

**CITY OF MELBOURNE
SAFE CITY CAMERAS
PROGRAM**

**SAFE CITY CAMERAS PROGRAM
AUDIT COMMITTEE
REPORT**

1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024¹

**CITY OF MELBOURNE
SAFE CITY CAMERAS PROGRAM
AUDIT COMMITTEE**

Mr Dean Robertson
Director, City Safety, Security and Amenity
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 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 to align with the financial year, in keeping with other City of Melbourne reporting.

Yours sincerely,

Bill Horman AM APM	Margaret Rode	Paul Ryan
Consultant	Governance Professional	Legal Practitioner
Chairman	Member	Member
Appointed Chairman in 2018; (appointed to Committee in 2011).	Appointed to Committee on 18/01/2018.	Appointed to Committee on 21/02/2018.

Signed.....

Signed.....

Signed.....

CONTENTS

Introduction – Change of Reporting Period	1
1. ESTABLISHMENT OF SAFE CITY CAMERAS PROGRAM (SCCP) AUDIT COMMITTEE.....	3
2. SCCP OPERATIONS DURING Financial Year 2023-2024	5
Cameras in Operation.....	5
Mobile Camera Vehicle	5
Control Room, Footage & CCTV Product.....	6
Product provided to Victoria Police.....	6
Dedicated Police Radio Base Station.....	6
CCTV Product – Dissemination, Tracking and Destruction.....	7
Control Room.....	7
Security.....	7
Police Acknowledge Value Partnership with SCCP.....	8
MOUs.....	8
Public Address Speakers.....	9
Control Room contact with Victoria Police Monitoring Assessment Centre	9
Extending Infrastructure and Sharing with Other Parties’ Cameras.....	9
City Safety - the Counter-Terrorism Environment and the SCCP.....	9
Exercise Soteria	10
Disparity between Program’s Aims &c Operating Procedures.....	10
Complaints.....	10
Freedom of Information.....	10
Victorian Auditor-General's Review of CCTV Camera Operations	11
3. SCCP AUDIT COMMITTEE.....	11
Independent Role.....	11
Membership 2023-2024.....	12
Meetings of SCCP Audit Committee in 2023-2024.....	12
Support to the SCCP CCTV Audit Committee	12
4. SCCP AUDIT COMMITTEE – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2023-2024.....	13
CoM Response to 2023=2024 Review’s Recommendations.....	13
Summary of SCCP activity in 2023-2024.....	13
Findings 2023-2024.....	14
Relationship with Victoria Police.....	15
5. SCCP AUDIT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS	15
6. APPENDICES.....	16

INTRODUCTION – Change of Reporting Period

Since the inception of the City of Melbourne’s Safe City Camera Program (SCCP), The “independent members” of the SCCP CCTV Audit Committee have submitted an Annual Report to the City of Melbourne. The Annual Reports are made available to Council and are ultimately available to the community via the City of Melbourne’s website. Up until this Report, Reports were submitted to cover a calendar year, but earlier in 2024 the decision was made to change the reporting period to the Financial Year.

This Report covers the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 and, following assistance of the SCCP management, the Report is able to provide its usual comparison with the previous financial year 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.

In the early part of the 2024, the SCCP Manager was seriously injured. He was off work for some time and then returned on “light duties” for a period before resuming full time. The Committee is able to report that although the manager’s skill, experience and expertise was missed, the SCCP and its Control Room managed to continue its role and functions in a manner which is a credit to the manager and his team.

1. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SAFE CITY CAMERAS PROGRAM & AUDIT COMMITTEE

On 6 December 1995, the City of Melbourne 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 City of Melbourne SCCP became operational on 27 February 1997.

From its inception, a SCCP CCTV Audit Committee was established consisting of three “independent” members (one of whom is appointed as the Chairperson), supported by representatives of Victoria Police and the City of Melbourne.

The inaugural Chairperson was the late Mr Norman Geschke, OBE the then immediate past State Ombudsman ². The independent members include a lawyer and a community representative.

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 proceedings.

² Norman Geschke OBE (1924-2018), State Ombudsman 1980-1984.

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) and Lygon Street, Carlton, monitored 24/7 by Safe City Camera Operators.

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

- Safe City Taxi Ranks monitored by the camera network
- Supporting the Melbourne Liquor Licensees Accord with Melbourne liquor licensees and coordinating meetings of the Melbourne Liquor Forum
- Victoria Police and City of Melbourne 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
- Liaison with Various Resident Associations in the municipality
- Local Safety Committee meetings - Neighbourhood Policing (Melbourne East and Melbourne West)
- Southbank Safety and Security Committee
- Assisting Building Emergencies as part of council's municipal building surveyor functions
- Assisting emergency services and statutory agencies during emergency incidents as part of follow-up or live investigations; and

- Regular Emergency Management Exercises developed and coordinated by the City of Melbourne with involvement of representatives of relevant agencies.

2. SCCP OPERATIONS DURING 2024 AUDIT PERIOD

Cameras in Operation

There was an increased number of 325 cameras at 2024 financial year end comprising:

- 121 Pan Tilt Zoom Cameras
- 176 Fixed Cameras
- 08 Taxi Rank and Help Point Cameras
- 05 Cameras on Safe City CCTV Mobile Vehicle
- 15 private cameras (eg Salvation Army and Hosier Lane)

During the first six months of 2024 it was noted more footage was provided to Victoria police, due largely to more cameras in-situ that create more likelihood of capturing footage.

The introduction of Evidence.Com created savings on materials, and greater efficiency on the timeliness of supply of footage to Victoria Police as it enables police to request footage electronically rather than having to attend the Control Room.

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

The City of Melbourne's SCCP website provides a map of locations of the SCCP cameras (it should be understood that the location of cameras is subject to ongoing review and change).

Mobile Camera Vehicle

The Melbourne Safe City Cameras Program has, in addition to fixed cameras, a Mobile Camera Vehicle, introduced in 2009. Since 2022 footage from cameras in the Mobile Camera Vehicle is directly fed to the SCCP Control Room. The independent members of the Audit Committee were provided with an inspection and demonstration of the vehicle and cameras in action and have viewed the effectiveness of the live-feed.

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/seven days a week by trained 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 with the State Police Operations Centre (SPOC) in operation, the Victoria Police can select what cameras they want to view - but the Safe City Operators retain actual control of the cameras.

Control Room Operators make electronic or hand-written notes/“running sheets” which are used for inputting the Incident Report in the Incident Management System. Such documents aid subsequent interrogation of the Incident Management System in relation to specific events and retrieval of relevant product (i.e. footage provided to police or others).

Footage in relation to an event is retained on the Council’s server for a minimum of 28 days (the “Holding Period”) after the event. In the absence of a request from Victoria Police or other relevant agencies or individuals, it is then recorded 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 copy is provided to the requesting party and the other copy retained by Council for a minimum of two years, after which it is destroyed unless further retained on request e.g. the matter could be relevant to a Coronial Inquest or trial.

Product provided to Victoria Police

In 2016, Victoria Police and CoM 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.

Subsequently a copy of the Victoria Police instructions and procedures was provided to the Audit Committee and the SCCP Program Manual amended to incorporate the agreement.

During the 2023-2024 financial year review period, no misuse or problem associated with product provided to Victoria Police was reported.

Dedicated Police Radio Base Station

The operational benefits for the Safe City Cameras Program in having a dedicated Victoria Police radio base station is evidenced by the increasing number of incidents the Control Room is alerted to via the Victoria Police radio network.

CCTV Product - Dissemination Tracking and Destruction

Product continues to be made available only to those authorised under relevant provisions of the Program Manual and release of product occurs only upon acceptance by applicants of necessary confidentiality, tracking, storage and destruction obligations.

Control Room

Security

Access to the Control Room is strictly limited and controlled in accordance with provisions of the Safe City Camera Program Manual.

During the reporting period, City of Melbourne management advised the committee that National Protective Services, an Australian owned company, was awarded the tender bid for a new Integrated Security Services Contract, replacing Securecorp. The seven-year contract came into effect on 7 May 2024. Many of the security staff, including highly skilled camera operators, were retained and successfully provided continuity of SCCP operations.

During financial year 2023-2024, City of Melbourne Management provided assurance to the Audit Committee that appropriate protection from hacking or other interference is in place and appropriate provisions are in place to ensure continuity of the Safe City Camera operations in the event of the SCCP Control Room being rendered inoperative.

In view of its importance, this Report recommends City of Melbourne continues to provide updates and reassurance to the Audit Committee regarding security and business continuity.

Police Acknowledge Valued Partnership with Safe City Camera Program

The SCCP Control Room staff are in direct radio contact with Victoria Police. SCCP Mobile Camera Vehicle staff are in direct contact with Control Room staff. The Audit Committee's Reports consistently note there is a very close working relationship between the Control Room Operators and Victoria 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.

In 2022 the Audit Committee was particularly pleased to record the exceptional honour and recognition given by the Victorian Chief Commissioner of Police Shane Patton APM to Mr Craig Buckingham, Team Leader, Security Services, and the Control Room Operators formally acknowledging the value of their work.

The inaugural award of the Victorian Police Company/Business Commendation to the City of Melbourne Safe City Cameras Program was presented in person by Chief Commissioner Patton, in the presence of the Lord Mayor Sally Capp, police representatives, City of Melbourne management, a number of SCCP Operators and members of the Audit Committee (both past and present members) on 27 October 2022 in the Melbourne Town Hall Commons area.

The citation reads:

***“In recognition of the exemplary working partnership with Victoria Police
to improve community safety in Melbourne”.³***

The independent members of the CCTV Audit Committee were impressed by the fact that within a short period of time almost 150 messages of congratulations and support appeared on Linked-In in response to a post of SCCP Manager Craig Buckingham.

On 23 December 2022, award-winning crime journalist Mr John Silvester for his weekly page “Naked City”, wrote an article *“Keeping an eye out across the city, on 222 cameras”*, focusing on the Melbourne Safe City Camera Program.⁴ This was the first time the SCCP was the subject of such detailed media coverage with access to Lord Mayor Sally Capp, SCCP Management and the SCCP Control Room. The initiative was discussed in Audit Committee meetings and was strongly supported by the Audit Committee.

In March 2024 the City of Melbourne published an article, *“How we’re helping keep Melbourne safe”* which provided an excellent summary of Melbourne’s Safe City Camera Program: see *Appendix “B”*.

During the writing of this Report, the Herald-Sun newspaper on 10 August published an article about the SCCP and its Control Room, *“Now Showing: A Catalogue of City Crime”*: see *Appendix “C”*. Again, the SCCP CCTV Audit Committee was consulted by the City of Melbourne and supported the request from the media (Herald-Sun) to inform the community on the important and effective role of the SCCP in helping keep the city safer.

MOUs

Current in 2024 were City of Melbourne Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Victoria Police and separately, the Independent broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission and Emergency Management Victoria.

Public Address Speakers for Emergency Situations

A Memorandum of Understanding between Victoria Police and Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) was signed in 2017 utilizing the SCCP hardware with public address speakers fitted onto cameras at CBD locations to be used in emergency situations.

³ See Appendix A

The speakers can be used to provide an audible warning sound and a message from Victoria Police to the public in an emergency situation. The speakers were not required to be used during July 2023-June 2024 other than for regular testing purposes.

Control Room Contact with 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 maintains its interest in being kept informed as to any relevant impacts on the arrangements.

The Chairman and Audit Committee members visited the Victoria Police Monitoring Assessment Centre in 2018, 2019 and in 2023 and were provided with a detailed overview of its operations, access and use of the live SCCP camera coverage.

In 2022 City of Melbourne procured an extra five years Agreement for the use of optic-fibre cable from a telecommunications company from 2023 to 2028. This fibre is used to connect thirty-nine different points in the field of coverage back to the Safe City Control Room, and one of those links is the main link into City West Police Station.

Extending Infrastructure and Sharing with Other Parties' Cameras

In 2023 agreement was reached between City of Melbourne and the Victorian Department of Justice for provision of additional SCCP cameras north along Lygon Street into Carlton and Argyle Square. This initiative was strongly supported by businesses and residents of Carlton and supported by the SCCP CCTV Audit Committee. The cameras became operational in the first half of 2024, including the first solar powered cameras.

City Safety, Counter-Terrorism, Major Emergencies and the SCCP

Major incidents in past years involving vehicles posing a threat to the lives and safety of CBD users, demonstrated 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 from any acts of terrorism, crimes or serious incidents.

Police representatives have commented very favourably on the improved speed of communication and supply of footage following the introduction of "Evidence.Com" software and online procedures.

Exercise Soteria

A multi-agency Emergency Management Exercise – Exercise Soteria – was organized and coordinated by the City of Melbourne on 14 June 2024. This simulated emergency provided representatives from multiple relevant agencies the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skill and experience while identifying areas for improvement. Two independent members of the Audit Committee attended as observers and were impressed with the standard of the exercise and the valuable benefits of such exercises.

Disparity between Program’s Aims & Operating Procedures

At the Audit Committee Chair’s request meeting agendas include reports by City of Melbourne management of any complaints, freedom of information requests or disparities between the Program’s Aims and Operating Procedures, etc. During the reporting period the independent members of the Audit Committee received assurances by management that there were none.

In the 2022 audit report, the independent members requested the opportunity to review, with the City of Melbourne, the SCCP manuals and procedures to ensure they reflect important changes and are up to date. In April 2024 the independent members were given, and took, the opportunity to provide input and await the final review by a consultant.

The independent members look forward to receiving the updated policies and procedures once approved by Council, as these will assist in fulfilling their auditing role.

Complaints

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

The SCCP Manual sets out a process by which complaints can be made about the operation of the Program.

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

No complaints were received during the period July 2023 – June 2024.

Freedom of Information

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

No Freedom of Information requests were received during the period July 2023 – June 2024.

Victorian Auditor-General’s 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 Cameras Program.

The VAGO report “*Security and Privacy of Surveillance Technologies in Public Places - September 2018*” can be found here:

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

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 have been progressively implemented and reported on.

The independent members of the Audit Committee are mindful that the Auditor General may revisit local government operations of CCTV in light of rapid changes in technology and the challenge of managing community expectations regarding safety, security and privacy.

This Report recommends that in 2024-2025 the Audit Committee, in conjunction with City of Melbourne, ensures that management’s reporting to the Committee, and the independent members’ inquiries and site inspections reflect the Program’s updated policies, manuals and operating procedures.

3. SCCP AUDIT COMMITTEE

Independent Role

The City of Melbourne made the operation of the Safe City Cameras Program operation subject to audit against its protocols and operating procedures by an independent committee called the Melbourne Safe City Camera Audit Committee. The Audit Committee is required to report to the City of Melbourne 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 compliance 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 City of Melbourne SCCP Audit Committee has been and continues to be independent of the Program operation.

Membership 2023-2024

During the 2023-2024 audit period, the SCCP Audit Committee's three independent members were 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). Chairman Mr Bill Horman was a member of the then Melbourne Safe City Executive when the Safe City Cameras Program was conceived and established.

Meetings of SCCP Audit Committee July 2023 – June 2024

During the Financial Year 2023-24 the SCCP Audit Committee met five occasions on the following dates;:

- 8 August 2023
- 10 October 2023
- 12 December 2023
- 7 March 2024
- 4 June 2024

Between formal Committee meetings, the Chairman communicated with the independent and other members of the Audit Committee by phone as emails. The independent members meet periodically for general Catch-Up meetings.

A schedule of meetings and attendees is ATTACHMENT A

Support to SCCP Audit Committee

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

- Mr Dean Robertson, City of Melbourne Director City Safety, Security and Amenity
- Ms Christine Drummond, City of Melbourne Emergency Management Coordinator
- Mr Craig Buckingham, City of Melbourne Security Manager
- Victoria Police, the biggest single-user of the Program's product, was represented at all meetings of the SCCP Audit Committee, significantly enhancing discussions and providing valuable feedback on police use of Product and police interaction with the Control Room. The Police representatives report at each meeting outlining some aspects of crime and particular incidents involving the police and the SCCP Control Room.

Police representatives, generally of Inspector or Senior Sergeant rank, from Melbourne West and Melbourne East Police Stations attend the meetings, depending on rosters and police operational demands. Continuity of police representation is viewed as important by the Audit Committee members.

Of particular value to the Committee are Mr Buckingham’s monthly Program Management Reports containing statistics, comparisons, and commentary on notable incidents.

Also of value are the police reports. The Audit Committee notes the regular police praise and appreciation of the timely assistance and expertise of the SCCP Operators.

4. SCCP AUDIT COMMITTEE – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2023-2024

City of Melbourne Response to Recommendations in the 2022 and 2023 Audit Reports

At each Audit Committee meeting, the City of Melbourne reported on the progress towards completion of each of the 2022 and 2023 Reports’ recommendations.

Summary of SCCP activity in 2023-2024

The Audit Committee found that the Safe City Cameras Program operated efficiently and effectively throughout the review period, notably increasing the number of incidents reported during what could have been a disrupted period of transition from Securecorp to National Protective Services

During the review period, the SCCP recorded a total of 5,905 incidents, down from 5,986 in the same period in 2022-3.

The five (5) most reported incident categories during the reported period 2023-24 are shown below, together with figures in the same category during the financial year 2022-23.

<i>Incident Category</i>	<i>2023-4</i>	<i>2022-3</i>
Assault	1,181	1,225
Theft/Attempted Theft	1,068	1041

Public Order	796	878
Traffic-related matters	703	756
Welfare Checks	369	564
Note: Drug-related matters	137	146

Police representatives reported on the challenge of policing the increased number, size and frequency of demonstrations and associated disruption in the city during the reporting period.

Findings July 2023 – June 2024

The Safe City Cameras Program Audit Committee reviewed the operation of the Melbourne Safe City Cameras Program for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 in accordance with its Terms of Reference and the relevant provisions of both the Program Manual and the Training Manual.

Management reported regularly to Committee meetings and provided assurances that:

- (i) No instances of disparity between the Program's aims, protocols and operating procedures.
- (ii) No complaints about the Program were made during January – June 2024.
- (iii) No evidence of failure by SCCP staff to observe security protocols and standard operating procedures as set out in the Training Manual.
- (iv) The Program and its operations were effectively and efficiently managed and coordinated.
- (v) There were no new major events requiring the supply of cameras into either the Melbourne Events Operations Centre or the State Government Operations Centre.
- (vi) 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.
- (vii) No evidence of access to the Control Room outside the scope of the standard operating procedures and security protocols.

- (viii) 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.
- (ix) No evidence of improper dissemination or use made of any Product.
- (x) No members of the public or stakeholders raised any public interest issues.
- (xi) No Freedom of Information requests were received.

Relationship between Victoria Police and SCCP Personnel

The relationship between Victoria Police and the SCCP is crucial to its effectiveness and, ultimately, city safety and security. The independent members of the Audit Committee are pleased to report that the effectiveness of this relationship continues.

The Audit Committee notes and commends the high level of professionalism, communication and co-operation between Control Room Operators and members of Victoria Police and other emergency services personnel.

5. 2024 SCCP AUDIT COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are put forward by the Audit Committee for consideration by the City of Melbourne, Victoria Police and the SCCP Audit Committee in 2024.

1. The City of Melbourne provides the Audit Committee with final approved SCCP manuals, policy and procedures to assist the independent members' site visits, and agenda items for reporting.
2. The City of Melbourne provides the Independent Members of the Audit Committee with the opportunity to view and have input to any City of Melbourne's proposal to widen the purpose and use of SCCP cameras and product.
3. The Independent Members of the Audit Committee visit the SCCP Control Room in 2024.
4. The City of Melbourne provides throughout 2024 - 2025 updates and reassurance to the Audit Committee regarding security and business continuity.

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix A: Schedule of CCTV Audit Committee Meetings and Membership July 2023 – June 2024

Appendix B: City of Melbourne article, March 2024: “How we’re helping keep Melbourne safe”

Appendix C: Herald-Sun article, 10th August 2024 – “*Now Showing: A Catalogue of City Crime*”.

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS JULY 2023 – JUNE 2024 – DATES AND ATTENDANCE

Member	08/08/23	10/10/23	12/12/23	07/03/24	04/06/243
BH	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
MR	Y	A	Y	Y	Y
PR	A	Y	Y	Y	Y
CD	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CB	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
DR	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
PS	A	Y	A	A	A
DH					Y
AJ			Y	Y	A
GI	Y	A			
YY		Y			
CP	Y				
JV	Y				

INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

BH BILL HORMAN (Chair)
 MR MARGARET RODE
 PR PAUL RYAN

CITY OF MELBOURNE

CD CHRISTINE DRUMMOND
 CB CRAIG BUCKINGHAM
 DR DEAN ROBERTSON

VICTORIA POLICE

AJ ANTHONY JOHNSON Senior Sergeant
 PS PETER SAMBELL Senior Sergeant
 DH DALE HUNTINGTON Inspector
 GI GUY IRVINE, Senior Sergeant
 CP CRAIG PEARSON, Inspector
 JV JAMES VASS, Acting Sergeant

**City of Melbourne article, March 2024:
“How we’re helping keep Melbourne safe”**

How we're helping keep Melbourne safe

We're investing in critical safety infrastructure, lighting and cameras.



As the third most liveable city in the world, we take safety and security seriously here in Melbourne.

For us, safety is at the core of our renowned liveability status.

If people don't feel safe, they won't want to live, work or visit here.

While Victoria Police provides policing services to the community, the City of Melbourne invests in safety and security infrastructure within the city and in our security teams and their ability to collaborate with police and other emergency services.



The first of the new CCTV cameras installed in Carlton

Investment in safety and security

This year, we're investing \$6 million in critical safety infrastructure and resources, including more safety lighting to reduce antisocial behaviour at night.

In partnership with the Victorian Government, we're currently expanding our closed-circuit television camera network into new neighbourhoods like Carlton with eight cameras to be installed in key locations like Lygon Street and Argle Square by July.

We've also upgraded our safe city cameras in the CBD, along with upgrading lighting in key precincts such as Bourke Street, between Exhibition and Spring streets.

We know police can't be everywhere at once but this network of closed-circuit TV surveillance cameras helps create a safer environment and reduce crime levels by deterring potential offending and helping in crime detection.

The cameras operate in areas where antisocial behaviour or criminal activity is historically more likely to occur.

Signage is placed in the monitored areas to alert the community of the surveillance.

Our specially trained security contractors in our Safe City Cameras Program Control Room monitor these cameras 24 hours a day, seven days a week, recording incidents and alerting police.

The footage can also be viewed at police stations and on officers' devices when responding to an incident.

In the past decade, the Safe City Cameras Program has:

- Recorded 47,258 incidents
- Provided 9,706 copies of recorded footage to Victoria Police
- And transferred 30,160 occurrences of live vision to police.

What started with 23 cameras in 1995 and a team of one has grown to a slick operation of 254 cameras and a mobile CCTV car, plus 11 dedicated contract security staff, comprising two round-the-clock operators and a full-time technician and apprentice.

And we're not stopping there. In May, we're adding a Safe City Supervisor role from Monday to Friday.

This will enhance our proactive monitoring capability on the streets, improve training of existing and new Safe City Operators, streamline our administrative functions by processing police applications for footage faster, and provide us with a resource to constantly look at improvement of the system and operations.



We'll soon be employing a Safe City Supervisor to assist with providing CCTV camera footage to police

Our Safe City CCTV Car, which operates from 10pm to 6am on Friday and Saturday nights, will also be expanded to Thursday nights this year.

This vehicle is fitted with 360-degree CCTV surveillance cameras to record in real-time with electronic media downloaded at the end of each shift.

The car's movements are directed via the Safe City Control Room and tasked to jobs where our permanent cameras can't view for example, if there's an incident in a small laneway.

This means we are able to report live incidents of crime, with accurate descriptions and paths of travel, to triple 000 and support police responses.

This is just one example of our collaborative efforts with emergency services across the city.

Trends we're seeing in Melbourne

We constantly identify and respond to emerging security trends.

One of these is an increase in high-level criminal damage and arson in some of our main amenity blocks in our parks.

Thanks to our security team’s innovative approach, we’re trialling an environmental sensor the HALO that can detect smoke, spray paint and yelling to alert us of the date and time of incidents for potential monitoring.

The sensor is linked to our CCTV management system.

Already, on two occasions footage has been provided to police from arson events in an amenity block in South Yarra; and incidents of arson have reduced in the past five months.



Our local laws team works closely with Victoria Police to ensure the city is safe for traders and visitors

Security and supporting our business community

Our investment in security infrastructure is not only about liveability, it’s also about supporting our business community.

We know that security done well supports local business, and gives customers the confidence to visit our local traders.

That's why we work with our business community, encouraging them to maintain their own security equipment such as lighting, CCTV cameras, door hardware and signage to enhance the perception of safety in and around a property.

This also includes reporting faulty public lighting, dumped rubbish, graffiti or overflowing bins so we can rectify this as soon as possible.

We know our traders are busy, which is why we have a hotline ([9658 9658](tel:96589658)) and [online reporting tool](#) to make this as easy as possible.

There's certainly an impetus to invest in safety and safety maintenance.

Our security teams find there's a correlation clean, well maintained and managed properties generally promote better behaviour from people interacting in those areas.

Herald-Sun article, 10 August 2024
“Now Showing: A Catalogue of City Crime”.



Keeping an eye out across the city, on 220 cameras

Here the Spirit of Christmas takes a back seat, which is why a giant blow-up koala had to be deflated to avoid blocking cameras.

By **John Silvester**

Sunday Age - NAKED CITY - DECEMBER 23, 2022



The number of monitoring screens was tripled after the 2017 Bourke Street tragedy.*CREDIT:JOE ARMAO*

Hidden inside Melbourne’s 155-year-old town hall sits a secure, high-tech room where two experienced security officers scan their computer screens, expecting the unexpected.

On the front wall is a bank of more than 100 screens showing images beamed from 220 security cameras dotted around the city.

On one, we see an ambulance pull up, lights flashing. On the electronic wall, triple-zero operators patch in to see if more help is needed.

The screens show live shots down St Kilda Road to the Shrine, people leaving Flinders Street Station and workers going about their daily business.

Just outside is a high-profile council-controlled private security vehicle — equipped with five fixed cameras and one 360-degree camera to patrol Melbourne lanes not covered by the cameras attached to buildings and poles.



The Safe City camera car that puts electronic eyes down blind spots.*CREDIT:JOE ARMAO*

One night when an idiot tried to mount the footpath to run someone over, the intended victim was able to jump on the camera car for safety. It was designed to deter crime, but not that way.

To the side of the room is Victoria's oldest gold safe, now transformed into the electronic engine room, filled with blinking computers and thousands of hours of video recordings.

This is the command centre of Melbourne's Safe City operation — designed as an early alert for everything from exuberant crowds to a terrorist assault.

Following the [2017 Bourke Street attack](#) that killed six and injured 27, the camera network was tripled and a public address system added to warn of future threats.

After last week's shameful soccer pitch invasion, police went to the room to look at footage of the hooligans as they entered and left the stadium. It will be part of the eventual evidence packages presented in court, proving what morons ignore: you can run, but you can't hide.

Next week on New Year's Eve, when an estimated 500,000 people will roll into Melbourne for the fireworks, the cameras will look for crowd crushes and alert police and council crowd controllers to divert people from dangerous bottlenecks.

With five major celebration points, the cameras will scan for lost kids and dangerous flashpoints as well as the over-refreshed and the under-prepared.

Here, the spirit of Christmas takes a back seat, which is why a giant blow-up koala had to be deflated to avoid blocking cameras. Trees are also pruned to make sure there are no blind spots.

The cameras pinpoint violence, with operators immediately alerting police. They know the city by heart and don't need to look at a map, knowing not only the street but the exact number of the location.

In 1995, the City of Melbourne resolved to set up the Safe City program by installing 23 cameras. It is now central to all public events.



Looking for trouble. Inside the monitoring room.*CREDIT:JOE ARMAO*

Lord Mayor Sally Capp says: “It is making a big difference and is now absolutely fundamental to the security and safety of Melbourne.”

It is now a way of life. There are hundreds of private security cameras in the city and the first instinct of many is to whip out their phones to record anything that moves. Even private cameras around the Salvation Army’s Project 614 support centre in Bourke Street can be patched in when needed.

Compare that to the outcry when a handful of cameras were installed in 1981, supposedly to monitor traffic, before the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

City police Inspector Jamie Templeton says the cameras are part of an investigator's bag of tricks and provide real-time intelligence.

This year, there have been 5012 incidents in the city, with police receiving valuable footage in 1444 cases.

In the past decade, the Safe City Cameras Program recorded 43,427 incidents, and provided 8025 copies of footage.

In the same time, it provided triple-zero operators with live vision nearly 30,000 times.

There can be no more tragic and graphic example of the use of CCTV in a criminal investigation than the [2018 murder of Eurydice Dixon](#), who was stalked for nearly five kilometres before being attacked in Princes Park, Carlton.



Jaymes Todd on the night he killed Eurydice Dixon. He was caught on multiple cameras as he stalked her for nearly an hour. *CREDIT: VICTORIA POLICE*

The offender, Jaymes Todd, then 20, spotted her outside Flinders Street Station and followed her for nearly an hour.

He trailed about 15 seconds behind her, occasionally stopping and pretending to roll a cigarette to conceal his real intentions.

He handed himself in within 12 hours after police released images of the suspect, and Todd's friends contacted him.

The cameras couldn't save Dixon, but they did stop Todd from reoffending.

Increasingly CCTV is becoming the central plank to prosecutions because the camera doesn't lie.

A few weeks ago, Aaron Ong was [found guilty of the 2019 ambush murder](#) of fruiterer Paul Virgona (his co-offender Josh Rider had earlier pleaded guilty) in a case where the prosecution relied heavily on CCTV.

Templeton says if the footage does not capture the crime, it can still identify the offender through clothing and car registration details. And tattoos can be a cop's best friend.

It can be the alibi-buster when the suspect says they weren't there. "There you are walking from Flinders Street Station or getting out of your car," Templeton says.

The experienced operators become electronic time travellers, working back from the incident frame by frame to see the exact movement of suspects from the time they enter the city until they commit a crime.

Even when a crime is not captured, the offenders can be. If there are a series of burglaries, the cameras are used to check car registrations to identify potential suspects.

Templeton says when police are called, the live feed is patched through to the officers' computer tablets, ensuring they are better prepared for what they will confront. "It gives us situational awareness and lets us know how many people we need."

A veteran of city policing, Templeton uses the cameras during protests to get police to potential trouble spots.

The cameras, he says, stop crime because many would-be offenders know their images will be captured. "It covers every corner and has been a game changer."

He says it is also valuable when there have been complaints against police because it provides more comprehensive coverage than body-worn cameras — a little like going upstairs at a Test match for a video review.

The cameras are just one club in the bag and, Templeton says, police can't rely on them exclusively. You need to talk to people, gather facts and make your own judgments.

At the back of the room are two old-fashioned blue folders, one marked Missing Persons and the other POI (Persons of Interest).

Craig Buckingham, Security Manager for the City of Melbourne, says they are contacted “every second day” about runaway wards of the state and have a 75 per cent pick-up rate: “We know where to look.”

Dean Robertson, the council’s Director of City Safety, Security and Amenity, says a regular complaint of city residents and regulars is the lack of visible police patrolling.

He says the cameras add a constant presence and send police to where they are needed, leading to less wasted resources.

Instead of a call from the public followed by general duties police arriving to assess a violent incident, specialist units such as the Critical Incident Response Team can immediately be dispatched when seconds matter.

It is a world away from the old days, when detectives would leave the Russell Street “Bullring” to go to the View Room, a theatrette where the freshly arrested would be paraded catwalk-style and told to turn left and right, so the cops would be able to recognise them if they saw them in the street.

The best cop was the legendary Reg “Eagle-Eye” Henderson, who carried a book with hundreds of photos of the most wanted. He managed to arrest more than 300 simply by recognising them in the street.

Now police can look at image after image captured on the screens and produce absolute evidence to present in court.