



**Evaluation by Thanet District Council**

**15<sup>th</sup> February 2011**



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## **Introduction**

Dover District Council is committed to ensuring the continued support of the public for CCTV in public places by conducting regular checks and evaluations of the system and publishing the results in an Annual Report.

There is a natural inclination to assume that CCTV surveillance systems will make a significant impact in reducing the level and fear of crime within town centre environments. However, establishing whether CCTV is an appropriate counter measure, determining the system requirements and measuring the ongoing success following implementation can only be achieved through an appropriate evaluation process.

The Dover CCTV System comprises of 50 CCTV cameras in the towns of Dover, Deal and Sandwich. All are pan, tilt and zoom with one fixed camera.

The Control Centre consists of a display monitor stack with the capability of viewing 50 cameras in quad form. All recordings are on digital hard drives and two real time VHS recorders. Operator positions have their own incident monitors within the control desk where there is the facility for incident recording in real time and with the ability to produce still prints.

Any operator can select any camera on any of the active monitors, which permits the selection of specific areas that need to be monitored.

A replay console, sited adjacent to the control desk, allows the multiplexed videotapes to be reviewed without interfering with the recording operation within the Control Console.

## **Methodology**

Phil Snook, Street Scene Enforcement Manager at Thanet District Council undertook a site visit to the CCTV Control Room at Dover District Council on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2011. The system was tested against the current Code of Practice, which is available to the public on the Council's website, and in Dover District Council public areas.

Sample recordings were checked for recording quality, compliance against the Code of Practice and for Human Rights issues.

It is anticipated that this report will be incorporated into the Dover District Council Annual report on CCTV, which will be made available to the public in accordance with their Code of Practice.

Interviews were undertaken with the CCTV Operators on duty and further discussion was held with Patrick Coleman, CCTV Supervisor.

## **1. Maintenance**

The picture quality of the CCTV system was found to be of a good standard, with all cameras fully functioning. A regular cleaning programme is in place, and the Council's appointed maintenance contractor maintains the system to a good standard. The CCTV Operation receives a prompt and satisfactory response to maintenance and repair issues. The recorded image quality of every tape is checked twice a day to ensure that it meets an acceptable standard.

## **2. Documentation**

The Code of Practice and Operators Manual are kept within the CCTV control room. The following documentation is completed within the control room: -

- Visitors Log
- Operators Log
- Incident Log
- Tape Register
- Review Log
- Maintenance Log
- Stills movement and seizure report
- Emergency Procedures
- Targeted Op sheet

Documentation was inspected and found to be fully completed and held in accordance with the Code of Practice.

### **3. Access**

The control procedures for access to the CCTV Control Room were reviewed and the Code of Practice is strictly adhered to.

### **4. System Management**

A random sample of recordings was reviewed, and the cameras were operated in accordance with the Code of Practice. The CCTV Unit was found to operate in accordance with the Human Rights Act (specifically Article 1- gather information lawfully, and Article 8- an individuals Right to privacy) on these random reviews. The images were of a good quality.

A full audit trail is available for all tapes, which are kept securely within the Control room. Access to these tapes is restricted to authorised personnel. Tapes are uniquely and sequentially referenced.

Tape seizure records were inspected, and found to be in accordance with the Code of Practice.

Secure transit is provided for tapes, and a documented destruction programme is in place. This is carried out on the same day, once per annum, ensuring that no more than twelve passes are made on any tape. All CCTV tapes are taken and destroyed by Kent Police.

The CCTV Supervisor carries out time checks on a regular basis.

Tapes cannot be withdrawn from the recording unit except at the designated times, unless this has been authorised by a Police Officer at the rank of Inspector or above, or the Parking Services and CCTV Manager.

Handover time between shifts is 15 minutes. This ensures that all Operators are fully aware of the day's occurrences, and provides for a seamless operation.

Preset changes and settings are only carried out by the CCTV Manager or Supervisor.

There are two Operators monitoring 50 cameras.

## **5. Communications**

CCTV Operators communicate with Kent Police by way of an Airwaves Police radio that is situated within the control room. The Unit also have access to three shop safe radios, and are able to co ordinate responses and act on information received via this medium.

## **6. Partnership Working**

The CCTV Operation in Dover has a good working relationship with Kent Police, HM Customs and Excise, Immigration service and Kent Fire and Rescue service. Tasking meetings are held every two weeks with Kent Police, the ASB Unit, KF&RS, Neighbourhood Watch, and other sections within Dover District Council. The Parking Services and CCTV Manager also holds regular meetings with the Dover / Deal / Sandwich Partnership Against Crime (DPAC) and the Community Safety Partnership.

## **7. Lay Visitors**

There is a named appointed Lay Visitor and regular visits have been undertaken throughout year. No adverse comments or observations have been made by the Lay Visitor

## **8. Performance Indicators**

Although there are no specific performance indicators included in the Code of Practice, Operator Performance is monitored. The Unit Benchmarks itself with other similar sized Local Authorities within Kent.

## **9. Complaints**

The CCTV Unit received one complaint in 2010.

## **10. Training**

All operators undergo formal Tavcom training and prior to single operation are schooled for six weeks by experienced operators. All operators are SIA licensed.

## **11. Signage**

Signage within the Town Centres was found to be good, and complied with current recommendations. A full audit of signage is carried out once a year by the CCTV Supervisor and replacements actioned as necessary.




**Recommendations**

I could find no areas in need of action.

**Conclusion**

The CCTV system at Dover District Council complies with all aspects of the Code of Practice, and there were no areas for concern observed.

Signed ...  .....

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Date 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2008