

Results of consultation

Drink driving discussion paper: Targeting high risk drink drivers

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Executive Summary

Each year, too many Queenslanders' lives are tragically cut short or permanently changed by fatal or debilitating injuries resulting from drink drivers and riders. Drink driving continues to be a factor in more than one in every five fatalities on Queensland roads.

Between 2011 and 2015, 265 people were killed and 2,808 were hospitalised due to drink driving.

Besides the human costs, death and serious injuries involving drink drivers cost the Queensland community a staggering \$3.8 billion between 2009 and 2013. This is an average of \$770 million per year. Based on current trends, if we don't act now there could be more than 2,400 fatalities and serious injuries due to drink driving during 2016 – 2020.

Drink driving can reflect wider social patterns that play out on the state's roads. Almost one in five Australians (18.2%) over the age of 14 drink at levels that put them at risk of alcohol related harm over their lifetime. A higher percentage of Queenslanders drink alcohol than other Australians (80.4% compared to 78.2%) and more of them drink on a daily basis (7.4% compared to 6.5%) (AIHW, 2014).

The *Drink driving discussion paper: Targeting high risk drink drivers* was published for public consultation, along with an online survey from Wednesday, 8 February until Tuesday 7 March 2017.

This report summarises the results of the public consultation which included nine formal submissions and 3,502 individual responses to the survey. The general consensus of these submissions were in **support** of the proposals put forward. However, some of these submissions raised concerns around abolishing restricted (work) licences as a way to prevent drink driving.

The responses to the online survey were evaluated in detail and will inform decisions about future reforms aimed at tackling drink driving on our roads. The responses indicate Queenslanders are supportive of all options surveyed.

Introduction

The *Drink driving discussion paper: Targeting high risk drink drivers* was published for public consultation, along with an online survey on 8 February 2017. The discussion paper sought community feedback on a number of proposals to further address drink driving – in particular, to tackle our highest risk drivers, including inexperienced drivers, drivers with high alcohol readings, and repeat drink driving offenders.

Feedback was sought on the following topics:

- Enhancing the current Alcohol Ignition Interlock Program
- Introducing education programs for all drink driving offenders
- Limiting access to restricted (work) licences.

The general public were invited to review the discussion paper and complete an online survey to indicate their views on these topics, with an option of providing additional comments and identifying their own demographic data.

Radio, print media and online media channels were utilised across Queensland to raise awareness of the opportunity to comment during the four weeks the survey was open. Social media channels such as Facebook and Twitter were also used to reach the public. In addition, road safety stakeholders were invited to comment and/or provide written submissions in response to the discussion paper.

This report summarises the findings from the formal submissions, survey results and a qualitative analysis.

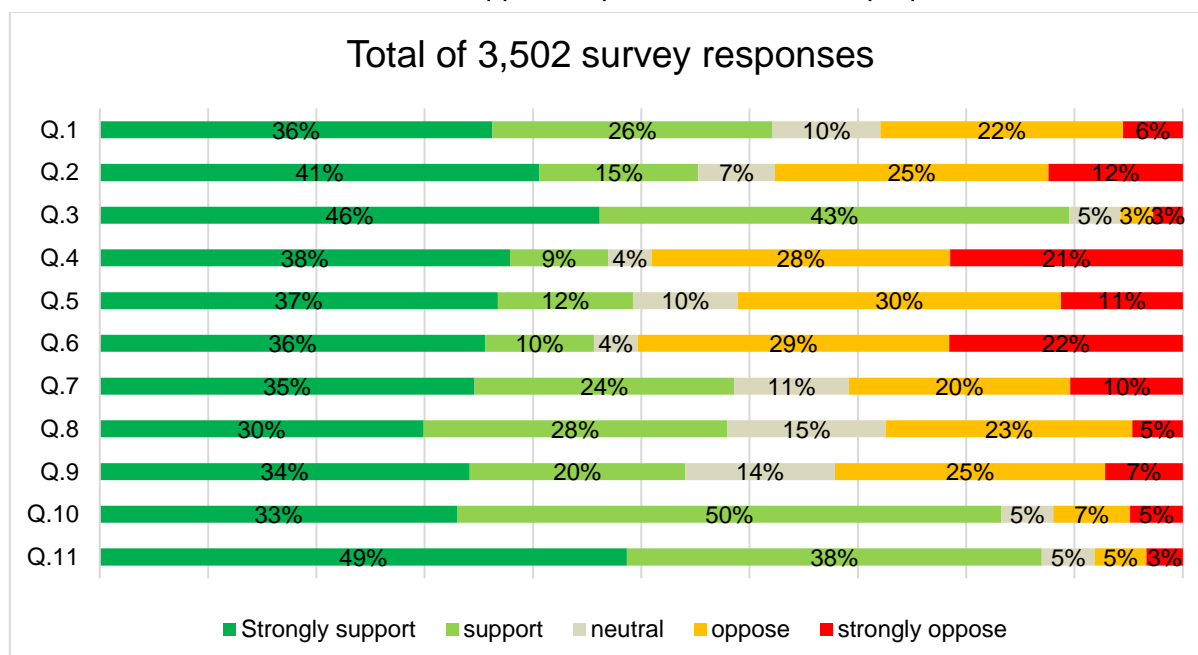
Discussion Paper Feedback Summary

A total of 3,502 responses to the survey were received and nine written submissions were provided by organisational stakeholders including the Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety – Queensland (CARRS-Q), RACQ, Qld Network of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies (QNADA), Qld Law Society (QLS), Qld Coalition for Action on Alcohol (QCAA), Qld Hotels Association (QHA) and Draeger and Guardian interlock providers.

The survey specifically requested respondents' feedback on the following proposals:

(Q1)	Increasing the interlock 'sit out' period from two to five years
(Q2)	Requiring interlock drivers to demonstrate they have separated drinking from driving before having the interlock removed (a 'performance based' program)
(Q3)	Expanding the interlock program to drink drivers who commit a middle BAC offence
(Q4)	Extending the interlock program to all learner licence holders who commit a drink driving offence
(Q5)	Extending the interlock program to learner licence holders with general BAC (0.05-0.099)
(Q6)	Extending the interlock program to provisional licence holders who commit drink driving offence
(Q7)	Extending the interlock program to provisional licence holders with general BAC (0.05-0.099)
(Q8)	Introducing online brief intervention program for first time drink driving offenders
(Q9)	Introducing intensive face-to-face drink driving education program for repeat offenders
(Q10)	Abolishing restricted (work) licences
(Q11)	Tightening eligibility criteria for restricted licences to exclude middle BAC offenders.

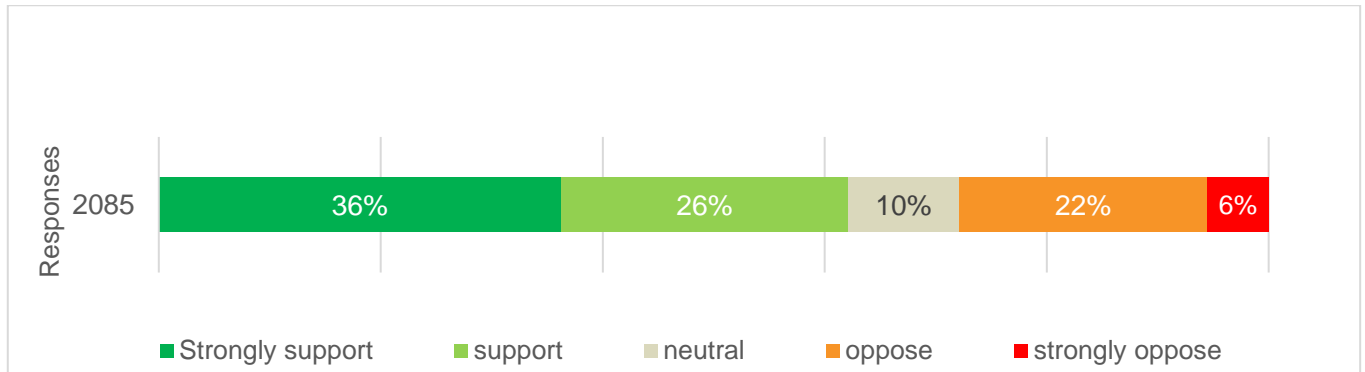
The figure below summarises the extent of support respondents had in the proposals.



Alcohol Ignition Interlock Program

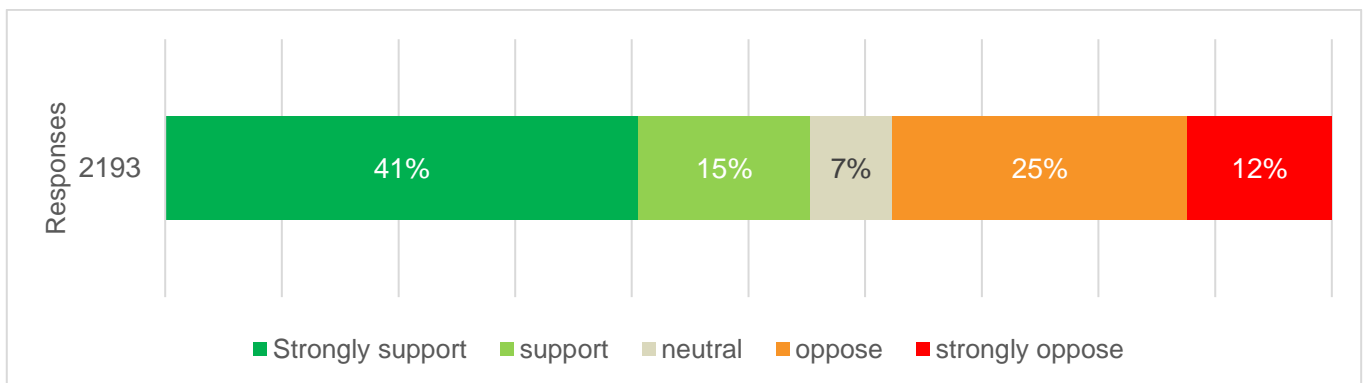
Question 1: Do you support extending the interlock 'sit out' period from two to five years?

Over half of respondents, 62 per cent, support or strongly support extending the interlock 'sit out' period from two to five years. The figure below shows the extent of support for this proposal.



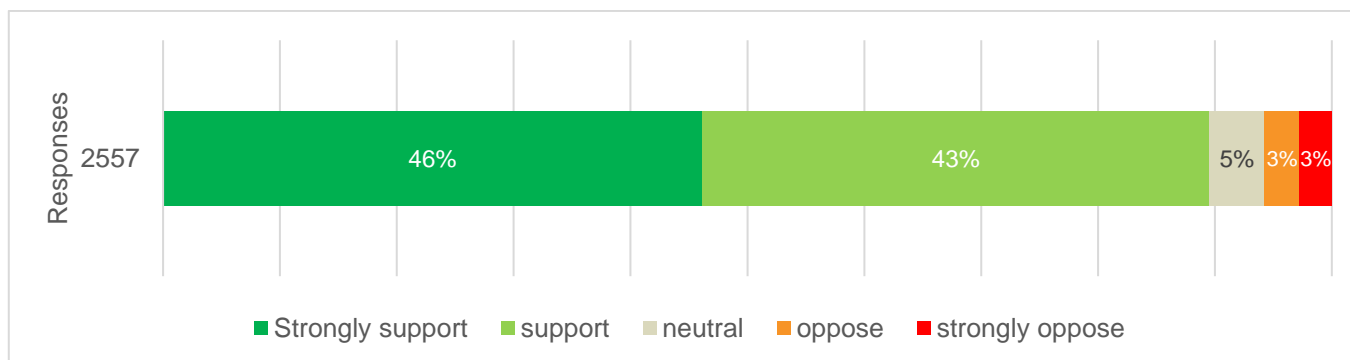
Question 2: Do you support changing the interlock program to a performance based program where participants must demonstrate (through no positive readings for a specified number of months) they can separate drinking and driving before having the interlock removed?

Over half of respondents, 56 per cent, supported or strongly supported changing the Interlock program to a performance based program. The figure below shows the extent of support for this proposal.



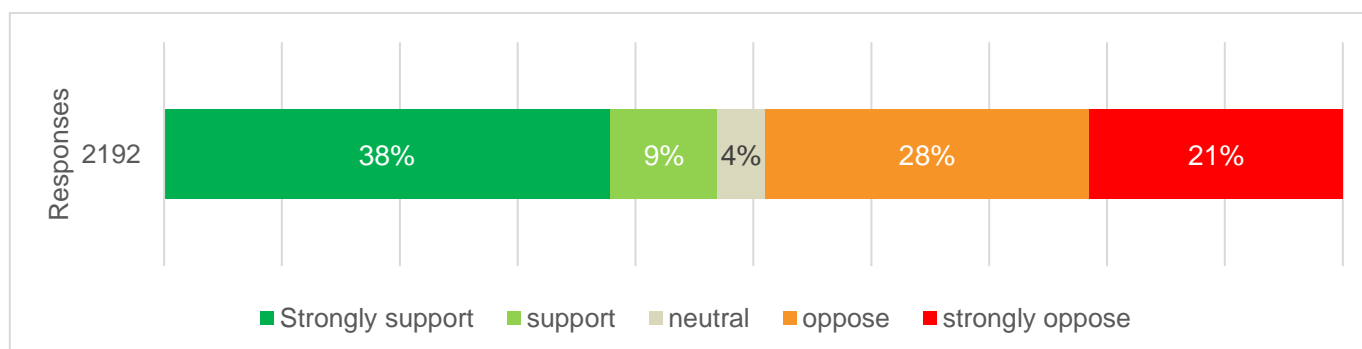
Question 3: Do you support extending the interlock program to drink drivers who commit a middle range BAC offence (0.10 to 0.149 BAC)?

The overwhelming majority of respondents, 89 per cent, supported or strongly supported extending the Interlock program to drink driving offenders who commit a middle range BAC offence. Supporters of the proposal were aware of the danger posed by drink driving and believed the Interlock program was appropriate for this offence. The figure below demonstrates the level of support for this proposal.



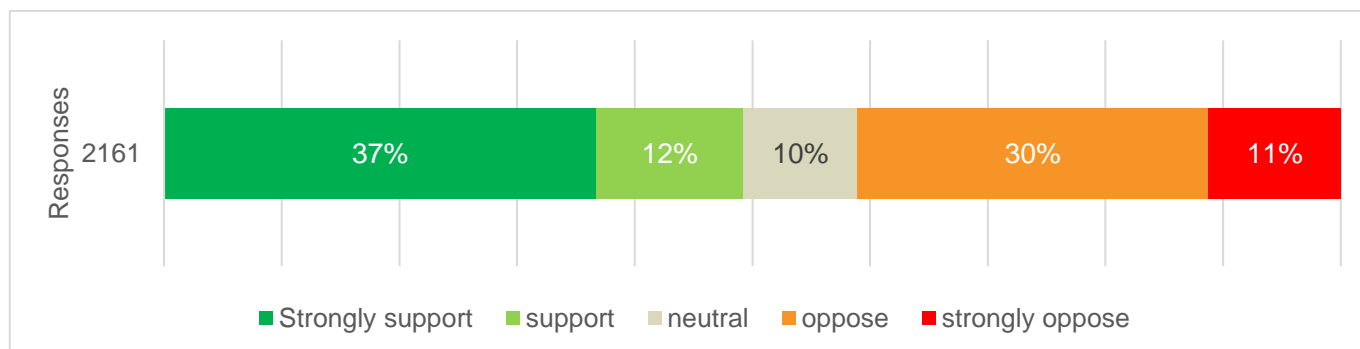
Question 4: Do you support extending the interlock program to all learners convicted of drink driving?

A plurality of respondents, 49 per cent, opposed extending the Interlock program to all learner licence holders convicted of a drink driving offence. However, this was due to concern over whether this proposal would actually help young people break the bad habit of drink driving. In particular, respondents believed there should be a stronger focus on educating rather than punishing this cohort. Respondents also noted the potential for families to be inadvertently punished as a result of an interlock being fitted to a family car. The figure below demonstrates the level of support for this proposal.



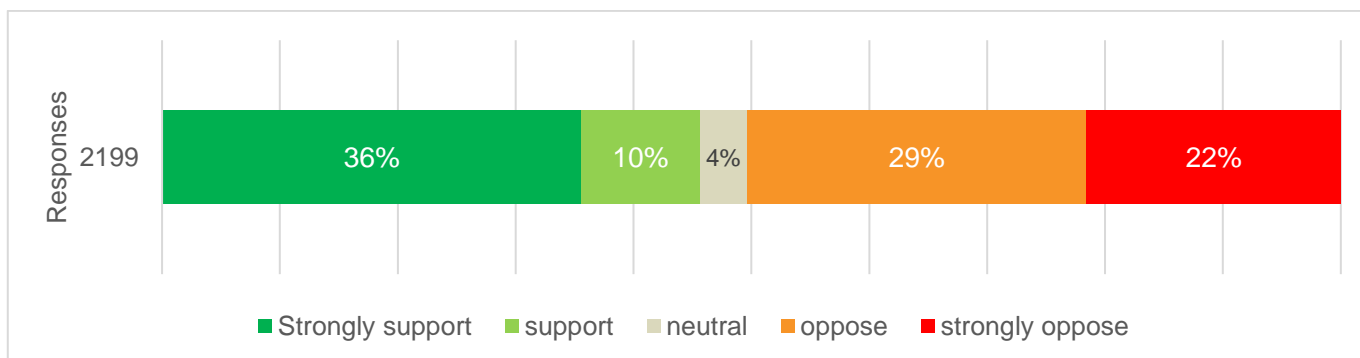
Question 5: Do you support extending the interlock program to all learners convicted of drink driving with a BAC of 0.05 or higher?

This question is similar to Question 4 however, the proposal would limit extending the Interlock program to learner licence holders with a BAC of 0.05 or higher despite being required to have a BAC of 0.00. A range of respondents, 49 per cent, supported or strongly supported extending the Interlock program to these offenders and reflects the feedback received for Question 4 that stronger penalties should be used for learner licence holders. The figure below demonstrates the level of support for this proposal.



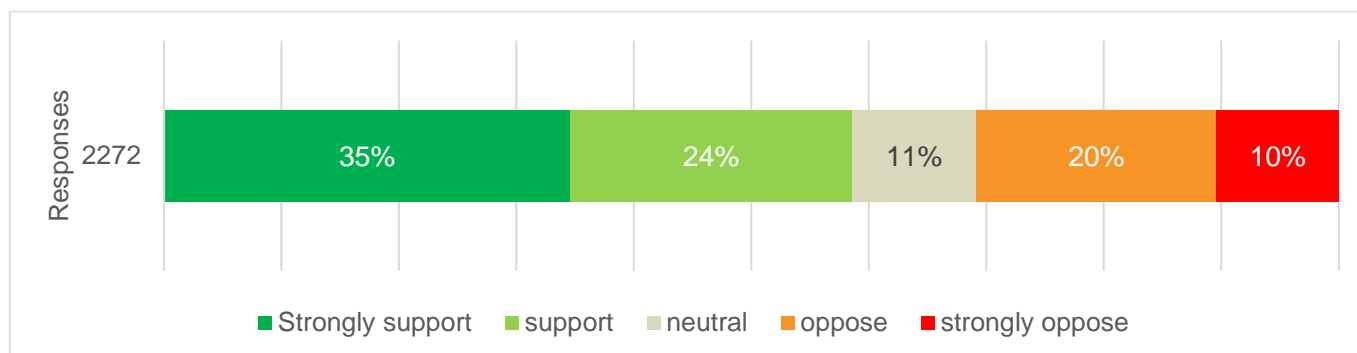
Question 6: Do you support extending the interlock program to all provisional licence holders convicted of drink driving?

The majority of respondents, 51 per cent, opposed extending the Interlock program to all licence holders convicted of drink driving. However, this was due to concern over whether this proposal would actually help young people break the bad habit of drink driving. Respondents to the public survey raised similar issues to those in Question 4 where they believed a greater focus should be on changing behaviours and educating this age group, and that the current punishments are sufficient. The figure below shows the extent of support for this proposal.



Question 7: Do you support extending the interlock program to all provisional licence holders convicted of drink driving with a BAC of 0.05 or higher?

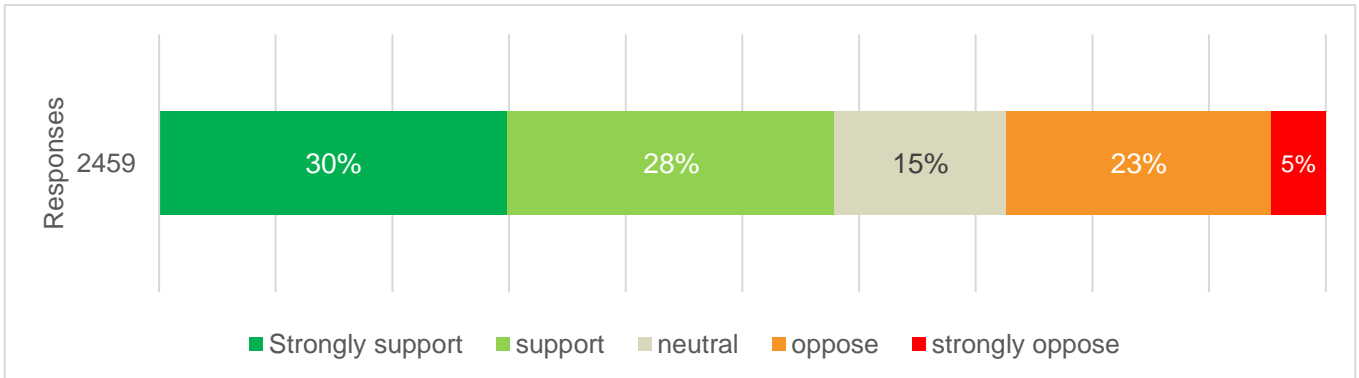
This question is similar to Question 7 however, the proposal would limit extending the Interlock program to provisional licence holders with a BAC of 0.05 or higher despite being required to have a BAC of 0.00. A majority of respondents, 59 per cent, supported or strongly supported extending the Interlock program to these offenders and reflects the feedback received for Question 7 that stronger penalties should be used for provisional licence holders. The figure below shows the extent of support for this proposal.



Education Programs

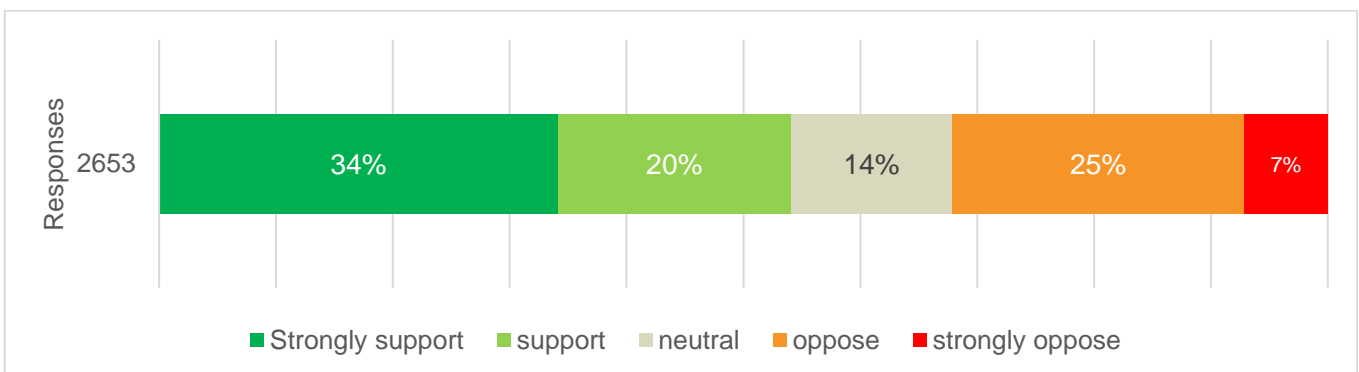
Question 8: Do you support introducing an online compulsory brief education program for all first time drink driving offenders?

A majority of respondents, 58 per cent, supported introducing an online compulsory brief education program for all first time drink driving offenders. Respondents provided positive feedback with the online learning environment however, voiced concerns over the effectiveness of an online course as a standalone response to drink driving offenders in comparison to face-to-face programs. The figure below shows the extent of support for this proposal.



Question 9: Do you support introducing an intensive face-to-face education program for repeat drink drivers?

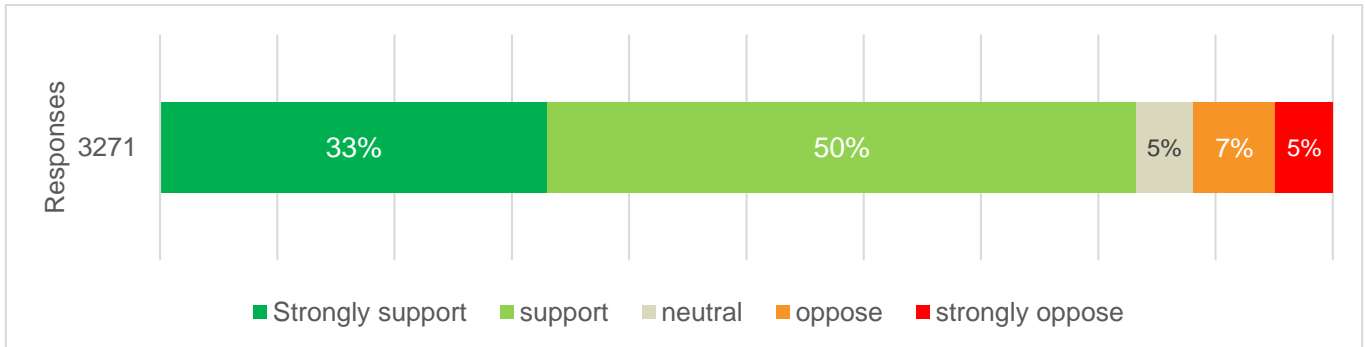
A majority of respondents, 54 per cent, supported introducing a compulsory face-to-face education program for repeat drink driving offenders. Respondents believed this proposal would have a positive effect on young drink drivers caught repeatedly drink driving. The figure below shows the extent of support for this proposal.



Review Access to Restricted (Work) Licences

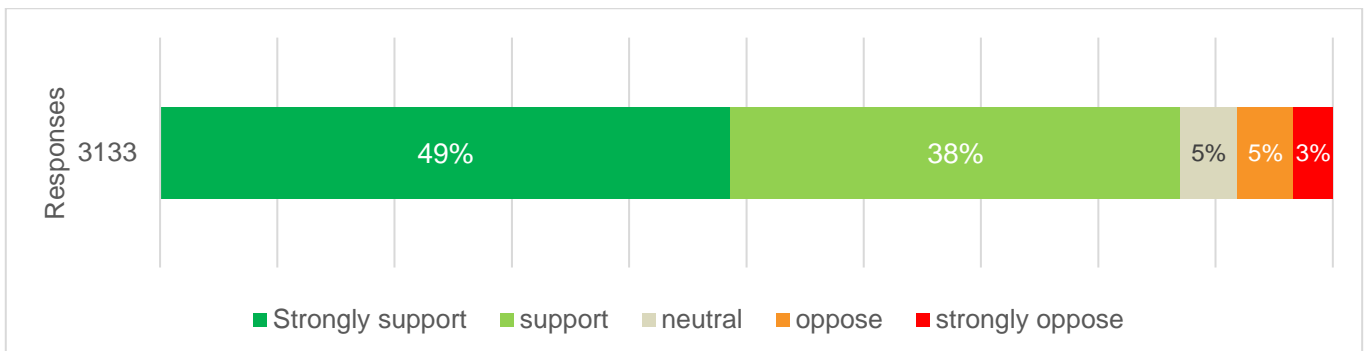
Question 10: Do you support removing restricted (work) licences for all drink drivers and making them serve a licence disqualification period?

The overwhelming majority of respondents, 83 per cent, supported or strongly supported removing restricted (work) licences for all drink driving offenders and making them serve a licence disqualification period. In general, respondents did not believe the need for a vehicle to work was not enough of a reason to allow drink driving offenders to retain a restricted (work) licence. The figure below shows the extent of support for this proposal.



Question 11: Do you support removing restricted (work) licences for middle BAC offenders (0.10–0.149 BAC) and making them serve a licence disqualification period?

This question is similar to Question 10 however, the proposal would limit removing restricted (work) licences to drink driving offenders with a middle BAC offence. The overwhelming majority of respondents, 86 per cent, support or strongly support this proposal. However, there was concern from opponents that this proposal may negatively impact on individuals in remote and regional areas who would face undue hardship without access to a restricted (work) licence.



Submissions

Nine formal written submissions were received from key stakeholders including the Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety – Queensland (CARRS-Q), RACQ, Qld Network of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies (QNADA), Qld Law Society (QLS), Qld Coalition for Action on Alcohol (QCAA), Qld Hotels Association (QHA) and Draeger and Guardian interlock providers.

The general consensus of these submissions were in **support** of the proposals put forward. However, some stakeholders raised concerns around abolishing restricted (work) licences as a way to prevent drink driving. One stakeholder raised concerns regarding requiring Learner and Provisional licence holders to participate in the Interlock program at lower BAC levels however, expressed strong support for the proposed education reforms. Another stakeholder raised concerns about increasing the interlock period from two to five years as offenders may disengage from the system.

Respondent Details

Of the respondents who included their demographic data:

- The majority, 53 per cent, were male compared with 47 per cent who were female
- The largest number, 24 per cent, were aged 40-49 years; the next largest group, 22 per cent, were aged 50-59 years
- The majority, 93 per cent, had an Open licence compared with 1.5 per cent who had a learner licence, 3.2 per cent had a provisional licence, 1.9 per cent who did not have a licence.

Appendix

Drink driving survey—have your say

The survey will take approximately 10–15 minutes depending on how much feedback you wish to provide.

Please note: There is a 45 minute time limit for completing the survey. To save your responses, click the 'finish later' button (within the 45 minute time limit)—you will be given an address and a password which you can use later to complete your response.

Demographic Questions

Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?

- Yes
- No

Which organisation do you represent?

What is your gender identity?

- Male
 - Female
 - Other
-

What is your age?

What is your current driver licence type?

- Learner
 - Provisional (including probationary and restricted licences)
 - Open
 - Not currently licenced
-

Enhance the current Alcohol Ignition Interlock Program

Extending the interlock period ('sit out' period)

The interlock program in Queensland is a time based model with an interlock condition placed on an offender's licence for two years after they complete their licence disqualification.

If the offender participates actively in the interlock program and chooses to install the interlock device in their vehicle, the interlock condition will be removed from their licence upon completion of a 12 month period. Drink drivers are encouraged to fit an interlock, to learn about separating their drinking from driving.

However, the offender may choose not to install the interlock in their vehicle, and 'sit out' a two year interlock period (during which time the offender cannot legally drive).

1. Do you support extending the interlock 'sit out' period from two to five years? This aims to discourage drink drivers from choosing to 'sit out'.

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neutral
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose

Additional comments:

Changing to a performance based interlock program

Queensland has a time based interlock program. Participants can complete the program when they fit an interlock device for the minimum 12 month period. Their interlock use is not assessed, so their interlock is removed after 12 months even if they record positive readings up until its removal.

2. Do you support changing the interlock program to a performance based program where participants must demonstrate (through no positive readings for a specified number of months) they can separate drinking and driving before having the interlock removed?

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neutral
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose

Additional comments:

Expanding the range of eligible offences for the interlock program

In Queensland, the interlock program applies to drivers convicted of higher risk drink driving offences, including:

- Driving under the influence of liquor (with a BAC of 0.15 or higher, or equivalent offences)
- Two or more drink driving offences within five years (repeat offenders)
- Failing to provide a blood/breath specimen for analysis
- Dangerous driving while affected by alcohol

However, middle range drink driving (detected driving with a 0.10 to 0.149 BAC) is also considered a high risk offence.

- In 2015, 26% of drink driving offences were middle BAC offences
- Just over one in five (21.5%) of drink drivers involved in fatal crashes had a middle range BAC reading.
- Almost one in three (29.4%) drink drivers involved in crashes resulting in hospitalisation had a middle range BAC reading.

3. Do you support extending the interlock program to drink drivers who commit a middle BAC offence (caught driving with a 0.10 to 0.149 BAC)? (Note: the general alcohol limit is 0.05 BAC)

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neutral
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose

Additional comments:

Extending the interlock program to drink driving offenders with a learner or provisional licence

Learner and provisional licence holders are not permitted to drive with any level of alcohol (zero BAC limit). The interlock program in Queensland only applies to these drivers if they commit a high BAC or repeat drink driving offence.

4. Do you support extending the interlock program to all learners convicted of drink driving?

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neutral
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose

Additional comments:

5. Do you support extending the interlock program to all learners if they are convicted of drink driving with a BAC of 0.05 or higher?

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neutral
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose

Additional comments:

6. Do you support extending the interlock program to all provisional licence holders convicted of drink driving?

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neutral
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose

Additional comments:

7. Do you support extending the interlock program to all provisional licence holders convicted of drink driving with a BAC of 0.05 or higher?

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neutral
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose

Additional comments:

Introduce education countermeasures

Online brief education intervention

8. Do you support introducing a mandatory online brief education intervention for all first time drink driving offenders? Participants would need to complete the online program before becoming relicensed to drive.

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neutral
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose

Additional comments:

Face-to-face education programs for repeat drink driving offenders

9. Do you support introducing an intensive face-to-face education program for repeat drink drivers? Repeat offenders would need to complete a face-to-face education program with a qualified professional as a relicensing requirement.

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neutral
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose

Additional comments:

Review access to restricted (work) licences

Limiting access to restricted (work) licences

First time drink drivers with a BAC less than 0.15 can apply for a restricted licence (more commonly known as a 'work licence'). It allows them to drive when they would otherwise be disqualified, but only for work purposes.

Previous research in Queensland found that 15-20% of people reoffended within five years of receiving a work licence exemption.

10. Do you support removing restricted (work) licences for all drink drivers and making them serve a licence disqualification period?

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neutral
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose

Additional comments:

Drink drivers who commit a middle BAC offence (0.10–0.149 BAC) have been detected with an alcohol level that is at least twice the 0.05 general alcohol limit.

Previous research in Queensland found that middle BAC offenders that had been granted a work licence were slightly more likely to reoffend than general BAC offenders.

11. Do you support removing restricted (work) licences for middle BAC (caught driving with a 0.10–0.149 BAC) drink drivers and making them serve a licence disqualification period?

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neutral
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose

Additional comments:
