under the legal limit when driving after drinking alcohol and don't think their driving ability is affected,
2. Too many drivers think 'drinking and driving' is associated with being significantly rather than marginally over the (legal) limit.
3. Many drivers are uncertain what the legal limit is and how the legal limit could be measured in their own case.
4. The incidence of drink-driving in men of all age groups has fallen; however, it has remained constant in women and has marginally decreased with the youngest age group (17 – 29).
5. A higher proportion of young drivers (17 – 29 years old) have driven while over the limit during 2007 than other ages.
6. A greater proportion of men, aged 30 to 59 in the professions or in business, drive after drinking than men of the same age group in other income categories.
7. The proportion of women who have driven after drinking alcohol is smaller than the proportion of men who have – but the gap between genders is shrinking.
8. The occurrence of Scottish motorists driving after drinking any alcohol has decreased by four percent between 2001 and 2007;
9. Rural drivers are no more likely to have driven after drinking any alcohol than those living in urban areas.
10. Six out of 10 drivers say that they would not consume any alcohol before driving.

* Compiled from findings addressed in the Scottish Government's Safer Scotland , "*Transport Research Series – Drinking and driving 2007: Prevalence, Decision Making and Attitudes*", E. Collins et al, TNS Systems Three, 2008 available on the Scottish Government Social Research website at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/03/04152525/0>