
Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs)

462.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) technology, also known as License Plate Recognition, provides automated detection of license plates. ALPRs are used by the West Covina Police Department to convert data associated with vehicle license plates for official law enforcement purposes, including identifying stolen or wanted vehicles, stolen license plates and missing persons. ALPRs may also be used to gather information related to active warrants, homeland security, electronic surveillance, suspect interdiction and stolen property recovery.

462.2 ADMINISTRATION OF ALPR DATA

All installation and maintenance of ALPR equipment, as well as ALPR data retention and access shall be managed by the Administration. The Patrol Captain will assign personnel under his command to administer the day-to-day operation of the ALPR equipment and data.

462.3 ALPR OPERATION

Use of an ALPR is restricted to the purposes outlined below. Department personnel shall not use, or allow others to use the equipment or database records for any unauthorized purpose.

- (a) An ALPR shall only be used for official and legitimate law enforcement business.
- (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 California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (CLETS) data unless otherwise authorized to do so.
- (f) If practicable, the officer should verify an ALPR response through CLETS before taking enforcement action that is based solely on an ALPR alert.

462.4 ALPR DATA COLLECTION AND RETENTION

All data and images gathered by ALPR are for the official use of the West Covina Police Department and because such data may contain confidential CLETS information it is not open to public review. ALPR information gathered and retained by this department may be used and shared with prosecutors or others only as permitted by law.

West Covina Police Department

Policy Manual

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Collection and retention of ALPR data is subject to the following guidelines:

- (a) Files will be transferred from field units to department or home servers in accordance with the specific technological capabilities of the ALPR system in use and the technical infrastructure currently available to the West Covina Police Department.
- (b) Operators should transfer all ALPR data recorded at the beginning of each shift from the MDT to the home server as soon as practicable and at the end of each shift. Once transferred all ALPR data should be immediately purged from the laptop.

462.5 ACCOUNTABILITY AND SAFEGUARDS

All saved data will be closely safeguarded and protected by both procedural and technological means. The West Covina Police Department will observe the following safeguards regarding access to and use of stored data:

- (a) All ALPR data shall be accessible only through a login/password protected system capable of documenting by name, date and time who has accessed the information.
- (b) Persons approved to access ALPR data under these guidelines are permitted to access the data when there is an articulable suspicion that the data relates to an investigation in a specific criminal or department related civil action.
- (c) Requests to review stored data shall be recorded and maintained in the same manner as criminal history logs.
- (d) All transmission and storage of ALPR data shall meet CLETS requirements for network and computer security.
- (e) ALPR system audits should be conducted on a regular basis.