

FROM: NO CCTV ([www.no-cctv.org.uk](http://www.no-cctv.org.uk))  
Press Release: 8<sup>th</sup> June 2011  
Attn: News Desks



**No CCTV**  
[www.no-cctv.org.uk](http://www.no-cctv.org.uk)

**PRIVACY  
INTERNATIONAL**

**Privacy International**  
[www.privacyinternational.org](http://www.privacyinternational.org)



**Big Brother Watch**  
[www.bigbrotherwatch.org.uk](http://www.bigbrotherwatch.org.uk)

– BEGINS –

**NUMBER PLATE CAMERA NETWORK WORRYING AND UNLAWFUL:  
NO CCTV, PRIVACY INTERNATIONAL AND BIG BROTHER WATCH TAKE ANPR  
COMPLAINT TO THE INFORMATION COMMISSIONER**

No CCTV has teamed up with Privacy International and Big Brother Watch to launch a blistering joint complaint [1] with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) regarding the so-called ANPR “Ring of Steel” that has been constructed around the town of Royston in Hertfordshire. The campaign groups warn that for Royston read any town in the country.

The three civil liberties groups believe that the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) [2] cameras encircling Royston are unlawful and have called on the ICO to take action.

A network of ANPR cameras has been constructed throughout the UK by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) – there was no public debate, no Parliamentary debate, no Act of Parliament, not even a Statutory Instrument before this network was constructed. The coalition government has failed to tackle the legal fog surrounding ANPR cameras in the Protection of Freedoms Bill which is currently before Parliament.

Charles Farrier of No CCTV said:

“The national ANPR network is the biggest surveillance network that the public has never heard of. The use of ANPR as a mass surveillance tool constitutes a major assault on our common law foundations and the Rule of Law. It is a system of automated checkpoints that ought to have no place in a democratic society.”

In March 2010 Sergeant Vine of Hertfordshire Constabulary told a North Hertfordshire District Council meeting about the aims of the ANPR cameras around Royston. The Minutes [3] state:

“He gave a list of camera sites, assuring Members that the aim was ‘no vehicle could enter or leave Royston without being recorded by a camera’.”

No CCTV, Privacy International and Big Brother Watch are concerned that the Royston cameras might be part of a wider strategy to encircle towns throughout the UK, not least as until recently the Chief Constable of Hertfordshire Constabulary was the ACPO national lead on ANPR.

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**(See next page for references)**

## References

[ 1 ] The full text of the No CCTV / Privacy International / Big Brother Watch complaint is available at:

[http://www.no-cctv.org.uk/materials/docs/Royston\\_Ring\\_of\\_Steel\\_ANPR\\_Complaint.pdf](http://www.no-cctv.org.uk/materials/docs/Royston_Ring_of_Steel_ANPR_Complaint.pdf)

[ 2 ] ANPR cameras work alongside a variety of databases that can be used to identify cars and their occupants. The data collected from the cameras is stored in local force databases (Back Office Facility (BOF)) that may be used alongside querying or data mining tools, and in a centralised database (National ANPR Data Centre (NADC)). License plate photos are stored for between two and five years and photographs of cars are stored for between 90 days and five years.

[ 3 ] The minutes can be viewed online at:

<http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/aksnherts/users/public/admin/kab12.pl?cmte=RAD&meet=2&arc=20>

## Notes to editors:

1. No CCTV is a UK group campaigning against the excessive use of surveillance cameras in the UK. Their homepage is at [www.no-cctv.org.uk](http://www.no-cctv.org.uk). For further information contact Charles Farrier at [press@no-cctv.org.uk](mailto:press@no-cctv.org.uk) or Steve Jolly at [steve\\_jolly@no-cctv.org.uk](mailto:steve_jolly@no-cctv.org.uk) . Last year Steve Jolly successfully fought a campaign against a ring of steel of cameras around Birmingham known as Project Champion.

2. Privacy International is the oldest surviving privacy advocacy group in the world, and was the first organisation to campaign at an international level on privacy issues. Their homepage is at [www.privacyinternational.org](http://www.privacyinternational.org). All media contact on this issue on behalf of Privacy International is to be handled by No CCTV as detailed above.

3. Big Brother Watch is a campaign from the founders of the TaxPayers' Alliance, fighting intrusions on privacy and protecting liberties. Their homepage is at [www.bigbrotherwatch.org.uk](http://www.bigbrotherwatch.org.uk) . For further information contact Daniel Hamilton at [Daniel.Hamilton@bigbrotherwatch.org.uk](mailto:Daniel.Hamilton@bigbrotherwatch.org.uk)

4. This press release may be downloaded from <http://www.no-cctv.org.uk/press/>