



# EDMONTON POLICE SERVICE

## News Release

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### **EPS implements NEC facial recognition solution to further investigations**

The Edmonton Police Service (EPS) has procured a facial recognition solution through NEC Corporation of America to help expedite the identification process in criminal investigations.

NEC's NeoFace Reveal facial recognition solution is used by hundreds of law enforcement agencies across the world. It delivers prompt and reliable facial recognition results and works in conjunction with EPS' and Calgary Police Service's mugshot database, enabling both police services to share data securely.

Facial recognition software employs biometrics to aid in the identification of a suspect using points on their face. This solution can be applied to compare still images, such as photos or CCTV footage, of a suspect against secure mugshot databases maintained under the *Identification of Criminals Act*.

Only a select group of trained technicians within EPS will use the technology. The potential matches produced from a search are reviewed for authentication and validity by one of the technicians before any further investigative steps are pursued. Investigators will have to submit their requests through the technicians in order to apply the technology to their investigations. This solution was implemented in full compliance with FOIP legislation.

In addition, and similar to fingerprinting, the solution is also be used to aid in the identification of individuals taken into custody who may provide false information about their identity.

"The purpose of this tool is to ultimately help progress our criminal investigations," says Devin Laforce, Superintendent of EPS' Research and Development Division. "We consulted with several other law enforcement agencies who use NEC's NeoFace Reveal solution and we know it has definitely helped them in identifying suspects that may not have been identifiable otherwise."

Facial recognition software will not replace the human component of investigative work. Instead, it will enhance community safety, while preserving time and resources. With a secure database of thousands of mugshots available for comparison, it is expected to fast-track investigations and result in more concluded files.

"The EPS has been researching and evaluating the benefits of facial recognition for quite some time," says Warren Driechel, Superintendent in charge of EPS' Information Technology Division. "While we've just rolled out the solution, we have ensured the proper safeguards, policies and protections align with legislation."

“While there are many different versions of facial recognition technology out there, the solution we are using will not be applied over live streams or social media platforms. We will be using the solution for very specific investigative reasons,” says Driechel.

The EPS has submitted a Privacy Impact Assessment to the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Alberta.