



BRIEFING: CCTV IN SLAUGHTERHOUSES

CAMPAIGN AIM

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

The case for CCTV

- More than 4,000 major breaches of animal welfare laws in British slaughterhouses were reported by the FSA in the two years to August 2016.
- The FSA's audit system shows that not a single slaughterhouse was in full compliance with the law when its data was analysed in June 2016.
- Animal Aid's fly-on-the-wall investigations (2009-2016) uncovered tens of thousands of further breaches. Ten of the eleven randomly chosen English slaughterhouses it filmed were breaking animal welfare laws.
- The abuses Animal Aid uncovered included animals being: punched and kicked in the head; burned with cigarettes; beaten with paddles and broom handles; picked up by their fleeces and thrown across rooms; smashed headfirst into solid structures; attacked with shackle hooks; and given powerful and deliberate electric shocks through their ears, tails, abdomens and open mouths. A very high percentage (more than 99 per cent of all pigs killed in two slaughterhouses monitored) were improperly stunned. Investigations by Hillside Animal Sanctuary have found further abuse at even more British slaughterhouses.
- Slaughterhouse vets cannot be everywhere and Animal Aid's evidence suggests that workers wait until they know they are not being watched before breaking the law. The British Veterinary Association supports mandatory CCTV in slaughterhouses to act as a deterrent, to help vets check what is happening when they cannot be present, and to provide evidence.
- Independently monitored CCTV protects animals and also assists in training and retraining staff, protecting staff from bullying and false allegations, and deterring workers from committing acts that lead to injuries. These have included accidental shootings, other workplace accidents and thefts of firearms.

The case for independent monitoring

- Animal Aid has filmed inside two slaughterhouses where our fly-on-the-wall cameras were placed beside the slaughterhouse's own cameras, and recorded vicious abuse. Either the slaughterhouse did not

properly monitor the footage or it ignored the abuse, as both times it was left to Animal Aid to report the workers to the authorities. By properly monitoring its own cameras, Animal Aid obtained the evidence that led to two men being jailed from one slaughterhouse, and there is a prosecution pending of workers from the second.

- Defra cites the two above examples as evidence that cameras alone do not work. We agree. Without independent monitoring and robust action, the presence of cameras is worthless. **In order to ensure that the monitoring is thorough right across the sector, regulations must set out the details of how the footage is gathered and stored, who monitors it, how much they view, and how often they do so.**

Evidence

- The evidence that properly monitored CCTV cameras work rests with Animal Aid's fly-on-the-wall investigations. As a result of the footage obtained being properly monitored and acted upon, thousands of abuses were uncovered, around ten slaughter licences were revoked, and some of the most abusive workers have been successfully prosecuted and jailed. None of this would have happened without the presence of independently monitored cameras.
- The only difference between Animal Aid's cameras and CCTV is that the former were covert, and did not, therefore, have an additional deterrent effect.

How can CCTV be made mandatory?

- A regulation could be made under Section 12 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006. Section 12 'provides for the making of regulations for the purpose of promoting the welfare of animals for which a person is responsible'. This would not be without precedent as The Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007 were introduced this way.

Has this been done anywhere else?

- Both Israel and France have made CCTV cameras mandatory in response to investigations revealing abuse of animals inside their country's slaughterhouses.



- The Indian State of Uttar Pradesh also has mandatory CCTV in all its slaughterhouses.

What would it cost?

- Defra Minister George Eustice has said that the cost of installing cameras is ‘relatively modest’.
- An independent report by Professor Ian Rotherham of Sheffield Hallam University (published August 2016) found that an independent CCTV-monitoring system would cost up to £370,000 a year for slaughterhouses in England.
- These modest figures should be weighed against the cost of not acting. The many scandals emanating from the slaughter industry – from welfare abuses and deaths of workers to the horsemeat contamination and campylobacter – have led to reputational damage across the whole farming industry. As a result of animal welfare abuses being uncovered, two slaughterhouses have gone out of business and a third has been shut down by the Food Standards Agency. The cost of independent monitoring is very little compared with the immediate and longer-term costs arising from such scandals.

Who would pay?

- Currently, the industry and taxpayer jointly fund the delivery of official monitoring in slaughterhouses but it is clear that this system is not working when it comes to preventing animal welfare breaches.
- The 2016 Rotherham report suggested a levy on each animal killed, so that industry and consumers pay, rather than government and taxpayers, in line with current regulatory policy.

Since the majority of slaughterhouses have already installed cameras, why do we need a law?

- Around 49 per cent of red meat slaughterhouses and 70 per cent of white meat slaughterhouses have some form of CCTV, but this figure for voluntary take-up has now plateaued.
- Moreover, the cameras are often not installed throughout their premises, are not necessarily facing

the right way, turned on, well maintained or working. The footage is not monitored by an independent body with welfare as its priority, nor does it have to be handed over to regulators when requested. In May 2016, The Times reported that a fifth of slaughterhouses with cameras refused to share the footage with the regulators. A law would set out all these requirements, as well as details of how the footage would be monitored.

Support for mandatory CCTV with independent monitoring

- The Food Standards Agency supports mandatory CCTV. Its Chair stated that the case for CCTV in slaughterhouses has been made.
- The British Veterinary Association supports mandatory CCTV with independent monitoring of the footage.
- UNISON – the union that represents meat hygiene inspectors and slaughterhouse vets – supports the introduction of mandatory CCTV with independent monitoring of the footage.
- 142 MPS signed the latest EDM, and others who do not sign EDMs have stated their support elsewhere.
- All the major supermarkets have now agreed to deal only with slaughterhouses that have ‘independently monitored’ CCTV. The RSPCA also insists that all slaughterhouses which form part of its RSPCA Assured scheme have CCTV with ‘independent monitoring’. (The level and robustness of the monitoring, however, varies widely, and in some cases is extremely weak, verging on the non-existent – another reason to put in place robust independent monitoring.)
- The campaign is also supported by the RSPCA, Compassion in World Farming and many other animal protection groups.
- A 2014 YouGov public opinion poll found that 76 per cent of respondents supported mandatory CCTV. That figure rose to 87 per cent when taking into account only those who expressed a view. A petition hosted on the UK Government website in 2015 attracted 112,285 signatures.

For more information, visit www.SlaughterhouseCCTV.org.uk



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