Automated License Plate Readers (ALPR)

428.1 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 Salem 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. The ALPR may also be used to gather information related to active warrants, homeland security, electronic surveillance, suspect interdiction and stolen property recovery.

428.2 ADMINISTRATION OF ALPR DATA

All installation and maintenance of ALPR equipment, as well as ALPR data retention and access, shall be managed by the Administration Chief of Police. The Administration Chief of Police will assign personnel under his/her command to administer the day-to-day operation of the ALPR equipment and data.

428.3 ALPR OPERATION

Use of an ALPR is restricted to the purposes outlined below. Department 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 patrol operation or official Department investigation. Reasonable suspicion or probable cause is not necessary before using 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.

(e) If practicable, the officer should verify an ALPR response through LEADS before taking enforcement action that is based solely upon an ALPR alert.

(f) No ALPR operator may access Ohio Law Enforcement Automated Data System (LEADS) data unless otherwise authorized to do so.

428.4 ALPR DATA COLLECTION AND RETENTION

All data and images gathered by an ALPR are for the official use of the Salem Police Department. Because such data may contain confidential information LEADS data is not open to public review.

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ALPR information gathered and retained by this department may be used and shared with prosecutors or others only as permitted by law.

The Administration Chief of Police is responsible to ensure proper collection and retention of ALPR data and for transferring 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 the minimum period established in the Department Records Retention Schedule identified in the Records Maintenance and Release Policy. Thereafter, ALPR data may 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 lawful action to produce records. In those circumstances the applicable data should be downloaded from the server onto portable media and booked into evidence.

428.5 ACCOUNTABILITY AND SAFEGUARDS

All saved data will be closely safeguarded and protected by both procedural and technological means. The Salem 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 Administrative Secretary and processed in accordance with 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 relate to a specific criminal investigation or department-related civil or administrative action.

(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.

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