



Press Up-date for 1<sup>st</sup> March 2015



## Drawing A Line Under Drug Driving

On 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015 new DRUG DRIVE limits come into force in England and Wales\*.

As well as the existing 'impairment' test, Police will have the power to saliva screen drivers at the roadside. If found to have drugs present they will be taken to a Police Station where a blood test will determine their specific level. If that level is over the prescribed limit they will be charged with drug driving.

Roger Singer, Head of DDE+ the Drug and Alcohol Road Safety Charity said "The limits drivers are allowed to have are VERY LOW - Cocaine 10µg/l, Cannabis 2µg/l, Ketamine 20µg/l, LSD 1µg/l, Ecstasy 20µg/l, and it's impossible to equate these levels with a spliff or a line of coke".

A conviction for drug driving WILL mean a criminal record (this is NOT a motoring offence), an obligatory disqualification for 12 months and fine of up to £5000. It could also bring a prison sentence of up to 12 months. It will stay on a driver's licence for 11 years and can create difficulties entering some countries e.g. USA, Canada and Australia.

Roger Singer continued, "DDE's view is simple, USE or DRIVE – DRIVE or USE but you can't do both!"

It will also be illegal to drive with certain levels of **legal** drugs if you're unfit to drive. Talk to your doctor about whether you should drive if you've been prescribed drugs.

You can drive after taking these drugs if:

- you have been prescribed them and advised how to take them by a healthcare professional
- they aren't causing you to be unfit to drive.

END

\*the new law doesn't cover Scotland or NI where 'impairment' will still be used.

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Note to Editors

**dde** (drink driver education) is a provider of the very successful DVSA courses. Drivers completing the 16 hour / 3 day course can gain a reduction of up to 25% off their disqualification.

**DDE+** (drink driver education plus) is a registered Drug and Alcohol Road Safety Charity that provides vital advice and training to organisations, colleges and companies.

With over 20 years' experience, DDE+ developed courses that educate people about drink/drug-driving BEFORE they risk conviction. Many people are caught 'the morning after', completely unaware of the risk they run. With this focus on prevention, DDE+'s mission is to save lives by saving licences.

If you'd like more information about this topic, or to schedule an interview with Managing Director, Roger Singer, please call on **0844 2511 363**, or email [ddeplus@drinkdrive.org.uk](mailto:ddeplus@drinkdrive.org.uk)



Information page -

**Crime and Courts Act 2013** (excerpt) (4) In Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988

Provision / offence	General nature of offence	Mode of prosecution	Punishment	Disqualification	Endorsement	Penalty points
RTA section 5A(1) (a) and (2)	<b>Driving or attempting to drive</b> with concentration of specified controlled drug above specified limit. (see below)	Summarily	On conviction in England and Wales: 52 weeks or level 5 on the standard scale or both. On conviction in Scotland: 6 months or level 5 on the standard scale or both.	Obligatory	Obligatory	3-11
RTA section 5A(1) (b) and (2)	<b>Being in charge</b> of a motor vehicle with concentration of specified controlled drug above specified limit.	Summarily	On conviction in England and Wales: 52 weeks or level 4 on the standard scale or both. On conviction in Scotland: 3 months or level 4 on the standard scale or both.	Discretionary	Obligatory	10

*"The (saliva) drug detection devices will only be used as preliminary screening devices which will help the police to assess whether a driver's condition might be due to presence of drugs"* DfT March 2014. **A blood test will be needed for conviction.**

1. **Benzoyllecgonine, (50 µg/L), Cocaine, (10 µg/L)** These are grouped together because benzoyllecgonine is a cocaine metabolite that stays in the system slightly longer than the cocaine itself. In saliva for between 2-5 days after use.

2. **Delta-9-Tetrahydrocannabinol (Cannabis and Cannabinol), (2 µg/L)** A 2-microgram limit for THC is extremely low. Marijuana use can be detected in the saliva for up to 24 hours after exposure but it's worth noting that it lasts much, much longer in the urine and blood. Habitual heavy users can test positive after as much as a month without the drug, as it is stored in body fat and re-released into the bloodstream when the fat is burned.

3 **Ketamine, (20 µg/L)** It's difficult to find information on how long Ketamine lasts in the system. It's detectable in urine for up to 2 weeks, but seems to last only around 3 days in the saliva.

4 **Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD), (1 µg/L)** LSD can be detected in saliva for 1-2 days after use.

5 **Methylamphetamine - (10 µg/L)** Methamphetamine can be detected in the saliva for 1-3 days after use.

6. **Methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA – Ecstasy), (10 µg/L)** MDMA may be detectable in the saliva for as much as 1-5 days after use.

7. **Monoacetylmorphine (6-MAM – Heroin and Morphine), (5 µg/L)** Heroin and morphine can be detected in the saliva for as much as 1-2 days after use.

See <https://www.gov.uk/drug-driving-law> – for the full details