



STRATEGIC POLICING AND CRIME BOARD
1st October 2013

CCTV, ANPR & Surveillance

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Strategic Policing Crime Board with a briefing outlining the use and management of CCTV, ANPR and aspects of surveillance by West Midlands Police (WMP).

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 This report will outline the management and use of CCTV and ANPR systems by WMP. It also covers WMP's use of body-worn cameras. Other projects related to the evidential capture and use of CCTV footage, such as FaceWatch, will be covered under the Crime paper which is also being presented to the Board. Similarly, aspects of covert surveillance will also form part of the Crime paper.

3. CCTV

3.1 The new National Surveillance Camera Code of Practice came into effect on the 2nd August 2013 and consists of 12 guiding principles. WMP already comply with some of these principles and over the coming months will adopt the code into its policies and procedures.

3.2 Principle 2 of the code states: 'The use of a surveillance camera system must take into account its effect on individuals and their privacy, with regular reviews to ensure its use remains justified.' West Midlands Police will ensure compliance with this principle for any new camera installations. We will also review existing camera locations to ensure that the system remains proportionate and effective.

3.3 Colleagues within the Home Office are currently working with the Information Commissioner's Office to formulate a national document which will be utilised as part of the review process. Once the Home Office have circulated this document, WMP will adopt this approach as part of best practice.

3.4 WMP will be making contact with Andrew Rennison (Surveillance Camera Commissioner) to discuss our systems and policies in relation to the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice.

3.5 It is not anticipated that there will be significant cost implications in ensuring compliance with the code, although any redeployment of cameras following review would incur additional costs.

3.6 WMP is able to view and access certain CCTV cameras through the contact centres. CCTV feeds from Birmingham City Council are also visible at the Events Control Suite (ECS). WMP are investigating the feasibility of linking the other 6 local authority CCTV schemes into the ECS. CCTV cameras from Wolverhampton, Coventry, Walsall, Solihull and Dudley are already transmitted into WMP LPU Contact Centres. If these cameras could be connected into the force ICT network, there is a possibility that in addition to being available locally, they could also be visible at the ECS. The security and integrity of the local authority CCTV scheme would not be compromised by this link. WMP are also investigating Airwave communication links with local authority CCTV schemes.

3.7 A potential technical solution and outline costs to link one of the local authority CCTV feeds into the ECS will be presented at the next CCTV/ANPR Strategy Board meeting in October for discussion.

4. ANPR

4.1 WMP governance regarding ANPR is via a combined CCTV/ANPR Strategy Board, chaired by ACC Operations, currently ACC Cann. This Board meets quarterly and attendees include: Head of Central Motorway Police Group, Head of CID, Head of Counter Terrorism Unit, Head of Operations, Head of Intelligence, Head of Professional Standards amongst others.

4.2 WMP current ANPR Strategy was ratified by the Board in April 2011 and is closely aligned with the aims of the 'National ACPO ANPR Strategy for the Police Service - 2010 to 2013'. The new national ANPR Strategy is at final draft stage and, once released, WMP will revisit its current ANPR Strategy.

4.3 The Board also ratify ANPR policies, such as 24x7 ANPR alarm monitoring, access to ANPR data, weeding of ANPR data and ANPR information sharing with regional forces. WMP are also members of the Regional User Group for ANPR, which consists of representation from WMP, Staffordshire Police, West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police. The aim of the regional group is to encourage sharing of best practice and a consistent approach to ANPR across the four regional force areas. This group is also represented on the National User Group for ANPR.

4.4 WMP operate a system of graded response to ANPR activations through the alarm monitoring system based in contact centres. Certain reports, such as those placed on stolen vehicles, receive an immediate grading of response meaning that appropriately trained staff will normally be deployed to intercept the vehicle utilising their emergency warning equipment. Other reports are subject to a lower grading and do not receive a 'blue light' response. This policy is designed to ensure that the opportunities provided by ANPR to prevent crimes in action, save life and arrest offenders are fully exploited whilst balancing this against the need to deploy resources in an efficient manner that does not place the public or WMP staff at unnecessary risk.

5. **BODY-WORN CAMERAS**

5.1 WMP are currently using a limited number of body worn video (BWV) cameras on the Birmingham West & Central (BWC) and Wolverhampton (WV) LPUs. Both LPUs are using an Edesix 'video badge' model which is not much larger than a police warrant card. The card, which is about 2cm deep, houses all of the technology in a single unit, without any trailing cables – something which caused H&S problems with earlier models used in force. It is attached to uniform by a standard Airwave radio clip and is worn on the upper part of the officer's chest.

5.2 BWC has allocated its 14 units for use by Community Action and Priority Team (CAPT) officers, primarily (but not exclusively) in policing the night time economy. WV officers use their 12 cameras on the borough's Response Teams. Whilst officers on both LPUs will say that the cameras are beneficial to their policing efforts, there is currently no set evidential criteria by which to measure the cost based benefits of using the equipment; the evidence that there is being anecdotal in nature.

5.3 The anecdotal evidence is, nevertheless, quite persuasive and, having consulted all LPUs and departments, the appetite for more BWV video devices is significant. This evidence is also supported by international studies. The Society of Evidence Based Policing (SEBP) and Cambridge University have obtained results from the Rialto Police Department in California, which has carried out some controlled testing of BWV devices. Data captured there has shown a reduction in the number of complaints made against officers, down by 89%, and a reduction in the number of instances where the use of force has been necessary, down 59%.

5.4 Staffordshire, following an 18 month trial of several systems, have recently approved the purchase of 530 units, which will be issued to every operational police officer, PCSO and Special Constable in the force. However, many other forces are holding off on large scale purchases until there is some form of evidence based criteria upon which to support their business cases.

5.5 A report will be submitted to the Head of Central Justice Services by the end of September which will highlight all of these findings and will recommend that further testing takes place of a range of devices against evidence based research criteria, supported by the Society of Evidence Based Policing (SEBP via Cambridge University).

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 These matters are detailed in the above sections where relevant.

7. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 These matters are covered in the above sections where relevant

8. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 The Board is asked to note the content of this report