

CHAPTER 2
INFLUENCE OF SPEED LIMIT
ON DATA COLLECTED

In November 1976, a governmental order reactivated policing of speeds on highways, using radar, to make effective the legal speed limit of 80 km/h. Up to that date, approximately 100.000 data had already been collected on speeds developed by vehicles on tangents and curves, using the same type of radar as that used for policing roads, ostensibly placed on road shoulders.

As a result, it became necessary to verify whether, because of the greatly increased policing, the presence of radar on road shoulders was affecting the speed patterns of the vehicles. But the surveys carried out with radar camouflaged showed no significant difference between the speeds observed before November 1976, with radar exposed, and those observed after that date, with radar camouflaged, except in the case of buses and loaded trucks.

The data on loaded trucks showed that the exposed radar inhibited the drivers from accelerating on negative grades. Since the observation of this acceleration was one of the objectives of the survey on free-flow speeds occurring on negative grades (TB-2), all data on loaded trucks obtained with exposed radar were rejected.

With relation to buses, after November 1976, even with radar camouflaged, a significant decrease in speed at the end of negative grades was observed. In this case, the change in drivers' behaviour was attributed to the obligation imposed about this same time on bus companies of using tachographs in their vehicles and maintaining speed readings filed for inspection by DNER. As a result, all bus data obtained on negative grades before November 1976 were also rejected.

