ANPR - Automated Number Plate Recognition

A national Automated Number Plate Recognition system would greatly enhance the ability of police
to detect criminal activity that involves the use of motor vehicles. This is a potential future system
that could be developed by CrimTrac.

Background
In October 2006, CrimTrac initiated and conducted a workshop of stakeholders from all police
services and other government agencies to define the current and future opportunities of
implementing a national Automated Number Plate Recognition system in Australia.

The workshop focused on the current use of the technology around the world as well as possible
uses of the technology in Australia, and identified a number of opportunities and strategies to
maximise the benefits of using this technology.

The Commonwealth government has funded a scoping study to examine a national approach to
ANPR through Proceeds of Crime money. CrimTrac will prepare a report, outlining options and
feasibility for a national ANPR capability which will be delivered to the Minister for Home Affairs and

What is ANPR?
Automated Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) is also known as Automated Licence Plate Recognition
(ALPR). It uses a camera and Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software to capture an image of a
vehicle, locate the number plate within the image and then convert the number plate value to a text
string. The technology works best with digital images. Infra-red and visible spectrum cameras can be
used, though infra-red provides suitable images under a wider range of conditions. The text can be
compared with databases containing vehicle number plate values used by law enforcement agencies
to generate alerts for unregistered or stolen vehicles as examples.

ANPR Project Objective and Scope
The CrimTrac ANPR Scoping Study Project will deliver a detailed scoping study that will identify
options and feasibility for a national strategic approach to the use of ANPR technology across
Australia. The options will be articulated in a final report to governments.

The scoping study report is being delivered by a project team who are actively engaged in consulting
with stakeholder groups in the law enforcement and road transport domains in Australia. A national
whole-of-government Sponsoring Group has been instituted to provide oversight and direction to
the project team.

Included in the final report will be analysis of the current and required national ANPR infrastructure;
high level business requirements of participating agencies; technical architecture and system
configuration options; a national procurement strategy; a detailed cost-benefit analysis; a legislative
review and a detailed Privacy Impact Assessment.

The decision to support the scoping study to determine the feasibility of a future national ANPR
capability, does not translate to a decision to implement a national ANPR system. Any such decision
is a matter for government (at both federal and state level) at a future time and will be dependent
upon a range of factors.