

Beware the real sobering effect of one too many

A drunk driving sentence could prevent you from landing a job

WORKPLACE STAFF

JUDGE Nkola Motata was recently charged with drunken driving. The appeal against his conviction and sentence in the Johannesburg High Court, which is either a R20 000 fine or 12 months in jail, was dismissed.

This is just one such case of negligence on our roads. South African statistics highlight a shocking number of people driving after having consumed an illegal amount of alcohol. One person is killed every two hours on South African roads due to drunk drivers!

"Driving under the influence (DUI) could leave you dead, paralysed or at best unemployed due to an irreversible criminal record," says Bonnie Currin, a director at PAG Recruitment.

A person found guilty of DUI is putting him or herself at risk in many ways – with lifelong effects.

"Because DUI is considered as an irresponsible and negligent criminal act, it can sometimes result in an irreversible effect on your career," says Currin.

According to South African law, the legal alcohol limit is 0.05g per 100ml of blood, and is based on an adult male weighing about 68kg, who has eaten a meal before or during consumption of alcohol.

It has also been discovered that women metabolise alcohol faster and will therefore reach this limit quicker. No amount of coffee, showering or any other "remedy" will help – only time reduces the alcohol level in your system.

It is no secret that alcohol affects judgment, reflexes, co-ordination and

vision, which is everything required for safe road usage.

The ability of being able to slow down or judge distance will be impaired, and the driver is in the perfect situation to cause major damage to himself, his passengers and other road users.

Most potential employers conduct a background check, which means that this offence will be picked up. Hiding it is not an option – it is a legal public matter, and therefore public knowledge.

Many companies have a clear criminal record entry requirement, which means that no matter what the position, should the candidate's criminal record not come up clear, he/she will not be appointed into that organisation.

PAG finds that many students may have faced DUI charges during their less "responsible" years while having fun as a student, and they don't realise how much it will affect them once they try to enter the workplace.

When there are numerous functions to attend and where drinking is unavoidable, it is imperative that other travel arrangements are made as employers won't be able to justify a DUI charge to a new prospective employer.

"The best thing for offenders is to remain honest with an employer, explain what happened and show shame, embarrassment and remorse," Currin explains.

"However, prevention is the best cure, it's best to consider the consequences and maintain safe road usage, or else face the lifelong consequences attached to this type of bad behaviour," she says.



CAUGHT: Few people realise that a criminal conviction is a lifelong blemish on your record.

Picture: Matthew Jordaan

