

<p>MESA POLICE</p> <p>Department Policy Manual</p>	<p align="center">License Plate Reader Technology</p>	<p>DPM 2.8.65 Effective 04/06/2012 Revised 06/11/2024</p>
<p>Approved by: Chief of Police</p>	<p>Chapter: Patrol Operations</p>	<p>Page: 1 of 6</p>

1. PURPOSE

This policy provides Mesa Police Department (MPD) members with guidelines for the operation and use of Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) and Mobile License Plate Reader (LPR) technology.

2. DEFINITIONS

ALPR Recognition: ALPR systems comprise cameras that capture an image of a vehicle's license plate and use Optical Character Recognition (OCR) to automatically read license plate characters.

ALPR Record/Detection: Is generated when an instance of a vehicle license plate is detected, imaged, and processed to identify the plate.

Contextual Photo/Image: An overview image of the area around a detection.

Data Retention: Refers to the amount of time that the collected data will be preserved.

Fixed Camera: An ALPR camera that is affixed to a non-moving structure.

GPS: Global Positioning System.

Hit: A detection of a license plate that matches a plate previously registered on a hot list or hot plate.

Hot List: Data which includes license plate numbers of stolen vehicles, stolen license plates, wanted persons with a license plate associated with the record, and missing or endangered persons.

Hot Plate: A license plate with a wanted status. It may also be entered into a system designed to provide notification of future detections.

Law Enforcement Data: ALPR/LPR data collected by law enforcement from third-party cameras.

Misread: An incorrect translation of a license plate.

Mobile Camera: A vehicle-mounted camera.

Mobile License Plate Reader (LPR): Consists of digital camera processor units and laptop computers.

National Crime Information Center (NCIC): An electronic clearinghouse of crime data, such as mug shots and crime records, available to virtually every criminal justice agency nationwide.

Personal Identifying Information (PII): Information that contains a name, date of birth, address, social security number, telephone number, email address, and/or driver license number of any person.

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Third-Party Data: ALPR/LPR data collected and maintained by a third-party.

3. PRIVACY PRINCIPLES

MPD is committed to protecting information collected from the public to the highest degree possible. We recognize that privacy is at the forefront of many of our citizens' concerns and as such, we are steadfast in our intent to clearly communicate what data we collect, how we use it, and how we disclose its use. For more information, please see the [City of Mesa Privacy Principles](#).

4. GENERAL

- A. License Plate Reader Technology is integrated into the MPD to assist and enhance law enforcement's ability to detect violations of law, recover stolen property, apprehend fugitives, and assist with investigations.
- B. The images and the metadata associated with ALPR/LPR data are forms of information collected by an ALPR/LPR system. Data files typically contain the following information:
 - 1. Black and white image.
 - 2. Contextual color image.
 - 3. Electronically readable format of plate (alphanumeric characters of license plate numbers).
 - 4. Location and GPS coordinates.
 - 5. Time and date of image capture.
 - 6. Camera identification.

5. GUIDELINES

5.1 Administration

- A. ALPR/LPR data does not contain PII. A license plate number identifies a specific vehicle, not a specific person. Although a license plate number may be linked or otherwise associated with an identifiable person, this potential can only be realized through a distinct, separate step involving authorized and secured access to the Arizona Department of Motor Vehicle's records. Absent this extra step, the license plate number and the time and location data attached to it are not personally identified. Thus, even though ALPR systems automate the collection of license plate numbers, *it is the investigation process that identifies individuals.*

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5.2 Live Detection Monitoring

- A. ALPR live detection access is limited to those members who have the capability of efficiently notifying first responders to a credible hit detection. The steps below are the flow when a hit is received:
 - 1. Receive – hit comes in via ALPR platform.
 - 2. Verify – plate read matches numbers and state.
 - 3. Query – confirm hit is still valid.
 - 4. Action – notify available units to respond.
- B. Upon receiving ALPR hit notification, prior to voicing the detection over the air, a member must first rerun the license plate to ensure accuracy (correct state, plate number), as well as make a reasonable determination if the hit is the result of a MVD reprint of a previously stolen vehicle.
- C. Members may then utilize live available streaming cameras in an attempt to locate the vehicle’s exact location. Once the vehicle has been located, then:
 - 1. Determine if there are available units to respond (e.g., not in Phase One or “any unit to break”).
 - 2. If the vehicle is located, notify patrol or other specialty units logged on, such as SCU, who have the ability to immediately respond to the incident.
 - 3. If the vehicle is not located on camera, a member may send an ATL, advising officers in the area of the detection.

5.3 Investigative Access

- A. Members assigned to an investigative unit are permitted access to ALPR/LPR resources for the purpose of utilizing previous plate/vehicle reads to assist in potential leads in active criminal investigations.
- B. Members adding custom hot lists are responsible for which members/areas will receive these hot list notifications.

5.4 Equipment/System Access

- A. Use of ALPR/LPR is restricted to the purposes outlined in this policy. Department members shall **not** use, or allow others to use, the equipment or database records for any unauthorized purpose.
- B. ALPR/LPR shall only be used for official and legitimate law enforcement purposes.
- C. Members must be trained in the use of the ALPR/LPR platforms prior to having an active account.
- D. If ALPR/LPR will be deployed during major incidents, this allows the collection of license plates associated with the incident area. Partial license plates reported during major crimes should be entered into the ALPR/LPR system to identify suspect vehicles.

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- E. ALPR/LPR may be used in conjunction with any routine patrol operation or criminal investigation. Reasonable suspicion or probable cause are not required *before* collecting ALPR/LRP data.
- F. ALPR/LPR data may be used to investigate hits and other circumstances in which law enforcement agents reasonably believe that the plate data are relevant to an ongoing criminal investigation or to protect the health or safety of others.
- G. Retention of law enforcement ALPR/LPR data will be stored in an appointed server for a period of no more than 12 months. Thereafter, it shall be purged unless it has become, or is reasonable to believe it will become, evidence in a criminal investigation. In those circumstances, the applicable data should be downloaded from the server onto portable media and impounded as evidence into evidence.com. Case files containing ALPR/LPR data can be shared with prosecutors as permitted by law.
- H. Hot lists should be updated as often as practicable and/or at the beginning of each shift. Whenever a license plate reader alerts on a plate, and before taking any action, officers are required to confirm visually that a plate matches the number and state identified in the alert, confirm that the alert is still active, and if the alert pertains to the registrant of the vehicle and not the vehicle itself.
 - 1. For example, in a warrant situation, develop a reasonable belief that the vehicle's occupant(s) match any individual(s) identified in the alert.
- I. Any malfunction and/or damage to any part of the system shall be reported immediately to the Real Time Crime Center (RTCC) Sergeant or Technology Sergeant.

5.5 Use and Care of the Mobile License Plate Reader

- A. All installation and maintenance of the LPR equipment, as well as the LPR data retention and access, shall be managed by PDIT. The PDIT Manager will assign members to administer the day-to-day operation of the LPR equipment and data.
- B. Installation of LPR devices on vehicles shall only be done by the Technology Sergeant or designee.
- C. The LPR shall only be used on vehicles designated by the Technology Sergeant or designee that has the proper wiring to ensure the necessary power output for each LPR unit.

6. ACCOUNTABILITY & SAFEGUARDS

- A. All saved data will be closely safeguarded and protected by both procedural and technological means. The MPD will observe such safeguards regarding access to and use of stored data.
- B. Law enforcement ALPR/LPR data will only be released in accordance with applicable law and will not contain any personal identifying information of any individual.

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- C. All ALPR/LPR data downloaded to the mobile workstation and server shall be accessible only through a login/password protected system capable of documenting all access of information by name, time, and date.
- D. Persons approved to use ALPR/LPR systems and access ALPR/LPR data under these guidelines are permitted to access the data for legitimate law enforcement purposes only, such as when the data relates to a specific criminal investigation or Department related civil or administrative action. Access to ALPR/LPR systems and data requires completion of approved Department training and is non-transferable to other users. User access violations are subject to a loss of access and discipline per Department guidelines. See [DPM 1.4.1 Code of Conduct](#).
- E. All ALPR/LPR data queries must be accompanied by the law enforcement case number corresponding with the investigation or case description.
- F. Requested ALPR/LPR data may be released to other authorized and verified law enforcement officials and agencies at any time for legitimate law enforcement purposes.
- G. Sharing of ALPR/LPR data is permissible with other law enforcement agencies for legitimate law enforcement purposes in accordance with this policy.

7. AUDITS

- A. Quarterly audits on the ALPR/LPR system will be conducted by the RTCC supervisor to validate compliance with agency policies and applicable laws and regulations. The audit will verify what ALPR/LPR information was accessed and by whom, in order to identify any improper or unauthorized uses of this data. They should also confirm that data is being purged as required under any applicable data retention schedules.

8. TRAINING

- A. **New User Training:** This training will include policy, procedures, state and local laws, and an in-depth walk-through of the ALPR/LPR products and software.
- B. **Refresher Training:** This will include changes to case law and examples of ALPR/LPR use. This training should ideally occur immediately after any changes to policy take place. Authorized trainers should provide training on ALPR/LPR technology that is currently deployed in Mesa. Authorized trainers are the Admin users of the ALPR/LPR software platform.

9. RTCC & FIELD SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Taking necessary action to ensure compliance with these rules.

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- B. RTCC supervisors are responsible for monitoring RTCC personnel utilizing the ALPR/LPR to ensure compliance.
- C. Field supervisors are responsible for monitoring field personnel utilizing the ALPR/LPR to ensure compliance.

REFERENCES

- [City of Mesa Privacy Principles](#)
- [DPM 1.4.1 Code of Conduct](#)