

Home Office Consultation on Surveillance Camera Code of Practice

1. On 7 February the Home Office issued a 21 page consultation document on a draft Code of Practice for Surveillance Cameras, requiring responses by 21 March.
2. The Code of Practice would be promoted by a Surveillance Commissioner, but he or she would have no power of sanction. However, the Code of Practice would be a reference document for other legal proceedings.
3. The draft code is based on 12 principles, set out below:-
 - i. Use of a surveillance camera system must always be for a specified purpose which is in pursuit of a legitimate aim and necessary to meet an identified pressing need
 - ii. 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.
 - iii. There must be as much transparency in the use of a surveillance camera system as possible, including a published contact point for access to information and complaints.
 - iv. There must be clear responsibility and accountability for all surveillance camera system activities including images and information collected, held and used.
 - v. Clear rules, policies and procedures must be in place before a surveillance camera system is used, and these must be communicated to all who need to comply with them.
 - vi. No more images and information should be stored than that which is strictly required for the stated purpose of a surveillance camera system, and such images and information should be deleted once its purpose has been discharged.
 - vii. Access to retained images and information should be restricted and there must be clearly defined rules on who can gain access and for what purpose such access is granted; the disclosure of images and information should only take place when it is
 - viii. Surveillance camera system operators should consider any approved operational, technical and competency standards relevant to a system and its purpose and work to meet and maintain those standards.
 - ix. Surveillance camera system images and information should be subject to appropriate security measures to safeguard against unauthorised access and use.
 - x. There should be effective review and audit mechanisms to ensure legal requirements, policies and standards are complied with in practice, and regular reports should be published.

- xi. When the use of a surveillance camera system is in pursuit of a legitimate aim and a pressing need, it should then be used in the most effective way to support public safety and law enforcement with the aim of processing images and information of evidential value.
 - xii. Any information used to support a surveillance camera system which matches against a reference database for matching purposes should be accurate and kept up to date.
4. Attached as Appendix A is a draft letter of response on behalf of the Partnership. It is **RECOMMENDED** that the draft letter is approved as the Partnership's response.