

Northern Ireland
ROAD SAFETY PARTNERSHIP
Community support for saving lives



2020 Annual Report

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NI Road Safety Partnership
42 Montgomery Road
Belfast
BT6 9LD

[Road Safety Partnership webpage](#)

Email:

info@nisafetypartnership.org

- A total of 46,731 detections were made by the Northern Ireland Road Safety Partnership (NI RSP) in 2020, either for speeding or running a red light. This was a 6% decrease on the number of detections in 2019 (49,880).
- These statistics should be viewed in the context of the lockdown measures introduced throughout 2020 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic which reduced [traffic volumes](#) by close to 75% at its lowest point.
- The fixed site on the Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast accounted for over two fifths (43%) of the 3,188 speeding detections by fixed cameras in 2020.
- The highest speed recorded by RSP in 2020 was 126mph.
- In 2020, 436 detections were made by the red light running cameras across Northern Ireland, a decrease of 23% compared with 2019.
- Average speed detections decreased by 31% in 2020 when compared with 2019.
- There were 5,826 deployments of the RSP vans in 2020, an increase of 7% on the number of deployments in 2019.
- There were 537 injury collisions recorded at safety camera sites in 2020, a decrease of 24% on the number recorded in 2019. There were 517 at fixed and mobile camera sites and 20 at red light running sites.

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This bulletin is an Official Statistics Publication meaning it complies with all aspects of the [Code of Practice](#) for Official Statistics. More information on Official Statistics is available on the [UK statistics authority](#) website.

1. Things you need to know about this release

This report presents key statistics relating to the activity of the Northern Ireland Road Safety Partnership (NIRSP) for the calendar year 2020. These statistics should be viewed in the context of the lockdown measures introduced throughout 2020 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic which reduced [traffic volumes](#) by close to 75% at its lowest point.

The aim of the Partnership is:

- To support Northern Ireland's Road Safety Strategy to 2020 by reducing speeding, which has a direct impact upon casualty reduction, through targeted enforcement using a range of approved detection equipment, including safety camera technology.
- To support Northern Ireland's Road Safety Strategy to 2020 by the delivery of educational campaigns and initiatives including education of offending drivers.

In Northern Ireland there are three fixed speed cameras, six fixed red light running cameras and two average speed enforcement camera systems. Fixed camera sites occasionally became unserviceable and needed to be repaired by specialist engineers which can affect the number of detections achieved in a given year. The Partnership is also responsible for eight speed camera vehicles which operate at various signed locations throughout Northern Ireland.

In addition to the permanently signed locations the Partnership enforces at community concern sites. Community concern sites are enforced where there is a well-founded concern, raised through the local Policing and Community Safety Partnership or the PSNI District Commander, that a failure to reduce speeds will result in collisions causing death or serious injury. Once approved for enforcement, camera operators use temporary signs at these locations.

Further information about the Partnership including the location of sites can be obtained from the [Northern Ireland Road Safety Partnership website](#)

This report covers statistics relating to:

- Detections by NIRSP for speeding¹
- Detections by NIRSP for red light running
- Numbers of people who have completed the speed awareness course
- Injury collision statistics at safety camera sites
- The number of times NIRSP vans were deployed at safety camera sites.

For the purpose of this report a detection is defined as when a driver is caught speeding or in breach of a red light running camera and is subsequently dealt with by any of the following;

- completing a speed awareness course,
- being referred for a fixed penalty,
- being referred for prosecution.

The information is also available in tabular format in the accompanying spreadsheet available on the NISRA website.

Section 7 provides further background information about the NI RSP.

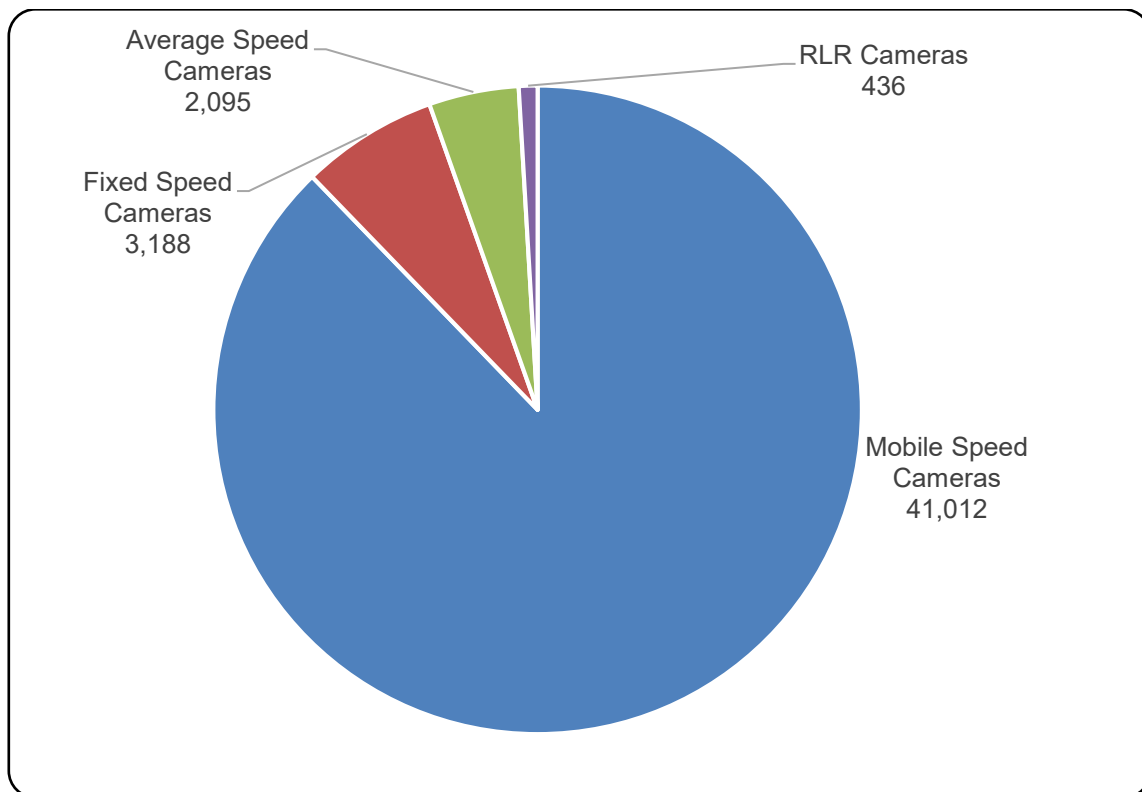
¹ Figures relating to persons caught speeding by PSNI officers are not included in this report as the Northern Ireland Road Safety Partnership is a separate organisation. Figures relating to motoring offences detected by PSN are available on [PSNI website](#).

2. Summary

Over the last 12 months:

- The NI Road Safety Partnership made 46,731 detections, this was a decrease of 6% (3,149) on the number detected in 2019.
- Mobile speed cameras accounted for 88% of all detections.
- Fixed speed cameras made 3,188 detections while the average speed cameras made 2,095 detections.
- Detections at red light running sites accounted for only 1% of all detections (436).

Figure 1: Detections by camera type, 2020



3. Trends

Table 1: Detections at Northern Ireland Road Safety Partnership sites 2004 – 2020

	Mobile Speed Cameras	Fixed Speed Cameras	Average Speed Cameras	RLR Cameras	Total
2004	6,915	4,376	-	-	11,291
2005	7,501	2,635	-	-	10,136
2006	7,781	2,440	4	-	10,225
2007	9,450	3,095	24	109	12,678
2008	9,642	2,300	8	519	12,469
2009	16,016	2,020	0	605	18,641
2010	26,006	6,709	80	736	33,531
2011	36,467	6,651	130	363	43,611
2012	36,546	11,413	464	484	48,907
2013	32,154	15,157	599	422	48,332
2014	30,012	11,484	265	668	42,429
2015	34,692	10,318	900	590	46,500
2016	34,308	8,100	936	314	43,658
2017	22,700	7,669	707	357	31,433
2018	31,538	5,970	3,461	448	41,417
2019	41,233	5,035	3,044	568	49,880
2020	41,012	3,188	2,095	436	46,731

- There was more than 4 times the number of detections in 2020 when compared with 2004. The main reason for this increase was the reduction in the speed threshold at which a driver can be detected speeding in June 2010 and again in April 2012.
- Additional sites for enforcement were also added in 2010 and 2014.
- The first marked increase in the number of detections was in 2009 prior to any changes in the threshold. The main reason for this was that operators became civilianised in December 2008. Prior to this the camera vans were operated by PSNI officers.
- Fewer deployments made by mobile vans in 2017 due to staffing resources had a significant impact on the number of detections.
- A camera upgrade was rolled out in 2018 and was the main reason for the increase in detections in 2018 and 2019.
- Lockdown measures introduced throughout 2020 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic reduced [traffic volumes](#) by close to 75% at its lowest point, however there was only a 6% decrease in 2020 detections when compared with 2019.

Figure 2: Number of NI Road Safety Partnership speeding detections 2004 – 2020

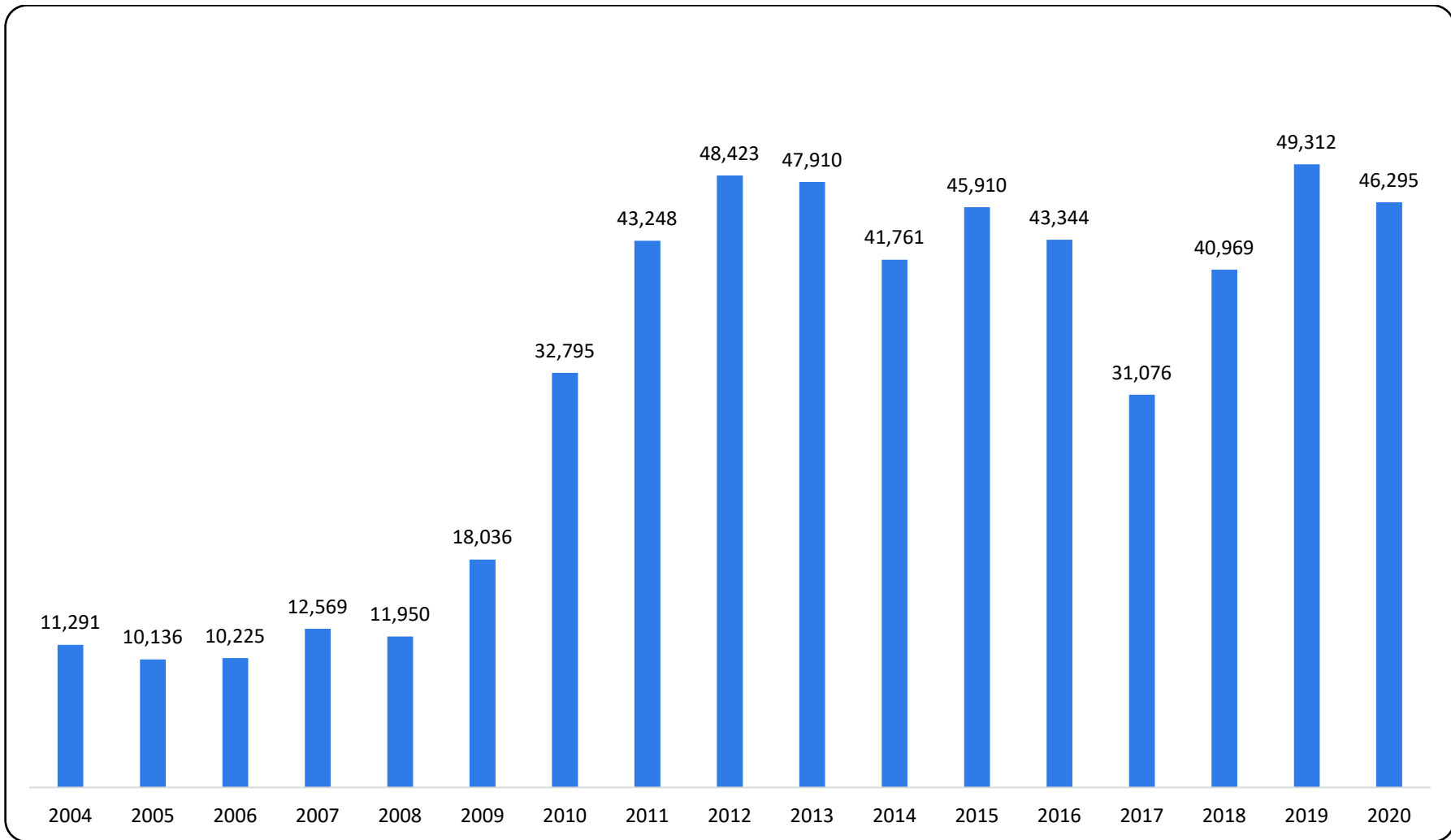
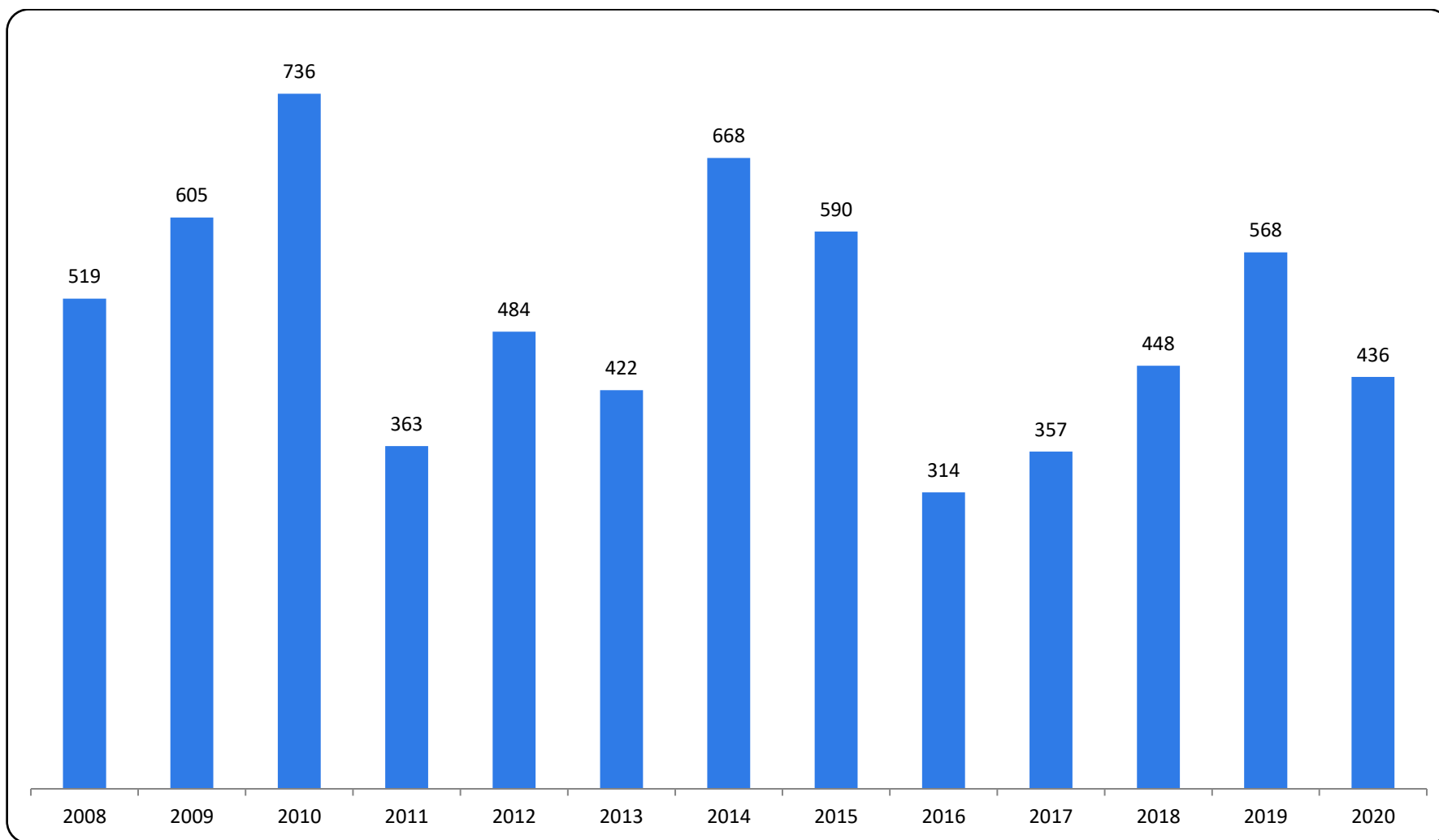


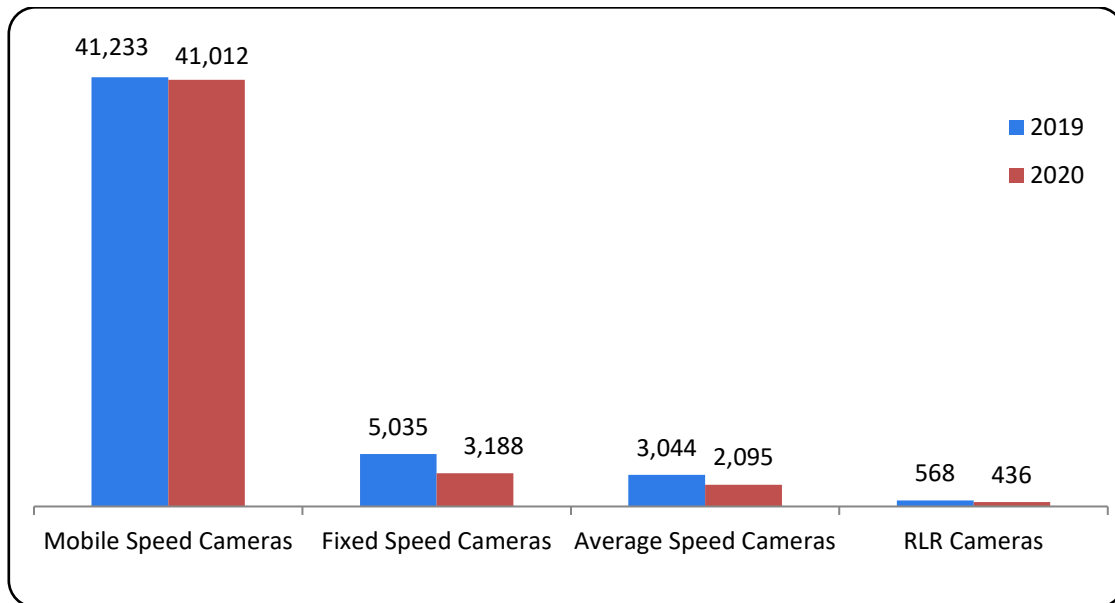
Figure 3²: Number of NI Road Safety Partnership red light running detections: 2008 – 2020



² Red light running cameras introduced in November 2007, the red light running site at Glenshane Road, Londonderry launched in September 2008.

4. Detections

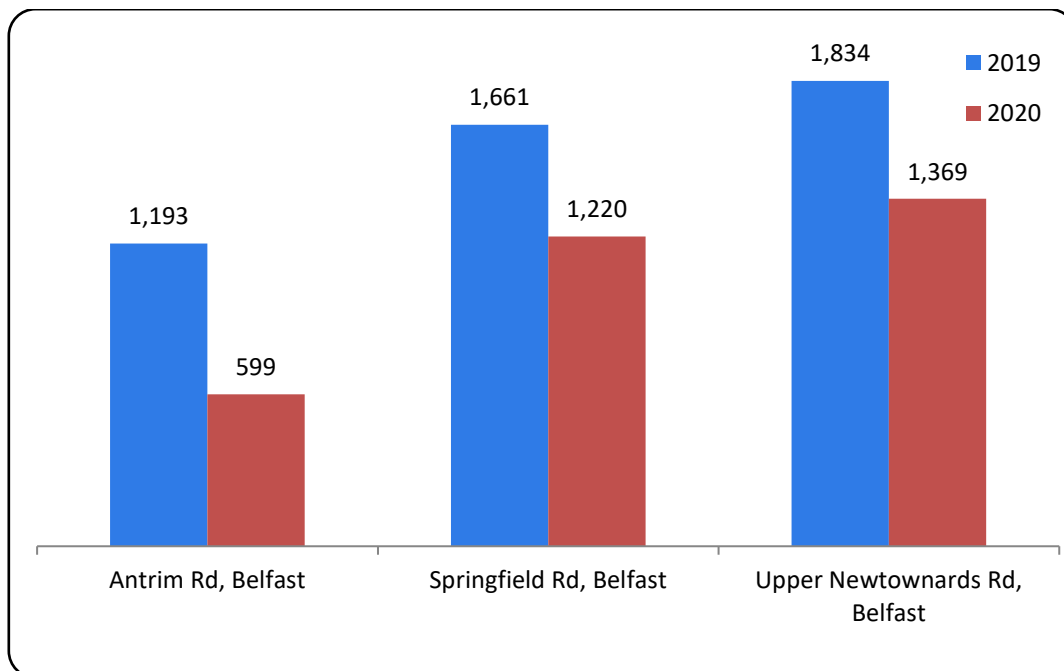
Figure 4: Detections at Northern Ireland Road Safety Partnership sites, 2019 and 2020



- There were 46,731 detections by the Road Safety Partnership in 2020 (approximately 128 per day). This was a decrease of 6% on the 49,880 detections made in 2019 (approximately 137 per day).
- Fixed camera detections decreased by 37% when compared with 2019. Two of the three fixed cameras experienced significant downtime throughout 2020.
- Average speed camera detections decreased by 31% in 2020 when compared with 2019.
- The number of detections at mobile cameras sites decreased by 0.5% between 2019 and 2020.
- Of the 46,295 speed related detections in 2020, a total of 23,430 drivers completed a speed awareness course. This equated to over half (51%) of the drivers detected and was a similar proportion to previous years.

4.1 Fixed camera sites

Figure 5: Detections at Fixed Camera Sites, 2019 and 2020



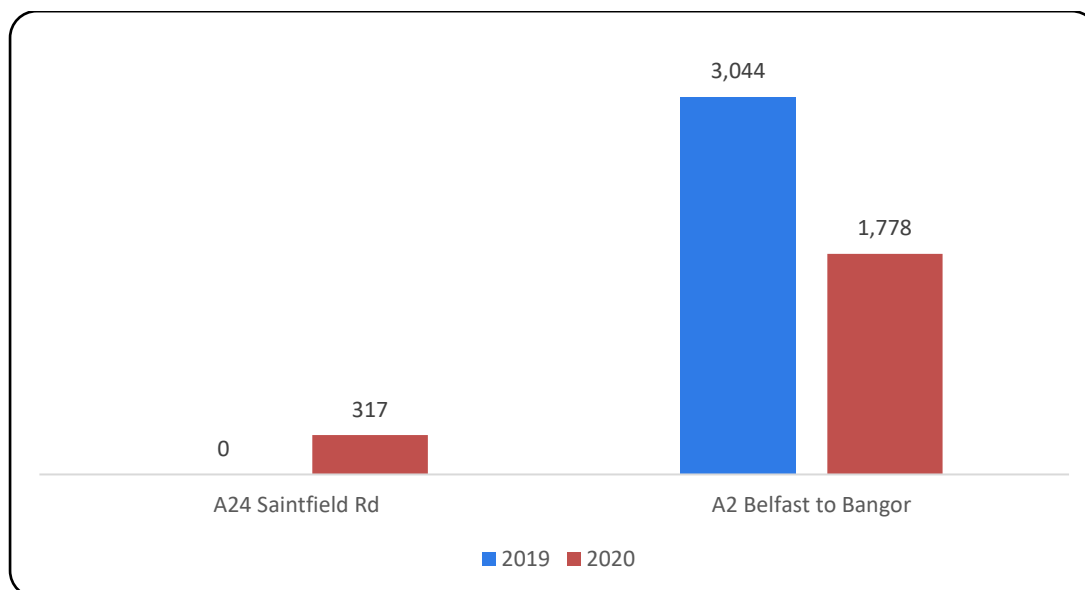
- The fixed site on the Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast accounted for 43% of the 3,188 speeding detections by fixed cameras, followed by Springfield Road, Belfast (38%) and Antrim Road, Belfast (19%).
- October was the month with the highest number of detections at fixed camera sites (500), accounting for 16% of the total.
- The fixed camera on the Saintfield Road, Belfast has been removed from the list of Partnership enforcement sites.

4.2 Mobile camera sites

- Of the total detections at mobile camera sites in 2020, 24,837 were at permanently signed sites – accounting for over three fifths (61%) of these detections, while the remaining 39% were at community concern sites.
- The A55 outer ring, Belfast route had the most detections with 2,585 in 2020 while there were a small number of sites with no detections. There are a variety of reasons for certain sites having low level of detections including; low numbers of drivers breaching the speed threshold on sites where a higher speed limit is in force (60 mph+), the site was dormant over last 12 months or part thereof meaning that it had not met the criteria for enforcement.
- The breakdown of detections by mobile camera sites is available in the accompanying spreadsheet.

4.3 Average speed camera sites

Figure 6: Detections at Average Speed Camera Sites, 2019 and 2020



- A new average speed camera system was installed on A24 Saintfield Road, Belfast and was launched in August 2020 and made 317 detections to the end of 2020.
- There was a 42% reduction in the number of detections along the A2 average speed sites in 2020, when compared with 2019. The reduced traffic volumes as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic may have contributed to this decrease.

4.4 Red light running camera sites

Table 2: Detections at red light running camera sites, 2020

Red light running camera site	2020
Castle St, Belfast	12
Glenshane Rd, L'Derry	48
Middlepath St, Belfast	5
Millfield at Peter's Hill, Belfast	165
Nelson St, Belfast	179
York St, Belfast	27
Total	436

- In 2020, 436 people were detected by one of the six red right running cameras across Northern Ireland, compared with 568 detections in 2019 – a decrease of 23%. This is mainly attributable to cameras being out of action for a period of time in 2020 while waiting on engineers to upgrade the cameras which was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

4.5 Speed limit

Table 3: Speeding detections by speed limit, 2020

Speed Limit (mph)	Number of detections	Highest speed recorded (mph)
30	26,590	74
40	8,624	107
50	2,469	93
60	7,858	126
70	754	111
Total	46,295	

- Over half (57%) of all speed related detections were on 30mph roads.
- The highest speed recorded in 2020 was 126mph, which was detected on the A6 Glenshane Road, Maghera (a 60mph road).

4.6 Age of drivers

Table 4: Age of drivers detected by camera type, 2020

Age of Driver	Mobile Speed Cameras	Fixed Speed Cameras	Average Speed Cameras	RLR Camera	Total
Under 25	3,747	622	298	60	4,727
25 - 39	12,447	1,071	812	132	14,462
40 - 54	12,812	868	553	99	14,332
55 - 69	7,971	430	237	75	8,713
70+	2,110	63	28	19	2,220
Unknown	1,925	134	167	51	2,277
Total	41,012	3,188	2,095	436	46,731

- Where age was known, one third of all persons detected by the RSP in 2020 were aged 25–39 (33%), a further 32% were aged 40-54, which was similar to the age breakdown in 2019.
- Persons aged under 25 accounted for 11% of all those detected, where the age was known, however they accounted for 20% of all those detected by the fixed speed cameras.

4.7 Time of day

Table 5: Detections by time of day, 2020

Time of Day	Mobile Speed Cameras	Fixed Speed Cameras	Average Speed Cameras	RLR Camera	Total
0000-0259	0	426	111	45	582
0300-0559	0	189	90	26	305
0600-0859	2,117	531	319	56	3,023
0900-1159	13,508	493	302	70	14,373
1200-1459	14,082	385	288	62	14,817
1500-1759	8,292	276	338	54	8,960
1800-2059	2,997	358	380	64	3,799
2100-2359	16	530	267	59	872
Total	41,012	3,188	2,095	436	46,731

- Almost one in three detections in 2020 was between midday and 3pm, followed by a further 31% between 9am and midday.

5. Deployment

There are currently 8 highly visible mobile speed camera vans that operate 7 days a week throughout Northern Ireland at over 80 permanently signed locations as well as community concern sites.

Table 6: Number of deployments by day of week and month of year, 2020

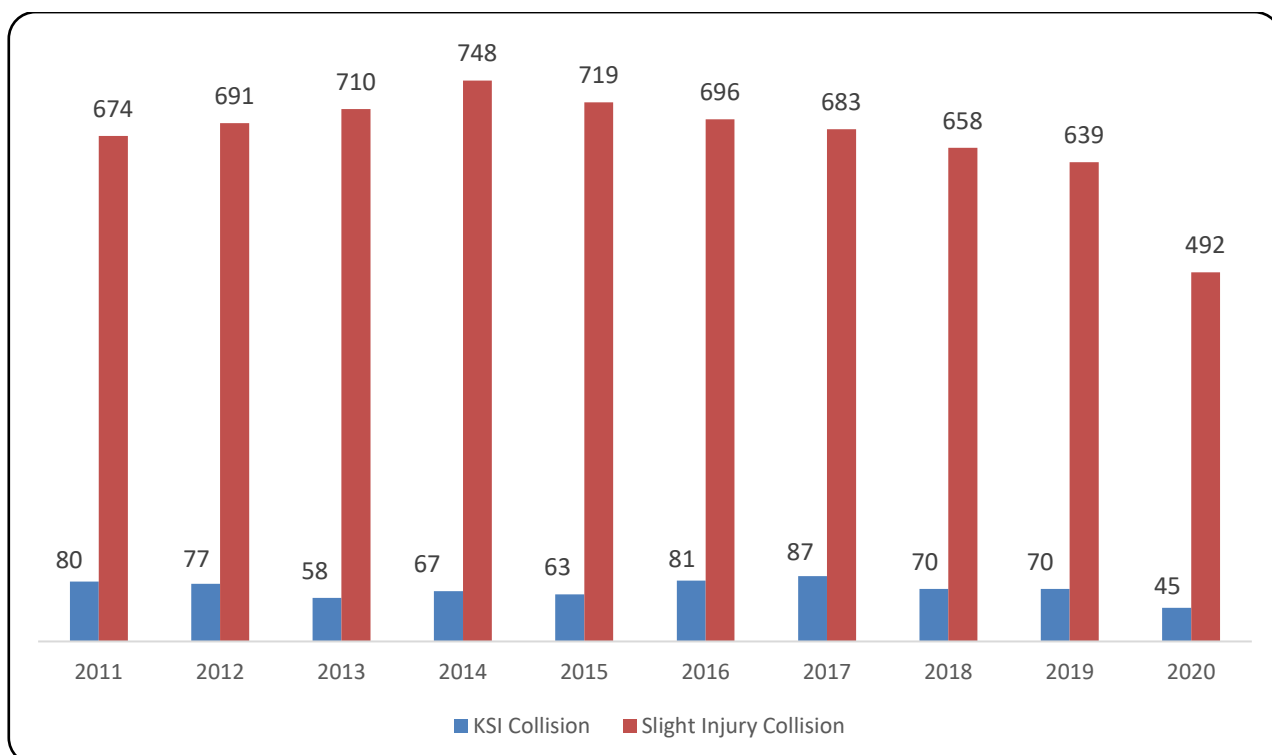
	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Total
January	39	69	79	88	98	99	64	536
February	32	67	77	64	78	82	85	485
March	59	78	72	73	71	67	46	466
April	39	75	72	89	91	73	65	504
May	55	75	81	79	78	103	71	542
June	46	91	107	74	72	79	70	539
July	28	65	63	96	81	82	55	470
August	53	99	76	73	65	67	74	507
September	23	49	73	89	79	70	43	426
October	35	73	77	77	73	60	63	458
November	34	61	60	67	73	72	66	433
December	30	76	88	93	82	46	45	460
Total	473	878	925	962	941	900	747	5,826

- There were 5,826 deployments of the NIRSP vans in 2020, an increase of 7% on the number of deployments in 2019.
- The highest number of deployments was on a Wednesday with 962, accounting for 17% of all deployments, while Sunday had the lowest number with 473 (8%).

6. Injury road traffic collisions

- There were 537 injury collisions recorded at safety camera sites in 2020, a decrease of 24% on the number recorded in 2019. Injury collisions overall in Northern Ireland decreased by 25% in the same period³. The large reduction must be viewed in the context of lockdown measures which were introduced throughout 2020 in relation to Covid-19 and reduced [traffic volumes](#) by close to 75% at its lowest point.
- There were 45 fatal or serious (KSI) injury collisions recorded at safety camera sites in 2020, a 36% decrease on the 70 recorded in 2019.
- The work of the RSP is to support the NI Road Safety Strategy (RSS) 2020 by using targeted enforcement to reduce the casualties on the roads. Looking at the collisions recorded at RSP sites over the period 2016 – 2020 there was a reduction in KSI collisions of 38% when compared with 2004 – 2008 (the baseline used in the NI RSS). However not all of this decrease can be directly attributable to the presence of safety cameras as there was a decrease 40% in KSI collisions in Northern Ireland when the same five year periods are compared.
- While these general reductions in KSI collisions at safety camera sites/routes are welcome, it is recognised that not all of the reduction is due solely to the use of safety cameras as there has been a general decrease in KSI collisions in Northern Ireland as a whole in the period in question. It is also possible that a regression to the mean effect may have contributed to the reduction (see section 7 for more detail). However, research in the UK indicates that when these factors are controlled for, safety cameras make a substantial contribution to the reduction in collisions (thought to be a reduction of around 20% fewer collisions depending on area and camera type).

Figure 7: Number of injury road traffic collisions at safety camera sites, 2011 - 2020



³ [Injury road traffic collision statistics](#)

7. Notes

The Northern Ireland Road Safety Partnership (NIRSP) was established in July 2003 as the Northern Ireland Safety Camera Scheme. The aim of the scheme is to reduce the number of casualties on Northern Ireland's roads through targeted enforcement at sites with a history of collisions using safety cameras.

The partnership includes both mobile and fixed speed cameras which record vehicles passing in excess of a pre-defined speed, camera systems which measures average speed travelled between two cameras and red light running (RLR) cameras which record vehicles that pass through red traffic lights - hence the collective term 'safety' cameras.

The Partnership covers only those detections made by safety cameras and not detections made by PSNI officers using other speed measuring devices, e.g. Laser, Radar or Vascar.

The enforcement of the RSP sites is conducted by operators employed on behalf of the organisation. The operators are trained in using the mobile cameras and operate in vans that are marked with the Northern Ireland Road Safety Partnership logo. Detections from fixed cameras and from red light running cameras under the scheme are also operated by the Northern Ireland Road Safety Partnership (and not the PSNI). The detection figures contained in this report relate solely to those enforced by the Northern Ireland Road Safety Partnership and exclude any other detections recorded by the PSNI for motoring offences outside the scheme.

Currently, there are approximately 80 permanently signed locations at which the mobile speed camera vans can deploy, 3 fixed speed cameras, 2 average speed systems and 6 red light running cameras.

The Northern Ireland Road Safety Partnership involves the co-operation of a number of government departments and agencies.

On the basis of common interest in the Partnership, delivery is overseen by the Partnership Board consisting of representatives from –

- Police Service of Northern Ireland
- Department for Infrastructure
- Department of Justice
- Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunal Service
- Northern Ireland Policing Board

Average Speed Camera System

Average speed systems are highly visible and are mounted on over-hanging poles in pairs. The system measures the average speed at which a vehicle travels between the two cameras.

Fixed Safety Cameras

Fixed safety cameras measure the speed of a vehicle at a given point. The cameras, which are marked yellow, are mounted at the roadside on grey coloured poles.

Fixed Red Light Running Cameras

Fixed red light running cameras, which are located at junctions governed by traffic lights which have a high incidence of collisions, are similar in appearance to fixed safety cameras.

Mobile Safety Camera Vehicles

There are currently eight mobile safety camera vehicles which utilise the latest digital photographic and laser technology to accurately measure and record vehicle speeds. The vehicles, which are clearly marked and highly visible, are used on designated routes throughout Northern Ireland.

Community Concern Sites

Community concern sites are enforced where there is a well-founded concern, raised via the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs) or the PSNI District Commander, that a failure to reduce speeds will result in KSI (killed or seriously injured) collisions and that the location poses a significant risk to road safety. Once approved for enforcement, camera operators use temporary signs at these locations.

Reliability of evidence

All speed detection equipment operated by the Northern Ireland Road Safety Partnership is type approved by the Department for Infrastructure for Northern Ireland (DfI) in accordance with the provisions of Article 23 of the Road Traffic Offenders (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 before it can be used for enforcement purposes.

In order to obtain type approval, the equipment is subjected to rigorous testing to the standards set by the Home Office Scientific Development Branch.

The type approval provides a public reassurance of the equipment's accuracy and reliability. In addition, there are a range of strict procedures for operating the equipment that further assures accuracy of operation and information providing an audit trail of evidence.

Human Rights Act

In keeping with the Human Rights Act 2000, the registered keeper of a vehicle can be required to give the details of who was driving at the time the vehicle was speeding. This is not a breach of the individual's right to a fair trial.

Speed Awareness Courses

Drivers, depending on the speed at which they were detected, may be offered an opportunity to attend a speed awareness course as an alternative to penalty points. The course, which is available at eight locations throughout Northern Ireland and delivered and managed by an appointed contractor, however due to the COVID-19 pandemic the courses moved to an online platform from June 2020. Courses must be attended within a period of 120 days from the date of detection. This method of disposal was introduced in June 2010. Certain restrictions apply to who can qualify for the speed awareness course option.

Regression to the Mean Effect

This is a statistical term that refers to the fact that road traffic collisions are random events and their incidence at any location can vary over time. Due to the very nature of how safety camera sites are identified (i.e. based on their high KSI collision history over the previous 3 years) some of the sites selected could have an abnormally high level of KSI collisions by chance (randomly). Therefore when identified as a safety camera site and enforced, the same high level of KSI collisions is unlikely to be repeated in subsequent years and it is argued that KSI collisions would decrease at these sites as they 'regress to the mean' regardless of safety camera enforcement.

- The NI Road Safety Partnership were unable to quantify the contribution of the RTM due to lack of access to all the required data variables in order to replicate the complex statistical modelling approach adopted by the Department of Transport (DfT) in their examination of the RTM effect in 2005⁴.
- No individual force in England & Wales would be likely to estimate the RTM effect in their evaluation of their own schemes.
- In the absence of a measure for the RTM effect in Northern Ireland, the Partnership believe that the findings of the 4 Year Evaluation Report conducted in England & Wales and other similar research would be equally applicable to the scheme in Northern Ireland: i.e. 'Whilst regression-to-mean effects does appear to account for some of the reduction in collisions at cameras, the safety effects of cameras still remain substantial'.
- Whilst the effect of safety cameras in reducing collisions in Northern Ireland cannot be calculated, attempts have been made to minimise the RTM effect, by increasing the time period used to identify RSP safety camera sites (5 year collision histories are used instead of the 3 year period normally adopted across the rest of the UK).

⁴ [The National Safety Camera Programme Four Year Evaluation Report December 2005](#)