



People for Proper Policing in North Wales

DfT road safety cost figures are grossly and deliberately distorted.

Department for Transport figures provided to the House of Commons Transport Select Committee led to massively erroneous conclusions about the relative cost effectiveness of speed cameras and vehicle activated signs.

The errors are so great and so dangerous that it is hard to believe that they were not wilful. Formal complaints have been lodged with the Police and the Parliamentary Ombudsman alleging possible misconduct or misfeasance. While **the Transport Committee claimed that speed cameras were marginally more cost-effective than vehicle activated signs, the truth is that vehicle activated signs are around 50 times more cost effective than speed cameras.**

Mr Idris Francis noticed the discrepancy and set about:

- * Finding out where the errors had come from
- * Ensuring that the Transport Committee was aware of the problem
- * Discovering that the errors all originated from the Department for Transport
- * **Discovering that the Transport Committee were, at best, unconcerned.**
- * Finally issuing formal complaints because the errors will inevitably cause scarce life saving resources to be misdirected with consequent loss of life.

In particular the Department for Transport...

- **used a sample figure of £7,000 for speed camera cost that was the cost of the housing and DIDN'T INCLUDE THE £35,000 COST OF THE CAMERA ITSELF.**
- **used a sample 1998 figure of £14,000 for TWO EXPERIMENTAL PROTOTYPE vehicle activated signs as if it were the current cost of one sign..**
- **used data from JUST ONE SITE of each type for the comparison when data from hundreds of sites was available and would have been much more reliable and accurate.**

Paul Smith, founder of <http://www.safespeed.org.uk>, said: "I simply cannot understand why Department for Transport remains firmly welded to their failed and dangerous speed camera programme. They appear determined to defend it to the ends of the earth, yet they must know that it was all an awful mistake. Department for Transport is not fit for purpose. They are not giving us the life-saving road safety Policies we need - instead they are giving us wildly wrong numbers, spin and bluff. When the errors were pointed out to the Transport Committee the indifferent response was simply astonishing."

"Vehicle activated signs - used with care - are proven to be effective at reducing vehicle speeds in areas of local danger. They do not come with the dangerous side effects associated with speed cameras."

Idris Francis, retired engineer and road safety campaigner said: "No one at the DfT, least of all Dr. Ladyman, **should have believed for one moment that speed cameras cost £7,500 but flashing signs £14,000.** It beggars belief that they and the Commons Transport Committee still refuse to accept that these figures were grossly misleading and that in reality signs are far more cost effective than cameras. Do they not understand that people die on our roads when safety policy is based on bogus data and analysis?"

Background information and extensive document archive on **VAS and the select committee members can be found at....** <http://www.safespeed.org.uk/vas.html>

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The PPP comments.....Paul and Idris epitomise the precision of real science, honesty and politeness, we applaud you.....In reality, Across the country, VAS are working well to advise drivers of changes in speed limit **BUT more importantly of particular hazards ahead. In Cheshire we have intelligent use of VAS to warn of queuing traffic beyond a humpback canal bridge.** BUT the Dft et al have to distort data and deliberately draw the wrong conclusions. Our representatives in Parliament on this select committee are either numerically illiterate or corrupt or probably both.

The sad truth is that the imaginary Iraqi weapons of mass destruction **was the tip of a mountain of corruption** leading to the perversion of the course of justice AND to the untimely deaths of British citizens in Iraq, on the roads, on our cities' streets and in the Hospitals.