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I. Purpose

This directive establishes guidelines, procedures, and proper use and care for officers utilizing the “License Plate Readers” (LPR) equipment.

II. Policy

The use of License Plate Readers equipment is intended to provide law enforcement personnel with an automated method of locating vehicles identified as having a specific interest to law enforcement, and for law enforcement applications that will promote the health, safety, and welfare of residents and visitors, consistent with legal and constitutional limitations, privacy concerns and accepted ethical standards.

III. Definitions

- A. License Plate Readers (LPR) system – Equipment consisting of a camera(s), computer, and computer software used to automatically recognize and interpret the characters on vehicle license plates. This data is then compared against a list of license plates bearing some significance to law enforcement.
- B. Hot List – Also known as “hit list”. A database populated with items of specific concern to the investigative and/or enforcement interests of law enforcement in Montgomery County. This may include, but is not limited to, Terrorist Screening Center watch list, stolen/wanted vehicles and license plates, wanted and missing persons, cautions, and license plates associated with Amber Alerts or various watch lists provided for law enforcement purposes.
- C. Download – Transfer of data from the Maryland State Police database consisting of license plate associated data.
- D. Alarm (aka Hit) – A positive indication, by visual and/or audible signal, 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 is stolen, and additional investigation is always warranted when a hit is indicated.

IV. Procedures

- A. All operators will receive training prior to using the LPR system.
- B. It will be the responsibility of each LPR user to download the current “hot list”, at the start of his/her shift, using the division provided or approved method to access the MVA and/or MSP secure web site prior to deployment of the LPR equipment.

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- C. Each LPR operator will be assigned a dedicated flash drive as a backup method. The sole purpose of the flash drive is for transferring “hot list” files from the MSP web site to the LPR system computer. No other files, documents, photographs, or records will be saved on the dedicated flash drive. In the event the of loss or damage to the dedicated flash drive, the loss or damage will be reported immediately to your immediate supervisor and documented appropriately and a replacement will be obtained from the Property Specialist. No other type of media storage device will be used in lieu of the dedicated flash drive.
 - D. Upon receipt of an alarm, the LPR operator will ensure that they are in a position to determine the accuracy of the “hit” safely and in accordance with Divisional Directives.
 - E. Upon receiving an alarm, the LPR operator should utilize whatever information is available to determine the accuracy of the “hit”. The LPR operator will visually verify the subject tag and the actual read on the LPR screen are the same (i.e. from the same state, etc.) Upon determination of the accuracy of the “hit” officers will take the appropriate enforcement action (traffic stop, arrest etc.) in accordance with Divisional Directives.
 - F. The operator will confirm the “hit” is still active by running the information through MILES/NCIC via Comsec. Receipt of an LPR alarm is **NOT** sufficient probable cause for arrest without additional verification.
 - G. Additional information may be entered into the LPR system at anytime. Broadcast information received following the initial download should be manually entered immediately upon receipt by the LPR operator. The reason for the entry will be included in the “note portion on the entry screen (i.e. stolen vehicle, missing person, abduction, Amber Alert, robbery suspect).
 - H. Upon completing a manual entry the operator will query the LPR data to determine if the information was scanned properly or previously.
 - I. The images and data acquired through the use of the LPR are the property of this agency and are for official use only. The use of the images and data for other than law enforcement purposes is strictly prohibited.
- V. Deployment
- A. At the start each shift, officers assigned an LPR will ensure that the device is properly affixed to their assigned vehicle.
 - B. LPR equipped vehicles may be used in a routine patrol capacity. They should **NOT**, however be intentionally used in a manner or location that will increase the risk of damage to LPR equipment (such as civil disturbance situations) if at all possible.
 - C. Operation of LPR equipped vehicles will be accordance with Divisional Directive 803.1 on Park Police Vehicle Procedures.
 - D. Vehicle-mounted License Plate Readers may be deployed on either marked, unmarked, or surveillance vehicles owned or in use by the department.

- E. Supervisors will make every effort to deploy LPR equipped vehicles on a regular basis and will be identified on the daily lineup.

VI. LPR Coordinator

- A. The LPR program will be coordinated by the Management and Technology commander.
- B. The LPR program coordinator will be responsible for all maintenance issues involving the LPR's.
- C. All requests pertaining to images and data collected by the LPR's shall be in writing to the Management and technology commander.
- D. All monthly reporting requirements shall be completed by Management and Technology personnel.
- E. All data collected by the LPR's shall have a retention period of (90) ninety days.

VII. Maintenance

- A. Under no conditions will an LPR operator attempt to modify the LPR equipment or software operating system.
- B. LPR camera lenses may be cleaned with glass cleaner or mild soap and water, and a soft, non-abrasive cloth.
- C. LPR cameras must be removed from the vehicle prior to entering an automatic car washing facility.
- D. Damage to LPR equipment will be immediately reported to your immediate supervisor. Supervisors will document the damage and will complete all appropriate forms by the end of their shift and forward a copy to the LPR coordinator.

**Approved Park Police Document
Signed Original on File**

End of Directive