

# Guidance for Journeycam Units on the Forensic Science Regulator Codes of Practice

## Document information

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## 1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 This NPCC 'Guidance for Journeycam Units on the Forensic Science Regulator statutory Code of Practice' (FSR CoP) document is written to guide forces on the requirements of the FSR CoP and NPCC Framework for Video Based Evidence, most relevant to police practitioners in the journeycam business area. It supersedes all other documents that offer, or purport to offer advice on this specific matter from the 'police' perspective.
- 1.2 Section 2 of the Forensic Science Regulator Act 2021 introduces a requirement for the Forensic Science Regulator to publish a statutory code of practice for forensic science in the investigation of crime and the criminal justice system in England and Wales. The [Forensic Science Regulator Code of Practice](#) (FSR CoP) came into force on 02/10/2023.
- 1.3 The NPCC portfolio for CCTV, under ACC Gilmer, produced the [NPCC Framework for Video Based Evidence](#) in consultation with the FSR and other stakeholders and approved by the NPCC Crime and Co-ordination Committee. This framework outlines the minimum requirements for UK policing to comply with the FSR statutory CoP in terms of training and competence.
- 1.4 The term 'Video based Evidence' applies to media submitted by operators of journeycam systems, such as dashcams and helmet cams, to police in order to report the behaviour of road users. Police practitioners in this business area are therefore subject to the FSR statutory CoP and the NPCC guidance issued by the CCTV portfolio.
- 1.5 This document is intended to complement the FSR and NPCC documents as referenced above, which forces should also refer to, and the College of Policing APP in relation to CCTV evidence.
- 1.6 This document does not amount to legal advice.

## 2. Principles

- 2.1 Journeycam footage is included in the term 'Video Based Evidence'.
- 2.2 Journeycam practitioners must be at least [Level 1 CCTV trained](#).
- 2.3 Journeycam practitioners must include [declarations as to compliance with the FSR Statutory CoP](#) in their statements.
- 2.4 The [NPCC Framework for Video Based Evidence](#) lays out activities available to each level of trained personnel and the requirements around those activities. It introduces two terms on page 10:
  - **Investigative Viewing:** For journeycam practitioners this means viewing of the footage without any forensic analysis, by level 1 trained personnel, in order to consider the question of prosecution.
  - **Image Analysis:** This is the forensic analysis of footage, such as speed analysis or distance measurement, carried out by level 3 trained forensic specialists under ISO 17025 who must be specifically competent in the Forensic Science Activities (FSAs) being undertaken.
- 2.5 Should journeycam practitioners carry out forensic analysis without being level 3 trained and/or specific competence in the FSAs being undertaken, they must declare non-compliance with the FSR CoP in their statement. This does not just risk undermining the integrity of the evidence and

the prosecution case, but it also renders the practitioner personally liable to sanctions from the FSR.

- 2.6 Guidance on declaration requirements can be obtained from [Declarations of compliance and non-compliance with the code of practice \(accessible\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#), however, we advise that you contact your own in-force Forensic Science team for advice in the first instance.
- 2.7 Competence is one element of the FSR CoP and those wishing to undertake this activity must refer to all the requirements set out in the Code.

### 3. Advice

- 3.1 Journeycam practitioners must not carry out any forensic analysis of footage. Existing practice must cease until a compliant approach with the FSR CoP is agreed. The national validation of this method is in progress and those undertaking this method are working collaboratively to mitigate the risks of errors and impact on cases. Advice should always be sought from your in-force Forensic Science team in the first instance.
- 3.2 Journeycam practitioners should carry out a triage function to determine whether a case should be proceeded with based upon investigative, non-analytical, viewing of the footage in conjunction with the evidence provided by the submitter.
- 3.3 Any statement obtained from the submitter should contain a great level of detail on the impact the event had on them. The footage may also support such impact, e.g. a driver being forced to brake or change course to avoid a collision, or a cyclist being caused to wobble or being forced into a pothole, or similar.

### 4. Future Considerations

- 4.1 Forces may wish to consider making trained and specifically competent forensic analysts available to their journeycam practitioners if required, potentially as a shared resource with other departments such as their Forensic Collision Investigation (FCI) Units. Ultimately these methods are FSAs legislated for within the FSR CoP and must be conducted under the controls of an embedded and accredited quality management system.
- 4.2 Accreditation does take some time to obtain; usually a number of years from commencement. Forces are responsible for obtaining accreditation for the FSAs they deliver. The approach being recommended, and this is supported by the FSR, is to take a staged or incremental approach, building a culture of quality into the business. The key components being Competency, Documented methods, Method validation, Tool testing and Environmental considerations. Accreditation will usually be sought after all those components have been signed off and the team has embedded those practices for at least 3 months. Declarations allow for those stages / progress to be reflected and this can support practitioners whilst they are on that journey to compliance and accreditation.  
Further information on accreditation can be found here: [New FCN videos to help explain the accreditation journey | FCN](#)
- 4.3 The uploading of footage can result in transcoding errors, loss of audio and critical metadata, including effects on frame rates which essentially introduces uncertainties that could undermine the interpretation of speed and / or distance. Anyone considering this evidence will need to take

those uncertainties into account in order not to inadvertently mislead the investigation or any prosecution.

Should forensic analysis of journeycam footage by trained and specifically competent personnel become necessary, access to the original footage from the submitter, rather than the uploaded version, should be considered for best evidence. Where a criminal or fatal incident is being investigated, this will include the cameras themselves for testing.