

London launches hi-tech trial for pedestrian safety

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Credit: tfl.gov.uk

(Phys.org) —London is trying out intelligent pedestrian technology to make crossing the road easier and safer. Announced earlier this month, the technology is said to be the first scheme of its kind in the world. The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, and Transport for London (TfL) have outlined plans for the trial of new pedestrian crossing sensors to help make it easier and safer for people to cross the road throughout the capital. The mayor said he was happy about London being the first city in the world to try out the equipment. Fundamentally, the system enables

the adjustment of traffic signal timings automatically; traffic lights are to account for situations where many pedestrians are standing on the pavement, waiting to cross, and need extra time, because of the numbers, to allow them do so safely. Leon Daniels, managing director of surface transport at TfL, said the system would be bringing huge benefits to those waiting to cross the road where there is heavy pedestrian demand. (TfL is responsible for London's transport system.)

The introduction of Pedestrian Split Cycle Offset Optimization Technique, or 'pedestrian SCOOT', is the first of its kind in the world and uses state-of-the-art video camera technology to automatically detect how many pedestrians are waiting at crossings. Once the cameras determine that number, they communicate with the signaling system and configure the signals so pedestrians get more "green" time.

Also in the works, said TfL, is the development of a 'call cancel' technology. This is to detect when a pedestrian who had already pushed the crossing button either did cross before the signal turned to green or walked away, canceling the [pedestrian](#)-crossing phase.

Pilot testing is to begin this summer outside Balham and Tooting Bec Tube stations. In July, TfL published its Safe Streets for London, as a report on a road safety action plan for London 2020. The report outlined proposals to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on London's streets by 40 percent by 2020. London's Mayor Boris Johnson, said he wanted London to be the most livable capital in the world; he said improved safety of roads was a key factor in achieving this. Nonetheless, he said "I'm all too aware that London's growing population and the success of my programs to increase the numbers of people cycling and walking, means that we will need to work even harder in future to tackle this."

He set a target to cut the number of those killed or seriously injured by a

further 40 per cent by 2020. "In real numbers that is a total reduction of 10,000 casualties over the life of the plan."

More information: www.tfl.gov.uk/assets/download...reets-for-london.pdf
www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/media...ewscentre/29745.aspx

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