

Report on Breathtesting at Splendour Music Festival 2015

The facts about alcohol and driving behaviour at Splendour Festival



October 2015

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Executive Summary

STEER Breathtesting received an overwhelmingly positive response from Splendour Festival patrons. Many people commented on what a simple idea it was and were so grateful for an opportunity to increase awareness of their blood alcohol concentration.

For some, breathalysing provided a type of game in which participants dragged their friends to the breathalyser and insisted they all take a test. Even in this 'play' context the breathalyser increased awareness amongst patrons regarding their BAC's. STEER volunteers were on hand to provide information and resources about standard drinks and processing alcohol.

Due to a late change, the Festival promoters were unable to place the STEER Breathtesting stall inside the Festival site. This adversely affected our ability to offer patrons the capacity to return and monitor their alcohol consumption over the Festival. The total number of breath tests and surveys conducted was significantly lower than previous Festivals.

There were a number of patrons who expressed disappointment at their low blood alcohol content subsequent to substantial drinking within the festival. STEER Breathtesting attribute this to the provision of low alcohol beverages at Splendour Festival bars.

STEER Breathtesting recommend provision of low alcohol drinks and 'alco-ternatives' be mandatory at Festivals and significant community events.

STEER Breathtesting recommend provision of voluntary breath testing at Festivals and community events be at least recommended and at best compulsory.

Introduction

STEER Breathtesting positively change drink driving behaviour by making a person-to-person connection at the coalface i.e. where choices about safe celebrating and safe driving are made.

STEER Breathtesting offer patrons a free breath test and provide information and resources associated with safe alcohol consumption and safe safe driving.



Background

Regional areas, and the Byron Shire particularly, are disadvantaged by a lack of safe transport options. This results in many young people, particularly males, making unsafe transport choices. In the 5 years from 2005-2010 there were 1,367 reported crashes in Byron Shire involving 17-20 year olds ¹.

Alcohol is a contributing factor in 15% of fatal crashes for young drivers aged 17-25 ²:

¹Figures obtained from Road Traffic Authority (NSW): crashes in the 17-20 yr age group in Byron Shire from 1/7/2005 to 30/6/2010.

²Figures obtained from Safer Drivers Course for Learners (RMS) crashes for young drivers aged 17-25, 2011.

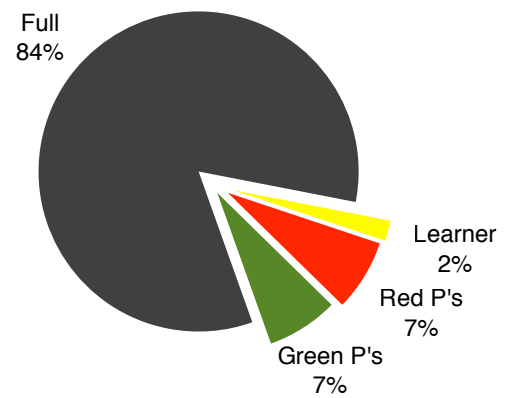
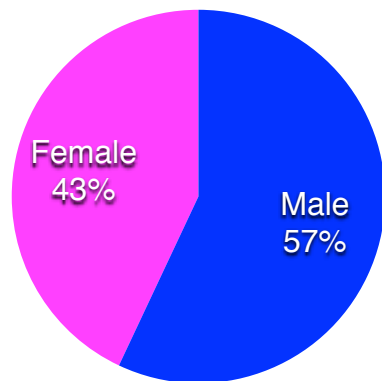
Facts and Figures

Approximately 30,000 patrons attended Splendour Festival Byron Bay from Fri 24th July to Mon 27th July 2015.

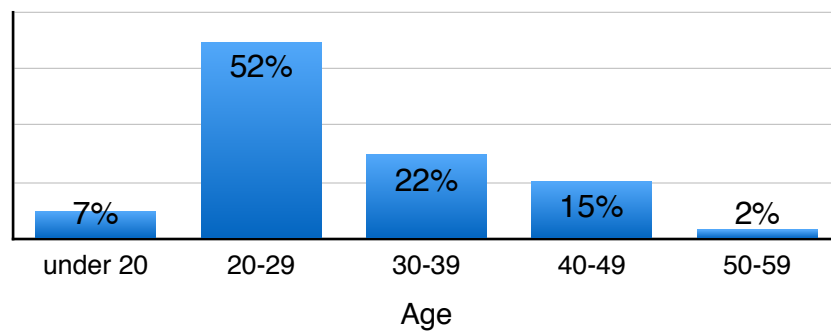
STEER Breathtesting provided approximately 800 voluntary breath tests and conducted over 50 surveys with Festival patrons.

Who we tested...

Gender and Licence Type



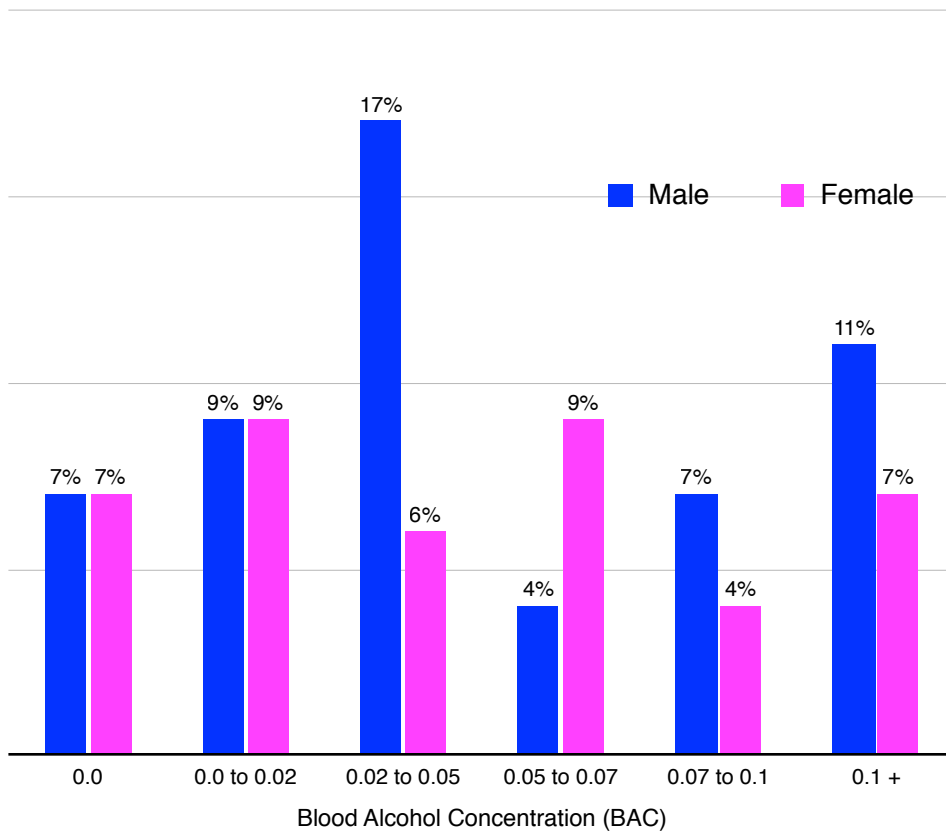
Average Age



STEER Breathtesting is particularly effective at targeting young males i.e. 57% of those tested were males and 59% aged under 29.

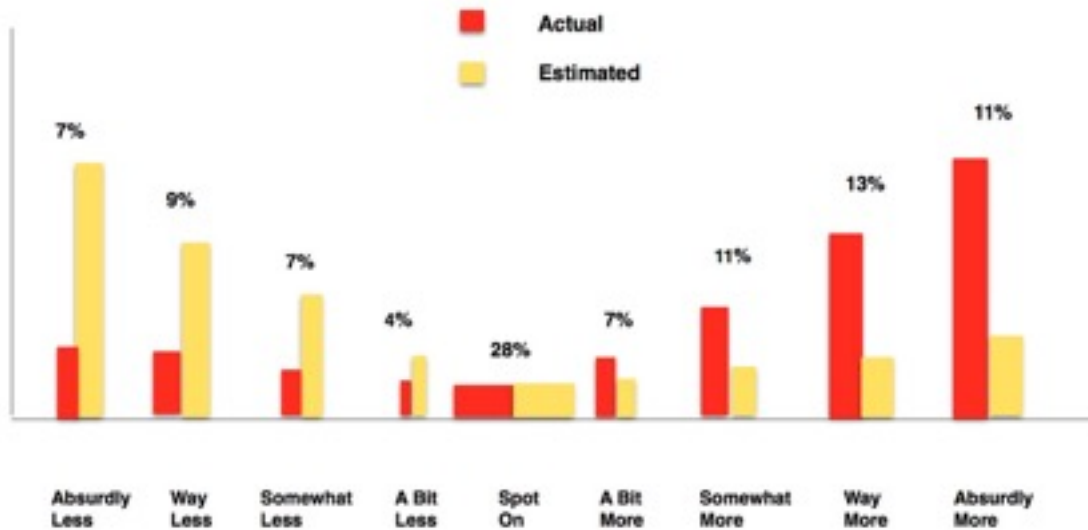
What we discovered...

Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) relative to Gender



***Males had a noticeably higher incidence of BAC under 0.05. Females had a higher incidence of BAC b/w 0.05 and 0.07, over which males had a higher incidence of higher BAC.
Of all patrons, 14% tested 0.0 and 56% tested under 0.05.***

Actual vs Estimated Blood Alcohol Concentration



Self awareness of BAC was good with 28% of people estimating their BAC almost exactly. 30% of patrons estimated their BAC with reasonable accuracy. 56 % of patrons had an actual BAC equal to and/or under their estimate i.e. they were actually less drunk than they thought

Thanks

STEER Breathtestings is a community initiative and relies on widespread community support to develop, evolve and succeed. We would like to acknowledge and thank:

- all who attended Splendour Festival;
- our STEER Breathtesting volunteers;
- Splendour promoters & organisers;
- RMS for providing the Alcolizer;
- our supporters Alcohoot for providing mobile breathalysers ;
- Claire Mason for the cover photograph



Contact

Please contact Phil Preston for more information about STEER Breathtesting and to offer your support and suggestions:

Phil Preston	STEER coordinator
Mobile	0414 809 330
Email	phil@steerproject.org.au
Website	www.steerproject.org.au

STEER Breathtesting is an initiative of the STEER youth safe transport project.

