| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information ResponseOur reference: FOI 25-1193Responded to: 21 May 2025 |
| --- | --- |

Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

**Questions 1-6 relate to the period from January 2023 to present.**

1. **Has Police Scotland deployed live facial recognition?
Please provide dates and locations for each deployment**

Police Scotland is not using or testing live facial recognition technology.

Police Scotland has laid a strong foundation for introducing technologies in a reflective and responsible way (through our rights-based pathway), to balance upholding human rights with ensuring we make best use of new technologies to fulfil our statutory obligations to keep the people of Scotland safe.

We need to look at the technologies available, explore their opportunities and understand their limitations.

Following our joint Biometrics Conference in June 2024, we agreed to start a conversation with the public about the potential use of LFR. Police Scotland is currently working with the Scottish Police Authority and the Scottish Biometrics Commissioner to progress this exploration, and a survey gathering public opinion has recently been published:

[Live Facial Recognition - National Conversation - Scottish Police Authority - Citizen Space](https://spa.citizenspace.com/strategy-performance/live-facial-recognition-national-conversation/)

Please note, the survey closed on Sunday 4th May 2025.

1. **Has Police Scotland used any form of retrospective facial recognition?
Please specify whether this is via the Police National Database (PND), any other database, or a combination.
If any database other than the PND was accessed for the purposes of retrospective facial recognition, please specify the database(s) and the number of searches that have been conducted.**

Police Scotland routinely use retrospective facial matching technology provided via the UK Police National and Child Abuse Image databases (CAID). Police Scotland can also request searching of Passport, DVLA or Immigration images as part of individual serious criminal investigations.

Figures for PND searches may be found within our management information published on the Police Scotland website [Biometrics - Police Scotland](https://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/biometrics/)

Figures from January – June 2023 are not held by Police Scotland and section 17 of the Act therefore applies. We can provide figures from July 2023 - March 2025, during which there have been 8,311 facial searches conducted using PND.

We are unable to clarify the number through other systems for this period, as they are not centrally recorded, and a manual review would be required. Unfortunately, I estimate that it would cost well in excess of the current FOI cost threshold of £600 to process your request. I am therefore refusing to provide the information sought in terms of section 12(1) of the Act - Excessive Cost of Compliance.

We can, however, provide the figure for CAID for period Apr 2023- Mar 2024 was published as 193 within the recent SBC Joint Assurance Review of the use of retrospective facial search technologies for criminal justice and police purposes in Scotland.

1. **Has Police Scotland deployed operator initiated facial recognition?
Please provide dates and locations for each deployment.**

Operation initiated facial recognition is not in use by Police Scotland.

1. **Has Police Scotland deployed any form of facial recognition in conjunction with body-worn video?
Please provide dates and locations for each deployment.**

Facial recognition function is not enabled in body worn video cameras used by Police Scotland.

1. **Where live facial recognition has been used:
How many individuals were on the watchlist used in each instance?
How many of those on the watchlist were not wanted for arrest in each instance?
For what reasons were these people included?**
2. **At each deployment, how many alerts were generated?
How many of these were true alerts (confirmed and unconfirmed) and how many were false alerts (confirmed and unconfirmed)?
Please provide the engagement outcomes for each deployment, showing how many resulted in arrest, other disposal, or no action.**
3. **Does Police Scotland plan to deploy live facial recognition?
If so, please specify dates and locations of any planned trials or deployments.**
4. **Does Police Scotland plan to deploy operator initiated facial recognition?
If so, please specify dates and locations of any planned trials or deployments.**
5. **Please provide any internal policy document, guidelines or legal basis governing Police Scotland’s use of facial recognition technology, including any Data Protection Impact Assessment.**

The information sought is not held by Police Scotland and section 17 of the Act therefore applies.

As per our response to question 1, live facial recognition is not in use and there are no current plans for deployment. There are also no documents/ guidelines in relation to Police Scotland’s use of facial recognition technology.

If you require any further assistance, please contact us quoting the reference above.

You can request a review of this response within the next 40 working days by email or by letter (Information Management - FOI, Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH). Requests must include the reason for your dissatisfaction.

If you remain dissatisfied following our review response, you can appeal to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner (OSIC) within 6 months - [online](https://www.foi.scot/appeal), by email or by letter (OSIC, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, KY16 9DS).

Following an OSIC appeal, you can appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

This response will be added to our [Disclosure Log](http://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log) in seven days' time.

Every effort has been taken to ensure our response is as accessible as possible. If you require this response to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know.