

Police among those not heeding the message



Community attitudes constantly change and evolve, and the Queensland Police Service (QPS) in turn responds to these changes accordingly.

One paradigm shift the Service has been active in promoting is the community's attitude towards drink driving. Over the past decade, the practice has become increasingly unacceptable, and most people clearly recognise the health and social harms associated with drinking and driving.

Unfortunately not everyone heeds the messages and drink driving

still remains a problem across the country, with alcohol-related road trauma costing Australians dearly.

Despite the strong anti-drink driving messages, a small number of QPS members have been prosecuted for drink driving. Assistant Commissioner Peter Martin, ESC, said this fact was a great disappointment.

"One of the frustrations we encounter as a policing agency is the situation in which we give the community mixed messages," Assistant Commissioner Martin said.

"It's not acceptable that on one hand we say you should not drink and drive and on the other hand some within the organisation are doing just that. The community could rightly become sceptical of our messages."

Deputy Commissioner Ian Stewart said drinking and driving posed great risks for members of the QPS.

"Not only is there the obvious health and safety risks to the individual, their family and other road users, but there are a range of other consequences," Deputy Commissioner Stewart said.

"The embarrassment of an appearance in court and the public humiliation is but one dimension of the outcome. Other outcomes include disciplinary considerations that can have dramatic consequences for a person's career."

Assistant Commissioner Martin said the message was clear.

"Drink driving is not tolerated. It can cost you much more than your licence."