

CCTV Annual Statistical Report

2010

Introduction

This document is an examination of data collected by the CCTV department of Boston Borough Council. This data is collected and studied in order better understand the performance and achievements of Boston's CCTV unit. The data within this document should not be seen as a full picture of criminal activity within the Boston area.

The majority of data in this report has been exported from the 'VTAS' software in use by Boston CCTV. Boston CCTV has no set targets for incidents or arrests, and does not receive any benefits or funding based on results or achievements. Altering or manipulating statistics would serve us no purpose, so the figures within this document can be confidently taken as factual

Scale of Data

For the period between 01/01/10 and 01/01/11, Boston CCTV operators have:

- Recorded 17,622 Daily log entries.
- Completed 1960 incident records
- Contributed to 803 arrests*
- Had 832 CCTV image reviews
- Produced 303 pieces of evidence for Police / Court use
- Over 2000 visitors signed into the CCTV suite
- Performed 8762 Pro-active activities and 6151 Re-active activities

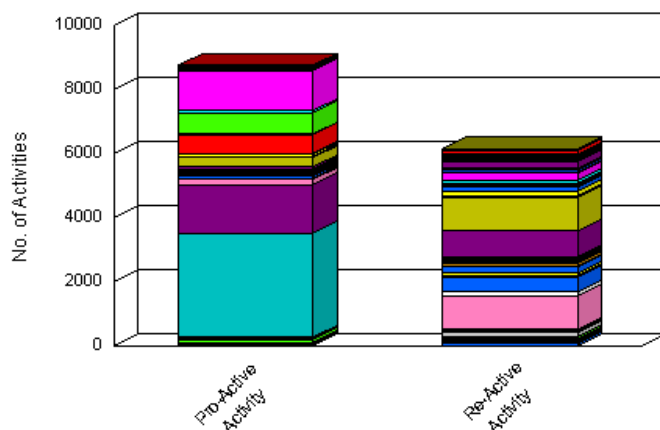
*It should be noted that we do not have records for arrests resulting from images reviewed post incident. These figures would be useful for measuring performance, however it would require the police to compile and forward these figures to us. The majority of data within this report is internal data only.

Operator Activities

By adding together, figures for Repeat Offender Sightings, Incidents and Pro-active monitoring we can estimate that CCTV operators have participated in 4878 'incidents' that involved camera usage. This is a rough figure, as other documented incidents may have included camera use but some software limitations prevent us from recording and accessing this information.

Repeat Offender Sightings = 2004
 Incidents = 1960
 Pro-Active Monitoring = 914
 = 4878 participations with camera.

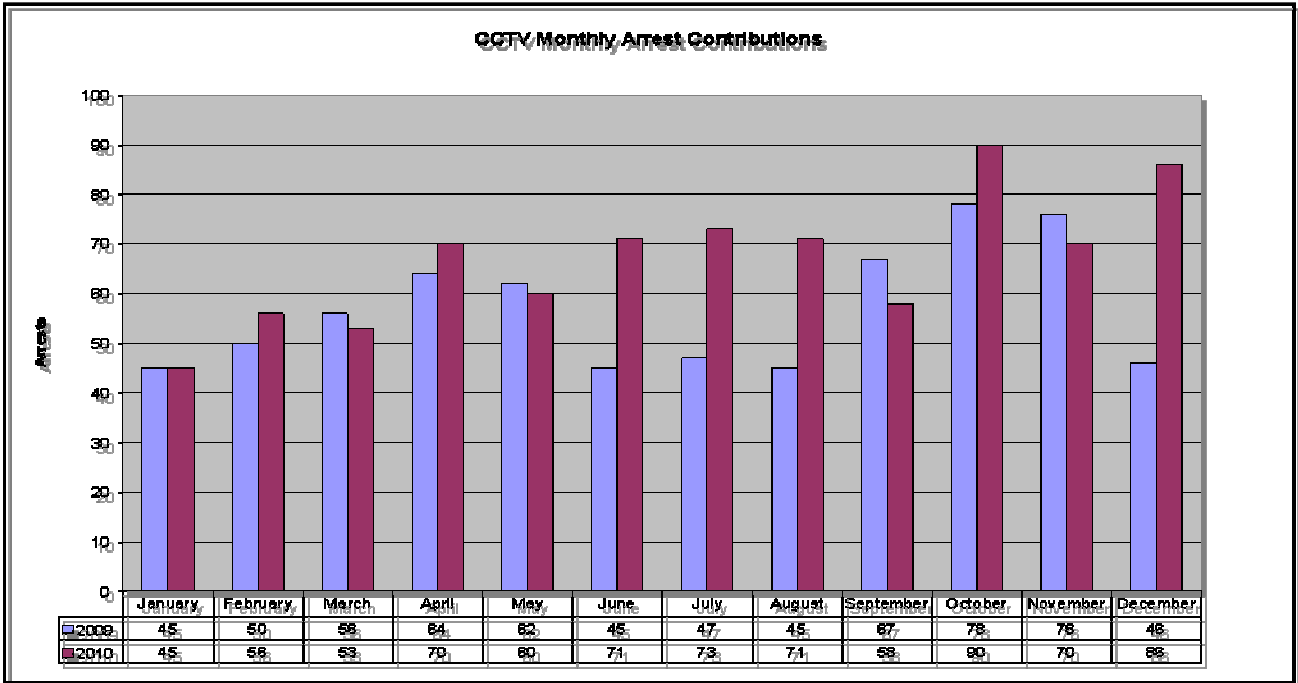
This figure does not include the routine camera patrols that operators perform on a regular basis. A camera patrol is performed by using each camera one by one in order to proactively 'patrol' a specific area. In the period stated in this report, 5890 camera patrols were documented by Boston CCTV operators.



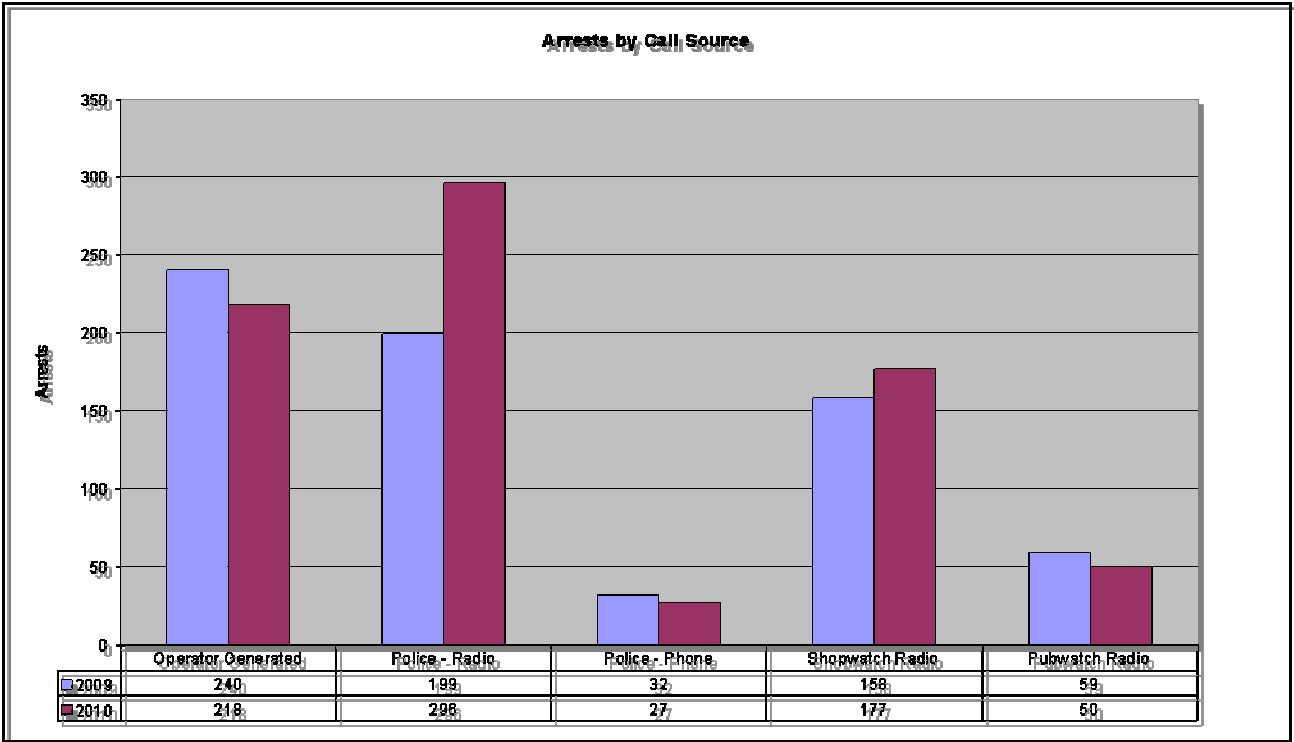
Boston CCTV operators are encouraged to be proactive in their activities. Operators use cameras to search for suspicious activity and repeat offenders. Intelligence information is gathered and sent to police on a regular basis. The graph above gives some idea as to the extent of CCTV operator activity.

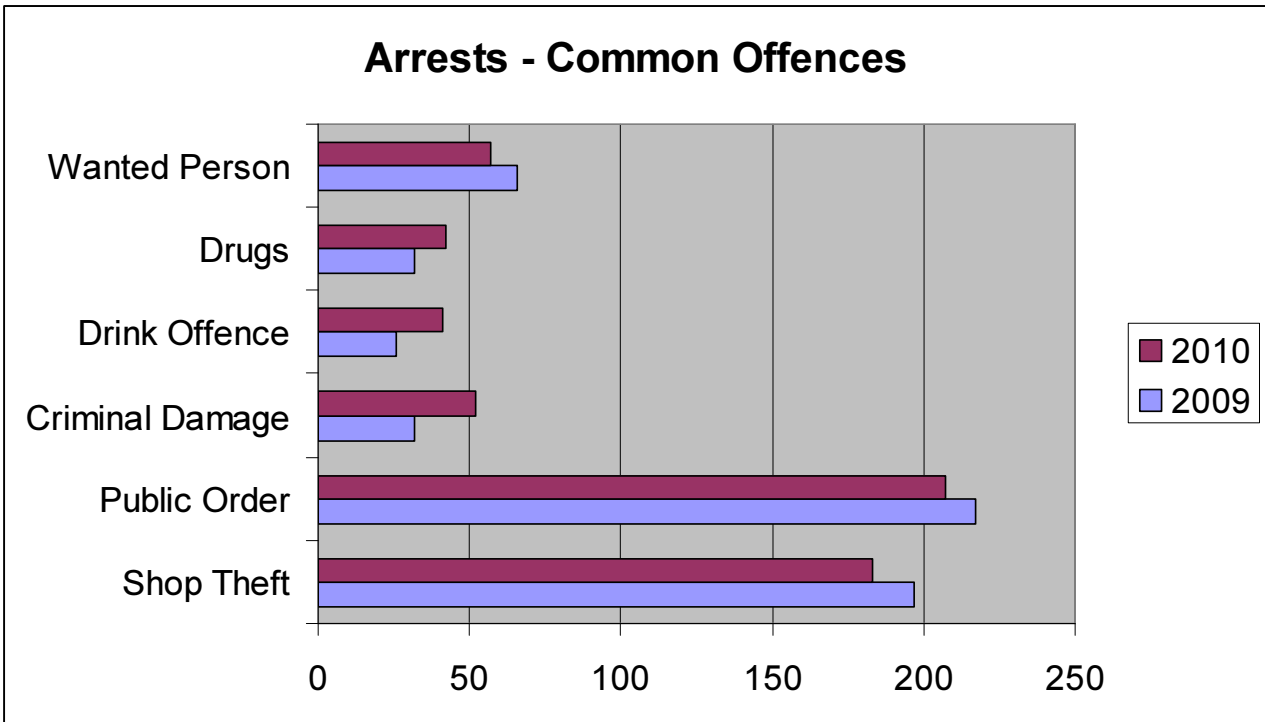
Arrests

The chart below shows a monthly breakdown of the 803 arrests where CCTV has provided a direct contribution. During the beginning of the year, results follow reasonably well with those of 2009. However the months of June, July, August and December show a large increase on previous years figures.



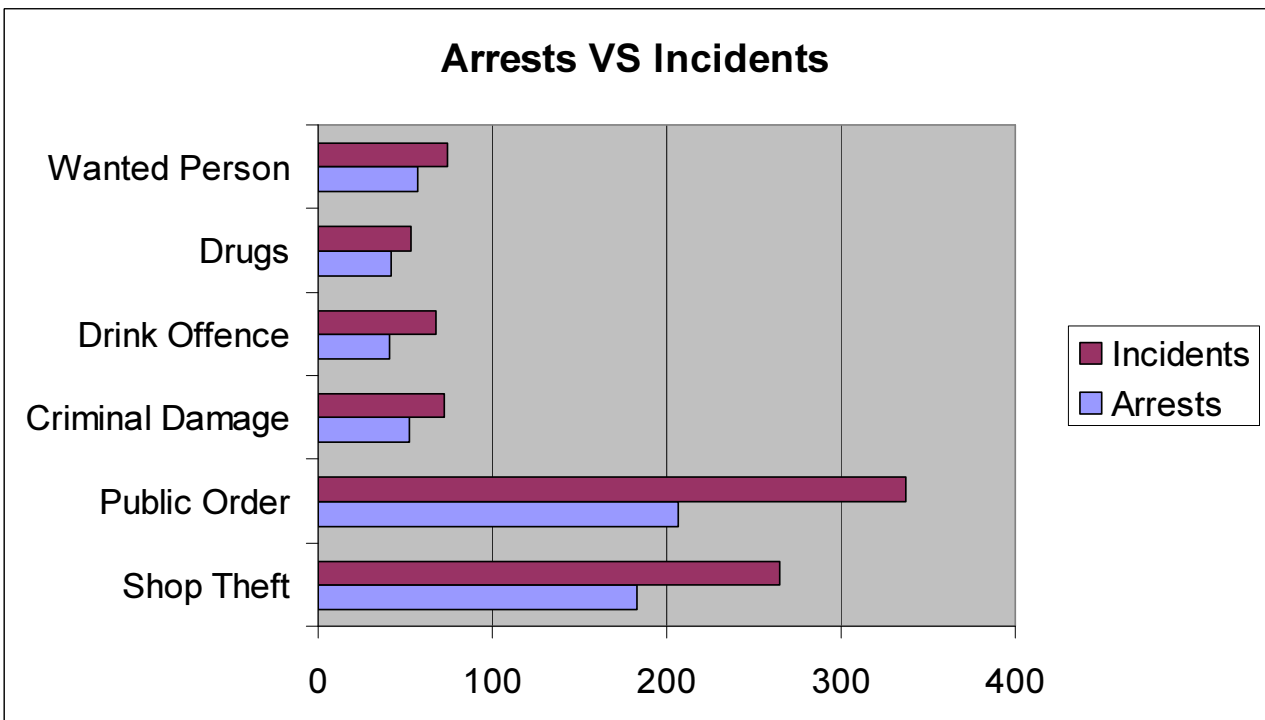
When we examine the arrests by call source, we see an increase in the number of arrests resulting from incidents initiated by contact from police over the Airwaves radio system. Arrests from Operator Generated incidents have seen a small decrease. This fits in with figures showing a decrease in operator pro-active activity compared to 2009.





The arrests that CCTV have assisted with fall into the same common categories as 2009. We have seen a slight reduction in arrests for shoplifting and public order offences (includes assault and affray). Drink and drugs offences have seen a rise, as well as criminal damage.

In the graph below we can compare how many incidents end in arrests. A large percentage of public order incidents logged by CCTV operators did not result in arrests. Similarly, large numbers of shop theft incidents have ended the same way. However we must take into account that we do not have information regarding arrests that have occurred sometime after the incident (e.g. from evidence following an image review). For the categories below, 2009 saw 62.4% of incidents end in an arrest. In 2010 this has risen to 67%



Partnership Working

As we have mentioned before, these figures should not be seen as a full picture of criminal activity.

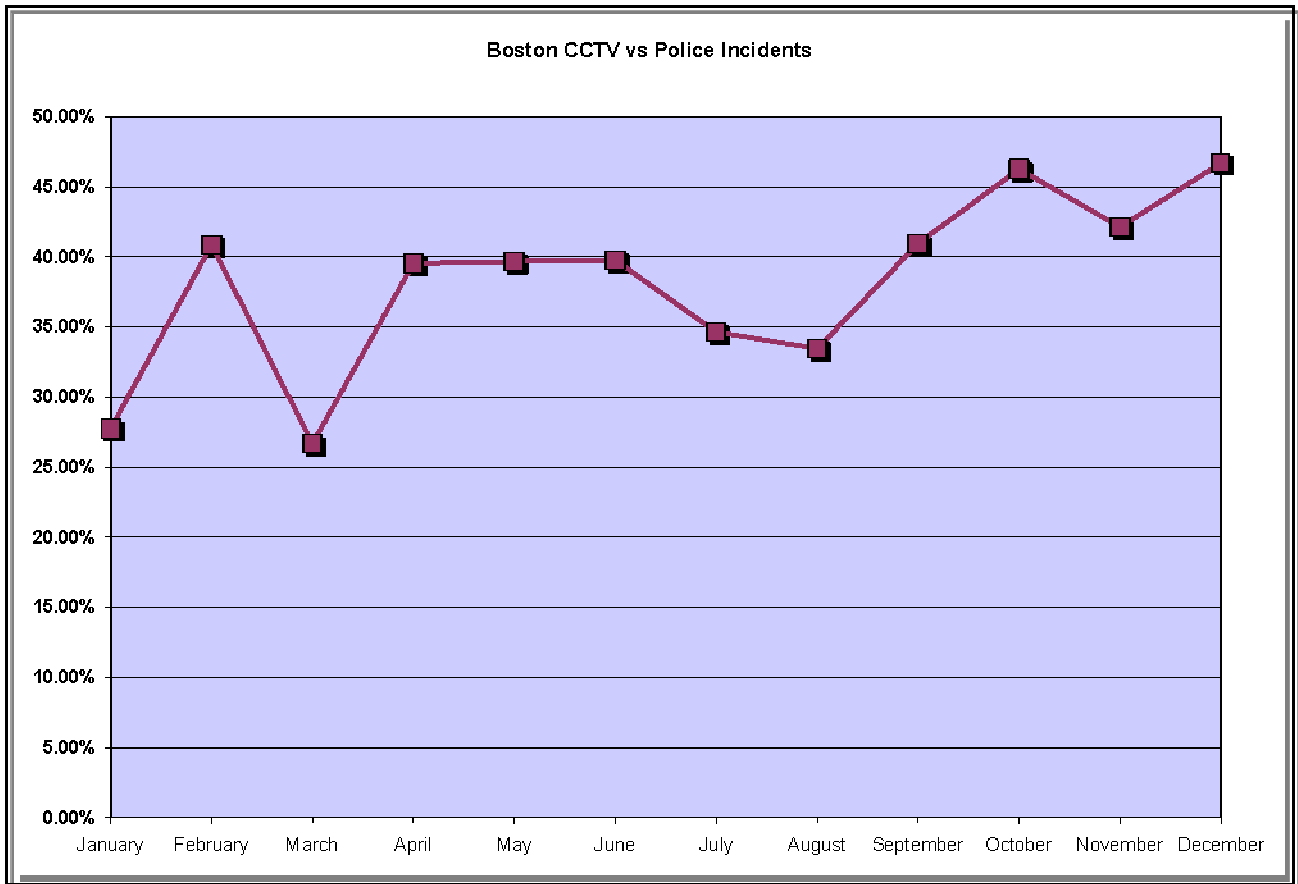
CCTV is used for the monitoring of public spaces: the places that we share, socialise and travel freely through every day, generally without incident. As such, the most common incidents dealt with by Boston CCTV may or may not necessarily be the most common of all crimes. Crimes in public spaces however cause distress to many passing members of the public, cause a heightened fear and perception of crime while bringing a bad reputation to the town centre.

Due to the restrictions of CCTV limited to public spaces, not all crime is targetable by CCTV. However CCTV can help with the aid of outside agencies. For example we can see from the previous chart, that CCTV is effectively involved in the fight against shoplifting. Offences are by nature, committed out-of-view of Boston Borough Council CCTV cameras. Positive results with this particular offence, are gained by co-operation and communication with shop staff and security, together with Boston BID Town Rangers and Police. In 2010 CCTV operators logged 709 important messages from Shopwatch radio users and 98 from Town Rangers. 298 incidents were initiated by Shopwatch communications.

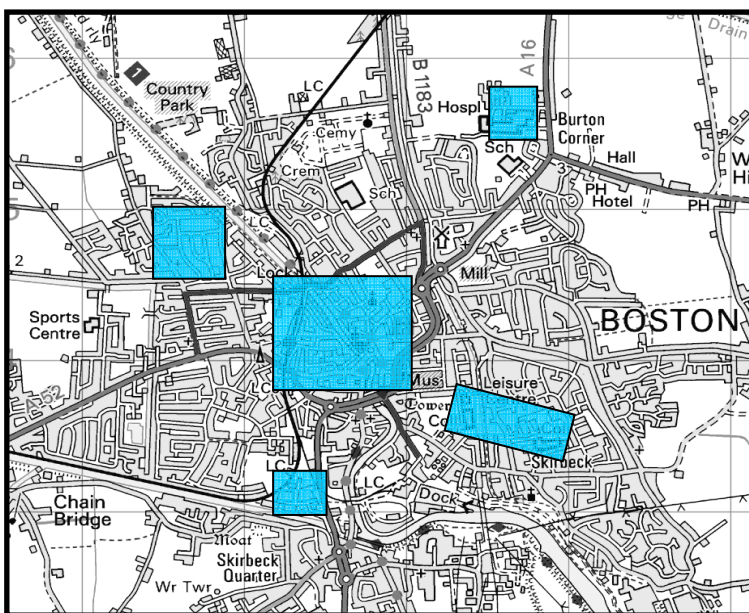
Similarly, public order offences surrounding the night-time economy of pubs, clubs and restaurants are combated with co-operation between pub/club staff and security, Police, Street Pastors and Night-time Economy officers. In 2010 CCTV operators logged 160 important messages from Pubwatch radio users. This may not seem like many, but the majority of these are occurring in a short time frame at weekend nights. As with Shopwatch, not all radio traffic is specifically logged. 93 Incidents were initiated by Pubwatch communications.

In both these cases Boston Borough Council CCTV control room acts as liaison and communications hub for multiple agencies, as well as performing its more traditional role of evidence gathering and the spotting of incidents. Operators also logged 1660 important communications from Police, and 218 communications from various other agencies and individuals.

Incidents

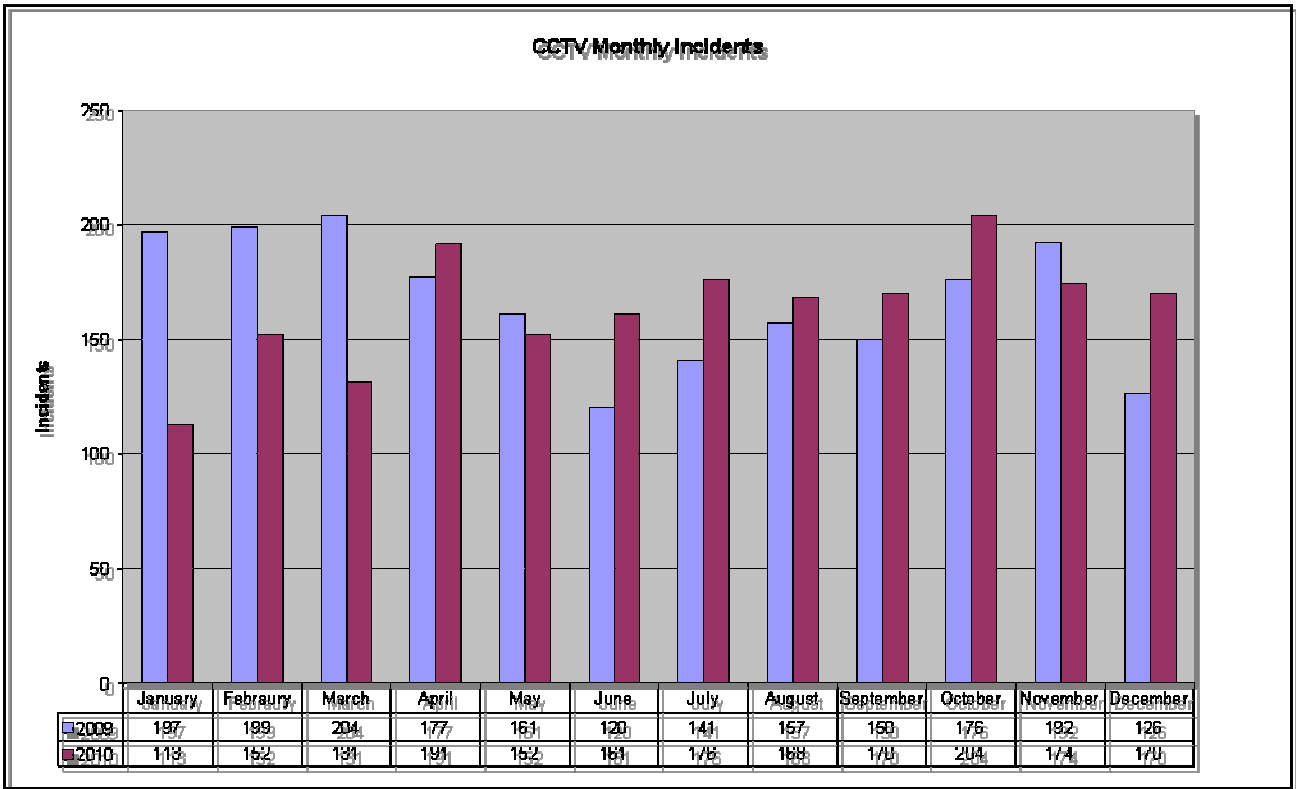


Thanks to Lincolnshire Police, we now have some incident figures for comparison with our own. If we judge the police figures to be that of total recorded crime in the Boston area, Boston Borough Council CCTV is involved in 38% of these incidents. Considering CCTV is confined to specific small areas, this is a reasonably impressive figure.



The map to the left is a rough guide to the areas covered by CCTV in Boston. Boston Borough Council's CCTV cameras cover much less than 30% of the town.

It is worth noting that the shaded areas in the map do NOT have complete coverage by CCTV cameras but are an indication of the specific areas targeted by CCTV.

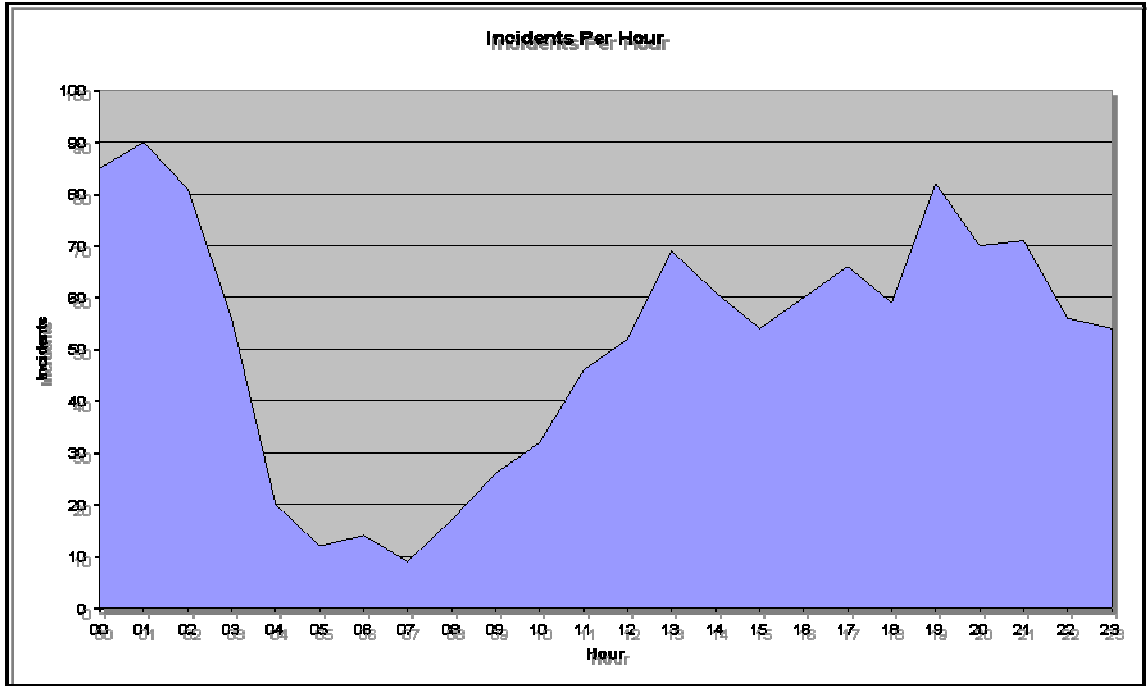


The graph above shows a comparison between 2009 and 2010 of CCTV logged incidents per month.

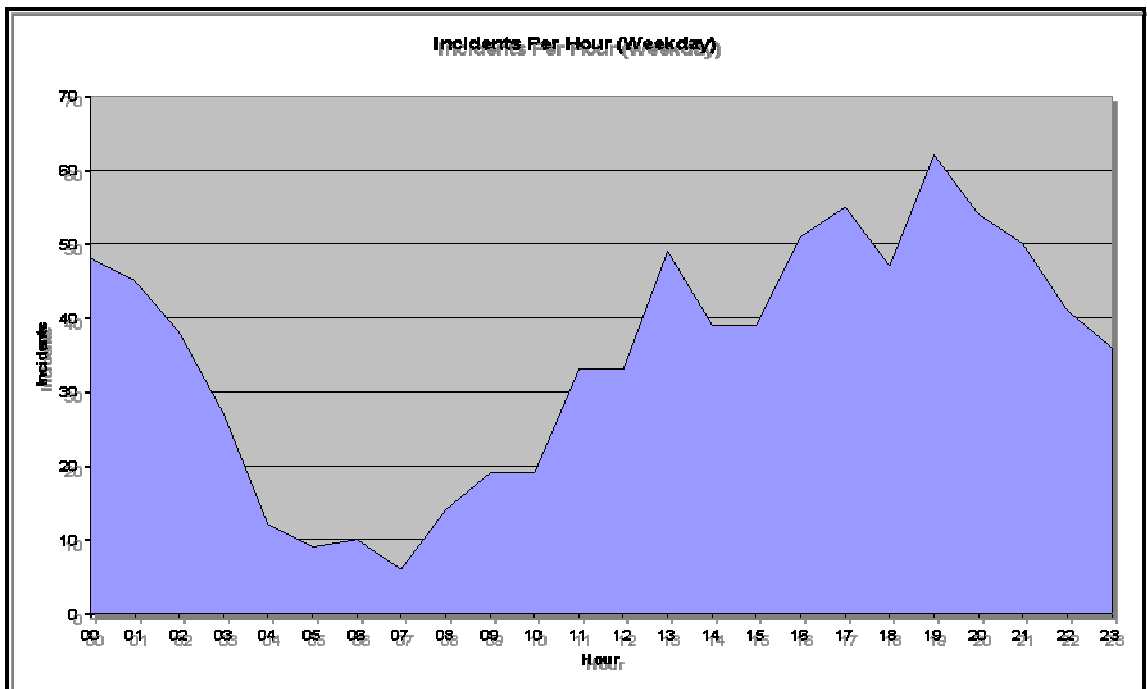
The figures are reasonable well matched, however January, February and March show a considerable difference with 2009 having more incidents logged for those months. On further examination, we find that Boston CCTV control room was still double staffed (two CCTV operators on duty at the same time) at peak periods during these months.

Incidents - Busiest Times

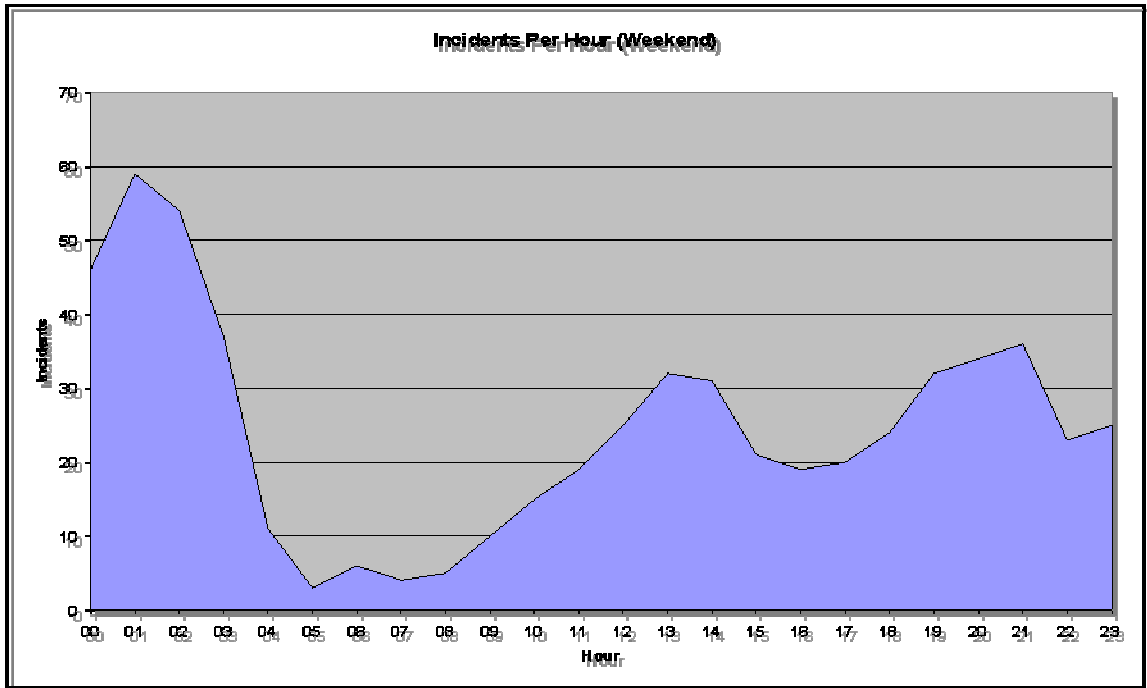
For the purpose of Boston Borough Council's "Transformation Project" we produced some figures this year to show the most active periods of the day for CCTV incidents. This data was taken from the 1st of January 2010 to the 1st of September 2010.



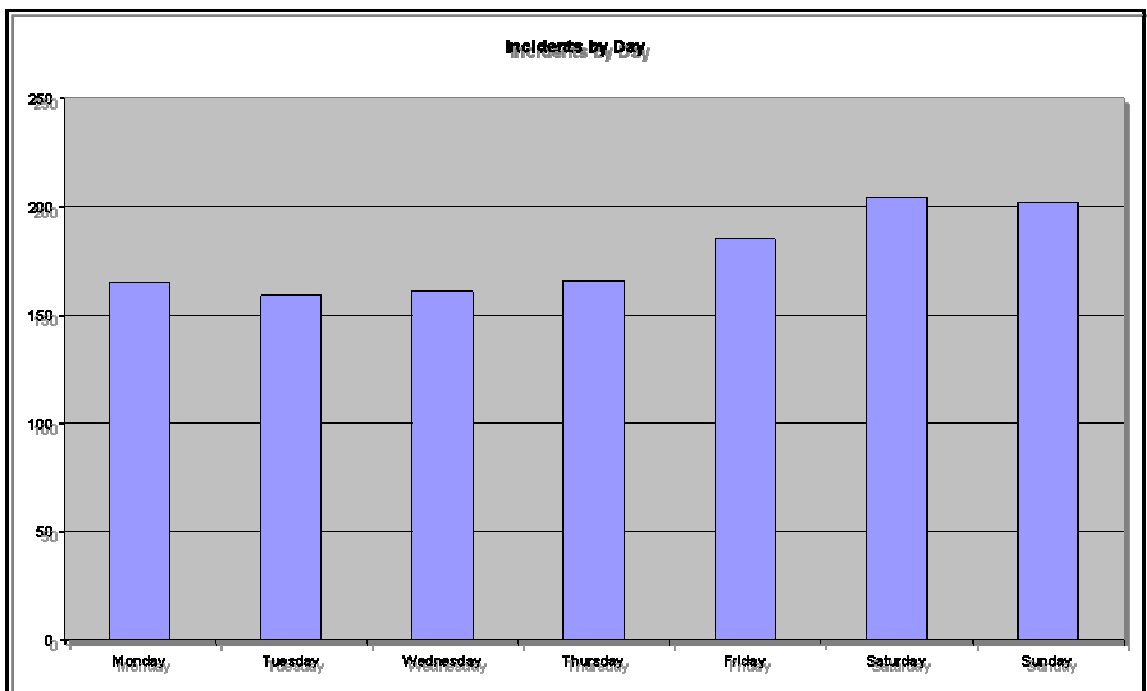
The chart above shows the times that incidents commonly occur. We can see a definite dip in incident frequency after 4am. Frequency begins to rise again at about 8am. If we remove data from the weekend this dip is still in existence (below). The peak from midnight to 4am is less defined but still recognisable.



We previously believed this peak was due to weekend public order offences only, but these charts show a relatively similar pattern for both weekend activities and weekdays.



We do however see in the following graph that on average 10 to 15% more incidents occur on weekend days than on week days. The peak from midnight to 4am is also very obvious.



Conclusion

We can see from these figures that in 2010 more incidents and arrests have been initiated by calls over the Police airwaves radio system. In 2009 more incidents and arrests were initiated by CCTV operators spotting something. In the beginning of 2009 Boston CCTV was still using 2 operators on shift and any one time. In 2010 less incidents were created by CCTV operators most likely due to there being less CCTV operators.

2010 has seen difficult times for all partnership agencies, with both Police and CCTV having a reduced level of resources. This will always of course have negative results in terms of the service provided. However, on the positive side, it seems to have caused partnership agencies to work more closely together. Our figures show more CCTV involved incidents now being initiated by the Police, showing how useful CCTV can be when Police resources are stretched. CCTV can get an overview of an incident before Police units are despatched, and can be on scene immediately without getting stuck in congested traffic. Similarly CCTV operators are relying more on Police for the discovery of incidents. It is not a perfect situation, but results show that all parties are doing the best they can with the limited resources available.

Large amounts of incidents are initiated by contact from Police over the Airwaves radio system. This is from both Police control, and individual Police officers that are out on the street. This is becoming an essential piece of equipment to facilitate the close partnership working between Police and Boston Borough Council CCTV. For many incidents, even a very short period of time can make all the difference between success and failure. Using the Police Airwaves radio system allows CCTV operators and Police officers to react quickly to shared information and communicate accurately without mediation.

If current trends continue in 2011 then quality communication will need to be preserved or even improved to enhance the relationships between partnership agencies. In addition to Police, Shopwatch, Pubwatch and Town Rangers, 2010 has seen the introduction of Night-time Economy Officers and Street Pastors, each with their own particular aims and objectives. Boston's CCTV control room is quickly becoming an important communications hub for these multiple agencies – facilitating a co-ordinated approach to complex problems.

Boston CCTV has seen a change from 'crime hunter' to a multi-agency liaison & evidence recorder. We have proved ourselves to be flexible and resilient against the challenges we face. 2009 saw Boston CCTV contribute to 713 arrests. In 2010 we increased our contribution to 803 arrests. Through adversity we have continued to achieve positive results. We do this through our skills, experience & a positive attitude. We believe strongly in what we do, and will continue...