



Department for Transport: how thirty years of drink drive communications saved almost 2,000 lives

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## **SUMMARY**

This is the story of how communications changed drink driving behaviour over the course of thirty years from 1979 to 2009.

Four successive periods of communication tackled drink driving attitudes, acceptability, denial and decisions.

This relentless pursuit of potential drink drivers saved almost 2,000 lives and prevented over 10,000 serious injuries.

The value of this to society is £3bn. We estimate that for periods two, three and four of the campaign, every £1 spent on communications saved society £154, £12 and £38 respectively.

The campaign offers powerful learning for all who seek to change behaviour over the long term.

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## INTRODUCTION

In 1979, 28 people were killed or seriously injured (KSI) on our roads every day in drink driving accidents. By 2009 this had fallen to just four a day.

We intend to demonstrate the role of communications in this decline.

This is a challenging task. We must show what *hasn't* happened. The people who *didn't* drink then drive. The people who *didn't* die or become injured as a result. And do so across thirty years in which boom, bust, legislation, traffic volumes, safer vehicles and an array of road safety initiatives have all had an effect on levels of drink driving.





However we can, and will, demonstrate the lives saved and injuries prevented using a model that delicately teases out the effect of communications.

We'll also show *how* communications have achieved these effects. Social science<sup>1</sup> has identified three key factors in changing drink driving behaviour that communications can influence:

1. Attitudes – particularly one's understanding of the risks of drink driving.
2. Norms – one's perceptions of what others think of drink driving.
3. Drink driver image – how one's image of drink drivers compares with self image.

Reviewing communications strategy across the thirty years against these factors reveals four distinct periods of communication (Figure 1) which we will explore in turn:


**Figure 1** 4 Distinct Periods of Communication

Period	1	2	3	4
Years	1979 - 1987	1987 - 1992	1992 - 2002	2002 - 2009
Behaviour change focus	Attitudes	Norms & drink driver image	Norms & Attitudes	Attitudes
Communications strategy	Heightening the perception of risk	Creating social unacceptability	Confronting drivers in denial	Pinpointing the moment of decision
				

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<sup>1</sup> Andrew Darnton's "Overview of behaviour change models and their uses" for Government Social Research (2008) identifies Gibbons and Gerrard's Prototype/Willingness Model (2003), as the best model for predicting and influencing drink driving behaviour. These three factors are taken from that model.

## Chapter 1: 1979 to 1987 – Heightening the perception of risk

Period	1	2	3	4
Years	1979 - 1987			
Behaviour change focus	Attitudes			
Communications strategy	Heightening the perception of risk 			

Drink and driving have combined to devastating effect since motor vehicles first appeared on the road in 1897.<sup>2</sup> The government tightened drink drive legislation in 1932, and by the 60s had conclusively demonstrated the effects of alcohol on driving<sup>3</sup>, paving the way for landmark legislation in 1967<sup>4</sup>. Supported by a one off communications campaign, this initially reduced the proportion of accidents involving alcohol but this rose throughout the 70s<sup>5</sup> until the government turned to communications to help reduce an unacceptable level of casualties.

1979 is the first year for which accurate records of drink drive attitudes, behaviour and KSIs are available. In that year alone nearly 10,000 KSIs were caused by drink driving.

Young male drivers in particular were over-represented in these statistics and to understand what was driving their behaviour we look at the factors from the behaviour change model.

*Attitudes:* Young male drivers had little sense of the risks of drink driving:

- They typically estimated the legal limit to be two pints, but believed they could drink three pints without affecting their driving.<sup>6</sup>
- They felt there was little danger of being stopped by the police and facing legal consequences. Over half believed that it was just bad luck if you were caught.<sup>7</sup>

*Norms:* The levels of drink driving surrounding these young men were hardly conducive to positive behaviour. Over half of all male drivers and nearly two thirds of young male drivers were drink driving on a weekly basis.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>2</sup> That very year, one George Smith was the first person to be charged with drink driving when he crashed his taxi into the front of 165 New Bond Street.

<sup>3</sup> Drew G. C. Effect of Small Doses of Alcohol on a Skill Resembling Driving. London: Medical Research Council;1959.

<sup>4</sup> The Road Safety Act of 1967 introduced a blood alcohol limit and a new drink driving criminal offence.

<sup>5</sup> The proportion of crashes where alcohol was a factor had fallen from 25% to 15% from 1967 to 1968, however, from 1968 to 1975 this rose steadily upwards to exceed 35% (DfT statistics).

<sup>6</sup> BMRB Tracking for DfT, 1979

<sup>7</sup> ibid

<sup>8</sup> ibid

*Drink driver image:* Given these levels of drink driving, young men’s images of drink drivers were based on friends and family and likely to be aspirational.

This was reinforced by popular culture. Prime-time television showed drinking every six minutes, but rarely showed negative consequences.<sup>9</sup>

### **The Solution**

The combined Department for Transport (DfT) and agency team<sup>10</sup> began by tackling young men’s attitudes towards drink driving.

Their strategy was to offset the *rewards* of drinking pleasure with a heightened sense of the *risks* of drink driving.

Advertising would surround them with a range of messages that left no room for doubt about the risks that drink drivers posed to themselves and to others.

Communications throughout the period focussed on two areas (Figure 2):

1. *The effects of drinking:* Educating drivers on the effect of even small amounts of alcohol on their driving performance and the terrible effect on others of their actions.
2. *The chances of detection:* Highlighting that if they did drink and drive then they risked being caught, and showing the legal consequences they could face.

The advertising was targeted at young men, but intended to be overheard by all drivers. The media strategy surrounded them with multiple executions across television, cinema, radio, print and poster advertising.

Activity initially focussed on the peak season for drink driving – Christmas - and later ran during the summer, when warmer weather leads to a second peak. This bi-annual approach became the model for most subsequent activity.

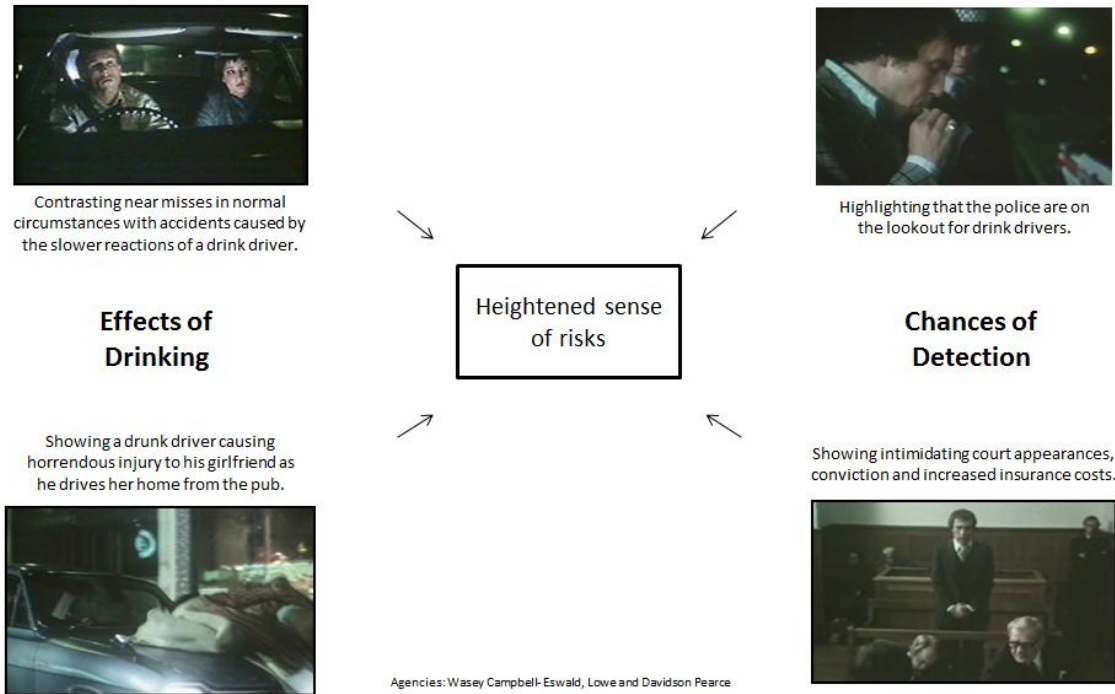
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<sup>9</sup> “Drinking and Smoking on Television, 1950-1982, Warren Breed and James R. De Foe (1984)”. Over the next thirty years alcohol portrayal in the media would become ever more pervasive without becoming any more representative of the dangers. Source: “Fancy a pint? Alcohol use and smoking in soap operas, S. Coyne, T. Ahmed (2009)”.

<sup>10</sup> At least nine creative agencies have worked with DfT on this campaign. For simplicity, we refer to them collectively as “the team” throughout: 1979-1982 - Wasey Campbell Ewald, 1983 - Lowe, 1984-1986 - Davidson Pearce, 1987-1989 - Waldron Allen Henry, 1990- Miller and Leaves, W/K&R, 1991-1997 - D’Arcy Masius Benton & Bowles, 1998-2004 - Abbot Mead Vickers, 2004-present - Leo Burnett.

**Figure 2**

**Advertising 1979 to 1987:  
Heightening the perception of risk**



**THE RESULTS: HOW HEIGHTENING RISK WORKED**

This section will demonstrate that in this period:

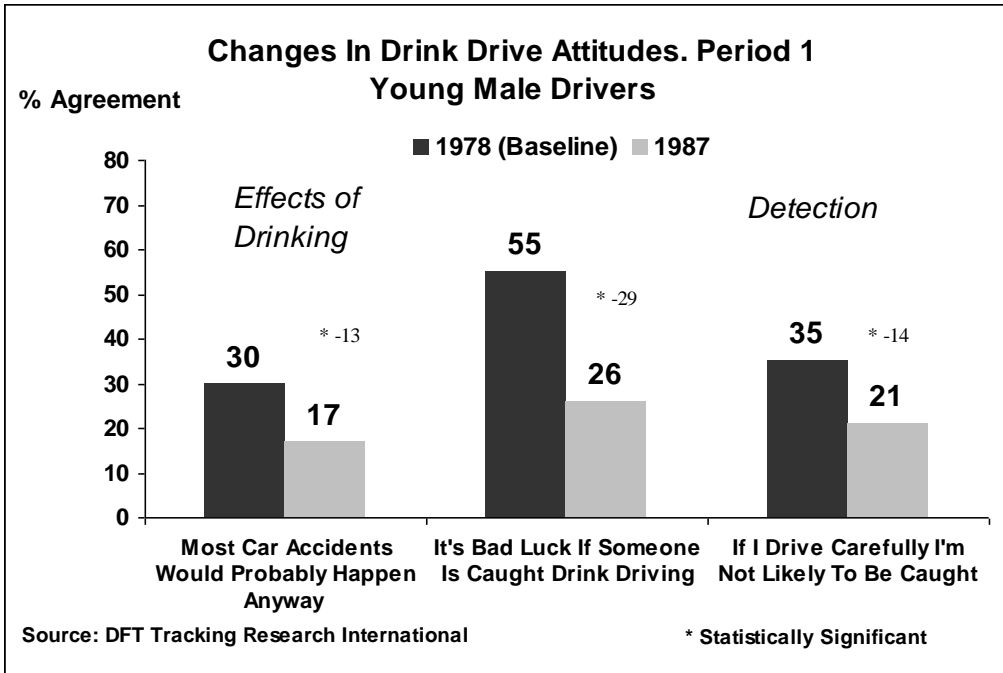
- Communications helped change attitudes towards drink driving
- Communications reduced drink driving behaviour
- Drink drive road casualties fell

In Chapter 5, we look holistically across all periods to demonstrate the casualties prevented by communications, the associated savings to society and the return on marketing investment.

**Communications helped change attitudes towards drink driving in Period 1**

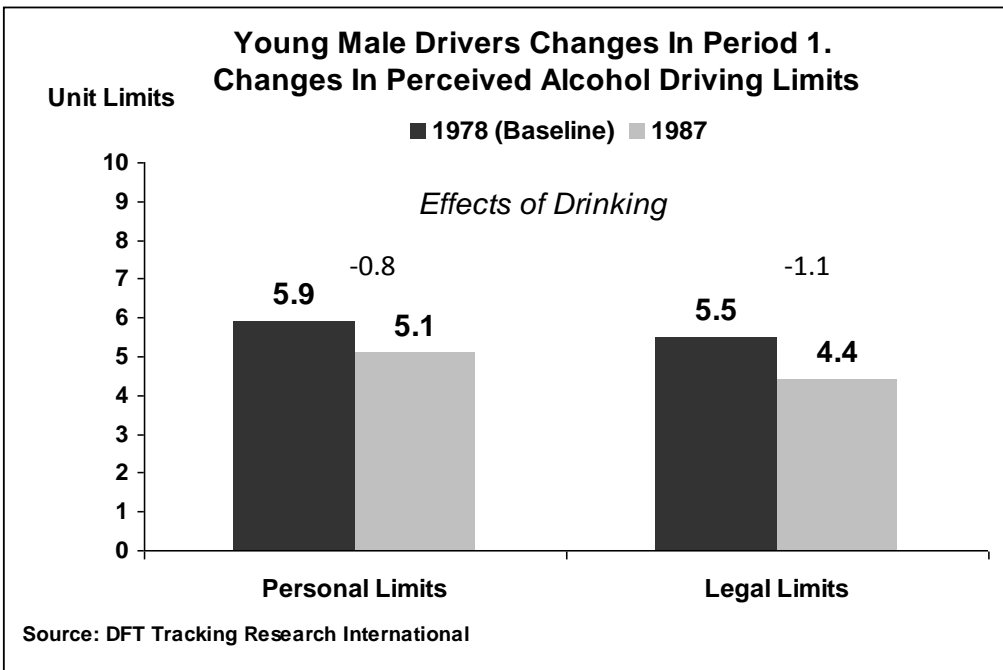
Attitudes targeted by communications saw substantial changes. The period saw decreases in attitudes related to both the effects of drinking and detection (Figure 3).

**Figure 3**



The period also saw a reduction in young male drivers' perceptions of their own personal limits<sup>11</sup>, and of the legal limits. (Figure 4)

**Figure 4**



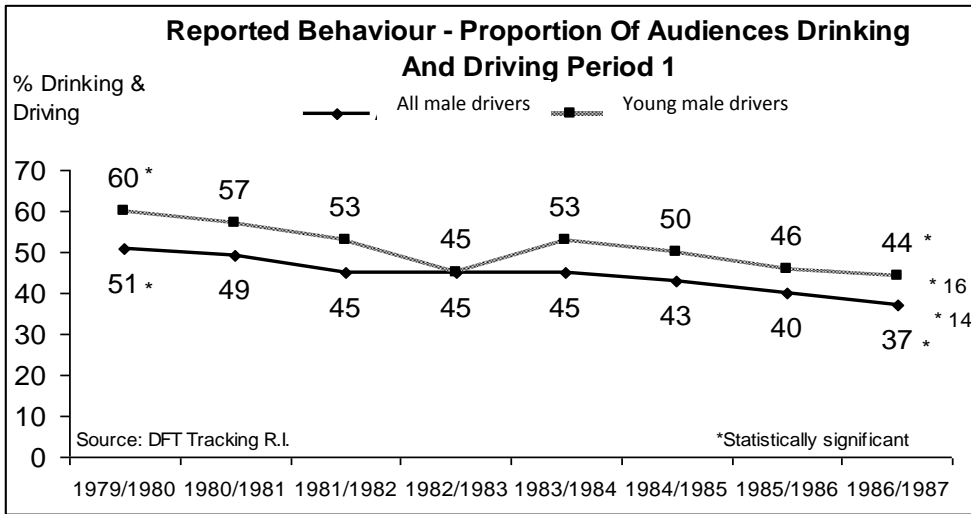
<sup>11</sup> The amount they felt they could safely drink without it affecting their driving

**Communications reduced reported drink driving behaviour in Period 1**

First we look at how behaviour changed across the whole period. DfT research offers an accurate picture of drink driving behaviour changes via reported behaviour<sup>12</sup>.

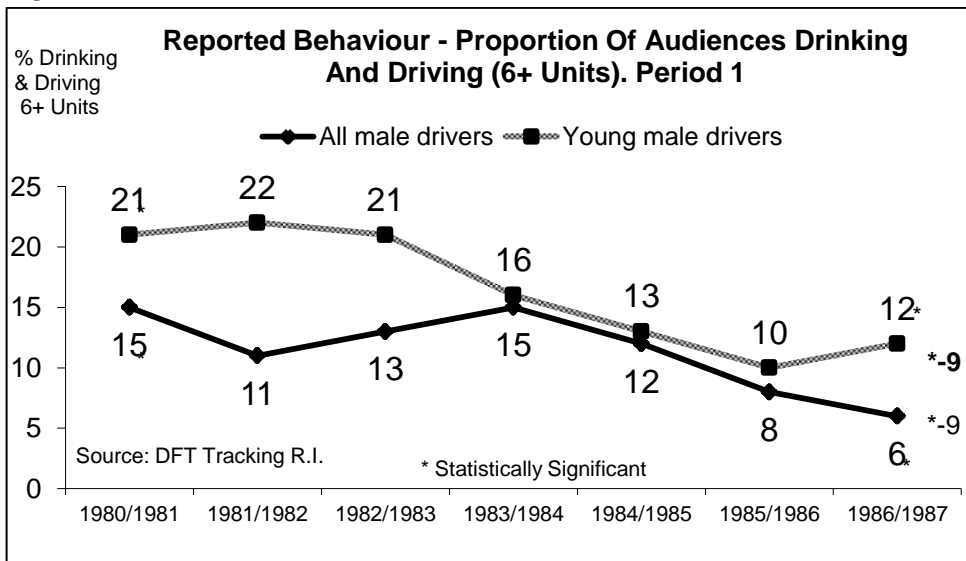
The percentage of male drivers who drove after any drinking fell from 51% to 37%, and fell from 60% to 44% amongst young male drivers (Figure 5).

**Figure 5**



The percentage of male drivers who drove after drinking 6 or more units (around 3 pints of beer) fell from 21% to 12%, and fell from 15% to 6% amongst young men (Figure 6).

**Figure 6**



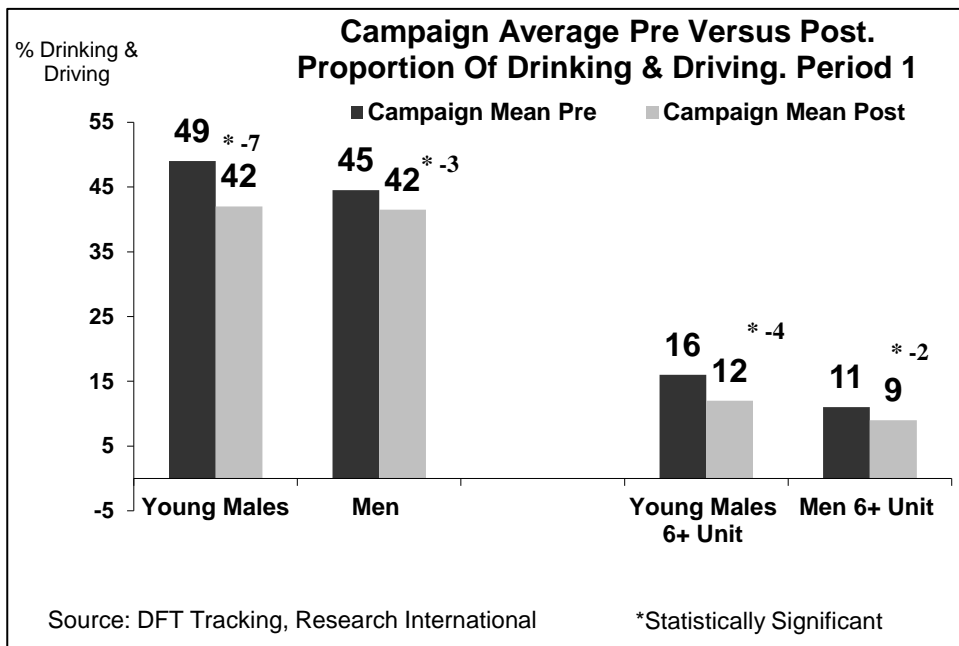
<sup>12</sup> The DfT tracking methodology from 1979 to 1997 used a diary approach to get an accurate picture of drink driving behaviour. It disguised interest in drinking and driving by looking separately at drinking occasions and how the respondent left the venue. The recorded levels proved consistent with behaviour from other sources and therefore although provided by respondents, they offer a more reliable indicator than more standard “claimed behaviour” approaches in this field.



To see the direct effect of communications on reported behaviour we look at the average change between behaviour measures taken immediately pre and post individual activity bursts (Figure 7):

- Driving after any drinking fell on average 7% pre to post amongst young male drivers and 3% amongst all male drivers.
- Driving after drinking over 6 units fell on average 4% pre to post amongst young male drivers and 2% amongst all male drivers.

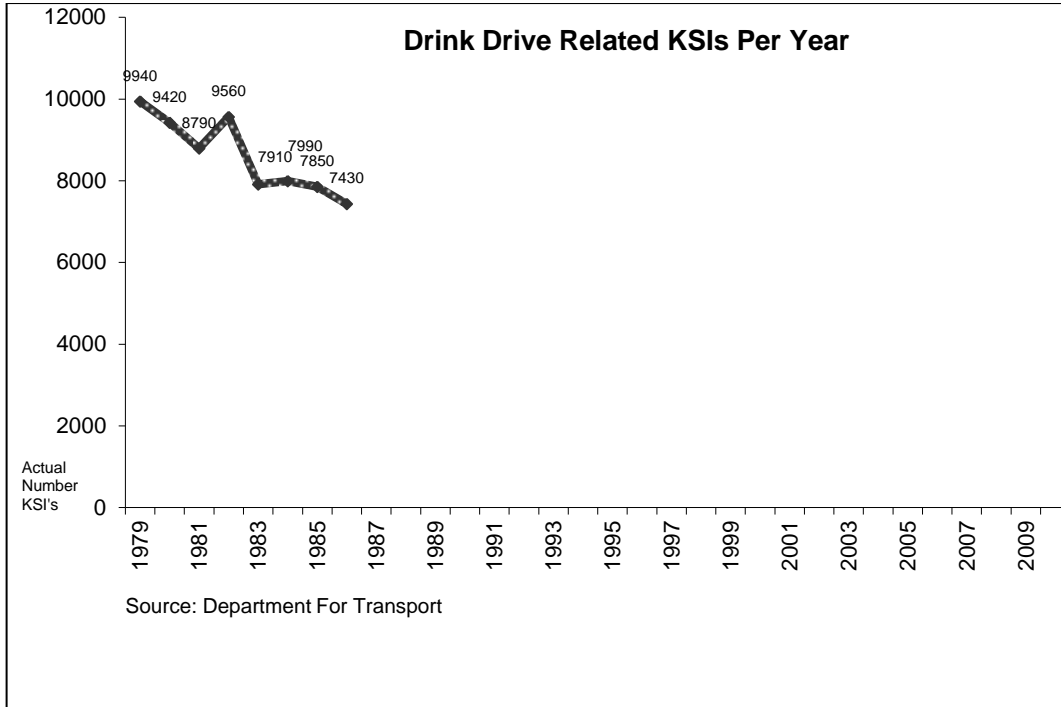
**Figure 7**





**Drink drive road *casualties* fell in Period 1**

Drink drive KSIs fell by a quarter from 9,940 in 1979 to 7,430 in 1986. (Figure 8)

**Figure 8**



## Chapter 2: 1987 to 1992 - Creating social unacceptability

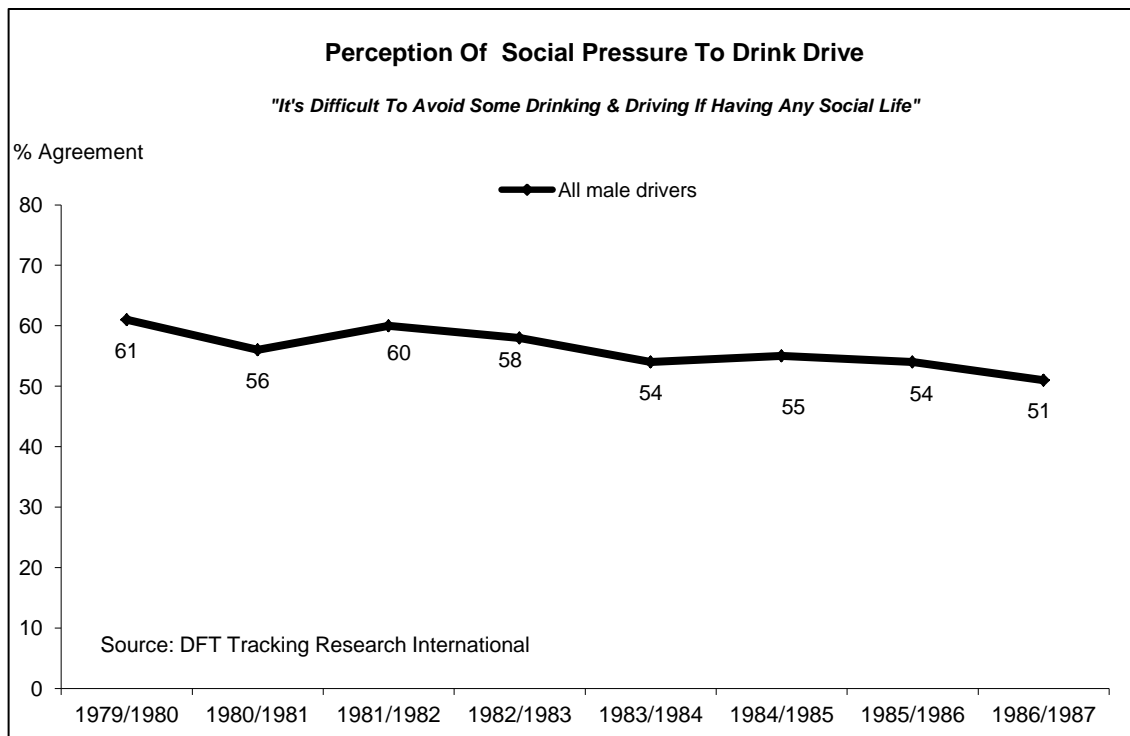
Period	1	2	3	4
Years	1979 - 1987	1987 - 1992		
Behaviour change focus	Attitudes	Norms & drink driver image		
Communications strategy	Heightening the perception of risk 	Creating social unacceptability 		

Referring back to the behaviour change model we can take stock of the situation in 1987:

*Attitudes:* had improved dramatically across the preceding period. However, drink driving casualties remained unacceptably high.

*Norms:* The team became concerned by the continued social acceptability of drink driving. Perceived levels of peer pressure had not fallen in line with other measures in previous years (Figure 9).

**Figure 9**



The team saw an opportunity. They believed that if young men felt that their friends, family and community shunned those that drank and drove they would think twice before getting behind the wheel after a few pints.

They set out to create a sea-change in the social acceptability of drink driving. The Transport Minister at the time described this as “changing the water in which the fish swim”.

This represented a fundamental change in strategy. Rather than targeting young men directly, communications would be aimed at society as whole. Rather than encompassing a breadth of messages, communications would be resolutely single-minded. Rather than focussing on *attitudes* they would change *norms* and make drink driving socially unacceptable.

The brief was to create nothing less than disgust at those who drank then drove.

The creative approach was to show the heart-rending emotional responses of people involved in drink drive tragedies: such as school-children reacting to the death of a class-mate, or a fireman to a crash scene involving a mother and baby (Figure 10).

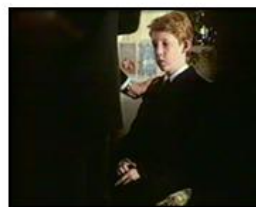
Television and radio advertising told these emotive stories across both the Christmas and summer seasons.

**Figure 10**

### Advertising 1987 to 1992: Creating social unacceptability



**The Children's Story**  
School children's heart-breaking reaction to the death of a class mate.



**Mourning Family**  
A narrator tells the story of how a young man lost his life, whilst we see images of his family coping with the loss.



**The Fireman's Story**  
A fireman breaks down after seeing a crash scene involving a mother and baby.



**Rehabilitation**  
A man struggles to learn how to walk again after a drink drive accident.



**Wheelchair**  
A young man recounts the accident that caused his paralysis.



**Kathy**  
A young girl cries whilst we overhear her mother railing at her father for killing a little boy.

**THE RESULTS: HOW MAKING DRINK DRIVING SOCIALLY UNACCEPTABLE WORKED**

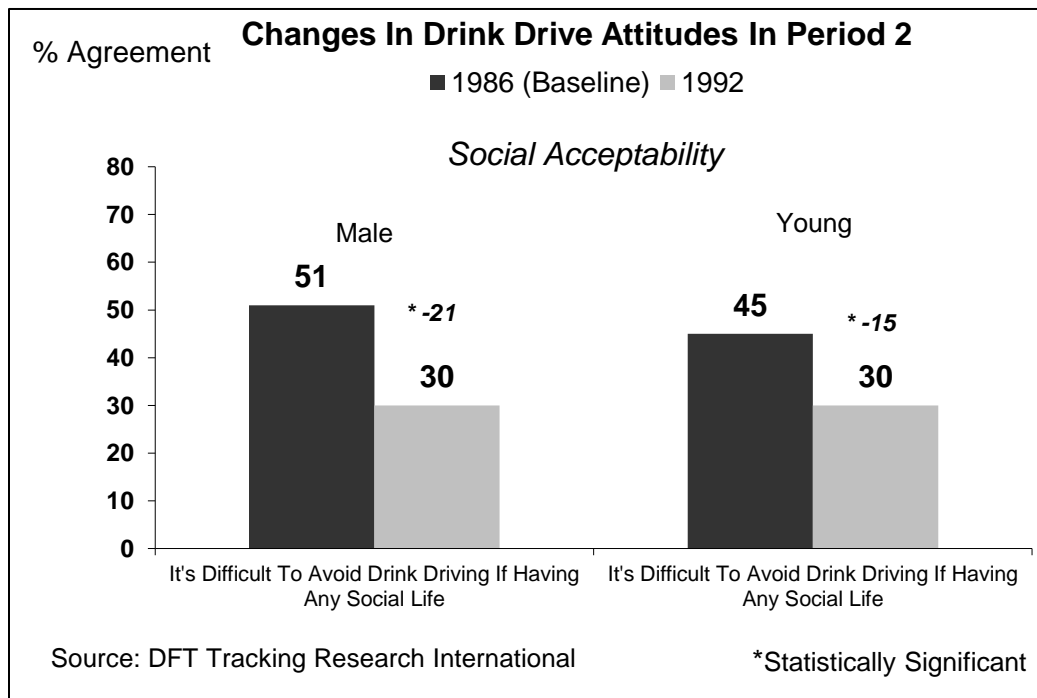
In this period communications:

- reduced the social acceptability of drink driving
- reduced drink driving behaviour
- reduced drink drive casualties

**Communications reduced the *social acceptability* of drink driving in Period 2**

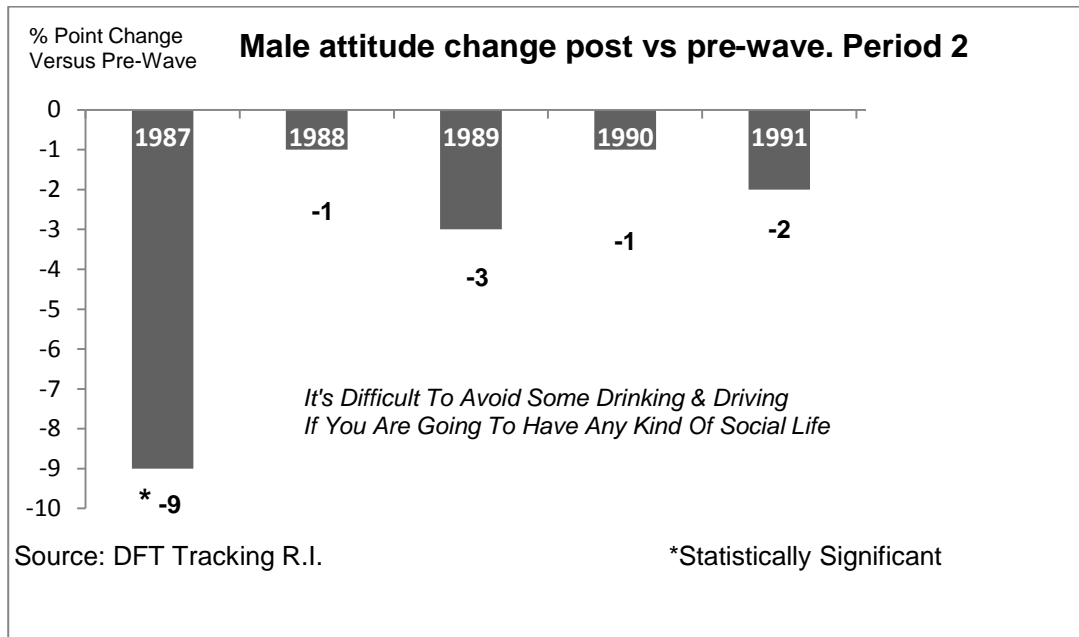
Across this period, communications helped drive substantial falls in the level of perceived peer pressure (Figure 11).

**Figure 11**



What's more, we see a communications effect in decreased in levels of perceived peer pressure between tracking immediately pre and post activity (Figure 12).<sup>13</sup>

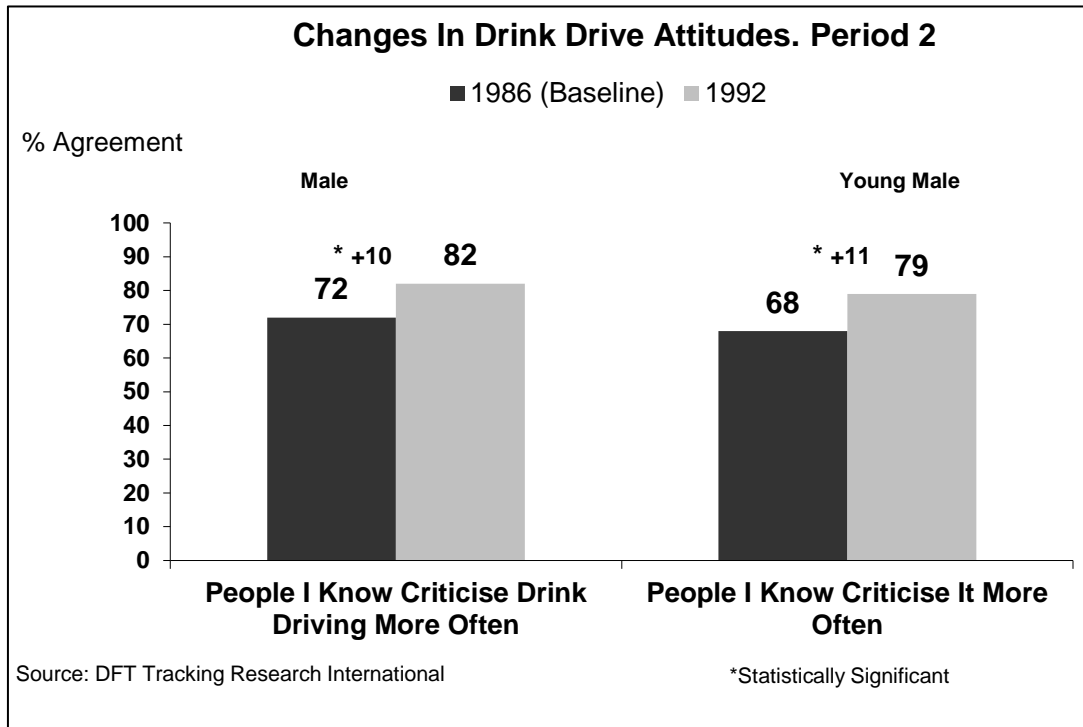
**Figure 12**



<sup>13</sup> Small sample sizes preclude comparison with young male drivers on this measure

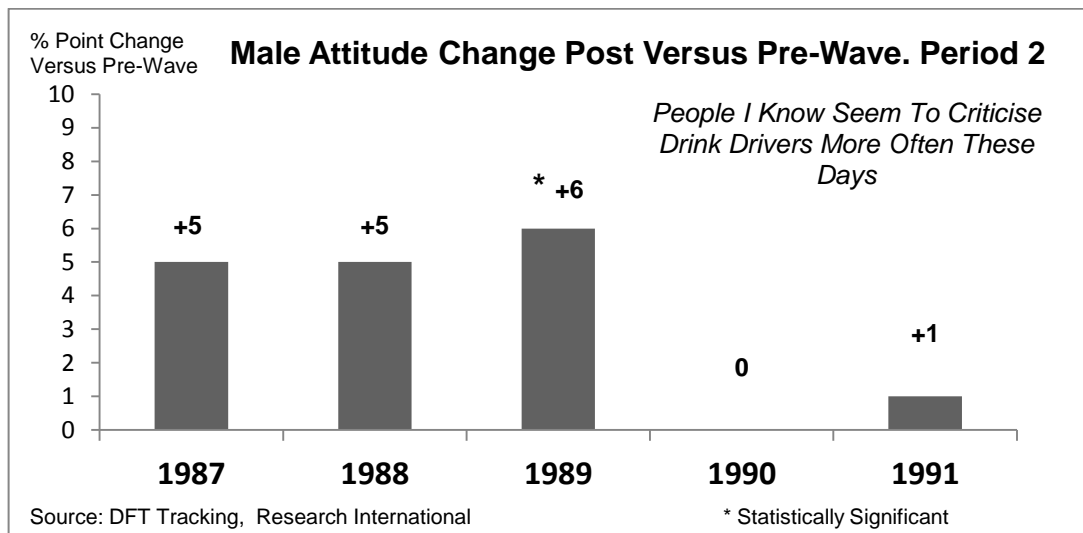
We also see corresponding increases across the entire period in perceptions that “people I know criticise drink driving more often” (Figure 13).

**Figure 13**



Again, we see a communications effect in increased perceived levels of criticism immediately pre and post activity (Figure 14).<sup>14</sup>

**Figure 14**

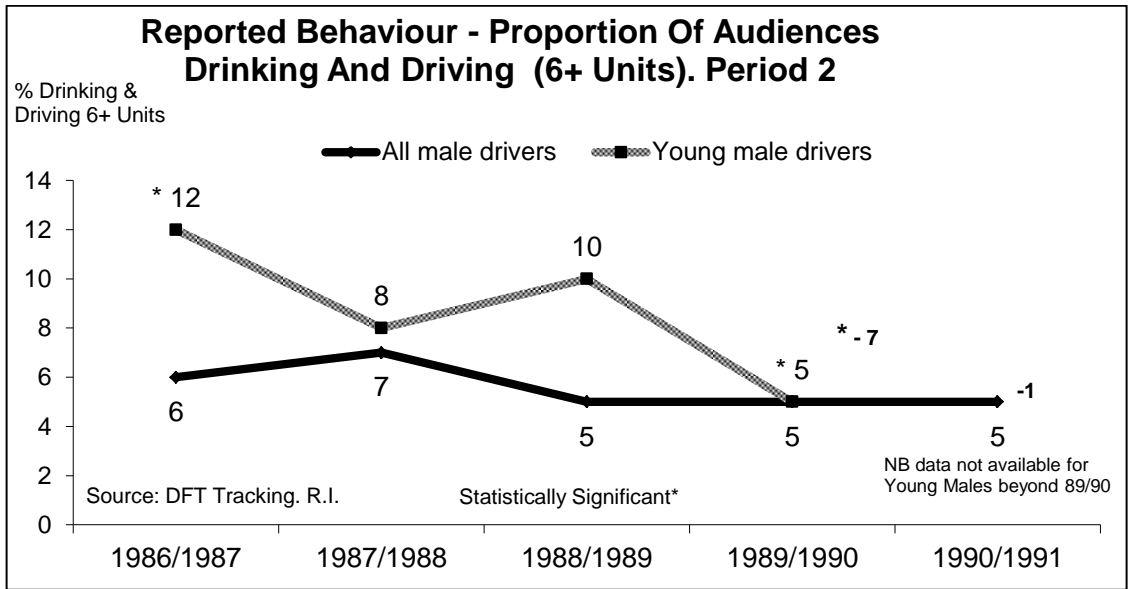


<sup>14</sup> Small sample sizes preclude comparison with young male drivers on this measure

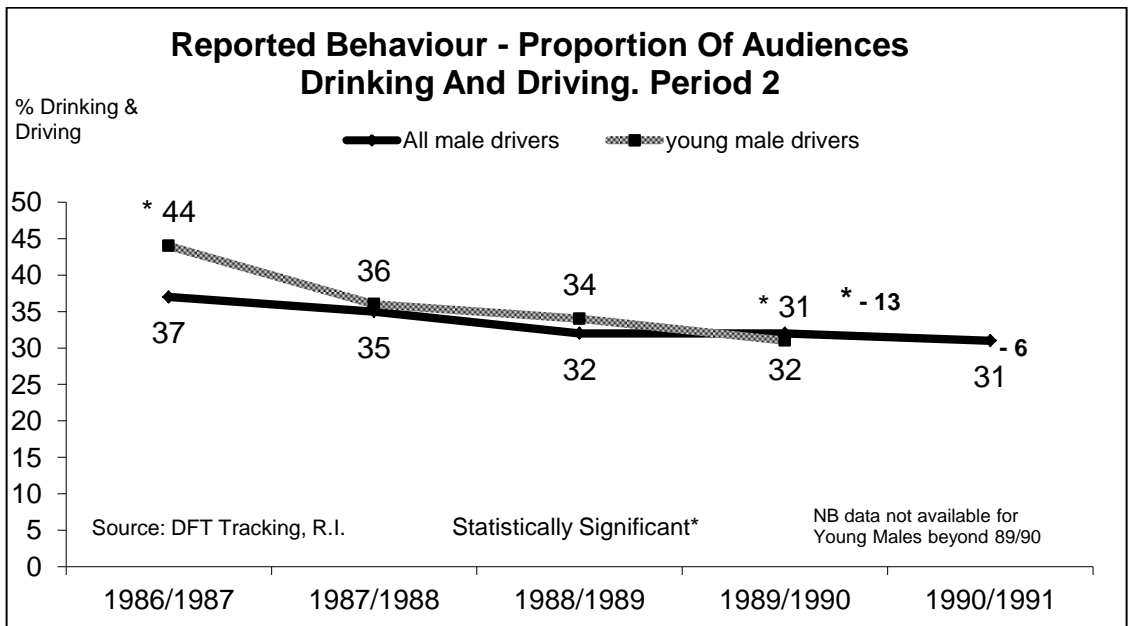
**Communications reduced drink driving behaviour in Period 2**

The percentage of young male drivers driving after 6 or more units (around 3 pints and above) more than halved in this period (Figure 15). These are similar declines to Period 1 despite the fact that in Period 2 they started from a lower base<sup>15</sup>, indicating an acceleration in behaviour change in Period 2. We also see a 13% drop in young male drivers driving after any drinking (Figure 16).

**Figure 15**



**Figure 16**



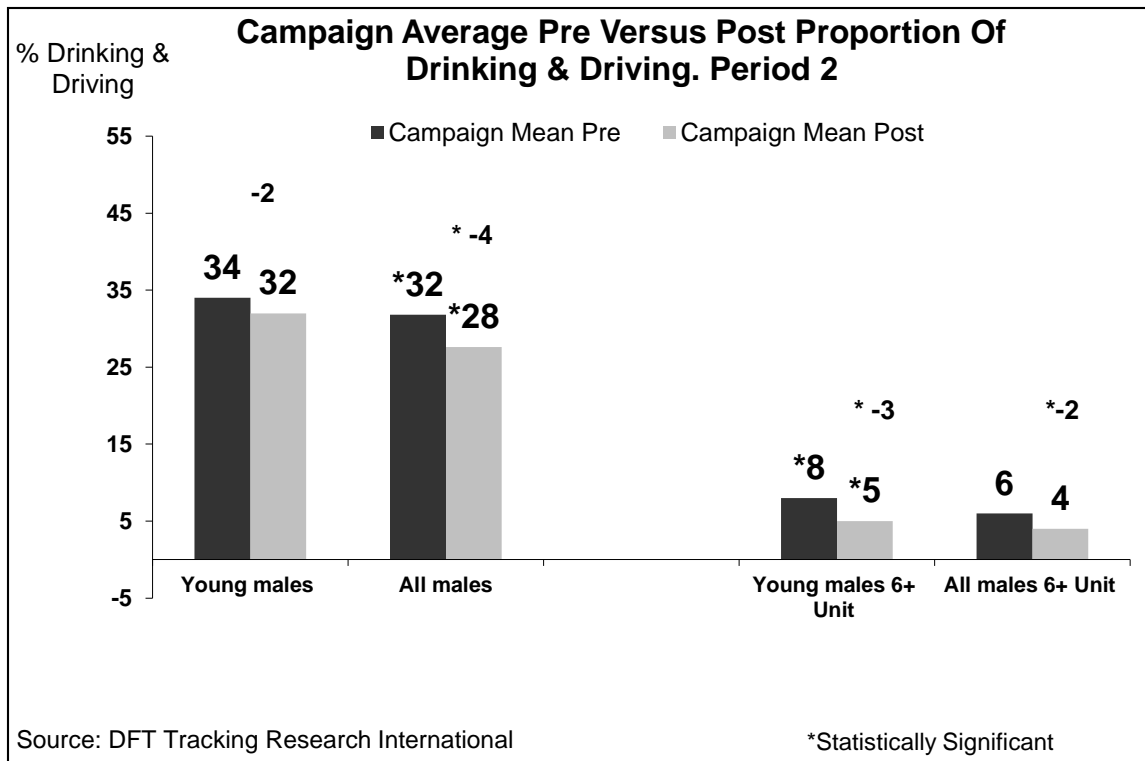
<sup>15</sup> Young male drivers drinking 6+ units fell 9% from 21% to 12% over the 6 years from 1979 to 1986 compared with a drop of 7% in just 5 years in Period 2 and this was coming from a lower (i.e. more difficult) baseline.



We see a communications effect in the average change between behaviour measures taken immediately pre and post individual activity bursts (Figure 17). The decreases here show the effect of communications on behaviour:

- Driving after any drinking fell on average 2% pre to post activity amongst young male drivers and 4% amongst all male drivers.

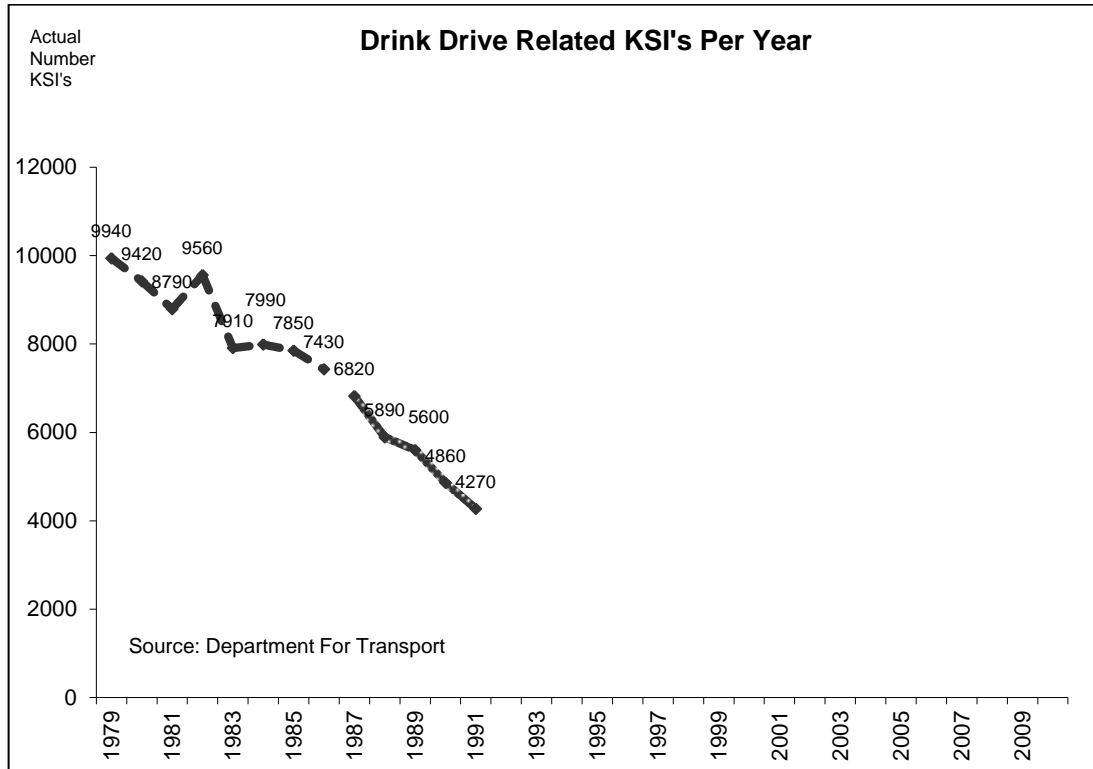
**Figure 17**






**Communications reduced drink drive casualties in Period 2**

KSIs dropped from 6,820 in 1986 to 4,270 in 1992. A decrease of 37%. As we will see in Chapter 5, communications accounted for a substantial proportion of the casualties prevented in Period 2. (Figure 18)

**Figure 18**



## Chapter 3: 1992 to 2002 – Confronting drivers in denial

Period	1	2	3	4
Years	1979 - 1987	1987 - 1992	1992 - 2002	
Behaviour change focus	Attitudes	Norms & drink driver image	Norms & Attitudes	
Communications strategy	Heightening the perception of risk 	Creating social unacceptability 	Confronting drivers in denial 	

The first decade of concerted drink drive communications had proved a success. Major in-roads had been created by heightening an awareness of the risks and then building on this to create social unacceptability. The next decade was to prove tougher by comparison.

The social context was becoming ever more conducive to drink driving.

### A new culture of intoxication

*Norms* – A ‘culture of intoxication’<sup>16</sup> was dramatically changing norms around broader drinking behaviours amongst young people:

- Alcohol consumption doubled across the 90s<sup>17</sup>, after relative stability in the 70s and 80s<sup>18</sup>
- Higher sessional consumption was fuelled by stronger drinks (alcopops, stronger lagers and so on), targeted aspirational advertising and redesigned pubs and bars<sup>19</sup>
- Norms that had previously constrained drunkenness, such as social condemnation of visible loss of self-control were disappearing<sup>20</sup>.

*Drink driver image* – The consumption of alcohol and its consequences were increasingly disconnected in popular culture. Drinking featured every four minutes on prime time television, with few depictions of negative outcomes. An explosion of ‘lads’ media<sup>21</sup> offered equally unbalanced portrayals of drinking<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> “Binge Drinking, British Alcohol Policy and the new culture of intoxication” Measham, F and Brain, K, 2005.

<sup>17</sup> “Binge Drinking”: The Meanings, Motivations and Management of Contemporary Alcohol Consumption”, Measham, F, 2004.

<sup>18</sup> (Duffy 1991, May 1992) referenced in *Illegal Leisure Revisited*, Aldridge, A, Measham, F, Parker, H, Williams, L, 2011

<sup>19</sup> “Drinking with Design: Alcopops, Designer Drinks and Youth Culture”. Brain, K and Parker, H, 1997.

<sup>20</sup> “Youth Alcohol and the Emergence of the Post-Modern Alcohol Order” Occasional Paper No.1, London Institute of Alcohol Studies. Brain, K, 2000.

<sup>21</sup> The circulation of the top 4 young men’s magazines more than doubled from 1995 to 2002. Source: ABC.

<sup>22</sup> Loaded’s launch issue in 1994 proudly proclaimed “Loaded is...drinking, eating, playing and living. Loaded is the man who believes he can do ANYTHING.”

*Attitudes* - Qualitative research<sup>23</sup> revealed that young men now had a strong sense that drink driving was socially unacceptable. However they were failing to apply this powerful moral condemnation to their own behaviour. Why? Because they defined a *drink* driver as someone who was clearly *drunk*. They admitted to driving after a “quick drink” but joined in society’s disdain for those who drove after a “skinful” without seeing any contradiction.

### **1992-1998: Targeting attitudes to low level drinking**

The next six years focussed on changing how young male drivers thought about driving after a ‘**quick drink**’. They also aimed to create clearly negative images of drink drivers and reinforce drink driving norms to counteract wider drinking permissiveness.

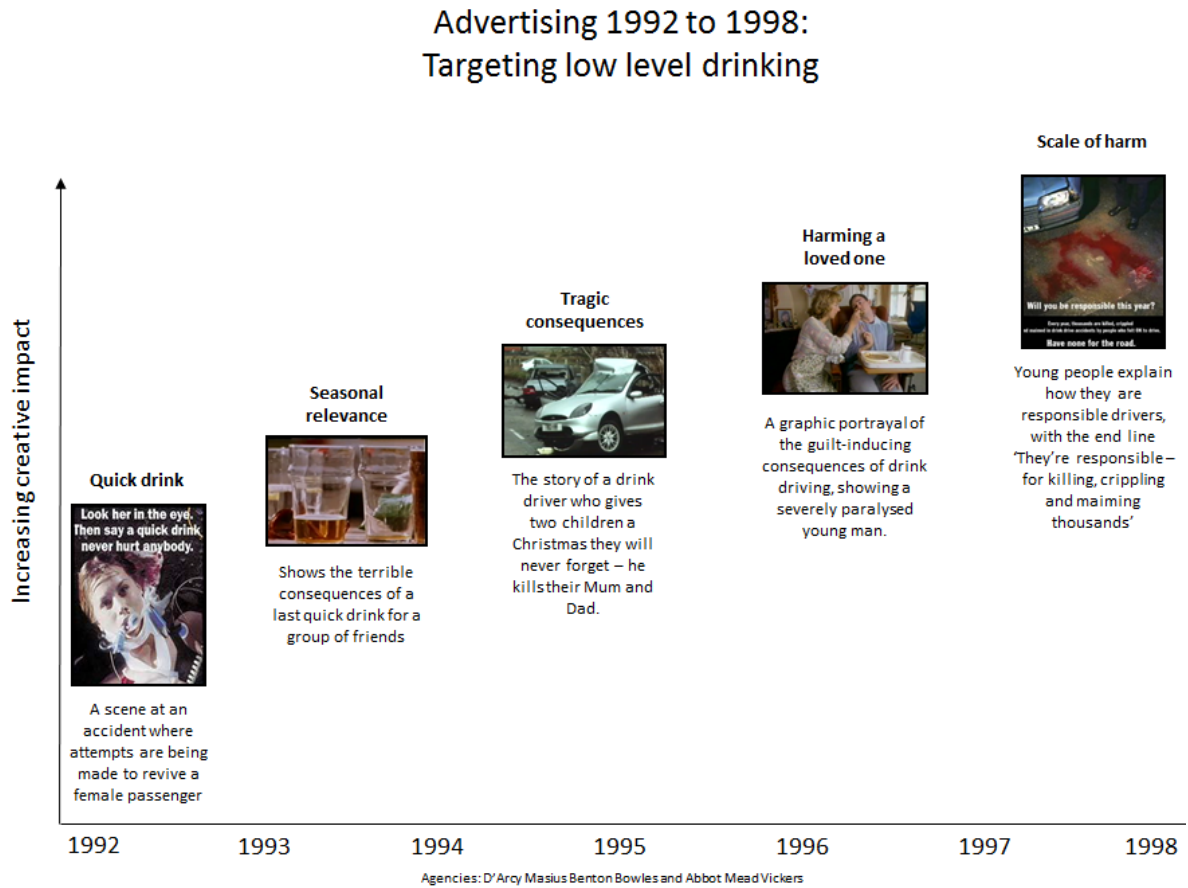
These ‘quick drink’ campaigns became increasingly hard-hitting as research revealed ways to increase their impact (Figure 19).

- **1992 – a ‘quick drink’ can cause a horrendous accident.**
  - Starting to dial up the consequences of low level drinking
- **1993 – 1994 – building greater seasonal relevance.**
  - Tailoring campaigns by showing festive and summer occasions shattered by the effects of a quick drink.
- **1994-1995 – tragic consequences for even the nicest people.**
  - Showing an otherwise responsible man who kills the parents of two children at Christmas.
- **1995-1997 – the guilt of harming a loved one.**
  - Graphically portraying the guilt-inducing consequences caused by a quick pint.
- **1997-1998 – the scale of harm for which young drink drivers are responsible.**
  - Emphasising that careless irresponsibility harmed thousands.

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<sup>23</sup> Annie Wicks, APG Creative Planning Awards, 1995

**Figure 19**



**1998 - 2002: Confronting young men with reality**

Towards the end of the 90s, qualitative research revealed an issue with this escalating creative arms race. Young men “knew the people in ads were just actors and actresses playing a role’. They were not real, so people post rationalised that the seriousness of the message was 'not real' either.”<sup>24</sup>.

The team responded by confronting young male drink drivers with the stark reality of what faced them that night if they chose to drink and drive: (Figure 20)

- **1998 - 2000 – “someone will die tonight, don’t let it be you”**
  - A series of real road accidents were graphically reconstructed to show that this was what was happening right now on the roads.
- **2000 - 2002 – “one tradition we could do without”**
  - Familiar Christmas songs were juxtaposed with horrific accident scenes taken from real police footage.

<sup>24</sup> Tara Macleod, APG Creative Planning Awards, 1997

**Figure 20**

**Advertising 1998 to 2002:  
Confronting young drivers with reality**

<p data-bbox="422 441 568 472">1998-2000</p> <p data-bbox="292 478 706 556"><b>Someone will die tonight, don't let it be you</b></p> 	<p data-bbox="1071 441 1218 472">2000-2002</p> <p data-bbox="974 478 1315 556"><b>One tradition we could do without</b></p> 
<p data-bbox="259 913 738 1020">Reconstructing a series of real road accidents in graphic detail. Viewers were confronted with 15 different ads to convey the sense that this was what was happening right now on the roads.</p>	<p data-bbox="901 913 1385 1020">Juxtaposing familiar Christmas songs with horrific accident scenes taken from real police footage, bringing to life the stark reality of the consequences of drink driving.</p>

Agency: Abbot Mead Vickers

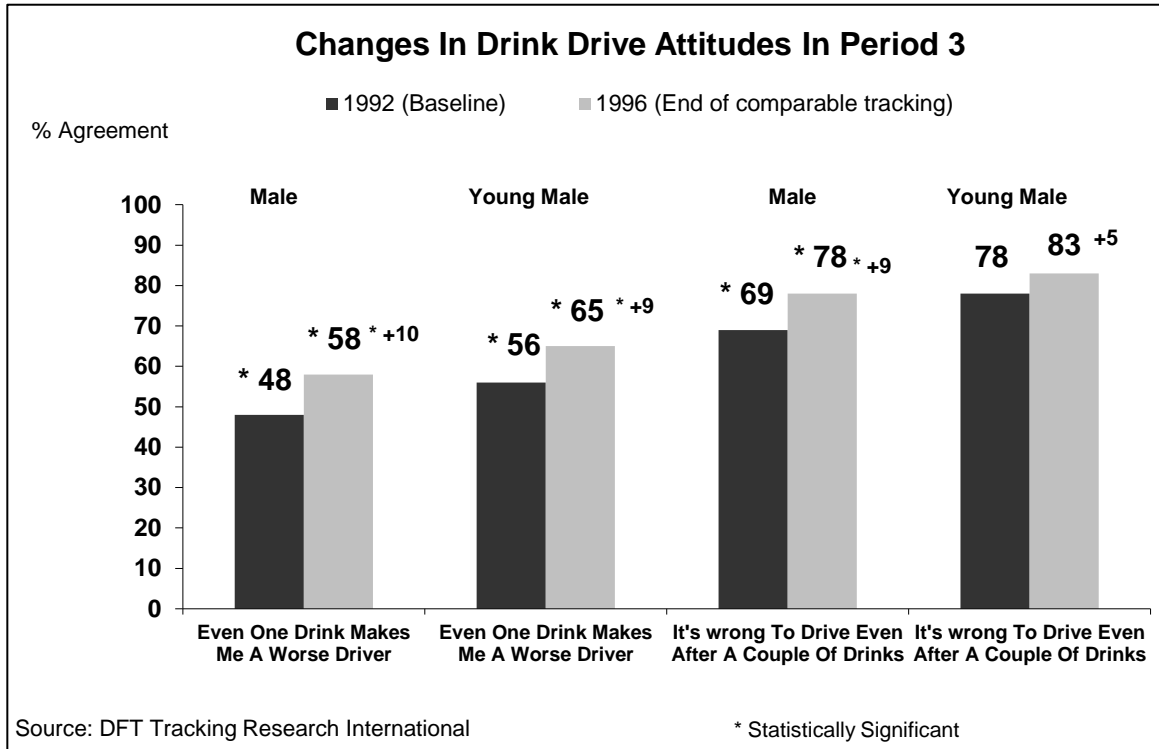
**THE RESULTS: HOW CONFRONTING DRIVERS' DENIAL WORKED**

In Period 3 communications drove further improvements to drink drive attitudes and behaviour, in turn helping reduce drink drive casualties. These gains were slim. However, in the context of the wider drinking context, holding onto previous gains and making slight improvements in key areas represented a real achievement.

**Drink drive communications changed *attitudes* to driving after a quick drink**

We see gains on a range of measures related to the ‘quick drink’ messaging in communications<sup>25</sup>. Amongst all male drivers and young male drivers agreement that “Even one drink makes me a worse driver” and “It’s wrong to drive even after a couple of drinks” increased significantly. (Figure 21)

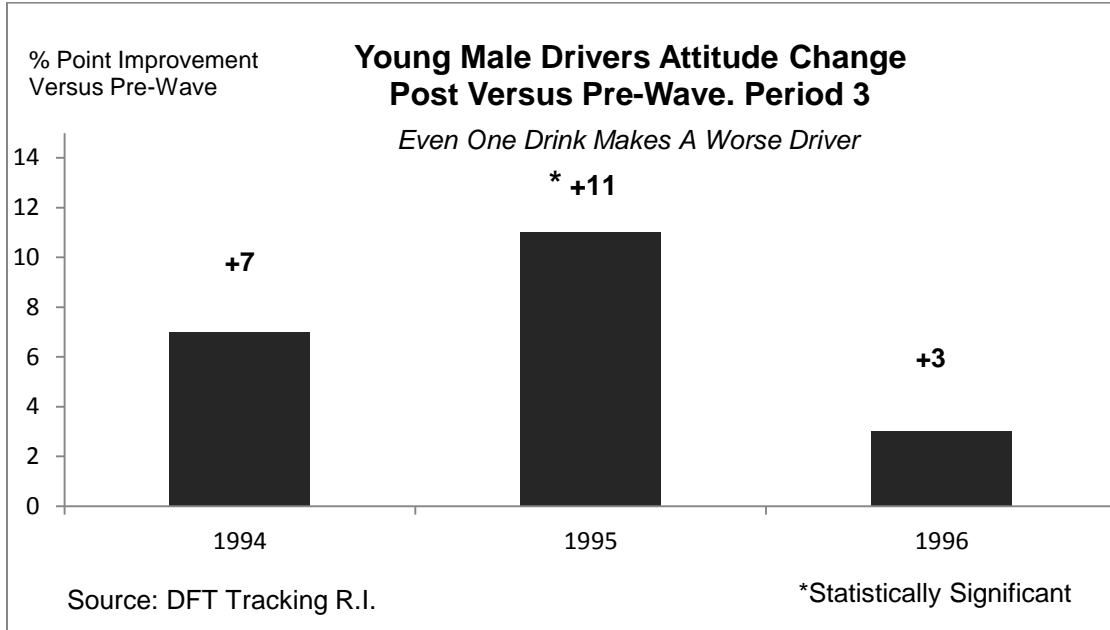
**Figure 21**



<sup>25</sup> Due to a questionnaire change in 1996 we are unable to compare attitudes at the start and end of the period, but we can look separately at 1992 to 1996 and then 1997 to 2002.

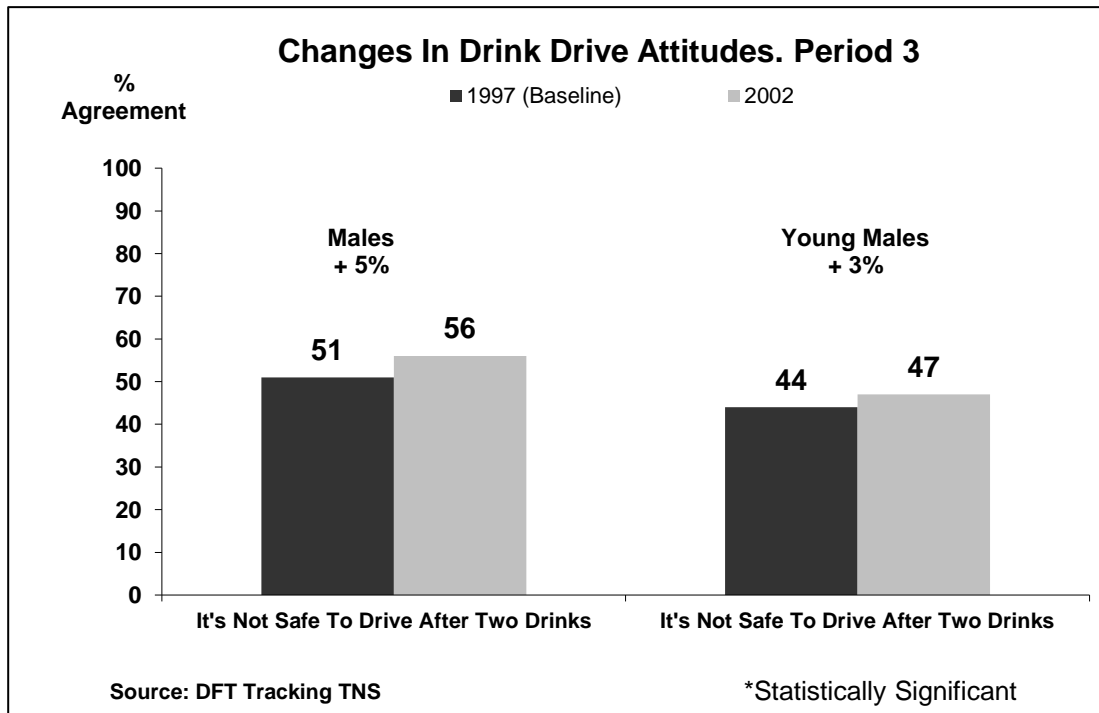
As in previous periods we see a comms effect in the change in these attitudes immediately pre and post activity (Figure 22), and tracking showed similar pre to post increases for “It’s wrong to drink even after a couple of pints”.

**Figure 22**



Between 1997 and 2002 we see a continuing trend in agreement with the dangers of drink driving, albeit at a slower pace (Figure 23).

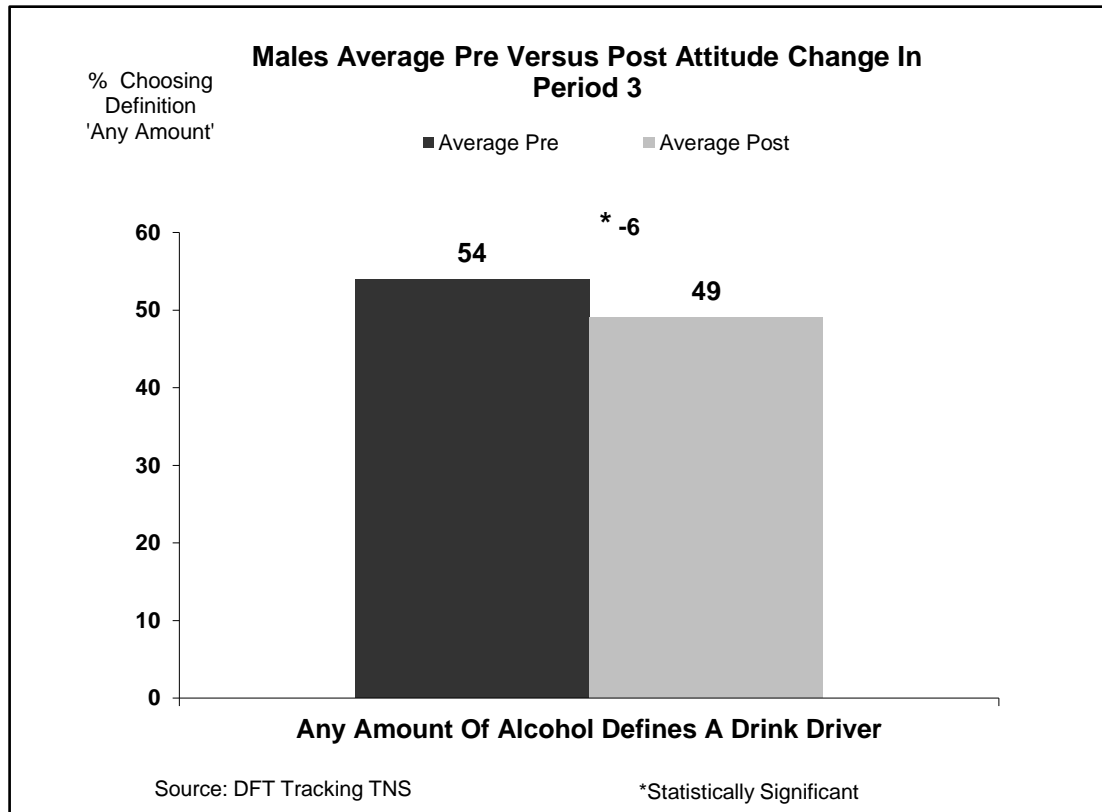
**Figure 23**





We see a communications effect in the average decrease between pre and post campaign measures from 1997 to 1999: (Figure 24)

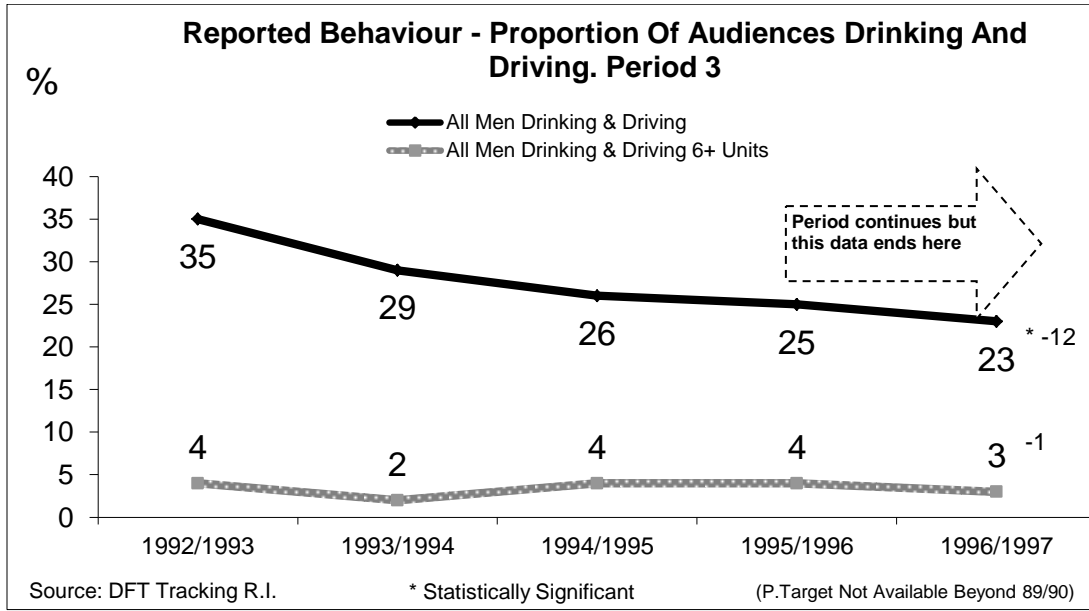
**Figure 24**



**Communications helped reduce drink driving behaviour in Period 3**

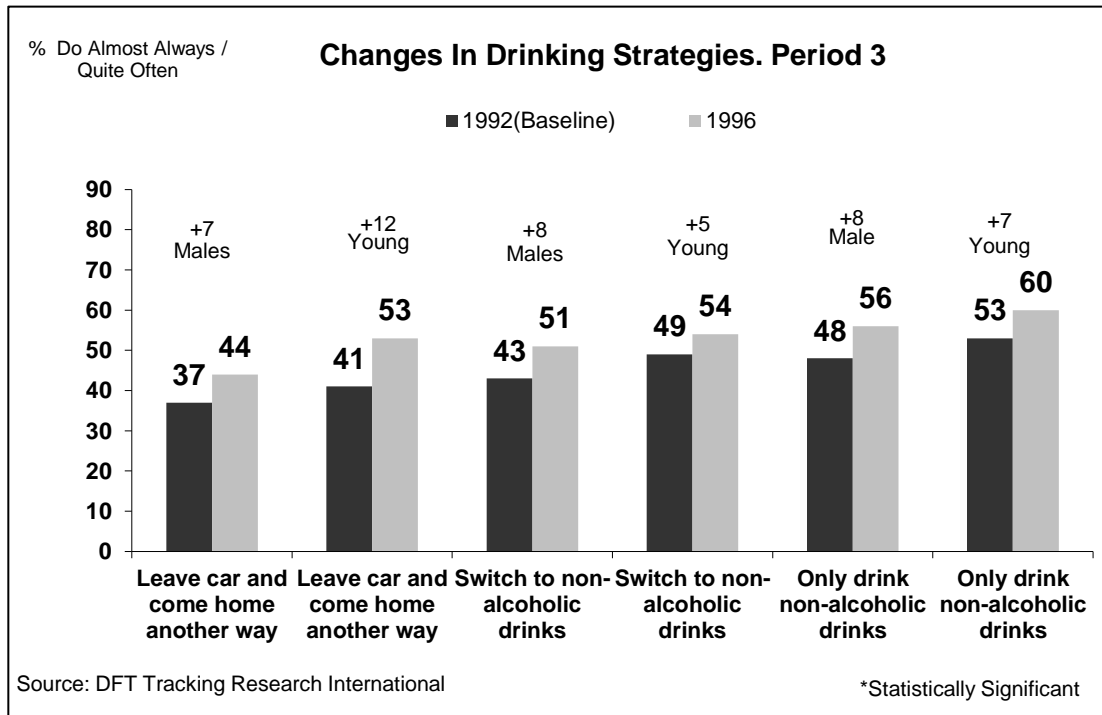
The focus of communications was reducing the ‘quick drink’ and we see a corresponding decline in “any” (ie low level) drinking (Figure 25).

**Figure 25**



Further indication of changing behaviours amongst all male drivers and young male drivers is shown by the increased levels at which they claimed to adopt strategies to avoid drink driving (Figure 26).

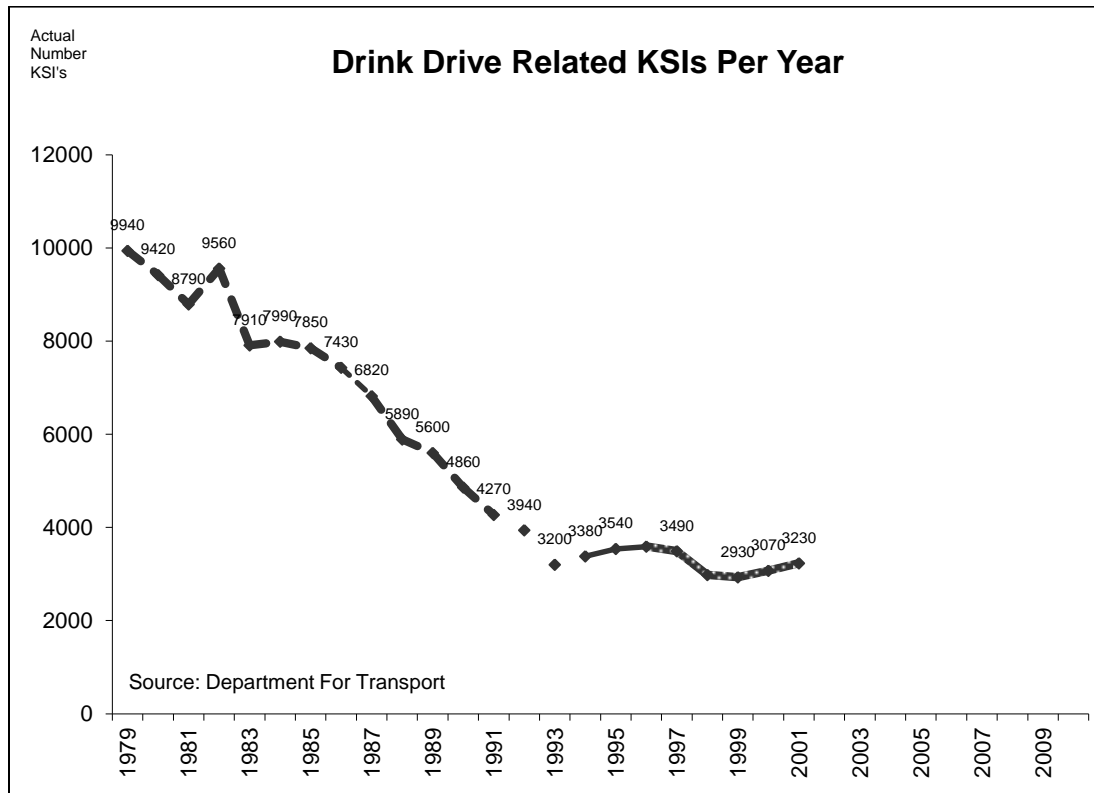
**Figure 26**







### Communications helped reduce drink drive *casualties* in Period 3

KSIs dropped from 3,380 in 1992 to 3,230 in 1986 (Figure 27). This is a smaller decrease than previous periods, but one that was achieved despite the substantial increase in wider anti-social alcohol-related behaviour. In Chapter 5 we will demonstrate the level of casualties that would have occurred in Period 3 in the absence of communications.

**Figure 27**



## Chapter 4: 2002 to 2010 - Pinpointing the moment of decision

Period	1	2	3	4
Years	1979 - 1987	1987 - 1992	1992 - 2002	2002 - 2009
Behaviour change focus	Attitudes	Norms & drink driver image	Norms & Attitudes	Attitudes
Communications strategy	Heightening the perception of risk	Creating social unacceptability	Confronting drivers in denial	Pinpointing the moment of decision
				

*Norms and driver images* – The storm of changed drinking norms and images described in the previous chapter continued to rage throughout the noughties.<sup>26</sup> The Government however was determined to turn the tide.

*Attitudes* – Young men felt that the legal alcohol limit was there specifically to give them permission to drink a certain amount and then drive. The problem was that they were unsure what this limit was. In the absence of any definitive information<sup>27</sup> they all created a personal rule of thumb where roughly one pint was seen to be safe, but three pints put them into risky territory.<sup>28</sup>

The team now identified the critical point as the decision to drink that second pint, where they weighed up the potential consequences of their behaviour.

This was the stage at which they were not too impaired to control themselves, when a one-pint-after-another domino effect could still be short-circuited and where they could be realistically prevented from becoming dangerous drink drivers.

The challenge was to change attitudes in a way that would resonate in the heat of the moment.

The team set out to seed doubt in the minds of the potential drink driver at the very moment in which they decide to have a second pint.

Three successive campaigns found increasingly compelling ways to contrast consumption with its consequences and pinpoint the moment of second pint decision through both creative and media. (Figure 28)

<sup>26</sup> “The new policy mix: Alcohol, harm minimisation, and determined drunkenness in contemporary society” International Journal of Drug Policy 17 (2006) 258-268, Measham F, 2006

<sup>27</sup> The amount of alcohol an individual would need to drink to be considered drink driving varies depending on weight, gender, age, what they’ve eaten, metabolism and so on.

<sup>28</sup> Davies McKerr qualitative research for DfT throughout Period 4

- **2002 - 2003 – tackling the excuses behind the decision**
  - Tackled universal excuses used to justify the decision to have that extra pint
- **2004 – 2006 – juxtaposing decision with consequences to *others***
  - Showing a pub table at which young men are just about to have a second pint crash into a passing girl.
- **2006 – present – juxtaposing decision with consequences to *you***
  - As a young man orders another drink a barman acts out the legal and personal consequences - being processed, prosecuted, losing your license, job and the respect of others.

**Figure 28**

### Advertising 2002 to Present: Pinpointing the moment of decision

2002 - 2003  
Excuses



Challenging the universal excuses men use to justify their decision to drink drive, this time resulting in hitting a young girl on a bike.

2004 - 2006  
Crash



Juxtaposing the decision to have another pint with the consequences to others. A pub table hits a passing woman, like a car on the road.

2006 - Present  
Moment of doubt



Showing the legal and personal consequences of drink driving. focussing advertising and media on the specific moment when the second pint decision is made.

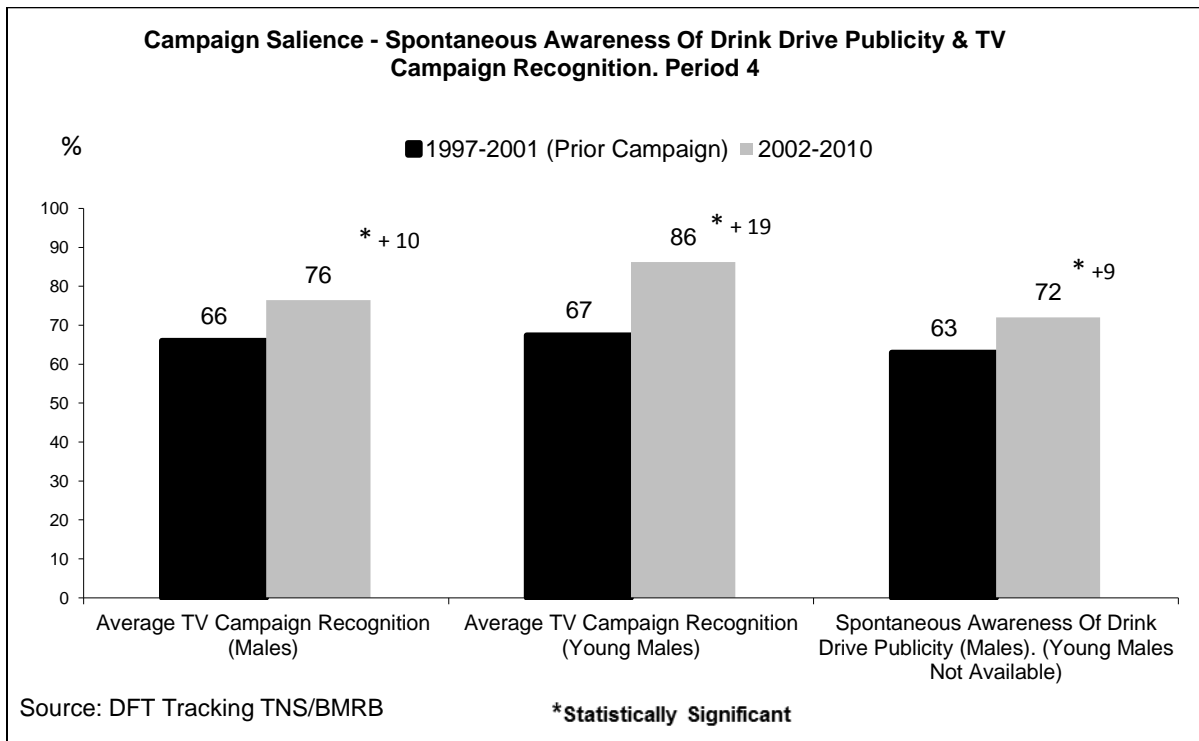
**THE RESULTS: HOW PINPOINTING THE MOMENT OF DECISION WORKED**

In this period communications successfully got inside the heads of young male drivers, ensuring that changed attitudes and an understanding of the consequences of drink driving resonated at the moment of second pint decision, helping reduce drink drive casualties.

**Drink drive communications got inside young male drivers’ heads in Period 4**

Campaigns in this period delivered higher awareness and cut-through than had previously been achieved (Figure X), particularly so amongst the young male driver target audience. In addition, half of young male drivers’ felt that the moment of decision message “really stuck in their minds”<sup>29</sup>. (Figure 29)

**Figure 29**

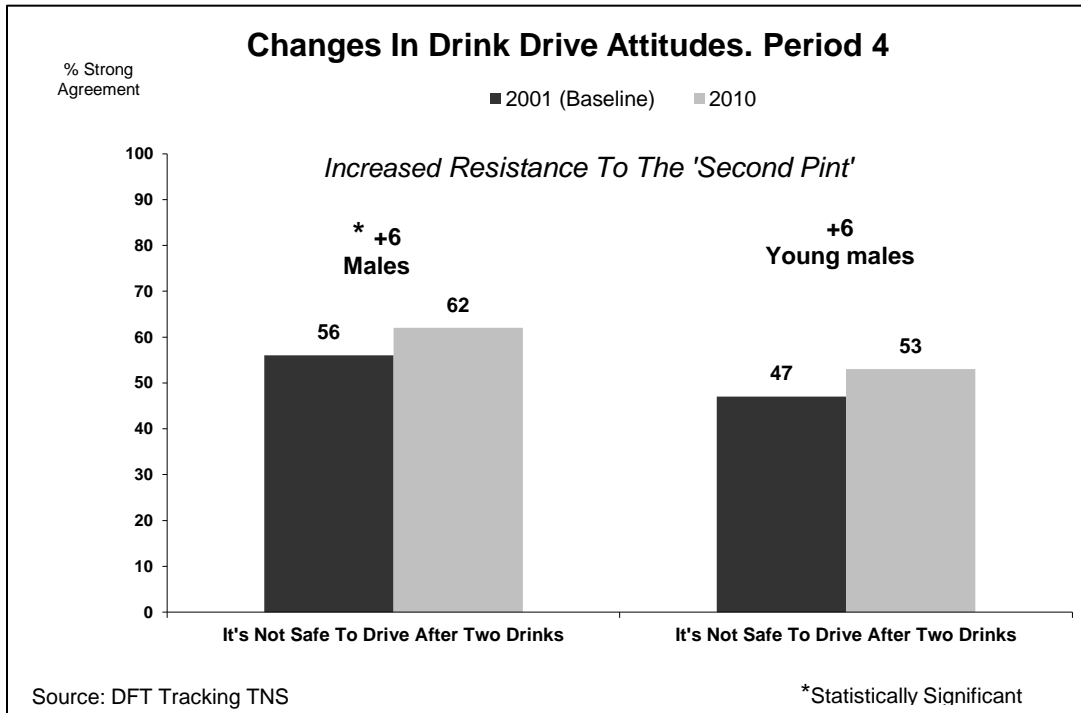


<sup>29</sup> TNS Tracking for DfT throughout Period 4

**Drink drive communications helped change attitudes towards the “second pint”**

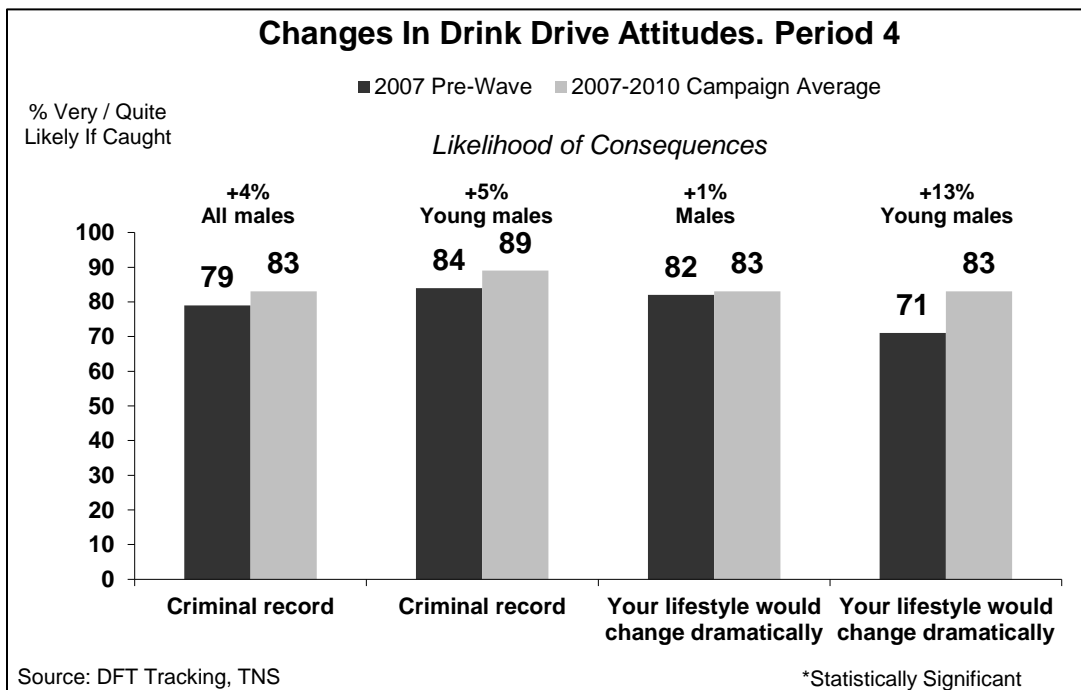
We see gains on the key measure related to the second pint decision. These are slight as we might expect given the difficulty of incremental attitude change with entrenched audiences: (Figure 30)

**Figure 30**



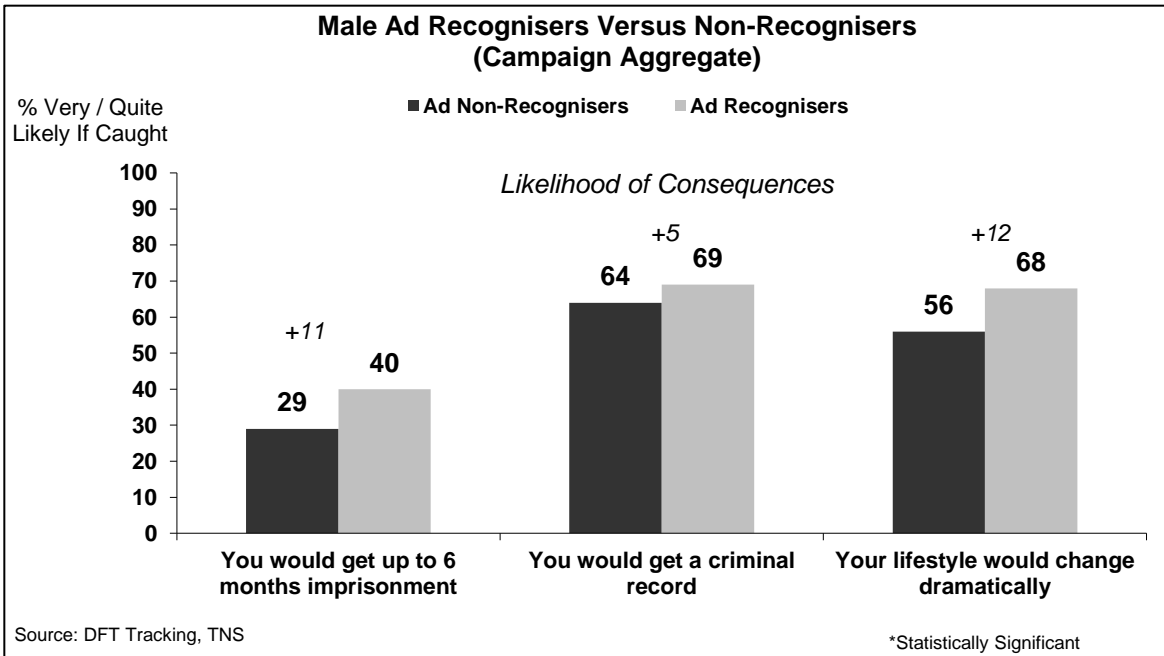
The last campaign found a compelling way to tackle the decision moment – highlighting potential legal and personal consequences of the second pint. We see corresponding increases in the perceived likelihood of those consequences: (Figure 31)

**Figure 31**



In addition, we see a campaign effect in the increased perceived likelihood of those consequences amongst campaign recognisers<sup>30</sup>. (Figure 32)

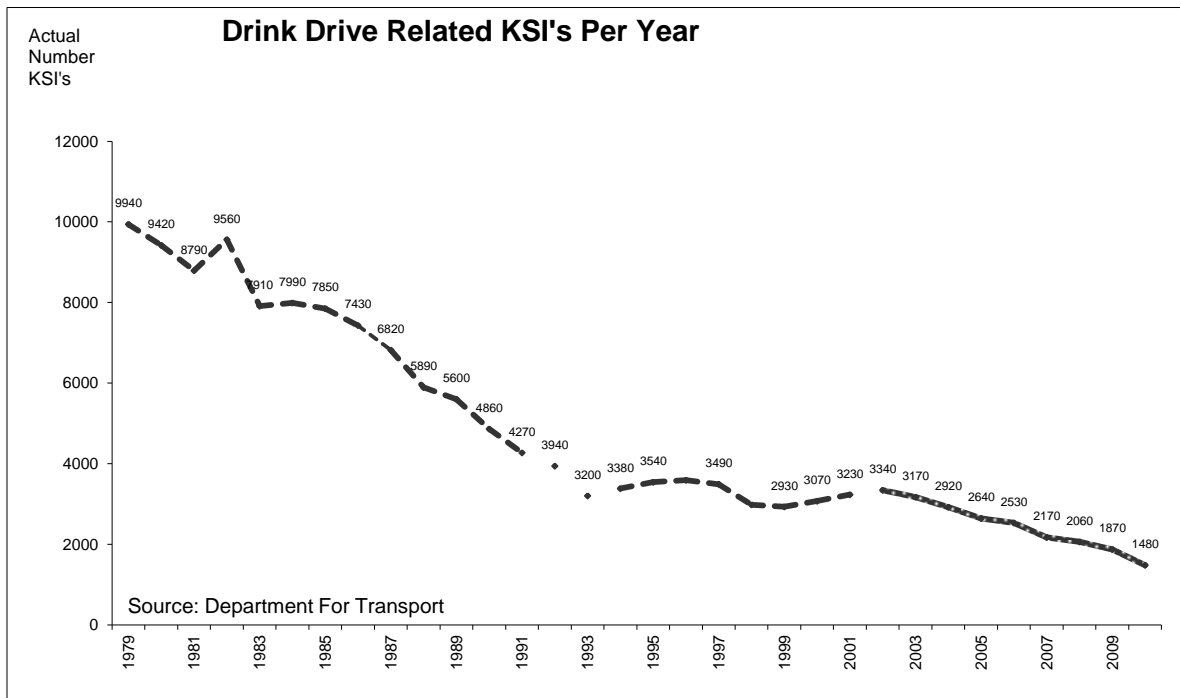
**Figure 32**



**Drink drive communications helped reduce casualties**

Annual KSIs more than halved, from 3,340 in 2002 to 1,480 in 2010. (Figure 33) Communications were responsible for a substantial proportion of casualties prevented, as we will see in Chapter 5.

**Figure 33**



<sup>30</sup> Recogniser non recogniser data is unavailable for young male drivers as too few did not recognise the communication to create a sufficient sample size.



## Chapter 5: Calculating the savings to society

### Isolating the effect of communications

In 2010 a team<sup>31</sup> explored and then dismissed the possibility of evaluating recent communication effects on drink drive KSIs through econometric modelling. However, in reviewing the possibilities for longer term evaluation, Holmes & Cook identified a solution which was elegantly simple.

Significantly, this model is based on the **proportion** of total KSIs represented by drink drive KSIs, rather than the absolute **level** of drink drive KSIs. As such some potentially powerful factors that can reasonably be deemed to equally affect KSIs of all types can be excluded from the model. These include:

- Improvements in vehicle safety
- Road engineering
- Traffic volumes
- Wider road safety legislation

Holmes & Cook investigated the effect on drink drive KSIs of a range of factors known or hypothesised to influence drink driving behaviour<sup>32</sup>. The key factors are accounted for in the model:

- Drink drive enforcement - represented by volumes of breath tests, the police's key enforcement measure
- Drink drive legislation - represented by 1991 legislation<sup>33</sup> and, implicitly, by 1983 legislation introducing evidential breath testing that is reflected in breath test volumes
- Economic factors - represented by unemployment rates<sup>34</sup>
- Weather conditions<sup>35</sup>
- Drink drive communications - represented by media spend across the four periods<sup>36</sup>

A number of other factors were explored but discounted as either having no effect on drink drive KSIs or being influenced by factors already included:

- Petrol prices
- Number of pubs
- The smoking ban

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<sup>31</sup> From DfT, Leo Burnett and Holmes & Cook. For full details of this exploration and the subsequent development of the model see the Technical Appendix.

<sup>32</sup> This is a widely researched area, with many sources to draw on.

<sup>33</sup> The Road Traffic Act of 1991 introduced a new offence of 'Causing death by driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs' which carried a compulsory prison sentence of up to five years. Media spend and any effects of it in the 2 years following the introduction of the act are inseparable from the legislative effect and so have not been included in the ROI calculations shown later.

<sup>34</sup> Employment rates produced better statistical and forecasting properties than variables such as GDP and alcohol affordability

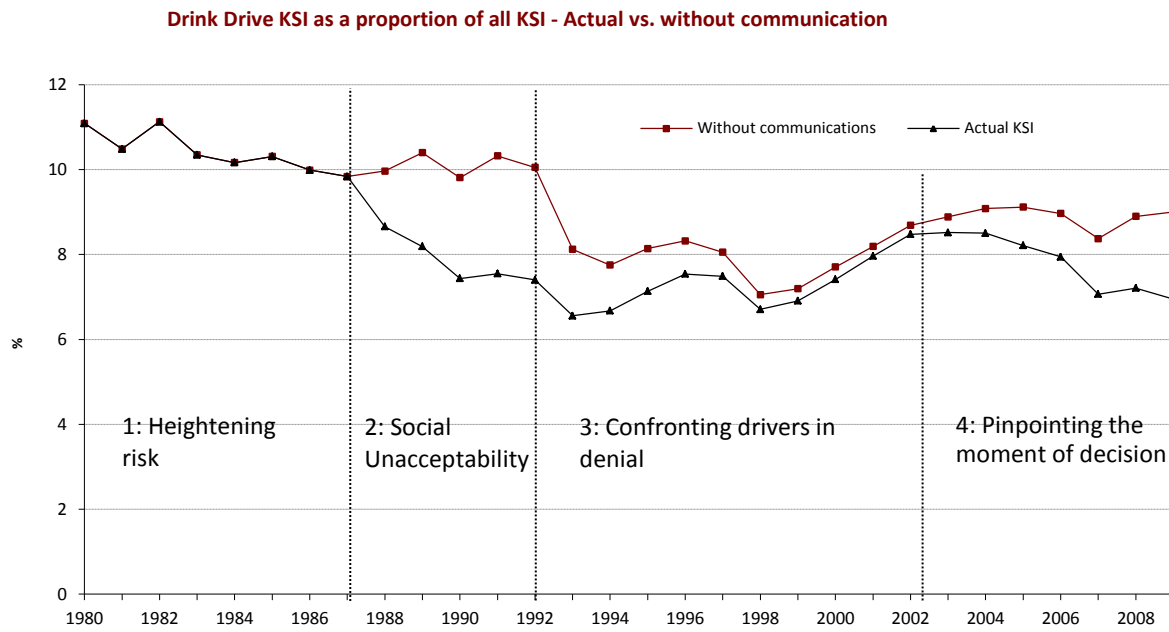
<sup>35</sup> Good summer weather, which affects road usage and drinking behaviour

<sup>36</sup> Wider road safety communications did not show an effect on the proportion of drink drive KSIs

## Quantifying the effects of communication on Drink Drive KSIs

The impact of communication on drink drive KSIs can be derived directly from the model (Figure 34). From 1988 onwards we see an increased proportion of KSIs that would have been represented by drink drive KSIs in the absence of communication.

**Figure 34**



Source: Holmes & Cook

### Assessing the effect of each period of communication

The marked attitudinal changes seen in Period 1 (1979-1987) are not reflected in a reduction in the proportion of drink drive KSIs within the same period. However, they appear to have laid the groundwork for substantial KSI prevention in Period 2 (1987-1992).

The model shows that, without communication in Period 2, the drink drive proportion of KSIs would have remained around 10% throughout the late 80's until recession in the early 90's, driven by a buoyant economy and relatively low levels of breath testing.

Instead, communications that made drink driving socially unacceptable delivered major immediate reductions in KSIs. These reductions persisted, building with campaign weight over a number of years.

In Period 3 (1992 to 2002), in the face of a wider culture of intoxication, we see that communications focussing on the "quick drink" held drink drive KSIs to lower levels than would otherwise have been seen.

The change of strategy in Period 4 to focus on the second pint moment proved decisive, with another more persistent reduction between 2003 and 2009.

Interestingly, in Periods 2 and 4 the model reveals a hitherto undetected longevity of effect for drink drive communications. 30% of their total effect came in year one with three-quarters by year four. This offers significant learnings for the planning of future activity.

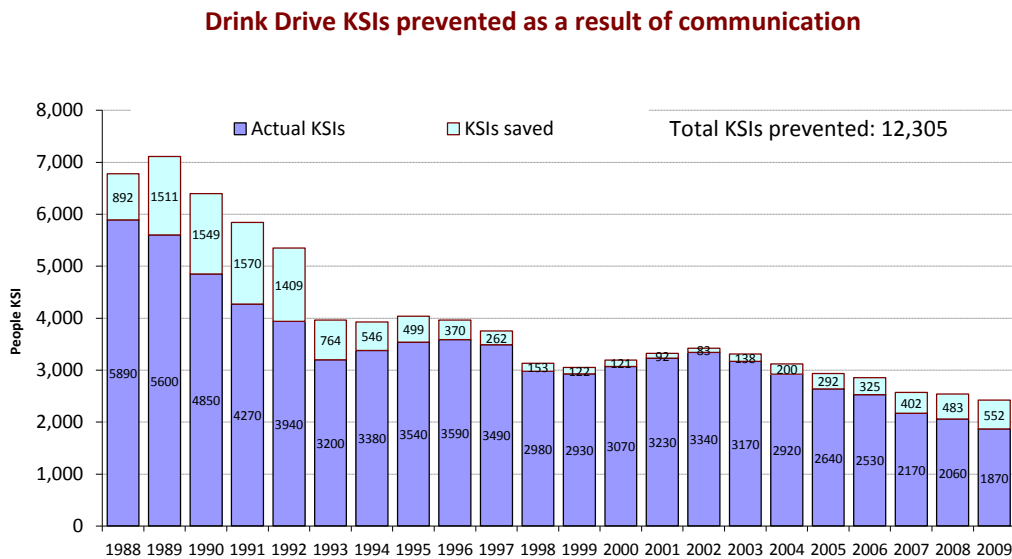
**RETURN ON INVESTMENT**

**Quantifying the effects of communication on Drink Drive KSIs**

The reduction in proportion of drink drive KSIs from 1988 onwards can be translated into total numbers of KSIs prevented (Figure 35). In total, communications prevented 12,305 people being killed or seriously injured as a result of drink driving.

This effect is comparable with road safety communications effects demonstrated previously<sup>37</sup>.

**Figure 35**



Source: Holmes & Cook

**Calculating the value of drink drive KSI reductions to society**

The DfT calculates the cost of casualties to society based on a willingness to pay (WTP) approach encompassing human costs (eg pain, grief and suffering), direct economic costs (eg lost output) and medical costs.

These costs are high and so any reduction delivers huge savings. (Figure 36)

<sup>37</sup> The 2010 THINK! IPA paper demonstrated that up to 6,594 KSIs were prevented by THINK! activity between 2000 and 2008. The drink drive model estimates that, over this period, drink drive communications accounted for 2,258 of these, or just over a third. Drink drive communications represented 55% of total road safety media spend in that period, so might be expected to represent a significant proportion of the KSIs prevented.

**Figure 36**

Casualty type	Cost per casualty (£) <sup>38</sup>
Killed	1,585,510
Seriously Injured	178,160

*Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain: 2010 Annual Report*

### Calculating ROI

Calculating a single ROI figure for a period of 30 years becomes unworkable, as media costs have varied so greatly in that time. Instead we show the ROI for each period. (Figure 37)

**Figure 37**

Period	Strategy	Media Spend £m (current prices)	Lives saved	Serious injuries prevented	Value of lives and injuries saved £m <sup>39</sup>	Ratio of value to media spend
1979-1986	Heightening the sense of risk	5,234				
1987-1991	Creating social unacceptability	7,810	1,512	7,937	2,006	154
1994-2001	Tackling drivers in denial	15,444	102	536	183	11.8
2002-2009	Targeting the moment of decision	20,440	355	1,863	786	38.4
<b>Totals</b>			<b>1,969</b>	<b>10,336</b>	<b>2,975</b>	

Given the role of Period 1 in laying the groundwork for Period 2, the ROI for these periods is combined showing a ROI of £154 for every £1 spent. In the tough cultural conditions of Period 3 this fell to a return of 11.8 to 1, before rising to 38.4 to 1 in Period 4.

These represent significant savings to society, and compare well to a wide range of ROI on Government campaigns. The TDA Teacher Recruitment campaign<sup>40</sup> demonstrated an ROI of 101:1. Recent crime prevention papers have shown payback between 14:1<sup>41</sup> and 28:1<sup>42</sup>.

Against any of these high standards, this activity has been very successful.

<sup>38</sup> 2010 values: savings to society and ROI calculated with relevant WTP figures for each period. See Appendix

<sup>39</sup> Calculated by taking the total KSIs prevented in that period, dividing between Killed and Seriously Injured in line with overall ratio and multiplying by appropriate value from WTP valuation for the period. See Appendix for fuller workings.

<sup>40</sup> "TDA Teacher Recruitment" IPA Effectiveness Awards 2010

<sup>41</sup> "Cutting the cost of crime" IPA Effectiveness Awards 2008

<sup>42</sup> 2008 "Crime doesn't pay, but advertising to stop it does" IPA Effectiveness Awards Paper 2006

### **Behaviour Change Learnings**

This review reveals a powerful approach for reducing negative behaviour:

1. Change attitudes
2. Create powerful new norms around desired behaviour
3. Force those in denial to apply these norms to their own behaviour
4. Make their new understanding resonate at the moment of decision

*“This paper clearly demonstrates that communications can effect significant behavioural change and sustain that change. Through impactful, insight-led creative approaches advertising has successfully tackled even the more entrenched drink drivers.”*

Emma Stranack, Deputy Director, External Communications, Department for Transport

# Appendix

## ROI Calculations

Period	Years	Media spend at current prices £m <sup>43</sup>	Cost of person killed <sup>44</sup>	Cost of person seriously injured <sup>45</sup>	KSIs prevented <sup>46</sup>	Killed saved <sup>47</sup>	Seriously injured prevented <sup>48</sup>	Value of lives and injuries saved	Ratio of value to media spend
1	1979-1986	5,234							
2	1987-1991	7,810	826,330	95,352	9,449	1,512	7,937	2,006,105,985	154
3	1994-2001	15,444	1,114,890	128,650	638	102	536	182,754,079	11.8
4	2002-2009	20,440	1,392,869	156,510	2,218	355	1,863	785,898,262	38.4

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<sup>43</sup> Nielsen

<sup>44</sup> DfT Road Casualties Report Great Britain

<sup>45</sup> ibid

<sup>46</sup> Holmes & Cook

<sup>47</sup> ibid

<sup>48</sup> ibid