

Roadside Drug driving testing kits still not being used by the Police in Scotland 1 year after legislation being introduced.



Roadside drug test identifies drug drivers on the spot

SCID has been campaigning for many years with bereaved families for road side drug testing kits to be introduced in Scotland. It is against the law to drive under the influence of illegal drugs, or if you have certain drugs above a specified level in your blood. Unlike the rest of the UK the only tool police officers have in Scotland to detect drug drivers, is the inadequate field impairment test.

The UK Crime and Courts Bill was introduced to the House of Lords on 10 May 2012. The Bill proposed a number of changes to the law in relation to criminal justice, the courts system, drug driving and immigration, many of which have application in relation to Scotland.

New legislation was introduced in March 2015 which allowed police officers in England & Wales to carry out roadside drug testing. There has been a four-fold increase in the number of motorists in England and Wales charged with driving under the influence of drugs since the law was introduced in March 2015, while the successful conviction rate has nearly doubled from 52 per cent in 2012 to 95 per cent now.

In the one month long 2015 Christmas campaign, officers in England & Wales used 1,888 drug screening devices during December with 931 showing positive results for drugs - or almost 50 per cent. A spokesperson for the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) said the new legislation has made it easier to identify and prosecute drug drivers and "*These results show that new legislation and detection devices have helped us to keep the roads safe.*"

Westminster Road Safety Minister Andrew Jones said:

"Thanks to our tougher law, police are catching and convicting more dangerous drivers.

The government will continue to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with police as they work tirelessly to protect the public."

While all this is good news south of the border; families in Scotland continue to be bereaved, victims seriously injured and road users put at risk by drivers who can go undetected for drugs.

It is deeply distressful and does not serve road users well that the Scottish Government does not take road safety seriously.

The Scottish Government's updated road safety plan, laying out its priorities for the next five years, makes no mention of drug driving or of roadside drug testing kits in spite of this being a proven substantial problem.

<http://www.transport.gov.scot/road/road-safety-framework-targets-and-reducing-road-casualties>

Roadside drug testing kits are cheap; each test costs £17.75p

<https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/256154/response/652139/attach/html/5/2015%20160%20Review%20Response.pdf.html>

Why has Scotland led the way to reduce the drink drive alcohol limit for drivers but side-tracked the substantial problem of drug drivers and roadside drug testing? Is it down to cost? Or is it down to indifference as suggested by the Scottish Government's road safety plan?