

National policing operation aimed at reducing fatal and serious road traffic collisions launches



An operation aimed at reducing fatal and serious injury road traffic collisions (RTCs) has launched in Avon and Somerset to run from 21 – 27 August.

Operation Tonic will utilise an intelligence-driven strategy to identify and apprehend drivers under the influence of drink or drugs, with the objective of taking offenders off the road before they can cause harm.

Our roads policing team will be conducting proactive high-visibility roadside checks at key locations identified through intelligence-led insights and officers' local expertise.

Recognising the power of real-time information, Op Tonic will also centre on swift responses to live CCTV updates and Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) hits. Through collaboration with CCTV hubs, officers will receive alerts about suspicious activities which could indicate that a driver is about to get behind the wheel while impaired by drink or drugs.

This ensures that officers can promptly shift their focus from static checks to respond to emerging situations.

Chief Inspector Rob Cheeseman, Head of Road Policing and Road Safety said:

"Drink and drug driving was a factor in a third of road traffic collisions (RTCs) in Avon and Somerset in 2021. They involved the deaths of 12 people, all of whom had families, friends and loved ones whose lives will be forever impacted. This is unacceptable.

"This operation will leverage intelligence, visibility, and responsiveness to send a clear message that there is no excuse for endangering lives through drink and drug driving.

"Roadside checks will be taking place across the force area at key times throughout the day and night. We'd remind motorists that they may still be over the limit in the morning if they have been drinking the night before.

"There is no safe way to drink and drug drive, so please don't take the risk."



We're encouraging the public to actively support the campaign by making responsible choices and reporting information to police if they suspect someone is drink or drug driving.

"If you suspect drink/drug driving is happening, don't look the other way – tell us." said CI Rob Cheeseman. "Your information could prevent serious harm to others by helping us make targeted arrests and taking dangerous and irresponsible drivers off our roads."

"By working together with our community and utilising the latest technologies to target offenders, we want to make our roads safer for everyone."

Police and Crime Commissioner Mark Shelford said: *"Road safety is a key area of focus in my Police and Crime Plan and I'm very supportive of Avon and Somerset Police's operation to tackle drink and drug driving.*

"It is shocking that individuals still think it is acceptable to get behind the wheel when under the influence of drink and/or drugs. We all know what the risks are if you choose to drive while under the influence; not only are you putting your own life at risk but also endangering others. This operation, as well as the wider work the Roads Policing Unit does, will make our roads safer for everyone."

Causing death by careless driving whilst under the influence of drink/drugs carries a max penalty of life imprisonment.

We are sharing the following tips to keep drivers safe:

Do not drink or drug drive – and do not let anyone you know do so either. Your reaction time will be slower, and you are more of a risk to yourself and others.

Plan travel arrangements in advance and arrange a designated driver who won't drink or take any drugs and will take responsibility for getting everyone home safely.

Be aware of the risks of getting behind the wheel, not just on the evening of drinking, but also the morning after.

Having a large cup of coffee won't clear the body of alcohol or dull its effects. The only thing that can sober you up is time.

It's safest not to drink at all if you are driving early the next day.

Drinking at home can make it more difficult to judge measures, so don't drive.

Reports of drink/drug drivers can be made online at: [Report drink and drug driving | Avon and Somerset Police](#) or by calling 101. Alternatively reports can be made anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555111 and useful information is available on their website: [Drink and drug driving | Crimestoppers \(crimestoppers-uk.org\)](#). **If someone is currently driving under the influence of drink or drugs, always call 999.**