

## Is This One?

### Background

During last year's conference, rural Police staff from various jurisdictions including Western Australia and Queensland expressed their frustration relating to the ongoing problem of drink driving within rural areas.

There seemed to be an almost exclusive focus on the application of alcohol interlocks or other punitive measures. What wasn't discussed to any large extent were the potential benefits that well targeted marketing and communications can deliver, especially if the marketing and communications are partnered up with enhanced targeted policing.

Drink driving currently contributes to about a third of all fatal crashes and 12% of all injury causing crashes in New Zealand. Most fatal or serious injury alcohol related crashes occur in rural areas (270 per year, compared to 170 per year in the cities). Most people who are killed or injured in rural drink-driving crashes are local rural people from the nearby areas and rural towns. Males account for 82% of rural drink drivers who crash.

Up until recently, drink driving campaigns in New Zealand have primarily placed a focus on the oft quoted catch phrase "If you drink and drive you're a bloody idiot" and have primarily utilised an above the line approach consisting of mainstream television and radio advertising. This has achieved a certain level of success but didn't seem to be sufficiently hitting the worst offenders – rural males.

In order to combat the rural drink driving problem within rural NZ communities, ACC teamed up with the New Zealand Police to undertake an innovative social marketing and enforcement campaign. The campaign was to take an unprecedented ambient approach which hadn't yet been trialled by social marketers in NZ.

### Campaign approach

According to Austroads<sup>1</sup>, effective drink driving enforcement strategies focus on the expected and actual risk of detection, automatically apply certain consequences on detection and are part of potential offenders' awareness prior to drinking. ACC and New Zealand Police's '*Is This One?*' campaign follows these key principles. The campaign utilises the two Ds which are required in order to implement an effective anti drink driving intervention. The two Ds being detection and deterrence.

Within this context, the word ambient refers to advertising of a surprise, left-field nature which is designed to create multiple contact points between the target group and the core message. In other words, the messages reach the target group as they go about their standard day, rather than when they sit down and turn on the television. It is believed that if enough contact points are created, core messages are absorbed by the target group via a process of osmosis.

Unlike a mass media marketing approach (TV commercials etc), this campaign uses a wide range of communication tools to heighten the effect of unmarked drink driving enforcement activity in rural areas.

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<sup>1</sup> Austroads<sup>1</sup> Inc. 2003 *Drink-Driving Enforcement — Issues in Developing Best Practice*

Successfully piloted early in 2004, this campaign is currently nearing the end of its rollout into other districts and is proving to be a success wherever it is implemented, this is explained later.

Critical to its success is the fact that the campaign carries a strong enforcement message, but delivers it in a manner which sits comfortably with the target group. Ingredients which contribute to this level of acceptability include a touch of humour and a novelty factor.

### *Site selection*

The campaign is tailored around covert/unmarked police mobile breath testing operations. Prior to the campaign's implementation in any given area, ACC has worked with NZ Police to identify where and when the operations are due to take place. Various site characteristics are considered before selecting the locations to focus campaign activity on, these include:

- the size of the town
- the extent to which the community traditionally has a disproportionately bad drink driving problem (worse than national average)
- the likelihood that the campaign can make an impact (e.g. which towns do people drive through/to etc)

Once the most appropriate locations have been decided, the locations' characteristics are analysed for message delivery purposes, this process includes:

- identifying where clusters of households are in order to send direct mail outs to
- identifying core towns to saturate with campaign materials
- identifying useful placement and distribution points for campaign materials within those towns
- selecting local press opportunities
- identifying frequently used back roads in the area to place campaign signage on

### *Communications cycle*

The campaign utilises a wide range of communication channels, the first being direct contact with local movers and shakers including:

- local road safety coalitions
- local government representatives
- representatives from community based groups including iwi based organisations

*Stakeholder engagement* - Prior to campaign activity taking place, these stakeholders are sent personalised letters to let them know that the campaign will be coming to their town. Relevant, localised statistics are included in this correspondence in order to highlight the size of the problem in their community. Although this process does not add to the suite of message delivery tools which reach the target group, it does secure a certain level of local buy-in which enables a fluid transition through the remainder of the process.

*Households, phase one* - Direct mail outs are then sent to households in the selected areas, informing residents of the fact that unmarked cars are “Coming, ready or not”, these let people know that there are now more unmarked cars on the road to keep drink drivers off it.

This strategy is utilised in order to provide a ‘heads up’ of sorts which will hopefully result in a heightened sense of anxiety about potential police presence. Potential drink-drivers need to know about the possible risk of detection prior to going to an alcohol outlet. Harrison (2001)<sup>2</sup> showed that once patrons have driven to a hotel in rural towns, for example, they are highly likely to drive home regardless of the level of enforcement. This is why the communication material pertaining to this campaign is sent directly to people’s homes one week before operations take place in the area, in order to reach them before it is too late.

*Gathering points* – early in the campaign phase and just before a local operation, campaign material is placed at local retailers and other contact points in order send out a warning to would be drink drivers, letting them know that there are unmarked cars in their neighbourhood and it will be hard to identify them. To achieve the right level of saturation and to create enough ambient contact points it is necessary to place campaign material within key settings which have high thoroughfare, settings include:

- dairies
- petrol stations
- pubs
- supermarkets
- car sales yards
- sports clubs
- farm equipment stores
- schools

Communication tools placed in these important points of contact include: flyers on car windows, stickers on coke fridges in dairies, lenticular postcards left in surprise locations, posters placed in shop windows and many others.

*Big hits* – Due to their ‘in your face’ effect, billboard and truck back advertising are also utilised within the campaign. Drivers often use back roads in order to steer clear of any checkpoints based at entry and exit points near small towns. In fact a quarter (25%) of New Zealanders surveyed in a nation wide survey stated they use back streets to drive home when they might be over the limit<sup>3</sup>.

The strapline “We know about this road too” features on billboards placed along back roads that are known to be used by drink drivers.

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<sup>2</sup> Harrison, W.A. (2001). Drink-driving and enforcement: *Theoretical issues and an investigation of the effects of three enforcement programs in two rural communities in Australia.*

<sup>3</sup> Land Transport New Zealand (2004). Public Attitudes to Road Safety - 2004

Truck backs offer a unique opportunity to add a slightly humorous flavour to the campaign's approach. A slogan stating "This is not an unmarked car, anything else could be" feature on double-trailer lorries driving through campaign locations.

*Press* – localised press has been utilised for both advertising and public relations purposes. Relevant statistics related to the total numbers stopped and prosecuted are advertised in local papers at the conclusion of each operation. Statistics such as '1800 drivers have been stopped and 9 have been prosecuted' may not sound very significant to people who live in large, urbanised centres but they really have the potential to get the rural grapevine going within a small town setting.

Journalists from local papers have expressed a fair degree of interest in the campaign, often requesting further information about the campaign's objectives and approach as well as why their area has been selected. The resulting articles have differed significantly, with some praising the efforts and explaining the extent of the local problem, whilst others have merely seen it as an opportunity to state how much money has been spent on the campaign.

*Households, phase two* - a few weeks later, post operation postcards are sent to households, letting residents know how many people were stopped and prosecuted in their area. From that point onwards a few more postcards are sent from time to time, reminding residents of the fact the Police aren't going away for long. These postcards feature slogans such as "Here today, here tomorrow".

## **Unmarked operations**

NZ Police enforcement activity is the core ingredient the rest of the campaign's activities are based on. An unmarked enforcement approach best compliments the anywhere, anytime feel of the campaign, therefore an unmarked approach has been utilised in each district the campaign has been run in.

Operations are targeted at small towns' entry and exit points and are carried out in towns which are traditionally known for having large drink driving problem or are focussed on towns which have emerging drink driving issues. The operations have also been carried out in larger towns that draw in residents from smaller, surrounding towns on weekend nights.

Although the campaign approach varies slightly from district to district, the operations have primarily taken place within a week of the initial campaign material being distributed.

Operation statistics have been released by the local Police following each operation. These statistics form the basis of the press and household (phase two) material.

## **Campaign effectiveness**

ACC's work in the road safety field is evidence driven, in other words, unless unprecedented initiatives are about to be undertaken, ACC programmes are based on best practice examples. When something of a green fields nature is being undertaken, initiatives are piloted first, then, pending pilot evaluation results, initiatives are rolled out in order to reach a critical mass.

### *Pilot*

This particular campaign model was piloted in the predominantly rural New Zealand region of Southland around eighteen months ago. The pilot achieved great success with the evaluation undertaken by independent research unit BRC identifying that:

- 82% of the respondents recalled the campaign's communication material;
- 55% of those surveyed believed the chances of being caught drink-driving had increased;
- since seeing the campaign's communication material:
  - 41% stated they had made a point of reducing their drinking when they were going to drive; and
  - 26% claimed they no longer drink and drive.

This clearly signalled that the approach can achieve promising post exposure results amongst the target group.

### *Roll out*

Two forms of evaluation have been applied in during the roll out phase in order to measure the campaign's success. One evaluation was a specifically funded independent survey based evaluation carried out by BRC. The other success indicator that has been used is an analysis of relevant crash statistics.

As the BRC, survey based evaluation focussed on Waikato, Southland and Tasman, statistics pertaining to the same districts have been studied.

### *Survey Findings*

The key findings are summarised here in relation to the two key objectives of the evaluation:

Objective 1 (Reach) – Increase the target audience's awareness of NZ Police using unmarked cars in their local area.

Conclusion: Objective achieved. There were substantive increases in the degree to which Police were perceived to use unmarked cars. As there were no significant differences in perceived use of checkpoints/random breath-testing during the same period, this result can be specifically attributed to the campaign.

Objective 2 (Effectiveness) – Increase the target audience's anxiousness regarding being stopped by unmarked Police cars.

Conclusion: Objective achieved. Those who noted seeing the ambient communications were significantly more predisposed to believing it was "likely" that they could be stopped by an unmarked Police car.

Other key findings pertinent to this evaluation include:

- at around 85%, awareness and recall of the ambient advertising campaign was exceptionally high
- in all regions investigated, a majority (around 4 out of 5) of respondents in the post-campaign surveys recalled seeing the ambient communications
- 47% of those who recall the material stated that they had since made a point of reducing their drinking if they are about to drive
- 19% of those who recall the material stated that they no longer drink and drive

- NZ Police and ACC were identified as the organisations mainly responsible for the advertising.

#### Contributors to success

Key factors contributing to the effectiveness of the campaign can be summarised as follows:

- the ambient advertising campaign was highly visible, showing extensive reach in relation to the target audience, due to the differentiated communications collateral used.
- the ambient advertising showed significant penetration into the target market and the differentiated collateral proved highly effective.
- working effectively and in a complementary way with other organisations at a community level (i.e. the Police) was an effective way of accessing the target audience.

### *Relevant crash statistics*

The campaign was undertaken in all three districts in 2004. The tables below show the extent to which single vehicle night time crash numbers, alcohol related open road injury crashes and alcohol related open road fatal crashes changed between 2004 and the average of the five years prior within the campaign districts. The campaign districts are also compared to other control districts which didn't host the campaign in 2004.

**Table One: Single Vehicle Night Time Crashes in Evaluated Campaign Districts**

NZ Police District	Average % of all Crashes that Were Single Vehicle Night Time Crashes 1999-2003	% of all Crashes That Were Single Vehicle Night Time Crashes 2004
Waikato	10.26%	8.4%
Tasman	9.4%	9.0%
Otago/Southland (Southern)	10.72%	9.6%

**Table Two: Single Vehicle Night Time Crashes in Control Districts**

NZ Police District	Average % of all Crashes that Were Single Vehicle Night Time Crashes 1999-2003	% of all Crashes That Were Single Vehicle Night Time Crashes 2004
Auckland	7.48%	8.4%
Bay of Plenty	10.94%	12.4%
Central	10.76%	11.6%

**Table Three: Alcohol Related Open Road Injury Crashes in Campaign Districts**

NZ Police District	Average No of Alcohol Related Open Road Injury Crashes 1999-2003	No of Alcohol Related Open Road Injury Crashes 2004
Waikato	60.6	54
Tasman	29.8	26
Otago/Southland	55.6	60

**Table Four: Alcohol Related Open Road Injury Crashes in Control Districts**

NZ Police District	Average No of Alcohol Related Open Road Injury Crashes 1999-2003	No of Alcohol Related Open Road Injury Crashes 2004
Auckland	17	21
Bay of Plenty	57.6	67
Central	64.8	51

**Table Five: Alcohol Related Open Road Fatal Crashes in Campaign Districts**

NZ Police District	Average No of Alcohol Related Open Road Fatal Crashes 1999-	No of Alcohol Related Open
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	2003	Road Fatal Crashes 2004
Waikato	8.8	5
Tasman	4.2	5
Otago/Southland	6.6	2

**Table Six: Alcohol Related Open Road Fatal Crashes in Control Districts**

NZ Police District	Average No of Alcohol Related Open Road Fatal Crashes 1999-2003	No of Alcohol Related Open Road Fatal Crashes 2004
Auckland	1	1
Bay of Plenty	11.2	15
Central	8.2	10

### *Crash statistics summary*

Based on these statistics, an overall reduction in alcohol related crashes is evident within the campaign districts. Although it is difficult to prove a linear relationship between the campaign and crash statistics, this reduction in alcohol related crashes could be attributable to the campaign's enforcement and advertising activity given that the same trend has not been observed within districts where the campaign has not taken place.

### **Summary**

The '*Is This One?*' campaign approach has achieved very promising results as a large proportion of the target group stated they had seen and recalled the campaign material and had also made an effort to improve their own drink driving behaviour.

The campaign approach also led to a significant increase in the extent to which the target group believed NZ Police undertake unmarked, mobile drink driving enforcement in their area. These findings co-relate with relevant road crash statistics which indicate that drink driving related crashes had reduced more in areas where the campaign has run, compared to areas where it hadn't run.

It is probable that the dual marketing/enforcement approach achieved greater gains than those which could be expected through one of the strands in isolation.

ACC believes that this multifaceted marketing, communications and enforcement approach is a sound method of reaching a target group in order to motivate a change in attitudes and beliefs. It is hoped that this will, in turn, lead to positive changes in behaviour, resulting in a reduction in unnecessary trauma and suffering.

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