

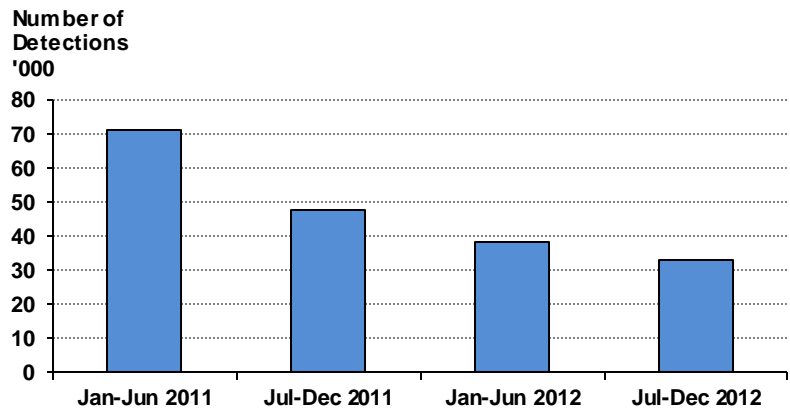
## 8 Management of Outsourced Safety Cameras

- 8.1 In July 2005, following consideration of a study by consultants and the report of an expert working group, the Government approved a tender process for the outsourcing by An Garda Síochána for a network of speed detecting cameras.
- 8.2 Among the estimates contained in the reports were that
- the system would cost in the region of €4.4 million per annum for approximately 3,000 hours of safety camera detection a month
  - annual revenue from speeding fines would be between €40 million and €70 million a year when the system was fully operational
  - revenue would fall in subsequent years as compliance with speed limits increased, but would remain in excess of the cost of operating the system.
- 8.3 A public procurement process was conducted in 2007 by An Garda Síochána for the provision of a service for speed surveying and monitoring of vehicles. Responses to the tender request suggested that the likely cost of the contract would be significantly greater than had been previously projected. Estimates of annual revenue were revised downwards to around €27 million. The advice to Government in June 2009 noted the difficulties in accurately estimating this figure but the indications were that the revenue would exceed costs. A formal proposal to proceed with the project was approved by the Government in June 2009.
- 8.4 A contract was agreed with the successful tenderer, the GoSafe Consortium, to provide outsourced safety cameras for a period of five years. GoSafe commenced operations in November 2010.

### Number of Fixed Charge Notices Issued

- 8.5 The level of revenue arising from fixed charge notices issued is influenced by the number of detections of speeding offences by the GoSafe system.
- 8.6 The terms of the contract require the GoSafe Consortium to provide 7,475 hours of speed enforcement or speed surveying each month, with a minimum of 6,000 of these hours being for speed enforcement. An Garda Síochána requested 6,000 hours of speed enforcement each month until early 2013, when it increased speed enforcement to 6,725 hours.
- 8.7 Figure 8.1 shows the number of fixed charge notices issued as a result of speeding offences detected by the GoSafe cameras for 2011 and 2012.

**Figure 8.1 Fixed charge notices from GoSafe camera detections, 2011 and 2012**

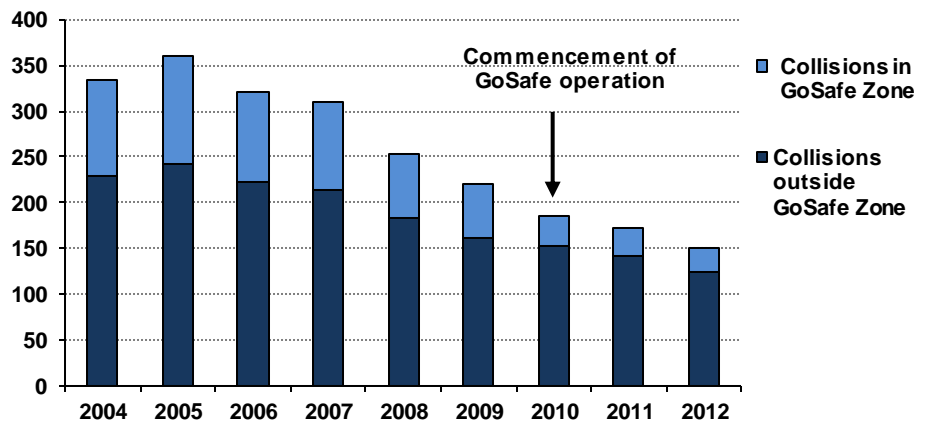


Source: Analysis by Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of fixed charge notices data

**Effect of Cameras**

- 8.8 In November 2010, GoSafe commenced operating in 518 zones, selected based on road collision data in the period 2004 to 2008. In March 2013, a further 243 zones were added and 34 zones removed following analysis of collision data in the period 2006 to 2012.
- 8.9 The number of fatal collisions in GoSafe zones and other zones is shown in Figure 8.2. In practice, the level of fatalities in the targeted GoSafe zones had reduced very considerably before the outsourced cameras were deployed.

**Figure 8.2 Fatal collisions in Ireland, 2004 to 2012**



Source: An Garda Síochána

- 8.10** Compliance with speed limits in zones monitored by GoSafe has increased, according to the results of speed surveying by GoSafe. The level of compliance in zones monitored by GoSafe is shown in Figure 8.3.

**Figure 8.3 Compliance with speed limits in zones monitored by GoSafe**

Speed limit in zone	January 2011	January 2013
50 km/hr	62%	93%
60 km/hr	78%	91%
80 km/hr	89%	97%
100 km/hr	96%	99%

Source: An Garda Síochána

### Payments and Receipts

- 8.11** The cost of the operation of the GoSafe system inclusive of VAT was €0.2 million in 2010, €15.8 million in 2011 and €15.6 million in 2012. The estimated cost for 2013 is €16.6 million.
- 8.12** The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform sanction for the GoSafe service provided for an annual expenditure of €13.5 million, excluding VAT. It also stated that the operational cost of the system was to be met from "speeding fines issued as a result of the system" and that the Justice Vote Group would have to carry any shortfall in revenue over the costs of operation from within the provision allocated to the Group.<sup>1</sup>
- 8.13** Receipts collected in 2012 from fixed charge notices issued on foot of detections by the GoSafe safety cameras amounted to €4.6 million. As a result, there was a shortfall of €11 million relative to the cost of the service. An Garda Síochána financed the shortfall through the retention of receipts from fixed charge notices issued on foot of other enforcement activities such as intercepts and Garda camera vans.
- 8.14** Total receipts from fixed charge notices in 2012 were €21.5 million. Of this, €15.8 million was retained as appropriations in aid of the Vote. The remaining receipts (€5.7 million) were paid over to the Exchequer. Up to the introduction of GoSafe cameras in November 2010, all receipts from fixed charge notices were paid over to the Exchequer.<sup>2</sup>
- 8.15** In the Vote Estimate for An Garda Síochána, only a nominal amount (€100,000) is initially allocated as appropriations in aid for receipts from fixed charge notices. However, this is subsequently revised as part of the supplementary estimate process, to reflect the likely receipts.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This excluded the first twelve months of full nationwide deployment, during which time the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform would fund any shortfall.

<sup>2</sup> Exchequer extra receipts are sums collected by departments and offices which are directed by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to be paid to the Exchequer.

<sup>3</sup> A supplementary estimate is required to secure Dáil approval for the provision of additional money to that provided in the estimate for an existing service or to cover any shortfall in appropriations in aid.

### ***Views of the Commissioner***

- 8.16** In relation to the allocation of receipts from fixed charge notices to fund the cost of operating the system, the Accounting Officer stated that no funding provision for the cost of the GoSafe contract is made in the annual Garda estimate. As the introduction of speed cameras came at the time of the fiscal crisis, there was no increase in the gross current expenditure ceiling of the Garda Vote. It was decided as part of the estimates process to ring fence revenues by treating them as appropriations in aid in order to fund the operation of the system. This was done by way of a supplementary estimate.
- 8.17** He also stated that a key element of the GoSafe contract is the surveying of speed limit compliance across the country which informs Garda speed enforcement activities. In these circumstances, he considers it appropriate to allocate speed related fixed charge notices generated as a consequential benefit of the operation of the contract to offset the cost of GoSafe.
- 8.18** In relation to the deployment of cameras, the Accounting Officer stated that An Garda Síochána are constantly reviewing both the location and effectiveness of GoSafe zones, as well as the enforcement areas for other detection technologies. He said that several sites could be located within each enforcement zone. He also stated that 310 new sites had been identified and are at the approval stage. It is proposed that these will be in place by the end of the year.
- 8.19** He also stated that a weighting system had been in operation since September 2013 whereby top weighting was given to sites where compliance is lowest and a fatality had occurred in recent years. The weightings will be reviewed every quarter to ensure that any changes in compliance are addressed. In addition, initiatives are underway with local authority engineers to provide facilities to enable GoSafe and other enforcement technologies to be utilised at locations which heretofore were considered inaccessible for operational reasons.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

- 8.20** The amount allocated to appropriations in aid from receipts from fixed charge notices is not consistent with the letter of sanction issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. Receipts from fixed charge notices arising from offences detected other than from the GoSafe system are retained by the Vote.

**Recommendation 8.1:** An Garda Síochána should seek a revised sanction from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform for the retention of receipts from fixed charge notices to fund the operation of the GoSafe system.

**Commissioner's Response:** Agreed. An Garda Síochána will seek a revised sanction from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in line with this recommendation.