



## Association of Chief Police Officers of England, Wales and Northern Ireland

### Communication Advisory Group

Andrew Trotter OBE QPM BSc (Hons), Chief Constable  
Chair of ACPO Media Advisory Group  
British Transport Police, 25 Camden Road, London NW1 9LN  
T: 0207 830 8810 F: 0207 383 3023 email: [andrew.trotter@btp.pnn.police.uk](mailto:andrew.trotter@btp.pnn.police.uk)

26 August 2010

Dear Colleagues

#### **Guidance for Photographers**

I am writing to you in my capacity as Chair of the ACPO Communications Advisory Group which sits in the Presidential Business Area.

There have been a number of recent instances highlighted in the press where officers have detained photographers and deleted images from their cameras. I seek your support in reminding your officers and staff that they should not prevent anyone from taking photographs in public. This applies equally to members of the media and public seeking to record images, who do not need a permit to photograph or film in public places. ACPO guidance is as follows:

- There are no powers prohibiting the taking of photographs, film or digital images in a public place. Therefore members of the public and press should not be prevented from doing so.
- We need to cooperate with the media and amateur photographers. They play a vital role as their images help us identify criminals.
- We must acknowledge that citizen journalism is a feature of modern life and police officers are now photographed and filmed more than ever.
- Unnecessarily restricting photography, whether for the casual tourist or professional is unacceptable and it undermines public confidence in the police service.
- Once an image has been recorded, the police have no power to delete or confiscate it without a court order.

If you require further guidance please refer to the ACPO website or contact my Staff Officer Robin Edwards at [robin.edwards@btp.pnn.police.uk](mailto:robin.edwards@btp.pnn.police.uk).

Yours sincerely

**Andrew Trotter**  
**Chief Constable**  
**Chair of ACPO Communication Advisory Group**

Further to recent enquiries and Mr Prescott's article in the last issue of FVM, a copy of a letter regarding *Guidance for Photographers* has been forwarded to one of our members.

The police authorities have been contacted by the Chairman and permission kindly given directly by Mr Trotter for FVM to publish his letter.

It is imperative that IAC members (and indeed, everyone) should know and fully understand their rights when taking pictures or filming in a public place.

Please remember that the police are there to help and to protect the community and its members from, besides other things, an event or incident that might constitute or appear to constitute a breach of local or national security.

**Garth Hope**  
Editor