




*enhancing community well-being
through civic engagement*



**ICW SUBMISSION
SEEKING THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF
CAMERA BASE WELLINGTON**



The best way to protect both the
policemen and the community
going forward is by creating a
system that's just, where
everyone feels safe.

Russell Simmons



INTRODUCTION

This submission has been prepared as a reaction to the sudden closure of the Camera Base (Camera Base Wgtn) in the Wellington Central Police Station.

ICW is not only concerned for the safety and well-being of city residents and visitors alike, but also shocked at the indifferent way in which WCC closed down Camera Base Wgtn. This was done without prior consultation with ICW's David and Sarah Webb who were not only part of the team of original volunteers, but who set up the operational protocols and training, and managed the running of Camera Base Wgtn from its inception until its abrupt closure.

The decision also left the large team of volunteers, who had willingly given their time with pride and attachment to Camera Base Wgtn, feeling disparaged and undervalued.

Camera Base Wgtn had been successfully operating for seven years with a team of 40+ volunteers who were comprehensively trained, not only to monitor the cameras, but to interact with the police when required.

- Volunteers provided Police with a rich intelligence resource that included:
 - ◇ Local gang intelligence
 - ◇ Breaches of the liquor ban.
 - ◇ Drug dealing activity.
 - ◇ Locating missing youths.
 - ◇ Searching for persons with warrants to arrest.
- Volunteers donated 403 hours of monitoring time per month (performing 3-hour shifts and cover during the day, night, and weekends that consisted of two-person shifts going throughout the night until at least 4.30am in the morning with volunteers often staying longer to assist the police).
- In total they delivered 4,433 hours per year at no cost to WCC or the NZ Police

Working with Police frontline staff, volunteer operators were able to provide information to update police on incidents to ensure they were fully prepared when they arrived on scene, and frequently were able to save resource being sent if an event had already been diffused.

As well as live monitoring, the volunteer operators also processed playback requests (gathering evidence from events) where their superior local knowledge and highly developed analytical skills, were often more successful in locating useful footage, and in a timely manner.

Over the last 3 years:

- the volunteers responded to 655 playback requests from police,
- searched through 1638 hours of footage to find information for evidential purposes.

Officers now need to do most of this work themselves, which represents a huge waste of Police resources.

Although ICW was concerned about the closure at the time, we refrained from comment to allow WCC time to demonstrate that they would indeed provide a superior service. Eight months later it is very clear they are not and we believe immediate action is required to re-establish Camera Base Wgtn as it was at the Police Station to ensure our city has this vital assistance in keeping us all safe.



- ⇒ **ICW recommends** the re-establishment of Camera Base Wgtn in Wellington Central Police Station.
- ⇒ **ICW contends that**, not only was the closure of Camera Base Wgtn ill-considered, but it has resulted in a noticeable reduction in city safety and an increase in violence and crime.
- ⇒ **ICW argue** that 2 people cannot possibly replace the work of 40+ camera base comprehensively trained volunteers.
- ⇒ **ICW hereby requests** a copy of the full evaluation and risk assessment report which led to the bewildering decision to close Camera base Wgtn.

ICW HISTORY OF CAMERA BASE WGTN.

In September 2013 Sergeant Matt Boyce from NZ Police attended an ICW meeting to request assistance. He explained there were WCC CCTV cameras around the city which had been installed for the rugby world cup and, as the police recognised their value in the fight against crime and keeping the city safe, they wanted to make use of them. However, the police did not have the resources to monitor the cameras so they were looking for volunteers to do this job.

ICW unanimously elected to step up to the challenge. The first pool of volunteers came from the committee and, without their involvement and commitment, Camera Base Wgtn would not have got off the ground.

David and Sarah Webb led the ICW team of volunteers and quickly ensured that the camera base was run on a professional and secure basis. With a background in training and documentation David set up systems, as well as volunteering, and working full time elsewhere.

As the number of volunteers started increasing, Sergeant Boyce asked David to become the volunteer co-ordinator and he took on the role from 2013 to 2015.

By 2015 the amount of work required meant the role had become unsustainable on a volunteer basis and it became a paid position as Camera Base Co-ordinator City Safety Camera-Wellington. The role was to provide a link between the Police, the council and volunteers and initially was for 15 hours per week, increased to 18 hours January 2017, and 20 hours from July 2018.

The role covered the following:

- **Assisted with recruitment and coordination of 40+ volunteers which included:**
 - ◇ *Processing applications, doing referee checks and interviewing prospective volunteers with a Police representative.*
 - ◇ *Supervising visits prior to acceptance to ensure volunteers understood what they were signing up for.*
- ◇ *Onboarding and Inductions.*
- ◇ *Training and mentoring.*
- ◇ *Developed and maintained training manuals and necessary desk files. (Appendix A)*
- ◇ *Implemented rosters and rostering software.*
- ◇ *Developed and maintained an accurate and detailed database of volunteers and their skills, to assess needs of future recruitment and training needs.*
- **Provided training in:**
 - ◇ *Induction to the Police Camera Base environment and expectations.*
 - ◇ *Health and Safety, Privacy and Security training and awareness*
 - ◇ *The role of the volunteer and "Police 101" = how volunteers fit into the bigger Police picture and how we can be most helpful to the Police*
 - ◇ *The use of the camera monitoring equipment and Multiple Screen Usability.*
 - ◇ *Radio communication procedures and the use of different radio types.*
 - ◇ *Gang awareness*
 - ◇ *Imagery Analysis*
 - ◇ *Site visits included Comms tour, police college, dog training school, tactical manoeuvres training.*
- **Provided assistance to both New Zealand Police and Wellington City Council for Camera Base Wgtn related matters as required, which included:**
 - ◇ *Recording, and reporting on all volunteer movements such as duties, hours and mentoring new trainees.*
 - ◇ *Reporting on coverage and identifying trends.*
 - ◇ *Processing playback requests and advising officers of results.*
 - ◇ *On site fault finding when problems occurred.*
 - ◇ *Produced and distributed a newsletter to volunteers and stakeholders.*

ICW HISTORY OF CAMERA BASE WGTN.

On 12 March 2020, without any prior discussion or advanced warning with David & Sarah Webb or ICW, WCC advised they were closing Camera Base Wgtn in the Wellington Central Police Station.

The inference was it was no longer viable to have camera base in the police station due to technology changes.

The council also claimed they could provide a better service and more hours of monitoring by employing five CCTV operators.

However, approximately 8 months later, WCC CCTV Control has two paid operators doing single person shifts. These operators were formerly Camera Base Wgtn highly trained volunteers. One operator does Wed & Thurs 4:00pm to 2:00am and Fri & Sat 6:00pm to 4:00am, while the other works day-time with a focus on playbacks.

In August 2020, Acting Area Commander Inspector Dion Bennett (reported in an article in stuff¹ regarding the closure of Camera Base) said the police were attending a serious incident almost every weekend in recent months.

This increase reflects the main concern relayed to the Police and WCC by Camera Base Wgtn Operators after learning their volunteer services were no longer wanted.

Wellington is out of step with the rest of the country. This is because the CCTV cameras are owned by council who have no legal mandate for surveillance of citizens, and are not able to hold intelligence on their systems vital for the work Police do.

¹ [Volunteers warned of trouble for central city streets after CCTV camera monitors given the boot | Stuff.co.nz](https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/300229164/man-arrested-after-stabbing-in-innercity-wellington)

MAN ARRESTED AFTER STABBING IN INNER-CITY WELLINGTON

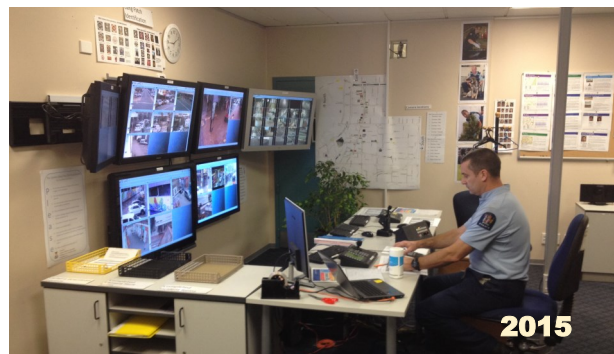
<https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/300229164/man-arrested-after-stabbing-in-innercity-wellington>



Were the police backed up by WCC CCTV Control for the stabbing incident above?

Two Camera Base Wgtn operators would have been on shift and interacting with the police for this incident!

From this



To this



And now Wellington has this



Shortly after the closure of Camera Base Wellington the ex-camera base volunteers were confronted with the following statement and above photo from the Mayor of Wellington which was published in SCOOP

“Also had the opportunity to visit the CCTV control. The camera network and team that monitors this resource do a great job in keeping our city safe. To be able to identify trouble before it escalates has saved lives and protected property”.

and Wellington has lost this



QUESTIONS

1. CONSULTATION AND CONSIDERATION

- Why were David and Sarah Webb and ICW left out of the decision-making process when it is very clear the success of Camera Base Wgtn for its 7 years of existence would not have happened without them?
- Prior to the decision being made, how many councillors or senior staff had been on a tour of Camera Base Wgtn to gain an understanding of how it operated and interacted with the police and council, and how it compared with the facilities available at WCC?

2. VETTING PROCESS AND INDUCTION

- What is the process for new applicants?

3. TRAINING

- Given that the current operators at WCC CCTV Control did not need training as that had occurred during their work at Camera Base Wgtn, we ask how will new recruits now receive the same comprehensive AND QUALITY of training received at Camera Base Wgtn.
- And who will be providing that training?
- What reference material is the training linked to, and what is the document approval process?

4. LEVEL OF SERVICE PROVIDED TO POLICE

Since WCC claim they can provide a better service than Camera Base Wgtn please provide the methods/timeframes for the following

- **Annual leave/Sickness**
 - ⇒ How will the service level be maintained with such low staff levels?
- **Live Camera Monitoring**
 - ⇒ Do WCC CCTV Control operators have daily debriefs from the police?
 - ⇒ Do WCC CCTV Control Operators have

access to police intelligence such as the Wanted To Arrest lists, crime trend sheets. If so, describe the process to update this information.

- ⇒ Does WCC CCTV Control interact with police in real time to assist them when faced with incidents/arrests etc. to provide video evidence if required.



Police Minister Stuart Nash visits Camera Base Wgtn at in 2018. in time to observe volunteers supporting the police during an incident.

- **Playback requests:**

- ⇒ What is the process for playback?
- ⇒ What is the turn-around time for requests?
- ⇒ How many requests are actioned by WCC CCTV Control per month?

- **Reporting**

- ⇒ How do the police gain access to information collected by the council to aid their intelligence on events in the CBD?
- ⇒ Is this information 'live'?
- ⇒ Is WCC CCTV Control identifying concerning trends emerging such as new 'preloading areas' so that police can be proactive and one step ahead?

5. THIRD PARTY NOTIFICATION

- Camera Base Wgtn contacted Outbreak organisations directly with information on rough sleepers, vulnerable persons to allow early intervention. Do WCC CCTV Control camera operators do this?


























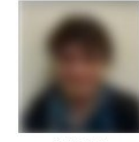







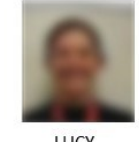



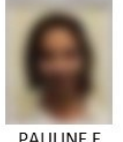









Volunteered
403 hours
every month

THE VOLUNTEERS

7 YEARS OF COMMITMENT
AND PRIDE IN THEIR WORK



Volunteered
4,433 hours
every year

				
ABBY	ANNABEL	ANDREW	BASIL	BRUCE
				
BRUCE F	CAMERON	CAROL	CAROL R	CINDY
				
COLIN	DAVID	HUGH	IAN	IM
				
ISLA	JESS	JO	JOHN A	JOHN R
				
JOHN Z	JORDAN	JOSEPH	KAREN	KATHRYN
				
KEITH B	KEITH T	KEVIN	LAUREN	RICK
				
LIAM	LUCY	MARY	MATHUS	MICHELLE
				
PAULINE E	PAULINE P	PETER	PETER C	RICK
				
ROBERT	RUFUS	RUSSELL	SAM	SARAH



SAFETY ISN'T EXPENSIVE, ITS PRICELESS.

Jerry Smith



APPENDIX A: Index to Camera Base Wgtn Volunteers Desk File.

Distribution	2	Body Egestion	44
Amendments	2	Breach of Liquor Ban BOLB	45
Change register	2	Busking	45
Table of Contents	4	Gang Activity	45
Equipment user ID and passwords	8	Graffiti	45
User ID / Passwords	8	Known Person	47
Camera Base Introduction	9	Rough Sleeping	47
Introduction	9	Street vendors / Hawkers	47
24-hour clock	9	Vehicle	47
Booking a shift rule	9	Vulnerable Person	47
Learning opportunities	11	Wanted for Arrest	47
Liquor Ban areas	13	Shift changeover - end	48
Maximum volunteers each shift	14	Shift change over protocol	48
Support services	14	Shift end process	48
Taking leave	14	Camera Controls	50
Camera Base Improvements	16	Introduction	50
Reporting Health and Safety issues	16	Icons on the screen	50
Appendix 1 shift booking instructions	16	Help	52
Appendix 2 Camera playback instructions	16	Camera controls	53
Where does Camera Base fit in the police structure?	17	Arranging Image Panes	53
How to escalate an incident	18	Displaying or hiding the Image pane bars	54
Feedback to and from other groups	20	Switching to full-screen mode	54
Shift Tasks	25	Displaying a camera in an Image pane	54
Introduction	25	Making your Favourites view	56
The Volunteer role	25	Reset the Joystick	57
Before starting your shift	25	Locate a camera by using the on-screen map	59
Starting your shift	25	Why some cameras look better than others	60
What should I do if my Shift buddy doesn't turn up?	27	Computer Passwords	61
Intel wall (Intelligence)	27	Laptop Passwords	63
Phone numbers	27	Play back of camera images	63
If you can't get through to Comms on the phone	27	Computer faults	63
I think I see someone on camera who is wanted	28	Camera faults	63
Attend Fall-in briefing	28	Camera not displaying?	63
Police radio	29	Radios	64
Recording	30	Introduction	64
Recording what you see	30	Offence codes	64
Playing back footage	33	Radio call signs make up	65
Describing people to Comms	34	Police call sign explanations	66
Reporting body egestion and infrastructure issues	35	Radio procedure words	67
Recording events in the APP	37	Priority codes	72
Introduction	37	Offence codes	72
Background	37	Activity codes	73
Opening the app	37	Police '10' Codes	74
Entering an event	38	Police Result codes	74
Which event type to select?	44	Police Victim codes	74
Introduction	44	Police '1' Incident codes	75
Antisocial behaviour	44	Police Jargon	75
Begging Active	44	Police radio operating instructions	76
Begging Passive	44	Local Host radio operating instructions	78

APPENDIX 2: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

THE VOLUNTEER VETTING PROCESS

- 1) Applicants meet with a coordinator & Police Rep to discuss the role and look at Camera Base
- 2) If applicants were interested they would do a supervised visit, which would be a couple of hours in the evening or at night with the volunteers on shift
- 3) If they still wished to apply, they completed the application form
- 4) The Police Rep then did an initial vetting check on the Police system
- 5) The applicant's details were then sent away to Police vetting for a more thorough check
- 6) Camera Base Co-Ordinators contacted all 3 referees by phone EVERY TIME
- 7) The co-ordinators and Police Rep would make the final decision once the application was back from police vetting
- 8) If successful, the applicant then went through a full induction and competency training.



CAMERA BASE COMPARISON TABLE - 2018

LOCATION	NUMBER OF CAMERAS	HOURS PER MONTH MONITORED	OWNER-SHIP	VOLUNTEERS OR EMPLOYEES	NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO MONITOR	COMMENTS
Auckland	1762	Full time	Council	Employees	Police FTE	
Kaitia	120		Trust	Employees	Non-profit security company	
Hamilton	75	Full time	Council	Employees	Council FTE	
Christchurch	176	78	Council	Volunteers	25	Constable 70 hours per fortnight solely on Camera Base tasks
Hutt Valley	59	95	Trust	Volunteers	40	
Wellington	43	403	Council	Volunteers	54	WCC fund per year: 1. 20 hours civilian admin per week 2. \$1200 for volunteer social activity 3. \$800 for coffee and biscuits
Gisborne	20		Trust	Volunteers		
Nelson	17	20	Council	Volunteers	Community Patrol	
Napier	16	80	Trust	Volunteers		
Dunedin	14	52	Council	Employees	Police FTE	
Levin	17	91	Trust	Volunteers	4	



Camera Base 7 Years on

On this day back in 2012 there was no great fanfare, it was straight to business on the night Wellington hosted the premiere of The Hobbit.

In classic New Zealand 'she'll be right' style volunteers were called for, no experience necessary, and training was limited to "you'll pick it up as you go along".

Sarah, one of two volunteers on that very first shift admits it was pretty scary knowing the safety of international celebs could be in your hands. "It was also fun though, especially having a bird's eye view of the stars!"

The Volunteers

The Camera Base now has 46 carefully selected and well-trained volunteers.

David Webb, co-coordinator of the volunteers says, "we're very proud of the training and mentoring given to volunteers before they go solo, and also of the ongoing learning opportunities provided such as; Imagery Analysis, Gang Awareness, Police 101 and Multiple Screen Usability"

The real stars are mostly definitely the volunteers, collectively contributing 403 hours of monitoring time per month.

'403 hours every month'



Footage Playbacks

In 2017 shift coverage was extended to include daytime volunteers, with the primary focus of processing playback requests.

Footage searches are done for both police and council personnel, and include casual 'walk ins', which are particularly useful when evidence is needed on the spot.

"The footage is gold!"

A newly simplified form has recently made the request process super easy.

If you think we can help with footage check out this link:

<http://ppi.police.govt.nz/StationsData/Wellington-Central-400/CCTV-camera-base/CCTV-Footage-Requests>

and contact sandy.cumpstone@police.govt.nz if you have any questions.



Since June 2018 we've processed 282 playback requests with a high success rate.

New Cameras

Camera coverage has also been extended over the years, with recent additions including 2 cameras in Newtown, 2 in Kilbirnie, and extra coverage of Te Aro Park.



**EXTRACTS FROM
CAMERA BASE
WGTV
7 YEARS ON
NEWSLETTER.**



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Inner-City Wellington seeks to serve as a progressive and influential voice of and for the residential community in Te Aro and Wellington Central

