Surveillance Impact Report

Digital Video Recorder (POE)
San Diego Police Department

DESCRIPTION

The DVR is a digital video recorder and is used as a part of a video recording system. The DVR is connected to a video camera with a power over ethernet cord (POE) that powers the camera and sends the images to the DVR. The DVR is not networked and not enabled to allow remote viewing. The DVR is scheduled to record 24 hours a day and seven days a week when operating.

The current systems used by the SDPD are: Uniview IPC3615SE-ADF28KM-WL-10, Uniview IPC6424SR-X25-VF, Armix HNC5V181T-IRASE/4, Armix DBC8MV, Armix, ILP1080VLR, Armix BC6-EXIR-f, Armix HNC512-VBA94, Armix IBC5M-EXIR-6, Armix DCB8M, and Armix IBC4M.

PURPOSE

The San Diego Police Department utilizes power over ethernet digital video recorders (POE / DVR) to create objective real-time recordings to develop and further investigations. The POE / DVR is used in areas where there are repeat offenses and more evidence needs to be collected for a successful apprehension of a suspect.

LOCATION

The DVR is used in the field to record video at a targeted location. The location picked is determined by the investigator based on their investigation. The video records 24 hours a day until the hard drive is full. The DVR can be used department wide.

City of San Diego crime statistics can be viewed at Crime Statistics & Crime Mapping | Police | City of San Diego Official Website.

IMPACT

The DVR is set up in public to watch a specific targeted location. The DVR is used in areas where there are repeat offenses or where more evidence needs to be collected for a successful apprehension of a suspect. These cameras are placed in public spaces where there is no expectation of privacy. No warrant is needed to use this technology.

MITIGATIONS

The public has no access to a DVR or any data it may collect. The DVR is password protected. The system can only be accessed by the operators in the Robbery Unit. The investigator is given access to the system at the end of its deployment. The investigator can transfer the timeframe they need for their investigation from the system. The hard drive is then reset, formatted and cleared for the next deployment.

Authorized users must evaluate the areas surrounding the location of deployment to ensure no private areas, areas of curtilage, or areas where an individual would have a reasonable expectation of privacy are covered by the recordings.

Once the authorized user has impounded the video file physically, evidence retention and access are the responsibility of the SDPD Property Unit and all such evidence is controlled and regulated by SDPD Procedure 3.02 – Impound, Release, and Disposal of Property Evidence.

DATA TYPES AND SOURCES

The system records in an MP4 format or as an AVI file, standard for videos. The system records video only. The system records in constant, meaning 24 hours a day for the length of the systems deployment. The system can record for multiple days or even weeks. If the device is deployed long enough the memory will write over the oldest recorded video. The amount of time this takes depends on how many cameras are being used, the quality of the camera and the frame rate.

DATA SECURITY

The password for the system is kept by the Robbery Unit. Access to the system is given by the Robbery Unit to the investigator at the end of the systems deployment. The system can be reviewed by the investigator or a member of their team. Once the video is viewed the investigator can download the video that applies to their investigation. The video is impounded per the evidence collection policy.

When an investigatory is finished using the DVR, the DVR's hard drive is formatted by the Robbery Unit, erasing the data from that deployment. The system is reset and ready for its next deployment.

FISCAL COST

A standard DVR costs between $250 to $300. The cost is a one-time fee with no additional costs or subscriptions. When a failure with the system occurs, the problem usually centers on the hard drive. When a hard drive needs replacement, the cost can range from $50 to $150.

THIRD PARTY DEPENDENCE

A DVR is a self-contained stand-alone unit. The device does not use a third party for any part of its operation.

ALTERNATIVES

A DVR is an older technology compared to an NVR (Network Video Recorder). A DVR is a cheaper alternative to an NVR. The San Diego Police Department uses both DVRs and NVRs. A DVR is used in places where long term deployment is requested because of repeat offenses or more evidence needs to be collected for a successful apprehension of a suspect.

TRACK RECORD

The DVR systems have been used by the San Diego Police Department for several years. The systems have been deployed at arson scenes, burglary series, vandalisms, sexual assault cases and for undercover investigations. The DVRs have consistently worked with little issues.

The systems are compact, making them easy to conceal and allow recording in situations where traditional video equipment may not be practical. They are generally plugged into a power source, making them useful for recording over an extended periods of time without needing to be recharged or replaced.

In August 2019, Cameras were placed in the rear alley behind a Buddhist Temple. This location was a victim arson on several occasions. The cameras were placed overtly. The system showed two young males approach the structure and set it on fire. The suspects were identified from the video.

Between April and May of 2000, several fires had been started at a residence on Delta Street. The cameras were set up on the residence to view the west side and the north side of the residence. A suspect was seen starting another fire. The suspect was identified and arrested.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND COMMENTS

On March 7, 2024, at 1805 hours, there was a publicly held meeting in all nine council districts in the City of San Diego. The following surveillance technologies were presented by the San Diego Police Department:

1. Covert Audio Recording Device
2. Covert Audio Recording Device (Record Only)
3. Covert Audiovisual Record Device
4. Motion Activated Trail Cameras
5. Pan Tilt Zoom Video Camera Mobile Unit
6. Pan Tilt Zoom Video Camera Mobile Unit with Cloud Based Storage
7. Power Over Ethernet Pan Tilt Zoom Video Cameras
8. Power Over Ethernet Digital Video Recorders
9. Power Over Ethernet Network Video Recorders
10. Power Over Ethernet Video Cameras

There were two attendees in District 1. There were no attendees in District 2. There were no attendees in District 3. There were no attendees in District 4. There were no attendees in District 5. There were no attendees in District 6. There were no attendees in District 7. There was one attendee in District 8. There were no attendees in District 9. There were no questions or comments from the three attendees. There was one question submitted to the online public comment form.

Question #1:

> Are motion-activated trail cameras going to be used on trails or is that just the name of the type of camera? Will there be signs notifying the public of their location?

Answer #1:

> "Trail Camera" is a generic term for battery-powered motion-activated cameras, which are not exclusively used on trails.
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> The San Diego Police Department utilizes battery-powered motion-activated "trail" cameras. These cameras are used when normal power sources for other equipment are unavailable. The device is used in
> areas where there are repeat offenses and/or more evidence needs to be collected for a successful apprehension. The device may be installed overtly or housed in such a way that the identity of the device is not immediately recognizable or is hidden or otherwise concealed. The placement of all recording devices shall be done in accordance with all Federal and State laws and shall adhere to all established case law. Absent a court order, a search warrant, an undercover operation, or permission of the property owner, motion-activated cameras may only be used to monitor public places or places visible to the public where persons do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy.

To maximize the reach of the materials presented at the community meetings, the Police Department created a link to the City of San Diego's technology website, which provides all materials for presented technologies as well as upcoming technologies and additional materials. The materials and questions/comments section can be accessed by visiting the web address below: www.sandiego.gov/police/technology. The web address was posted in conjunction with the QR code at the community meeting.

The Department also video-recorded a meeting so that it could be presented to a larger group. The benefit of the video was the capability of translating the presentation into over 100 languages, such as Spanish and other languages frequently used by the communities within San Diego, to maximize penetration of the materials to affected groups. The link to the video is at the San Diego Police Department's YouTube channel under Surveillance Technology Community Meeting 03/07/2024 - YouTube