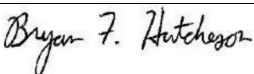


ROCKINGHAM COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES					
SUBJECT: Automated License Plate Readers (ALPR)			NUMBER: 2-45		
EFFECTIVE DATE: 6-03-2026			REVIEW DATE: 5-20-2026		
AMENDS / SUPERCEDES:			APPROVED:  Sheriff		
VLEPSC STANDARDS:					

I. Policy

It is the policy of the Sheriff's Office to utilize Automatic License Plate Recognition technology (ALPR) to capture and store digital license plate data and images only for legitimate law enforcement purposes. These include, but are not limited to, locating stolen vehicles or license plates, identifying vehicles associated with missing persons or wanted individuals, supporting active criminal investigations, and responding to alerts.

II. Purpose

To establish uniform operational procedures and guidance governing the use, operation, and management of Automatic License Plate Recognition Systems.

III. Definitions

Definitions applicable to this policy, in addition to those contained in 2.2-5517, Code of Virginia, are as follows:

- A. Automatic License Plate Recognition (ALPR) System: Technology that utilizes high-speed cameras and specialized software to capture and convert images of vehicle license plates into machine-readable data.
- B. Read: Digital images of license plates and vehicles and associated data (e.g., date, time and geographic coordinates associated with the image capture).
- C. Alert/Hit: A read matched to a plate that has previously been registered on a hot list of vehicle plates related to stolen vehicles, wanted vehicles, or other factors supporting investigation, or which has been manually entered by a user for further investigation.
- D. Hot List: A collection of license plates associated with criminal activity or public safety concerns, such as those from the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) or Virginia

Criminal Information Network (VCIN). The Rockingham County Sheriff's Office may also develop a "Custom Hot List" for vehicles under specific local investigations.

- E. Fixed Automatic License Plate Recognition System: ALPR cameras that are permanently affixed to a structure, such as a pole, a traffic barrier, or a bridge.
- F. User: Any individual who is authorized to access information and use the system.
- G. Audit Trail: A system-generated log that documents all access and queries, including user credentials, date and time, the license plate queried, the stated purpose, and any related case number.

IV. Procedures - General

- A. The use of and/or access to an ALPR system is restricted to official law enforcement purposes only and in compliance with VA Code 2.2-5517. These uses include:
 - 1. Criminal investigations involving violations of Virginia law or local ordinances where reasonable suspicion exists.
 - 2. Locating missing, endangered, or abducted individuals.
 - 3. Responding to alerts related to outstanding warrants, stolen vehicles or plates, and human trafficking investigations.
- B. Personnel shall not use a system for the purpose of interfering with individuals engaged in lawful activities or tracking individuals on the basis of the content of lawfully protected speech.
- C. Non-agency owned or contracted ALPR systems
 - 1. Personnel who have access to non-agency owned or contracted ALPR systems should report access to the ALPR program manager who at the Rockingham County Sheriff's Office is the Data System Coordinator.
 - 2. Non-agency owned or contracted ALPR systems include memberships or accounts to private entity ALPR systems or databases.
- D. Notification of an Alert
 - 1. Notification by a system does not constitute reasonable suspicion as grounds for law enforcement to stop a vehicle. Prior to stopping a vehicle based on a notification, Deputies shall:
 - a. Develop independent reasonable suspicion for the stop; or
 - b. Confirm the license plate or identifying characteristics of a vehicle match the information contained in the database used to generate the notification.
 - c. This confirmation procedure shall be an independent comparison of the ALPR system alert and the corresponding hot list notification.

- d. Deputies are encouraged to use radio communication to verify the ALPR system alert.
2. If a Deputy stops the driver of a motor vehicle, stops and frisks a person based on reasonable suspicion, or temporarily detains a person during any other investigatory stop based upon the alarm of an ALPR, the reporting requirements set forth in 52-30.2, section C, Code of Virginia, shall be followed.

E. ALPR Hot Lists

1. The primary use of ALPR data involves the comparison of license plate characters collected by an ALPR system to characters contained on a previously compiled hot list. These hot lists may be compiled by the local, state or federal law enforcement. These hot lists inform law enforcement which vehicles are of interest and why, alerting the user when such a vehicle is read by an ALPR camera. This can be done in real time or using historical ALPR data.
2. Hot lists shall be updated at least once every 24 hours, or as soon as practicable, after such updates become available.
 - a. The Virginia State Police distribute the NCIC hot list four times daily
 - b. Law-enforcement agencies should coordinate directly with the Virginia State Police or through their ALPR vendor in reference to the accuracy and currency of the NCIC hot list.
 - c. Authorized personnel can enter custom law-enforcement hot lists. This custom hot list shall be updated as soon as practicable.
 - d. Manually entered license plate lists shall contain at a minimum:
 - i. Supporting information regarding why a particular license plate is on the specific hot list.
 - ii. Vehicle description (year, make, model, and color)
 - iii. Legal reason for entry
 - iv. Valid 24-hour contact number of entrant or agency
 - v. If available, valid case number or CAD/Incident number

F. Training Requirements

1. Employees must attend training prior to using or accessing the ALPR system
2. ALPR training should occur bi-annually and should include the following:
 - a. Legal update of relevant ALPR matters
 - b. Administrative procedures
 - c. Technical procedures
3. Agencies shall maintain a record of each employee's completion of ALPR training in accordance with existing training records policies.

G. System Data Usage – Retention and Sharing

1. In accordance with Code of Virginia, ALPR system data shall be retained for no longer than 21 days unless the data is linked to an ongoing criminal investigation.
2. ALPR system data may only be downloaded from the system in accordance with 2.2-5517, Code of Virginia.
3. System data and audit trail data is not subject to disclosure under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).
4. When releasing ALPR information to another law-enforcement agency it is important to note that 2.2-5517, section A, Code of Virginia, defines a law-enforcement agency as any agency or entity that employs law-enforcement officers as defined in 9.1-101, Code of Virginia.
5. Audit trail data shall be purged two years after the date of its capture.

H. Administrative Process

1. Internal system auditing shall occur at least once every 30 days.
2. Internal system audits shall be conducted in the following use areas to ensure compliance with 2.2-5517, Code of Virginia:
 - a. Queries Conducted
 - b. Downloads
 - c. Traffic Stops
 - d. Agency Sharing
3. ALPR data and audit trail data shall be purged and rendered not recoverable in accordance with 2.2-5517, section E, Code of Virginia.

I. Data Security and Access

1. Only authorized personnel will have access to the ALPR system granted through the Data System Coordinator.
2. Access will be controlled by roles or permissions to further restrict the user's ability to access certain functions of the system.
3. ALPR data is categorized as "for official use only." Access control to the administrative profile(s) of the ALPR system shall be maintained.
4. All collected data will be maintained on a server that is not connected to, or shared with, other law-enforcement databases.
 - a. The server will be able to provide an inquiry tool, history tracking, and reporting protocols for the entire ALPR system
 - b. The server will provide a secure intranet site or internet site, allowing only approved personnel, password-protected access to collect data.

J. ALPR Program Manager

1. The Rockingham County Sheriff's Office Data System Coordinator will manage the ALPR program.
2. The Data System Coordinator should at a minimum:
 - a. Stay abreast of current case law and legislation
 - b. Monitor the use of the ALPR system and conduct periodic audits every 30 days to ensure compliance with policy and state law
 - c. Audits will review user access, and justification for system queries
 - d. Manage user accounts and permissions
 - e. Provide users with ALPR training
 - f. Submit ALPR updates to the Policy Review Committee as necessary