



Boulder County Sheriff's Office

JOE PELLE

Sheriff

Ms. Sara J. Rich, Esq.
303 E. 17th Avenue, Suite 350
Denver, CO 80203

August 7, 2012

Dear Ms. Rich,

I am in receipt of the letter addressed to Sheriff Joe Pelle requesting records concerning automatic license plate readers (ALPRs). Our policy concerning the use of this technology is enclosed. Other requests including records regarding procurement of technology, use of technology, storage of data, access to data, sharing of data and data from third parties should be directed the Boulder Police Department as they coordinated procurement and maintain storage of the information about which you refer for this area. We do not keep lists of information retrieved from ALPRs, nor do we have records of use of such information.

Although our policy references a "hot list" maintained by BCSO, I have been informed we do not in fact have any such list at this time. Training was provided by the company that makes the ALPR—any manuals they used for training remain in their custody, we did not keep it if, in fact, we ever had it. I believe this satisfies your request under C.R.S. §24-72-207(7). Please feel free to call me if you have additional questions at (303) 441-1699. Thank you,

Dea M. Wheeler

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke.

Assistant County Attorney

Legal Advisor—Boulder County Sheriff, District Attorney & Risk
Management

EFFECTIVE DATE: May 1, 2012**REVISION DATE:**

POLICY: The use of an automated license plate reader (ALPR) system can provide useful documentation in the identification and prosecution of criminal and traffic investigations. ALPR systems also enhance productivity, effectiveness, and promote officer safety. In keeping with the Sheriff's Office's commitment to providing efficient, effective public safety services, the agency has adopted the following guidelines governing the use and management of the ALPR.

Deputies must use reasonable discretion as an ALPR "hit" does not automatically provide deputies with probable cause to stop and/or arrest. Enforcement action, stops, detentions and arrests are based on facts and observations the deputy can articulate in addition to the ALPR hit. An ALPR hit relates typically only to the vehicle, not to the person who may be driving the vehicle. Information obtained through the use of the ALPR system is independently confirmed before enforcement action is taken.

DEFINITIONS:

ALPR: The Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) is a computer-based system that utilizes cameras to capture a color image, as well as an infrared image, of the license plate of a passing or parked motor vehicle. The infrared image is converted into a text file utilizing Optical Character Recognition (OCR) technology. The text file is then automatically compared against an "informational data file" or "Hot List" containing information on stolen vehicles, or wanted vehicles associated with Amber Alerts, wanted parties or other criteria as selected. If a match is found, the operator is notified of the vehicle "hit" by an audible alert and an associated notation on the user's computer screen. When the ALPR captures an image it also logs the data, time and GPS location of the capture.

MDC: Acronym for *Mobile Data Computer*.

Data: When used in this application, data refers to captured images from the ALPR system and associated information.

BOSS: Acronym for *Back Office System Software*. This is the desktop system that allows authorized users to access the data captured.

PAGIS: Acronym for *Police ALPR Graphical Interface System*.

Hot List: A data file containing information on stolen vehicles, or wanted vehicles associated with Amber Alerts, wanted parties, or other criteria as selected.

Hits: License plate "reads" captured by the ALPR system which correspond to data file listings of vehicles of interest, whether stolen, associated with a wanted party, or matching some other established criteria.

PROCEDURE:

I. Installation of the ALPR system

- A. The ALPR equipment is installed in a manner that ensures that the ALPR system will activate when the patrol vehicle's MDC is turned on.
- B. Installation settings and preferences for the ALPR system are set by the ALPR technician.
 - 1. Only designated users are given access to the ALPR system's administrative functions.
 - 2. The audible tone is turned "on" for each license plate read to ensure license plates are being recorded.
- C. Unique user IDs and passwords are assigned to each authorized user of both the PAGIS and BOSS Systems.

II. Training and Inspection of the ALPR System

- A. No deputy may use the ALPR or BOSS Systems unless they have been properly trained as an operator on the system.
- B. Deputies are responsible for inspecting the ALPR equipment for proper operation in accordance with the manufacturer's procedures prior to the beginning of their shift. Any malfunction, damage, or deviation in operating condition of the ALPR equipment will be reported immediately to the system administrator.
- C. Vehicles equipped with an ALPR system must be washed by brushless car washes only so as to protect the alignment of the cameras.

III. Vehicle.

- A. The patrol vehicle equipped with the ALPR will be assigned to an operator that is trained in the use of the ALPR and it should be used when the vehicle is in service.

IV. Operation of the ALPR System

- A. At the beginning of each shift the ALPR operator will ensure the following

steps have been completed:

1. The ALPR System ~~in the trunk~~ is turned on.
2. Once the MDC is turned on, the operator logs into PAGIS using their assigned ID and password.
3. The operator clicks on "***Begin Shift***" twice at the beginning of their shift.
4. The operator ensures that the camera lenses are clean and free of obstructions. If needed, the camera lenses should be cleaned with water and a soft rag. No glass cleaner is to be used on the camera's lenses.
5. The operator validates all "Hits" from the ALPR by contacting Communications or utilizing MDC software, cross checking the hit against CCIC (or other databases)..
6. The operator is responsible for entering a disposition on all "Hits" from the ALPR.
7. The operator clicks on "***End Shift***" twice at the end of their shift.

V. Records Access and Retention

- A. All ALPR systems may only be used for official law enforcement purposes in the furtherance of public safety and may not be used for any personal reasons.
- B. The Boulder Police Department currently provides the server that houses the data generated not only from the Sheriff's Office but also the other county law enforcement agencies.
- C. The retention schedule for the data will be agreed upon by the "command group" comprised of representatives from each of the county law enforcement agencies utilizing the system.
- D. The Operations Division Chief will designate a "System Administrator" (typically a Patrol Sergeant) who will be responsible for authorizing users of the ALPR and access to the captured data via BOSS.
- E. One detective each from the Detective Section and Boulder County Drug Task Force will be assigned to input/delete entries on the "hot list" created for the Sheriff's Office agency. These detectives are responsible for the timely inclusion/deletion of entries in the hot list. All license plates included

on the hot list are uploaded to the BPD server. All ALPR systems utilizing this server will automatically query the Sheriff's Office hot list.

F. It is possible for the ALPR operator to enter a license plate via PAGIS while in the patrol vehicle. This license plate will be cleared out after the "end shift" is executed.

G. The Support Services Division Chief will designate an "ALPR computer technician" to maintain the systems at the Sheriff's Office and to issue username/passwords to operators as approved by the System Administrator.

By order of the Division Chief,

Phil West, Division Chief

Date