

# Busted drink driving? It's more likely in the country than the city

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If you live in a rural area and are weighing up whether or not to drink and drive, then think again because new research shows drivers are more likely to be busted in the country than the city.

The findings, to be presented by QUT Senior Research Fellow Dr Kerry Armstrong at an international [road safety](#) conference in Brisbane this week, will reveal random breath testing apprehension rates were far higher in the Northern and Far Northern police regions compared to the state's [metropolitan areas](#).

Dr Armstrong, from [QUT's Centre for Accident Research & Road Safety](#) - Queensland (CARRS-Q), said a "she'll be right" attitude and a lack of public transport were factors contributing to higher drink driving

rates in rural areas.

"There is still this mentality in rural regions that 'I'm okay to drive and nobody's around so I won't get caught', but this isn't the case," Dr Armstrong said.

"The RBT detection rate in rural areas is far in excess of that observed in the more populist urban areas in the south east corner of Queensland.

"For example in the Northern and Far Northern regions which take in Cairns, Townsville and Mount Isa, the RBT detection rate was one in 83 and one in 85 people, compared with the detection rate in the Metropolitan South region of one in 149 people."

Dr Armstrong said there were a number of differences between rural and urban areas in the prevention, detection and intervention of drink driving with social, environmental and geographical factors impacting on drink driving behaviours.

"There's this perception of a lower probability of being caught in rural areas and there is also a higher degree of social solidarity in many smaller rural communities," she said.

"There is also this view of a relative scarcity of police on rural roads and that law enforcement tends to be more expensive and therefore less likely, on low traffic volume roads."

She said rural drivers were also faced with fewer alternatives to drink driving as a result of a lack of public transport.

Dr Armstrong said drink driving continued to be a major cause of death and injury on Australian roads.

"Research shows alcohol is a factor in about one third of all road traffic deaths and that alcohol and drugs is a factor in more than half of fatal sole occupant single vehicle crashes," she said.

"We also know that excessive drinking of alcohol can be particularly prevalent in many rural communities."

Dr Armstrong's research "Are more city dwellers caught drink driving than country folk? An analysis by random breath testing [apprehension rates](#)" will be presented at *T2013: The 20th International Council on Alcohol, Drugs and Traffic Safety conference*.

Hosted by CARRS-Q, the conference is an opportunity for road safety experts from across the world to put their heads together in a bid to tackle one of the major causes of road deaths and injury - drink and drug driving.

Alcolizer Technology, a world leader in alcohol breath testers, is the platinum sponsor of the conference.

The full program is available [here](#).

Provided by Queensland University of Technology

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