

CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION

CODE OF
PRACTICE
2005-2006



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SOLIHULL MBC
CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION
CODE OF PRACTICE

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The CCTV system consists of more than 30 sites spanning the whole of the Borough. The sites range from schools and sports facilities, to car parks and shopping precincts. Most sites have a dedicated manager and the scheme is overseen by the CCTV Manager.
- 1.2 The purpose of this document is to outline the objectives of the CCTV system.
- 1.3 The system has the objective of providing a safe and comfortable environment for the benefit of all those who live in, work, or visit the area. The main aims are to:
- (a) reduce the fear of crime and offer public reassurance
 - (b) assist in the prevention of crime and disorder
 - (c) facilitate the apprehension and prosecution of offenders
- 1.4 Any request to use the system for reasons other than those stated above, must be made in writing to the CCTV Partnership Manager.
- 1.5 This code of practice also aims to ensure that any concerns over integrity, confidentiality, ethics and human rights are not compromised.

2 CCTV CONTROL ROOM

- 2.1 The monitoring equipment associated with the CCTV system is situated within a dedicated control room, currently located in Solihull Town Centre.
- 2.2 The control room is a secure area and authorised access to the area will only be granted by the control room staff or the CCTV Manager.
- 2.3 The control room should be locked at all times and any unauthorised or unnecessary intrusion into the operational functions of the control room will be minimised.
- 2.4 Particular arrangements will apply to the following:

a. Police

A relatively small number of Police should require access to the control room and should only enter under the following circumstances:

- i) emergencies and major incidents
- ii) liaison and training purposes by prior arrangement with the control room staff or CCTV Manager
- iii) the viewing of evidence tapes, agreed by prior arrangement with the control room or CCTV Manager

If Police officers arrive unexpectedly, the purpose of the visit should be established and confirmed with the control room staff or CCTV Manager prior to admittance to the Control Room.

All Police Officers should sign the visitors book on being admitted to the control room.

b. Visitors

It is important that operations are managed with a minimum of disruption, so casual visits will not be permitted. Subject to prior arrangement with the control room staff or CCTV Manager, visitors will be restricted to the following hours:

Monday – Friday 10.00 - 12.00
14.00 - 16.00

c. Contractors

All visits by contractors will be by prior arrangement with the control room staff or CCTV Manager. At all times, the control room staff must be satisfied of the identity and purpose before allowing entry.

3 CONTROL ROOM ADMINISTRATION AND PROCEDURES

Control Room Administration

- 3.1 There must always be at least one controller present within the control room throughout operating hours.
- 3.2 The occurrence log must be maintained throughout operations. Brief details of incidents should be shown, together with action taken and results noted. The identity of telephone callers and responses must always be established and noted.
- 3.3 The occurrence log must be a bound book, and specifically not be loose leaf and all information should be kept for a minimum of 5 years.
- 3.4 A visitor's book will be maintained in the control room and control room staff will ask all visitors to complete the book.
- 3.5 Other administration functions will include maintaining & filing video tapes, retaining photographic files, maintaining occurrence logs and any other duties as may be required.

Communications

- 3.6 Other duties undertaken by control room staff will include liaison with other organisations and the most likely are listed below. Details of these organisations will be kept within the control room:
- (a) Fire and Rescue Service
 - (b) Ambulance Service
 - (c) Town Centre Management
 - (d) Store Detective Radio System
 - (e) Bus Station
 - (f) Solihull Police Station
 - (g) Urban Traffic Control
 - (h) Car Park Management
 - (i) Pubwatch System
 - (j) Other CCTV surveillance systems in the Solihull Borough

CCTV Group

- 3.7 To assist in the scheme, a CCTV User Group is held quarterly. Chaired by the CCTV Manager, the User Group enables all dedicated site managers and associated parties to be kept up to date with new technologies and legislation, as well as allowing any problems or concerns to be expressed and best practice to be shared.

4 MONITORING PROCEDURES

Camera Controls

- 4.1 At least one controller must be present within the control room throughout operating hours, to allow camera surveillance to be maintained at all times.
- 4.2 The control of the system will remain with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council.
- 4.3 Only control room staff authorised by the CCTV Partnership Manager may operate the cameras.
- 4.4 The occurrence log must be completed when incidents arise and when formal requests are received from the Police.

Monitoring Arrangements

- 4.5 The optical systems are all viewed hourly and these regular guard tours involve the viewing and checking of each camera on each site.
- 4.6 Four of the optical sites also contain radio and telephone early warning systems to alert the control room operatives to any suspicious activity.
- 4.7 The DVST systems are monitored in accordance with a set timetable. Each site is dialled up at 23.00, 01.00 and 3.30 each night, in addition to the times requested by each site. These guard tours also allow control room staff to check the equipment as well as the site.
- 4.8 Several of the DVST sites also have alarms and sensors connected to the cameras and the control room operatives should respond to these when they are activated.
- 4.9 CCTV monitoring arrangements need to be relatively flexible in order to respond to changing issues on a daily basis.

Lone worker monitoring

- 4.10 The control room carries out lone worker monitoring for several section of the Council, which involves receiving and making telephone calls to check whether or not lone workers are safe and well.

Emergency Call Handling

- 4.11 The control room also handles out of hours calls for several sections of the Council and this involved the receipt and logging of telephone calls. The control room staff then decide whether or not the call requires an immediate response and, if so, make a telephone call to the relevant duty officer. If an immediate response is not required, the call is logged and faxed to the respective Council section to be dealt with the following morning. A log of the out of hours faxes and calls is also forwarded to the CCTV Manager.

5 VIDEO TAPE PROCEDURES

Recording

- 5.1 The control system is currently supported by video tape recording facilities which function at all times. In addition, a spot recording unit is available for instant operation and record of incidents. Under normal usage, a real time video tape will last 3 hours, with the time lapse tape lasting for 24 hours.
- 5.2 The retention period for tapes is currently 28 days, with tapes thereafter being recycled into normal usage. To ensure optimum clarity of image, recycled tapes are only reused as follows:
 - (a) Real time recordings - 12 times
 - (b) Time lapse recordings - 12 times

Once the above limits have been met, the tapes are removed of all data and disposed of.

Storage of Video Tapes

- 5.3 The storage of all used tapes is currently in a secure room within the control room, which is under the control of the control room staff and the CCTV Manager. All tapes are clearly labelled identifying the type of recording (real time or time lapse) together with the period of time covered by the recording.
- 5.4 Any removal of tapes from the control room must be agreed by the control room staff or the CCTV Manager and each tape must be clearly recorded on the control sheet provided. It is anticipated that all of the tapes to be taken from the room will be required by the Police and an annual consignment of replacement tapes will be required from the Police in order to maintain the tape system.

Copying of Video Tapes

- 5.5 Copies of videotapes will only be made upon request and an appropriate charge may be levied for this.

Photographic stills

- 5.6 The process of printing photographic stills will only be carried out by control room staff or the CCTV manager.
- 5.7 If the Police require photographic stills, they will be able to download them at the control room for printing off site. through the CCTV Partnership Manager, for crime incidents.

Data Protection and Human Rights legislation must be adhered to at all times in relation to photographic stills.

6 SPECIAL CONTINGENCIES

- 6.1 When major incidents arise such as serious public disorders, bombs, or serious fires, the Police may be given the authority by Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council to supervise the control room. The control room staff will respond accordingly and ensure that appropriate assistance and guidance is given but will retain, as far as is practicable, the monitoring of the equipment controls. The log should record the time at which Police assumed responsibility.
- 6.2 In circumstances when problems are anticipated, arrangement may be made for a Police officer to be present within the control room. This would normally only apply for the duration of the incident.
- 6.3 Should the control room staff receive phone calls regarding bomb threats or similar incidents, a full record of exactly what is said must be made and forwarded to the Police as soon as possible.

7 TRAINING

- 7.1 The appointed maintenance contractors for the CCTV system will train the control room staff, who may also receive awareness training from the Police; to ensure that staff are aware of legal evidence requirements and patterns of suspect behaviour.
- 7.2 If the CCTV system is changed or extended then the operators should receive further training from the installers.
- 7.3 The appointed monitoring contractor will ensure that all control room staff are aware of the requirements of the code of practice and follow its procedures. Evaluations may take place to ensure that the procedures are being carried out effectively and a copy of this code should be kept in the control room at all times.
- 7.4 Control room staff should receive ongoing evaluation of their performance and be subject to ongoing training as may be necessary to ensure a high standard of performance.
- 7.5 Training and evaluation methods should be undertaken to satisfy the requirements under the Investors in People accreditation system currently in operation at Solihull Council.
- 7.6 The monitoring contractor will need to ensure that new or relief control room staff are fully briefed and trained on all functions, operational and administrative, arising within the CCTV operation.

8 OTHER

- 8.1 Failure by control room staff to comply with this code of practice may lead to disciplinary action being taken, which could result in dismissal or, ultimately, suspension of the monitoring contract.

9 CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

- 9.1 The monitoring contractor shall ensure that the control room staff do not, during the contract period, or any time thereafter, divulge to any third party any information which comes into their possession in the course of performing the services or make use for their own purposes of such information
- 9.2 The Contractor shall indemnify the Council against all actions, claims, demands, proceedings, damages, costs, charges and expenses whatsoever in respect of any breach of non-observance of this Condition.

10 APPENDICES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

10.1 The following documents are available, on request, from the CCTV Manager:

Solihull CCTV Code of Practice

Solihull Retail Radio Link membership

Shirley Retail Radio Link membership

Solihull CCTV camera site location list

Solihull CCTV site contact list

Solihull CCTV equipment schedule

Solihull CCTV monitoring schedule

A guide to CCTV data protection implications

A guide to the Data Protection Act 1998

A guide to the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) 2000