

Rural

Rural	Screening Questions	Response to Screening Questions		Full Impact Assessment Required		Justification / Key issues and groups to focus on
		Yes	No	Yes	No	
	<p>1. Does the policy apply in rural areas and communities?</p> <p>If NO: set out the reasons why</p> <p>If Yes:</p> <p>a. Does the policy have the potential to have a negative impact on rural areas and communities?</p>	x			x	<p>The policy will apply equally in both rural and urban areas.</p> <p>It has been argued that tougher drink driving laws, rigorously enforced, would have a detrimental impact on licensed premises, particularly in rural areas.</p> <p>It must be stated that DOE’s research survey indicates that a significant proportion of motorists who drink alcohol respond that they already refuse to drive after one drink and a majority of respondents would not travel in a car with a driver who has had one drink¹.</p> <p>New legislation would mean that drivers could be</p>

¹ NI Road Safety Monitor 2008, NISRA, October 2008: 79% of motorists interviewed who drink alcohol said they would not normally drive after one drink; and 61% of respondents said they would not travel in a car in which the driver has had one drink.

					<p>over the limit after one drink. The long standing road safety message from Government is already that no one should drive after even one drink. The Department's proposals will bring the law into line with the road safety message.</p> <p>There is no compelling evidence to suggest that a lower limit will result in people frequenting licensed premises less. In countries where there are lower limits and stricter enforcement, there are many initiatives designed at maintaining customer numbers in licensed premises while ensuring road safety, for example designated driver schemes, community taxi services and local bus initiatives. Such schemes are often sponsored by the drinks industry. There is no reason to believe that such initiatives could not work equally well in Northern Ireland, and indeed some similar programmes have been run here in over the festive season in the past.</p> <p>It is recognised that pubs and hotels can be a locally significant source of employment, and those in rural areas are particularly dependent on access by car and do not have the same level of access to alternative modes of transport, such as public transport, as in urban areas. However, it must be noted that these proposals include reductions in the drink drive limit and do not, in themselves, remove a person's right to use any mode of transport or reduce their access to travel options. They simply propose that vehicles should not be driven by a</p>
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					<p>person above a BAC limit that is lower than is currently the case.</p> <p>The vast majority of citizens, whether living in rural or urban areas, comply with the law as it stands. It is expected that these people will continue to comply with the law, even if amended. Those who currently disregard road safety advice and/or who break the law might continue to do so. However, stronger police powers will mean that there may be a greater likelihood of detection.</p>
	<p>b. Does the policy have the potential to have a positive impact on rural areas and communities?</p>	<p>x</p>		<p>x</p>	<p>The principle positive impact anticipated is a reduction in road traffic collisions due to alcohol impairment and a reduction in fatal and serious casualties.</p> <p>Data demonstrate that there are more deaths and serious injuries due to road traffic collisions in rural areas than in urban areas. Furthermore, most deaths and serious injuries due to driver/rider alcohol happen on rural roads.</p> <p>In Northern Ireland in 2007, 14 of the 18 deaths (78%) and 62 of the 113 serious injuries (55%) due to driver/rider alcohol occurred on rural roads.</p> <p>It is therefore very likely that any reductions in the numbers killed or seriously injured due to driver/rider alcohol would be proportionally greater in rural areas.</p>

	CONCLUSION			It would be inappropriate and unenforceable to have different BAC limits in rural and urban areas and would actually reduce the potential positive benefits of this policy to rural areas.
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