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Welcome to the December 2024 newsletter for the Scottish Biometrics Commissioner

Since our last newsletter I have welcomed a new member to the team. DCI Ross MacDonald has joined us on secondment from Police Scotland




**Dr Brian Plastow**  
Scottish Biometrics Commissioner

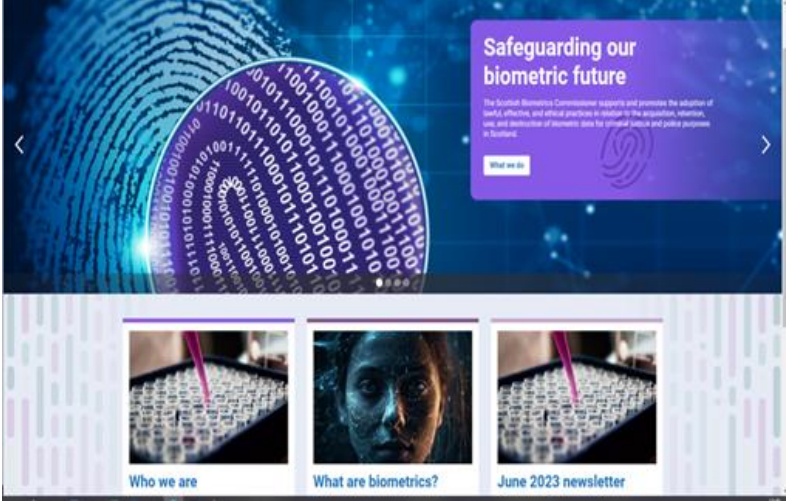


**Scottish Biometrics  
Commissioner**  
Coimiseanair  
Biometrics na h-Alba

To learn more about who we are and what we do please visit our [website](#)



Find us on social media by clicking on the links above or by searching ‘Scottish Biometrics Commissioner’





Ross Macdonald joined the SBC in July on secondment from Police Scotland. Ross is a Detective Chief Inspector and brings with him a wealth of experience from his 20+ years with Police Scotland.



L-R Ross MacDonald (SBC Director), AC Armando Aguilar (Miami Police Department), Chief Superintendent Conrad Trickett (Policing a Digital World team), DI Des McKenna(International Bureau).

The SBC were invited along to the Scottish Crime Campus on 7th October 2024 by the Policing in a Digital World team from Police Scotland to meet Assistant Chief Armando Aguilar of Miami Police Department. The Assistant Chief was given a formal welcome from Police Scotland’s International Bureau’s Detective Inspector Des McKenna, where International Cooperation between law enforcement was discussed. Prior to AC Aguilar describing the steps taken to introduce and formalise, Miami Police Department’s use of Retrospective Facial Recognition technology, including consultation with the public, challenges and benefits to law enforcement operations.

### Conferences

In October, the Commissioner was invited to speak at the Biometrics Institute Congress in London. The Commissioner’s presentation was titled **The Three Laws of Biometrics – A public policy framework for Scotland**

The Operations Manager spoke at both the Holyrood Insight Data Protection Scotland Conference and the Digital Data Conference

For the 3<sup>rd</sup> year in a row the SBC were asked to speak at the FutureScot Criminal Justice and Policing Conference. The Operations Manager talked about **digital transformation, regulation and the future of justice services**



On 14 November our Director Ross Macdonald was presented with his 20 year long service and good conduct medal by ACC Steve Johnson. The ceremony took place for the first time at the Scottish Crime Campus

On 26 September we laid our third [Annual Report and Accounts](#) covering the 2023/24 financial year. Highlights of the report include the publication of our third assurance review on [Images and Photographs](#), the carrying out of the first compliance assessments with [Police Scotland](#), the [SPA](#) and the [PIRC](#) and the publication of easy read versions of the [Code of Practice](#) and [Complaints procedure](#).



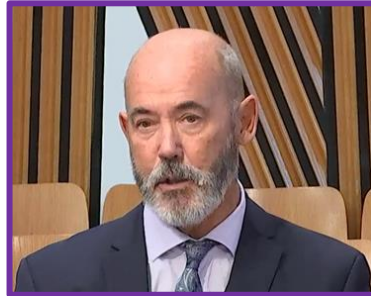
The Commissioner was a guest speaker at the 2024 SPA Forensic Services Excellence Awards.



In his presentation the Commissioner emphasised that the SPA Forensic Services are the largest public sector provider of forensic services in Europe delivering world class and value for money forensic services to the Scottish justice system. He also reflected on his 40+ years working within the justice ecosystem in Scotland highlighting numerous high-profile investigations where forensic science had provided crucial insights to detectives. The Commissioner further highlighted the importance of celebrating the achievements of people within any organisation, and on behalf of the Parliament, took the opportunity to thank everyone working within the SPA Forensic Services for everything that they do daily to keep citizens safe.



The Commissioner was invited to speak at the Biometrics for Government and Law Enforcement Summit on International biometric results and future capabilities. During his presentation he spoke about what the UK law enforcement needs in the next 5 years.



Since our last newsletter the Commissioner has attended a variety of meetings and delivered a range of presentations - some are listed below:

- **19 September:** Attended the FIND Strategy Board
- **22 October:** Attended the Biometrics Institute Congress as a key speaker
- **13 November:** Attended the Criminal Justice Committee (inset link) at the Scottish Parliament
- **28 November:** SPA Board meeting

The Director has been busy since he started in the team and has attended several meetings and events – as listed below:

- **3 October:** Attended an awareness session on Life Facial Recognition and DNA at Gartcosh
- **8 October:** Attended the Futurescot - Digital Policing and Justice Conference
- **13 November:** Attended the Criminal Justice Committee

Our Operations Manager has also been busy over the past few months:

- **July:** Attended Law, Ethics & Policy of Artificial Intelligence course at KU Leuven University, Brussels
- **24 September:** Speaker at The Scotsman Data Conference 2024
- **26 September:** Scottish/UK AI regulatory meeting
- **19 November:** Attended Digital Identity Expert Group – workshop

## FURTHER SOURCES OF READING

For further reading please visit our [Scottish Biometrics Commissioner](#) website

There are many other reference sources available to assist readers in engaging with debates on biometric data and technologies more generally. We do not endorse materials on other websites but simply signpost the following short selection as sources of additional information:

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| Scottish Police Authority Forensic Services  | <a href="https://www.spa.police.uk/forensic-services/">https://www.spa.police.uk/forensic-services/</a>   |
| Biometric Update UK  | <a href="https://www.biometricupdate.com/">https://www.biometricupdate.com/</a>   |
| Biometrics Institute   | <a href="https://www.biometricsinstitute.org/">https://www.biometricsinstitute.org/</a>   |
| Ada Lovelace Institute   | <a href="https://www.adalovelaceinstitute.org/">https://www.adalovelaceinstitute.org/</a>   |
| Commissioner for the retention and use of Biometrics for the UK and the Surveillance Camera Commissioner for England and Wales | <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/biometrics-and-surveillance-camera-commissioner">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/biometrics-and-surveillance-camera-commissioner</a>   |
| Forensic Information Database Service (Home Office)  | <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/international-dna-and-fingerprint-exchange-policy-for-the-uk/forensic-information-database-service-finds-international-dna-and-fingerprint-exchange-policy-for-the-united-kingdom-accessible-version">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/international-dna-and-fingerprint-exchange-policy-for-the-uk/forensic-information-database-service-finds-international-dna-and-fingerprint-exchange-policy-for-the-united-kingdom-accessible-version</a> |

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