

# REPORTER

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

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## Alcobaça, Portugal



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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

With advanced vehicle technology and fully autonomous vehicles becoming a reality in the not-to-distant future, there may be some genuine hope to reach our goal of zero alcohol impaired driving fatalities. But the not-to-distant future is still many years away----at least 20 years away and most likely many more. That is why it is more important than ever for countries around the world to continue to evaluate current countermeasures and implement ***data-driven, proven effective laws, enforcement strategies and intervention programs.***

The COVID-19 pandemic affected impaired driving in many different ways in many different countries. Some countries experienced dramatic decreases in impaired driving while others (e.g., the United States) saw unprecedented increases in impaired driving fatalities. The ***Toward Zero Traffic Fatalities by 2050*** goal around the world has experienced a set-back in many countries and it is becoming difficult to recover from the effects of COVID-19. Resources for traffic enforcement are decreasing and there are numerous other societal issues competing with the goal. Taking the ***Safe System*** approach to impaired driving will help, but it can be expensive and is taking time to implement.

The ICADTS members (about 100 dues paying) and ICADTS friends (about 100-200 additional experts who attend our conferences) collectively have the knowledge, the experience, and the motivation to help identify and verify the best practices to reduce impaired driving. We realize that the issue is not ***One Size Fits All*** and that each country must identify their own problems, implement proven measures in their country, evaluate the countermeasures they choose, and adjust as necessary. ICADTS members and friends represent at least 50 countries around the world, but we lack members in many low- and middle-income countries (LMIC). That is why we continually attempt to recruit and incentivize officials from LMICs to join ICADTS.

At least one high income country (the United States) and a few other high income countries experienced increases in impaired driving during the pandemic and have their work cut out for them. Politics and culture play a large role, but the science shows that if (1) the BAC limit was lowered from .08 g/dL to .05 g/dL in all States in the US, (2) if sobriety checkpoints were conducted at least monthly in all States, and (3) if alcohol ignition interlocks were mandated for all convicted driving while intoxicated (DWI) offenders in all States, thousands of lives would be saved annually in the US. I'm sure other countries can come up with at least three ***underutilized strategies*** that if implemented would save lives in that country.

While alcohol detection technology (e.g., the Driver Alcohol Detection System for Safety (DADSS) in the US) and rapidly developing crash avoidance technologies hold great promise to reduce impaired driving injuries and fatalities, current proven effective countermeasures must be implemented in the meantime. The question remains: How can we do that? If you have the answer, please contact me ([felljim@norc.org](mailto:felljim@norc.org)).

ICADTS will continue to serve as a meeting place for sharing knowledge, ideas, and inspiration as we all strive for a future free of traffic deaths and injuries.

James C. Fell  
ICADTS President 2021-2024

## T2025- TIME FOR CHANGE: TRAFFIC SAFETY FOR A SUSTAINABLE WORLD

### 15-18 JUNE/2025

We are precisely two years away from our triennial conference.

As was previously announced, this time it will be in Portugal in the beautiful city of Alcobaça. Our enthusiasm is high, because besides being our first conference in Portugal, we elected the city of Alcobaça as the host city for the Conference.

**2025 -Time for Change: Traffic Safety for a sustainable World** will be the title of the conference because the year 2025 brings together several challenges. In fact, as we all know, 2025 is an important milestone in the Second Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030 (UN General Assembly Resolution 74/299). We will be exactly in the middle of the global challenge for all of us: to achieve the decade's goals (50% reduction in the number of road traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2030). This challenge makes us responsible for the action calling the governments, national and international entities, road safety experts, civil society, academia and other stakeholders/ organizations to take a new path -- one that emphasizes safety as a core value within the Safe System and sustainable mobility. Traffic Safety and sustainable mobility is our concern. and we have chosen Alcobaça to share experiences and knowledge worldwide.

Alcobaça is located in the Oeste region (one hour from Lisbon). With a magnificent location between the mountains and the Atlantic coast, the soul of the city of Alcobaça is defined by the Alcobaça Monastery, a masterpiece of Cistercian architecture. Alcobaça is known worldwide for its beauty and heritage as well as its natural, cultural and gastronomic wealth. A perfect connection of history and cultural richness, hand in hand with a disarming hospitality.

#### Welcome messages from officials in Alcobaça

**Hermínio Rodrigues - Mayor:** As Mayor of Alcobaça, we want Alcobaça to be a world reference in the reflection about the challenges of the Decade of Action and that the practices associated to Traffic Safety regarding Alcohol and Drugs. This conference will mark progress towards the global target for 2030. We are a city that bets on sustainability and safety, in the most diverse ways of action. Our commitment to hotels is a reflection of this, inviting everyone to experience the different options, from the hotels in the city to those in rural areas. It will be a pleasure to receive you in our land of passion."

**Inês Silva - Vice-Mayor of Alcobaça:** "We are a city that bets on national and international partnerships valuing culture, art, safety and sustainability. In fact, our history is already long in organizing international projects: From the International Event of Conventual Cakes to the XIX World Congress of the Hispanic Association of Medieval Literature, it is a privilege to host major events. We are a city of culture, art, gastronomy, conventual cakes and safety. Safety for everyone and for our young people is a priority, and Traffic Safety is a concern that we have been pursuing for a long time and that also resulted in Alcobaça in an International Seminar of Traffic Psychology International. It will be an honor and pleasure to host T2025 in our city of passion".

**Inácia Caeiro - President of the Commercial, Services and Industrial Association from Alcobaça and Region of Leiria (ACSIA):** "Safety in mobility is a concern of ours that we share with our associates. We represent the industrial, commercial and service sectors and we are committed to involving everyone in the construction of a safe place to live. As President of ACSIA, and member of the T2025 organizing committee, it will be an honor to be able to involve all members in a single voice: Safe together, building a better future, with Traffic Safety. We are committed to T2025. Welcome to Alcobaça."

The words we share only translate part of what we feel. As an international expert, member of the ICADTS Board (Member at Large), member of the ACSIA Board and native of Alcobaça, I am committed to share with you this challenge I embraced when I took on the organization of T2025. In the next editions of the reporter, we will share more details about T2025 and Alcobaça. See you soon...

*"It is crucial that we join hands and take responsibility for our common goals of sustainable development and building safe mobility without alcohol and drugs"*

#### Fátima Pereira da Silva - Conference Chair - T2025



## IMPAIRED DRIVING BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS - ICADTS INTEREST GROUP (IDBIIG) MEMBER SURVEY

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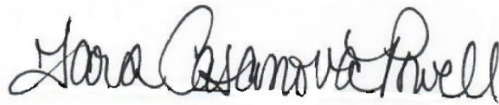
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The Impaired Driving Behavioral Interventions - ICADTS Interest Group (IDBIIG) was recently initiated and established as a formal ICADTS interest group as of October 2022. This interest group was formed in response to the Pretrial Services for DWI Offenders Workshop participant reactions during the 2022 Rotterdam Conference. Several attendees indicated the critical need for these impaired driving interventions pre/post convictions. It has been determined by the Board that ICADTS would be the perfect platform to help facilitate the implementation of these interventions worldwide. The mission of this committee is to expand the awareness, adoption, and implementation of effective pretrial services, early intervention services, monitoring, supervision, and treatment courts to address impaired driving around the world. The Committee plans to facilitate educational webinars, workshops and conference presentations identifying effective pretrial services, early intervention services, monitoring, supervision, and treatment court guiding principles that may be implemented in various jurisdictions around the world. Additionally, the Committee intends to help facilitate the implementation of these services where requested. Both virtual and in-person training and workshops will be conducted for multiple countries at regional ICADTS and other organized summits incorporating the knowledge and information developed from various entities in the U.S.

IDBIIG's initial task is to survey ICADTS members and friends to identify best practices regarding impaired driving interventions in their country. Watch for an email from ICADTS regarding the survey. IDBIIG appreciates any information you may have to share and encourages you to participate. IDBIIG thanks you in advance for your help in gathering this important information. You can also participate in the survey right now by clicking here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/IDBIIG>. We thank you in advance for your help in gathering this important information.

Respectfully,



Tara Casanova Powell  
IDBIIG Chair

### UPDATE FROM MALAWI

The ICADTS-sponsored research project in Malawi recommended several strategies to enhance enforcement of impaired driving laws. It appears that these recommendations are being adopted in the country. The Homeland Security Minister announced that his ministry will introduce anti-drink and drive operations aimed at reducing road crashes.

The introduction of breathalyzer controls in the capital, Lilongwe, has encountered some resistance because it has led to a decline in business in Lilongwe. Some bars have even closed, which raises concerns about the economic impact of increased enforcement. The Minister has held firm, however, and stated that they were working on even more strict alcohol limit and that the controls will continue. "I will say again and again that the drunkard is the one we will catch in this operation," said the Minister, Ng'oma. "If you are drunk and you are driving, you will be taken. No discussions about that." Malawian newspapers have reported that many bar visitors have started to use taxi or hire private car drivers when going home from parties. Colleagues from the Kamuzu Central Hospital, who worked on the study, have reported that results and recommendations from the project are the only data they have in order try to reduce alcohol - related crashes.

Once again, our ICADTS colleagues from Norway, who worked closely with partners in Malawi, are to be commended for facilitating this challenging project, which has led to significant changes in policies and practices in a low-income country.





## Upcoming Events

### The European Workplace Drug Testing Society

October 12-13, 2023

Istanbul, Turkey

<http://www.ewdts.org/join-us-in-istanbul-2023.html>

### 7<sup>th</sup> Global Alcohol Policy Conference

October 24-26, 2023

Cape Town, South Africa

<https://globalgapa.org/events/gapc-2023-cape-town/>

### Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting

January 7-11, 2024

Washington, D.C. USA

[www.trb.org](http://www.trb.org)

### T2025

15-18 June, 2025

Alcobaça, Portugal

[www.icadtsinternational.com](http://www.icadtsinternational.com)

To view past issues of the Reporter, go to

<http://www.icadtsinternational.com/pages/icadts-reporter.php>



## TRAFFIC SAFETY ISSUES IN LATIN AMERICAN – A NEW INTEREST GROUP UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Flavio Pechansky from Brazil - ICADTS' President-elect, along with colleague José Ignacio Muñoz (a Canadian-based Chilean investigator), from Chile, are putting together a new ICADTS interest group. The group is intended to include Latin-American experts in the field of alcohol abuse and harm associated with driving and policies aimed at curtailing the harmful effects of alcohol. Although Latin America has high levels of injuries and fatalities associated with crashes due to alcohol consumption and other causes, it is underrepresented in the field of research and policy in the world. The new interest group has already been formed and plans to have a regional meeting in the next few months with the aim of developing an agenda to help identify priorities for the region. The next goal is to propose a regional ICADTS meeting for the year 2024. So far, the group has representation from Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Mexico, Peru, and Uruguay, as well as the Panamerican Health Organization.

If you know professionals from Latin America or would be willing to help create this new Interest Group, you may contact Flavio directly at [flaviopchansky@gmail.com](mailto:flaviopchansky@gmail.com).

## RESEARCHERS CALL FOR RISK AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS TAILORED FOR OLDER DRIVERS

Substance use among older drivers increases the probability of them being at-fault two to four times during a crash, a new study, analyzing nine years' worth of U.S. nationwide highway traffic data, shows. Although older drivers are less likely to report using substances, this research found that out of a sample of 87,060 drivers involved in two moving vehicle crashes, more than one-third were motorists over the age of 70 who tested positive for substances. In 2020, there were almost 48 million licensed drivers ages 65 and older in the United States, according to the CDC. This is a 68% increase since 2000. And in 2020, about 7,500 seniors died in collisions while nearly 200,000 others were injured.

In this study, the research team examined data from the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Fatality Analysis Reporting System between the years 2010–2018, to determine the impact of substance use (including alcohol, cannabinoids, stimulants, narcotics, depressants, and hallucinogens) on the likelihood of drivers being at-fault for a fatal crash on U.S. public roads, with emphasis on older adult drivers. In total, there were 43,530 two vehicle crash pairs involved in two moving-vehicle crashes. Substance use was reported among 42% of the drivers involved in these incidents – from this 1,978 were adults 70+, 1,454 were over the age of 80.\* The team computed the relative crash involvement ratios for each category of substance and illicit drugs. For those aged 70–79 years, it was 1.17; but, more than double (2.56) for drivers over 80 years old. It was relatively low among drivers aged 20 to 69 years. The study found that substance use, in general, disproportionately increased the probability of being at-fault during a crash, regardless of driver's age. The regression models, even after adjusting for driver's sex, road grade, weather, light conditions, distraction, and speeding at time of crash, revealed that older substance-impaired drivers were twice as likely to be at fault in fatal crashes.

Some of the key takeaways of the study include the need for campaigns to raise awareness about the risk of impaired driving tailored to older adults. Kedia also stated, "Another implication is that healthcare professionals and prevention specialists trying to develop best practices for deterring drugged driving must ensure that their intervention efforts address the specific needs of older adults." This will include emphasis on the danger of unforeseen drug interactions, especially the dangerous interactions between many prescription medications and alcohol that can compromise drivers' motor skills and reaction time.

Specific to limiting driving while intoxicated (DWI), evidence suggests that the most effective deterrents are strong DWI laws, enforcement of such laws, and the regular use of sobriety checkpoints. These strategies would ideally be accompanied by educational interventions to increase knowledge of the laws and the risks of impaired driving for all ages. "Obviously, we do not want to dissuade older people from driving, but knowing the risks involved and taking precautions can help everyone. We just want to persuade them to drive safely for the sake of themselves and others," said Dr. Kedia. Further Information For an interview, please contact: Dr. Satish Kedia, University of Memphis School of Public Health's Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences [skkedia@memphis.edu](mailto:skkedia@memphis.edu)

Source: Satish Kedia, Asos Mahmood, Lu Xie, Yu Jiang, Patrick Dillon, Nikhil Ahuja, Hassan Arshad & Coree Entwistle, *Traffic Injury Prevention*, Volume 24, 2023 - Issue 5

\*Note that the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has cautioned that using FARS data to indicate the presence of drugs is problematic. Source. DOT HS 813 264



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADVANCED IMPAIRED DRIVING TECHNOLOGY

The Technical Working Group on Advanced Impaired Driving Prevention Technology (TWG) [Co-chaired by members of the Johns Hopkins Center for Injury Research and Policy and Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)] recently issued recommendations for the U.S. Department of Transportation as it establishes a new car safety standard that will prevent impaired driving, as required in the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

The TWG guidance recommends incorporating comprehensive systems in cars that detect blood alcohol content along with driver monitoring technologies such as cameras and other sensors that will eventually detect impairment by other drugs, distracted and drowsy driving. Because such a comprehensive system will take time to develop and test, the TWG recommends first addressing the most critical issue – driver alcohol impairment – in the short term and incentivizing further development to expand the prevention systems in subsequent years. The systems should both prevent cars from operating when drivers are alcohol-impaired and would warn drivers when other risky driving is detected.

“After a comprehensive review, we believe passive impaired driving prevention technology is an achievable requirement which will save lives from preventable deaths and injuries on the road,” said TWG co-chair Jeff Michael, Distinguished Scholar at the Johns Hopkins Center for Injury Research and Policy at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. “Our goal is to offer federal regulators our findings regarding this complex but necessary and lifesaving requirement.”

TWG co-chair Stephanie Manning, chief government affairs officer for MADD, noted the urgent need for advanced impaired prevention technology, especially after two consecutive years of 14% increases in alcohol-related traffic deaths.

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GERMAN SOCIETY FOR TRAFFIC PSYCHOLOGY DGVP E.V. ON THE QUESTION OF CANNABIS LEGALIZATION

In view of the German government's legislative initiative, the German Society for Traffic Psychology DGVP examined the potential effects of legalizing non-medical cannabis on traffic safety in a systematic review of international studies, evaluating 76 studies and presenting the following report: Fastenmeier, W. & Söllner, M. (2023). "The legalization of cannabis in different countries - empirical status report on the effects on risk indices of traffic safety, health and market dynamics." Berlin: German Society for Traffic Psychology DGVP. As this report shows, it is extremely difficult to find both methodologically sound studies and reliable data to conclusively assess the effects of cannabis legalization on road safety risk measures and health system parameters. The evaluation of the relevant parameters indicates a mixed set of findings, ranging from negative to neutral to positive effects.

Regarding the central question of this review, the report concludes that no reliable statement can be generated on the influence of cannabis legalization on road safety - measured by the accident criterion. The review of the studies overall indicates that the risk of accidents is moderately increased, and cannabis thus does not appear to contribute significantly to the occurrence of accidents. However, this does not mean that the use of cannabis in active participation in road traffic during the effect phase can be regarded as harmless and unproblematic. This is especially true for the group of regular "high-dose" cannabis users as well as for the group of persons who practice problematic mixed use of cannabis with other substances - alcohol, other drugs - which, based on the available evidence, may pose a risk to road safety. As this report shows, many unanswered questions remain. To develop a full understanding of potential long-term effects of the cannabis market, continuous monitoring is needed.

