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PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT

PRACTICE ADVICE ON

THE MANAGEMENT AND USE OF AUTOMATIC NUMBER PLATE RECOGNITION

2009

Produced on behalf of the Association of Chief Police Officers
by the National Policing Improvement Agency

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PRACTICE ADVICE ON THE MANAGEMENT AND USE OF AUTOMATIC NUMBER PLATE RECOGNITION
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Specialist Operations Centre
Wyboston Lakes, Great North Road, Wyboston, Bedfordshire MK44 3BY

Telephone: 0845 000 5463
Email: soc@npia.pnn.police.uk

All other enquiries relating to this publication should also be addressed to the Specialist Operations Centre at the above address.

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PREFACE

The use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology can help to detect, deter and disrupt criminality, including terrorism. It can be used locally and nationally, as well as across force and regional borders. ANPR is a tactical option providing new lines of enquiry and evidence in the investigation of crime.

There is a need to support forces to incorporate ANPR into their everyday business. This practice advice offers assistance to those who conduct investigations and to those who carry out response policing. It introduces ANPR and explains how it can be used to develop intelligence, support reactive and proactive investigations, improve performance, and prevent crime. The document does not include technical information for specialist ANPR operators; this is outside the scope of this document.

This practice advice is designed as a reference guide for staff who are not ANPR specialists, but who require an understanding of the technology and its potential use in investigations.

Section 1
BACKGROUND

This section contains basic information about ANPR, why it is a valuable tool, and how it functions.

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1.1 WHAT IS ANPR?

ANPR is a technology that automatically reads vehicle registration marks (VRMs), allowing these details to be compared against database records. ANPR systems are used by the police, government agencies, eg, the Highways Agency, and commercial companies including garages, shopping centres and car parks.

ANPR provides a tactical option to disrupt, deter and detect criminal activity and, by doing so, helps to increase public confidence in the police.

Note: ANPR will only identify a vehicle of interest based on the numberplate it is displaying; such identification should not replace thorough investigative enquiries and officer discretion.

1.2 HOW ANPR WORKS

An ANPR camera takes an image of a numberplate; the picture is passed to a reader (see **1.3 Cameras**) which locates the VRM and reads the letters and characters so that they can be identified using Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software. An image of the plate patch and/or overview is then saved as a jpeg file and checked against local and national databases, providing feedback to the operator in seconds. (See **1.6 National ANPR Data Centre** and **1.7 Databases**.)

Figure 1 How ANPR Works

Overview

Plate Patch

Full Image

Note: The images shown above are from a QRO Solutions system Back Office Facility. Images from other systems may differ.

1.3 CAMERAS

ANPR systems usually consist of a camera linked to a numberplate reading device (NRD) (or reader) that captures and reads data. These functions can be separate, with cameras sending remote feeds to readers. The capability of the reader dictates the number of vehicles that can be read. Each camera has a capacity to read up to 3,600 numberplates per hour. Cameras can be static (fixed site or temporary fixed site), CCTV-integrated, or mobile. Some older cameras may take black and white images. Newer versions take colour images and have greater quality. Infrared capability is also available in some cameras allowing them to function over a twenty-four-hour period in low-light situations. Mobile cameras can be vehicle mounted or portable (linked to laptops or other portable ANPR equipment). Covert cameras can be used in sensitive cases with only the personnel working on the operation aware of the camera location, direction and capabilities (see **5.1 Introduction, 5.2 Use During Routine Patrol** and **5.4 Fixed Site Deployments**).

1.4 ANPR DATA

ANPR data comprises 'read' data and 'hit' data. A read is the capture of the VRM and image of the vehicle as it passes through the camera; read data is the term used to describe all the data collected as vehicles pass through the ANPR reader. A hit is a match to a VRM held within the database being searched.

Hits and reads are saved in a central repository in each force and are then transmitted to the National ANPR Data Centre (NADC) (see **1.6 National ANPR Data Centre**). ANPR data is accessed via the Back Office Facility (BOF) (see **1.5 Back Office Facility**) or force bespoke system.

In addition to the VRM, ANPR data includes:

- A digitalised picture of the VRM (or patch plate image);
- The time the data was captured;
- The date the data was captured;
- The location (and GPS coordinate) of the camera;
- The force identification;
- The camera name (such as description of where it is and the exact location).

It may also include:

- The direction of travel;
- An overview image that could help to identify the
  - make, model, taxation class and colour of the vehicle
  - vehicle in the context of the capture zone (the field of vision of the ANPR camera at any given time).

Note: It is the responsibility of forces to ensure that ANPR readers are calibrated to accurately record the time, date and location for all images that are obtained. Forces will be required to prove the accuracy of such data when ANPR images are used as evidence; however, the weight given to the image itself is for the court or jury to determine.

1.5 BACK OFFICE FACILITY

Each force has a centralised computer database for storing and analysing ANPR data, commonly known as the Back Office Facility (BOF). Stored data may be accessed for analysis. The BOF can be searched on a case-by-case basis in support of an investigation for matches in both read and hit data. Any searches must be authorised in accordance with the ***National ACPO ANPR Standards 2008 (NAAS).***

The NAAS provide the standards to which ANPR assets should be maintained by forces (see **2.3 National Standards**). ACPO provides recommendations for the time limits for data storage within this framework.

For further information see ***ACPO (2007) Practice Advice on Police Use of Digital Images, ACPO (2006) Guidance on the Management of Police Information*** and ***Crown Prosecution Service (2005) Disclosure Manual.***

1.6 NATIONAL ANPR DATA CENTRE

The National ANPR Data Centre (NADC) allows investigators to search for matching data on a national basis (once their forces have connected their BOFs to the NADC). The NADC records the location of the read using GPS coordinates sent via the BOF from the camera, which is identified through the force, source ID or camera number detail irrespective of whether it is fixed, covert, overt, mobile or portable.

Where material has been sourced with assistance from another force area, the owning force should be consulted when preparing disclosure schedules and before the material is used as evidence in criminal proceedings.

1.7 DATABASES

An ANPR database is a list of vehicles of interest to a particular force or specialist area against which ANPR read data is checked. These are sometimes referred to as 'hot lists'. There are a number of databases loaded onto the ANPR system.

PNC File

The PNC file contains information about vehicles that have markers on the PNC (this does not include PNC Information Report (INF) markers), including vehicles that have been stolen or those linked to crime. It is managed by the NPIA on behalf of the Police Service and can be checked in live time by ANPR units with 'live link' or 'fast-track' capability. Its use is governed by ***NPIA (2007) PNC User Manual, v07.02.*** It contains a number of reports that can be placed against a VRM. As soon as a report is created against a VRM it can be identified by an ANPR system. This is the only real-time ANPR database. The PNC should be regarded as the primary ANPR database.

A PNC extract database is used within forces to support ANPR readers that do not have live link capability to the PNC. An extract database is updated at regular intervals but may potentially be out of date at any given time; therefore, where a user is working without a live-link capability, any hit should be verified by a standard PNC check.

Where a vehicle of interest is identified on the PNC as requiring action, an ACTion report (ACT) is raised and identified as high, medium or low priority, depending on the nature of the report. Once an ACT has been completed, a REAction report (REAct) must be created. For further information on ACT and REAct, see ***NPIA (2007) PNC User Manual, v07.02.***

Local Force Databases (or Force Intelligence)

These supplement national databases, primarily the PNC. Local databases created to support ANPR are required to conform to a national template, see **Appendix 2.** Items included within a database are determined by local force policy. Forces should develop local force protocols for the creation and management of these databases.

Database entries must be appropriately managed to ensure that they are updated in a timely and accurate manner. They should provide enough information so that any officer stopping a vehicle knows exactly what action is required, and is aware of any warning information associated with that vehicle or person.

For further information on retention of data, see ***ACPO (2006) Guidance on the Management of Police Information, NPIA (2007) PNC User Manual, v07.02*** and **3.4.1 The Data Protection Principles.**

Foreign Force Databases

In some cases forces may wish to circulate a local force database to a neighbouring force or BCU. This should only be done when necessary, eg, to support an investigation where a known vehicle crosses force or BCU boundaries. This is referred to as a foreign force database. Circulation of databases must be in line with Data Protection Principles, see **3.4 Data Protection Act 1998.**

MIDAS (Motor Insurance) Database

The Motor Insurance Database (MID) contains details of all vehicles covered by an insurance policy. The MIDAS database shows vehicles which were previously present on the MID but are no longer insured. MIDAS is also an extract database and may, therefore, be out of date. Any hits should always be verified on the PNC database in the first instance. If any doubt remains, they should then be cross-checked with the Motor Insurance Bureau.

DVLA Databases

The DVLA supplies three databases to the Police Service for use on ANPR systems.

1. Vehicles where records indicate that there are no current keeper details held by the DVLA.

2. Vehicles where records indicate that there is no vehicle licence in force for that vehicle.

3. A list of all VRMs issued by the DVLA, which includes the make, model, colour, and taxation class of the vehicle currently bearing that VRM (known as the MMC (Make, Model, Colour) list). This can be used to identify vehicles using false plates. The MMC list is published every six months and does not include the VRMs being issued in the current registration period.

The MMC list is automatically circulated to regional ANPR representatives. Force ANPR managers can request a copy of the list from their regional ANPR representative, but its use will depend on the technical capability of the local force system. For further information on the DVLA database, contact the regional ANPR representative; see also ***ACPO (2007) Practice Advice on the Policing of Roads.***

Counter-Terrorism

The National Joint Unit compiles a database of vehicles that are of interest to Force Special Branch and other government agencies, in relation to terrorism.

1.7.1 DATABASE POLICY ISSUES

Local force policy should define the standards for monitoring active databases and for controlling the response to ANPR hits, including:

- The definition of the requirements for monitoring all databases, taking account of force strategic and tactical processes;
- The definition for the prioritisation of responses to ANPR hits twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, including the identification of resources that should be available for a response.

Forces may use local database templates where information is input in a standard format against a vehicle of interest on a database. This will ensure that response teams stopping a vehicle, in response to a hit, will have as much information as is available and will also help to protect their safety. This is particularly important for vehicles identified at the scene of a crime, where the vehicle user may be a dangerous or violent offender.

See **Appendix 1, Case Study 10** for an example of using databases in support of an investigation. For further information on using ANPR databases, see **7.2 ANPR Data Searches.**

Section 2
STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

This section sets ANPR within the context of the wider policing strategy and details the roles and responsibilities which support the ANPR system.

CONTENTS

2.1 STRATEGIC ISSUES

The strategic intent of the ANPR strategy for the Police Service is to:

Target criminals through their use of the road

by exploiting the full potential of ANPR at national, regional and local levels within the Police Service of England and Wales, acting in partnership with others where appropriate.

In fulfilling this intention, the ANPR strategy will help to meet primary Police Service aims to:

- Reduce crime and terrorism;
- Increase the number of offences brought to justice, including serious and major crime;
- Reduce road traffic casualties;
- Increase public perceptions of safety and confidence in the police;
- Make more efficient use of police resources.

The ANPR strategy will achieve this through secondary (indirect) aims to:

- Deter criminals and terrorists through an increased likelihood of detection;
- Disrupt criminal activities and networks by intelligence-led interventions;
- Remove prolific and serious offenders from the streets;
- Increase arrests;
- Increase sanctioned detections;
- Increase the number of offenders brought to justice (charges, guilty pleas, convictions);
- Increase the seizure of uninsured vehicles and reduce anti-social behaviour;
- Remove those drivers with an increased risk of causing road traffic collisions from the roads;
- Improve compliance with road traffic laws;
- Increase visible policing;
- Enable the public to see greater police success in tackling criminality on the roads;
- Increase victim satisfaction with the outcome of reported crimes;
- Increase the proportion of stop and searches that lead to an arrest;
- Bring about more productive police interventions;
- Provide increased opportunities for early lines of enquiry in an investigation;
- Generate improved use of intelligence to direct intelligence-led operations.

For further information see ***ACPO (2007) ANPR Strategy for the Police Service – 2007/2010.***

2.2 MANAGEMENT ISSUES

The use of ANPR within force intelligence, investigation and enforcement business processes is included within Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) inspection criteria.

It is important that forces develop local force policy and procedures for the effective management and deployment of ANPR assets. These should cover a range of issues that maximise the benefits of ANPR within core police business, such as identifying key roles and training requirements, and supporting the development of relationships with partner agencies including the Highways Agency.

The development of a Service Level Agreement (SLA) or Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the police and partners is key to the successful operation of CCTV-linked ANPR systems. The SLA provides the necessary information for all parties as to how, when and what type of ANPR alerts the police will respond to, and the responsibilities of individual partners.

2.2.1 KEY ROLES

The detailed roles of ANPR staff should be defined in force policy. The following roles are, however, recommended.

The ACPO Lead or equivalent owns each force's ANPR policy. The Lead also ensures that:

- ANPR is embedded in core business;
- Investment opportunities are regularly reviewed to achieve optimum benefit from the use of ANPR technology;
- Information Sharing Agreements (ISAs) with partners are in place;
- A Project Lead on ANPR Infrastructure and Procurement, who reports directly to the local Business Change Programme Board (chaired by the ACPO Lead), is appointed;
- National and Regional User Groups are attended by officers of the appropriate rank with decision making capacity, including a technical representative;
- The correct level of training is undertaken by SIOs, Response Officers and Analysts in this area;
- All officers and staff involved in the use of ANPR have a sound working knowledge of it.

The ANPR Manager advises and supports the development of the ANPR force strategy, local force policy and procedures, partnership agreements and ISA, and ensures that the audit and quality assurance processes are in place and compliance is evident. The manager also provides operational support to ANPR systems, liaising with the National ANPR Technical Coordination Team and specialist system support.

The Back Office Administrator administers the BOF in accordance with NAAS.

The Controller is responsible for monitoring ANPR hits and then controlling and coordinating the response to hits in line with force policy.

ANPR Tactical Advisers need to be fully informed of the capabilities of ANPR in order to be able to provide tactical advice on the use of ANPR in critical incidents, major events, and covert operations. They require sound investigative knowledge as well as technical knowledge of ANPR systems and capabilities. They should understand and be able to advise on the benefits and drawbacks of ANPR in relation to, for example, evidential issues, and how ANPR can be integrated with other investigative strategies.

Force Data Protection Officers are responsible for the force response to, and compliance with, data protection issues under the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). They must, therefore, be made aware of how ANPR data is being used and shown that it is being used in accordance with the DPA (see also **3.4.1 The Data Protection Principles**).

Intelligence Staff (including analysts and researchers) should have access to ANPR data and should be aware of how it can be used, together with other intelligence and data, to support intelligence profiles and investigations. See **4 Intelligence-Led Policing** and **7 ANPR Data Retrieval and Analysis.**

Response or Intercept Officers are any operational police officers who respond to an ANPR hit, or intercept vehicles identified by ANPR readers as part of a pre-planned operation.

Investigators are any police officers (or police staff where appropriate) involved in a criminal investigation, and who may use ANPR to generate lines of enquiry as part of that investigation.

Forces may identify other roles and responsibilities that require definition within local force policy with regard to their use of ANPR. These may include, for example, Training Manager and BCU Commander.

2.3 NATIONAL STANDARDS

To enable the development and integration of ANPR, all ANPR systems operated by the Police Service in England, Wales and Northern Ireland should be compatible with one another and comply with common standards supporting a national strategy. These standards are the ***National ACPO ANPR Standards 2008 (NAAS).***

The requirements listed in NAAS relate to force ANPR systems including all components of infrastructure that constitute the force ANPR environment. They also include those components that are under the ownership or control of identified partners. In addition to other related supporting components, ANPR systems will include the NRD, the BOF, communications links, and firewalls.

Compliance with NAAS is critical to exploiting the benefits of ANPR. The National ANPR Technical Coordination Team can provide advice to ANPR Managers on the technical capability of local systems and how it may be configured to achieve maximum benefit.

2.3.1 NATIONAL ANPR WEBSITE

Information on current good practice and technical and strategic advice can be found on the National ANPR website.

The site can be accessed via the Genesis website at:
http://www.genesis.pnn.police.uk/genesis
– ACPO/NPIA Projects and Workstreams
– ANPR Automatic Numberplate Recognition Extranet

Section 3
LEGAL, JUDICIAL AND MEDIA CONSIDERATIONS

This section presents the law that applies to the police use of ANPR. It also includes advice on presenting ANPR as evidence in court, as well as information on the use of third-party data. The section concludes with the issues that need to be considered with regard to ANPR and the media.

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3.1 INTRODUCTION

The use of ANPR for law enforcement and crime prevention purposes depends on maintaining the public's confidence that the technology is being used lawfully and appropriately. The following information and cross-referenced knowledge assets will ensure that those deploying and operating ANPR recognise and respect the rights and privacy of individuals.

3.2 POLICE INFORMATION

The police gather information for a number of policing purposes, such as protecting life and property and preserving order. ANPR data is categorised as police information. Policing purposes provide the legal basis for using this information. See ***ACPO (2006) Guidance on the Management of Police Information*** and ***ACPO (2007) Practice Advice on Police Use of Digital Images.***

3.3 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT 1998

The Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) gives effect to the rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights, and makes it unlawful for a public authority to behave in a way that is incompatible with the rights of the Convention.

Article 8 of Schedule 1 of the HRA protects an individual's right to respect for private and family life. This places a responsibility on police forces to set a clear aim for obtaining personal information, consistent with the qualifications in Article 8(2), and is a test of proportionality in how they meet this aim (see **3.2 Police Information**). The greater the interference with an individual's privacy, the higher the threshold required. This test is particularly relevant to the collection of information by covert or intrusive means, ie, activity that is governed by the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) (see **3.5 Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000**).

ANPR is usually used overtly to record the movement of vehicles on the public road and to identify vehicles of interest. Data retained and stored as a result could, potentially, be viewed as an invasion into an individual's right to privacy as set out in Article 8 of the HRA. However, in a public place an expectation of privacy is limited.

The question of whether the use of ANPR equipment is lawful can be determined by identifying the legislation being relied on during the deployment. For example, section 163 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 (as amended) enables a police officer in uniform to stop a motor vehicle, or other mechanically propelled vehicle, on the road, and section 4 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (as amended) (PACE) enables a road check to take place in certain circumstances.

In determining whether the use of the equipment is proportionate, the deploying officer must consider the purpose of the deployment and the necessity of its use for the offence being investigated as compared with the impact on the individual's rights under the HRA.

3.4 DATA PROTECTION ACT 1998

3.4.1 DATA PROTECTION PRINCIPLES

The use of ANPR data must be compliant with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). ANPR data is classed as personal data as defined by the DPA. The requirements for the retention of and access to ANPR data must be detailed within force policy, taking account of the requirements of legislation. Subject to certain exemptions, a force Data Protection Officer has a 'duty to comply with the DPA principles in relation to all personal data for which they are the data controller' (section 4(4) DPA).

The following data protection principles are set out in Part 1 of Schedule 1 of the DPA.

The First Principle

> Personal data shall be processed fairly and lawfully.
>
> *Data Protection Act 1998*

The force Data Controller must ensure that the data subject (eg, the registered keeper of the vehicle) is provided with information including:

- The identity of the data controller;
- The purpose for which the data is intended to be processed;
- Further information to enable processing in respect of the data subject to be fair.

Note: An ANPR hit will only identify a vehicle of interest which, when matched to relevant databases, will identify the registered keeper and, if the image shows the occupants of the vehicle, may assist with enquiries to identify them.

The use of information signs where ANPR cameras are deployed, or where ANPR vehicles are patrolling, should **always** be considered. This may include permanent signage throughout a force area.

The DPA, however, provides an exemption to this requirement where the provision of such information would be disproportionate or impracticable. For example, the use of ANPR from a patrolling vehicle, where the use of signs would frustrate the purpose of concealing covert ANPR cameras or where the use of signs would not be conducive to road safety.

The Second Principle (The Specified Purpose)

> Personal data shall be obtained only for one or more specified and lawful purposes, and shall not be further processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose or those purposes.
>
> *Data Protection Act 1998*

Personal data gathered (by the police) using ANPR technology should only be obtained for a specified purpose which has been registered and it shall not be used for any other purpose (see **3.2. Police Information**). If it is not relevant for a specified and lawful purpose, the data must not be retained. The reason for retaining ANPR data must be documented in case of any future investigation by the Information Commissioner.

The Third Principle (Relevancy)

> Personal data shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose or purposes for which they are processed.
>
> *Data Protection Act 1998*

This applies to any database loaded onto the system such as the PNC and databases generated by the system of vehicle sightings.

Where downloaded extracts from the PNC or any other collection of data are to be used as part of a specific operation, the extract file used must be appropriate. This means that it must be adequate, relevant and not excessive to the purpose of the operation. Once the specific operation is completed any downloaded extracts should be deleted.

The Fourth Principle (Accuracy)

> Personal data shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.
>
> *Data Protection Act 1998*

The Fifth Principle (Retention)

> Personal data processed for any purpose or purposes shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose or those purposes.
>
> *Data Protection Act 1998*

The length of time that ANPR data should be retained will depend on the nature of the deployment. However, it is important that data is retained for only as long as the operational need to do so remains.

Data should not be retained on the grounds that it might become of use for some other purpose at some future date.

The retention of material under the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996 (CPIA) should also be considered.

Data Retention – General Crime ANPR Deployments

ANPR data should be retained. As a minimum standard, data should be stored in line with the standards set out in the NAAS. See **2.3 National Standards.**

Note: Access to ANPR databases should only be conducted by staff who are appropriately trained and have been granted access to the data according to local force policy. See **2.2 Management Issues** for further information.

The storage and retention of material should also take into account the needs of any investigation. The Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996 (CPIA) places particular obligations on investigators to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken for the purposes of the investigation and, in particular, all reasonable lines of inquiry are pursued. It further states that all information which is obtained in the course of an investigation, and may be relevant to the investigation, is recorded; and that any record of such information is retained.

ACPO (2007) Practice Advice on Police use of Digital Images details how images, including ANPR images, should be managed. As ANPR data is held within a secure police network, the BOF can be designated as a master copy, however, forces should establish systems and processes for obtaining and managing working copies in line with the principles set out in the practice advice.

The National ANPR Technical Coordination Team can provide advice to forces on the technical implications of retaining and managing ANPR data as evidential material.

For further information on the retention of data, see ***National ACPO ANPR Standards 2008, ACPO (2006) Guidance on the Management of Police Information, ACPO (2007) Practice Advice on Police Use of Digital Images, ACPO (2007) Data Protection Manual of Guidance, ACPO (2008) Practice Advice on Analysis*** and ***CPS (2005) Disclosure Manual.***

The Sixth Principle (Subject Access)

> Personal data shall be processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects under this Act.
>
> *Data Protection Act 1998*

The Seventh Principle (Security)

> Appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data.
>
> *Data Protection Act 1998*

The Eighth Principle (Overseas Transfers)

> Personal data shall not be transferred to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data.
>
> *Data Protection Act 1998*

Exemptions

The DPA provides several exemptions from the requirement to comply with some or all of the data protection principles.

For further information on the DPA, the Data Protection Principles and the exemptions, officers should consult their force Data Protection Officer (see **2.2.1 Key Roles**).

See also ***ACPO (2007) Data Protection Manual of Guidance*** and ***ACPO (2006) Guidance on the Management of Police Information.***

3.5 REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000

If the deployment of ANPR is overt then RIPA will not apply. This covers the majority of ANPR deployments. Covert deployments against named targets are, however, likely to require a directed surveillance authority. ANPR is unlikely to constitute directed surveillance unless the programme routinely captures the faces of front seat occupants. Advice on particular cases can be obtained from specialist teams, eg, the Central Authorisations' Bureau, that routinely deal with RIPA issues.

The following scenarios provide examples of the appropriate use of ANPR in respect of RIPA.

Scenario 1

Acting on intelligence that a known drug dealer will be travelling a particular route at a specified time, an ANPR vehicle is deployed at the road side and the database is loaded with details of the vehicle, and any other vehicles that the suspected drug dealer has access to. Where the sole purpose of the deployment is to identify the dealer, an authority under RIPA should be considered.

Scenario 2

Where an ANPR vehicle is deployed at the road side for the purpose of policing general crime and the databases on the ANPR vehicle include PNC and DVLA, no authority under RIPA is required because this is an overt operation. The use of signs should always be considered, whether using a marked or an unmarked vehicle.

Scenario 3

ANPR is deployed for the purpose of policing general crime, and during this time an armed robbery takes place in the area. Details of the vehicle that the offender was seen to be using during the commission of the robbery are put onto the ANPR database.

If the original operation was covert and a judgement had been reached that personal information might be obtained, a directed surveillance authorisation would already be in existence. If an authorisation had not previously been obtained, a directed surveillance authorisation may be considered necessary.

Scenario 4

Where ANPR is deployed as in Scenario 3, but the details put onto the ANPR database are those of a vehicle used by a known criminal with a similar modus operandi as that used in the robbery, an authority under RIPA might be considered.

A verbal authority in the first instance may be appropriate. However, the likelihood would be that details of the vehicle(s) may already be loaded onto the ANPR databases prior to the deployment, in which case no authority under RIPA would be required.

For further information see ***ACPO (2008) Guidance on the Lawful and Effective Use of Covert Techniques – The Legal Framework and Covert Operational Management, The Home Office (forthcoming – Revised) Code of Practice on Covert Surveillance and Property Interference.***
See **http://www.surveillancecommissioners.gov.uk/advice_key.html**

3.6 ANPR MATERIAL

3.6.1 GATHERING MATERIAL

ANPR material consists of data and a plate patch. There may also be an overview image of the vehicle, which in certain circumstances may provide a view of the occupants. The images will need to be proved by witness statements from all relevant officers and staff involved in gathering the material.

In most cases, where ANPR leads to an arrest or interception, eg, for a road traffic offence, it should not be necessary to provide evidence of the use of ANPR as the evidence will start from the observation of the vehicle being driven and stopped and the subsequent interaction with the driver. It may, however, be necessary to disclose the use of ANPR to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). See **3.7 Disclosure.**

Note: It is the responsibility of forces to ensure that ANPR readers are calibrated to accurately record the time, date and location for all images that are obtained. Forces will be required to prove accuracy of such data when ANPR images are used as evidence; however, the weight given to the image itself is for the court or jury to determine.

3.6.2 THIRD-PARTY DATA

In some areas it may be possible to recover data that has been collected by a third party, non-policing or commercial organisation. Third parties cannot, at present, be compelled to produce this data. If a third party agrees to release data, terms of reference should be drawn up to define how the data will be provided, including copyright issues or the use of data for evidential purposes.

3.6.3 GOOD PRACTICE

When producing ANPR material as evidence, the following should be considered.

Explanation of the System

It is good practice to provide prosecutors and the courts with a simple explanation of how the system works and what the ANPR database is capable of proving. The National ANPR Technical Coordination Team can advise ANPR managers on who is the most appropriate person to provide this explanation, depending on the ANPR system used by a force (see **2.2.1 Key Roles**).

A statement explaining the application of ANPR should include details of how the cameras were deployed and what material is being presented as a result. In particular, it should address whether images of the occupants of the vehicle were captured, and if so, how many. An audit trail should be given to explain why and how the system was used where a particular car was targeted.

Public Warning Signs

The statement should include information about the use of signs in the vicinity of the cameras that warn the travelling public of the existence of security cameras, or the exemption that has been relied on for not putting signs in place. The information should describe the nature and wording of such signs in general terms.

Image Security and Retention

The statement should include a form of words to assure the court that the system is being operated with integrity and in accordance with the DPA. This should include a reference to the fact that all images are recorded automatically, uniquely numbered, and then stored on fully secure computer databases in accordance with the fifth principle of the DPA. It should further explain that stored images can only be retrieved by an authorised operator using the retrieval computer, and that the images cannot be altered, enhanced or selected for their content by the operator. When printed, the images are an exact reproduction of the original images that were captured recorded and stored.

The main body of the statement should include the following:

- The application of the system being used;
- Why the system was being used (this can include details of tasking if appropriate – see **3.7 Disclosure**);
- When and where the image was captured;
- Why the image was selected;
- What the evidence is and its unique reference number or exhibit number;
- A description of the exhibits referred to in the statement (these will normally be attached to the statement and will be included in the exhibits bundle in due course).

Facial Images

An ANPR photograph may include a facial image of the occupant(s) of the car. These images will usually require further work to identify the person(s) seen in the image. The ANPR statement and subsequent evidence from the ANPR operator will simply prove that the image was accurately and lawfully obtained, subject to appropriate RIPA authority if required (see **3.5 Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000**). It will not refer to, or seek to identify the facial images retrieved. (See also ***ACPO (Forthcoming) Facial Identification Guidance***.)

3.7 DISCLOSURE

Her Majesty's Attorney General, Lord Goldsmith, defined disclosure as:

> …one of the most important issues in the criminal justice system…
> …the application of proper and fair disclosure is a vital component of a fair criminal disclosure system. The 'golden rule' is that fairness requires full disclosure should be made of all material held by the prosecution that weakens its case or strengthens that of the defence.
>
> *Attorney Generals Guidelines on Disclosure, 2005.*

The function of the Police Service in this process is to reveal all relevant material to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) in accordance with the requirements of Part II of the CPIA and its Code of Practice. It is the duty of the CPS to disclose any prosecution material which has not previously been disclosed to the defence, but which might reasonably be capable of undermining the prosecution case or assisting the case of the defence.

Where the ANPR material is not relevant to the facts of the case or the offence committed, eg, road traffic offences, it may not be necessary to disclose this information to the defence. In all cases it should be revealed to the prosecution, and the CPS should be consulted if there is any doubt about its relevance or disclosure.

Where material has been sourced with assistance from another force area, the owning force should be consulted when preparing disclosure schedules and before the material is used as evidence in criminal proceedings.

Disclosure officers and CPS lawyers must adhere to ***CPS (2005) Disclosure Manual.***

3.7.1 PUBLIC INTEREST IMMUNITY (PII)

In principle, ANPR evidence should not be automatically protected from disclosure. However, some aspects of ANPR and its use may be considered sensitive because they relate to methods and techniques that the police and other agencies rely on to detect or prevent crime, for example, the location of fixed site cameras or methods of concealment of covert assets. In these cases it may be appropriate to protect this aspect of the evidence.

Material that is deemed sensitive should be included on a separate sensitive material schedule and submitted to the CPS with the case papers. This material may be withheld by the prosecution team under Public Interest Immunity (PII). Material protected by PII will not be disclosed to the defence without the leave of the court.

For further information see ***CPS (2005) Disclosure Manual, ACPO (2005) Practice Advice on Core Investigative Doctrine, ACPO (2008) Guidance on the Lawful and Effective Use of Covert Techniques – The Legal Framework and Covert Operational Management.***

3.8 MEDIA ISSUES

The existence of ANPR technology and its use by the Police Service is well documented in the media. Numerous articles have been published in the national press over the years regarding its use and effectiveness.

During an investigation or targeted operation media strategies may include references to the use of ANPR.

The following guidance on media issues has been provided by the ACPO ANPR policy lead:

> It has for some time, and continues to be desirable, for ANPR media enquiries to be answered as fully and openly as possible. This is in order to ensure positive messages about the benefits of ANPR are communicated to the public and any public concerns about its use are allayed. However, there are boundaries which we would not wish to breach such as the specific locations of ANPR capture devices, the operational tactics employed and some of the analytical capabilities of the systems that we use to support ANPR. Careful thought is, therefore, always needed when dealing with media enquiries.
>
> This approach provides a managed response to media enquiries which can often be 'good news' stories for the police service. The failure or refusal to respond to such enquiries could be seen as a lost opportunity and raises the risk that uninformed reporting takes place and conveys the impression that the police may perhaps be trying to hide something. Whist *[sic]* the prevention and detection of crime is paramount, public support for what we are doing is also very important and I would ask you to take this into consideration when establishing local policy.

Appendix 3 gives some frequently asked questions and suggested answers; they have been drawn up by the National ANPR Coordinator.

Section 4
INTELLIGENCE-LED POLICING

In keeping with ACPO 2007/2010 ANPR strategy, ANPR should be incorporated into mainstream police business and embedded into intelligence processes. ANPR has the potential to enhance intelligence products and improve the efficiency of surveillance. This section contains an overview of the use of ANPR data to support intelligence-led policing.

CONTENTS

4.1 ANPR DATA AND INTELLIGENCE-LED POLICING

ANPR data can be used in combination with many other sources of information. This could include intelligence reports, witness testimonies, CCTV footage, relevant surveillance results, telecommunications and financial data, which can be used in investigations ranging from major to volume crime.

ANPR data can also be used in the development of subject profiles and problem profiles by identifying associations, locations, vehicles, and time spans that define a pattern of behaviour for a subject of interest.

Effective analysis of intelligence can also determine the placement of ANPR resources in order to make the most efficient and successful use of cameras and ANPR resources and data. See **5.1 Introduction** and ***ACPO (2006) Practice Advice on Tasking and Co-ordination.***

4.1.1 COLLECTING VEHICLE INTELLIGENCE

The collection of accurate and current intelligence relating to a vehicle of interest and its users is key to ensuring that ANPR delivers maximum benefit. In order to be effective, the data has to be accurate and accessible. The first stage of this is the tasking of officers to collect intelligence on vehicles linked to crime and criminals. This should be the responsibility of all officers, including neighbourhood policing teams, police community support officers and other police staff. Forces may wish to review and amend their data collection forms, eg, stop reports, intelligence submissions or crime reports, to include a separate field for vehicle information, and to encourage the collection of this data.

Once collected, vehicle intelligence should be analysed to evaluate its accuracy and assess its relevance and contribution to the intelligence picture. This data can be used to create a database and loaded onto the BOF. It may also be appropriate to load it onto PNC using an ACT marker. An ACT marker should be used when the originating force wants a vehicle stopped if it is seen anywhere in the country. See also **5.2.1 PNC Data and ACT/REAct Reports.**

4.2 CRIME REDUCTION THROUGH PREVENTION AND DISRUPTION

ANPR can be used as a tactical option to help:

- Intercept suspect vehicles before the occupants commit a crime;
- Disrupt prolific offenders by focusing on the commission of minor offences and possible use of uninsured vehicles by prolific offenders (see **5 ANPR for Response Policing**);
- The development of problem profiles (see ***ACPO (2006) Practice Advice on Professionalising the Business of Neighbourhood Policing***).

4.3 TASKING AND CO-ORDINATION

ANPR cameras, whether fixed or mobile, are a valuable tactical option and their use should be considered as part of the tasking and co-ordination process.

The establishment of strategic priorities should identify crime hot spots and geographical areas where ANPR assets may be assigned; a problem profile should identify how these assets could specifically be deployed. See **5.1 Introduction** and **5.3 Pre-Planned Operations**).

ANPR response teams (see **5 ANPR for Response Policing**) need to be provided with high-quality intelligence and analytical products that enable effective tasking and exploit the full potential of existing response teams.

Mobile ANPR cameras can be deployed, as a tactical option, following the identification of a vehicle or vehicle user of interest and the locations or routes that they habitually use. These cameras can either be used to locate and arrest the vehicle user who it is suspected is about to offend, or provide intelligence on the movements of that vehicle.

Effective ANPR tasking can take factors such as traffic volumes, crime hot spots, and likely routes used by suspects into account.

4.3.1 INTELLIGENCE PRODUCTS

The analysis of ANPR data can be used to support the development of intelligence products. ANPR data should be considered alongside all other sources of information in the development of intelligence products.

An assessment of demand for ANPR assets may be considered in the development of the strategic assessment. This is in order to confirm that ANPR assets are being fully exploited and to ensure that any gaps in capacity or capability are identified and escalated. This may not form part of the final assessment but it is important to consider.

The tactical assessment should identify how force or local command unit priorities are being progressed. Any deployment of ANPR assets should form part of the action plans that are directed by the tactical tasking and co-ordination group through the tactical assessment.

The use of ANPR assets should be considered in the development of action plans forming part of any subject or problem profile. The development of a subject profile should take into account any vehicles owned or used by the individual or group of interest. A problem profile that identifies a geographical location that is experiencing unusual levels of crime and disorder should also consider the location of any existing cameras in the area or the temporary use of mobile resources. ANPR tactical advisers should be consulted if it is not clear how ANPR assets may be used to assist. See **2.2 Management Issues** and **2.2.1 Key Roles.**

All intelligence products should be supported by analysis. This includes crime pattern analysis to identify hot spots or series of crime and disorder; subject profile analysis and case analysis to identify vehicles being used by persons of interest; and network analysis to identify vehicles being used by groups of individuals. See **7.2 ANPR Data Searches; *ACPO (2006) Practice Advice on Tasking and Co-ordination,* 2.3 Developing the Strategic Assessment; *ACPO (2005) Guidance on the National Intelligence Model*** and ***ACPO (2008) Practice Advice on Analysis.***

Section 5
ANPR FOR RESPONSE POLICING

ANPR is one of a number of tools available to forces as part of their core policing strategy. This section provides details on how ANPR can be used to maximum effect in response policing.

CONTENTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The most basic offences often lead to the detection of more significant criminal offences. Criminals and terrorists use the road network for travelling to or from their criminal activities, as well as at other times.

The evaluation report of the ACPO Project Laser Pilots (mainstreaming the use of ANPR) (***Police Standards Unit (2007) Evaluation of Automatic Number Plate Recognition 2006/2007***) showed that the use of ANPR by vehicle response teams and other staff resulted in:

- The arrest of 20,592 individuals with around five per cent of these designated as prolific or priority offenders (mostly for drugs offences, vehicle crime and disqualified driving);
- The identification of 52,037 vehicle-related document offences;
- The seizure of 41,268 vehicles for document offences;
- The identification and recovery of 2,021 stolen vehicles.

ANPR supplements the patrol officer's own skills by providing a quick and effective means of identifying vehicles that would otherwise not be identified.

Note: ANPR will, however, only identify a vehicle of interest; identification should not replace proper investigative enquiries and officer discretion.

The use of specially equipped vehicles such as ANPR Spectrum vans, intercept vehicles, in-car equipment and CCTV-linked systems, along with legislation and an effective tasking process, enable the police to have greater impact on addressing criminal use of motor vehicles.

This intelligence-led approach has been found to be most effective on high-volume roads leading to and from crime hot spots, rather than at the hot spots themselves (see **7.3.1 Crime Pattern Analysis**). The NADC provides significant opportunities for real-time alerts to the originating officer(s) on target vehicles, locations and routes.

When using ANPR as part of a response policing strategy, a number of issues should be considered. These include:

- Deployment considerations
  - nature of the crime
  - intelligence and information available
  - traffic flows
  - available vehicle sites
  - additional support resources;

- Tactical considerations
  - environment and location
  - other operational commitments
  - type and number of available resources
  - other agency support or partnership working.

5.2 USE DURING ROUTINE PATROL

ANPR systems fitted to police vehicles should remain operational as much as possible to gather read data (for example, when single-crewed or already dealing with an incident). Response to hits should, however, only be undertaken when and where it is safe and appropriate to do so.

The potential to collect intelligence which would otherwise not be gathered should be a primary consideration as this could be useful to post-incident investigations and National Intelligence Model processes (see **4.1.1 Collecting Vehicle Intelligence**). This data will also be useful to analysts in their research and for preparing predictive intelligence on potential crime locations. This research could be a factor in the future deployment of ANPR.

5.2.1 PNC DATA AND ACT/REACT REPORTS

If a vehicle comes to the notice of a response patrol as a result of a PNC check, it is expected that it will be dealt with according to the information contained within the report. An ACT report will highlight a vehicle of sufficient interest to be stopped immediately as a part of an investigation, or for action to be taken.

A REAct report is used to cancel an ACT report after the required action has been completed. If it is apparent, however, that the ACT report is of ongoing relevance to an investigation or an enquiry, a REAct report should not be created.

An officer who stops a vehicle but does not have live-link access to the PNC (see **1.7 Databases**) should verify any information in the ACT report through the force control and suspect enquiries.

Note: ANPR will only identify a vehicle of interest; identification should not replace proper investigative enquiries and officer discretion.

Any officer stopping a vehicle in response to an ANPR hit should ensure that they carry out all stop checks in line with force policy. Officers should be satisfied that they know who the occupants of a stopped vehicle are, where they live, that they are not wanted or disqualified, and that they are driving and have possession of the vehicle lawfully.

See ***ACPO (2007) Practice Advice on the Policing of Roads, ACPO (2006) Practice Advice on Stop and Search, ACPO (2008) Practice Advice on Stop and Search in Relation to Terrorism*** and ***NPIA (2007) PNC User Manual, v07.02.***

5.3 PRE-PLANNED OPERATIONS

ANPR can be used to good effect as part of a pre-planned operation where an immediate response can be made to a hit on a local database (see **1.7 Databases** and **6.2.2 Proactive Investigations**).

The location of ANPR is essential to the effectiveness of the system and should be an integral part of the NIM tasking and co-ordination process (see **4.3 Tasking and Co-ordination**). Consideration needs to be given to ensuring that the operation is flexible enough to allow the ANPR and intercept vehicles to be moved at short notice. The location must also be selected and managed to reduce the possibility of a pursuit. As police activity is identified, especially when successful, offenders may change routes to avoid police attention (see **6.2.2 Proactive Investigations**).

ANPR vehicles should be sited on the main entry routes around the area of operation. Support and stopping vehicles should be located close to the ANPR vehicles for ease of deployment when a hit has been received. There should be sufficient support resources to ensure that any vehicle and its occupants can be dealt with effectively. They should also have ready access to operation managers with authority to authorise removals and provide guidance to staff.

General Considerations

- As pre-planned operations can be resource hungry depending on the number of ANPR vehicles to be used, they should form part of the overall tasking and co-ordination process.
- Each ANPR vehicle requires a minimum of two response vehicles.
- Consideration should be given to the use of additional support officers for each response team; this will ensure that response vehicles can be redeployed quickly.
- An operation manager should be appointed to oversee the deployment of resources and control the operation site.
- Arrangements should be in place to effectively process and transport any prisoners arrested during the operation.

Cross-Border Considerations

- Cross-border operations should form part of the level two tasking and co-ordination process.
- A lead force should be designated to take responsibility for managing and controlling the operation.

5.3.1 RISK ASSESSMENTS

A risk assessment should be undertaken when planning operations. It should specifically cover the area of operation, and concentrate on the sites where ANPR will be located, how response vehicles will be used and force policy on following and stopping vehicles.

Control measures used are likely to include the support of other specialist resources, eg, pursuit-trained officers in authorised vehicles, firearms unit, drugs dogs and suitable prisoner transport.

For further information see ***ACPO (2004) Guidelines for the Management of Police Pursuits.***

5.4 FIXED SITE DEPLOYMENTS

Fixed ANPR sites, including CCTV systems, operate twenty-four hours a day and are a rich source of information for intelligence, analysis and post-incident investigation. They also provide an operational response opportunity.

Strategic decisions for the placement of fixed-site cameras should be based on force intelligence and analysis, known routes used by criminals, planning issues, changing demographics and the intended outcome of using the cameras. Placement of cameras in high-volume traffic locations will increase the number of reads and hits that will require a response. It is, therefore, important that this information is taken into account when making staffing and resource capability assessments, as should issues such as IT, network and storage demands.

Forces should develop local tactical plans identifying fixed camera locations to provide information for tasking and co-ordination or investigation strategies.

Once a vehicle of interest has been identified by an ANPR camera, CCTV can provide an additional resource to track the target vehicle even where the CCTV cameras are not linked to ANPR readers.

A potential drawback of fixed sites (eg, CCTV cameras) is that offenders may identify the sites and change their routes in order to avoid them. Local knowledge of alternative routes in the area may help in preparing pre-planned operations, or in deciding where to deploy mobile ANPR cameras or vehicles.

The development of a service level agreement (SLA) or memorandum of understanding (MoU) between police and partners will support the successful operation of CCTV-linked ANPR systems. SLAs will provide the necessary information to all parties on how, when and to what type of ANPR alerts police will respond, and the responsibilities of individual partners (see **2.2 Management Issues**).

Locations where vehicles can park up, observe traffic, provide a visible presence or wait for hits should be identified as fall-back locations. These should not be sited near fixed systems. ANPR vehicles can use these fall-back points as additional camera points, and for responding to hits from static systems.

5.5 MOBILE DEPLOYMENTS

Mobile deployments are an effective ANPR tool which can be deployed in a number of ways. These may include:

- Lone vehicles;
- Stopping sites;
- ANPR reading vehicle such as a Spectrum van.

A dynamic risk assessment should be carried out prior to any tactical deployment.

Deployment locations for mobile cameras should be based on regular and accurate geographical analysis identifying crime hot spots and the most effective sites.

5.5.1 URBAN DEPLOYMENT

The nature of urban locations and their volume of traffic make deploying mobile units there difficult due to locality and traffic. The following advice will assist when planning an urban operation:

- Do not stay in one location for too long;
- Identify several locations around the deployment area so that cameras can be moved easily;
- Ensure that response vehicles can join traffic flows easily following an alert (at 30 mph a vehicle is travelling at forty-four feet per second);
- Make sure sufficient room is available for vehicles to turn around safely.

5.5.2 SINGLE VEHICLE DEPLOYMENTS

Where a single ANPR vehicle is deployed, it should be located out of the flow of traffic. This will make it easier for the vehicle to rejoin traffic flows in either direction when a hit is received, thereby minimising the distance the target vehicle has covered before the ANPR vehicle can respond.

5.5.3 MOBILE DEPLOYMENTS WITH RESPONSE VEHICLES

Where a mobile ANPR unit is to be supported by a response vehicle, two response vehicles should be used, where possible, to take alternative hits.

A fall-back point and stopping sites should be identified for the response vehicles prior to their deployment. They should be located a safe distance from the ANPR camera.

5.5.4 MOTORWAY DEPLOYMENTS

When deploying ANPR on a motorway, the use of multiple mobile cameras, eg, Spectrum vans, should be considered. One camera should be used per lane, where possible. Consideration should also be given to using an additional camera to cover the hard shoulder. This will allow coverage of all lanes and provide the widest range of tactical options.

The effectiveness of a mobile ANPR camera deployed on a bridge over the motorway depends on its height. Locations should, therefore, be assessed prior to deployment to ensure that cameras are set at the appropriate angle to make effective reads.

For further information see ***ACPO (2007) Practice Advice on the Policing of Roads.***

5.6 INVESTIGATIVE SUPPORT

While ANPR resources are used primarily for response policing, there are examples of SIOs, on major investigations, tasking response teams with intelligence-gathering activities. See **6.2.1 Reactive Investigations** and **4.1 ANPR Data and Intelligence-Led Policing.** This includes deploying an ANPR response team on roads near the scene of a crime in order to gather intelligence on potential witnesses who may have travelled through the area at the time of the offence.

For further information see ***ACPO (2007) Practice Advice on the Policing of Roads*** and ***ACPO (2007) ANPR Strategy for the Police Service – 2007/2010.***

Section 6
THE USE OF ANPR TO SUPPORT INVESTIGATIONS

The use of ANPR has contributed to successful investigations against serious and organised criminals, terrorist suspects and individuals involved in volume crime. This section demonstrates how ANPR can be used as an effective investigative resource, and to support suspect and witness strategies.

CONTENTS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

ANPR provides valuable information which can be used as an investigative strategy to help develop and/or pursue lines of enquiry in an investigation.

ANPR data, combined with other sources of information, eg, crime and incident data, intelligence, CCTV and DNA data, can provide material which will support the overall direction of an investigation or specific lines of enquiry. It can enhance the intelligence picture, identify where and when a vehicle has travelled and provide enforcement opportunities. It can also be used to assist in both reactive and proactive investigations, supporting witness and suspect strategies, identifying vehicles, and, potentially, persons of interest. For further information on investigative strategies, see ***ACPO (2005) Practice Advice on Core Investigative Doctrine.***

6.2 HOW ANPR CAN ASSIST INVESTIGATIONS

6.2.1 REACTIVE INVESTIGATIONS

> A reactive investigation starts with the discovery of a crime and seeks to bring the offender to justice by uncovering material that identifies suspects and provides sufficient evidence to enable a court to determine guilt.
>
> ***ACPO (2005) Practice Advice on Core Investigative Doctrine, p 47.***

Basic searches of ANPR data can be used to assist in any investigation where a vehicle is or may be involved. It can help to:

- Locate lost or stolen vehicles;
- Identify the movements of a vehicle(s) used in the commission of a crime;
- Research the movements of a potential suspect in order to identify the user;
- Research the movements of the vehicle of a victim to assist with victimology;
- Research an alibi;
- Identify the vehicles of people in a particular location during particular time parameters to assist in identifying a suspect, potential victim, or potential witnesses (for example, witnesses to a road traffic accident).

Search results can help to identify:

- Who was driving the vehicle and who was a passenger;
- What type of vehicle was being driven;
- When the vehicle was used;
- Where the vehicle has been driven, and in which direction.

A marker against any vehicle on a database used in an ANPR operation must be supported by reliable intelligence. Managers should ensure that local databases contain timely and accurate intelligence (see **1.7 Databases** and **5.2.1 PNC Data and ACT/REAct Reports**).

Investigators should remember that ANPR provides data on a vehicle's movements, and not on an individual's movements. It is essential that a hit on a vehicle of interest be compared with the image of the numberplate (called a plate patch) and any other evidence sources if available.

The absence of a vehicle on an ANPR system does not necessarily exclude the possibility of a vehicle's or, by inference, a person's presence in a particular place at a given time. In complex or serious cases it may be appropriate to reconstruct a journey which has been given as an alibi. By driving a vehicle through relevant ANPR readers at similar times and in similar conditions to those applicable at the time of the alibi, it may be possible to determine whether the vehicle could have been at a particular location at the material time. Alternatively, it may also show that the vehicle could have passed through other locations, which may generate new lines of enquiries.

Linking an individual to a particular vehicle can be achieved in a number of ways, such as CCTV and witness evidence. As the use of ANPR in investigations becomes more widespread, more sophisticated criminals may also use ANPR to attempt to create false alibis.

Scenarios that highlight the use of ANPR in reactive investigations are included in **Appendix 1.**

6.2.2 PROACTIVE INVESTIGATIONS

> A proactive investigation will usually start with an intelligence analysis which identifies that a particular individual or group is involved in criminal enterprise, eg, organised crime such as drug dealing, fraud or people trafficking. Investigators will then generally use a range of covert policing techniques to link offenders to the criminal enterprise.
>
> ***ACPO (2005) Practice Advice on Core Investigative Doctrine, p 47.***

In these cases ANPR can help to:

- Research the movements of a vehicle which may belong to or be used by a suspect;
- Locate a vehicle in support of a surveillance operation;
- Initiate a trigger plan or an arrest plan (arrest/stop/notify);
- Reduce disorder;
- Develop intelligence about the activities and lifestyle of a subject prior to an operation (see **4.3.1 Intelligence Products**).

Scenarios that highlight the use of ANPR in proactive investigations are included in **Appendix 1.** For further information see ***ACPO (2005) Practice Advice on Core Investigative Doctrine*** and ***ACPO (2006) Murder Investigation Manual.***

6.2.3 SURVEILLANCE OPERATIONS

Portable ANPR systems involving a laptop and ANPR camera can be set up at any location within a short amount of time by an individual user. These systems can be used covertly in both a rural and urban environment to monitor the vehicle movements of targets.

Mobile surveillance teams are able to use ANPR information from the strategic road network to identify suspect vehicles that have been lost. This information can also be used as a trigger to surveillance so that targets do not need to be monitored continuously.

For further information see ***ACPO/HMRC/SOCA (2008) Guidance on the Use and Management of Specialist Surveillance Techniques.*** See also **Appendix 1** for a scenario on the use of ANPR in support of surveillance operations and **3.5 Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.**

6.2.4 ADVANTAGES AS A TACTICAL OPTION

As a tactical option ANPR:

- Can produce accurate geographic positioning data (unlike cell sites);
- Is an easily searchable system (unlike CCTV);
- Provides a flexible option for deployment for fixed, temporary fixed, or mobile assets;
- Can be accessed or deployed quickly;
- Is relatively low cost (once established);
- Can allow the investigator to monitor a number of vehicles simultaneously (unlike surveillance).

As with any type of technology, ANPR has limitations. However, it has already been used in many investigations with great success.

As the coverage of ANPR expands and the technology develops, many more opportunities will arise where it can be used to assist investigations.

See also **2.1 Strategic Issues.** For information on searching and analysing ANPR data, see **7 ANPR Data Retrieval and Analysis.**

6.2.5 LIMITATIONS

The use of non-standard numberplates or other countermeasures, eg, non-standard fonts or 'magic' plates, on some vehicles will prevent the OCR software from accurately reading those plates. In these cases ANPR controllers and/or investigators will need to manually verify the accuracy of reads and hits.

The value of ANPR may also be affected by the:

- Number and type of cameras;
- Location of the cameras;
- Quality of the images, arising from
  - poor lighting and low contrast due to over exposure, sun glare, reflection or shadows
  - obstructed vehicles
  - speed of vehicles (blurry images)
  - traffic volume
  - poor weather conditions
  - obscured, broken, dirty or customised numberplates
  - some foreign registered vehicles (although this should not prevent foreign vehicle details being input onto local force databases).

In addition, the effectiveness of using ANPR is limited by the level of ANPR coverage available.

6.2.6 BASIC KNOWLEDGE REQUIREMENTS

Those involved in investigations should understand how ANPR data can assist them. Staff will need to:

- Have a basic knowledge of how ANPR works and its limitations (see **1 Background**);
- Know how the data can be accessed and analysed to assist in their particular investigation (see **6.2 How ANPR Can Assist Investigations, 7 ANPR Data Retrieval and Analysis**);
- Know the existing ANPR coverage that is relevant to their investigation (police, local authority, Highways Agency, commercial sources);
- Know how to present the material as evidence (see **3.6 ANPR Material**);
- Know how to use ANPR to address intelligence gaps and assist in the reduction of crime (see **4.1 ANPR Data and Intelligence-Led Policing**).

The investigator will be assisted by:

- The skills and awareness of force analysts to exploit existing ANPR data using current analytical tools such as Microsoft Excel;
- The ability of the NADC to resource national searches for the most serious offences (see **1.6 National ANPR Data Centre**);
- The skills and awareness of force analysts to use the NADC to exploit ANPR data.

Section 7
ANPR DATA RETRIEVAL AND ANALYSIS

This section includes information on methods of ANPR data retrieval, search and analysis.

CONTENTS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The data produced by ANPR systems can be used in intelligence processes, operational policing and investigations. It can be searched to find specific information, or analysed to identify crime trends or hot spots.

Like other passive data generators, ANPR systems can produce large quantities of data, not all of which will be relevant. Any officers intending to commission a search or analysis should consult an experienced BOF administrator or trained analyst to determine the appropriate parameters for the work, and to identify the products that can be provided and how they may assist.

7.2 ANPR DATA SEARCHES

ANPR data can be searched in a variety of ways using various applications. These may include structured searches using spreadsheets or via the NADC (see **1.6 National ANPR Data Centre**).

7.2.1 STRUCTURED SEARCHES USING SPREADSHEETS OR SPECIALIST ANALYSIS SOFTWARE

ANPR data, like some other sources of information, can involve significant quantities of material. Tightly focused search parameters must be defined to ensure that staff are not swamped with data. This will also help to ensure that searches and analysis are meaningful and insightful. The simplest, and often most flexible analytical approach, is to export the ANPR data out of the BOF and import it into a spreadsheet package such as Microsoft Excel or a specialist analytical software package. This should be undertaken by an experienced BOF administrator or analyst. The data can then be manipulated within the spreadsheet and extra data added to ascertain detail and inferences about a relevant vehicle. Data that is downloaded should be cross-referenced with the patch plate images to ensure accuracy.

Note: Running queries directly on the BOF may slow down the run time of the BOF, making it ineffective for identifying 'real time' intercept operations.

Data can be used to produce a timeline of a vehicle's movements, and mapped to visualise routes. In addition, locations where the most hits are seen can be prioritised for police intervention by identifying the optimum days for the deployment of response or surveillance teams (see **5 ANPR for Response Policing**).

Knowing the location of fixed ANPR sites, including the GPS or grid coordinates for each camera, will enable users to:

- Map these locations;
- Identify where a vehicle has been seen;
- Overlay crime and incident data.

Knowing the following details can help the user to understand the data and identify where the vehicle has come from and where it may be going:

- Direction in which the camera reads the VRM;
- The camera range;
- What image the camera actually captures;
- Whether the camera captures the image on the entry to, or exit from, a roundabout;
- Whether the camera covers all lanes and, if applicable, the hard shoulder;
- Whether there are any blind spots associated with the camera location.

7.2.2 STRUCTURED SEARCHES USING THE NADC

A number of structured searches are supported by the NADC and can assist in sifting data, especially where there are large volumes of data to be collated.

Vehicle Matching

Vehicle matching allows the users to detect any vehicles taking a particular route through two locations. The user can define two locations and the time usually taken to drive between the two locations. When a VRM is recorded as having passed the first location in the direction specified followed by the second location, and the time difference between the capture is less than the specified value, an alert will be raised.

Each location may be defined in one of three ways:

- A set of fixed cameras;
- A rectangular area, defined as maximum and minimum latitude and longitude;
- A circular area, defined as a point and radius.

These searches are directional, so that an alert is only raised if the VRM is detected at the second location within the specified time interval of it having been detected at the first location.

Geographical Searches

Geographical searches produce a list of VRMs that have appeared in a particular area, or areas, within specified timeframes. The timeframes are defined by a start date and time, and an end date and time. Each geographical area is defined by a centre point and a circle drawn around it using a defined radius. All VRMs that appear at a location, or locations, within the specified timeframe are included in the result set.

This search might help to identify associates of an offender, or the vehicles known to be used by them. Where more than one vehicle may have been used to leave the scene of an incident, this may help to link a VRM witnessed at the scene, to that of an identified associate.

Figures 2 and **3** show screen shots of a geographic profile search using an ANITE BOF system. Screens may differ on other systems.

Figure 2 Example Screen showing Geographical Profile Results

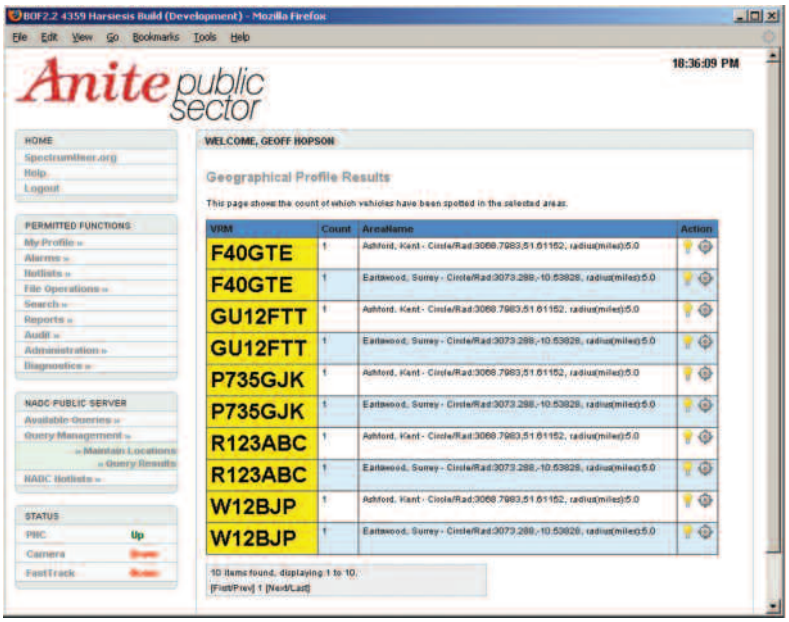
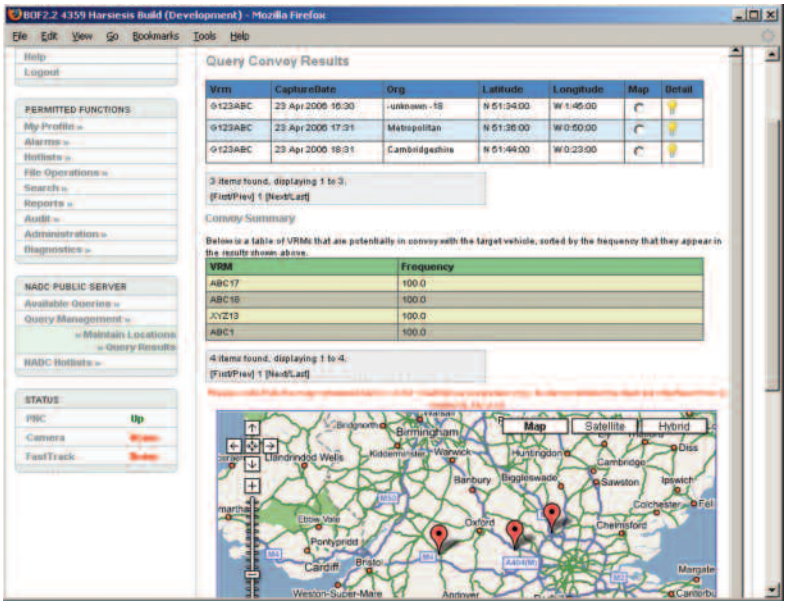


Figure 3 Example Screen showing Convoy Search Results



Real-Time and Retrospective Searches

The real-time and retrospective search functions allow for the detection of vehicles travelling in convoy with other known targets; this is sometimes referred to as convoy analysis. The real-time function operates on user-selected entries on a database. When a database match is generated, previous reads of the same vehicle are analysed to detect vehicles travelling closely on both occasions.

The retrospective function allows the user to specify a database and retrospective timeframe. The search will then be performed within that timeframe for all of the reads on the database.

Extra Parameters

Where the appropriate server is available, an additional search can be undertaken on the colour, make and model of a vehicle.

Where one or more extra parameters are provided for each VRM produced by the initial hit, eg, defining a vehicle make, model or colour, a search command (known as a #VK enquiry) is sent to the PNC (see **1.7 Databases**). The enquiry will return the registered owner details, vehicle make, model and colour as recorded by DVLA, as well as the road fund licence status. The results will show only those vehicles that match.

Scenarios highlighting the use of ANPR data can be found in **Appendix 1.**

7.3 ANALYSIS OF ANPR DATA

ANPR data must be analysed in conjunction with other data. Forces should use analytical techniques defined in NIM, such as crime pattern analysis, subject profile analysis, network analysis, incident analysis and results analysis. Any tasking of analytical resources should include discussion of the use of various sources of information, including ANPR data, although this may not be specified in the terms of reference. Analysts will then select the appropriate technique to fit the task at hand. This work is usually undertaken by trained analysts.

7.3.1 CRIME PATTERN ANALYSIS

Crime pattern analysis (CPA) identifies the nature and scale of emerging and current crime and disorder trends, linked crimes or incidents, hot spots of activity and common characteristics of offenders and offending behaviour.

When a trend, series or hot spot has been identified, ANPR data can assist either in developing a picture of vehicles in the relevant location at identified times of day, or as a tactical option if a vehicle or target has been linked to an incident.

The environment plays an important part in the development of crime, and much offending behaviour is concentrated within certain, small geographic areas. The identification of crime hot spots provides one of the best examples of the influence of place on crime patterns. Hot spots are locations that display significantly higher than usual levels of crimes and/or incidents.

By establishing which vehicles were in the area at the time an offence or offences were committed, it is possible to narrow down potential suspects using additional intelligence. This can lead to the development of a trigger plan, such as an arrest plan, for the next time the vehicle travels into the defined area. By stopping that vehicle, once an ANPR camera has identified it, it may be possible to prevent a crime being committed.

There is also an opportunity, through CPA, to identify potential future sites for both permanent and mobile ANPR cameras. Assessment of road traffic collisions, as well as the analysis of hot spots of crime and disorder, may help identify key routes and significant time periods, leading to a more accurate deployment of ANPR.

7.3.2 SUBJECT PROFILE ANALYSIS

ANPR data is one of many sources of information that can be used to develop a subject profile. ANPR data can be layered with other data, such as crime reports, incident reports, witness testimony, CCTV, other surveillance, communication analysis, financial analysis, as well as existing intelligence, to define a pattern of behaviour for a subject of interest.

Once an individual can be associated with a vehicle, ANPR data can help to profile that individual. This relies on the capture and storage of historical ANPR data so that previous movements of a vehicle can be analysed. It can also identify if there is any association between the movements of the subject's vehicle and a crime that has been committed. If a location visited by the vehicle does not form part of a pattern of normal behaviour, it may illustrate a previously unknown location of interest. The analyst, however, needs to be aware of the limitations of ANPR data and the locations of cameras in order to understand how this will influence the profile (see **6.2.5 Limitations**).

ANPR deployment may be one of a number of tactical options identified following the identification of either a pattern of offences or a target, especially if the subject is in the early stage of development. ANPR data should be considered to assist in building up a picture of the subject's lifestyle before more expensive options, such as surveillance, are used. See also **6.2.1 Reactive Investigations.**

7.3.3 NETWORK ANALYSIS

Analysis of criminal groups, networks and key individuals, based on the movements of vehicles they are known to use, can help to identify networks of associates and other individuals who may be of interest.

As a vehicle can be driven by more than one person, care should be taken to establish the identity of the driver where possible.

By identifying the drivers of vehicles and their network of associates, ANPR data can be used to indicate vehicles that may be travelling in convoy. This might be used to infer that the occupants are about to make direct contact, or are about to commit an offence, or have just done so.

The usual drivers of vehicles may be verified against information obtained during a routine stop, rather than having to rely on V5 Registered Keeper information from the DVLA (see also **1.7 Databases**).

7.3.4 INCIDENT ANALYSIS

A number of case studies in **Appendix 1** highlight how ANPR data can be used in serious and major investigations (see **case studies 1, 2, 3** and **4**). For example, it can be used to refute or verify alibi statements, to locate offenders and to seize important forensic evidence. ANPR can also be used to identify potential witnesses to specific incidents by identifying vehicles in the location at the time of an incident. For further information see ***ACPO (2005) Practice Advice on Core Investigative Doctrine, ACPO (2006) Murder Investigation Manual*** and **6 The Use of ANPR to Support Investigations.**

7.3.5 RESULTS ANALYSIS

A review of the effectiveness of policing activity should be discussed and agreed at the start of an investigation or operation in order to set objectives against which effectiveness can be measured.

A review or results analysis is particularly useful when the response or activity is unusual, or where significant resources have been or are committed to the activity. Reviewing activity can lead to the development of organisational knowledge and the improvement of practices and policy. An evaluation of the use of ANPR and its contribution is an important aspect of results analysis undertaken following an investigation or intelligence gathering initiative. When undertaking results analysis, the use of ANPR should be evaluated and, if ANPR was not used, any missed opportunities should be identified to ensure that lessons learned can be used in future investigations.

For more information on the analytical techniques included in this section, see ***ACPO (2008) Practice Advice on Analysis.***

APPENDIX 1
CASE STUDIES

CONTENTS

CASE STUDIES

Appendix 1 provides practitioners with practical examples of how ANPR has been used effectively in policing scenarios. If more information is required on the potential use of ANPR, practitioners should consult their local ANPR tactical adviser, or contact the NPIA Specialist Operations Centre, telephone 0845 000 5463.

1 IDENTIFYING THE USERS OF VEHICLES USED TO COMMIT CRIME

Repeated thefts from one location are reported. Intelligence suggests a team of criminals from another district are responsible. A list of vehicles registered to keepers in this district is obtained from the DVLA and a database is created. This is loaded onto ANPR assets and a static ANPR system is placed on the main, direct route between these two locations. Several hits are made. Arrests and the discovery of stolen property result from this.

2 LOCATING A SUSPECT

A vehicle's details, used in several burglaries, are entered onto an ANPR system resulting in a hit. The vehicle is stopped and searched. Officers find a sizeable amount of cash and class A drugs. Further quantities of both are found at the driver's work and home addresses.

3 SERIOUS CRIME

A woman suffers a serious sexual assault by an unknown man shortly after driving home. There is little information on the suspect and no vehicles were seen at the location of the assault. There is some ANPR coverage in the local town. As a line of enquiry, ANPR data from the force BOF is analysed. The locations of the police and council fixed-site cameras are already known. Additionally, commercial ANPR sources such as garages and shopping centres are identified. An analyst profiles the victim's vehicle. Hit data is analysed to identify other vehicles of police interest in the vicinity of the crime without result.

A week later a second serious sexual assault with a similar modus operandi is reported in an adjoining town. ANPR is used to identify the movements of the second victim's car. Research is undertaken in the local area to try to identify any vehicles owned by persons of interest to the police. Nothing of significance is found. Analysis is then used to identify all vehicles travelling to and from the town on the same road as the victim for two hours prior to the offence and one hour afterwards. A questionnaire is sent to the registered owners of these vehicles in an effort to identify witnesses. This tactic supplements a traditional road check on the anniversary of the offence.

The read data from the search for vehicles using the same road is loaded onto a new database. ANPR mobile assets are deployed on the anniversary of the offence in order to prioritise vehicles that are stopped by the uniform staff.

An examination of the search results and the patch plate images finds nothing of significance. Analysis through the NADC is undertaken to ascertain if the attacker was using a vehicle on plates illegally copied from another registered vehicle (ghost plates), revealing two red Rover 45 vehicles using the same plates in different locations. One of these is identified as the second vehicle following after the victim's. An analysis of the patch plate confirms that the VRM is registered to a Rover. A poor-quality colour overview image of the vehicle is sent for enhancement. CCTV viewing is also requested to locate the vehicle and provide an image of the driver.

The owner of the other Rover is eliminated from the enquiry. The first Rover is flagged on the PNC to trace its current and previous locations. An analysis of commercial ANPR data identifies that it was at a garage in the town of the first attack three hours before the attack. CCTV footage of the driver is obtained.

Analysis of the movements of the Rover is undertaken for the previous six months. Identified hits are mapped and cross-referenced to known data on other sex attacks in the area at the time of the sightings. This identifies a third sex attack in another force area not previously linked.

On analysing ANPR data, it is apparent that the Rover has travelled on a particular road every day at a certain time. A trigger plan to arrest the driver is put in place using mobile ANPR assets operating together with armed response vehicles. The vehicle is then identified by an ANPR system, an intercept team is deployed and the vehicle is stopped. The driver is identified from the CCTV footage from the garage and arrested for all three offences.

4 ANPR AS A TRIGGER FOR INTERCEPT TEAMS

During a deployment on a main road, an ANPR unit has a hit on the HQ FIB (Serious Crime) database in relation to a murder. Following investigation at the road side, the driver was arrested on suspicion of conspiracy to commit murder.

The driver was the girlfriend of the main suspect, who is wanted for a murder in Slough. She was driving the vehicle used in the commission of the offence. The vehicle was seized for forensic examination. Subsequently, the main suspect surrendered himself to the police.

5 A SURVEILLANCE OPERATION

A team loses the subject of their surveillance. Contact is made with the force FIB which, in turn, liaises with relevant BCUs that have ANPR. An appropriate flag is placed on the vehicle.

Forty-five minutes later a hit occurs twenty miles away. The team relocates and recovers the surveillance.

6 REDUCING THE THREAT TO AN INDIVIDUAL'S SAFETY

A risk assessment concludes that there is a threat to the life of a prominent national figure.

Covert ANPR assets using a specific database are deployed to cover the approaches to the home of the principal. This is linked to the on-call force intelligence office which receives notice of any activation. Activation leads to a spontaneous firearms operation and the successful apprehension of the target without risk to the principal.

7 MANAGING HIGH-RISK PERSONS

A high-risk paedophile on licence is the subject of a sex offender order and is managed under the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). Specific restrictions have been placed on the man's movements. As part of the risk management plan, the BOF is reviewed daily to assess his compliance. This clearly indicates that he is lying about his movements. The offender's behaviour, and further enquiries, leads to the revocation of his licence.

8 REDUCING DISORDER

A group of youths are excluded from a town centre as a condition of an ASBO. Their vehicles are flagged on the BCU database. An instruction is issued for uniform staff to respond to any hits. A case officer is assigned to collate any evidence of a breach of the ASBO, including ANPR evidence.

From the intelligence gathered, ANPR intercept teams (see **5 ANPR for Response Policing**) are deployed on Thursday evenings, as this seems to be the peak time for activity. It is established that two vehicles have no insurance and they are stopped and subsequently seized.

The operation also establishes a blind spot in relation to CCTV and ANPR coverage. A successful bid is submitted to the local Crime and Disorder Partnership.

9 INTELLIGENCE-LED POLICING

A large rave took place. As police attempted to stop the rave, serious public disorder occurred. A significant number of arrests were made as a result. Officers on the ground, ANPR assets at the scene and the Police Air Support used ANPR systems to collect the VRMs of vehicles at the scene.

Information was received that the organisers intended to stage a violent protest outside a main police station the following evening. Using the VRMs collected at the scene, with the appropriate RIPA authority, a database was created and loaded onto all force ANPR assets.

An electronic moat was placed around the town centre, acting positively on all hits. The outcome was a heavily depleted protest that was effectively managed, thereby causing no disruption to the town.

10 USING A DATABASE IN SUPPORT OF AN INVESTIGATION

A problem of bogus official burglaries was identified. The victims were elderly and the offenders were suspected of being travellers from two sites, one in North Wales and the other in Cheshire. The ANPR-enabled force helicopter was sent on an evidence-gathering mission, flying over each site and collecting the VRMs of any vehicles seen. The VRMs were then loaded onto a local database and using both fixed site and mobile ANPR assets, several potential offenders were then stopped and searched. Other technologies, eg, lanterns were also deployed, and several arrests were made.

Note: The LANTERN project delivered mobile fingerprint devices to forces, allowing the user at the roadside to check a person's fingerprints against the National Automated Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS), to help confirm that person's identity.

11 LIFESTYLING AND PROFILING TARGETS PRIOR TO AN OPERATION

As a result of the force tasking and co-ordination process, a decision was taken to develop target profiles about members of an organised crime group. The vehicles being used by the targets were researched on the NADC on a twice-weekly basis, to profile their movements. This intelligence was overlaid with intelligence from other sources. The ANPR data contributed greatly to profiling the lifestyles and movements of the targets and, in particular, showed regular movement between two cities that was not previously known to the intelligence team.

APPENDIX 2
NAAS DATABASE TEMPLATE

Column	Description	Standard Words	Comment
1	VRM		No Spaces
2	MAKE		
3	MODEL		
4	COLOUR		
5	ACTION 1st WORD	Stop Silent Intel DO NOT STOP	Silent sightings only. Do not stop for routine checks If additional grounds exist vehicle may be stopped For reasons of officer safety or investigation requirements
6	WARNING MARKERS 2nd WORD	Nothing Known (NK) Firearms (FI) Weapons (WE) Violent (VI) Fails to Stop (FT)	Enter maximum of 3 relevant markers
7	REASON 3rd WORD	Drugs Crime Disqualified Docs Drink Drive Sexual Other Protest VISOR NO STOP Intel	For silent checks enter NO STOP
8	INTEL 5X5X5		Enter grading without X or spaces
9	INFORMATION/ ACTION	Prefix free text with date and time in format [dd/mm/yyyy hh:mm]	Brief free text to include and additional information and force reference number if applicable
10	FORCE AND AREA		Include force name/area (BCU/division letter) and 24hr contact tel no.
11	WEED DATE		
12	PNC ID	1 Firearms 2 Explosives 3 Fails to stop for Police 4 Weapons 5 Violent 6 Suicidal 7 Mental 8 Escaper 9 Drugs 10 Contagious 11 Alleges 12 Ailment 13 Offends against Vulnerable Person 14 Sex Offender 15 Female Impersonator 16 Male Impersonator	
13	GPMS marking		Restricted
14	CAD		
15	SPARE		
16	SPARE		

APPENDIX 3
PROPOSED MEDIA LINES TO TAKE

Issued by National ANPR Coordinator July 2007

INTRODUCTION

Q. What is ANPR?

A. ANPR devices work by scanning vehicle registrations and checking them against information stored in databases, including the Police National Computer, to identify vehicles of interest to the police, such as stolen cars or those involved in crimes. When a suspicious vehicle is recognised, it can be the focus of targeted interception and enquiries.

Q. How is it used?

A. ANPR technology, coupled with immediate follow-up police action via dedicated intercept teams, has the potential to deny criminals the use of the roads. ANPR is an enormously effective operational tool which allows the police to target known offenders, leading to officers engaged on ANPR operations arresting up to five times the number of offenders that patrol officers would normally catch in a year.

Q. Who is it used by?

A. Every force in England and Wales has an ANPR capability and this intelligence-led policing tool is fast becoming a core policing activity.

Q. What is it currently being used for?

A. Automatic Number Plate Recognition is an invaluable tool in the campaign to make our streets safer. There is an ambitious programme of crime reduction measures, harnessing the powers of this technology to drive down crime. By denying criminals the use of the road, the police will be better able to enforce the law, prevent crime and detect offenders. ANPR can also assist casualty reduction by removing unsafe vehicles and drivers from our roads.

Q. What are we planning to use it for in the future?

A. We plan to implement a national ANPR infrastructure so that all police forces can make full use of the ANPR capability.

POLICING GENERALLY

Q. Won't this take police away from work they should be doing, like catching murderers and rapists?

A. Far from taking police away from catching criminals, ANPR is an effective policing tool that can be used in the detection of criminals and in crime reduction generally. It is known that motoring offences are often associated with other crime. Experience has shown that stopping vehicles where a motoring offence has been committed, often leads to arrests for more serious offences. ANPR has become a valuable tool in fighting crime and will deny criminals the use of the roads.

Q. Isn't this going to take 'bobbies' off the beat?

A. No. The policing of our streets is not adversely affected by the use of ANPR. High-visibility policing is enhanced by ANPR operations. The overt nature of ANPR operations and the associated policing activity is generally welcomed. Indeed, its use leads to increased crime detection and arrests.

Q. Won't street crime increase if the police focus on motoring offences?

A. While ANPR uses the car numberplate as an identifier, there is no specific focus on motoring offences. An intelligence-led approach results in persons of interest to the police being highlighted, allowing officers to focus on them. There is no evidence to suggest that use of ANPR leads to an increase in street crime. In terms of the deployment of police resources, ANPR will not divert the police away from their priorities. Use of ANPR has, so far, led to the arrest and conviction of criminals for a wide range of serious and volume crime offences.

Q. How is this going to help police fight crime?

A. Experience with ANPR has revealed very strong links between the use of motor vehicles on the road and criminality. The wider use of ANPR has led to the arrest and conviction of criminals for offences other than those motoring offences for which they have been stopped. This is a valuable tool in the fighting of crime more generally.

POLICING THE ROADS

Q. Isn't this just another attack on the poor motorist?

A. Vehicles will only be stopped where records suggest that some form of road traffic offence has been committed or there is a known police interest. Using ANPR, law-abiding citizens are less likely to be stopped by the police.

Law-abiding motorists need have no fear that they will be targeted by the police.

Q. Isn't this an unfair burden on the motorist, how can it be justified?

A. No. The development of ANPR has helped with the enforcement of road tax offences and where there is no insurance or no MoT, as well as tackling other more serious offences. It will have no impact on the vast majority of motorists who are law-abiding, use their vehicles lawfully on the roads, and pay their vehicle taxes and insurance.

Q. Won't this lead to police chases and endanger innocent drivers?

A. Safety of the motorist and intercepting officers is our primary concern. Units will be located where it is possible for the police to intercept vehicles without undue risk to motorists in general. In ANPR operations, safe stopping techniques are used and can be a planned part of the operation, as opposed to chance sightings of offenders by patrol officers. There should be no increased risk to the average road user.

The experience gained already allows best practice in the intercepting of vehicles to be employed. In general, interception will be achieved without the need for a chase.

Q. Is this another type of speed camera?

A. No. ANPR focuses on motoring offences and other crime.

FUTURE ROLL OUT

Q. Will ANPR be rolled out across the country?

A. Each police area already has at least one mobile ANPR unit and dedicated intercept team. We are now in the final stage of testing the national ANPR infrastructure prior to national rollout throughout England and Wales.

Q. Will you be publishing where ANPR devices will be sited?

A. No. This would defeat the purpose of them – criminals would avoid these areas. If motorists are law abiding, they need have no concerns as to where the devices may be sited.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Q. Isn't this the beginnings of a 'Big Brother' state?

A. Criminals and terrorists are becoming increasingly more sophisticated in their activities; therefore, the police need to update their crime-fighting capability. The technology used will alert the police if there are legitimate concerns that the law has been broken; it will do little more than that. ANPR allows the police to focus on those who engage in unlawful activity. This means that people lawfully using our roads will do so unhindered by the police. There are very strict management processes in place to ensure that ANPR capture data is only used for legitimate policing purposes.

Q. Doesn't this just give police the ability to spy on innocent members of the public?

A. No. ANPR will only be used to target vehicles where records indicate that a motoring offence has been committed or where there is evidence of other criminal activity. The technology does no more than check the numberplate against records and alert the police where there is cause for concern. There are strict ACPO guidelines on the use of ANPR which have been published and are available to everyone, and provide the necessary safeguards to prevent abuse of this technology.

Q. This is just government spying on the people, isn't it?

A. No. This is simply a tool for identifying vehicles where a road traffic offence has been committed or where criminal activity is suspected. It does not have any other purpose.

Q. How can we be sure that innocent motorists will not have their details recorded or will not be stopped?

A. ANPR acts as a search tool of the numberplates it has scanned. It is only where a vehicle is of interest to the police because a motoring offence is noted, or there is other known criminal activity associated with it, that a vehicle would be stopped.

DATA PROTECTION/FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/HUMAN RIGHTS

Q. Will motorists be able to see the information held on them by the police?

A. Data protection law will apply to any records associated with ANPR, the same as any other policing activity.

Q. How will the police know who to stop?

A. ANPR will assist the police in identifying road traffic offences and other offences through a search of database records. It will only be those cases where the database indicates that an offence has been committed, or is suspected, that the police would stop a vehicle.

Q. Will a permanent record be kept when someone is stopped? If so, for how long and where?

A. There are strict ACPO guidelines on the police use of ANPR; and these provide the necessary safeguards to prevent abuse of this technology. In certain high-profile investigations the police will value the ability to prove that a vehicle was in a specific area at a given time. There is provision within the technology to record this. Such records would only be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act and the ACPO ANPR Guidelines which have been published in full.

Q. Does ANPR infringe my human rights?

A. No. ANPR, in fact, enhances the human rights of law-abiding citizens by providing additional security through assisting the police to target criminals and terrorists. It also enhances the freedom of movement of law-abiding citizens by only targeting the criminal, thereby leaving other people who use the roads lawfully, to travel unhindered by the police.

APPENDIX 4 ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACPO ..... Association of Chief Police Officers
ANPR ..... Automatic Number Plate Recognition
BCU ..... Basic Command Unit
BOF..... Back Office Facility
CCTV ..... Closed-Circuit Television
CHIS..... Convert Human Intelligence Source
CJA..... Criminal Justice Act 2003
CPA..... Crime Pattern Analysis
CPIA..... Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996
CRB..... Criminal Records Bureau
DPA..... Data Protection Act 1998
DVLA ..... Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency
ECHR ..... European Convention on Human Rights
FIB ..... Force Intelligence Bureau
FOIA..... Freedom of Information Act 2000
GPMS..... Government Protective Marking Scheme
GPS..... Global Positioning System
HMIC..... Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
HRA ..... Human Rights Act 1998
IO ..... Investigating Officer
ISA ..... Information Sharing Agreement
MID ..... Motor Insurance Database
MoU..... Memorandum of Understanding
MMC ..... Make Model Colour
NAAS..... National ACPO ANPR Standards
NADC..... National ANPR Data Centre
NIM ..... National Intelligence Model
NPIA ..... National Policing Improvement Agency
NRD ..... Numberplate Reading Device
OCR ..... Optical Character Recognition
PII..... Public Interest Immunity
PNC..... Police National Computer
RIPA..... Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000
SIO ..... Senior Investigating Officer

SLO ..... Service Level Agreement
SOCA ..... Serious Organised Crime Agency
T&C..... Tasking and Co-ordinating
T&CG ..... Tasking and Co-ordination Group
TT&CG..... Tactical Tasking and Co-ordination Group
VODS ..... Vehicle online Descriptive Search (on PNC)
VRM ..... Vehicle Registration Mark

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