

**A WINNING FRAMEWORK TO IMPLEMENT
SURVEILLANCE TECHNOLOGIES TO ENHANCE THE
POLICE AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP**

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This Command College Independent Study Project is a FUTURES study of a particular emerging issue in law enforcement. Its purpose is NOT to predict the future, but rather to project a number of possible scenarios for strategic planning consideration.

Defining the future differs from analyzing the past because the future has not yet happened. In this project, useful alternatives have been formulated systematically so that the planner can respond to a range of possible future environments.

Managing the future means influencing the future--creating it, constraining it, adapting to it. A futures study points the way.

The views and conclusions expressed in the Command College project are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST).

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If you are a police executive either asked to consider public surveillance cameras for your city or a little curious about how your community would accept the technology this article is for you. We will look at the issues surrounding this emerging tool and provide a framework to answer questions and implement cameras for public safety. We will assess ways this approach can make a positive impact on the community and police partnership.

TECHNOLOGY TRENDS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

While a number of cities have implemented surveillance technology, there are lingering concerns about privacy in some jurisdictions. Many more, though, are concluding that the cameras are a necessary and desired tool for police in the future. In part, this acceptance grows as the technology becomes more readily accessible to everyone. In order for you to fully benefit from the proposed framework, let's journey down the path toward empowering you with a series of emerging trends and real- life examples to make a positive impact on your local community and police partnership.

Eye-in-the Sky: A Present Reality

If you went to an ATM, passed through a toll booth or did some shopping at the mall today, chances are that you were photographed by a computerized surveillance camera. In Great Britain, experts assert the average citizen in

London is photographed about 30 times per day.¹ Whether you realize it or not, countless numbers of citizens maintain wireless network connectivity that enables video surveillance to be conducted virtually anywhere; and to be monitored from any locale. The “ eye-in-the-sky” technology is a present reality, with digital video cameras that are standard equipment in a variety of cell-phones, red- light camera systems, license plate readers and of course, public surveillance cameras.²

A notable trend identified by prominent future researchers, is the manner in which computers are becoming part of the fabric of our landscape; dominating the economy and society in the process. Think about it. Computers are fast becoming part of our environment, rather than just tools we use for specific tasks. With wireless modems, wi-fi connections and similar media, portable computers give us access to networked data wherever we go.³

Next, consider the advent of U-Tube. This popular website allows people to post video of themselves or others on-line for public consumption. Interestingly, it now receives more than 65,000 uploads daily. A similar video capture site developed in the United Kingdom allows people to record themselves from images on surveillance cameras at public venues. The “i-caught” web service is another step in the use of images on the Internet. This site solicits everyday folks to use their digital cameras, cell-phone cameras or web cams to capture video images and upload them for immediate distribution on

¹ Fun with Surveillance; The Futurist, November-December,2006, p.10

² <http://www.sun-surveillance.com> , accessed August 3, 2006.

³ Trends now shaping the Future by Marvin J. Cetron and Owen Davies;(2005) World Future Society.

the web. A visit to “i-caught” reveals video footage of crimes from a number of states that had been uploaded to the website by either victims or police in the hopes of someone being able to identify the perpetrator(s). This approach has already paid dividends in the resolution of serious crime.

For example, when prominent Chicago physician, David Cornbleet, was killed in 2006, his son, uploaded the surveillance camera video images of the suspect on i-caught in the hopes that the killer could be identified. Within six months, the alleged killer turned himself in to police and confessed to the murder. He said he had been a patient of Dr. Cornbleet and was unhappy with the outcome of a surgery, so he killed the doctor. He saw himself on “i-caught” and decided to turn himself in because he thought he would be identified eventually.⁴

Commercial applications of this technology are already in the marketplace.

“Magic Moments” debut in April, 2007 at the Alton Towers Amusement Park in Staffordshire, England. Visitors to the park, who purchase the service receive a Radio Frequency Identification band to wear around their wrist, marking them to the park surveillance system. As they go around the park, footage of their rides, eating food and peeling gum off the bottom of your shoe, is routed, catalogued and digitally stored. When you are ready to leave the park, you signal a computer to begin assembling the footage which is transferred to a 30 minute DVD, available for purchase.⁵

⁴ <http://www.abcnews.go.com> Alleged Killer of a Doctor turns himself into police after viewing himself on i-caught. (August 16, 2007) accessed August 17, 2007.

⁵ Fun with Surveillance by The Futurist, p.10 (November-December, 2006)

In short, the public have become increasingly comfortable with a variety of personal camera devices. They have come to trust the increased use of cameras in public places to enhance safety, security and entertainment. This affords those dedicated to safety an opportunity to consider implementing surveillance as another tool in the arsenal. To do so, however, one must have a means to assess and select the means best-suited to any locale.

Core Considerations

When contemplating the use of electronic surveillance for public safety there are some core considerations. Certainly, you would want community participation to establish the potential benefits and deficits of this approach in the minds of your constituents. For it to be accepted, the community must take control from the start to avoid suspicion and misunderstanding.

The goal of the framework for community participation is two-fold: First, it can define the appropriate and beneficial use of public surveillance cameras in your city. Second, it can be used to successfully evaluate other technologies for local use. There are five components to the framework that are essential to your success when contemplating the possible use of public surveillance technology:

- 1) Community participation in establishing projects
- 2) Minimum standards for implementation
- 3) Training requirements for monitoring personnel, including volunteers
- 4) Criteria to ensure confidentiality

5) Clearly identifiable links to community policing⁶

Community participation can lead to a consensus with regard to the minimum standards for a successful implementation, and answer the question of whether the cameras will be monitored or not. If your group decides to monitor with either paid or volunteer staff, minimum training requirements can be properly researched and developed. This technology is really a two-edged sword, since the general public has the same or similar ability to capture images and distribute them on the internet via mediums like, U-Tube and i-caught. While no cities are known to have sought to create a social compact with its citizens regarding the use of their personal cameras, the future may dictate that *a clear and reasonable criteria be crafted to ensure the confidentiality* of those photographed in public places. Whatever approach is selected, the strength of any planning and implementation effort is dependent on the evaluation process being linked to *clearly identifiable links to the community policing philosophy.*

While most citizens are comfortable with having surveillance technology for their personal use; though, some do not necessarily trust the police with the formal use of such technologies. The most prominent concern may be the intrusion of government into private affairs.

⁶ <http://www.Library.ca.gov./crb/97/05>, Public Video Surveillance: Is it an effective crime tool?by Marcus Nieto (1997)

Privacy Concerns

Noted future researchers, Marvin J. Cetron and Owen Davies, state that privacy, once a defining right for Americans, is dying in many lands. Surveillance is on the rise and privacy is evaporating as more stress is placed on ensuring security and safety. In large and medium sized cities around the world, public spaces that remain unwatched will continue to shrink and the number of criminal cases based on surveillance data will grow rapidly in countries with the required technological sophistication and infrastructure.⁷

Research reveals that while most citizens across the nation have accepted the notion of surveillance cameras, either public or private, some citizens do not trust the police having access to public surveillance systems.⁸ Depending on the community's culture and level of perceived threat facing your jurisdiction, the ability for the citizenry to voice their opinions before the surveillance technology is implemented is critical to address privacy concerns.

For example, in 2005, the San Francisco, California Board of Supervisors spent \$500,000 for cameras to be placed in high crime neighborhoods. The Housing Authority obtained additional federal funding of \$200,000 to install cameras in public housing complexes to deter crime. The citizens were very concerned about Police monitoring the cameras, so strict rules were implemented which required the police to make formal request of the Mayor

⁷ 53 Trends now shaping the Future by Marvin J. Cetron and Owen Davies; (2005) World Future Society, p.12

⁸ <http://www.aclu.org/CCTV> is susceptible to abuse; accessed on July 17,2006

Newsom's office after a crime occurred to protect the privacy of citizens in a public place.⁹

Knowledge, Consent and Participation

While the State and Federal Courts have long held that there is no expectation of privacy in a public place¹⁰, it is wise for police executives to craft a policy in a spirit of shared governance with community leaders. Among the dissenting voices on the privacy issue are the members of the Electronic Frontier Foundation, who are comprised of a blend of lawyers, technologists, policy analysts and activists to confront cutting edge issues defending free speech, privacy, innovation and consumer rights.¹¹

Like the American Civil Liberties Union, the Electronic Frontier Foundation also believes that electronic surveillance of public spaces require the knowledge, consent and participation of every citizen to conform to the U.S. Constitution. This segment of the population also view the U.S. Patriot Act of 2001 as an erosion of fundamental safeguards and fear that citizens engaged in constitutionally protected activity could be routinely photographed, wiretapped and harassed in the name of public safety or national security.¹²

One example they cite is the 1997 case of a top-ranking police official in Washington D.C. caught using information from a police database to identify patrons at a gay bar. Using the surveillance footage to capture their images and

⁹ <http://www.SFgate.com> (August 17, 2007) Focus on Security Cameras: Is it worth the cost?

¹⁰ United States vs Knotts, 368 US 276 281-82 (1983)

¹¹ <http://www.eff.org> , Electronic Frontier Foundation accessed July 18, 2006.

¹² <http://www.aclu.org>, American Civil Liberties Union accessed July 17, 2006

license plates, he would use the motor vehicle database, research the owners of the vehicles and try to blackmail the patrons who were married.¹³

A second example involves agencies that establish bad policy leading to abusive practices. During the Civil Rights movement and the Vietnam War, the FBI and local police conducted illegal operations to spy upon and harass political activists challenging racial segregation and the Vietnam War.¹⁴

Today, civil liberty groups and even some veteran law enforcement officers worry that police will be tempted to resume political spying. Intelligence officers argue that “no one in police intelligence today wants to go back to the bad old days.” “We have been beaten up pretty good over bad intelligence decisions that were made in the 1960’s and 1970’s and have learned from that” says, Illinois State Police Colonel Kenneth Bouche, chair of a federal advisory board on information sharing. He and others point out that in some cases state laws are even more stringent than those at the federal level. California, for instance, includes a right to privacy in its Constitution; something that is not spelled out in the federal Bill of Rights.¹⁵

These concerns can be addressed by developing operational guidelines in partnership with all stakeholders to ensure that their point of view is considered. For example, in many cities, public and private, surveillance zones are clearly

¹³ <http://www.aclu.org>, accessed July 17, 2006.

¹⁴ <http://www.aclu.org>, accessed July 17, 2006

¹⁵ <http://www.CUAPB.com>, accessed July 17, 2006

posted by signage which gives knowledge to the citizens that surveillance cameras are present. The citizen can freely choose whether to stay or leave.

A FRAMEWORK FOR SUCCESS

In the context of the privacy issue, a framework can help you navigate through the suspicions and uncertainty about how the technology will be used in your jurisdiction. As illustrated, the civil liberty groups are concerned surveillance cameras will be abused by law enforcement, either the result of the technology not being utilized as intended or having the technology capturing images of citizens that do not have the knowledge, consent and participation.

When you solicit community participation to establish a project, invite a representative from a local chapter of the ACLU to ensure that their point of view is considered. Inviting local civil liberty representatives to participate will also ensure that they will understand the minimum standards for implementation and develop some trust with the partnership because of the open communication and collaborative process. The components of developing training requirements for paid or volunteer personnel will also enhance the discussion which involves crafting reasonable criteria to ensure confidentiality of the citizens being photographed. In fact, the acceptance of public camera surveillance is growing. A primary tool to address concerns of any part of the community, then, can be accomplished by viewing the success of others.

Growing Public Acceptance

A recent Washington POST poll conducted by ABC news revealed that 71% of the American public approved the use of surveillance cameras in public places.¹⁶ A review of the literature also revealed several trends involving the public's acceptance of surveillance of public spaces. In Britain, some 1.5 million surveillance cameras now monitor a wide range of public areas, including schools, office buildings, streets and shops.¹⁷

Since 1975, Washington, DC has installed hundreds of cameras in a variety of public places including but not limited to the national monuments, shopping malls, schools and various neighborhoods. Baltimore, MD has also installed cameras in crime ridden neighborhoods and city parks to identify criminals, while Tampa, Florida has used cameras in crime ridden neighborhoods, shopping centers, the airport and the football stadium to surveil the 2002 Super Bowl to deter a terrorist attack.¹⁸

Deterrent or Evidence Tool?

In the majority of cases studied, the cameras are believed to be a deterrent to street crime and an enhanced evidence collection tool. In Toronto, Police Superintendent Jeff McGuire states "That's the first reason that we're installing them is to deter crime and create safer neighborhoods and in any event

¹⁶ <http://www.abcnews.go.com> (July 29, 2007) Surveillance Cameras: Keeping Eyes on Crime

¹⁷ The 100 Best Trends of 2006 by George Ochoa and Melinda Corey(2005) p.37 Adams Media: Avon, Massachusetts

¹⁸ <http://www.aclu.org>

where crimes occur within the field of the camera, we're using them to collect evidence."¹⁹ In some cities, the effectiveness of the cameras is in question by a segment of the community who believe that some criminals are not dissuaded from committing criminal acts.

Despite their increasing use, there is limited evidence that CCTV camera surveillance programs are successful crime-prevention tools. According the International Association of Chiefs of Police survey, 96 percent of the responding law enforcement agencies using CCTV surveillance do not incorporate an evaluation component that measures the effectiveness of the system.

Tacoma was one of the first cities to install a CCTV video surveillance system to tackle neighborhood crime, and the system is still operating. Crimes detectable by cameras, such as assaults, trespassing, prostitution and vandalism, decreased from 244 incidents in 1993 to 87 incidents in 1994. In 1995, the number of crimes increased to 125, still less than half the number reported in 1993.²⁰

An Effective Tool?

Over the last few years, the Chicago Police Department has set up more than 500 cameras throughout the city and the CPD claims that the web of surveillance has been an important crime-fighting tool, resulting in more than 1,200 arrests since February 2006.²¹ "Our preliminary research shows that they are effective, especially when left in places for over 180 days," said Jonathan Lewin, the CPD's

¹⁹ <http://www.CityNews.ca> (February 8,2007) Opinions Mixed on Public Surveillance Cameras

²⁰ <http://www.Library.ca.gov/crb/02-006> (March ,2002) Public and Private Applications of Video Surveillance and Biometric Technologies, by Nieto, Johnston-Dodds and Simmons

²¹ <http://www.sfgate.com> (August 17, 2007) Focus on security cameras: Is it worth the cost?

commander of information services.²² “Once it’s in, it’s hard to move because the community loves it. If they don’t see the camera there one day, we get calls.”²³

Most research into the efficacy of anti-crime cameras has been conducted in the United Kingdom, where closed-circuit networks have been used far longer and more widely than in the United States. In general, those studies have found that cameras can lead to slight improvements in crime rates, but mainly in property offenses and especially in car thefts. Cameras can make a difference, but it is limited and tough to measure. They cannot guarantee safety, even within their field of view but can alert officers to a pending crime if actively monitored.

Active or Passive Monitoring?

A second issue is whether the cameras are more effective when actively monitored or passively monitored? Thomas Nestel III, a Philadelphia police inspector who studied cameras for his master’s thesis at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, called cameras an important tool in investigating and prosecuting crimes. Having live monitors for the cameras is important, he said. “The goal is to see the behavior before the crime occurs,” Nestel said. “You see somebody that is pacing back and forth in an area looking into cars. He hasn’t committed a crime yet, but you’re keyed into what he’s going to do.” By sending

²² <http://www.sfgate.com> (August 17, 2007) Focus on security cameras: Is it worth the cost?

²³ <http://www.sfgate.com> (August 17, 2007) Focus on security cameras: Is it worth the cost?

an officer to check on such behavior, he said, “You send a message to him and others that if you commit a crime here, we’re going to see you.”²⁴

According to a British Home Office review of dozens of studies analyzing the camera’s value as an active monitoring device at reducing crime, half of the studies showed a negative or negligible effect. The other half showed a negligible decrease in crime of 4 percent, at most. Researchers found that crime in Glasgow, Scotland, actually increased by 9 percent after cameras were installed there.²⁵ The cameras have provided valuable forensic evidence, though, in crime and terror investigations. The most notable incident may be the recent blundered car bombings and the July 7, 2005, terror attacks in London where British officials were able to track the movements of the perpetrators and make arrests.²⁶

In the United States, one of the most prominent examples was Tampa’s use of facial recognition technology in 2001. But the city’s police department dropped the technology two years later when it failed to result in a single arrest. The use of video surveillance was considered by the Oakland, Calif., police chief, but he ultimately found that “there is no conclusive way to establish that the presence of video surveillance resulted in the prevention or reduction of crime.”²⁷ They are good forensic tools — after something happens, they’ll tell you what happened,” said Jim Harper, the director of information policy studies at the Cato Institute. “And in the rare case where a terrorism case fails, they can be useful to

²⁴ <http://www.sfgate.com>, (August 17, 2007) Focus on Security Cameras: Is it worth the cost?

²⁵ <http://www.Library.ca.gov/crb/97/05>, Public Video Surveillance: Is it an effective crime tool?by Marcus Nieto(1997)

²⁶ <http://www.abcnews.go.com> (July 9,2007) Eye on the City: Do Cameras Reduce Crime?

²⁷ <http://www.sfgate.com> (August 17, 2007) Focus on Security Cameras: Is it worth the cost?

help track down the perpetrators. But they do not provide protection against attacks, and that's a key distinction."²⁸

Other cities, including Chicago and Los Angeles, have expanded their use of public surveillance cameras and tout the effectiveness of the technology. Some of these cameras, which can cost up to \$60,000 each, have night-vision capabilities and can be remotely controlled to pan, tilt, zoom and rotate.²⁹ Most police chiefs regard the cameras as just one tool for cutting crime. "It's a technology bump for policing and justice," said John Firman, the director of research at the International Association of Chiefs of Police, who said that the issue will be discussed in a roundtable discussion at the IACP's annual conference in October. "We know cameras enhance that capacity but saying for sure that they reduced crime by 20 percent, that's another thing. Anecdotally, we know that they have had an impact."³⁰

Cities across the globe are finding growing public acceptance for surveillance cameras in public places. In some larger cities, the cameras are actively monitored which can result in an officer being dispatched to investigate a pending crime. In most cities, the camera systems are passive or not monitored, but can provide photographic evidence of a crime that has occurred, although an arrest may never be made. There are no data available on how many crimes have been aborted by criminals because of the cameras but most citizen groups and police believe that the cameras provide some deterrent effect.

²⁸ <http://www.sfgate.com> (August 17,2007) Focus on Security Cameras: Is it worth the cost?

²⁹ <http://www.abcnews.go.com> (July 9,2007) Eye on the City: Do Cameras reduce crime?

³⁰ <http://www.abcnews.go.com> (July 9, 2007) Eye on the City: Do Cameras reduce crime?

Conclusion

Chances are the citizens in your community have become increasingly reliant and comfortable with a variety of personal camera devices and trusting of the increased use of cameras for the clearly defined purpose of public safety or evidence collection. In order to ensure that the key citizen groups have input in the dialogue to establish how the surveillance cameras would be used and where they would be placed in your jurisdiction, you need to ask them. Some cities, worked with the local chamber of commerce or downtown business districts, while others enlisted the assistance of select neighborhood watch groups, City Planning Commissioners, Park Service Commissions and/ or City Councils.³¹

It is widely accepted that a law enforcement agency is only as successful as the support it receives from the public it serves. Indeed, O.W.Wilson, writing in 1963, stressed that “failures in police administration are frequently traceable to a lack of support, arising from citizen misunderstanding of police purposes and methods.”³²

Now that you have been given the framework to define the appropriate and beneficial use of a public surveillance system within a community policing context or if you are considering adding other technology in addition to an existing public surveillance system, you have the proven tools to explore the use of emerging technology in the context of emerging issues. Your future potential with surveillance technologies looks promising with better technology, changing

³¹ <http://www.library.ca.gov/crb/97/05>, Public Video Surveillance: Is it an Effective tool? By Marcus Nieto

³² O.W. Wilson, Police Administration(New York: McGraw Hill, 1963) p.201

societal values, better educated police and community members with a willingness to communicate openly while developing progressive strategies to ensure safe neighborhoods.