

SEAWORTHY

09/07 ISSUE 36
Op STAYSAFE



EMAIL: navy.safety@defence.gov.au
TELEPHONE: 1800 558 555 (confidentiality assured)

Seaworthy is produced by the Directorate of Navy Safety Systems in the interests of promoting Safety in the Navy. The contents do not necessarily reflect Service policy and, unless stated otherwise, should not be construed as orders, instructions or directives - KEEP NAVY SAFE.

Road Crashes – They're No Accident

Traffic fatalities are reported weekly in our media and often we dismiss them as unfortunate or think that it will never happen to me and accept it as just another aspect of our lives. Although it is disappointing to read or hear about traffic related fatalities, it is with a heavy heart when we read that the fatality was a colleague, a member of the Navy. The tragic reality is that a traffic fatality recently occurred and involved a young Naval member. The impact this can have on family, friends and work colleagues is unmeasurable.

Too often, traffic fatalities can be avoidable. Reckless driving, excessive risk taking, driver distraction and even hoon like behaviour are often the causes of traffic crashes. According to the Australian Transportation Safety Bureau, 'four to five people on average are killed every day in crashes on Australian roads. A great many more are seriously injured and permanently incapacitated.' Australian safety campaigners have indicated that there are four areas of concern: Speeding, Drink Driving, Driver Fatigue, and failure to wear seatbelts.

Speeding

With comfortable high performance cars and the frustration of being trapped in traffic, it is all too easy to speed on the road. However, speeding is the biggest killer on our roads and greatly increases the risk and the severity of a crash. A common factor in speeding related crashes is the under estimation of the distance that is needed to stop. According to the Queensland Transport Department, a vehicle travelling at 80km/h requires approximately 88 metres to come to a halt. Speeding greatly reduces driver reaction time to dangerous situations and the ability to manoeuvre a vehicle.

Drivers must also be aware that travelling fast in poor road conditions (influenced by weather, visibility and poor roads), is also a form of speeding even if it is under the legal speed limit. Do the maths; lower speeds save lives.

Drink Driving – Drunk Driving

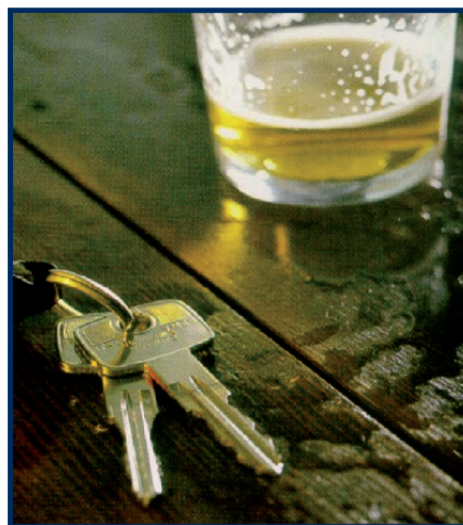
A recent Drink Driving Blitz on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula, saw 197 drivers intercepted with 25 drink-drivers detected. These figures may indicate that it appears to some people that Drink Driving is no longer considered socially unacceptable. Ask around and many people will admit that they wouldn't drive if they were drunk; however, they have admitted that they have driven a car after a few quiet drinks. Scarily, one in seven people have admitted driving under the influence of alcohol according to a National Drug Strategy Survey. The danger is, many of us like a drink when we go out; however, we must be aware that the alcohol content of different types of drinks varies and that even low levels of alcohol impairs an individual's ability to assess risk and make quick decisions.

There is no way to quickly reduce your Blood Alcohol Level (BAL) after you have stopped drinking and drinkers must be aware that you may still be over the legal limit until sometime the next morning. Driving hours after a heavy night out may still have you over the legal limit.

Most Male drinkers may reach a BAL of 0.05 after 3 standard alcoholic drinks per hour. Most female drinkers may achieve this in less. The Navy has a Zero Alcohol Policy and anything over 0.02 or higher in a Safety Critical Area may result in further action (DI(N) PERS 31-51 refers).

Driver Fatigue

Researchers have found that driving after being awake for 17 hours brings a similar risk to a Blood Alcohol Level of 0.05. Beating fatigue is difficult and nothing but sleep and rest can improve your ability to react to a given situation. If you feel that you are fighting sleep, pull over and rest. It is better to arrive late, than not at all.



Seatbelts

Seatbelts save lives; they have proven their value in preventing severe injury in the majority of road crashes time and time again. A lot of injuries to drivers and passengers are caused by contact with the steering wheel, windscreen and the sides and roof of the vehicle. Regardless of the length of the journey or the speed you intend to drive, it is in your own best interest that you and all of your passengers wear a seatbelt. After all; is it the law.

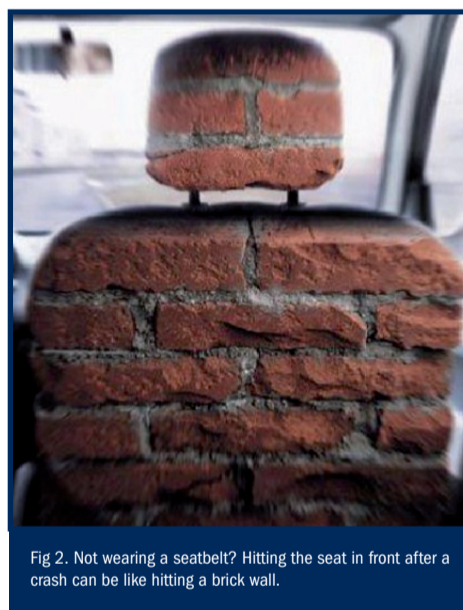


Fig 2. Not wearing a seatbelt? Hitting the seat in front after a crash can be like hitting a brick wall.

We are often reminded to drive safely, but how can we drive safely if we ignore some simple rules? There is no such thing as safe speeding; slow down. Don't drink and drive, wear a seat belt at all times and don't drive if you're tired. Road Safety is often common sense; it's no accident, it's caused and it's up to you to make our roads safer.

SAFE WORK AUSTRALIA WEEK 21-27 OCTOBER 07

Consistent with Defence's moral and legal obligations relating to occupational health and safety, the first priority of the Major Defence Priorities for 2007-08 announced by CDF and the Secretary for 'Our People' is to 'Provide a best practice safe and healthy workplace'. It is imperative that workplace health and safety is maintained to the highest standards to protect our people – from our forces deployed on operations or undertaking training exercises to personnel working in workshops and office based environments. This helps to preserve Defence capability.

On behalf of Defence, the Personnel Executive's Occupational Health, Safety and Compensation Branch is working with the Australian Safety and Compensation Council (ASCC) to promote Safe Work Australia Week 21-27 October 2007. This national event promotes workplace safety around Australia and encourages both employers and employees, and indeed all working Australians, to focus on safety within their workplace.



For more information on activity ideas, how to register and available products go to:

<http://ohsc.defence.gov.au/SafeWorkAustraliaWeek/>

Caption Call



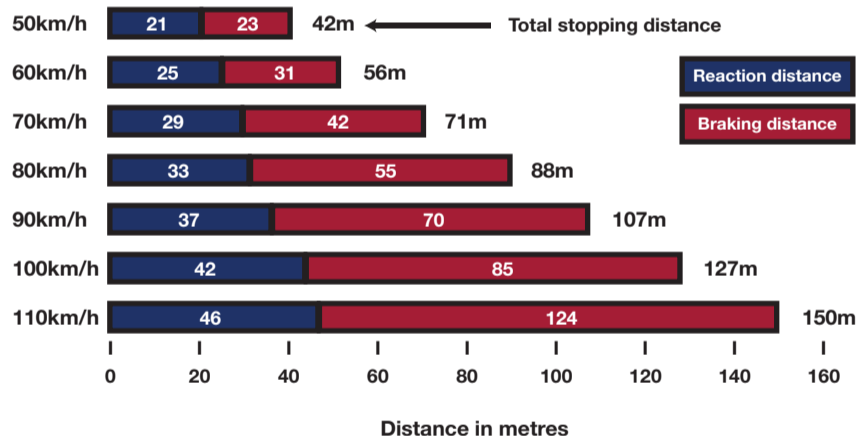
Each edition of Seaworthy will devote space to unsafe acts caught on camera. Please submit caption entries (no later than 11 October 2007) and suitable photos to: navy.safety@defence.gov.au.



Winning Caption Call

Do you still think letting go the anchor at high speed is a good idea??!!

David W Jones



How long it takes to stop (driving an average sized vehicle)

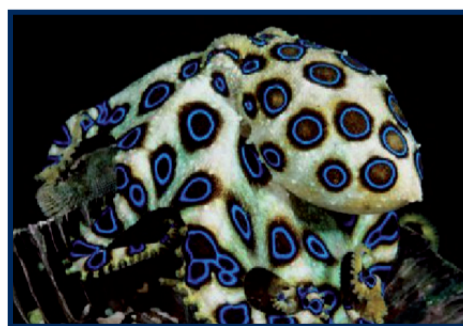
Fig 1. Vehicle stopping distances courtesy of the Queensland Department of Transport

Blue Ring Octopus

The Blue Ring Octopus is very small (about the size of a golf ball) and is common along the coast of Australia and other Pacific Islands. It is an extremely dangerous marine creature with venom powerful enough to kill adult humans. One stand out warning trait the animal displays is that the blue rings are only visible when it is about to attack. Because the poison is in the saliva, it can be ingested through the skin, or bite, which is generally painless and may appear little more than a scratch. It has also been reported that some people have felt a tingling in their hands after touching rocks or water recently occupied by the blue ringed octopus. Unfortunately; there is no known antidote.

There is little wonder then, why supervisors were alarmed when a member of a Ship's Company picked up a Blue Ring Octopus, which had been attached to one of the Ship's fenders, and returned it to its domain. Luckily, the Ship's Staff did not use their bare hands for the task.

All personnel should be cognisant of the environment we work in and the dangerous marine life that inhabits that environment. Personnel should wear appropriate PPE at all times, especially when handling lines that are being retrieved from the water or conducting similar evolutions.



THE RIGHT LOAN FOR YOU

Whatever you need to borrow for, we can help you get it. A new car, a home entertainment system, a computer, or just a holiday with the family this Christmas.

APPLY ONLINE - WWW.ADCU.COM.AU - PHONE-A-LOAN - 1300 13 23 28
OR VISIT YOUR LOCAL BRANCH

Terms and conditions, fees and charges apply and are available on application. Australian Defence Credit Union Ltd ABN 48 087 649 741 AFSL 237 988.



we understand you!