

News Release

26 January 2015

### **Performance data for A9 and the average speed cameras published**

The first set of data illustrating how speed cameras have influenced driver behaviour on the A9 between Dunblane and Inverness has been published today.

The A9 average speed camera system and 50mph HGV pilot both went live on October 28<sup>th</sup> 2014, although the installation process started in the summer. Initial performance analysis of the route for the first quarter (Oct-Jan) is now available and coincides with the first release by Police Scotland of the number of detections by the average speed cameras in this period.

The main findings, published [here](#), show:

- The camera system detected 298 vehicles exceeding the speed limit which warranted further action, this is less than 4 per day
- Overall speeding is down from around one in three drivers to one in twenty
- Examples of excessive speeding (10 mph+ above limit) are down by 97 per cent
- Journey times have increased in line with predictions
- Journey time reliability has improved
- There is no evidence that drivers are avoiding the A9
- Feedback from hauliers suggests a significant reduction in journey times for HGVs

The chair of the A9 Safety Group, Transport Scotland's Stewart Leggett, said:

"It is very encouraging to see the improved driver behaviour following the introduction of the average speed cameras and HGV speed limit pilot, ahead of the dualling. Drivers are clearly paying heed and moderating their speed, and we welcome this positive contribution to road safety on the A9.

"All the early findings on speed, journey time and journey time reliability are in line with our predictions, while traffic volumes on the A9 are remaining higher than in 2013, with no evidence of drivers diverting onto other routes. The low number of drivers being detected by the cameras and the speed profiles from along the route indicates the early effectiveness of the cameras in improving behaviour; but the A9 would be safer still if every driver observed the limits. We don't want drivers facing fines and the cameras have never been an alternative to dualling.

"We will continue to monitor the road safety performance of the A9 and share our findings on the A9 Safety Group [website](#). Speeding is only one behaviour and the Group will be running further education campaigns on safer overtaking and working with freight and haulage industry to address tailgating and elephant racing.

"Over the next two years we are committed to spending a further £18 million on maintenance of the A9 to support even more safety improvements. This is additional investment, over and above the investment plans to dual the A9."

Chief Superintendent Iain Murray, Head of Road Policing at Police Scotland said:

"This is an encouraging start. In the first three months of operation we have seen a more than eight-fold decrease in the number of people caught speeding on this stretch of road compared with the same time last year when there were 2,493 offences recorded.

"It is clear that the cameras are changing driver behaviour in the way that we expected. This will undoubtedly help to make the A9 safer for all road users.

"Speeding is not the sole cause of collisions on the route and we shall continue to engage positively with those who put themselves and others in danger through risky or illegal driving behaviour. Safety remains the responsibility of all road users and it is important that we interact appropriately with each other on the A9, and all of the other roads in Scotland."

Director of Road Safety Scotland Michael McDonnell said:

"We know that around three quarters of A9 drivers believed average speed cameras would be 'effective' or 'very effective' in improving safety, and these new findings may strengthen that viewpoint further.

"It's important to stress that the cameras aren't happening in isolation. They are just one part of a substantial package of measures to make the A9 safer such as engineering improvements, improved lighting and signing, and targeted publicity campaigns.

"As expected, there has been a slight increase in journey times, although some of this can be explained by roadworks that were in place as part of the dualling programme and some of the recent severe weather that we've seen. However, it is important to compare and contrast these extra minutes with the costs, both human and financial, of a serious accident, which can also close the road for hours at a time."

Martin Reid of the Road Haulage Association commented:

"Almost universally our members report that the flow of traffic is much improved and that journey times if anything can be slightly shorter.

"Recently, one of our members carried out an experiment by driving the A9 the day before the speed trial began then replicating the journey after the trial started. They then published the results in Transport News. Journey times from Perth to Inverness and back were reduced substantially at 50mph, even with the addition of the speed cameras - with only an additional 0.5 litre of diesel used. Our member reported the journey was far less stressful because there was a marked reduction in the need for any vehicle to overtake".