

## **Safer Roads Humber Camera FAQs**

### **Speeding offences**

**Why do you focus on speeding motorists, surely there are many more serious traffic offences that you need to tackle?**

Whilst most people understand the consequences of drink-driving, the impact of speed is not well understood. Research shows that for every 5km/hour (approx. 3mph) over a 60 km/hour (approx. 40mph) limit, the risk of an injury collision doubles. In Humberside, on average approx. 10% of injury collisions are judged to involve excess or inappropriate speed. What is more, speed is recorded as a factor in around one in five fatal collisions on Humberside roads. Empirical studies in the UK have shown that if average speeds reduced by 1mph, the accident rate would fall by approximately 5%<sup>1</sup>.

While speed is not always the key factor in contributing to a crash, it plays a major part in the severity of injuries, which increase with the speed limit. Speed limits are in force not only to prevent accidents but also to minimise harm to fellow citizens in the event of a collision, however caused. It is the impact speed that determines the severity of a victim's injuries and whether they live or die. We cannot defeat the laws of momentum and kinetic energy: the greater the moving speed, the greater the thinking and stopping distance; the greater the impact speed, the greater the damage. Simply put, the lower the speed, the more time for seeing, reacting and stopping under control.

**Speeding is not a serious offence - everybody does it at some point.**

Unfortunately, the traffic offence of speeding is often regarded as a minor offence and many people have a cavalier attitude to speed limits and their enforcement – however, speeding is a serious and criminal offence and speed enforcement does have life-saving potential. Most people agree that drink-driving is unacceptable and they support drink-drivers being prosecuted. Should a drink driver who is only fractionally above the drink drive limit be let off and treated sympathetically as you might feel towards someone who is 'only just' exceeding the speed limit? A motorist could be driving safely on the face of it, but if he commits a motoring offence, it is still an offence per se: Speeding - yes or no? Insured - yes or no? On the phone - yes or no? Drink driving - yes or no?

Many traffic offences are being determined by exceeding a limit (or a 'number'), prescribed in law, e.g. tyre depth, breath and blood alcohol levels, drug levels, weight limits and so on – just like the speed limit which is also a number prescribed by law. If legally prescribed limits and their enforcement are necessary and supported for some aspects of safety on the road, surely there has to be support for them all.

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<sup>1</sup> "Effects of Drivers' Speed on the Frequency of Road Accidents" Taylor et al, TRL Report 421, 2002

**Why not try other methods of slowing drivers down, such as better speed limit signs, traffic calming, driver education and publicity?**

Safer Roads Humber recognises that enforcement is only one tool in reducing collisions and casualties and slowing down motorists, but it is effective in the right circumstances, especially to reduce excessive speeds. The partnership dedicates substantial resources to other fields of intervention, ranging from road safety engineering to education and publicity campaigns.

Educating road users to develop the right skills and attitudes to keep themselves and others safe is an important device in our toolkit. We undertake a wide range of education activities, ranging from diversion courses for those road users that make mistakes (e.g. national speed awareness course) to direct interaction with high risk road user groups and general awareness raising campaigns. Activities are based on behaviour change theory and focus on developing risk management skills rather than just presenting road safety information.

In addition, we use a wide range of media to promote a safer road use message, with different messages being targeted at specific road user groups. This includes the use of social media, radio, print and engagement events.

**The police should enforce speed limits without relying on cameras.**

Apart from its influence on collisions and casualties, speeding traffic is one of the key concerns of Humberside residents. This is reflected in the high number of speeding complaints that each local authority and Humberside Police receive each year. Detecting speeding motorists is one means available to the police and highways authorities to deal with this issue.

It is important to challenge perceptions and influence road user behaviour through a combination of different interventions, with proportionate enforcement, also via cameras, being part of this toolkit. Speed enforcement is used as a last resort when other measures for casualty and speed reduction have been exhausted or are deemed as not cost effective.

As well as enforcing speed limits, cameras are also used to detect other traffic offences such as mobile phone misuse and seat belt non-compliance.

**What are your speed enforcement thresholds and why can they differ across police forces?**

Safer Roads Humber and Humberside Police apply the NPCC (National Police Chiefs Council, formerly ACPO) Speed Enforcement Policy Guidelines and the enforcement thresholds specified therein. It is our policy to adhere to the ACPO guidelines, but these are guidelines only, so are not mandatory. While Safer Roads Humber camera enforcement adheres to the thresholds, a Police Officer at the roadside may choose to deal with an offence below the thresholds as a fixed penalty, at his/ her discretion.

It is an operational matter for each police force to decide at what threshold speed enforcement takes place. Each force has to take account of local circumstances.

## **Camera sites**

### **I have just driven past a camera vehicle and I am not sure if I was speeding or not.**

If you were driving at a speed that amounts to an offence, a Notice of Intended Prosecution (NIP) will be sent to the registered keeper's address with details of the violation. The NIP has to be sent within 14 days of the offence. Neither the enforcement officer at the camera site nor any other member of staff at Safer Roads Humber will be in a position to check recordings or make speculative searches on your behalf. You will simply have to wait if a NIP is coming through the post.

### **Why is there a fixed or mobile camera on a certain road?**

Camera enforcement takes place at locations that have a history of injury collisions and casualties, especially those that resulted in death and/ or serious injury (core camera sites), and at locations that suffer from a considerable speeding problem that either impacts on the quality of life of residents or poses a concern to public safety (local concern sites). Enforcement is undertaken to reduce and prevent injury collisions as well as to address anti-social and intimidating speeds in our towns and villages.

The partnership applies a set of site selection criteria to identify which sites qualify for core status based on their collision history. Local concern sites are identified by each local authority as part of their local [Speed Management Procedures](#). Site selection is based on the collision history of a particular site in conjunction with speed data collected at that site.

More information on each camera site is available on our camera site map. Information on camera enforcement in general is available in our 'Enforcement, Signing & Speed Management Policy'.

### **Who decides where the cameras are located?**

Sites are selected in consultation with all partners, including Humberside Police and the relevant highways authority, which is either the local council or Highways England. Both the collision and speed criteria determine whether a site qualifies for fixed cameras or whether mobile enforcement via enforcement vehicles is more suitable.

Before enforcement commences, an assessment takes place to establish whether the site is suitable for enforcement activities and whether camera enforcement is the most appropriate and cost effective solution to a casualty and/ or speeding problem.

### **Are the camera sites legal?**

Before enforcement commences, the partnership ensures that the posted speed limit is legal and that any relevant Traffic Regulation Orders (if applicable) are correct. Furthermore, a site audit takes place to confirm that the speed limit is signed appropriately and that all signing, lining and lighting is in order. These checks are repeated before every single enforcement visit. Should a site not meet the basic requirements, then enforcement will be suspended until the identified issues are rectified.

**Where can I find information on collisions, speeds driven and offences detected at a camera site?**

For each core camera site, Safer Roads Humber publishes historic collision, casualty, speed and offence data going back as far as 2006 for offence data and even further for collision and speed information (depending on the camera site) on its website. This information can be accessed via our camera site map (by clicking on the relevant site), with data being updated annually once the figures have been verified and all relevant databases have been closed. Due to the time required to process speed awareness courses, court referrals and collision files, at least 6 months will pass before confirmed figures are published (i.e. figures for the previous year will usually be published by late summer/ early autumn of the following year). As such, Safer Roads Humber will not publish figures for individual cameras sites for the current financial or calendar year.

**The camera site was not signed.**

Safer Roads Humber aims to change driver behaviour by encouraging motorists to be aware of the speed limits and to comply with them. We therefore support advertising the potential presence of speed enforcement by the use of clear, visible and conspicuous signs as well as highly visible equipment. However, the use of signs to indicate camera enforcement is NOT a legal requirement<sup>2</sup> and there is also no requirement by law to make cameras highly visible.

The [Department for Transport Circular 01/2007](#) and the [NPCC \(National Police Chief's Council\) Guide for the Operational Use of Speed and Red-Light Offence Detection Technology](#) provide **guidance** on the signing, visibility and conspicuity of camera enforcement activity, but this is not mandatory. It is up to individual local authorities and road safety partnerships to decide on what (if any) signing, visibility and conspicuity rules are being followed locally.

The partnership will aim for core camera sites, either fixed or mobile, to be signed in accordance with the national guidance. In considering enforcement at other sites (e.g. local concern ones), the cost and benefits of installing signage will be balanced against the frequency, location and type of enforcement.

More information on our signage procedure can be found in our 'Enforcement, Signing & Speed Management Policy'.

**The enforcement vehicle was parked illegally.**

For the purpose of law enforcement police vehicles may park legally in any location providing they do not cause a hazard or obstruction. In order to undertake enforcement, the enforcement vehicle can park anywhere where it is safe to do so.

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<sup>2</sup> Mandatory rules existed as part of the National Safety Camera Programme (NSCP), but with the end of the NSCP in April 2007 these ceased to have effect.

**The enforcement vehicle/ camera was hidden.**

There is no deliberate concealment taking place. In order to detect traffic offences, an enforcement officer needs a clear view of passing traffic which means that the enforcement vehicle cannot be hidden from view by street furniture, vegetation etc as this would actually hinder observing the traffic and therefore detecting offences. If an enforcement officer operating from a van, motorbike or at the roadside can see a vehicle, this vehicle is also able to see that enforcement is taking place.

Safer Roads Humber's marked vans and motorbikes display high visibility, retro-reflective livery, with camera vans also displaying camera 'box brownies' and 'Safer Roads Humber' marking. If enforcement is conducted on foot and away from the enforcement vehicle the operators wear high visibility jackets.

In addition, core camera sites are clearly signed as such with camera terminal signs and camera repeater signs dotted along the whole stretch of the site, on both sides of the carriageway. These signs are there to inform and remind motorists that they are entering a camera enforcement site and provide ample warning that enforcement can take place on any day and at any time.

Both sides of the carriageway can be enforced, i.e. both approaching and receding vehicles can be detected. Motorcyclists are not exempt.

**I don't believe I was speeding.**

Unless you can prove that the camera device was malfunctioning at the time of the alleged offence or that it was being operated outside of its Home Office Type Approval, the offence will stand. Using cruise control or a speed limiter is not evidence that you were not speeding as these devices are not calibrated for accuracy and should not be relied upon for guaranteeing your speed.

**Camera technology & accuracy**

**What types of speed camera do you use?**

The type of camera deployed depends on the site type and the collision and speed problem at a location. All camera types have the ability to capture different classes of vehicle within the speed limits. The main camera types currently in use are:

Fixed point cameras: these are unattended, permanent roadside cameras in yellow housings which operate 24/7 and are designed to measure the speed of approaching and/ or departing vehicles. Only vehicles travelling above the posted speed limit are seen and recorded by the camera.

Average speed systems: these are several time over distance cameras usually installed along a route and measuring the average speed between an entry and exit point, based on a calculation of the time taken to travel the fixed distance between the cameras. These cameras tend to be installed on yellow roadside posts or overhead gantries.

Mobile cameras: these are operator attended cameras housed in a vehicle or mounted on a specially adapted motorbike as well as hand held laser cameras operated at the roadside. Mobile units use

highly sophisticated and accurate laser speed detection technology. The camera unit incorporates a display control unit and an integrated digital video camera.

Safer Roads Humber currently does not operate red light or combined speed and red light cameras.

More information on our camera technology can be found in our 'Enforcement, Signing & Speed Management Policy'.

### **How do average speed cameras work and how is average speed calculated?**

Average speed cameras measure the speed between two points, namely an entry and an exit point. The entry camera records the date and time when a certain number plate passed by (i.e. it takes a digital photo) and the number plate, date and time are recorded again when the exit camera is passed.

The vehicle registration is then automatically matched up from both cameras, meaning the time it took to travel the pre-defined distance between the two cameras is known. This now enables the onboard computer to calculate the vehicle's speed based on the familiar equation of

$$Speed = \frac{Distance}{Time} \text{ (Speed = Distance over Time)}$$

If the vehicle was speeding, the images are saved as an offence. If the vehicle was travelling within the speed limit, the registration details and dates/ times are deleted.

### **Do the cameras work at night or in the dark?**

The cameras operate effectively at all times of day, including at nighttime and during poor weather condition such as rain and snow. They use low-level flash or infra-red light to illuminate number plates.

### **How can you prove that the camera is accurate?**

All our equipment is fully Home Office Type Approved (HOTA) for use. Type approval is only granted to devices that display a high level of accuracy and reliability, after rigorous testing by the Home Office and the police in the field. <sup>3</sup>

The equipment is independently checked and calibrated on an annual basis in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations. Once completed, the equipment is issued with a calibration certificate. This forms part of police evidence and can only be produced in court.

All equipment is tested and operated in accordance with the NPCC Guidelines for the use of enforcement equipment and the operating manuals issued by the manufacturers on every occasion it is used. Each device also has a built-in self-diagnostic check to ensure that the calibration is correct every time it is used.

### **Can I see operator training records?**

All operators hold certificates of competence to evidence they have attended the relevant training. These form part of police evidence and can only be produced in court.

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<sup>3</sup> Further information on type approval is available from the Home Office.

## **Public Perception**

**It is all just a money making scheme, a 'cash cow' and another 'stealth tax' on motorists.**

Certainly not. As explained above, the primary aim of enforcing speed limits is to reduce collisions and casualties to make Humberside's roads safer for all. However, speeding is also an anti-social and intimidating activity which generates many complaints from Humberside residents each year, so it is important that speeding motorists are dealt with and encouraged to comply with the posted limit in the future.

Losing a loved one or sustaining life changing injuries due to a driver who thought he was driving at a safe speed above the limit, i.e. at a speed that he subjectively believed to be in keeping with the prevailing conditions, devastates families for life. There are still far too many people having to cope with the loss or life changing injury of loved ones. The sad reality is that the vast majority of collisions are completely preventable and each casualty represents untold sorrow and heartache.

Using cameras for enforcing the speed limit is not a stealth tax on the motorists as a tax is something all citizens must pay. The only motorists who will be subject to speeding notices and who need to fear prosecution are those who break the law and in so doing put themselves and others at risk. Law abiding motorists will not incur any costs – the offender pays rather than the tax payer!

**Numerous media reports confirm that cameras are just another measure to raise revenue for the police or the road safety partnership. Where does the money go?**

Cameras are only a small part of the road safety toolkit, albeit one loved by the popular press. There remains a great deal of poor reporting and often misreporting in the media, with coverage on cameras frequently being inaccurate or selective.

Safer Roads Humber is funded via cost recovery from offender education courses ('the offender pays, rather than the tax payer'). Any funds received are used to meet the costs of the agencies involved in operating cameras and the related administrative activities (e.g. employee costs, equipment & vehicle costs, premises, supplies & services, course costs etc.), with any surplus being re-invested into the local community as part of local road safety projects.

The fine revenue from those paying a speeding fine (fixed penalty) and accepting points on their license is paid directly to HM Treasury, so neither Safer Roads Humber nor Humberside Police receive any revenue from fixed penalties. In addition, some offences are dealt with at court where a fine may be imposed, which is then collected by the courts and also sent to HM Treasury.

**What is the public's reaction to speed cameras?**

Contrary to popular belief, public attitude surveys across the country regularly show that there is widespread support of speed cameras. AA Populus<sup>4</sup> polls have consistently highlighted that approx.

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<sup>4</sup> The AA Populus motoring panel includes 180,000 AA members that are vetted by market research company Populus. About 25,000 panel members respond to AA survey questions every month; [http://www.theaa.com/public\\_affairs/aa-populus-panel/](http://www.theaa.com/public_affairs/aa-populus-panel/)

70 % to 80% of drivers deem speed cameras an acceptable way to identify speeding vehicles. In the October 2016 survey this figure was even higher with 82% of respondents supporting the use of cameras. 86% agreed that it is important speed cameras are maintained and operational in order to be effective in reducing speed. This shows that speed cameras are generally endorsed by the motoring public, although there is a vociferous minority of people that do seem to have a personal axe to grind.

### **Effectiveness of cameras**

#### **Is there any evidence that speed cameras are having an effect on reducing casualties and slowing motorists down?**

The short answer is yes. There is a strong positive link between speed and the likelihood of a collision. In general, the higher the speed the more severe is the resulting injury. The evidence available suggests that motorists are slowing down in areas where speed cameras are located, meaning that cameras have a role to play in keeping everyone safe on our roads.

A systematic review of camera operations across 35 national and international studies by the influential Cochrane Collaboration<sup>5</sup> concluded that speed cameras are a worthwhile intervention for reducing the number of road traffic injuries and deaths.

Across all studies reviewed there was a:

- 1% - 15% reduction in average speed
- 14% - 65% reduction in the proportion of vehicles speeding
- 8% - 49% reduction in all crashes
- 11% - 44% reduction in fatal or serious injury crashes
- 17% - 58% reduction in killed or seriously injured casualties.

The RAC Foundation ([www.racfoundation.org](http://www.racfoundation.org)) has commissioned a number of reports looking into the effectiveness of speed cameras on a national level, with the latest report published in 2016 specifically looking at the impact that average speed cameras are having. All available research concluded that speed cameras reduce the number of injury collisions occurring in their vicinity by approx. 15%, over and above natural variation and general trend, with the positive effect on fatal and serious collisions being even greater. Detailed analytical results are available on <http://www.racfoundation.org/research/safety> or <http://www.racfoundation.org/motoring-faqs/enforcement#a7>.

In his 2013 analysis of collision data for speed cameras in Humberside, Prof Richard Allsop of University College London (UCL) established that across the whole of Safer Roads Humber's core fixed and mobile camera sites there has been a positive influence on casualties. The estimated impact on casualties of all severities (fatal, serious and slight) was a 2.5% reduction, with a greater effect on those killed or

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<sup>5</sup> "Do speed cameras reduce road traffic crashes, injuries and deaths?" Cochrane Review, Wilson, Willis, Hendrikz, Le Brocque and Bellamy (2010); [http://www.cochrane.org/CD004607/INJ\\_do-speed-cameras-reduce-road-traffic-crashes-injuries-and-deaths](http://www.cochrane.org/CD004607/INJ_do-speed-cameras-reduce-road-traffic-crashes-injuries-and-deaths)



seriously injured: a 15% reduction relative to numbers in Humberside as a whole over the period from when the cameras became operational (starting in 2003) to the end of 2012<sup>6</sup>.

Furthermore, as part of a review of Safer Roads Humber undertaken by Heather Ward and Nicola Christie (UCL) in March 2016<sup>7</sup>, Prof. Ben Heydecker (UCL) carried out some statistical analysis into suspended camera sites in Hull. This analysis indicated that there had been a small, although not statistically significant, increase in casualties at Hull sites where enforcement had been halted, which was over and above the increase observed across Hull as a whole.

## **Speed limits**

### **Who sets the speed limits?**

Speed limits are set by the relevant highways authority - on motorways and trunk roads, this is Highways England. On all other roads speed limits are set by the local authority.

Before a speed limit is set, the police are consulted and where required, a traffic regulation order is issued. A restricted road where there is a system of street lighting has a default speed limit of 30mph (unless another limit is indicated) and a Traffic Regulation Order is not necessary.

### **How can I tell what the speed limit is?**

The speed limit is displayed on circular signs installed on both sides of the carriageway and if there are signs indicating speed limits, these should be followed.

The Highway Code clearly states that 'Streetlights mean 30mph':

Rule 124: You must not exceed the maximum speed limits for the road and for your vehicle. The presence of street lights generally means that there is a 30mph speed limit unless otherwise specified.

If a road is street lit and there are no speed limit entry or repeater signs, this indicates that a 30mph speed limit applies.

If there are no streetlights and no repeater signs then it is likely the road is subject to a national speed limit.

In all other circumstances, repeater signs indicating the posted speed limit should be present.

### **I did not see any speed limit signs. How would I have known what speed limit was applicable?**

The most likely answer is that you were in a 30mph limit. These are usually signified by the presence of street lighting, lit or unlit, in a built up area as described in the Highway Code. The Highway Code

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<sup>6</sup> The impact on fatal and serious casualties is statistically significant at 5% and indicative but not quite reaching the 5% for casualties of all severities (Allsop, R E. 2013 Analysis of collision data for speed cameras in Humberside v2); available on request

<sup>7</sup> Heather Ward & Nicola Christie, UCL, March 2016: Review of Safer Roads Humber Partnership: Transparency, governance & performance monitoring; available on request

clearly states that, in an area with a system of street lighting, the 30mph limit applies to all traffic unless signs show otherwise.

The law does not allow highway authorities to put repeater speed limit signs on 30mph roads that have street lights. So, when driving on built-up, street lit roads, motorists should always assume the limit is 30mph, unless signage indicates that another speed limit applies. Motorists should not assume that the speed limit is higher only because a road looks like a higher speed limit road.

### **What is the national speed limit?**

The national speed limit is depicted by a white circular sign with a black stripe diagonally across it from right to left. It varies depending on the type of road you are on and the category of vehicle you are driving.

If you are on a dual carriageway or motorway and driving a car or motorcycle, the national speed limit is 70mph. If you are on a single carriageway and driving a car or motorcycle, the national speed limit is 60mph.

The national speed limits for cars towing caravans/ trailers, buses/ coaches and goods vehicles vary depending on the type of road and the exact type of vehicle. More information on national speed limits for these types of vehicles can be found on the Government's speed limit website: <http://www.gov.uk/speed-limits>.

Please remember that in adverse weather conditions it is advisable to drive below these national speed limits.

### **Speeding complaints**

#### **I am concerned about vehicles speeding in my area. Who should I contact?**

In the first instance, please contact your Parish Council/ Ward Councilor or get in touch with the highways department of your local council as they are the highways authorities for your road. They will then assess the location as part of their local Speed Management Procedures.

The Speed Management Procedures have been implemented to deal with speeding complaints received from members of the public in a fair and evidence led way. Any speed concern location brought to the council's attention is firstly monitored over a seven-day period. Locations are then assessed based on their collision history and latest speed offending rate and are finally scored and ranked by greatest risk/ need. The aim of speed management is to address the worst areas for collisions and for speed offending with the limited resources available to all partners.

If a speed problem is proven then the site will be assessed for the most appropriate road safety measure. Potential solutions may include traffic calming, speed enforcement, improved signage, vehicle activated signs or local publicity to name just a few. Speed enforcement itself is always the last resource if other measures cannot be applied or have not helped to curb a speeding issue.