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**SCOTTISH POLICE  
AUTHORITY**

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Mr John Finnie MSP  
Convener  
Justice Sub-Committee on Policing  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

9 February 2021

CO/105/2020

Dear Mr Finnie

**Proposed use of live facial recognition technology**

Thank you for your letter of 22 December in relation to the use of live facial recognition technology in light of the Court of Appeal's ruling in the case of South Wales Police. This was an important judgment that greatly assists understanding of the law and duties related to policing and the assessment and trailing of this novel and controversial technology.

Under the Joint Strategic Police Plan 2020 and in discussion with the Chief Constable there are no plans to introduce the use of live facial recognition, and no live setting facial recognition has been trialled, tested or piloted by Police Scotland.

The Scottish Police Authority (SPA) refreshed and published a revised Joint Strategic Police Plan<sup>1</sup> for policing in Scotland in 2020. This was subject to public consultation between January and March 2020. The Joint Strategic Police Plan replaced the 2026 Policing Strategy (2026 Serving a Changing Scotland) referred to in your letter.

Should a proposal to use live facial recognition technology be presented to the Authority in future, full regard will be given to assessing the operational, legal, human rights, equalities and ethical issues that have been identified in the Court of Appeal case.

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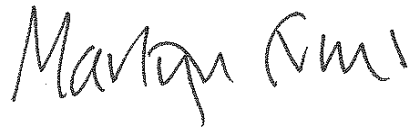
<sup>1</sup> <https://www.spa.police.uk/strategy-performance/strategic-police-plan/>

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Thank you for the opportunity to update members on the issue of live facial recognition technology, and we will update further in the event of any substantive change in circumstances.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martyn Evans". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**Martyn Evans**  
Chair

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