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Alcohol in Fatal Road Crashes in  
Ireland  
2003-2005

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Cardiff  
24<sup>th</sup> September 2009

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# This presentation

- Results of study into role of alcohol in fatal crashes
    - Drivers
    - Pedestrians
  - What needs to be done
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What happens in Ireland this often each  
year

47, 563,516

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# Alcohol Related Road Deaths In Ireland

- No systematic collection of data
  - 1975 regional study:
    - 46% killed drivers above legal limit
  - 2003 national study:
    - alcohol a factor in 37% of road deaths
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# Study Into Alcohol And Fatal Crashes

## Methods

- † Files on fatal crashes kept by The National Traffic Bureau of An Garda Síochána
    - † Witness reports
    - † Technical examination of sites and vehicles
    - † Post mortem reports including toxicology
    - † Garda Investigations
  - † All files for 2003-2005 examined by authors
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# Definition Alcohol Related Crash

## Driver

- † Blood alcohol level of  $\geq 20\text{mg}/100\text{ml}$  (or the equivalent in urine and breath tests) in a driver.

## Pedestrian

- † Blood alcohol level and the circumstances of the crash
  - † In any crash other factors such as speed may also be involved
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# Results of Data

## 2003-2005

- 995 crashes killing 1,105 people

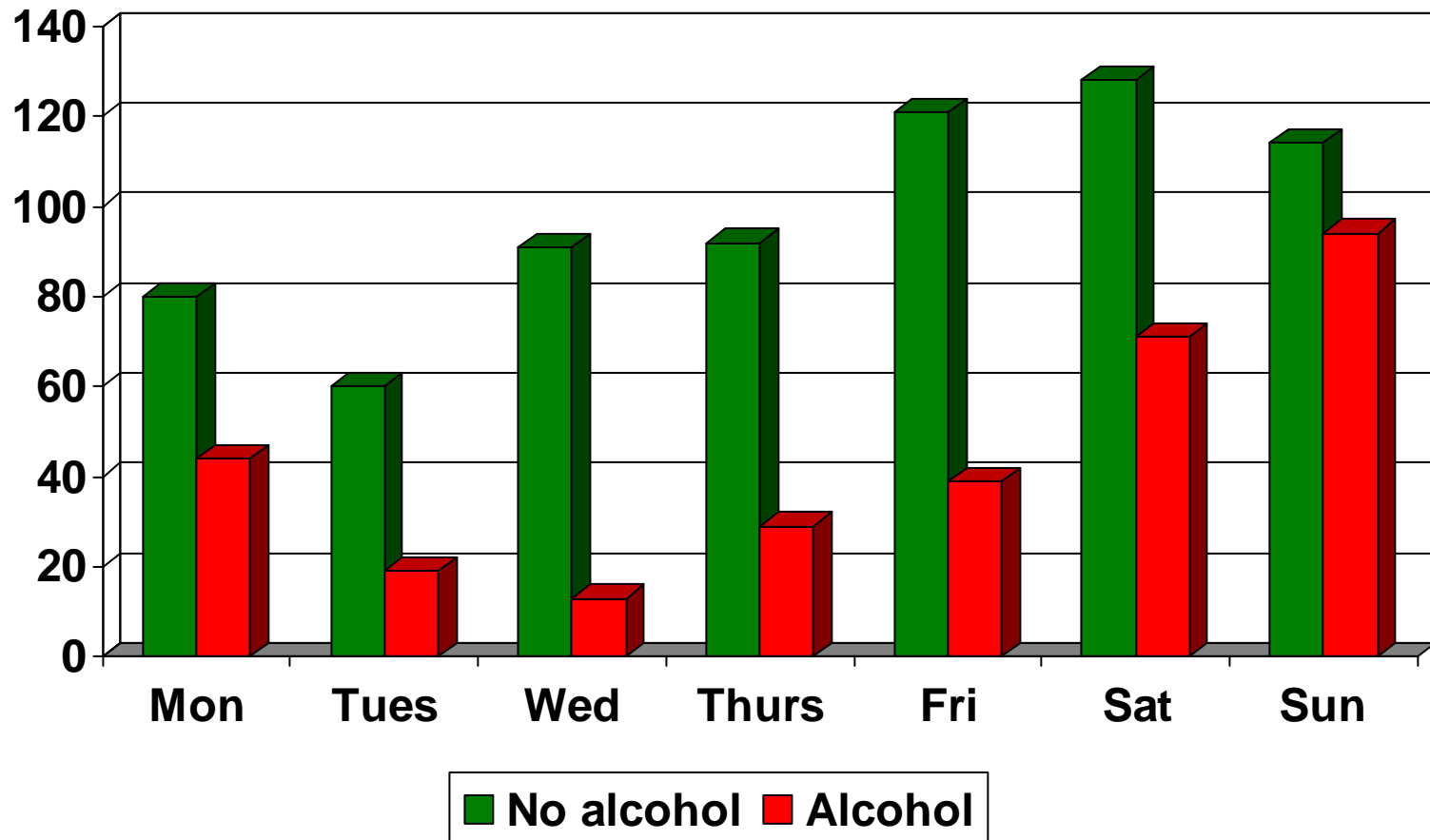


# Fatal Crashes That Were Alcohol Related

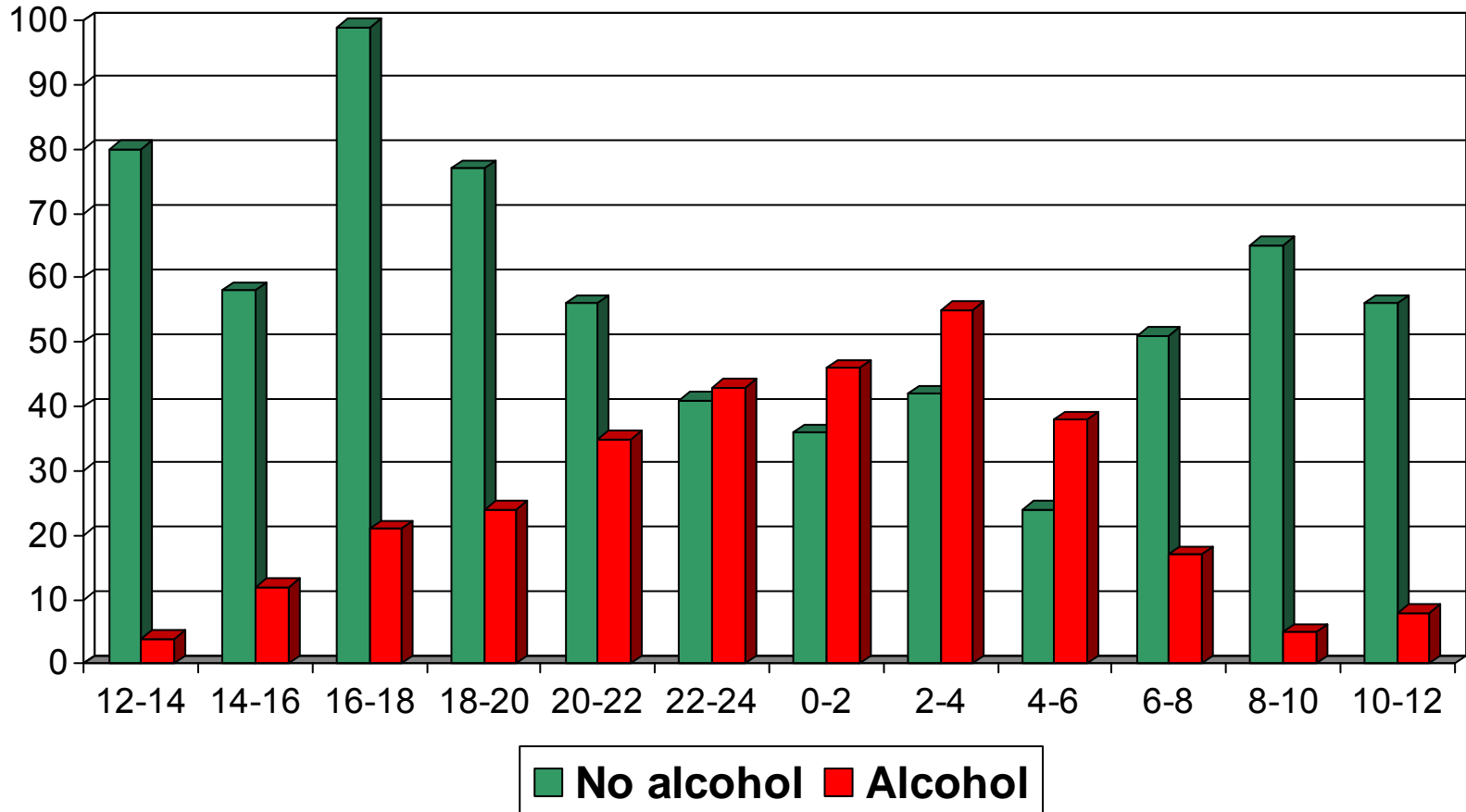
	All Crashes	Alcohol crashes	% Alcohol Crashes
2003	301	110	37%
2004	334	95	28%
2005	360	104	29%
2003-5	995	309	31%

\*The decrease is not statistically significant

# Day Of Week Of Alcohol and Non-alcohol Related Crashes 2003-5



# Time Of Day Of Non-alcohol Fatal Crashes 2003-5



# BACs in killed drivers

BAC LEVEL		
	No	%
Zero	165	27
Not recorded as done/not available	214	35
1-19	12	2
20-49	18	3
50-80	18	3
81-159	55	9
160-239	74	12
240+	55	9
Total	611	100

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81-159	55	9
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Total	611	100

# Killed Drivers With BACs Above 80 And 50 Mg%

	ALL YEARS
<i>All killed drivers</i>	611
>80 mg%	30%
>50 mg%	33%
<i>Killed drivers with test result available</i>	446
>80 mg%	41%
>50 mg%	45%

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# Miscellaneous

- 18% of alcohol related fatal road crashes are between 04.00 and 08.00 hours
  - 62% of single vehicle single occupant fatal crashes alcohol related
  - Alcohol related crashes 1.5 times more likely to occur in counties that border N. Ireland (OR:1.5; 95% CI:1.1-2.1)
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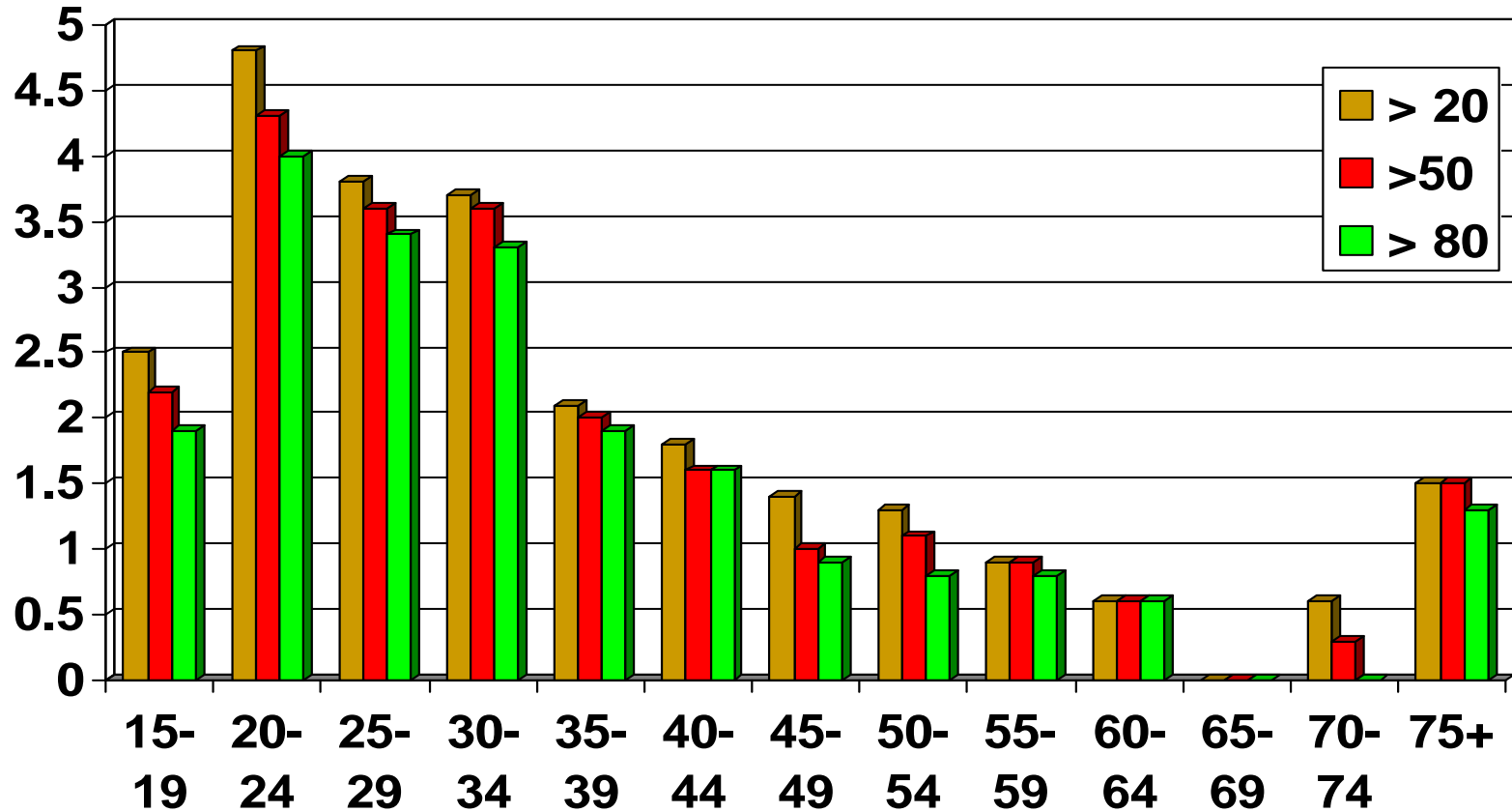
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# Who are the killed drivers with alcohol?

- 9 out of 10 are men



# Rate per 100,000 population for killed drivers with BAC $\geq 20$ , $>50$ and $>80$ mg/100ml

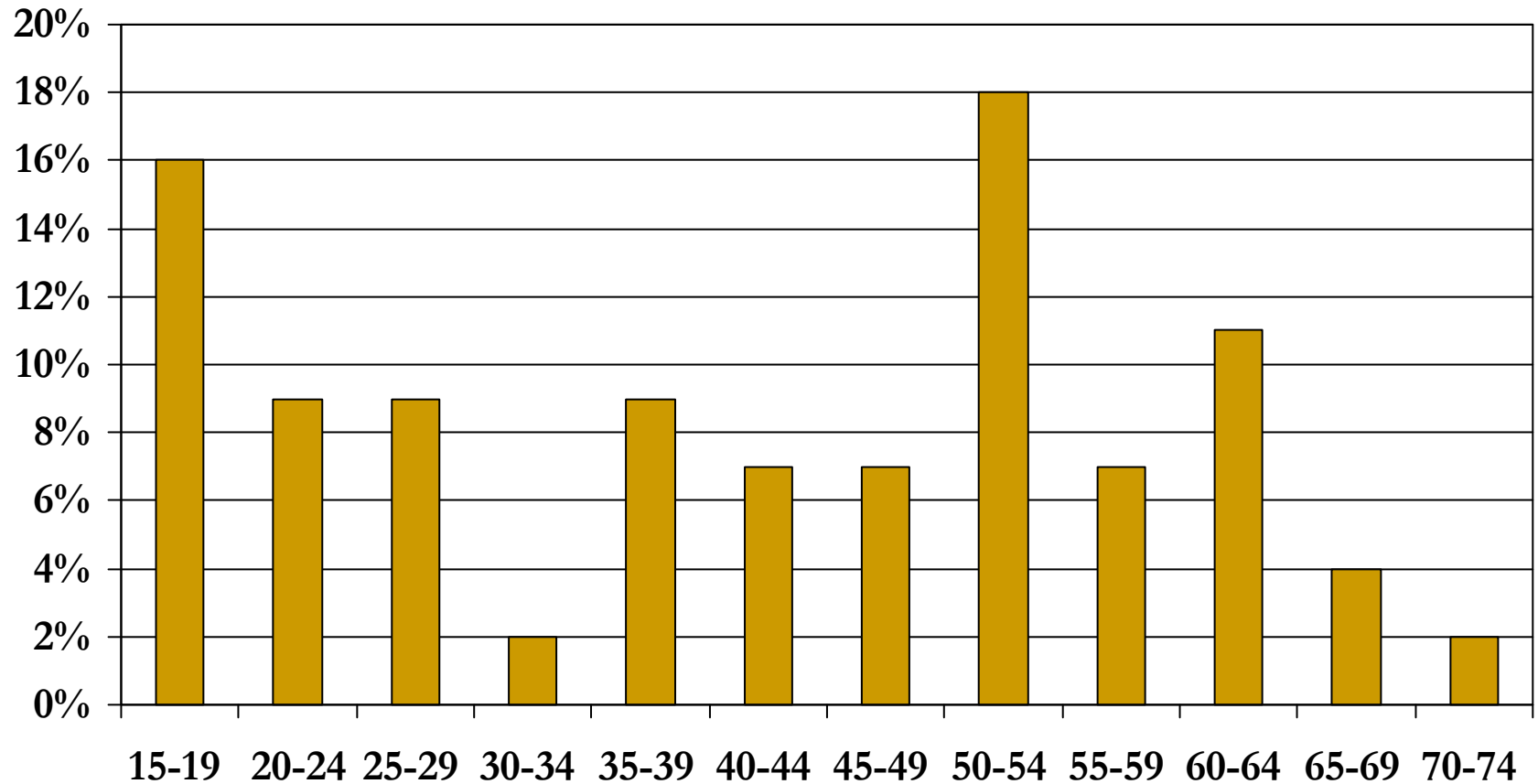


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## Pedestrians Aged 15 Years And Over

- 187 killed over the 3 years
  - 1 in 4 of their deaths related to their own alcohol intake
  - 9 out of 10 alcohol related deaths were men
  - 1 in 9 had BACs in excess of 240 mg%
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# Age profile of killed pedestrians with BAC levels of greater than 80mg/100ml

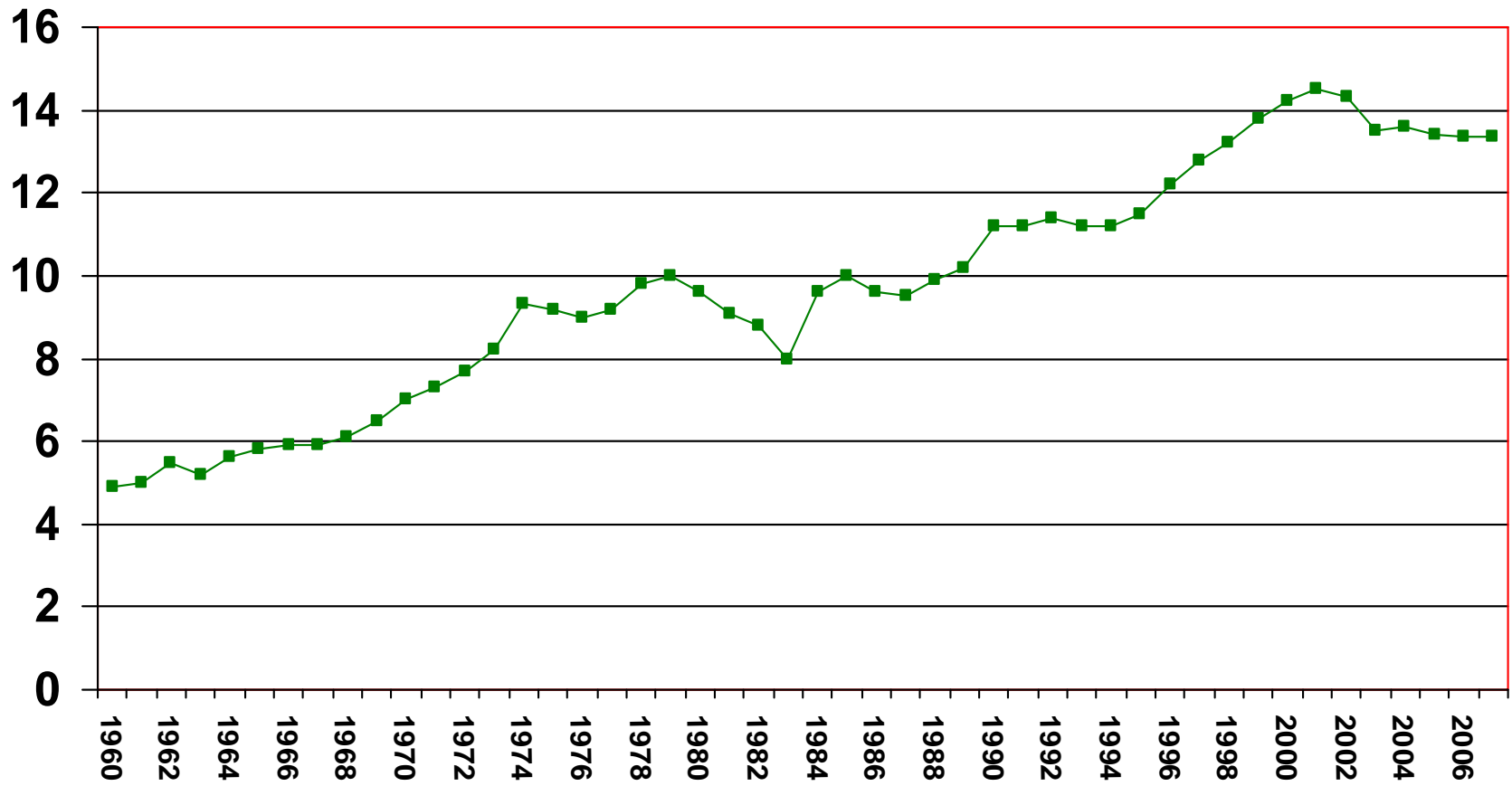


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# Drink Driving

- A serious problem
  - Kills at least 120 people a year
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# Per capita Alcohol consumption Ireland (age 15+) 1960-2007



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What happens in Ireland this often each  
year

47, 563,516

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# Everyone wins on perfect day

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Paul O'Connell dominates another lineout early in the second half of Ireland's record 43-13 victory over England in their Six Nations Championship match at Croke Park on Saturday night. - (Photograph: Cyril Byrne)

INSIDE

good as the team, and were a barometer of the performance.

tastic gesture on his part. I've huge regard for Martin, and I

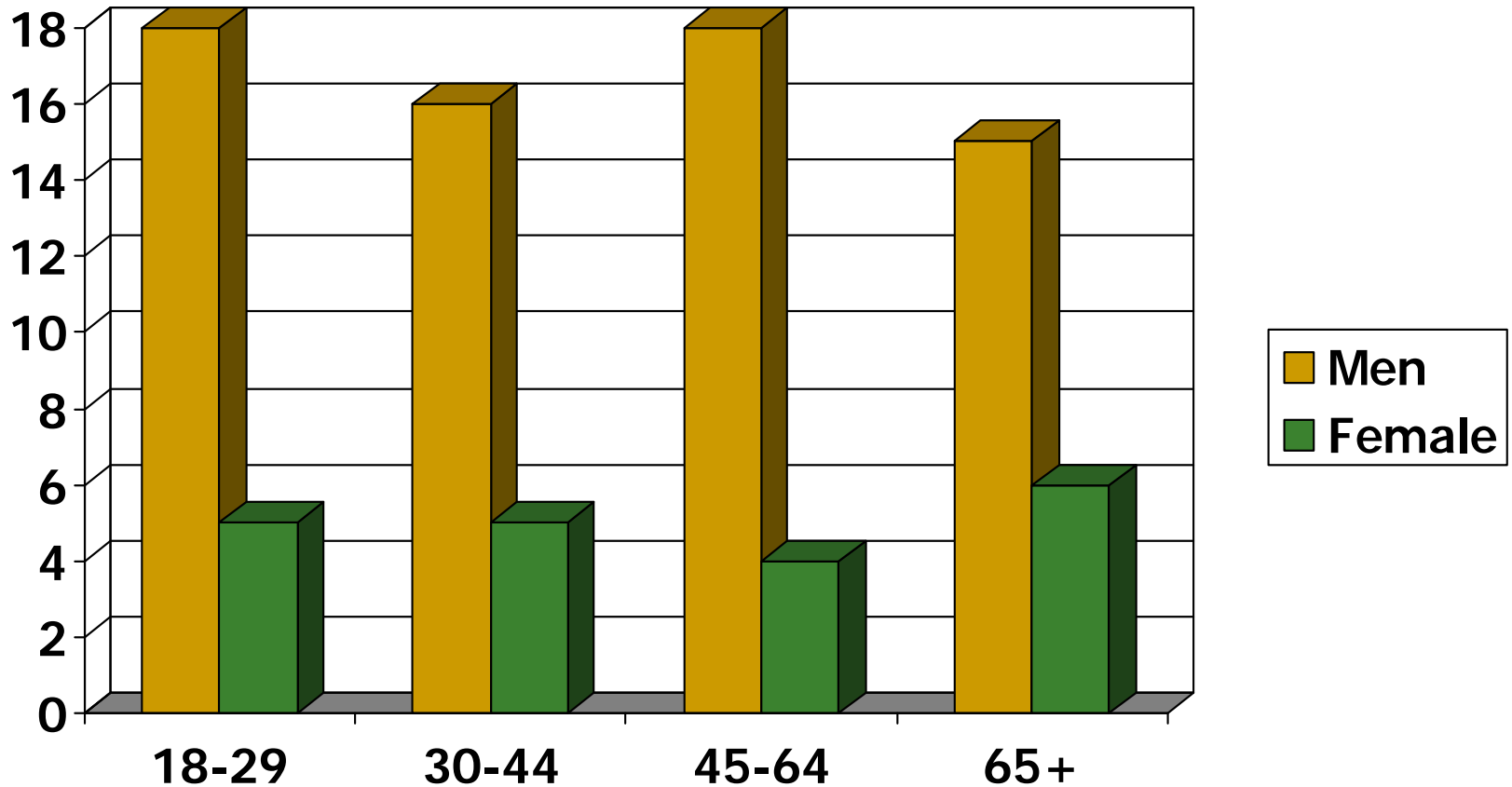
friends, there were shades of 1973 all over again, even down to England's performance heroine John

the bench; the edge briefly ebbed from the endgame until Isaac Boss's late, late try.

SIX NATIONS

EWOLF

Percentage of drivers, who are drinkers, who drive after drinking 2 or more standard drinks (SLAN 2007)



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# What is needed

1. Reduce our overall consumption
  2. Highly visible enforcement
  3. Graduated licensing
  4. Reduce the legal limit
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**I am only having one!**

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# Reducing the limit works

## *NSW*

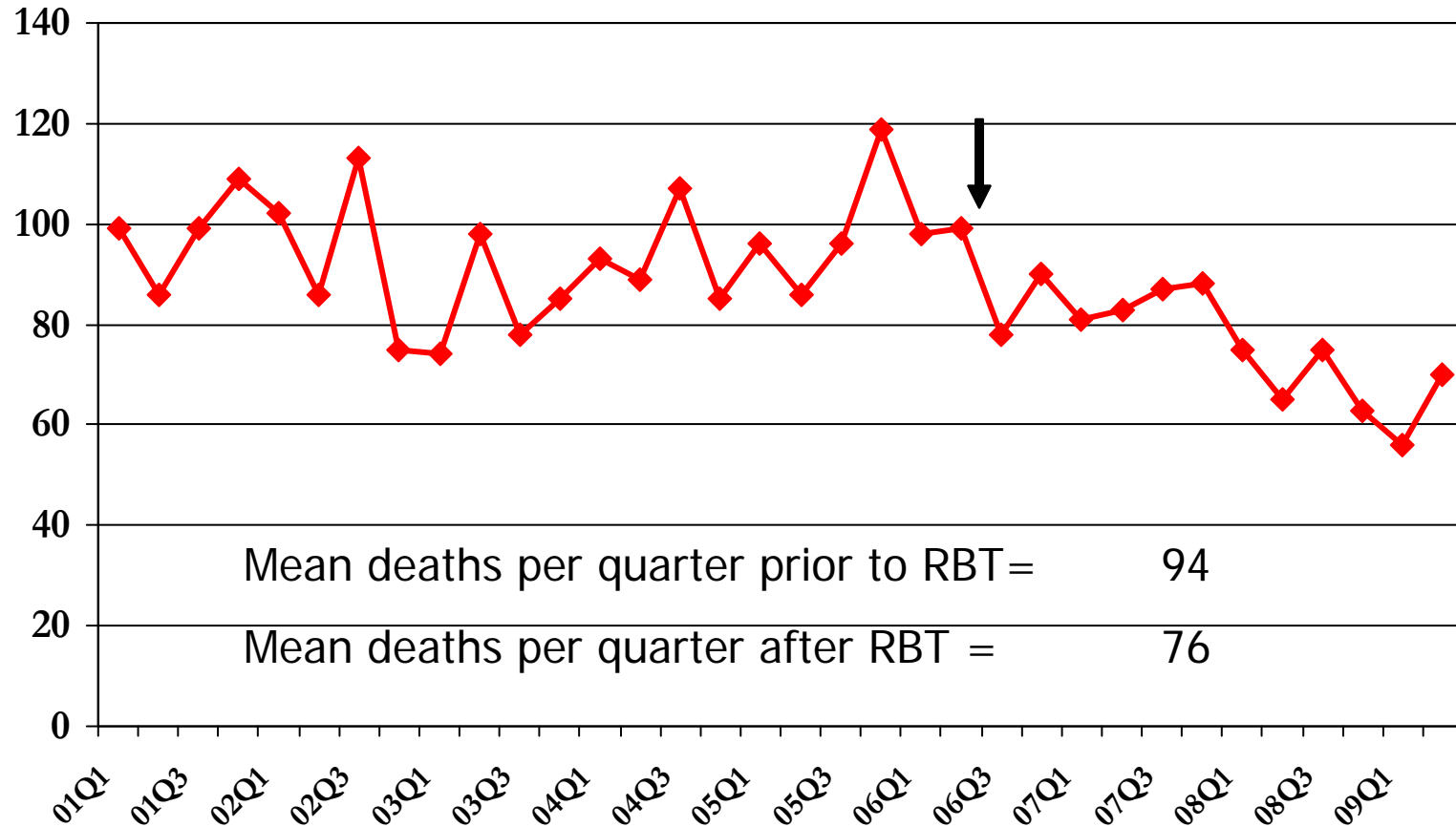
- Serious collisions down 7%
- Fatal collisions down 8%

## *Queensland*

- Serious collisions down 14%
  - Fatal collisions down 18%
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- Evidence based policy works
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# Number of road deaths in Ireland by quarter January 2001- June 2009



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# Conclusion

Drink driving is a problem in Ireland

Lowering the Limit is the next step

- Will save lives
  - Will reduce injury and disability
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