

## Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs)

### 463.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for the capture, storage and use of digital data obtained through the use of Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) technology.

### 463.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Citrus Heights Police Department to utilize ALPR technology only for official and legitimate law enforcement purposes with the goal being to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of its public safety efforts in a manner that safeguards the legitimate privacy concerns of law-abiding citizens. Department personnel may use the ALPR system for official use only. Any matches received from the ALPR must be verified before enforcement action is taken. ALPR data that is not considered intelligence and investigative information shall be retained for a maximum of two years.

### 463.3 ADMINISTRATION

The ALPR technology, also known as License Plate Recognition (LPR), allows for the automated detection of license plates. The Citrus Heights Police Department utilizes data associated with vehicle license plates for official law enforcement purposes, including identifying stolen or wanted vehicles, stolen license plates, ongoing criminal investigations, and missing persons. It may also be used to gather information related to active warrants, homeland security, electronic surveillance, suspect interdiction and stolen property recovery.

All installation and maintenance of ALPR equipment, as well as ALPR data retention and access, shall be managed by the Support Services Manager.

The Patrol Services Division Commander will assign members under his/her command to administer the day-to-day operation of the ALPR equipment and data.

### 463.4 DEFINITIONS

**Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR)** : A mobile or stationary device that uses cameras and computer technology to compare digital images of license plates to lists of known plates of interest.

**Detection** : Data obtained by an ALPR of license plates within public view that were read by the device including potential images of the plate and vehicle on which it was displayed and information regarding the location of the police vehicle at the time of the ALPR read.

**Hit** : Alert from the ALPR system that a scanned license plate number may be in the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) or other law enforcement database for a specific reason including but not limited to being related to a stolen car, stolen license plate, wanted person, missing person, domestic violence protective order or terrorist related activity.

**Hot List** : License plate(s) associated with vehicles of interest from an associated database including but not limited to NCIC, DMV, local BOLO's, etc.

# Citrus Heights Police Department

Citrus Heights PD Policy Manual

## *Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs)*

---

### **463.5 GENERAL ADMINISTRATION**

ALPRs will be used only by members of this department which includes sworn and non-sworn staff who have been properly trained in the use of designated ALPR equipment and operations for legitimate law enforcement purpose.

No civilian or sworn member shall use or authorize the use of any ALPR system or any ALPR database information for any reasons other than official law enforcement purposes.

A positive hit under the ALPR program does not in and of itself establish probable cause. With the absence of exigent circumstances the hit information/data should be confirmed prior to taking any related law enforcement action.

### **463.6 OPERATIONS**

Use of an ALPR is restricted to the purposes outlined below. Department members shall not use or allow others to use the equipment or database records for any unauthorized purpose (Civil Code § 1798.90.51; Civil Code § 1798.90.53).

- (a) Prior to a shift, members using an ALPR will ensure that an upload of the most up to date list of data from the system has been performed for the day.
- (b) An ALPR may be used in conjunction with any routine patrol operation or criminal investigation. Reasonable suspicion or probable cause is not required before using an ALPR.
- (c) While an ALPR may be used to canvass license plates around any crime scene, particular consideration should be given to using ALPR-equipped cars to canvass areas around homicides, shootings and other major incidents. Partial license plates reported during major crimes should be entered into the ALPR system in an attempt to identify suspect vehicles.
- (d) No member of this department shall operate ALPR equipment or access ALPR data without first completing department-approved training.
- (e) No ALPR operator may access department, state or federal data unless otherwise authorized to do so.
- (f) If practicable, the officer should verify an ALPR response through the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (CLETS) or the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) before taking enforcement action that is based solely on an ALPR alert.
- (g) When an enforcement action and investigation and/or prosecution results from an ALPR hit the hit will be preserved and included in the report.
- (h) ALPRs may be used in special operations or details such as high crime area patrols, DUI saturations and checkpoints enforcement details, direct criminal investigations, etc. As an additional investigative resource the department may solicit assistance from other agencies or companies with ALPR equipped cars or stationary ALPR cameras in identifying a vehicle to gather license plate data in particular areas and to track a known vehicle's whereabouts. Similarly other departments may request assistance from this department in the event of the same.

# Citrus Heights Police Department

Citrus Heights PD Policy Manual

## *Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs)*

---

- (i) As an additional investigative resource the department may solicit assistance from other agencies or companies with ALPR equipped cars or stationary ALPR cameras in identifying a vehicle to gather license plate data in particular areas and to track a known vehicle's whereabouts. Similarly other departments may request assistance from this department in the event of the same.
- (j) Consideration should be given to deploying ALPR strategically such as at a perimeter, choke point, major highways, other avenues of escape, et cetera.

### **463.7 ALPR OPERATORS**

Officers assigned to ALPR vehicles shall ensure the ALPR cameras are properly affixed to the assigned police vehicle prior to starting their shift; inspecting units for damage or excessive wear.

Upon discovery of any ALPR equipment that is inoperable or damaged in any way officers shall immediately notify the ALPR administrator or supervisor and complete a vehicle repair slip.

Officers shall start the car detector ALPR system software to activate the system and receive the automatic updated hot list at the beginning of each shift.

ALPR units installed on marked Citrus Heights Police Department vehicles shall be activated and used at all times unless the operator of the vehicle has not been trained or the system is not properly functioning. Officers shall assure that the ALPR system is operational by making sure all cameras, LEARN, GPS and system light color is green on the top right of the car detector program.

Officers shall not attempt to repair defective or inoperable ALPR equipment.

### **463.8 ALPR DATA**

#### Internal Data

All ALPR data downloaded to the server should be stored for a minimum of one year (Government Code § 34090.6) and in accordance with the established records retention schedule. Thereafter, ALPR data should be purged unless it has become, or it is reasonable to believe it will become, evidence in a criminal or civil action or is subject to a discovery request or other lawful action to produce records. In those circumstances the applicable data should be downloaded from the server onto portable media and booked into evidence.

#### Sharing Data

All detection data generated from the Citrus Heights Police Department's ALPR systems can be shared with requesting law enforcement agencies who utilize the Law Enforcement Archival Reporting Networks (LEARN).

In the event an agency whose ALPR data is not hosted on the LEARN server and requests data sharing such request will be forwarded to the ALPR administrator.

# Citrus Heights Police Department

Citrus Heights PD Policy Manual

## *Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs)*

---

### **463.9 HOT LISTS**

General hot lists will be automatically downloaded into the ALPR system a minimum of once a day with the most current data overriding the old data.

Special hot lists approved by the support services manager will be automatically downloaded into the ALPR system a minimum of once a day with the most current data overriding the old data.

- (a) The hits from these data sources should be viewed as informational; created solely to bring the officer's attention to specific vehicles that have been associated with criminal activity.
- (b) Officers alerted to an observed motor vehicle's license plate entered as a hot plate are expected to make a reasonable effort to confirm that a wanted person is actually in the vehicle before the officer would have a lawful basis to stop the vehicle.

### **463.10 HOT PLATE ENTRIES**

Hot plates added to the database by LEARN/CDMS users will have an expiration date of no longer than 30 days.

Plates entered into the ALPR system with distribution to more than one officer will contain the following information as a minimum:

- (a) Entering officer's name and contact telephone number;
- (b) Related CHPD/Outside Agency (OAG) Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) number or case number;
- (c) Short synopsis of nature of the originating call, and reason for the want.

When officers are entering plates into the ALPR system as stolen hot plates, they should be as descriptive as possible.

Stolen plates or vehicles being entered into the system as a stolen hot plate should be entered by an officer for a period of no longer than one day, as it will automatically upload through CLETS Stolen Vehicle System (SVS) within 24 hours.

### **463.11 ACCOUNTABILITY**

All data will be closely safeguarded and protected by both procedural and technological means. The Citrus Heights Police Department will observe the following safeguards regarding access to and use of stored data (Civil Code § 1798.90.51; Civil Code § 1798.90.53):

- (a) All ALPR data downloaded to the mobile workstation and in storage shall be accessible only through a login/password-protected system capable of documenting all access of information by name, date and time (Civil Code § 1798.90.52).
- (b) Members approved to access ALPR data under these guidelines are permitted to access the data for legitimate law enforcement purposes only, such as when the data relate to a specific criminal investigation or department-related civil or administrative action.