

## Red-light running: accidents and surveillance cameras

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Cost: 28,000 per annum over three years

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With the arrival in the United Kingdom of equipment to monitor 'red-light running', a review of accidents related to violations of traffic lights was undertaken by the City of Birmingham as part of continuing studies into urban accident research. The study's purpose was to evaluate the potential of such equipment in terms of accident prevention, and to examine the economics of the case for its installation on road safety grounds alone. Five thousand accidents per year in Britain are caused by red-light running, costing the country 100 million.

Its main findings included:

- red-light running accidents were most frequent at busy junctions, often with a fast, open downhill approach;
- such accidents were most frequent when traffic was heavy but moving freely; there was a disproportionate number between 7.00pm Saturdays and 4.00am Sundays;
- 10 per cent of such accidents were hit and run;
- in 75 per cent of accidents the driver who ran the red light collided with a vehicle entering the junction from either the left or right;
- offenders were frequently young, male, sober car drivers, with van drivers often at fault;
- camera surveillance equipment should be installed at accident-prone junctions with signs to warn drivers that offences would be recorded automatically;
- the accident rate should be monitored before and after camera installation;
- a campaign should be mounted to expose red-light running as dangerous and socially unacceptable behaviour;
- police and highway authority data should be compiled to identify red-light running accidents, and the junctions where they happen;
- highway authorities should avoid designing junctions which would be likely to encourage red-light running.

This study was the last undertaken through the partnership in which the AA Foundation sponsored a researcher in Birmingham's City Engineer's Department.

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