

FROM: **NO CCTV**
Press Release
8th February 2013
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Attn: News Desks

-- BEGINS --

NO CCTV SLAMS ORWELLIAN CONCEPT OF "SURVEILLANCE BY CONSENT" IN PROPOSED CCTV CODE

The government's proposed new Surveillance Camera Code of Practice [1] will do little to roll back the surveillance state warns campaign group No CCTV. The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (under which the Code is to be introduced) should have been an opportunity to ensure that a meaningful and informed debate took place on the use of surveillance cameras, and that evidence based decision making replaced the emotive knee-jerk introduction of CCTV cameras that currently pervades. Instead we are presented with a code of practice that redefines consent.

Charles Farrier of No CCTV said:

"The proposed Code is about perceived public confidence and not the promised protection of freedoms. In an echo of the hackneyed phrase 'policing by consent', the Code creates a truly Orwellian definition of 'surveillance by consent' - this apparently is overt surveillance in a public place in pursuit of a "legitimate aim" that "meets a pressing need". According to the Code consent is something that magically happens when a checklist is ticked, regardless of the views of the people actually being surveilled!

The danger of producing a code of practice, particularly one so heavily laden with technical standards, is that it will be viewed as a blueprint of how to use surveillance cameras rather than a thorough evaluation of whether or not to use cameras at all. We fear a repeat of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000, which introduced no new powers to use surveillance, yet led to a massive increase in state intrusion by local authorities.

What is needed if the government is committed to restoring and preserving our historic and valued traditions of freedom (to borrow a phrase from the Ministerial Foreword to the 2011 code consultation), is a thorough evaluation of surveillance cameras and an ethical discussion of whether it is appropriate to use such technology at all."

-- ENDS --

References:

[1] <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/about-us/consultations/surveillance-camera-consultation/>

NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. No CCTV is a UK group campaigning against the excessive use of surveillance cameras in the UK. Their homepage is at www.no-cctv.org.uk
2. For further information contact Charles Farrier at press@no-cctv.org.uk