



When the BPA asked its members to sign up to and adopt the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice, Park Watch decided to go the extra mile and aim for full accreditation

Right on target



Park Watch is celebrating a major achievement. The Security Systems and Alarms Inspection Board (SSAIB) recently awarded the company the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice certification, for its use of CCTV enforcement cameras, automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) and body-worn video.

Park Watch is the first parking enforcement firm to achieve this. It is also the first organisation in the UK to have its use of ANPR subject to assessment under the code of practice.

SSAIB's lead assessor, Stephen Grieve, who conducted the assessment, says: 'ANPR is the one area of surveillance camera systems that – until now – had not been subject to any assessments under the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice. Therefore, we are pleased to have been able to confirm to the Surveillance Camera Commissioner that Park Watch's use of the technology fully meets the requirements of his code.'

RAISING STANDARDS

Park Watch – the trading name of Defence Systems, which has been operating since 2012 – offers a full set of parking services, including ANPR, CCTV parking-control cameras, parking attendants and self-ticketing to more than 40 shopping centres and retail parks across the UK. The company also has a large mobile patrol service in north-west England that serves commercial and residential customers, including railway stations, sports and social clubs, and residential estates.

For Park Watch's company director, Geraldine Powell, the decision to go for the full accreditation was driven by the need for a uniform standard across the business.

'Once the BPA requested its approved operators to sign up to the guidelines, it was decided that we would prefer to follow the extensive audit process through to full accreditation,' she says.

'At a time when the parking industry comes under intense scrutiny of its standards, achieving this accreditation provides confidence to our customers and staff who benefit from the extensive investment we have made into

camera technology across our business.'

She explains that the certification meant several weeks of pre-audit preparation, followed by a two-day office and site inspection involving members of Park Watch's head office staff and site-based operatives.

Powell says staff felt the process had been 'excellent'. 'All our site-based and mobile patrol staff are issued with body-worn cameras, supplying them with a visual deterrent in the sometimes difficult situations that they face. They now appreciate the requirement for a full understanding of the operating procedures and the daily checks required when using this important equipment.'

She adds: 'We are pleased to achieve the accreditation for the confidence it now gives our existing and new customers – plus staff – that they are dealing with a professional organisation that takes pride in the quality of service it gives.' 



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