

## Drink and drug driving reforms

As part of the Road Safety Plan 2021, the NSW Government is introducing a range of reforms to strengthen the drink and drug driving penalties applied to offenders.

The legislative reforms are outlined in the *Road Transport Legislation Amendment (Penalties and Other Sanctions) Act 2018*.

These reforms change the penalties and licence sanctions that apply for lower range drink driving offences, and for the offence of driving with the presence of an illicit drug.

Driving with the presence of drugs or an illegal level of alcohol in your system is not only illegal, it's extremely dangerous and puts your life and the lives of all other road users at risk. This reform will ensure those who put their lives and the lives of others at risk, receive swift and certain penalties to help protect all road users.

Alcohol related crashes claimed the lives of at least 68 people on NSW roads last year, accounting for 19 per cent of all road deaths, and included 55 lives lost on country roads. Fatalities from crashes involving a driver or rider with an illicit drug present in their system have accounted for similar levels of fatalities.

From 20 May 2019, there will be changes to the penalties and licence sanctions that apply for lower range drink driving offences, and for the offence of driving with the presence of an illicit drug.

If you commit a first time lower range drink driving offence, you will receive an on-the-spot fine of \$561 and immediately lose your licence, which will be suspended for three months.

If you commit a first time driving with the presence of an illicit drug offence, you will, once the offence is confirmed by the laboratory, receive a fine of \$561. Your licence will also be suspended for three months. Offenders will typically be notified via mail.

### Road Safety Plan 2021

For more information on other initiatives being introduced as part of the road safety plan, please visit: <https://towardszero.nsw.gov.au/roadsafetyplan>

*A road safety message from Trish Suckling,  
Road User Safety Project Officer,  
Roads and Maritime Services T: 02 6923 6544.*

## Driver of the Season Mitch Annetts



### Who is your employer?

I work for Pederson at the Norske Skog paper mill at Albury. Pederson's have been doing wood handling and chipping for Norske Skog since 2010.

### What do you do?

I have been with Pederson's since start up. I drive a Cat 988H log loader and operate the wood chipping plant as well. All Pederson's operations people rotate through these jobs. My prior experience has been with earthmoving in the construction industry and before that, a period as fitter TA at the old Fruits of Batlow factory.

### What are some of the safety issues face by log loader drivers?

Operating heavy machinery in a log yard can be hazardous. We have rules requiring log truck drivers to have permission before entering the woodyard. It's pretty simple really, I need to know where trucks are to be able to operate safely. The way trucks are loaded can also be a problem. Things like over height logs, log restraint, (especially logs falling between the bolsters), broken logs and intertwined bays are unsafe in the yard and on the road.

### What do you do to make sure the loader is operationally sound?

We do daily pre-start checks for each of the loaders which requires inspection of all of the important operating systems and clean out the engine bay, particularly over summer due to fire risk. Any problems are quickly passed on to the supervisor.

### Any safety tips?

Clear communications with everybody involved with the process is very important. Knowing and complying with the site rules and watching out for your workmates. Keeping fit and healthy.

*The 'Driver of the Season' will receive 'A Truckies Motoring Atlas of Australia' by UBD/Gregorys courtesy of Roads and Maritime Services.*

## Gocup Road upgrade nearing completion



Traffic is now moving freely along Gocup Road with all work on the five-year \$70 million upgrade set to be completed by the end of June.

A major milestone was achieved in April with completion of the 5.4 kilometre section through Halfway Hill and Doctors Hill.

This \$44 million project required major earthmoving to create an improved road alignment through hilly terrain with two new overtaking lanes, widened road shoulders, safety barriers and two permanent bus stops.

Minor work will continue until the end of June with shoulder widening, drainage improvements and safety barrier installation along a three kilometre section between Doctors Hill and Gundagai.

The five-year transformation of Gocup Road has improved freight movement and safety for all road users.

Sections of work along the full 31 kilometre length of the road have improved the alignment, width and surface for heavy vehicles to increase safety for motorists and support the growing needs of the timber and milling industry into the future.

### Further Information

For further information please contact (02) 6981 4819 or go to the FIC web site:  
[www.forestindustrycouncil.com.au](http://www.forestindustrycouncil.com.au)



## Tool Box Tips

### Safety alert winter driving

The main rule for winter driving is to be cautious and alert.

With winter here, drivers need to think about driving safely in winter conditions. There have already been reports of incidents where vehicles have slipped off the road edge. This can also be a risk during wet conditions when trucks are being loaded due to a combination of tight landing areas, soft edges, and the placement of logs and equipment at the landing.

**Aquaplaning** - One of the most dangerous conditions faced by motorists during the winter months is a wet bitumen road. If you're travelling at high speed over a road covered with water, there's the possibility that your vehicle could aquaplane out of control.

#### Dos

- Take your foot off the accelerator and reduce your car's speed.
- When you have regained control, drive slowly through any water on the road.

#### Don'ts

- Never slam on the brakes, as this may increase your chances of skidding out of control.

**Short days, fog and rain** - Driving through fog and rain can be hazardous and requires extra care. Night time driving in horse and kangaroo areas can result in significant damage to you, the animal and the vehicle. Overnight stay to limit night time winter driving will reduce these risks.

In these conditions reduce your speed to a level where you can comfortably see the road ahead and prior to departure check **windscreen wipers**, **tyres** and make sure your **headlights** are on.

**Black ice and snow driving** - When driving in conditions such as ice and snow proceed with caution, adjust your speed accordingly. If conditions deteriorate slow down and leave plenty of space between your vehicle and the one in front to cope with any driving difficulties. Driving in snow can often cause tiredness, particularly when conditions demand a high level of concentration. Remember to be patient.

**Flood crossings** - Crossing flooded roads, streams and fords can be extremely dangerous due to deep water. Floodwater may be deeper and faster than it appears and often contains hidden debris and snags. Don't cross flooded rivers and streams. Forging rivers can result in water entering the engine or air intake and is fatal to diesel motors.