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Average speed cameras more effective at slowing vehicles down than traditional single location, fixed ones

Eight in 10 motorists believe average speed cameras are more effective and play a greater role in road safety than traditional cameras that catch speeding drivers in one location, new research has found.

Seventy-nine per cent of 2,172 motorists surveyed by the RAC* say average speed cameras, as commonly used in to monitor the speed of vehicles in stretches of motorway roadworks, are better at slowing down vehicles compared to just one in 10 (9%) who felt single location cameras were more effective.

While 70% of those questioned felt traditional speed cameras were effective at getting drivers to slow down at their specific location, 80% said they made little difference beyond where they are sited.

In contrast average speed cameras, which work over longer distances between two or more locations, were thought to be far better at getting drivers to stick to the speed limit with 86% claiming they were very (38%) or reasonably (48%) effective. Only 12% did not believe them to be very effective.

When asked if they felt one type of camera was fairer on motorists, nearly half (46%) said that it was not a question of whether one is fairer than the other, but that they are both there to improve road safety. However, a quarter (25%) believe average speed cameras are fairer on drivers while one in five (18%) maintained there was no difference. Only 7% said fixed, one location speed cameras were fairer on motorists.

Among those who thought average speed cameras were fairer, 81% claim they promote a smoother driving style and more consistent driving speeds, rather than drivers hitting the brakes to conform to the limit briefly when driving past a single location camera. Just over half (53%) believe they are fairer to drivers that accidentally drift above the speed limit very briefly and 17% think that the signage used to highlight them is better and easier for drivers to take in.

Motorists' opinions about the purpose of speed cameras as a whole is divided, although there is acknowledgement from the majority that they play a valuable road safety role. A third of those surveyed (37%) believe they are intended to improve road safety by slowing down drivers at accident blackspots and places of danger while another third (36%) say they are there to both improve road safety and raise revenue from drivers. Just over a quarter (27%) are more cynical claiming they are primarily about raising cash from drivers.

RAC road safety spokesman Pete Williams said: "We know that some drivers can be very cynical about speed cameras, with a significant minority having told us they believe they are more about raising revenue than they are about road safety. Interestingly, these latest findings show there is now a strong acceptance that they are there to help save lives and prevent casualties on the road, although more than a third (36%) claim they are about both road safety and raising revenue.

"Our research suggests the growing use of average speed cameras in motorway roadworks, and increasingly on sections of A-road, is reinforcing the road safety message as they are extremely effective at slowing down drivers. For instance, [on the A9 in Scotland the number of deaths has halved since average speed cameras were introduced between Dunblane and Inverness in October 2014](#). This type of use of average speed cameras, together with the constant addition of more miles of smart motorways with strictly enforced variable speed limits, may be contributing to a shift in perception in favour of regulated speed enforcement over longer stretches of road.

"Speed is one of the main contributory factors in many road collisions so measures that effectively reduce speed over greater distances will mean fewer lives are lost or ruined on our roads. And even though drivers accept this, many still have issues with single location cameras as in places other

than accident blackspots, they don't appear to have lasting effect on behaviour.”

The RAC Drive website carries a [guide to the different types of speed camera found in the UK](#).

Notes to Editors

* Survey carried out with 2,172 members of the RAC Opinion Panel

About the RAC

First formed in 1897, the RAC has been looking after the needs of its members and championing the interests of motorists for more than 120 years.

Today it has more than eight million members and is one of the UK's most progressive motoring organisations, providing services for both private and business motorists. Whether it's [roadside assistance](#), [insurance](#), [buying a used car](#), [vehicle inspections and checks](#), [legal services](#) or up-to-the-minute [traffic and travel information](#) – the RAC offers a solution for all motoring needs. The RAC is committed to making motoring easier, safer, more affordable and more enjoyable for drivers and road users.

The RAC is the motorist's champion and campaigns to support the interests of its members and UK motorists at a national level. This includes voicing concerns about the increasing cost of motoring, particularly the price of fuel and the high level of tax levied on it, advancing levels of road safety, and supporting the needs of all drivers, from young to old.

The RAC's annual [Report on Motoring](#) – first published in 1989 – is one of a kind and provides a clear insight into the concerns and issues facing today's motorists.

For the very latest news on UK fuel prices, check [RAC Fuel Watch](#). It provides a comprehensive guide to the latest UK unleaded petrol and diesel prices – both at the wholesale level and at the pump - and tracks these prices daily to

help drivers check if the price they pay to fill up is a fair one.

Contacts



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