



ASSOCIATION OF CHIEF POLICE OFFICERS IN SCOTLAND

## NEWS RELEASE

**Monday, 05 January 2009**

**For Immediate Use**

### **DRINK/DRUGS DRIVING NUMBERS DROP BUT POLICE STILL CONCERNED**

MORE motorists in Scotland are heeding the message that it is totally unacceptable to drink and drive according to latest figures.

Despite the reduction in numbers senior police officers remain concerned that there are still hundreds of drivers prepared to take the risk

And Scotland's police are not slowing down their daily drive to make the country's roads safer for all road users.

At the end of the country's annual four-week festive drink/drugs driving safety campaign, involving all eight of Scotland's police forces, nearly 200 fewer motorists had been arrested for drink or drugs driving offences than during last year's campaign.

Chief Constable Kevin Smith of Central Scotland Police, Chair of the Road Policing Business Area of the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland said: "While we are pleased to see more people obeying the law there were 654 motorists who chose to ignore it. That is still far too many who are prepared to take the risks to themselves and other road users."

Last year, 839 motorists throughout the country were charged by police for drink / drugs driving offences during the month-long, ACPOS-led campaign.

Among those stopped by police on Hogmanay and New Year's Day were a number of young drivers that included:

- An 18-year-old male in Alloa, who was nearly twice the limit, crashed his vehicle into an electricity substation at 3:20 a.m. Central Scotland Police advised that damage was estimated at £25,000.
- A 21-year-old male who lost control of his vehicle after a pursuit from Ardrossan to Largs and ended up in a ditch. After being apprehended shortly after 1:30 a.m., the driver provided readings of two and a half times the drink drive limit.
- A 21-year-old male apprehended in Gatehead by Strathclyde Police after his extensively-damaged vehicle had been found in a ditch on the A759 at 4:20 that morning. His readings were almost three times the drink drive limit.

- A 22-year-old male suspected of theft, seen driving a stolen vehicle which was subsequently pursued when spotted by Strathclyde Police on Brockburn Road in Glasgow at 8:20 a.m. Once arrested, he refused to provide breath tests.

During the earlier part of the fourth week of the month-long campaign, a 62-year-old woman was arrested on December 31 for drink driving and driving while disqualified on the A944 in Aberdeenshire. Grampian Police obtained a reading of over twice the limit and noted that she had appeared in Aberdeen Sheriff Court that morning where she had been sentenced for a previous drink driving offence that had occurred in November.

Northern Constabulary received a report from a member of the public in Caithness that resulted in a 46-year-old male driver being arrested with reading over five times the limit. He appeared in Wick Sheriff Court the following day and was given an immediate interim disqualification.

Additional arrests were made on the weekend that included a 19-year-old male and a 40-year-old male after a van had crashed into a garden in Sauchie. The driver and passenger changed places and then drove the van off until apprehended by Central Scotland Police.

And, finally, Strathclyde Police observed a vehicle exceeding the speed limit on John Street in Ayr late Saturday night. After the vehicle was stopped, the 21-year-old driver failed a roadside breath test, was arrested and conveyed to a police station where he provided readings of more than double the limit. He also had no insurance nor had paid tax for the vehicle.

There appears to be a growing trend of young drivers - as the figures for the month-long campaign show - who are prepared to take the risk, sometimes believing that one or two drinks would not only keep them within the limit, but would not impair their driving.

Chief Constable Smith added: "They have been proven wrong and have suffered the consequences. To all motorists, regardless of age, if you are doing to drink, don't drive. The consequences can be very serious, including the loss of life. So, 'Don't Risk It!'"

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