

# THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

GREAT MINSTER HOUSE  
76 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SW1P 4DR  
FAX 0171-217 5313  
TELEX 22221 DOT MAR-G  
DIRECT LINE 0171-271 5145  
SWITCHBOARD 0171-271-5000  
GTN 271

The Chief Executive  
County Councils )  
Borough Councils ) in England  
District Councils )  
London Borough Councils  
The Town Clerk, City of London

My Ref: GT 17/3/35

Your reference

## CIRCULAR ROADS 1/95

7 October 1995

Dear Sir/Madam

## TRAFFIC SIGNAL AND SPEED CAMERA SIGNING

### INTRODUCTION

1. The purpose of this Circular Roads is to set out guidance for highway authorities to follow in providing informatory signing to warn drivers that Traffic Signal and/or Speed Cameras are present and operating in the area through which they are driving.
2. Experience indicates that the greatest benefits in terms of speed reduction and traffic signal obedience arise when signs are erected in addition to installing cameras. However, the provision of such signing is optional and the issue of this Circular does not place any obligation on highway authorities to erect signs. Enforcement powers for speed and red signal violations detected by cameras are not compromised by the absence of signing.
3. The Department is aware of the desire among many authorities to provide signs, and these have already been erected in a number of areas under special DOT authorisation since the spring of 1993. The signs are not prescribed in the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 1994, but they are to be included in Amendment Regulations at the earliest opportunity. In the meantime authorisations will continue to be issued by the Government Offices for the Regions (for local highway authority roads) and by the Highways Agency (for trunk roads and motorways).
4. It is our intention to allow highway authorities as much flexibility as possible in the provision of signs but authorisations will be conditional on the following requirements being fulfilled:-
  - i. There should always be at least one camera operational, which may be supplemented with speed activated 'dummy' flash units, for the majority of the time within the area or along the route signed;
  - ii. Police enforcement activity must follow from the camera detection taking place; and
  - iii. Signs should be installed on an area or route basis (see paragraphs 8 to 11) and not at specific camera sites or junctions.

These conditions are necessary so that the signs do not fall into disrepute by indiscriminate use. They do not preclude the use of temporary camera equipment being used with permanently erected signs, because as long as camera enforcement activity is being carried out for the majority of the time within an area or along a route, the criteria will be met.

## **SIGN DESIGN AND LEGEND**

5. To be consistent with the fundamental traffic signing principle, that sign legends are meaningful but as short as possible, the following legends have been agreed and it is recommended that one of these be used, as appropriate:-

**Traffic signal cameras**

**Speed cameras**

**Traffic signal and speed cameras**

In all cases the signs must include the camera symbol - as illustrated on working drawing no. NP 878 attached.

6. Consultation on whether or not to include the word "Police" on the signs has resulted in a strong consensus against this being added as a prefix to the legends in paragraph 5, although that has been allowed under special authorisation. The Department does not have any evidence to show that this makes the signs more effective and it does of course make them larger and more expensive. However, it is recognised that there may be circumstances where authorities do wish to include "Police" and so to allow flexibility the alternative legends:-

**Police enforcement cameras**      or      **Police cameras**

may be used. They will be particularly appropriate where, in future, cameras are used to detect other traffic offences in addition to speeding or red signal violations. These legends are allowed as variants on working drawing no. NP 878.

7. No other variations of the legends in paragraphs 5 and 6, or the omission of the camera symbol, are thought likely to be necessary. The sign colours to be used are black on white, irrespective of the class of road on which signs are provided, or whether the signing is intended to be temporary or permanent. The x-height used should be appropriate for the speed of traffic on the road on which a sign is erected. Within camera areas or along camera equipped routes, the use of the camera symbol on its own should be sufficient as a 'repeater' sign - see working drawing no. NP 879 attached.

## **CAMERA AREAS, ROUTES AND REMOTE SITE SIGNING**

8. The Department's policy has been to permit camera signing on only an area wide or route basis because camera site or junction specific signing is likely to be ineffective beyond the particular location. The greatest benefits from signing accrue from drivers obeying speed limits and traffic signals throughout the whole area or along the length of route where cameras are in use and not just at the sites or junctions where the cameras are located.

9. Common sense and judgement will need to be exercised to determine what constitutes an area but it should normally tie in as closely as possible with the area actually covered by the cameras. This can range from something quite small (say about 1 square mile or so) for a compact town centre, to areas covering several miles. This Circular is deliberately non-prescriptive on this aspect to give maximum flexibility to highway authorities, but the following examples help to illustrate the point:

- a. Norwich has a number of camera sites around its ring road and in the city centre so it is logical to count Norwich as one area and sign the approaches accordingly. However, if just one quadrant of the city had been equipped with cameras, then only that sector would have been signed.
  - b. Similarly if, say, a London Borough has cameras in just one neighbourhood of the Borough, then only that area would be signed and not the whole Borough.
  - c. If a County has cameras in use only in particular towns or communities, then signing should be confined to those localities and not be provided throughout the rest of the county.
10. In some cases authorities will wish to sign linear routes such as an inter-urban primary route (possibly dual carriageway). The principle of area signing can still be applied in these situations, by ensuring that there are a number of camera sites along the road. The section of route will then form an area and can be signed as such, but without signing specific camera sites.
  11. Signing for solitary camera sites, remote from an area or route with other camera installations, does present a potential conflict with this policy of no site specific signing. We therefore recommend that in such circumstances any signs provided are located well in advance of the camera position.

## **TEMPORARY CAMERAS AT ROAD WORKS**

12. The same principles for signing linear routes with regular camera enforcement activity can be applied to the use of temporary or portable camera mountings (with at least one operational camera between them) located at intervals throughout a length of road works. This arrangement fulfills the area signing requirement and the signs and equipment can be re-used many times over.
13. The same sign designs and colours (black on white) erected for permanent camera areas are also to be used for road works camera signing. This will make camera signing consistent and easily recognisable wherever it is used. It is likely that the Highways Agency will make increasing use of speed cameras, supplemented by the use of speed activated flash units alone (when cameras are not in place in the housing), at lengths of trunk road and motorway road works.

## **REMOVAL OF SIGNS**

14. If the Police stop camera enforcement activity in an area or along a route the signs should be removed, or at least covered, to avoid their effectiveness in other areas from being undermined. Without adequate enforcement the signs will fall into disrepute.

## **CARRIAGEWAY SPEED CAMERA CALIBRATION MARKINGS**

15. The Department's view is that the markings which ACPO and a number of Police forces have asked to be applied to the road surface in the vicinity of fixed speed camera sites to assist in the verification of speed violations do not constitute traffic signs within the meaning of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
16. However, in consenting to the placing of these markings, highway authorities should ensure that they do not obscure or otherwise interfere with markings which are prescribed or authorised as traffic signs.

## **FINALLY**

17. Could you please bring this Circular to the attention of the Chief Surveyor or Engineer and the Chief Financial Officer to your authority.

Yours faithfully

M Talbot  
Assistant Secretary

Copies to:-

Highways Agency  
ACPO  
PACTS  
Scottish Office  
Welsh Office  
DOE (NI)  
Home Office

*Telephone enquiries about the content of this Circular should be made to Driver Information & Traffic Management Division (DITM) on (0171 - 271 5145). Enquiries about distribution should be made to OSD Division of the Highways Agency on (0171 - 921 4702)*



Drawing No.

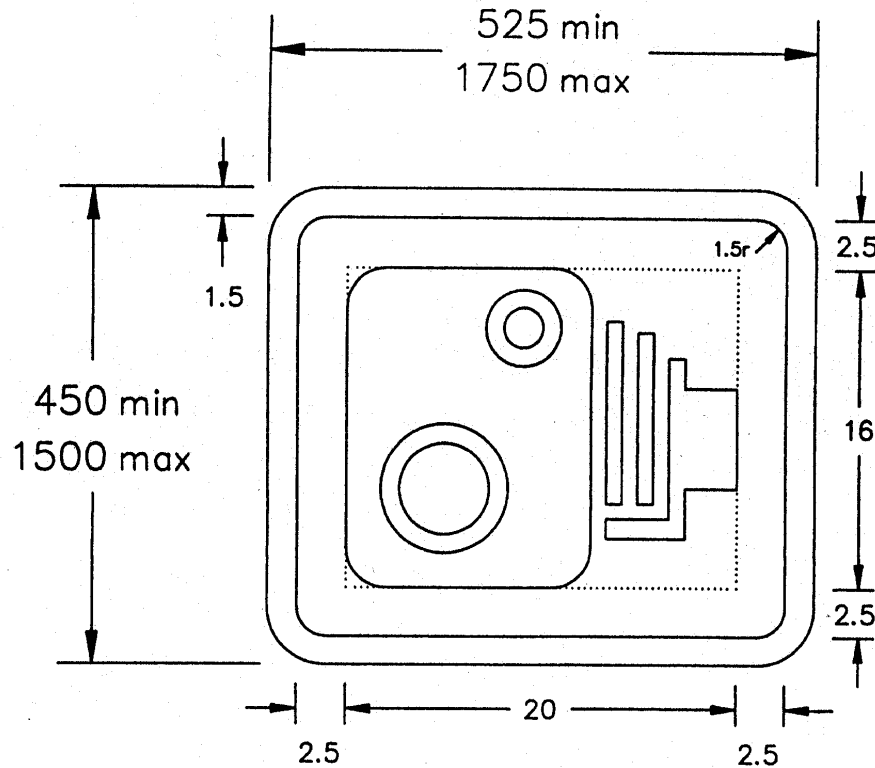
NP 879

Related drawings

NS 58 & NP 878

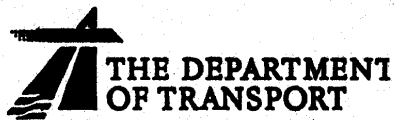
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- NOTES:
1. Details of the camera symbol are on dwg. NS 58.
  2. The tile outline does not form part of the sign.
  3. COLOURS: - BS 873:Part 6  
Background ----- WHITE  
Symbol & Border --- BLACK
  4. DIMENSIONS: - overall sizes are in millimetres, other dimensions are in stroke widths based on the x-heights shown on dwg. NP 878. (4sw = x-height)



NP879

Before using this drawing, confirm that it has not been superseded.



Title: Informatory Sign  
TRAFFIC CAMERA REPEATER SIGN

Issue: Date:  
A: 12.10.95  
B:  
C:

Drawn by: R.M.  
Approved by: R.M.

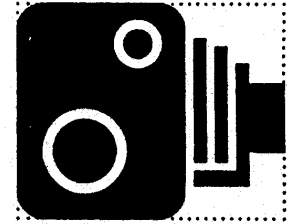
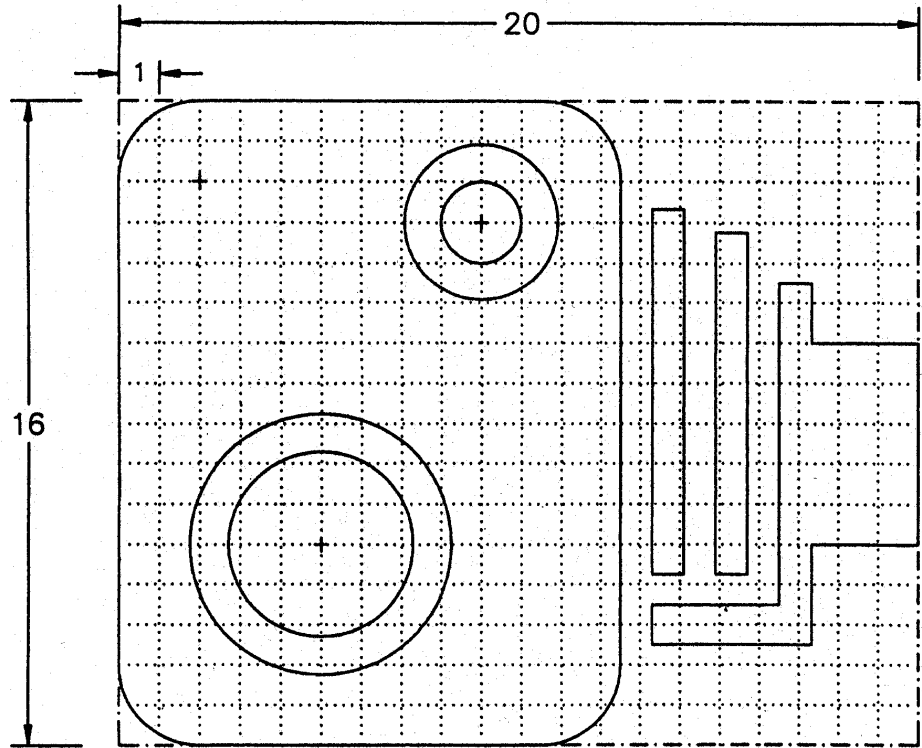
Dimensions: SEE NOTE 4

Drawing No. NP 879

Drawing No.  
NS 58


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- NOTES: 1. The grid does not form part of any sign to which the symbol is applied.  
2. Dimensions are given in grid divisions, which are normally equal to stroke widths. (4sw = x-height)



NS58

Before using this drawing, confirm that it has not been superseded.

 <b>THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT</b>	Title:	Symbol	Issue:	Date:	Drawn by:	Dimensions:	Drawing No.
		<b>TRAFFIC CAMERAS</b>	A:	12.10.95	S.P.	ALL IN	<b>NS 58</b>
			B:		Approved by:	GRID DIVISIONS	
			C:		R.M.		