

Northumbria Safety Camera Partnership

Operational case

2004/2005



NORTHUMBRIA SAFETY CAMERA PARTNERSHIP
OPERATIONAL CASE 2004 – 2005

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

- (1) The Northumbria Safety Camera Partnership (NSCP) was formed in 2002 and became live 1 Apr 03.
- (2) The partnership consists of the following members
 - (a) Crown Prosecution Service
 - (b) Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council
 - (c) Highways Agency
 - (d) Newcastle City Council
 - (e) Newcastle University
 - (f) North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council
 - (g) Northumberland County Council
 - (h) Northumbria Health Care Trust
 - (i) Northumbria Magistrates
 - (j) Northumbria Police
 - (k) South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council
 - (l) Sunderland City Council
- (3) The partnership area covers more than 2,000 square miles bordering Scotland, Cumbria and County Durham, with a mixture of rural and densely populated areas.
- (4) The Partnership has carried out research and liaison with other police forces and associated agencies throughout the country to establish best practice in the implementation of a safety camera scheme. This, coupled with detailed research and analysis of the selected sites, forms the basis of this submission.

1.2. AIM

The aim of the NSCP is to help reduce casualties on the roads of Northumbria inline with the government's targets for casualty reduction by 2010.

1.3. OBJECTIVES

- (1) To reduce the number of casualties at new camera sites by 35% over the first 3 years of operation.

- (2) To reduce the number of people breaking the speed limit at new fixed camera sites by 40% and at mobile sites by 20% over the first 3 years of the partnership.
- (3) To ensure that public opinion continues to support safety cameras as a means of reducing casualties.
- (4) To show that all processes and procedures put in place by the NSCP represent best value and that best practice has been adopted.

2. 2003 – 2004 ACTIVITY

2.1. ESTABLISHMENT OF POSTS

- (1) The project team has been established and is currently accommodated at Northumbria Police headquarters in Ponteland and consists of:
 - (a) Project Manager – Employed by Gateshead MBC.
 - (b) Communications Manager – Employed by Gateshead MBC.
 - (c) Camera Enforcement Sergeant – Employed by Northumbria Police.
- (2) The Camera Enforcement Unit (CEU) has recruited a further five police officers to carry out enforcement duties and follow up enquiries, in addition to the civilian technician and one officer previously assigned to these duties. This expansion has enabled the team to carry out enforcement 7 days a week. It also gives robustness and flexibility for deployments and enquiries.
- (3) The central ticket office (CTO) has a total of 17 personnel working exclusively on camera enforcement in order to provide the increase capacity required by the Partnership, with a further 5 staff employed by the magistrates courts on the same basis. This increase has meant that staffing levels no longer limit the number of offences processed during this period of increased camera enforcement activity.

2.2. IMPROVEMENTS TO CENTRAL TICKET OFFICE PROCESSES

- (1) In order for the Partnership to meet its aims and objectives, much work has been carried out within the CTO. This has included:
 - (a) Film reading is now carried out within the CTO and not by the camera enforcement team. This process has required a considerable amount of training and cross-pollination of skills, but has resulted in the enforcement team having more time for deployments and enquiries.
 - (b) An enquiries team has been established within the CTO to carry out correspondence and telephone based enquiries and assist in establishing the identity of the driver at the time of the offence. Once enquiries have been exhausted, the case is then passed to the CEU for further investigation.
 - (c) The provision of two film processing units to allow in house developing of film, thus reducing the time delay previously associated with this process.
 - (d) The provision of a new server for CTO application and the establishment of a backup system to allow for disaster recovery.
 - (e) The provision of the ERIC system to allow offence screens to be automatically created using the information already recorded by the

camera technology, removing the need for all of the data to be input manually.

(f) The introduction of Formscan systems to electronically store and file documents allowing for fast and efficient document retrieval and reducing the need to physically archive information.

(g) The installation of Neopost systems to carry out high volume mailing of printed materials generated by the project.

(h) A complete refurbishment of the CTO office complex, including the provision of air conditioning, in order to accommodate all of change listed above.

(2) As a result of the improvement to the process within CTO and the recruitment of additional staff, the CTO can now process in excess of 7,000 offences a month. Previously the highest sustainable number of tickets would have been approximately 2,500 a month. This increased capacity means that the camera enforcement team is able to deploy in line with the enforcement strategy and not be capped by CTO capacity issues.

2.3. CAMERA ENFORCEMENT UNIT

(1) In addition to the recruitment of (CEU) personnel the following equipment has been purchased:

(a) Four vans fitted out to enable mobile enforcement.

(b) Two cars to be used for servicing static sites and by officers carrying out follow up enquiries.

(c) Four Gatso static cameras to supplement the existing six, giving a ratio of 1 camera to every 6 housings.

(d) Four laser video cameras for mobile enforcement.

(e) Three additional Gatso mobile cameras.

(2) This additional equipment offers the flexibility and robustness to allow the camera enforcement team to fully meet their remit as set out in last year's operational case.

3. ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY

3.1. SITE SELECTION

(1) There have been eleven new sites selected for mobile enforcement. These have all been selected in line with current DfT regulations.

(2) Sites previously approved for inclusion in the scheme will be maintained until the need for speed enforcement as a casualty reduction tool has been removed either by engineering measures or a change in driver behaviour. Nine mobile sites selected in year 1 have now been removed from the scheme for these reasons.

3.2. CONSPICUITY AND VISIBILITY

(1) With the exception of one site all of the camera enforcement sites within the partnership area meet all rules on conspicuity and visibility.

(2) Due to the nature of the road at the fixed site at Watergate Bank, the camera is not visible from a distance of 60 metres. Dispensation for this site is sought as it has already demonstrated its potential for reducing both speed and casualties on a section of road that includes a steep hill with multiple sharp bends. A full explanation of this site, its layout and reasons for inclusion within the scheme, is given at Appendix D of this document.

3.3. DORMANT SITES

(1) There are 15 Speed and 1 Red light camera in the partnership area, which did not meet the criteria for casualty and speed. These sites are maintained as a deterrent to motorists and are enforced at as part of the 15% rule.

(2) Cameras will only be removed in situations where engineering work has taken place that has effectively reduced that hazard and the potential for speed related collisions.

3.4. OTHER SITES

(1) There are 2 sites that are categorised as 'other' by the DfT model. These are level crossing red light cameras operated by the British Transport Police. Fines from these cameras are not hypothecated.

3.5. A696 ROUTE ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY

(1) The A696 from Ponteland to the junction with the A68 is a Highways Agency road largely running across open countryside and passing through some small villages and hamlets.

(2) Currently there are 5 camera sites along this route. The accident data combined for these sites is 8 KSI collisions and 22 PIC in the last 3 years. However in between these sites there have been a further 15 KSI collisions and 32 PIC over the same period. These collisions do not occur in neat clusters around given points but are spread fairly evenly over the 35 kilometre route.

(3) In order to reduce the unacceptably high number of collisions along this stretch of road, mobile camera enforcement will take place at any suitable point between Ponteland and the junction with the A68 in addition to the specific sites. This camera activity will be part of the scheme and not form part of the 15% of non-compliant sites.

3.6. SPEED ENFORCEMENT THRESHOLDS

Redacted. Information exempt from publication under the Freedom of Information Act, Section 31 – Law Enforcement. It is considered that the public interest in disclosing this information is outweighed by the potential consequences to law enforcement and the impact of such a release on road safety measures and consequently the safety of the public at large.

3.7. DEPLOYMENT STRATEGY

(1) In order to have the maximum effect on the reduction of casualties the camera sites have been graded as red, amber, or green, depending on the number and severity of casualties over the past 3 years.

(2) Sites that are classified as red will have the highest proportion of deployment time each month, whilst green sites will have the lowest proportion of deployment time.

(3) All sites will be visited at least every two months regardless of category.

3.8. SITES OF PUBLIC CONCERN

(1) Where members of the public highlight community concerns over speeding on certain routes, Northumbria Police has adopted a graded response policy.

(2) This response will be coordinated by the casualty reduction officers for the force and may include any or all of the following:

(a) Deployment of speed monitoring equipment to determine whether there is a problem with speed or simply a perception problem.

(b) Police officers deployed with handheld speed enforcement device; revenue from these deployments is not hypothecated.

(c) Deployment of interactive message signs warning drivers to slow down.

(d) A request that mobile enforcement cameras are deployed. This would normally be the last resort and would be within the 15% tolerance set by DfT.

(3) Requests for cameras to be deployed at sites of public concern will only be processed in conjunction with the casualty reduction coordinators.

4. ENHANCEMENTS TO THE SCHEME

4.1. ADDITIONAL SITES

- (1) In year 2, ten additional fixed speed camera sites and 4 red light sites will become live. All of these sites were identified and approved as part of the year 1 operational case. Implementation was deferred until year 2 because of cost and the lack of capacity with the CTO to process the increased number of offences that are likely to be recorded when these sites go live.
- (2) The fixed speed camera sites will be the Truvelo type cameras, utilising frontal photography to aid in the identification of offenders. There will also be four new red-light cameras installed.
- (3) The addition of these fixed sites will provide a 24 hour, seven day a week deterrent and allow for cost efficient enforcement at some of the worst collision sites within the region. The value for money they represent in terms of casualty reduction is considerable.

4.2. VEHICLE PROCEDURES FIXED PENALTY OFFENCES (VP/FPO)

- (1) In order to ensure that the CTO can maintain its capacity and efficiency, it will be necessary to purchase and install the VP/FPO IT system. This is tried and tested technology, already employed by the majority of police forces in the UK.
- (2) The current system in use in the CTO is a bespoke system designed exclusively for Northumbria Police. Although it does provide the functionality required at the moment, it lacks compatibility with other systems within the judicial system, such as LIBRA, which is currently scheduled to be introduced into the magistrate's courts from February 2005.
- (3) The main benefits of introducing the VP/FPO system to the CTO will be:
 - (a) The removal of the need to develop costly in house solutions to meet increasing demands for functionality.
 - (b) Reduced maintenance and support costs.
 - (c) VP/FPO will be the only CTO based IT system that will be supported by and interfaced with the LIBRA system as a matter of course.
- (4) The VP/FPO system will be purchased in the financial 03/04, but full implementation not taking place until after April 2004, so whilst the majority of costs will be met from last years income there will be some residual funding requirements.

4.3. AUTOMATIC NUMBER PLATE READING (ANPR)

- (1) The ANPR solution being recommended for use in the CTO is designed to read number plate information from video and wet film, it should not be confused with the national ANPR project which uses technology to read number plates in real time at the road side.

- (2) With a big increase in the number of films that require to be read the purchasing of an ANPR solution will add greatly to the efficiency of the CTO process.
- (3) Currently all films are read manually and input onto an offence screen by an operator. This process may take up to eight hours for a film with 400 offences.
- (4) The ANPR solution will read an entire film and marry it up to the correct offence data on the ERIC system in approximately one hour, with the operator only having to validate the input information as required by ACPO.
- (5) An ANPR solution will be purchased for both wet and video films. Due to the high cost of the equipment, only one of each will be purchased in year 2 with the emergency recovery procedure being to revert back to manual reading whilst the equipment is repaired.
- (6) The main benefits of installing an ANPR solution will be:
 - (a) The ability to integrate fully with and make full use of the technology already purchased by the scheme.
 - (b) A reduction in the time taken to read films, allowing more flexibility in the initial 14 day period in which the notice of intention to prosecute must be issued.
 - (c) A significant reduction in the backlog of offences waiting to be processed at times of high enforcement activity and after weekends and public holidays when the CTO has been closed.
- (7) In order to keep costs to a minimum it is intended to purchase an ANPR system currently in use by another force within the national scheme. Liaison visits will be carried out prior to ordering as part of the tender process to establish that the system is suitable for the volumes we predict and that the purchase represents best value for money.

4.4. RELOCATION OF THE CAMERA ENFORCEMENT TEAM

- (1) The camera enforcement team are currently located at Northumbria Police headquarters in Ponteland. This was always considered to be a temporary solution as none of the other partners had suitable secure accommodation available for occupation.
- (2) Lack of partner owned accommodation remains a problem, therefore there is no alternative but to move to an independent site.
- (3) A site that meets all of the security and functional needs of the team is actively being sought. The new premises is likely to be an existing unit close to the major arterial routes through the partnership area and much closer to the centre of the enforcement area than the current location.

- (4) Moving away from the police headquarters will have the following benefits:
- (a) Savings in both fuel and time on deployment of cameras and follow up enquiries by being more central to the area of enforcement.
 - (b) A permanent and stable location for the enforcement team.
 - (c) Ease of recruiting in a more central area for support and technical staff.
 - (d) The initiative is less likely to be perceived as police led if it is located somewhere other than police premises.
- (5) It is intended that the site be ready for occupation by April 2004.

4.5. GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEMS

- (1) In the past members of the public have questioned the exact location of mobile deployments some time after the event. Particularly questioning where the camera was in relation to the change in the speed limit on certain stretches of road. Although the police officers have been able to successfully prove that enforcement was taken legally this has often been a lengthy process.
- (2) To eliminate this problem it is intended to purchase GPS for all mobile deployments; this will allow the officer to record the exact location of the camera at the time enforcement takes place. He will also be able to determine the exact grid reference of any change in speed limits on routes. This information could then be used to confirm the exact enforcement location.
- (3) As well as removing ambiguity of enforcement locations and reducing the time taken to reassure the public that enforcement was carried out correctly, the purchase of 6 GPS for a relatively small sum will also bring the following principle benefits:
- (a) Aid the officers in determining the best place for enforcement in relation to the collision data provided by the Accsmap system, thus using the cameras to their full potential regarding casualty reduction.
 - (b) Assist in the accurate deployment of speed monitoring equipment to potential sites identified by clusters on the Accsmap system.
 - (c) Accurately report the location of faulty or missing signage, removing any ambiguity when plotting replacements and ordering from third parties.

5. PROJECT ISSUES

5.1. FINANCE

- (1) Gateshead MBC will continue in its role as Treasurer for the project and will arrange for the account to be audited by an auditor appointed by the Audit Commission.
- (2) Significant areas of capital expenditure are:
 - (a) ANPR Solution £110,200
 - (b) Three replacement Gatso cameras at a total of £99,900.
 - (c) Eleven Truvelo camera housings at a total of £208,900.
 - (d) Two Truvelo cameras at a total of £69,200.
 - (e) Four red-light camera housing at a total of £52,600.

5.2. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

- (1) It is essential to the projects overall success that public opinion continues to support the use of safety cameras as a means of reducing casualties.
- (2) In order to achieve this a dedicated Communications Manager has been appointed with a budget for this financial period of £170,000.
- (3) A detailed breakdown of the communications strategy and predicted areas of expenditure are contained in Appendix B of this document.

5.3. SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT (SLA)

- (1) The SLA that was submitted with last year's operational case committed all of the partners to the scheme until April 2005. As there are no significant changes from the initial two-year case, that SLA remains in force.
- (2) A new SLA will be drawn up and presented to the partners during 2004 to cover further years of the partnership.

5.4. DATA ANALYSIS

- (1) Independent data analysis will continue to be carried out by the University of Newcastle upon Tyne.
- (2) This data analysis will form the basis of future site selection and be used to fulfil the DfT data monitoring requirements.

5.5. PUBLIC HEALTH AUTHORITIES

- (1) The reduction in casualties caused by road collisions will have an impact on health care throughout Northumbria; this will release some resources to other essential activities.

(2) In order to assess the impact, the Academic Department Northumbria Healthcare NHS Trust will carry out research in this area on behalf of the partnership.

6. SUMMARY

- (1) The NSCP has had a good start with a lot of new technologies and processes introduced throughout the system. There has been a rapid expansion in terms of staff in all areas. This now means that the number of offences processed are no longer determined solely on CTO capacity or the availability of enforcement equipment and personnel.
- (2) Enforcement can now take place in line with the deployment strategy in order to maximise the effect of the partnership on casualties at identified collision sites.
- (3) Camera sites are selected using information provided by an independent data analysis and conform to all of the rules set out in the DfT handbook.
- (4) In order to further improve on the effectiveness and efficiency of the Partnership, further investment is required in the following main areas:
 - (a) New cameras and camera sites.
 - (b) CTO IT solutions.
 - (c) CEU and project team location.
 - (d) Electronic Global Positioning Systems.
- (5) To maintain public support and to reinforce the message that safety cameras do reduce casualties a Communications Manager has been appointed and a comprehensive communications strategy produced.
- (6) The total predicted expenditure for the project in the financial year 04/05 is £2,840,150, which is balanced against a predicted income of £3,225,600. The financial budget is administered by Gateshead MBC and subject to audit.
- (7) A Project Manager has been appointed to coordinate activities within the project and bench marks have been put in place to ensure that best value and optimum efficiency are achieved in all sectors of operation.

7. CONCLUSION

The aim of the NSCP remains that of reducing casualties on the roads of Northumbria. In order to achieve this aim it is necessary to influence driver behaviour at sites where there is a history of collisions resulting in casualties. In the long term it is desirable the public recognises speeding as an activity that is as anti social and irresponsible as drink driving.

Two elements essential to realising the aims and objectives of this project are:

A robust intelligence led enforcement strategy employed that transparently targets those areas with the highest incidence of casualty collisions.

A targeted and balanced communications plan with clear, achievable and measurable objectives.

Both of these elements have been put in place and continue to be built upon.

To process the recorded offences efficiently and within the times permitted by law the CTO procedures have been refined and improved upon with investment in tried and tested technology. This process will continue with best practice being researched and implemented on a continuous basis.

This project will continue to assist all the highways authorities within the partnership to achieve the government set targets for casualty reduction by 2010.

This operational case is submitted in accordance with the rules and guidance provided by the DfT.

Appendix A

**Communications
Strategy**

NORTHUMBRIA SAFETY CAMERA PARTNERSHIP COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

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1. SITUATION ANALYSIS

Speed plays a significant role in serious and fatal road collisions. The DfT states that excessive and inappropriate speed is the major factor in the most serious crashes. Evidence from casualty reduction projects across the UK indicates that speeding is the major factor in up to 50% of all road crashes and a contributory factor in many more.

There is overwhelming evidence that lower speeds result in both fewer collisions and in reduced severity of collisions. Research by the Transport Research Laboratory showed that just a 1mph reduction in average speed results in an average 5% reduction in collisions.

At the other end of the spectrum, even a slight increase in speed can cause fatality rates to soar. Drivers are twice as likely to kill someone when travelling at 35mph than they are at 30mph. At 40mph, nine out of 10 pedestrians will die, but at 20mph, nine out of ten will survive.

And yet motorists continue to justify speeding, with many retaining the belief that breaking speed limits is “not a real crime”.

The Northumbria Safety Camera Partnership has been set up with the aim to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on Northumbria’s roads. This will be achieved through targeted enforcement at known casualty hot spots, awareness-raising publicity campaigns and driver education.

In its document “Tomorrow’s Roads – Safer for Everyone”, the Government has set clear casualty reduction targets for local authorities and the police. By 2010, partners need to demonstrate a 40% reduction in the number of adults killed or seriously injured in road collisions; a 50% reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured; and a 10% reduction in slight injuries.

Safety cameras, alongside other road safety measures and police enforcement, can be effective tools in achieving these targets. The eight two-year pilot schemes across the UK demonstrated the positive effect of safety cameras, with 35% fewer collisions at camera sites and an average drop in speed of 10%.

Over the next two years 11 new fixed camera sites are being deployed at collision hotspots in addition to the existing 51 across the Northumbria area. Four new red light cameras (14 currently) and seven mobile camera sites (78 currently) will also be introduced.

Cameras can only be situated in locations where there is a history of people being killed or seriously injured (KSI) in the last three years. These are sites that have seen speed-related crashes, resulting in one or more people being killed or serious injured.

There still needs to be drivers speeding on that road and no other short-term engineering solutions available.

The partnership works towards achieving the aims set out in Northumbria Police's Road Policing Strategy 2003-06, which includes reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured on the roads and investing resources in driver education.

Money raised from speeding fines will be reinvested in the partnership to cover costs and support further driver awareness initiatives. The standard fixed penalty fine is £60 plus three points on the driving licence.

The partnership includes the police, magistrates, CPS, health care trusts, Newcastle University, Highways Agency, the five Tyne and Wear councils and the county council.

2. ISSUES

"The majority of drivers regularly break speed limits. This is true for all classes of roads, all times of day and all days of the week."

(DETR 1999)

Speeding is not something carried out by a small deviant minority, which makes it an emotive subject for a large percentage of the population. About two thirds of drivers regularly exceed 30mph urban speed limits and most deaths occur on these roads.

A single road traffic collision can cost the NHS up to £100,000.

There is a cultural acceptance of speeding, even though it poses a serious risk to all road users. The challenge is to make speeding as anti-social as drink driving has become.

Drivers who want to break the speed limit often intimidate other drivers in front of them by driving too close or constantly trying to overtake. This can put a lot of stress on other drivers so that they also feel a need to exceed the speed limit to alleviate the pressure from vehicles behind.

Many drivers treat posted speed limits as minimums rather than maximums, failing to realise the risks they pose to themselves, their passengers and other road users.

There is also significant amount of negativity surrounding the use of safety cameras, both in the media and the local community. Public perception of safety cameras as a "stealth tax" on motorists and a revenue generator for the police or the local authority is one of the most common criticisms.

Incorrect signage in other areas of the country, nationwide high profile court cases etc. also have a knock-on effect locally. One of the most common complaints is that the police should stop harassing motorists, who are an "easy touch" and instead invest time and energy catching "real" criminals.

The majority of drivers think they are better and safer than they are.

3. MARKET RESEARCH

A recent survey carried out by Northumbria Police questioned 2,100 people who had accepted conditional offers for camera offences. A total of 762 (36.2%) responded. The main reasons given for speeding were as follows:

I did not think I was going as fast as I was	42%
I was unaware of the speed limit	28%
I did not know there was a camera there	19%
I was in a hurry to get to my destination	15%

Many drivers also cited pressure from other road users as a reason for speeding – “you have to be very brave to keep to 30mph on that road” was one respondent’s answer.

Younger drivers appear more likely to accept cameras as a legitimate means of “policing” the roads whereas older drivers complain more about camera sites, signs and speed limits in general.

Many people who responded thought that the £60 penalty and three points was too harsh and said they would like to see some form of caution instead for first time offences.

Few drivers considered themselves to be a danger either to themselves or other road users. On the whole, they saw themselves as experienced and competent drivers who could cope with normal road conditions and situations.

It was generally agreed that motorists were more accepting of safety cameras if they were conspicuous and clearly signed.

The vast majority believed cameras have a positive effect on driver behaviour and 76% said the offence had influenced their driving habits: 46% claimed to drive more carefully and conform to speed limits and 30% said that visible camera signs now caused them to slow down. But still 20% admitted that the offence had no effect whatsoever on their driving.

The most common answers given for using speed cameras were as follows:

To prevent accidents	69%
To encourage drivers to conform to the speed limit	58%
To catch dangerous drivers	48%
To make easy money from motorists	16%

Many motorists failed to appreciate that safety cameras were not simply a deterrent but also played a vital role in reducing collisions at “hotspots”.

Overall, very few motorists were prepared to risk being caught by a camera if they knew it was there.

On a national level, a MORI survey on behalf of Direct Line in July 2001 showed that 70% of people supported the use of safety cameras.

The Transport Research Laboratory found that drivers who travel faster than average are likely to be young males driving high mileages alone in company cars.

4. AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The results of the initial public consultation will provide a benchmark on which to base the following objectives:

- To increase the number of people in Northumbria who know the partnership/campaign exists and understand its aims by 25%
- To locally maintain public support of safety cameras at 80% or higher
- To influence driver behaviour by encouraging motorists to conform to speed limits and slow down at camera sites
- To increase the public acceptance that safety cameras are designed to make roads safer - not to make money - by 20%.
- To raise the profile of how effective safety cameras and reduced speeds can be in reducing casualties

5. KEY MESSAGES

It is important to have a clear idea about what the partnership wants to communicate and to whom. This can be achieved through a number of simple concepts, which can be repeated across all of its communications:

- Excessive and inappropriate speed plays a significant role in fatal and serious road traffic collisions
- Safety cameras are about saving lives, not making money
- Speeding is everyone's problem
- Every safety camera is a reminder of lives lost on that road
- Safety cameras can help reduce the demand on public services e.g. hospitals
- We need to take responsibility for our own driving speeds at all times, not just at camera sites
- This is a partnership approach to influencing driver behaviour

6. KEY AUDIENCES

Safety cameras have an impact on a large percentage of the population, but there are target audiences within the larger community that will require an individual communications approach. Within this strategy the aim is to tap into the potential for support from all sections of the local community, including non-drivers, to help push the belief that speeding is socially unacceptable.

The challenge is to convince the community that speeding is everyone's problem and create widespread debate surrounding the issue.

If the community at large has access to key messages and facts, then individuals are more likely to feel empowered to do something about the problem. Creating a culture of collective responsibility and empathy for the cause means people are more likely to make informed decisions and support the partnership's aims.

- 6.1 Internal** (staff within all partner organisations) - there is a need to make everyone feel involved in the partnership and as a result take ownership of it. If staff understand the reasoning behind the partnership and why safety cameras exist, they are more likely to become ambassadors of positive and accurate information.
- 6.2 Central government/National Safety Camera Liaison** – it is important to keep communication channels flowing to maintain links between local and national issues and raise the profile of NSCP on a national platform.
- 6.3 Road safety groups/campaigners** (BRAKE, RoadPeace etc.) – this group is already on side and has an extensive, established network or contacts and events which can be tapped into. At the same time, it is important to also distance the partnership from any strong views and political agendas which might be detrimental to its public image.
- 6.4 Professional bodies** (RAC, AA, CBI etc.) – motoring organisations and business groups can often be critical of controversial road safety measures and it is important to maintain a professional relationship. Their opinions can have a negative knock-on effect on motorists' views, therefore it is crucial to work with them to dispel myths and generate understanding of the real consequences of cameras.
- 6.5 Media** – the local media, especially newspapers, are swayed by their audience's views and vice versa. Open, honest and transparent communication with the media is essential for the partnership to succeed. If the media is made an integral part of the communication process and used to support campaigning against speeding, then the risk of negative coverage is reduced.
- 6.6 Opinion formers** – MPs, Police Authority members, local councillors etc. can influence policy and also reflect the views of their constituents. They will be keen to be associated with positive, pro-active campaigning which will be seen

favourably in the eyes of the local community, but by the same token will usually shy away from taking a stand against public opinion over a specific issue. It is therefore important to keep them as informed as possible and provide an open channel for communication.

6.7 Non-drivers – this category may initially think they are absolved of responsibility as this issue does not concern them, but it is important to empower this group so they realise they do have a voice. This is all part of working towards the aim of collective community responsibility. Most non-drivers will know people who speed and could easily cause a serious collision. If they have access to relevant knowledge about the implications of speeding, then they will have the confidence to voice their concerns.

6.8 Motorists

A survey by Brunel University in 1999, “Effects of Speed Camera: How Drivers Respond”, placed motorists in four different categories:

- **Compliant** – usually abide by speed limits so cameras make no difference to their behaviour
- **Deterred** – reduce speed to avoid detection
- **Manipulative** – slow down on approach, then speed up when past the camera
- **Defiant** – carry on driving over the speed limit regardless

Manipulative drivers are the most calculating and more likely to disapprove of cameras. They also think they know how to “beat the system”. This type is often younger, with the highest offending, speeding and collision rate.

Deterred drivers are most likely to be driving high performance or company cars and are the most likely to deny a link between speed and collisions.

Defiant drivers are least likely to think that any action will be taken against them.

The aim of any communication would be to keep compliant drivers on side and to educate the remaining three. They each provide individual communications challenges but the most important work lies in convincing all three types of driver of the link between speed and collisions and educating them about the financial and human consequences of speeding. For those who do speed and think they do not pose any risk, this includes “shaming” them into knowing that they could have easily caused a serious collision and therefore changing their driving habits.

6.8.1 Professional drivers – company car drivers, driving schools, taxi drivers, bus drivers etc. will be a specific focus as their driving habits can have an effect on many other road users. This is due to their driving experience, mileage, or frequent contact with the public.

6.8.2 New drivers (17-24) – most new drivers are unaware that they will revert to being a learner if they clock up six points within two years of passing a driving test. This is an important message to get across; this group is the most inexperienced but also least likely to have developed bad driving habits or ingrained opinions about safety cameras.

Further research will be undertaken in the near future to establish if there are specific age groups and driver types in the local area that require dedicated communication channels.

7. TACTICS

It is important for the campaign to remain strong, focused and consistent if it is to be successful. There are a number of different communications tactics that will be employed in this type of campaign; those that revolve around behavioural messages, combined with active police enforcement, are likely to be the most effective. There will be a series of pro-active themed publicity campaigns that utilise several different communications channels to get the message.

7.1 Branding - the partnership needs to have clear, simple branding which is easily identifiable.

The partnership will be operating under the umbrella of “Safe Speed for Life – because we can’t slow down fast enough”. This moves away from any “them and us” connotations that can be associated with partnerships and places the emphasis firmly on the individual.

It gives a clear message that the partnership is not working in isolation: it is for all of us to change our driving behaviour and take responsibility for our own driving speed at all times.

It also reinforces the link between cameras, casualties and road safety and can be localised to suit each of the local authority’s needs e.g. “Safe Speed for Life – join Gateshead’s/Northumberland’s drive for safer roads”.

Overall, the logo and strap line supports the ethos of safety cameras saving lives and reducing serious injuries through making the roads of Northumbria a safer place.

Clear, intelligent branding adds credibility, visibility and cohesion to the partnership as well as giving a strong sense of direction and purpose.

This branding will be used through everything from displays, leaflets, posters and advertisements to business cards and headed paper during the partnership’s existence.

7.2 Media Handling – a good working relationship needs to be established with the media. This includes both reactive and proactive communications. The

media will be monitored to ascertain public mood; the level of support for the safety camera partnership; and to highlight any potential areas of concern. Coverage will be analysed in terms of positive, negative or neutral and whether key messages are getting across.

This will also include:

- **Press releases** – issued on a regular basis for key themes and events and in response if required
 - **Newspaper campaigns** – supported by a specific newspaper for a targeted campaign, e.g. safer speeds outside schools
 - **Radio Phone Ins/Discussions** – debates/listener participation shows
 - **Photo-calls** – to highlight positive publicity events, variable message sign trials, any new technology i.e. video cameras, road shows etc.
 - **Editorial features** – placed in targeted publications, such as motoring magazines, business periodicals etc.
 - **Public service announcements** – regarding new camera sites, temporary cameras for road works etc.
 - **Letters** – responses only issued to readers’ letters if they contain factually incorrect information, not to engage in a “tit for tat” discussion about safety cameras in general.
- 7.3 Events/Road shows** – at organised road safety events to link in with national/local authority/police campaigns and also independently at supermarkets, council offices, shopping centres, sports centres, colleges, libraries, hospitals, garages etc. Exhibition material will support the road shows to engage the public in an interactive and informative way.
- 7.4 Advertising** – a limited amount of paid-for advertising will be implemented, as this could easily use up a large percentage of the communications budget. There is potential to include bus backs, local magazine/newspaper advertising and regional radio advertising.
- 7.5 Internal newsletters/email/Intranet** – this will be used to regularly keep staff informed and up to date. It will also be sent to key opinion formers.
- 7.6 Internet** – a simplistic, easy to navigate website is essential for communicating the location of camera sites; dispelling myths; explaining why the partnership exists; the link between speeding and casualties etc. It also supports the aim to be as open and transparent as possible. The partnership website was launched on 1st December 2003 and can be found at www.safespeedforlife.co.uk. The partnership will also utilise links to other relevant sites on the Internet.
- 7.7 Leaflets** – a series of information leaflets will be produced to support targeted publicity campaigns. These will be distributed through the partners’ outlets such as libraries, hospitals, surgeries, council offices, schools, police stations etc. as well as through links with local businesses.

- 7.7.1 NIP inserts** – this is a cost-effective means of targeting a large volume of drivers on a regular basis who are directly affected by safety cameras.
- 7.8 Visits/Presentations** – it is important to get across the key messages about safety cameras face-to-face as much as possible, which can be achieved through visits and presentations to key opinion formers within the community as well as to vulnerable road users such as school children.
- 7.9 Promotional items** – these would be suitable for “give-aways” at events and road shows, raising the profile of the partnership and its aims. Suitable items include pencils, pens, drinks mats, car stickers, bugs, key rings and tax discs and the possibility of sponsorship will be explored to keep costs down.

8. BUDGET

A budget of £120,000 has been identified for the partnership’s communications activity during 2004-2005.

The expected areas of expenditure can be divided as follows:

Website maintenance	£3000
Media monitoring/website service	£4000
Media analysis	£2500
Display materials	£5000
Promotional items	£5000
Bus back/shelter advertising campaign	£18000
Radio advertising	£21500
Magazine/newspaper advertising	£10000
Public opinion surveys	£20000
Direct mail	£10000
Graphic design/print	£20000

In addition to this, £40,000 has been set aside to work in partnership with local councils and the police on speed/safety camera related activities to enable road safety officers/youth affairs officers etc. to have access to promotional materials such as information packs to help get across the message to a wider audience.

A budget of £12,000 has been allocated as a contribution towards regional promotional activity.

9. OUTLINE ACTIVITY TIMETABLE 2004-2005

This is an outline of planned activities during 2004-2005 and further details will be added in due course. Regular communications, such as updating the media and the website have not been included.

	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March
Publicity Campaign	Schools				New Drivers			NHS				Speed Aware
Press releases	Speed Aware - Schools		Speed Limits		New Drivers		Casualty Reduction		Speed Aware		School Safety	
Internal		Review of the Year		News letter		News-letter		News-letter		News-letter		News-letter
Advertising	Bus Backs/ Shelters				Posters			Radio		Bus Backs/ Shelters	Magazine	
Website		Online questionnaire				Poll		Online questionnaire			Poll	
Visits	Schools				IAM/ Driving groups	Sixth-form colleges		Hospitals				
Road shows	Supermarkets			Driving Schools			Hospitals/Councils			Sports Centres		
Market Research	Public Survey	CTO survey			Direct mail		Public Survey					

10. MONITORING & EVALUATION

It is important to evaluate and monitor the communications programme to ascertain whether the strategy is on track and to check that key messages are being understood and taken onboard. This will help identify further opportunities and threats as the programme progresses.

10.1 Public consultation

As this strategy is geared towards changing public opinion, knowing what opinions exist already is vital. It is also important to know what is currently understood about safety cameras. A public consultation process was carried out at the end of **October 2003**, which will be used as a benchmark for further consultation and surveys.

Any public consultation has to include DTLR's seven common statements (agree/disagree) to allow for comparisons to be made across the UK and the results for these were as follows:

- Fewer accidents are likely to happen on roads where cameras are installed
77% agree, 23% disagree
- Cameras mean that dangerous drivers are now more likely to get caught
80% agree, 20% disagree
- Cameras are meant to encourage drivers to keep to the limits, not punish them
86% agree, 13% disagree, 1% don't know
- Cameras are an easy way of making money out of motorists
53% disagree, 46% agree, 1% don't know
- The primary aim of safety cameras is to save lives
85% agree, 15% disagree
- There are too many safety cameras in our local area
81% disagree, 17% agree, 2% don't know
- The use of safety cameras should be supported as a method of reducing casualties
94% agree, 6% disagree

There were also a number of additional questions put to the 1,200 respondents across Northumberland and Tyne and Wear.

Three quarters of drivers surveyed admitted to knowingly driving above the speed limit. The majority (37%) said "sometimes", while nearly a third (32%) said they "very rarely" exceeded the limit. Six percent of drivers questioned admitted to breaking the speed limit "most of the time".

Just over a third of all drivers questioned said that they didn't change their behaviour when they saw a camera sign as they were already confident that they were within the speed limit. Thirty percent said that they would slow down. Younger drivers indicated they were more likely to "slow down and then speed up again" (18%) than older drivers.

A common cause of complaint from motorists caught speeding is that they were unaware of the speed limit at the time. When asked what the speed limit was for an urban road with regular street lights (30mph unless signs state otherwise), 92% drivers questioned during this survey gave the correct response.

Just under a third of all respondents correctly identified the national speed limit sign and just over a third had "no idea" what it meant. Out of those who incorrectly identified the sign, 15% thought it meant "no entry".

Only 7% of those questioned had heard of the Northumbria Safety Camera Partnership.

In the future, public consultation will be carried out through a number of different ways i.e. postal questionnaires, street surveys, focus groups, website polls etc.

Evaluation of the communications programme, in addition to the public consultation, will also include the following:

10.2 Media monitoring

Local media will be monitored to track references to the partnership, speed/safety cameras and speed enforcement and analysed as positive, neutral or negative. This will be used to gauge public/media mood, track shifts in perception and help inform future communications.

10.3 Website hits

The number of visitors to the site will be monitored. There will also be a series of online polls and surveys conducted at regular intervals.

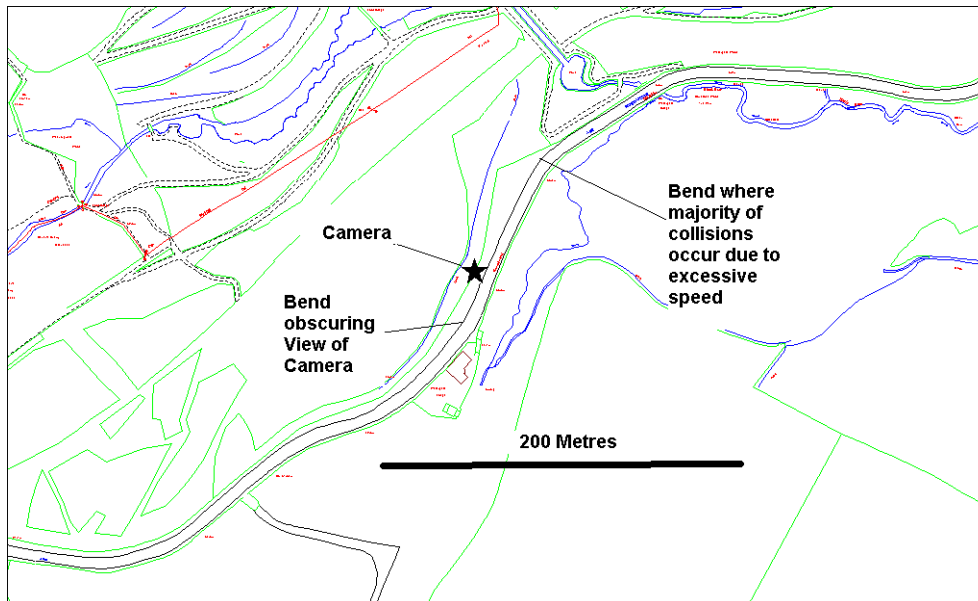
Appendix B

EXCEPTIONAL SITE
AT
WATERGATE BANK

REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION FOR AN EXCEPTIONAL SITE AT WATERGATE BANK GATESHEAD

The site on the A692 at Watergate Bank to the west of Gateshead was installed by Gateshead MBC in September 2001 and went live in November 2001. It has reduced accidents in the 1Km of road significantly since its introduction.

The camera is situated on a 30 MPH single carriageway that has a steep gradient of 12.5% (1:8) with a sharp right hand bend at the bottom of it as shown by the diagram and picture below.



It is at this bend at the bottom of the hill that the vast majority of accidents have occurred, mostly involving only one vehicle with the driver losing control as they enter the bend and leaving the roadway a short distance further on.

The camera is only visible to the driver at a distance of approximately 40 metres. However, Gateshead MBC have undertaken to erect an additional camera warning sign prior to the camera at a suitable location. This should have the desired effect of causing the driver to slow down before the bend without losing control of the vehicle. It will also clearly demonstrate that the camera's lack of visibility is not intended to catch drivers unaware but has been placed there to reduce casualties.

If camera enforcement was to stop at this site it is likely that casualties would occur here. It is therefore requested that this site be continued to be included in the scheme despite the issue of visibility, as all reasonable steps have been taken to warn motorists of its location.