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Sydney security tightens for APEC

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More than 300 high definition CCTV cameras have been placed in potential terrorist targets in the lead-up to Sydney's APEC Summit, acting Premier John Watkins says.

The new cameras bring to 6400 the total number of cameras watching people using buses, trains and ferries.

The cameras, 200 of which use cutting-edge facial recognition technology, have been installed across the city in buses, ferry and train stations.

"The technology which includes live streaming to large LCD displays will also prove a strong deterrent to common criminals and thugs," Mr Watkins told reporters today.

"This follows a success of the large screens at Central with more to come by APEC at critical locations across the Sydney rail network."

The acting premier said the first 65 of the 300 cameras were now working alongside the existing security system, adding that the 50th bus had been hooked up to the system.

"Each of the state's transit buses now fitted with live streaming CCTV have five cameras on board improving passenger security and demonstrating to passengers that they are being filmed and recorded, allowing them to see what's happening on the bus around them.

"The technology is similar to that on buses in London where footage from a bus has been used as evidence in court against one of the men accused over the failed bomb attacks on London's transport network in 2005.

"London Metropolitan police have had considerable success with their CCTV program on London buses with their arrest rate for graffiti, window etching, seat and window damage and arson tripling in two years."

RailCorp's security division general manager Paul Passmore said the improved technology already had been crucial to solving several vandal attacks on trains.

Mr Passmore told reporters the CCTV cameras worked in alliance with other security agencies that gather intelligence on possible threats to security such as an attack on the rail network system.

"We are planning for that possibility. We have no specific intelligence at this time but we plan for that possibility and we're prepared for that possibility," he said.

Privacy concerns with the increased surveillance were doused by both Mr Passmore and Mr Watkins who said that safety issues now warranted such measures.

When the minister was asked about public transport and city residents affected by the APEC Summit, he said the details were still being finalised.

"As APEC comes closer we'll have more information provided to those workers and residents that live in the areas most affected and that's in the northern part of the CBD.

"During the three days we have a public holiday on the Friday, we've got the weekend services on those three days.

"There will be no trains running on the city's circle part of the CBD rail network but the other routes will be running and certainly bus services, ferry services will be running.

"There may be changes to the timetable with ferries and certainly changes to their destinations.

"Buses will be held back from Circular Quay."

AAP

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