



REPORTER

The Newsletter of The International Council on Alcohol, Drugs & Traffic Safety

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

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The International Council on Alcohol, Drugs & Traffic Safety (ICADTS) is an independent nonprofit body whose only goal is to reduce mortality and morbidity brought about by misuse of alcohol and drugs by operators of vehicles in all modes of transportation.

Message from the ICADTS President

Dear ICADTS members,

A recent court ruling in Germany on medicinal cannabis use and driving set an interesting precedent that will give direction to this new judicial territory.

The case involved a driver who suffered from chronic back and joint pain and who did not respond to regular therapy. Because of the pain, he had been illegally taking cannabis since 2015. Under the influence of cannabis he was involved in a rear-end collision and consequently his driver's license was revoked. He then received permission to acquire medicinal cannabis on prescription. He received monthly prescriptions of cannabis and took the prescribed dose three times daily. The cannabis treatment was effective and subjective pain levels reduced to a minimum. His sleep and eating pattern also returned to normal. At that point, he contacted his local traffic authority to reissue his driving license, but the traffic authority denied.

He subsequently sued the traffic authority before the administrative court. He presented the judges with a medical-psychological report. Afterwards his driving ability was tested under the prescribed dose and he successfully passed this assessment of driver fitness. According to the expert opinion, he would even be fit to drive a truck. The court obliged the traffic authority to grant him a driving license. "But you must handle it responsibly and constantly check yourself", told the judge. In addition, the judge indicated that similar cases should always be examined individually in the future.

This case highlights an area of traffic research that has been widely overlooked so far. Cannabis and driving research has traditionally focused on cannabis induced impairments in recreational users and devoted little attention to drivers who use cannabis to treat a medical condition. With the increasing acceptance of cannabis as a medical treatment of pain, more research is needed to establish the net effect of symptom relief and cannabis impairment on driving performance of pain patients. Likewise, more research is needed to establish the pace and magnitude of tolerance to the impairing effects of cannabis that may develop in patients that use cannabis prescriptions around the clock. In some European countries (e.g. Ireland, Norway and UK), people who drive after using cannabis for medical reasons are exempted from prosecution for cannabis-impaired driving. The main argument for granting an exemption is that it will enable patients who use cannabinoids for medical purposes to live a more normal life. The counterargument is of course that use of medical cannabis can still cause impaired driving and threaten road safety. Yet, scientific evidence to demonstrate the presence or absence of cannabis impairment in patients is currently lacking, but sorely needed to develop science-based laws for people who use cannabis for medical reasons and drive.

This case illustrates just one of the areas in which more research is needed to provide science-based policy guidance in the cannabis field. ICADTS members have the opportunity to contribute to this knowledge base in important ways.

Kind regards,

Jan Ramaekers
President ICADTS

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS IN TRAFFIC: COMMIT TO ACT FOR SAFE MOBILITY - UPCOMING CONFERENCE IN COIMBRA, PORTUGAL: JUNE 28-30, 2020

On behalf of The International Council on Alcohol, Drugs and Traffic Safety (ICADTS) and Coimbra Engineering Academy (ISEC) in close collaboration with InOutCister (Lda) and World Association for Connecting People (WACP) we would like to invite you to the 2020 *International Conference on Alcohol Drugs and Traffic Safety* in the beautiful city of Coimbra, Portugal.

This will be an event where we will share knowledge from around the world on all alcohol and drug related issues in mobility. The year 2020 is of great importance as the beginning of the new decade where the whole world should turn attention to changes needed urgently in various quarters and sectors. For this reason, Portugal will be the stage for several world organizations to come together to share information and come to agreement on issues and priorities.

Representative members of organizations will define prevention strategies, assessment methodologies and implementation of new practices and processes aimed at increasing traffic safety. Speakers from the European Workplace Drug Testing Society (EWDTS), Traffic Psychology International (TPI), International Forum for Drugs and Alcohol Testing (IFDAT), and experts of various nationalities (France, Germany, Austria, India, Georgia, Nigeria, Australia, Nepal, Somalia) are expected to share their experiences to start the new decade with a clear goal: Commit to act for safe mobility.

The conference is open to all experts, researchers and stakeholders from the areas of public health and safety, traffic and transport psychology, law, medicine, economics, law enforcement, public policy, education, pharmacology, toxicology, forensic science, human factors, and alcohol/drugs intervention and rehabilitation.

A pre-conference workshop with the theme: “Trends in driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs” will take place on June 28, (afternoon), followed by the formal conference opening on June 29. The Program will conclude on June 30.

An interesting and historic tour is planned for July 1 as part of the conference – including a tour of UNESCO’s World Heritage University of Coimbra and the Joanina Library

For more information: icadts2020@gmail.com; info@inoutcister.eu [Website under construction.]

We hope to see you in Coimbra!

Fátima Pereira da Silva

UNDERUTILIZED STRATEGIES IN TRAFFIC SAFETY

A recent publication pointed out that numerous traffic safety strategies that are proven effective in reducing crash fatalities have been underutilized. The author states that if all of these strategies are implemented widely in every state in the U.S, traffic fatalities could be reduced by at least 50%. One of the barriers to implementation of these strategies is the perception by officials that the public is against them. The purpose of this study was to address which of these underutilized measures would be favorably viewed by the American public if they were educated their effectiveness?

A representative survey of 2,000 U.S. drivers was conducted in October 2018. The objective was to gauge the public’s opinion of these strategies. Each respondent was given a summary of the research on the effectiveness of these strategies and then asked if they were in favor of them in their community. Some examples of the results: 64.7% of the respondents were in favor of conducting sobriety checkpoints in their community at least monthly; 68.2% were in favor of police using passive alcohol sensors at sobriety checkpoints.

The results of this survey indicate that when drivers in the United States are given facts about countermeasures or strategies to reduce traffic crash fatalities, the majority are in favor of the underutilized strategies. This information could be useful to legislators and highway safety officials in each state who make the decisions as to whether to implement some of these strategies.

Source: James Fell (2019) Underutilized strategies in traffic safety: Results of a nationally representative survey, Traffic Injury Prevention, DOI: [10.1080/15389588.2019.1654605](https://doi.org/10.1080/15389588.2019.1654605)



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NEWS:

Sweden is to host the 3rd Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety on 19th –20th February 2020. The conference will be co-sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO), and minister-led delegations from more than 100 countries are expected to attend. Representatives from the world of industry and research, international institutions and other global organizations will also participate.



<https://www.roadsafetysweden.com/>

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DUI AND VIOLENT CRIME AMONG GUN PURCHASERS IN CALIFORNIA

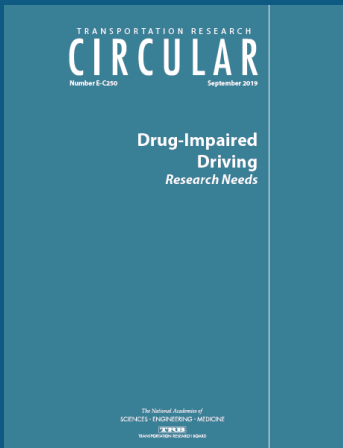
Alcohol use is a risk factor for firearm-related violence, and firearm owners are more likely than others to report risky drinking behaviors. A recent study examined the association between prior convictions for driving under the influence (DUI) and risk of subsequent arrest for violent crimes among handgun purchasers. This retrospective, longitudinal cohort study followed 79 678 individuals from their first handgun purchase in 2001 through 2013. The study cohort included all legally authorized handgun purchasers in California aged 21 to 49 years at the time of purchase in 2001. The primary exposure was DUI conviction prior to the first handgun purchase in 2001. Outcomes included arrests for violent crimes (murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault), firearm-related violent crimes, and any violent crimes. Of the study population (N=79 678), 91.0% were males and 68.9% were white; the median age was 34 (range, 21-49) years. Compared with purchasers who had no prior criminal history, those with prior DUI convictions and no other criminal history were at increased risk of arrest for a violent crime (adjusted hazard ratio [AHR], 2.6; 95% CI, 1.7-4.1), a firearm-related violent crime (AHR, 2.8; 95% CI, 1.3-6.4), and any violent crime (AHR, 3.3; 95% CI, 2.4-4.5). Among purchasers with a history of arrests or convictions for crimes other than DUI, associations specifically with DUI conviction remained. This study's findings suggest that prior DUI convictions may be associated with the risk of subsequent violence, including firearm-related violence, among legal purchasers of handguns. Although the magnitude was diminished, the risk associated with DUI conviction remained elevated even among those with a history of arrests or convictions for crimes of other types.

Source: Kagawa RMC, Stewart S, Wright MA, et al. Association of Prior Convictions for Driving Under the Influence with Risk of Subsequent Arrest for Violent Crimes Among Handgun Purchasers. *JAMA Intern Med.* Published online September 30, 2019. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamainternmed.2019.4491>

TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH BOARD CIRCULAR ON DRUG IMPAIRED DRIVING RESEARCH NEEDS

The emergence of drug-impaired driving, notably marijuana-impaired driving, is a priority concern among road safety stakeholders. In particular, the availability and potency of marijuana has increased, and the legalization of different forms of marijuana has occurred in many jurisdictions around the world. Moreover, this drug type has warranted greater attention in light of evidence suggesting that marijuana is more commonly detected in fatally injured drivers than other types of illicit drugs. In comparison to alcohol, much less is known about marijuana and driving in terms of the prevalence of the problem, the consequences on driving performance, and strategies to manage marijuana-impaired drivers. Substantial investment in research about marijuana-impaired driving is essential to inform solutions. To this end, the Alcohol Drugs and Driving Committee of the Transportation Research Board produced a report describing eight priority research topics that span several disciplines. These high-level research needs are based on key areas that emerged from the Committee's midyear meeting in August 2017, and special session on marijuana and driving at the 97th Annual Meeting of the Transportation Research Board. The eight priority topics include: • Pharmacokinetics of Alcohol and Marijuana, • Legislation and Enforcement, • Prosecution and Courts, • Toxicology, • Supervision, • Treatment, • Public Policy, and • Public Education and Awareness.

For each topic, the report summarizes current knowledge and important caveats and then presents key research results. The rationale for prioritizing each question is highlighted, and the topics and their associated research questions within each section are discussed relative to the chronological flow of a drug-impaired driving case through the criminal justice system.



EUROPEAN ROAD SAFETY CHAPTER AWARD TO FÁTIMA PEREIRA DA SILVA



Fátima Pereira da Silva receiving award in Brussels

ICADTS board member Fátima Pereira da Silva received, with the team members and as Director & Mentor / Manager of Ideas and Projects from InOutCister lda, the Road Safety Award 2019 - Best Practices in the Excellence in Road Safety Awards 2019, from the European Commission (European Road Safety Charter) for the drink driving awareness campaign in Portugal. The project, in partnership with the Coimbra Academic Association (AAC) covers a set of activities that aim to raise awareness about the danger of alcohol behind the wheel among young drivers. These activities include briefing of students by volunteers at social/academic events on the dangers of drink driving; and encouragement of self-testing of alcohol consumption with breathalyzers. Excessive alcohol consumption continues to be a reality among young people in Portugal leading to impaired driving and a number of serious crashes. The project encourages students to adopt safe behavior towards alcohol consumption and to create awareness about the dangers of driving under influence. The action also enabled the organizers to collect data on alcohol consumption among youngsters. Ms. Pereira da Silva credited many partners over the years who have helped to bring about the program, including WACP, IPC, ESEC, Coimbra Engineering Academy (ISEC), ANSR, Robocorp, ACSIA, As Beiras and Dräger.

UPCOMING CONFERENCE IN SALZBURG: IFDAT 2020- 10th ANNUAL IFDAT CONFERENCE



The City of Mozart, the shooting location for The Sound of Music, the epitome of picture-book Austria - will host the 10th Annual International Forum for Drug and Alcohol Testing (IFDAT). The city will act as the historical backdrop for this meeting of experts, stakeholders, authorities, and pundits to discuss the issues and potential solutions in workplace drug and alcohol testing. The conference will take place 6-8 Sept. 2020

Organization: IFDAT; University of Salzburg; Endorsed by EWDTS
Conference President: Thomas Keller; Chair IFADT: Per Björklöv

<https://www.ifdat.com>

SPOTLIGHT ON AN ICADTS STIPEND WINNER: MARCELO ROSSONI DA ROCHA

We are publishing reports from winners of the stipends presented by the ICADTS Foundation and the City of Edmonton to attend T2019. This gives everyone a chance to get to know these participants. Marcelo Rossoni da Rocha is studying for a Master's in Psychiatry from the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul in Porto Alegre, Brazil.

My experience attending the T2019 in Edmonton was rewarding. I participated in many enriching activities. The report of DUI drivers or their victims and family members was particularly emotional. The lunch meeting with young and senior researchers was much appreciated. All of them were very friendly and approachable. I had the opportunity to meet researchers who develop high quality studies, adding knowledge that will certainly contribute to my projects and research. T2019 was the first international congress I attended and had the opportunity to present my work orally. This study evaluated combined risk behaviors in traffic, and demonstrated the existence of different risk groups of drivers. My findings showed that the group of drivers who drink and use their cell phones while driving is exposed to more severe traffic hazards compared to groups of drivers who report only drinking and driving or just using cell phones and driving.

I am currently an early-career researcher at the Center for Drug and Alcohol Studies, working on projects involving the analysis of biological and neuropsychological factors in DUI drivers through the implementation of driving simulation. Regarding this main project I am developing my master's project on the attentional process of drivers in different traffic situations, especially evaluating interactions with smartphones in a driving simulator. This ongoing project also assesses associations between previous drug and alcohol use and attention in traffic. This will be the first study on the subject conducted in Brazil. The experience I had during T2019 expanded my knowledge and made it possible to include new insights in my project. I hope to be able to show the results of this study during the next ICADTS meeting.

Thanks again to the city of Edmonton and ICADTS and a special thanks to our Center for this opportunity and the award. This kind of incentive enables many young researchers to attend scientific meetings abroad.



Upcoming Events

Annual Meeting of the Transportation Research Board
12-16 January 2020
Washington, DC USA
www.trb.org

Lifesavers National Conference on Highway Safety Priorities:
March 15-17, 2020
Tampa, Florida, USA
<https://lifesaversconference.org/>

Research Society on Alcoholism:
New Orleans, Louisiana, USA
June 20-24, 2020
<http://www.rsoa.org/>

Alcohol and drugs in traffic: Commit to act for safe mobility
June 28-30 2020
Coimbra, Portugal
icadts2020@gmail.com
info@inoutcister.eu

IFDAT 2020- 10th Annual International Forum for Drug and Alcohol Testing
6-8 September 2020
Salzburg, Austria
www.ifdat.com

T2022
28-31 August 2022
Rotterdam, The Netherlands
www.t2022.org



To view past issues of the Reporter, go to
<http://www.icadtsinternational.com/pages/icadts-reporter.php>

TRAFFIC FATALITIES IN THE U.S. IN 2018

The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has released highway crash fatality data for 2018, showing a 2.4 percent decline in overall fatalities, the second consecutive year of reduced crash fatalities. The data, compiled by NHTSA's Fatality Analysis Reporting System, shows that highway fatalities decreased in 2018 with 913 fewer fatalities, down to 36,560 people from 37,473 people in 2017. The fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled also decreased by 3.4 percent (from 1.17 in 2017 to 1.13 in 2018), the lowest fatality rate since 2014.

Other findings from the 2018 FARS data include:

- Fatalities among children (14 and younger) declined 10.3 percent;
- Alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities declined 3.6 percent; (i.e., driver BAC \geq .08 g/dL)
- Speeding-related fatalities declined 5.7 percent,
- Motorcyclist fatalities declined 4.7 percent,
- Fatalities among pedestrians and pedal cyclists increased by 3.4 percent (to 6,283) and 6.3 percent (to 857), respectively.
- Pedestrian fatalities occurred overwhelmingly after dark (76 percent), when many pedestrians had some alcohol in their systems (38 percent), and were not at intersections (74 percent; i.e., crossing in the middle of a street or road).
- Pedalcyclist fatalities often occurred after dark (50 percent of the time), with some alcohol in their systems (26 percent), and outside of intersections (60 percent).

With this release, NHTSA also introduced its new Fatality and Injury Reporting System Tool (FIRST), a modernized crash query tool that lets users not only query fatal crash data but also generate estimates of crashes and people injured in crashes. The upgraded functionalities in the new tool include generating multi-year trends, estimates of alcohol involvement, and charting/tabulation/mapping of query results. The tool, along with instructions on its usage, can be accessed at <https://www.nhtsa.gov/press-releases/roadway-fatalities-2018-fars>

REPORT ON THE FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO A DECLINE IN TRAFFIC FATALITIES IN THE U.S.

Between 2005 and 2011, the number of traffic fatalities in the U.S. declined by 11,031, from 43,510 in 2005 to 32,479 in 2011. This decline amounted to a reduction in traffic-related deaths of 25.4 percent, by far the greatest decline over a comparable period in the last 30 years.

Historically, significant drops in traffic fatalities over a short period of time have coincided with economic recessions. Longer recessions have coincided with deeper declines in the number of traffic fatalities. This report from the National Cooperative Highway Research Program, *NCHRP Research Report 928: Identification of Factors Contributing to the Decline of Traffic Fatalities in the United States from 2008 to 2012*, provides an analysis that identifies the specific factors in the economic decline that affected fatal crash risk, while taking into account the long-term factors that determine the level of traffic safety.

A key insight into the analysis of the factors that produced the sharp drop in traffic fatalities was that the young contributed disproportionately to the drop-off in traffic fatalities. Of the reduction in traffic fatalities from 2007 to 2011, people 25-years-old and younger accounted for nearly 48 percent of the drop, though they were only about 28 percent of total traffic fatalities prior to the decline. Traffic deaths among people 25-years-old and younger dropped substantially more than other groups. Young drivers are known to be a high-risk group and can be readily identified in the crash data.

Source: National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine 2019. *Identification of Factors Contributing to the Decline of Traffic Fatalities in the United States from 2008 to 2012*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/25590>.