



# GENERAL ORDER

Loudoun County Sheriff's Office

**Chapter:** Operations

**Section:** 401.8

**Subject:** Operational Functions

**Topic:** Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR)

**Enacted:** 07/30/2015

**Last Review:** 03/24/2025

**Review:** 11/01/2027

## I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to establish a policy regarding the issuance, operation, and administration of [Automated License Plate Recognition](#) ("ALPR") equipment.

## II. POLICY

The use of ALPR equipment is intended to provide law enforcement personnel with a method of identifying vehicles and license plates (and by association the specific owners or operators of those vehicles) without direct intervention by the officer. Locating vehicles identified as having a specific interest to law enforcement is consistent with the mission of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office in delivering the greatest measure of safety and the highest level of service to the citizens and visitors to the County.

The assignment of ALPR equipment within the agency is made by the Sheriff or his/her designee based upon the needs of the agency.

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

## III. PROCEDURE

- A. All operators shall receive training prior to using the ALPR system.
- B. All operators will be certified to conduct NCIC/VCIN queries with a minimum level "B" certification.
- C. Upon receiving an [Alarm](#), the [ALPR operator](#) shall determine the accuracy of the Alarm. The ALPR operator will visually verify that the subject tag and the tag on the ALPR software are the same. The operator will confirm the Alarm is still valid by running the information through NCIC/VCIN. Receipt of an ALPR alarm is **not** sufficient probable cause to warrant an arrest or detention without additional verification.
- D. Upon receiving an Alarm from the Terrorist Screening Center Watch List and confirming the results, the ALPR operator will contact the Terrorist Screening Center with details of the Alert (1-866-872-9001) as soon as possible. The operator shall also complete an informational IBR report and forward it to the Criminal Investigations Division.

- E. Additional license plate information may be entered into the ALPR system at any time by an operator or administrator. Broadcast information received following the initial download should be manually entered immediately upon receipt by the ALPR 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, etc.).
- F. Upon completing a manual entry, the operator will query the ALPR data to determine if the license plate was scanned previously. If an Alarm is recorded, the information will be relayed to the appropriate person (i.e., the investigating officer and/or the Emergency Communications Center).
- G. The ALPR operator shall ensure that the GPS is connected and operating properly.
- H. Additional specific instructions may be provided by the supervisor of a particular unit.

#### IV. DEPLOYMENT

ALPR equipped vehicles may be used in a routine patrol capacity or for special operations. Unless necessary for the specific incident, ALPR equipment should not be intentionally used in a manner or location that will increase the risk of damage to or damage caused by the ALPR equipment (i.e., civil disturbances, etc.).

#### V. MAINTENANCE

- A. Under no circumstances should an ALPR operator attempt to modify the ALPR equipment or software.
- B. ALPR camera lenses may be cleaned with glass cleaner or mild soap and water, and a soft, non-abrasive cloth.
- C. ALPR cameras must be removed from the vehicle prior to entering an automatic car wash facility and/or upon the completion of the tour of duty, and placed in the trunk of the vehicle.
- D. Damage to the ALPR equipment shall be immediately reported to an on-duty supervisor and the ALPR [System Administrator](#).
- E. The supervisor shall document (and investigate, if necessary) the damage in accordance with agency policy.
- F. The Technology Section shall be notified of any ALPR equipment requiring maintenance or repair. Maintenance and repair will be coordinated with the appropriate vendor.

#### VI. ADMINISTRATION

- A. On a daily basis, the System Administrator shall ensure the current [Hot List](#) from the Virginia State Police Fusion Center has been updated through the automatic interface.
- B. ALPR data will be maintained for a period of 365 days on the ALPR Server, but that retention period may be reduced depending on the amount of data collected, the ability of the server to retain such data, and the needs of pending investigations. In serious criminal investigations where a general location for a suspect vehicle or a crime pattern has been identified, information captured by the ALPR system may be retained for an extended period of time with approval of the Sheriff or his/her designee.
- C. All FOIA requests will be submitted to the Sheriff or his/her designee for review.
- D. The sharing of ALPR data among other agencies shall be dictated in accordance with Memorandum's of Understanding (MOUs) or established agency policies.
- E. All users of the ALPR software shall be approved by the Sheriff or his/her designee. All system usage will be audited on a quarterly basis for compliance with the policies outlined in this General Order.