

Thursday 16 May 2019

## DRINK AND DRUG DRIVING REFORMS

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New penalties affecting drivers caught drink or drug driving will come into force next week from 20 May 2019.

Driving with the presence of drugs or an illegal level of alcohol in your system is not only illegal, it's extremely dangerous and puts your life and the lives of all other road users at risk. This reform will ensure those who put their lives and the lives of others at risk, receive swift and certain penalties to help protect all road users.

Alcohol related crashes claimed the lives of at least 68 people on NSW roads last year, accounting for 19 per cent of all road deaths, and included 55 lives lost on country roads. Fatalities from crashes involving a driver or rider with an illicit drug present in their system have accounted for similar levels of fatalities.

In Narrandera Shire there were 13 casualty crashes with alcohol as a contributing factor in the five year period 2013-2017. Tragically the outcomes of these crashes included two fatalities and five serious injuries.

From 20 May:

- drivers who are first-time, lower range drink driving offenders will receive an immediate three month licence suspension and on the spot fine of \$561.
- drivers caught for the first time with a roadside positive result that is confirmed by the laboratory will receive a \$561 fine and a three month licence suspension.

These changes will streamline processes and ensure dangerous drivers are taken off the road.

"The latest reforms highlight the importance of separating drinking and drug use from driving," said Narrandera Shire's Road Safety Officer Elizabeth Mudford.

"We continue to emphasise the Plan B message - if you're planning to drink, plan not to drive. In addition those using illegal drugs have no place behind the wheel."

The latest changes are part of a wave of drink and drug driving reforms introduced since July 2018 aimed at reducing the number of crashes and fatalities involving alcohol and drugs. These include the expansion of Mobile Drug Testing and inclusion of testing for cocaine, and expansion of the Alcohol Interlock Program to include mid-range offences.

# MEDIA RELEASE



*Photo caption: Tougher penalties for first time, lower range drink drivers effective from Monday 20 May 2019.*

**END**

Precis or Summary: Drink and drug driving reforms effective from 20 May 2019			
Attachments	Nil	Embargoed: N/A	
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