

One in 35 drivers stopped during the festive period over the legal limit



New statistics released today show that one in 35 drivers stopped during the Christmas and New Year period were over the legal limit, despite the fact that drink driving is falling.

Police Scotland's four-week enforcement campaign saw an average of 579 drivers stopped every day – with three per cent of those tested found to be over the legal limit compared to two per cent of those tested last year.

The seasonal spike is in stark contrast to the general downward trend of drink driving as new data shows that 7.6 per cent fewer drivers were caught over the limit in 2015 compared to the previous year.

Justice Secretary Michael Matheson said: "It is encouraging to see that the number of people caught drink driving has fallen since the introduction of the lower limit. Unfortunately there is still a persistent minority of drivers who continue to ignore the law, particularly during the height of summer and over the festive season.

"Campaigns like this one help to reinforce the message that drink driving is unacceptable. Getting behind the wheel while over the limit not only puts your own life in danger but risks the lives of other road users and pedestrians too and that is why I welcome the action being taken by Police Scotland to tackle reckless road users who continue to break the law.

"Of the 459 drivers caught drink driving just 19 were found to be between the old and new limit. This shows that the majority

of those caught are well over the limit which is why we are working with Police Scotland on enforcement campaigns like this to crack down on this persistent minority.

“If you are caught driving over the legal limit you risk facing a minimum 12 month driving ban, a criminal record, points on your licence as well as a substantial fine. The consequences of drink driving can be devastating, that is why our advice is simple. Don’t risk it. Don’t drink and drive.”

Chief Superintendent Andy Edmonston, Head of Road Policing at Police Scotland, said:

“Despite the encouraging 12 month drop and general downward trend in the number of drink/drug driving detections it is disappointing that during the recent Festive Drink Drive Campaign we caught 459 drivers who were prepared to cause danger to others as well as themselves.

“Road Safety is a high priority for Police Scotland throughout the year and our officers will continue to target those who are intent on causing danger to others by driving whilst under the influence of drink.

“I would like to take this opportunity to also thank the many members of the public who phoned the police to report suspected drunk/drug drivers during the festive period as this helped enable us to take appropriate action.”