

Automatic License Plate Readers

Effective Date:	July 2025
Revised Date:	
Issuing Authority:	

612.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the responsible and ethical use of Automated License Plate Readers by the Redmond Police Department. This policy aims to ensure that the deployment and utilization of these technologies are conducted in a manner that respects privacy, civil liberties, and public trust and are consistent with state law, city policy and WASPC accreditation standards.

Automatic License Plate Readers (ALPRs) use cameras to photograph vehicles and license plates. ALPR technologies used by the Redmond Police Department include vehicle-mounted cameras and stationary cameras installed in strategic locations around the city. This technology is for authorized law enforcement and public safety purposes as set forth in this policy.

This policy applies to the use of ALPRs and associated information by all department employees. This policy governs the use of ALPR data, to enable the collection and use of such data in a manner consistent with respect for individuals' privacy and civil liberties.

This policy is intended to provide guidance specific to ALPR systems and is in addition to the provisions found in the department's Public Safety Technology Data Governance Policy 341.

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains current and consistent with technological advancements, legal requirements, best practices in data governance, and City policy.

612.1.1 DEFINITIONS

ALPR Administrator: A Department employee who manages the utilization of the ALPR software from the end user through training, reporting, and monitoring.

Hit: Alert from the ALPR system that a scanned license plate number may be in the NCIC or other law enforcement database for a specific reason including, but not limited to, being related to a stolen vehicle, wanted person, missing person, domestic violence protective order, or other criminal activity.

Hot List: A collection of license plates associated with vehicles of interest from databases that include, but not limited to: National Crime Information Center (NCIC), Washington Crime Information Center (WACIC), Department of Licensing (DOL) databases, and local "be on the lookout" notices (BOLOs).

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Reads: Data obtained by an ALPR of license plates within public view that were read by the device, including images of the plate and vehicle on which it was displayed, and information regarding the location of the police vehicle at the time of the ALPR read.

612.2 POLICY

ALPR systems will only be deployed for official law enforcement purposes. Examples of these include:

- Locating stolen vehicles and stolen license plates
- Locating wanted, endangered or missing persons; or those violating protection orders
- Canvassing the area around a crime scene

ALPR data will only be accessed by RPD employees for official law enforcement purposes such as:

- Criminal investigations
- Searches for wanted persons or persons of interest
- Community caretaking functions, such as locating an endangered or missing person

Before employees operate the ALPR system or access its data, they will complete department training on the proper and lawful use of the system. The Training Unit will coordinate with the ALPR Administrator to provide this training.

612.2.1 CUSTOM HOTLISTS

Users who create custom hotlists will include the following information for each entry:

- Case number
- Topic explaining the nature of the investigation
- Comments detailing the reason for the contact (e.g. PC for Arrest, Identify Driver, etc.) if the list is shared or the audience includes anyone other than the person who created the entry.
- Reasonable expiration date for the entry

Users are responsible for maintaining their custom hotlists and promptly removing entries that are no longer necessary.

612.3 OPERATING ALPR SYSTEMS

ALPR operators will activate the software and ensure that it is operational at the beginning of their shift. Operators will notify the ALPR Administrator upon discovery of any damaged or inoperable ALPR equipment.

ALPR systems automatically update hotlists.

When an operator receives a hit/alert indicating a positive hit from the hotlist database, a digital image of the license plate will display on the screen.

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ALPR operators will compare the digital image of the license plate to the hotlist information to verify the hit for both the state and characters on the plate.

ALPR operators will confirm the information by radio or Mobile Data Computer (MDC) to confirm the hit prior to taking enforcement action or other type of police action (absent exigent circumstances).

The system will upload ALPR data accumulated from the shift.

612.4 DATA COLLECTION AND GOVERNANCE

ALPR technology collects digital images of license plates and associated license plate numbers. The technology collects the date and time that the license plate passes an ALPR camera. No additional personally identifiable information is collected.

Access, storage, use, and sharing of ALPR data is addressed in the Public Safety Technology Data Governance Policy 341.