

Speeding and other hazards

Many of you will have noticed the increase in speed cameras here in Spain. DGT (Trafico) have announced that there will be more fixed installations throughout the peninsular and for sure the incidence of mobile cameras has increased dramatically

These are seen as an essential tool to reduce accidents which are frequently caused by speed, or as a cash cow depending whether you are a police officer or a culprit. A few years ago I was pulled in along with many other drivers whilst quietly tootling along at 90 KMH. When questioned as to why I had been stopped, the smiling Guardia agreed with me that the limit on that particular road was indeed 90, but not at a T junction a few clicks back where the limit reduced to 60 and was of course where they had hidden their camera- ah well

A near miss

A recent incident which took place near to San Javier in Murcia served to turn the tables. The Guardia were lurking near a hill top when their speed radar locked onto a vehicle travelling in excess of 500 KMH; the camera promptly burnt out with overload. The cops realised that the vehicle was in fact an aircraft from the nearby jet training school of the Spanish Air Force. The Guardia Chief was none too happy with his expensive piece of kit being ruined so sent off a stiff letter to the Commander of the air base.

The reply was sent in that true laconic style employed by all Air Forces. "Dear Sir, thank you for your message which allows us to complete our file on this incident. You may be interested to know that the tactical computer on the jet had automatically locked on to your "hostile radar equipment" and sent a jamming signal back to it; the Sidewinder air-to-ground missiles had also locked on to the "target". Fortunately the pilot was experienced and responded to the missile status alert intelligently and was able to override the automatic protection system before the missile was launched"

Detectors illegal

DGT also announced that speed trap detectors are now illegal. This was of little personal interest until I recently invested, after 10 years, in a new Tom-Tom sat Nav system as the old one kept driving me into lakes, dead ends, one way streets and other areas where I had no right to be. Well it came equipped with a radar detector which I was unaware of until driving on an empty motorway which about 5 years ago caused me to receive a fine for exceeding the 100 KMH speed limit (on a rural stretch of motorway!!). I must have approached the same camera as Tom Tom burst in to life to advise me of its presence. "Useful" I thought but how the Guardia would know that I have this device is at the moment a mystery as it is a passive piece of kit which emits no signals

Look out

Along with the recent clampdown on foreign vehicles Trafico have announced a review of speed limits; in some cases we will be able to travel faster on certain

sections of motorways, but in many cases the speed limits have been reduced, specifically in towns and on secondary roads where most accidents take place. You can rest assured that where the limit has been reduced the Guardia will be out to reinforce this by hurting your wallet. The roads that you have habitually used for years may be affected by this, so it may be a good idea to start reading the road signs again as we all become blasé. Fines are normally paid at a bank and are reduced by 50% if paid within the specified period. It is rare to be asked to pay on the spot, but if you get such a demand, get a receipt if you have the nerve to ask for one!

Spanish Number Plates
Graham Shelton
Orihuela, Alicante
www.spanish-number-plates.com
info@spanish-number-plates.com
966 753 375
605 319 889