

# RTA drives facial recognition into license checks



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## **Aims to combat identity theft.**

The Roads and Traffic Authority has started using facial recognition technology at motor registries in NSW to combat identity theft.

Assistant transport minister David Borger said yesterday that all customers with a licence or photo card would now have their photo matched against the entire RTA photo database.

The technology works by measuring various facial features from a photo, such as the distance between the eyes, nose and mouth.

These measurements are then compared against other images in the RTA's database.

"High probability matches" would be investigated further, the minister said.

"Since October last year, the RTA has identified 41 suspected fraud instances which are currently being investigated," Borger said.

"The technology will be used to support the investigation of known and suspected fraud. During investigations, the images of a person of interest may be searched against the entire database of images."

Borger said it would also be used to catch people who tried to create more than one licence in NSW.

"This technology will allow them to be identified and prosecuted - and they may then face serious charges," he said.

The only changes customers would notice is that they would be asked not to smile when they have their photo taken "to ensure reliable measurements". Customers will also have to remove glasses if they wear them, Borger said.

The RTA [started rolling the technology out in June last year](#). The technology was supplied by Sagem.

The implementation followed a successful 2006 trial of the technology at the RTA, which was commissioned by Austroads.