City of Melbourne Safe City Cameras Program

Safe City Cameras Program Audit Committee Report 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019

Mr Dean Robertson
Director, On-street Support & Compliance
City of Melbourne
PO Box 1603M
Melbourne   VIC   3000

Dear Mr Robertson

Safe City Cameras Program Audit Committee Report

In accordance with the Safe City Cameras Program Audit Committee Terms of Reference, we submit our Report for the review period 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019.

Yours sincerely,

Bill Horman AM APM	Margaret Rode	Paul Ryan
Consultant	Governance Professional	Barrister & Solicitor
Chairman	Member	Member
Appointed Chairman in 2018.	Appointed to Committee on 18/01/2018.	Appointed to Committee on 21/02/2018.

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1. Establishment of the Safe City Camera Program and Audit Committee

On 6 December 1995, the City of Melbourne (CoM) resolved to establish a closed-circuit television system in Melbourne's Central Business District to be known as the "Safe City Cameras Program" (the Program or SCCP). The CoM SCCP became operational on 27 February 1997. The SCCP helps create a safer environment and reduce crime levels by deterring potential offenders, helping in crime detection and providing evidence to assist in investigations and/or in Court.

The Program's aims are set out in the Safe City Cameras Program Manual and include:

(a)   aiding in the provision of a safer physical environment in the Melbourne CBD

(b)   assisting police to reduce crime levels by deterring potential offenders

(c)   aiding in early identification of criminal offences

(d)   generally assisting in emergency response.

The operation of the Program is regulated by "Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's), the Training Manual" and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Victoria Police.

The Program Manual incorporates a Code of Practice, Privacy Principles,

Product (i.e. copy of CCTV footage) tracking and release provisions and general management processes.

The Program uses closed circuit cameras (CCTV) positioned throughout the Melbourne Central Business District (CBD).

The Program is one aspect of the CoM's strategy for a safer city. Others include:

- Safe City Taxi Ranks
- Accord with Melbourne licensees
- Victoria Police and CoM lighting audits
- Promotion of visible police presence throughout the CBD
- Improved transport at night to and from the CBD
- Prohibition of consumption of alcohol in CBD public places
- Education, information and awareness campaigns.

1. SCCP operations during 2019 audit period

Cameras in Operation

During this audit-period, 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019 the following additional cameras were installed:

- 10 Pan Tilt Zoom (PTZ) cameras
- 16 Fixed cameras

- 01Taxi Rank and Help Point camera.

By 31 December 2019, the SCCP had a combination of 162 cameras in the Safe City Camera Network which comprised:

- 88 Pan Tilt Zoom (PTZ) cameras

- 64 Fixed cameras

- 9 Taxi Rank cameras

- 01 Mobile CCTV Vehicle (5 cameras attached).

The additional cameras are reported to be very beneficial illustrated by the increased amount of applicable footage for the record number of incidents recorded.   The majority of the new cameras were funded by the State Government or available through the Victorian Department of Justice and Community Safety Department.

The SCCP now has an optic-fibre link from the SCCP Control Room to the new Melbourne East Police Station in Bourke St. Melbourne which provides the capability of monitoring cameras with a Safe City Operator from this location if required.

The increased number of cameras and capacity has raised the question of needing a third camera operator to the Control Room team during peak times to ensure their effectiveness and value. Whilst a challenge may be space in the room, the Committee strongly supports consideration of additional support staff to the Control Room team. Exploring advancement in technology may also assist the program moving forward.

At the time of writing this report, Corona Virus Covid-19 was severely impacting on Australia and the rest of the world. The Victoria Government introduced tight restrictions, particularly in relation to social distancing and encouraged people to stay at home and work from home where that was possible. The City of Melbourne showed leadership in making alternate arrangements for camera operations where practical. Significantly, a temporary back-up control room was established at a separate location. This action by the City of Melbourne is commended by the Independent Audit Committee members. The Independent Audit Committee encourages the City of Melbourne to review the practicality of making such arrangement permanently to give the Safe City Camera Program the capacity to continue live feed to Victoria Police of CCTV coverage of the city in the event the existing control room is incapacitated for whatever reason and/or cause.

Requests for information regarding the Safe City Cameras' statistics of incidents should be directed to the Melbourne City Council.

The CoM's SCCP website provides a map of locations of its cameras – but it should be noted that the location of cameras is subject to ongoing review and change.

Mobile Camera Vehicle

The Melbourne Safe City Camera Program has, in addition to fixed cameras, a Mobile Camera Vehicle, introduced in 2009. Footage from cameras in the Mobile Camera Vehicle is not directly fed to the SCCP Control Room but is downloaded at the end of each shift to the Program Management System and stored together with staff notes, running sheets and incident reports with footage from the Program's fixed cameras. The Audit Committee understands the feasibility of live footage direct from the vehicle was investigated, and although achievable, the cost of implementation was not practicable.

Control Room, Footage & CCTV Product

All fixed cameras feed footage, in real time, to screens located in the SCCP Control Room. Footage is recorded on the Video Management System ("VMS"). VMS screens are monitored 24 hours per day by Control Room Operators.

Control Room Operators may transfer incoming footage, in real time to dedicated monitors and control cameras to ensure detailed recording of any event. Control Room Operators notify police of incidents that they see unfolding and feed footage in real-time to Police Operation Centres.

When major events occur in Melbourne, and the State Police Operations Centre (SPOC) is operational, Control Room Operators may also feed live footage to the SPOC, while retaining control of the cameras.

Control Room Operators make electronic notes, "running sheets" and Incident Reports on a dedicated Program Management System. Such documents aid subsequent interrogation of the Incident Management System in relation to specific events and retrieval of relevant product (ie footage provided to police or others).

Footage in relation to an event is retained on the Council server for a minimum of 28 days (the Holding Period) after the event. In the absence of a request from police or other relevant agencies or individuals, it is then copied over. Should the Council receive a request for product from a relevant agency or individual within the Holding Period, two copies of the requested footage are made. One is provided to the requesting party and the other retained by Council for seven years, after which it is destroyed.

Product provided to Victoria Police

During 2016, Victoria Police and CoM discussed and ultimately agreed that police to whom product was provided would be responsible for its safe storage and ultimate destruction when the product was no longer required by them.

Previously, such product was returned to the Control Room. Victoria Police procedures were trialed during 2017, considered by both Victoria Police and the City of Melbourne to be successful and followed throughout 2018 and 2019. A copy of the Victoria Police instructions and procedures was provided to the Audit Committee and the Program Manual amended to incorporate the agreed Victoria Police responsibility for destruction of product no longer required.

A very detailed Victoria Police audit document was provided to the CoM and the Audit Committee in relation to product provided by the CoM. During the 2019 review period no misuse or problem associated with product provided to Victoria Police was reported.

During 2019 a record number, 1000 copies of footage was was provided, with 5,734 recorded incidents.

Dedicated Police Radio Base Station

The SCCP reported the operational benefits for the Program in having a dedicated police radio base station is evidenced by the number of incidents the Control Room is alerted to via the police radio network.

CCTV - Dissemination Tracking and Destruction

Product continues to be made available only to those authorised under relevant provisions of the Program Manual, particularly Victoria Police, on submission of a completed Application Form (See Page 13 of the Program Manual). Release of product occurs only upon acceptance by applicants of necessary confidentiality, tracking, storage and destruction obligations as set out in the "Application for Access to Product" form, the Program Manual and the procedure as agreed between the City of Melbourne and Victoria Police.

The Operations Manual provides that in an emergency product may be released without a completed "Authorisation Application Form" although such a form must be completed within five days of any such release.

Applicants other than police are required to return the product to the Control Room when it is no longer required by them.

As a consequence of the changes introduced, only "non-police" applicants for product are required to complete "Outcome Forms" and provide them to the Control Room setting out the use to which the product was put and describing any "result". Product returned to the Control Room by "non-police" is required to be accompanied by a completed "Outcome Form".

The Audit Committee notes that confirmation of destruction of 61 released product remains outstanding. This matter of concern was reported on and subject of a recommendation at the end of the Audit Report 2018. It has continued to be the subject of review during the current audit period – and requires further follow-up effort towards resolution.

Control Room

Security

Access to the Control Room is strictly limited and controlled in accordance with provisions of the Operations Training Manual.

Major Refurbishment

During the 2018 Audit Period, the SCCP Control Room underwent a major refurbishment which included change to structure, design and layout of the room and major upgrades to hardware.

Police communications via the service provider were upgraded to all Safe City 900 Base Stations and Speakers, which allow the Operators to work more effectively at their respective workstations.

Management, Supervisors and Operators reported great satisfaction with the implementation and impact of the changes in 2018 and throughout 2019.

Communication with Police

Control Room Staff are in direct radio contact with police. SCCP Mobile Camera Vehicle staff are in direct contact with Control Room staff. The Audit Committee reports there is a very close working relationship between the Control Room Operators and police. There is also a close working relationship between Victoria Police and the City of Melbourne management generally in regard to planning and operational matters, particularly relating to safety, security and counter-terrorism strategies and management of emergency responses.

MOUs

Current in 2019 were CoM Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with Victoria Police and separately, the Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission and Emergency Management Victoria.

Public Address Speakers

A MOU between Victoria Police and Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) was entered into 2017 utilizing the SCCP hardware with public address speakers being fitted onto cameras at CDB locations to be used in appropriate emergency situations.

A number of the new speakers were trialed as part of a Police Exercise in June 2018. The speakers can be used to provide an audible warning sound and a message from police to the public in an emergency situation. Fortunately the speakers were not required to be used during 2019.

Victoria Police Monitoring Assessment Centre

Since December 2016, the Victoria Police Monitoring Assessment Centre (MAC) has been able to select live feeds from CCTV cameras in the CBD.

In view of the importance of the role of the Victoria Police MAC, its relationship with the SCCP and the live use of SCCP footage the Audit Committee indicated its interest in being kept informed as to any relevant impacts on the arrangements.

The Chairman and an Audit Committee member visited the Victoria Police Monitoring Assessment Centre in 2018 and in 2019 the Chairman with the other Committee member were provided with a detailed overview of its operations, access and use of the live SCCP camera coverage.

Major Incidents in CBD

Major incidents in the CBD put the SCCP Operators and managers as well as CoM management, administration, practices and procedures, under a significant test.

The Audit Committee notes that during this audit period, there were many instances where the Control Room Operators alerted police to the commission of offences, or assisted police investigators in live time or provided evidence in relation to murder, rape and armed robbery.

City Safety- the Counter-Terrorism Environment & the SCCP

Major incidents in 2017, 2018 and 2019 involving the use of vehicles posing a threat to the lives and safety of CBD users, demonstrating the importance of the SCCP in prevention, deterrence, critical incident response and providing footage to form part of the police investigation as well as evidence when matters are before the Coroner or criminal prosecutions proceed to Court.

Safety and counter-terrorism measures have been taken, noticeably protective bollards strategically located throughout the city, and the public address system reported on earlier. Major upgrades to the existing counter-terrorism measures have been carried out during the current reporting period.

Complaints

The CoM website provides advice for members of the public to facilitate complaints about the Program operation.

The Program Manual also sets out a process by which complaints can be made about the operation of the Program. (Safe City Cameras Program Manual p.16)

Any complaint lodged against the SCCP is the subject of focus by the Audit Committee.

No complaints were received in 2019.

Freedom of Information

FOI requests lodged relevant to the SCCP are a subject of focus by the Audit Committee.

Three Freedom of Information requests were received during 2019 and were dealt with by the City of Melbourne.

Victorian Auditor General's 2018 Review of CCTV Camera Operations

During 2018 the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) carried out an extensive review of the Public Safety and Corporate CCTV cameras of a number of local governments including the City of Melbourne's Safe City Camera Program.

The resulting report *"Security and Privacy of Surveillance Technologies in Public Places -* September 2018" can be found at [Surveillance-Technologies-in-Public-Places](https://www.audit.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-09/20180919-Surveillance-Technologies-in-Public-Places.pdf)[1] at the Victoria Auditor-General's Office.

While the VAGO report was generally favourable, the Audit Committee noted there were areas where the SCCP (Public Safety CCTV) was not fully compliant and made recommendations addressing those issues. The recommendations were implemented and reported on in 2019. *(Appendix A)*

3. SCCP CCTV Audit Committee

Establishment

CoM made the Program's operation subject to audit against its protocols and

operating procedures by an independent committee, the Melbourne Safe City Camera Audit Committee. (CoM drew and published Safe City Cameras Program Audit Committee Terms of Reference.) The Audit Committee is required to report to the CoM annually pursuant to the Committee's Terms of Reference.   The Report is available to the public.

Independent auditing of the Program's operation is intended to:

(a) ensure congruence between the Program's operation and the parameters set out in the Operations and Training Manual and the Program Manual;

(b) promote public confidence in the Program by making its operation transparent and accountable;

(c) ensure the Program's efficient, effective operation and management;

(d) support continuous improvement of the program through consideration and implementation of Audit Committee recommendations ; and

(e) identify any incidents of non-compliance with the terms of the Operations and Training Manual or the Program Manual.

From inception the CoM SCCP Audit Committee has been and continues to be independent of the Program operation. The Audit Committee notes that not all Australian capital city Safe City Cameras Programs have incorporated an independent CCTV Audit Committee as part of their program.   During the Audit Period, Police from NSW visited and liaised with the City of Melbourne and its SCCP Management.

Membership 2019

During the 2019 audit period the three member independent SCCP Audit Committee consisted of long-serving member Mr Bill Horman AM APM who was appointed Chairman, with 2018 appointees, Ms Margaret Rode (Governance Professional and Community Representative) and Mr Paul Ryan (Solicitor).

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[1] https://www.audit.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-09/20180919-Surveillance-Technologies-in-Public-Places.pdf

Meetings of SCCP Audit Committee 2018

The SCCP Audit Committee met on six occasions on the following dates:

- 13 February 2019

- 10 April 2019

- 19 June 2019

- 7 August 2019

- 23 October 2019

- 5 December 2019.

Between formal Committee meetings, the Chairman convenes "catch-up" meetings of the independent members of the Audit Committee. The independent members consider the catch-up meetings to be valuable and wish to continue to meet on a regular basis between formal meetings of the Audit Committee.

A schedule of meetings and attendees is attached: (*Appendix B)*

Support to SCCP Audit Committee

The Audit Committee wishes to again express its appreciation for support throughout the audit period, provided by:

- Mr Gordon Harrison, City of Melbourne Team Leader Engineering Programs

- Ms Christine Drummond, City of Melbourne Emergency Management Coordinator

- Mr Craig Buckingham, City of Melbourne Team Leader Security Services and his colleague Mr Rodney Gadsden.

- Victoria Police, the biggest single-user of the Program Product (CCTV recorded material) was represented at all meetings of the CCTV Audit Committee which significantly enhanced discussions, including police use of Product and police interaction with the Control Room.   The Police representatives gave a report at each meeting outlining some aspects of crime and particular incidents involving the police and the SCCP and Control Room.

  The Police representatives were:

  - Senior Sergeant Adam Tanner (from Melbourne East) who attended all meetings (including when Acting Inspector in-charge of his command providing continuity, which was greatly appreciated).

  - Another Senior Sergeant from Melbourne West attended various meetings as a consequence of Senior Sergeant Mick Wilmott (a regular attendee over several years), being assigned by Victoria Police to other roles from time to time, including as Acting Inspector) and not available:

  - Other police members who attended meeting during 2019 were:

  - Senior Sergeant Lisa Prentice-Evans from Melbourne West – since promoted to Inspector; and

  - Senior Sergeant Andrew Brady – representing Melbourne East

Continuity of police representation is viewed as important by the Audit Committee members and was included in the 2018 recommendations but, pleasingly improved throughout 2019.

Of particular value to the Committee through the audit period were Mr Buckingham's monthly Program Management Reports containing statistics, comparisons and commentary on incidents.

4. SCCP Audit Committee – Executive Summary 2019

CoM Response to Recommendations set out in 2018 Report

At each meeting the CoM reported on the progress/completion of each of the 2018 Report's recommendations.

Summary of SCCP activity in 2019

The CCTV Audit Committee found that the Safe City Camera Program operated efficiently and effectively throughout the review period.

The media reported from time to time an increased rate of certain types of crime in Victoria and at times highlighted crime and anti-social behavior in the CBD.

- During the review period, the SCCP recorded a record total of 5711, up from 4825 in the same period in 2018

- The five (5) most reported incident categories during 2019 accounted for 68% of all incidents:

    (i)   Public Order   1,417 Incidents up from 1293 (+9%)

    (ii)   Assault   869 Incidents up from 827 (+5%)

    (iii)   Welfare Checks   661 Incidents up from 537 (+23%)

    (iv)   Theft/Attempted Theft   565 Incidents up from 393 (+44%)

    (v)   Traffic related matter   206 incidents up from 196 (+5%)

Note: Drug-related matters   193 Incidents down from 256 (- 25%)

The number of incidents recorded and copies of footage provided to the police were greater than in any previous year.

Findings 2019

The Safe City Camera Program Audit Committee reviewed the operation of the Melbourne Safe City Camera Program for the period 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019 in accordance with its Terms of Reference and the relevant provisions of both the Program Manual and the Training Manual. (The Training Manual includes Standard Operating Procedures.)

The Committee found:

(i)   No evidence of disparity between the Program's aims, protocols and operating procedures.

(ii)   No evidence of failure by Program staff to observe security protocols and standard operating procedures as set out in the Training Manual.

(iii)   The Program and its operations were effectively and efficiently managed and coordinated.

(iv)   There were no new major events requiring the supply of cameras into either the Melbourne Events Operations Centre or the State Government Operations Centre. As in previous years supply of cameras into the Melbourne Events Operations Centre occurred on New Year's Eve and into the State Government Operations Centre for the "White Night" festival.

(v)   No evidence that Control Room Operators' entries on the Program Management System failed to comply with the requirements set out in the provisions of the Operations and Training. The level of detail of such entries continues to be satisfactory.

(vi)   No evidence of access to the Control Room outside the scope of the standard operating procedures and security protocols.

(vii)   Program staff maintained professional, cordial, efficient and effective interaction with authorised persons including police, other stakeholders and members of the public who visited the SCCP Control Room.

(viii)   No evidence of improper dissemination or use made of any Product.

(ix)   No complaints about the Program were made through this portal or to the CoM by any other means during 2019.

(x)   No members of the public or stakeholders raised any public interest issues.

(xi)   There were no Freedom of Information requests.

Relationship with Victoria Police

The relationship between Victoria Police and the SCCP is crucial to its effectiveness and, ultimately, city safety and security, including the implementation of counter-terrorism strategies.

The Audit Committee is encouraged by the high level of communication and co-operation between Control Room Operators and members of Victoria Police and other emergency services personnel.

The Auditor General also commented favourably on this close relationship in the 2018 Report on Security and Privacy of Surveillance Technologies in Public Places (p76) and the Committee is pleased to be able to report that this relationship continues to be very positive.

During the current review period, police commented and on occasions provided letters of commendation to SCCP staff in relation to their contribution to successful investigations of incidents observed by and passed onto the police by Control Room staff as well as indicating their appreciation for Product provided – some of which required considerable effort by the Control Room Operators in searching for and copying relevant footage.

The Audit Committee commends the Program staff and Management on this high level of effective communication and working relationship.

5. Recommendations for the forthcoming review period

2019 SCCP Audit Committee's recommendations

The following recommendations are put forward by the Audit Committee 2019 for consideration by the City of Melbourne, Victoria Police and for the SCCP Audit Committee in 2020.

1.   The Audit Committee to follow-up its 2019 recommendation to audit by site visits the installation of appropriate signage to be displayed near SCCP cameras as part of the Safe City Camera Program (expected completion in March 2020)

2.   The Audit Committee to consult with Victoria Police in relation to a site visit to the East Melbourne Police Station for the purpose of inspection of its recording, storage and documentation in relation to CoM Product, especially in relation to ultimate destruction of the CoM Product.

3.   The Audit Committee to continue to consult with the City of Melbourne in relation to the audit and follow-ups with regard to the recorded number of product still outstanding by non-police.

4.   The Audit Committee regularly receives at meetings reports from the City of Melbourne on:

   (i) complaints received in regard to the Safe City Camera Program

   (ii) Freedom of Information Requests in relation to the Safe City Camera Program

   (iii) any evidence of disparity between the Program's aims, protocols and operating procedures

   (iv) whether any new major events occur requiring the supply of cameras into either the Melbourne Events Operations Centre or the State Government Operations Centre.

   (v) any evidence that Control Room Operators' entries on the Program Management System failed to comply with the requirements set out in the provisions of the Operations and Training Manual.

   (vi) any evidence of access to the Control Room outside the scope of the standard operating procedures and security controls

   (vii) any evidence of improper dissemination or use made of any Product

5.   The City of Melbourne reports data to the Audit Committee on the number of hits on the City of Melbourne website with regard to:

(a) the Safe City Camera Program; and

(b) the SCCP Audit Committee Reports.

6.   The City of Melbourne explore the planning for the establishment of a permanent back-up Control Room at a different location for use as required to ensure important CCTV camera coverage is able to be provided to Victoria Police should, for whatever reason, the Control Room is put out of action.

Appendices

A   SCCP Audit Committee Minutes Dec 2019 – Recommendations from the 2018 Audit Report and Actions in Response

B   Schedule of Meetings 2019 – dates and attendance

Members (below) and dates of meeting (right)	13 Feb	10 Apr	19 Jun	7 Jul	12 Oct	5 Dec
BH	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
MR	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
PR	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CD	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
GH	N	N	Y	N	N	N
RG	N	Y	N	N	N	N
AT	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N
MW	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y
LPE	N	Y	Y	N	N	N
AB	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y

Independent members

BH   Bill Horman (Chair)

MR   Margaret Rode

PR   Paul Ryan

City of Melbourne

CH   Christine Drummond

CB   Craig Buckingham

RG   Rodney Gadsden

GH   Gordon Harrison

Police

AT   Senior Sergeant Inspector Adam Tanner

MW   Senior Sergeant Michael Wilmott

LPE   Senior Sergeant Lisa Prentice-Evans

AB   Senior Sergeant Andrew Brady