BELIEFS ABOUT CCTV

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Police set high hopes to new super-cameras

All other measures haven’t worked. 55 advanced cameras on house-walls have filmed everything that have occurred in three disadvantaged centre areas during four weeks.

However, the new legislation, putting on restrictions, is a threat. But we will appeal.

- Obviously, the police believe strongly in effectiveness of CCTV.

- What can we learn from research evidence?
Outline

• Own experiences evaluating CCTV
  • Process and results
• Swedish experiences
• Systematic reviews of CCTV
  • Campbell Collaboration
  • EMMIE Concept
• The police view
  • Conversation with officer in charge at upper police bureaucracy
• Concluding reflections
Oslo evaluation

- Impressed by UK colleagues Oslo police wanted CCTV surveillance by Oslo central railway station.
- Aim – to reduce criminality and increase feelings of safety.
- Norwegian politicians hesitant to accept CCTV by police because of integrity threats.
Condition for Oslo CCTV trial – an evaluation study

- Requirement by Norwegian Department of Justice.
- To be carried out by the Police University College.
- I was in charge of the project.
  - Found and hired a researcher for the job.
  - Oslo police funded the project.
- After discussions – agreement with Oslo police to conduct an impact evaluation.
- Focus on effects on crime and feelings of safety.
On daily basis about 70,000 persons pass the area.
Map over surveilled area

Karl Johan's street

System: 6 cameras operated at railway station.

Links to Oslo police dispatch center.
Three sub studies

Pre and post evaluation designs

1. Structured interviews with shopkeepers in area covered by the CTTV-surveillance (experimental area).
2. Time series analyses of police incident log.
3. Times series of crimes reported to the police.
Summary of results

Winge & Knutsson, 2003

- More incidents detected in surveilled area.
- Indication of reduction of robbery/theft from person and bicycle thefts.
- No signs of crime displacement.
- No change in perception of criminality by shopkeepers.
- Indication of improvement in perception of public order.
- Positive attitudes to CCTV-surveillance.
- Continued belief in its efficiency – but decreased.
Main conclusion

Assumed strong effects on feelings of security and on crime could not be substantiated.
And then….

• Oslo police did not accept the result.
• CCTV surveillance continued.
• National Police Directorate required a new evaluation, but did not inform the Police College.
• Oslo police had no idea about what they wanted to be evaluated.
• No evaluation conducted.
• According to the Director of the National Police Directorate enthusiasm for CCTV in other cities decreased.
• CCTV scheme now closed down.
Swedish evaluations of CCTV

• 6 reports from the Swedish National Council for Crime prevention
  • 1 meta review 2007 (Welsh and Farrington, a Campbell Collaboration review).
• 3 evaluation studies
  • 2003 – Malmö. Somewhat mixed results
  • 2009 – Landskrona no-effect
  • 2015 – Stockholm no-effect (preliminary findings 2013 and 2014)
Stockholm study

- CCTV in two centre city areas (7 resp. 9 cameras).
- Aim – prevent crimes, increase feelings of safety, and increase clear-ups.
- Permission for 3 years – condition evaluation by NCP.
- CCTV active in nights, and active monitoring at dispatch centre during weekend nights.
Results in short

• Crime decreased in surveilled areas, but also in the 7 control areas. Interpretation – part of general crime drop. Conclusion: no effect.
  • NB - on average only 3 target type crimes reported per place and weekend night.

• Most people did not know the areas were surveilled but believed CCTV was effective.

• Police positive to CCTV.

• And clear-ups?
Contribution to clear-ups

n=560 crimes reported during monitored time in CCTV surveilled areas.

There are (must be) cleared-up crimes among these.

- Crimes with no footage use: 79%
- Requested not examined: 6%
- Examined not used: 10%
- Useful - no prosecution: 2%
- Decision to prosecute: 2%
- Footage decisive: 1%

There are (must be) cleared-up crimes among these.
Systematic Review

- Welsh and Farrington (2008). n=41

“The studies included in this systematic review indicate that CCTV has a modest but significant desirable effect on crime, is most effective in reducing crime in car parks ....” (p. 18).
Table 7
Meta-Analysis of CCTV Evaluations in City and Town Centers

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>RES</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
<th>P</th>
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<tr>
<td>All 20 studies*</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>0.97-1.20</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 UK studies*</td>
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<td>5 other studies*</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>0.83-1.13</td>
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</table>

Table 10
Meta-Analysis of CCTV Evaluations in Car Parks and Other Places

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>RES</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All 6 studies*</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>1.39-2.96</td>
<td>.0003</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

RES=relative effect size
Systematic review via EMMIE concept covering 41 evaluation studies

- **E** = Effects found.
- **M** = Mechanisms identified (how a measure works).
- **M** = Moderators identified (conditions needed to activate mechanisms).
- **I** = Implementation (what was found to be needed to put the measure in place).
- **E** = Economy (costs and returns on costs of the measure).

See http://whatworks.college.police.uk/toolkit
Effect

• How effective is it?

• Overall, the evidence suggests that CCTV can reduce crime.
• Significant reductions in vehicle crime and property crime.
• No evidence of an effect on violent crime. No signs of displacement of property crimes.
Mechanism

• *How does it work?*

A. Deterring criminals by increasing their perception of the risk of getting caught;
B. Increasing the actual risk of getting caught;
   (Four more indirect mechanisms described).

• However, none of these potential mechanisms are empirically tested and the authors note that this should be done.
Moderators

• *In which contexts does it work best?*

• There is good evidence that CCTV effectiveness varies considerably by context.

• The effect was non-significant in city and town centre, public housing and public transport.

• CCTV appears most effective in a car park setting.
Implementation

- *What can be said about implementing this initiative?*

- Types of camera tested in the studies varied.
- The technical specification of cameras should be considered during implementation.
- Most of the successful CCTV systems involved active monitoring of the cameras, typically by security personnel (i.e. not the police).
Economic considerations

- *How much might it cost?*

- No information on costs of CCTV in the reviews.
- Estimate: more than £250 million (approximately $500 million) of public money was spent on CCTV over the 10-year period of 1992 to 2002 in the UK.
What about the Swedish police?

Conversation with the officer in charge of developing the National CCTV Concept at NOA – National Operative Unit.

• CCTV works better than research indicates. (Had not read the NCP Stockholm report.)
• Too narrow focus on preventive effects.
• Immature technique evaluated. Technical progression last 7-8 years make the systems far better.
• Useful for operative purposes; documenting occurrences.
• However, the police inclined to be “operative”. Bad at tedious tasks like creating effective processes and routines.
• Had systematically checked police systems for CCTV footage. Built his opinion from cases he had encountered – in essence an anecdotal approach.

• As to the 55 cameras in 3 disadvantaged areas – dedicated officers in charge. No plans to use these camera systems to evolve lacking processes and routines.

• No firm plans for evaluations.

• Go for full-scale implementation with no prior on site trials. 23 disadvantaged areas. About 1 million SEK per CCTV set.

• Displeased with proposal for new Kamerabevakningslag (Camera Surveillance Law). Too restrictive; e.g. four weeks and then mandatory application for permission.
Upper police bureaucracy

• In 2009 requirement from the government to establish an evaluation unit
  • To find out what works.
  • For police to become a learning organization.
• After 6 month the National Police Board deserted what they had stated to the Government.
• In the 2015 major police reform remnants of the evaluation unit became an organizational headache. Maybe non-existent?
• But Swedish police invest in Evidence Based Policing.
  • Police leaders follow the Masters Program in Cambridge run by Lawrence Sherman.
CCTV – an easy sell?

Reinforced by recent events many believe in CCTV’s efficiency.

- The Stockholm April 17 terror attack where footage almost immediately was available and terrorist soon afterward was apprehended.
- Sexual assaults during rock festivals – big issue last year, fewer reported crimes this year.
- These instances are used by the police.
- Security industry lobbying.
- My worry – another 25 mill. SEK down the drain?