

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS  
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S PORTFOLIO

**Group: 3**

**Program: 1.7**

**Question No. BE15/046**

**Senator LUDLAM asked the following question at the hearing on 27 and 28 May 2015:**

Senator LUDLAM: I want to be clear, because I am not sure if we have got anything going in on notice or not. Police forces around the country are increasingly linking facial recognition technology and live access to CCTV cameras. I think even Facebook is getting better and better at automatically recognising and tagging people's faces. There are big open source photo archives and then there is obviously access to CCTV feeds, and that is for tracking individuals of interest almost, effectively, on a real-time basis. It feels to me to be inevitable that this system would be patched into those systems if they are being developed by state law enforcement agencies or whatever the AFP has afoot. What can you tell us about how this hub will be linked or coordinated with other facial recognition technologies that are being rolled out in the states and territories or at a Commonwealth level?

Ms K Jones: As I said before, at this stage we have not got to that point. The focus has simply been on the sharing of materials such as driver's licence, passport material. But I would like to take that on notice. There have been a range of discussions with the states and the territories. I cannot say that people have flagged that that might be something that they were interested into looking at further down the track, but it is not currently envisaged as part of the operating model.

Senator LUDLAM: I would find it extraordinarily implausible if I were the first person to have thought of the idea of maybe matching those various technologies together. That would be quite something.

Senator O'SULLIVAN: It is highly unlikely.

Senator LUDLAM: So I am presuming those ideas have been had. Whatever you can provide us with, I would greatly appreciate. How is the database to be linked in with systems used by the immigration department in tracking people coming in and out of the country? That is part of the use case presumably.

Ms K Jones: We have been talking with the department of immigration, because they have obviously been enhancing their capability at the borders as well, with the SmartGate. In terms of the specifics of how they will interact, I think it is subject to discussions but it has not been worked through finally. If I could take that on notice.

**The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:**

As a system for supporting the sharing and matching of facial images between agencies, the Capability will complement the use of facial biometric systems by other Commonwealth and state agencies.

This includes biometric systems being implemented by:

- the AFP to support law enforcement investigations

- the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to support the issuance of passports, and
- the Department of Immigration and Border Protection to enhance automated processing of passengers at international airports (SmartGates).

AGD is working with Austroads to develop a detailed business case for a national driver licence solution.

- The business case will need to be completed to a sufficient degree before the COAG Transport and Infrastructure Council meeting in November 2015 to inform Ministers' consideration of the solution.