

Live facial recognition technology guidance published

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New national guidance sets consistent standards and ensures use of the technology is necessary and proportionate

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We've published [new authorised professional practice](#) to ensure police forces in England and Wales take a consistent approach when using technology to find individuals who are sought by the police – known as live facial recognition. The guidance also provides a clear legal and ethical framework for its use.

Live facial recognition technology supports police to prevent and detect crime and make people safe. It involves using cameras in public or private areas to find passing individuals who are included on police databases. The software generates an alert, which is reviewed manually by a police officer before a decision is made to engage with the individual.

Uses can include preventing people with banning orders from entering an area and catching those that police have intelligence on, such as terrorists or stalkers.

The guidance is clear that:

- live facial recognition technology should be used in a responsible, transparent, fair and ethical way and only when other, less intrusive methods would not achieve the same results
- all use of the technology has to be targeted, based on intelligence and have a set time for use to start and end
- images placed on the predetermined database must meet a proportionality and necessity criteria and be reviewed before every deployment
- police forces should give notice about the use of live facial recognition, making use of social media and their website, unless there is a critical threat that makes this impractical
- chief officers should involve their elected police and crime commissioner to provide oversight

The new authorised professional practice comes after consultation with the public, police, regulatory bodies and campaign groups. It was developed in the light of the Bridges v South Wales Police Appeal Court judgment (2020) and addresses the issues identified in the judgment.

Read the guidance

- [Live facial recognition – authorised professional practice](#)

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