

# **Automated License Plate Readers**

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1.0

**Purpose:**

Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) technology, also known as License Plate Recognition, provides automated detection of license plates. ALPR is used by the King County Sheriff's Office, in jurisdictions where the contract city has purchased the technology, 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. ALPRs may also be used to gather information related to active warrants, homeland security, electronic surveillance, suspect interdiction, and stolen property recovery.

2.0

**Definitions:****Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR):**

A system consisting of a camera and related equipment that automatically and without direct human control locates, focuses on and photographs vehicles and license plates that come into range of the device. The ALPR devices capture images of a vehicle's rear license plate, transform that image into alphanumeric characters, compare the plate number to official local, state and federal database records, and deliver alerts to authorized law enforcement users when a license plate of interest has been detected.

**ALPR Operator:**

Authorized Department members (users) who may utilize the ALPR system/ equipment. ALPR Operators may consist of sworn and non-sworn personnel, with the KCSO Chief/Major determining which members will be designated in their city.

**ALPR Administrators:**

The Contract City Chiefs shall designate sworn personnel to serve as the Department's ALPR Administrators. The ALPR Administrators serve as the Officers-In-Charge of the ALPR system/equipment, and are responsible for system training, deployments, audits, etc.

**Hot List:**

A list of license plates associated with vehicles of interest compiled from one or more data bases including, but not limited to, NCIC, WACIC, Local BOLO's, etc. Vehicles of interest may include, but are not limited to, vehicles reported stolen, displaying stolen license plates, linked to missing and/or wanted persons, or otherwise flagged by law enforcement agencies.

**Detection:**

Data obtained by an ALPR of an image (such as a license plate) within public view that was read by the device, including potential images (such as the plate and description of vehicle on which it was displayed), and information regarding the location of the ALPR system at the time of the ALPR's read.

**Hit:**

Alert from the ALPR system that a scanned license plate number may be in the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) or other law enforcement database for a specific reason including, but not limited to, being related to a stolen car, wanted person, missing person, domestic violence protective order violation, or terrorist-related activity.

**Vehicles of Interest:**

Including, but not limited to vehicles which are reported as stolen; display stolen license plates or tags; vehicles linked to missing and/or wanted persons and vehicles flagged by the Department of Motor Vehicle Administration or law enforcement agencies.

## 3.0

**ALPR Data Collection and Retention:**

1. The ALPR vendor (Flock Safety) stores data (data hosting) and ensures proper maintenance and security of data stored in their data towers. The vendor purges this data after thirty (30) days of storage. The data is not transmitted to KCSO unless the KCSO identifies a record that is considered evidence.
2. Data that is maintained as evidence will be transmitted to a server or on portable media and stored in accordance with the department evidence procedures, according to the Property and Evidence policy.
3. All non-law enforcement requests for access to stored ALPR data shall be processed in accordance with applicable law and the Records Maintenance and Release policy.

## 4.0

**Accountability and Safeguards**

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

1. All non-law enforcement requests for access to stored ALPR data shall be referred to the Public Disclosure Program and processed in accordance with applicable state law.
2. 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.
  - a. No member of the department shall operate ALPR equipment, or access ALPR data, without first completing department-approved training.
3. 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.
4. Such ALPR data may be released to other authorized and verified law enforcement officials and agencies at any time for legitimate law enforcement purposes.
5. ALPR system audits shall be conducted on a regular basis every 90 days.
6. Administrative access shall be granted to the following:
  - a. Public Disclosure Supervisor
  - b. Public Disclosure Tech Lead
  - c. Legal Unit Lead
  - d. Sheriff
  - e. Undersheriff
  - f. Patrol Operations Division Chief
  - g. Contract City Chiefs and their designees.
  - h. Legal Advisor.