



CCTV and DashCam

Taxi Compliance Officer Information Sheet 16

Can I fit a camera in my licensed vehicle ?

CCTV provides great evidence if there is a problem such as an accident or a challenging customer, and I encourage drivers to protect themselves by getting CCTV – particularly Hackney Carriage drivers. I've known many drivers who have avoided a suspension or further police investigation because of the footage they have supplied. However, the rules are quite strict about what is allowed, and this Sheet gives some information to help you fit a system which complies with the law.

As your vehicle is seen as a licensed public area, the rules are stricter than for a "normal" vehicle and subject to data protection law. The Information Commissioner (ICO) enforces the law created by the Data Protection Act 1988 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation. If you fit a camera system you will need to register yourself or nominate someone else to be the Data Controller with the ICO. See ico.org.uk and ico.org.uk/for-organisations/data-protection-fee for details.

What do I need to do ?

- For Bristol City Council drivers – Outward facing Dashcam allowed only if ICO requirements met. CCTV inside allowed if data protection laws met. No requirement to inform Council.
- For South Gloucestershire Council drivers – There is currently no policy in place, however you must notify the Council and obtain permission before fitting it.
- It is a legal requirement to tell people you are recording them, usually by a clear notice displayed so passengers can see it as they get in, and which includes details of who the Data Controller if it's not you.
- Switch off the audio function so it doesn't record voices. You can always turn it on in exceptional circumstances, for example if a customer starts to become abusive or racist but remember to tell the person that you are then recording audio.
- You can choose to switch the camera off for personal journeys.
- Have a Privacy Notice in the vehicle which tells people how their information will be used, and on what lawful basis.
- Keep the recordings secure. This is usually where most dashcams fall short, as it's difficult to keep the data secure because the unit could be easily taken, or the memory card removed. Most dashcams don't offer encryption of the data which means they may not comply with data protection law. For internal recordings, a CCTV system is usually the better option (a typical cost of around £500 – 600 which is money well spent if it avoids you being suspended by your Council following a complaint from the public).
- Keep the recording only for as long as needed then delete them (most find that 28 days is sufficient). Only the registered Data Controller may have access to the data saved on the camera.

People's rights

Passengers and anyone else recorded have a right to ask you for the footage that they are in. You must supply the footage but not include images of any other person.

Please note : The ICO is due to update it's guidance on this subject, and that may change this advice in the future.

Police powers

The police have a right to seize the footage if it shows evidence of an offence. No warrant is needed, and if you fail to provide the footage you may commit an offence.

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This is one of a series of information sheets produced for the benefit of Driver, Vehicle and Operator licence holders by Police Constable 4645 Patrick QUINTON, Taxi Compliance Officer, The Bridewell Police Station, Bristol, BS1 2AA

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To join the "Taxi Cop" WhatsApp group, and get information about PC Quinton's work, news updates and licensing/law updates, send a message to 07469 400832. Your details will not be visible to any other members of the group and your privacy is protected.

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