Participant Information Sheet

People who drive under the influence of Alcohol

NOTE: *This Participant Information Sheet will remain with the University of Tasmania and the University of Queensland researc team for their records.*

Project Title: **Drugged-Driving Effects on Driving Performance**

Chief Investigators:

Dr Shamsi Shekari Soleimanloo, Project Leader, School of Psychology, The University of Queensland

Associate Professor Raimondo Bruno, Chief Investigator, School of Psychological Sciences, University of Tasmania

Professor Mark Horswill, Chief Investigator, School of Psychology, The University of Queensland

Associate Professor Andrew Hill, Chief Investigator, Sustainable Minerals Institute, The University of Queensland

Professor Simon Smith, Chief Investigator, Children Health Research Centre, The University of Queensland

Associate Professor Caroline Salom, Chief Investigator, the Institute for Social Science Research, The University of Queensland

Ethics Approval Numbers – UQ: 2025/HE000945; UTAS: 2025/H40445

You are invited to take part in a study exploring how the use of alcohol affects a person's ability to drive safely. Please read the following information about the project to decide whether you want to participate in this research. Please feel free to ask any questions about our involvement in the project.

If you decide to participate in this research, please remember that participation is voluntary. If you do not wish to participate, you do not have to. If you decide to take part and later change your mind, you are free to stop at any time, and you would not need to give any explanation for your decision to stop participating. If you stop participating and indicate it in the Consent Form, your data will not be used in the research.

You will be given a Consent Form to sign, and you will be given a copy to keep. Your decision whether you take part, or not to take part, or to take part and then withdraw, will not affect your relationship with the University of Tasmania.

Please note that your identity and the data collected from this study will be confidential. This Participant Information Sheet describes what is involved in the study, and you should read it in full before deciding whether to participate. Please keep this information sheet as a record.

What is this research about?

A research team, led by Associate Professor Raimondo Bruno, at the School of Psychological Sciences, the University of Tasmania, are conducting this study. We are interested in understanding how habitual behaviours, such as sleep and alcohol use, might affect people's ability to focus, react quickly, or complete driving-related tasks. We are not testing your driving ability, judging your driving ability, or making any medical diagnoses. The findings will help improve safety-related knowledge and support future public health and road safety initiatives.

The University of Queensland and the University of Tasmania Human Research Ethics Committees have approved the study (UQ: 2025/HE000945, UTAS: 2025/H40445).

Am I eligible?

To participate in the experimental study, you must meet the following criteria:

- Must live in Hobart
- Between the ages of 18 and 65 years
- Must not have any type of sleep disorder
- Sleep more than 6 hours regularly
- Must not be diagnosed with a mental illness by a clinician
- Hold a valid driver's license (provisional or open)
- Be a regular alcohol drinker (have at least one standard alcoholic drink in the past month)
- Must not be underweight nor significantly above the healthy weight range
- Must not be pregnant nor plan to get pregnant during the study
- Must avoid alcohol for up to 24 hours before each session so that your breath alcohol concentration is zero at the lab testing session.
- Be willing to provide oral fluid (saliva) and breath sample to screen for drugs and measure alcohol in your body
- Do not use any illicit drugs or prescription medications

- Have normal vision (either with or without prescription glasses or contact lenses).

Please note that further screening will be conducted during the induction session to identify dependence or alcohol withdrawal risk, and only low-risk participants will be recruited.

If you experience any unanticipated changes in life circumstances that may affect your ability to engage in the experimental study, please notify the research team as soon as possible to discuss your ability to continue the study.

What will I need to do?

After you pressed the "Participate in the Alcohol group" button on the study website, you will be directed to a screening page where you are asked to provide your consent to participate in the screening process. If you deemed ineligible, the screening page will ask for your permission to make future contacts for upcoming related projects. If you meet the criteria, the RA will also schedule an in person one-hour induction session for you at the University of Tasmania. The RA will send you a link to review the Participant Information Sheet and obtain verbal consent. Then, you will be asked to complete some questionnaires about your general health and sleep quality at the induction session. You can choose not to respond to the questions if you feel uncomfortable.

You will provide your consent at two stages: At the induction session, you will be asked to provide a verbal consent to ensure that fully understood the study before your test session is scheduled. Then, at your first test session, you will be asked to give a written consent again. This second consent confirms that you are in a clear state of mind to take part on the day of testing. This delayed second consent ensures you have sufficient time to reflect on the study requirements, discuss participation with others if desired, and make an informed, voluntary decision without pressure.

At the end of the induction session, you will be given an actiwatch (a wristwatch activity monitor) to wear continuously for three nights to monitor your recent sleep-wake pattern. You will also be emailed a short sleep diary every morning for at least three days before each laboratory session to monitor your habitual sleep patterns in preparation for your lab visit.

You will be required to attend three 1.5-hour laboratory visits at the University of Tasmania. You will be asked to abstain from food for 4 hours, caffeine-containing products for 8 hours, and alcohol for 24 hours before each session, and illicit drugs, prescription medication and tobacco for the duration of the study.

Before the start of the first lab session, we will ask you to sign a consent form.

During each lab session, you will begin by completing short questionnaires about your recent drug use, alcohol consumption, and with a brief breath alcohol test to record any potential alcohol levels in your system. You will then provide saliva samples to screen for the presence of drugs using validated testing devices. In case of successful screening for alcohol or drug use, the actiwatch you have worn for the past week will be collected so the research team can download your sleep data.

Then, the research team will measure your height and weight. Depending on the randomised alcohol level for the test session, the research team will prepare an alcoholic orange juice drink by adding enough alcohol (vodka) to an orange juice to reach a breath alcohol concentration (BrAC) of 0.025 BAC (low alcohol), 0.05 BAC (driving alcohol limit) or no alcohol, respectively. Following participation, we will inform you of the amount of alcohol you have consumed.

The core part of your session will involve a series of computerised tasks designed to assess your attention, reaction time, and cognitive functioning. These tasks are commonly used in research to understand how substances affect the brain's ability to process information. You will also complete a traffic conflict perception test that simulates driving conditions, and afterwards, rate how well you believe you performed. Please note that we are not judging your performance on the traffic conflict perception test. Next, you will be asked to complete a computerised Digit Symbol Substitution Task, rate your mental effort and complete a series of posture and balance tests.

The second and third visits will follow the same protocol as the first visit, one week apart, but with different alcohol concentrations. After your first and second visits, you will be given a new actiwatch to continue monitoring your sleep until your second session.

You will be asked to remain in the laboratory until your blood alcohol concentration equals 0.03% or less on two occasions, measured 15 minutes apart. If you hold a provisional driver's licence and intend to drive, you must remain in the laboratory until your breath alcohol concentration is 0.00% on two alcohol measurements at 15 minutes apart. If you hold a provisional driver's licence and do not intend to drive, you will be able to leave the laboratory at 0.030% breath alcohol concentration after signing a declaration in which you agree to be escorted by your nominated legal adult. The nominated legal guardian must be an adult aged 21 years or older who: (i) holds their provisional or full driver licence (ii) directly collects you from the research premises and meets the researcher in-person, and (iii) signs a declaration agreeing to escort you directly to your place of residence and accompany you for the two hours following session completion. Additionally, you must refrain from drinking alcohol or operating a vehicle or other heavy machinery for four hours after the end of the experimental session.

As a thank you for your time and contribution, you will be reimbursed $600 ($200 Gift Pay voucher per experimental session) for your time and for providing sleep data and specimen samples after the three experimental sessions.

Source of funding

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts funds this project.

What type of consent should I give?

If you are eligible for this study, you must sign an extended consent form to participate in the research. When you agree to extended consent, your data can be reused in future projects that are an extension of this project, closely related to this project, or in the same general area of this research. Your consent form will include permission to collect biospecimens (saliva and breath samples), wear an actiwatch, and fill out a brief sleep diary before each test session.

As part of the consent, if you do not permit future contacts, we will remove your personal information after the completion of the study to protect you from future contacts. Also, if you tick the relevant box in the Consent Form, we will remove your data from the dataset if you withdraw from the study. However, you can remove your data before the conclusion of the research project, as all personal identifiers will be deleted upon completion.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

While there may be no direct personal benefit from participating in this research, your involvement is highly valuable and may offer some indirect advantages. By participating in this study, you are contributing to necessary research to understand how alcohol use affects driving ability, attention, and reaction time and ultimately contribute to reducing crashes and saving lives on Australian roads.

For the broader community and research field, this study will provide critical evidence about the impairing effects of alcohol on driving performance. The findings may help establish more scientifically valid approaches to detecting alcohol-impaired driving and support the development of safer, evidence-informed road safety laws and technologies.

As a token of appreciation for your time and effort, you will receive **a $600 Gift Pay voucher** for laboratory sessions you complete. These reimbursements are provided in recognition of your participation and to cover any inconvenience or expenses associated with your involvement.

What are the possible risks and disadvantages of taking part?

This study has been designed with your safety and well-being as a priority. However, like all research, you should be aware of some potential risks and disadvantages.

Physical Effects of Alcohol: If you are in a group that receives alcohol, you will be given a small, controlled dose that is expected to produce only mild effects (a blood alcohol concentration between 0.025% and 0.05%). You may experience short-term physical effects such as mild nausea, dizziness, headaches, or flushed skin. These effects might feel stronger if you have a lower alcohol tolerance or if you have not eaten or had enough water beforehand. To reduce this risk, you will complete a screening questionnaire before taking part to ensure that you are a low-risk, regular

drinker. If you do not drink alcohol regularly or have certain medical conditions, you will not be able to participate. Your alcohol dose will be calculated based on your body weight to avoid over-intoxication, and you will be closely supervised by trained research staff throughout the session.

Psychological Discomfort from Task Performance or completing the questionnaires: During the study, you will complete tasks such as reaction time and hazard perception assessments and may be asked questions about drinking and driving. You may feel that your performance is not as good as you expected, especially if you have consumed alcohol. You might feel self-conscious, embarrassed, or discouraged, particularly if you compare your results to others or believe you have "failed" a task. To help with this, we will clearly explain (in both the written information and verbal instructions) that the tasks are not diagnostic, and errors are completely normal and expected. will remind you that we are not judging you and that there are no right or wrong answers. You can stop or skip any part of the study if you feel uncomfortable, with no penalty. After your session, you will be offered a friendly and supportive debrief and a list of support services if you want to talk to someone afterwards, such as Lifeline (13 11 14) and the Alcohol and Drug Information Service (1800 250 015).

Impaired Function: Even after the testing ends, you may still feel some effects of the alcohol. These could include feeling tired, less coordinated, or less alert than usual, affecting your ability to make decisions or complete activities afterwards. Your breath alcohol concentration (BrAC) will be monitored regularly during the session. You will also receive water and snacks to help you recover and feel comfortable.

Driving While Intoxicated: Because you will be consuming alcohol, there is a risk that you may still be over the legal driving limit at the end of your session. To protect your safety, you will not be allowed to drive home. Even if you feel okay, your BrAC may still be above the legal or required limit. You will be asked to remain with the research team until your BrAC has dropped to 0.03% or lower on two consecutive measurements. You will be allowed to leave after signing a declaration agreeing to be escorted by your nominated legal adult. If you have a provisional driver's licence, your BrAC must be zero (0.00%) before you can leave.

Risk of motion sickness: The study includes a 25–30-minute driving simulation. The simulator is designed to minimise visual strain and discomfort. If you are prone to motion sickness, you might feel dizzy, nauseous, or disoriented. We will ask if you have had motion sickness before to reduce this risk. You can take breaks or stop the task anytime if you feel unwell. Also, water, fresh air, and short rests will be available throughout.

Risk of minor discomfort or inconvenience: Each session lasts 1.5 hours. There may be minor fatigue from completing computer-based tasks and concentration-heavy tasks. You can take breaks between tasks and skip anything you do not want to do. You will also receive a $600 Gift Pay voucher upon the conclusion of your participation to compensate you fairly for your time.

All participation is voluntary. You can take breaks, skip any part of the session, or withdraw from the study anytime. Your safety is a priority, and the research team is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment throughout your participation.

What will happen to the information about me?

The study follows strict privacy, confidentiality, and ethical standards to ensure your information is handled responsibly and kept safe at every stage. All information collected about you will remain confidential.

When you participate, we will collect information such as your questionnaire responses, results from driving and cognitive tasks, and biological samples (like breath or saliva). This information will be stored securely and handled according to national ethical guidelines and university policies. Any biological samples collected (saliva and breath) will be labelled only with your study code and destroyed after they are analysed, following biosafety procedures.

Your research data will be stored securely at the University of Queensland while conducting and following the study's conclusion.

During the study, we will assign you a unique study code to protect your identity; This code will be used on all your data and samples instead of your name. Your name and contact details will be stored separately from your study data in an encrypted file. These details are used only during the study to contact you about session times. All electronic data will be saved on password-protected university servers, and paper records will be stored in locked cabinets or archived securely. Only researchers who are listed on the approved ethics protocol will be able to access the data.

If you consent to future contacts, your personal information will be stored for 5 years in a password-protected file, separately from your participant code. Otherwise, all identifying information, such as your name, contact details, and the document that links your name to your study code, will be deleted to ensure your identity's confidentiality and protect you from unwanted contacts in the future. Additionally, at the end of the study, data from paper records will be scanned and saved digitally; then the paper records will be shredded. We also allow you to update your responses before your data is analysed.

Your data will be reused in future projects that are an extension of this project, closely related to this project, or in the same general area of this research. At the University of Queensland, your Consent Form will be stored securely for 15 years, and other raw data collected from you (deidentified data) will be stored for five years after the study is published. After these periods, all records will be permanently destroyed using secure methods. The metadata (research findings and outputs) will be retained indefinitely.

It is anticipated that the results of this research project will be published and/or presented in various forms. Information will be provided in any publication and/or presentation so you cannot be identified.

What will happen if I decide to withdraw?

Your participation in this research is voluntary, and you are free to withdraw from the study anytime without needing to provide any explanation. You would not receive any penalty or bias due to your withdrawal. Should you decide to withdraw and tick the relevant box in your Consent Form, all the information collected from/about you will be destroyed and not used in the research. Please note that you will be able to withdraw your data before the completion of all parts of the project. After this point, you cannot withdraw your data as any links with identifying information will have been destroyed. If you choose to withdraw, contact the research team by email at **drugdrivingenforcement@uq.edu.au**. Upon indicating your intention to withdraw, the researcher will send you a withdrawal form. Please complete and return that withdrawal form. You will receive partial reimbursement for the time you have already contributed.

Can I hear about the results of this research?

Yes, you are very welcome to learn about this study's results. Once the research is complete, we will summarise the main findings through The University of Queensland's research pages. This website will include project updates, key results, links to published journal articles or reports, and presentations at national and international conferences. You will be able to visit these sites to read about what we discovered:

Please note that we will only report results at the group level. This means the data will be averaged across all participants and presented in a way that does not identify you personally. Because this study does not produce individual-level health or clinical feedback, we will not provide personal results to participants. If you would like to receive a direct update or have any questions about the results once they are available, please contact Associate Professor Raimondo Bruno at 03 6226 2240 , at the University of Tasmania.

Who can I contact if I have any concerns about the project?

If you have questions about the study, you can contact Associate Professor Raimondo Bruno at 03 6226 2240 or Raimondo.Bruno@utas.edu.au and cc the study email drugdrivingenforcement@uq.edu.au.
This study has been approved by the University of Tasmania Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study, you can contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on (03) 6226 6254 or email human.ethics@utas.edu.au.

The Executive Officer is the person nominated to receive complaints from research participants. You will need to quote this research Ethics Approval Numbers – UQ: 2025/HE000945; UTAS: 2025/H40445.

Thank you for your interest in this study and for taking the time to read this information sheet. This information sheet is for you to keep. If you wish to participate in this study, you will be asked to sign a written consent form.