



**An examination of the licensing status of drivers involved in  
fatal road crashes in Western Australia.**

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## Unlicensed drivers – the extent of the issue

- 2005 – 14.9% of drivers involved in fatal crashes were unlicensed
- 2006 – 13.4% of drivers involved in fatal crashes were unlicensed
- 2007 – 20.5% of drivers involved in fatal crashes were unlicensed
- 2008 – 17.8% of drivers involved in fatal crashes were unlicensed



## Unlicensed drivers – the size of the pool

- 2007 – 1.423 million drivers licenses
- 2004 – DPI estimates 88,000 drivers with suspended, disqualified, cancelled or expired drivers licenses.
- October 2007 – Fines Enforcement Registry estimated that there were 6,900 matters over which licenses may be suspended
- 2007 – Fines Enforcement Registry estimated that there were 59,000 unique drivers licenses suspended.
- No estimates of drivers driving when they have never held a drivers licence

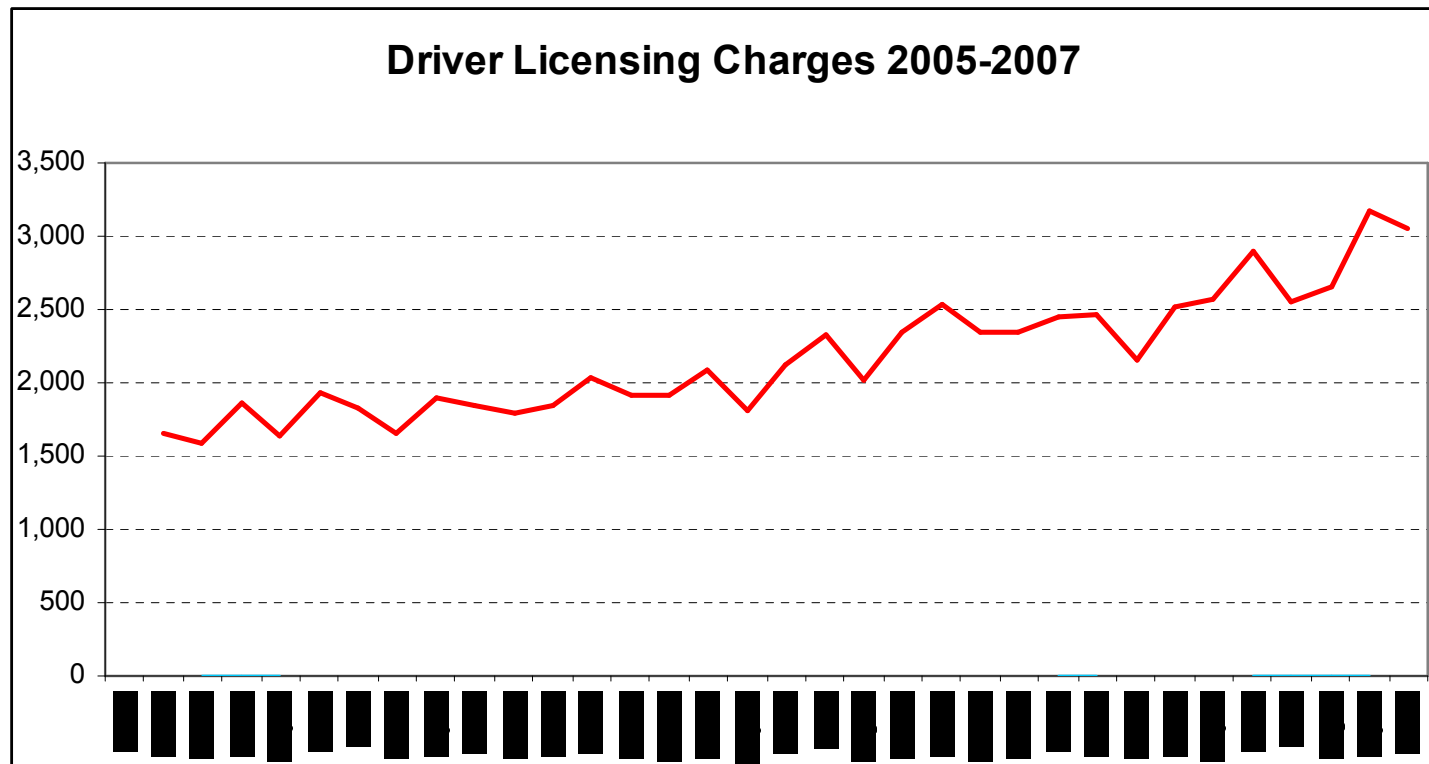


## Unlicensed drivers – once suspended, do they continue to drive

- Smith and Maisey survey (1990) 36% would drive
- Other survey (1990) 40% would drive.
- Fines Enforcement Registry, issues about knowing, attitude to FER,
- Drivers in rural and remote areas and access to driver training, licensing services, log books



# Unlicensed drivers – detection of drivers



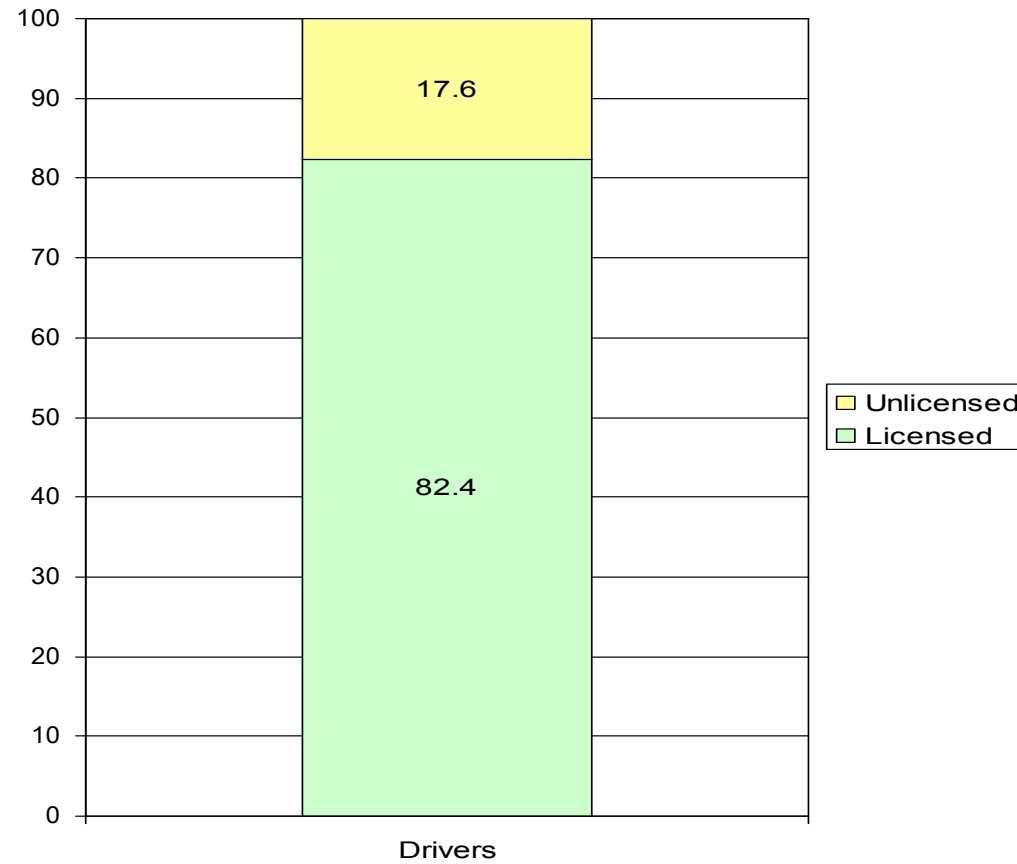


## Unlicensed drivers – the data issues

- Two calendar year datasets. 2006 and 2007
- Linked a series of WA Police datasets
- Being a driver has two elements, licensing status and being a driver in the fatal crash
- Licensing status separated into two exclusive categories licensed and unlicensed.
- Fatal crashes counted in the road toll

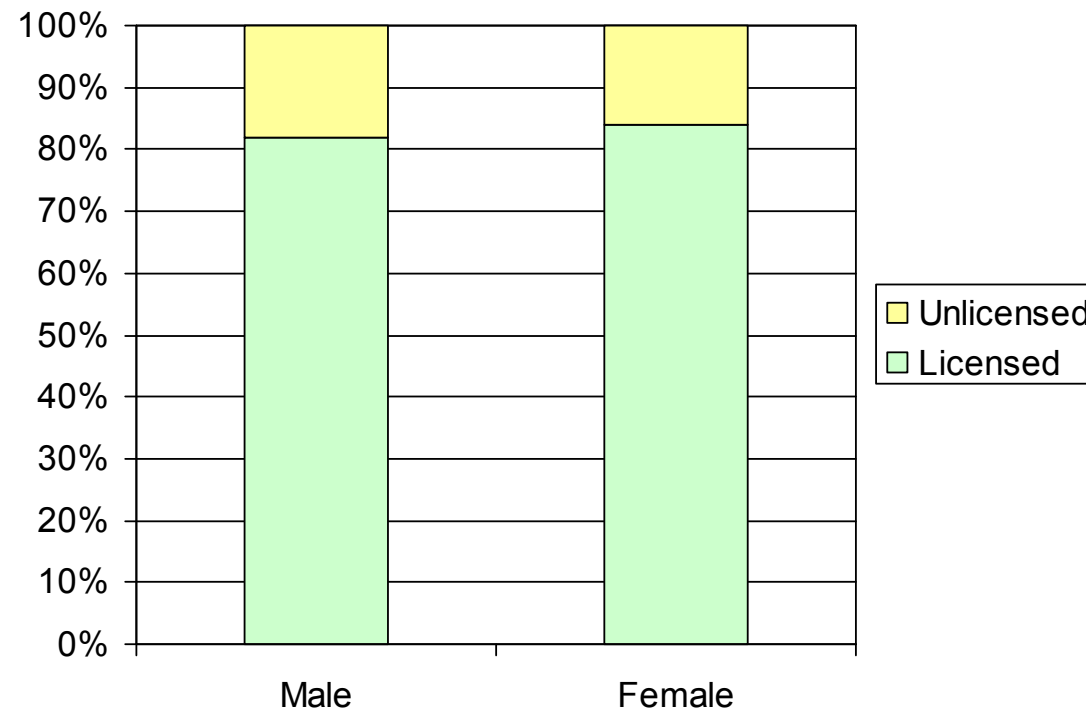


# Results – licence status



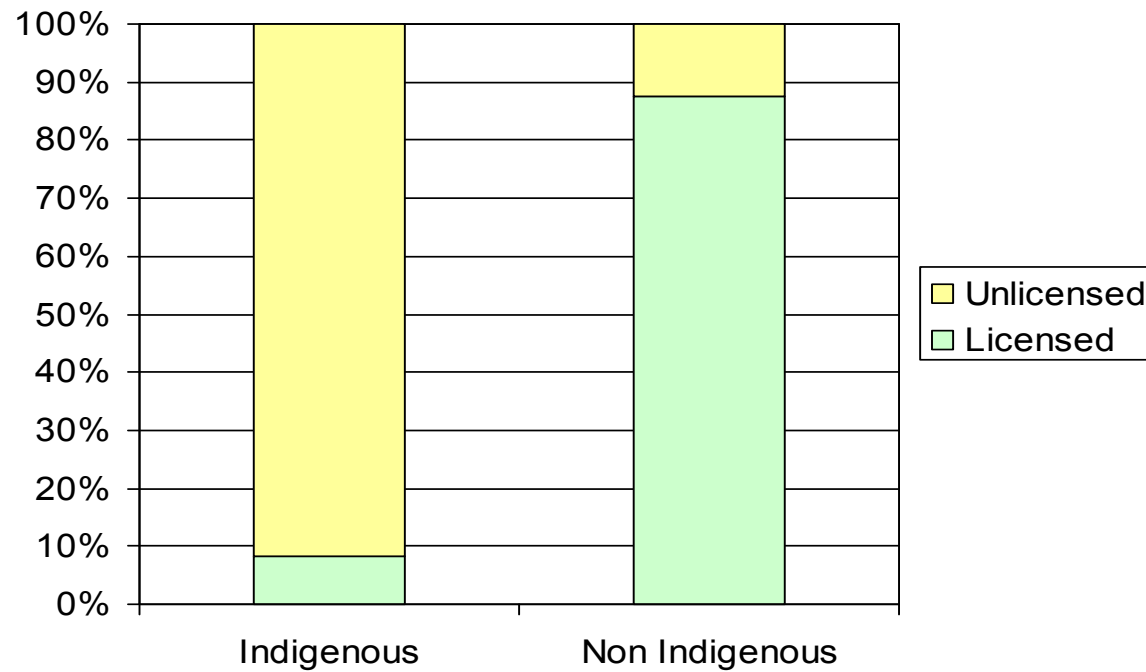


# Results – gender



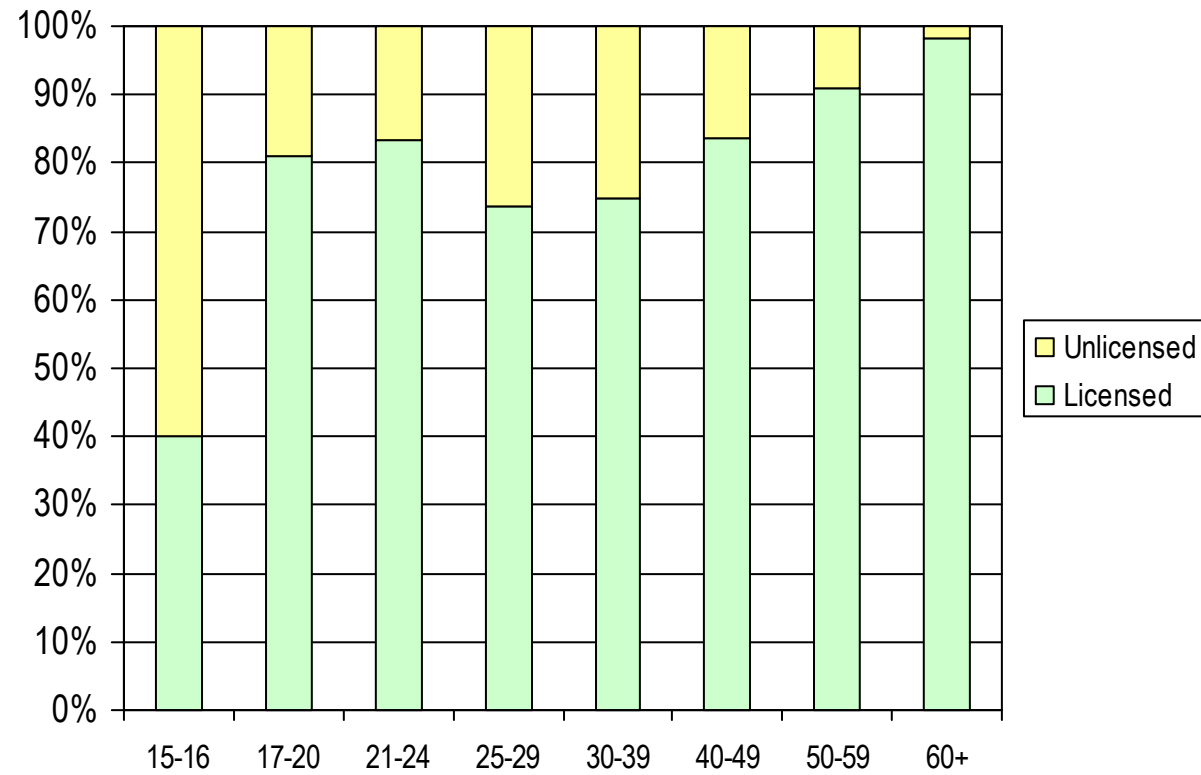


# Results – Indigenous status



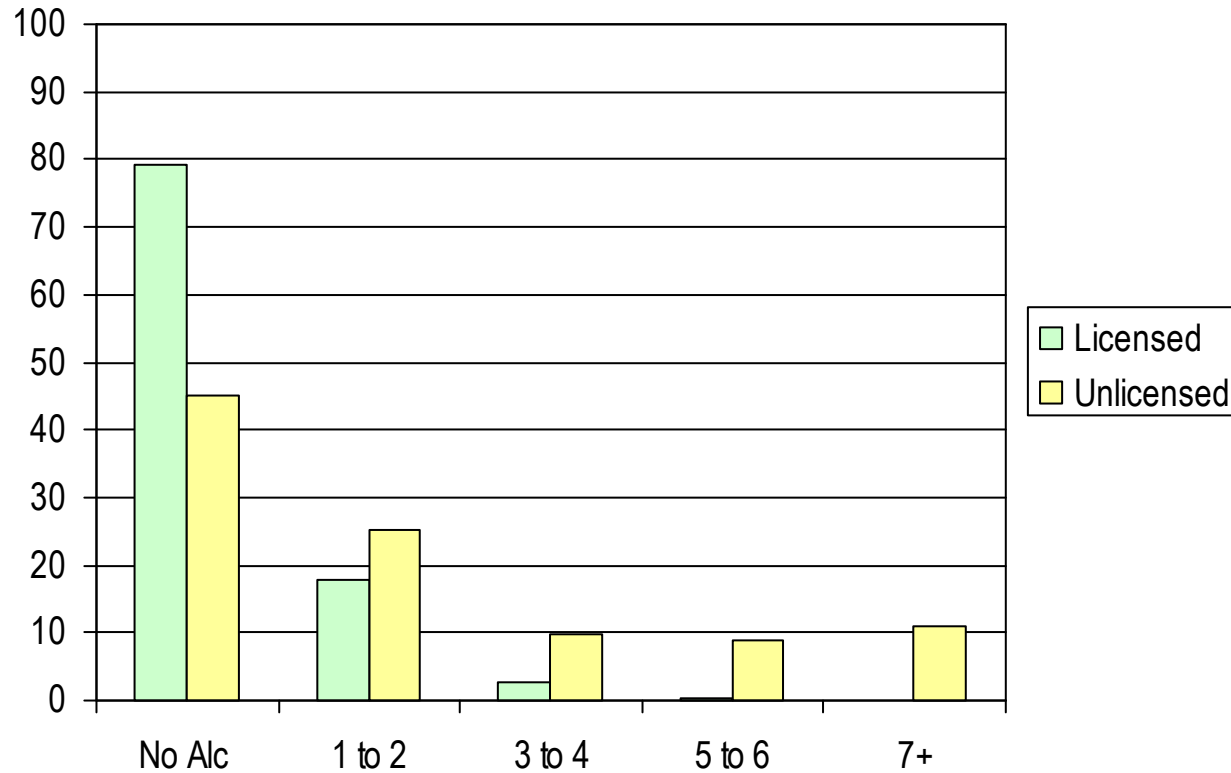


# Results – age



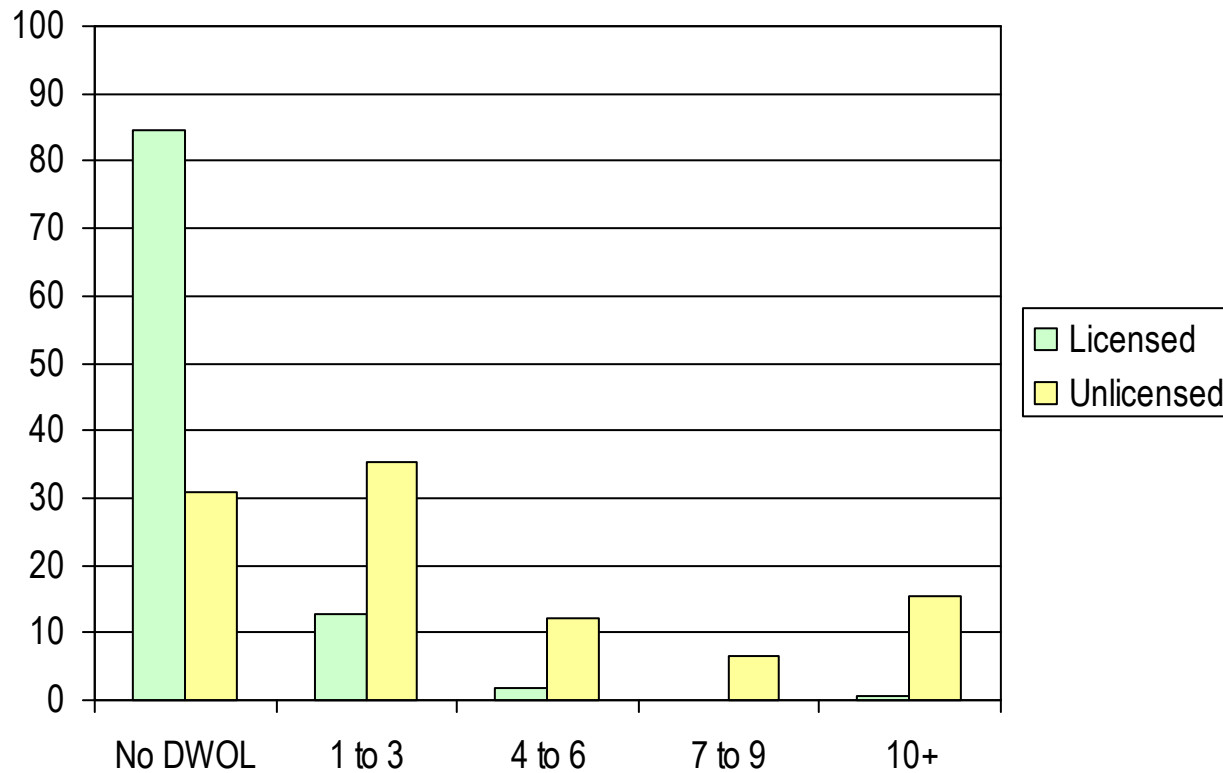


# Results – risk factors – alcohol outcomes



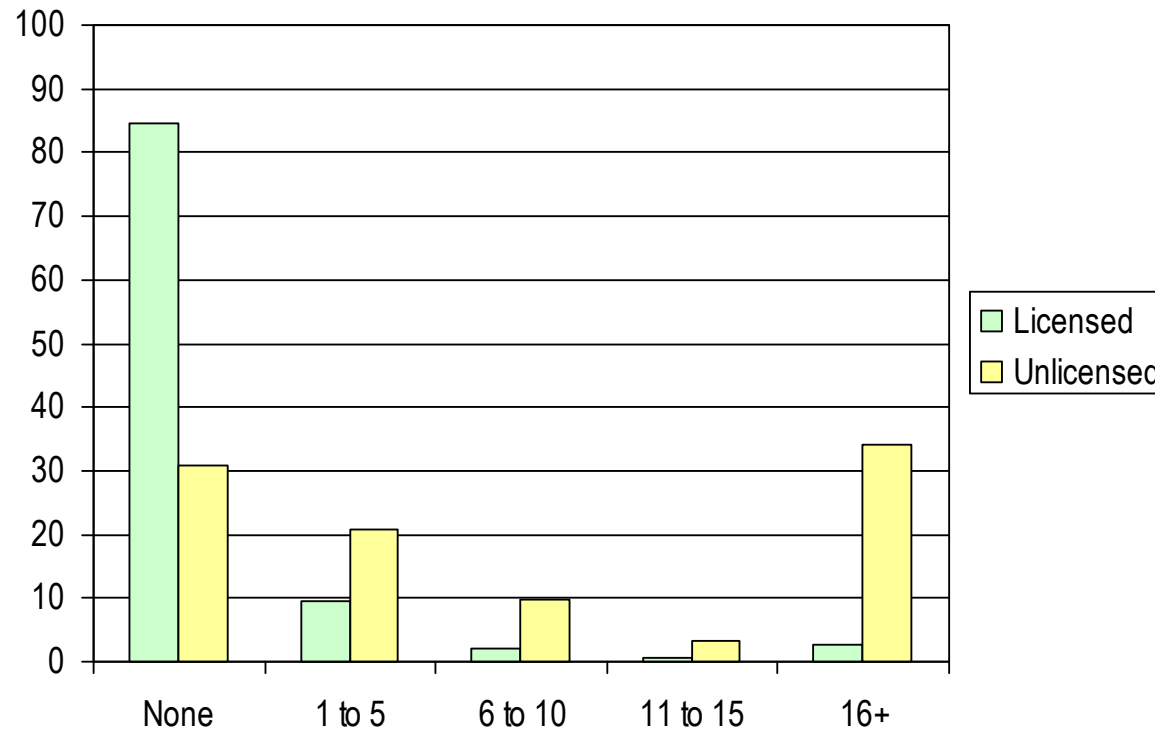


# Results – risk factors – DWOL outcomes



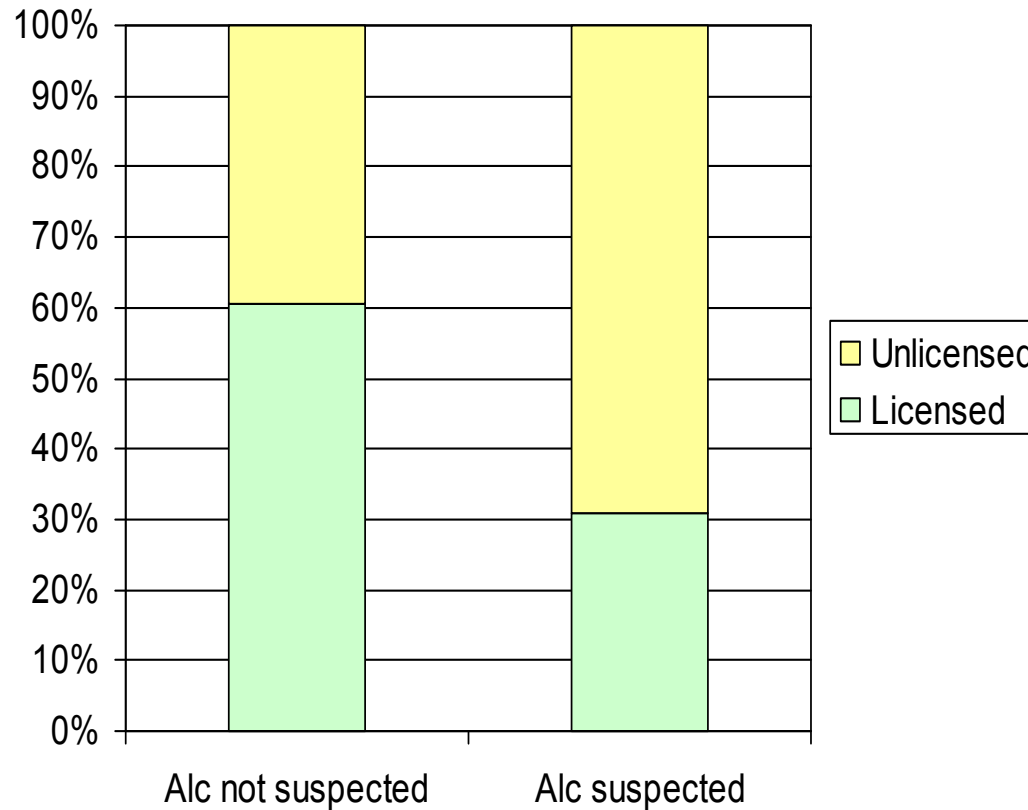


# Results – risk factors – criminal outcomes



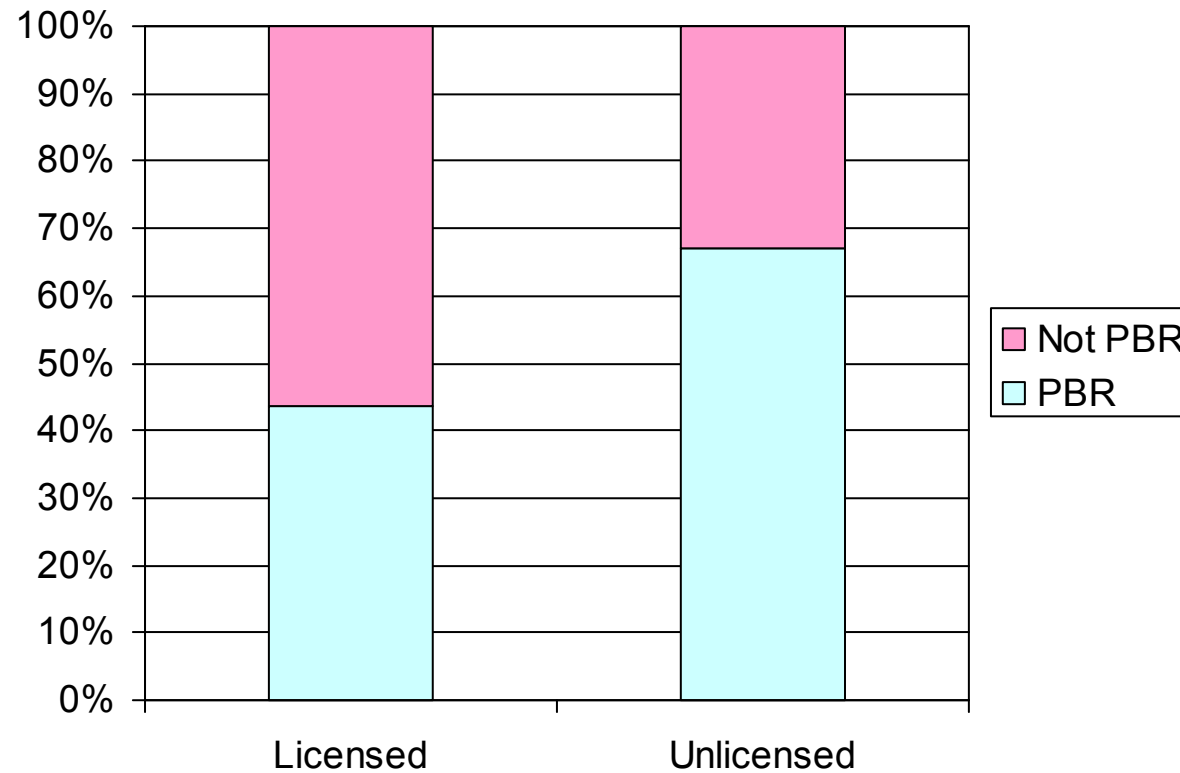


# Results – alcohol involvement





# Results – person believed responsible





## Results – average number of injuries

Licensing Status	Licensed %	Unlicensed %
Ave no of injuries	1.275	1.516

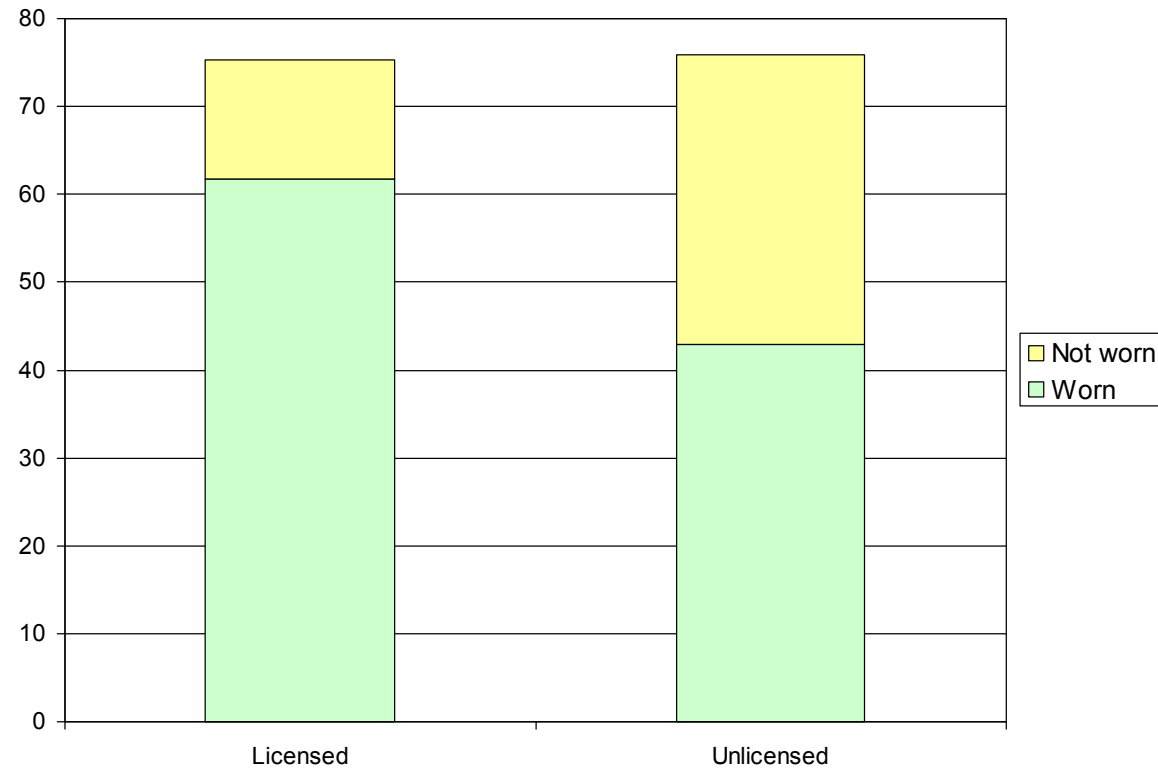


# Results – location

Licensing Status	Licensed %	Unlicensed %
Regional WA	80.4	19.6
Metropolitan	84.9	15.1



# Results – restraint use





## Results – crash nature

Licensing Status	Licensed %	Unlicensed %
Hit object	31.9	20.9
Non collision	10.1	30.8
Hit pedestrian	7.5	3.3



## Results – causal factors

Licensing Status	Licensed %	Unlicensed %
Alcohol/speed	9.2	22.0
Alcohol	6.8	16.5



## Unlicensed drivers – summary

- 17.6% of drivers involved with fatal crashes unlicensed
- 92.1% of Indigenous drivers were unlicensed
- Indigenous drivers formed 38.5% of the unlicensed pool,
- 50% of unlicensed drivers in 25-39 yrs age range
- Unlicensed drivers have twice as many alcohol outcomes
- Unlicensed drivers have four times as many DWOL outcomes
- Unlicensed drivers have three times as many criminal outcomes
- Less likely use restraints
- Unlicensed drivers have twice as likely to consume alcohol prior to crash
- Unlicensed drivers are more likely to be responsible for the crash
- Unlicensed drivers will injure a larger number of other persons in crash



# Unlicensed drivers – impact on road safety and traffic enforcement

- Unlicensed drivers are high risk,
- Unlicensed drivers are less receptive to road safety messages
- Unlicensed drivers are more involved with traffic enforcement and judicial systems
- Unlicensed drivers are ignoring traffic enforcement and judicial systems
- Incorporating Indigenous drivers is problematic, public education strategies need to target differing groups
- Enforcement needs to target perception of risk of detection
- Enforcement needs to be back by good quality timely data on licensing status



# Unlicensed driving – a new response

- Introduced on 1 July 2009, 28 day impounds for unlicensed driving
- Limited range unlicensed offences,
- Common element - court stating licence, cancelled, suspended
- Vehicle impounded at roadside for 28 days
- Owner responsible for storage and towage costs



# Unlicensed drivers – the first four months

- 3,800 - average of 30 impounds per day
- Estimate 11,000 vehicles in a full year



## Unlicensed drivers – an early survey

- 77% male
- 13% Indigenous
- 55% aged in their 20s
- 49% driving vehicle not registered in their name



## Unlicensed drivers – driving risk factors

- 87% had a previous DWOL offence, average 4.4 offences
- 65% had a previous driving/alcohol offence, average 2.6 offences
- 25% had a police attended traffic crash recorded
- 25% had a dangerous or reckless driving offence
- 37.5% had a current fine suspension
- 87.5% had a current licence revocation
- 39% had multiple licence revocations
- 61.5% had a criminal court outcome
- 39% had more than 5 criminal court outcomes



# Unlicensed drivers – response and results

- Characteristics of impounded drivers and unlicensed drivers in fatal crashes are a strong match.
- Anecdotal evidence of unlicensed drivers reconsidering driving whilst unlicensed