

Fit to Drive

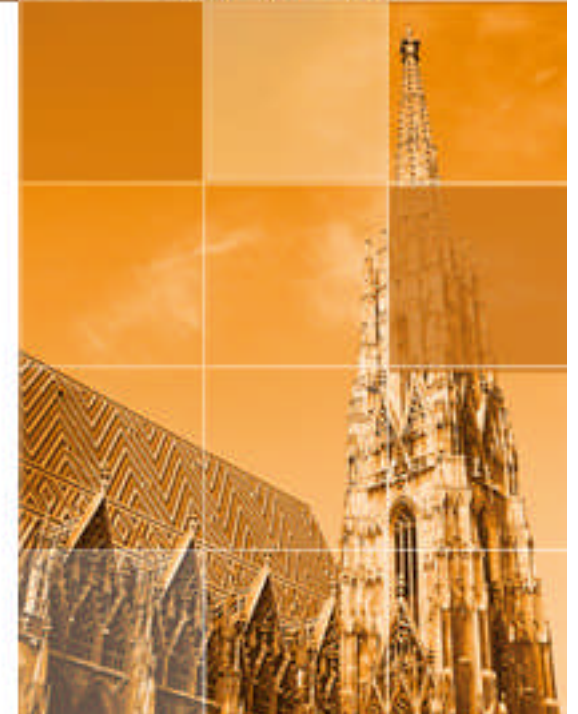
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Welcome

Unlicensed drivers:
How big is the problem and what can
be done about it?
An international perspective

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Who are unlicensed drivers?

Various definitions:

- drivers who have *invalid* licenses (i.e., a suspended, revoked, inappropriate, expired, or canceled/denied license),
- or drivers who simply have not gone through the process necessary to obtain a license.

Why is Unlicensed Driving a Concern?

- Undermines licensing system
 - reduces ability to monitor & manage drivers
 - undermines deterrent effect of license loss

Why is Unlicensed Driving a Concern?

- Link with risky driving
 - **unlicensed drivers overrepresented in serious and fatal crashes**
 - **more likely to be judged at fault**
 - **more likely to attempt to flee the scene of crashes**
 - **crashes more severe, (drinking and driving, speeding, motorcycle use and failure to use seat belts or motorcycle helmets)**

Unlicensed drivers are a major road safety problem in countries around the world.



Scope of the Problem - US

- An AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety survey:
20 percent - one in every five - of all fatal crashes in the U. S. involve unlicensed drivers –
who should never have been on the road in the first place

Scope of the Problem - US

- Extrapolating from California data, of the 56,688 drivers in fatal crashes in the US in 1998, 23.7 percent were driving without a valid license.
- Of drivers at fault in crashes, 35.4% were driving without a valid license.
- If all unlicensed drivers stayed off the road, there would have been 13,435 fewer drivers in fatal crashes that year in the U.S.

Source: DeYoung, Peck and Helander (1997)

Scope of the Problem - US

- Alcohol use was much more common among unlicensed drivers in fatal crashes:
 - 74.1% of revoked drivers involved in fatal crashes had been drinking compared with 19.9% of licensed drivers.

Source: Griffin and DeLaZerda (2000)

Scope of the Problem - US

Compared to licensed drivers:

- suspended/revoked drivers were over-involved in fatal crashes by a factor of 3.7 to 1
- other unlicensed drivers were over-involved in fatal crashes by a factor of 4.9 to 1

Source: DeYoung, Peck and Helander (1997)

Scope of the Problem – Australia

- 5% of drivers and 19% of motorcyclists involved in fatal crashes (1992 and 1994) were unlicensed
- Crashes involving unlicensed drivers accounted for 10% of national road toll
- Almost half of those killed in these crashes were road users other than the unlicensed drivers

Source: Federal Office of Road Safety 1997 report

Scope of the Problem – Australia

Source: Watson, ICADTS 2004

- In Queensland, Australia, 7.9% of drivers involved in fatal crashes were unlicensed.
- Unlicensed drivers are more likely to engage in higher risk behaviors than licensed drivers.

Source: Watson, 2007 TRB presentation



Serious Casualty Crashes Queensland, Aus. 2000-2004

Source: Watson, 2007 TRB presentation

	Licensed	Unlicensed
Alcohol and Drugs	8.3%	33.5%
Speeding	3.9%	15.5%
At Fault	56.4%	85.8%

Scope of the Problem - Canada

- 2,000 fatal and injury crashes occur each year involving unlicensed drivers in the province of Ontario
- One in 14 fatal crashes involve an unlicensed driver
- Crashes involving unlicensed drivers were more likely to include fatalities
- Unlicensed drivers were more likely to be at fault in the crash
- Unlicensed drivers were more likely to have used alcohol or drugs
- Unlicensed drivers were more likely to attempt to flee the scene of the crash

Source: Suggestt, 2007 TRB presentation

Scope of the Problem - Canada

1.53% of drivers stopped at roadside checkpoints in New Brunswick were driving while suspended.

The suspended drivers had four times more reportable crashes in preceding five years, than the average (licensed) New Brunswick driver.

Suspended drivers in that province are over-involved in fatal crashes during their suspension period.

Source: 2002 survey by Malenfant, Van Houton and Jonah



Scope of the Problem - UK

- 17% of disqualified drivers who were breath tested after an accident were positive compared with the national average for all post-crash tests of 3%.

Source: McMahon, 2005

Scope of the Problem - UK

- Approximately one million unlicensed drivers on U.K. roads.
- Unlicensed drivers account for less than one percent of total hours driven, but:
- Unlicensed drivers are up to nine times more likely to have an accident than licensed drivers.

Source: UK Department of Transport, *Research into Unlicensed Driving (Report No. 48)*, 2003

Scope of the problem-Germany

- **Licensed Drivers in Germany – 64.4 million (2003)**
- **Licenses revoked/withdrawn – 141,477 (2005 data)**
- **Licenses suspended – 498,294 (2005 data)**

Source: BAST



Scope of The Problem-Germany

Source: BAST

2005	Road users involved in injury accidents	Without appropriate License
Passenger cars	403,500	1.4%
Goods vehicles	34,902	1.3%
Motorcycles	41,382	2.9%

Scope of the Problem-France

- In 2005, 54,242 driver's licenses were revoked (11% of all criminal offences)
- Between 2002 and 2005, the annual number of revoked licenses increased by 300% and the number of unlicensed drivers increased by an estimated 1000%
- Most license revocations were the result of automated speed enforcement, which increased by 313% between 2002 and 2005
- It was estimated that 1 in 15 French drivers were unlicensed

Source: Reflexions sur La Reforme du Permis à Points

Scope of the Problem-France

- In 2005, 1.6% of drivers involved in an accidents were unlicensed, down from 2.5 % in 2002
- 3.2% of drivers in fatal accidents were unlicensed (2005)
- 6% of motorcycle fatal accidents involved an unlicensed driver
- 30% of unlicensed drivers have an alcohol offense- 5% for licensed drivers

Source: Assailly, INRETS

Scope of the Problem – Nordic Countries

Sweden - In 2002, 32% of drivers who were killed and who were positive for alcohol, were unlicensed. Most of them had lost their licenses for previous drunk driving offences.

Norway - Police report that 30 - 40 % of arrested drunken/drugged drivers are unlicensed.

Source: Swedish Road Administration and the Norwegian Institute of Public Health



Belgium – Sanctioned by court

7 million drivers licenses

source: Belgisch Instituut voor de Verkeersveiligheid vzw

Year	Driving without a licence	Driving while licence withdrawn
2005	5953	803
2004	5583	552
2003	5377	436
2002	5145	521
2001	3368	532
2000	3991	653

U.S. Laws Found Effective in Combating Driving Without a Valid License

- Administrative license revocation and suspension laws
- Vehicle impoundment, seizure, and immobilization programs
- License plate removal at the scene
- Special plates or stickers as a cause for a traffic stop
- Mandatory jail time for multiple offenders
- Strictly circumscribed ignition interlock programs
- License status checkpoints
- Prevention of registration of vehicles by drivers lacking a valid license

Source: AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, *Unlicensed to Kill-The Sequel*, 2003

UK-Measures considered Effective and Acceptable

- Tighten administrative loopholes
- Online checking of licence details in police vehicles
- Online checking of licence details in police stations
- Employers to check driving licences if driving is a job requirement
- Explain to provisional licence holders the penalties for unlicensed driving
- Convert all licences to photocard licences as soon as possible
- Introduce harsher penalties for repeat offenders
- Tell drivers at their disqualification the penalties for breaking their ban

Source: UK Department of Transport, *Research into Unlicensed Driving (Report No. 48)*, 2003

UK-Measures considered Effective and Acceptable (continued)

- Wider range of penalties for various types of unlicensed driving
- Police (or Probation Service where appropriate) follow up/monitoring
- Use non-disqualification penalties for motoring offences
- Increase police resources for detection
- Harsher penalties for unlicensed driving
- Teach of safe driving in schools, highlighting unlicensed driving
- Educate young motoring offenders in the long-term effects of committing crime
- Tell drivers at disqualification the start and finish dates of their ban

Source: UK Department of Transport, *Research into Unlicensed Driving (Report No. 48), 2003*

UK-Measures Considered Less Effective and Acceptable

30 potential countermeasures listed that were rated as less effective and acceptable -

Very low priority given to any type of vehicle sanctions

Reasons for Vehicle Sanctions

Offenders are not deterred from driving by the lack of a license;

They might be prevented from driving by the lack of a vehicle.

The threat of the loss of the vehicle might be a more effective deterrent to unlicensed driving than other penalties.

Types of Vehicle Sanctions

- Impounding a vehicle or License Plate
- Confiscating vehicle
- Immobilizing vehicle
- Forfeiting of a vehicle

Used as a result of an unlicensed driving offense -- in relatively few countries around the world.

Vehicle Sanction Programs

Vehicle sanction are used most prominently in:

- New Zealand
- Canada, and
- U.S.

Vehicle Plate Impoundment in the U.S.

- Minnesota among the first states to seize license plates of vehicles owned by DWI offenders
- License plate seizure, for 3rd time DWI offenders now an administrative process
- The arresting officer can take the plates at the time of the DWI arrest
- The program was found to be effective in reducing DWI recidivism
- Violators who received the police-issued impoundment order had **one-half** the recidivism rate as compared to similar offenders who did not receive such an order.

Source: Rogers

New Zealand's Impoundment Program

- The roadside impoundment of more than 25,000 vehicles May 1999 to May 2001 (Of about 2,700,000 registered vehicles in New Zealand.)
- A fall in the proportion of fatalities attributed to unlicensed drivers from 10% (1998) to 6.9% (2000),
- A fall of one-third in all casualties attributed to unlicensed drivers
- A fall of one third in the number of driving-while-disqualified offences

Conclusions

- Unlicensed drivers pose risks
- Solutions have been proposed and tried around the world
- Some involve more severe penalties
- Some streamline the process of detecting, apprehending, and processing offenders
- Sanctions against the vehicles of offenders have been used in relatively few jurisdictions
- The experience in these jurisdictions has been generally positive
- Wider adoption of vehicle sanction programs could help to reduce the problems posed by unlicensed driving