

Studies and Articles on Video Surveillance

Home Office Research Study 292: Assessing the Impact of CCTV (2005)

This comprehensive study that looked at 13 jurisdictions in Britain found that cameras did not significantly reduce crime, especially violent crime in city centers. Not only did cameras not reduce crime, but they also did not reduce fear of crime. Surveys of individuals in the survey area reported that they did not feel safer and were not more likely to go into city centers after camera placement.

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/hors292.pdf>

The Effect of Closed Circuit Television on Recorded Crime Rates and Public Concern about Crime in Glasgow (1999)

This earlier British study, conducted by the Scottish Central Research Unit, evaluated crime statistics preceding and following the institution of surveillance cameras in Glasgow, Scotland. Researchers found cameras had little impact on crime, finding reductions in crime “no more significant than those in control areas without the camera locations.” Researchers also found that installing surveillance cameras does not make people less likely to avoid high crime areas. The study also found that cameras did not significantly improve clearance rates.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/cru/resfinds/crf30-00.htm>

Home Office Research Study 251: Effects of Improved Street Lighting on Crime: A Systematic Review (2002)

Public safety dollars spent on video surveillance are not spent in a vacuum – they can trade off with other more effective programs. This study looked at 13 jurisdictions in Britain and the United States and found that on average, improved lighting alone reduces crime 20%. These remarkable results suggest that from a public safety perspective, it makes a lot more sense to spend limited resources on improved lighting as opposed to video surveillance given its lack of effectiveness and significant impact on privacy.

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/hors251.pdf>

Spy Cameras Fail to Focus on Street Crime

Surveillance cameras that are in place in a number of jurisdictions have not met expectations of police or prosecutors. This article reports on disappointing results in a number of jurisdictions. <http://www.washtimes.com/metro/20060813-121827-2123r.htm>