



# OPERATIONS ORDER

|                                       |         |
|---------------------------------------|---------|
| SUBJECT: LICENSE PLATE READER DEVICES |         |
| DATE ISSUED:                          | NUMBER: |
| 07-11-07                              | 33      |

1. The Department has recently installed License Plate Reader (LPR) devices on a select number of Department vehicles. The LPR device consists of a specialized camera and computer that can automatically scan license plates on passing vehicles and compare them against a list (“hot list”) of license plates of interest (vehicles that have been reported stolen, wanted, suspended registrations or insurance coverage, etc.). The “hot list” is a list of targeted license plate numbers and partial plate numbers that are stored locally on a Department vehicle’s mobile digital terminal (MDT). The LPR system also allows for the proactive entry of license plate numbers and partial plate numbers, enabling the system to activate when the vehicle’s license plate has been read by the LPR device. This feature is useful when canvassing for wanted vehicles that have not been classified as stolen and do not already appear on the systems “hot list.” In addition, the LPR system will act as an intelligence resource by allowing the officer to identify the last known contact with a vehicle and by reporting the list of vehicles located in a specific area within a given time range.

2. Therefore, in order to provide guidelines to uniformed members of the service on the use and maintenance of LPR devices in selected Department vehicles, the following procedure will be complied with:

**PURPOSE** To provide for control, use, maintenance and accountability of License Plate Reader (LPR) devices installed in selected Department vehicles.

**DEFINITIONS** LICENSE PLATE READER DEVICE (LPR) - A specialized camera and computer that is capable of quickly capturing license plate numbers on passing vehicles and then converting them into text that is automatically compared against a large list of license plates of interest (i.e. stolen, wanted, suspended registration, etc.). An LPR device can identify a target plate within seconds. LPR devices operate while Department vehicles are traveling at normal speeds, reading each license plate passed and alerting the LPR operator when there is a match to the “hot list.”

HOT LIST - A list of targeted license plate numbers and partial plate numbers that are stored locally on a vehicle’s mobile digital terminal (MDT). Due to the speed of the LPR system, the volume of license plates being read and the fact that the system must notify the officer of an alarm within seconds, in order to be useful, the method of using a locally stored database is utilized rather than relying on real-time communications with state or federal data sources. The LPR device is not automatically connected to NYSPIN, is not programmed to scan the state and will activate upon a partial scan match. Therefore, it is absolutely essential that the LPR operator verify the current status of a vehicle through NYSPIN prior to initiating any law enforcement action (i.e. arrest, summons, etc.).

**PROCEDURE** When a License Plate Reader (LPR) device is installed in selected Department vehicles of assigned command:

- DESK OFFICER**
1. Account for the condition of each LPR device in Department vehicles assigned to the command at the beginning of each tour.
    - a. Record results of member's inspection for each LPR device in the Command Log.
  2. Enter on roll call the assignment of each Department vehicle equipped with an LPR device assigned to the command (i.e. sector A, conditions, anti-crime, etc.).
  3. Notify operations coordinator when LPR device becomes inoperable and requires repair or maintenance.

- MEMBER UTILIZING LPR SYSTEM**
4. Inspect LPR device for operability and serviceability in assigned vehicle at the beginning of tour and report the results to desk officer.
  5. Activate the LPR device and record in **ACTIVITY LOG (PD112-145)** the last time LPR device received an updated "hot list."

*NOTE* *If the system has not received an updated "hot list" within the last twenty-four (24) hours, the LPR operator will immediately report to a designated download site in order to receive a new update.*

*Under no circumstances will an LPR device be utilized if it has not been updated within the last twenty-four (24) hours.*

UPON THE ACTIVATION OF AN ALARM FROM THE LPR SYSTEM

- MEMBER UTILIZING LPR SYSTEM**
6. Verify by checking NYSPIN through the radio dispatcher that the alarm or the vehicle status remains active.

*NOTE* *The LPR device is not automatically connected to NYSPIN, is not programmed to scan the state and will activate upon a partial scan match. Therefore, it is absolutely essential that the LPR operator verify the current status of a vehicle through NYSPIN prior to initiating any law enforcement action.*

7. Take necessary law enforcement action (i.e. arrest, summons, Rotation Tow, etc.). Members shall be guided by P.G. 212-39, "Vehicle Pursuits," whenever they are in pursuit of a vehicle due to the activation of an alarm from the LPR system.
8. Notify the patrol supervisor and the desk officer if the LPR system becomes inoperable.

- OPERATIONS COORDINATOR**
9. Contact the vendor at 1-866-967-4900 twenty-four (24) hours a day seven (7) days a week for repairs and maintenance to an LPR device, when required.

*ADDITIONAL DATA* *The LPR system allows for the proactive entry of license plate numbers and partial plate numbers, enabling the system to activate when the wanted vehicle's license plate has been read by the LPR device. If the New York State Police activate an Amber Alert,*

**ADDITIONAL  
DATA  
(continued)**

*the Communications Section will instruct all LPR operators of selected Department vehicles equipped with LPR's to manually enter the Amber Alert vehicle's license plate number into the "hot list." This will enable selected vehicles to immediately begin canvassing for an Amber Alert wanted vehicle rather than reporting to a designated download site in order to receive a new update for the "hot list." This feature is useful when canvassing for wanted vehicles that have not been classified as stolen and do not already appear on the LPR system's "hot list."*

*The Real Time Crime Center can be contacted to conduct a search of past records of license plate numbers searched.*

*LPR devices are intended to provide access to stolen and wanted files and may also be used in furtherance of a criminal investigation. The use of an LPR device for any other purpose is strictly prohibited.*

*The camera lens of an LPR device may be cleaned only with a glass cleaner that is applied with a soft cloth. Other types of maintenance or manipulation by members of the Department are strictly prohibited.*

*If the LPR is inoperable or requires maintenance, the vendor will be contacted to make the repair. A Department vehicle does not have to be placed out of service while waiting for the repair of the LPR device.*

**RELATED  
PROCEDURES**

*Vehicle Pursuits (P.G. 212-39)*

**FORMS AND  
REPORTS**

*ACTIVITY LOG (PD112-145)*

3. Commanding officers will ensure that the contents of this order are brought to the attention of members of their commands.

**BY DIRECTION OF THE POLICE COMMISSIONER**

**DISTRIBUTION  
All Commands**