



NORTH MIAMI POLICE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES



LICENSE PLATE RECOGNITION SYSTEM 400.22

EFFECTIVE DATE: 12-28-21

APPROVED:

[Signature]
Chief of Police

SUPERSEDES: N/A

CFA: 32.04

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I. PURPOSE

To provide guidance on the application, deployment, management and maintenance of the mobile License Plate Recognition (LPR) System, to include its cameras and trailer. The LPR System, and all data generated from it, will be used for official law enforcement purposes only.

II. POLICY

The North Miami Police Department will utilize the LPR System to identify stolen vehicles, vehicles used in the commission of a crime, or driven by wanted persons, while following established legal guidelines, to include Florida State Statutes (FSS) 316.0777, 316.0078, and the Guidelines for the Use of Automated License Plate Readers. The LPR System will be utilized in furtherance of ongoing investigations, crime prevention activities, and to assist in the recovery of missing children and adults through the Amber, Silver and Blue Alert Systems.

III. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Departmental sworn members and Communications Personnel.

IV. DEFINITIONS

- A. **License Plate Recognition (LPR) System:** A system of high-speed cameras that take a digital photograph of every vehicle and license plate that enters its field of view and conducts a search of the license plate against an electronic Hot List. The LPR System components, and accompanying video cameras, are contained within a mobile trailer for ease of deployment to different areas of the City.
- B. **Hot List:** A list of license plates and vehicle information entered into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), and the Florida Crime Information Center (FCIC) databases.
- C. **Hot List Download:** The method by which the NCIC/FCIC Hot List data is automatically transferred at specific times throughout the day by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) and made accessible within the LPR System.

Note: The LPR System does not conduct live checks against the NCIC/FCIC Hot List. The system can only search the latest Hot List downloaded to it; therefore, all ALERTS shall be verified to ensure their validity.

- D. **ALERT:** An indication or “HIT” that a potential match exists between a license plate scanned by the LPR system and data listed on the NCIC/FCIC Hot List.
- E. **Personal Identifying Information:** Information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual’s identity, either alone or when combined with other personal or identifying information that is linked or linkable to a specific individual. Personal Identifying Information includes names, gender, race, date of birth, photographs, addresses, social security numbers, driver’s license numbers, or biometric data.
- F. **LPR Operator:** An employee trained and given specific permissions in the use of the LPR system.

G. Language clarification:

Should: Indicates a general or expected action, absent a rational basis for failing to conform.

Shall or Will: Indicates a mandatory action.

V. GENERAL PROCEDURES

- A. The Chief of Police has designated the Special Services Major to have oversight over the administration of the LPR System, and day-to-day management of the operations of the system to the Traffic Safety Unit.
- B. The Traffic Safety Unit Supervisor, or his/her designee, will be responsible for the trailer keys, and will ensure that functionality checks are conducted on each LPR trailer and its components on a regular basis.
- C. The LPR System will be deployed with supervisory approval for investigative purposes, crime prevention activities, or for routine placement along City roads to identify wanted vehicles used in the commission of a crime, stolen vehicles, wanted persons, and vehicles associated with missing or endangered persons. **CFA 32.04B**
- D. The LPR System cameras will only be placed in areas exposed to public view (City streets or public property) or from a location where a law enforcement officer would be lawfully present. The Department will utilize the system to capture and store digital license plate data and images while recognizing the established privacy rights of the public.
- E. LPR Operators will consist of the following:
 - 1. System Administrator: Responsible for setting the LPR System's security, permissions and software maintenance.
 - 2. Communications Personnel: Responsible for monitoring the LPR System for Hot List ALERTS, confirming their validity, and issuing BOLOS, when applicable.
 - 3. Maintenance Officers: Responsible for physically inspecting and

placing the LPR System trailers at specific locations throughout the City, as requested, and ensuring the Communications Unit is notified of the location change.

4. Investigators: Whether from the Investigations Unit, or the Traffic Safety Unit, investigators given special permissions to make license plate entries into the LPR System (local data) and conduct searches of the system's overall recorded data for criminal justice purposes.

VI. DEPLOYMENT PROCEDURES & MAINTENANCE

The LPR System's trailers may require relocating, as needed. The accurate documentation of said location, and the position in which the system's cameras are facing, are critical steps that will ensure the accurate deployment of personnel and the increased potential for detaining a Hot List vehicle.

- A. Maintenance Officers relocating the LPR System trailers will visually inspect the equipment, to include its battery life and cameras to ensure the lenses are clear and the cameras have not been altered in any way.
- B. Once an officer has moved an LPR trailer to a new location, immediately thereafter, the officer will notify the Communications Unit of the new location and the fixed direction of the trailer's cameras.
 1. The Communications Unit will also be notified if an LPR trailer is recalled for maintenance, or any other issue, so as to maintain an accurate log of each trailer's location.
- C. The Communications Unit member receiving the above message will, without delay, update the LPR Location Log positioned near the dispatch terminal to ensure the accurate dissemination of the location and direction of travel of verified ALERT vehicles.
- D. Any officer who becomes aware of a damaged LPR trailer, or any component of it, will notify their immediate supervisor, who will complete the applicable supervisory documentation. Notification will also be made to the Traffic Safety Unit Supervisor as soon as possible to arrange for the trailer's retrieval and follow-up maintenance.

- E. LPR Operators are prohibited from making any equipment modifications or repairs to the LPR System.

VII. RESPONDING TO ALERTS

- A. The Communications Unit will receive LPR System ALERTS on their computer terminals.
- B. Upon receiving an ALERT, Communications personnel will determine, without delay, the nature (stolen vehicle, wanted person, etc.) and accuracy of the ALERT by verifying that the image of the license plate captured by the LPR System, and the license plate and state listed on the ALERT, are an exact match.

Note: Communications personnel must be cognizant that the LPR System will only recognize characters and may misread a letter for a number, such as an “S” for a “5,” or vice versa; therefore, **only a visual verification, as described above, can ensure that the ALERT is valid.**
- C. Following the visual confirmation mentioned above, Communications personnel will run an NCIC/FCIC query, without delay, to confirm that the ALERT on the license plate in question is still active.
- D. The ALERT will be rejected if the LPR image visually examined does not coincide with the information on the ALERT, and/or if a real-time check of the NCIC/FCIC database reveals the ALERT is no longer current.
- E. Once an ALERT has been verified, Communications personnel will broadcast the ALERT information via BOLO to the officers on duty and will state the following:
 1. License plate number
 2. Vehicle description
 3. Location and direction of travel
 4. Nature of the NCIC/FCIC ALERT
- G. Officers will take appropriate action in accordance with all applicable

Departmental policies and procedures and be cognizant that the driver of the vehicle may not be the registered owner.

VIII. MANUAL ENTRIES

- A. The LPR System has a local/manual entry option for license plates of interest to our agency, such as attempts to locate situations, BOLOS, or where probable cause exists on a NMPD case.
- B. Manual local entries will be entered into the LPR System by authorized personnel given special access to make said entries; however, investigators, whether from the General Investigations Unit, or the Traffic Safety Unit, shall seek approval prior to entry by sending said request via City email to their immediate supervisor.
- C. If approved, the concerned investigator's supervisor will document the approval on an LPR Flagged License Plate Entry Form, which will be retained by the supervisor and will be subject to audit at any time. It will be the Supervisor's responsibility to request the manual entry once approved.
- D. Upon the conclusion of an investigation, it is the requesting Investigator's responsibility to arrange for the removal of the manually flagged license plate from the LPR System and will, without delay, request from their immediate supervisor the removal of said license plate from the list. The Supervisor will then log the removal request date on the LPR Flagged License Plate Entry Form and will ensure that the same is removed.
- E. Concerned investigators from the General Investigations Unit, and the Traffic Safety Unit, will document on a Supplemental Report their initial request for entry, and the subsequent request for removal, of any manually flagged license plate.

IX. SECURITY, ACCESS and RETENTION

- A. LPR System data will be stored and maintained in a secured database server maintained by the City's Information Technology Division. Access will be restricted to authorized personnel only.

- B. Authorized users will be able to access the LPR System database by entering their assigned username and password.
- C. Investigators assigned permissions to search the LPR System's data for criminal justice purposes shall document the search, and the reason, in their Supplemental Report. In addition, any search of the system shall be logged in the designated LPR System Search Log.
- D. Any NCIC/FCIC Personal Identifying Information recorded and maintained by the LPR System is subject to the same binding Criminal Justice Information Systems "User Agreement" promulgated in the Department's NCIC/FCIC procedures policy, 400.13. Personnel found to be in violation of NCIC/FCIC access restrictions will be subject to disciplinary action.
- E. All LPR System data will be maintained in accordance with FSS 316.0778 for a maximum of three years; however, data known to have evidentiary value shall be promptly secured for retention (as with the rest of the case file) by the investigator handling the case following the Department's policies and procedures for digital evidence. **CFA 32.04D**
- F. All data captured, stored, generated, or otherwise produced by the LPR System is the property of the North Miami Police Department.
- G. An annual audit will be conducted by Special Services Major, or his/her designee, to ensure that only authorized personnel are able to access the LPR System data.

X. PUBLIC RECORDS EXEMPTION

Pursuant to FSS 316.0777, the following information held by an agency is confidential and exempt from inspection and copying of records:

- A. Images and data containing, or providing, personal identifying information obtained through the LPR System.
- B. Personal identifying information of an individual in data generated, or resulting from, images obtained through the LPR System.
- C. Personal identifying information may be disclosed as follows:

1. To a criminal justice agency in the performance of their official duties.
2. The license plate registered to an individual may be disclosed to the individual, unless such information constitutes active criminal intelligence information, or active criminal investigative information.

CFA 32.04C

D. Any requests from a criminal justice agency for Department-owned LPR System data information will be forwarded to the Traffic Safety Unit Supervisor with notice to the Special Services Major.

XI. TRAINING

LPR System Operators will receive training pursuant to the manufacturer's recommendations and the contents of this policy. LPR System training documentation shall be forwarded to the Training Unit. **CFA 32.04A**