

Wednesday 8 October**POLICE LAUNCH SCOTTISH ANPR SYSTEM IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CRIME**

POLICE in Scotland are using the latest ANPR technology linked to an enhanced centralised database which is having a major impact in the detection and investigation of crime.

Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) is a system which is connected to fixed or mobile cameras and can read over 3000 number plates per hour. The system takes a snapshot of the number plate and converts it into data which is then cross checked against police intelligence databases, including the Police National Computer (PNC).

If the vehicle is of interest to the police, information is displayed and the officers will stop the vehicle and take appropriate action. If it is of no interest to the police, then no information will be displayed.

The ANPR system is in use by Scotland's eight forces, as well as the Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency. Cameras are fitted to a variety of vehicles as well as being deployed at a number of sites across the country.

Assistant Chief Constable Allan Burnett, who speaks on ANPR for the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS), said: "The development of this system has been of great benefit to the police in the continuing fight against crime and criminals.

"It allows officers to stop vehicles and occupants based on intelligence and assists greatly in the detection and prevention of all levels of criminal activity ranging from murder and terrorism to vehicles with no insurance. Criminals operate across local and national boundaries and this advanced technology allows their movements to be tracked and their vehicles intercepted and occupants arrested.

"We are determined to deter and disrupt criminals from going about their business and to detect them if they do - ANPR is about the intelligence led targeting of criminals, making our communities safer, and depriving criminals of the use of the roads."

Justice Secretary Kenny MacAskill said: "Tackling serious organised crime is a key priority for the Scottish Government as we seek to build safe, strong communities.

"The development of this technology and the intelligence systems that underpin it are enabling our law enforcement agencies to identify and target vehicles of interest more quickly and efficiently.

"The ANPR network provides the police with another tool to disrupt and dismantle organised crime groups and to make our roads safer by tackling traffic offenders who pose a danger to other motorists and pedestrians.

"This is another example of how police and prosecutors are using modern technology to make our streets safer."

Notes to Editors:

- The ANPR system has already contributed to a number of high profile detections and arrests across the country including drug dealers stopped and searched after an ANPR “hit”, a number of stolen cars recovered and missing persons and sex offenders traced and detained with the help of ANPR
- Earlier this year Fife constabulary compared the activity of a team using ANPR – during this time there was an increase of 109% in charges in comparison to a similar road policing team. In addition, the numbers of vehicles seized for no insurance increased by 275%.
- The roll out of ANPR to the eight Scottish police has been backed by the Scottish Government and is part of the continuing ACPOS Business Change programme
- A demonstration of the ANPR technology will be available at the Strathclyde Police Road Policing Complex, 433 Helen Street, Glasgow G51 3HH at 1030hrs on Wednesday 8 October
- ACC Allan Burnett and colleagues will be available for interview

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