

# SPRINGFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT

## Standard Operating Guideline

<b>Effective Date:</b> 08/15/2013	<b>Supersedes Policy Dated:</b> N/A New	<b>Rescinds:</b>	<b>SOG Number:</b>  <b>304.8</b>
<b>Accreditation Index:</b>			
<b>Part Title:</b> Support Services		<b>Chapter Title:</b> Facilities and Equipment	
<b>Chief of Police:</b>			

## License Plate Reader

### I Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction to employees for the official use of the License Plate Reader and the proper dissemination and retention of data collected by the License Plate Reader.

The License Plate Reader, whether attached to a patrol car or used at a stationary location, is to be used to enhance productivity, effectiveness and officer safety by identifying stolen or wanted vehicles, stolen license plates and missing persons. LPR's may also be used to gather information related to active warrants, homeland security, electronic surveillance, suspect interdiction, stolen property recovery, detection of crime, enforcement of State law and local ordinances, AMBER Alert assistance, crime prevention and other traffic related matters. It is the policy of this agency that all members of the agency abide by the guidelines set forth herein when using the License Plate Reader and data gathered by the system.

### II Definitions

**LPR** - License Plate Recognition/License Plate Reader

**OCR** - Optical Character Recognition

**Detection** - Digital images of license plates and vehicles and associated metadata (date, time and geographic coordinates associated with vehicle image capture) that are captured by the LPR system.

## **SOG 304.8**

License Plate Reader

Effective Date: 08/15/2013

**Alert** - A visual and or auditory notice that is triggered when the LPR system receives a potential “hit” on a license plate entered into the LPR system.

**Hit** - A read matched to a plate that has previously been registered on an agency’s “hot list” of vehicle plates related to stolen vehicles, wanted vehicles, or other factors supporting an investigation, or which has been manually registered by a user for further investigation.

**Hot List** - License plate numbers of vehicles that are wanted because the vehicle is stolen, wanted in connection with a crime, or connected to a suspect who is wanted or suspected of committing a crime or otherwise of interest to law enforcement.

**Fixed LPR system** - LPR cameras that are permanently affixed to a structure, such as a pole, a traffic barrier, or a bridge.

**Mobile LPR system** - LPR cameras that are affixed, either permanently (hardwired) or temporarily (e.g., magnet-mounted), to a law enforcement vehicle for mobile deployment.

**Portable LPR system** - LPR cameras that are transportable and can be moved and deployed in a variety of venues as needed, such as a traffic barrel or speed radar sign.

### **III Procedure**

#### **1 General**

1.1 The use of LPR systems is restricted to official law enforcement purposes of this agency. LPR systems and LPR generated data is the property of this agency and intended for use in conducting official business.

1.2 LPR systems and associated equipment and databases are authorized for official public safety purposes. Employees who misuse this equipment, associated databases, or data shall face disciplinary actions.

#### **2 Administration**

2.1 The Traffic Section Commander will have administrative oversight for LPR system deployment and operations and will ensure that:

2.1.1 Data captured, stored and/or retained by the LPR system is kept in a secure data storage system with access restricted to authorized personnel;

2.1.2 LPR reads and “alerts” or “hits” that are acted on in the field or associated with investigations or prosecutions are preserved and documented; and

## **SOG 304.8**

### License Plate Reader

Effective Date: 08/15/2013

- 2.1.3 Personnel approved to operate the LPR system receive training from the department on its proper use and operation. This training will be documented and forwarded to the Training Unit to be included in the employees training record.
  - 2.2 The Traffic Section Commander, or their designee, shall check equipment on a weekly basis to ensure functionality and camera alignment. Any equipment that falls outside expected functionality shall be removed from service until deficiencies have been corrected.
  - 2.3 LPR systems repairs, hardware or software, shall be authorized through the UOB chain of command.
- 3 License Plate Reader System Usage
  - 3.1 Only officers who have been properly trained in the use and operational protocols of the LPR systems shall be permitted to use it.
  - 3.2 Prior to use, LPR users must ensure that the LPR system has been updated with the most current hot lists available.
  - 3.3 LPR Alerts/Hits: Receipt of a LPR Alert/Hit is not sufficient reasonable suspicion to initiate a stop without verification. Verification of the information is essential before initiating a stop or taking any enforcement action. Prior to initiation of the stop:
    - 3.3.1 Visually verify that the vehicle plate number matches the plate number ran by the LPR system, including both alphanumeric characters of the license plate and the state of issuance.
    - 3.3.2 Verify (through communications with the applicable dispatcher or via a mobile data terminal (MDT) inquiry of the relevant database) the still-valid status of a “wanted,” “stolen vehicle/plate,” or “warrant” return; and, then, the LPR operating officer may take enforcement action (or institute such action through assisting officers).
      - 3.3.2(a) If the Alert/Hit is on a license plate associated with a wanted person the officer should make a reasonable effort to confirm that the wanted person is actually in the vehicle before initiating the vehicle stop.
      - 3.3.2(b) If the Alert/Hit is on a license plate associated with a suspended/revoked driver, the officer must ensure that the vehicle driver generally matches the physical description of the registered owner.
      - 3.3.2(c) Some information entered into the LPR system may not be considered actionable and was added for informational purposes only. An example may be officer safety information or a homeland security alert. In such cases a traffic stop should not be initiated

## **SOG 304.8**

License Plate Reader

Effective Date: 08/15/2013

based solely on that Alert/Hit information and the officer should develop reasonable suspicion to justify a vehicle stop.

- 3.4 In each case in which an alert or a hit is triggered, the user should record the disposition of the alert and the hit into the LPR system
  - 3.5 Special Details: LPR use during nontraditional deployments (e.g., special operations or during a criminal investigation) must be approved by the Traffic Section Commander
  - 3.6 Searches of historical data within the LPR system should be done in accordance with established departmental policies and procedures.
- 4 LPR Data Sharing and Dissemination
- 4.1 LPR data should be considered for official use only and is exempt from mandatory release to the public under RSMO 610.100 subsection 3 “known as the Missouri Sunshine Law.”
  - 4.2 LPR data shall be considered criminal investigatory records and shall not be shared with or provided to any person, entity, or government agency, other than a law enforcement agency, unless such disclosure is authorized by a subpoena or court order.
    - 4.2.1 LPR data can be shared among agencies for legitimate law enforcement purposes with joint authorization from the Traffic Section Commander and the appropriate Criminal Investigations Section Commander.
- 5 Retention of Data
- 5.1 The data shall be retained by the vendor and shall not be released without joint authorization from the Traffic Section Commander and the appropriate Criminal Investigations Section Commander.
  - 5.2 The detection data shall be retained by the vendor for a period of 30 days from the date of collection. After 30 days, the detection data stored shall be destroyed by the vendor, unless otherwise requested by the Springfield Police Department.
  - 5.3 The hit data shall be retained by the vendor for a period of 5 years from the date of collection. After 5 years, the hit data stored shall be destroyed by the vendor, unless otherwise requested by the Springfield Police Department.

## **IV Attachments**