

Memorandum

Date: September 12, 2022
To: All Personnel
From: Craig Bonner, Undersheriff
Subject: Lexipol Update, Section 467 ALPR



Sheriff's Bulletin: 22-01

This numbered bulletin is being distributed to update our agency policy relating to the addition of a policy governing the implementation and operation of Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) Technology within the Sheriff's Office.

The attached Policy Section (467) is effective immediately and will be incorporated into our overall Lexipol Policy during the 2023 policy review and update procedure.

CRAIG BONNER
Undersheriff

Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office

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Policy
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467.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Best Practice

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for the capture, storage and use of digital data obtained through the use of Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) technology.

467.2 POLICY

Best Practice

The policy of the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office is to utilize ALPR technology to capture and store digital license plate data and images while recognizing and balancing the established privacy rights of the public.

All raw data and images gathered by the ALPR are for the official use of this department. Because such data may contain confidential information, it is not open to public review. However, we will make our policy, aggregated usage and audit data available via the Flock Transparency Portal.

467.3 ADMINISTRATION

Best Practice

The ALPR technology, also known as License Plate Recognition (LPR), allows for the automated detection of license plates. It is used by the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office 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. It may also be used to gather information related to the investigation of significant crimes, active warrants, suspect interdiction, and stolen property recovery.

All installation and maintenance of ALPR equipment, as well as ALPR data retention and access, shall be managed by the Criminal Investigations Division Commander. The Criminal Investigations Division Commander will assign members under his/her command to administer the day-to-day operation of the ALPR equipment and data.

467.3.1 ALPR ADMINISTRATOR

State

The Criminal Investigations Division Commander shall be responsible for developing guidelines and procedures to comply with the requirements of Civil Code § 1798.90.5 et seq. This includes, but is not limited to (Civil Code § 1798.90.51; Civil Code § 1798.90.53):

- (a) A description of the job title or other designation of the members and independent

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contractors who are authorized to use or access the ALPR system or to collect ALPR information.

- (b) Training requirements for authorized users.
- (c) A description of how the ALPR system will be monitored to ensure the security of the information and compliance with applicable privacy laws.
- (d) Procedures for system operators to maintain records of access in compliance with Civil Code § 1798.90.52.
- (e) The title and name of the current designee in overseeing the ALPR operation.
- (f) Working with the Custodian of Records on the retention and destruction of ALPR data.
- (g) Ensuring this policy and related procedures are conspicuously posted on the department's website.

467.4 OPERATIONS

State

Use of an ALPR is restricted to the purposes outlined below. Department members shall not use, or allow others to use the equipment or database records for any unauthorized purpose (Civil Code § 1798.90.51; Civil Code § 1798.90.53).

- (a) An ALPR shall only be used for official law enforcement business.
- (b) An ALPR may be used in conjunction with any routine patrol operation or criminal investigation. Reasonable suspicion or probable cause is not required before using an ALPR.
- (c) While an ALPR 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.
- (d) No member of this department shall operate ALPR equipment or access ALPR data without first completing department-approved training.
- (e) No ALPR user/ operator may access department, state or federal data unless otherwise authorized to do so.
- (f) If practicable, the deputy should verify an ALPR response through the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (CLETS) before taking enforcement action that is based solely on an ALPR alert.

467.5 DATA COLLECTION AND RETENTION

Best Practice

The Criminal Investigations Division Commander is responsible for ensuring systems and processes are in place for the proper collection, retention and protection of ALPR data. Generally, ALPR data will not be downloaded and retained on SBSO servers unless it is relevant to a criminal investigation conducted by the Sheriff's Office or another California law enforcement agency upon official request.

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All ALPR data that is downloaded on an SBSO server should be stored for a minimum of one year (Government Code § 34090.6) and in accordance with the established records retention schedule. Thereafter, ALPR data should be purged unless it has become, or it is reasonable to believe it will become, evidence in a criminal or civil action or is subject to a discovery request or other lawful action to produce records. In those circumstances the applicable data should be downloaded from the server onto portable media and booked into evidence.

467.6 ACCOUNTABILITY

State

All data will be closely safeguarded and protected by both procedural and technological means. The Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office will observe the following safeguards regarding access to and use of stored data (Civil Code § 1798.90.51; Civil Code § 1798.90.53):

- (a) All ALPR data downloaded to the mobile workstation and in storage shall be accessible only through a login/password-protected system capable of documenting all access of information by name, date and time (Civil Code § 1798.90.52).
- (b) Members approved to access ALPR data under these guidelines are permitted to access the data for legitimate law enforcement purposes only, such as when the data relate to a specific criminal investigation or department-related civil or administrative action.
- (c) ALPR system audits should be conducted on a regular basis.

For security or data breaches, see the Records Release and Maintenance Policy.

467.7 RELEASING ALPR DATA

Best Practice

The ALPR data may be shared only with other California law enforcement or prosecutorial agencies for official law enforcement purposes or as otherwise permitted by law, using the following procedures:

- (a) The agency makes a written request for the ALPR data that includes:
 1. The name of the agency.
 2. The name of the person requesting.
 3. The intended purpose of obtaining the information.
- (b) The request is reviewed by the Criminal Investigations Division Commander or the authorized designee and approved before the request is fulfilled.
- (c) The approved request is retained on file.

Requests for ALPR data by non-law enforcement or non-prosecutorial agencies will be processed as provided in the Records Maintenance and Release Policy and only if allowable pursuant to Civil Code § 1798.90.55.

With approval of the Sheriff, the Sheriff's Office may share aggregated, non-identifiable ALPR usage data to assist in statistical analysis of ALPR usage by the Sheriff's Office.

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467.8 TRAINING

State

The Criminal Investigations Division Commander should ensure that members receive department-approved training for those authorized to use or access the ALPR system (Civil Code § 1798.90.51; Civil Code § 1798.90.53).