

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/11501233/His-own-data-show-that-Boriss-speed-cameras-wont-save-lives.html>

By [Christopher Booker](#)

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That great libertarian Boris Johnson, we are told, hopes to lead the way in a plan to impose 20mph speed limits on all the urban roads of Britain, enforced by thousands of new digital speed cameras, with minimum fines of £100. Starting with eight of London's busiest arterial roads, this is a dramatic extension of the plan announced last year by Mayor Johnson's Transport for London (TfL) to install 600 of the new cameras around London, with a claim that previous cameras had cut serious accidents by "58 per cent". The new cameras, TfL insisted, will "help to prevent 500 deaths or serious injuries a year".

In January I reported on two startling graphs compiled by an engineer, Idris Francis, and endorsed by a respected academic statistician. Based only on police and other official data, one showed that there had indeed been a steady decline in serious accidents around London's camera sites over the past 20 years. But the second graph, tracking accidents on all the roads not covered by cameras, showed exactly the same rate of decline. In other words, the accident reduction had nothing to do with speed cameras but was due to other factors.

Mr Francis's attempts to persuade TfL to look at his graphs have been repeatedly rebuffed, and in a subsequent letter to The Daily Telegraph, Ian Kemp, head of the "Metropolitan Police Traffic Criminal Justice Command", insisted that the new digital speed cameras would indeed play a vital role in cutting accidents and were not just a "cash cow".

But if Mr Kemp and Mayor Johnson's TfL wish us to believe their claims they must first provide a convincing response to the evidence, based on their own figures, which tells a very different story. Until they do, we can only assume that their new cameras have nothing to do with road safety but only with the millions they hope to raise in fines, from motorists caught by cameras which serve no other purpose.