

SPECIAL ORDER



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Subject Requesting Video Evidence
Number SO-14-03
Effective Date June 6, 2014
Related to: General Order 304.8 (Collection of Physical Evidence; Utilization of the Crime Scene Search Section and Crime Scene Search Officers), effective date April 30, 1992

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I. BACKGROUND

It is the goal of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) to provide members with a centralized method of requesting video evidence and incorporate commercial video requests into its existing CCTV Resource Tracking System. This will assist members in requesting and preserving video evidence in a timely manner with the goal of obtaining video evidence before it expires. As the Department tracks these requests, it will build a record of commercial video resources that, along with government video, will provide investigators with an expanding database of video sources.

The Department also realizes that time can be critical when it comes to obtaining digital video evidence. The Crime Scene Investigations Division (CSID) maintains the proper equipment to handle an emergency request for commercial video when a situation arises which requires the immediate recovery of digital evidence (e.g., to identify a suspect or to avoid the possibility that the digital evidence may be overwritten).

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this special order is to outline the procedures for requesting video evidence from government and private systems not listed in the CCTV Resource Tracking System.

III. DEFINITIONS

When used in this order, the following terms shall have the meaning designated:

1. CCTV Resource Tracking System – Web-based system on the MPD intranet homepage that allows members to review CCTV locations that may be relevant to an investigation. A member may use this system to request video evidence from MPD CCTV, District Department of Transportation (DDOT) cameras and red light enforcement cameras.
2. Compression – Ratio of time a download takes for the CCTV unit's data to convert to a video format compared to the amount of time requested. For example, a one (1) hour video may take a half hour to download or two (2) hours to download depending on the compression rate for a particular video system.
3. Digital Video Recorder (DVR) – Separate device with its own software that is part of an individual CCTV unit or system and allows the video to be stored on site.
4. Download – Act of obtaining CCTV data and converting it into viewable content for the requesting member.
5. Neighborhood Based Cameras – MPD CCTV deployed to help combat crime in District of Columbia neighborhoods. The location of these cameras is subject to change based on crime patterns.
6. Permanent Cameras – MPD CCTV that is deployed to specific locations including public spaces around the National Mall, the US Capitol, the White House, Union Station and other critical installations, as well as major arteries and highways that pass through the District.
7. Private/Commercial Video – Video evidence that may be relevant to an investigation that is obtained from a private/commercial entity including, but not limited to, nightclubs, office buildings and retail establishments.
8. Video/CCTV Canvass – Onsite review during a preliminary investigation in the area around the crime scene to include video systems from MPD CCTV, government facilities, and private companies.
9. Write-Over Period – Period of time a CCTV system preserves video internally before it is erased or written over. The time period can vary greatly in commercial systems from one (1) day to over thirty (30) days.

IV. REGULATIONS

- A. Members shall attempt to obtain video evidence on the scene whenever practicable. In accordance with this order:
 - 1. The Crime Scene Investigations Division (CSID) shall be responsible for the recovery of private/commercial video evidence.
 - 2. Members shall use the CCTV Resource Tracking System to obtain government video [e.g., CCTV, District Department of Transportation (DDOT) video].
 - 3. Nothing in this order precludes a member from obtaining video directly from either a government agency or a commercial or private source while at the scene or at a later date.
- B. Members who obtain video evidence on the scene or at a later date shall send notification to the CCTV administrative email box (cctv.admin@dc.gov) prior to the end of their shift so that an entry can be made into the CCTV Resource Tracking System.
- C. Members shall classify any video obtained as evidence and handle the video in accordance with Department procedures including, but not limited to, establishing a chain of custody by completing a PD Form 81 (Property Record) and submitting the video to the Tactical Information Division within seventy-two (72) hours for entry in the CCTV Resource Tracking System.
- D. Members who are unable to obtain video evidence at the scene shall use the procedures outlined in Part V of this order to request assistance.
- E. Members are reminded to comply with all applicable orders as they relate to the viewing and retention of CCTV video including, but not limited to, GO-OPS-603.07 [Closed Circuit Television Cameras (CCTV)] and SO-06-12 (Enhanced Use of CCTV to Combat Crime).

V. PROCEDURES

- A. Non-Emergency Government Video Requests
 - 1. Members seeking video evidence from MPD or other government sources listed in the CCTV Resource Tracking System in which retrieval is not an immediate priority shall log in to the system on the MPD intranet home page and follow the instructions contained therein including, but not limited to, providing CCN numbers and the reason why the request is being made.
 - 2. Members shall view the video prior to making any request, when practicable.

3. Members seeking video evidence from a government agency not listed in the CCTV Resource Tracking System shall complete the "CCTV Video Request Form" and submit the form to cctv.admin@dc.gov for processing.

NOTE: The form may be accessed by clicking on the "CCTV Video Request Form" link under the "Investigative Services" heading on the MPD intranet homepage.

4. The Tactical Information Division staff will then process the request.
5. Once the requested video is available, the requester must review and move the video to their case files located on the CCTV Resource Tracking System within seven (7) days.
6. Members may direct any questions concerning the CCTV Resource Tracking System, request additional copies of videos, or check on a pending request by contacting the Tactical Information Division, (202) 724-4252.

B. Non-Emergency Commercial or Private Source Video Requests

1. Members seeking video evidence from commercial or private sources in which retrieval is not a priority shall complete the "CCTV Video Request Form" and submit the form to csid.adminbox@dc.gov for processing.

NOTE: The form may be accessed by clicking on the "CCTV Video Request Form" link under the "Investigative Services" heading on the MPD intranet homepage.

2. Requesting members shall ask the owner when the video will be overwritten and include that information in their request.
3. Members shall view the video prior to making any request, when practicable. The request must be as specific as possible as to the time frame (minutes) and to exact camera number or angle/view. CSID will not fill blanket requests for video extractions, (i.e., requests for large time frames or multiple cameras that may or may not show the suspect or incident).
4. Members making a request are responsible for ensuring that all consent and/or warrant requirements are fulfilled prior to making the request to CSID.

C. Emergency Government Video Requests

1. Members who need a video for an unfolding incident or other priority reason (e.g., the video is needed to provide immediate investigative

information to allow MPD to disseminate usable lookout information regarding the offense) shall contact the Watch Commander, CIC. Members shall provide as much detail as possible about the location and type of camera(s) in question.

2. The Watch Commander, CIC, shall determine if the requested video can be obtained remotely from the MPD Network or if it requires a field download.
3. If the request requires a field download, the Watch Commander, CIC, shall ensure:
 - a. A qualified member responds to the location.
 - b. The appropriate point of contact from the government agency is notified and advised of the urgency of the request.
4. If the CCTV unit in question is in the CCTV Resource Tracking System, the requesting member shall submit a request that includes the obtained CCNs in the CCTV Tracking System prior to the end of his/her shift.
5. If the CCTV unit in question is not in the CCTV Tracking System's menu, the CIC staff shall document the request in the system.
6. Once the requested video is available, the requester must review and move the video to their case files located on the CCTV Resource Tracking System within seven days.

D. Emergency Commercial or Private Source Video Requests

1. If a priority video request involves non-government video, members shall contact the Watch Commander, CIC. The member shall provide as much detail as possible about the location and type of camera system in question to include the time period when the video will be over-written.
2. The Watch Commander, CIC, shall:
 - a. Notify an official from the Crime Scene Investigations Division (CSID) to request that a CSID member respond to the location to recover the video evidence.
 - b. Ensure the request and all necessary information is entered into the CCTV Resource Tracking System.

E. Duration of Individual Requests

1. While each investigation is unique, members are advised to make the best effort to limit the duration of a video to the amount of video containing evidence pertaining to the case. If it is believed a larger period of time is needed, the member shall coordinate viewing the video feed in accordance with this order prior to the download and attempt to identify the relevant periods.
2. Members who request more than two hours of video shall obtain approval from a lieutenant or above assigned to the Criminal Investigative Division prior to submitting the request in the CCTV Tracking Program. The requesting member shall list the name of the official approving the request in the notes section of the Tracking Program.

NOTE: The compression time for individual CCTV systems varies and will effect turnaround time on the request.

3. In cases of extreme length, the support staff may have to remove hardware such as the DVR from the CCTV unit in order to facilitate the download. Retrieval in some extreme cases may take one (1) to two (2) days.

VI. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**A. The Commander, Tactical Information Division, shall:**

1. Ensure that the CCTV Resource Tracking System is monitored by Watch Commanders, CIC, and administrative officials and that requested video evidence is retrieved prior to the end of its write-over period.
2. Ensure that a current list of government contacts is available to the Watch Commander, CIC, for retrieving video not on the MPD Network.

B. The Watch Commander, Command Information Center, shall:

1. Ensure that a member is designated each shift to staff the CIC Video Desk to intake and document video related requests.
2. Ensure that video requests for emergency downloads are handled prior to the end of their shift.
3. Review the CCTV Resource Tracking System each shift to ensure that requests are properly entered by CIC staff and that pending requests approaching a write-over period are being handled.

- C. Patrol District Watch Commanders shall ensure that a video/CCTV canvass is conducted and the results are documented for serious and violent crimes or any other incident in which video evidence may play a crucial role.
- D. The Watch Commander, Criminal Investigations Division, shall ensure that all video requests made to the CIC are completed prior to the end of the shift and documented on the PD Form 150 (Tour of Duty Supervisor's Report) to include the CIC staff member receiving the request.
- E. The Commander, Crime Scene Investigations Division, shall ensure each shift is staffed with an adequate number of members trained in the recovery of digital video evidence.

VII. CROSS REFERENCES

- A. GO-OPS-603.07 [Closed Circuit Television Cameras (CCTV)], effective date December 9, 2002
- B. SO-06-12 (Enhanced Use of CCTV to Combat Crime), effective date August 9, 2006



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