



BRIEFING: CCTV IN SLAUGHTERHOUSES

CAMPAIGN AIM

TO MAKE CCTV MANDATORY FOR ALL SLAUGHTERHOUSES,
WITH INDEPENDENT MONITORING OF FOOTAGE

WHY CCTV?

- Animal Aid's undercover investigations discovered breaches of animal welfare laws in nine of the ten randomly chosen slaughterhouses it filmed. No one else – not even the onsite vets or slaughterhouse operators – picked up on these often serious and widespread breaches.
- The abuses included animals being: punched, kicked in the head, stamped on and burned with cigarettes; beaten with paddles and broom handles; picked up by their fleeces and thrown across rooms; and a very high percentage being improperly stunned – more than 99 per cent of all pigs in two slaughterhouses.
- While CCTV will not prevent all welfare breaches, it is a valuable tool to help vets, slaughterhouse operators and auditors ensure best practice and compliance with welfare laws. If properly monitored and robust action taken as a consequence, it is also a powerful deterrent. Animal Aid's footage successfully resulted in two slaughterhouse workers being convicted in 2012.
- The ten leading supermarkets, as well as Freedom Food and wholesaler Booker, all demand that their slaughterhouse suppliers have CCTV fitted.

IS THIS THE BEST OPTION?

- Unobserved monitoring is crucial in the regulation of slaughterhouses. The former Chief Executive of the Food Standards Agency (FSA), Tim Smith, said: *'Animal Aid's filming reveals that some slaughtermen carry out some appalling actions when they think they are not being observed. It appears that we are not dealing with isolated incidents... The solution would seem to lie in more observation. CCTV is a good option.'*
- A slaughterhouse vet told Animal Aid's undercover investigator: *'I need to check a few times a day, the killing point. We have three cameras at the killing point because, if I come into the killing point, they will see me and everything will be OK... but I can check in... on the camera. It is better because they don't know.'*
- Some people suggest that hidden platforms and apertures – where vets and slaughterhouse operators can observe without being observed – would suffice but these are less effective than CCTV for the following reasons:

- * Plant layouts often prevent slaughterhouse operators and vets from watching the stunning and slaughter process. During 250 hours of footage obtained in ten slaughterhouses, we did not see a single vet in the stunning or slaughter areas at any point. For this reason, it is unlikely that they would spend much time at an observation platform or aperture. They could, however, view selected CCTV footage at their convenience.

- * CCTV provides a far greater deterrent than an unobserved platform. Knowing that there is a slim chance that a vet may be viewing the stunning or slaughtering process is not the same as knowing that the treatment of every animal is filmed.

- * Crucially, unobserved platforms do not record events. Such recordings can be used to train and retrain workers, support best practice, and provide evidence for prosecutions.

- * CCTV protects all workers from false allegations.

- * CCTV deters acts that could lead to injuries and deaths, while footage could be used to determine how accidents occurred and prevent them occurring again. Recent incidents include: the accidental shooting at Sandyford in 2011; the death of a man crushed at the same slaughterhouse, also in 2011; a man airlifted to hospital after being injured at Dawn Meats, Ulverston in 2012; and a man being crushed to death by machinery at F Drury & Son in 2012.

- * CCTV could protect the public. Slaughterhouses contain firearms, of which there have been a number of thefts in recent years, including from Diplocks in Sussex and Broxburn in West Lothian. There have been a number of suicides and murders using captive bolt guns from slaughterhouses. CCTV could deter such thefts, or provide evidence that could identify the perpetrator.

- * A significant percentage of slaughterhouse vets and hygiene inspectors report being bullied. We suspect this is also true for other slaughterhouse staff. CCTV could protect all workers, and allow them to undertake their duties with confidence.

- * CCTV – unlike an unobserved platform – allows workers to discreetly air their concerns about, for example, certain procedures or a particular colleague. The concerned worker need not make a formal complaint but could simply suggest the vet or slaughterhouse operator views certain parts of the footage.

- * There can be no dispute with CCTV. With an unobserved platform any allegations remain unsubstantiated. CCTV, in many cases, could settle such disputes definitively.

HOW?

- A regulation could be made under Section 12 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006. This would not be without precedent as The Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007 were introduced this way.
- We would expect a public consultation on the proposal.
- We would expect appropriate phase-in times and derogations for the very smallest slaughterhouses – where there are two staff or fewer.

WHY MANDATORY?

- Animal Aid's investigations have shown that no slaughterhouse operator can trust that all is well in his or her establishment. They do not and cannot know everything that is happening, and their business is at risk if they trust to luck.
- 'Voluntary' take-up – i.e. installation of CCTV in slaughterhouses as demanded by their supermarket customers – has been encouraging but, unless there is a legal duty to record, store and make available footage to independent monitors and regulators, CCTV will not be effective.
- Deploying cameras of a suitable standard, properly located, fitted and maintained, will create a level playing field across the industry.
- One FSA Board member suggested that the slaughterhouses that resist CCTV most are probably those we should be most concerned about.
- Only by making CCTV mandatory – with policy defined on practical aspects, including storing and viewing footage – can the industry argue that it has taken credible steps to provide better protection for animals.

SUPPORT FOR MANDATORY CCTV

- The campaign for mandatory CCTV in slaughterhouses has attracted the support of more than 170 MPs over the past three years and more than half of all Welsh Assembly Members.
- Morrisons, Waitrose, the Co-op, Sainsbury's, Aldi, Tesco, Lidl, Asda, Marks & Spencer and Iceland, along with wholesalers Booker, have now agreed to deal only with slaughterhouses that have independently-monitored CCTV cameras installed. The RSPCA insists that all Freedom Food-approved slaughterhouses have CCTV.

- UNISON – the union that represents meat hygiene workers and slaughterhouse vets – supports the campaign for mandatory CCTV in slaughterhouses.
- The campaign for mandatory CCTV is also supported by the RSPCA, Compassion in World Farming and many other animal protection groups.
- A 2014 YouGov public opinion poll* found that 76 per cent supported mandatory CCTV. That figure rose to 87 per cent when taking into account only those who expressed a clear view.

**Respondents gave their answers after being shown the following statement: 'All the leading supermarkets now insist that their slaughterhouse suppliers install CCTV cameras to help prevent cruelty to animals. This means about half the animals killed in the UK are filmed on CCTV and half are not. Those who oppose installing cameras object because of the cost of installing them and say workers don't want to be filmed. Those who support the installation say that the protective benefits to both animals and workers outweigh these concerns.'*

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2406 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 2nd and 3rd June 2014. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+).

For more information, visit

www.SlaughterhouseCCTV.org.uk