



# **Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) Strategy**

## **2020 - 2024**

Version 1.0  
April 2020

# Document Control

## Change Control

Version	Date	Change	Author
0.1	5.12.19	First draft	Bill Mandeville
0.2	19.12.19	Minor revision following conference call	Bill Mandeville
0.3	20.12.19	NPCC format draft + revisions from H Hall and T Longshaw	Bill Mandeville
0.4	20.12.19	Includes additional comments from T Longshaw	Bill Mandeville
0.5	07.01.20	Review by CC Hall revisions H Hall	Hannah Hall
0.6	02.03.20	Revisions following feedback from consultees	Bill Mandeville
0.7	24.03.20	Final revision/approval NPCC Crime and Intelligence portfolio review	Hannah Hall
1.0	01.04.20	Version presented to NASB	Charlie Hall

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Use of ANPR in Law Enforcement

Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology is a critical law enforcement capability used to detect, deter and disrupt criminality at a local, regional and national level, including Organised Crime Groups, people traffickers, serious sexual offenders and terrorists. ANPR is also used to protect vulnerable people from harm.

ANPR enables police forces throughout England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and other approved Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) to identify those who are using our roads for criminal purposes, whilst protecting the privacy, the rights and the safety of those who use our roads legitimately.

## 1.2 Purpose and Scope

This document articulates the strategy for the development and management of ANPR capability by police forces and other LEAs throughout the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

This strategy addresses the use of ANPR by police forces and LEAs at a national, regional and local level taking account of the implementation of the National ANPR Service (NAS). It is intended to provide an over-arching framework to ensure ANPR capability is optimised and managed to consistent high standards with good governance practice evidenced across all police forces and wider LEAs.

## 1.3 The Overall Aim of the Strategy

The overall aim of this strategy is to set out a clear statement of how police forces and LEAs use of ANPR is to be advanced during the period and the priorities for the National ANPR Portfolio to develop the ANPR capability.

## 1.4 The Timescale of the Strategy

The strategy covers the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. It is restricted to this period as the management and use of ANPR by police forces and LEAs is likely to develop significantly following the implementation of the NAS.

# 2 Stakeholders

The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) lead for ANPR, who is also the lead controller for the NAS for the Purposes of the Data Protection Act 2018,

is responsible for the ANPR strategy that is approved through the governance of the National ANPR Strategy Board.

## 2.1 Primary Stakeholders

2.1.1 The main organisations that have a stake in this strategy that have primary responsibility for the governance and use of the NAS and whose representatives will be invited to commit to it are as follows:

- National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC)
- Approved LEAs as defined within National ANPR Standards for Policing and Law Enforcement (NASPLE) including:
  - 43 England and Wales Police Forces (NPCC)
  - Police Service of Scotland (PSOS)
  - Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI)
  - National Crime Agency (NCA)
  - Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)
  - Border Force (BF)
  - Ministry of Defence (MOD)
  - Royal Military Police (RMP)
  - National Anti-Fraud Network (NAFN)
  - Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA)
  - Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
  - National Vehicle Crime Intelligence Service (NAVIS)
  - Food Standards Agency (FSA)
- Home Office (HO)

## 2.2 Secondary Stakeholders

2.2.1 There are several secondary stakeholders, who contribute to the delivery of this strategy in providing support or oversight of ANPR use by the police and LEAs. These include:

- Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC)
- Motor Insurers' Bureau (MIB)
- ANPR Independent Advisory Group (IAG)
- College of Policing (CoP)
- Counter Terrorism Units (CTU)
- Counter Terrorism Intelligence Units (CTIU)
- Department for Transport (DfT)
- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS)
- Surveillance Camera Commissioner (SCC)
- Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

# 3 Strategic Vision

## 3.1 Strategic Intent

3.1.1 The strategic intent during the period of this strategy is:

- To strengthen and develop the existing fundamental capabilities that ANPR brings to protecting the public and reducing crime in relation to the following law enforcement activities;
  - Operational Response – real-time response to ANPR matches relating to vehicles of interest.
  - Intelligence Development – using the value of ANPR data.
  - Investigations – using ANPR data to support investigations.
- To ensure public confidence in the development, management and use of ANPR by police forces and LEAs taking account of privacy concerns, and maximising transparency.
- To ensure ANPR data is managed responsibly and used proportionately for policing and law enforcement purposes only.
- To maximise the benefits from the NAS as a cost-effective service to ensure consistent efficient and effective use of ANPR.

## 3.2 Strategic Goals

3.2.1 The key goals over the period of the strategy are that the following will have been achieved:

- Police and LEA resources, processes and procedures are in place to realise the potential of ANPR in:
  - providing consistent operational response to ANPR matches relating to vehicles of interest.
  - providing complementary data analysis in intelligence development, investigation and the management of demand
  - improving proactive and targeted interventions.
  - protecting the safety of road users and targeting high risk offending that can lead to road death.
- Police forces and LEAs adopt national training standards and guidance to professionalise their capability, ensuring full utilisation and optimisation of ANPR capability.
- Approved Professional Practice and operational capability guidance in ANPR is established within the College of Policing's (COPs) professional development framework and embedded where appropriate in national training.
- Elements of local technology infrastructure will have been decommissioned and costs will be reduced.
- NAS is providing cost effective functionality to support ANPR use in line with best practice.
- Consistent audit and monitoring of ANPR data and its use embedded within all police forces and LEAs.

- Transparency in the use of ANPR providing an appropriate level of openness by police forces and LEAs in the collection and use of ANPR data.

## 4 Strategic Context

### 4.1 Technology Infrastructure

- 4.1.1 The current National ANPR Infrastructure (NAI) comprises of three core elements: a network of cameras and supporting components, a Back Office Facility (BOF) within each police force and a centrally hosted National ANPR Data Centre (NADC).
- 4.1.2 During 2020 the current NAI will be replaced by the National ANPR Capability (NAC) which will consist of a network of cameras and supporting components (the new NAI), the National ANPR Service (NAS) which is a single data store providing a BOF replacement with functionality to support national law enforcement, and a local management server which is the gateway between NAI and NAS.
- 4.1.3 Police forces and LEAs manage a network of cameras that record number plate sightings which are then, in most cases, transferred to the NAS. Over 60 million ANPR reads are recorded daily. Data is retained within the NAS for 1 year consisting of NAS holding approximately 20 billion records. Once the NAC is fully operational police forces and LEAs that submit read data to the NAS will store a copy of the data submitted by them locally for a period of 7 days.
- 4.1.4 The NAC is underpinned by the NASPLE, which specifies standards for all elements of the NAC, including the requirements for the deployment of NAI cameras taking into account necessity, proportionality and privacy concerns.
- 4.1.5 NAI development is subject to oversight by the National ANPR Camera Strategy Group (NACSG).
- 4.1.6 NASPLE also set out the responsibilities in the collection, management and use of ANPR data by police forces and LEAs.
- 4.1.7 National Standards for Compliance and Audit of Law Enforcement ANPR (Audit Standards) are also in place which are complementary to NASPLE and provide for consistent management of the NAC by police forces and LEAs.

## **4.2 Economic and Financial Environment**

- 4.2.1 Police forces and LEAs continue to face significant challenges to reduce costs and increase efficiencies. The strategy recognises the importance of seeking efficiencies and cost reductions both operationally and in the technology infrastructure.
- 4.2.2 The implementation of NAS provides significant opportunity for police forces and LEAs to reduce costs at a local level in terms of the technology used and in storage of data.
- 4.2.3 ANPR also presents cost effective support to intelligence and investigations that can reduce the costs associated with other activities and shorten the time taken for an investigation to be concluded. The NAS provides appropriate access to national data that, together with increased awareness of staff of the value of ANPR to their work, will optimise the use of ANPR and enable cost efficiencies to be achieved.

## **4.3 Operational Maturity**

- 4.3.1 ANPR has been established to support core policing for operational response purposes for a considerable time, although greater consistency in provision of monitoring and response is required.
- 4.3.2 During recent years there is evidence of the value of ANPR in improving national security, intelligence led investigations and in the investigation of major and serious organised crime, leading to the conviction of offenders.
- 4.3.3 The maturity of the use of ANPR data varies across policing and LEAs due to the knowledge and experience of staff, organisational policy and local operating model.
- 4.3.4 The National ANPR Portfolio has developed a National ANPR Value Model (NAVVM) which provides a baseline for the ANPR maturity of police forces. Within the scope of this strategy the Portfolio will continue to assist the police and LEAs to utilise the NAVVM to optimise the benefits that they derive from ANPR.
- 4.3.5 A National ANPR Capability Framework has been developed to provide consistency across all police forces and LEAs in understanding their capability levels and provide a tool to develop officers and staff. This is complemented by a new National ANPR Training set, which provides a full suite of consistent training products for the use of ANPR managers in upskilling officers and staff to increase effective use of ANPR.
- 4.3.6 There is variation between police forces and LEAs in arrangements for the management of ANPR data. The strategy recognises the need for consistent and effective management of ANPR data supported by appropriate governance. The NAS offers improved management functions within the

ANPR application against a national dataset. Consistent management and audit requirements are defined within NASPLE and Audit Standards.

## **4.4 Privacy and Transparency**

- 4.4.1 The proportionality in the deployment and use of ANPR by police forces and LEAs and the impact on privacy is of continued interest. The standards for infrastructure development and for access to and use of ANPR data within NASPLE have been developed with advice from the ICO. The standards provide consistent and effective procedures and controls to support proportionate use of ANPR by police forces and LEAs.
- 4.4.2 The NAS contains a large amount of data and it is recognised that transparency in the development of the NAI and the use of that data is important to maintain public confidence and support for the NAC.
- 4.4.3 The SCC, appointed under provisions of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, has published a Code of Practice that includes 12 principles that are also relevant to the principles within Part 3 of the Data Protection Act 2018. Compliance with the principles within the Code by police forces and LEAs assists in establishing and maintaining public confidence in their use of ANPR.
- 4.4.4 The strategy recognises the importance of respecting and addressing concerns regarding privacy and transparency. Police forces and LEAs will consult appropriately regarding infrastructure development and provide appropriate information regarding the operation and use of ANPR, taking account of the need to safeguard the operational effectiveness of the NAC.
- 4.4.5 The strategy recognises the importance of continued engagement at a national and local level with the public and wider stakeholder groups. The NPCC lead for ANPR will continue to engage with the National ANPR IAG on matters relating to the management and governance of ANPR in law enforcement.

# **5 Strategic Objectives**

## **5.1 Capability Support to Police Forces and LEAs**

- 5.1.1 Guidance on the optimisation of ANPR has been issued to police forces and LEAs to promote excellent practice. The strategic aim is to develop these practices in all police forces and LEAs as appropriate to their operational responsibility.

Good practice will continue to be identified and shared between police forces and LEAs to uplift capability across all law enforcement and support compliance with legislation and standards.



5.1.2 The strategic aims in respect of real-time operational response to ANPR alarms relating to vehicles of interest either through a control room or through self-deployment are to:

- Forces and LEAs target improvement in the capacity to respond to alarms
- Ensure that real-time monitoring and response is proportionate to the priority of the alarm.
- Ensure a consistent and sufficient response.
- Improve co-operation in and co-ordination of response by police forces and LEAs.

5.1.3 The strategic aims in respect of intelligence development are to:

- Increase police and LEA staff awareness of the opportunities provided to them by ANPR data.
- Ensure ANPR is embedded as a core intelligence product throughout law enforcement.
- Develop innovative and best practice for the use of ANPR in offender management and intelligence development to improve public safety.

5.1.4 The strategic aims in respect of investigation are to:

- Increase police and LEA staff awareness of the opportunities provided to them by ANPR data.
- Fully embed the understanding of ANPR capabilities and their use throughout the investigative process.
- Further develop and promulgate best practice in the use of ANPR data for surveillance and other forms of support to investigations.

## **5.2 Infrastructure Development**

5.2.1 The NACSG provides oversight of national infrastructure to:

- Ensure that current deployments are consistent between police forces and LEAs.
- Identify any potential duplication of capability arising as a consequence of integrating local systems into a single national system, with proposals for mitigation.
- Identify any gaps in infrastructure provision that may be mitigated by deployment of additional ANPR capability.

5.2.2 Criteria for the deployment of ANPR cameras have been reviewed and updated templates and guidance issued. Work is ongoing within the scope of this strategy to further establish national oversight of infrastructure via the NACSG.

5.2.3 Opportunities for collaboration between police forces, LEAs and other public and private sector operators of ANPR will be explored to rationalise the ANPR

infrastructure and reduce the costs of establishing ANPR at locations where it is necessary and proportionate to do so. This will contribute to efficiency and take account of privacy concerns by reducing the number of cameras that are deployed at a location.

### **5.3 Data Management and Use**

The need for retention of data will be kept under review to ensure that data is not retained for longer than necessary.

## **6 Contact Information**

- 6.1 Further advice about the contents of this strategy can be obtained via the NPCC ANPR Portfolio Office: [nationalanprportfoliooffice@herts.pnn.police.uk](mailto:nationalanprportfoliooffice@herts.pnn.police.uk).