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The Mission of MADD Canada is
to stop impaired driving and to
support victims of this violent
crime.

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For immediate release

June 24, 2003

Canadians want more effective impaired driving BAC limit

-- Tremendous support for lowering the BAC to 0.05% --

Three in four Canadians want to see the current blood alcohol concentration (BAC) limit for impaired driving law be reduced and a vast majority of Canadians (87%) feel MADD Canada's suggested 0.05% BAC is either about right or not low enough.

In a recent SES national telephone survey, Canadians were asked whether they supported or opposed a movement 'to change the laws so that people will not be able to drink as much and legally drive.' A majority -- 65% of Canadians strongly supported lowering the BAC, while another 11% somewhat supported the action. There were 8% of Canadians who strongly opposed the suggestion and another 5% who somewhat opposed it. (8% of Canadians were neither approving or opposing the lowering the BAC, and 4% were unsure.)

When asked whether they supported the MADD Canada suggestion of lowering the BAC to a specific limit that would allow a 200 lb man to drink 4 drinks in 2 hours, or a 140 lb woman to drink 2 drinks in 2 hours, 46% of those surveyed thought the MADD Canada limit was 'about right', while 41% of Canadians thought the limit should be lower. Only 6% of Canadians felt the limit should be higher.

Nik Nanos, President of SES, says, "In our surveys over the last two years, Canadians have been very consistent in their strong support for a lower BAC. Our findings indicate that men and women, of all ages, from every region of the country, want to see a 0.05% BAC - or an even lower legal limit."

"Our survey found that seven of ten Canadians do not drink and drive - and I think we would all want to have a level of comfort that we won't be killed or injured in an automobile crash caused by an impaired driver," says Mr. Nanos. "We have seen a consistently strong opinion expressed over the last few years that Canadians support the lowering of the BAC."

Andrew Murie, National Executive Director of MADD Canada, comments on

the latest survey, "Lowering the BAC is being discussed more and more in our country. With the high profile the issue has been given by Premier Campbell, and the number of BAC experiments by media and police that have been conducted, Canadians are becoming more informed about just how much a person can legally drink and still get behind the wheel - and the public realizes it is far too much."

"The views of Canadians have galvanized and, today, we see a vast majority concluding that the BAC in our country should be lowered. Most of us understand this as an important public safety issue," says Mr. Murie. "Lower BACs mean there will be drivers drinking less - and that means increased safety for everyone on the road. And this is important for it will lead to a decrease in the number of Canadians being killed and injured as a result of alcohol-related crashes."

A Centre for Addiction and Mental Health study concludes that as much as 6% to 18%, or as high as 555 deaths a year would be avoided in Canada if the federal Criminal Code BAC were lowered to 0.05%.

MADD Canada reports that, in practical terms, the current legal limit means a 200 lb. man on an empty stomach can drink 6 plus, standard drinks in two hours and will likely not be charged with a Criminal Code offence for impaired driving. MADD Canada strongly believes this is not social drinking, but rather levels that are far too risky for other safe and sober road users.

The SES survey was taken between May 13 and 23, 2003, commissioned by MADD Canada, and is accurate within 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

[MADD \(Canada\) National Poll – May 2003](#) (PDF)

For more information, visit www.sesresearch.com, www.madd.ca, or call:

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