



# People for Proper Policing in North Wales

## Speed Cameras and the Herts Camera Partnership

26 January 2009

**Highlights (or lowlights)** since my first contact with Herts Camera Partnership in Nov 2007:

- The Herts Camera Partnership report for 2007 was published on 18 Dec 2008 (**why did it take 350 days to produce a 10-page document?**)
- Across Hertfordshire, **fatalities in 2007 were up 25%** and **serious injuries were up 5%** on the previous year.
- The Herts 2007 Road Traffic Collision and Casualty Report shows that **Killed and Seriously Injured are both up significantly year on year**, but the Executive Summary, and the related Collision and Casualty Facts report, choose to open with "***the total number of personal injury road traffic accidents was 1.6% lower than that for 2006 and the total number of casualties was 1.4% lower than 2006***". This is a disgraceful example of being "economical with the truth", especially when it is known that the minor injuries included in those totals are under-reported.
- **Safety performance at camera sites was worse than in 2006.**
- In over a year of correspondence with Herts Council I **have not received a scrap of evidence that speed cameras have made any positive contribution to road safety**. I have received countless bland assurances that "cameras save lives" and similar unfounded platitudes, but these are meaningless without evidence. I do not believe anyone that I have dealt with understands what constitutes evidence to support a safety claim.
- I have provided a logical safety engineering argument explaining why **a camera cannot prevent a collision or an injury**. No-one in Herts, or in the UK (and I have challenged most "speed camera proponents"), has been able to disprove my approach. Cameras do not work "by magic" – this is no place for blind faith. They do not work, they cannot work.
- I have shown that the "**PA Consulting 4-Year Camera Evaluation Report (2005)**" **proved nothing about the effectiveness of speed cameras** – it was a master class in statistical smoke and mirrors. This is the subject of ongoing correspondence with DfT.
- I have explained that, by using an inflated figure for the cost of a fatality/injury, the "**operational/business case**" used to claim cost effectiveness of cameras is **fraudulent**, and by a significant margin (at least a factor of 10). No-one has attempted to explain to me where I have gone wrong.
- I have recently **challenged the legality of all of Herts cameras** in terms of the need for Parliamentary Orders to make them Prescribed Devices. I await a response to an FOI request but have reason to believe that the POs do not exist for the camera element (an important device which produces evidence). I believe that a **major embarrassment** is about to unravel, which will make the Lower Luton Road fiasco look like a tea party. **Who will take responsibility for that debacle?**
- In 4 years, nearly **£9m has been spent by the Partnership and it has provided no safety benefit**. Fatalities across the county have stayed much the same since the sudden drop in **1992**. The Partnership's performance, as reported in the Annual Reports, is a disgrace. It contains just eight lines on safety performance, and that includes the following drivel "***Despite the latest data showing a slight lowering of the percentage reduction, overall the reductions remain at a significant level***". It fails to explain that, again, **most of those reductions are a direct result of statistical tendencies and engineering changes and have nothing to do with the cameras**.
- The revenue/expenditure trends for the Partnership should be ringing alarm bells. Expenditure is increasing annually and receipts from fines decreasing. I note that the 2007/8 expenditure is given but the "revenue from fines" is not (the St Albans Review report says 38,345 paid £60 = £2,300,700). **So the Partnership made a £400,000 loss? This is unsustainable in the current economic climate.**

Which ever way you look at this, the situation is dire:

- the County's road safety strategy has failed
- the business/financial case for cameras has crumbled (and was already founded on **fraud**)
- the legality of speed cameras may be about to be undermined.

**There is no rationale for continuing with the Camera Partnership. It costs over £2.7m of public money. It has failed to improve road safety and it could not even deliver its own report on time. It made a “net loss” of nearly half a million pounds. This is a scandal of major proportions.**

Cameras were always doomed to failure – speed in excess of the speed limit (the only “offence” that a camera can recognise) is the cause of a tiny percentage of collisions and casualties (2%?). The police need to get back on the roads to deal with **all** of the behaviours that cause tragedies across the county and the country.

For your information, I will be submitting the case against speed cameras to the Serious Fraud Office before the end of January. A like-minded colleague has already started an investigation by the Metropolitan Police into fraud and malfeasance by central government staff and others, and we have a major serious national newspaper interested.

**These problems need to be acknowledged now, the Partnership must be disbanded. Road safety cannot be improved by solely by enforcement of speed limits. Education, and policing by patrol cars are the keys to road safety and they must be returned to a realistic level.**

I have much more analysis and argument to offer and, as always, welcome feedback and correspondence via any of the ways given below and would be happy to meet with you.

**The PPP comments ... we are not publishing the Author's name because we respect his privacy and his need to continue his campaign for truth and sense and reason in Road Safety independently. The only advantage he has in dealing with aptrnership as uselss as Arrive Alive is that the Herts lot have the courage to publish their partnership members' ID which the unholy alliance refuse to do.**