



FOLKETINGET
STATSREVISORERNE



FOLKETINGET
RIGSREVISIONEN

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submitted to the Public Accounts Committee

The police's use of speed cameras for speed control

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose and conclusion

1. This report concerns the police's use of speed cameras for speed control. Speed cameras are a central tool in the police's effort to combat speeding on the roads. Approximately 90% of all speed violations are recorded using speed cameras. In 2023, the police issued fines totalling DKK 759 million based on speed measurements from speed cameras. Speeding is the most frequent cause of traffic accidents in Denmark and a contributing factor in 4 out of 10 fatal accidents.

2. Through the multi-year agreement on the police and prosecution authority's finances for 2021-2023, the police were allocated DKK 100.7 million to replace existing speed cameras and acquire 25 new ones. The police have 107 speed cameras distributed across the country's 12 police districts.

According to the multi-year agreement, the selection of road sections and the arrangement of the control efforts should be based on the police's assessment of where the traffic safety, behaviour-regulating, and safety-creating effects are greatest. The police have stated that the traffic safety effect relates to accident prevention, while the behaviour-regulating effect aims to reduce speeding where it occurs. The safety-creating effect includes placing speed cameras on school roads and taking citizens' concerns about safety into account when the police designate areas for control in local communities.

This report focuses on the part of the effort with speed cameras that aims to reduce speed and prevent accidents. We have not examined the part of the effort primarily aimed at creating a sense of safety among citizens.

3. The police's planning of the use of speed cameras is crucial for maximizing the effectiveness of the speed cameras. In this context, two factors are involved: the placement of the cameras and the timing of their use.

In other words, to achieve the greatest possible effect from speed control using speed cameras, the police should carry out control on sections with frequent speed violations and at times of the day and week when the most violations occur. We therefore assume that there should be a correlation between the scope of speed control and the number of speed violations and accidents.

4. The purpose of the study is to assess whether the police have a satisfactory use of speed cameras so that the cameras can best contribute to reducing the number of speed violations and traffic accidents. We answer the following questions in the report:

- Do the police have satisfactory planning for speed control carried out with speed cameras?
- Have the police placed the speed cameras in locations where there is a correlation between the speed control and the level of speed violations and accidents?

Rigsrevisionen initiated the study in December 2023.



Conclusion

The police's use of speed cameras is not entirely satisfactory. The police can further improve the placement of speed cameras at locations and times where there is excessive speed and traffic accidents. By using available data more effectively to place the speed cameras, the police could contribute more to reducing the number of speed violations and accidents.

The police's planning of speed control using speed cameras is not entirely satisfactory

The majority of police districts have used certain data to select road sections for speed control, but few have used all available data sources. Nine out of twelve police districts have not used data to select time periods for when speed control should take place.

Only half of the police districts follow up to determine whether their efforts with speed cameras help reduce the number of speed violations and accidents.

Three police districts have the potential to utilize their speed cameras more effectively, as the number of control hours per speed camera is significantly below the national average.

The police do not place the speed cameras in a fully satisfactory manner, meaning there is no clear correlation between the control conducted and the level of speed violations and accidents

In all twelve police districts, there are road sections where the police have not placed speed cameras, even though these sections are more prone to speeding than those where speed cameras are currently located.

On the sections where the police have placed speed cameras, the control level is appropriate in most districts relative to the level of speed violations and accidents. Nationwide, the police have an appropriate level of control on the vast majority of the surveyed road sections. However, there is overcontrol and undercontrol on some sections. To improve their efforts, the police could shift control hours from over-controlled sections to under-controlled sections by continuously using available speed data.

The police can also improve their efforts regarding the times at which speed control is carried out. For instance, the police use speed cameras less on weekends and evenings than the number of speed violations and accidents would suggest. Conversely, there is relatively more control during weekdays between 6:00 AM and 6:00 PM than the level of speed violations and accidents justifies. Rigsrevisionen has calculated that between 16% and 22% of the police's control hours take place at times when the level of speed violations and accidents is low compared to the level of police control. To improve the use of speed cameras, the police could shift their control to times of day and week when the level of speed violations and accidents is higher relative to the police's control level.