

Police Position on RBT

12 months ago in this Chamber members pressed for these powers to be made available to Police to combat drink-driving.

At that time the Force view was that we would accept the powers only if LegCo members and the public considered them appropriate.

The drink-driving hit-rate in the intervening 12 months has remained stable, at approx. 3.2%, likewise the number of prosecutions.

RBT is simply another weapon against drink-driving and if granted it will hopefully further deter drivers from acting irresponsibly.

Law-abiding drivers have nothing to fear from RBT.

Police internal arrangements for RBT checks will initially comprise of **6** measures :-

- Restricted to **SBT-trained Traffic officers only** - not the Force in general.
- Bearing in mind the proposed revised legislation *retains* the existing 3 criteria for checks, RBTs will **not normally be targeted against vehicles in motion**. For the safety of the officers concerned, and to ensure that the check can be carried out with the minimum of inconvenience to the driver and other motorists, RBTs will **normally be conducted during roadblock operations** or as part of other traffic enforcement checks (i.e. when ticketing speeding cars).
- Use of a quick and simple **pre-screening device** is being considered, to speed up the checking process and avoid undue delay/inconvenience to motorists. This will reduce the time needed from 4-5 mins (for SBT) to 3-4 seconds (for Alcoscan).
- The number of RBTs conducted will **be monitored** for a trial period after introduction, to determine their success and gauge if undue inconvenience is caused to other non-offending road users.
- Limitations by time or location will **not be applied** initially, as this would defeat the 'random' nature of RBTs.
- Likewise **no rank restrictions will be placed on their use** initially - all Police Officers are vested with considerable powers which they exercise in a responsible manner - there is no reason to suspect that RBT powers will be abused.