

ANIMALS have friends

and those friends have

VOTES!



ELECTION 2015 BRIEFING: CCTV IN SLAUGHTERHOUSES

CAMPAIGN AIM

TO MAKE CCTV MANDATORY FOR ALL SLAUGHTERHOUSES,
WITH INDEPENDENT MONITORING OF FOOTAGE

WHY CCTV?

- Animal Aid's undercover investigation discovered legal breaches in eight of the nine randomly chosen slaughterhouses it filmed. No one else – not even the onsite vets or slaughterhouse operators – picked up on these often serious and widespread breaches.

- The abuses included animals being: punched, kicked in the head and burned with cigarettes; beaten with paddles and broom handles; picked up by their fleeces and thrown across rooms; and being improperly stunned.

- While CCTV will not prevent all welfare breaches, it is a valuable tool to help vets, slaughterhouse operators and auditors ensure best practice and compliance with welfare laws. It is also a powerful deterrent.

- The ten leading supermarkets, as well as Freedom Food and wholesaler Booker, all demand that their slaughterhouse suppliers have CCTV fitted. Supermarkets report that the cameras are proving useful and that slaughterhouses are, by and large, supportive of their installation.

IS THIS THE BEST OPTION?

- Unobserved monitoring is crucial in the regulation of slaughterhouses. The former Chief Executive of the Food Standards Agency, Tim Smith, said: *'Animal Aid's filming reveals that some slaughtermen carry out some appalling actions when they think they are not being observed. It appears that we are not dealing with isolated incidents... The solution would seem to*

lie in more observation. CCTV is a good option.'

- A slaughterhouse vet told Animal Aid's undercover investigator: 'I need to check a few times a day, the killing point. We have three cameras at the killing point because, if I come into the killing point, they will see me and everything will be OK... but I can check in... on the camera. It is better because they don't know.'

- Some people suggest that hidden platforms and apertures – where vets and slaughterhouse operators can observe without being observed – would suffice but these are less effective than CCTV for the following reasons:

- * Plant layouts often prevent slaughterhouse operators and vets from watching the stunning and slaughter process. During 250 hours of footage obtained in nine slaughterhouses, we did not see a single vet in the stunning or slaughter areas at any point. For this reason, it is unlikely that they would spend much time at an observation platform or aperture. They could, however, view selected CCTV footage at their convenience.

- * CCTV provides a far greater deterrent than an unobserved platform. Knowing that there is a slim chance that a vet may be viewing the stunning or slaughtering process is not the same as knowing that the treatment of every animal is observed through the use of CCTV.

- * Crucially, unobserved platforms do not record events. Such recordings can be used to train and retrain workers,



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support best practice, and provide evidence for prosecutions.

- * CCTV protects all workers from false allegations.

- * CCTV deters acts that could lead to injuries and deaths, while footage could be used to determine how accidents occurred and prevent them occurring again. Recent incidents include: the accidental shooting at Sandyford in 2011; the death of a man crushed at the same slaughterhouse, also in 2011; a man airlifted to hospital after being injured at Dawn Meats, Ulverston in 2012; and a man being crushed to death by machinery at F Drury & Son in 2012.

- * CCTV could protect the public. Slaughterhouses contain firearms, of which there have been a number of thefts in recent years, including from Diplocks in Sussex and Broxburn in West Lothian. There have been a number of suicides and murders using captive bolt guns from slaughterhouses. CCTV could deter such thefts, or provide evidence that could identify the perpetrator.

- * A significant percentage of slaughterhouse vets and hygiene inspectors report being bullied. We suspect this is also true for other slaughterhouse staff. CCTV could protect all workers, and allow them to undertake their duties with confidence.

- * CCTV – unlike an unobserved platform – allows workers to discreetly air their concerns about, for example, certain procedures or a particular colleague. The concerned worker need not make a formal complaint but could simply suggest the vet or slaughterhouse operator views certain parts of the footage.

- * There can be no dispute with CCTV. With an unobserved platform any allegations remain unsubstantiated. CCTV, in many cases, could settle such disputes definitively.

WHY MANDATORY?

- Animal Aid's investigations have shown that no slaughterhouse operator can trust that all is well in his or her establishment. They do not and cannot know everything that is happening, and their business is at risk if they trust to luck.

- 'Voluntary' take-up – i.e. that demanded by customers – has been encouraging, but this still leaves around half of all animals slaughtered without proper scrutiny.

- Deploying cameras of a suitable standard, properly located, fitted and maintained, will create a level playing field across the industry.

- One FSA Board member suggested that the slaughterhouses that resist CCTV most are probably those we should be most concerned about.

- Only by making CCTV mandatory – with policy defined on practical aspects, including storing and viewing footage – can the industry argue that it has taken steps to provide better protection for animals.

WHY NOT?

- Some argue against CCTV due to its cost, but it is not prohibitive. Many slaughterhouses have already installed cameras at the request of their customers. Grants or loans could be made either from government (which gave more than £900,000 to slaughterhouses between 2011 and 2013), industry bodies or third parties such as The Prince's Countryside Fund, which has also given grants to slaughterhouses.

- Others argue for worker privacy, but staff in hotels, restaurants, high street shops and some offices are all covered by CCTV. There are also cameras in many streets, parks and other public places. The cameras are there to protect staff, too, and will not be sited in changing rooms or toilets.

HOW?

- A regulation could be made under Section 12 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006. This would not be without precedent as The Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007 were introduced this way.

- We would expect a public consultation on the proposal.

- We would expect appropriate phase-in times and derogations for the very smallest slaughterhouses – where there were two staff or fewer.

SUPPORT FOR MANDATORY CCTV

- The campaign for mandatory CCTV in slaughterhouses is already supported by 145 MPs and more than half of all Welsh Assembly Members.

- Morrisons, Waitrose, the Co-op, Sainsbury's, Aldi, Tesco, Lidl, Asda, Marks & Spencer and Iceland, along with wholesalers Booker, have now agreed to deal only with slaughterhouses that have independently monitored CCTV cameras installed. The RSPCA insists that all Freedom Food-approved slaughterhouses have CCTV.

- The campaign for mandatory CCTV is also supported by The RSPCA, Compassion in World Farming and many other animal protection groups.

- A 2014 YouGov public opinion poll found that, of those who expressed a view, 87 per cent supported mandatory CCTV.

Respondents gave their answers after being shown the following statement: 'All the leading supermarkets now insist that their slaughterhouse suppliers install CCTV cameras to help prevent cruelty to animals. This means about half the animals killed in the UK are filmed on CCTV and half are not. Those who oppose installing cameras object because of the cost of installing them and say workers don't want to be filmed. Those who support the installation say that the protective benefits to both animals and workers outweigh these concerns.'

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2406 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 2nd and 3rd June 2014. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+).