



CEDAR RAPIDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

Cedar Rapids, Iowa

APPLIES TO: Department

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POLICY TITLE:	<i>Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR)</i>	STANDARD/REF #:	11.4.5d; 41.3.9; 83.2.2
APPROVED BY:	<i>David Dostal, Chief</i>	REVIEWED DATE:	11/06/2024
REQUIRED REVIEWERS:	<i>ALPR Program Administrator, Patrol Captain; CID Captain</i>	REVISED DATE:	11/06/2024

POLICY/PURPOSE:

The purpose of this procedure is to implement practices for the proper use, maintenance, and deployment of the department's Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) systems and its software.

It is the policy of the Cedar Rapids Police Department to utilize ALPRs to aide in the apprehension of perpetrators, enhance effectiveness, improve officer safety, increase solvability of criminal activity committed within the City of Cedar Rapids and assist in locating missing and/or endangered persons.

The availability and use of the ALPR technology provides opportunities for enhanced productivity and effectiveness, with an emphasis on safety and security in our community.

The Cedar Rapids Police Department currently utilizes two (2) ALPR systems – Flock Safety and Vigilant Solutions.

All information in the ALPR systems will be considered confidential and law-enforcement sensitive. Employees will be held accountable for and must be able to articulate the legitimate law enforcement purpose for the use and dissemination of received information.

DEFINITIONS:

Administrators – Individuals with a unique username and password allowing access to the ALPR system and who operate the information side of the system.

- Are responsible for setting up users and other administrative functions
- Can query data
- Create/use hot lists
- Ensure hot list entries conform to the requirements of this policy
- Coordinate or assist with training users on the appropriate use of the ALPR systems
- Ensure appropriate administrative reporting is completed

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

ALPR – Automated License Plate Recognition



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Evidentiary Hit - A hit resulting in either law enforcement action (i.e. arrest or traffic stop) or documentation related to an active investigation. This ALPR information may be downloaded and treated as evidence.

Flock Safety/Flock – The company providing and maintaining the roadside ALPR and fixed location pan/tilt/zoom cameras, which is also responsible for storing ALPR data in its cloud-based system for public safety purposes.

Flock Systems Software – Software that serves as a repository of all data collected by the Flock Safety ALPR system. This software acts as a data warehouse that can be queried for information pursuant to a law enforcement or public safety function.

Hit – A detection matched to a license plate that has been previously registered to an agency's hot list of vehicle plates, entered into NCIC, or is in an individual user's hot list related to an active investigation.

Hot List – A list of license plates associated with vehicles of persons of interest compiled from one or more sources including but not limited to NCIC, AMBER Alerts, and locally created lists for agency-specific vehicle or persons of interest. This list may include the following:

- Stolen license plates or license plate numbers of stolen vehicles
- Vehicles associated with wanted subjects or registered sex offenders
- Vehicles associated with missing/endangered persons or AMBER Alerts
- Vehicles associated with federal probationers
- Nationwide domestic violence protection orders
- NCIC violent gang and terrorist files
- Vehicles associated with suspended, revoked, or barred drivers
- Vehicles associated with active criminal investigations

NCIC – National Crime Information Center

Operations Center Software – Software that serves as a repository of all data collected by the deployed Vigilant ALPR systems. This software acts as a data warehouse that can be queried for information pursuant to a law enforcement or public safety function.

Read – The capture of digital images or license plates and vehicles with associated metadata (date, time, GPS coordinates with vehicle image capture).



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User - Individual with a unique username and password with access to the ALPR system for use in their official capacities as a member of the Cedar Rapids Police Department.

Vigilant Solutions – The company providing the in-car ALPR system which is also responsible for sorting in-car ALPR data for public safety purposes.

AUTHORIZED USAGE:

Use of the ALPR systems and/or software is restricted to the law enforcement or public safety functions of the department. Information obtained from the ALPR systems and/or software will not be used for personal reasons or for reasons inconsistent with the law enforcement/public safety functions of the department.

Misuse or abuse of any part of the ALPR system will result in discipline up to and including termination in accordance with department directive, Disciplinary System.

Information obtained from any or all ALPR system components will only be disseminated to other law enforcement agencies for legitimate law enforcement purposes consistent with this procedure upon the expressed permission of the Chief of Police or his designee. Information may also be disseminated to comply with a court-related request or subpoena.

PROHIBITED USAGE:

Prohibited uses of the ALPR system, active ALPR data, historical ALPR data, and hot lists include, but are not limited to the following:

- To record plates on vehicles on private property that are not exposed to public view;
- To harass or intimidate any person/group;
- For personal use;
- Solely based on a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics that are an impermissible basis for ALPR use include:
 - A person's race
 - Gender
 - Religion
 - Political affiliation
 - Nationality
 - Ethnicity
 - Sexual orientation
 - Disability
 - Any other classification protected by law



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- For the purpose of or known effect of infringing on First Amendment Rights. For example, collecting information about an individual's lawful associations, lawful political and religious affiliations or activities, etc., is improper.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS [41.3.9c]

All users shall receive training prior to operating the ALPR systems. Only personnel that have successfully completed approved departmental training are allowed to operate the ALPR equipment or systems. Users will use the ALPR equipment and systems in accordance with their training and this directive. Training will be conducted by the ALPR Program Administrator or designee.

PROCEDURE:

Administrators will oversee additions to the ALPR hot lists and will ensure the ALPR hot lists are securely maintained.

Prior to manually entering vehicle information to a hot list, users will complete an ALPR Submission Request (CRPD #782) and receive supervisor approval for the submission.

Administrators can manually add license plates to ALPR hot lists by entering complete license plate information, the reason for the entry, any pertinent information (i.e. officer safety issues), and contact information. An inactive time of 90 days will be set unless further information is received to extend this timeframe. Only Administrators are allowed to add license plates to ALPR hot lists once the ALPR Submission Request (CRPD #782) has been completed and signed off on by the ALPR Administrator.

Every Flock ALPR database search shall include a legitimate law enforcement purpose in the "Search Reason" search box and must be supported by documented and verifiable information that is supported by reasonable suspicion that the vehicle is directly associated with potential criminal activity or a public safety interest. When an associated case number is available, users shall list the case number in the "Search Reason" entry.

For Flock alerts or searches resulting in enforcement action, the user shall complete the appropriate "View/Edit outcome" categories for the hot list entry in accordance with the directions of the Administrator.



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Guidelines: [41.3.9a]

Hot list data and collected hits are automatically refreshed within the system.

ALPR “hits” alone do not constitute reasonable suspicion or probable cause for a stop. Officers receiving an alert will develop independent reasonable suspicion for the stop or immediately confirm the status of the vehicle by visually confirming the license plate matches the image and running the license plate manually via the MDC or request verification from CAU; unless compelling circumstances or officer safety issues make it unsafe to do so. In such cases, officers will confirm the status of the associated vehicle as soon as practical.

Vehicle occupants may not be the subject associated with the license plate. Officers must develop a reasonable belief the operator/occupant is the person of interest included in the hot list prior to initiating a traffic stop.

License plates may be entered manually for inclusion to a hot list for law enforcement purposes only (i.e. Attempt to Locates, stolen vehicles, etc.).

All enforcement action taken in response to a hit will be documented on an incident report, supplemental report, and will follow all reporting procedures outlined in department directives.

Enforcement action taken in response to a hit with the Vigilant system will require Officers involved to also include a copy of the ALPR hit report within the case file and notify the ALPR Program Administrator by email with the ALPR hit and case number.

Enforcement action taken in response to a hit with the Flock system, the user shall complete the appropriate “View/Edit outcome” categories for the hot list entry.

Users may log into one or both ALPR systems at the beginning of their shift and may remain logged in throughout their shift. Users shall log out of both systems at the end of their tour of duty. Users are not expected to monitor or receive ALPR alerts while off-duty.

Users shall not share nor confirm the existence (or non-existence) of any ALPR data with commercial or private entities.

Users shall not share ALPR system access with another user. Each user is required to access the ALPR systems under their own unique username and password.



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Officers will adhere to the department's Department Motor Vehicle Operation and Pursuit directives when attempting to contact an ALPR alert vehicle.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTING:

Monthly, the Administrator will submit a report of ALPR usage to the Criminal Investigative Division (CID) and Patrol Captain for each system. The report will include:

- The number of hits
- The number of successful uses of the ALPR
- Data purging information
- Data dissemination information
- Procedure compliance

The summary of the monthly ALPR reports will be included in the department's Annual Report.

Quarterly, the ALPR Program Administrators will audit the general access hot lists to ensure they are up to date.

- Manual entries remaining in the system in-excess-of 90 days will be deleted unless otherwise noted.

DATA STORAGE & RETENTION: [41.3.9b,d]

- All ALPR data will remain on the system no longer than 30 days.
- ALPR data collected and retained by the Cedar Rapids Police Department will not be sold, published, exchanged, or disclosed for commercial purposes.

MAINTENANCE:

A user will not modify the ALPR equipment or software operating system without permission and in cooperation with the Administrator and vendor/service provider technical support personnel.

Damaged ALPR equipment mounted to cars will follow procedures in Police Vehicle – Equipment and Inspection directive. Damage will be immediately reported to the Administrator, Watch Commander, and documented using the following:

- Vehicle Damage book located in the Command Center
- Police Vehicle Damage form (CRPD #729)
- Email to "Police Vehicle Defect"



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The Administrator will be responsible for coordinating repairs with the appropriate vendor.

Mobile Vigilant system ALPR camera lenses may be cleaned with non-alcohol/non-ammonia based glass cleaner or mild soap and water and a soft, nonabrasive cloth.

Mobile Vigilant system ALPR camera lenses must not be scraped to clear snow or ice. Lenses must be gently warmed until clear to avoid damage.

Anytime the Mobile Vigilant system ALPR unit is disconnected, un-mounted, or removed from the vehicle, it will be placed in the protective storage case and secured.

Flock camera services and systems will be maintained by Flock Safety personnel.