

<i>Subject: License Plate Reader Program</i>	<i>Page No. 1</i>
--	-------------------

THURMONT POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER	<i>Date Issued: June 5, 2015</i>	<i>Effective Date: June 5, 2015</i>	<i>Order No: Chapter 2.18</i>
<i>Authority: Chief of Police Gregory L. Eyer</i>		<i>Manual Page No:</i>	
<i>Subject: License Plate Reader Program</i>		<i>Replaces Page No:</i>	
<i>Accreditation Standard: Chapter 2</i>	<i>Distribution: ALL</i>	<i>Amends:</i>	<i>Number of Pages: 5</i>
<i>Related Documents:</i>		<i>Rescinds: New Order</i>	

This Directive is for internal use only, and other than as contraindicated here this Directive does not create or enlarge this Department's, governmental entity's, any of this Department's officers, and/or any other entities' civil, criminal, and/or other accountability in any way. This Directive is not to be construed as the creation of a standard of safety or care in any sense, with respect to any complaint, demand for settlement, or any other form of grievance, litigation, and/or other action. Deviations from this Directive, if substantiated, can only form the basis for intra-Departmental administrative action(s) (including discipline and/or termination).

I. PURPOSE:

To establish guidelines for the deployment, maintenance, training, and data storage associated with the usage of License Plate Recognition (LPR) systems by Thurmont Police Department (TPD) personnel. The Department may employ LPRs in its efforts to identify, and when appropriate, apprehend persons in possession of stolen vehicle and license plates, persons who are subjects of Missing Person Reports, outstanding warrants or who may be on a terrorist watch list, scofflaws, or operating a vehicle with a suspended registration, or suspended driver's license. The LPR Unit may also be used to collect license plate data in a given area for criminal intelligence gathering purposes.

II. POLICY:

It is the policy of the Thurmont Police Department to utilize a LPR Unit to identify a specific vehicle in connection to motor vehicle violations or a subsequent discovery of a wanted subject; a license plate does not identify a specific person upon an alert. The Thurmont Police Department is committed to ensuring the information collected and analyzed from a LPR is for **official use only**.

III. DISCUSSION:

1. LPR technology uses specialized cameras and computers to quickly capture large numbers on license plates, and photographs and compares them to a list of plates of interest. The plates of interest are referred to as a “hot list.” LPR systems can identify a target plate within seconds of contact with it, allowing law enforcement to identify target vehicles that might otherwise be overlooked. LPR systems also record every license plate photographed and records the location, date, and time.

2. The technology is available via Mobile LPR systems, mounted on police vehicles as well as Fixed LPR systems mounted on poles or on the roadside. The Thurmont Police Department will only utilize the Mobile LPR systems. Mobile LPR systems are designed to allow officers to patrol at normal speeds while the system photographs license plates, uses Optical Character Recognition Software and compares that information to a “hot list” of tags identifying a multitude of violations associated with the owner or vehicle such as suspensions, missing persons, or warrants. The data collected by the LPR system may be used for a secondary purpose in analyzing and identifying additional criminal involvements of vehicles queried on the system.

3. Updating the Database File: Prior to an officer deploying the LPR he/she will ensure that the Database is current. The source data will be uploaded with the current information from NCIC / METERS prior to use in accordance with Manufacture specifications.

IV. UTILIZATION:

The Mobile LPR systems may be utilized in accordance with the law and with Departmental policy to increase the detection of stolen vehicles, vehicles with revoked or suspended registrations, uninsured vehicles, vehicles operated by drivers with suspended or revoked licenses, wanted and missing person, and other vehicle related crimes that impact the safety of citizens.

V. PROCEDURE:

1. Operating the System:

A. Once the system is connected and powered, the LPR software can be accessed on the laptop by clicking on the icon.

B. The cameras will automatically start scanning plates when the unit is powered and the software is running.

C. A picture of the most recent plate scanned will appear in the center of the screen. A log of the last 5 plates scanned on each camera will appear in the bottom of the screen.

2. Verifying all “Alarms” on the system:

A. Since the data is not live, an “Alarm” will be confirmed through Communications to ensure that it is accurate and currently active before taking actions to stop the vehicle or occupants and before any arrests are made or summonses are issued.

B. The officer operating the system shall verify all Alarms through the proper channels as expeditiously as possible upon receiving the Alarms.

C. In the event that the Alarm is confirmed, responding officers will then take such action as is appropriate to the nature of the Alarm and comply with all other applicable Department policies.

D. When the Alarm sounds it must be cleared off the screen. If an Alarm is confirmed the “Accept” button will be clicked. If the actual vehicle does not match the alarmed vehicle, then the “Reject” button will be clicked.

E. When an Alarm sounds for a vehicle listed for scofflaw violations, the officer will confirm with the reporting agency or municipality prior to towing the vehicle.

VI. RESTRICTIONS:

1. The Thurmont Police Department will protect the rights of individuals under the 1st Amendment and understands it has long been upheld that there is a benefit to anonymity in the exercising of those rights. To this end, it is the policy of the Thurmont Police Department that mobile LPR data collection will not be used in those areas known to reflect an individual’s political, religious or social views. All intended collection of data using the mobile LPR system and analysis of the information collected will be directly related to criminal conduct or activity.

2. The Mobile LPR systems collected information will not be used for probable cause application without additional investigative information. All “Alarms” will be confirmed in a NCIC / METERS records check via Communications.

VII. MAINTENANCE AND INSTALLATION:

The LPR system will be installed in a police vehicle designated by the Deputy Chief of Police. Installation will be performed by a technician or officer who has been trained to install the equipment and setup the software.

1. Operators will ensure the LPR system equipment is maintained and stored according to manufacturer’s guidelines and Departmental policy.

2. Any damage to LPR systems will be reported immediately to a Supervisor.

VIII. DATA COLLECTION AND RETENTION:

1. All LPR data collected will be kept confidential and “For Official Use Only.” At no time will any authorized user of the LPR discuss or divulge private information or specific information collected by the system with any unauthorized person.

2. Data collected by the Department’s LPR program will be retained on the assigned vehicle laptop computer for a period of 90 days at which time it will be automatically purged. Thurmont LPR data will be uploaded to the Maryland State Police hard-drive and retained at their facility for a period determined by MSP.

IX. TRAINING:

Any person utilizing the LPR system will be trained in its use and maintenance, which will require training as recommended by the manufacturer and approved by the Deputy Chief of Police. Certification will be maintained in the officer’s training records.

DOCUMENT DATES :

Amended Date:

Review Date:

Review Date:

Review Date:

Rescinds:

Order Written By: Lt. P.A. Droneburg

Order Edited and Approved By: Chief Gregory L. Eyer

Accreditation Standards Included in this Order

CHAPTER