

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/11291390/Boriss-speed-cameras-will-save-no-lives-and-TfLs-data-proves-it.html>

TfL is wasting millions on expensive digital speed cameras, argues Christopher Booker.

By [Christopher Booker](#)

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[29 Comments](#) (more now since I added mine. Every one in agreement! Idris

Boris Johnson's Transport for London (TfL) recently announced that it was planning to install more than 600 new digital speed cameras around the city. TfL claimed that its old film cameras, most of which it closed down three years ago, had reduced fatal or serious accidents by a staggering "58 per cent", meaning that its new cameras will "help to prevent 500 deaths or serious injuries a year".

No one was more startled by these claims than Idris Francis, an engineer and reader of this column. For 12 years he had been feeding into his computer huge quantities of data from police sources and TfL itself.

First he tracked back into the late Eighties the number of "KSIs" (killed and seriously injured) recorded at each camera site. This did indeed show a dramatic and steady decline. But he then compiled a graph showing the accident rate for the whole of London, subtracting the data for the sites with cameras. The result was unequivocal. The two graphs, though very slightly apart, showed exactly the same rate of decline. In other words, any evidence that cameras affected the accident rate was virtually nil.

Since July, Mr Francis has been trying to persuade TfL to look at his evidence, which has been checked out by an eminent academic statistician, but to no avail. In the end, TfL refused to answer his messages and seemingly ordered its switchboard not to put through his calls. Equally in vain have been Freedom of Information requests, which have been published on the Whatdotheyknow blog, trying to elicit the cost of this scheme, estimated at more than £20 million. TfL's repeated reply was that such information cannot be disclosed because it is commercially sensitive.

So Mayor Johnson's traffic officials have embarked on a scheme that will do little or nothing for road safety; made claims flatly contradicted by their own data; and are refusing to reveal what we will have to pay for it. It sounds like everything we have come to expect from modern government.

