



Land Transport Amendment Bill

Submission from Brake, the road safety charity

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I do not wish to appear before the committee.

About Brake

Brake is a road safety charity with global interests, and branches in the UK and New Zealand. It approaches road safety and sustainable travel using the vision zero method. That is to say, the charity considers that all deaths and injuries on roads are unacceptable, and eliminating carbon emissions from transport, which is the largest contributing carbon sector, should be approached with equal zeal. Brake's vision is a world where people can move around in ways that are safe, sustainable, healthy and fair.

Brake promotes road safety awareness, safe and sustainable road use, and effective road safety policies. It does this through national campaigns, community activities, services for employers and fleet professionals, and coordination of national Road Safety Week.

Brake also cares for families bereaved and injured in road crashes. It does this by providing specialist support resources to families following a crash.

Brake's response to the Amendment Bill

Alcohol interlock sentences

Brake supports the proposed amendment to make alcohol interlock sentences mandatory for recidivist drink drivers, and high level first time offenders.

New Zealand has made some significant steps in tackling drink driving, through the introduction of a zero alcohol limit for drivers under the age of 20 and a lower limit for those aged 20 and over. However, alcohol is still a significant cause of road deaths and injuries, with almost a quarter (24%) of deaths, and 14% of injuries having alcohol and/or drugs as a contributing factor in 2014¹.

Research shows even small amounts of alcohol affect driving. Drivers with even 20-50mg alcohol per 100ml of blood are at least three times more likely to die in a crash than those with no alcohol in their blood².

New Zealand has a high incidence of recidivist drink driving. In 2012-13, 50% of convicted drink/drug drivers were eligible for the Alcohol Interlock Programme - 28% were repeat drink drive offenders and 22% were high level first time offenders³.

Current sanctions such as licence disqualification and fines are not working, and rates of repeat offending by drivers after obtaining back their licence have been high at 32-42%⁴. Where alcohol interlock sentences

¹ Alcohol and drugs fact sheet, Ministry of Transport, 2015

² [Global status report on road safety](#), World Health Organisation, 2015

³ The New Zealand Alcohol Interlock Program: A review of the first year as a sentencing option for high risk drink drivers, Waters, 2014

⁴ [Substance Impaired Driving](#), Waters, 2013

have been used, they have been successful at stopping attempts to drink drive. As of March 2014, SmartStart devices had stopped 599 attempts and Draeger Safety Pacific devices, 390 attempts⁵.

Interlocks have also been proven internationally to be effective in preventing drink driving⁶. However, to date in New Zealand alcohol interlock sentencing has only been used for around 2% of eligible offenders.

Brake believes mandatory alcohol interlock sentences for recidivist and high level drink drivers will help to reduce instances of drink driving and help to protect innocent road users. Licence disqualification, followed by an alcohol interlock licence, and exit from the programme only when no violations have been committed over a set period (as with the existing Alcohol Interlock Programme) will help to prevent repeat offences.

However, Brake also recommends that drink drivers are referred to relevant alcohol support organisations and agencies for help in looking at their alcohol-related behaviour and potential underlying issues, in order to also help prevent repeat offending.

Whilst Brake supports this amendment, the organisation also wishes to highlight that New Zealand still needs to go further in order to eradicate impaired driving; by implementing a zero alcohol limit for all drivers, and by tackling drug driving too through a zero tolerance approach and implementation of roadside testing.

Fleeing drivers

Brake supports the move to increase penalties for fleeing drivers, including disqualification from driving for first offences, and longer disqualifications for repeat offenders. Fleeing drivers put innocent road users at risk by driving dangerously, often at high speeds. We need these stronger penalties to discourage drivers from fleeing from police officers.

End/

⁵ The New Zealand Alcohol Interlock Program: A review of the first year as a sentencing option for high risk drink drivers, Waters, 2014

⁶ Benefit and Feasibility of a Range of New Technologies and Unregulated Measures in the fields of Vehicle Occupant Safety and Protection of Vulnerable Road Users, TRL, 2015