


**LEESBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT
REGULATIONS AND GENERAL ORDERS MANUAL**

General Order Number: 228		Section: OPERATIONS	Effective Date: SEPTEMBER 2022
Title: LICENSE PLATE RECOGNITION EQUIPMENT			
Accreditation Standards: OPR.01.06			
Review Date: JANUARY 2024	Total Pages: 3	Chief of Police: 	

I. Policy

The use of License Plate Recognition equipment is intended to provide law enforcement personnel with an automated method of identifying vehicles and license plates. Locating vehicles identified as having a specific interest to law enforcement is consistent with the mission of the Leesburg Police Department in delivering the greatest measure of safety and highest level of service to the citizens and visitors to the Town.

Assignment of LPR equipment within the agency is made by the Chief of Police or designee and based upon the needs of the department.

The use of LPR equipment shall be for law enforcement purposes only and done in a manner consistent with the manufacturer's recommendations and this policy.

II. Definitions

License Plate Recognition (LPR) system – Equipment consisting of a camera(s), computer, and computer software used to automatically recognize and interpret the characters on vehicle license plates. This data is then compared against a list of license plates bearing some significance to law enforcement.

Hot List – Also known as “hit list”. A database populated with items of specific concern to the investigative and/or enforcement interests of law enforcement in Leesburg. This may include, but is not limited to, Terrorist Screening Center watch list, stolen/wanted vehicles, and license plates, wanted and missing persons, cautions, and license plates associated with Amber Alerts or various watch lists provided for law enforcement purposes.

Download – Transfer of data from the Virginia State Police database consisting of license plate associated data.

Alarm (aka Hit) – A positive indication, by visual and/or audible signal, of a potential match between data on the “hot list” and a license plate scanned by the LPR system. A hit is NOT conclusive confirmation that a license plate is wanted, and additional investigation is always warranted when a hit is indicated.

LPR Generated Data – All information, including location, date and time of a license plate encounter, the OCR interpolated data, and any LPR generated digital photographic image(s) of the license plate and vehicle generated entirely through the use of and by the LPR equipment.

III. Procedure

This procedure establishes basic guidelines to be used in the deployment of LPR equipment by agency personnel. It applies to use by personnel throughout the department, regardless of assignment. Additional specific instructions may be provided by the supervisor of a particular Unit.

A. All operators shall receive training prior to using the LPR system.

- B. It shall be the responsibility of each LPR user to download the current “hot list” from the VSP secure web site prior to deployment of the LPR equipment.
- C. Each LPR operator will be assigned a dedicated flash drive. The sole purpose of the dedicated flash drive is for transferring “hot list” files from the VSP website to the LPR system computer. No other files, documents, photographs, or recordings shall be saved on the dedicated flash drive. In the event of loss or damage to the dedicated flash drive, the loss shall be documented and a replacement shall be obtained from the Division coordinator or designee. No other type of media storage device shall be used in lieu of the dedicated flash drive.
- D. Upon receiving an alarm, the LPR operator should utilize whatever information is available to determine the accuracy of the “hit”. The LPR operator will visually verify the subject tag and the actual read on the LPR screen are the same (i.e. from the same state, etc.). The operator will confirm the “hit” is still active by running the information through NCIC/VCIN via MDT or through the ECC. Receipt of an LPR alarm is **NOT** sufficient probable cause to warrant an arrest without additional verification.
- E. Upon receipt of an alarm, the LPR operator will ensure that they are in a position to determine the accuracy of the “hit” safely and in accordance with General Order 603 (Mobile Computers).
- F. Additional information may be entered into the LPR system at anytime. Broadcast information received following the initial download should be manually entered immediately upon receipt by the LPR operator. The reason for the entry shall be included in the “note” portion of the entry screen (i.e. stolen vehicle, missing person, abduction, Amber Alert, robbery suspect).
- G. Upon completing a manual entry, the operator should query the LPR data to determine if the license plate was scanned previously.
- H. At the end of an operator’s tour of duty, they shall complete a LPR Daily Log Form and forward it to the Division coordinator or designee.

IV. Deployment

- A. LPR equipped vehicles may be used in a routine patrol capacity or for special operations. They should NOT, however, be intentionally used in a manner or location that will increase the risk of damage to or by LPR equipment (such as civil disturbance situations) if at all possible.
- B. Operation of LPR equipped vehicles shall be in accordance with General Order 201 (Patrol).
- C. Supervisors should make every effort to deploy LPR equipped vehicles on a regular basis. LPR equipped units should be identified on daily worksheets.

V. Data Retention

LPR Equipment has the capability to store and/or cause to store data collected during the license plate detection and identification phase of use. LPR generated data shall NOT be routinely retained for a period greater than 30 calendar days without specific authorization of the Chief of Police or designee.

VI. Maintenance

- A. Under no conditions should an LPR operator attempt to modify the LPR equipment or software operating system.
- B. LPR camera lenses may be cleaned with glass cleaner or mild soap and water, and a soft, non-abrasive cloth.

- C. LPR cameras must be removed from vehicle prior to entering an automatic car washing facility.
- D. Damage to LPR equipment shall be immediately reported to a supervisor. The supervisor shall document (and investigate, if necessary) the damage in accordance with established procedures.
- E. The LPR coordinator for the Division shall be notified of any LPR equipment needing maintenance or repair who will then coordinate all maintenance and repair with the appropriate vendor. The vehicle need not be removed from service once the damaged LPR unit is secured or removed from the vehicle.
- F. Any time the LPR unit is disconnected, unmounted, or removed from the vehicle, it SHALL be placed in the protective storage case and secured to prevent damage.