

Our ref: CRS 707968  
Your ref:

[REDACTED]  
3A Federated House  
London Road  
Dorking RH4 1SZ

Direct Line: [REDACTED]  
Fax: [REDACTED]

16 June 2014

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request for information about overhead gantry speed cameras on the M25. Your request was received on 31 May 2014 and I am dealing with it under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I am writing to confirm that although we do hold some of the information you have requested, we have decided that not all of this information can be disclosed. I am not able to provide details of the number of cameras installed or operational within any given area, or their precise location.

Firstly, you asked 'on which stretches of the M25 are the cameras physically switched on, i.e. enabled to capture images for speeding, and if they are currently switched off, what is their projected in-service date?'

There are currently speed enforcement cameras on the M25 between Junctions 2 to 3, and 5 to 25, which are currently switched on. Further cameras will be installed on the section of the M25 under construction between Junctions 25 and 27. Between Junctions 27 and 30 further cameras installed are awaiting final commissioning later this year.

Secondly, you asked 'How many of the actual gantry positions contain physical cameras, i.e. does every camera position contain a camera or are there a few cameras that move about the gantry sites?'

This information is being withheld under the exemptions in sections 31 and 38 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, on the grounds that it would affect driver compliance and be detrimental to road safety and law enforcement. The attached Annex A to this letter sets out the exemptions in full. In applying these exemptions we have had to balance the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosure.

I can confirm though, that cameras are mounted on a significant proportion of overhead gantries. These cameras have the potential to be moved.



Finally, you asked, 'What margin of error above the indicated speed on the sign a notice of intended prosecution will be sent, ie national guidelines are 10% plus 2 mph, do these cameras follow these criteria?'

Since enforcement is carried out by the Police, the Highways Agency does not hold any information on the times or thresholds at which the cameras are operational; this is decided by the Police as the enforcing authority. Each local Police force will determine their own enforcement strategy, and these may vary between regions.

Enforcement is one of a number of measures which are used to support compliance with the displayed speed limits, and variable speed enforcement cameras are installed as part of every Managed Motorway scheme. They are operated by the Police, and for this reason I am unable to provide all of the information you have requested.

The information provided will now be published on our website together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context.

If you are unhappy with the way we have handled your request you may ask for an internal review. Our internal review process is available at:  
<http://www.highways.gov.uk/foicomplaints>

If you require a print copy, please phone the Highways Agency Information Line on 0300 123 5000; or e-mail [ha\\_info@highways.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ha_info@highways.gsi.gov.uk). You should contact me if you wish to complain.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House, Water Lane  
Wilmslow, Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely



pp.



NDD M25 DBFO Team Leader

Email: 

Annex A – Public Interest Test tables

Request for information under FOI –

Variable speed detection cameras on the M25 –

- On which stretches of the M25 are the speed cameras physically switched on, i.e. enabled to capture images for speeding? If they are currently switched off, what is their projected in-service date?
- How many of the actual gantry positions contain physical cameras, i.e. does every camera position contain a camera or are there a few cameras that are moved around?
- What margin of error above the indicated speed on the sign is tolerated before a prosecution will be sent, i.e. national guidelines are 10% plus 2 mph, do these cameras follow this criteria?

Exemptions – FOIA section 31 (1) – the prevention or detection of crime, and FOIA section 38 (1) (a) endanger the physical or mental health of any individual, or (b) endanger the safety of any individual.

Factors for disclosure

- Ministers expect us to be open and honest with our answers to questions from the public regarding enforcement cameras. Recent media interest in camera enforcement should be taken into consideration.
- The public has a right to know how the money spent on the investment made in the asset (in this case Smart Motorways) is being used and how that asset is functioning.

Factors for withholding

- Some enforcement sites may not be active all of the time; supplying details of camera location, operation or numbers in any given area may give the travelling public sufficient knowledge to allow them to avoid live sites and thus evade prosecution by defeating the enforcement system.
- As an organisation, we need to ensure an effective enforcement regime on sections of Smart Motorways, because we have a legal duty to ensure a safer working environment for our road workers. The enforcement sites encourage speeding drivers to slow down and contribute towards a compliant environment, which reduces the risk of incidents.
- Public money has been invested to make improvements to traffic flow and reduce congestion by creating a controlled environment; disclosure of this information would put these benefits at risk by encouraging criminal non-compliance with mandatory speed limits.
- The benefits of current and future schemes may be eroded, requiring greater public investment in future, in order to achieve the same level of

	<p>compliance with the law and deliver the same benefits to road users.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Safe and effective operation of the schemes depends on ensuring a controlled environment.</li><li>• If speed limits are broken by drivers, this compromises the effectiveness of the scheme and poses a safety hazard to road workers and other road users.</li><li>• Attempts to defeat the enforcement system could result in erratic driving which would further increase the risk of harm to others.</li><li>• Reduced speed limits on Smart Motorways are set in response to live conditions on the road, therefore driver compliance is particularly important. The speed limits are used to prevent congestion (thereby reducing the risk of minor incidents in stop-start conditions), and in response to incidents (e.g to prevent secondary incidents and protect the incident scene or queuing traffic from being struck by another vehicle).</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conclusion: The public interest factors far outweigh the reasons for disclosing this information in full. All PIT members agreed that the number and locations of cameras on any given scheme or section of the network should not be disclosed, but details of the operational status of individual schemes could be provided.</li><li>• PIT members: [REDACTED]</li><li>• Date of PIT: 10 June 2014</li></ul>	

