Horry County Police Department
General Order

Subject: Automate License Plate Recognition System
Effective Date – September 01, 2026
Amends/Rescinds: Previous Version(08/20/2026)
References: SCLEA 16.11; CALEA 41.3.9.A-D

POLICY

The purpose of this directive is to establish guidelines and procedures for the proper use of Automated License Plate Recognition technologies. ***(CALEA 41.3.9)***

POLICY

It is the policy of the Horry County Police Department (HCPD) to utilize emerging technologies to promote public safety to include Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) systems. **(CALEA 41.3.9.A)**

DEFINITIONS

Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) – Equipment consisting of portable or non-portable cameras and computer software that recognize, interpret and temporarily collect vehicle license plate data for law enforcement purposes.

Read – A digital image of license plates and associated metadata (date, time, and geographic location associated with a captured vehicle image) collected by the ALPR system.

Alert – A notification associated with an image captured by the ALPR system.

Hit – A match to a license plate image that is previously enlisted and associated with stolen, wanted, or other vehicles related to an official, law enforcement investigation.

Hot List – A database of license plate numbers associated with stolen or suspicious vehicles or license plates, or persons of interest in an official, active law enforcement investigations. Information may come from a variety of sources to include; National Crime Information Center (NCIC), The National Insurance Crime Bureau, AMBER Alert incidents, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, SC Department of Motor Vehicle Administration, HCPD, and/or other authorized agencies.

Active ALPR Data – Real-time information provided to an authorized ALPR operator in the form of an alert notification indicating the proximal presence of a license plate associated with a *Hot List* entry.

Historical ALPR Data – A collection of metadata of individually identified vehicle license plates that is temporarily stored by the contracted ALPR vendor for future use during an official investigation. **(SCLEA 16.11)**

Authorized User – HCPD personnel who have successfully completed department-approved ALPR training and have been granted access credentials for official use. Each Authorized User will be assigned a unique individual user account and sign in credentials. Credentials shall not be shared or used by another person.

PROCEDURES

A. GENERAL **(CALEA 41.3.9.A-B)**

1. The use of ALPR systems and database access is restricted to authorized personnel for official law enforcement purposes in accordance to HCPD directives, SLED regulations, manufacturer's

   recommendations, and in accordance with applicable SC laws. Access will be accomplished through a unique user account assigned to the individual accessing the system. Personnel will not use another person's credentials or permit another person to use their credentials**.**

2. Any misuse of ALPR data may result in discipline up to and including termination of employment. Violations of this directive, including unauthorized access, use, disclosure, dissemination, or failure to safeguard ALPR information or user credentials, may result in disciplinary action consistent with HCPD policy and applicable law.

   a. Verified misuse of the ALPR System will mandate a suspension of access for at least six months in addition to any administrative discipline(s) or restrictions.

   b. Unauthorized access, dissemination, personal use, or release of ALPR information may also result in criminal prosecution or civil liability where applicable by law.

3. The ALPR system, equipment, and database information is the property of the contracted provider and only intended for official law enforcement use.

B. ADMINISTRATION **(CALEA 41.3.9.B-D)**

1. The Chief of Police will designate an ALPR coordinator (Police IT Supervisor) to manage the administrative operations of the approved ALPR system. The coordinator's responsibilities will include: **(SCLEA 16.11)**

   a. Establishing protocols for authorized access, collection, storage, and retention of collected metadata.

   b. Developing protocols for the documentation of ALPR *Reads* and *Hits* as received by HCPD personnel.

   c. Developing guidelines for the secured storage of metadata captured and retained by the ALPR system.

   d. Ensuring compliance with stipulations associated with the contracted ALPR system vendor.

   e. Conducting monthly reviews and audits of ALPR system access and usage to ensure compliance with agency policy and applicable law. Such audits will include, when

available, review of user access, searches, queries, entries, dissemination, and other system activity to identify unauthorized or inappropriate use of ALPR information.

f. Maintaining records of authorized ALPR users and training completion.

g. Ensuring that each ALPR user is assigned a unique user account and that access is promptly modified or terminated when an individual's authorization, assignment, or employment status changes.

C. ALPR SYSTEM OPERATIONS **(CALEA 41.3.9.A-D; SCLEA 16.11)**

1. Only properly trained and authorized HCPD personnel will receive access to the approved ALPR system.

   a. Training will include system operations, legal considerations, privacy protections, data dissemination restrictions, and procedures for validating alerts prior to enforcement action.
   b. Personnel will sign in to the ALPR system using their individually assigned credentials. Personnel will not share, loan, or otherwise permit another person to use their credentials.

2. Personnel initiating reports for serious offenses with a vehicular element involved to include, but not limited to; Missing Persons, Stolen Vehicles, or Stolen Tags will ensure the creation of a "*24Hour Hotlist Entry*" in the ALPR System prior to the end of their respective shift to aid in recovery efforts.

3. Upon the receipt of an ALPR system alert, HCPD personnel will visually verify the accuracy of the ALPR information compared to the actual license plate.

   a. HCPD personnel will verify the status of the information contained in the ALPR system alert prior to initiating a traffic stop or detention.

   b. Receipt of a *Hit* notification alone, **does not** constitute sufficient probable cause to initiate a stop or detention without verification. Verification of associated information is essential, prior to initiating a stop, detention, or taking further investigative or enforcement action.

4. Officers will take appropriate action in response to the information received in a verified *Hit* of the ALPR system.

5. Certified law enforcement personnel may manually enter information into the ALPR system database. Manually entered information must be:

   a. For legitimate law enforcement purposes only; and,

   b. Personnel entering information into the ALPR system are responsible for the timely removal of the information once it is no longer applicable for legitimate law enforcement purposes.

6. HCPD personnel searching the ALPR database for historical information will only do so for legitimate law enforcement purposes in compliance with agency directives. Historical ALPR searches must be associated with a documented case report, CAD event number, intelligence file, or investigative activity.

7. Any information obtained from the ALPR system by agency personnel will be maintained and disposed of in accordance with CJIS protocols and only utilized for official purposes. ALPR system activity and information may be audited to verify that access, searches, entries, use, and dissemination are consistent with this directive and applicable law.

D. SHARING AND DISSEMINATING ALPR DATA **(CALEA 41.3.9.B; 41.3.9.D; SCLEA 16.11)**

1. Current or historical ALPR data is considered "for official use only" and can only be shared for legitimate law enforcement purposes:

   a. When ALPR information is shared outside of the HCPD, each occurrence will be documented in an email to the Captain, Support Services Division and HCPD Terminal Agency Coordinator (TAC) as soon as practical.

   b. Dissemination of ALPR information to an outside agency will be dictated by an MOU, in accordance with HCPD directives, or at the direction of the Chief of Police or designee.

E. MAINTENANCE **(CALEA 41.3.9.B)**

1. Personnel will not modify, tamper with, disable, or attempt unauthorized repairs to ALPR equipment or associated software.

2. Vehicles equipped with exterior mounted ALPR equipment will not be driven into an automated car wash system.

3. ALPR camera lenses will only be cleaned in accordance with manufacturer's guidelines.

4. HCPD personnel will immediately notify supervisor of any malfunction, damage, loss, unauthorized access, or maintenance issue involving ALPR equipment or software.

F. DOCUMENTATION **(CALEA 41.3.9.A-B; 41.3.9.D)**

HCPD personnel will document in the report narrative, any instance of a positive ALPR alert that results in enforcement action where completion of an *HCPD Incident Report/Supplement* is required. Documentation
should include the nature of the ALPR alert, verification steps taken, associated databases queried, and resulting enforcement or investigative action when applicable.

By Order of:

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Kris Leonhardt, Chief of Police

Date: 09/01/2026

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