



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**7 April 2010**

## **Strong support for measures to improve road safety.**

The Road Safety Strategy 2010, called *Safer Journeys*, was released recently by the Minister of Transport and among the many recommendations made were the following:

1. That the driving age be increased to 16 years of age
2. That drivers under 20 years of age should have a zero alcohol drink-drive limit
3. That the current drink drive limit for drivers 20 years of age and over which is currently 80 mgs of alcohol per 100 mls of blood should be reduced to 50 mgs.

A recent Research New Zealand public opinion poll asked New Zealanders to give their views on the proposed changes.

New Zealanders appear to have accepted the message that the proposed changes would improve road safety in New Zealand, said Yvonne Sharp, Chairman of the Road Safety Trust, since there is overwhelming support for them.

Seventy-eight percent of New Zealanders are in favour of increasing the driving age to 16 years. The support for the proposal is lowest among those 15 – 24 years of age at 59 percent and highest among women at 82 percent and those over 55 years of age at 86 percent.

The support for a zero alcohol drink-drive limit for driver under 20 years of age was also very high; 84 percent support this measure compared to 15 percent who oppose it. "It is noteworthy, said Research New Zealand Director, Emanuel Kalafatelis, that the support for the measure was highest, at 91 percent, among those in the 25 - 34 year age group". Not unnaturally, the support for the measure was lowest among those in the 15 – 24 year age group at 63 percent, although that is still almost twice as many as oppose the measure (35 percent).

"It was also gratifying, said the Road Safety Trust Chairman, Yvonne Sharp, that there was also strong support for lowering of the alcohol drink-drive limit from 80 mgs per 100 ml of blood to 50. Those in favour at 63 percent outnumber by almost two to one those who were opposed to the measure. Interestingly, it is the age group 35 years and over that shows the strongest support for the proposed measure.



The Research New Zealand poll of 500 people aged 15 and over was conducted by telephone between 15 and 19 March. The maximum margin of error is +/- 4.8 % (at the 95% confidence level). The data has been weighted to ensure it is an accurate representation of New Zealand's general population. The poll was not taken on behalf of any organization, but as part of Research New Zealand's monthly survey of attitudes and opinions.

**Table 1: Should the driving age be raised to 16?**

*The driving age in New Zealand is currently 15 years. Are or are you not in favour of raising this to 16 years.*

| Base =            | Total | Male | Female |
|-------------------|-------|------|--------|
|                   | 500   | 249  | 251    |
|                   | %     | %    | %      |
| Yes, in favour    | 78    | 73   | 83     |
| No, not in favour | 17    | 21   | 14     |
| Don't know        | 4     | 6    | 3      |
| Total             | 100   | 100  | 100    |

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

**Table 2: Should the driving age be raised to 16?**

*The driving age in New Zealand is currently 15 years. Are or are you not in favour of raising this to 16 years.*

| Base =     | Total | 15 to 24 years | 25-34 years | 35 to 54 years | 55 years and over |
|------------|-------|----------------|-------------|----------------|-------------------|
|            | 500   | 53             | 53          | 161            | 233               |
|            | %     | %              | %           | %              | %                 |
| Yes        | 78    | 59             | 84          | 78             | 86                |
| No         | 17    | 34             | 10          | 19             | 10                |
| Don't know | 4     | 7              | 6           | 3              | 4                 |
| Total      | 100   | 100            | 100         | 100            | 100               |

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.



**Table 3: Should the drink-drive limit for drivers under 20 be zero?**

*It has also been suggested that for drivers under 20 years of age the blood alcohol limit should be zero. Are you in favour or not in favour of this?*

|                   | Total | Male | Female |
|-------------------|-------|------|--------|
| Base =            | 500   | 249  | 251    |
|                   | %     | %    | %      |
| Yes, in favour    | 84    | 77   | 91     |
| No, not in favour | 15    | 22   | 9      |
| Don't know        | 1     | 2    | 1      |
| Total             | 100   | 100  | 100    |

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

**Table 4: Should the drink-drive limit for drivers under 20 be lowered?**

*It has also been suggested that for drivers under 20 years of age the blood alcohol limit should be zero. Are you in favour or not in favour of this?*

|            | Total | 15 to 24 years | 25-34 years | 35 to 54 years | 55 years and over |
|------------|-------|----------------|-------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Base =     | 500   | 53             | 53          | 161            | 233               |
|            | %     | %              | %           | %              | %                 |
| Yes        | 84    | 63             | 91          | 89             | 85                |
| No         | 15    | 35             | 9           | 10             | 13                |
| Don't know | 1     | 2              | 0           | 1              | 1                 |
| Total      | 100   | 100            | 100         | 100            | 100               |

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

**Table 5: Should the drink-drive limit for drivers over 20 be lowered?**

*The blood alcohol limit for drivers over 20 years of age is currently 80mg per 100 millilitres of blood. It has been suggested that this should be lowered to 50mg per 100 millilitres of blood. Are you in favour or not in favour of lowering the blood alcohol level for drivers over 20 to 50 mg per 100 millilitres of blood?*

|                   | Total | Male | Female |
|-------------------|-------|------|--------|
| Base =            | 500   | 249  | 251    |
|                   | %     | %    | %      |
| Yes, in favour    | 63    | 60   | 65     |
| No, not in favour | 34    | 38   | 31     |
| Don't know        | 3     | 2    | 4      |
| Total             | 100   | 100  | 100    |

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.



**Table 6: Should the drink-drive limit for drivers over 20 be lowered?**

*The blood alcohol limit for drivers over 20 years of age is currently 80mg per 100 millilitres of blood. It has been suggested that this should be lowered to 50mg per 100 millilitres of blood. Are you in favour or not in favour of lowering the blood alcohol level for drivers over 20 to 50 mg per 100 millilitres of blood?*

|            | Total    | 15 to 24<br>years | 25-34<br>years | 35 to 54<br>years | 55 years<br>and over |
|------------|----------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Base =     | 500<br>% | 53<br>%           | 53<br>%        | 161<br>%          | 233<br>%             |
| Yes        | 63       | 52                | 55             | 67                | 69                   |
| No         | 34       | 45                | 43             | 28                | 29                   |
| Don't know | 3        | 4                 | 2              | 5                 | 2                    |
| Total      | 100      | 100               | 100            | 100               | 100                  |

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

**Research New Zealand is an independent, New Zealand-owned research organisation undertaking social and business research.**

[www.researchnz.com](http://www.researchnz.com)