

Proposed Amendments to the Criminal Code of Canada (Impaired Driving)

Response to Issue Paper of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human
Rights

March 5, 1999

Executive Summary

The CMA believes that comprehensive long-term efforts that incorporate both deterrent legislation and public awareness and education constitute the most effective policy in attempting to reduce the number of lives lost and injuries suffered in crashes involving impaired drivers. The CMA supports a multidimensional approach to the issue.

The CMA therefore recommends the following:

- developing awareness campaigns and education programs, particularly at the high school level where the pattern of alcohol misuse is often established;
- retaining the curative treatment provision found in Section 255(5) of the Criminal Code;
- providing comprehensive treatment suited to the needs of the individual person. Those repeatedly convicted of impaired driving should be considered for mandatory assessment;
- seizing or impounding the driver's vehicle for the length of the license suspension if an individual is charged with impaired driving while his or her licence is suspended because of a previous impaired driving conviction;
- lowering the legal BAC limit to 50 mg%; and
- creating probationary licence systems for new drivers that would make it an offence to drive a motor vehicle during this probationary period with any measurable alcohol in the body.