



Tayside Safety Camera Partnership

**PE1503/G**

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Date:

27 February 2014

Andrew Howlett  
Assistant Clerk  
Public Petitions Committee  
T3.40, Scottish Parliament  
EDINBURGH  
EH99 1SP

Dear Mr Howlett

### **PUBLIC PETITION PE1503 – A9 AVERAGE SPEED CAMERAS**

I refer to your letter of 6 February 2014 regarding the above and seeking responses from members of the A9 Safety Group on two specific questions raised following a presentation made to the Committee by the petitioner, Mr Mike Burns. In this regard please find below my comments on these two questions for the consideration of the Committee.

- What are your views on what the petition seeks and the discussions that took place at the meeting on 28 January?

In the first instance I feel it important to acknowledge that Mr Burns is clearly passionate towards his cause and has clearly undertaken a considerable amount of research in creating his arguments to present his case and I commend him for that. As a member of the A9 Safety Group I too am passionate towards my work which, as a Safety Camera Partnership Manager, is directed towards the aims and objectives of our programme; to reduce the number of people killed or injured on Scottish roads and, through our work, to engender a culture of speed limit and red traffic light compliance by providing a visible and effective deterrent. In order to achieve this it necessitates us working closely with a wide range of partners many of whom are road safety experts, highly qualified within their own field of work. To not rely and take account of such expertise would in my mind be incorrect, or indeed neglectful, and could potentially comprise public safety and this applies equally to my position as a member of the Group.

To that end and in regard to the work of the A9 Safety Group, and in particular the provision of the now approved Average Speed Camera System, considerable input is provided by all members of the group towards the development of proposals designed to improve safety on this particularly route for the public in general. A key input to the decision making to date has been the modelling work undertaken by TRL and AECOM. This used all available research and data available to them to reach their conclusion that the

introduction of average speed cameras on the A9 would result in a significant reduction in collisions and casualties compared to existing statistics. This information therefore provided for me unequivocal support for the introduction of this system as in addition to speed management there was also considered to be benefits in regard to smoother traffic flows, generally reduced overtaking and smaller platoon lengths in regard to large goods vehicles.

I do accept the position that the introduction of average speed cameras will not solve all of the issues present on this particular route but it is clear from our work and the data presented from traffic survey equipment that there is a significant speeding issue on this road that requires to be addressed. I would also point out that the work on other causal factors identified has not, and will not stop, due to the introduction of the average speed camera system. Indeed there is evidence of significant activity ongoing by partners in regard to various engineering and education measures on the A9.

As a Safety Camera Partnership Manager I have great difficulty in understanding how the wider motoring public do not favour a speed management system that has the sole purpose of managing vehicle speeds to the maximum limit that they are permitted to drive at by law. Anyone who makes a decision to drive a vehicle at a speed in excess of the permitted limit does so consciously and must therefore accept the risk of being detected and dealt with appropriately. Unfortunately such actions can also affect other road users, the vast majority of whom do drive within the legal limits, and it is for their safety, the offenders safety and the consideration of the wider community that positive action has to be taken to deal with this issue.

In conclusion, I repeat that nobody has ever intimated that the introduction of average speed cameras will solve all of the problems with which we are faced, but I am personally convinced that they will reduce them and for that reason it is my duty to support the scheme. In doing so I will also continue to support and contribute to the work of the A9 Safety Group as we drive for continued improvement and safety.

- In addition to the Institute of Advance Motorists recently joining, has the A9 Safety Group considered inviting other organisations such as the AA to be members of the group?

In regard to this question I can recall the question of membership being tabled at the inaugural meeting of the group to seek any views but I am unable to state specifically if any particular group was mentioned. Whilst I do not recall any organisation, other than recently the IAM, being invited to join the group I personally would be happy to consider any relevant proposals that were put forward to join. I would however point out that Mr Burns does make mention of there being no group that can realistically represent the car drivers on the A9. I would like to highlight that all members of the group are car drivers in their own right many of whom drive the A9 on a regular basis and contribute from this position as well as their professional position.

I trust you will find my response helpful and sufficient for your purposes.

Yours sincerely

Arron S Duncan BA(Hons)  
Partnership Manager