

Greer Police Department

General Order 140.2

Automated License Plate Recognition

This order consists of the following numbered sections:

- I. Purpose
- II. Policy
- III. Definitions
- IV. Procedure

By Order of: *Matt Hamby*

Chief of Police

Effective: January 26, 2023

CALEA 41.3.9

I. **Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to provide officers with guidelines on the proper use of automated license plate recognition systems (ALPR). Currently, the Greer Police Department utilizes the stationary Flock system, only.

II. **Policy:** The availability and use of the ALPR systems have provided many opportunities for the enhancement of productivity, effectiveness, and officer safety. It is the policy of this agency that all members abide by the guidelines set forth herein when using ALPR systems.

III. **Definitions:**

- A. **Automated License Plate Reader:** Equipment consisting of fixed and mobile cameras and computer hardware/software used to automatically recognize and interpret characters on vehicle license plates. This data is then compared against data contained in NCIC, SLED, or DMV files that may bear some significance to law enforcement. This significance may come in the form of stolen cars, stolen or suspended tags, Amber Alerts, or wanted persons. Flock cameras record images of vehicles that may be queried against specific information for stated investigative purposes.
- B. **Hot lists:** License plate numbers of stolen cars, vehicles owned by persons of interest, and vehicles associated with Amber Alerts that are regularly added to "hot lists" circulated among law enforcement agencies. Hot list information can come from a variety of sources, including stolen vehicle information from the National Insurance Crime Bureau and NCIC, as well as national Amber Alerts and Department of Homeland Security watch lists. The DMV can provide lists of expired registration tags, and law enforcement agencies can interface their own, locally compiled hot lists to the ALPR system. These lists serve an officer safety function as well as an investigatory purpose. In addition to agency supported hot lists, users may also manually add license plate numbers to hot lists to be alerted if and when a vehicle license plate of interest is read by the ALPR system.
- C. **Hit:** A read matched to a plate that has previously been listed as stolen or suspended, or matched to a wanted person or Amber Alert, or some other factor supporting further law enforcement investigation.
- D. **Alert:** A visual and/or auditory notice of a hit that triggered when the ALPR system reads a license plate that is a match with information found in any information file such as NCIC. With Flock, specifically, the hit is sent to the registered officer via an email alert.
- E. **Read/Scan:** Digital images of license plates and vehicles associated with metadata (i.e. date, time, and geographical coordinates associated with the vehicle capture) that are captured by the ALPR.
- F. **Digital Image:** Image produced of the license plate and the vehicle with each scan.
- G. **Verification:** The user of the digital image system will complete visual verification of each hit.
- H. **Confirmation:** Each hit will be confirmed through NCIC, NLEATS, SLED, SCDMV, or other relevant database prior to initiating an investigation and/or traffic stop.

IV. **Procedures**

A. General

1. The use of the ALPR systems is restricted to public safety related missions of this agency.
2. ALPR systems and associated equipment and databases are authorized for official public safety purposes. Misuse of this equipment and associated databases, or data, may be subject to sanctions and/or disciplinary actions.
3. ALPR systems and ALPR data and associated media are the property of this agency and intended for use in conducting official business with limited exceptions noted elsewhere in this general order.

B. Administration

1. The agency shall designate an employee(s) with administrative oversight for the ALPR system deployment and operations who is (are) responsible for the following:
 - a. Establishing protocols for access, collection, storage, and retention of ALPR data and associated media files.
 - b. Establishing protocols to preserve and document ALPR reads and alerts or hits that are acted on in the field or associated with investigations or prosecutions.
 - c. Establishing protocols to establish and ensure the security and integrity of data captured, stored, and/or retained by the ALPR system.
 - d. Ensuring the proper selection of the personnel approved to operate the ALPR system and maintaining an adequate number of trainees.
 - e. Maintaining records identifying approved ALPR deployments and documenting their results, including appropriate documentation of significant incidents and arrests that are related to ALPR usage.
 - f. Authorizing any requests for ALPR systems use or data access according to the policies and guidelines of this agency.
2. Designated, trained personnel shall check equipment on a regular basis to ensure functionality and camera alignment. Any equipment that falls outside expected functionality shall be removed from service until deficiencies have been corrected.
3. ALPR systems repairs, hardware or software, shall be made by agency authorized sources.

C. Automated License Plate Reader System Usage

1. ALPR operation and access to ALPR collected data shall be for official agency purposes only.
2. Only officers who have been properly trained in the use and operational protocols of the ALPR systems shall be permitted to use it.
3. ALPR Alerts/Hits: Prior to initiation of the stop:
 - a. Visually verify that the vehicle plate number matches the plate number run by the ALPR system, including both alphanumeric characters of the license plate and the state of issuance.
 - b. Verify the current status of the plate through dispatch or MDT query when circumstances allow.
 - c. Enforcement action taken by officers that is based upon ALPR hits/alerts will be documented in an incident report.
4. Hot lists may be updated manually by approved personnel for law enforcement purposes only. Personnel entering information into the ALPR are responsible for the timely removal of information once it is no longer applicable for law enforcement purposes.

5. Special Details: ALPR use during nontraditional deployments (e.g., special operations or during a criminal investigation) must be approved by the administrator.
 6. Searches of historical data within the ALPR system should be done in accordance with the established departmental policies and procedures.
- D. ALPR Data Sharing and Dissemination-** ALPR data should be considered for official use only and can be shared for legitimate law enforcement purposes:
1. When ALPR data are disseminated outside the agency, it should be documented in a secondary dissemination log.
 2. Information sharing among agencies should be dictated in accordance with memoranda of understanding or established departmental policies.
- E. Retention-** Any information obtained from the ALPR system by Greer Police personnel will be maintained and disposed of in accordance with CJIS protocols and only utilized for official purposes.
- F. Maintenance**
1. Under no condition should an ALPR operator attempt to modify the ALPR equipment or software operating system without permission from the ALPR coordinator.
 2. ALPR camera lenses may be cleaned with glass cleaner or mild soap and water and a soft, nonabrasive cloth.
 3. Damage to ALPR equipment shall be immediately reported to a supervisor. The supervisor shall document and investigate, if necessary, the damage in accordance with policies on agency owned equipment.
 4. The system administrator will be notified of any ALPR equipment needing maintenance or repair. The administrator will then notify the ALPR vender.