




COCOA POLICE DEPARTMENT

General Orders Manual

	General Order Number: 0970	Subject: Automated License Plate Reader (LPRs)		
	Date Effective:	8/26/2025		
	Date Reviewed:			
	Date Revised:	8/26/2025		
	Replaces Order #:			
	Authority of: Chief of Police Evander Collier IV			
	CFA: 32.04			
F.S.S.:				

I. PURPOSE:

To develop guidelines and protocols to provide direction regarding the operation, use, storage, access, and retention of our ALPR data and systems consistent with Criminal and Juvenile Justice Information Systems Guidelines. These procedures are intended to ensure that ALPRs and ALPR-generated data are used only in a lawful manner, serves the public interest, and fulfills the criminal investigative and intelligence needs while balancing the privacy interests of individuals.

II. POLICY:

It is the policy of the Cocoa Police Department to use ALPR systems to aid in the detection, identification, and recovery of stolen vehicles, wanted persons, missing and/or endangered children/adults, and persons who have committed felonies, misdemeanors, and criminal traffic offenses. ALPR data can help develop and pursue leads in criminal investigations by assisting in locating suspects, witnesses, and victims by identifying vehicles in the vicinity at the time of the crime. Captured license plate images are obtained for official use only and accessed by trained authorized users only.

1. Authorized users may search ALPR data in furtherance of an active investigation, with the safeguarding of individuals' privacy as a paramount concern. Criminal Investigative Services will run quarterly audits of authorized users. Any misuse or suspicion of misuse of any ALPR system will result in all the user's accounts being inactivated immediately.
2. The Criminal Investigative Services lieutenant will be responsible for administering and overseeing the agency's ALPR program.

III. DEFINITIONS:

- A. **Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR)** – An automated license plate reader system is a system of one or more mobile or fixed high-speed cameras, combined with computer algorithms to convert images of license plates into computer-readable data.

- B. **Hot List** – Data files extracted from law enforcement databases, including FCIC/NCIC and agency databases, which contain a listing of stolen license plates, stolen vehicles, wanted persons, and other vehicles/persons actively being sought by a law enforcement agency. These data extracts are generally facilitated numerous times per day in an effort to provide current data.
- C. **ALPR HIT** – When contact is made with, or a license plate is observed and confirmed by the communications center as being on the internal “hot list” or in NCIC or FCIC database as entered by a Cocoa Police Department employee or an external agency.
- D. **Approved ALPR Vendors** – The Cocoa Police Department currently contracts services from the following vendor:
 - a). FLOCK Safety LPR Systems
- E. **Personal Identifying Information (PII)** – Information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual’s identity, either alone or when combined with other personal or identifying information that is linked or linkable to a specific individual. PII includes names, gender, race, date of birth, photographs, addresses, social security numbers, driver’s license numbers, or biometric data.

IV. PROCEDURE:

A. USE OF ALPR SYSTEMS

The use of ALPR Systems and access to ALPR data requires a legitimate law enforcement purpose. No employee may use or authorize the use of the ALPR equipment or data for any other reason. Employees who engage in the misuse of the equipment, databases, or data are subject to disciplinary action.

B. ALPR OPERATORS

All ALPR Operators shall be required to have individual access for use of the ALPR System.

C. OPERATIONS OF USE

An ALPR may be used only to scan vehicle license plates exposed to public view i.e., plates of vehicles traveling or parked on any street or highway or other public property, or visible from a place or location at which an officer may be lawfully present.

D. SUPERVISORY APPROVAL OF ALPR DEPLOYMENT AND USE:

1. ALPR system use and placement must be authorized by the Operations Division Commander or their designee. Placement location of ALPR cameras must also be approved by the property owner, regardless of ownership being the state, county, or municipality as applicable.
2. Authorization may be given for repeated or continuous deployment of an ALPR (e.g., mounting the device on a particular law enforcement vehicle, or positioning the ALPR at a specific stationary location), in which case the authorization shall remain in force and effect unless and until rescinded or modified by the Operations Division Commander or their designee.

E. ALPR RECORDS

An ALPR record consists only of information as a result of the license plate capture, such as the image of the license plate, the optical character recognition rendition of the license plate number, the date/time, and location of the LPR.

F. ALPR "HITS"

During operation, ALPR "hits" can be indicated by an audible and visual alarm or through an email notification. An ALPR "hit" **shall not** be used as a reason for a traffic stop or enforcement contact until the following verifications are fulfilled.

1. The employee receiving the notification must first visually verify that the Hot List entry matches the digital image displayed by the ALPR system (confirming the tag read is accurate, and the tag matches with the appropriate state). If, for any reason, they do not match, the "hit" will be rejected. If they do match, the "hit" will be accepted, and the employee will verify the hit through NCIC/FCIC.
2. When verifying the "hit," the employee will confirm the FCIC/NCIC "hit" information via their MCT, or the employee will request a Communications Officer to validate that the hit is still active in NCIC/FCIC.
3. After verifying the "hit," officers will take the necessary actions to safely surveil and stop the vehicle. As the "hit" may involve the vehicle or suspect being involved in a crime, the officer conducting the vehicle stop will employ a strategy, considering the safety of the community as their primary concern, while requesting assistance to make an appropriate vehicle stop.
4. The primary employee will also be responsible for securing the digital image as part of the investigative file for use in any future proceeding.

G. HOT LIST UPLOAD AND HANDLING

1. For internal agency "hot file" hits, the primary employee on the incident will input notes into the CAD event screen "hit record," notating "LPR Hit" for later use in the investigation or court presentation. This will assist Criminal Investigative Division personnel with maintaining the Department's Hot Lists. Custom Hot List requests and updates will be forwarded to the Criminal Investigations Lieutenant or their designee.
2. Hot lists received from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) are uploaded to the ALPR server via an encrypted and secure FTP link. These are Hot Lists created by teletype entries regarding stolen vehicles, stolen tags, missing and endangered persons, and other exigent law enforcement incidents. Custom Hot Lists created by members of the Cocoa Police Department are manually uploaded to the ALPR platforms via ALPR web portals. The approved ALPR platform for the Cocoa Police Department's Hot Lists is FLOCK. The Department's Custom Hot Lists will be entered and managed by the Criminal Investigative Lieutenant or their designee during normal hours. Emergency Hot List entries for felonies will be entered after hours if there is an exigent need and with supervisor approval.
3. Custom Hot Lists entered into FLOCK by Criminal Investigative Division personnel will be reviewed, maintained, and purged within fifteen (15) days unless a request to the Investigative Lieutenant or their designee is received not to purge the data. Any request to maintain the data on the internal agency's hot list for a period beyond 15 days must specify the criminal justice purpose justifying the request. Unless otherwise subject to a longer retention as governed by Chapter 257, Florida Statutes and Rule 1B-24.003(1)(a)-(b), Florida Administrative Code, such as part of a criminal investigation or pending criminal case, any record retained under this provision will be disposed of within thirty (30) days of the request to retain.
4. Hot Lists that are entered by Criminal Investigative Division personnel will remain "local" or in the Cocoa Police Department's operated ALPR's. A Local Hot List Alert does not provide a reason to stop a vehicle, this alert is just information to be used as an investigative lead. The information provided in a local Alert needs to be verified through the entering employee or the officer must establish their own reasonable suspicion to conduct a law enforcement contact. A disclaimer will be provided in relation to any local Alert advising the investigating officer of same.

5. Teletype entries automatically uploaded through FDLE to NCIC/FCIC will remain in the system until a law enforcement agency provides information that it can be removed. If a "hot list" recovery is made from an external agency's list through FDLE, the communications center shall send teletype notification to the entering agency, so they know to remove the item.

H. MAINTENANCE

The Criminal Investigative Lieutenant or their designee is responsible for the management of the Cocoa Police Department's ALPR programs to include planning, policy development and enforcement, training, vendor management and ALPR site locations of mobile and stationary ALPR systems.

I. RETENTION OF CAPTURED LICENSE PLATE IMAGES

The usefulness of captured license plate images has an immediate impact on crime and the safety of citizens. Validated images of license plates provide the ability to locate missing endangered persons, detect and deter crime, address nuisance and safety issues related to criminal investigations, and provide useful intelligence information.

1. Access to ALPR data for criminal investigation is limited to authorized personnel. Images may be downloaded if needed for a law enforcement purpose and requires an agency case number and be retained as any other evidentiary item.
2. Downloaded images will not be retained longer than 30 days from the date of capture unless needed and stored as case evidence. If needed as case evidence, the information will be copied from the ALPR systems and placed in the case file.
3. The Cocoa Police Department recognizes the importance of sharing ALPR data with other law enforcement agencies. Sharing data in this manner provides a force multiplier and increases the probability of locating missing endangered persons and deterring, detecting, or solving crime. ALPR data sharing supports a key element of thwarting acts of terrorism. Through the ALPR providers, Memorandums of Understanding will be executed with agencies that the Cocoa Police Department shares ALPR data with outside the boundaries of the City of Cocoa. Once the data is shared, the shared records become property of the requesting agency, governed by the policy and procedures of that agency. ALPR records may be subject to the provisions of Chapter 119, Florida Statutes.

J. TRAINING

Only employees trained by the manufacturer or the appointed Cocoa Police Department personnel will operate an ALPR system. Users must also successfully complete the required training before receiving access.