# Automated License Plate Readers

| **Effective Date:** | 02/01/2018 |
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| **Revised Date:** | 04/11/2025 |
| **Issuing Authority:** Chief Christopher K. Wiles | |

## 427.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE
The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for the capture, storage and use of digital data obtained through the use of Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) technology

## 427.2 DEFINITIONS

(a) **Alert/ Hit**: a positive indicator of a potential match between data on the Hot List and a license plate scanned by the LPR system. A hit is not conclusive confirmation that a license plate or vehicle is wanted. Additional investigation is warranted when a hit is indicated.

(b) **Hot List:** a database populated through VCIN/NCIC with specific items of concern. which includes but is not limited to, Terrorist Screening Center watch lists, stolen/ wanted vehicles and license plates and/or wanted persons associated with them, caution notices, and license plates associated with Amber Alerts, missing persons,or any watch lists provided for law enforcement purposes.

(c) **Local Hot List:** a database populated by authorized users in effort to locate local wanted persons or their associated vehicles,and persons or vehicles of interests associated with an ongoing criminal investigation.

(d) **Automated L icense Plate Recognition ( A LPR** or **LPR )** system: the equipment utilized to run the associated camera(s), computers, GPS antenna, computer software, and associated accessories necessary to connect the system. The process involves the photographing of license plates and checking the captured tag numbers against the Hot List.

## 427.3 POLICY
The policy of the Danville Police Department is to utilize ALPR technology to capture and store digital license plate data and images while recognizing the established records retention schedule.

All data and images gathered by the ALPR are for the official use of this department. Because such data may contain information that could be used for an unlawful purpose, it is not open to public review.

## 427.4 ADMINISTRATION
The ALPR technology, also known as License Plate Recognition (LPR), allows for the automated detection of license plates and general feature of vehicles they are attached to such as make,

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model, color, etc. It is used by the Danville 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 or wanted persons. It may also be used to gather information to support criminal investigations.

All installation and maintenance of LPR equipment, as well as LPR data retention and access, shall be managed by the Assistant Chief of Operation. The Assistant Chief of Operations will assign members under their command to administer the day-to-day operation of the LPR equipment and data.

### 427.5   PROCEDURES

(a)   Information obtained from the LPR database shall only be used for the purposes aligned with the law enforcement and public safety functions of the department. LPR data is prohibited from being used for the purpose of immigration enforcement, reproductive healthcare monitoring, traffic enforcement, harassment or intimidation, the use of protected class data (race, sex, religion, etc.) and/ or personal use. Misuse of equipment or data base records may result in disciplinary action.

(b)   The LPR program falls under the direct supervision of the Assistant Chief of Operations or their designee. Access will be granted to the Crime Analyst and sworn employees to use for official law enforcement purposes only.

(c)   LPR units will be installed at locations as approved by the Chief or their designee. Placement of the fixed LPR units will be based on current crime analytics related to violent crime,property crime, or other criminal justice purpose. The Chief or their designee, must pre-approve the relocation of an LPR unit to another area.

(d)   Appropriate justifications in the " Reasons" field for LPR database inquiry should include, but is not limited to, a case number, call for service number, or warrant number. For all Danville Police Department cases, a case number will be required for all requests.

    1.    (a)   Hot list data from state and national databases will be refreshed according to the policy of the software vendor and/or the state agency and national database administering agency.

        (b)   Only sworn supervisors and crime analysts are authorized to manually enter or remove information in department "Hot Lists." Any access to or denial of access to the Hot List may be approved or denied by an Assistant Chief.

        (c)   Entering officers are responsible for removing any data that is no longer required for law enforcement purposes as soon as reasonable possible and will be reviewed by the supervisor.

        (d)   The reason for the entry and the name of person entering it shall be document in the "Reason" portion of the entry screen and must be approved by the supervisor prior to entry into the system. Appropriate justification should include, but is not limited to, a case number, call for service number, or warrant number. Any additional information should be

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entered into the "Notes" field. Officer safety information shall be included in the "Notes" field as other departments may receive an alert on the respective LPR system.

(e) Operators will receive notification of a positive hit through an audible tone, email, and/or text message. A picture of the license plate will be uploaded if it matches one identified in a Hot List or Local Hot List.

(f) Upon receiving an alarm or hit, the operator shall verify the accuracy of the information by visually verifying the captured tag, making sure it is the same, and then verify the information status for the hit by contacting dispatch.

(g) An alarm alone is NOT sufficient probable cause to warrant any enforcement action.

(h) Employees are required to confirm a positive hit prior to any enforcement action being taken.

## 427.6   OPERATIONS
When in operation, the LPR will photograph license plates without action from the operator.

(a) Queries

(a) In the event of an active law enforcement investigation and a full/partial license plate information or vehicle description is available, authorized users will be allowed to search the LPR system for suspect vehicle based on the information available to them. A valid and related search reason is required for each search and must be entered into the "Search Reason" field.

(b) Appropriate justifications in the "Reasons" field must include a case number.

(b) Hot lists

(a) Hot list data from state and national databases will be refreshed according to the policy of the software vendor and/or the state agency and national database administering agency.

(b) Only sworn supervisors and crime analysts are authorized to manually enter or remove information in department "Hot Lists." Any access to or denial of access to the Hot List may be approved or denied by an Assistant Chief.

(c) Entering officers are responsible for removing any data that is no longer required for law enforcement purposes as soon as reasonable possible and will be reviewed by the supervisor.

(d) Local hot list entries will remain active for 30 days and afterwards will automatically drop from the list. If the entry is still valid, the entering officer must request that the entry remain on the list for another 30 days.

(e) Operators will receive notification of a positive hit through an audible tone, email, and/or text message. A picture of the license plate will be uploaded if it matches one identified in a Hot List or Local Hot List.

(f) Upon receiving an alarm or hit, the operator shall verify the accuracy of the information by visually verifying the captured tag, making sure it is the same, and then verify the information status for the hit by contacting dispatch.

(g) An alarm alone is NOT sufficient probable cause to warrant any enforcement action.

(h) Employees are required to confirm a positive hit prior to any enforcement action being taken.

## 427.7 DATA COLLECTION, STORAGE, AND RETENTION

Data Storage and Retention: The Department will not store plate read data past the established 30 day retention period unless the data is related to a specific criminal investigation.

(a) LPR plate read data will retained for a period of thirty (30) days.

(b) Data not required to support a specific criminal investigation will be automatically purged after thirty (30) days;

(c) Entries in the agency Hot List will not be maintained for a period longer than thirty (30) days. However, if there is an ongoing criminal justice purpose, the entry may be extended beyond this period for another 30 day period. Any entry that no longer requires an alert for criminal justice purposes will be removed from the system as soon as reasonably possible; and

(d) The department may collect, store, and analyze data that relates to specific, on-going, active investigations. The data shall be made part of the criminal investigation file and may not be used for other purposes.

## 427.8 DATA SECURITY

The Assistant Chief of Operations or their designee, is responsible for the overall operation of the program, including:

(a) Controlling access to personnel to the LPR system;

(b) Assist in maintaining the Local Hot List by entering and removing entries form the list. A review of the entered items will be conducted once every thirty (30) days to ensure accuracy and relevancy; and

(c) All footage is encrypted and transmitted from the camera to a secure, cloud-based storage system.

(d) Only approved personnel with password-protected access are able to access the collected data. The access to data shall be restricted to:

(a) Searching for a license plate or partial license plate;

(b) Viewing the image and location of matches on the "Hot List;"

(c)      Viewing maps showing the location of hits;

(d)      Searching for matches for a specific geographical location and/or time frame.

## 427.9 ACCOUNTABILITY

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

(a)      All LPR data downloaded to the mobile workstation and in storage shall be accessible only through a login/password-protected system capable of documenting all access of information by name, date and time.

(b)      Members approved to access LPR data under these guidelines are permitted to access the data for legitimate law enforcement purposes only, such as when the data relate to a specific criminal investigation or department-related civil or administrative action.

(c)      LPR system audits should be conduct ed on a regular basis

Auditing

(a)      The Video and Evidence Technician will conduct monthly audits of system queries and Local Hot Lists to ensure the appropriateness, accuracy, and relevance. Audits will be forwarded to the Assistant Chief of Operations or their designee to be included in the monthly plate reader activity report.

## 427.10 RELEASING ALPR DATA

The LPR data may be shared only with other law enforcement or prosecutorial agencies for official law enforcement purposes or as otherwise permitted by law, using the following procedures:

(a)      Any agency in Virginia and North Carolina enrolled in a law enforcement LPR data sharing system will be granted automatic access to the department's system. Any outside agency, requesting access will be handled on a case-by-case basis to be reviewed and approved by the Assistant Chief of Operations or their designee prior to dissemination.

(b)      The request is reviewed by the Assistant Chief of Operations or the authorized designee and approved before the request is fulfilled.

(c)      The approved request is retained on file.

Requests for LPR data by non-law enforcement or non-prosecutorial agencies will be processed as provided in the Records Maintenance and Release Policy.

The Danville Police Department will post locations of all overt LPR cameras within the city. The Danville Police Department will not publicly share locations of any covert LPR camera used for short-term, on-going criminal investigations. In an effort of transparency, the Danville Police Department will maintain a public transparency portal containing LPR system information, department policy, and a map of overt camera locations.

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## 427.11  MAINTENANCE

The Assistance Chief of Operations shall be notified of any LPR equipment in need of maintenance or repair.

Under no circumstances shall an LPR operator attempt to modify the equipment or software without the permission of the Assistant Chief of Operations or designee.

## 427.12  TRAINING

All department users are required to complete training on the LPR system prior to being granted access to the program. The users must completed the following training prior to being allowed into the network:

    (a)    LPR system vendor Webinar

    (b)    User Webinar

    (c)    LPR vendor User Certification course

Upon completion of the require training, the user should forward all completion documents to the training Sergeant for tracking.

Training on this policy will be completed annually by all department users.