

LONG BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT TRAINING BULLETIN

Anthony Batts, Chief of Police

**57 – Automated License Plate
Recognition (ALPR)**

REVISED November 2006

AUTOMATED LICENSE PLATE RECOGNITION (ALPR)

INTRODUCTION

Auto theft is one of the highest drivers of crime statistics in the City of Long Beach. Numerous sweeps, task forces and special details are utilized to combat this ongoing crime issue. The Long Beach Police Department now has an opportunity to employ emerging technology to directly impact this criminal activity.

THE ALPR SYSTEM

The ALPR system is a mobile computer and multiple camera system that scan the roadways and parking lots for wanted and stolen vehicles. The system automatically locates, reads, and runs license plates against an on-board database of wanted vehicles. The Police Department controls these databases that can be updated manually or automatically.

Databases may contain plates of stolen vehicles, wanted felony vehicles, vehicles with lost or stolen plates, vehicles wanted for certain crimes, missing persons, Amber Alerts or any other lawful reason. Officers are also able to manually enter wanted plates into the ALPR system. Any crime where a license plate has been identified may be impacted by the use of this system.

The Long Beach Police Department has acquired multiple ALPR systems. These systems are mounted in both marked patrol vehicles and on pursuit standard dual-purpose vehicles. .

ALPR technology revolutionizes how Long Beach police officers can search for wanted vehicles. This technology provides a manner in which vehicle licenses plates can be automatically scanned by a computer from a moving vehicle or a fixed location.

If the vehicle is a match and comes up wanted, the system will alert the officer with both an audible and visible alert. Images of the license plate and vehicle, as well as a brief explanation of what the vehicle is wanted for will be displayed. This process is entirely automatic and takes less than a second, allowing the system to read literally hundreds of license plates an hour.

ALPR technology may increase a patrol officer's productivity and his/her ability to check for wanted vehicles. Officers are no longer limited to manually entering license plate numbers into a mobile data terminal or calling them into the dispatcher.

CAPABILITIES:

- The ALPR system Incorporates two cameras, one Infra-red, one color, into a single self-contained device
- Each system utilizes three cameras, two forward facing and one right side parking
- The system has the ability to capture quality images in a variety of settings including darkness, oncoming headlights, bright sunlight, low sun, deep shadows and glare
- The system utilizes Optical Character Recognition technology
- The system has the ability to capture the license plate while capturing an color overview image of the vehicle associated with the plate
- The system has a capability that allows the administrator to search for read plates and retrieve a GPS time stamped photo of each read plate
- The system also has a capability allows for read plates to be plotted on a map for analysis

Officers should note that the ALPR system will **not** read all license plates. The system only reads plates that it “sees.” Plates must be in the field of view of the camera and in the infrared color spectrum. Specifically, In order to read the plate, it must have reflective characteristics. Older blue California plates and extremely dirty, mutilated or obscured plates may not be able to be read. Out of state and motorcycle plates can be read but accuracy may be reduced.

OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES:

Prior to using the ALPR system, an approved training class must be completed. Officers must visually verify the license plate on the vehicle and confirm its wanted status through CLETS. The wanted vehicle database is not in real-time and this step is necessary to confirm that the vehicle is still wanted and the plate was read properly.

All arrest reports that are a result of the ALPR system should contain the following disclaimer:

- “The vehicle was initially brought to my attention via the use of an automated license plate recognition system. I visually verified the license plate of the vehicle in question and ran it through CLETS to confirm it was a wanted vehicle.”

Officers shall notify the program administrator of all arrests and recoveries for tracking purposes prior to the end of their shift.

PURSUIT:

These ALPR equipped units are governed by the Long Beach Police Department’s pursuit policy but shall adhere to the dual-purpose pursuit standard, specifically:

- The vehicle operator must notify dispatch that they are in a ALPR/dual-purpose vehicle

- The vehicle operator should request a marked black and white police vehicle to respond to take over the pursuit as soon as practical
- ALPR/dual-purpose vehicles may be allowed to continue in a pursuit or assist in a pursuit only when approved to do so by a field supervisor
- The ALPR/dual purpose vehicles shall follow dual purpose pursuit policy guidelines (Manual Section 7.1.7)

SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

Supervisors shall consider the totality of the circumstances when approving ALPR dual-purpose vehicles to engage in, assist, or remain in a pursuit

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR:

The Night Auto Theft Team's Detective Sergeant shall administer the ALPR program.

AUDIT RESPONSIBILITY

The Investigations Bureau will ensure the information in this Training Bulletin is current.

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Chief of Police

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