

CLINTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) System Use



GENERAL ORDER NUMBER: 12.10
(CALEA 41.3.9)

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order establishes the responsibilities, procedures, and guidelines for the use of the Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) System within the Clinton Police Department to ensure compliance, accountability, and proper use of ALPR data.

II. POLICY

The policy of the Clinton Police Department is to utilize ALPR technology to capture and store digital license plate data and images for criminal investigations and missing person(s) investigations, while recognizing the established privacy rights of the public. All data and images gathered by the ALPR are for the official use of this department. Because such data may contain confidential information, it is not open to public review.

The placement of the ALPR shall be determined by crime analysis data and severity in consultation with the vendor providing the ALPR service and shall be law enforcement sensitive. The Chief of Police shall have the exclusive authority for placement of the ALPR.

The ALPR technology, also known as Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR), allows for the automated detection of license plates. The system is also capable of detecting vehicle make, model, color and other unique identifiers.

The technology used by the Clinton Police Department to convert data associated with vehicle license plates and vehicle descriptions is for official law enforcement purposes, including, but not limited to, identifying stolen or wanted vehicles, stolen license plates, wanted persons and missing persons.

It may also be used to gather information related to active warrants, security threats, suspect interdiction, stolen property recovery and active criminal investigations. The ALPR technology **shall not be used** for traffic violations, outstanding fines or any civil infractions.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. Alert: A visual and/or auditory notice that is triggered when an ALPR system receives a potential hit on a license plate (See Appendix I for alert types).

- B. **ALPR**: Automated License Plate Recognition. ALPR technology uses high-speed cameras combined with sophisticated computer algorithms capable of converting the images of license plates to electronically readable data. The ALPR system captures an image of a license plate and converts it to a text file using Optical Character Recognition (OCR) technology. The technology also compares the digital images of license plates to the CJIS-NCIC Hot file database.
- C. **ALPR Operator**: Trained Department members who may utilize ALPR system/equipment. ALPR operators may be assigned to any position within the Department, and the ALPR Administrator may order the deployment of the ALPR systems for use in various investigative efforts.
- D. **ALPR Administrator**: The Chief of Police or their designee, serves as the ALPR Administrator for the Department. The Commander of the Administrative Services Division is currently the designated ALPR Administrator for the Department.
- E. **Alert Data**: Information captured by an ALPR relating to a license plate or vehicle description that matches the vehicle data or description in the system on a “hot list”.
- F. **ALPR Data**: Scan files, alert data, and any other documents or data generated by, or obtained through, utilization of an ALPR system.
- G. **ALPR Data Query Logs**: A record of a search or query of ALPR data.
- H. **ALPR System**: The ALPR camera and all associated equipment, software and databases operated by the Clinton Police Department. This includes fixed ALPR cameras that are attached to a structure, (pole, a traffic barrier, bridge, building, etc.) as well as mobile ALPR cameras that are deployed from a law enforcement vehicle or other equipment for mobile deployment.
- I. **CJIS-NCIC Hot File Database**: contains identifying information concerning wanted and missing persons, stolen vehicles and identifiable stolen property of several types. The information is entered into the system by the originating agency-the agency holding the arrest warrant, the missing person report or the theft report.
- J. **Hot List**: A list of license plates associated with vehicles of interest compiled from one or more data bases including, but not limited to, National Crime Information Center (NCIC), Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles (CT DMV), Local “Be on The Lookout” (BOLO’s), manually entered alerts, etc.
- K. **Custom Hot List**: A list that is manually entered by a Clinton Police Department System Administrator or designee. Such entries shall include the department’s name, and case number, along with a brief narrative about the entry.
- L. **Vehicle(s) of Interest**: Including, but not limited to vehicles which are reported as stolen; display stolen license plates or tags; vehicles linked to missing and/or wanted persons and vehicles flagged by the Department of Motor Vehicle Administration or other law enforcement agencies.

- M. **Detection:** Data obtained by an ALPR of an image (such as a license plate) within public view that was read by the device, including potential images (such as the plate and description of vehicle on which it was displayed), and information regarding the location of the ALPR system at the time of the ALPR's read.
- N. **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, wanted person, missing person, domestic violence protective order or terrorist-related activity.
- O. **Optical Character Recognition (OCR):** The technology that supports the automated reading and digitizing of images of license plates that are captured by an (ALPR) system.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. ALPR Administrator and Oversight

- a. The Chief of Police or their designee shall serve as the ALPR Administrator and shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with all aspects of ALPR usage, including training, data management, and audits. The ALPR Administrator is also responsible for conducting an annual review of the policy and making recommendations for necessary amendments.

B. ALPR System Training

- a. Prior to being granted access to the ALPR system, all officers and dispatchers must complete the department-approved training.
- b. Annual refresher training is required for continued authorization of ALPR operation. Such refresher training shall include policy review and any legal updates regarding the use and deployment of ALPR systems.
- c. All training shall be documented, and access to the system will only be granted to personnel who have completed the necessary training.

C. ALPR Data Usage and Access

- a. Only properly trained sworn officers and police dispatchers are authorized to use the ALPR system or collect ALPR data. All use and access of the system shall be for legitimate law enforcement purposes only.
- b. The ALPR system may be used for routine patrol operations or criminal investigations. Reasonable suspicion or probable cause is not required before using an ALPR.

- c. Partial license plates and unique vehicle descriptions should be entered into the system to assist in identifying a suspect vehicle(s) during criminal investigations.
- d. System users must verify ALPR alerts through the Connecticut On-Line Law Enforcement Communications Teleprocessing System (COLLECT) or NCIC before taking any enforcement action.

D. Verification and Enforcement Based on ALPR Alerts

- a. When an ALPR alert is received, system users must confirm the observed license plate matches the system's read. Verification must be done through COLLECT, NCIC, or Dispatch.
- b. Officers may not restrict the freedom of an individual based solely on an ALPR alert unless validated.
- c. If a vehicle is associated with a wanted individual, officers should attempt to visually identify the driver or have another legal basis before making a stop. (Kansas v. Glover)
- d. Before initiating a vehicle stop based on an alert, the following steps must be taken:
 - i. Verification of validity from COLLECT, NCIC, RMS, or Dispatch.
 - ii. Visual confirmation of the license plate, state of issue, and vehicle descriptors.
 - iii. Reasonable effort to confirm the presence of a wanted person in the vehicle.

E. Notifications and Response

- a. Not all notifications require an automatic dispatch and response. Some may be informational or helpful for investigations, but do not, by themselves, necessitate officer intervention.
- b. The following notifications/alerts require dispatch or a supervisor to assign officers to respond and actively search for a vehicle flagged by an ALPR, as shift activity permits.
 - i. Amber Alert
 - ii. Stolen Vehicle
 - iii. Missing Person
 - iv. Wanted Person

- c. Other notifications may be deemed by the shift supervisor as requiring an officer's response; however, these decisions may depend on the situation and the officer's proximity.

F. Hot List Management

- a. The creation and entry of Hot Lists entered into the ALPR system will be limited to the ALPR Administrator, a Patrol or Investigative Section Supervisor or their designee.
- b. Hot lists will be updated as necessary and compiled only from authorized sources.
- c. Officers must receive confirmation from COLLECT or other CJIS relevant systems before proceeding with enforcement based on a hot list alert.
- d. Any Hot List entries made by a supervisor must include:
 - i. The entering officer's name.
 - ii. A brief synopsis of the case.
 - iii. The associated Call for Service (CFS) number.
- e. Custom Hot List entries must be regularly reviewed, updated and removed when no longer valid.

G. Communication Center Responsibilities

- a. The Emergency Communications Center (ECC) is responsible for monitoring ALPR alerts and verifying captured license plates with relevant databases (COLLECT, NCIC, Hot Lists).
- b. If an alert/notification is verified through COLLECT/NCIC and meets the following criteria, dispatch shall advise and dispatch officers to respond.
 - i. Amber Alert
 - ii. Stolen Vehicle
 - iii. Missing Person
 - iv. Wanted Person
- c. If a stolen license plate is identified, dispatch will verify the plate's status through COLLECT access to DMV records.
- d. Hot List alerts may include specific instructions for field officers (e.g., "stop only with probable cause").
- e. ECC personnel will notify the relevant jurisdictions regarding the recovery of wanted vehicles or arrests based on ALPR data.

H. Patrol Officer Responsibilities

- a. Upon receiving an ALPR notification, officers will advise dispatch of the alert/notification before responding to the area if the notification is for:
 - i. Amber Alert
 - ii. Stolen Vehicle
 - iii. Missing Person
 - iv. Wanted Person
 - v. Sex offender
 - vi. Gang or Suspected Terrorist
 - vii. Supervised Release person
 - viii. Violent person
- b. If directed to respond by dispatch or a supervisor, officers should make a reasonable effort to respond to the area and search for the vehicle.
- c. Traffic stops should only be made following the positive identification of the suspect vehicle and COLLECT/NCIC information has been verified, and backup should be requested when applicable.
- d. **Non-response / Missed Alerts:** The job of police officers and dispatchers can be complex and fast-paced and it may not be possible or feasible for them to respond to every alert generated on an ALPR. Officers should use their best judgement when deciding to respond to an ALPR alert while they are already on a call for service or have been dispatched to a call. In the event an officer cannot respond to the ALPR alert because they have a prisoner, are responding to a higher priority call, or are otherwise unable to address the ALPR alert, they should make every effort to broadcast the alert information over the radio so other officers are aware of the alert and can respond if they are able to do so. Similarly, there are situations that would preclude dispatchers from responding immediately to an ALPR alert (for example, 911 calls, routine calls, other dispatch activities, etc.). Dispatchers should make every effort to broadcast alerts in as timely a manner as possible.

I. Supervisor Responsibilities

- a. Supervisors are responsible for monitoring ALPR alerts and verifying captured license plates with relevant databases (COLLECT, NCIC, Hot Lists).
- b. Upon receiving an ALPR notification, Supervisors should direct officers respond to the area and search for the suspect vehicle when the notification is for:
 - i. Amber Alert
 - ii. Stolen Vehicle
 - iii. Missing Person
 - iv. Wanted Person

- c. If directed to respond by dispatch or a supervisor, officers should make a reasonable effort to respond to the area and search for the suspect vehicle.
- d. Traffic stops should only be made following the positive identification of the suspect vehicle and COLLECT/NCIC information has been verified, and backup should be requested when applicable.
- e. Supervisors shall periodically review Hotlist stored in the ALPR system and shall remove any that are deemed to be no longer valid (i.e. apprehension, vehicle located, improper or invalid information identified).
 - i. After removing a Hot List(s) from the ALPR system, the supervisor shall notify the ALPR System Administrator via email of said removal and the reasons for it.

J. Investigator Responsibilities

- a. Investigators, trained in ALPR system use are authorized to use ALPR data for identifying suspects involved in criminal activities.
- b. Investigators, trained in ALPR system use may access the ALPR database and download relevant data to assist in criminal investigations.
- c. Any ALPR data used as evidence must be attached to the investigative report.

K. Permitted and Prohibited Uses

- a. ALPR data is to be used exclusively for legitimate law enforcement purposes. The following uses are prohibited:
 - i. Any use that violates a person's Constitutional rights.
 - ii. Harassment or intimidation.
 - iii. Discriminatory use based on protected characteristics.
 - iv. Personal use of the ALPR system.
 - v. Any prohibited use of the ALPR system may result in criminal prosecution, civil liability, or administrative sanctions.

V. REPORTING

A. Data Collection and Retention

- a. The Chief of Police or designee is responsible for ensuring proper collection, retention, and destruction of ALPR data.
- b. ALPR data maintained by the vendor (e.g., Flock Safety, Rekor) will be controlled by the vendor and destroyed based on the vendor's retention requirements.
- c. ALPR data will not be stored or used for any non-law enforcement purposes.

B. Data Access and Accountability

- a. All ALPR data access shall be logged and can be audited.
- b. Only authorized personnel may access ALPR data for legitimate law enforcement purposes only.
- c. ALPR data will be safeguarded by procedural and technological means, including password-protected systems.
- d. The ALPR System Administrator is responsible processing requests for the release of ALPR data in accordance with legal protocols, including requests from other law enforcement agencies.

C. Auditing and Oversight

- a. The Chief of Police or their designee to verify that ALPR data usage aligns with this policy will conduct monthly audits.
- b. The audit will review a sample of ALPR system queries by all personnel to ensure they meet the required standards.
- c. Auditing results will be documented and reviewed by the Chief of Police or their designee, and corrective actions will be implemented if necessary.

VI. TRAINING

A. Policy Review and Training Oversight

- a. The Chief of Police or their designee is responsible for conducting an annual review of the policy and making any recommendations for revisions.

b. Division Commanders and Shift Supervisors shall ensure that all system users are familiar with this policy and adhere to its guidelines.

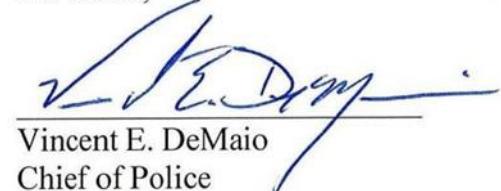
VII. Distribution

This general order will be produced in electronic format and accessible to all employees through the Department's Power DMS software.

VIII. Effective Date

This general order is effective January 01, 2025.

Per Order,



Vincent E. DeMaio
Chief of Police

APPENDIX I: AUTOMATED LICENSE PLATE RECOGNITION (ALPR) SYSTEM Use

1. The ALPR systems are customizable to include a variety of alert types. The ALPR system includes the following notification reasons: Supervised Release, Protection Order, Protective Interest, Violent Person, Missing Person, Immigration Violator, CPIC Data Records, Gang or Suspected Terrorist, Warrants, Stolen Vehicle, Stolen Plate, Sex Offender, Extreme Risk Protection Order, NCMEC Amber-Alert/Missing Child.
 - a. For purposes of this policy, department personnel are required to activate the following ALPR notification reasons: **Missing Persons, Warrants, Stolen Vehicle, and NCMEC Amber-Alert/Missing Child.**
2. The ALPR systems allow custom Hot List entries specific to the agency. In the event an officer feels that a specific vehicle should be entered into our ALPR systems, they can request such entry through their immediate supervisor.
3. The “*Flock Hot List Tool*” and “*Flock Web-Portal*” provide user configurable settings in the left tool pane. The “**Alerts**” setting can be toggled on or off to allow “**SMS/TEXT**” hit notifications to a mobile phone number if the feature is active. The “**Email**” setting can also be toggled on or off to activate hit notifications that may be sent to a user’s configured email address. The user’s work email address shall be the only email allowed for such notifications.
 - a. The “**Notification Reasons**” setting allows the user to select the categories or reasons to be alerted by the Flock system. Section 1 of this appendix details the categories and section 1a specifies the required reasons.
 - b. The “**Cameras**” setting allows the user to select which cameras they are monitoring. Selecting the “**My Cameras / Public Cameras**” category will monitor only the cameras installed in the Town of Clinton for hits.