

Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR)

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 Fairfield 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 license plates associated with 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

All installation and maintenance of ALPR equipment operated by the Fairfield Police Department, as well as ALPR data retention and access, shall be managed by the Support Services Division Captain or their designee. The Support Services Division Captain will assign personnel to implement this policy's requirements and to administer the day to day operation and maintenance of the ALPR equipment and data.

462.3 ALPR OPERATION

Access to and use of an ALPR shall be restricted to Fairfield Police Department sworn peace officers as defined in California Penal Code section 830.1(a)(1) or to civilian staff specifically authorized by the Support Services Captain or their designee. Such access and use is restricted to the purposes outlined below. Authorized 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 consisting of a minimum of two (2) hours of training provided by an approved instructor. This training will cover both the physical operation of the ALPR as well as the laws and policy regarding authorized use of ALPR equipment and data.
- (e) No ALPR operator may access California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (CLETS) data unless otherwise authorized to do so.

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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 an ALPR shall be used solely for legitimate law enforcement purposes. Use of data or images collected from an ALPR shall be restricted to sworn peace officers as defined under California Penal Code section 830.1(a)(1) and any law enforcement official or agency requiring access to use of the ALPR for legitimate law enforcement purposes as well as authorized civilian staff of the Fairfield Police Department. Because such data may contain confidential CLETS information, it is not open to public review. ALPR information gathered and retained by the Fairfield Police Department may be used and shared with prosecutors or others only as permitted by law.

The Support Services Division is responsible to ensure the proper collection and retention of ALPR data and for transferring the ALPR data stored in department vehicles to the department server on a regular basis, not to exceed 30 days between transfers.

All ALPR data downloaded to the server should be stored for a minimum of one year (Government Code 34090.6) and thereafter may be purged at the direction of the Support Services Division Captain or his or her designee, 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 lawful action to produce records. In those circumstances the applicable data may be downloaded from the server onto department evidence storage media for permanent retention.

462.5 ACCOUNTABILITY AND SAFEGUARDS

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

- (a) All non-law enforcement requests for access to stored ALPR data shall be referred to the department Custodian of Records and processed in accordance with the applicable law.
- (b) All ALPR data downloaded to the mobile workstation and server shall be accessible only through a login/password protected system capable of documenting all access of information by name, date and time.
- (c) Persons 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 relates to a specific criminal investigation or department related civil or administrative action.

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(d) Such ALPR data may be released to other authorized and verified law enforcement officials and agencies at any time for legitimate law enforcement purposes.

(e) ALPR system audits should be conducted on a regular basis to ensure proper functioning of the ALPR software as well as compliance with security measures by personnel utilizing the ALPR system.

(f) When data has been entered erroneously from the ALPR into the database, either through software error or human error, these incidents should be brought to the attention of the ALPR system administrator. The ALPR system administrator shall investigate the data discrepancy and ensure the correct entry is made into the database. When it is not possible to determine the correct data, such as a partially obscured license plate, the entry will be removed from the database.