



Office of Biometrics Surveillance and Camera Commissioner
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

06 November 2023

Dear Professor Sampson and Staff @IndepOBSCC,

RE: Correspondence with Local Authorities

Thank you for your letter of 25th October 2023.

I would note that the content of our response to the issues you have outlined is not newly introduced information, as Hikvision has always been committed to working openly with industry partners on these issues, in the spirit of full disclosure.

However before I do this, I must respond to your recent comments to the media ("[Britain is 'omni-surveillance society, watchdog warns'](#)", The Guardian, 29.10.23"). In this piece, you allege that Hikvision asked you to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement to facilitate a meeting.

As you know, this is a categorically false claim. In the time that you served as Biometrics Surveillance and Camera Commissioner, Hikvision met with dozens of UK government officials, members of parliament, and other national Biometric and Security Camera Commissioners. None of those individuals were asked to sign an NDA and neither were you. This is apparent from the extensive published record of our correspondence with you and your office over the course of your tenure.

Will you acknowledge that you, perhaps unintentionally, misled the public on this matter? You claimed that Hikvision had placed some kind of legal barrier to a meeting, as opposed to the issue being your unwillingness to respect commercial confidentiality. It is notable that every single other official that Hikvision has engaged with has been more than willing to agree to these terms, including your predecessor.

As to your three questions, our position has always been clear:

In the company's 2020 ESG Report, former U.S. Ambassador Pierre-Richard Prosper concluded after his team's due diligence, "In the end, we do not find that Hikvision entered into the five projects in Xinjiang with the intent to knowingly engage in human rights abuses or find that Hikvision knowingly or intentionally committed human rights abuses itself or that it acted in willful disregard."

Hikvision's annual ESG Reports are publicly available on their website [here](#).

Committed to international standards, Hikvision, as a global company, recognises its corporate responsibility to respect human rights and takes it seriously.

Given this, and in light of the Government Chief Security Officer Vincent Devine's confirmation that the sensitive sites exemption does not apply to private individuals or businesses or other public authorities (outside the central government estate), we would respectfully request that your office ensures that any guidance provided to individuals or businesses regarding Hikvision refers to the new regulatory and political settlement reached between Hikvision and His Majesty's government.



This is detailed in both the Procurement Act, and in the letter, attached to this response, and indicates that Hikvision cameras may continue to be used in the vast majority of public settings, with limited exclusions for those sites designated as 'sensitive'.

Baroness Neville-Rolfe provided the definition of "sensitive sites" in remarks in the House of Lords on 11 September 2023 as "...any building or complex that routinely holds secret material or above; any location which hosts a significant proportion of officials holding developed vetting clearance; any location which is routinely used by ministers; and any government location covered under the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005."

It is also important to note that this policy does not respond to a 'request for a "ban" on the use of Hikvision products' and that no such blanket ban on the use of Hikvision products exists.

Hikvision has consistently been willing to meet with UK government officials to address misconceptions regarding its business, and we look forward to such constructive meetings with your successor as and when they are identified, in the spirit of the meetings that we used to have with your predecessor BSCC Porter.

I look forward to receiving your response and ask that this letter be added to your website for full public transparency regarding our exchanges.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Hollis".

Justin Hollis

Director, Public Affairs