

# Bowie City Police Department - General Orders



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| TITLE: LICENSE PLATE<br>RECOGNITION PROGRAM   |                       | NUMBER: 502 |
| EFFECTIVE DATE: 8/5/16  | REVIEW DATE:          |             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NEW <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AMENDS <input type="checkbox"/> RESCINDS | DATE: 7/4/11, 6/24/13 |             |

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| AUTHORITY<br><b>Chief John K. Nesky</b> | ACCREDITATIONS STANDARDS<br>41.3.9 | TOTAL PAGES<br>4 |
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## I. POLICY

The use of License Plate Recognition Equipment is intended to provide law enforcement personnel with a method of identifying vehicles and license plates (and by association the specific owners or operators of those vehicles) without direct intervention by the officer. Locating vehicles identified as having a specific interest to law enforcement is consistent with the mission of the Bowie Police Department in delivering the greatest measure of safety and highest level of service to the citizens and visitors to the City.

Assignment of LPR equipment within the agency is made by the Chief of Police or his designee and based upon the needs of the department.

The use of LPR equipment shall be for law enforcement purposes only and done in a manner consistent with the manufacturer's recommendations and this policy.

## II. DEFINITIONS

License Plate Recognition System (LPR) – Equipment consisting of a camera(s), computer, and computer software used to automatically recognize and interpret the characters on vehicle license plates. This data is then compared against a list of license plates bearing some significance to law enforcement.

Hot List – A database populated with items of specific concern to the investigative and/or law enforcement interests of the Bowie Police Department. This may include, but is not limited to, Terrorist Screening Center watch list, stolen/wanted vehicles and license plates, wanted and missing persons, cautions, and license plates associated with Amber Alerts or various watch lists provided for law enforcement purposes.

Alarm (aka Hit) – a positive indication, by visual and/or audible signal, of a potential match between data on the “hot list” and a license plate scanned by the LPR system. A hit is NOT conclusive confirmation that a license plate is wanted, and additional investigation is always warranted when a hit is indicated.

The Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center (MCAC) – A clearinghouse for LPR data run by the State of Maryland. All LPR data collected by the Bowie Police Department will be stored at the MCAC in accordance with their policies and procedures. The MCAC Operations Center provides a database, inquiry tool, history tracking, and reporting for the entire LPR program. It manages and provides a storage and search structure for the license plate information being collected in the field. The “Hot list” will automatically be updated twice a day (morning and evening) through an encrypted VPN by MCAC.

### **III. PROCEDURE**

This procedure establishes basic guidelines to be used in the deployment of LPR equipment by agency personnel. It applies to use by personnel throughout the department, regardless of assignment. Additional specific instructions may be provided by the supervisor of a particular unit.

- A. All operators shall receive training prior to using the LPR system.
- B. Upon receiving an alarm, the LPR operator should utilize whatever information is available to determine the accuracy of the “hit”. The LPR operator will visually verify the subject tag and the actual read on the LPR screen are the same (i.e. from the same state, etc.). The operator will confirm the “hit” is still active by running the information through NCIC/MILES via MDT or Communications dispatcher. Receipt of an LPR alarm is NOT sufficient probable cause to warrant an arrest without additional verification.
- C. Upon receipt of an alarm, the LPR operator will ensure that they are in a position to determine the accuracy of the “hit” safely and in a manner which will not interfere with driving ability.
- D. Additional information may be entered into the LPR system at anytime. Broadcast Information received following the initial download should be manually entered immediately upon receipt by the LPR operator. The reason for the entry shall be included in the “note” portion of the entry screen (i.e. stolen vehicle, missing person, abduction, Amber Alert, robbery suspect, etc).
- E. Upon completing a manual entry the operator should query the LPR data to determine if the license plate was scanned previously.

### **IV. DEPLOYMENT**

- A. LPR vehicles may be used in a routine patrol capacity or for special operations.
- B. Supervisors should make every effort to deploy LPR equipped vehicles on a regular basis.

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### **V. MAINTENANCE**

- A. Under no conditions should an LPR operator attempt to modify the LPR equipment or software operating system.

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- B. LPR camera lenses may be cleaned with a glass cleaner or mild soap and water and a soft, non-abrasive cloth.
- C. LPR cameras must be removed from the vehicle prior to entering an automatic washing facility.
- D. Damage to LPR equipment shall be immediately reported to a supervisor. The supervisor shall document (and investigate, if necessary) the damage in accordance with established procedures.
- E. The LPR coordinator for the Department shall be notified of any LPR equipment needing maintenance or repair, who will then coordinate all maintenance and repair with the appropriate vendor.