

	NEWTOWN POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER		DISTRIBUTIO N	G.O. # 3.20
	Order Title Automatic License Plate Readers		Section 3	Section Title Chapter 3
	Original Issue Date 4/10/2025		Reissue/Effective Date 4/10/2025	
	Rescinds N/A		Accreditation standard	

This General Order is for departmental use only and does not apply in any criminal or civil proceeding. This General Order should not be construed as the creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense concerning third party claims. Violations of this General Order will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal penalties in a recognized judicial setting.

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide officers with guidelines on the proper use of automatic license plate recognition (ALPR) systems, also commonly known as automatic license plate reader systems.

II. POLICY

The availability and use of ALPR systems have provided many opportunities to enhance 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

FOUO: For Official Use Only

LPR: License Plate Recognition/License Plate Reader

OCR: Optical Character Recognition

Read: Digital images of license plates and vehicles and associated metadata (e.g., date, time, and geographic coordinates associated with the vehicle image capture) that are captured by the ALPR system.

Alert: A visual and/or auditory notice that is triggered when the ALPR system receives a potential “hit” on a license plate.

Hit: A read matched to a plate that has previously been registered on an agency’s “hot list” of vehicle plates related to stolen vehicles, wanted vehicles, or other factors supporting investigation or which has been manually registered by a user for further investigation.

Hotlist: 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. Hotlist information can come from a variety of sources, including stolen vehicle information from the National Insurance Crime Bureau and the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), as well as national AMBER Alerts and Department of Homeland Security watch lists. Departments of motor vehicles 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 hotlists in order to be alerted if and when a vehicle license plate of interest is “read” by the LPR system.

Fixed LPR system: ALPR cameras that are permanently affixed to a structure, such as a pole, a traffic barrier, or a bridge.

Mobile LPR system: ALPR cameras that are affixed, either permanently (hardwired) or temporarily (e.g., magnet-mounted), to a law enforcement vehicle for mobile deployment.

Portable LPR system: ALPR cameras that are transportable and can be moved and deployed in various venues as needed, such as a traffic barrel or speed radar sign.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. General

1. The use of ALPR systems is restricted to this agency's public safety–related missions.
2. ALPR systems, associated equipment, and databases are authorized for official public safety purposes. Misuse of this equipment and associated databases or data may result in disciplinary action.
3. ALPR systems 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 policy.

B. Administration

1. The Chief of Police shall designate an employee(s) with administrative oversight for 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 LPR 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 regularly to ensure functionality and camera alignment. Equipment that does not meet 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. License Plate Reader System Usage

- 1. ALPR operation and access to ALPR-collected data shall only be for official agency purposes.
- 2. Only officers who have been properly trained in the use and operational protocols of the ALPR systems shall be permitted to use them.
- 3. ALPR Alerts/Hits: Before initiation of the stop:
- 4. The officer shall visually verify that the vehicle plate number matches the plate number run by the LPR system, including both alphanumeric characters of the license plate and the state of issuance.
- 5. The officer shall verify the current status of the plate through COLLECT/NCIC with dispatch or an MDT query when circumstances allow.
- 6. Hotlists may be updated manually if the user enters a specific plate into the ALPR system and wants to be alerted when that plate is located. The officer should document the reason when a plate is manually entered into the ALPR system. These entries shall be removed from the hotlist when no longer valid.

7. Historical data searches within the LPR system should be conducted FOUO; each search requires a case number or description.

D. ALPR Data Sharing and Dissemination

LPR data should be considered FOUO and can be shared for legitimate law enforcement purposes:

E. Retention

ALPR data will be retained within the system for thirty days unless the information is involved as part of a legitimate law enforcement purpose, including investigations. Retention, storage, and release of the data will be pursuant to the CT Freedom of Information Act and the Public Retention Schedule.