Media Release

Peter Chandler
Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services, Minister for Transport

Drug driving: not worth the risk

2 December 2015

From 1 February, if you drive under the influence of drugs you will be caught thanks to amendments to the Traffic Act passing through Parliament this morning.

Minister for Police and Transport Peter Chandler said the amended Traffic Act will help Police do their jobs by giving them greater powers to keep our roads safe from drivers on drugs.

“If you’re pulled over by Police, it could be for a random breath test for alcohol, a saliva drug test, or both – so don’t be surprised when it happens to you,” Mr Chandler said.

“Research shows that random drug testing is having a positive impact on road safety.

“A study in Victoria has found that the current rates of random testing are saving 20 lives per year and reducing total driver fatalities by up to eight per cent.

“Safe roads are a right for all road users in the Territory and drivers who kill or seriously injure someone while on drugs will be held responsible.”

Drug use can slow down your reaction time, causing a distorted view of time and distance and also stimulate the nervous system which can lead to reduced attention span, and the sudden onset of fatigue as the stimulant effects wear off.

Minister Chandler said the Country Liberals are serious about law and order and these new police powers are one example of how our policies are working to keep Territorians safe.

“We have addressed strong concern about drug use in the community and the need to implement tougher measures as a priority,” Mr Chandler said.

“If police detect the presence of drugs in your system whilst driving your licence will be immediately suspended for 24 hours and could lead to six months imprisonment.

“If a driver refuses to submit a saliva test you will be up for a $765 fine or three months imprisonment, for the first offence.”

For more information on drug testing drivers please visit www.roadsafety.nt.gov.au

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