

Land Transport (Safer Alcohol Limits for Driving) Amendment Bill

Member's Bill

Explanatory note

General policy statement

This bill lowers the allowable blood alcohol content (BAC) from 0.08g to 0.05g per 100mls of blood when driving.

Drink driving continues to cause fatalities and serious injuries on our roads, with long term emotional or physical trauma to many people and their families each year.

Despite improving attitudes having had a marked effect on the incidence of drink driving, it remains a significant issue.

New Zealand allows its drivers to consume a much larger quantity of alcohol and remain able to drive a motor vehicle than most other countries, including Australia.

In order to complement the work the Government is doing with its Safer Journeys road safety strategy, this bill reduces the amount of alcohol adults are able to consume if they wish to drive a vehicle.

There is demonstrable evidence and research already available which shows enough driver impairment between the proposed .05 limit and the 0.08 limit to warrant action. A drug and alcohol expert from the United Kingdom has estimated that this measure could reduce our road toll by two-thirds as it would alter driver behaviour.

The bill also reduces the current breath alcohol limit from 400 micrograms of alcohol per litre of breath to 250 micrograms.

This bill takes action because there is no more time to waste. The information required to make a decision is already available, and this bill gives effect to the weight of that evidence for a reduction in the blood alcohol content for drivers.

Clause by clause analysis

Clause 1 is the Title provision.

Clause 2 provides for the Bill to come into force on the day after the date on which it receives the Royal assent.

Clause 3 sets out the purpose of the Bill.

Clause 4 defines the Principal Act as the Land Transport Act 1998.

Clause 5 amends section 56(1) and (2) to lower the specified breath or blood alcohol limit(s) while driving.

Iain Lees-Galloway

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Contents

	Page
1 Title	1
2 Commencement	1
3 Purpose	1
4 Principal Act	2
5 Section 56 amended (Contravention of specified breath or blood-alcohol limit)	2

The Parliament of New Zealand enacts as follows:

- 1 Title**
This Act is the Land Transport (Safer Alcohol Limits for Driving) Amendment Act **2012**.
- 2 Commencement** 5
This Act comes into force on the day after the date on which it receives the Royal assent.
- 3 Purpose** 10
The purpose of this Act is to make New Zealand's roads safer by adopting an evidence-based approach to the level of speci-

fied breath and blood alcohol levels, by lowering the specified levels.

4 Principal Act

This Act amends the Transport Act 1998 (the **principal Act**).

5 Section 56 amended (Contravention of specified breath or blood-alcohol limit) 5

- (1) In section 56(1) replace “400” with “250”.
 - (2) In section 56(2) replace “80” with “50”.
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