

ALLIANZ GLOBAL CORPORATE & SPECIALTY®

DROWSY DRIVING

ALLIANZ RISK CONSULTING

THE EFFECTS OF DRIVING WHILE

- According to the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, while official statistics from the U.S. government indicate that only approximately 1%–2% of all motor vehicle crashes involve drowsy driving, many studies suggest that the true scope of the problem is likely to be much greater. This Research Brief describes a study that examined the prevalence of driver drowsiness immediately prior to crashes that occurred in the context of a large-scale naturalistic driving study in which the driving of more than 3,500 people was monitored continuously for a period of several months using in-vehicle cameras and other data collection equipment. Drowsiness was assessed using a validated measure that is based on the percentage of time that a person’s eyes are closed. Using this measure, drowsiness was identified in 8.8%–9.5% of all crashes examined and 10.6%–10.8% of crashes that resulted in significant property damage, airbag deployment, or injury.

Everyone takes the dangers of drinking and driving seriously, but the hazards of driving while drowsy receive little attention. Many experts believe it’s the most serious issue facing the motoring public today.

THE BIOLOGY OF SLEEP

We each have a “biological clock” that tells our bodies when it needs to do certain things – eat, sleep, and wake up. It’s based on the “circadian hormonal rhythm” – a daily cycle with

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