



REPORTER

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

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

Plan for Revamping of *ICADTS Newsletter*

P.2

Ignition Interlock Resources Available Online

P.2

Drugged Driving in Victoria, Australia

P.3

Canada Considers Random Breath Testing

P.3

Report Examines Lessons Learned From Lowering Legal BAC Limits

P.4

Gene Variant Linked to Heavy Drinking and Drinking-and-Driving

P.4

Roadside Survey in British Columbia

P.5

Interlock Symposium Program Set

P.5

Nightclub Lockout Reduces Alcohol-Fueled Crime in Queensland, Australia

P.5

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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.

LETTER FROM THE ICADTS PRESIDENT: WOLF NICKEL

Dear ICADTS members:

In a few days, many of us will be attending the 19th triennial ICADTS conference in Oslo, Norway. More than 200 presentations from the various fields of research, expertise, and new developments are on the program. Several symposia will address special topics. There will also be a young scientists meeting, working group sessions, and many chances to meet and discuss recent developments in alcohol, drugs, and traffic safety. The International Council will honor two individuals and one institution with Widmark Awards, signifying that they have contributed significantly and achieved international recognition over a sustained number of years.

Before the conference, the ICADTS Executive Boards and the Foundation Board will hold their meetings. I will give a brief overview of the discussions and decisions taken during the general membership meeting. We do hope that you will attend that meeting. Your input and opinions will help us shape the future development of ICADTS.

I hope to meet many of you in Oslo and I would appreciate if we had a chance to talk.

Have a safe trip. ■

ACT ON ALCOHOL INTERLOCK PROGRAM PASSED BY DUTCH PARLIAMENT

The act on the introduction of an Alcohol Interlock Program (AIP) for drunk-driving offenders in the Netherlands has been passed by the Dutch Parliament. On June 1, 2010, the First Chamber passed the act, after the Second Chamber had passed the act on January 19, 2010. The act was published on June 4, 2010, in the Bulletin of Acts, Orders, and Decrees. The act will become effective in 2011.

Preparations for the introduction of the AIP will start soon. The Dutch government wants to create a market for alcohol interlocks. Vendors wanting to enter this market should become authorized and should receive type approval for their interlocks. The technical requirements have been formulated in Ministerial Regulations. The expectation is that these regulations will be finalized after the summer of 2010.

The Road Traffic Authority (RDW) is responsible for issuing type approvals and authorizations. The RDW aims to issue the first certificates to vendors and installers in early 2011. The RDW will organize a meeting for vendors that are interested in entering the Dutch market. In this meeting, the RDW will explain the requirements for alcohol interlocks, vendors, and installers and the procedures for receiving type approval or becoming authorized. Interested vendors can check the Web site of the RDW (www.rdw.nl/voertuigbranche) or can contact the RDW. ■

PLAN FOR REVAMPING OF ICADTS REPORTER

As discussed in the previous edition of *The Reporter*, we are redesigning the format and delivery method for the newsletter. The Winter edition in 2011 will transition to an e-mail and online delivery system unless recipients specifically request a print version to be mailed to them through regular postal service. This change will reduce costs and expand the flexibility of content in the newsletter. In the next few months:

1. Recipients who want to continue to receive the newsletter via regular post must send an e-mail or postal mail request to the ICADTS List Administrator via e-mail to jcannady@pire.org or by post to Jenee Cannady, ICADTS List Administrator, c/o PIRE, 11720 Beltsville Drive, Calverton, Maryland 20705-3111. Anyone who doesn't do so by the time of the Winter Edition (approximately February) will no longer receive a copy by postal mail.
2. Current readers of the print edition who want to receive the newsletter via e-mail must send their e-mail address to Jenee Cannady via e-mail at jcannady@pire.org.
3. ICADTS members will automatically be sent an e-mail version to the address on file at ICADTS.
4. Readers who have already requested to be placed on the electronic mailing list do not need to take any further action.
5. *The Reporter* will continue to be available on the ICADTS Web site.

We also wish to expand participation in the development of newsletter content. We are seeking volunteers who wish to contribute regularly (or irregularly!). This could be from a particular geographic region or from a specific field. We are especially seeking contributions from young scientists and from countries currently not well represented in our coverage. We will discuss ideas for the new, improved *Reporter* at the general membership meeting at T2010 in Oslo. Any ideas or comments that you would like to contribute in the meantime would be most welcome. Please direct them to the editor, Kathryn Stewart, stewart@pire.org. ■

IGNITION INTERLOCK RESOURCES AVAILABLE ONLINE

The U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has posted a new publication on its Web site, *Key Features for Ignition Interlock Programs*. The document was developed for NHTSA by Paul Marques and Robert Voas of the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE), in association with Bedford Research. The report documents key features of alcohol ignition interlock programs in the United States, based on a literature search, interviews with State ignition interlock experts, and discussions with the ICADTS ignition interlock working group and an expert panel meeting convened by PIRE. Topics include program enrollment issues; interlock program ramp-up and expansion; standardization of reporting and information flow; program compliance, noncompliance and interlock removal; linkages to treatment; and differences between court-based judicial programs and motor vehicle administered programs. The full report is available at http://www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/impaired_driving/pdf/811262.pdf.

Other relevant materials are also available. These include:

- *Ignition Interlocks – What You Need to Know; A Toolkit for Policymakers, Highway Safety Professionals and Advocates*, also developed for NHTSA. It contains frequently asked questions, information about costs and benefits, a summary of research, a Point-Counterpoint section, and media talking points regarding ignition interlock laws and programs. The document is available at http://www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/impaired_driving/pdf/811246.pdf.
- *Traffic Injury Research Foundation (TIRF) Ignition Interlock Curriculum*. TIRF maintains a Web site containing its new alcohol interlock curriculum. The curriculum was designed for practitioners who play a role in ignition interlock programs, including criminal justice professionals, drivers' licensing agencies, and treatment providers. The curriculum contains separate modules that cover the latest research, technology, implementation issues, legal concerns, and information about vendors and service providers. Development of the curriculum was supported by NHTSA and three private-sector interlock providers—Alcohol Countermeasure Systems Corp., Smart Start Inc., and Drager Safety. For more information, go to www.aic.tirf.ca. ■



DRUGGED DRIVING IN VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA

There is growing evidence to suggest that drug use among Victorian drivers is on the rise. Statistics indicate that the number of drivers killed whose specimens contained drugs other than alcohol has steadily increased over the past 15 years.

The Drugs and Driving project—formally known as “The relationship between accident culpability and drug presence in blood samples taken from persons injured in motor vehicle collisions”—aims to document the effect of licit and illicit drugs on crashes with injuries. It has the potential to direct changes in drug-driving policy.

Drivers injured in a motor vehicle collision in Victoria are required to furnish a blood sample as standard procedure. So far, 442 suitable samples have been quantitatively analyzed to provide the study with results for the presence of alcohol and five main drug classes: amphetamines, benzodiazepines, cannabis, morphine, and ketamine. These blood results are then matched with the corresponding traffic incident report. Conditions surrounding the incident (i.e., road conditions, vehicle condition, difficulty of task) are graded using standard scoring guidelines, and the driver is appointed either “nonculpable,” “contributory,” or “culpable” for the collision.

Some preliminary findings of interest follow:

- 69.9% of all injured drivers were found to be culpable for their collision; however, of the drug-free drivers, only 51% were found culpable. Also, of the:
 - Drivers using one drug, 75% were culpable,
 - Drivers using two drugs, 77% were culpable,
 - Drivers using three drugs, 93% were culpable, and
 - Drivers using four drugs, 100% were culpable.
- 38.9% of injured drivers were found to be under the influence of alcohol, with 62.2% of these drivers testing positive for at least one other drug.
- Average blood alcohol concentration of drivers who tested positive was 0.145%.
- Although females accounted for 29.4% of drivers testing positive for one or more substances, they accounted for 42.1% of drivers who tested positive for benzodiazepines. In contrast, women only accounted for 15.2% of drivers who had combined alcohol with cannabis.

This study continues to examine the effects of illicit, legal, and misused legal drugs on collision causation to determine their relative importance. This will, in turn, provide vital information for developing road safety policy.

The study is funded by the Victorian Road Safety Executive consisting of VicRoads, Department of Justice, Traffic & Transit Safety Department, and Transport Accident Commission. For more information, contact Dr. Edward Ogden at mail@forensicmedicalconsultants.com. ■

CANADA CONSIDERS RANDOM BREATH TESTING

Canada’s federal justice department is investigating the idea of imposing random breath tests (RBT). Currently, a federal discussion paper explores the benefits of random breath tests. So far, 22 European countries use the RBT strategy and say drinking-and-driving numbers are down dramatically. Currently, Canadian police can only administer breath tests if they have reasonable evidence to believe someone has been drinking.

According to Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), Canada, impaired-driving rates have decreased 23%, on average, in those European jurisdictions with RBT. But the Criminal Trial Lawyers’ Association is against the idea, saying it hopes the discussion dies. The association claims police already have the right to do random stops, such as Checkpoints, and it feels the federal government is using the idea to show Canadians it is getting tough on crime. “The legislation is absolutely unnecessary—they can set up Checkpoints—they can stop a car regardless of what they think the car’s doing—from then on, they can check the guy out whether he’s been drinking,” said Mike Clancy with the Criminal Trial Lawyers’ Association.

MADD argues legislation should go beyond seasonal Checkpoints, and drivers should be on guard every day of the year. “Why are you afraid? You shouldn’t be afraid to be tested if you have nothing to hide,” said Gladys Shelstad with MADD. Canadian federal officials are now looking for public input on the issue. Provincial ministers and other experts will also have an opportunity weigh in on the idea. ■

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 17, 2010

Ignition Interlock Symposium
Montebello Quebec
Visit: <http://www.interlock-symposium.com/>
See related article.

December 5-7, 2010

Alcohol Policy XV
Washington Marriott Wardman Park, Washington, DC
<http://www.silvergategroup.com/ap15/> Washington, DC, USA

January 23-27, 2011

89th Annual Meeting of the U.S. Transportation Research Board
Washington, DC, USA
Visit [http://www.trb.org/AnnualMeeting2011.aspx](http://www.trb.org/AnnualMeeting2011/Public/AnnualMeeting2011.aspx) for meeting information.

April 7-8, 2011

5th Fit to Drive Congress, Steigenberger Kurhaus Hotel, The Hague / Scheveningen.
The congress will be organized by the Association of the TÜV (VdTÜV) in cooperation with SWOV (Institute for Road Safety Research) und CBR (Centraal Bureau Rijvaardigheidsbewijzen). Details about the programme, the speakers, and the organization can be found at www.fit-to-drive.com.

May 8–11, 2011

Canadian Multi-Disciplinary Road Safety Conference
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
The "Call-For-Papers" has been issued. See www.cmrcxxi.ca

REPORT EXAMINES LESSONS LEARNED FROM LOWERING LEGAL BAC LIMITS

A recent paper examines the translation of evidence into policy on the effectiveness of laws to reduce the blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of drivers. The paper recounts the history of efforts by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as it collaborated extensively with federal and nonfederal partners and stakeholders in conducting a rigorous systematic review to evaluate the body of empirical evidence on 0.08 g/dL BAC laws. The timely dissemination of these findings and related policy recommendations—made by the independent Task Force on Community Preventive Services—to Congress very likely contributed to the inclusion of strong incentives to states to adopt 0.08 g/dL BAC laws by October 2003. Subsequent dissemination to partners and stakeholders informed decisionmaking about support for state legislative and policy action. This case study suggests the value of—

- clearly outlining the relationships between health problems, interventions, and outcomes;
- systematically assessing and synthesizing the evidence;
- using a credible group and rigorous process to assess the evidence;
- having an impartial body make specific policy recommendations based on the evidence;
- being ready to capitalize in briefly opening policy windows;
- engaging key partners and stakeholders throughout the production and dissemination of the evidence and recommendations;
- undertaking personalized, targeted, and compelling dissemination of the evidence and recommendations;
- involving multiple stakeholders in encouraging uptake and adherence of policy recommendations; and
- addressing sustainability.

These lessons learned may help others working to translate evidence into policy.

The paper, "Translating evidence into policy: lessons learned from the case of lowering the legal blood alcohol limit for drivers," was authored by SL Mercer, DA Sleet, RW Elder, KH Cole, RA Shults, and JL Nichols. It appears in *Annals of Epidemiology* (Ann Epidemiol), 2010; 20(6): 412-20. ■

GENE VARIANT LINKED TO HEAVY DRINKING AND DRINKING-AND-DRIVING

The serotonin transporter promoter polymorphism (5-HTTLPR) has been linked to a number of human behavioral traits and disorders. The variants of 5-HTTLPR are commonly reported in three forms—L/L, S/L, and S/S—with the latter most often associated with emotional distress and/or behavioral dysfunction. A recent study reports associations between 5-HTTLPR, alcohol intoxication, and intention to drive among young adult patrons exiting on-premise drinking establishments (i.e., bars) at night. Self-report measures, breath alcohol concentration (BrAC) readings, and saliva samples for DNA analysis were collected from 477 bar patrons. Analyses were performed on 225 patrons likely to be near their peak intoxication level for the night. Results from a linear regression revealed that the 5-HTTLPR genotype was associated with exiting patron BrAC, after adjusting for random and fixed effects of other variables. An interaction effect involving 5-HTTLPR and bar-sponsored drink specials also had an independent association with BrAC, suggesting that selection of price-discounted alcoholic beverages increased intoxication in patrons with an L allele. In addition, results from logistic regression indicated that patrons with the S/S genotype were three times more likely to intend to drive a motor vehicle (after drinking on the night of study participation) compared with those with the L/L genotype. The 5-HTTLPR genotype may play an important role in the etiology of problems associated with on-premise drinking establishments. (Source: Thombs DL, O'Mara RJ, Hou W, Wagenaar AC, Dong HJ, Merves ML, Goldberger BA, Weiler RM, Dodd VJ, Clapp JD. *Addict Biol* 2010; ePub(ePub)) ■

ROADSIDE SURVEY IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

A recent study measured the prevalence of alcohol and drug use among a random sample of nighttime drivers randomly selected from the traffic stream in three cities in British Columbia. Each driver was asked to provide a breath sample to determine alcohol content and a sample of oral fluid to be tested for the presence of psychoactive drugs. The survey was conducted between 9 p.m. and 3 a.m. on Wednesdays through Saturdays in June 2008. Of the 1,533 vehicles selected, 89% of the drivers provided a breath sample and 78% provided a sample of oral fluid. Key findings include 10.4% of the drivers tested positive for drug use; 8.1% of the drivers had been drinking; and 15.5% of the drivers tested positive for alcohol, drugs, or both. Cannabis and cocaine were the drugs most frequently detected in drivers. Alcohol use among drivers was most common on weekends and during late-night hours; drug use was more evenly distributed across all survey nights and times. Alcohol use was most common among drivers aged 19 to 24 and 25 to 34; drug use was more evenly distributed across all age groups. Though driving after drinking has decreased substantially since previous surveys, the number of drivers with elevated alcohol levels (more than 80 g/dL) was higher than in the past. The finding that drug use is more common than alcohol use among drivers highlights the need for a unique and separate societal response to the use of drugs by drivers. The observed differences between driving-after-drug-use and driving-after-drinking have implications for enforcement and prevention. (Source: Beirness DJ, Beasley EE. *Traffic Injury Prevention*, 2010; 11(3): 215-21) ■

INTERLOCK SYMPOSIUM PROGRAM SET

The program for this year's International Interlock Symposium is being finalized. The symposium will spotlight the experiences of jurisdictions that have interlock programs for first offenders. In addition, it will focus on reciprocity across interlock programs in different jurisdictions. With a growing worldwide interest in alcohol interlocks, many countries are currently developing alcohol interlock programs or working to improve and enhance existing applications. To support this trend, the symposium will identify areas in which consistency across jurisdictions is achievable and develop strategies to promote consistency in legislation in regulations and in practices (where feasible) for dealing with different classes of drivers. The Symposium will take place October 17-19, 2010, at the Fairmont Le Château in Montebello, Quebec, Canada. The proceedings from the 2009 Symposium in Melbourne, Australia, will soon be available online at www.interlocksymposium.com. ■

NIGHTCLUB LOCKOUT REDUCES ALCOHOL-FUELED CRIME IN QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

A study of the effects of a lockout policy for nightclubs in Queensland, Australia, found that the policy reduced traffic offenses and other alcohol-related crimes. The policy prevents patrons from entering a nightclub between the hours of 3 a.m. and 5 a.m. and was piloted in selected cities (Brisbane and the Gold Coast) in Queensland in 2004 and 2005. Dr. Gavan Palk of CARRS-Q found that the peak time for serious assaults and traffic offenses was late in the evening on Friday and Saturday nights and that two-thirds of the offenses were alcohol-related. Serious traffic incidents declined markedly in Brisbane during the trial, and sexual assaults dropped 33% on the Gold Coast. Dr. Palk interviewed club owners, who initially opposed the lockout but became supportive because they found it did not affect business. (Source: CARRS-Q Safety Visions, Autumn 2010, www.carrsq.qut.edu.au) ■



To view past issues of the REPORTER, please visit: <http://www.icadts.nl/reporter/reporter.html>

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