
Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs) Privacy and Usage

462.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The policy of the Manhattan Beach Police Department is to utilize ALPR technology to capture and store digital license plate data and images while recognizing the established privacy rights of the public.

462.2 ADMINISTRATION

The ALPR technology, also known as License Plate Recognition (LPR), allows for the automated detection of license plates. It is used by the Manhattan Beach 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 persons. It may also be used to gather information related to active warrants, homeland security, electronic surveillance, suspect interdiction and stolen property recovery.

All installation and maintenance of ALPR equipment, as well as ALPR data retention and access, shall be managed by the Administration and Investigation Bureau Commander

The Administration and Investigation Bureau Commander will assign members under his/her command to administer the day-to-day operation of the ALPR equipment and data.

462.3 AUTHORIZED PURPOSES

ALPR shall only be used for official law enforcement business for the following purposes:

- Investigation for prosecution or exoneration of suspected criminal incidents
- Identification and/or location of wanted persons
- Enforcement of sanctions, orders, or sentences
- Crime prevention/general law enforcement purposes
- Crime Analysis

462.4 ALPR ADMINISTRATOR

The Administration and Investigations Bureau Commander is the administrator of the ALPR system and shall ensure that the system is operated in conformity with this Policy and other Department policies, procedures, rules and regulations.

462.5 AUTHORIZED USERS

Only sworn officers, Records Section personnel, and Parking and Animal Control Officers who have received department approved training are allowed to access the ALPR system after receiving department-approved training. Authorized vendors will have limited access for maintenance and repair.

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462.6 MONITORING SECURITY, INFORMATION AND COMPLIANCE OF PRIVACY LAWS

All data will be closely safeguarded and protected by both procedural and technological means. The Manhattan Beach Police Department will observe the following safeguards regarding access to and use of stored data (Civil Code § 1798.90.51; Civil Code § 1798.90.53):

(a) Personnel approved to access ALPR data under these guidelines are permitted to access the data for legitimate law enforcement purposes only.

(b) All access to ALPR information will be documented. The access information will include all of the following:

1. The date and time the information is accessed.
2. The license plate number or other data elements used to query the ALPR system
3. The username of the person who accesses the information
4. The purpose of accessing the information

(c) ALPR system audits will be conducted no less than two times per year by the Administration and Investigation Bureau Commander.

462.7 SHARING ALPR INFORMATION

The ALPR 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) The agency makes a written request for the ALPR data that includes:

1. The name of the agency.
2. The name of the person requesting.
3. The intended purpose of obtaining the information.

(b) The request is reviewed by the Records Manager or authorized designee and approved before the request is fulfilled.

(c) The approved request is retained on file.

Requests for ALPR data by non-law enforcement or non-prosecutorial agencies will be processed as provided by the California Public Records Act and the Records Maintenance and Release Policy (Civil Code § 1798.90.55).

462.8 DATA ACCURACY

Several factors may affect the accuracy of the ALPR readings, for example: wear on the license plate, dirt, covers, and license plate frames. For this reason, it is important to verify the accuracy of any alert received.

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Prior to any action being taken due to an ALPR alert, the officer in the field and/or communications officer in dispatch should view the image of the license plate verifying that the image of the license plate was correctly recognized by the ALPR system.

If practicable, the officer should verify an ALPR response through the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications Systems (CLETS) before taking enforcement action that is based solely on an ALPR alert.

462.9 RETENTION OF ALPR INFORMATION

The Administration and Investigations Bureau Commander is responsible for ensuring systems and processes are in place for the proper collection and retention of ALPR data. Data will be transferred from vehicles to the designated storage in accordance with department procedures.

All ALPR data downloaded to the server should be stored for 1 year. Thereafter, ALPR data should be purged 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 discovery request or other lawful action to produce records. In those circumstances, the applicable data should be downloaded from the server onto portable media and booked into evidence.

462.10 TRAINING

All approved ALPR users will have training consisting of the following:

- (a) Use and operation of the ALPR equipment
- (b) Review of Department Policy