

---

# Securi-Tech Solutions

---

Providing Technical Solutions For a Technical World

## Laws Needed To Govern CCTV, says Surveillance System Developer

By Laura Spadanuta

02/11/2008 -

In an [opinion piece](#) in the Washington Post, Frank Baitman, president of Petards, exhorts Congress to pass laws governing the use of surveillance technologies for security. Petards is a Baltimore-based subsidiary of Petards Group, a British-based developer of surveillance systems and installations.

Baitman writes that there are no federal laws outlining how surveillance images can be used, although state and local governments have created a "hodgepodge of occasionally conflicting regulations." Baitman says federal laws must ensure individual privacy while setting principles regarding the use of CCTV and other surveillance systems for security reasons.

Baitman would specifically like Congress to establish laws that:

- Ensure that surveillance technologies satisfy their mission for crime and terror control without the potential for misuse.
- Reassure the public that their images are being collected for bona fide objectives and that there are penalties for those who misuse surveillance recordings.
- Promote the adoption of open standards to ensure interoperability, which in turn would promote the introduction of emerging technologies.

Baitman points to Britain as an example of how such surveillance regulation could work: Britain's experience has been helped by legislation passed 10 years ago that put public surveillance under national control. The Data Protection Act of 1998 set clear and consistent guidelines for video monitoring of public spaces, and created the information commissioner's office as the regulatory authority. A code of practice established privacy principles, provided guidelines for safeguarding the use of video images and gave industry a framework for doing business.

The British government also created a partnership between the criminal justice system, local police forces, government departments, the closed-circuit television industry and the Home Office (similar to our [Department of Homeland Security](#)) that resulted in a consensus on how and when video surveillance should be used in public spaces.

Baitman says the lack of a national strategy will "inevitably result in an incident in which an individual's rights are compromised, or evidence of a significant crime is disallowed in court."

---

# Securi-Tech Solutions

---

Providing Technical Solutions For a Technical World