



ROYAL SOLOMON ISLANDS POLICE FORCE

INTRODUCTION OF ALCOHOL TESTING IN SOLOMON ISLANDS



www.rsipf.gov.sb

LEGISLATION FOR ALCOHOL TESTING

The RSIPF is pleased to inform the public of the Solomon Islands that legislation for the alcohol testing of drivers or operators of vehicles has been gazetted and is now in force. The Police and Transport Legislation (Amendment) (Alcohol Testing) Act 2016 commenced operation on 1st June 2016.

The Act provides police with the power to require the driver or person in charge of a vehicle to submit to a breath test in accordance with the police officer's direction. 'Vehicles' includes motor vehicles, vessels and aircraft.

THE LEGISLATION

Alcohol is a leading factor in the number of vehicle accidents where people die or are seriously injured on Solomon Islands roads.

The aim of the legislation and police operations which will use the provisions is to reduce death and serious injury resulting from vehicle accidents where alcohol has been a contributing factor. The legislation will greatly enhance the ability of the RSIPF to remove intoxicated drivers from our roads, further ensuring the safety of all road users.

The Act prescribes the level of alcohol as 50 milligrams or more of alcohol in 100 millilitres of blood, referred to as a Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) of 0.05%.

A driver or person in charge of a vehicle who is at or above the prescribed level has committed an offence.

The prescribed level of 0.05% was decided upon because international best practice indicates that at this level it is known that drivers are impaired and are more likely to be involved in motor vehicle accidents. This risk of having an accident increases significantly as the BAC level increases in a driver.

IMPACTING FACTORS ON CONCENTRATION OF ALCOHOL

There are a lot of factors that affect the concentration of alcohol in your blood;

- how much you have had to drink and how quickly you have been drinking
- the type of alcohol
- how much you weigh and when you last ate
- your general health, gender and mood

Drinking coffee or water, having some food, a swim, or vomiting, does not reduce the alcohol concentration in your blood or make you 'sober up' faster. Time is the only thing that will reduce the effects of alcohol.

Depending on your alcohol concentration, you may not even be safe to drive the following morning after a sleep. If you have any doubts at all, don't drive – it's not worth the risk.



POLICE POWERS

In order to help keep the roads a safe place for you and your family, the Police have the power to;

- Stop and detain any vehicle and require the driver or person in charge of the vehicle to submit to a breath test.
- If the preliminary breath test indicates the driver is at or above the prescribed level, detain the person and require the person to accompany the officer to a police station or post for an additional breath test.
- Arrest a driver or person in charge of a vehicle who is suspected of being unfit to drive as a result of alcohol or drugs
- Impound the vehicle.

OFFENCES AND PENALTIES

The penalties for a driver being at or above the prescribed level or for failing or refusing a breath test are severe and include the following;

- For a first offence of being at or above the prescribed level of 0.05% BAC, \$10,000 or 12 months imprisonment or both, and disqualification of driver's licence,
- For a second offence of being at or above the prescribed level of 0.05% BAC, \$20,000 or 2 years imprisonment or both, and disqualification of driver's licence,
- For refusing or failing a breath test, \$10,000 or 12 months imprisonment or both.

GET HOME SAFELY

Think ahead and if you are planning to drink alcohol then DON'T drive. Make other arrangements such as;

- Arrange for a friend to be the sober driver (take turns with friends and be the sober driver another time)
- Get a ride with someone else
- Arrange for someone to drop you off and pick you up
- Use a taxi, bus or other public transport
- Stay the night at a friend's house



See www.rsipf.gov.sb for more information.

**If you are
going to
drink, don't
drive.**

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This information is brought to you by
the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force
- working in partnership to keep the
roads of Solomon Islands safe for the
community.

For more information contact:

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