

GENERAL ORDER



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Subject License Plate Reader Program		
Topic	Series	Number
OPS	303	09
Effective Date March 28, 2014		
Replaces: GO-OPS-303.09 (License Plate Reader Program), Effective Date: March 6, 2013		
Rescinds: TT# 02-067-14 [License Plate Reader (LPR) Regulations]		
Related to: General Order 304.10 (Police-Citizen Contacts, Stops and Frisks) GO-OPS-301.13 (Vehicular Pursuits)		

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I. BACKGROUND

The identification of stolen vehicles, stolen license plates, and wanted and missing persons is the primary focus of the Metropolitan Police Department's License Plate Reader Program. The License Plate Reader (LPR) Program uses specialized cameras and computers to rapidly photograph large quantities of license plates and compare the license plate numbers to a listing of the numbers of "plates of interest." The listing of "plates of interest" is referred to as the "Hot List."

LPR systems can identify a plate of interest within seconds of contact, allowing members to identify target vehicles that might otherwise be overlooked. LPR systems are also capable of recording the location, date, and time of each plate read. LPR technology is available in portable systems mounted on police vehicles and fixed camera systems that can be mounted on poles or on the roadside. Portable LPR systems are designed to allow members to patrol at normal speeds while the technology reads each license plate contacted and alerts members when there is a match with a number on a "Hot List."

The Homeland Security Bureau (HSB) manages the LPR System Operations Center (LPR-SOC). The LPR-SOC is a secure, password-protected intranet site that serves as the central clearinghouse for all license plates scanned by the by LPR systems available to the Metropolitan Police Department.

Authorized Metropolitan Police Department personnel have the ability to:

- Look for a license plate or partial license plate in the history and view the image and location of matches;
- View maps with the location of plate reads and alarms;
- View statistical reports on reads and alarms; and
- View reads and alarms for a specific geographic area and time frame.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) to use LPRs for official law enforcement purposes that will promote the health, safety, and welfare of District of Columbia residents and visitors, consistent with legal and constitutional limitations, privacy concerns, and accepted ethical standards.

III. DEFINITIONS

When used in this directive, the following terms shall have the meanings designated:

1. Hit – Alert from the LPR system that a scanned tag 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, domestic violence protective order or terrorist-related activity.
2. Hot List – Vehicle extract file obtained from the NCIC or other law enforcement system for use with LPRs that identifies license plate numbers of interest to law enforcement.
3. License Plate Reader (LPR) – Computer assisted equipment used to identify and compare license plate numbers to a Hot List.
4. LPR Element Manager – Member, the rank of lieutenant or above, or civilian equivalent, at each police district or other element who manages the LPR Program for that district/element.

5. LPR Grants Manager – Civilian or sworn employee who handles LPR grant funds and reporting.
6. LPR Program Manager – Designee of the Director, Intelligence Fusion Division, responsible for oversight of the LPR Program.
7. Member – Sworn or civilian employee of the MPD or MPD Reserve Corps member.
8. Tactical Operations Center (TOC) – An alert monitoring system that can be used to focus only on LPR alarms from particular LPR sites (portable and fixed LPR cameras).

IV. REGULATIONS

- A. LPRs shall be used only by sworn or civilian members who have been trained and certified in the use of the equipment pursuant to MPD requirements.
- B. No civilian or sworn member shall use or authorize the use of any LPR system or any LPR-SOC database information for any reasons other than official law enforcement purposes.
- C. Requests for non-routine use of LPR data or images shall be approved in advance by the affected watch commander who shall document the instance on the PD Form 150 (Watch Commander's Report).
- D. LPR resources may be used in Washington Metropolitan Area-wide law enforcement initiatives only with the prior written approval of the Chief of Police or designee.
- E. A positive Hit under the LPR Program does **not** establish probable cause. The Hit information/data must be confirmed prior to taking any related law enforcement action.
- F. All portable LPR data and images shall be stored up to thirty (30) days on the Mobile Data Computer (MDC) that captured the information.

NOTE: After thirty (30) days, the LPR System will overwrite the data on the MDC.

- G. LPR images and data shall be stored by the Department for a period of ninety (90) days and then destroyed **unless:**
 1. The LPR image results in a verified, positive HIT. Verified, positive HITs shall be retained for a period of one (1) year and then destroyed.
 2. The LPR images/data are part of an active criminal investigation.

- a. Members who need LPR images/data shall submit a request to the Tactical Information Division (TID) administrative email box. For emergency requests, members shall contact the Command Information Center (CIC).
 - b. Members assigned to TID and/or CIC shall retrieve requested LPR images/data and place the images/data in the Digital Evidence Management System (i.e., "Commander") for retrieval by the member.
3. The LPR images and data are subject to a litigation hold.
 - a. A litigation hold is a notice informing a member that litigation is pending or is anticipated and directing that member to preserve all relevant documents and to stop the routine document retention policies for such documentation.
 - b. The LPR Program Manager, shall ensure all LPR images and data covered by a litigation hold, LPR images and data that he/she independently knows are relevant to pending litigation, or that he/she independently knows or should reasonably know may be relevant to future litigation are retained until notified that the subject litigation has concluded and the items may be released.
- H. Portable LPR systems (including MDCs) **shall not** be removed from a vehicle without prior authorization from the element Commanding Official. The LPR Program Manager shall be notified of each such transfer.
 1. In the event that a vehicle with a LPR becomes unavailable for an extended period of time (e.g., the vehicle is involved in a crash), Commanding Officials may authorize the LPR equipment to be moved to another vehicle in accordance with Part V.G of this order.
 2. When a portable LPR is moved from one vehicle to another, the MDC in the new vehicle shall be configured (e.g., appropriate software installed and configured on the MDC) to ensure the LPR unit works properly.
- I. Vehicles equipped with LPR systems shall be secured and garaged or stored at a police facility when not in use.
- J. Take-home vehicles **shall not** be equipped with LPR systems.

V. PROCEDURES

A. General Use

LPR Systems shall be deployed for official law enforcement purposes, including, but not limited to:

1. Locating stolen vehicles, carjacked vehicles, stolen license plates, wanted or missing persons, or vehicles on the Hot List;
2. Canvassing of areas surrounding recent crimes to capture vehicle tags that may be connected to crime scenes; and
3. Other uses as approved and documented by the appropriate watch commander and documented on the PD Form 150 (Watch Commander's Report).

B. Fixed License Plate Reader Systems

1. Fixed LPR systems shall be deployed at locations throughout the District of Columbia as approved by the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
 - a. Locations of fixed LPRs may be obtained by authorized members contacting the Watch Commander, CIC or may be accessed through the "Sources Listing" on the TOC.
 - b. Members **shall not** release the locations of the fixed LPR locations to non-law enforcement personnel.
2. The MPD Chief Information Officer shall coordinate the deployment and installation of the fixed LPR systems and ensure the systems are properly maintained.
3. The Watch Commander, CIC, shall ensure members are assigned to monitor the LPR system and review images and the scanned data in order to take appropriate actions when an alarm is activated.
4. When a member locates a vehicle related to a positive LPR system Hit, the member shall verify the license plate information and relay this information by radio or mobile data computer to the Office of Unified Communications (OUC) in accordance with related MPD policies and procedures.
5. Fixed LPR System Hits

- a. When an alarm is received alerting members of a positive Hit in the Hot List database, a digital image of the license plate will be displayed on the monitoring screen.
 - b. Members shall compare the digital image of the license plate to the Hot List information to verify the Hit for both the state and characters on the plate.
 - (1) Members shall accept verified, positive Hits by selecting the "Alarm Confirmed" alarm key on the video monitoring center screen; or
 - (2) Members shall select the "Alarm Not Confirmed" alarm key when a Hit does not result in a positive verification that the captured tag matches the wanted tag and select the appropriate reason from the adjacent drop down menu.
 - c. Members shall immediately attempt to validate the current status of the Hit in WALES/NCIC in accordance with MPD policies and procedures.
 - d. For confirmed, validated Hits, CIC members shall request, through the OUC, that a patrol unit be dispatched to the location of the Hit.
 - e. Members shall immediately notify the Watch Commander, CIC, of arrests resulting from positive LPR Hits for inclusion on the Daily CIC Report.
6. Damage to Fixed LPR Equipment
- a. Upon discovery that any LPR equipment is inoperable or damaged in any way, members shall:
 - (1) Immediately notify the Watch Commander, CIC; and
 - (2) Initiate a PD Form 43 (Report of Loss or Damage to District Government Property) if damage is detected.
 - b. The Watch Commander, CIC, shall:
 - (1) Immediately notify the LPR Grants Manager;
 - (2) When applicable, ensure the PD Form 43 is completed and submitted according to MPD policies and procedures; and

(3) Forward through the chain of command the completed PD Form 43 to the LPR Program Manager, the LPR Grants Manager, and the Director, Office of Risk Management.

c. The LPR Grants Manager shall coordinate any required repair with the LPR vendor and the MPD Office of the Chief Technology Officer (MPD-OCTO).

C. Portable License Plate Reader Systems

1. Portable LPR systems shall be distributed to elements/units as directed by the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
2. Element Commanding Officials with assigned portable LPR systems shall:
 - a. Designate a sufficient number of trained members to operate and maintain the LPR systems.
 - b. Ensure that designated LPR members meet any initial and continuing MPD training requirements and that the receipt of such training is documented in writing.
 - c. Ensure the LPR systems are properly deployed and maintained (e.g., monthly inspections completed, damage reported and investigated in accordance with this order).
 - d. Ensure the LPRs are deployed, when practicable, on every shift.
 - e. Designate an official the rank of lieutenant or above to serve as the LPR Element Manager.
3. LPR Element Managers shall:
 - a. Ensure any required LPR program logs and records are properly established and maintained in accordance with MPD recordkeeping policies and procedures.
 - b. Ensure that all LPR system equipment is inspected, at minimum, on a monthly basis.
 - c. Ensure that when notified of an inoperable/damaged LPR, the Mobile Data Computer (MDC) is re-imaged as an LPR MDC and is certified by the LPR Program Manager before being returned to service.

- d. Submit the LPR Monthly Report (Attachment A) through the chain of command to the Assistant Chief, Patrol Services and School Security Bureau (PSSSB), and the LPR Program Manager no later than the 5th day of each month
4. Members assigned portable LPR systems shall:
 - a. Ensure that the LPR is properly affixed to the assigned police vehicles.
 - b. Start the MPD LPR Car System software to activate the system and receive the automatic updated Hot List at the beginning of each shift.
 - c. Ensure that the LPR system is operational by making sure that LPR, GPS, COM, and TOC checkbox color is green under the Mobile Plate Hunter 900.
 - d. Ensure that the portable data computer speakers are enabled and set to a level sufficient to hear the LPR system's audible alarm in the event of a Hit.
 - e. Handle LPR system Hits in accordance with Part C.5 below.
 5. Portable LPR System Hits
 - a. All license plate data scanned by LPR systems are transmitted to the mobile data computer inside the vehicle on which the equipment is installed and checked against the computer-based Hot List.
 - b. When an alarm is received alerting members of a positive Hit in the Hot List database, a digital image of the license plate will be displayed on the mobile data computer screen.
 - c. Members shall compare the digital image of the license plate to the Hot List information to verify the Hit for both the state and characters on the plate.
 - (1) Members shall accept verified, positive Hits by activating the "accept" alarm key on the video monitoring center screen; or
 - (2) Members shall activate the "reject" alarm key when a Hit does not result in a positive verification.

- d. Members shall provide the LPR information by radio or mobile data computer to the OUC in order to immediately attempt to confirm the Hit in accordance with related MPD policy and procedures and prior to taking enforcement or other type of police action (absent exigent circumstances).
 - e. Verified, Positive LPR Hits Resulting in Arrest
 - (1) Members shall immediately notify their supervisors when a verified, positive LPR Hit results in an arrest.
 - (2) The supervisor so notified shall notify the element Watch Commander.
 - (3) The element Watch Commander shall notify:
 - (a) The Watch Commander, CIC, of the arrest resulting from the positive LPR Hit for inclusion on the Daily CIC Report.
 - (b) The LPR Program Manager for inclusion on the LPR monthly report.
6. Damage to Portable LPR Equipment
- a. Members shall not attempt to repair defective or inoperable LPR equipment.
 - b. Upon discovery of any LPR equipment that is inoperable or damaged in any way, members shall:
 - (1) Immediately notify a supervisor.
 - (2) Initiate a PD Form 43 (Report of Loss or Damage to District Government Property) if damage is detected.
 - (3) Document the damage/issue on their PD Form 775 (Daily Vehicle Inspection and Activity Report).
 - c. Supervisors notified of damaged or inoperable LPR equipment shall:
 - (1) Immediately notify the LPR Element Manager.

- (2) When applicable, ensure the PD Form 43 is completed and submitted according to MPD policies and procedures.
 - (3) Provide the LPR Element Manager with a copy of the completed PD Form 43.
- d. Upon notification or discovery of a Portable LPR system that has been damaged or is inoperable, LPR Element Managers shall:
- (1) Immediately notify their element Commanding Officials or designee.
 - (2) When applicable, initiate a PD Form 43.
 - (3) Forward through the chain of command copies of the completed PD Form 43 to the LPR Program Manager, the LPR Grants Manager, and the Director, Office of Risk Management.
- e. The LPR Grants Manager shall coordinate any required repairs with the LPR vendor and MPD-OCTO.

D. Outside Agency LPR Data

1. Through established agreements, MPD receives data and hits from other agencies' LPRs and handheld ticket issuance devices (e.g., the Department of Public Works or the Department of Transportation).
2. When another agency's LPR or handheld unit receives a hit, the CIC will receive either an LPR alert that includes a digital image of the license plate or an automatic email from the handheld units. In some cases, the email will contain information about a notice of infraction (NOI) issued to the vehicle.
3. When the CIC receives an LPR hit from another agency's LPR, the Watch Commander, CIC, shall ensure:
 - a. A member is assigned to immediately compare the digital image of the license plate to the Hot List information to verify the Hit for both the state and characters on the plate.
 - (1) Members shall accept verified, positive Hits by selecting the "Alarm Confirmed" alarm key on the video monitoring center screen; or

- (2) Members shall select the "Alarm Not Confirmed" alarm key when a Hit does not result in a positive verification that the captured tag matches the wanted tag and select the appropriate reason from the adjacent drop down menu.
 - b. Members shall immediately attempt to validate the current status of the Hit in WALES/NCIC in accordance with MPD policies and procedures.
 - c. For confirmed, validated Hits, members shall request, through the OUC, that a patrol unit be dispatched to the location of the Hit.
 - d. Members shall immediately notify the Watch Commander, CIC, of arrests resulting from positive LPR Hits for inclusion on the Daily CIC Report.
4. When the CIC receives an email notification of a handheld ticket unit hit from another agency the Watch Commander, CIC, shall ensure:
 - a. A member is assigned to immediately attempt to validate the current status of the Hit in WALES/NCIC in accordance with MPD policies and procedures.
 - b. For confirmed, validated Hits, members shall request, through the OUC, that a patrol unit be dispatched to the location of the Hit.
 - c. Members shall immediately notify the Watch Commander, CIC, of arrests resulting from positive Hits for inclusion on the Daily CIC Report.
 - d. If ticket information is provided in the email alert, in the event that the hit is confirmed and is related to a stolen vehicle, contact the agency that issued the NOI to cancel the NOI.

NOTE: The LPR Program Manager will provide the CIC with contact information and procedures for initiating the cancelation of an NOI with participating agencies.

E. Manual Inputs into the LPR-SOC

1. Only the Director, Intelligence Fusion Division, the Commander, TID, the LPR Program Manager, or the Watch Commander, CIC, are authorized to approve manual entries into the LPR-SOC when:

- a. Crimes are reported after the LPR has been deployed (e.g., lookouts for stolen vehicles before they have been entered into NCIC, AMBER alerts, radio broadcasts); or
- b. Manual license plate checks need to be performed, or
- c. Plates need to be entered for other authorized investigative purposes.

NOTE: Manual entries into the LPR-SOC can be accomplished through the LPR operational console.

2. Prior to authorizing the manual input of data into the LPR-SOC, the Director, Intelligence Fusion Division, the Commander, TID, the LPR Program Manager or the Watch Commander, CIC, shall ensure the custom manual input is related to a specific criminal investigative or patrol purpose.
3. In cases where a vehicle is wanted and manually entered into the LPR-SOC, but the investigation does not rise to the level where a WALES/NCIC submission is required, the authorizing member shall ensure the name of the requesting detective/member and contact number is documented and available to CIC personnel.

NOTE: In the event the vehicle is stopped, this will enable the CIC and/or units in the field to contact the appropriate detective/requesting member and ascertain further instructions.

F. Reporting Requirements

1. The LPR Grants Manager shall prepare all required reports regarding monetary expenditures related to the LPR program, as well as the incremental reporting required by the grant used to purchase the systems.
2. The Commander, TID, shall prepare and submit a monthly report through the chain of command to the Commanding Official, Criminal Investigations Division, and the Assistant Chief, PSSSB, of the city-wide totals of verified, positive LPR System Hits resulting in arrest, including the district of occurrence and type of crime, by no later than the fifth (5th) day of the following month.

G. LPR Installation and Maintenance

1. Portable LPR equipment shall be:

- a. Mounted and deployed on marked, unmarked, or surveillance vehicles owned or in use by the MPD.
- b. Assembled and mounted on MPD vehicles:
 - (1) By MPD-OCTO in coordination with the Corporate Support Bureau, General Support Services Division, Fleet Services Branch and the affected LPR Element Manager and/or Element Commander.
 - (2) Solely in the manner described in the related user manuals and manufacturer's instructions.
- c. The MDC and LPR System shall remain with the assigned vehicle after the LPR software has been installed on the MDC.

NOTE: The MDC in the assigned MPD vehicle serves as a video monitoring center and central clearinghouse for all license plates scanned by the LPR.

3. The LPR Grants Manager shall work with MPD-OCTO to assist in the installation of portable LPRs on fixed sites.

H. Tactical Operations Center

The LPR Program Manager shall ensure the Tactical Operations Center (TOC) is installed on MDCs and on pertinent desktops in order to facilitate monitoring Hits.

VI. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The LPR Grants Manager shall be responsible for preparing all required reports regarding monetary expenditures related to the program and for serving as the liaison between the MPD and the vendor from which the LPR Systems have been purchased.
- B. The Chief Information Officer, MPD-OCTO, shall be responsible for ensuring the proper installation and maintenance of the LPR-SOC server, Portable and Fixed LPR Systems, and all related hardware and software.
- C. The Assistant Chief, HSB, shall be responsible for oversight of the LPR Program, designating the LPR Program Manager and for ensuring that all sworn and civilian members assigned to LPR video monitoring in the CIC have received any required initial and continuing training and the training is documented in writing.

- D. The Assistant Chief, Strategic Services Bureau, shall be responsible for developing and implementing training for sworn and civilian members assigned to LPR video monitoring.

VII. ATTACHMENT

Sample LPR Monthly Report



Cathy L. Lanier
Chief of Police

CLL:PAB:MOC:PHC

LPR Equipment Inspection Checklist

MONTH: _____

Unit # _____
 Inspecting Member _____
 Date of Inspection _____



Item Checklist

Remarks

- 1 - Both cameras right/left are in place and pointing in the proper direction* - (see description below) _____
- 2 - Right/Left Cables are properly connected to the cameras _____
- 3 - Camera lenses are clean _____
- 4 - LPR box: 1 right cable, 1 left cable, 1 power cable and 1 ethernet cable is properly connected _____
- 5 - Ethernet cable is connected to the USB ethernet adapter and the USB ethernet adapter is connected to the docking station _____
- 6 - Car system software GUI has LPR, GPS, and COM lights green* - (see description below) _____
- 7 - Click on the LPR Mobile Plate Hunter 900 icon and the Hot list last update date/time shouldn't be more than 12 hrs old* - (see description below) _____

***Description**

- 1 - Both cameras must be 2 ft above ground. Right Camera: 12ft aside, 12ft forward, Left Camera: 12ft aside, 21 ft forward
- 6 - If red, grey or yellow the unit has a malfunction
- 7 - List is updated 2:45am and 14:45 pm everyday

Camera Aiming (ft)		
Lens Size	Aside	Forward
16mm (right)	12	12
25mm (left)	12	24*
35mm	14	25
50mm	24	41
12mm	9	9

*Measure 21 ft. forward for city streets only

Plate Height:



The optimal height of the plate is **2 ft** from the ground to the center of the plate. When aiming, the plate target should be in the center of the live screen.