



## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Project to expand security cameras on BC Transit buses**

#### **1. What is the project?**

BC Transit will install video and audio recording equipment, known as closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras, on 376 conventional buses (27 feet and longer) in the existing fleet, acquired in 2006 and later. All new medium-duty and heavy-duty conventional buses will have the equipment ready-installed upon delivery.

#### **2. How many buses have cameras installed and where are they located?**

Over 450 buses across the province have CCTV cameras installed and activate.

The buses are located in Kamloops, Nanaimo, Victoria, Kelowna, Chilliwack, Abbotsford, Whistler, Penticton, Nelson, Quesnel, Dawson Creek, Vernon, Squamish, Cowichan Valley, Prince Rupert, Port Edward, Terrace, Kitimat, Williams Lake, Comox Valley, Trail, Terrace, Campbell River, Cranbrook, Hope, Whistler, Prince George, Powell River and the Sunshine Coast. The list of communities will grow as new buses are delivered across the province. Please note, other communities may receive buses with CCTV cameras as part of routine fleet realignments.

#### **3. Why are cameras being installed?**

The safety of our customers and employees is always the number-one priority for BC Transit and for WorkSafeBC. Our transit operators are responsible for many lives, both on and off the bus. Examples from other transit systems in North America and the results of a one-year Proof-of-Concept (pilot) project at BC Transit in 2015-16 confirm that security cameras do provide a positive benefit to enhance security and safety including evidence to ensure successful conclusions for security investigations.

#### **4. What other North American transit agencies use security cameras on buses?**

Large urban centres that use CCTV (security cameras) include: Vancouver (TransLink), Edmonton, Calgary, Regina, Winnipeg, Ottawa, Halifax, Montreal, Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, Denver, New York City, Long Island Railroad, Chicago, Los Angeles and San Diego.

## **5. What resulted from the Proof-of-Concept 2015-16 project?**

Between April 2015 and April 2016, 83 buses in Victoria and 25 in Kamloops were fitted with cameras. Over 1,400 incidents were recorded: more than 500 went to full investigation by BC Transit, police and/or ICBC.

These incidents included five assaults on transit operators (all of which led to convictions) and 61 liability claims, in which BC Transit was found to be 100% at fault 19 times; 0% at-fault 40 times. That eliminated or reduced lengthy and costly legal proceedings.

## **6. What will this equipment record?**

Between four and eight video cameras inside the buses will record any incidents that occur in the passenger area. These cameras will cover every part of the interior, while a high-definition front-facing camera in the operator's cockpit area will be used to view events at the front of the bus, such as a motor vehicle accident. In addition, two external-facing cameras will be mounted on the outside of each bus. Audio will be captured in a limited area around the operator's compartment.

## **7. Are the images or audio captured on cameras permanent?**

The video is kept for a maximum of seven days, then is recorded-over.

## **8. Who will have access to viewing the video recordings?**

Only a few pre-authorized BC Transit safety and security personnel.

## **9. How will the information on the video recorders be secured?**

Buses will be secured in locked parking depots after hours with the information securely stored on each bus. The information on digital hard drives is password-protected and cannot be removed and viewed without using proprietary software controlled by the BC Transit security team.

## **10. Will security personnel be watching my activities in real time?**

There is no live monitoring. Cameras become operational when the bus is turned on. Video is captured on a digital hard drive and will only be tagged, removed and viewed following a reported incident.

**11. Are the cameras sensitive enough to read my text messaging?**

The video is intended to capture incidents that may impact passenger and operator safety. The only high-definition camera is the forward-facing camera in the operator's area. BC Transit values the personal privacy of its passengers and their right to communicate in private.

**12. Is the Privacy Commissioner aware of this project?**

Yes, the Privacy Commissioner is aware of the BC Transit CCTV camera project and has acknowledged they received our privacy impact assessment. We will continue to work with the privacy commission as appropriate.

**13. How are you informing bus passengers that security cameras and audio recordings are in use?**

Signs will be installed on each bus, as well as a smaller decal in the passenger seating area near the cameras

**14. Will BC Transit share images with law enforcement agencies?**

If a police agency is investigating an alleged crime or incident that has involved the bus, BC Transit will work cooperatively with law enforcement officials. If a police agency is using images as evidence in a police investigation, the images may possibly be used in a public court of law.

**15. Will BC Transit use the cameras for accident-related purposes?**

Cameras are an effective tool to assist with other incidents involving security or personal safety, such as vandalism to buses, or evidence related to motor vehicle accidents.

**16. Can images be used for any other purposes?**

BC Transit can use the images solely for the purpose for which they are collected, as required by the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. As images are collected for the safety and security of BC Transit passengers and operators, they may only be used to assist in the investigation of safety or security-related incidents.

**17. How much will the installation cost?**

The estimated budget to retro-fit the 376 existing buses is \$2.41 million, or approximately \$6,400 per bus. Cameras will be included in the purchase price for new buses.

**18. Where is the budget coming from?**

Funding for this project is coming from the Public Transit Infrastructure Fund (PTIF), which was announced in June 2016 by the federal and provincial governments. Under the arrangement, local governments pay 17 per cent of the project cost.

**19. What contractor is installing the equipment?**

SEON Design Inc., based in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia, was chosen to install the CCTV Camera system. SEON Design Inc. also installed the CCTV camera system for the proof of concept stage.

**20. What communities will the cameras be installed in and how soon will my community receive camera support?**

Installation on existing buses is underway now, but it has not yet been determined exactly when specific communities will see the cameras. BC Transit will advise communities as this happens.

**21. How is privacy respected in the process?**

Information is collected in accordance with the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#). If you have any concerns or questions regarding privacy, please visit [BC Transit's privacy page](#), contact [transitinfo@bctransit.com](mailto:transitinfo@bctransit.com), call toll-free at **1 844 482-6161**, or write BC Transit c/o FOI Requests, PO Box 9861 520 Gorge Road East, Victoria, BC V8W 9T5.