Feedback on student consultation on CCTV in public streets of North Dunedin

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University Operations

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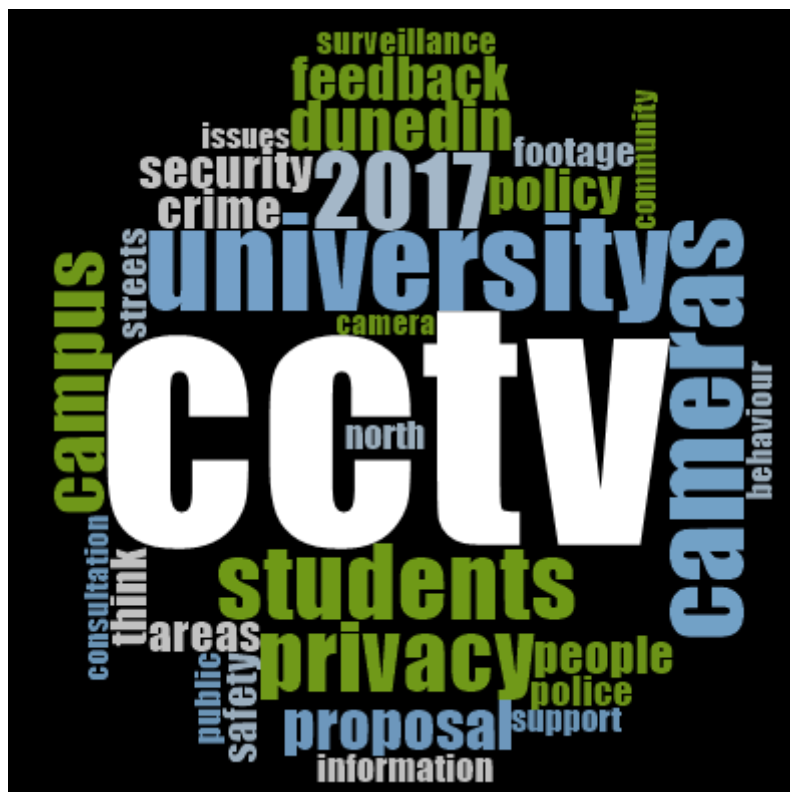Property Services | Risk, Assurance and Compliance | Sustainability

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Feedback from student consultation
on
CCTV in public streets of North Dunedin

Prepared by UoO / OUSA working party
August 2017

Contents

1. Background

1.1 Project

The University of Otago is proposing installing CCTV cameras at 60 locations in public streets around campus. Before making a final decision on this proposal the Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee recommended that formal consultation be undertaken with students and invited OUSA to work with the University on this.

The resulting consultation plan involved OUSA first gauging students' current views about the proposal via their annual Referendum. 3,702 students, or 18%, responded to the OUSA Referendum. 51.22% said OUSA should oppose the CCTV proposal and 48.78% said they shouldn't.

Following the Referendum additional information on the proposal and the draft CCTV policy was made available to further inform students. A formal consultation was then undertaken to gather detailed student feedback and suggestions on the proposal and policy to inform a final decision.

A working party, comprising of 2 University staff and 2 OUSA Executive members, was convened to jointly review and present the student feedback to the Vice-Chancellor. This report is a summary of the working party's findings. The raw student submissions are also attached as Appendix 1.

1.2 Methodology

Over July and early August students were invited by both the University and OUSA (via email, social media, electronic and print advertising around campus) to say their say on the proposal.

A webpage was set up for students with:

- Details about the proposal
- a downloadable version of the draft CCTV policy
- the consultation process
- timeframes, and
- how to provide feedback

A lunch-time student forum was held to talk about the proposal and answer questions. The University also met separately with the OUSA Executive and Te Roopū Māori to answer questions.

Feedback was due electronically to either the University or via OUSA by 5pm, Friday 4 August 2017.

2   Feedback received

There was a moderate level of engagement on this topic over the consultation period. The web page had 1,526 visitors. University and OUSA social media posts were liked 47 times, shared 6 times, and received 7 comments. Approximately 20 students attended the student forum.

98 student submissions were received as follows:

POSITION ON PROPOSAL	NUMBER OF RESPONSES
Support	57
Oppose	34
Neutral or no position stated	7
Total	**98**

4 non-student submissions were also received and are summarised separately in this report.

3   Main themes from feedback

The submissions were analysed and the issues raised by respondents have been summarised into the following themes:

THEME	FREQUENCY OF MENTION
1. Safety	34
2. Privacy concerns	30
3. Crime prevention	28
4. Cost	14
5. University over-reach	13
6. Offender identification	13
7. Draft CCTV policy	13
8. Effect on student culture	8
9. Live monitoring	5
10. Other recurring concerns	5

3.1   Safety

Safety was the most significant theme and was referred to by 35% of respondents. Most considered that cameras would improve safety, but some considered that there was a lack of evidence about this. Safety, crime prevention and offender identification were the top themes for respondents who supported the proposal:

FEEDBACK	FREQUENCY OF MENTION
Believe CCTV cameras will provide an increased sense of safety	27
Do not believe that CCTV cameras will improve student safety	5
CCTV is not required as crime is low and students already feel safe	2
Total	**34**

3.2   Privacy concerns

Privacy was the 2nd most referenced theme with 31% of respondents mentioning it. Concerns ranged from cameras being an invasion of privacy through to the need for the University to have high standards around student privacy. Privacy was the most significant concern for respondents who oppose the proposal:

FEEDBACK	FREQUENCY OF MENTION
CCTV is an invasion of privacy	20
Support the proposal as long as the University acts to ensure that privacy is protected and student concerns are addressed	8
Lack of confidence in University to ensure privacy requirements can be guaranteed	1
Understand that the proposal doesn't breach privacy laws, however have an expectation of privacy in excess of the legal minimum	1
Total	**30**

3.3   Crime prevention

29% of respondents referred to the deterrent and crime prevention aspect of cameras, although again there were concerns about the lack of evidence that this is a proven outcome of cameras. This was the 2nd highest ranking theme for respondents who support the proposal:

FEEDBACK	FREQUENCY OF MENTION
Believe that CCTV cameras will assist in preventing crime and/or deterring criminal behaviour	17
Lack of evidence to suggest that CCTV cameras will prevent crime	7
Lack of evidence that it works in residential areas	2
CCTV cameras not needed because crime is already low	2
Total	**28**

3.4   Cost

Cost was referred to by 14% of respondents, with concerns raised by both those in support and opposed to the proposal about how it would be funded:

FEEDBACK	FREQUENCY OF MENTION
There's better uses for University money, particularly in this current environment	6
The cost is significant, and there is concern that the proposal will contribute to fee increases, which isn't acceptable to students	3
Ongoing operational costs will be too high	3
Concern that the University is intending to fully fund this proposal. Is anyone else contributing to the costs of such an initiative in public streets?	2
Total	**14**

3.5   Draft CCTV policy

14% of respondents suggested that further work is required to ensure that the CCTV policy is clear and explicit to students, and the use of CCTV cameras meets the Privacy Act 1993:

FEEDBACK	FREQUENCY OF MENTION
Further clarification required in the policy on the use of CCTV cameras for enforcing the student Code of Conduct	8
Signage section needs further clarification to meet the Privacy Act 1993	2

The section that refers to the Vice-Chancellor being able to approve temporary and/or covert surveillance needs clarification, as installing covert cameras in public streets is in breach of the Privacy Act 1993	2
Use of CCTV should only apply to student behaviour of a material nature	1
Lack of faith in the policy continuing to be implemented over time	1
Total	**14**

3.6 University over-reach

13% of respondents referred to the University over-stepping its role as a tertiary education institution. This is the 2nd most common concern of respondents who oppose the proposal, after privacy:

FEEDBACK	FREQUENCY OF MENTION
The University is overstepping its authority by monitoring students and citizens off campus	11
The University doesn't have the right to film on public streets	1
Supportive of the policy but concerned that the university is actually acting in excess of its authority	1
Total	**13**

3.7 Offender Identification

Being able to identify and prosecute offenders was considered a positive with 13% of respondents mentioning this. This was the 3rd most significant them for respondents who expressed their support:

FEEDBACK	FREQUENCY OF MENTION
Support CCTV cameras helping to identify and prosecute offenders who commit crimes against students	13
Total	**13**

3.8   Effect on student culture and experience

8% of respondents were concerned about the effect CCTV cameras will have on their student experience. This was the 3rd most pressing concern for those opposing the proposal.

FEEDBACK	FREQUENCY OF MENTION
CCTV cameras will act as an attack on student culture	4
The social experience is part of the reason students choose to come to Otago. There is a risk to the University that this experience is adversely affected by CCTV	2
The student culture and behaviour has already improved over the past few years, and anti-social behaviour is low	2
Total	**8**

3.9   Live monitoring concerns

5% of respondents disagreed with the 24/7 live monitoring aspect of CCTV cameras:

FEEDBACK	FREQUENCY OF MENTION
Concerns with CCTV cameras being used to constantly monitor students away from campus	5
Total	**5**

3.10 Other recurring concerns

FEEDBACK	FREQUENCY OF MENTION
Concern that due diligence hasn't been properly undertaken on the proposal, including a cost/benefit analysis to show it's the most cost effective approach for the University	3
View that the University is only proposing CCTV cameras for promotional purposes	2
Total	**6**

4   Student suggestions

Respondents also took the opportunity to suggest changes to the proposal or additional suggestions to improve student safety. These are as follows:

SUGGESTIONS ABOUT THE PROPOSAL

1. Conduct independent research into the implications of CCTV to address the lack of evidence base

2. Extend the proposal to include:
   - Area around Unipol
   - Woodhaugh St area
   - Cumberland Street area
   - Pitt St
   - Areas around dental and medical schools

3. Reduce the number of cameras being installed by 50%

4. Students able to request specific black-out areas

5. Ensure that any finalised proposal is well communicated with a presentation to students and pamphlets on how it will operate and who to contact with queries and complaints

6. Have the evaluation of effectiveness after the installation of zones 1 & 2 undertaken by an impartial group, rather than the Proctor's Office, and include student consultation in this

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS TO ADDRESS STUDENT SAFETY

7. Install emergency phone booths in areas of highest incidents

8. Work with landlords to increase flat safety and security education

9. Work with landlords to improve living conditions and cost of living

10. Develop a student led peer to peer campus watch style safety initiative

11. Employ more campus watch staff

12. Invest in initiatives that develop a vibrant student environment and culture, like events, venues, social activities and organised "positive" drinking events run by OUSA

5 Summary of non-student submissions

4 non-student submissions were received and are recorded here.

3 respondents supported the proposal as they perceived that there would be benefits to student safety, the ability to identify and prosecute offenders, and crime prevention.

2 respondents suggested that the draft CCTV policy needs to be more explicit about signage so that the University meets the requirements of the Privacy Act, and 1 submission provided an example of signage used in the area by the North Dunedin Community Patrol.

1 respondent from a legal professional didn't state a position, instead identifying that the draft CCTV policy needs more clarification to be compliant with the Privacy Act 1993, and provided legal suggestions.

6 Feedback on consultation process

This consultation also served as a pilot for student engagement within the Operations Group. It is worth noting that 9 respondents specifically acknowledged the opportunity to provide their feedback.

FEEDBACK	FREQUENCY OF MENTION
Appreciated being consulted	7
Did not believe that the consultation was authentic, effective or would have any impact on the decision	2
Liked the web information that was provided	1