

# **The benefits and problems of drug and alcohol testing in policies**

## **the benefits**

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# Introduction

- **The TfL policies**
- **Why do random testing?**
- **Why test for alcohol?**
- **Outcomes of testing**
- **The benefits**



# Drugs and Alcohol at Work

## TfL Policy Statements

- **No drugs**
- **No alcohol**
- **Support and job protection if a problem is declared and treatment complied with**
- **Drug and alcohol testing**
- **Gross misconduct for breach of policy and for positive test**



# LU – when testing takes place and for whom

- Pre employment (safety critical only) – drugs only – NOT ALCOHOL
- Promotion and transfer (safety critical only)
- Unannounced (safety critical only) – also known as “random”
- For cause (anyone)
- Post incident (anyone)
- Monitoring on return to work after treatment



**Why do random testing?**



# Why do random testing?

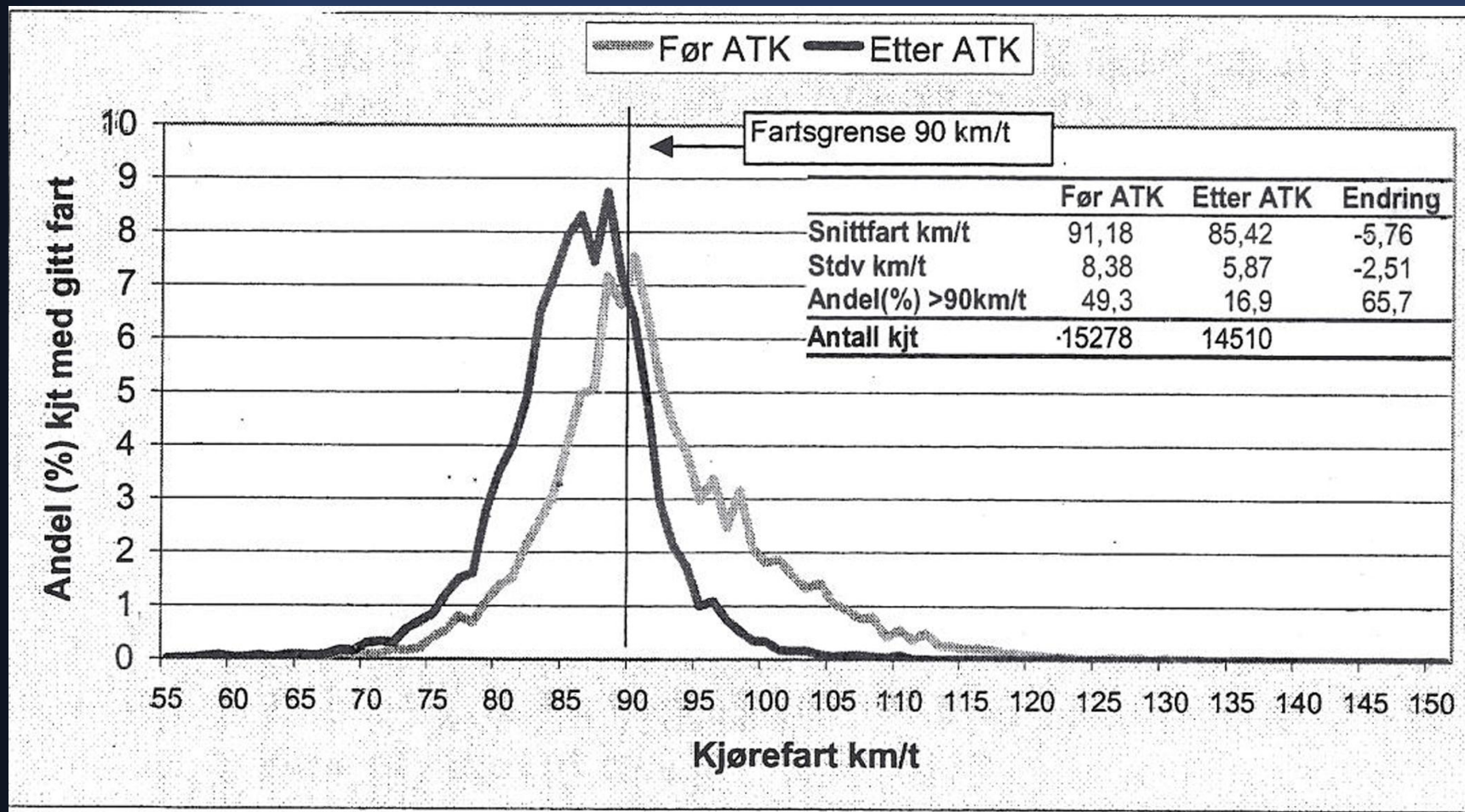
**Results of automatic speed control before and after introduction of photo-boxes and information to the drivers of its use (Norwegian text). Report from 2002**

*Information courtesy of Dr Hans Knut Otterstad, formerly of Norwegian State Railway*



# Why do random testing?

Slide courtesy of Dr Hans Knut Otterstad



# Why do random testing?

- The average speed fell from 91.2 km/hour to 85.4 km/hour. The speed limit in the section was 90 km/hour.
- The proportion of cars exceeding the speed-limit fell from 49.3% to 16.9% percent after the automatic control was introduced.

*Information courtesy of Dr Hans Knut Otterstad, formerly of Norwegian State Railway*





# Why do random testing?

- **50 % of the drivers followed the rules without the need of a monitoring control system,**
- **33 % adjusted their behaviour after introduction of a control system**
- **16 percent represented the “hard core”, who did not change behaviour under this type of regime.**

*Information courtesy of Dr Hans Knut Otterstad, formerly of Norwegian State Railway*



# Why do random testing?

**And most important:**

- **66 percent of those who violated the rules adjusted their behaviour in the right direction, just by informing them of a monitoring system.**

**The effect of this system is mainly to prevent unwanted driving, and not to catch the “sinners”.**

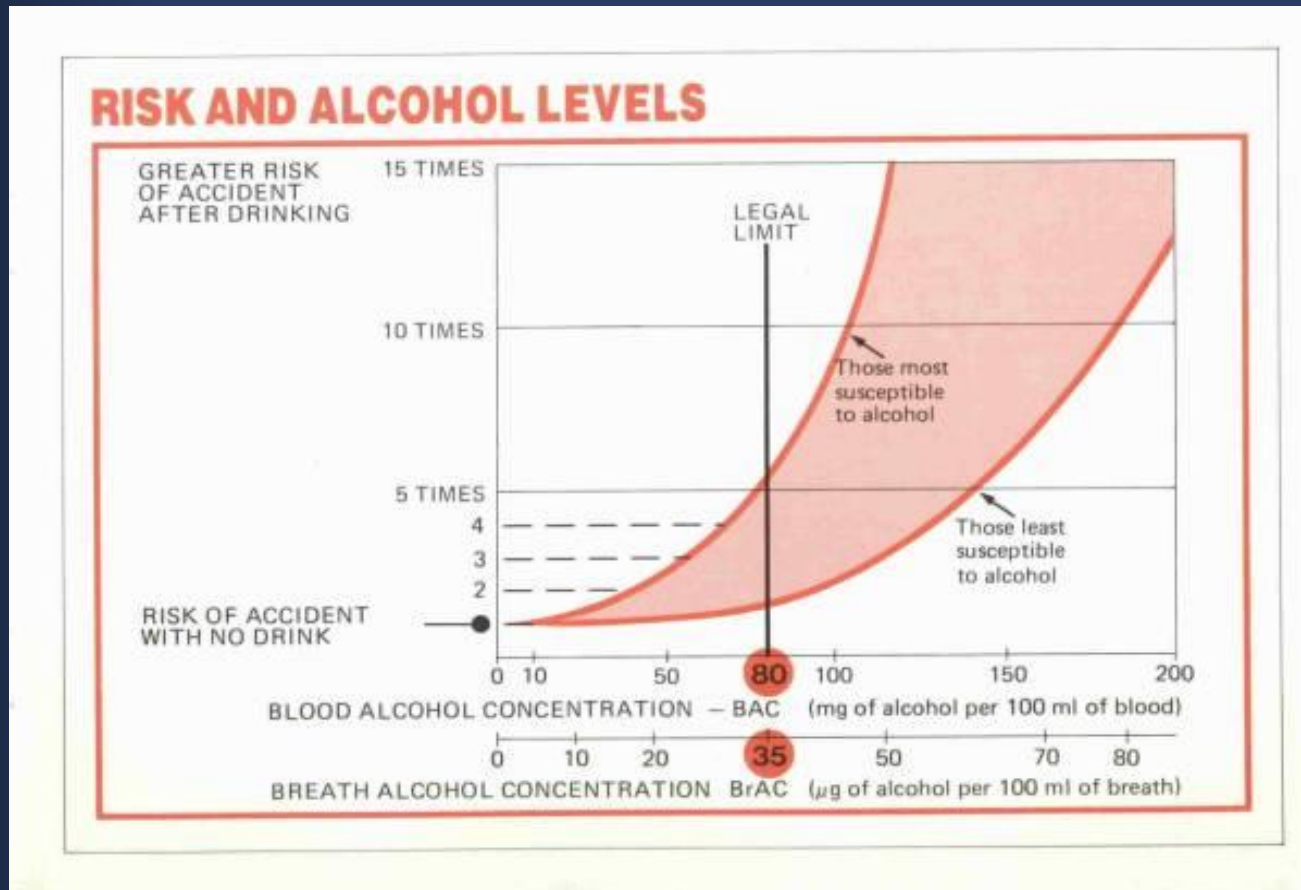
*Information courtesy of Dr Hans Knut Otterstad, formerly of Norwegian State Railway*



**Why test for alcohol?**

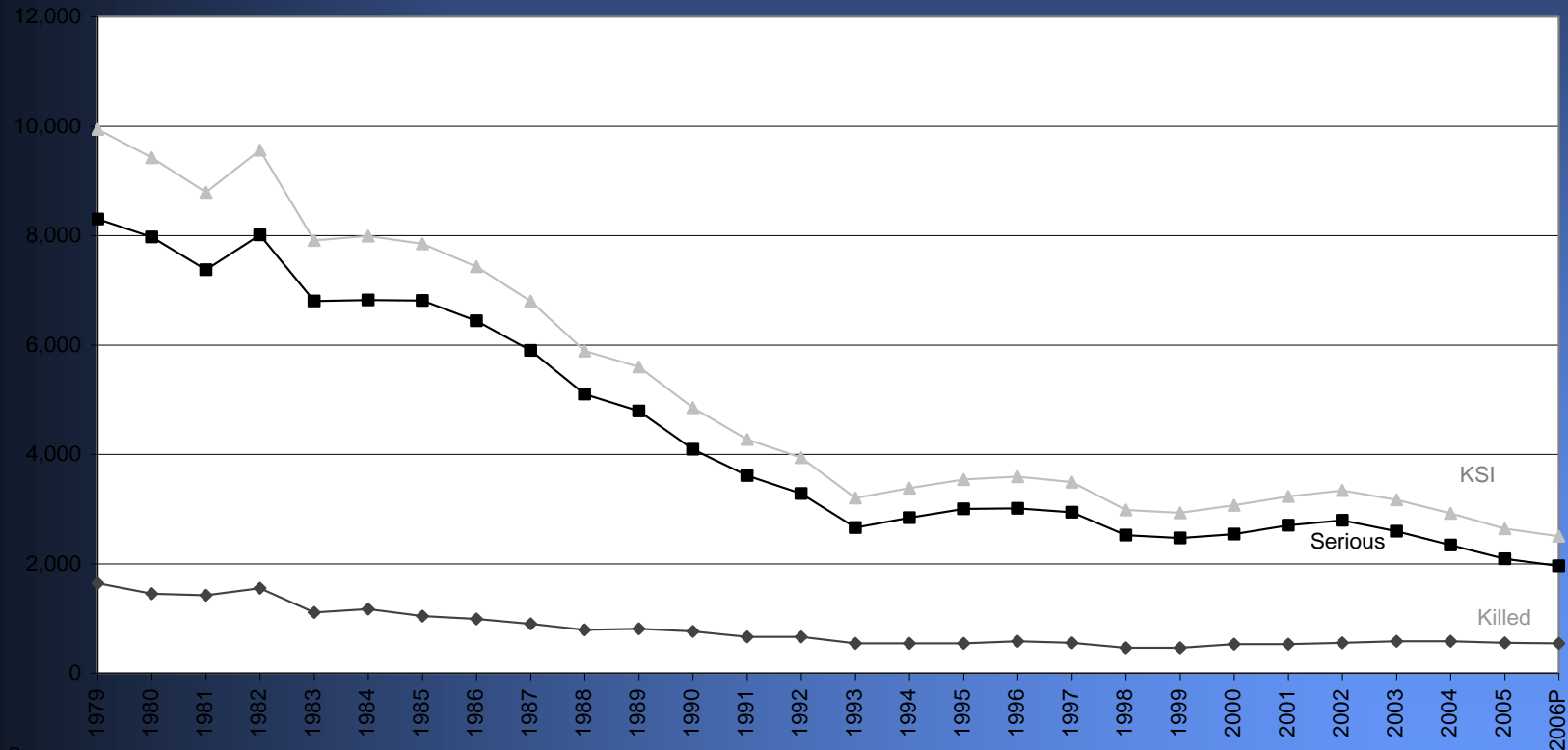


# Risk and alcohol levels



# Killed and serious casualties resulting from accidents involving illegal alcohol levels: GB 1979-2006

Chart 3a: Killed and serious casualties resulting from accidents involving illegal alcohol levels: GB 1979 – 2006



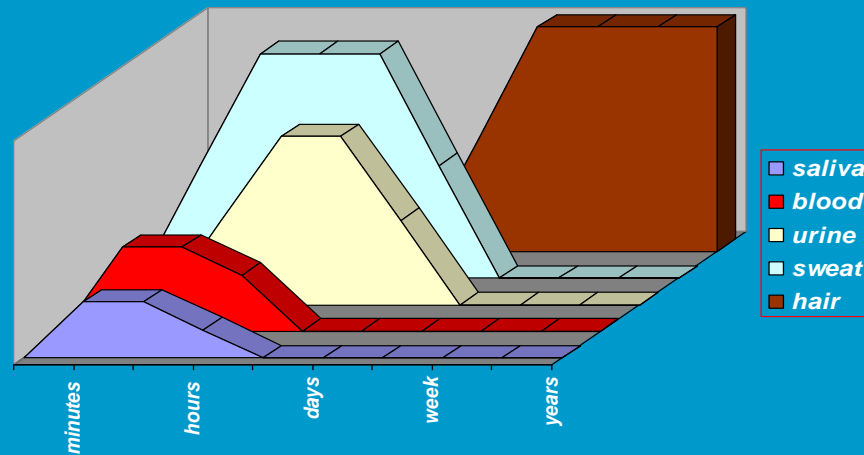
P Provisional data



# What type of test?

*slide courtesy of Professor M. Chiarotti, Catholic University of Sacred Heart – Rome*

Relative detection times in various specimens



# LU testing

- **Alcohol - breathalyser**  
⇒ Positive at 13 ug/100 ml breath
- **Drugs - urine test with laboratory analysis for an agreed panel of drugs**
- **Chain of Custody arrangements**



**Some outcomes**





# USA Experience

- **Testing is a legal requirement in public transportation**
- **National figures**
- **Strong trend of reduced safety related incidents and marked reduction in post-incident positives over 18 years, especially in the early years of the programme**
- **More than 55% respondents in large surveys state they stopped using drugs and alcohol for the single reason that they might be caught through random testing**
- **Federal programme staff in USA believe that, to be effective, the level of testing must be 50% of employee base per year and never below 25%**



# LU testing results

## % positive tests (no of tests)

	1993	1994	1995	2011/12
<b>recruit</b>	4.1% (800)	3% (540)	0.7% (737)	0.25% (400)
<b>unannounced</b>	3.4% (380)	1.9% (1130)	1.2% (929)	0.5% (784)
<b>for cause</b>	10% (10)	9.2% (76)	4.2% (95)	9.5% (21)



# Job Outcomes

**There were 9 confirmed positive tests in 11/12, not including pre-employment testing. and 2 for**

- **4 (0.51%) through Unannounced testing (3 summarily dismissed, 1 resignation before discipline);**
- **2 (9.5%) through For Cause (1 summarily dismissed, 1 resigned before discipline);**
- **1 (0.91%) through Post Incident (summarily dismissed),**
- **2 (0.52%) through post-treatment monitoring (1 summarily dismissed, 1 resigned before discipline).**



**Supporting employees with drug and  
alcohol problems  
TfL as an example**



# TfL's Drug and alcohol assessment and treatment service

- **Assessment**
  - Degree of chemical dependence
  - Extent of risk to public safety
- **Treatment**
- **Managed return to work**
- **Monitoring**



# Some outcomes of DAATS

## Review of randomly chosen DAATS cases treated between 1995 and 1999 (n=40)

- average sickness absence in two years before treatment - 28.5 days per year
- average sickness absence in two years after treatment - 8 days per year
- **In a review of all the LU safety critical employees assessed as being substance dependent from 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2004 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2005, 67% were still working in their job of origin or a more senior post in 2010**



# Success of DAATS

- It is the fear of losing their job that brings people into DAATS
- So we believe that our random testing programme drives people to seek help through self-declaration
- This is driven by fear of loss of job
- But we believe it works and that we run a safer service AND help some of our people to change their lives for the better



# The benefits





# Drivers for the LU approach

- **Need to demonstrate commitment to safety of the travelling public**
- **Transport and Works Act 1992 requirement for due diligence**
- **Ethos of commitment to staff welfare**



# Benefits of testing as part of the drug and alcohol at work policies

- Improved safety
- Driver for behaviour change
- Can lead to improved employee health
- Provides opportunities to set clear boundaries of behaviour and clear consequences for breaching those (ie easier to manage)
- Requires cross disciplinary working and employee involvement
- Reputation enhanced for safety and potentially for employee support



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