



## British Transport Police Live Facial Recognition (LFR) Pilot – FAQs

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### Overview and Purpose

#### What is Live Facial Recognition (LFR)?

Live Facial Recognition (LFR) is a technology that uses real-time video streams to automatically detect and compare faces against a pre-defined watchlist. It works by analysing facial features captured by cameras and matching them to stored images of individuals on that watchlist.

#### What is the purpose of the LFR pilot?

The purpose of the pilot is to assess the operational effectiveness of facial recognition technology in railway environments, its impact on public safety, and its suitability for potential future use within British Transport Police (BTP).

#### Why is BTP introducing LFR?

BTP is exploring the use of LFR as part of its wider approach to improving safety across the railway network by helping to identify and intercept individuals linked to serious and high-harm offending who use transport hubs

### Deployment Locations and Technology

#### Why is BTP using station-based cameras instead of vans like other forces?

Due to the unique layout and spatial constraints of railway stations, BTP is unable to deploy mobile vans. Instead, cameras will be mounted in station concourses to ensure safe and effective operation within these environments.

#### Where will the pilot take place?

The pilot will take place at selected London locations for an initial six-month period.

#### What kind of technology is being used?

The deployment will use Pan-Tilt-Zoom cameras, NeoFace Watch facial recognition software (with a confidence threshold of 0.64 to help reduce bias), and laptops and handheld devices for trained operators and engagement officers.

## Public Information and Engagement

### **How will the public be informed?**

Highly visible signage will be placed in all deployment areas, including QR codes that provide access to further information and opportunities to share feedback.

### **How will public engagement be managed throughout the pilot?**

BTP will maintain an ongoing programme of public engagement throughout the pilot, beginning in January 2026. This will include on-site engagement, clear signage, and accessible feedback channels such as QR codes and email to encourage dialogue and understanding.

### **How can staff or the public provide feedback?**

Feedback is welcomed and can be provided via QR codes displayed at deployment sites or by contacting the LFR team directly. All feedback received will be reviewed and used to inform ongoing development and future decision-making.

## Privacy and Safeguards

### **What safeguards are in place to prevent bias or misuse?**

A range of safeguards is in place, including the use of independently tested algorithms (assessed by the National Physical Laboratory and the National Institute of Standards and Technology), a confidence level set at 0.64 to help reduce demographic bias, two levels of human adjudication before any engagement, and clear, public-facing policies to promote transparency and accountability.

### **How will privacy be protected?**

Images of individuals who are not on the watchlist will be deleted immediately. All deployments will be clearly signposted, with information and QR codes available to support openness and transparency.

### **Can people opt out of being scanned?**

Individuals will be able to choose alternative routes around the deployment area should they prefer not to pass through the recognition zone. There is no legal requirement for members of the public to participate.

### **Is participation voluntary?**

Participation is voluntary. Recognition zones will be clearly marked, and alternative routes will be available for those who prefer not to pass through the area.

### **How is the watchlist compiled fairly?**

Watchlist entries are based on intelligence-led and operationally justified criteria, rather than on demographic characteristics.

### **What kind of images are used in the watchlist?**

Only custody images held by BTP will be used in the watchlist.

## Legal Framework and Governance

### **What legal frameworks support this deployment?**

The pilot is guided by relevant legislation, including the Data Protection Act, the Human Rights Act, the Equality Act, the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA), and the Protection of Freedoms Act.

### **Who oversees the deployments?**

Deployments are overseen by a Silver Commander, supported by Bronze Commanders and trained operators, to ensure appropriate governance and operational oversight.

### **Is BTP monitoring any legal challenges related to the use of Live Facial Recognition?**

BTP is aware of an upcoming Judicial Review involving the Metropolitan Police Service's use of Live Facial Recognition (LFR) technology and will monitor the hearing to assess whether there are any implications, impacts, or learning points that should be applied to British Transport Police's deployment.

## Operational Use and Accuracy

### **Will LFR be used to monitor minor offences?**

The pilot is focused on serious and high-harm offences and is not intended for the identification of low-level or minor infractions.

### **Will individuals wanted by other police forces be included?**

During the pilot, the watchlist will be limited to individuals of interest to BTP. Any future consideration of including individuals wanted by other forces would be subject to national policy direction and appropriate governance.

### **How accurate is the system?**

The system operates at a confidence threshold of 0.64 and has been tested by independent bodies to help minimise bias and error. Experience from live use by the Metropolitan Police Service has demonstrated a very high level of reliability, with approximately 1 in 230,000 recognitions being incorrect.

### **What is the role of engagement officers?**

Engagement officers receive system alerts, carry out a second level of human checks, and determine whether it is appropriate to engage with individuals who have been flagged by the system.

### **What happens if someone is flagged by the system?**

Two levels of human adjudication take place before any engagement. If appropriate, officers will then confirm the individual's identity using standard policing powers