



Well here we go again, Newsletter no. 6 and a slight change to report this time. It occurred to me that the publication date may not be to everyone's taste, so I've decided to produce this as a one off bi-monthly edition, which will hopefully allow me to bring forward future offerings to publish around the middle of each month. Lots of news to get through in the next few pages, but as always, if you've missed out and you want to catch up on any previous editions, they can all be accessed using [the Newsletter archive page](#), Happy reading! D.J.

So what's been hitting the headlines recently?

For any seasoned video surveillance news watchers, you could be forgiven for thinking that the media's previously pleasant natured CCTV worm, is finally beginning to turn.

Following a succession of significantly less than complimentary reports (as detailed in the following news pages), this month's major story proved to have more momentum in its legs than a millipede on speed, when it was revealed to the world that in London only one crime was actually being cleared up, for every 1,000 security cameras currently estimated to be in use ([MailOnline](#)).

The finding was contained in a confidential internal report prepared by DCI Mick Neville of London's Metropolitan Police Service specialist VIIDO unit, which was obtained by a journalist through a Freedom of Information request. Whilst the somewhat controversial statistic was universally highlighted as the key focal point of the report, it was interesting to read that there are actually two other hidden aspects of CCTV use, which give rise to concerns, but were not in themselves quite so widely reported by the Press.

It was quietly noted that there appears to be an increasing number of complaints being made against the police by victims of crime, for an apparent failure to review or recover CCTV evidence which may or may not have helped to resolve their investigation; a factor which DCI Neville has correctly forecast may increasingly have a significantly negative effect, on the public's currently high confidence in the perceived benefits of Public Space Surveillance (PSS).



In addition, the report highlights the view amongst some serving officers that "... CCTV detections are difficult to obtain," and yet time and again, fundamental opportunities to heighten the effectiveness of CCTV as a crime reduction tool, are increasingly being wasted by failing to recognise the simple principles and benefits of systems optimised for "Deterrence through Detection" (DtD).

Given the way in which the news was gleefully reported by more media organisations than I ever thought existed, perhaps the most interesting aspect was the understandable desire for some in our Industry to play down the findings, rather than simply acknowledge the fact that there's still an awfully long way to go before we can say in all honesty, that we're actually on track for getting it right, on a more consistent basis.

DJ's pick of this month's CCTV related news stories

Proposed policy fosters suspicion - Council leaders in Sydney, Australia have voted against a proposal to allow a number of agencies access to the city's 81 Public Space Surveillance cameras. The suggestion that the CCTV network could be used to track individuals before any crime is committed, received a hostile reception in committee, and it was eventually decided to only allow police officers access to the video streams. - source - [Sydney Central](#)

Nothing on the telly tonight - A series of fatal gun and grenade attacks in Kashmir, were unfortunately missed by a number of surveillance cameras, which despite earlier assurances to the contrary, have actually provided no leads for investigating officers. The cameras failed to perform due to poor sighting, looking in the wrong direction, or on one occasion as a result of a 'lack of electricity'. A police spokesman has said "We want to upgrade our CCTV's for better results,. We want 480 degrees CCTV". - source - [Rising Kashmir](#)

Let's start with the register - Police in Western Australia have been disappointed by the slow uptake to their "Blue Iris" CCTV registration project. Launched back in April this year, it was hoped that persuading businesses to record the details of their camera systems, would significantly assist investigating officers in locating vital video recorded evidence, but so far hardly any of the bars and nightclubs in Perth or Freemantle, have participated in the project. - source - [WAToday.com.au](#)



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DJ's pick of this months CCTV related news stories from around the globe - continued

Nothing wrong with protecting rights - In a growing demonstration of dissent amongst some residents of Lancaster in Pennsylvania USA, The "Citizens Against Public Surveillance (CAPS)" organised a march around the city to protest against the installation of 165 CCTV security cameras, which they believe infringe their fourth amendment rights under the Constitution. - source - [Stop the Cameras](#)

A scheme based on a plot - Councillors from Kingsbridge Town Council in Devon, UK, are expected to vote through approval for a new CCTV system, paid for using the proceeds of a land deal. The town's former allotments were recently sold off to a housing association, and it's hoped that part of the monies raised will permit the cameras to go live in various public spaces. - source - [Herald Express](#)

Would you believe it ... - As part of a five point security plan, the Israeli government has announced it intends to install CCTV systems in 50 cities, as a direct response to rising problems with alcohol fueled anti social behaviour. Described by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as a "city without violence" initiative, he cites Britain as having been successful in driving down violent crime through the use of surveillance cameras. - source - [Ha'aretz.com](#) -

Yule have to look closely - Police Officers have been studying CCTV images to try and identify a hooded figure, seen delivering a threatening letter to a charity shop in the suburbs of Leeds, UK. The message, purported to be from the "Movement for the Containment of Xmas", was one of a number sent to frighten various charities into withdrawing their christmas cards from sale, in what is described as a commercialisation of the festival. - source - [Guardian.co.uk](#)

Security by association - Residents of a small housing estate in Torquay, Devon, are apparently up in arms after it was discovered that around 112 CCTV cameras are being installed in the communal areas. The Riviera Housing Trust have decided to spend over a 1/3rd of a million pounds (US\$ 580k, € 400k) on security cameras to address issues of criminality and anti social behaviour. - source - [Mail Online](#)

Not so smart surveillance - Drivers in Bexley, Kent, UK are less than impressed that their Local Authority are operating a CCTV equipped Smart Car for traffic enforcement, whilst apparently breaking the law in the process. The vehicle has been routinely photographed causing traffic disruption, or parked up in restricted locations, whilst attempting to discreetly film motorists apparently committing a range of motoring offences. - source - [This is Local London](#)

CCTV isn't always a pushover - News from Limerick, Eire, where around €120k (£ 108k, US\$ 160k) damage was caused to the towns CCTV system, after a stolen JCB excavator was used to ram a number of camera poles. Whilst two were effectively flattened in the attack, a further four were also put out of action, in what has been described as a concerted attempt by local criminals, to disable an effective crime reduction tool for the local Gardai (police). - source - [The Irish Times](#)

The future of 'Pay to View'? - Councillors in the town of Market Rasen, UK, are considering introducing a levy charge for businesses to raise the funding needed to monitor the towns CCTV system. Problems started last year when the council decided to withdraw it's £ 10k annual funding (US \$15.5k, € 11.5k) for the monitoring operation, and despite ongoing problems with low level crime, the system has thus far failed to produce any useful evidential recordings. - source - [Market Rasen Mail](#)

Still a very long way to go - Set up just eighteen months ago, Baghdad's CCTV Control Centre is tasked with monitoring the feeds from just 113 cameras covering barely 5% of the city. Too often, operators are helpless when it comes to tackling the devastating attacks carried out by insurgents throughout the city, and security managers are acutely aware that much has still to be done to increase security. - source - [CNN.com](#)

Facing up to reality - A man who on the strength of eyewitness identification was falsely convicted of robbing a bank branch in Glasgow, has been exonerated after DNA evidence subsequently fingered the real culprit. William Mills was positively identified on the banks CCTV recordings by two police officers, and then subsequently picked out at an identity parade by four eyewitnesses, even though he was completely innocent of the crime. At his appeal hearing, Lord Justice Gill voiced his concerns that the conviction was based purely on eyewitness testimony, something which in recent academic experiments has been shown to be unreliable in perhaps a third of cases. - source - [Guardian.co.uk](#)

A law unto themselves - The same problem keeps replaying itself at Paisley Sheriff Court in Scotland, when time and again proceedings are either delayed or cancelled due to problems displaying vital CCTV evidence. Despite the vast majority of recordings being brought to court on the established VHS tape format, the courts video playback facilities can only accommodate DVD disc media. To address the issue, a technician has been employed to transfer all the material from one format to another, although given the volume of work involved, many cases stand to be delayed for quite some time yet. - source - [Paisley Daily Express](#)

What a liberty - Officials at the Hellenic Data Protection Authority in Greece, are up in arms after their Parliament passed a new law allowing the authorities unrestricted use of CCTV. Prior to this, Public Space Surveillance for security and safety purposes was not permitted under the country's Constitution except for monitoring traffic. - source - [Kathimerini](#)

Amazing what you can pick up - UK based retailer Home Bargains, have taken the unusual step of posting images of suspected shoplifters on their parent company's website. With currently 190 stores across the country and an annual theft bill estimated at around £ 6 million, bosses are determined to take whatever steps they can to drive down shoplifting, and asking their site's visitors to help identify the suspects online, is for them the next logical step forward. - source - [Telegraph.co.uk](#)



DJ's pick of this months CCTV related news stories from around the globe - continued

Moving in the right direction? - The latest generation of Video Analytics are currently being trialled by Portsmouth Council in the U.K., using their expansive city centre camera scheme. Scientists from the local university are working on developing advanced computer systems, capable of recognising specific patterns in an individuals movements or gestures, to help identify incidents of violent or threatening behaviour.. - source - [Times Online](#)

Expect a rise in Traffic-ing offences - Greater Manchester Police are apparently the first in the UK to trial the use of CCTV equipped Smart cars, to effectively target the habits of 'distracted' motorists. Under the auspices of the local Casualty Reduction Partnership, the tiny vehicles which are equipped with an extendable mast mounted remote control camera, will be parked up at strategic locations, and used to ticket drivers who are caught on the move using their mobile phones, - [BAPCO Journal](#)

Balloon goes up, trousers come down - Residents in the canadian border town of Sarnia are less than impressed at being constantly monitored, by an experimental high tech. long range surveillance blimp, currently being tested by a specialist american homeland security contractor, across the river in Port Huron, USA. Following news of the border control crafts deployment, a mass protest was organised to "Moon the Balloon", despite it having only just been put out of action following damage sustained in a violent storm. - source - [NowPublic](#)

The camera never lies - A Bradford shopkeeper is going back to the local licensing authority, to see if he can regain his permit to sell alcohol. The licence was revoked earlier this year after Trading Standards carried out a 'sting' operation, to determine whether alcohol and cigarettes were being sold to under age customers. The case was proven after officers examined numerous recordings from the shops own video surveillance system. - source - [Telegraph & Argus](#)

Not exactly diamond geezers - It's been revealed that the two men responsible for Britains biggest ever robbery, the £ 40m. theft from Graff jewellers in London's Bond Street, were thought to have been captured on CCTV looking in to the premises two days before the robbery actually took place. In what is also thought to be a first for the criminal fraternity, the suspects are believed to have been fitted with very high quality prosthetic masks, that effectively altered their appearance for the benefit of the store's CCTV system. Police have since arrested a number of individuals who have been charged with the crime. - source - [Guardian.co.uk](#) - [Mirror.co.uk](#)

Ramping up the defences - 13th century Aberystwyth castle is set to benefit from the installation of CCTV, in an attempt to tackle a series of ongoing graffiti and vandalism attacks. Given the importance of the site which was effectively the seat of welsh government at the turn of the fifteenth century, the owners Ceredigion council, are about to receive funding from the Home Office specifically to address Anti Social Behaviour. - source - [BBC News](#)

Anything worth watching on the telly? - Leaders from Cirencester Town Council in Gloucestershire, U.K., are urging members of the public to sign up as volunteer operators for the local CCTV scheme. The move follows a recent fatal attack in the towns market place, which led to calls from local residents for extended 'round the clock' monitoring of all the towns existing security cameras - source - [Wilts and Gloucestershire Standard](#)

A reasonable expectation of ... - Following a legal ruling in the California Supreme Court, employers have been left in no doubt as to the validity of using covert surveillance equipment in the workplace. In the case of *Hernandes v Hillside Inc.*, two employees sought legal redress against their employer for working in an environment where covert CCTV had been installed to record only outside of normal working hours. However the court has cautioned employers not to use hidden cameras in situations where workers have a reasonable expectation of privacy in the workplace - source - [Examiner.com](#)

Freedom to withhold information - Journalists from the Springfield, Missouri News-Leader newspaper, have been denied access to security camera recordings made at the state Governors office, which were required as part of an ongoing investigation into the delay in publishing a vital public health report. In refusing the paper access under a 'Sunshine Law' request, the Capitol Police cited an exemption which allows them to prevent disclosure where it may potentially compromise the security of the location. - source - [News Leader.com](#)

Rules were made not to be broken - Since July 1st following the introduction of new rules governing the use of CCTV to enforce traffic violations, Redbridge Council in Essex, U.K., has actually issued fines to over 1,800 motorists for varying traffic offences. Meanwhile local traders have been pleading with council officials not to enforce the rules using CCTV, as they predict a severe effect on local businesses, if shoppers are put off parking in the area. - source - [Waltham Forest Guardian](#)

Now you see them Police officers in Lakeland, Florida, have been puzzled by a series of thefts from businesses, where only the security cameras have been stolen. Since April of this year, 13 premises have been subject to the attention of thieves, although at this stage there does not appear to be any motive for this obviously targeted crime. - source - [The Ledger.com](#)

Security ... what security? - Investigators working on the failed La Guardia "bomber" case in the US, were shocked to discover that there was no usable video available from the airports security camera system. The incident occurred when a 32 year old mentally ill male attempted to detonate what turned out to be a fake explosive device, directly in front of a federal security checkpoint in the main terminal. Despite the widespread presence of security cameras in one of the US's busiest airports, there was not a single frame of video evidence available to assist the investigation. - source - [New York Post](#)

• Doktor Jon's current CCTV News page - <http://www.doktorjon.co.uk/whatsnew2.html>



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The next batch of forthcoming Security Shows and CCTV / IP Video related Events

- 21st - 23rd September - [ASIS 2009](#) - Anaheim, California, USA
 - 22nd - 24th September - [Digital Video Expo](#) - Pasadena, California, USA
 - 1st & 8th October - [IQeye IP Video Design symposiums](#) - Chicago & New York, USA
 - 1st & 29th October - [CCTV Center Roadshows](#) - Swindon and Huddersfield, U.K.
 - 6th - 8th October - [FLIR Thermal Imaging training courses](#) - Frankfurt, Germany
 - 29th - 31st October - [IFSEC India 2009](#) - Pragati Maidan, New Delhi, India
 - 18th - 20th November - [LEVA 20th Anniversary Training Conference](#) - Fort Worth, Texas, USA
- [• DJ's complete listing of Forthcoming CCTV / IP Video Shows and Events •](#)

Some additional CCTV / IP Video Industry Newsy bits

Whilst the news media are becoming increasingly enthusiastic when it comes to finding fault with CCTV, the fact remains that from a global perspective, here in the UK we are still universally regarded as the world leaders in the use of video surveillance technology ... although of course, not always for the right reasons!. So it's perhaps no surprise that the US based Law Enforcement & Emergency Services Video Association, more commonly known as LEVA, have invited Deputy Chief Constable Graeme Gerrard from Cheshire Police, to provide the keynote speech at their forthcoming symposium on ["Public Video Surveillance: CCTV Policy and Operations for Public Safety"](#). DCC Gerrard is well known as both the lead officer on the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) CCTV Working Group, and also a co-author of the National CCTV Strategy. For anyone interested in attending the event, it's scheduled to be held in Fort Worth, Texas on November 18th 2009.

Quite often, things don't always appear as they really are ... some time back I wrote a blog post about the increasing number of unmarked, often ANPR equipped, surveillance vehicles that are to be seen most days cruising around the back streets of Anytown, U.K.. Most are on the hunt for untaxed vehicles, which can quickly be clamped and ticketed on what has for some local authorities, increasingly becoming a "nice little earner". But then the idea of unmarked vehicles using video surveillance tends to raise questions with regards to the requirements for compliance under the Data Protection Act. Being somewhat curious to find out what the Information Commissioners Office would make of this situation, I decided to seek a more informed opinion on this matter. As it happens, the response that came back was pretty much along the lines of



what I had expected; according to a spokesperson for the ICO, **"There can be some practical difficulties in making sure proper information is conveyed about who is collecting images when they are being obtained from moving vehicles. It may be obvious if the CCTV or ANPR equipment is in a police vehicle. However, where this is not the case the vehicles should display details of the organisation operating the system, the purpose for using CCTV and contact details. When it is less obvious to people that images are being recorded the details should be made more prominent"**. The interesting point to consider is, if the vehicles are operating without complying with the DPA, then it could be argued that any recordings / evidence they gather has been obtained unlawfully, and as such, the penalty notices and clamping operation may in turn have been carried out on a less than lawful basis.

There is also the everyday issue of system operators warning signage; it was brought to my attention recently that it's now possible to buy supposedly DPA compliant signs, that are being supplied with a unique reference number to allow operator identification by accessing a database on the internet. Surely this is not acceptable under the Act? Well according to the ICO **"Our CCTV code of practice makes it clear that signs should contain details of the organisation operating the CCTV system and who to contact unless it is obvious, for example where CCTV is installed in a shop. Individuals should have an easy way of finding out who is collecting information about them. They should not have to go to a website and enter a unique ID number against an internet hosted database to find out this information"**.

Interesting that if you look closely enough, things aren't always quite what they appear to be.

That said, the more eagle eyed amongst you may have noticed that work is now well underway on my websites new design layout, and whilst there's still a significant number of pages to upgrade, hopefully the entire process will be completed sometime in November; keep watching this space for all the latest.

Well I hope you found this edition interesting, and if you have any comments, suggestions or ideas for future inclusion, please don't hesitate to drop me a line:- newsdesk@doktorjon.co.uk If you happen to know someone that would like to receive future copies, or if you decide you don't want to receive them, just let me know. Hopefully normal service will be resumed with the next monthly Newsletter due to be published sometime around mid October, so until the next time, have a great month ahead DJ