



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY

Department of Criminal Justice Information Services

200 Arlington Street, Suite 2200, Chelsea, Massachusetts 02150, MASS.GOV/CJIS
TEL: 617-660-4600 • TTY: 617-660-4606 • FAX: 617-660-4613

Deval L. Patrick
Governor

Andrea J. Cabral
Secretary of Public Safety and Security

James F. Slater, III
Acting Commissioner

October 8, 2013

Dear Chief:

Attached, please find two documents concerning the use of Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) technology. The first document is the *Commonwealth Criminal Justice Information Services Automatic License Plate Recognition Systems Central Repository Companion Policy*. This is the policy that governs the statewide centralized data warehouse that stores ALPR information contributed by law enforcement and public safety agencies. The second document is a model policy for law enforcement agencies concerning the use of ALPR systems. Many departments requested that the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) provide a model ALPR policy that they may consider adopting in their jurisdiction.

ALPR technology is an effective mechanism to increase public safety by enhancing existing law enforcement capabilities. Capable of recognizing over 1,000 license plates an hour on vehicles as they pass either a portable or stationary unit, an ALPR system reads a plate, compares it against a locally stored list of plates known as a CJIS-NCIC Hotfile database (“Hotfile”) and alerts the officer to any matches. The Hotfile consists of license plate numbers associated with suspended and revoked licenses, stolen vehicles, AMBER Alerts, Missing Child Alerts, Missing College Student Bulletins, and Be On Look Out (BOLO), Attempt to Locate (ATL), or Wanted or Missing Person broadcasts or bulletins in which a license plate number is included.

The Hotfile information can come from a variety of sources, including stolen vehicle information from the National Insurance Crime Bureau and the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) or Department of Homeland Security watch lists. The Registry of Motor Vehicles can provide lists of expired registration tags, and law enforcement agencies can interface their own, locally compiled hot lists to the ALPR system. In addition to agency supported hot lists, users may also manually add license plate numbers to hot lists in order to be alerted if and when a vehicle license plate of interest is “read” by the ALPR system. When a targeted plate is located, the officer is notified with a visual or audio alert. ALPR systems record every license plate viewed, as well as the location, date and time of each license plate read.



ALPR data can be electronically submitted to the state central repository maintained by the Department of Criminal Justice Information Services (DCJIS). Departments that procured ALPR systems through a grant from EOPSS have agreed, as a condition of acceptance of grant funds, to electronically submit their captured ALPR data to the state central repository. The DCJIS central repository policy and model department policy were crafted recognizing the importance of balancing law enforcement goals with potential privacy concerns. Since the use of ALPR technology must be consistent with the high standard of privacy protection under Article 14 of the Massachusetts Declaration of Rights, the policies include privacy safeguards which not only restrict data access, but also secure the data and provide for audit functions to ensure compliance with the policies.

I hope you will find these documents useful for your department.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'James F. Slater III'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial 'J'.

James F. Slater, III
Acting Commissioner

cc: Anne P. Powers, Undersecretary for Law Enforcement
Curtis M Wood, Undersecretary for Forensic Science and Technology
Major Dermot Quinn, Massachusetts State Police