

For Immediate Release

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POLICE CHIEFS CONCERNED AS DRINK DRIVING FIGURES RISE

One week into a two-week-long, nation-wide safety campaign and Scottish police forces have arrested 162 drivers who were ignoring laws about drink driving or driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Since Monday last, 146 motorists throughout Scotland were found to be over the limit and charged with drink driving offences. Of those, 17 were involved in collisions and 129 were stopped for being suspected of drink driving.

In addition, 16 motorists were found to be unfit through drink or drugs (8 through drinking and 8 through drugs).

On Friday, 11 July, the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS) launched its annual '*Summer Drink-Drugs Driving Campaign*', running from Monday, 14 July to Monday 28 July, to remind Scottish motorists of the consequences of drinking and driving.

"It seems that there is still a mindset with some drivers that they will not get caught," said Assistant Chief Constable Jim Green, Secretary of the ACPOS Road Policing Business Area. "So far in this campaign, 162 drivers have found out that their attitude was the wrong one to have."

"Not only have these drivers faced the stigma of an arrest but now have to face a court appearance where they will be fined and will acquire a criminal record that will last for 20 years along with a conviction on their driver's licence that will last for 11 years," Mr. Green stressed.

"While the legal limit is 35, our message to motorists is simple: Do not drink if you intend to drive!"

And when it came to being over the limit or under the influence of drugs while driving, those 162 motorists have found out what the consequences of their drinking or drug taking and driving has been.

Among them are motorists such as the following:

- In Perthshire, Tayside police arrested a 46-year-old female twice on the same day for drink driving offences and being three times over the limit;

- In Glasgow, a 25-year-old male driver – found to be five times the legal limit - was arrested and detained in custody by Strathclyde Police for drink driving following a collision with a parked vehicle;
- In Giffnock, a 62-year-old male who was four times over the limit, was arrested for drink driving following a collision with a parked vehicle; and,
- An 18-year-old driver in Midlothian was arrested by Lothian and Borders Police after he crashed into a parked car. He was over three times the legal limit and while he did not sustain any injuries, he was charged with drink driving and careless driving;
- A 33-year-old male in East Lothian lost control of his vehicle and struck the wall outside an ambulance depot, according to Lothian and Borders Police, who arrested him and found he was over twice the legal limit. He sustained no injuries.

In addition to these incidents, police stopped eight motorists for drug driving – a number which has not changed from last year’s summer campaign arrests.

Last year 147 motorists, in total, were stopped for drink/drugs driving offences with 141 stopped in 2006.

“The number of drink drivers or drivers found to be unfit through drink or drugs has increased over the last two years’ summer campaigns,” said Assistant Chief Constable Jim Green. “We have another week to go for this year’s *‘Summer Drink / Drugs Driving Campaign’* to get this message across.

“I urge motorists who drink or take drugs and drive to think long and hard before they get behind the wheel. The consequences for both themselves and for others are well documented. Don’t risk it!”

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For further information, including interviews with ACC Jim Green, contact: Graham MacDonell, Communications Officer, ACPOS at: 0141 435 1241 or 07771 842 881 (out-of-hours)