

July 2015

CCTV in slaughterhouses

1. BVA believes that for the benefit of animal welfare, all approved slaughterhouse operators (Food Business Operators - FBOs) must have effective procedures in place to be able to observe and verify stunning and slaughter operations.
2. We consider that all animals should be stunned before slaughter, purely for reasons of animal welfare. However, BVA recognises that for various reasons the stun process is on occasion not carried out as effectively as legislation dictates. Closed Circuit Television cameras (CCTV) are a useful tool in helping to meet animal welfare requirements in slaughterhouses, observing and verifying handling of animals and in observing and verifying the proper application of the stun process. CCTV also has the potential to provide supplementary evidence in response to any allegations of illegal practice as well as to help protect the food chain and public health.
3. Slaughterhouses are increasingly installing CCTV as a means of observing, verifying and recording operations, though its use is currently not mandatory. EU legislation on the protection of animals at the time of killing (1099/2009) simply requires the FBO to take necessary measures to ensure various conditions that protect animal welfare (Article 3), such as through Standard Operating Procedures, regular observing and verifying of animals for signs of consciousness and the provision of Animal Welfare Officers and Official Veterinarians. In addition, since 2010 the Food Standards Agency (FSA) has encouraged FBOs to voluntarily install CCTV as best practice and as an additional management tool to protect animal welfare.
4. A number of slaughterhouse operators have proactively installed CCTV. In addition, the use of CCTV in slaughterhouses is being promoted by animal welfare organisations and supported by retailers and farm assurance schemes, many of which are increasingly requiring CCTV in the slaughterhouse. Additional options for observing and verifying slaughterhouse activity include an aperture, or window in the stunning pen. However such options have their limitations as they cannot offer continuous recorded surveillance and do not provide objective evidence or records.
5. A [FAWC opinion](#) on CCTV in slaughterhouses was published in February 2015 and put forward 23 recommendations in support of the use of CCTV. We consider the key recommendations are:
 - All approved slaughterhouse operators (Food Business Operators, FBOs) should install CCTV in all areas where live animals are kept and where animals are stunned and killed
 - All assurance scheme operators, food retailers and others in the food chain require that CCTV be installed in the slaughterhouses associated with them
 - FBOs install CCTV in a manner that allows for the clear and uninterrupted recording of all actions and areas involving live animals and animal killing.
 - FBOs should ensure that CCTV footage is regularly and securely reviewed according to an established protocol

- The slaughter industry should produce a common set of good practice protocols for the review, evaluation and use of CCTV footage
 - FBOs should make CCTV footage readily available to authorised officers
6. BVA is calling for the implementation of all the recommendations set out in the FAWC report.
 7. BVA considers that all slaughterhouses should be required to install CCTV in all areas where live animals are kept and killed, in order to provide a clear and uninterrupted recording of all activities within these areas.
 8. It should not be necessary for FBO staff to constantly observe slaughter operations via CCTV in real-time. The CCTV footage should be regularly observed and verified according to an agreed protocol and should be used as an additional training, observing, verifying, and enforcement tool to ensure the relevant legal requirements are met and high animal welfare standards are maintained.
 9. Appropriate training should also be provided on observational techniques, and the use and secure storage of recorded material, for staff involved in reviewing CCTV footage. It is recommended that OVs as well as other enforcement officers must have access to any CCTV footage and this should be written into UK legislation. This would avoid any delays and complications caused by securing a warrant.