

Whitewater Police Department General Order		
Order Topic: <b>AUTOMATED LICENSE PLATE READERS (ALPR)</b>		
Issue Date: 09/29/2023	Last Revision:	Review Date: 11/12/2025
Special Instructions:	WILEAG Standard:	

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:** Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) technology, also known as License Plate Recognition, provides automated detection of license plates. ALPRs are used by the Whitewater 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. ALPRs may be used to gather information related to active warrants, homeland security, electronic surveillance, suspect interdiction and stolen property recovery.

Flock Safety is an Automated License Plate Reading (ALPR) system that securely captures images while the system uses Vehicle Fingerprint technology to identify license plates. This system is web based and any authorized user can log in from any device with internet access. Approved users can search by date, time, location, and description search criteria. These cameras take pictures of all traffic in front of the camera. Depending on the image quality, the captured image can also help to determine the color, make, and model of the vehicle as well as the License plate state. The Flock Safety system compares the characters in the license plate read to an imported hotlist and sends an alert if there is a match.

#### REQUIREMENTS:

1. All installation and maintenance of ALPR equipment, as well as ALPR data retention and access shall be managed by the Administrative Captain.
2. Information captured and stored by the ALPR system includes, but is not limited to the following: license plate image, vehicle image, license plate number, license plate state, date, time, and location of the read.
3. ALPR System Security

Use of the ALPR system 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. Access to the ALPR system is restricted to Department personnel.
- b. All ALPR data downloaded to the operator mobile workstation and server shall be accessible only through a login/password-protected system capable of documenting access of information by name, date and time.
- c. The ALPR system shall only be used for official and legitimate law enforcement business. Department personnel must have an articulable law enforcement reason to access and/or perform any query in the ALPR system. The ALPR system may be used in conjunction with any routine patrol operation or criminal investigation. Reasonable suspicion or probable

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cause is not required before using an ALPR.

- d. The ALPR system may be used to canvass license plates around any crime scene. Partial license plates reported during major crimes should be entered into the ALPR system in an attempt to identify suspect vehicles.
- e. In furtherance of investigative purposes, ALPR data may be shared or accessed by members of outside law enforcement agencies. All logins and queries will be captured and monitored including the following information: username, date, time, purpose of query, license plate, and other elements used to query the system.
- f. A member of the command staff may conduct periodic audits, to ensure that users are utilizing the ALPR system for legitimate law enforcement purposes.

### 4. ALPR (Flock) Searches

- a. Open the website: <https://www.flocksafety.com/>.
- b. Read the disclaimer and click “accept.”
- c. Select “What” the search criteria are for the target vehicle. Best practice is to begin with a general search and then narrow down the focus if needed.
- d. Select the “Category” of images to search. Best practice is to begin with “All images” and then narrow the focus if needed.
- e. Select the proper location(s) “Where” cameras are located and then broaden the search if necessary.
- f. Select the timeframe(s) “When” the incident(s) occurred. Multiple time frames can be searched simultaneously.
- g. Enter the case number in the search reason. If no case number is associated with the search, enter the primary reason you are searching for the plate (i.e. burglary suspect, robbery suspect, retail theft suspect, etc.).
- h. When images of evidentiary value are located select, “Download Images,” and add them to the case file.

### 5. Hotlist Notification

- a. The Flock Safety Hotlist Tool will send an audible alert to all authorized users currently logged on whenever it receives information that a vehicle matching the license plate of NCIC stolen vehicles, NCIC missing entries, NCIC stolen registration plates, and hotlist entries.
- b. Hotlist entries shall contain actionable intelligence such as reasonable suspicion or probable cause to arrest, NCIC stolen vehicles, NCIC stolen registration plates, NCIC

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missing entries or significant officer safety information. The hotlist entry should not be utilized for “make your own case” type of intelligence. Hotlist data may not be entered into the ALPR database without supervisor or OIC approval.

- c. The alert will include an image of the vehicle along with a map link of the camera that detected the vehicle.
- d. Dispatch Responsibilities
  - 1) Dispatch shall monitor for Hotlist alerts and the audible signal should be turned on.
  - 2) Upon receiving a Hotlist notification, dispatch personnel will open the Hotlist tool and determine the location of the activation as well as the suspected stolen/missing registration and vehicle information.
  - 3) Immediately broadcast the notification, “Unverified flock hit.” The dispatcher will include the reason for the notification (e.g. stolen vehicle), the license plate associated with the notification, the location, direction of travel, and description of the vehicle associated with the notification, and any other pertinent information.
  - 4) Dispatch personnel will begin the verification of the notification by running the plate. Once verified, dispatch will notify officers over the radio, “Flock hit confirmed.” Dispatch will also notify officers if the vehicle is no longer listed in NCIC.
  - 5) Dispatch personnel will create a call for service and assign an officer to the call.
  - 6) In situations when the ALPR notification is associated with a custom hotlist, dispatch personnel will ensure the license plate is removed from the hotlist.
- e. Officer Responsibilities
  - 1) An audible alert will activate when there is a Hotlist notification.
  - 2) Open the Flock Safety Hotlist Tool and determine the location of the activation as well as the suspected stolen/missing registration and vehicle information.
  - 3) Upon broadcast of a Hotlist notification, officers who are available and near the vicinity of the notification origin should look for the vehicle in question. Dispatch personnel may assign a specific officer to look for the vehicle in question. If an officer observes the vehicle in question, the officer will determine what action to take.
  - 4) A Hotlist notification alone does not constitute reasonable suspicion to perform a traffic stop or otherwise make contact with a vehicle. Officers must ensure they

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establish reasonable suspicion or probable cause prior to performing a traffic stop or otherwise making contact with a vehicle. At a minimum, dispatch personnel or the officer should query the license plate through NCIC/CIB to determine if the ALPR notification is accurate.

### **6. ALPR Data Storage and Retention**

- a. All data and images gathered by an ALPR are for the official use of the Whitewater Police Department, and because such data may contain NCIC/CIB information, it is not open to public review. ALPR information gathered and retained by the Department may be used and shared with prosecutors or others only as permitted by law.
- b. The current ALPR system used by the Department is Flock Safety. Flock data is stored for a period of 30 days, after which time it is automatically purged. Any data exported from the Flock database to be used for investigative purposes will become part of the case file, retained in accordance with the records retention schedule followed by the Department, and may be subject to open records requests.

### **7. Training**

No member of the department shall operate ALPR equipment or access ALPR data without first completing Department-approved training.