

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE – 7 JULY 2010

EUROPEAN FORUM FOR URBAN SAFETY

REPORT BY CHIEF CONSTABLE AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Introduction

1. This report updates the Professional Standards Committee on the European Forum for Urban Safety, and the interest received in the development in Sussex of the Authority's Independent CCTV Monitoring Scheme.

Background

- 2.1 The European Forum on Urban Safety (EFUS) was set up in 1987 as a Europe-wide network, supported by the Council of Europe, to strengthen crime reduction policies and to promote the role of local authorities in national and European policies.
- 2.2 The project "Citizens, Cities and Video-Surveillance" has been about reflecting on, and exchanging CCTV practices/ideas which operate across Europe, with particular emphasis on those factors impacting on fundamental human rights. It has looked at both the operational use of CCTV and the manner in which these practical issues affect citizen privacy. The project's aim has been the creation of a Europe-wide charter for the democratic use of video-surveillance in European cities.
- 2.3 Members from 10 cities or regions of the EFUS network have participated in this project: Le Havre (France), Saint-Herblain (France), Venice (Italy), Emilia Romagna (Italy), Sussex Police (United Kingdom), Ibiza (Spain), Rotterdam (Netherlands), Genoa (Italy), and the London Metropolitan Police Service (United Kingdom). Other partners from Hungary and the Czech Republic and a number of academic and legal experts have also participated in the project.

Representation by Sussex Police

- 3.1 Sussex Police, along with colleagues from the Metropolitan Police, have represented the UK on this European Union sponsored project. Chief Supt. Chris Ambler, Head of Communications Department, and Inspector Roger Fox, CCTV Manager, have represented Sussex Police.
- 3.2 At the outset, the project created a basis of theoretical and practical information on which to inform the writing of a charter. The experiences of the partner cities played a crucial role in this effort, as did the

contributions from the academic and legal experts. A systematic analysis of these practices was gained through each participant completing an evaluation grid in regard to their own national experiences. This evaluation tool was then used and developed during working seminars in LeHavre, Budapest and Bologna, and study visits to London, Lyon and Genoa.

Force CCTV Monitoring Centre

4. In September 2009, Sussex hosted a visit by the project, with Brighton Police Station's new monitoring centre being the focal point. The visit was opened by the Chief Constable, Martin Richards, and talks were given by the current ACPO lead on CCTV, DCC Graeme Gerrard, and Professor Peter Squires, University of Brighton.

Recommendations for the Future Use of CCTV

- 5.1 Utilising these shared experiences, compiled and examined during the study visits, the project then developed recommendations for using CCTV in a transparent manner, balancing security with an individual's right to privacy. These recommendations now lay at the heart of the 'Charter for the good use of video surveillance in European cities'.
- 5.2 The resulting document has now been published in four languages, (see appendix) having been launched at the final conference in Rotterdam on 27 and 28 May 2010. Dr L Bush, Chairman of the Authority, accompanied Chief Superintendent Ambler and Inspector Fox, to this event, and delivered a presentation on the subject of independent oversight of public space CCTV, one of seven key principles forming the basis of the Charter.
- 5.3 A number of cities have already signed the Charter, including Rotterdam and Genoa. Sussex Police will meet with their Public Space CCTV partners with the intention being to jointly sign the Charter.

Sussex Independent CCTV Monitoring Scheme

- 6.1 The Chairman of the Authority was invited as a guest of EFUS to present details and the philosophy of the Independent CCTV Scheme that the Authority have recently set up and are now running for the benefit of Sussex residents.
- 6.2 The Scheme generated considerable interest at the Conference, and a number of enquiries have been made that the Authority will host a visit in the autumn where interested partners in Europe and the UK can learn more about the Scheme and how it has been embedded into the operation of the Authority and Sussex Police.

Conclusion

7. The Conference was a useful opportunity to explore further the shared issues relating to the use of public place safety and the use of CCTV. The interest in the Sussex Police Authority's Independent CCTV Monitoring Scheme was considerable and it is recommended that the Authority fosters its connections with EFUS and widens the publicity of its own scheme.

Recommended – That

- (1) the Committee supports the principle of the Authority continuing to further relationships with European and UK partners in the area of CCTV monitoring; and
- (2) the Committee supports the notion of hosting a visit for UK and European partners to view the Sussex Independent CCTV Scheme.

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