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Community Attitudes towards Data Analytics in Law Enforcement

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Acknowledgement of Country

The University of Queensland acknowledges the Traditional Owners and their custodianship of the lands. We pay our respects to their Ancestors and their descendants, who continue cultural and spiritual connections to Country. We recognise their valuable contributions to Australian and global society.

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Executive summary

This report presents findings from a nationally representative survey conducted in 2025 to assess Australian public attitudes toward the use of Data Analytics (DA) in law enforcement. The study explored perceptions across five DA applications: Predictive Policing, Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras, Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics, Forensic Analytics, and Generative AI-assisted Policing.

Summary of key insights

High Public Expectations for Regulation: Australians have high expectations for strong regulatory oversight of all five DA applications in law enforcement. There is only moderate confidence in current legal protections despite this high level of expectation. This regulatory gap highlights the need for policymakers to address public concerns and bridge the divide between expectations and the perception of legal protections currently in place.

Public Sees Benefits Despite Risks: Most DA applications are seen as providing valuable contributions, though Generative AI-assisted Policing is viewed somewhat more cautiously than the other DA applications. There are concerns about risks , with Generative AI-assisted Policing again the riskiest and least beneficial in the eyes of the public. The overall sentiment is that DA applications in law enforcement are more beneficial than they are risky, indicating cautious optimism among Australians.

***Moderate Social Licence*:** The public's support for law enforcement's use of DA relies on benefit, trust, fairness, and alignment with community values, called *social license*. There is moderate overall support for DA with cautiousness around Generative AI-assisted Policing highlighted. The findings signal a need for law enforcement to prioritise transparency, community engagement, and responsiveness to community concerns.

***Moderate Trust and Acceptance*:** Trust and acceptance of DA applications in law enforcement remain moderate overall, reflecting neutral views rather than strong support or rejection. Generative AI-assisted Policing again lags with lower levels of trust and acceptance. Recidivism risk assessment and Forensic Analytics attract higher trust levels, showing stronger public support for these technologies. Older generations tend to show higher acceptance and trust, while trust and acceptance increase with higher levels of knowledge and education.

Pathways to Acceptance: Trust emerges as a key driver of acceptance of DA applications. Social licence, or the community's sense that the technology aligns with societal values and norms, is critical for acceptance. Confidence in governance, rules, and legal safeguards, known as structural assurance, supports public acceptance. Alternatively, perceived risk acts as a barrier to acceptance, reinforcing the need for effective risk management. Regulatory expectations, while still relevant, appear to play a lesser role compared to trust and social licence.

Overall, this study shows Australians see benefits in law enforcement's use of DA, including strong support for Forensic Analytics, while public trust and acceptance remain moderate. Acceptance is linked to trust, social licence, and structural assurance. Many feel current legal protections are only moderate despite high regulatory expectations, highlighting the need to strengthen safeguards, improve legal protections, and engage the community to address people's concerns and ensure responsible use.

1

Introduction

This report was prepared by the Australian Research Council (ARC) Industrial Transformation Training Centre for Information Resilience (CIRES) as part of the research partnership between the Centre and the Queensland Police Service. CIRES was established in 2021 in response to the need to build workforce capacity in Australia that can ensure responsible, secure, and agile value creation from data. The Centre will train a cohort of Higher Degree Research students, Postdoctoral Research Fellows, and Data Engineers, during its lifetime. These researchers are embedded in industry projects, working collaboratively with our Partners on real-world problems and solutions. Headquartered at The University of Queensland in Brisbane, the Centre is a collaboration with Swinburne University of Technology in Melbourne, and current partners: Aginic (part of Mantel Group), Astral Consulting, Allianz Worldwide Partners (AWP) Australia, Health & Wellbeing Queensland, Queensland Department of Education, Queensland Health, and the Queensland Police Service.

We define Information Resilience as: The capacity of organisations to create, protect, and sustain agile data pipelines that are capable of detecting and responding to failures and risks across their associated value chains in which the data is sourced, shared, transformed, analysed, and consumed [1]. One key Information Resilience research theme is the Responsible Use of Data, which explores challenges in data collection, ethical data usage, and the development of socially responsible data products. This theme examines strategies for obtaining social licences and ensuring transparency, security, and governance while preparing future data leaders with expertise in privacy, consent, and responsible data management [2].

The study on Community Attitudes towards Data Analytics (DA) in Law Enforcement aligns with this theme, examining trust, social licence, and risk perceptions in data use. The study explored public expectations for regulations and perception of assurance mechanisms, and the drivers of trust and acceptance of DA in law enforcement. Insights from this report inform strategies for the responsible use of data in law enforcement, particularly in policing. As DA continues to reshape law enforcement practices, understanding community attitudes becomes essential to ensuring these innovations are implemented in ways that are both trusted and socially responsible. DA is rapidly becoming an integral part of various law enforcement sectors, offering powerful tools for value creation by understanding complex patterns and making informed decisions. In an increasingly data-driven world, its application is expanding into areas critical to public safety. Law enforcement agencies globally are exploring and implementing DA to enhance crime prediction, resource allocation, and efficiency in service delivery [3, 4]. This growing reliance on data-driven approaches in law enforcement necessitates a deeper understanding of how the community perceives, trusts and accepts these changes.

While the potential benefits of DA in law enforcement are substantial, its use also raises ethical, legal, and social considerations [5, 6]. Concerns surrounding issues such as data privacy, algorithmic bias, lack of transparency, and the potential erosion of public trust have been highlighted in academic research and public discourse [7-9]. Australia is no exception, for instance, NSW Police's AI-powered Insights platform and trials of Clearview AI raised issues of misidentification, disproportionate targeting of Indigenous communities, and erosion of public trust in policing [10, 11]. These challenges are prompting critical discussions and raising questions about the legitimacy and responsible use of DA in sensitive domains of law enforcement, such as police services. Despite the growing

importance of understanding public perceptions of DA in various sectors, specific research focusing on community attitudes towards its application within law enforcement remains crucial. This study enhances our understanding of how communities perceive trust and accept the use of DA by law enforcement agencies. Understanding these attitudes is vital for building trust and ensuring the ethical use and socially responsible implementation of data-driven law enforcement practices. This study highlights these perceptions, offering insights into how law enforcement agencies can obtain social license in the use of DA and increase public trust and acceptance. This study investigated public attitudes towards DA in the context of law enforcement through six key dimensions as appropriate measures for public attitude studies [12-27][1]. Figure 1 provides an overview of the six dimensions and their inter-relationships.

The results are reported in the following four sections:

- Protection and Risk includes three dimensions relating to public perceptions of protection and risk, namely ***regulatory expectations***, ***structural assurance*** and ***perception of risks***. This report includes how the public perceives regulatory expectations regarding the governance of DA use in law enforcement, their understanding of existing structural assurance mechanisms (e.g., legal safeguards), and the perceptions of risks associated with the use of DA.
- Social License – The overall research question is how the public views law enforcement's use of DA in terms of ***social license,*** according to the four sub-dimensions of benefits, alignment, responsiveness and engagement. In this report we examine community attitudes for each as detailed in the section on social licence.
- Trust – The study of ***trust*** investigates the degree to which the public trusts law enforcement agencies to use DA through reliance and data sharing.
- Acceptance – The study of ***acceptance*** is whether people accept the use of DA by law enforcement and what factors influence this acceptance.

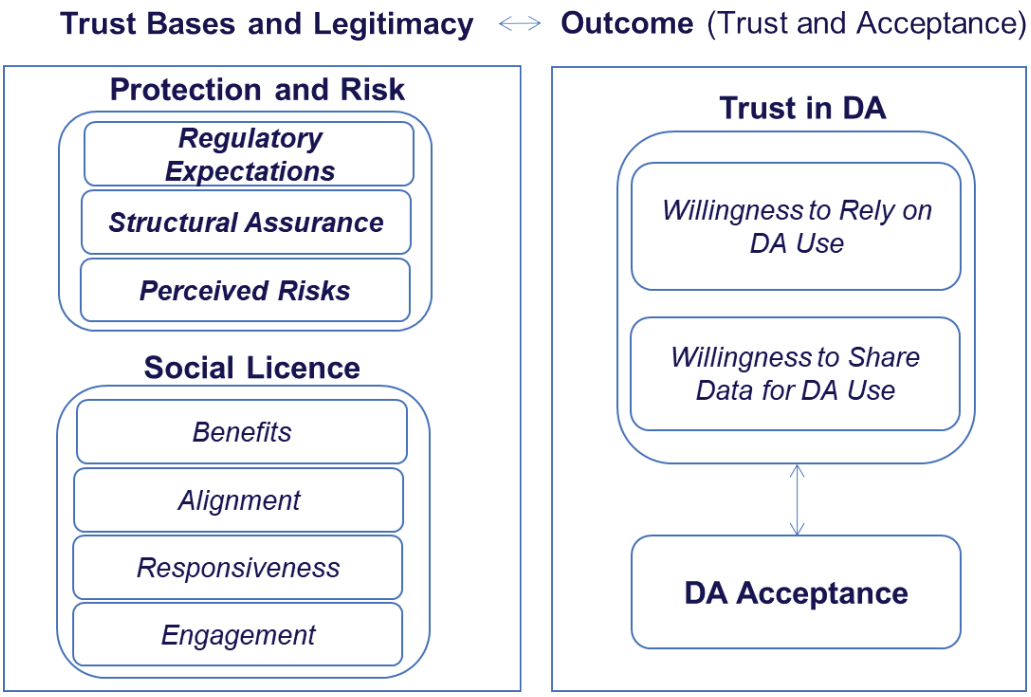


Figure 1. *Six Dimensions for the public attitudes study: Regulatory Expectations, Structural Assurance, Perceived Risks, Social Licence, Trust, Acceptance*

The study investigates individuals' trust dispositions and innovativeness, examines how the public understands DA and related regulations within law enforcement, and then how these factors contribute to differences in people's trust and acceptance of DA use. These results are detailed in section 7 under participant profile.

A national survey was designed and conducted using a rigorous, multi-stage process (see Research Methodology for details). The survey was co-designed with domain experts, academic researchers in DA and law enforcement, and professionals from a state policing agency. The survey was administered online to a nationally representative Australian sample (N = 1,288). Survey questions about the use of DA in law enforcement were framed around one of five specific use cases since attitudes toward DA can vary depending on its purpose and application. Each participant was randomly assigned to one of five specific DA application areas in law enforcement, and responded to survey questions related to regulatory expectations, structural assurance, perception of risks, social license, trust, and acceptance in that application context

Application 1: Predictive Policing uses historical and real-time data to forecast crime locations and times, enabling proactive resource allocation to prevent crime and enhance public safety within legal boundaries.

Predictive Policing, driven by data analytics, offers law enforcement agencies a tool for crime prevention and preparedness. This analytics approach processes historical data, including crime types, locations, and times, in conjunction with various datasets such as historical incident reports, recent local events, photos, live footage, and publicly available social media data. The aim is to predict crimes, and the demand for police services in different areas and times, helping to allocate officers, vehicles, and other resources efficiently. This proactive approach enables police to respond pre-emptively, resulting in a safer and more secure work environment for officers, enhancing public safety and minimisingthe impact of criminal activities on communities. All activities involving the collection and processing of data, as well as actions taken in predictive policing, are bounded by legal rules and procedures.

Application 2: Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras analyse surveillance footage to identify people and vehicles, supporting investigations and evidence gathering to detect unlawful behaviour while complying with legal data use protocols.

Law enforcement employs advanced camera networks to improve community safety and tackle anti-social and unlawful behaviour. These camera systems, operating in public spaces, capture images of people and vehicles, including registration number plates. Using data analytics to analyse the camera feeds, law enforcement agencies can quickly search and automatically detect details about people (e.g., identifying the colour of a bag or types of clothing worn in a theft scenario) or vehicles, expediting crime investigations. The use of Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras also serves as support in law enforcement activities, facilitating the identification and documentation of offenders' identities and actions. In some cases, this evidence may be admissible in court proceedings, strengthening the prosecution's case. All activities involving the collection and processing of data, as well as actions taken in Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras, are bounded by legal rules and procedures.

Application 3: Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics uses algorithms based on criminal history and other factors to predict the likelihood of re-offending, informing targeted crime prevention and rehabilitation strategies.

The Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics identifies individuals who may be at higher risk of re-offending. An algorithm forecasts the likelihood of recidivism, referring to the probability of someone re-offending, and evaluates the potential danger they might pose to society. This analysis considers factors accessible to law enforcement such as criminal history (type and frequency of offenses), age at first offense, and compliance with court orders. This analytics tool helps law enforcement make more informed decisions about potential offenders and the information can be used to develop more targeted crime prevention and rehabilitation strategies. All activities involving the collection and processing of data, as well as actions taken in Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics, are bounded by legal rules and procedures.

Application 4: Forensic Analytics uses advanced DA techniques on digital, biometric, and communication records to support investigations, identify suspects, and provide evidence for legal proceedings.

Forensic Analytics in law enforcement includes a range of cutting-edge techniques empowered by data, including DNA, fingerprints, voice analysis, phone records, social media data, financial records, and location data from smartphones. Forensic Analytics help police identify suspects, locate missing persons, and gather evidence for ongoing investigations and legal proceedings. For instance, in a missing person case, investigators leverage Forensic Analytics to analyse phone records, call patterns, and locations visited from electronic devices. When traditional searches fail, Forensic Analytics examine big datasets of phone data, social media activity, and authorised financial transactions. Through the application of advanced analytics, investigators can find patterns within the data, potentially linking suspects to crime scenes, revealing concealed connections, identifying potential locations and contacts, and ultimately enhancing the likelihood of successful case resolutions. All activities involving the collection and processing of data, as well as actions taken in Forensic Analytics, are bounded by legal rules and procedures.

Application 5: Generative AI-assisted Policing assists officers in generating reports, summaries, and suspect profiles, and providing real-time guidance through AI-powered natural language interactions during patrols and investigations.

Generative AI can inform law enforcement agencies, assisting officers in decision-making processes and generating reports, including incident summaries, and suspect profiles. Imagine police officers having a generative AI-powered assistant integrated into their patrol vehicles or accessible through their devices and seek guidance by communicating with the AI assistant during routine patrols or after conducting interviews. Officers may consult the Generative AI tool for insights on crime issues and receive prompt assistance in crafting detailed written reports following interviews with witnesses, victims, or suspects. This generative AI application both streamlines administrative tasks and ensures accurate documentation of critical information. All activities involving the collection and processing of data, as well as actions taken in Generative AI-assisted Policing, are bounded by legal rules and procedures.

These five DA applications reflect applications currently in use or emerging in law enforcement and were developed with domain experts and academic researchers. Respondents received detailed descriptions of their assigned DA application before answering survey questions related to regulation, structural assurance, social licence, trust, and acceptance (see DA applications and context for details).

2

Protections and Risks

This section presents public attitudes toward the governance of data analytics in law enforcement, covering the three dimensions of: regulatory expectations, perceptions of existing safeguards (structural assurance), and perceived risks. We examine what protections people expect, whether they view current measures as adequate, and how they assess potential risks of harm to individuals, groups, agencies, and society.

2.1 Regulatory Expectations

What expectations do people have about the regulations of data analytics in law enforcement?

Key Findings

The public strongly expects laws to protect against misuse, bias, and errors in law enforcement's DA, with >80% supporting robust legal safeguards across all applications, especially Forensic Analytics.

Highlight

The public demands strong legal safeguards for the misuse of DA.

Participants were asked about their expectations regarding the regulation and oversight of DA in law enforcement, and the extent they believe the law should protect them from; the misuse of DA such as privacy breaches, guard against failures like bias or errors, ensure law enforcement agencies govern and interpret DA use safely and responsibly, and be capable of addressing any risks or harms arising from DA applications.

Participants demonstrated a strong overall regulatory expectation that laws should protect them from the misuse and failures of DA in law enforcement. Figure 2 shows respondents, across all applications, predominantly rated their regulatory expectations as high (mean scores between 3.50-5.00). Eighty-four percent of participants indicated they expect and want legal protections (e.g., expecting laws to protect them from DA misuse and risks). Similarly, 84% held such expectations for Predictive Policing, while 82% expected protections for Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras. For Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics, 84% of respondents expressed expectations for legal safeguards. Forensic Analytics received the highest level of expectation, with 88% of participants wanting protections ensured by law. Lastly, Generative AI-assisted Policing showed strong expectations, with 83% of respondents expecting legal protections.

The proportion of respondents who were neutral (neither expecting nor dismissing protections) ranged from approximately 11-15% across applications, while the percentage of those with low or no expectation of legal protections remained minimal, mostly under 4%.

Overall, the findings suggest a robust consensus among participants that laws and regulations should robustly govern and safeguard the use of DA in law enforcement, particularly addressing concerns about privacy breaches, bias, errors, and governance.

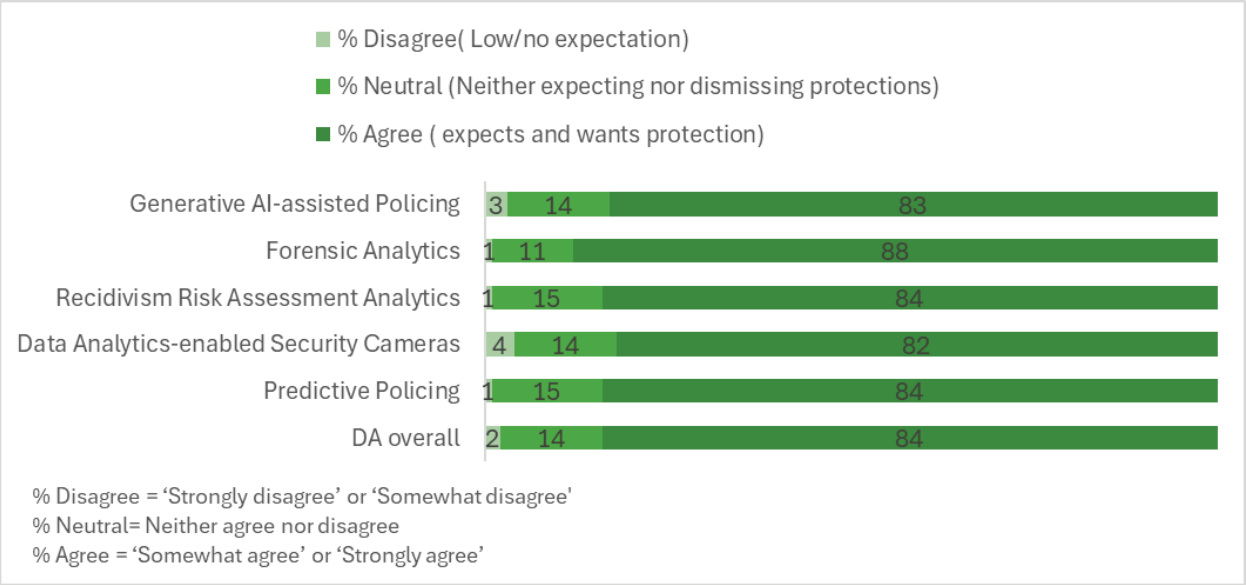


Figure 2. *Participant expectations for regulatory protections*

2.2 Structural Assurance

How does the public perceive the current structural assurance mechanisms for data analytics in law enforcement?

Key Findings

Public perceptions of structural assurances for DA use are mixed. While 43% feel confident in existing safeguards, many remain neutral or doubtful, especially regarding Generative AI-assisted Policing.

Highlight

Less than half feel assured by current safeguards for DA use, with even fewer assured about Generative AI-assisted Policing.

The perceptions of current structural assurances help identify gaps between expectations and perceived protections to understand the legal protections the public expects and how confident they feel about existing measures. Participants were asked about their perceptions of the current structural assurances surrounding the use of DA in law enforcement, the extent they agree there are enough existing safeguards, regulatory processes, and legal protections in place to make them feel comfortable, safe, and secure about the use of DA applications.

Structural assurance perceptions varied across DA applications. Overall, 21% of respondents reported low or a lack of assurance, while 36% were neutral, neither fully assured nor unassured, and 43% felt assured and secure about existing safeguards governing DA use in law enforcement.

The general trend shows around 43–48% feel assured for DA applications such as Predictive Policing, Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras, Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics, and Forensic Analytics. Generative AI-assisted Policing instead has lower perceived structural assurance, with a higher proportion of respondents indicating low or a lack of assurance.

Public perceptions of structural assurance regarding DA in law enforcement were mixed. While many respondents felt assured and secure about existing laws and safeguards, a substantial proportion remained neutral, indicating uncertainty about whether current protections are sufficient. Notably, perceptions of assurance were lower for Generative AI-assisted Policing compared to other applications, suggesting greater public scepticism about the adequacy of safeguards for newer AI-driven technologies. Figure 3 presents these distributions across DA applications.

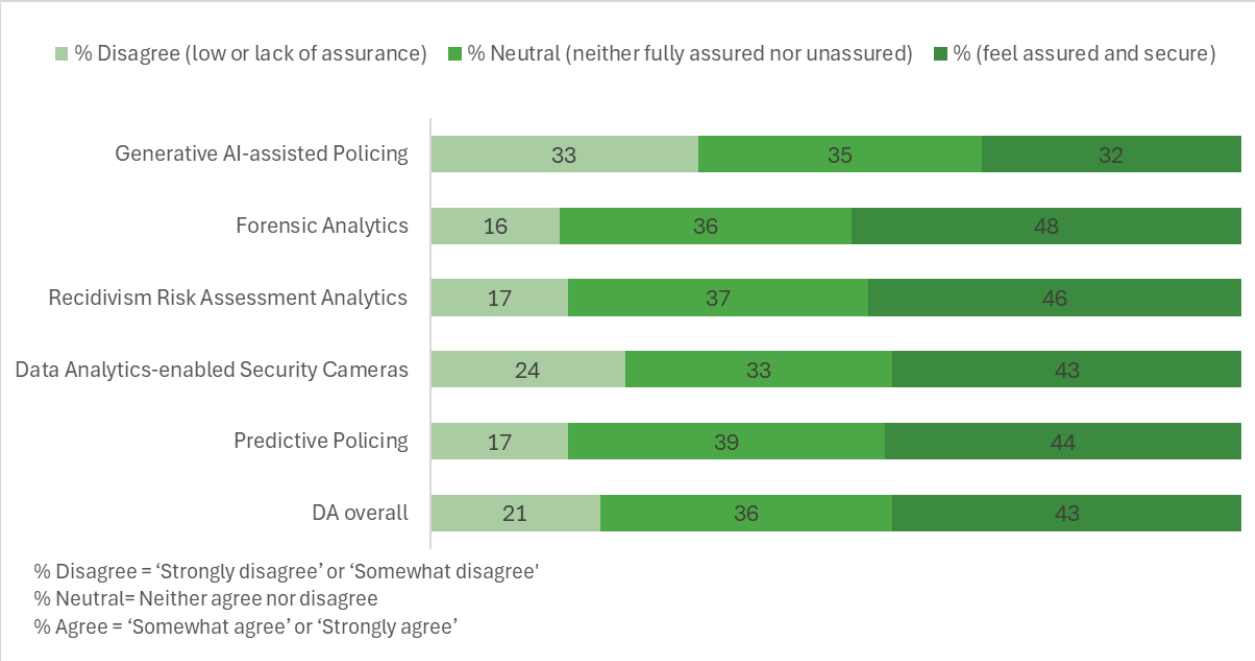


Figure 3. *Participant perceptions of current structural assurance*

2.3 Risks

How does the public perceive the risks of data analytics in law enforcement?

Key Findings

The public perceives moderate risks from DA in law enforcement, with 41–46% rating all harm types as moderate and 26–28% as high, showing minimal differences between risk categories. Nearly half of the respondents rate the overall risk as moderate. Risk perceptions vary by application with Generative AI-assisted Policing seen as higher risk, while applications like Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics are viewed as less risky.

A gap analysis reveals high regulatory expectations but low confidence in safeguards.

Highlight

Use of DA in law enforcement is seen as moderately risky. Generative AI-assisted Policing is viewed as higher risk.

Participants were asked about the extent of risk they believe exists if law enforcement agencies use data analytics, rating the level of risk across four potential areas of harm from very low to very high risk. These areas included harm to individuals such as privacy loss or psychological injury from false accusations, harm to groups such as bias or discrimination, harm to agencies such as system vulnerabilities or reputational damage, and harm to society such as weakened social cohesion or erosion of civil liberties due to disproportionate surveillance or targeting.

Descriptive analysis based on percentages indicated a similar pattern across all four harm types. Around 41–46% of participants rated each as a moderate risk, while about a quarter, 26–28% perceived them as a high risk, with 28–31% considering them a low risk. These distributions suggest participants viewed the different types of harm similarly, with no major distinctions in perceived risk levels (see Figure 4 for details).

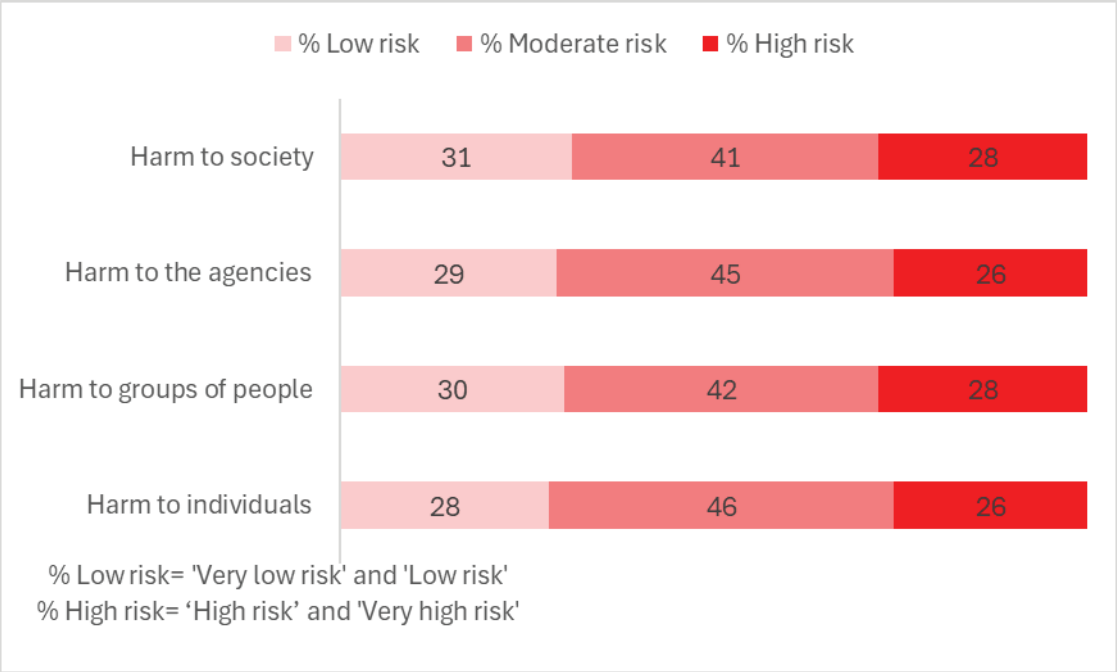


Figure 4. *Perceived risks of harm*

Risk perceptions varied across the five DA applications. The public's perception of risk associated with various DA applications in law enforcement centres was predominantly around a moderate level of risk, with nearly half the respondents,48% categorising DA overall as posing moderate risk. This pattern is consistent across most specific applications, where moderate risk ratings range from 45% for Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics to 53% for Forensic Analytics. The relatively high proportion of moderate risk responses suggests the community recognises potential concerns and uncertainties around the use of DA but may not view these technologies as overwhelmingly dangerous or harmful.

Notably, the percentage of respondents perceiving high risk varies more widely across applications, from 25% for Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras and Forensic Analytics to 35% for Generative AI-assisted Policing. This range indicates some DA applications provoke heightened concerns about privacy, bias, or misuse especially newer, AI-driven technologies, while others are seen as comparatively less threatening. Similarly, the low-risk category is less prevalent overall, particularly for Generative AI-assisted Policing at 18%, signalling that very few respondents view these applications as risk-free. The findings suggest risk perceptions are generally similar across applications, with Generative AI-assisted Policing perceived as posing a higher risk, relative to other DA applications. See Figure 5 for the distribution of perceived risk levels across applications.

Perceived risk alongside regulatory expectations and structural assurance were analysed to provide a more nuanced understanding of public attitudes toward DA in law enforcement. Perceived moderate-to-high risks were substantial across applications 72–82%, with many respondents rating risks specifically at the moderate level of 45–53%. See Figure 5. Expectations for legal protections and governance remained high at 82–88% and across all DA applications, respondents reported consistently higher regulatory expectations than their perceived structural assurances, which were notably lower at 32–48%. This indicates a perception gap between what the public believes the law should provide and their confidence in current safeguards. The gap was most pronounced for Generative AI-assisted Policing, where regulatory expectations were 83%, structural assurance remained low at 32%, and perceived moderate-to-high risk was highest at 82%. See Figure 6. These findings highlight the need for policies that strengthen public confidence in existing legal and institutional frameworks to better align with community expectations.

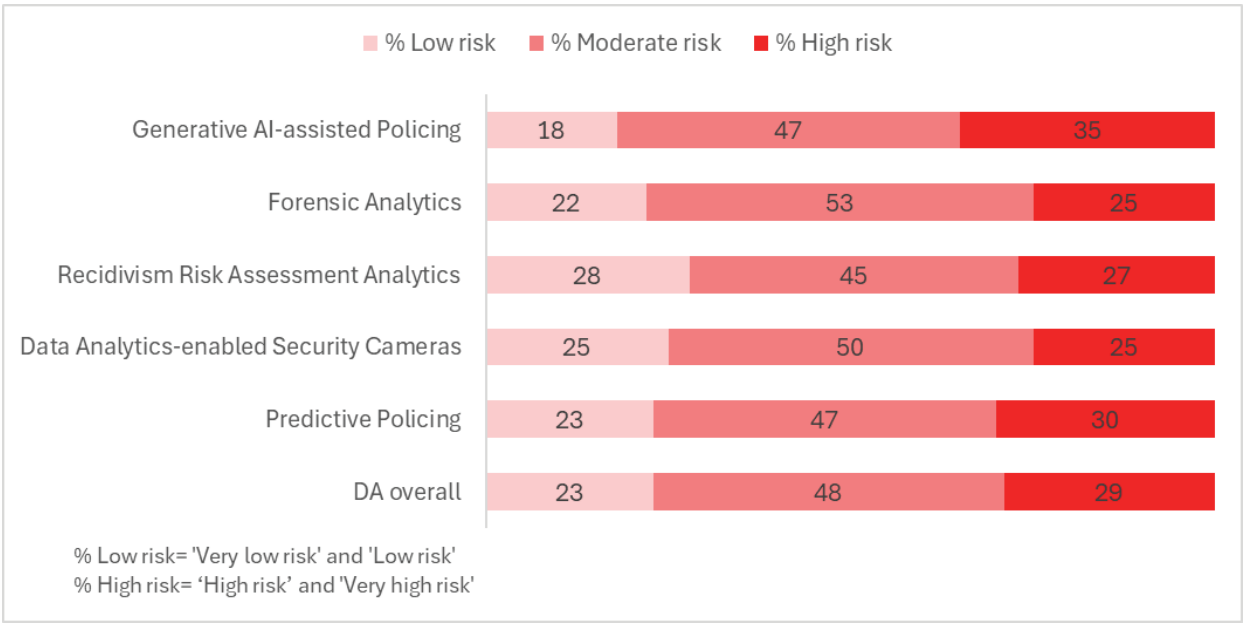


Figure 5. *Perceived risks of DA*

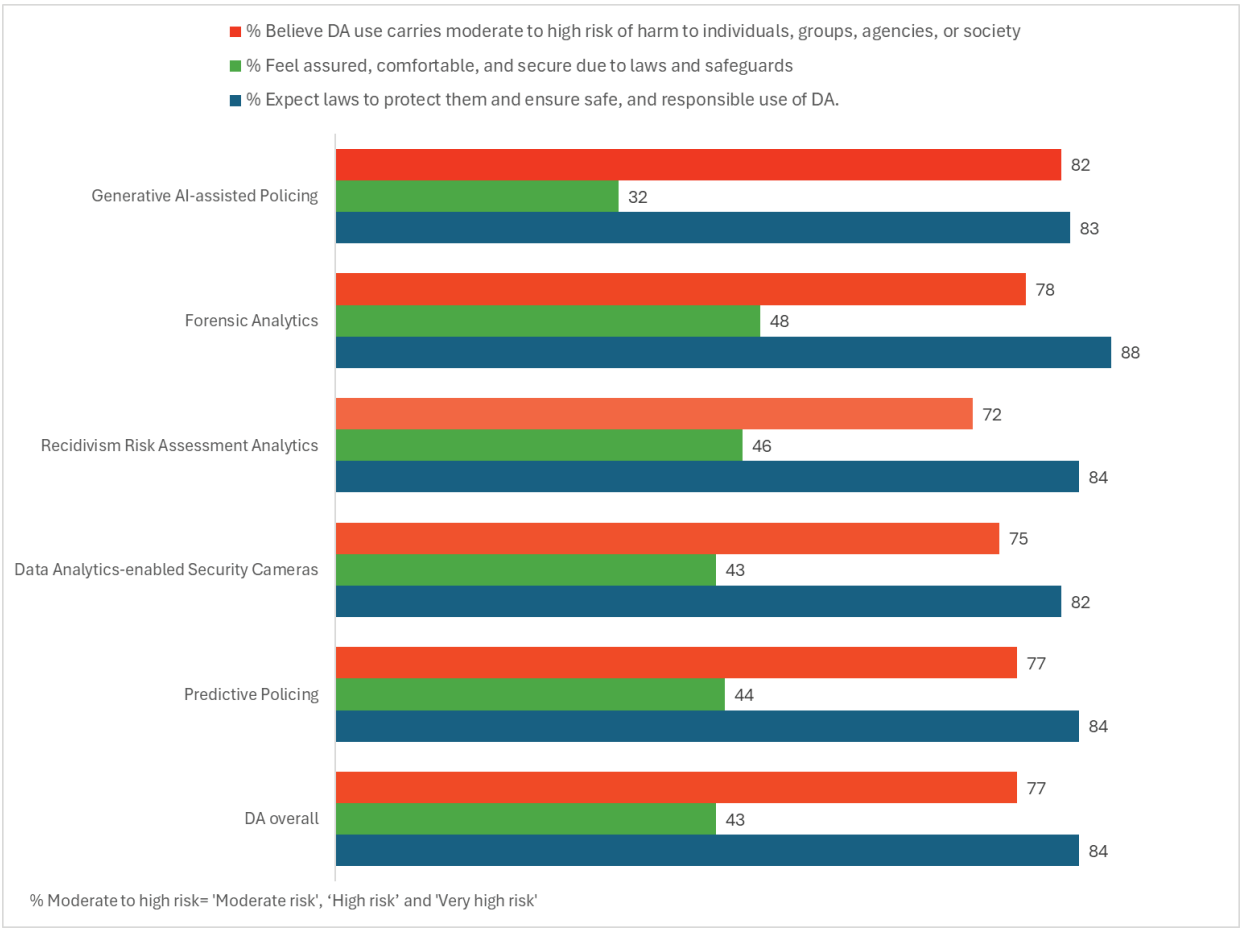


Figure 6. *Perception Gap: risk, regulatory expectations versus structural assurances*

3

Social License

How is the use of data analytics by law enforcement viewed in terms of social licence?

Key Findings

Over half of the respondents perceived law enforcement's use of DA as socially licensed, recognising its benefits and alignment with community values. Many expressed neutrality or concern, especially regarding Generative AI-assisted Policing.

Highlight

Public supports DA's safety benefits but doubts fairness.

Public perceptions of the social license for DA in law enforcement and the legitimacy in operations as perceived by the public was assessed in terms of the extent to which law enforcement agencies' use of DA is seen as beneficial, responsible, transparent, and aligned with community interests. These perceptions were measured through the four sub-dimensions of social licence, namely benefits, alignment, responsiveness, and engagement (Figure 7).

This report is based on refined and contextualised construct labels and definitions adapted from social license measures of Economic Legitimacy, Socio-political Legitimacy, Interactional Trust, and Institutionalised Trust[2] to better capture community perceptions of law enforcement use of data analytics. Refer endnote section[3] for details of these changes and the rationale.

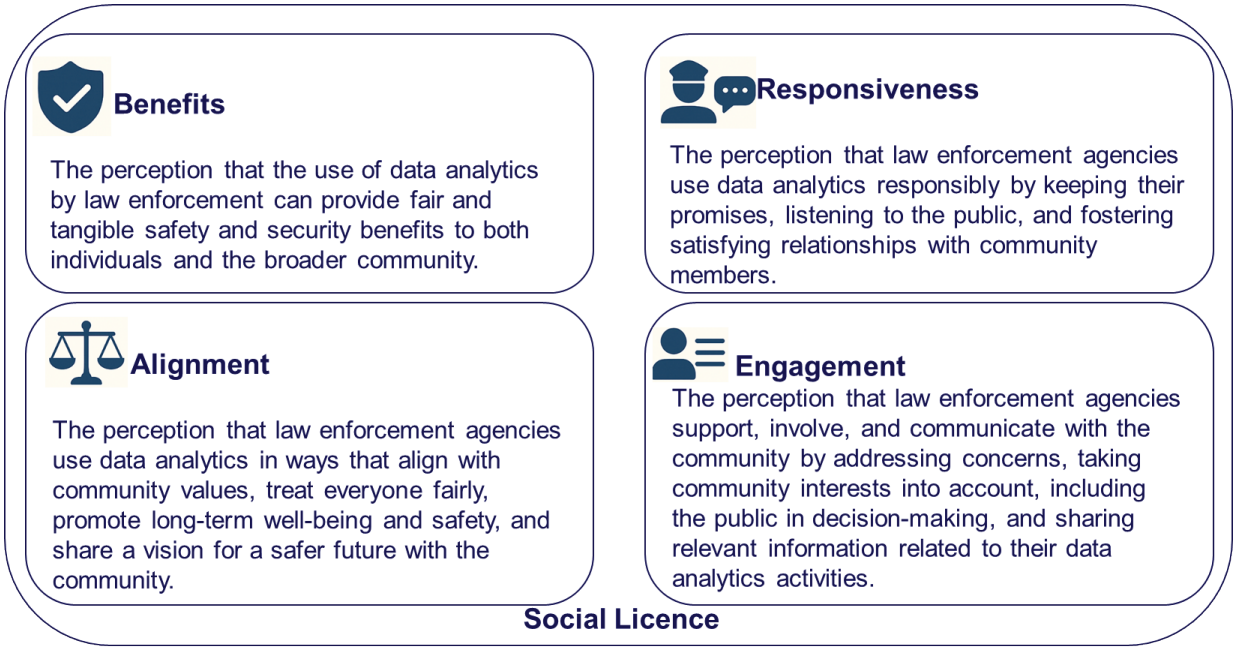


Figure 7. *Four sub-dimensions of social licence*

3.1 Perceived agreement on items measuring social licence

To what extent do the public perceive law enforcement's use of DA as socially legitimate?

Key Findings

Most respondents 72%, perceived DA use by law enforcement as enhancing community safety. Perceptions of fairness, transparency, and involvement were weaker, with agreement ranging from 34-48%.

Highlight

Strong support for safety benefits, though public involvement remains low.

This section reports the assessment of public agreement using 18 items measuring social licence, including perceptions of safety benefits, fairness, transparency, accountability, respect for community values, and engagement. The 18 items include improving future safety, benefiting personal and community security, following through on promises, listening to and involving the community, treating everyone fairly, and openly sharing information. The analysis of responses to these 18 items identified strengths like recognition of safety benefits, and weaknesses such as limited public involvement and perceived fairness, which together can be used to inform practices that enhance social licence.

Figure 8 shows the proportion of respondents who agreed (i.e., selected somewhat agree or strongly agree) with each item of social licence related to the use of DA by law enforcement agencies (see Table 1 for the survey items), ordered from lowest to highest agreement.

Overall, agreement was highest for statements about broad community and personal safety benefits. Seventy-two percent of respondents agreed DA improves community safety, followed by 71% who believed DA contributes to community safety efforts, 66% who felt DA improves their future safety, and 64% who saw personal security benefits. Around 61-61% agreed DA provides fair benefits to the community and contributes to long-term community well-being.

Social licence items reflecting fairness, transparency, and engagement received notably lower agreement. For example, 34% agreed law enforcement involves the public in decision-making, or supports those negatively affected by the use of DA. Fewer than half perceived that law enforcement, in relation to the use of DA, follow through on promises 48%, openly share information 42%, or treat everyone fairly 39%. Between 50-59% of respondents agreed law enforcement listens to the community, respects community values, and shares a vision for regional safety. While these figures indicate many in the public recognise positive efforts in these areas, there remains an opportunity to further strengthen these efforts to build a broader and deeper social licence. These findings suggest the public recognises the benefits of DA for safety and security, while their perceptions of fairness and engagement remain weaker. This pattern highlights areas where law enforcement agencies may need to strengthen efforts to build social licence beyond demonstrating benefits alone.

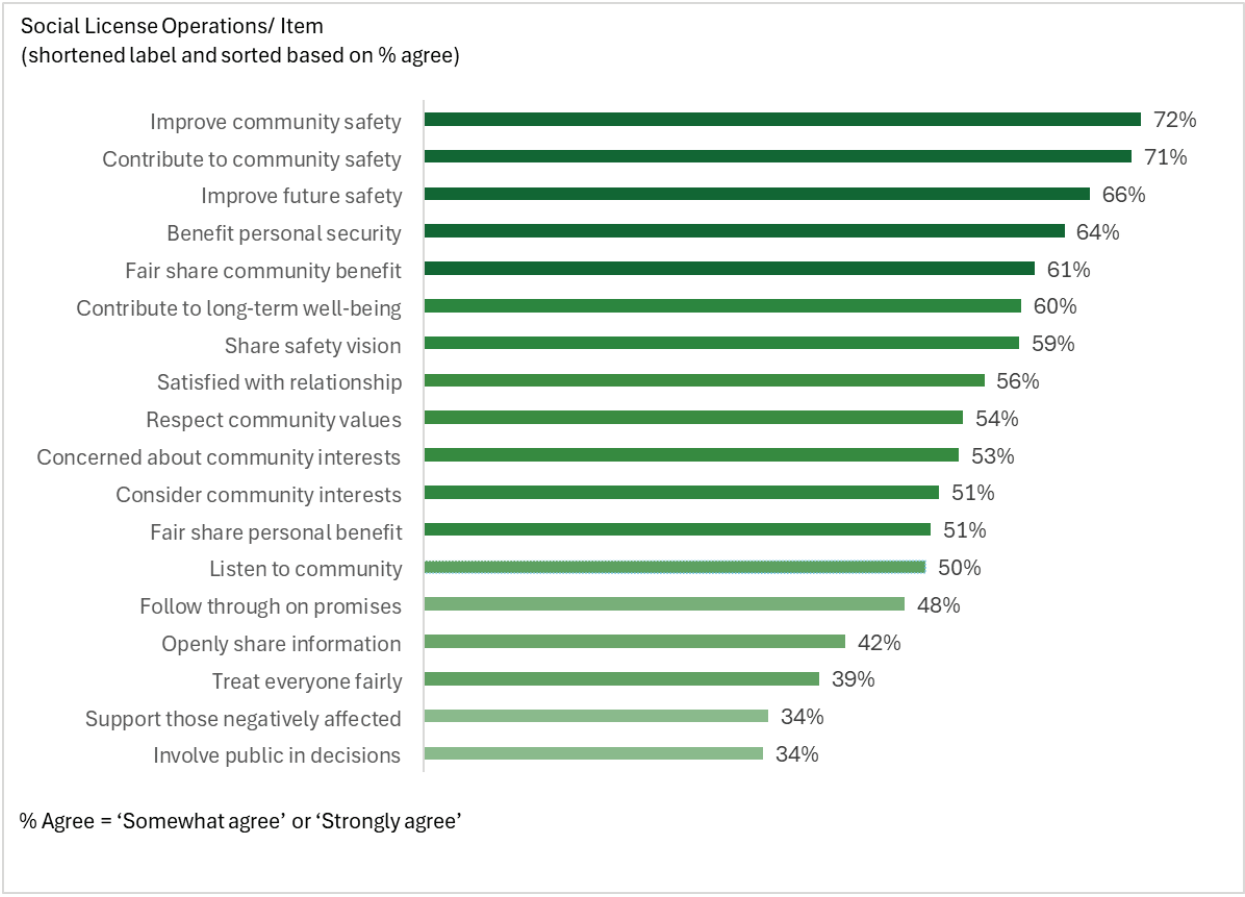


Figure 8. *Agreement levels on social licence operations regarding DA use by law enforcement*

Table 1. *Social licence survey items and corresponding shortened versions for the Question:*

Social license items	Associated shortened version
The use of DA [specific application] by law enforcement agencies can	(applies to items 1–6)
1. Improve my future safety.	Improve future safety
2. Provide benefits for my personal security.	Benefit personal security
3. Provide me with a fair share of potential benefits.	Fair share personal benefit
4. Improve community safety e.g., by better tackling crime and supporting victims.	Improve community safety
5. Contribute to community safety efforts e.g., by optimising resource allocation and aiding criminal investigations.	Contribute to community safety
6. Provide the community with a fair share of potential benefits.	Fair share community benefit
7. Law enforcement agencies follow through on their promises in their relations with the public.	Follow through on promises
8. I am very satisfied with my relationship with Law enforcement agencies.	Satisfied with relationship
9. Law enforcement agencies listen to the community.	Listen to community
10. In the long term, using DA [specific application] in law enforcement contributes to the well-being and safety of the whole community.	Contribute to long-term well-being
11. Law enforcement agencies treat everyone fairly.	Treat everyone fairly
12. Law enforcement agencies respect our community's values and way of life.	Respect community values
13. Our community and law enforcement agencies share a vision for the future safety of our region.	Share safety vision
14. Law enforcement agencies support those who are negatively affected by DA [specific application] operations.	Support those negatively affected
15. Law enforcement agencies involve the public in decision-making processes.	Involve public in decisions
16. Law enforcement agencies take our community's interests into account.	Consider community interests
17. Law enforcement agencies are concerned about our community's interests.	Concerned about community interests
18. Law enforcement agencies openly share information that is relevant to our community.	Openly share information

Note: Social licence is conceptualised in this study as a multi-dimensional construct consisting of four sub-dimensions: Benefit, Responsiveness, Alignment, and Engagement. In total, the survey includes 18 items mapped to these dimensions: Benefit (items 1–6), Responsiveness (items 7–9), Alignment (items 10–13), and Engagement (items 14–18). As detailed in Sections 3.1–3.3, we first analysed all items collectively without reference to their dimensions to enable a fine-grained, item-level assessment. Sections 3.4–3.7 then present analyses aggregated by dimension to capture broader patterns across the four components of social licence.

3.2 Social licence key areas for improvement

Which social licence aspects of law enforcement's DA use require improvement according to public perceptions?

Key Findings

Public involvement in decision-making and perceptions of fairness, support, and transparency show significant weaknesses across data analytics applications in law enforcement, especially for Generative AI-assisted Policing and Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras, indicating improvement needs.

Highlight

Community demands greater fairness, transparency, and involvement in DA.

This section presents the key social licence areas that need to be improved, based on an investigation of public perceptions across 18 specific items related to law enforcement's use of data analytics (DA). Frequency analysis was used on items where the majority (more than 50%) of respondents Disagree/ Neutral ('Strongly disagree', 'Somewhat disagree', or 'Neither agree nor disagree'), or less than 50% Agree. The evaluation of each of the 18 items (see Table 1 for the 18 items, including the full wording and shortened labels), highlights areas where public confidence or perceived legitimacy is limited. These insights indicate where law enforcement agencies may focus their efforts to strengthen legitimacy and foster greater community alignment, transparency, and fairness. The full analysis is presented in Table 2, and key areas for improvement as summarised below.

Predictive Policing

Community perceptions suggest Predictive Policing raises issues regarding fairness, support, engagement, and transparency.

Findings: Four items require improvement. Involve public in decisions (65%), Support those negatively affected (61%), Treat everyone fairly (54%), Openly share information (54%)

The percentages represent Disagree or Neutral responses, meaning respondents do not agree these social licence items are being met.

Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras

Community perceptions indicate concerns regarding fairness, personal benefit, promise fulfilment, listening, support for those negatively affected, engagement, and transparency.

Findings: Eight items require improvement. Fair share personal benefit (51%), Follow through on promises (56%), Listen to community (54%), Treat everyone fairly (62%), Respect community values (51%), Support those negatively affected (69%), Involve public in decisions (65%), Openly share information (59%)

Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics

Community attitude results indicate Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics is perceived as insufficient in promise fulfilment, fairness, support, engagement, and transparency.

Findings: Four items require improvement. Follow through on promises (52%), Treat everyone fairly (59%), Support those negatively affected (63%), Involve public in decisions (63%), Openly share information (58%)

Forensic Analytics

Forensic Analytics raises concerns regarding promise fulfilment, equitable treatment, support mechanisms, public involvement, and transparency in law enforcement use.

Findings: Five items require improvement. Follow through on promises (52%), Treat everyone fairly (60%), Support those negatively affected (67%), Involve public in decisions (66%), Openly share information (60%)

Generative AI-assisted Policing

Generative AI-assisted Policing generates community concerns across multiple social licence dimensions including fairness, personal benefit, promise fulfilment, community consultation, support, engagement, and transparency.

Findings: Nine items require improvement where over 50% of respondents expressed disagreement or neutrality. Fair share personal benefit (57%), Follow through on promises (51%), Listen to community (55%), Contribute to long-term well-being (55%), Treat everyone fairly (68%), Support those negatively affected (69%), Involve public in decisions (71%), Consider community interests (51%), and Openly share information (59%).

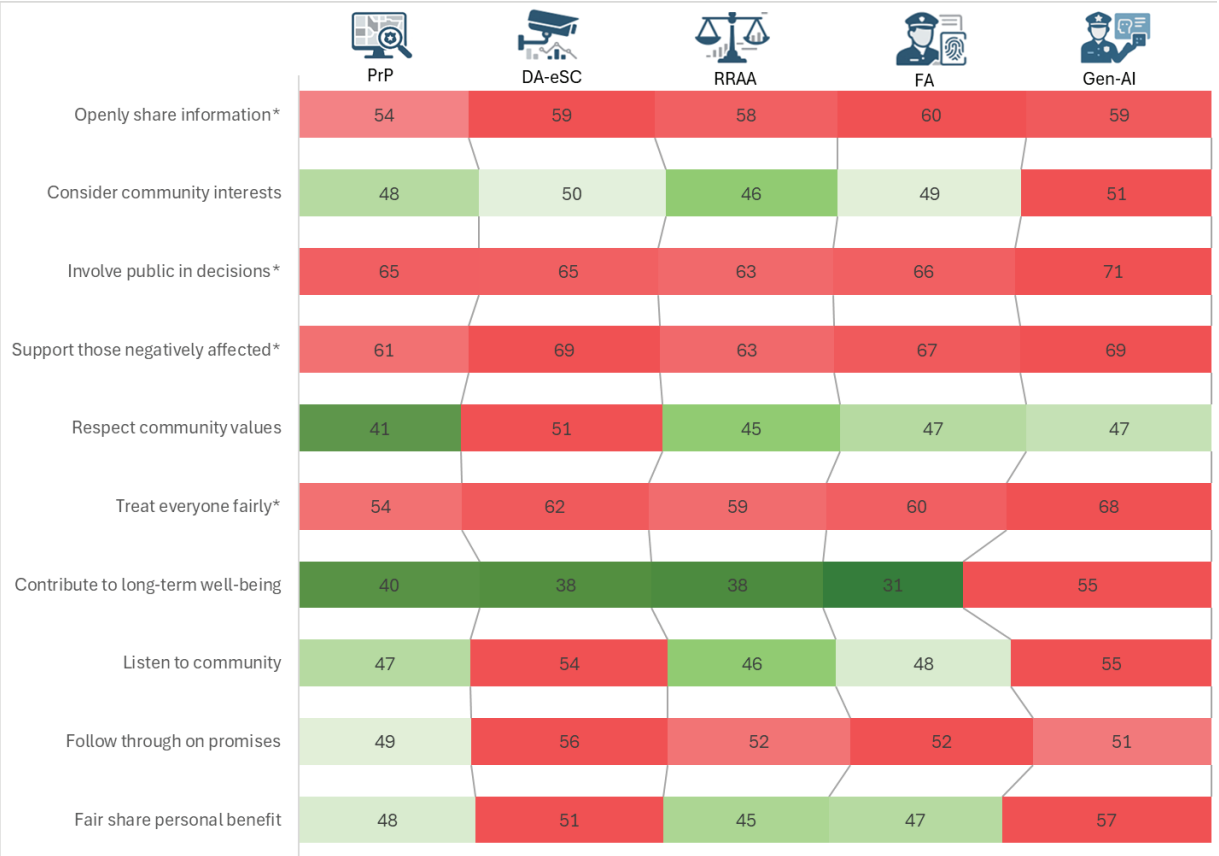
Table 2. *Community perceptions of social licence items across DA Applications*

		Predictive Policing		Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras	
Social licence items		**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**
1	Improve future safety	5	27	9	24
2	Benefit personal security	8	29	13	22
3	Fair share personal benefit	9	39	15	36
4	Improve community safety	8	22	9	17
5	Contribute to community safety	8	21	8	20
6	Fair share community benefit	8	30	11	30
7	Follow through on promises	16	33	23	34
8	Satisfied with relationship	13	26	18	31
9	Listen to community	19	27	26	27
10	Contribute to long-term well-being	11	29	12	27
11	*Treat everyone fairly**	27	27	33	29
12	Respect community values	13	28	18	34
13	Share safety vision	10	26	14	28
14	*Support those negatively affected**	19	42	22	47
15	*Involve public in decisions**	30	35	35	30
16	Consider community interests	16	31	22	28
17	Concerned about community interests	13	31	20	29
18	*Openly share information**	21	33	28	31

*Items marked with * ("treat everyone fairly", "support those negatively affected", "involve public in decisions", and "openly share information") show less than 50% agreement across all five applications. This result indicates more than half the public do not perceive law enforcement as meeting these social licence measures, highlighting clear areas for improvement.*

	Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics		Forensic Analytics		Generative AI-assisted Policing	
	Disagree	Neutral	Disagree	Neutral	Disagree	Neutral
	3	21	5	26	14	34
	6	25	6	24	19	29
	10	35	10	37	20	37
	5	14	5	22	16	24
	5	18	6	18	12	30
	6	27	7	29	14	33
	24	27	17	34	20	31
	14	32	11	33	13	31
	20	26	21	26	25	30
	9	29	7	24	20	35
	29	29	28	33	40	29
	16	29	15	32	18	28
	12	26	10	30	13	35
	14	49	16	50	23	46
	30	33	30	36	39	33
	17	28	18	31	19	32
	15	33	18	27	17	30
	23	35	20	40	26	33

See Figure 9 for the percentage of responses that did not reach agreement, indicating social licence was not achieved. Social licence items related to fairness, public involvement, support, and openly sharing information (four of 18 items) scored percentages above 50%, reflecting low or limited positive perceptions across all DA applications. These areas are highlighted in red in for all applications and marked with an asterisk (*). This figure highlights context-specific items that require attention; for example, *Contribute to long-term well-being* applies only to Generative AI-assisted Policing, and *Respect community values applies* to Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras. Red areas in the figure indicate high concern or need for attention (majority do not agree), while green areas indicate majority agreement (social licence achieved) for a specific application and should be maintained or further improved.



% **Disagree/Neutral** ('Strongly disagree', 'Somewhat disagree', or 'Neither agree nor disagree').
Red areas: high concern/ need attention (majority do not agree), **Green areas**: majority agreement (social license achieved) for a specific application.
PrP= Predictive Policing, **DA-eSC**= Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras, **RRAA**= Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics, **FA**= Forensic Analytics, **Gen-AI**= Generative AI-assisted Policing
***= Over 50% disagreement or neutrality across all five applications.

Figure 9. *Key social licence operational areas for improvement*

Several areas clearly require improvement across all DA applications examined. In total, 10 out of the 18 social licence items showed areas requiring improvement in at least one DA application, as highlighted in red in Figure 9. Of these, four items were consistently identified across all DA applications as requiring particular attention: "*openly share information*," "*involve public in decisions*," "*support those negatively affected*," and "*treat everyone fairly*." Most notably, public involvement in decision-making was consistently rated as high disagreement or neutrality across all applications (Involve public in decisions: 65–71%), indicating participants perceive limited

opportunities to meaningfully participate in decisions about DA use in law enforcement.

Support for those negatively affected similarly showed high disagreement/neutrality, particularly for Generative AI-assisted Policing and Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras (Support those negatively affected: 61–69%), indicating communities perceive there are insufficient mechanisms to assist individuals adversely impacted by DA.

Fairness perceptions are also a concern, with more than half of respondents expressing neutral or negative views for all applications (Treat everyone fairly: 54–68%). This result suggests many community members remain unconvinced that law enforcement agencies apply DA in a fair and equitable manner.

Transparency in information sharing emerged as another critical area with Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras and other applications demonstrating over 50% disagreement/ neutrality regarding agencies openly sharing relevant information (Openly share information: 54–60%).

Other areas with majority Disagree/Neutral responses include Follow through on promises (Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras 56%), Listen to community (Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras 54%), and Contribute to long-term well-being (Generative AI-assisted Policing 55%). These results highlight that perceptions of agency follow-through, community engagement, and long-term benefits are limited.

These findings highlight that DA applications are generally perceived to provide safety and security benefits, and targeted improvement is necessary to enhance trust and community support in terms of critical social licence dimensions, including fairness, transparency, support, and public involvement.

3.3 Overall perception of social license

What is the overall public perception of social licence for law enforcement's use of data analytics?

Key Findings

53% of respondents view law enforcement's DA use as socially licensed, while 38% remain neutral and 9% disagree, with Generative AI-assisted Policing facing the most public scepticism.

Highlight

The majority view DA as socially licensed, except for Generative AI-assisted Policing.

This presents the aggregated assessment of social licence, combining responses across all 18 items measured in the previous section. This analysis summarises overall public perception rather than individual aspects of social licence and identifies the proportion of respondents who view law enforcement's DA use as socially legitimate, neutral, or problematic. Aggregating the items provides a holistic view of social licence, highlighting general social licence, neutrality, or scepticism toward different DA applications, such as Generative AI-assisted Policing versus Forensic Analytics.

When aggregated across all items, a total of 53% of respondents reported a high level of social license, perceiving law enforcement's use of DA as beneficial, fair, and consistent with community interests and expectations. This result indicates over half the surveyed participants viewed DA operations as aligning with community values (alignment), providing meaningful benefits (benefits), demonstrating dependability and listening (responsiveness), and involving the community in an open and inclusive manner (engagement). In contrast, 38% of participants fell into the moderate category, indicating they neither agreed nor disagreed with statements about DA use by law enforcement. This result reflects neutrality about whether such use is appropriate and legitimate, suggesting a substantial proportion of the public (nearly 4 in 10) is not fully assured of the value,

fairness, or acceptability of these practices. Finally, 9% of respondents expressed disagreement, indicating they do not grant social licence to the use of DA by law enforcement. This result reflects concerns about whether such practices deliver tangible benefits, operate fairly, align with community values, demonstrate responsiveness, and meaningfully engage the public. This group likely represents critical voices questioning the legitimacy of DA use in law enforcement.

When examining specific applications, high social license perceptions were most common for Forensic Analytics (58%) and Predictive Policing (56%), whereas Generative AI-assisted Policing had the lowest proportion of high social license (45%) and the highest proportion reporting low social license (13%). This result suggests many in the public accept traditional forms of DA in law enforcement, and a greater public scepticism toward generative AI applications. See Figure 10 for the distribution of perceived social license levels across DA applications.

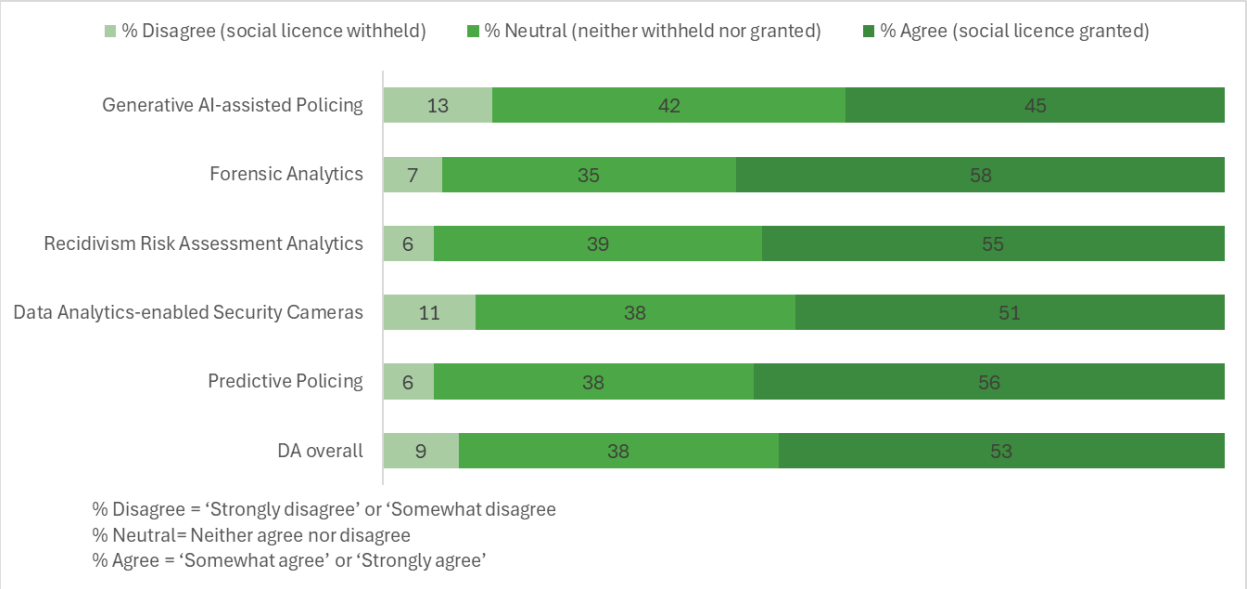


Figure 10. Perceived social license of DA in law enforcement

Overall, these findings indicate more than half the public views the use of DA in law enforcement positively, with a sizeable proportion remaining neutral, and a smaller proportion of respondents who hold concerns. Analysis of mean scores across the four key dimensions of social licence (benefits, alignment, responsiveness and engagement) illustrates this pattern. Perceived benefits received the highest mean ratings across applications (ranging from 3.45 to 3.82), indicating respondents generally see DA as moderately to highly beneficial. Alignment (M = 3.30–3.54) and responsiveness (M = 3.30–3.50) scored in the moderate range, suggesting neutral views about whether DA use aligns with community values and whether agencies are dependable and attentive. Engagement received the lowest mean ratings among the social license dimensions (M = 3.17–3.31). These scores however, still fell within the moderate range, indicating respondents were somewhat less confident about law enforcement's inclusion, support, and transparency regarding DA, and did not view these aspects negatively overall. These trends are visualised in Figure 11, which presents mean ratings for each social license dimension across DA applications.

Figure 11. *Perceived social license dimensions by DA applications*

The next section presents the details of each dimension of social license perception.

3.4 Benefits

How does the public perceive the benefits of law enforcement's data analytics use?

Key Findings

71% of the public view DA in law enforcement as beneficial, especially Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics and Forensic Analytics. Generative AI-assisted Policing was rated lower but still positive, reflecting cautious optimism about newer AI tools.

Highlight

The majority view DA in law enforcement as beneficial, and Generative AI-assisted Policing slightly less.

Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with six items to answer how the public perceives the risks of DA in law enforcement. The items assessed whether the use of DA by law enforcement agencies can; improve their future safety; provide benefits for their personal security; ensure a fair share of potential benefits; improve overall community safety by tackling crime and supporting victims; contribute to community safety efforts through better resource allocation and aiding investigations; and, provide the community with a fair share of potential benefits. Overall, these benefit items focus on the positive outcomes, both personal and public, that DA can deliver.

Results showed 71% of respondents overall perceived DA use as beneficial, while 23% fell into the neutral category, indicating they neither viewed it as beneficial nor lacking benefit. Only 6% perceived DA as providing no or low benefits. Across specific applications, perceptions were generally positive, with Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics (78%) and Forensic Analytics (76%) rated most highly, and Generative AI-assisted Policing receiving comparatively lower benefit ratings (58%) alongside a higher proportion of neutral responses (30%) and no/low-benefit perceptions (12%).

These findings suggest public perceptions of DA benefits are generally strong across applications, with Generative AI-assisted Policing viewed as less beneficial relative to others, potentially reflecting community caution about newer AI technologies in law enforcement. Notably, a majority (58%) still perceived Generative AI-assisted Policing as beneficial, indicating overall positive views despite comparatively greater uncertainty (see Figure 12 for the distribution of perceived benefits across DA applications).

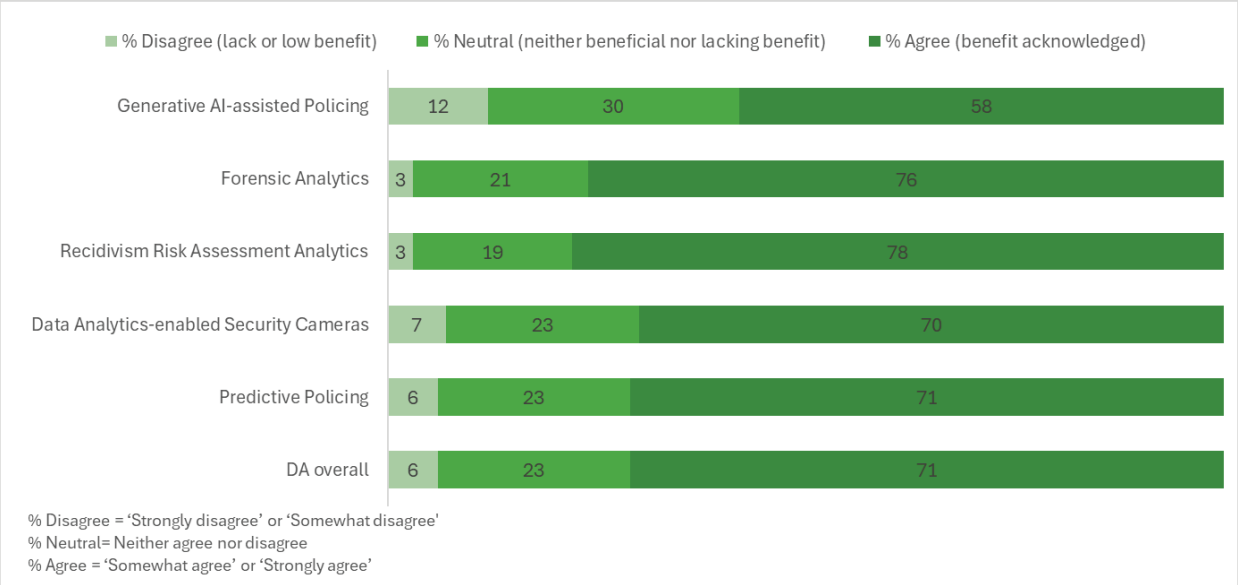


Figure 12. *Perceived benefits of DA in law enforcement*

3.4.1 Risk and benefit analysis

How do public perceptions of benefits compare with perceived risks across different law enforcement DA applications?

Key Findings

Across DA applications, perceived benefits consistently outweigh risks with the largest gaps for Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics, Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras, and Forensic Analytics. Generative AI-assisted Policing shows benefits slightly outweighing risks.

Highlight

The benefit-risk gap shows DA benefits outweigh perceived risks overall.

Further analysis of mean ratings shows perceived benefits across DA applications consistently exceeded perceived risks. Figure 13 presents Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics had the highest mean benefit rating (M = 3.82), followed by Forensic Analytics (M = 3.75) and both Predictive Policing and Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras (M = 3.72 each). Generative AI-assisted Policing rated lowest on perceived benefits (M = 3.45), still within the moderate-to-high range. In contrast, mean perceived risk ratings for all applications remained around the moderate level, ranging from 2.92 (Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics) to 3.17 (Generative AI-assisted Policing).

These mean ratings indicated the need to further examine how the difference—or gap—between perceived benefits and risks varied across specific DA applications. The largest benefit-risk gap was observed for Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics (benefit M = 3.82 vs. risk M = 2.92; gap = +0.90),

indicating strong public perception of benefits and relatively lower risk for this application. Similarly, Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras (benefit M = 3.72, risk M = 2.95; gap = +0.77) and Forensic Analytics (benefit M = 3.75, risk M = 2.97; gap = +0.78) showed comparable and substantial gaps between perceived benefits and risks. This result suggests these applications are likewise viewed favourably, with a clear margin of benefit over risk. In contrast, Generative AI-assisted Policing exhibited the smallest benefit-risk gap (benefit M = 3.45 vs. risk M = 3.17; gap = +0.28), reflecting more balanced perceptions of risks and benefits.

This pattern suggests the public generally sees value in these DA applications, and remain risk aware, and do not view them as low-risk technologies. Instead, perceptions of risk are moderate, indicating the public recognises potential harms alongside benefits, particularly for the Generative AI-assisted Policing application.

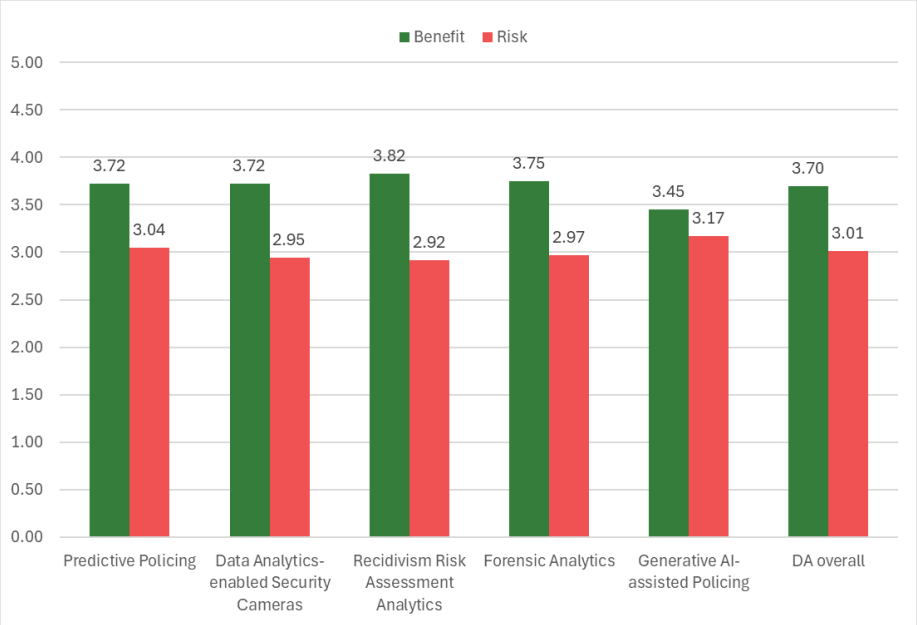


Figure 13. *Perceived benefit and risk for each DA application*

3.5 Alignment

How does the public perceive the alignment of law enforcement's DA use with community values, well-being and safety, and fairness?

Key Findings

Over half perceive DA use to align with community values, especially for Predictive Policing and Forensic Analytics. Generative AI-assisted Policing show more neutral views and lower perceived alignment.

Highlight

The majority see data analytics aligning with community values, and Generative AI-assisted Policing less so.

Alignment items capture how the use of DA by law enforcement agencies fits with community values and a shared vision for safety. Participants rated four items that asked whether law enforcement agencies treat everyone fairly, respect community values and ways of life, contribute to the long-term well-being and safety of the whole community, and share a vision for the future safety of the region with the community. Overall, these items reflect the extent to which the public perceives DA use by law enforcement fits with community values and a shared safety vision.

The results showed the public generally holds a positive outlook on the alignment of law enforcement's use of DA with community values. Overall, 55% of respondents agreed (somewhat or strongly agreed), indicating they perceived alignment was achieved, that they felt law enforcement's use of DA in its operations aligns with community values, a core dimension of social licence. About one-third (33%) were neutral (neither highly aligned nor misaligned), suggesting uncertainty about whether law enforcement agencies treat everyone fairly, respect community values, contribute to community well-being and safety, and share a vision for the region's future safety. The remaining 12% disagreed (no or low alignment), signalling potential concerns about whether law enforcement's use of DA reflects community values and shared visions for safety.

When identified according to specific DA applications, Predictive Policing had the highest proportion of respondents who agreed (alignment achieved), followed by Forensic Analytics and Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics. Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras showed slightly lower agreement levels. Generative AI-assisted Policing received the lowest agreement, with a larger proportion remaining neutral, suggesting more ambivalent views about this newer AI-driven application's fit with community values.

These findings indicate many participants view law enforcement's use of DA as aligned with community interests, with a substantial proportion (29-39%) holding neutral positions, especially regarding newer technologies. See Figure 14 for detailed distributions of perceived alignment across DA applications.

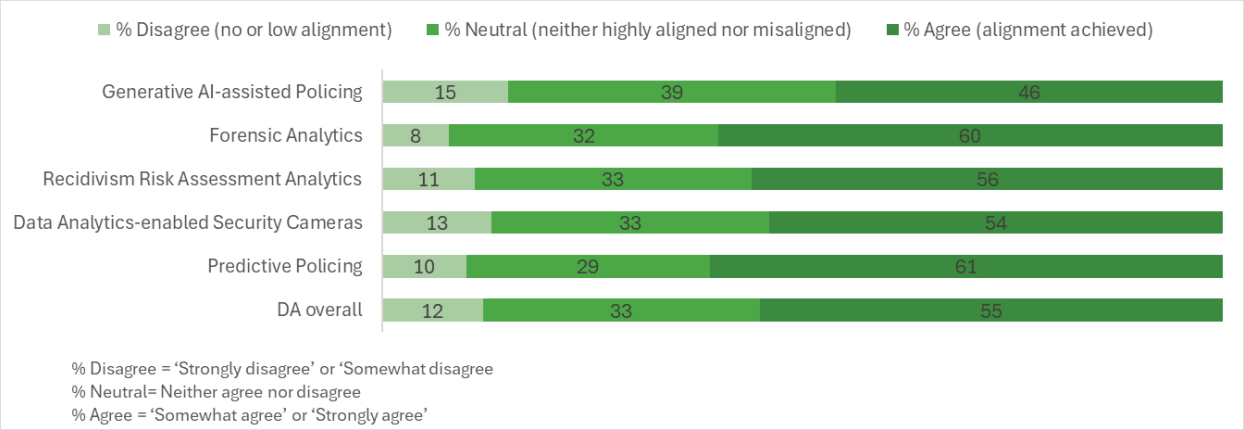


Figure 14. *Perceived alignment of law enforcement's use of DA*

3.6 Responsiveness

How does the public perceive law enforcement's responsiveness in using data analytics?

Key Findings

Just over half of the respondents perceive law enforcement agencies as responsive in using DA e.g., keeping promises, listening, especially in Predictive Policing. Data analytics-enabled Security Cameras received the lowest rating, with only 46% perceiving them as responsive in this context.

Highlight

The majority view law enforcement as responsive. Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras are rated lower.

Responsiveness items assess whether law enforcement agencies are reliable and attentive to community expectations. Participants responded to three items measuring whether agencies follow through on their promises in their relations with the public, listen to the community, and foster satisfying relationships with community members. Overall, these items reflect perceptions of agency

attentiveness and accountability in their use of DA.

The results indicate just over half of the respondents (51%) perceived law enforcement agencies as demonstrating responsiveness in their use of DA. Around one-third of participants (33%) fell into the neutral category, neither viewing agencies as responsive nor unresponsive, suggesting a balanced or uncertain stance. Meanwhile, 16% of respondents disagreed, perceiving law enforcement as unresponsive or showing low responsiveness overall.

Figure 15 shows Predictive Policing was seen as the most responsive when examining specific DA applications, with 55% rating it as demonstrating responsiveness, followed by Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics (52%), Forensic Analytics (51%), and Generative AI-assisted Policing (50%). Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras received the lowest proportion of demonstrated responsiveness ratings (46%) and the highest percentage of disagreement (20%), indicating comparatively more scepticism or concern regarding agency responsiveness in this area.

These findings highlight generally moderate to positive perceptions of law enforcement responsiveness across different applications, with some variation by application type.

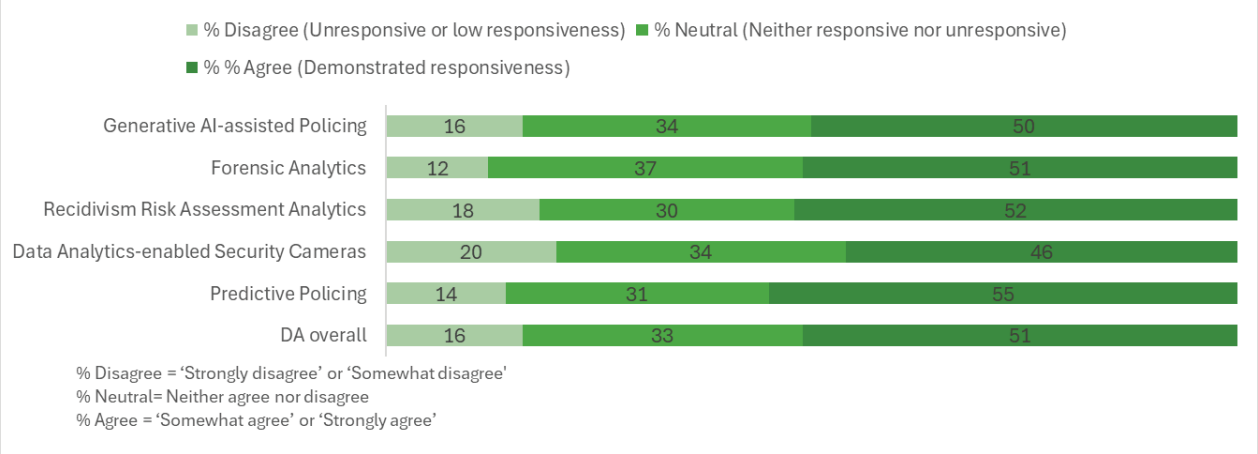


Figure 15. *Perceived responsiveness of law enforcement's use of DA*

3.7 Engagement

How does the public perceive law enforcement's engagement and inclusion when using data analytics?

Key Findings

Perceptions of law enforcement engagement in DA use are mixed. There were 35–43% who perceive engagement across applications, and many remain neutral. Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics ranks highest for engagement, while Generative AI-assisted Policing ranks lowest with 46% of respondents unsure about community involvement and transparency.

Highlight

Public sees limited engagement. Generative AI-assisted Policing rated lowest on inclusion.

Engagement items address the extent of two-way interaction between law enforcement and the community in the context of DA use. Participants rated five items assessing whether agencies support those negatively affected by DA operations, involve the public in decision-making processes, take the community's interests into account, are concerned about the community's interests, and openly share information relevant to the community. Overall, these items measure perceptions of inclusion, support, and transparency in DA activities.

Participant perceptions of law enforcement agency engagement in their use of DA show varied levels of community involvement and transparency. Overall, 40% of respondents reported engagement by law enforcement. A larger proportion, 43%, fell into the neutral category, neither engaged nor disengaged, reflecting uncertainty or balanced views on the extent of community involvement. The remaining 17% perceived disengagement or low engagement, signalling concerns about transparency or inclusion.

When looking at specific DA applications, engagement rated highest for Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics, with 43% of respondents perceiving active engagement, followed by Predictive Policing (42%) and Forensic Analytics (41%). Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras received 40% engagement ratings, while Generative AI-assisted Policing had the lowest at 35%, accompanied by the highest proportion in the neutral category at 46%. These findings indicate a considerable proportion of participants (35–43%) perceive active engagement by law enforcement agencies in their use of DA, and a substantial portion (39–46%) remaining neutral. This neutrality suggests uncertainty or a lack of clear experiences regarding whether agencies genuinely engage communities across these operational dimensions. Across all applications, 16–21% of respondents perceived disengagement or low engagement, signalling a segment of the public who feel excluded or unsupported in law enforcement's DA operations. See Figure 16 for detailed engagement distributions across DA applications.

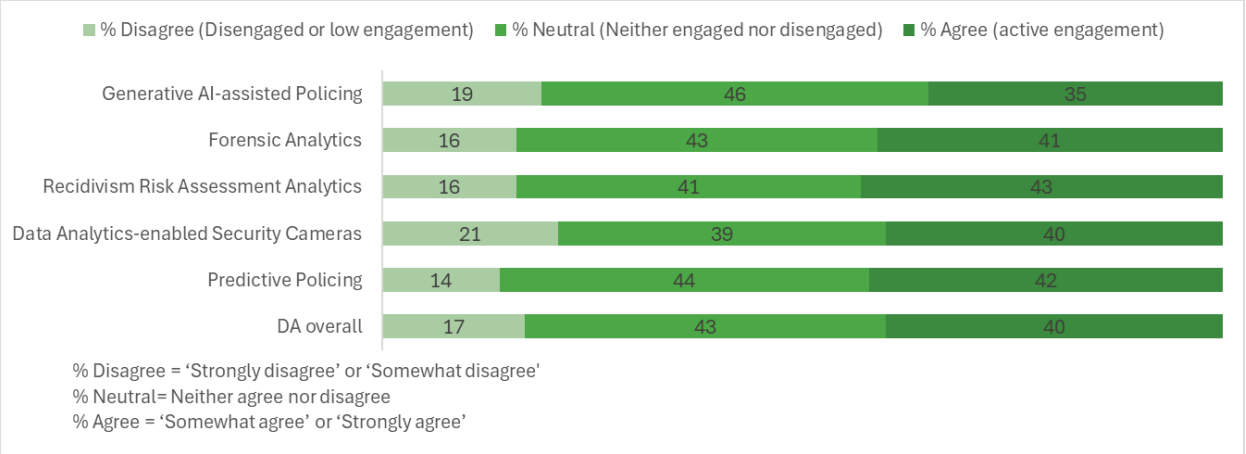


Figure 16. *Perceived engagement of law enforcement's use of DA*

3.8 Geographic variation in social licence perceptions

This section explores whether public perceptions of law enforcement's use of DA vary across Australian states, territories, and between capital cities and other regions.

3.8.1 Differences across Australian states and territories in social licence perceptions

Key Findings

No significant differences were found across Australian states and territories for overall social licence or its dimensions.

The ANOVA test was conducted to examine whether perceptions of law enforcement agency use of DA differed across Australian states.

Overall, no statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level were found across states and territories for any of the social licence items. One item approached significance:

*Law enforcement agencies supporting those negatively affected by DA operations (*p = 0.053)

Although not statistically significant, this result suggests potential state and territory-based variation in perceptions of whether law enforcement agencies support individuals who are negatively impacted by the law enforcement use of DA. Descriptive statistics showed Tasmania had the lowest mean score (M = 2.74, n = 39), while New South Wales had the highest (M = 3.27, n = 392). Figure 17 shows the mean differences in perceptions across states.

Post-hoc analyses using Tukey HSD and Bonferroni tests also revealed a significant difference between Tasmania and New South Wales, with respondents in Tasmania reporting lower perceived support (mean difference = -0.529, p = 0.016). The Games-Howell test, which does not assume equal variances, confirmed this difference and also indicated significant differences between the Northern Territory with New South Wales and Victoria. These results suggest some state-level variation in perceptions of law enforcement support, with Tasmania notably less positive than others. It is important to interpret these findings cautiously, given the notably small sample sizes for Tasmania (n = 39) and Northern Territory (n = 4), which limit the statistical power and generalisability of results for these regions.

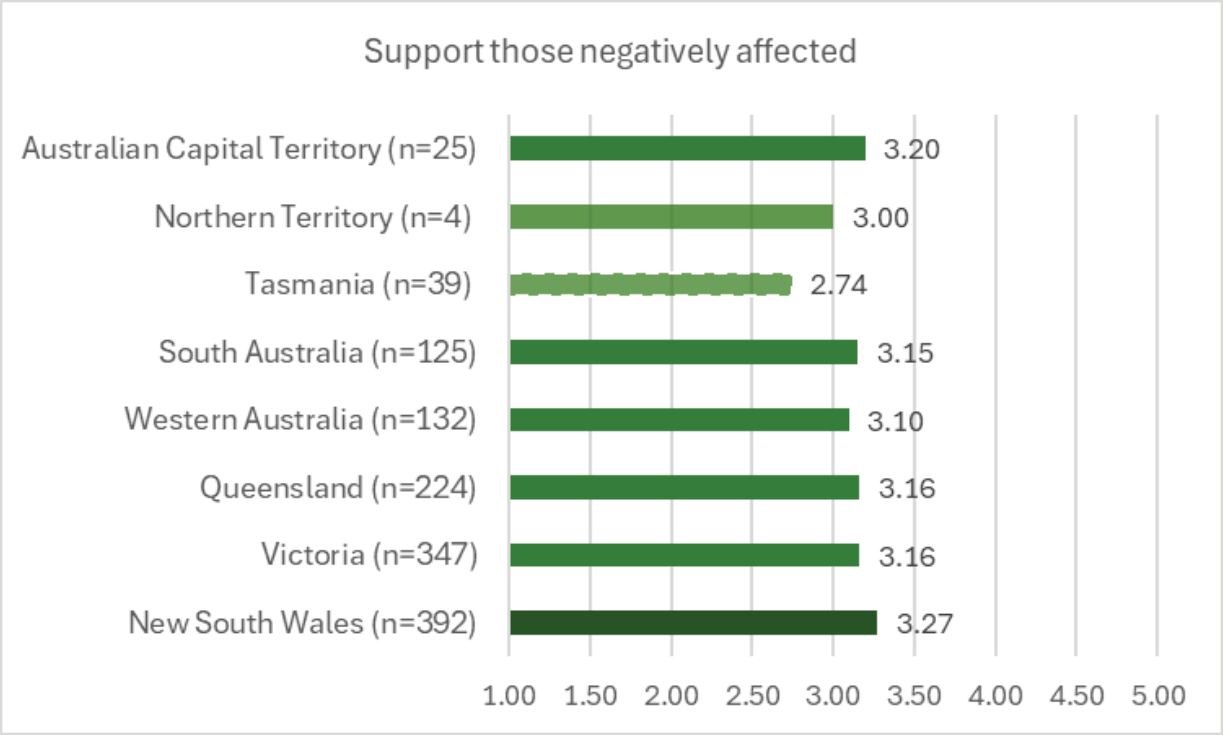


Figure 17. *Mean perceptions by state/territory of law enforcement agencies' support for individuals negatively affected by data analytics operations*

The ANOVA test was conducted to examine whether overall social licence perception and its four dimensions differed significantly across Australian states and territories. The results showed no statistically significant differences for overall social licence or any of its four dimensions of Benefit, Alignment, Responsiveness, and Engagement.

3.8.2 Differences between capital cities and the rest of Australia in social licence perceptions

Key Findings

Perceptions of law enforcement's use of data analytics are largely similar between capital city and non-capital city residents. Minor differences include greater perceived personal benefits, support for those negatively affected, and public involvement in decision-making among capital city residents, while non-capital residents report slightly higher satisfaction with law enforcement.

Highlight

Capital and non-capital city residents share similar views; minor differences in benefits, support, and satisfaction exist.

An independent samples t-test was conducted to examine whether perceptions of law enforcement agency use of DA differed between respondents residing in capital cities and those in non-capital cities across Australia. Capital cities are classified as Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide, Hobart, Darwin, and the Australian Capital Territory. All other areas within each state or territory were categorised as the "rest of" the respective state or territory, encompassing non-capital cities, regional, rural, and remote locations.

Overall, the results indicated largely similar perceptions between the two groups, with four statistically significant differences:

- **Fair share of potential personal benefits**
  Capital city residents were more likely to agree that the use of DA by law enforcement agencies provides them with a fair share of potential benefits (p = 0.046, two-sided), with a small mean difference of 0.11.
- **Satisfaction with law enforcement agencies**
  Non-capital city residents reported higher satisfaction with their relationship with law enforcement agencies (p = 0.043), with a mean difference of -0.12 indicating slightly greater satisfaction outside capital cities.
- **Support for those negatively affected by DA operations**
  Capital city residents perceived greater support from law enforcement agencies for those negatively affected by DA operations (p = 0.035), with a mean difference of 0.12.
- **Involvement of the public in decision-making**
  There was a borderline significant difference of $t(1286) = 1.908$, p = 0.057, suggesting capital city residents slightly, more strongly agreed that law enforcement agencies involve the public in decision-making processes (mean difference = 0.12).

No significant differences were found between capital city and non-capital city residents (all $p > .05$) for the remaining items. See Figure 18 for differences in significant and borderline significant items between capital cities and the rest of Australia.

These findings indicate attitudes to law enforcement's use of DA are broadly consistent across capital cities and the rest of Australia, with minor differences in perceptions of fairness, satisfaction, support, and involvement. Capital city residents tend to perceive slightly greater benefits and involvement, whereas non-capital city residents report marginally higher satisfaction with law enforcement overall. These insights may inform targeted communication and engagement strategies to address specific community expectations in different geographic contexts.

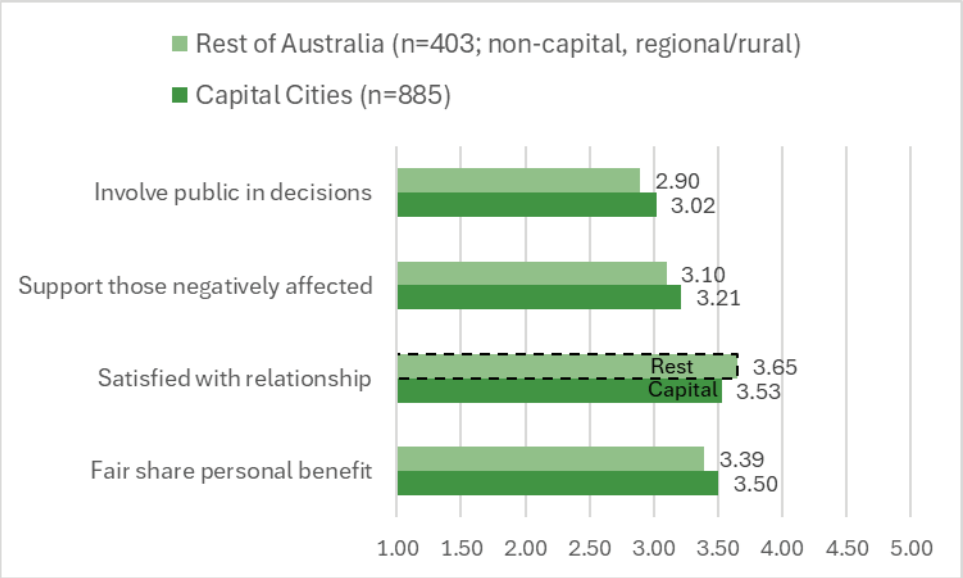


Figure 18. *Mean differences in perceived benefit, satisfaction, support, and involvement between capital cities and the rest of Australia*

Independent sample t-tests were conducted to compare overall social licence perception and its four dimensions between participants residing in capital cities and those in the rest of Australia (non-capital cities, regional, and rural areas). The results showed no statistically significant differences between the two groups for overall social licence or for any of its four dimensions of Benefit, Alignment, Responsiveness, and Engagement. Descriptive results indicated a slight trend where capital city residents reported marginally higher mean scores on overall social licence (M = 3.47 vs. 3.45) and for Benefit and Engagement dimensions, whereas Alignment showed almost identical means between the two groups. These differences were not statistically significant and suggest broadly similar perceptions of social licence across Australia, with negligible differences between capital city and non-capital city population. Figure 19 shows mean comparisons of social licence and its four dimensions between the two groups.

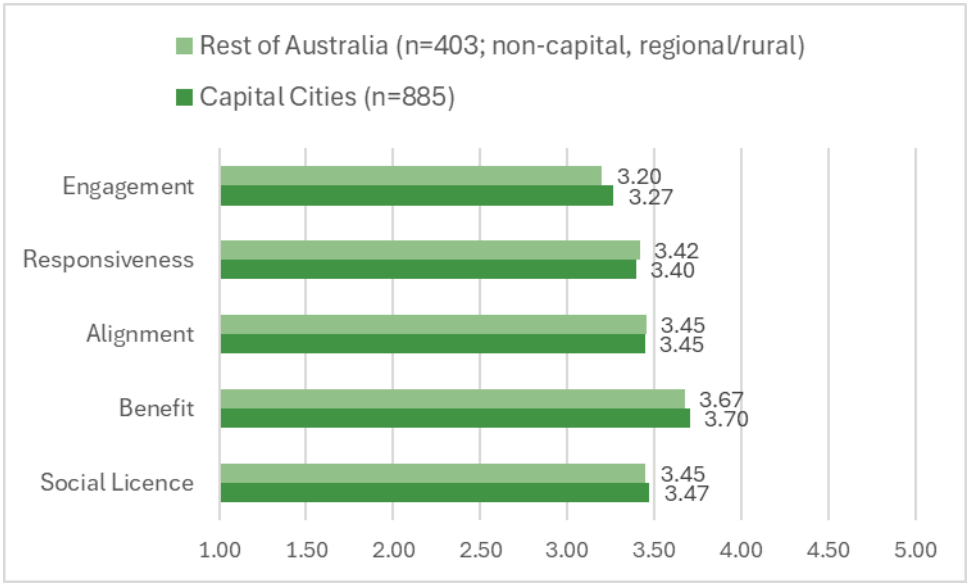


Figure 19. *Mean comparison of overall social licence and its four dimensions between capital cities and the rest of Australia*

4

Trust

Does the public trust the use of data analytics in law enforcement?

Key Findings

Around 43% of respondents are willing to trust DA, with the highest trust for Recidivism Risk Assessment (48%) and Forensic Analytics (47%). Nearly half feel comfortable with law enforcement agencies relying on DA, and fewer are willing to share their personal data. Trust is lowest for Generative AI-assisted Policing.

Highlight

Moderate trust in DA; more comfortable relying on than sharing data especially for Generative AI-assisted Policing.

Participants were asked about two primary ways they demonstrate trust in DA within the law enforcement contexts of Reliance and Data Sharing. Trust in DA is defined as a willingness to accept vulnerability to a DA application (e.g., by feeling secure and comfortable with a law enforcement agency relying on DA for prediction, risk assessment, or generating content, and sharing data to support its operation) based on positive expectations about how the system will function (e.g., contributing to personal and community safety, being accurate, and avoiding harmful outcomes) [28-33][4].

Reliance assesses the public's willingness to depend on and accept the information generated by DA applications. Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements about their feelings when law enforcement agencies rely on DA information from a specific application. These statements included whether they felt secure, comfortable, and content with such reliance. This dimension captures the degree of trust by reflecting the emotional and cognitive confidence the public has in law enforcement's reliance on DA outputs.

Data Sharing relates to the public's willingness to provide their personal information to law enforcement agencies for the purpose of DA. Participants rated their agreement with statements reflecting their likelihood to share data, such as "I am willing to share my data". This dimension reflects the degree of trust in the agency's handling of personal data and the benefits of contributing information to DA efforts.

Together, these dimensions provide insight into both the public's agreement that law enforcement can rely on DA outputs in decision-making, and their readiness to contribute personal data to support such analytics.

4.1 Willingness to trust DA in law enforcement

How willing is the public to trust law enforcement's use of DA across applications?

Key Findings

Less than half the public (43%) are willing to trust DA, with 36% neutral and 21% unwilling. Trust peaks at 48% for Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics and 47% for Forensic Analytics, and is lowest for Generative AI-assisted Policing (36% trust, 33% distrust).

Highlight

Less than half are willing to trust DA. AI-assisted policing faces the highest unwillingness.

The results reveal variation in public trust (reliance and data sharing) toward different DA applications used by law enforcement, as illustrated in Figure 20. Overall, 43% of respondents indicated they are willing to trust DA, 36% remained neutral, and 21% were unwilling to trust. Trust was highest for Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics (48%) and Forensic Analytics (47%), followed by Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras (44%) and Predictive Policing (42%). In contrast, Generative AI-assisted Policing had the lowest trust level, with only 36% willing to trust and the highest proportion unwilling to trust (33%). These results suggest public trust is generally moderate and varies by the type of DA application.

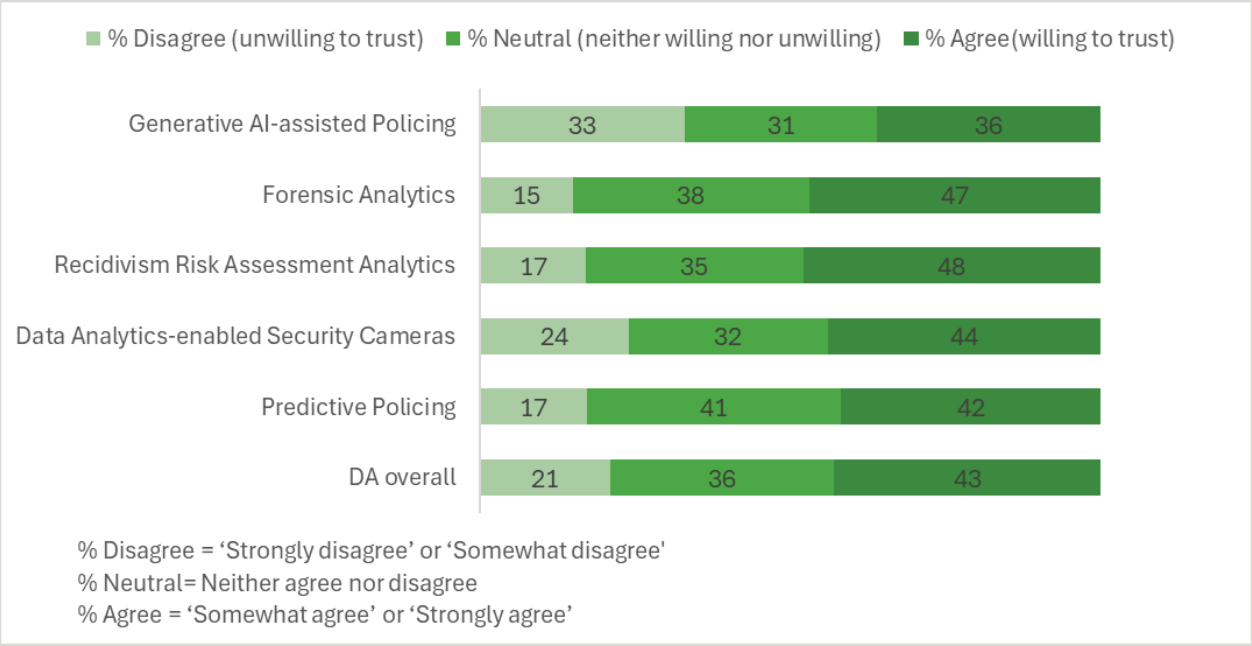


Figure 20. *Public willingness to trust DA in law enforcement by application*

A more detailed analysis of the two key dimensions of trust, willingness to rely on DA applications and willingness to share data with law enforcement for these applications, served to better understand these patterns.

4.2 Reliance: Public willingness for law enforcement agencies to rely on DA applications

How willing is the public for law enforcement to rely on different DA applications?

Key Findings

Public willingness to rely on law enforcement DA applications varies by type. Forensic Analytics has the highest reliance (57%) while Generative AI-assisted Policing has the lowest (38%). Overall, 49% are willing to rely, 31% are neutral, and 20% unwilling.

Highlight

Public reliance is highest for forensic analytics, and lowest for generative AI.

The analysis of public willingness to rely on different DA applications by law enforcement revealed notable variation across applications (see Figure 21). Overall, 49% of respondents were willing to rely on DA applications (i.e., they felt secure, comfortable, and content), while 31% remained neutral, and 20% were unwilling to rely. Reliance was highest for Forensic Analytics, with 57% willing to rely and only 13% unwilling. It was followed by Predictive Policing (51% willing), Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics (50%), and Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras (49%), all showing similar, moderate levels of willingness. In contrast, Generative AI-assisted Policing had the lowest willingness to rely, with only 38% willing and the highest proportion of unwilling respondents at 33%. These findings indicate public willingness to rely on DA applications varies by application type, with emerging generative AI tools eliciting the greatest hesitancy.

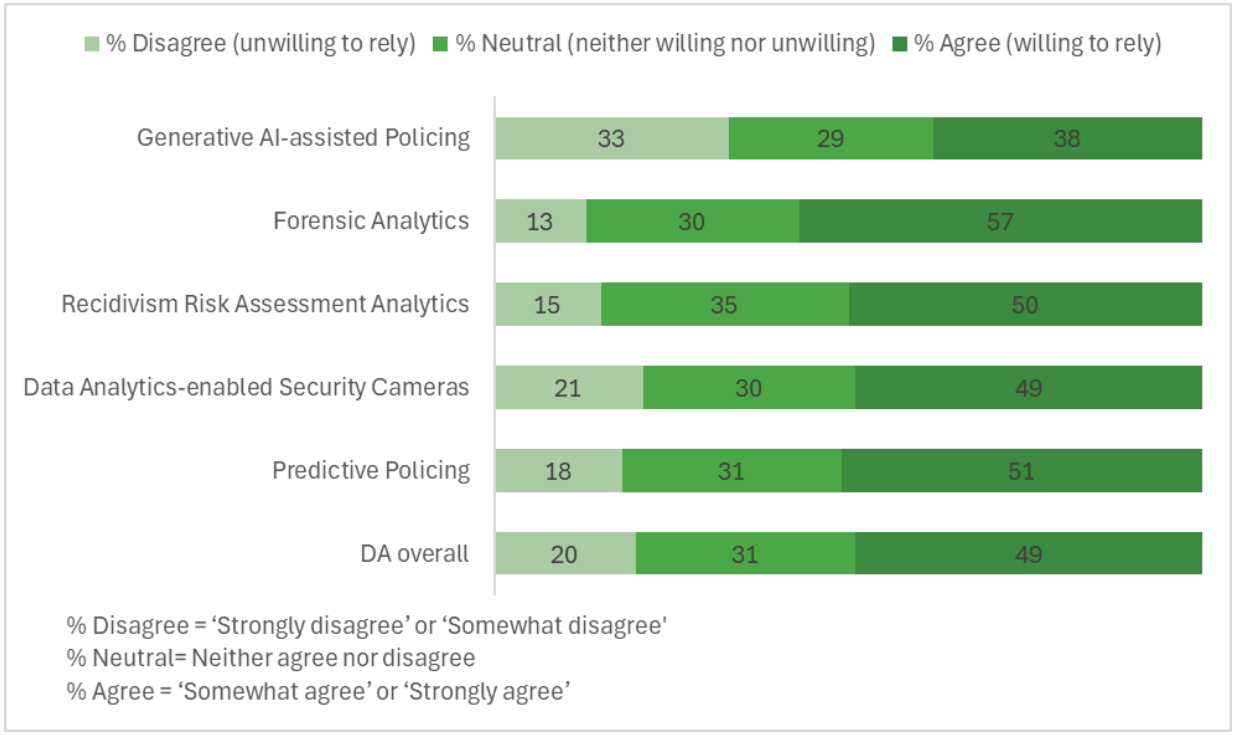


Figure 21. *Willingness to rely on DA applications*

4.3 Data sharing: Willingness to share data with law enforcement for DA applications

How willing is the public to share personal data with law enforcement for DA use?

Key Findings

Public willingness to share data with law enforcement for DA applications is generally low, ranging from 32% for Generative AI-assisted Policing to 43% for Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras, with 29% neutral and 35% unwilling to share across applications.

Highlight

The public is reluctant to share data, and is least willing for Generative AI-assisted Policing.

Analysis of public willingness to share data with law enforcement for different DA applications showed generally cautious attitudes, with notable variation across application types (see Figure 22). Overall, 36% of respondents indicated a willingness to share their data, while 29% were neutral and 35% unwilling to share. Willingness to share data was highest for Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras (43%), followed by Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics (40%) and Forensic Analytics (38%). Predictive Policing showed a lower willingness with only 34% willing to share data and 33% unwilling. Generative AI-assisted Policing had the lowest willingness to share data at 32%, with the highest proportion of unwilling respondents at 41%. These findings indicate public support for data sharing is generally low, with agreement levels below 50% ranging from 32-43%, and varying by application type, with emerging generative AI tools again facing the greatest public reluctance for data sharing.

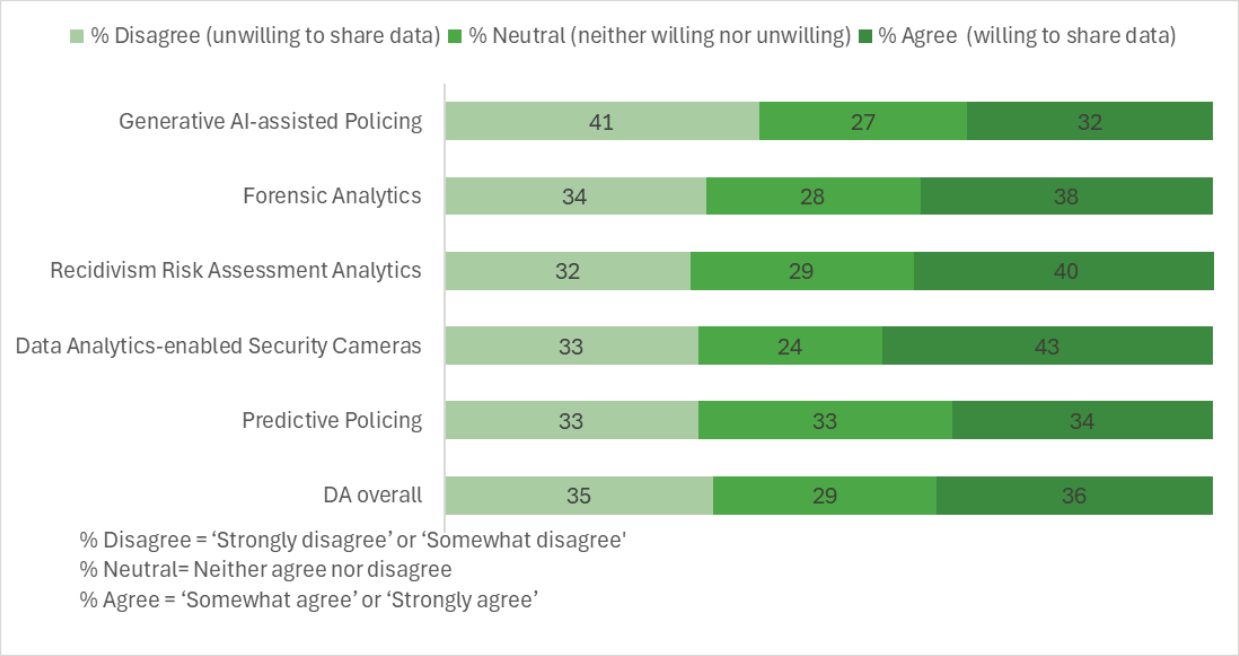


Figure 22. *Public willingness to share data for DA applications*

4.4 Public trust gap: differences between willingness to rely on and to share data

How does public willingness to rely on DA compare with willingness to share personal data?

Key Findings

The public is significantly more willing to rely on DA applications than to share personal data, with reliance exceeding data sharing by 6-19 percentage points across all applications. Public comfort law enforcement to rely on DA does not imply comfort with personal contribution (data sharing).

Highlight

The public is generally hesitant to share personal data, with the lowest support observed for the use of generative AI in policing.

A paired samples t-test was conducted to compare public willingness to rely on DA applications with their willingness to share data for the same applications. Overall, the public was significantly more willing to rely on DA applications than to share their data with law enforcement (mean difference = 0.36 on a 5-point scale, $p < .001$). Figure 23 shows these differences in mean willingness to rely versus share data by application. This pattern was consistent across all applications. For example, willingness to rely was higher than willingness to share data by 0.42 points for Forensic Analytics and Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras ($p < .001$), 0.38 points for Predictive Policing ($p < .001$) and 0.35 points for Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics ($p < .001$). Even for Generative AI-assisted Policing, which had the lowest overall trust, the public was more willing to rely on it than to share their data, with a mean difference of 0.21 points ($p < .001$). These results indicate a consistent and statistically significant gap between public willingness to rely on DA applications and their willingness to share data for these applications. The results also indicate the public may feel secure and comfortable with law enforcement agencies relying on DA tools, and are more hesitant to provide their personal data for such use.

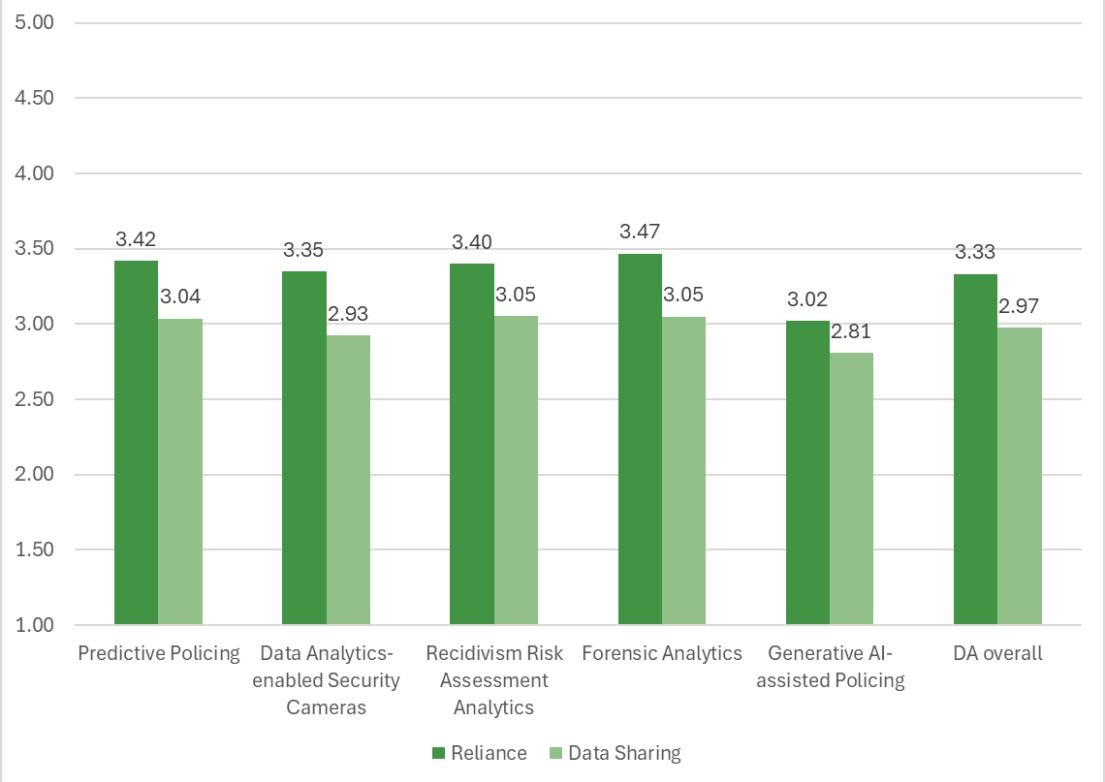


Figure 23. *Differences in mean willingness to rely on DA applications versus willingness to share data with law enforcement*

This gap is also reflected in the percentage of respondents who agreed with each dimension (see Figure 24). For example, 57% were willing to rely on Forensic Analytics, but only 38% were willing to share their data for that application. Similarly, 51% agreed to rely on Predictive Policing, while just 34% agreed to share data. Across all applications, willingness to rely exceeded willingness to share data by 6 to 19 percentage points, reinforcing the finding that while the public generally feels comfortable with law enforcement using DA tools, they are more cautious about providing their personal data for these purposes.

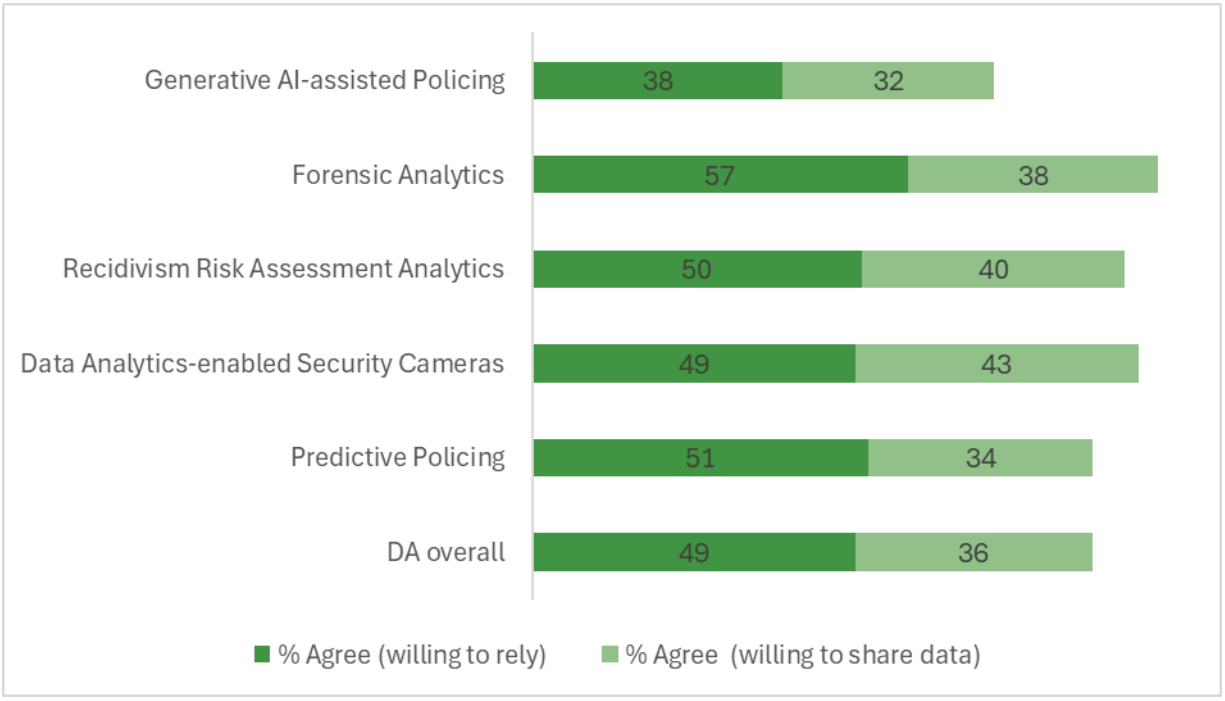


Figure 24. *Percentage of respondents willing to rely on DA applications versus willing to share data with law enforcement*

4.5 Trust in DA applications by demographic and dispositional factors

Does public trust in DA applications (reliance, and data-sharing) differ across demographic and dispositional groups?

Key Findings

Significant differences in public trust, reliance, and willingness to share data for DA use are seen by age, income, knowledge levels, trust disposition, and IT innovativeness. Other factors like education, location, industry, occupation, and prior law enforcement contact showed limited or no statistically significant effects.

Highlight

Individuals with greater knowledge of data analytics in law enforcement and its regulation tend to show higher levels of trust and a greater willingness to share their data.

Further analyses of differences in trust across demographic[5] and dispositional factors were conducted to gain a deeper understanding of public trust in DA applications within law enforcement. Trust was conceptualised as a construct comprising two dimensions; willingness to rely on and share data for DA use. Analyses were conducted both at the aggregate level (overall trust) and dimension level (reliance and data sharing) to examine general attitudes and identify which specific aspects of trust differ across groups.

The following sections explore how trust varies by generation, education, DA knowledge, income, location, occupation, industry sector, prior contact with law enforcement, and individual dispositions such as general trust and innovativeness. These analyses provide critical insights into which groups are more or less supportive of DA use in law enforcement, informing targeted communication, engagement, and policy strategies. See each section for detailed findings.

4.6 Trust in DA applications by generation

Key Findings

Older generations (71–97 years) generally show significantly higher trust, reliance, and willingness to share data for DA than those aged 18–28 and 45–60 years, with the 45–60 age group reporting the lowest overall. Trust, reliance, and data sharing did not vary significantly by age for most DA applications, except for willingness to share data for Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras, which increased significantly with age.

Highlight

Older generations exhibit greater trust in DA and are more willing to share their data compared to younger groups.

An ANOVA test was conducted to examine differences in trust, reliance, and willingness to share data across five age groups. Results showed a statistically significant effect of age on overall trust in DA applications ($p = 0.001$), reliance ($p = 0.032$), and data sharing ($p < 0.001$) across age groups[6].

Figure 25 shows mean scores for trust, reliance, and data sharing across generational groups. Overall, Older Boomers and the Silent Generation (71–97 years) reported the highest levels of trust (M = 3.33), reliance (M = 3.44), and willingness to share data (M = 3.21). Millennials (29–44 years) also showed relatively high trust (M = 3.23) and reliance (M = 3.39), with moderate data sharing willingness (M = 3.07).

In contrast, Gen X (45–60 years) reported the lowest trust (M = 2.99) and relatively low reliance (M = 3.18) and data sharing (M = 2.81). Gen Z (18–28 years) and Younger Boomers (61–70 years) had similar moderate trust (M = 3.11 and M = 3.15, respectively) and reliance scores (M = 3.35 and M = 3.33), though Gen Z showed the lowest data sharing willingness among younger groups (M = 2.87).

These results suggest older generations generally express higher trust and reliance, with middle-aged groups (Gen X) reporting lower levels of trust, reliance, and data sharing.

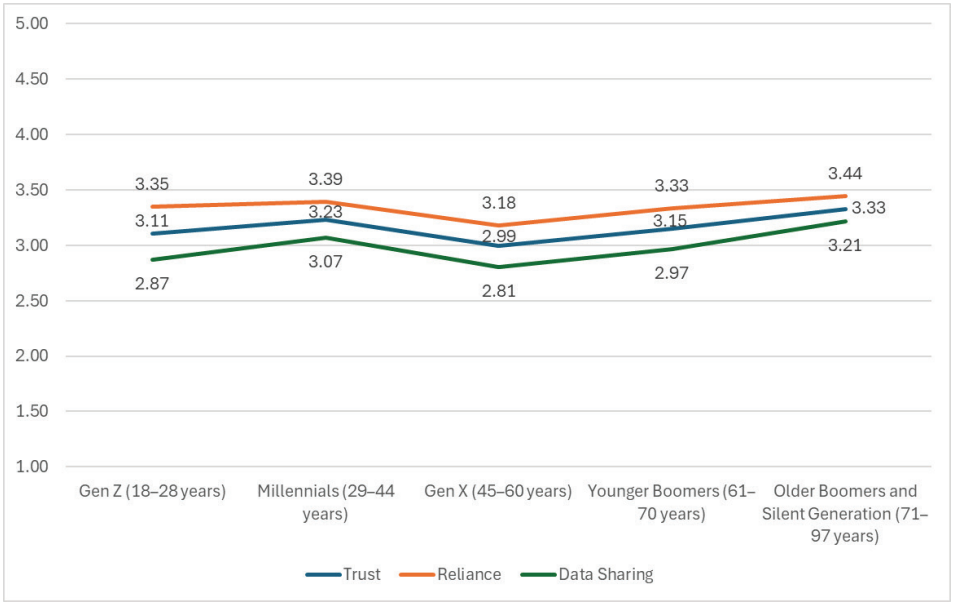


Figure 25. *Trust in DA by generation*

The next analysis examines how trust varies by application within each age group, providing insights into which DA tools are more or less trusted across generations. ANOVA results showed no statistically significant differences in trust, reliance, or data sharing across age groups for Predictive Policing, Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics, Forensic Analytics and Generative AI-assisted Policing (all $p > 0.05$). For Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras, only willingness to share data differed significantly by age group ($p=0.046$).

Mean willingness to share data for Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras increased with age. Older Boomers and the Silent Generation (71–97 years) reported the highest willingness (M = 3.31), while Gen Z (18–28 years) reported the lowest (M = 2.48). Millennials (M = 2.99), Gen X (M = 2.93), and Younger Boomers (M = 2.91) reported intermediate values (see Figure 26).

Post hoc Tukey tests showed Older Boomers and the Silent Generation were significantly more willing to share data than Gen Z (mean difference = 0.83, $p = 0.020$). No other pairwise differences reached statistical significance, indicating a meaningful generational gap in comfort with data sharing for surveillance purposes, where the oldest cohort is notably more supportive than the youngest.

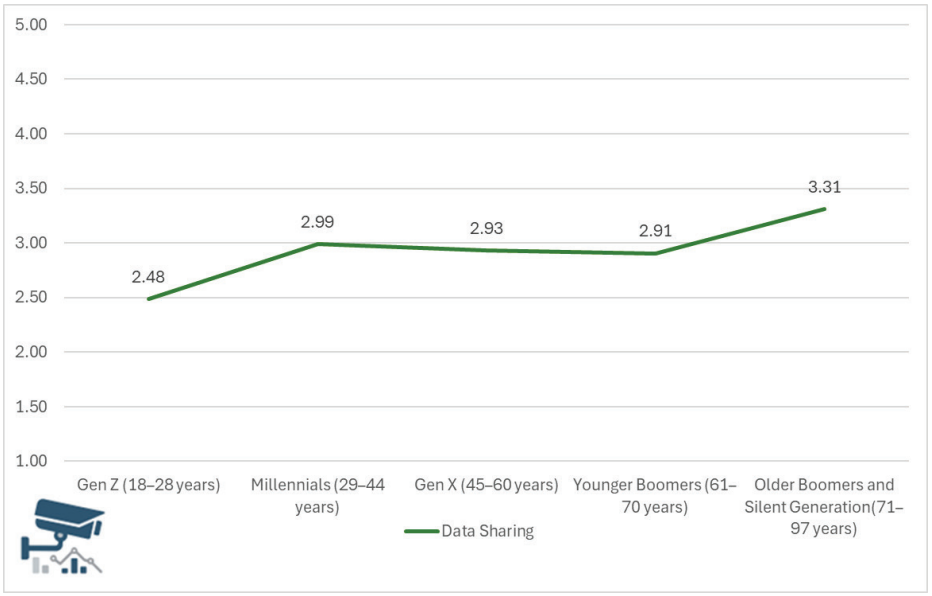


Figure 26. *Data sharing for Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras by generation*

4.7 Trust in DA applications by education

Key Findings

Trust and data sharing tended to increase with education level, with postgraduates showing the highest trust, reliance, and willingness to share data. Forensic Analytics had significantly higher trust and data sharing among postgraduates compared to Undergraduate degree holders, while other applications showed no clear differences.

Highlight

Individuals with postgraduate education demonstrate significantly higher levels of trust and willingness to share data.

The ANOVA results indicated marginally significant differences in overall trust ($p = 0.053$) and data sharing ($p = 0.059$) across education levels, suggesting possible group differences, though these did not meet the conventional significance threshold ($p < 0.05$). No significant differences were found for reliance ($p = 0.153$). Mean scores indicated a slight upward trend across education levels (see Figure 27). Respondents with postgraduate qualifications reported the highest trust ($M = 3.37$), reliance ($M = 3.51$) and willingness to share data ($M = 3.23$). In contrast, those with secondary school education or below reported the lowest trust ($M = 3.11$) and reliance ($M = 3.28$), with a slightly higher data sharing willingness ($M = 2.93$) than diploma holders ($M = 2.92$). Undergraduate degree holders reported intermediate values. While differences did not reach conventional significance thresholds, these descriptive patterns suggest higher education may be associated with marginally greater trust in DA applications.

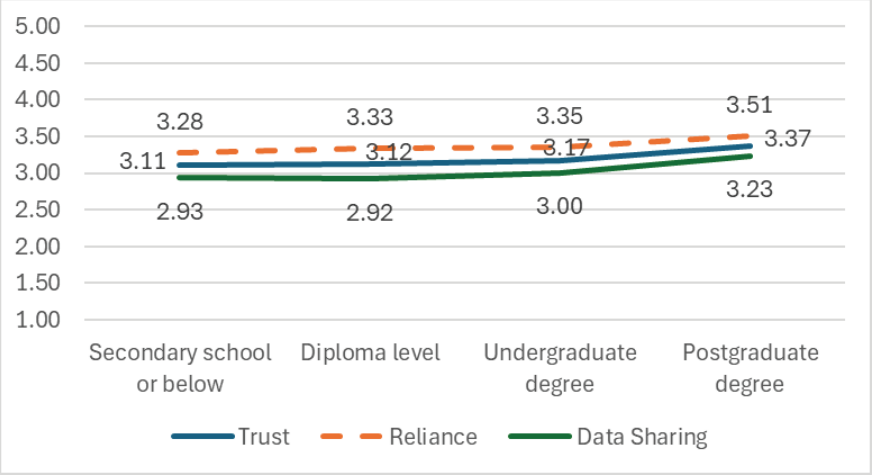


Figure 27. *Trust, reliance and data sharing for DA by education*

Further analyses explored trust and willingness to share data within education levels for each DA application type. Notably, Forensic Analytics showed a marginally significant difference in trust across education groups ($p = 0.053$) and in willingness to share data ($p = 0.038$). In contrast, no statistically significant differences were found across education groups for Predictive Policing, Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras, Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics, or Generative AI-assisted Policing for either trust or data sharing (all $p > 0.05$). Post hoc Tukey tests for Forensic Analytics revealed significant differences by education level. Participants with postgraduate qualifications reported significantly higher trust compared to those with an undergraduate degree (mean difference = 0.57, $p = 0.030$). Similarly, willingness to share data was significantly greater among postgraduates than undergraduate degree holders (mean difference = 0.76, $p = 0.021$). No other pairwise differences reached statistical significance for either trust or data sharing. These findings suggest individuals with postgraduate education are more supportive of Forensic Analytics, both in terms of their trust and willingness to share data, compared to those holding an undergraduate degree (see Figure 28).

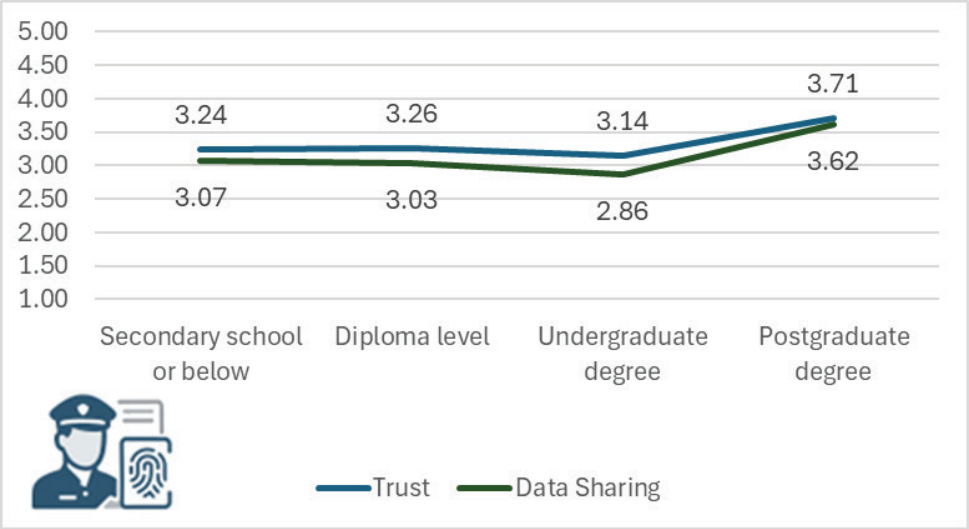


Figure 28. *Trust and data sharing for Forensic Analytics by education*

4.8 Trust in DA applications by levels of DA knowledge

Key Findings

Significant differences in trust, reliance, and data sharing were found across levels of knowledge about DA, especially knowledge of DA in law enforcement and Australian laws protecting data, and DA use. Higher knowledge consistently corresponded with greater trust, particularly for Predictive Policing and Generative AI-assisted Policing.

Highlight

Public trust increases with higher levels of DA knowledge in law enforcement.

Analyses revealed statistically significant differences in trust and data sharing across levels of three types of knowledge[7]: 1. knowledge of DA; 2. knowledge of DA in law enforcement; and, 3. knowledge of Australian laws and regulations protecting data and safeguarding the use of DA. In terms of reliance, significant differences were observed only for knowledge of DA in law enforcement and knowledge of Australian laws and regulations, but not for general knowledge of DA ($p = .086$). Pearson correlation analyses showed further positive but relatively weak associations between these knowledge types and trust, reliance, and data sharing. Associations were weakest for general DA knowledge, particularly with reliance ($r = 0.095$), and strongest for knowledge of Australian laws and regulations which showed correlations of $r = 0.231$ for trust. These findings suggest self-rated knowledge in any of these areas corresponds to differences in trust in DA applications, warranting further analysis of specific group differences in subsequent post hoc tests.

4.8.1 Knowledge of DA

Key Findings

Participants with greater general knowledge of DA showed significantly higher trust and willingness to share data. Differences within specific DA applications were not significant, except for a marginally significant increase in data sharing willingness for Generative AI-assisted Policing with higher knowledge levels.

Highlight

Higher DA knowledge increases trust in DA overall and data sharing, especially for generative AI policing.

Post hoc tests revealed that for trust, participants categorised as Knowledgeable reported significantly higher trust compared to both

the No Knowledge of DA and Basic Awareness of DA groups. In terms of data sharing, the Knowledgeable group reported significantly higher willingness to share data compared to the Basic Awareness group, while differences between Knowledgeable and No Knowledge approached significance (p = 0.060). Mean scores were Trust (3.10, 3.11, 3.27) and Data Sharing (2.92, 2.91, 3.11) for No Knowledge, Basic Awareness, and Knowledgeable groups, respectively. These findings indicate that differences in trust across groups are statistically significant, with participants having greater knowledge of DA showing higher trust mean scores.

ANOVA analyses of differences between general knowledge of DA and trust or data sharing within each application area revealed no statistically significant differences. Generative AI-assisted Policing showed a marginally significant difference in data sharing (p = 0.057) with mean scores increasing by knowledge level; No Knowledge (2.62), Basic Awareness (2.72) and Knowledgeable (3.04). Overall, these findings indicate knowledge of DA does not strongly differentiate trust or data sharing within specific application areas.

4.8.2 Knowledge of DA in law enforcement

Key Findings

Publics with greater knowledge of DA in law enforcement reported significantly higher trust, reliance, and data sharing than those with no or basic awareness. Significant differences appeared only for Predictive Policing and Generative AI-assisted Policing.

Highlight

Greater knowledge of DA in law enforcement corresponds with higher trust for Predictive Policing and Generative AI-assisted Policing.

Post hoc tests revealed that for trust, reliance and data sharing, participants in the Knowledgeable group reported significantly higher trust compared to both the No Knowledge and Basic Awareness groups. No significant difference was observed between the No Knowledge and Basic Awareness groups. Mean scores were highest in the Knowledgeable group across all three outcomes; Trust (3.04, 3.13, 3.35), Reliance (3.24, 3.30, 3.53) and Data Sharing (2.85, 2.97, 3.17) for No Knowledge, Basic Awareness, and Knowledgeable groups, respectively. These findings suggest greater knowledge of DA is associated with higher trust (reliance and data sharing).

Further analyses revealed that trust, reliance, and data sharing differed significantly by knowledge level of DA in law enforcement for only two applications; Predictive Policing and Generative AI-assisted Policing. For these two DA applications, participants with Knowledgeable ratings reported higher trust, reliance, and data sharing compared to those with No Knowledge (see Table 2). Knowledge levels did not result in significant differences in these attitudes for other applications.

Table 2. *Trust in Predictive Policing and Generative AI-assisted Policing by DA knowledge level*

DA applications	No Knowledge	Basic Awareness	Knowledgeable
Predictive Policing	Trust in DA: 3.06	3.24	3.51
	Reliance: 3.26	3.42	3.70
	Data sharing: 2.86	3.05	3.32
Generative AI-assisted Policing	Trust in DA: 2.72	2.86	3.30
	Reliance: 2.81	2.99	3.40
	Data sharing: 2.63	2.74	3.20

4.8.3 Knowledge of laws and regulations

Key Findings

The public with a higher understanding of data protection laws and regulations express greater trust, reliance, and data sharing with DA. This pattern is consistent across most law enforcement applications with one exception for forensic analytics.

Highlight

A deep knowledge of law increases trust, reliance and data sharing for DA applications.

Post hoc tests revealed participants in the Knowledgeable group reported significantly higher trust, reliance, and data sharing compared to both the No Knowledge and Basic Awareness groups. For reliance, Basic Awareness was also significantly higher than No Knowledge, while for trust, the difference between Basic Awareness and No Knowledge approached significance ($p = 0.052$). Mean scores were highest in the Knowledgeable group across all three outcomes; Trust (2.95, 3.10, 3.37), Reliance (3.09, 3.34, 3.52) and Data Sharing (2.81, 2.86, 3.23) for No Knowledge, Basic Awareness, and Knowledgeable groups, respectively. These findings suggest greater knowledge of DA is associated with higher trust (reliance and data sharing).

Further analyses on the application area showed significant differences in trust, reliance, and data sharing across levels of knowledge of Australian data protection laws for Predictive Policing, Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras, Forensic Analytics, and Generative AI-assisted Policing, but not for Recidivism Risk Assessment analytics. This finding indicates perceived legal knowledge differentiates attitudes across most law enforcement DA applications, especially for Generative AI-assisted Policing. A pattern also emerges in Forensic Analytics where, unlike other applications, participants with Basic Awareness reported lower data sharing willingness (M = 2.86) than those with No Knowledge (M = 2.95). In other applications, data sharing showed a consistent increase with higher knowledge levels. This result suggests that in the context of Forensic Analytics, basic awareness of laws and regulations may not necessarily translate to a greater willingness to share data (see Table 3).

Table 3. *Trust, reliance and data sharing for DA applications by level of knowledge of laws and regulations*

DA applications	No Knowledge	Basic Awareness	Knowledgeable
Predictive Policing	Trust in DA: 3.03	3.21	3.40
	Reliance: 3.20	3.47	3.55
	Data sharing: 2.87	2.94	3.25
Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras	Trust in DA: 2.96	3.08	3.36
	Reliance: 3.12	3.35	3.55
	Data sharing: 2.79	2.82	3.17
Forensic analytics	Trust in DA: 3.08	3.18	3.45
	Reliance: 3.21	3.49	3.62
	Data sharing: 2.95	2.86	3.28
Generative AI-assisted Policing	Trust in DA: 2.55	2.82	3.31
	Reliance: 2.63	3.00	3.37
	Data sharing: 2.48	2.64	3.25

4.9 Trust in DA applications by income

Key Findings

Higher-income individuals report significantly greater trust, reliance, and willingness to share data in DA applications than lower and middle-income groups. Differences are small but notable, especially for trust and reliance in Generative AI-assisted Policing.

Highlight

Higher income corresponds to slightly increased trust and reliance in Generative AI-assisted Policing.

ANOVA analyses revealed significant differences across income groups[8] in trust ($p = 0.001$), reliance ($p < .001$), and data sharing ($p = 0.024$). Follow-up tests showed individuals in the upper income range (≥ $104,000) reported significantly higher levels of trust, reliance, and data sharing than those in both the lower (≤ $41,599) and middle income groups ($41,600–$103,999). No significant differences emerged between the lower, and middle income groups. Descriptive statistics supported these findings where mean trust scores increased from 3.08 (lower income) to 3.35 (upper income), reliance increased from 3.25 to 3.55, and data sharing increased from 2.91 to 3.15. While differences are statistically significant, they reflect only small mean increases in attitudes across income levels. Overall, results suggest higher income is associated with slightly more favourable attitudes toward trust, reliance, and data sharing in the context of DA.

ANOVA analyses were conducted across five application areas to examine whether trust in DA applications differ across income groups. Results showed no significant differences in trust by income for Predictive Policing, Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras, Recidivism Risk Assessments Analytics, and Forensic Analytics. However, in the Generative AI-assisted Policing context, a statistically significant difference emerged for trust and reliance. Post hoc tests revealed individuals in the upper income group expressed significantly higher trust compared to the lower income group. Differences between the upper and middle income groups were not statistically significant, though trends followed the same direction. For trust in Generative AI-assisted Policing, mean scores increased from 2.85 in the lower income group to 3.42 in the upper income group. A similar pattern was observed for reliance, with mean scores rising from 2.77 in the lower income group to 3.30 in the upper income group. This pattern is presented in Figure 29.

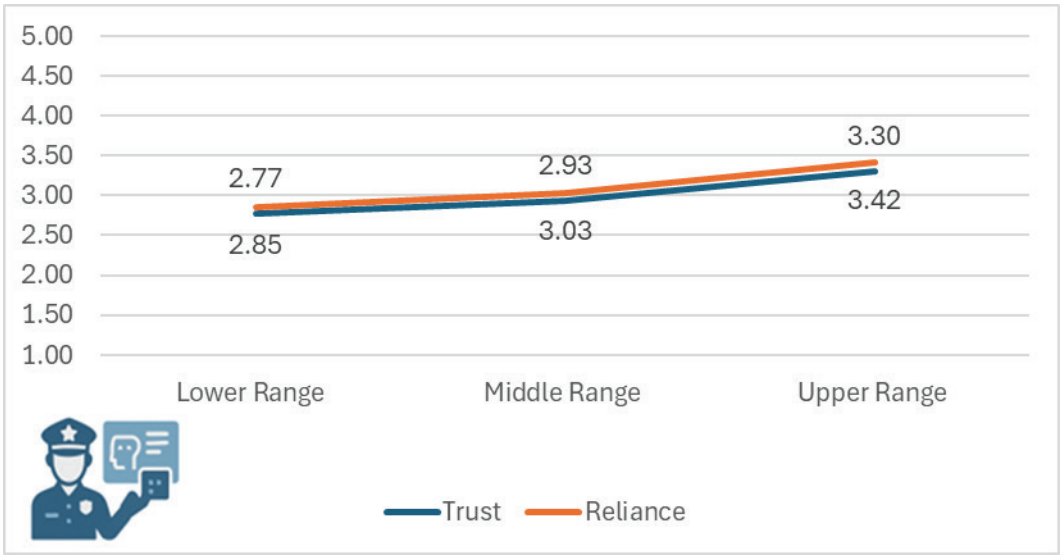


Figure 29. *Trust and reliance on Generative AI-assisted Policing by level of income*

4.10 Trust in DA applications by location

Key Findings

No significant differences in trust, reliance, or data sharing were found across states. Participants in capital cities showed marginally higher trust and significantly greater reliance on DA, especially for Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics, compared to regional and rural areas.

Highlight

Capital city residents show slightly higher trust and reliance on DA than others.

ANOVA tests indicated no statistically significant differences across states and territories for trust, reliance and data sharing. The comparison of broader geographic categories, capital cities versus the rest of Australia (non-capital, regional/rural areas), showed significant differences . Independent sample t-tests indicated participants from capital cities reported a marginal trend toward higher trust (M = 3.19) than those from regional/rural areas (M = 3.08, p = 0.056) and greater reliance on DA (capital cities: M = 3.38, rest of Australia: M = 3.23, p = 0.015). Differences in data sharing between the two groups were not statistically significant. These results, presented in Figure 30, indicate a modest yet meaningful divide between Capital Cities and non-capital areas in community attitudes toward trust and reliance.

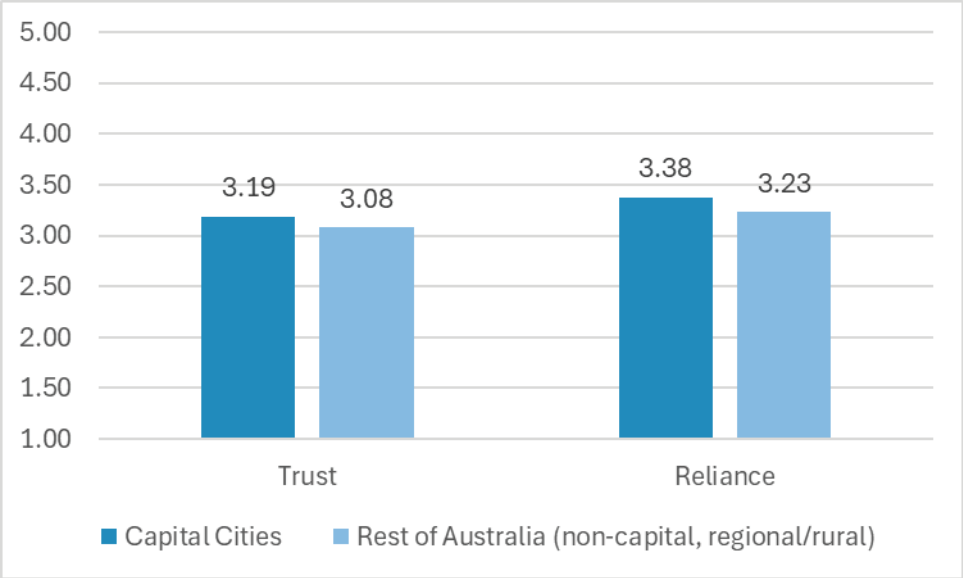


Figure 30. *Trust and reliance on DA in law enforcement by location*

Further analyses revealed trust and reliance did not differ significantly between the two groups for most applications of DA, including Predictive Policing, Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras, Forensic Analytics, and Generative AI-assisted Policing. The only exception was Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics, where participants from capital cities reported significantly higher reliance compared to those from non-capital areas (see Figure 31), with the difference reaching significance. For trust, there was a marginally non-significant trend towards higher levels in capital cities (one-sided p=0.077).

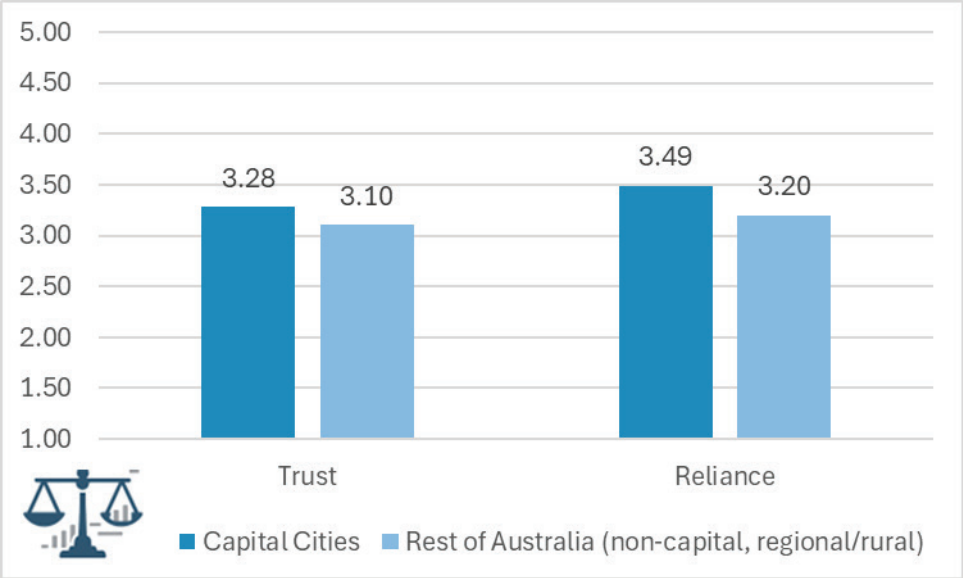


Figure 31. *Trust and reliance on Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics by location*

4.11 Trust in DA applications by industry sectors, occupation, and prior contact

Key Findings

In terms of trust and its dimensions of reliance and data sharing, reliance on DA applications differed across industry sectors, with higher reliance in Mining, Media, Construction, Education, Professional Services, and Finance compared to Other Services. No significant differences were found for trust or data sharing across industries.

Highlight

No significant differences in trust in DA were found across occupations or prior contact with law enforcement. Public working in industries like Mining, and 'Information Media and Telecommunications' show higher reliance on DA than others.

The analysis revealed no statistically significant differences for trust or data sharing. A statistically significant difference was found for reliance ($p=0.029$), indicating the mean levels of reliance on DA applications varied significantly across at least some industry sectors. Multiple post-hoc tests were conducted to further explore these differences. A Tukey post-hoc test did not identify any statistically significant pairwise differences between any of the industry sectors. A less conservative LSD post-hoc test did reveal some statistically significant pairwise differences. Sectors with generally higher reliance such as Mining, Information Media and Telecommunications, Construction, Education and Training, Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services and Financial and Insurance Services, demonstrated significantly greater reliance compared to Other Services (e.g., repair and maintenance, personal care services, parking services). Other significant differences included Retail Trade having a higher reliance than Health Care and Social Assistance, and Other Services (See Figure 32). The significant findings from the LSD test should be interpreted with caution, as LSD does not control for the inflated risk of Type I errors (false positives) when multiple comparisons are made.

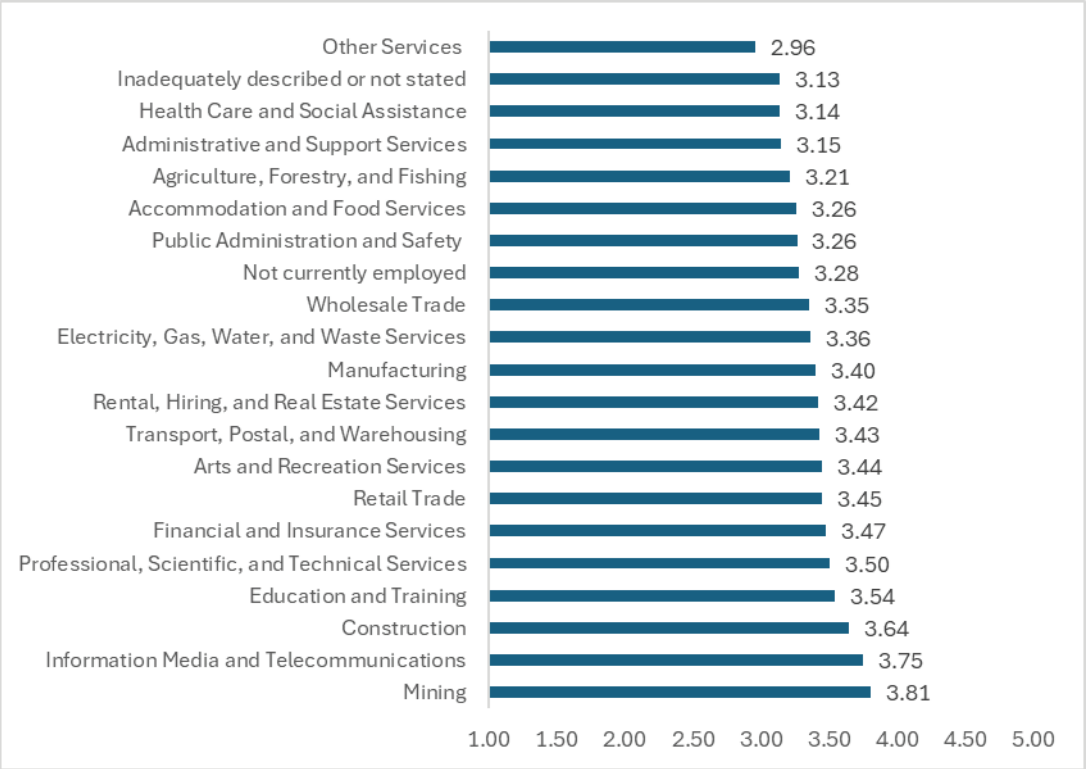


Figure 32. *Reliance on DA by industry sectors*

This analysis includes breakdowns of reliance across industry sectors, but application-level comparisons by industry were not conducted due to unequal and often small sample sizes within sectors (e.g., N = 1-4 in some combinations). These small sizes limit statistical power and increase the risk of unstable estimates. Therefore, comparisons were analysed at the industry level, regardless of application.

Analyses also revealed no significant differences in trust, reliance, or data sharing for DA applications across occupations or by prior contact with law enforcement, with only slight, non-significant variations in mean scores observed (all $p > 0.05$).

4.12 Trust in DA applications by trust disposition in humans

Key Findings

Significant differences in trust, reliance, and data sharing were found among groups based on trust disposition in humans. Those willing to trust humans consistently showed higher trust and willingness to share data across all DA applications compared to others.

Highlight

Willingness to trust humans strongly aligns with greater trust in DA applications.

Analysis revealed significant differences in trust, reliance and data sharing (all $p < 0.001$) among the trust disposition groups; unwilling to trust humans, neutral, and willing to trust humans.

Post hoc tests showed participants who were willing to trust humans reported significantly

higher trust in DA applications compared to those unwilling. Similarly, the neutral group scored significantly higher than the group unwilling to trust humans. Comparable patterns were observed for reliance and data sharing. Participants who were more willing to trust humans also reported higher average levels of reliance on DA and greater comfort with sharing data for DA use in law enforcement. Participants more willing to trust humans also reported higher average reliance on DA and greater comfort with sharing data for DA use in law enforcement. Mean scores were Trust (2.64, 3.03, 3.44), Reliance (2.85, 3.22, 3.60) and Data Sharing (2.43, 2.85, 3.28) for Unwilling to trust humans, Neutral, and Willing to trust humans, respectively. All group differences were statistically significant.

Further analyses revealed human trust disposition significantly differed across DA applications. Results indicated statistically significant differences in participants' trust, reliance, and data sharing across all five application types. These effects were observed for Predictive Policing, Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras, Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics, Forensic Analytics, and Generative AI-assisted Policing.

Post hoc tests further confirmed these differences were pronounced based on participants' baseline trust disposition toward humans, categorised as unwilling to trust humans, neutral, and willing to trust humans. Across nearly all applications, individuals willing to trust humans reported significantly higher levels of trust in DA, greater reliance, and willingness to share data than those unwilling to trust humans (see Table 4). For example, in the case of Generative AI-assisted Policing, participants willing to trust humans reported significantly higher trust in DA compared to those who were neutral or unwilling to trust. Similar patterns were observed for reliance and data sharing. However, several comparisons involving the "Neutral" trust disposition group showed less consistent significance depending on the application and dependent variable (trust, reliance, data sharing). For instance, in Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics, and the trust in DA variable, the difference between "Neutral" and "willing to trust human" groups was not statistically significant, while the difference between "Neutral" and "unwilling to trust human" groups was significant. Similarly, in Forensic Analyticsand the reliance variable, differences between "unwilling to trust human" and "willing to trust human" did not reach significance.

Table 4. *Trust, reliance and data sharing across DA applications by level of trust disposition in humans*

DA applications	Unwilling to trust humans	Neutral	Willing to trust humans
Predictive Policing	Trust in DA: 2.80	3.15	3.46
	Reliance: 3.04	3.31	3.65
	Data sharing: 2.56	2.98	3.26
Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras	Trust in DA: 2.59	2.93	3.53
	Reliance: 2.88	3.10	3.74
	Data sharing: 2.31	2.76	3.32
Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics	Trust in DA: 2.75	3.20	3.42
	Reliance: 2.79	3.38	3.64
	Data sharing: 2.70	3.03	3.19
Forensic Analytics	Trust in DA: 2.94	3.06	3.49
	Reliance: 3.28	3.32	3.62
	Data sharing: 2.61	2.80	3.35
Generative AI-assisted Policing	Trust in DA: 2.27	2.77	3.31
	Reliance: 2.43	2.92	3.37
	Data sharing: 2.11	2.63	3.25

4.13 Trust in DA applications by innovativeness with IT

Key Findings

The public is more receptive to IT, reporting greater trust, reliance, and data sharing with DA in law enforcement. This pattern holds for most applications, except for Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras.

Highlight

The public with higher innovativeness with IT is more trusting of DA in law enforcement.

Analysis revealed significant differences in trust, reliance, and data sharing across IT innovativeness groups (all $p < .001$), with higher scores among IT innovators compared to neutral and IT-resistant participants. Mean scores were Trust (2.98, 3.13, 3.38), Reliance (3.15, 3.31, 3.57), and Data Sharing (2.82, 2.94, 3.19) for IT-resistant, Neutral, and IT innovator groups, respectively. The detailed description of participant profiles and the innovativeness with IT scale is presented in Section 6.

Post hoc tests showed participants who identified as IT innovators (receptive) reported significantly higher trust in DA compared to those who were IT resistant, and those who were neutral. The neutral group also reported significantly more trust than the IT-resistant group. Comparable patterns were observed for reliance on DA applications. IT innovators showed significantly greater reliance than both the neutral and IT-resistant groups, while the neutral group also reported higher reliance than IT-resistant participants.

In terms of data sharing, IT innovators were again significantly more willing than both neutral and IT-resistant groups. However, the difference between neutral and IT-resistant participants on data sharing was not statistically significant. These findings indicate a consistent trend in which greater openness to IT is associated with increased trust, reliance, and willingness to share data for DA use in law enforcement.

Further analyses revealed individual innovativeness with IT was associated with significant differences in trust, reliance, and willingness to share data across several DA application types. Statistically significant group differences (i.e., between IT-resistant, neutral, and IT-innovative participants) emerged for Predictive Policing, Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics, Forensic Analytics, and Generative AI-assisted Policing. No significant group differences were found for Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras.

Across multiple applications, participant IT innovators consistently reported higher trust and reliance on DA compared to IT-resistant individuals (see Table 5). For example, in the context of Recidivism Risk Assessment, innovators expressed significantly more trust than both IT-resistant and neutral participants. Similar trends were observed for reliance and data sharing, where innovators scored higher than other groups, reaching statistical significance, except that data sharing was marginally different from that of neutral participants, $p=0.60$. The strongest effects appeared in Generative AI-assisted Policing with IT innovators reporting significantly more trust and willingness to share data compared to IT-resistant participants.

Not all differences were statistically significant. In Predictive Policing, while innovators trusted DA more than IT-resistant participants, their trust scores were not significantly different from those of neutral participants. Likewise, in Forensic Analytics, differences across groups in reliance and data sharing did not reach significance. Overall, attitudes toward DA varied by innovativeness, with innovators generally showing greater trust.

Table 5. *Trust, reliance and data sharing across DA applications by level of innovativeness with IT*

DA applications		IT resistance	Neutral	IT innovator (receptive)
Predictive Policing	Trust in DA	3.07	3.19	3.53
	Reliance	3.26	3.40	3.69
	Data Sharing	2.87	2.98	3.36
Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics	Trust in DA	3.07	3.14	3.51
	Reliance	3.22	3.34	3.70
	Data Sharing	2.92	2.95	3.33
Forensic Analytics	Trust in DA	3.16	3.16	3.47
	Reliance	3.39	3.37	3.65
	Data Sharing	2.93	2.94	3.29
Generative AI-assisted Policing	Trust in DA	2.62	2.95	3.23
	Reliance	2.69	3.06	3.37
	Data Sharing	2.54	2.84	3.09

5

Acceptance

Do the public accept the use of DA in law enforcement?

Key Findings

The majority of the public supports and accepts DA in law enforcement with 54% expressing acceptance overall, the strongest support for Forensic Analytics and the weakest for Generative AI-assisted Policing. Acceptance ranges from passive consent to active endorsement with notable hesitation toward Generative AI-assisted Policing.

Highlight

Most of the public supports the use of data analytics in law enforcement, and over half remain neutral or opposed to the use of generative AI in policing.

Participants were asked to rate their agreement with four endorsement statements for each specific application of DA to explore public acceptance of DA in law enforcement. These statements included whether they support, accept, approve of, and embrace the use of DA by law enforcement agencies. The four items of support, acceptance, approval, and embracing, together capture the continuum of legitimation, ranging from passive consent (e.g., "acceptance" and "support") to active endorsement (e.g., "approval" and "embracing") of DA use by law enforcement. These items are collectively labelled as "acceptance" for clarity and consistency with common terminology in social license research [23, 34, 35].

5.1 Acceptance of DA use across questionnaire items

Key Findings

Most participants showed positive attitudes toward DA in law enforcement with higher endorsement for "accept" and "support" than "embrace", indicating general support but lower enthusiasm for full adoption.

Highlight

The public generally supports the use of DA, with fewer fully endorsing its application in law enforcement.

Overall, the majority expressed positive views with 50–58% agreeing or strongly agreeing across items (except for 'embracement' which was 42%), and only 16–24% unwilling to accept or embrace DA use (see Figure 33). Repeated measures analysis revealed statistically significant differences between items ($p < 0.001$), indicating nuanced levels of endorsement. Pairwise contrasts showed the agreement for "accept" and "support" while "embrace" received comparatively lower endorsement with 24% expressing some level of disagreement. These findings suggest most of the public generally accept and support DA use, and fewer are fully enthusiastic about its use.

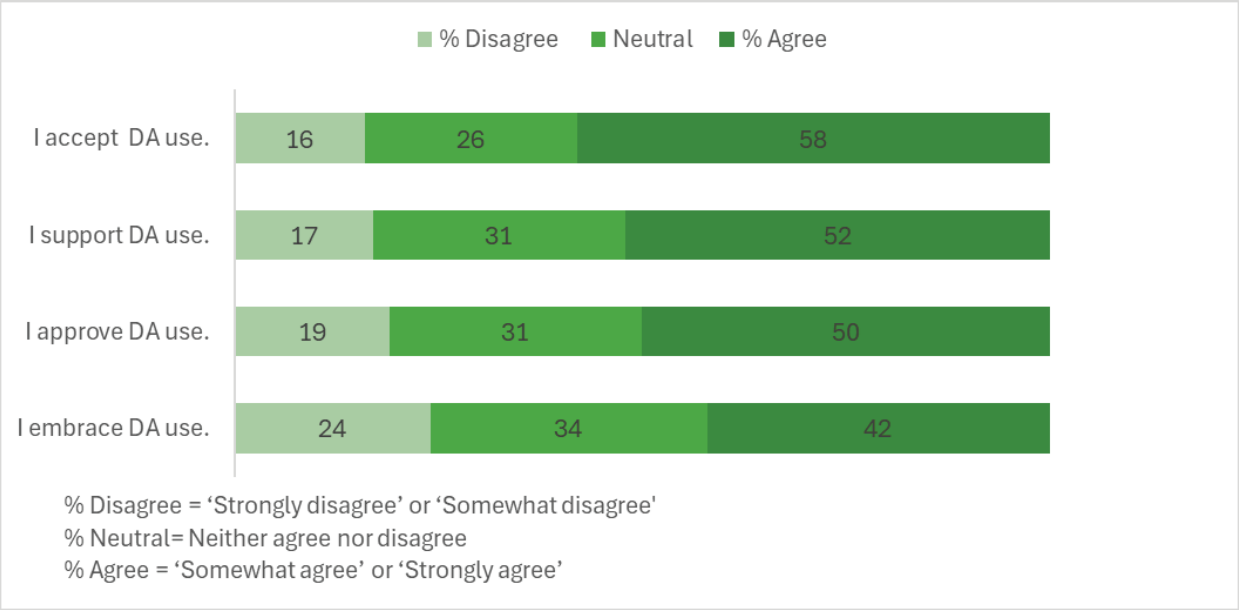


Figure 33. *Agreement levels on acceptance of DA use by items*

5.2 Acceptance of DA use

Key Findings

Acceptance of DA applications varied with Forensic Analytics receiving strongest support (65%) and minimal rejection (6%). Generative AI-assisted Policing faced the most resistance (39% acceptance, 32% rejection) revealing substantial public hesitation compared to established tools like Forensic Analytics.

Highlight

Public acceptance of DA is highest for Forensic Analytics, and lowest for Generative AI-assisted Policing.

When aggregated across items, public acceptance of DA use in law enforcement was generally positive with 54% of participants expressing acceptance, while 17% expressed rejection or low acceptance, and 29% remained neutral. Levels of acceptance varied across specific DA applications, highlighting both broad public support and areas of emerging concern. Forensic Analytics received the highest acceptance rate (65%) and the lowest rejection or low acceptance rate (6%). Both Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics and Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras shared similar acceptance rates of 56%, with rejection or low acceptance at 11% and 18%, respectively. Predictive Policing showed moderate support at 53% acceptance with higher neutrality. In contrast, Generative AI-assisted Policing was the most contested application with only 39% acceptance and 32% rejection or low acceptance (see Figure 34).

Findings highlight significant public hesitation and concern toward Generative AI-assisted Policing, as the majority of participants are either neutral or reject this application. This contrasts with more established DA tools (e.g. Forensic Analytics), which receive broader support and acceptance in law enforcement contexts.

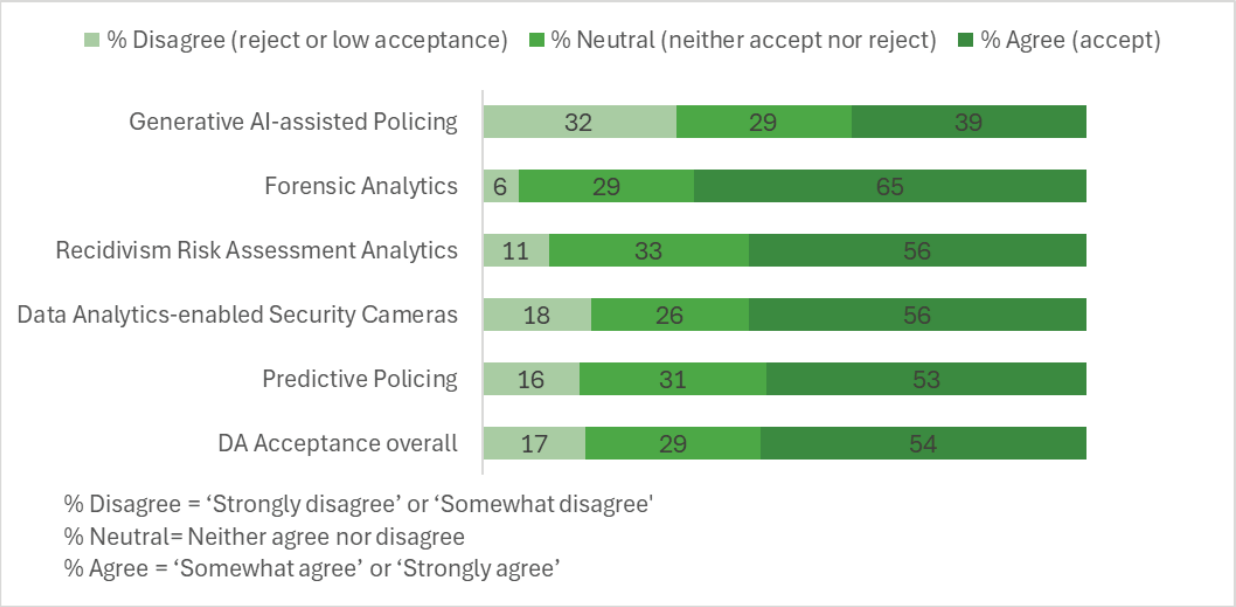


Figure 34. *Acceptance of DA use across applications*

5.3 DA acceptance by demographic and dispositional factors

Do public acceptance levels of DA applications in law enforcement differ across demographic and dispositional groups?

Key Findings

DA acceptance varied across demographics and dispositions. Participants aged 29–44 and 61–97, highly educated, knowledgeable, higher-income, high dispositional trust, and IT-innovative individuals reported higher acceptance, particularly for Generative AI-assisted Policing. No significant differences emerged by location, occupation, industry, or prior law enforcement contact.

Highlight

Public knowledgeable in DA with high trust in humans and IT-receptive, demonstrate notably greater acceptance of DA.

Additional analyses were conducted to better understand public acceptance of DA applications in law enforcement, mirroring those in the trust section, and examining variation across demographic and dispositional factors. The following sections explore differences by generation, education, DA knowledge, income, location, occupation, industry sector, prior law enforcement contact, general trust, and innovativeness.

5.4 Acceptance of DA by age group

Key Findings

Acceptance of DA in law enforcement varies by age group with those aged 29–44 and 61–97 years showing significantly higher acceptance than the 45–60 years group. Differences are most notable for Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics and Generative AI-assisted Policing, where younger and older groups show greater acceptance than middle-aged participants.

Highlight

Acceptance of DA varies by age especially for Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics and Generative AI-assisted Policing.

The analysis revealed statistically significant differences in acceptance levels between age groups (P=0.003). Figure 35 shows mean scores for acceptance across generational groups. A post hoc test was conducted following a significant difference in DA acceptance across generations. The results indicated Millennials (M = 3.45) reported significantly higher acceptance of DA compared to Gen X (M = 3.17). Similarly, Younger Boomers (M = 3.44) showed significantly higher acceptance than Gen X. A near-significant difference was also observed between Older Boomers and the Silent Generation (M = 3.44) and Gen X (p = 0.053). No other pairwise comparisons were statistically significant, including Gen Z and Older Boomers and the Silent Generation, suggesting the primary differences in acceptance were driven by lower scores among Gen X.

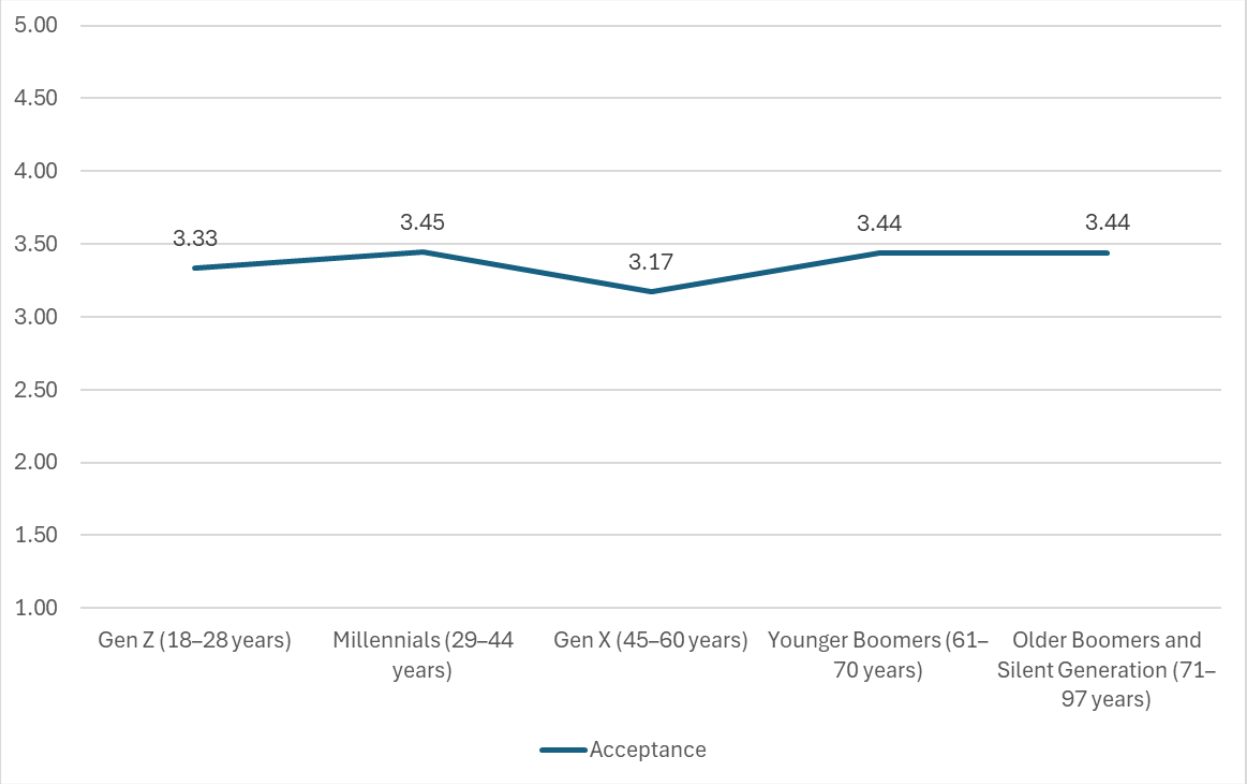


Figure 35. *DA Acceptance by generation*

The next analysis examined how acceptance varies by application within each age group, providing insights into which DA tools are more or less accepted across generations. Results showed DA acceptance generally did not differ significantly across age groups for most applications including Predictive Policing, Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras, and Forensic Analytics. Marginally significant differences emerged for Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics and Generative AI-assisted Policing (both at $p = 0.05$), suggesting acceptance of these applications may vary by age. Post hoc comparisons for these two applications show for Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics, no pairwise comparisons reached statistical significance at $p < 0.05$, with Gen X showing a non-significant trend toward lower acceptance compared to Millennials and Younger Boomers (see Figure 36). In contrast, a significant difference was found for Generative AI-assisted Policing between Millennials and Gen X, with Millennials reporting higher acceptance. No other pairwise comparisons reached significance.

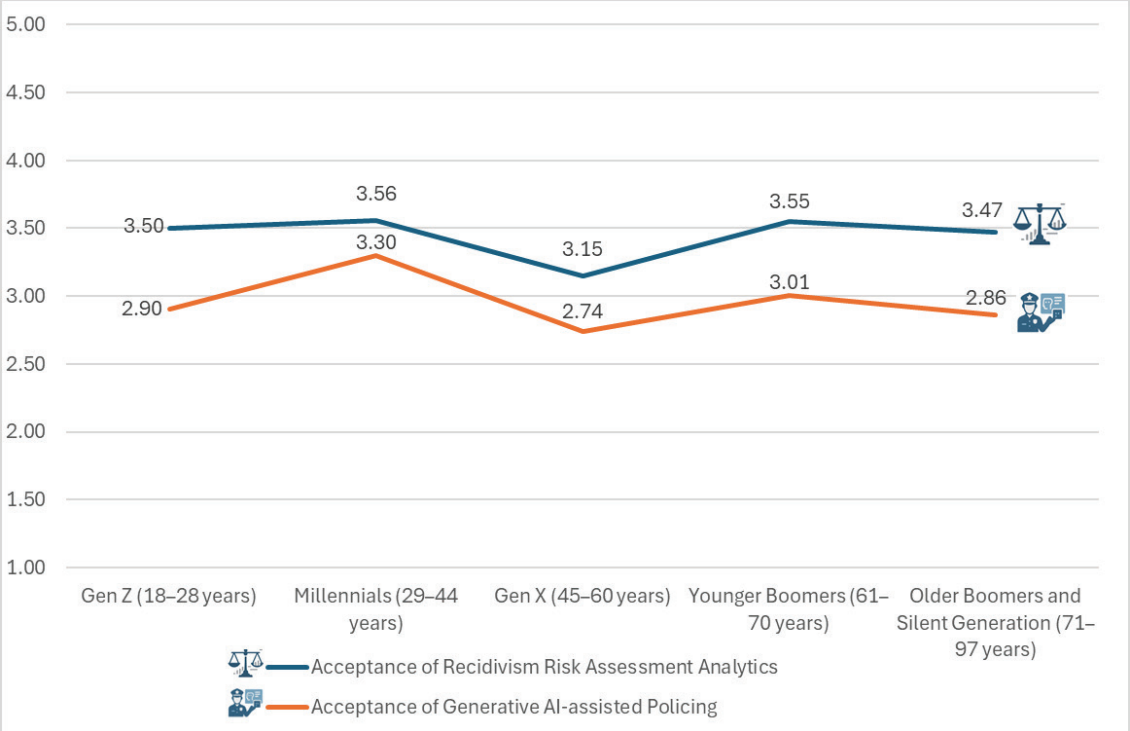


Figure 36. *Acceptance of Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics and Generative AI-assisted Policing by eneration*

5.5 Acceptance of DA by education

Key Findings

Acceptance of DA in law enforcement does not significantly vary by education overall, where those with postgraduate degrees show notably higher acceptance of Generative AI-assisted Policing compared to those with lower education levels.

Highlight

Individuals with postgraduate qualifications show greater acceptance of Generative AI-assisted Policing than those with lower levels of education.

An ANOVA test was conducted to examine whether acceptance of DA in law enforcement varied by education level. Results revealed no statistically significant differences across education groups ($p = 0.071$) though the result approached the conventional significance threshold.

Descriptive statistics showed slightly higher acceptance among participants with postgraduate degrees (M = 3.59) compared to other groups, including those with secondary or below (M = 3.34), diploma level (M = 3.32), and undergraduate degree holders (M = 3.36).

Further analyses explored acceptance within education levels for each DA application type. Generative AI-assisted Policing showed a significant difference in acceptance across education groups. In contrast, no statistically significant differences were found across education groups for Predictive Policing, Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras, Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics, or Forensic Analytics (all $p > 0.05$).

A post-hoc test was conducted to examine differences in acceptance of Generative AI-assisted Policing across education levels. The results revealed a statistically significant difference between participants with postgraduate qualifications and those with secondary education or below, with postgraduates expressing significantly higher acceptance. This finding suggests individuals with advanced degrees are more supportive of the use of Generative AI-assisted Policing (see Figure 37). While no other pairwise comparisons reached statistical significance, there were small, non-significant trends indicating acceptance tended to increase with higher education levels. These findings point to the potential influence of educational background on public attitudes toward emerging AI applications in policing contexts.

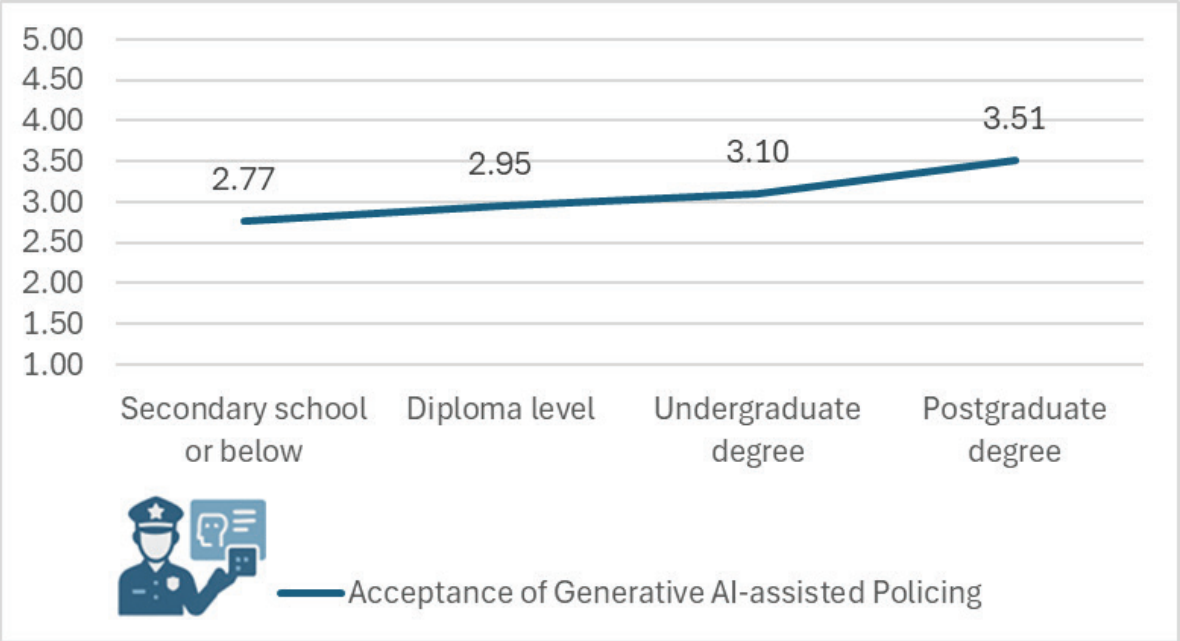


Figure 37. *Acceptance of Generative AI-assisted Policing by education level*

5.6 Acceptance of DA by level of DA knowledge

Key Findings

Statistically significant differences in DA acceptance emerged across levels of knowledge with the highest acceptance among participants knowledgeable in DA, law enforcement DA applications, and relevant regulations.

Highlight

The public, knowledgeable of laws, regulations, and analytics, shows higher acceptance of DA in law enforcement.

ANOVA analyses revealed statistically significant differences in acceptance across three types of knowledge: 1. knowledge of data analytics (DA); 2. knowledge of DA in law enforcement; and, 3. knowledge of relevant laws and regulations. Pearson correlation analyses showed weak but statistically significant positive correlations between acceptance and these knowledge measures (ranging from 0.14 to 0.21), with knowledge of laws and regulations having a slightly stronger association. This result suggests that greater awareness of legal safeguards is somewhat more related to acceptance than general or law enforcement-specific DA knowledge. These findings indicate that self-rated knowledge in any of these areas corresponds to differences in DA acceptance, warranting further exploration of specific group differences via post hoc tests.

5.6.1 Knowledge of DA

Key Findings

Knowledgeable participants showed significantly higher acceptance of DA overall, especially for Recidivism Risk Assessment and Generative AI-assisted Policing applications.

Highlight

The public with greater knowledge of DA show higher acceptance of DA.

Post hoc tests revealed participants classified as Knowledgeable reported significantly higher acceptance compared to both the No Knowledge and Basic Awareness groups. There was no significant difference between the No Knowledge and Basic Awareness groups. Mean acceptance scores were highest in the Knowledgeable group with 3.27 for No Knowledge, 3.31 for Basic Awareness, and 3.52 for Knowledgeable participants. These findings indicate that greater knowledge of DA is associated with higher acceptance.

The ANOVA tests revealed significant differences in acceptance across knowledge groups at the application level, for Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics and Generative AI-assisted Policing. No significant differences emerged for Predictive Policing, Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras, or Forensic Analytics. Post hoc analyses indicated Knowledgeable participants had significantly higher acceptance than the No Knowledge group for Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics. Knowledgeable participants reported greater acceptance than both the No Knowledge and Basic Awareness groups for Generative AI-assisted Policing (See Figure 38). Other pairwise differences were not significant.

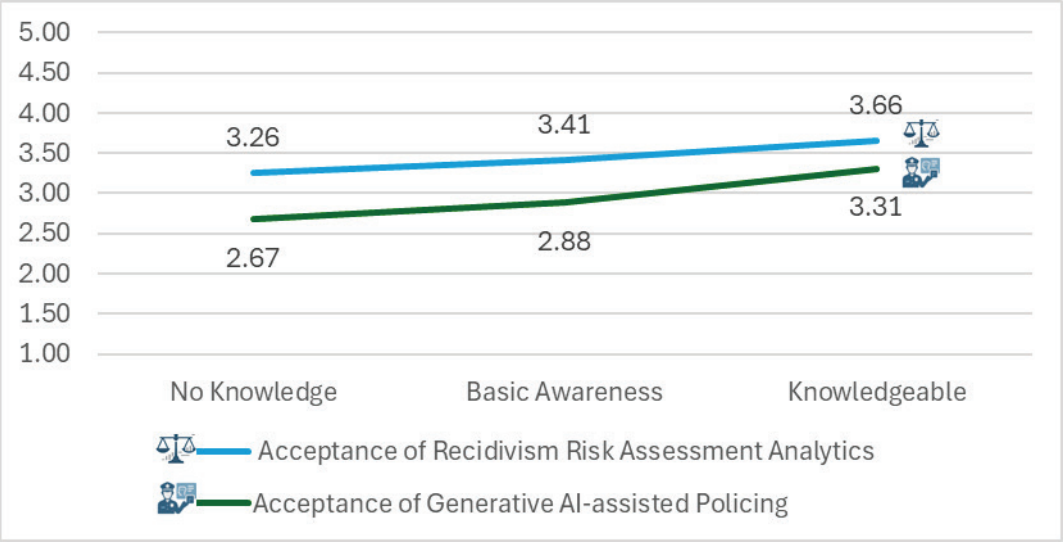


Figure 38. *Mean acceptance of Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics and Generative AI-assisted Policing by DA knowledge level*

5.6.2 Knowledge of DA in law enforcement

Key Findings

Significant differences in acceptance were found by knowledge of DA in law enforcement. Knowledgeable participants showed higher acceptance than the No Knowledge and Basic Awareness groups for Predictive Policing, Forensic Analytics, and Generative AI-assisted Policing.

Highlight

Acceptance of DA is higher among the public with greater DA knowledge in law enforcement.

Post hoc tests showed participants with Knowledge of DA in law enforcement reported significantly higher acceptance than both the No Knowledge and Basic Awareness groups. No significant difference was found between the No Knowledge and Basic Awareness groups. Mean acceptance increased with higher knowledge where participants with No Knowledge reported the lowest acceptance (3.23), followed by Basic Awareness (3.34), and the highest among the Knowledgeable group (3.59).

Further analyses revealed acceptance differed significantly by knowledge level of DA in law enforcement for the three applications of Predictive Policing, Forensic Analytics and Generative AI-assisted Policing. Knowledge levels did not result in significant differences in acceptance for other applications. Post hoc analysis showed participants with Knowledgeable ratings reported significantly higher acceptance compared to those with No Knowledge for these three DA applications (see Figure 39). No significant difference was found between the No Knowledge and Basic Awareness groups.

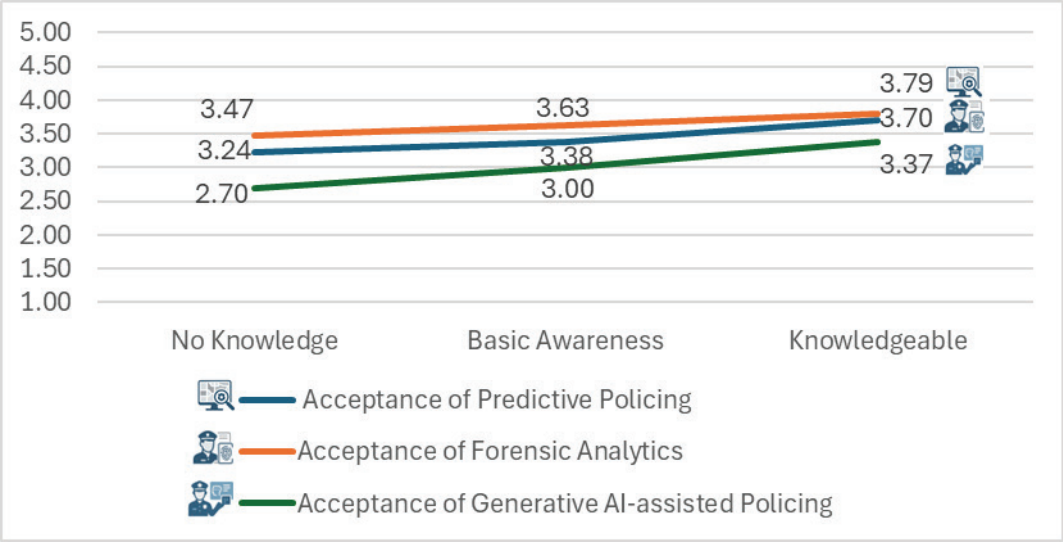


Figure 39. *Acceptance by knowledge of DA in law enforcement and DA applications*

5.6.3 Knowledge of laws and regulations

Key Findings

Significant differences in DA acceptance were found across regulatory knowledge levels. Participants knowledgeable about relevant laws and regulations reported higher acceptance, particularly for Predictive Policing, Forensic Analytics, and Generative AI-assisted Policing.

Highlight

DA acceptance is highest among those knowledgeable about legal safeguards.

Post hoc tests revealed participants in the Knowledgeable group reported significantly higher acceptance than those with No Knowledge or Basic Awareness of relevant laws and regulations. While the difference between the No Knowledge (M=3.16) and Basic Awareness (M=3.32) groups was not statistically significant, the Knowledgeable group reported the highest mean acceptance (M=3.56), indicating DA acceptance varied by regulatory knowledge.

Further post hoc comparisons revealed participants with knowledge of relevant laws and regulations reported significantly higher acceptance of DA in the three application areas of Predictive policing, Forensic Analytics and Generative AI-assisted Policing. No significant differences were observed across knowledge levels for acceptance of Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras or Recidivism Risk Assessment.

The Knowledgeable group in Predictive Policing and Generative AI-assisted Policing showed significantly greater acceptance than both the No Knowledge and Basic Awareness groups, while no significant difference was found between the No Knowledge and Basic Awareness groups. A similar pattern emerged for Forensic Analytics, where the Knowledgeable group reported significantly higher acceptance than those with No Knowledge, but not compared to the Basic Awareness group, and no difference was found between No Knowledge and Basic Awareness. The findings suggest acceptance of DA varied significantly across levels of regulatory knowledge, with the Knowledgeable group reporting significantly higher acceptance for Predictive Policing, Forensic Analytics, and Generative AI-assisted Policing (see Figure 40).

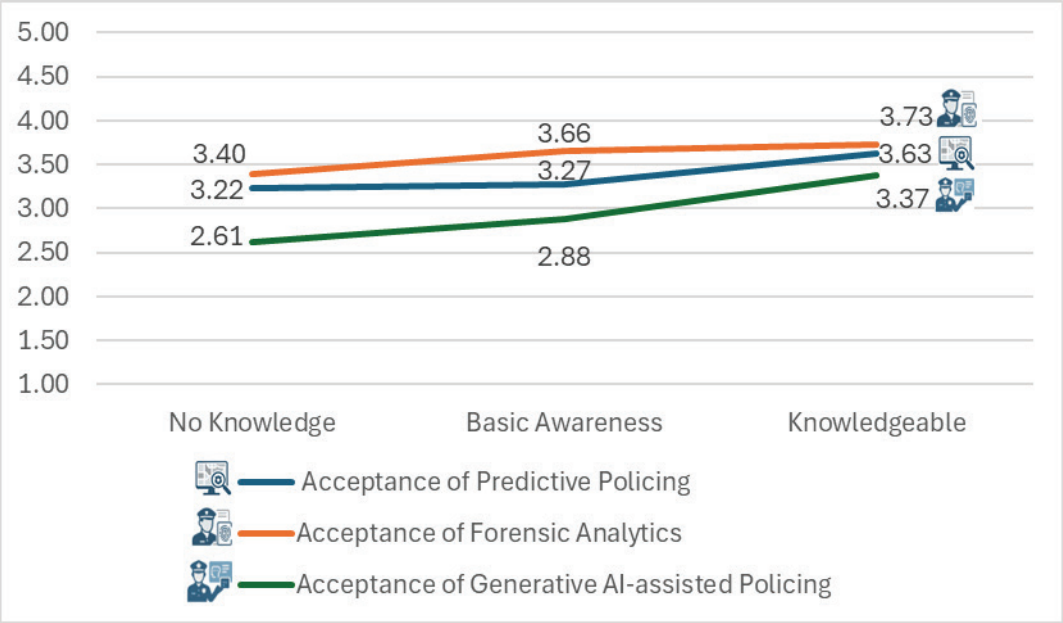


Figure 40. *Acceptance of DA applications by level of knowledge of laws and regulations*

5.7 Acceptance of DA by income

Key Findings

Acceptance of DA increases with income, with upper-income groups showing significantly higher acceptance for Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics and Generative AI-assisted Policing compared to lower-income groups. No significant differences were found for other DA applications or middle-income groups.

Highlight

Higher income groups show greater acceptance of Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics and Generative AI-assisted Policing.

Post hoc tests revealed a significant difference in acceptance between income groups, specifically between the upper-income and lower-income groups. No significant differences were found between the middle-income group and the other two. Mean acceptance scores increased with income, suggesting income is slightly associated with more DA acceptance in the context of DA. This trend was supported by a small but statistically significant correlation (less than 0.1), indicating a weak relationship between income and acceptance of DA.

ANOVA tests were conducted to examine whether acceptance of DA varies across five application areas and income groups. Results showed no significant differences in acceptance by income for Predictive Policing, Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras, Recidivism Risk Assessments Analytics, and Forensic Analytics. Recidivism Risk Assessments Analytics and Generative AI-assisted Policing showed a statistically significant difference in acceptance. Post hoc comparisons test revealed that, for Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics, participants in the upper income group reported significantly higher acceptance than those in the lower income group. Differences between the lower and middle income groups, and between the middle and upper income groups, were not statistically significant. A similar pattern was observed for Generative AI-assisted Policing where the upper income group reported significantly higher acceptance than both the middle and lower income groups (see Figure 41).

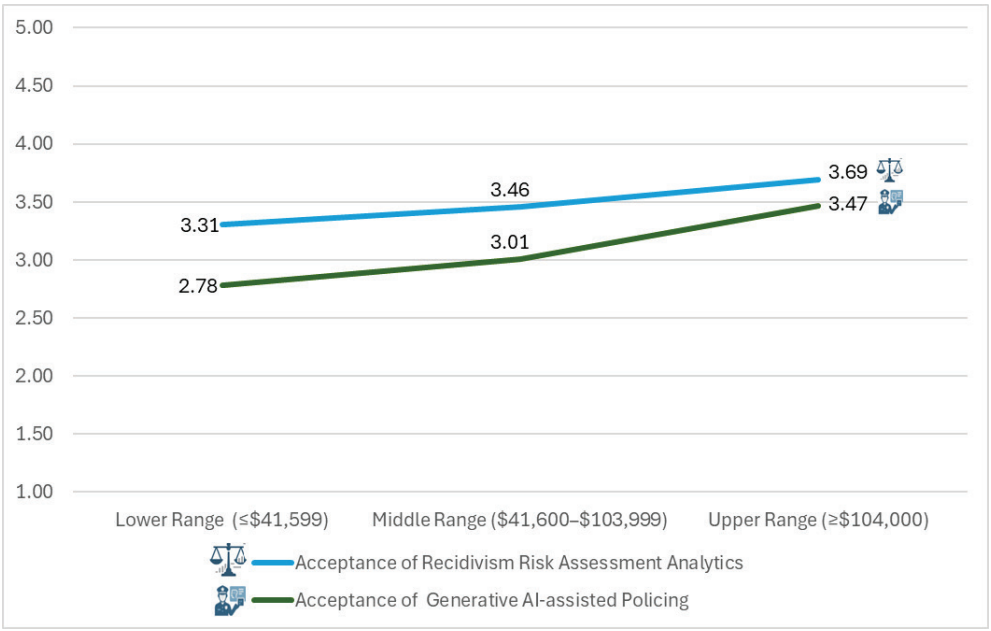


Figure 41. *Acceptance of Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics and Generative AI-assisted Policing by level of income*

Analysis of public acceptance of DA applications across occupational, location, and prior contact with law enforcement factors revealed no statistically significant differences. Acceptance scores did not differ meaningfully across states, territories, or between respondents from capital cities and non-capital areas, with only minor mean differences observed. Similarly, acceptance was consistent across occupations and industry sectors, and respondents with prior contact with law enforcement reported slightly higher acceptance (M = 3.41 vs. 3.34), a difference that was not significant ($p > 0.05$).

5.8 Acceptance of DA by trust disposition in humans

Key Findings

Significant differences in DA acceptance emerged based on general trust disposition in humans with variations across applications, excluding Forensic Analytics and certain neutral group comparisons.

Highlight

The public is more willing to trust others, showing greater acceptance of DA in law enforcement.

Analysis revealed statistically significant differences in DA acceptance based on participants' general trust disposition in other humans. Respondents who reported being more willing to trust humans showed significantly higher acceptance of DA applications (M = 3.60) than those who were neutral (M = 3.26) or unwilling to trust humans (M = 2.95). Similarly, the neutral group scored significantly higher than the group unwilling to trust humans. These results suggest individuals with higher trust disposition are more inclined to accept DA technologies.

Further analyses revealed statistically significant differences in acceptance of all DA applications except Forensic Analytics based on participants' trust disposition in humans.

Individuals willing to trust humans reported significantly higher levels of acceptance across all four applications, than those unwilling to trust humans (see Figure 42). The largest differences appeared for Generative AI-assisted Policing, where both the neutral and trusting groups showed notably higher acceptance than the unwilling-to-trust human group. Some comparisons involving the "Neutral" trust disposition group showed non-significance. No significant difference was observed between the neutral group and either the unwilling-to-trust or willing-to-trust participants for Predictive Policing. Similarly for Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras, the difference between participants unwilling to trust humans and those with a neutral trust disposition was not significant. In the case of Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics, the acceptance scores between neutral and willing-to-trust participants did not differ significantly. These non-significant findings highlight the differences in trust disposition are not always sufficient to produce statistically significant differences in acceptance for the neutral group.

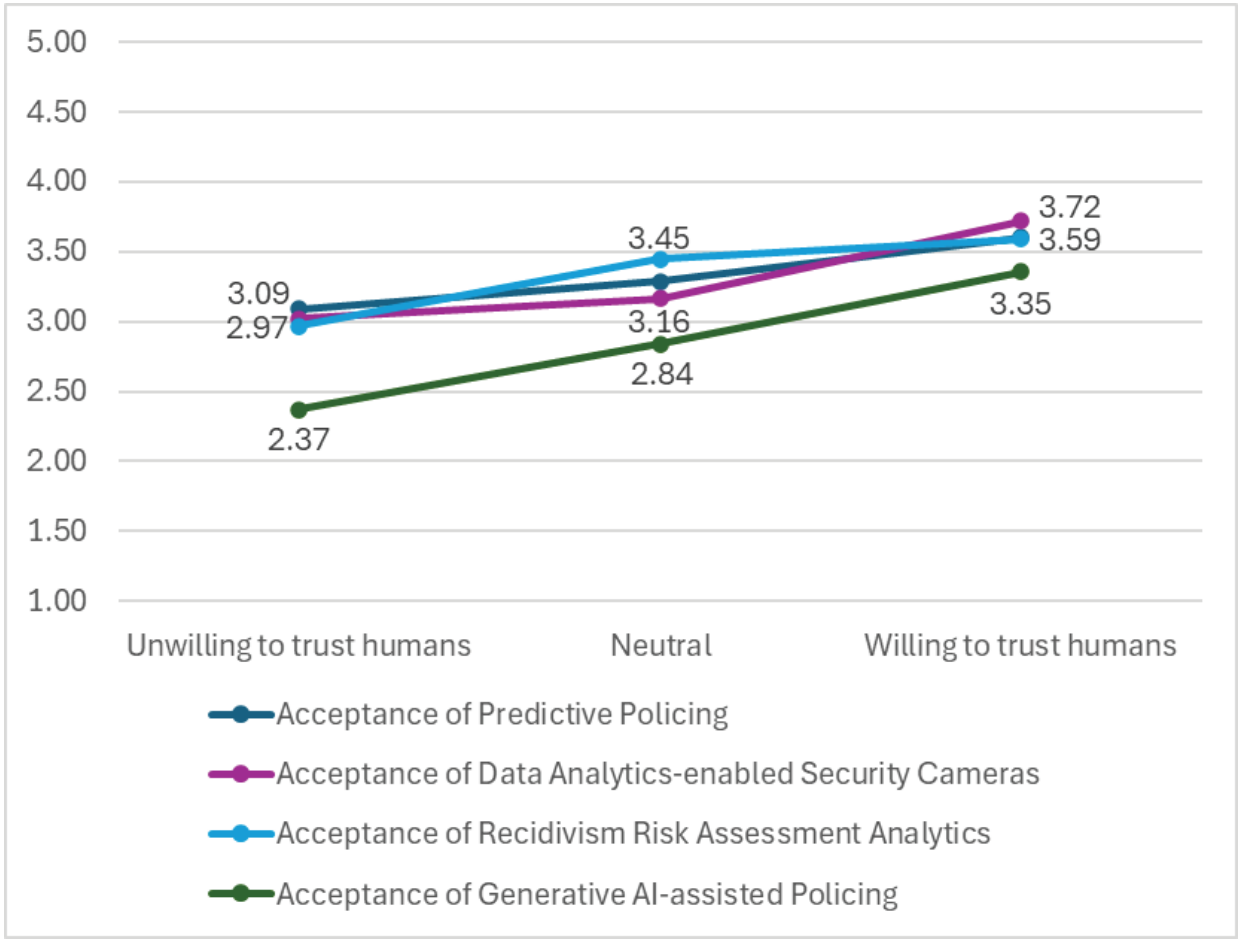


Figure 42. *Acceptance across DA applications by level of trust disposition in humans*

5.9 Acceptance of DA by innovativeness with IT

Key Findings

Significant differences in DA acceptance were found across levels of IT innovativeness. IT innovators consistently reported higher acceptance than IT-resistant and neutral participants, especially for Generative AI-assisted Policing.

Highlight

Receptiveness to IT strongly aligns with greater acceptance of DA in law enforcement

Analysis revealed significant differences in acceptance across IT innovativeness groups, with higher scores among IT innovators compared to neutral and IT-resistant participants. Post hoc tests showed participants who were IT innovators (receptive) reported significantly higher acceptance compared to those who were IT resistant and those who were neutral. The neutral group also reported significantly more acceptance than the IT-resistant group. These findings suggest levels of receptiveness to IT are reflected in participants' acceptance of DA use in law enforcement, with more innovative participants consistently reporting greater acceptance.

Further analyses revealed statistically significant differences in acceptance of three DA applications based on participants' innovativeness with IT; Predictive Policing, Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics, and Generative AI-assisted Policing.

A significant difference in acceptance was observed between IT innovators and IT-resistant participants, with the former showing greater acceptance for both Predictive Policing and Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics. The most pronounced differences were found in Generative AI-assisted Policing where both IT innovators and the neutral group demonstrated significantly greater acceptance compared to the IT-resistant group (see Figure 43). No significant differences emerged between the neutral and IT innovator groups across any of the applications. These findings suggest individuals' degree of innovativeness with IT, either receptive or resistant, plays a role in shaping acceptance of DA applications in law enforcement.

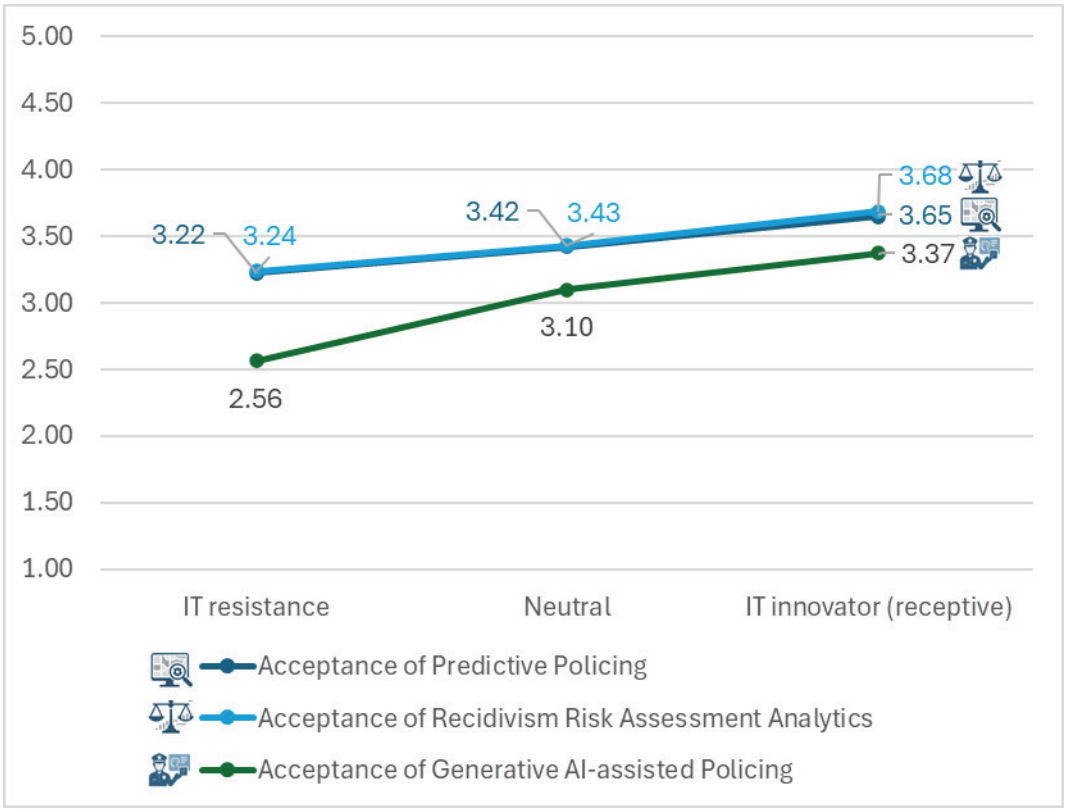


Figure 43. *Acceptance across DA applications by level of innovativeness with IT*

5.10 Factors associated with the DA acceptance in law enforcement

Key Findings

Trust and social licence were the strongest factors associated with public acceptance of data analytics in law enforcement, while perceived risk consistently reduced acceptance.

Highlight

Trust and social licence drive support for DA more than regulation or structural safeguards.

A correlation analysis was conducted to explore the factors most closely associated with public acceptance of DA in law enforcement. This approach served to examine the strength and direction of relationships between acceptance and a range of variables, including regulatory expectations, structural assurance, perceived risk, social licence, and trust in DA overall, and in Application areas. This analysis helps highlight the factors statistically associated with higher or lower acceptance levels.

The results (see Figure 44) show:

Trust and social licence consistently demonstrated strong, positive associations with acceptance across all five DA technologies. For example, trust correlated most strongly with acceptance of DA-enabled Security Cameras (r = 0.83) and Generative AI-assisted Policing (r = 0.81).

Perceived risk showed a negative relationship with acceptance across all applications (e.g., r = –0.38 for DA-enabled Security Cameras), suggesting higher perceptions of risk are linked with lower acceptance.

Structural assurance was moderately associated with acceptance particularly for DA-enabled Security Cameras (r = 0.64) and Generative AI-assisted Policing (r = 0.62).

Regulatory expectations showed relatively weak but statistically significant associations with acceptance across most DA applications (e.g., r = 0.217 for Generative AI-assisted Policing), except for Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics, where the correlation was not significant (r = 0.089, p = 0.150).

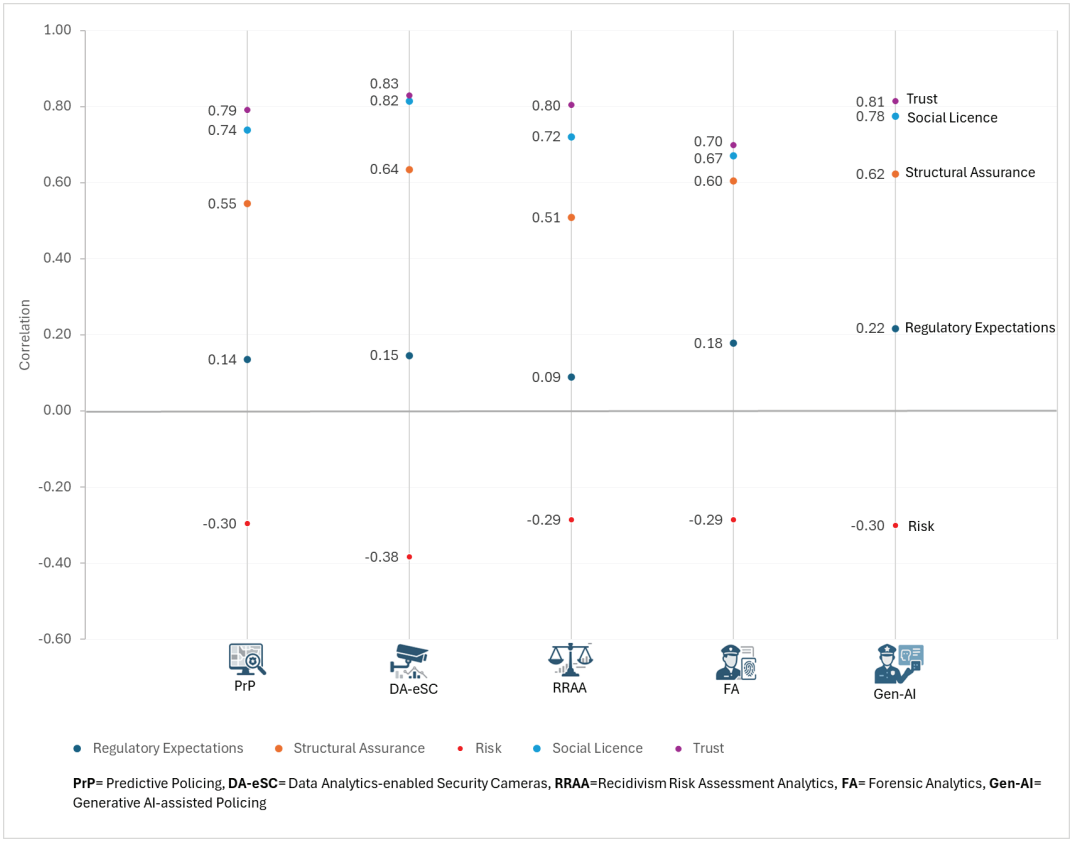


Figure 44. *Correlation between public attitudinal drivers - regulatory expectations, structural assurance, risk, social licence, and trust - and DA acceptance*

5.11 Qualitative insights: factors influencing public acceptance

What increases or decreases the acceptance of law enforcement agencies using DA?

Key Findings

Public acceptance of law enforcement's use of DA is influenced by education and understanding of DA, transparency, and demonstrable benefits. Strong safeguards in data security, privacy, accountability, and fairness enhance acceptance, while clear laws and active community engagement further support it. Conversely, deep distrust or prior negative experiences drive resistance.

Participants expressed concerns about misuse, DA's accuracy, effectiveness, bias, privacy and security, over-reliance, lack of transparency, and oversight. Distrust in authorities, potential harm to individuals or communities, and loss of human judgment undermine acceptance, highlighting the need for fairness and accountability.

Highlight

The public wants law enforcement to be transparent and accountable about using DA, with clear regulations, data protection, human oversight, and bias mitigation to ensure fairness and accuracy.

Participants were asked about the factors that might influence an increase or decrease in their acceptance of the use of DA by law enforcement agencies to better understand the key drivers associated with acceptance. Open-ended questions served to uncover more nuanced perceptions and concerns that may not be captured by the quantitative data of the survey alone.

The following sections indicate the factors that could either increase or decrease acceptance of DA in specific law enforcement applications.

5.11.1 What increases acceptance of law enforcement agencies using DA?

From participant responses, we identified 11 themes that would increase their acceptance of law enforcement's use of DA. Foremost was the need for public education, knowledge and understanding through clear explanations, public forums, and accessible information to close the knowledge gap. Many stressed acceptance depends on demonstrated benefit and effectiveness, such as DA's proven success in reducing crime and improving public safety. Transparency was also critical with calls for openness about how DA operates, what data it uses, and how decisions are made. Concerns about data security and privacy protection highlighted the demand for safeguarding personal information against misuse. Participants emphasised accountability, human oversight, and robust governance. The importance of bias mitigation and fairness was clear with many wanting DA systems free from discrimination, especially regarding race and culture. Participants also valued community engagement, urging law enforcement to involve affected communities in DA strategy development. Accurate, error-free analytics (accuracy) and clear, robust laws and regulations to govern DA use were seen as essential safeguards. Some participants expressed prior acceptance, already trusting DA, while others reflected opposition, resistance or strong distrust, indicating deep scepticism that no measure might overcome. The next section details each theme.

Public education, knowledge and understanding

Participants emphasised the need for comprehensive information and educational initiatives to help the community better grasp how DA functions and its broader implications. This theme reflects a current knowledge gap and a strong belief that enhanced understanding would foster greater acceptance. For example, one respondent noted for Predictive Policing, "*If they made the public more educated about the topic...*

I'm sure it wouldn't be so weird of it", while another highlighted the need for clear communication around Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras stating, "*Overall, for communities to have more news/education about Data analytics enabled security would really help people to make an informed decision*". Participants suggested various approaches for improving public understanding including information sessions, public forums, advertising campaigns, community discussion groups, and making information accessible in easy-to-understand language. Overall, the sentiment is that clear explanations and proactive public education are essential to increasing community acceptance of DA applications.

Demonstrated benefit and effectiveness

Many participants indicated their acceptance of DA applications depends on concrete evidence and proven results such as a track record of effectively solving crimes, enhancing public safety, and preventing harm. Acceptance is often contingent on whether DA demonstrably serves the greater good by improving community safety and solving crimes efficiently. Participants highlighted the importance of tangible benefits including lower crime rates, increased public safety, and more efficient policing. One respondent noted, *"after predictive policing is being used successfully for a long time and proves itself a useful tool"*. Regarding Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras, a participant commented, *"Information and hard statistics on the real-world benefits and tangible outcomes that are being achieved by law enforcement agencies as a result of using Data Analytics-Enabled Security Cameras - for example, percentage of crimes that have been detected and/or mitigated as a result of this technology"*. Similarly, in relation to Generative AI-assisted policing, one participant stated, *"My acceptance of generative AI-assisted policing would increase if the AI tools demonstrably helped solve crimes more efficiently and improved community safety"*.

These responses illustrate participants are more willing to accept DA when there is clear, observable evidence of its effectiveness in improving public safety and achieving positive outcomes.

Transparency

Participants emphasised the critical need for law enforcement agencies to be open and clear about how DA operates, the types of data it uses, and its actual practices. This transparency includes being honest about its implementation and ongoing use, with clear, open, and accessible communication. One respondent highlighted the fundamental nature of this expectation stating, *"Being 100% transparent. Getting involved with the public to gain trust"*.

Transparency was further seen as essential for understanding the mechanics of DA applications and the decisions they inform. One participant explained, *"Greater transparency about how the analytics work, including what data is used and how decisions are made would increase my acceptance"*. Such clarity was viewed as pivotal in building confidence and trust in the ethical and responsible use of analytics. Another respondent emphasised, *"Transparency about how the data is collected, stored, and used would also help build trust"*. illustrating participants expect openness about decision-making and the underlying data processes.

Data security and privacy protection

There is a strong demand for assurances that personal data collected for DA will be kept confidential, secure from theft or misuse, and not shared or exploited inappropriately. Concerns revolve around the safety and appropriate use of private information. One participant explained, *"Guaranteed privacy and security. Not sharing personal information. Reduce risk of theft and loss"*, highlighting the importance of preventing data misuse and unauthorised disclosure. Some respondents emphasised specific threats such as the risks posed by certain technologies or foreign-made devices. For example, one participant noted, *"Don't use camera that are made in China, Our Data will not be safe... make sure our law enforcement have a max security of resident's data... I'm concerned they can't protect my information"*, underscoring anxieties about vulnerabilities in data security infrastructure.

Others focused on preventing the commercial exploitation of personal data. As one respondent stated, *"Guarantee our data isn't being misused or sold. I don't want to be getting calls from marketers or sales people. I also don't want to people to steal my identity and commit crimes with if"*, illustrating a concern that extends beyond security breaches to include the selling and repurposing of personal details. A further concern centred on limiting data access to only authorised

and necessary uses. One participant expressed this as, *"Knowing that the data used is kept secure and is not accessed by any unauthorised persons, and not used for any other purpose. Similarly, such data must not be shared to other entities"*.

Accountability, human in the loop, and oversight

Participants stressed the need for robust checks and balances, independent review bodies, and ongoing training to ensure DA is used correctly, ethically, and without abuse. This accountability includes providing recourse for individuals who feel wrongfully affected. One participant succinctly stated, *"An Independent overseer to keep tabs on everything or I will be against it"*, highlighting the demand for formal oversight mechanisms to safeguard public trust.

This theme also emphasises the importance of human involvement in overseeing, monitoring, and validating the results of DA, ensuring human judgment remains paramount and agencies are held accountable for the proper and ethical use of the technology. For example, one respondent stressed, *"I think it needs to be monitored carefully to make sure that anyone who is identified as a high risk at re-offending by the analytics, makes sense and it is not targeting the wrong people. I would feel more comfortable knowing that humans are monitoring it"*, reinforcing the value placed on human review in preventing errors and unjust targeting.

Independent verification of DA outputs was also seen as essential to maintaining fairness. As expressed by one participant, *"The cameras must not simply remain in the hands of the police, there would need to be an overarching body... the findings need to be thoroughly verified by an independent judge"*, indicating oversight should extend beyond internal processes to include impartial, external scrutiny. Participants emphasised the broader principle of accountability across all actors involved. One respondent captured this sentiment stating, *"Transparency and accountability. If companies don't do this then how can anyone trust them"*, linking openness and responsibility directly to the perceived legitimacy of DA applications.

Bias mitigation and fairness

Participants want DA algorithms and their application to be unbiased, equitable, and not discriminatory against any group, particularly regarding racial or cultural backgrounds. This theme highlights concerns about potential discrimination and the need for the technology to be applied impartially. One participant stated, *"Being unbiased in its analysis and reporting of crime related issues"*, means impartiality in both data interpretation and presentation is considered foundational to fairness. Many respondents stressed that equitable treatment requires proactive measures to prevent prejudice based on physical or cultural characteristics. For instance, one participant argued for, *"some sort of law in forcing non-discrimination based on skin colour and other features of personal appearance"*, suggesting legal safeguards are essential to uphold fairness in practice.

Ensuring predictive policing and other DA applications do not perpetuate racial bias was a recurring concern. One respondent emphasised, *"Ensuring that the predictive policing does not have any racial bias towards Indigenous people and POC"*, pointing to specific communities that may be disproportionately affected without deliberate bias mitigation. Participants also linked fairness to the consistent impartiality of law enforcement decision-making. For example, a participant noted, *"The law enforcement agencies need to be impartial all the time, no matter of which race, background, religious belief etc."*, underscoring that equitable treatment must extend to all aspects of engagement, not just data analysis. Participants stressed the importance of mechanisms to detect and address bias as part of an ongoing process. One suggested, *"Implementing measures to detect and mitigate bias in predictive policing tools can help ensure that they are fair and equitable"*, highlighting the need for continuous oversight and adjustment to maintain fairness over time.

Community engagement

Participants expressed a desire for law enforcement to actively involve and consult with local communities, and those most affected by DA use, in the discussion, development, and implementation of DA strategies. This consultation included an emphasis on education, open dialogue, and sustained collaboration. One participant explained, *"Public forums run by the police to not only educate the community, but have a two way dialogue on the use,*

application of Forensic Analytics", highlights the importance of creating spaces for mutual exchange rather than one-way communication. Some participants noted that active engagement builds public confidence and fosters trust in DA applications. For example, one participant stated, *"Demonstrating …. and engaging the community through education and feedback also increases confidence in its use"*, pointing to the role of transparency and responsiveness in shaping community perceptions. Others emphasised the need to ensure those most directly impacted by policing and DA have meaningful input. As one participant put it, *"Community Involvement: Local communities, especially those disproportionately affected by policing, should have a say in how and whether predictive tools are used"*, signalling a concern for inclusivity and fairness in decision-making processes.

Community engagement was seen as a pathway to developing more effective and contextually informed strategies. One participant recommended, *"Community engagement like involving local communities in the development and implementation of predictive policing strategies… and incorporating feedback from the community"*, reinforcing the value of ongoing consultation to ensure DA is applied in ways that reflect local needs and priorities.

Accuracy

There is a critical demand for analytics to be precise, error-free, foolproof, and validated, ensuring DA is correct, leads to accurate conclusions, and avoids misinterpretation or false accusations. For some, this means refining DA systems to the highest technical standard with one participant explaining, *"Accuracy: Enhance the accuracy of AI in identifying, analysing, and predicting criminal behaviours"*, and highlights the expectation that precision should be embedded in every stage of the analytical process. Participants expressed that reliability is key to public acceptance. One participant stated, *"If they could be proven to be absolutely error-proof. Also that the information cannot be misused or abused by police officers"*, indicating accuracy must be paired with safeguards against misuse. Similarly, another participant stressed, *"being total foolproof, not exposed to hacking and 100% correct at all times"*, reflects a belief that technical robustness and cybersecurity are integral to trust in DA outcomes.

Participants also linked accuracy to the prevention of harm, both to individuals and the broader community. One respondent noted, *"No chance of a mistake or errors, helps solve more cases and lock up criminals. Get them off the streets"*, showing how perceived precision translates into expectations for improved public safety. Participants highlighted the role of transparency in validating accuracy claims. One participant recommended, *"The agencies must show the accuracy of outcomes using forensic analytics to show their worth"*, pointing to the need for demonstrable evidence of accuracy to justify the continued use of DA.

Clear and robust laws and regulations

This theme calls for the establishment of clear, comprehensive, and robust legal frameworks, specific guidelines, and defined policies to govern the use of DA. Participants emphasised that legal clarity is essential to prevent misuse, protect individual rights, and ensure proper implementation, control, and accountability. One respondent stated, *"Dedicated laws and regulations governing how agencies use predictive policing"*, reflecting the need for formalised frameworks that clearly define acceptable practices. Several participants highlighted the importance of legal safeguards that provide recourse for individuals who may be wrongfully affected. For example, one participant explained, *"Legal safeguards-laws that prevents misuse and offer citizens recourse if wrongfully targeted"*, pointing to the necessity for mechanisms that protect the public and uphold justice. Participants also suggested stronger laws and stricter enforcement would enhance trust in law enforcement's use of DA. One respondent noted, *"We need more strict laws, the Police law enforcement is doing great job, but it's the law and the court who need a big shake up and get more tough"*, indicating that clear regulatory authority must be matched with rigorous legal accountability.

Addressing fairness and discrimination in DA applications was another key concern. One participant stated, *"Including anti-discrimination legislation so stop racism in the algorithms"*, emphasises the role of legal frameworks in preventing bias and promoting equitable outcomes. Participants linked clear regulations to public confidence and acceptance of DA. One participant highlighted, *"My acceptance of law*

enforcement agencies using Forensic Analysis would increase if there were clear regulations and oversight in place to prevent misuse of data. ... without violating privacy rights", showing that transparency, legal protections, and oversight collectively strengthen legitimacy and trust in these technologies.

Prior Acceptance

This theme includes responses from participants who already express a degree of acceptance or indicate they have no issues with DA. Many participants conveyed general support for the use of analytics in law enforcement, reflecting trust in both the technology and the agencies implementing it. As one participant stated, *"I already accept"*, indicating a straightforward endorsement without reservations. Some respondents elaborated on their acceptance by highlighting the perceived benefits to community safety. For example, *"I don't have a problem with law enforcement agencies using Data Analytics if it helps keep the community safer"*, showing one participant's approval is linked to the practical outcomes of DA. Others expressed confidence in law enforcement's current methods and viewed DA as a way to enhance them. One respondent explained, *"I believe and trust Law Enforcement, I think they currently do a fine job and if by using AI improves their methods to protect us then I'm in total favour"*, suggesting acceptance is grounded in both institutional trust and the potential for technological improvement.

Participants also emphasised that they see DA as a helpful tool rather than a source of concern. One participant reflected, *"I'm happy for them to be installed. I live an honest life and have nothing to hide. The police force and security agencies can't be everywhere, all the time. This helps them with exact facts of what happened, where and when."*, indicating that acceptance is linked to perceived transparency and utility. Participants noted adherence to existing guidelines reinforces their support. One respondent commented, *"After everything was done correctly and following all guidelines, I don't have any issue in this. It's a good idea, however, guidelines are in place for a reason"*, highlighting that trust in established procedures contributes to their prior acceptance of DA.

Opposition, resistance or strong distrust

This theme represents a categorical rejection of DA or a deep-seated distrust in law enforcement's ability to use such technology responsibly. For these respondents, no measures or reassurances would increase their acceptance. One participant stated, *"Nothing will increase my acceptance for law enforcement agencies using Data Analytics Enabled security cameras...."*, reflecting an absolute refusal to endorse these technologies under any circumstances. Some participants expressed a fundamental distrust in both AI systems and law enforcement agencies. For example, one respondent noted, *"Nothing would increase my acceptance, do not trust AI, and system would be open to abuse"*, indicating concerns about the potential for misuse and systemic vulnerabilities. Similarly, another participant emphasised, *"Nothing. I don't trust any of this. What part of nothing don't you understand"*, conveying a strong personal rejection of any assurances or safeguards. Some respondents extended their distrust to the organisational level, pointing to historical or ongoing misconduct. One participant explained, *"Nothing - police will miss use it both on an individual level and as an organisation. NSW Police are bullies and they are corrupt. Nothing has changed from the 80s, they are just more careful"*, showing that perceptions of institutional corruption intensify resistance. Participants framed their opposition as a matter of personal autonomy and boundaries. One respondent asserted, *"Absolutely NOTHING would; my personal life is my life and as long as I do 'right' by self, others and the law, it's none of the polices effing beeswax"*, highlighting that strong distrust can stem from a desire to protect individual privacy and control over personal information.

5.11.2 What decreases acceptance of law enforcement agencies using Data Analytics?

From participant responses, we identified nine themes that decrease acceptance. Concerns about misuse or abuse of data and DA were prominent, with fears authorities or individuals could leverage the technology unethically or for purposes beyond its intended use. Privacy and data security issues were also critical, including the potential for constant monitoring, unauthorised access, data breaches, and exposure of sensitive information. A lack of transparency and insufficient communication regarding how DA is applied further reduced acceptance, as participants emphasised the importance of honesty, clear explanations, and consultation to build trust. Similarly, limited knowledge, understanding, or familiarity with the technology made participants hesitant, highlighting a need for public education and accessible information. Concerns about the lack of oversight, regulation, and accountability underscored fears of unchecked power, insufficient legal frameworks, and inadequate independent monitoring. Participants also questioned DA's accuracy and effectiveness, worrying that errors, false identifications, or failure to achieve intended outcomes could cause unjust or harmful results. The potential harm to individuals and communities, including bias or discrimination, was another major deterrent, particularly regarding unfair targeting of vulnerable or minority populations. A general distrust or negative perception of law enforcement and government compounded these issues, reducing confidence in the technology's responsible use. Participants worried about over-reliance on DA and the loss of human judgment, fearing critical thinking, discretion, and empathy would be replaced by algorithmic decision-making. Each theme is detailed as follows.

Misuse or abuse of data and DA

This theme encompasses concerns that DA applications or the data they process could be used improperly, unethically, or for purposes other than their stated intent, leading to negative consequences. This use includes instances where the technology or data is leveraged for wrongdoing, misrepresentation, or without proper ethical consideration, including unlawful applications. Participants fear these tools could be abused by authorities or individuals to achieve undesirable outcomes, deviating from their intended application. One respondent noted, "*Misuse of information from Data Analytics enabled security cameras*", highlighting the perceived risk of DA systems being exploited beyond their intended public safety function.

Participants frequently expressed concern that DA would be used for purposes other than their stated public safety goals, including using data for personal, political, or financial gain, for unjustified surveillance, or in ways that are unethical, unlawful, or contrary to their intended function. As one participant emphasised, "*wrongful use of recidivism risk assessment analytics will not be tolerated by me and I would withdraw my use of [the] same*", reflecting strong personal objections to the misuse of predictive tools in justice contexts. Others echoed these concerns, warning against systems being exploited for ulterior motives, with one respondent stating, "*Using it for their personal gain against human rights*", and another adding, "u*se for personal gain, use for revenge on persons or groups, the system is able to be manipulated to serve a person, politician or other responsible entity*".

This theme also highlights participants' fears DA could be intentionally used for harmful, unethical, or illegal purposes by law enforcement agencies or others. Concerns include the potential for the system to be manipulated, for power to be abused, for information to be used for criminality or fraud, or for agencies to pursue their own agendas rather than public safety. One participant noted, "*If it was disclosed that Forensic Analytics was being used for unlawful purposes by law agencies*". These fears also encompass broader societal implications, such as the potential for DA applications to control citizens or contribute to "I, Robot"-type scenarios.

Privacy and data security concerns

A significant number of participants expressed discomfort with the feeling of constant monitoring and the potential for their personal privacy to be compromised. This theme captures concerns about being "watched all the time", feeling violated, the creepiness of surveillance, and the potential for a "nanny state" where individual freedom and anonymity are diminished by widespread monitoring. For instance, one participant emphasised, *"I just don't like the idea of being*

watched all the time. It is creepy and a violation of privacy. The mantra of 'if you have nothing to hide you have nothing to fear' doesn't wash with me. Knowing that I am been watched all the time makes me feel nervous and paranoid". Concerns also extended to surveillance in unnecessary or private locations, reflecting unease about the scope and intrusiveness of monitoring.

This theme further reflects deep concerns about the potential for DA to invade personal privacy, lead to unauthorised access or disclosure of sensitive information, or result in data breaches and hacking. Participants highlighted the risks posed by insufficient technical safeguards, noting that, *"Cameras lacking end-to-end encryption may be hacked by hackers due to technical vulnerabilities ..., resulting in the leakage of real-time monitoring images or stored data, and even being used for illegal purposes such as ransomware and harassment"*. Such fears underscored the critical importance of robust security measures to protect sensitive, personal information.

Participants also expressed apprehension that personal information could be accessed, shared, misused, or breached when law enforcement agencies use DA. Concerns included data leakage, hacking, and the perception that personal data would not be adequately protected, potentially putting individuals or their families at risk. One respondent articulated these worries succinctly, *"If the population is being tracked, even when no crime is committed, and a person's privacy is invaded, especially if someone was convicted for an offence that they didn't commit, I would not accept it at all"*. This theme captures the broader ethical unease surrounding the use of personal data without consent. Participants indicated mass surveillance or inappropriate data use would significantly reduce their acceptance of DA. One participant noted, *"breaches of personal privacy, I would be very concerned. The idea of mass surveillance or using data without consent also makes me uneasy"*.

Lack of transparency

This theme describes a significant concern regarding the openness and clarity with which law enforcement agencies use DA. Participants indicated that secrecy, a lack of detailed explanation, or an unwillingness to share information about how the tools are applied, how data is collected and used, and the underlying methodologies would reduce their acceptance. They value honesty and open communication over hidden practices. For example, one participant noted, *"Hiding the cameras and not telling the public about them and what the data will be used for"*, highlighted the unease with covert monitoring practices.

Participants expressed their acceptance would decrease if law enforcement agencies were not completely open and honest about their use of DA. These concerns include those about secretive algorithms, insufficient public guidelines, and a general lack of communication or consultation with the community. One respondent emphasised, *"My acceptance would decrease if there is a lack of transparency about how forensic analytics are being used, especially if there's no accountability for potential misuse"*, reflecting the importance of clear disclosure and responsibility.

Concerns also arose regarding the accessibility of information and methodological clarity. Participants highlighted the need for transparency about how data is processed, who can access it, and how decisions are made. A participant explained, *"Lack of transparency on the location and use of cameras and no explanation of how the data is used or who can access it"*, demonstrated that unclear communication can generate mistrust and suspicion.

This theme underscores the perceived risk of secretive practices eroding public confidence. Participants stressed dishonest or incomplete information undermines legitimacy and accountability. One respondent articulated, *"Dishonest and secretive behaviour. Lack of real information"*, to illustrate the negative impact of opacity on public acceptance. Overall, these findings highlight that transparency, clear communication, and independent oversight are essential for fostering trust and responsible use of DA in law enforcement contexts.

Lack of knowledge, understanding, or familiarity

Many participants openly admitted to not knowing enough about DA to form an informed opinion. Their responses indicate a clear need for more information, education, and explanation about the technology, its functions, implications, and practical applications before they can fully accept or reject

its use. One participant noted, *"I really don't know enough about this area, and would seek further information"*, illustrating the desire for accessible and comprehensive explanations.

Participants expressed their acceptance would decrease if they felt uninformed about what DA is, how it works, its implications, or its specific benefits and limitations. Another respondent emphasised, *"I will never accept this concept as I do not know enough regard the pros and cons"*, highlighting how a lack of foundational knowledge can directly limit acceptance.

The theme also reflects participants' broader uncertainty regarding DA. Many emphasised the need for further research, explanations, and public education on the technology's workings, benefits, and risks before they could fully trust or accept its use. One participant explained, *"Not knowing enough about it, it should be more publicised, this is the first I have heard of it"*, demonstrating that unfamiliarity generates hesitation.

Overall, participants indicated their acceptance would be constrained by a lack of knowledge or understanding. They stressed the importance of clear explanations, further research, and public discussion to enable informed opinions. One respondent succinctly stated, *"A lack of education or information to the community/ public"*, captured the fundamental barrier that insufficient awareness poses to public acceptance.

Lack of oversight, regulation, and accountability

Participants expressed a strong desire for independent monitoring and robust legal frameworks to govern the use of DA. Concerns were repeatedly raised regarding the absence of governing bodies, committees, or strict laws to oversee data handling, prevent overreach, and ensure proper use. One participant emphasised the problem as an, "*absence of oversight*". This lack of accountability and clear regulation was seen as a critical barrier, as individuals feared DA systems could operate unchecked, potentially leading to misuse. Another respondent echoed this concern, noting, "*no oversight, poor regulation*".

This theme illustrates the perceived risks arising from insufficient rules and safeguards to guarantee responsible and ethical use of DA by law enforcement. Participants highlighted concerns about inadequate government guidelines, limited safeguards, absence of independent oversight bodies, and a lack of appeal processes or consequences for system failures. One respondent explained, "*Unregulated use of the technology. Self-regulation would not be appropriate in this instance*". The need for a robust framework to ensure legal compliance and ethical implementation was a recurring point, with participants asserting that without it, acceptance of DA tools would decrease.

Participants feared the power granted by DA could be exploited for self-serving, fraudulent, or harmful purposes such as conducting "*fishing expeditions*" that violate individuals' rights or trust. One participant reflected this concern stating, "*My acceptance would decrease … especially if there's no accountability for potential misuse*". Overall, the absence of proper checks, balances, and clear ethical guidelines was repeatedly highlighted as a significant impediment to the public's trust and acceptance of DA in law enforcement contexts.

Inaccuracy and lack of effectiveness: failing to achieve purpose

Participants expressed significant concerns regarding the reliability, accuracy, and overall effectiveness of DA in law enforcement. They emphasised that errors in the system could produce false identifications, incorrect information, or flawed conclusions, which might lead to wrongful accusations, arrests, or other harmful consequences. As one participant noted, "*Accuracy issue: AI makes errors when identifying, analysing and predicting criminal behaviours*", highlighting the potential for systemic mistakes that undermine trust. Similarly, another participant reflected on the tangible impact of inaccuracies stating, "*Finding that it is inaccurate and damage was done. People may be accused falsely*".

Concerns extended beyond individual errors to the system's effectiveness in achieving its intended outcomes. Participants feared DA might fail to prevent or reduce crime, produce poor results, or misallocate resources, thereby eroding confidence in its practical utility. One respondent emphasised this point, "*if the system was constantly failing and not helping in catching the criminals*", to illustrate concern about persistent inefficiency. Others highlighted the social consequences of flawed outcomes, with one participant noting, "*Additionally, if the technology produced*

inaccurate or unfair outcomes, …public trust would likely erode".

High-stakes decision-making informed by DA further amplifies concerns. Participants underscored that repeated failures, misuse, or lack of oversight could significantly decrease acceptance, especially when public accountability is absent. One respondent explained, "*My acceptance would decrease … especially if there's no accountability for potential misuse*", reflecting the interplay between accuracy, effectiveness, and governance in shaping public acceptance. Overall, participants view reliability, accuracy, and demonstrated effectiveness as essential for DA acceptance. Without these assurances, the technology is seen as potentially flawed, or ineffective, reducing willingness to support its implementation in law enforcement.

Harm to individuals and communities, including bias and discrimination

Participants expressed significant concern that DA could lead to unfair treatment, prejudice, or the targeting of specific individuals or groups. They emphasised that human biases in interpreting data, as well as biases embedded within the technology itself, could perpetuate discrimination. One respondent illustrated this risk noting, "*If it was used in a biased way or unfairly*", highlighting apprehension about inequitable application. Concerns extended to the disproportionate monitoring and profiling of certain racial, social, or low-income communities. Participants stressed that predictive policing algorithms trained on biased historical data might reinforce existing societal inequalities, leading to unfair targeting and marginalisation. As one participant explained, "*Bias, … and unjust profiling would decrease public acceptance*", highlighting the broader social implications of such systemic bias.

Participants also highlighted the potential for direct harm, including false accusations and wrongful convictions. One participant commented, "*wrongful accusations, discrimination, …, I would be very concerned*", reflecting fears DA could have tangible negative consequences for individuals' lives. Similarly, concerns about the technology's failure to protect citizens effectively were expressed through the example, "*…has caused people to be wrongly convicted*", indicating the seriousness of potential harms when DA is applied without adequate safeguards. Overall, participants view bias, discrimination, and negative impacts on individuals or communities as critical barriers to the acceptance of DA.

General distrust or negative perception of law enforcement or government

This theme reflects a scepticism or distrust toward authorities responsible for implementing and operating DA. Participants expressed concerns about government overreach, corruption within law enforcement, and the possibility agencies might not act in the public's best interest, reducing acceptance regardless of the technology's potential benefits. One participant illustrated this distrust stating, "*I do not trust law enforcement agencies in any way shape or form. They are corrupt and my acceptance of them could not be lower than what it is now and has been for a very long time*".

Pre-existing distrust, often stemming from prior negative experiences or perceptions of unethical behaviour, was identified as a key factor influencing acceptance. Participants emphasised a belief in systemic corruption or power misuse could override confidence in the technology itself. One respondent noted, "*Thinking that officers looking to just pin a particular person to a crime because of a grudge*", highlighting fears of individual bias within institutional operations. Another participant elaborated, "*I already don't accept it and doubt that I ever will. The police routinely abuse any power that is given to them so this will be no different*", reflecting entrenched scepticism rooted in historical and ongoing abuses of authority.

Broader concern about government or AI misuse was also highlighted with a participant stating, "*Hearing stories of government abuse and illegal surveillance of people*", demonstrates that prior narratives of overreach shape current perceptions. The potential for institutional corruption to erode community trust was emphasised, "*corruption within government agencies and this will lead to distrust among communities*".

Over-reliance on DA and loss of the human element and judgment

Participants expressed concern that law enforcement agencies might become overly dependent on DA, potentially diminishing human judgment and interaction. They highlighted concerns that officers could rely on DA more than

their own professional expertise, leading to poor decision-making, job losses, and a shift away from traditional, human-centric policing practices. As one participant explained, "*If officers were relying on it more than humans, and if officers automatically assumed was correct because is technology*", to illustrate the fears of blind trust in algorithmic outputs.

The potential loss of human interpretation and ethical consideration was another central concern. Participants stressed DA should support rather than replace human discretion, as relying solely on data could produce unfair or inappropriate outcomes. One respondent noted, "*A human being not interpreting data or situations correctly or fairly*", underscores the risks when human judgment is sidelined. Similarly, participants warned against the complete adoption of AI-driven processes, "*To let the machines take over is a dangerous move and one I do not support*", reflecting the moral and practical unease with removing human oversight.

Participants also raised the broader implications of dehumanising policing practices, highlighting that excessive reliance on DA could create impersonal or "Orwellian" law enforcement. One participant emphasised this concern stating, "*Relying on technology for everything. I don't completely trust anything that doesn't have a heartbeat*", pointing to the perceived loss of empathy and human connection in policing. Concerns about blind reliance were further illustrated by another respondent, "*Blindly using forensics and not investigating further into the matter at hand*", indicates that over-dependence on DA could compromise thorough investigations and ethical responsibility. Participants emphasised that policing involves nuance and variability that cannot be fully captured by algorithms. One participant highlighted this point stating, "*taking the human aspect out of policing, not everything is black and white, there are many variances*", reinforcing the importance of human judgment in complex, real-world situations. Another participant captured the overarching concern about irreversible consequences noting, "*I believe choices should be made by people not by artificial intelligence. As the wrong judgment could be made and then can't be taken back*".

6

Research Methodology

6.1 Survey Design

This study is based on data from a national survey designed to examine community attitudes about the use of DA in law enforcement. The survey gathered responses from 1288 participants across diverse demographics in Australia, providing a comprehensive snapshot of public perceptions.

The survey design was informed by a systematic process; a literature review to identify existing surveys examining community attitudes and social license in DA in the context of law enforcement. This review revealed a lack of directly comparable instruments. Key constructs were then identified relevant to community attitudes toward DA, such as trust, acceptance, and perceived risks and benefits, drawing on broader studies of public attitudes to AI and data use. Recognising the importance of context in shaping public perceptions, application descriptions were incorporated to present realistic descriptions or scenarios of DA use in law enforcement. Validated measures were used or adapted from previous public attitudes surveys, reports, and academic literature to ensure rigour.

The survey was co-designed with domain experts and academic researchers to ensure relevance, clarity, and alignment with the research objectives. A focus group was conducted with members of the QPS and a follow-up survey for feedback to gather initial insights and refine the language and structure of the survey items, particularly DA applications in law enforcement. Feedback from researchers in DA and law enforcement, academic colleagues, and the QPS domain experts was incorporated to enhance the clarity and validity of the instrument.

A pilot study was conducted using Prolific, to test the survey. Several refinements were made based on the pilot findings and feedback from domain experts to improve question wording, survey flow, and overall usability prior to the full-scale launch. See Appendix for details of survey items.

6.2 Data collection

Data was collected using the Qualtrics platform in April 2025. Participants were recruited through a reputable research panel provider in Australia, which sources individuals who are broadly representative of the national population. Panel members were invited to complete the survey online. The final sample consisted of 1,288 respondents from all Australian states and territories. The sample was designed to be nationally representative of the Australian adult population based on gender, age, and geographic location, in line with the most recent Australian Census data, with a ±5% quota flexibility applied by the data panel provider.

6.3 Data analysis

A multi-step mixed-methods analysis strategy was used to understand the survey data. Quantitatively, the key demographic characteristics were summarised, relationships examined between variables, and tested for significant differences across groups using statistical methods such as frequency analysis, mean comparisons, correlations, t-tests, and ANOVA, consistent with established literature supporting parametric analysis of Likert-scale data[9] [33, 36, 37]. Where significant differences emerged, category-level data were reported to highlight variations across data analytics applications, states, or demographic groups. Qualitatively, open-ended survey responses were analysed thematically to capture nuanced participant perspectives and insights. This

combined approach provided both descriptive and inferential evidence regarding public perceptions of data analytics in law enforcement. All quantitative analyses were conducted using SPSS.

6.4 DA applications and context

Participants were provided key contexts to ensure clarity before being asked about their understanding of data analytics in law enforcement. First, the following definition of Data Analytics was shared:

Data analytics is a combination of processes and various tools, including data mining, statistics, and artificial intelligence (AI), to analyse large datasets and derive valuable insights for informed decision-making [38].

Next, the context of law enforcement's use of data analytics was explained as:

A law enforcement agency, such as a police service, the Australian Federal Police, Customs, or any government body with responsibilities for revenue protection or law enforcement, may use or disclose personal information as necessary for activities such as the prevention, detection, investigation, prosecution, or punishment of criminal offences or breaches of the law. This may also include enforcing laws related to confiscating proceeds of crime, protecting public revenue, investigating serious misconduct, and implementing court orders. Data analytics serves as one method to support these activities.

Respondents were provided with a description of data analytics in law enforcement, including five applications, with each respondent being assigned to one specific application, before answering the main questions.

				
Application 1: Predictive Policing	Application 2: Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras	Application 3: Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics	Application 4: Forensic Analytics	Application 5: Generative AI-assisted Policing
**Icons generated by AI*				

Application descriptions (refer introduction section) were developed based on the current use of data analytics, insights from a focus group study with domain experts in a law enforcement agency, and input from academics.

7

Participant Profile

7.1 Participant demographic information

Demographic information was gathered from respondents to better understand participant characteristics. The demographic results reveal important insights into the composition of the survey participants. The final sample of 1,288 respondents was designed to be nationally representative of the Australian adult population, reflecting distributions by gender, age, and geographic location across all states and territories.

Figure 45 presents the age distribution, showing a diverse range of participants. A notable proportion falls within the 29–44 age bracket, offering a broad perspective on perceptions of data analytics in law enforcement.

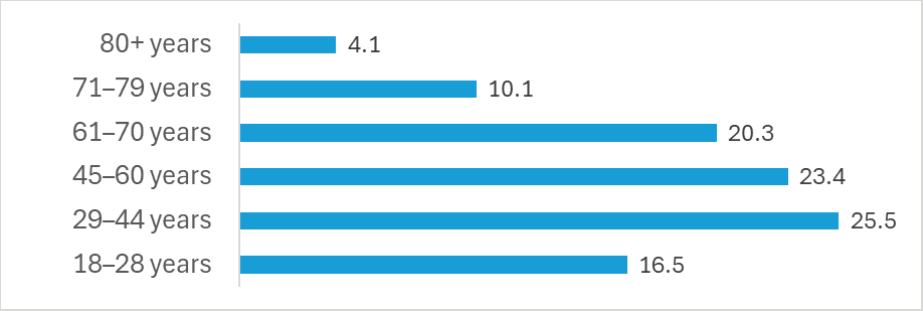


Figure 45. *Distribution of respondents by age*

In terms of gender (see Figure 46), 44.3% of respondents identified as male, 55.1% as female, and approximately 1% as non-binary, reflecting diverse gender representation within the sample.

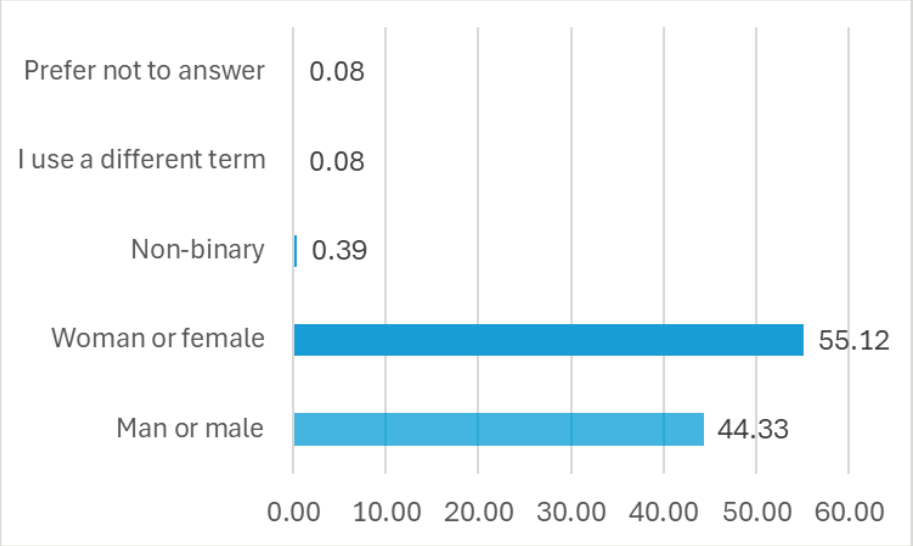


Figure 46. *Gender breakdown of respondents*

Figure 47 illustrates the education levels of respondents. The majority had completed medium-level education (senior secondary or diploma), while a substantial proportion (~40%) held university degrees or higher qualifications.

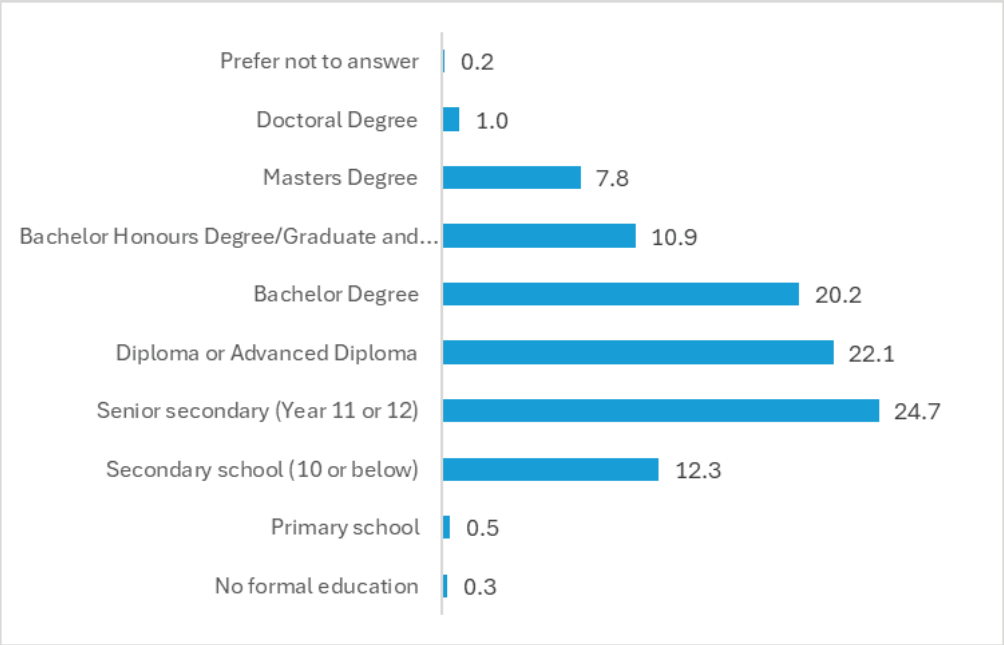


Figure 47. *Education level*

Figure 48 shows income distribution, indicating most respondents earn between $20,800 and $77,999 annually with about 32% earning above $78,000 before taxes.

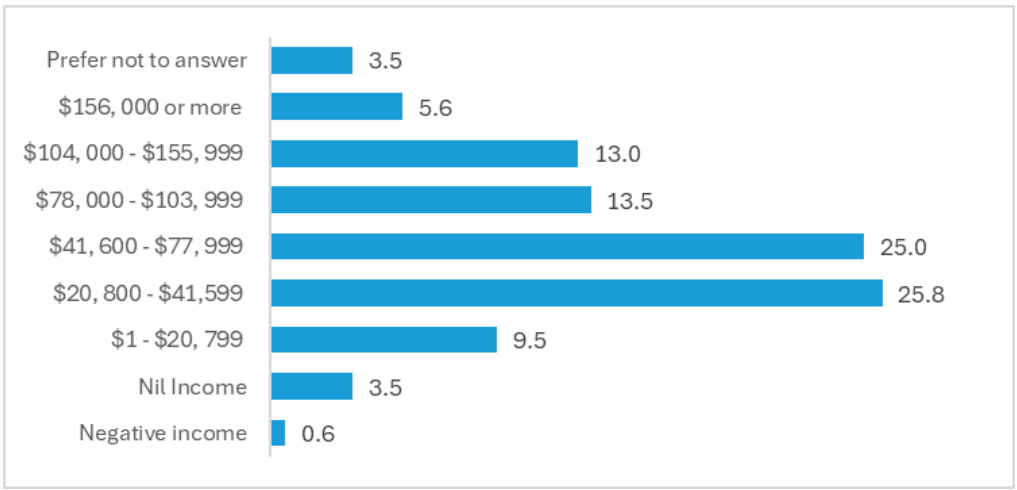


Figure 48. *Estimated income distribution*

Occupation categories (Figure 49) identified the most common roles as Professionals (13.4%), Managers (11.5%), and Clerical and Administrative Workers (10.8%). Notably, 39.3% reported having no occupation, and 37.8% were not currently employed.

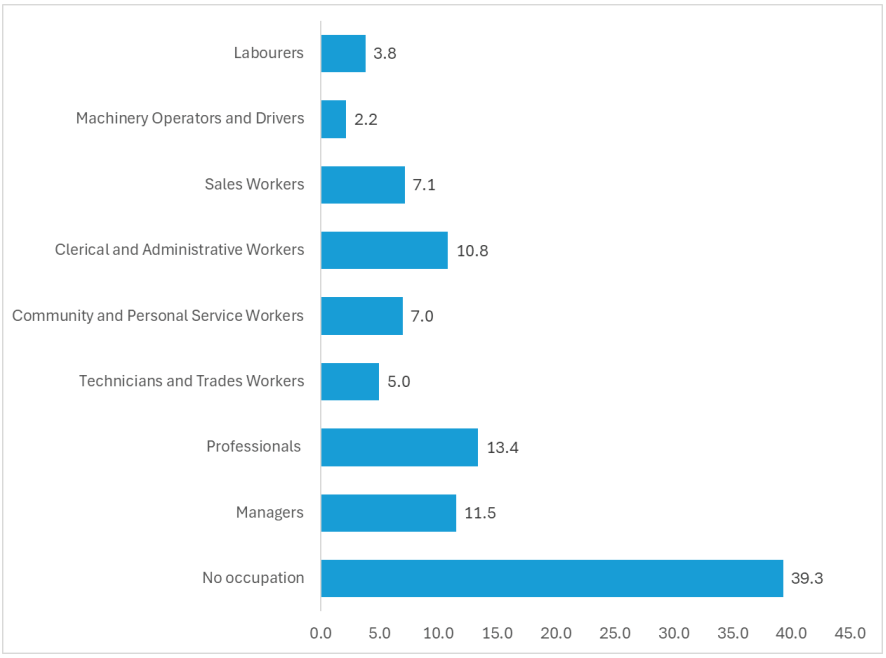
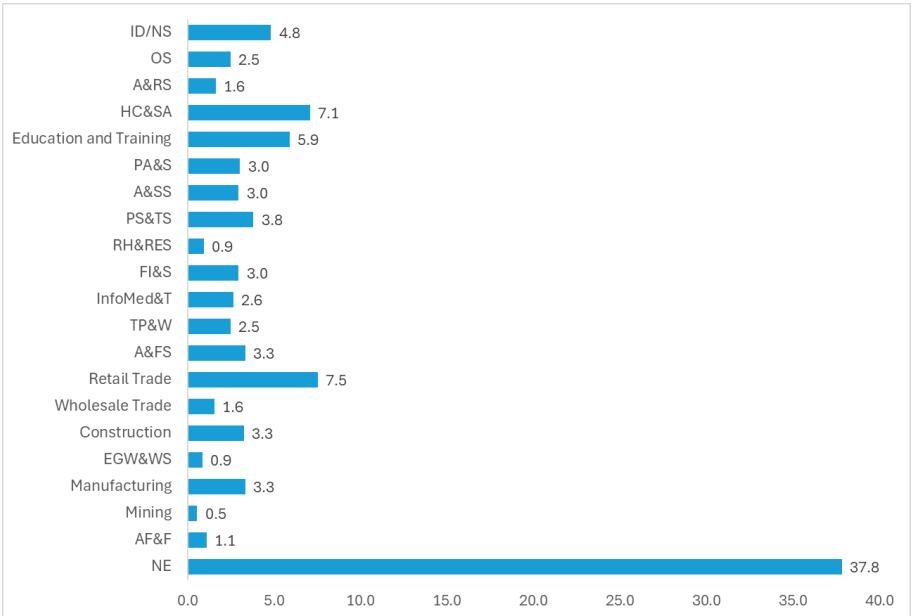


Figure 49. *Occupational categories*

Figure 50 illustrates participants were primarily working in the Retail Trade (7.5%), Health Care and Social Assistance (7.1%), and Education and Training (5.9%) sectors.



Note: NE = Not currently employed; AF&F = Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing; EG&WW = Electricity, Gas, Water, and Waste Services; A&FS = Accommodation and Food Services; TP&W = Transport, Postal, and Warehousing; InfoMed&T = Information Media and Telecommunications; FI&S = Financial and Insurance Services; RH&RES = Rental, Hiring, and Real Estate Services; PS&TS = Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services; A&SS = Administrative and Support Services; PA&S = Public Administration and Safety (e.g., Government, Police); HC&SA = Health Care and Social Assistance; A&RS = Arts and Recreation Services; OS = Other Services (e.g., Repair, Personal Care, Parking); ID/NS = Inadequately described or not stated.

Figure 50. *Industry sectors*

Figure 51 displays the geographic distribution of the sample to be concentrated in New South Wales (30.4%), Victoria (26.9%), and Queensland (17.4%), aligning with national population trends. Fewer participants were from the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory.

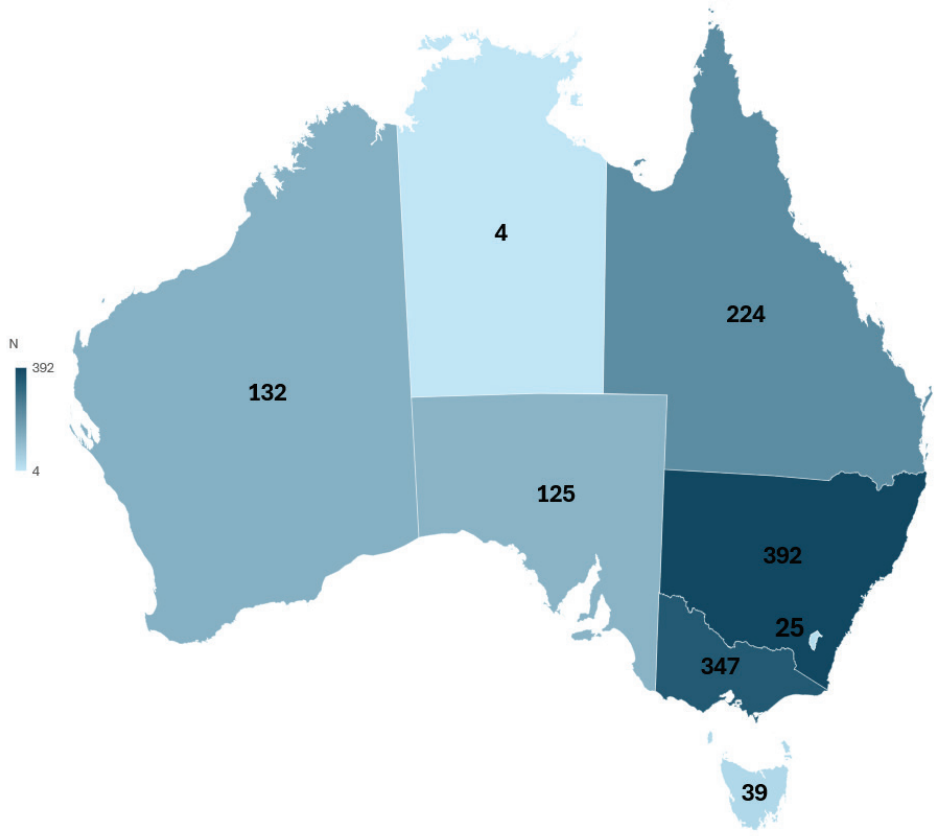


Figure 51. *Geographic distribution*

7.2 Participant Context: contact, trust disposition, innovativeness with IT, and prior knowledge

This section presents background on respondents' recent contact with law enforcement, their general disposition to trust humans, and innovativeness with IT levels, awareness of DA in law enforcement, and knowledge of relevant laws, offering important context to interpret their attitudes and responses.

7.2.1 Contact with law enforcement agencies

Respondents were asked to describe their most recent contact with a law enforcement agency. The most commonly reported type of contact was reporting a crime or suspicious activity at 10.4%, followed by requesting assistance (e.g., welfare check, noise complaint) at 5.3%, and seeking information or advice at 4.3%. A total of 69.8% of respondents indicated they had no contact with law enforcement agencies. Other reported interactions included providing a witness statement or evidence (4.0%), being stopped, questioned, or searched by police (2.6%), lodging a complaint about police conduct (2.0%), other types of contact (1.1%), and preferring not to answer (0.5%). Figure 52 illustrates the breakdown of responses.

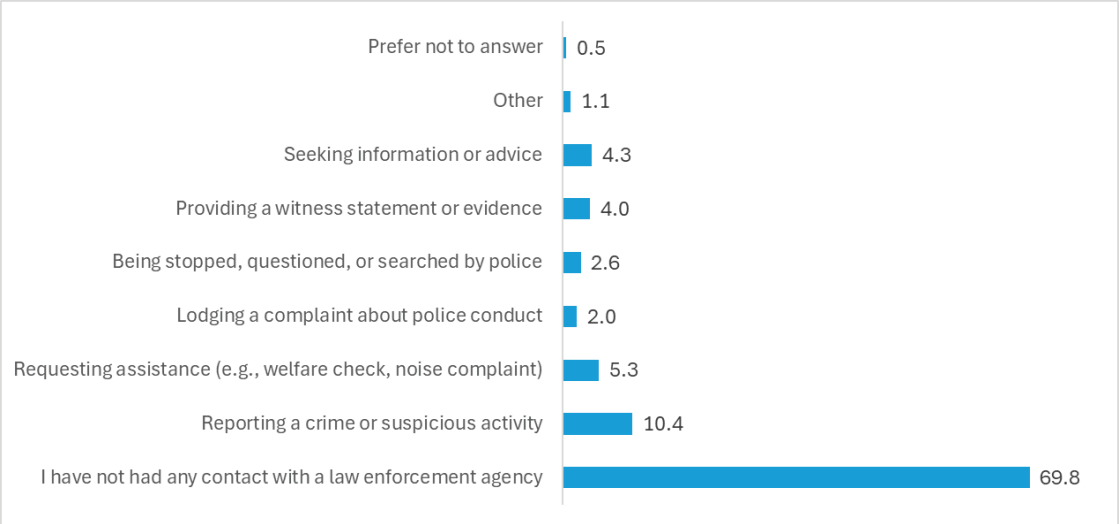


Figure 52. *Distribution of respondents by type of recent contact with law enforcement*

Respondents selecting "Other" were asked to specify the nature of their most recent contact with law enforcement. These open-text responses were reviewed and coded. Most overlapped with existing categories, such as reporting a crime, requesting assistance, or being stopped by police. Two new categories emerged, "Reporting lost items (not stolen)", capturing administrative reports of lost property without suspicion of theft, and "Employment-related contact" where contact occurred due to the respondent's occupational role in law enforcement. Responses that did not indicate actual contact (e.g., general opinions) were recoded as "No contact", aligning with the last response option. Once the "Other" responses were coded, there were small increases across reporting, assistance, being stopped, providing evidence, and seeking information categories, with a slight rise in no-contact responses overall (changes ranged from +0.1% to +0.4%). The updated frequencies are presented in Figure 53.

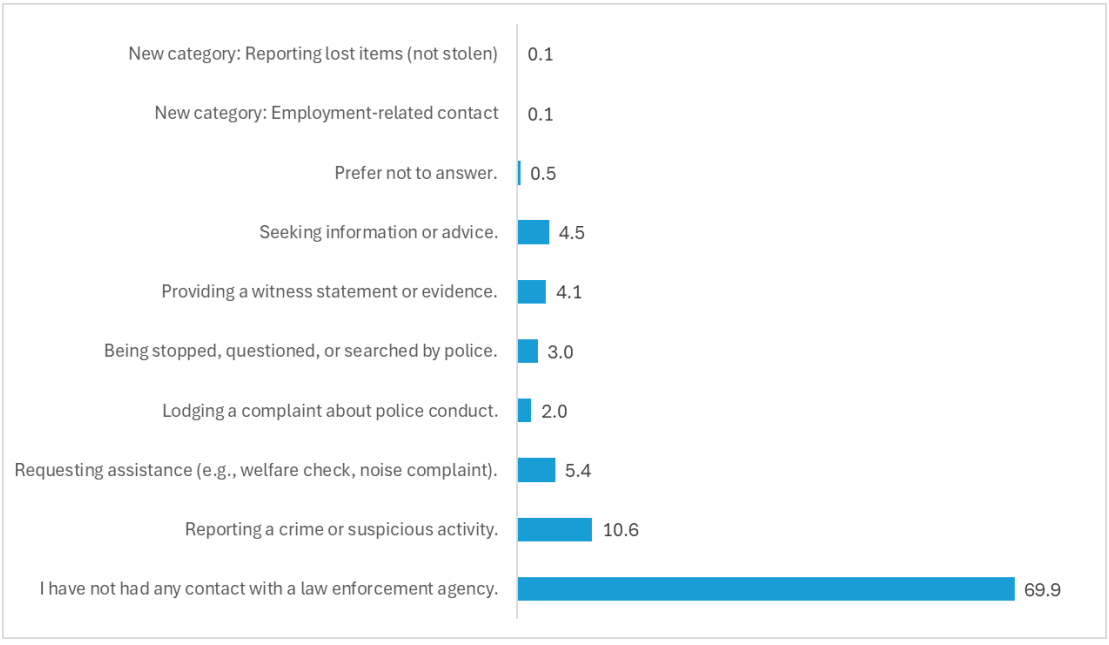


Figure 53. *Recoded distribution of respondents by type of recent contact with law enforcement (including recoded "Other" responses)*

7.2.2 Disposition to trust humans

Individuals' disposition to trust humans was measured via three items related to faith in humanity, reliance on others, and general trust in people, to assess disposition to trust in others.

The analysis of mean scores revealed participants reported generally higher levels of disposition to trust in humans (M range: 3.07–3.45). Specifically, faith in humanity (M = 3.45) and general trust in people (M = 3.41) scored higher than reliance on others (see Figure 54).

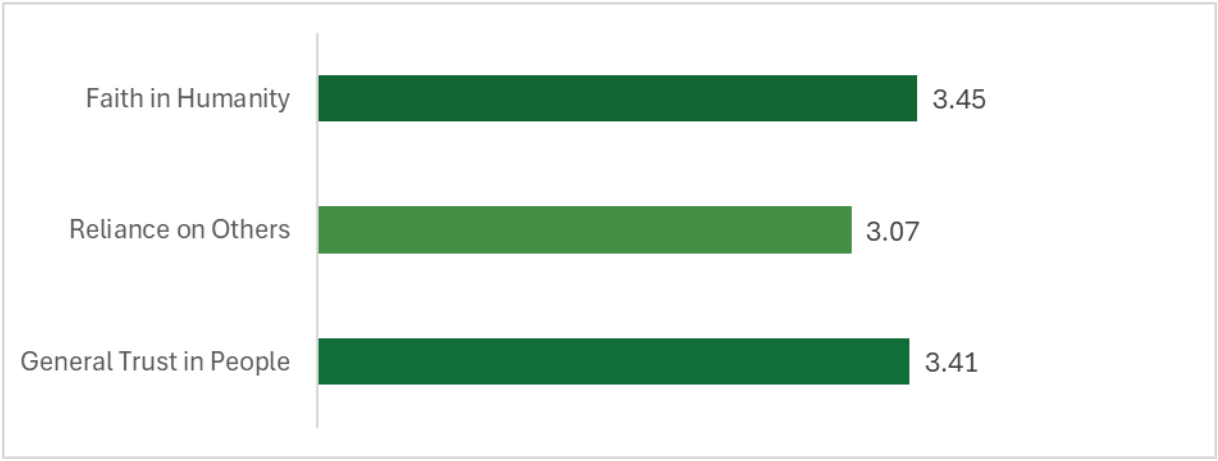


Figure 54. *Mean Scores of disposition to trust humans*

This disposition was furthered examined across three categories: % Disagree (unwilling to trust humans); Neutral (neither unwilling nor willing to trust); and, % Agree (willing to trust humans). Nearly half the respondents (47%) reported a willingness to trust others, 19% were unwilling to trust, and the remainder were neutral (see Figure 55).

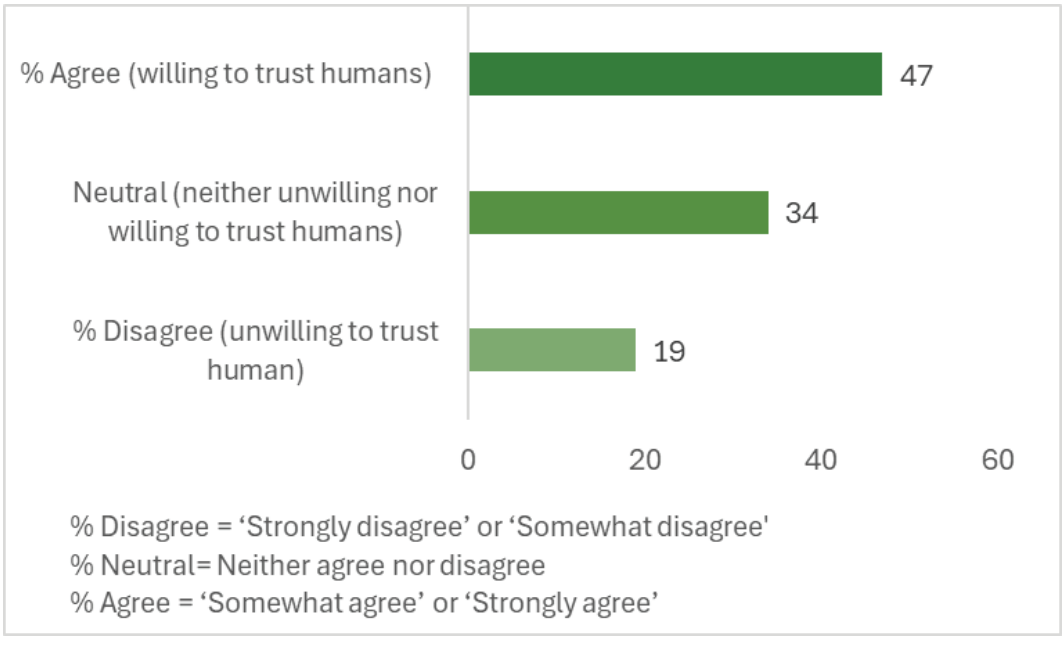


Figure 55. *Distribution of respondent levels for disposition to trust humans*

7.2.3 Innovativeness with IT

Innovativeness with IT was evaluated by measuring agreement with statements about being first to try, enjoying experimentation, and seeking opportunities to use new technologies. Participants reported moderate levels of personal innovativeness with IT (M range: 2.61–3.07), and being the first to try IT scoring lower (M = 2.61) compared to other measures (see Figure 56).

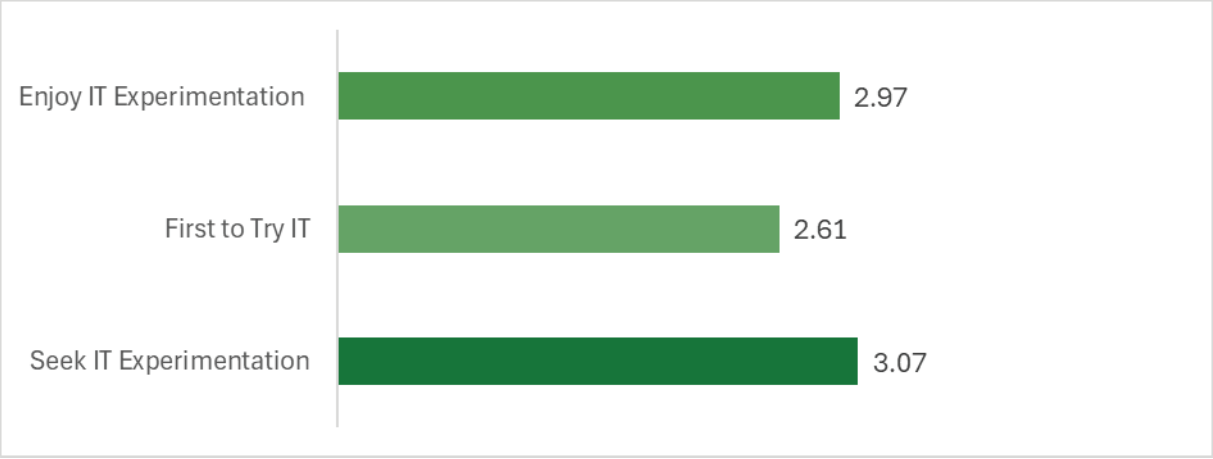


Figure 56. *Distribution of respondent levels for personal innovativeness with IT*

Personal innovativeness with IT was further examined by measuring the distribution of respondents across the three categories of IT resistant, neutral, and IT innovator/receptive to new technology. Analysis of personal innovativeness with IT showed 38% of respondents were classified as IT resistant (disagreeing with innovation statements), 30% neutral (neither resisting nor embracing innovation), and 32% identified as IT innovators or receptive (see Figure 57).

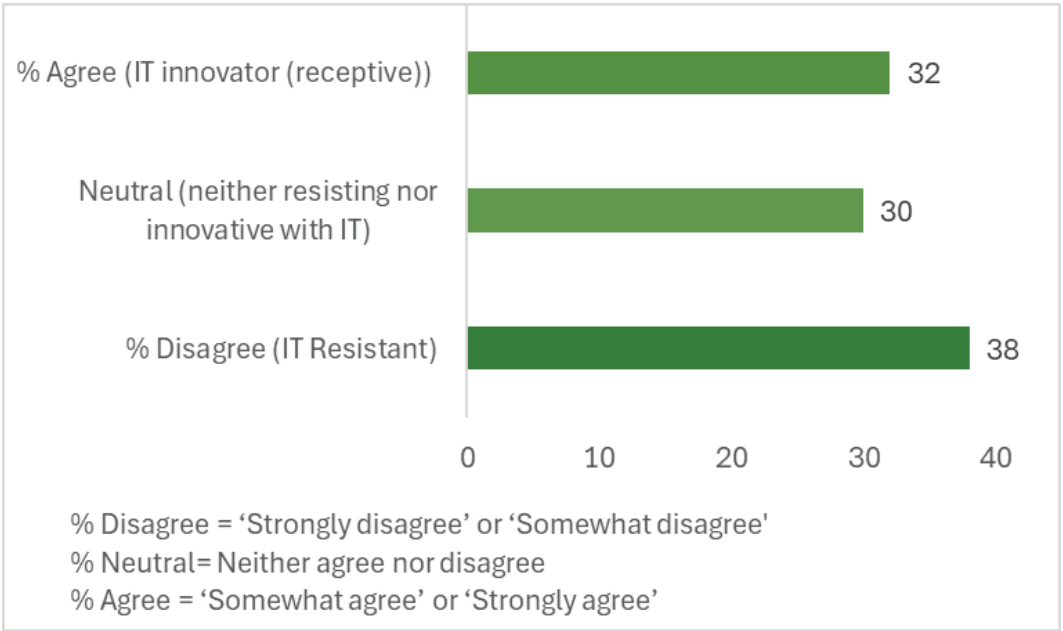


Figure 57. *Distribution of respondent levels for personal innovativeness with IT*

7.2.4 Awareness and knowledge of DA

Participants were first provided a clear and accessible definition of DA to identify how well they understood DA and its use in law enforcement. They were then asked whether they had previously heard, read, or seen anything about DA in general and specifically in the law enforcement context, and then asked to rate their level of knowledge.

Just under half of the respondents (49%) reported having heard, read, or seen something about data analytics, while a slight majority (51%) had no prior exposure. When asked specifically about data analytics in law enforcement, awareness levels were lower with only 38% encountering information about its use (e.g. crime prediction or suspect identification), while 62% had not (see Figure 58).

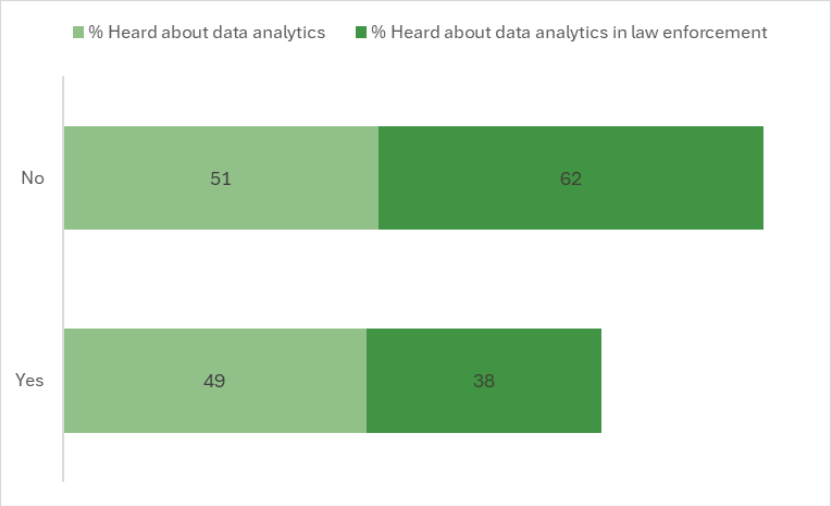


Figure 58. *Awareness of DA among participants*

When asked to rate their level of knowledge, 27% of respondents reported having no knowledge of data analytics, while 42% had basic awareness, and 21% indicated some knowledge. Only 8% reported moderate expertise, and just 2% claimed expert-level knowledge. In the law enforcement context, awareness was even lower; 38% had no knowledge, 38% had basic awareness, 17% had some knowledge, 6% had moderate expertise, and just 1% identified as expert (see Figure 59).

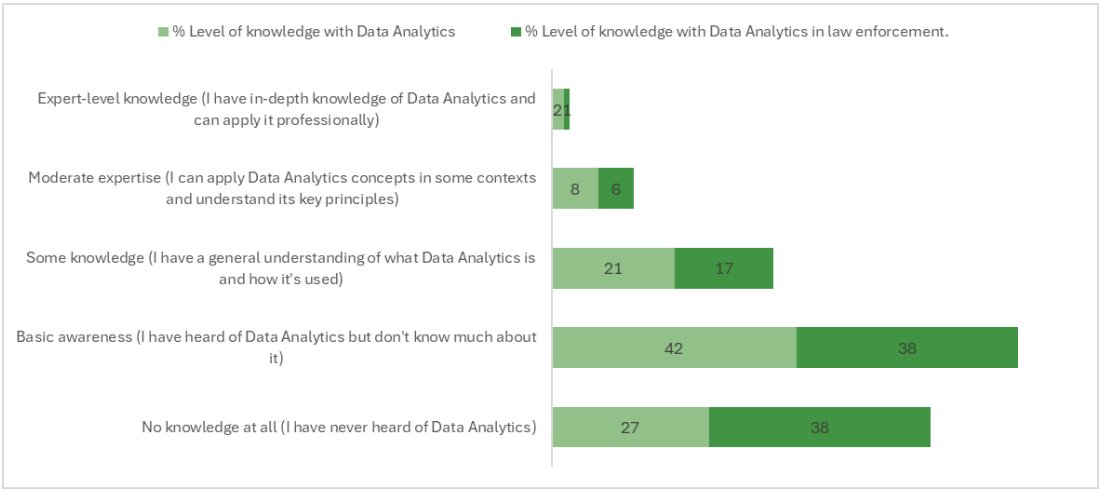


Figure 59. *Self-Rated level of knowledge of DA*

This level of knowledge suggests that while general awareness of data analytics is moderate, familiarity with its application in law enforcement is much lower, pointing to a knowledge gap in this area.

7.2.5 Knowledge of laws and regulations protecting data and DA use

To provide context, participants were first presented with a summary of relevant laws and regulations. While Australia does not have specific legislation directly addressing data analytics and AI at the federal or state level in the law enforcement context, there are related laws that protect data used in analytics and safeguard its practice. These include State Privacy Laws which govern the handling of personal data at the state level; the Privacy Act 1988 which protects individuals' personal information at the federal level; and Human Rights Acts and Anti-Discrimination Laws which prohibit unfair practices and discrimination, influencing how data analytics in law enforcement is used to avoid bias. The Australian Federal Government has released two key documents to promote the safe and responsible use of AI, a proposal paper for mandatory guardrails in high-risk settings including law enforcement, and the Voluntary AI Safety Standard.

After reading this information, participants were asked how knowledgeable they felt about these laws and regulations. Around 29% reported having no knowledge at all, 36% had slight knowledge, and 26% indicated moderate knowledge. Only 7% reported knowing these laws and regulations very well, and just 2% felt extremely knowledgeable (see Figure 60). These findings suggest most participants lack awareness of existing laws governing DA and AI in law enforcement, highlighting the need for clearer public communication to build informed trust and community confidence.

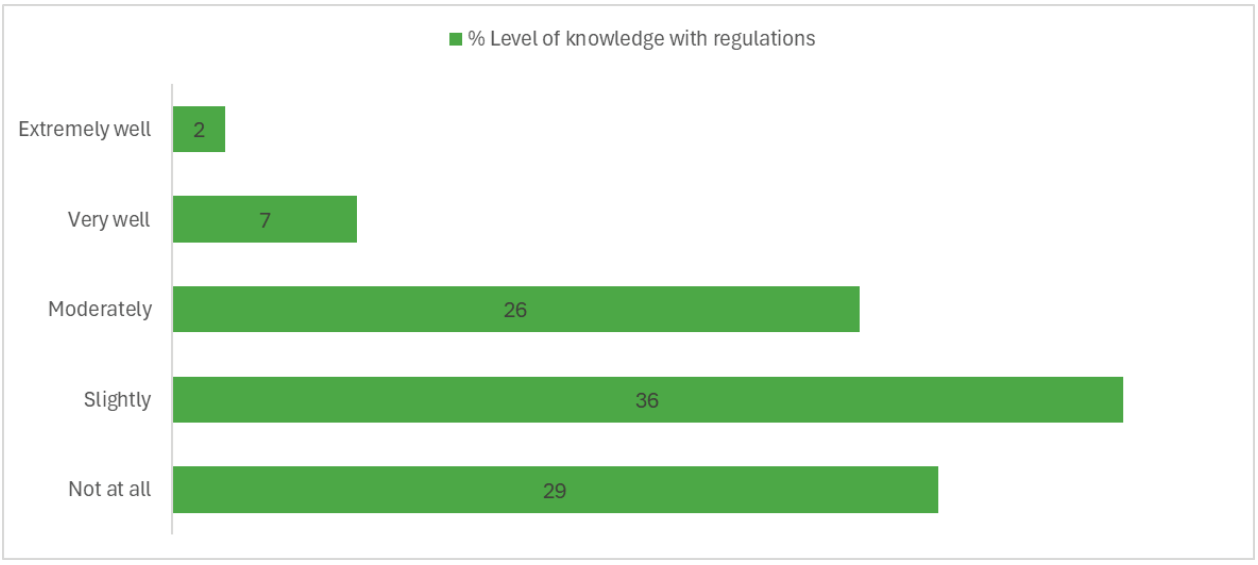


Figure 60. *Self-rated knowledge of laws and regulations safeguarding data use in law enforcement*

8

Conclusion

This report is a comprehensive analysis of community attitudes to DA in law enforcement, focusing on public expectations, risks, social licence, trust, and acceptance of its use. Social licence, trust, and acceptance are distinct concepts. Social licence captures community perceptions of law enforcement's benefits, responsiveness, alignment with values, and engagement regarding DA. Trust reflects public reliance on DA by law enforcement and associated feelings of security, comfort, and willingness to share data. Acceptance is the explicit endorsement of a specific DA application, indicating public support. The findings reveal a nuanced landscape marked by moderate trust and acceptance, high regulatory expectations, and significant variation across different DA applications, particularly highlighting scepticism toward emerging technologies such as Generative AI-assisted Policing (see Table 6).

Regulatory expectations and assurance gaps

Public expectations for legal and regulatory frameworks governing DA in law enforcement are very strong, with over 80% supporting robust safeguards to prevent misuse, bias, and errors. This expectation reflects a clear societal demand for accountability and fairness in the deployment of these technologies, especially for sensitive areas like Forensic Analytics. Confidence in current structural assurance mechanisms is comparatively low with less than half of respondents feeling adequately protected, and particular doubt of newer applications such as Generative AI-assisted Policing. This discrepancy stresses the perception gap between regulatory ideals and current assurance experiences, suggesting a need for enhanced safeguard mechanisms and guardrails for the responsible use of DA.

Perceptions of risk and benefit

Risk perceptions are generally moderate with public concerns distributed relatively evenly across harms to individuals, groups, and society. Importantly, risk perception varies significantly by DA application. That is, Generative AI-assisted Policing is seen as a notably higher risk compared to more established tools such as Forensic Analytics. Despite this, the perceived benefits of DA generally outweigh the perceived risks, with a majority recognising personal and public safety advantages.

Social license

More than half the respondents consider the use of DA by law enforcement to be socially licensed, acknowledging its contributions to community safety. Yet, this support is not unconditional. Fairness, transparency, and public involvement, key pillars of social license, receive weaker endorsement, especially regarding applications like Generative AI-assisted Policing and Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras.

Trust

Public trust in DA applications remains moderate with only 43% willing to trust DA use and an even smaller proportion comfortable sharing personal data. Trust and willingness to rely on DA are highest for Recidivism Risk Assessment and Forensic Analytics, and lowest for Generative AI-assisted Policing, which also faces the greatest unwillingness to share data. A consistent pattern emerged showing people are more comfortable with law enforcement relying on DA than with sharing their own data.

Acceptance

While acceptance of DA use in law enforcement is generally positive (around 54%), enthusiasm varies by application. Established tools like Forensic Analytics enjoy the highest acceptance and lowest rejection rates, whereas generative AI applications face significant public resistance, with acceptance from 39% of participants. Demographic factors such as knowledge about data analytics and relevant regulations show significant differences in levels of trust, willingness to share data, and acceptance, suggesting education and outreach could enhance public support.

Analysis of the interplay among social licence, trust, and acceptance indicates that across all five data analytics applications, social licence and trust strongly correlate with acceptance (see Figure 41). Higher perceived social licence aligned with greater trust, and both were associated with higher acceptance levels. For example, trust correlated most strongly with acceptance of DA-enabled Security Cameras and Generative AI-assisted Policing, but this is not an "or" condition; acceptance does not occur only if trust exists, nor does trust automatically follow from acceptance. These correlations highlight the co-occurrence and interplay of social licence, trust, and acceptance without implying causality. For instance, except for Generative AI-assisted Policing which showed both low trust and lower acceptance, other applications such as Predictive Policing and Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras, were generally accepted, even though many participants were neutral or unwilling to trust them.

The public may accept the use of DA due to its perceived benefits, yet simultaneously express caution or distrust stemming from concerns about privacy, errors, bias, or limited transparency and public involvement. This pattern is reflected in these assessments of social licence items, qualitative insights, and analyses of perceived risk–benefit gaps. Supporting evidence from a global study on trust in AI shows that while only 46% of people are willing to trust AI, 72% have at least some level of acceptance of its use [39]. The study indicates that the more concerned people are about the risks and potential negative outcomes of AI in society, the less likely they are to trust the systems. Conversely, when people perceive adequate regulatory safeguards, they are considerably more likely to trust AI. Similarly, research exploring the trust in AI [40] found that support for AI-enabled police surveillance exceeds trust. This 'trust paradox' study suggests that underlying beliefs such as fear of missing out, optimism about future improvements, perceptions that benefits outweigh risks, and expected efficiency gains, help explain why people may accept AI use while retaining caution regarding its reliability and impact.

Table 6. *Public perceptions of DA applications in law enforcement*

Application	Regulatory Expectation	Structural Assurance	Perceived Risk	Social License	Trust	Acceptance
Predictive Policing	High	Mixed feelings*	Moderate	Supported	Neutral/ unwilling to trust**	Accepted
Data Analytics-enabled Security Cameras	High	Mixed feelings	Moderate	Supported	Neutral/ unwilling to trust	Accepted
Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics	High	Mixed feelings	Moderate	Supported	Nearly half are willing to trust	Accepted
Forensic Analytics	High	Nearly half feel protected	Moderate	Most supported	Nearly half are willing to trust	Accepted
Generative AI-assisted Policing	High	Nearly one-third feel protected	Moderate	Least supported	Neutral/ unwilling to trust	Neutral/ rejected
DA Overall	High (over 80% want legal safeguards)	Mixed feelings	Moderate	More than half are supportive	Neutral/ unwilling to trust	More than half are accepted

**Mixed feelings: The majority feel safeguards are either lacking or neutral if they exist.*

***Neutral/unwilling to trust: the majority of the public were either unwilling to trust DA or held a neutral stance (neither trusting nor unwilling to trust). For example, for Predictive Policing, 17% were unwilling to trust, and 41% were neutral.*

Limitations of the Study

This study provides valuable insights into community perceptions of DA in law enforcement, and four limitations should be noted. First, the findings are based on self-reported perceptions which reflect respondents' attitudes rather than objective measures of DA effectiveness or outcomes. Acceptance and concerns may vary depending on the specific DA application described, as contextual framing can influence responses. Second, although the sample was broadly representative of the Australian adult population in terms of age, gender, and location, some subgroups with distinct experiences of law enforcement may be underrepresented. These subgroups include culturally and linguistically diverse communities such as recent migrants or refugees, who may face language barriers, or differing cultural expectations which limit the generalisability of the findings. Third, although acceptance of law enforcement's use of DA was moderate and the majority indicated support at the time of the survey, such acceptance is inherently temporal and may shift with changes in societal events, media coverage, or high-profile incidents. Trust, however, was consistently lower than acceptance, suggesting endorsement of DA's use does not necessarily reflect a deeper or more enduring confidence in its implementation. Fourth, the study is cross-sectional and descriptive, and therefore does not allow for causal inferences. Observed associations between variables indicate correlations rather than direct cause-and-effect relationships. Therefore, while the study identifies key factors that decrease acceptance, it cannot determine the precise mechanisms or predictive power of these factors.

Taken together, these limitations suggest caution in generalising the results. They also highlight the value of complementary research, such as longitudinal or experimental studies, to explore variations in public perceptions across different DA applications and to examine the causal pathways underlying trust, acceptance, and perceived risks in law enforcement contexts.

Implications for Law Enforcement Stakeholders

The findings have important implications across multiple facets of law enforcement operations, policy, and community relations:

Regulatory bodies and policymakers

- **Strengthen legal frameworks:** Policymakers could prioritise comprehensive, enforceable regulations specific to each DA application with particular focus on emerging technologies like generative AI, given strong public demand for protections against bias, misuse, and errors.
- **Enhance Transparency and Reporting:** Regular, accessible public reporting on DA use, outcomes, and safeguards could help close the perception gap and build confidence in existing mechanisms.
- **Adaptive Governance:** Establish mechanisms to quickly update regulations in response to evolving DA technologies and public concerns, ensuring regulations remain relevant and protective.

Law enforcement agencies

- **Prioritise Fairness and Transparency:** Agencies should increase transparency around how DA tools are selected, implemented and governed, focusing on fairness and bias mitigation to address community concerns.
- **Community Engagement:** Develop and expand forums for meaningful public involvement in the use of DA for decision-making, especially for controversial applications like generative AI and surveillance cameras.
- **Data Governance and Privacy:** Clearly communicate data handling policies, limit data collection to what is strictly necessary, and reinforce privacy protections to build trust around data sharing.

Technology developers and vendors

- **Design for trust:** Integrate fairness and transparency features into DA applications, with a focus on making them more understandable to both law enforcement and the public.

- **Collaboration with stakeholders:** Work closely with law enforcement agencies, regulators, and community representatives to co-design solutions that meet regulatory standards and public expectations.
- **Ongoing monitoring:** Implement robust monitoring and auditing to detect and address potential biases or misuse quickly.

Community and advocacy groups

- **Advocate for accountability:** Use the public's strong regulatory expectations to push for enforceable legal protections and independent oversight of DA in law enforcement.
- **Facilitate public dialogue:** Act as intermediaries between law enforcement and communities to ensure concerns about fairness and transparency are voiced and addressed.
- **Educate the Public:** Provide accessible information about DA applications, risks, and safeguards to improve public understanding and informed consent.

Researchers and academics

- **Monitor Impact and Risks:** Continue interdisciplinary research to evaluate the social, ethical, and legal impacts of DA use, focusing on under-explored areas like Generative AI-assisted Policing.
- **Conduct Longitudinal Studies:** Implement long-term, longitudinal research to track changes in public perceptions, social license, trust, and acceptance over time, capturing evolving attitudes as technologies and policies develop.

A

Appendix

Survey questions

Construct	Questionnaire Items
Dispositions to trust humans	To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (5-point Likert scale: strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat agree, strongly agree) I generally trust other people. I generally count on other people. I generally have faith in humanity.
Innovativeness with IT	If I heard about a new information technology, I would look for ways to experiment with it. Among my peers, I am usually the first to try out new information technologies. I like to experiment with new information technologies.
Awareness of DA	Have you heard, read, or seen anything about Data Analytics? Yes No
Knowledge of DA	Please rate your level of knowledge with Data Analytics. *No knowledge at all (I have never heard of Data Analytics)* *Basic awareness (I have heard of Data Analytics but don't know much about it)* *Some knowledge (I have a general understanding of what Data Analytics is and how it's used)* *Moderate expertise (I can apply Data Analytics concepts in some contexts and understand its key principles)* *Expert-level knowledge (I have in-depth knowledge of Data Analytics and can apply it professionally)*
Awareness of DA in law enforcement	Have you heard, read, or seen anything about Data Analytics in the law enforcement context (e.g., predicting crime hotspots, identifying suspects)? Yes No
Knowledge of DA in law enforcement	Please rate your level of knowledge with Data Analytics in law enforcement. No knowledge at all (I have never heard of Data Analytics in law enforcement). Basic awareness (I have heard of Data Analytics in law enforcement but don't know much about it). Some knowledge (I have a general understanding of what Data Analytics in law enforcement is and how it's used). Moderate expertise (I can apply Data Analytics concepts in law enforcement in some contexts and understand its key principles). Expert-level knowledge (I have in-depth knowledge of Data Analytics in law enforcement and can apply it professionally).

Construct	Questionnaire Items
Knowledge of laws and regulations	How knowledgeable are you about the laws and regulations in Australia that protect your data and safeguard the use of data analytics in law enforcement? Not at all, Slightly, Moderately, Very well, Extremely well
Prior contact	Have you had any contact with a law enforcement agency (e.g., police) regarding any matter, such as reporting a crime, lodging a complaint, or addressing an incident in the past 12 months? I have not had any contact with a law enforcement agency. Reporting a crime or suspicious activity. Requesting assistance (e.g., welfare check, noise complaint). Lodging a complaint about police conduct. Being stopped, questioned, or searched by police. Providing a witness statement or evidence. Seeking information or advice. Other (please specify):
Regulatory expectation	To what extent do you agree with the following statements? I believe the law should ... Protect me from the misuse of DA [specific application] (e.g., a breach of privacy).
	Protect me from DA [specific application] failures (e.g., bias, errors, inaccurate predictions, or reporting)
	Govern and interpret how law enforcement agencies use DA [specific application] safely and responsibly.
	Be able to address risks and harms from DA [specific application].
Structural Assurance	To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (These statements explore your perceptions and beliefs about the current institutional structures, such as laws and safeguards, and whether they make you feel comfortable and secure about the use
	I feel assured that there are sufficient regulatory processes in place to protect me from any problems that may arise from the use of DA [specific application].
	The current law helps me feel that using DA [specific application] is safe.
	Having the backing of current legal statutes and processes makes me feel secure with the use of DA [specific application].
Risk	How much risk do you believe there is if law enforcement agencies use DA [specific application]? Consider the following potential risks of harm or negative consequences: Harm to individuals (e.g., privacy loss, psychological injury due to false accusations)
	Harm to groups of people (e.g., bias and discrimination)
	Harm to the agencies (e.g., system vulnerabilities or reputational harm from misuse or failure)
	Harm to society (e.g., weakened social cohesion and civil liberties from disproportionate surveillance or law enforcement targeting)

Construct	Questionnaire Items
Social Licence	**Benefit** To what extent do you agree with the following? The use of DA [specific application] by law enforcement agencies can ... Improve my future safety. Provide benefits for my personal security. Provide me with a fair share of potential benefits. Improve community safety (e.g., by better tackling crime and supporting victims). Contribute to community safety efforts (e.g., by optimising resource allocation and aiding criminal investigations). Provide the community with a fair share of potential benefits. **Responsiveness** To what extent do you agree with the following statements associated with the use of DA [specific application] by law enforcement agencies? Law enforcement agencies follow through on their promises in their relations with the public. I am very satisfied with my relationship with Law enforcement agencies. Law enforcement agencies listen to the community. **Alignment** In the long term, using DA [specific application] in law enforcement contributes to the well-being and safety of the whole community. Law enforcement agencies treat everyone fairly. Law enforcement agencies respect our community's values and way of life. Our community and law enforcement agencies share a vision for the future safety of our region. **Engagement** Law enforcement agencies support those who are negatively affected by DA [specific application] operations. Law enforcement agencies involve the public in decision-making processes. Law enforcement agencies take our community's interests into account. Law enforcement agencies are concerned about our community's interests. Law enforcement agencies openly share information that is relevant to our community.
Trust	**Reliance** To what extent do you agree with the following statements about law enforcement agencies relying on the information provided by DA [specific application]? I feel secure. I feel comfortable. I feel content. **Data sharing** I am likely to share my data. I will probably share my data. I am willing to share my data.

Construct	Questionnaire Items
Acceptance	To what extent do you agree with the following endorsement statements about the use of DA [specific application] by law enforcement agencies? I support DA [specific application] use.
	I accept DA [specific application] use.
	I approve DA [specific application] use.
	I embrace DA [specific application] use.
Enablers	What would increase your acceptance of law enforcement agencies using Data Analytics [Specific App]?
Barriers	What would decrease your acceptance of law enforcement agencies using Data Analytics [Specific App]?

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Endnotes

1. The survey was designed to capture community attitudes toward AI use in the public sector across four key dimensions: Protection and Risk, Social License, Trust, and Acceptance. These constructs are well established in the literature as appropriate measures of public perception. Protection and Risk capture perceptions of regulatory expectations, structural assurance, and potential risks (Dinev et al., 2013; McKnight et al., 2002, 2011; Australian Government, 2024; Xu et al., 2011). Social License reflects beneficence, alignment, responsiveness and engagment (Boutilier & Thomson, 2011; Black, 2017; Richert et al., 2015; He et al., 2023; Sun et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2015; Esmaeilzadeh, 2019). Trust assesses reliance and data sharing (Komiak & Benbasat, 2006; McKnight et al., 2002; Bansal & Gefen, 2010). Acceptance measures willingness to accept, support, approve and embrace DA applications (Zhang et al., 2018).

2. Measures adapted from: Boutilier and Thomson (2011), Black (2013), and Richert et al. (2015)

3. In this report, we undertook a careful refinement and contextualisation of the original constructs and their definitions to ensure they accurately reflect the specific dynamics of law enforcement agencies' use of data analytics. The original construct of '*Economic Legitimacy'* was re-labelled as '*Benefits'* to more explicitly capture perceptions related to the fair and tangible safety and security advantages that data analytics applications offer to both individual community members and the broader public. This shift clarifies that the focus is not simply on abstract economic legitimacy but on concrete benefits perceived by stakeholders. The construct previously known as '*Socio-political Legitimacy'* has been adapted to '*Alignment'* to emphasise how law enforcement's data analytics practices align with the values, fairness expectations, and long-term safety aspirations of the community. This change better encapsulates the holistic relationship between the community and law enforcement, including respect for cultural norms and a shared vision for regional well-being, which goes beyond traditional notions of legitimacy. '*Interactional Trust*' was renamed '*Responsiveness*' to foreground the interpersonal quality and ongoing commitment that law enforcement agencies demonstrate when using data analytics responsibly. This includes fulfilling promises, listening attentively to community concerns, and fostering satisfying, trust-based relationships with the public. The term 'commitment' also implies an active and sustained effort rather than a static perception of trust. Lastly, the original '*Institutionalised Trust'* construct has been reframed as '*Engagement'* to highlight law enforcement's active role in supporting those affected by data analytics operations, involving community members in decision-making processes, taking community interests seriously, and transparently sharing relevant information. This re-conceptualisation distinguishes this construct from relational aspects and clearly positions it as a measure of participatory, transparent, and inclusive institutional interactions.

   Overall, these adjustments not only make each construct's label more meaningful and distinct for a lay audience but also ensure that the constructs comprehensively cover the nuanced ways law enforcement agencies interact with the community through data analytics. By contextualising the definitions to reflect community perceptions of fairness, engagement, benefit, and relational dynamics, the constructs become more actionable for policy evaluation, community consultation, and improving law enforcement practices in data analytics.

4. This definition aligns with interdisciplinary understandings of trust (e.g., Mayer et al., 1995; Rousseau et al., 1998; Koh et al., 2012; Liu et al., 2012) and extends to emerging work on trust in AI systems, including security-related applications (e.g., Shao et al., 2025; Gillespie et al., 2023).

5. Gender was excluded from further analyses because ANOVA tests showed no statistically significant differences by gender for any of the key outcome variables, including trust, reliance, data sharing, and acceptance.

6. Responses were originally collected in six age categories: 18–28, 29–44, 45–60, 61–70, 71–79, and 80–97 years. Due to the low number of respondents in the oldest age group (80–97 years; n = 53, 4.1%), for statistical analyses such as ANOVA, the 71–79 and 80–97 age groups were combined to ensure adequate cell sizes. This resulted in five age categories used in the analysis.

7. Statistical comparisons were not undertaken due to limited sample sizes within five knowledge level groups for several DA applications. For example, in the expert-level knowledge group, Recidivism Risk Assessment Analytics had only n=1 and Predictive Policing had n=6. These small group sizes limit the feasibility of conducting reliable application-level analyses by knowledge level. To ensure sufficient sample sizes for statistical analyses, the original five knowledge categories were reclassified into three meaningful groups: (1) No Knowledge, (2) Basic Awareness, and (3) Knowledgeable. The "Knowledgeable" category combined participants with some knowledge, moderate expertise, and expert-level knowledge, reflecting at least a working understanding and the ability to apply data analytics concepts. Also the original five categories assessing knowledge of Australian laws and regulations protecting data use in law enforcement were reclassified into three groups: (1) No Knowledge ("Not at all"), (2) Basic Awareness ("Slightly"), and (3) Knowledgeable (combining "Moderately," "Very well," and "Extremely well").

8. For the purpose of analysis, respondents reported annual incomes were grouped into three categories to ensure meaningful sample sizes and clearer interpretation in ANOVA tests. The original income categories included several low-frequency groups (e.g., Negative Income: 8 respondents, Nil Income: 45 respondents), which could reduce the reliability of statistical comparisons and complicate interpretation.

   The new income groups are as follows:

   Lower Range: Includes Negative Income, Nil Income, and incomes up to $41,599

   Middle Range: Includes incomes from $41,600 to $103,999

   Upper Range: Includes incomes of $104,000 and above

9. Parametric analyses, including ANOVA, are appropriate for Likert-scale data even with unequal variances or non-normal distributions. This approach is supported by literature: Norman (2010) emphasises that parametric statistics can be used "with no fear of 'coming to the wrong conclusion'" for Likert data; Sullivan and Artino (2013) conclude that "parametric tests can be used to analyze Likert scale responses"; and Gillespie et al. (2025) report using one-way ANOVA to examine differences across countries, AI applications, and demographic categories.

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