



Frequently Asked Questions

Security Cameras on Buses – Pilot Project

April 2015 to April 2016

What is the pilot project?

- BC Transit launched a one-year pilot project in April 2015 to activate security cameras on a number of buses in Victoria and Kamloops to enhance safety for its passengers and operators.

What's new for January 2016?

- Two exterior, side-facing cameras will be activated on 13 buses in Victoria.
- Limited audio recording near operator's compartment will be trialed
- 9 more buses are being added to the trial in the Victoria Regional Transit System

How many buses will have security cameras?

- For this pilot project, 84 low-floor buses and one double decker in the Victoria fleet have security cameras. An additional 25 buses in the new CNG (Compressed Natural Gas) bus fleet in Kamloops were factory-equipped with security cameras.
- BC Transit has more than 1,000 buses in its provincial fleet.

Why are security cameras required?

- Ensuring the personal safety for our transit operators and passengers is BC Transit's top priority as well as a priority of WorkSafeBC.
- Security cameras are one more tool we can use to minimize risks against operators and passengers.

Is B.C.'s Privacy Commissioner aware of this plan?

- Yes. BC Transit submitted a Privacy Impact Assessment to the B.C. Privacy Commissioner in 2013 and has shared its plans for the pilot project. BC Transit has also updated the B.C. Privacy Commissioner regarding the new phase of trials.

What other transit agencies use security cameras on buses?

- BC Transit is following the lead of a long list of transit agencies across North America that use security cameras on buses, including: Vancouver (TransLink), Edmonton, Calgary, Regina, Winnipeg, Ottawa, Halifax, Montreal, Seattle, Portland, San Francisco and Denver.

How many cameras will be installed on each bus?

- Up to eight cameras will be installed on each bus. One will be a forward-facing camera in the operator's seating area, two side-facing, exterior cameras, plus five internal cameras with different views of the bus interior.

How do the cameras work?

- There is no live monitoring.
- Cameras are operational when the bus is.
- Video will be captured on a digital hard drive. Video will only be removed and viewed following a reported incident.

Are BC Transit employees watching the video in real time?

- No. There is no live monitoring.

Are you recording audio conversations?

- Yes. In addition to the trial of the six original cameras, the audio recording function on the camera system is being turned on. This recording is only focused on the operator's compartment.

Are the images captured on camera permanent?

- The video footage is stored up to the limit of the video recorder. Once capacity is reached, the new video footage overwrites the previous images.
- The pilot project will validate the appropriate capacity of the recorder.
- If incidents are reported before the information is erased, BC Transit will remove the specific period of the event for further investigation. Retention of the information will depend on how long the information may be required for any criminal or litigation investigations.

Who will have access to viewing the video recordings?

- Only a few pre-authorized BC Transit safety and security personnel.

How will the information on the video recorders be secured?

- Buses will be secured in locked parking depots after hours with the information securely stored on each bus. The information on digital hard drives is password-protected and cannot be removed and viewed without proprietary software held by the BC Transit security team.

How are you informing bus passengers that security cameras are in use?

- Signs will be installed on each bus, including an information card near the entrance of the bus as well as a smaller decal in the passenger seating area near the cameras.
- Updated signage, reflecting the changes to the program, will be installed on all applicable buses.
- Brochures will be available on each bus to describe the pilot project in more detail and how to contact BC Transit for more information.

How are you informing the general public that security cameras are in use?

- General information about the project will be posted on BC Transit's public website to explain the purpose and how people can contact BC Transit for more information.
- BC Transit is also providing information to media outlets.

Will BC Transit share images with law enforcement agencies?

- If a police agency is investigating an alleged crime or incident that has involved the bus, BC Transit will work cooperatively with law enforcement officials.

Can images be used in a court of law?

- If a police agency is using images as evidence in a police investigation, the images may possibly be used in a public court of law.

Can images be used for any other purposes?

- BC Transit can use the images solely for the purpose for which they are collected, as required by the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. As images are collected for the safety and security of BC Transit passengers and operators, they may only be used to assist in the investigation of safety or security-related incidents.

Will BC Transit use the cameras for accident-related purposes?

- Cameras are an effective tool to assist with other incidents involving security or personal safety, such as vandalism to buses, or evidence related to motor vehicle accidents.

Are the cameras sensitive enough to read my text messaging?

- The only high-definition camera is the forward-facing camera in the operator's area.
- The video is intended to capture incidents that may impact passenger and operator safety.
- BC Transit values the personal privacy of its passengers and their right to communicate in private.

Can I use B.C.'s Freedom of Information process to obtain video footage?

- You can make a request to our Information and Privacy Officer by calling 1-250-995-5679. Video can be provided, as long as the request is made before the information is permanently erased.

Will you sell any information gathered from these cameras to third-party business interests?

- No. BC Transit can only use the images solely for the purpose for which they are collected, as required by the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

How much will the pilot project cost?

- The BC Transit-approved budget is \$400,000.
- There are no changes to the budget due to the new trials

What contractor is installing the equipment?

- SEON Design Inc., based in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia, was chosen as the successful vendor after a public Invitation to Quote (ITQ) process in December 2014.

Who do I contact if I have any questions or concerns about the pilot project?

- Please call toll-free at **1 844 482-6161** or email transitinfo@bctransit.com. Or, write BC Transit c/o FOI Requests, 520 Gorge Road East, Victoria, BC V8W 2P3.

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