



OFSC MEDIA RELEASE

Canadian Snowmobiling Says No To Alcohol

Barrie, ON. December 3, 2002: In an effort to eliminate alcohol as a major contributing factor in snowmobiling fatalities and injuries, the Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations, and all of Canada's provincial and territorial snowmobiling associations, have backed an international resolution endorsing "Zero Tolerance While Snowmobiling". The trend-setting resolution calls for the adoption of 0.00 per cent Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) level as the only acceptable number while riding a snowmobile.

"The significance of this development is that the provincial/territorial associations representing 914 snowmobile clubs across Canada have now voted unanimously that the 0.08 per cent BAC (the legal limit in most jurisdictions) is not good enough. Our Zero Tolerance While Snowmobiling position calls for total abstinence from alcohol while riding a snowmobile," commented CCSO President Bob Walsh of New Brunswick. "Our next step is to take it right down to that minority of snowmobilers who still drink and ride."

The incidence of alcohol involvement in snowmobiling fatalities and injuries is well documented, with the highest proportion of alcohol-related crashes occurring in the hours of darkness involving 19 to 34 year old males. This behaviour is unacceptable to most snowmobilers — responsible, family people who do not drink and ride. While snowmobilers are not expected to police other snowmobilers, the Zero Tolerance While Snowmobiling campaign will rely on such forms of peer pressure as refusing to ride with anyone who consumes alcohol before or during a ride to encourage rider compliance.

"With the endorsement of Zero Tolerance While Snowmobiling, the CCSO has made major progress towards the elimination of alcohol from the snow," concluded Walsh, "but we still have a long way to go, and are actively seeking support from governments, other agencies and the private sector, because we cannot do it alone."

At their September Annual General meeting, members clubs of the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs supported Zero Tolerance While Snowmobiling by agreeing to encourage individual snowmobilers to make the personal choice to refrain from drinking alcohol prior to or during any ride.

The Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations (CCSO) is dedicated to providing leadership and support to organized snowmobiling in Canada (www.ccsso-ccom.ca).

The Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs is dedicated to providing strong leadership and support to member clubs and volunteers to establish and maintain quality snowmobile trails which are used in a safe and environmentally responsible manner to further the enjoyment of organized snowmobiling (www.ofsc.on.ca).

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