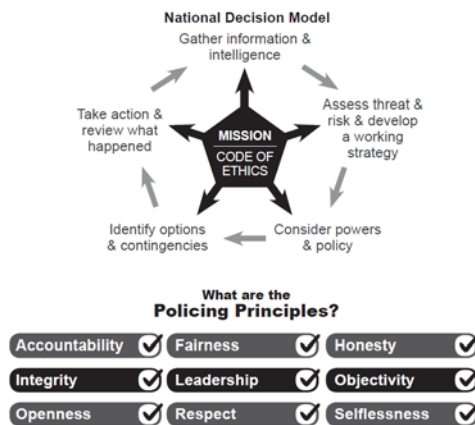




## Automatic Number-Plate Recognition (ANPR)

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## 1. Background

- 1.1. ANPR has been in use since 2001, following the introduction of Operation Spectrum, a Home Office sponsored initiative that provided each force with a marked ANPR van with four cameras and a Back Office Facility (BOF).
- 1.2. Following some high profile criminal cases, the Millie Dowler murder being the most serious, plans were established to install a series of permanent fixed site ANPR cameras at strategic sites around the county.
- 1.3. Also instrumental in this process was work conducted under the Operation Shield banner, a formal process conducted to identify criminal activity where known offenders were targeting the Surrey police area. The conclusion of the report identified that over 50% of crime was committed by the travelling criminals. The highest percentage of offenders operating out of the Metropolitan Police area (MPS). Surrey police has a large border with the MPS including key strategic roads networks. As a result of this strategic plans were put in place to install permanent fixed ANPR sites on the borders over a period of four years, this included the MPS, Kent, Sussex, Hampshire and Thames Valley Police border areas.
- 1.4. Currently Surrey Police have 63 locations covering 233 lanes of traffic for fixed site cameras, this includes sites shared with Surrey County Council who use the infrastructure to improve journey times across the county.

We currently have 42 mobile systems fitted to patrol vehicles, the majority being Roads Policing and Armed Response teams.

We have 34 re-deployable cameras that can be moved around to supplement the current fixed site infrastructure where emerging crime series, major incidents or pre-planned events occur that requires additional coverage

- 1.5. Currently Surrey Police has a read rate of 1.6 million read per day, the majority coming from six key strategic roads sites, three of those on motorways covering 34 lanes of traffic in total. Surrey currently covers one of the busiest sections of motorway in the country.

The hit rate for a twenty-four hour period from 1720 hours on 26/11/2017 and 1718 hours on 27/11/2017 equates to 276 PNC Action alarms, 158 alarms relating to the Surrey police vehicle of interest hotlist, 78 alarms for other forces hotlists loaded onto the BOF. The only bulk hotlist matched on the main system other than PNC is the MIDAS uninsured vehicle hotlist, this generated 2, 619 alarms.

- 1.6. The ANPR Back Office Facility (BOF) has been upgraded in the last two years to the latest Falcon-I BOF, the plans are to migrate to one BOF with Sussex Police by April/May 2018. This is in preparation for the National ANPR Service (NAS) sponsored by the Home Office. This is a national system that will further enhance the way in which ANPR is used to target Serious and organised crime, Counter Terrorism, volume crime, modern day slavery, child sexual exportation and anti-social behaviour in vehicles.

## 2. Content

- 2.1. Currently the data retention period for ANPR is two years, at the recent meeting of the NPCC the Chief Constables voted to reduce the data retention from two to one year to bring ANPR into line with other retention periods set in other areas of policing where large data sets are kept.
- 2.2. The Information and Surveillance Commissioners have been recommending this course of action for some time, the police service has voluntarily reduced the data retention periods to reflect their concerns and that of the public.
- 2.3. The guidance from the Home Office team is to reduce the retention period to one year by April 2018, due to the critical state of the storage capacity in Surrey this was achieved early to allow for the use of re-deployable cameras to target emerging crime series. This has also saved 60-70K that was required to upgrade the storage in Surrey.
- 2.4. The Surveillance Commissioner Tony Porter requested that all forces complete his self-

assessment tool and publish the results on the external police web page covering ANPR. This action has been completed, it is aligned to the ANPR page that gives an extensive explanation on the use of ANPR to any visitor to the page.

- 2.5. Privacy Impact Assessments (PIA) have been completed for all new sites, and as the existing sites are reviewed for refurbishment a PIA is completed, although not required as they are existing sites, for transparency a PIA is being completed on each occasion.
- 2.6. One area of concern for both the Information and Surveillance commission is access to the stored data, the users only have access privileges that are proportionate to their current role within the organisation. The majority of officers and staff will have access to search 90 days data only as recommended by the national ANPR Standards for Policing (NASP) and alarm management.

To research data beyond 90 days to one year requires inspector authority, to conduct the search beyond 90 days can only be completed by approved staff.

To use the data for criminal investigations into police officers and staff, or any offence suspected under the police conduct, code of ethics requires superintendent authority. These searches are conducted by Professional Standards. The anti-corruption team are all trained to an advanced standard to include audit functions.

- 2.7. Daily audits of staff usage of the ANPR back office are conducted, officers and staff are required to justify the use of the system, and this has to be approved by a supervisor as being proportionate and necessary.
- 2.8. The use of ANPR technology has been embedded into mainstream policing for over fifteen years, there are currently 1, 535 user accounts on the back office system. There currently are no performance related processes available to capture officers and staff outcomes from the systems, the system is capable of providing good statistical information for reads and hits, it can tell you a great deal of information about the data and intelligence.

The collation of stops carried out, arrests, seizures of vehicles, drugs seized, property recovered etc. is not effectively captured.

- 2.9. The capture of good news stories with ANPR is very difficult, particularly now that it is so embedded into core policing. Recent activity though shows the importance of ANPR.

The week commencing 20/11/2017 a vehicle passed through the ANPR cameras on the M25, this generated a medium ACTION marker from Staffordshire police. The adult occupants had removed three children subject to restriction orders and were intending to flee the country. The vehicle was picked up by officers using the mobile data terminals monitoring the alarm stack. The vehicle was located and stopped, the adults were arrested for kidnapping offences and the children safely returned to the care of the relevant authorities. The adults were transferred to Staffordshire to be dealt with. The stopping officer was Sgt Gary Lefort from the roads policing unit who located the vehicle and instigated the stop with the assistance of other RPU staff.

In April 2017 a possible hit and run KSI collision occurred in Surrey, this was under investigation by the collision investigation unit at Woking. They came to the ANPR unit to seek assistance with specialist searching capabilities and experience. The only evidence left at the scene where a cyclist was hit was an external nearside door mirror. Enquires revealed the door mirror belonged to a particular make and model of vehicle. The colour of the mirror being black gave the ANPR data manager Andy Lloyd the final piece of evidence, he now had the make, model and colour of the vehicle, the time and date of the collision. Research was carried out in a targeted way for all cameras in the area of the collision that had recorded any black vehicles of the same make and model.

The search showed a number of vehicles matching the description prior to the collision. Post, collision several days of data was extracted from the BOF on the registration numbers of the vehicles that were known to be in the area prior to the collision, one of those vehicles identified as being in the area was captured on an ANPR camera the following day, the overview image clearly showed the nearside door mirror was now missing. The driver was identified and arrested, when confronted by the ANPR evidence in interview he admitted to being involved in the collision and has been convicted at court of serious driving offences.

Op Zorro centres on an OCG operating out of the central London area of Westminster, the OGC are committing high value burglaries in the Surrey area. They change their vehicles constantly.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> July 2017 an attempt burglary on the Wentworth Estate, the house alarm was activated, no vehicles were seen. The Wentworth Estate in partnership with Surrey Police installed ANPR cameras on entrances/exits to the estate.

Research identified a single registration number triggered ANPR in the following locations that day:

11/07/2017 14:43	Met pol - Westminster
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11/07/2017 18:18	Pinewood Road - Wentworth - entering estate
11/07/2017 19:01	Portnall Drive - Wentworth - exiting estate
11/07/2017 19:19	Recorded by Mobile ANPR unit, appear to be on the M25 slip at junction 11 about to head south

Research for the Wentworth Estate shows the same vehicle entering the estate at 1818 hours in Pinewood Rd, leaving at 1901 hours by Portnall Drive close shortly after the alarm was activated. Tracing the time line, the vehicle was picked up on ANPR in the Met Police area earlier in the day, in the area where the OCG is operating from.

This allowed for further intelligence searches to identify further members of the OCG.

### 3. Conclusion[s]

- 3.1. The use of ANPR data to target known offenders through their vehicles is a well-known tactic, the key to all of this is good intelligence, factual information and keeping the PNC ACT markers and vehicle of interest hotlists fresh and up to date. There is a clear process in place to monitor this through the data bureau, intelligence managers and the ANPR back office staff.
- 3.2. One key area identified during a visit of the Surveillance Commissioner is the use of covert markers and the need to have a RIPA in place. Following work with the authority's bureau this has been refreshed, and introduced into training packages for CID teams.
- 3.3. The completion of Privacy Impact Assessments (PIA) is ongoing as sites are refurbished, the process has identified sites that are no longer required due to partnership work with Surrey County Council. These sites failed the PIA process and have been de-commissioned.
- 3.4. The introduction of the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR) in May 2018 gives clear guidance as to the requirements to be met moving forward, the ANPR team work closely with the data protection officer to ensure compliance.
- 3.5. The latest Surveillance Camera codes of practice has the strapline "Surveillance by Consent" if this is done fairly and is proportionate, legitimate and necessary the support of the public will be retained.
- 3.6. The consultation with the local communities through the neighbourhood teams is important. For any planned permanent new sites a letter drop is arranged to engage with those local communities, the use of social media is planned and funds permitting, the erecting of signage.
- 3.7. The use of redeployable dual lane intelligent cameras to deal with emerging crime series, major events and pre-planned events is a relatively new tactic. A PIA has been completed for this use, and includes the application process through daily management meetings chaired by the relevant divisional commander. Once the commander is satisfied that the deployment is proportionate, legitimate and necessary the process is signed off and the cameras deployed. The process must continue, and be reviewed regularly to ensure the continued deployment still fits the original criteria.
- 3.8. One area of risk is capturing performance, the systems themselves accurately capture read

rates, hit rates, audit functions. What cannot be accurately captured are the outcomes from officers and staff use of the systems, for example arrests, vehicle seizures, drugs seizures and how the ANPR systems have influenced criminal investigations, intelligence work conducted that has resulted in the identification of suspects.

This is an area that the HMI is interested in, built around force efficiency. Anecdotally we know the systems are used to great effect on a daily basis, but having been completely embedded into core policing, capturing this data efficiently and effectively is a real challenge. The introduction of the National ANPR Service in March 2019 will include a case management system, it is unsure what this looks like and how the functionality will allow for capture of performance data.

- 3.9. A further risk identified is the monitoring of the ANPR alarm management system within the Force Control Room. The capacity of the control room is at its optimum, and the management of the alarms varies between rotas from very good to very poor. Failure to deal with alarms of a serious nature leave the force vulnerable to complaint and damage the excellent reputation of the force. On many occasions the ANPR alarms are not monitored at all within the control room, only by officers through their mobile data terminals. A more robust solution must be found.

#### **4. Decision[s] Required**

- 4.1. Members are invited to endorse the following recommendation[s] [None, this paper is for information only].

#### **5. Attachments / Background Papers**

**Nil**