



TfL Corporate Archives Research Guides

Research Guide No 46: CCTV

Introduction

Closed-circuit television, more widely known as CCTV, has been a part of London Transport's infrastructure since the 1960's, when the organisation began experimenting with the technology with an eye towards installing it on the newly built Victoria Line. The primary objective of these early CCTV trials was for it to assist in crowd control and emergency situations. The trials were a success, and when the Victoria Line launched, its CCTV system was touted as one of the many features that made it "the most modern Underground railway in the world."



In the decades since this initial implementation of CCTV, London Transport has installed the technology more widely and for a greater breadth of purposes throughout the network. For example, CCTV has been key in the shift to One Person Operation (OPO) on Underground trains.

CCTV is a core piece of the organisation's Security Strategy, acting as an important deterrent against crime.

Early 1960's: London Transport Trials CCTV Installations

London Transport started working with CCTV installations in the early 1960's to help improve passenger control and flow at stations. One of the motivations for this approach was the forthcoming opening of the Victoria Line, which was being heralded as having the latest in design and technological advances, of which CCTV was seen as a key element. The proposed plan was to install "an 'operations room' in the ticket halls at major stations on the new line, at which a suitably qualified supervisor would be on duty, and to provide

closed-circuit television circuits with cameras situated on each platform and at the bottom of the escalators.” [LT000586/749]

In order to assess the feasibility and potential impact of this plan, London Transport first launched an experimental installation at Holborn Station. This station was chosen as the pilot site for a number of key reasons: “it has several street entrances, a heavy two-way flow into and out of the station in the peaks, a heavy peak boarding and alighting movement on the platforms, and considerable off-peak traffic; in addition it is used by many provincial and overseas visitors who would provide a test for the ‘talk-back’ enquiry equipment.” These trials “confirmed [CCTV’s] usefulness in helping to control the movement of crowds and to deal with emergency situations.” [LT000586/749 and LT000287/005]

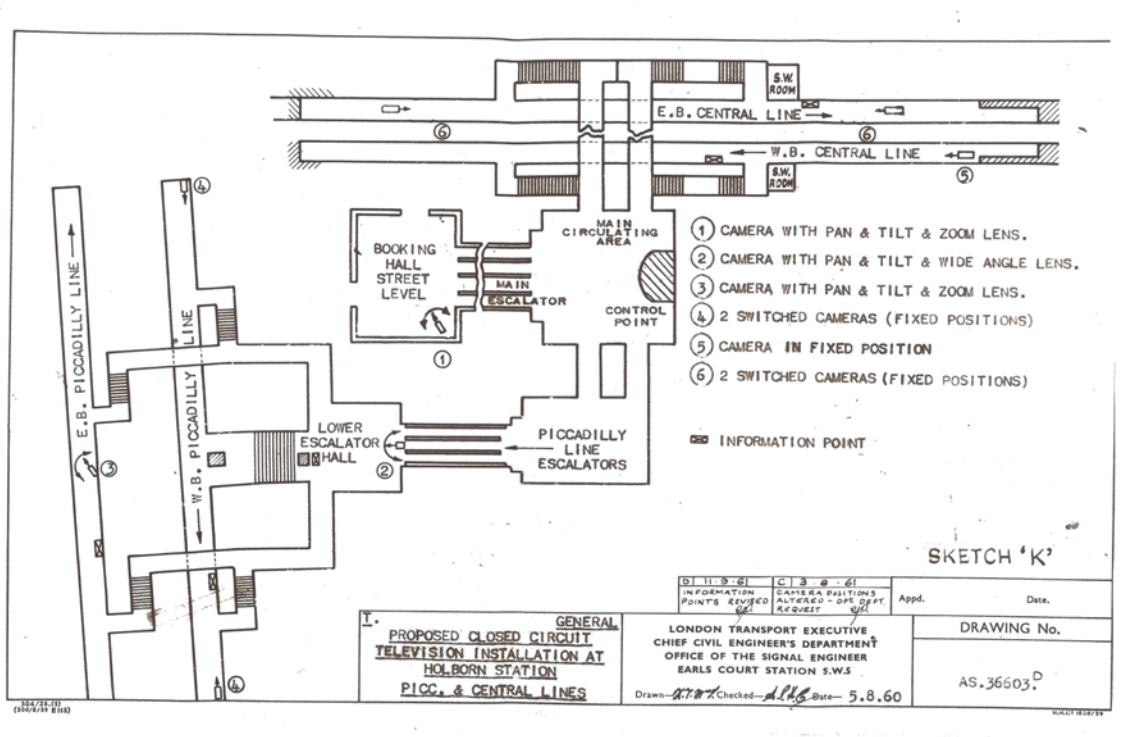


Image LT000586/205

1960's: Victoria Line Brings the Wider Launch of CCTV

London Transport announced the government's approval of the Victoria Line project in 1962, with press releases describing how it would “be the most modern Underground railway in the world” including “closed-circuit television at central areas stations to assist in controlling and speeding up the movement of passengers at peak hours.” Another press release called CCTV the “TV ‘Hook-Up’ for Victoria Line.” [LT000287/005]

1970-1990's: Expanded Use and Utility of CCTV

Following the implementation of CCTV on the Victoria Line, London Transport then sought to leverage its benefits in other areas, including:

- **One Person Operation (OPO) on Underground trains:** CCTV was a key part of the shift towards OPO beginning in the early 1980's, where trains were being manned by one person who would monitor all of the train functions and duties, including

the opening and closing of passenger doors at stations. CCTV was crucial for ensuring passenger safety on station platforms in the OPO set-up. [LT000280/027 and 223]

- **Installations at additional station platforms within the network:** For example, in 1977, CCTV was proposed for six Central Line stations as a way to “improve the operation of the railway service and crowd control.” [LT000254/1245]
- **CCTV on buses:** Since the early 1980’s, buses have been fitted with CCTV systems to address problems of antisocial behaviour, robbery, theft, and criminal damage. [LT000259/001/001/002/001/003/025, including image]
- **Engineering surveys:** CCTV was also adopted in the early 1990’s for survey purposes, allowing engineers to more safely monitor and survey sites in the network. [LT001883/002/003]
- **CCTV at ticket barriers and gates:** In 1993, London Underground began installing CCTV monitor displays at gatelines and ticket barriers to help prevent staff assault, and customer & staff fraud. [LT001315/009]



CCTV as a Core Component of London Transport’s Security Strategy

During its early implementation phases, CCTV was seen as a tool for helping station staff with crowd control, but as the technology became more widely implemented, it was recognised as having important benefits in terms of the security and safety of passengers and staff. Here is a timeline of relevant documents:

- **In 1975**, CCTV became a priority investment in order to deter assaults on staff and hooliganism. [LT000139/012]
- **In 1980**, “inexpensive but highly visible CCTV cameras” were installed at 55 Broadway “as a deterrent to would-be intruders.” [LT000078/022]
- **In 1986**, following a “Crime on the London Underground” report published by the Department of Transport, London Underground implemented a Passenger Security Strategy that included measures involving the outside community, soft measures like staff training and publicity, and hardware for security, including CCTV. [LT000261/1300]
- **In 1988**, the Fennell Report focused on safety procedures and recommendations for the Underground, citing CCTV and the extension of this technology to British Transport Police as a key safety recommendation. [LT000838/045 and 54]

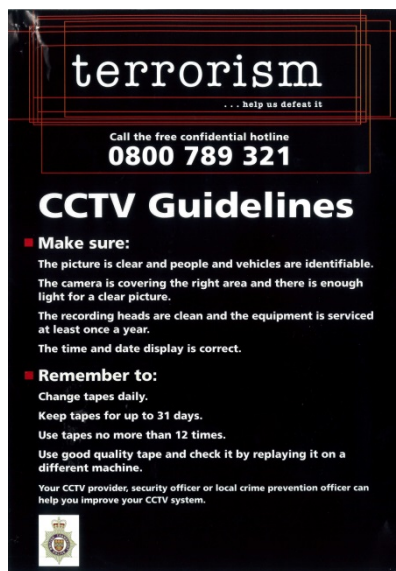


Image LT000336/009

CCTV and Transport for London (TfL) Today

Today, CCTV continues to be an important part of TfL’s strategy for security and passenger safety. For details of CCTV cameras across the London Underground network, TfL has provided this Freedom of Information (FOI) request detail online at <https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/transparency/freedom-of-information/foi-request-detail?referenceId=FOI-0077-1718>

TfL also provides information on CCTV & surveillance cameras online, describing the “use personal data collected via Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) and Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) camera systems across London's transport network.” <https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/privacy-and-cookies/cctv>

Files of Interest in the Archive

Transport for London Corporate Archives holds many records pertaining to CCTV and all its many facets. In addition to the documents outlined above, the following key series of records contain valuable information. The list below is not exhaustive so please contact the Corporate Archives should you be looking for something in particular.

ArchiveRefNum	Content
LT000078/022	Security files containing a letter dated 11 Dec 1982 describing the installation of CCTV at 55 Broadway, 1982.
LT000102/484-486	London Underground Limited (LUL) Department of Signal and Electrical Engineering specifications for CCTV cameras, 1983-1987.
LT000106/010/001/055	Engineering Standard for CCTV Systems, 1992.
LT000106/010/001/063	Standard defining the technical requirements necessary to provide one person operation track-to-train CCTV systems, 1993.
LT000120/039	London Underground: Passenger Security 14 Mar 1989-30 Jun 1989.

LT000129/076	CCTV Review - LUL 1996.
LT000139/012	Assaults on Staff and Hooliganism: Includes recommendations to install CCTV at stations to protect staff and passengers, 1974-1977.
LT000254/1245	Memorandum for the Executive describes provision for CCTV at six Central Line stations, 1977.
LT000259/001/001/002/001/003/025	Presentation about live access to CCTV cameras on buses, 2005.
LT000261/1300	Post Implementation Review of CCTV at 43 Stations, 1991.
LT000276/010/001/015/002	Engineering Specification: Preventative Maintenance and Repair of CCTV Equipment, 1987.
LT000280/027	CCTV papers defining its function and maintenance for One Person Operation (OPO), 1989-1990.
LT000280/223	OPO reports and correspondence, including descriptions of the use, maintenance and enhancements of OPO CCTV and mirrors, and a document summarising the history of OPO monitors, 1989-1994.
LT000287/005	Development of Victoria Line: Press releases describe the installation and benefits of CCTV, 1961-1968.
LT000336/009	Leaflet on CCTV Guidelines for counterterrorism, 1996.
LT000586/205	The Engineer's Contribution to Better and Cheaper Services. This paper by GR Kent includes illustrations of the proposed CCTV set-up at Holborn Station. It also describes the vision for passenger control at stations by use of television, 1960-1962.
LT000586/749	Experimental installation of CCTV at Holborn Station, 1961-1965.
LT000640/015	Paper concerning pilot station projects to improve passenger security including CCTV systems, 1989.
LT000813/004	Correspondence and memoranda concerning security on the Underground. Includes a report of the Crime Working Party and details of the installation of CCTV cameras, 1985-1986.
LT000813/042	Correspondence and reports concerning the use of CCTV cameras on the Underground, 1986-1988.
LT000826/029	Documents issued to lines about CCTV on London Underground, including Communications Equipment Handbook, which is a how-to guide for operating CCTV components, 1992.
LT000826/036	Information issued to lines about preventative maintenance of and repair of CCTV equipment, including description of routine maintenance tasks, camera and monitor replacements, and maintenance specifications, 1991.
LT000838/045 and 054	Fennell Report concerning safety procedures and recommendations for the Underground, including CCTV, 1988.

LT001315/009, 011, 020, 023	Includes correspondence, memoranda and minutes of meetings concerning the provision and installation of CCTV at 78 stations. Also includes details of the linking of CCTV to the Police Force Information Room, 1988-1993.
LT001344/293	Includes letters about on bus CCTV equipment, and CCTV fitted to Routemasters, 1982.
LT001692/004	Memorandum concerning procedure to be followed regarding closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras at Underground stations, 1998.
LT001883/002/003	Contains engineering specifications regarding CCTV surveys, 1993.

Addition Resources and Further Information can be found on the TfL website:

The Audit and Assurance Committee review a report titled Personal Data Disclosure to Police and Other Statutory Law Enforcement Agencies published annually:

<https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/publications-and-reports/audit-and-assurance-committee>

Information can also be found on Privacy and Data Protection Pages:

<https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/privacy-and-cookies/cctv>

For further information or to book an appointment at the Corporate Archives please email corporatearchives@tfl.gov.uk