What Will Make Alcohol Interlock Programs Work in Australia?

Chris Coxon*1 and Les Libbesson2
1SA Government, Adelaide South Australia
2Guardian Interlock Australasia, Castle Hill, New South Wales, Australia

Alcohol remains a major factor in over one third of fatal Australian crashes. Adopting a 2001 best practice interlock program design has been ineffective in lowering the incidence of drinking drivers involved in serious injury crashes. More recent published research shows that two main legislative actions are needed to keep known drinking driver off the roads. Early availability of interlocks will help keep convicted drinking drivers within the legal system or drinking drivers soon learn to drive unlicensed with low risk of detection. Some convicted drink drivers who are required to mandatory fit an interlock will never apply, so a driver licensing enforcement program is necessary. Research also shows drivers have been drinking and driving over 2,000 times before they are caught the first time which exposes the myth of a first time offence. Interlocks should be mandatory for all convicted drink drive offences over 0.08 BAC. Presently no Australian drink drive legislative program requires first time offenders over 0.08 but less than 0.15 BAC to mandate the installation of an alcohol interlock to their vehicle. The logic is they need a second chance. These drivers remain a high risk to having a serious injury crash as they can regain their full license with mostly a year of license disqualification. An outline of legislative reform is presented to keep drinking drivers from driving and who are aware of the increased risk of unlicensed detection will improve road safety for all road users.

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