

Driving lawyer urges 'culture of responsibility' for Christmas party planners

Submitted by: Simpson Millar LLP Solicitors

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A leading driving offences lawyer is calling on businesses to issue health warnings ahead of Christmas office parties and business networking events.

Julie Robertson, Head of Driving Offences at Simpson Millar (<http://www.simpsonmillar.co.uk/services/motoring-offences/motoring-offences.aspx>), explains that the arrival of Christmas marks the dawn of networking season in the business world, where professionals frequently attend alcohol filled social gatherings and parties.

She says a "culture of responsibility" should be encouraged amongst event organisers so that the temptation for guests to drink drive (<http://www.simpsonmillar.co.uk/services/motoring-offences/drink-driving.aspx>) is given due consideration during the planning process. "It's not uncommon for organisers to give their guests free car parking spaces, so if they are providing free alcohol it follows that a health warning could be appropriate," says Julie.

"Elsewhere in society this culture of responsibility is prevalent; TV ads encourage individuals not to offer alcohol to someone who is planning to drive and the same message should be sent out to event organisers," says Julie. "Businesses which organise networking events should provide guests with alternative transport and with health warnings of some description, whether it's stating the possible consequences or penalties of drink driving.

"Unfortunately, this is not a common practice, because as well all know event organisers can't be held legally responsible if one of their guests is caught driving under influence. But with around 50,000 people found guilty in court for driving after consuming alcohol¹, it's a fair bet that some of these people were driving after a social occasion at work," adds Julie.

Editor's notes:

Simpson Millar LLP successfully represents the rights of individuals and their families via a network of 14 regional UK offices and through their long-standing association with membership organisations such as trade unions. Simpson Millar was the first ever UK law firm to obtain Lexcel Accreditation from the Law Society and, more recently, the first to obtain the Diversity in Business Accreditation.

The company is part of Fairpoint Group PLC and has offices in Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, London, Wimbledon, Bristol, Lancaster, Gateshead, Newcastle and Sheffield
www.simpsonmillar.co.uk

¹ Institute of Alcohol studies, 2013

<http://www.ias.org.uk/uploads/pdf/Factsheets/Drink%20driving%20FS%20HM%20May%202013.pdf>

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