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LOMBARD POLICE DEPARTMENT

TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

MAY 2022



THIS UPDATE WILL
COVER:



• LICENSE PLATE READER

PROGRAM

TEAM

• POLICE DEPARTMENT DRONE

LICENSE PLATE READER PROGRAM





LICENSE PLATE READER (LPR) PROGRAM

- The Lombard Police Department began its LPR program in 2011 with a mobile license plate reader installed on a single patrol car.
- By 2015, the program had been expanded to five total car LPR systems using Vigilant Systems products.
- In 2019, the Department added fixed Flock Safety LPR systems at Yorktown Mall and on St. Charles Rd in downtown Lombard. Fixed systems are LPR units mounted to existing or supplemental poles.

HOW DO LICENSE PLATE READERS WORK?

Generally speaking, LPR systems work by recognizing the characters on a vehicle's license plate using optical character recognition (OCR).

The LPR then compares the license plate recognized against a text file "hotlist" generated by the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) as well as the Illinois State Police.





These "hotlist" files contain the license plates of:

- Missing persons
- Stolen vehicles and stolen license plates
- Persons wanted on arrest warrants
- Vehicles wanted for criminal offenses
- Vehicles with suspended or revoked license plates
- Sex offenders

HOW DO LICENSE PLATE READERS WORK?

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These “hotlist” files DO NOT contain:

- Names of vehicle owners
- Race or sex of vehicle owners
- Address of vehicle owners
- Any identifying information whatsoever regarding the owner or operator of the vehicle.

LPR's do not run an inquiry on the license plate itself using the systems that officers use.



HOW DO LICENSE PLATE READERS WORK?

Once the LPR identifies a vehicle that is on the hotlist, officers logged in to the LPR system are notified of the time, location, and reason of the "hit". They also receive photos of the vehicle and a closeup of its license plate.



HOW DO LICENSE PLATE READERS WORK?

LPR recognition of license plate characters is highly accurate.

Even with that accuracy, LPD policy requires that officers conduct an inquiry on the license plate in order to verify that the “hit” is valid prior to taking any enforcement action or attempting to stop the vehicle. This requirement verifies the license plate accuracy and ensures that officers do not mistakenly stop a vehicle that is not on the “hotlist”.



HOW DO LICENSE PLATE READERS WORK?

Fixed and mobile LPR systems also retain license plate data of vehicles that were not on the "hotlist" for set periods.

This feature helps LPD investigate crimes and identify vehicles operated by offenders.

The license plate data is deleted after a set period of time if it has no **investigatory** or **evidentiary** value. For example, the fixed LPR systems automatically delete data after 30 days.



WHAT ABOUT PRIVACY AND POTENTIAL MISUSE?

REVIEW:

- Data contains no personal information on vehicle owner or occupants whatsoever.
- Data is deleted after a set period if it does not have investigatory or evidentiary value.
- Courts across the country have held that license plate numbers themselves are not private information.



WHAT ABOUT PRIVACY AND POTENTIAL MISUSE?

The LPR software used by our LPR system has robust auditing features that allow supervisors to review detailed officer activity in the system. By policy, officers found to be misusing or abusing the system are subject to sanctions and/or disciplinary action.



WORKING TOGETHER

The Lombard Police Department shares LPR data with over 100 other law enforcement agencies both in our area as well as across the country.

Sharing this data helps other agencies to locate offenders within our jurisdiction while allowing us to locate offenders in other jurisdictions as well.





On August 27th, 2018 at 7:30 am, Jose Aguirre intentionally ran over his former girlfriend in the parking lot of Yorktown Mall as she was walking to her work. He fled the scene, but was located a day later when his license plate was captured by a LPR in Northlake, IL. LPD was notified and Aguirre was safely taken into custody. When questioned, he advised he was planning to flee the state to avoid capture prior to his arrest. Aguirre plead guilty in 2020 and was sentenced to 20 years in prison. His former girlfriend continues to recover from her injuries.

CASE #1: ATTEMPTED 1ST DEGREE MURDER

THREE EXAMPLES OF LPR SUCCESSES

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CASE #2: VEHICULAR HIJACKING PREVENTED

On November 4th, 2021, LPD officers were alerted by the LPR systems at Yorktown that an Acura wanted by the Bellwood Police Department for vehicular hijacking had just entered the mall property. The information also included that the occupants of the Acura were armed with firearms. LPD officers responded to the area in order to locate the Acura. The Acura fled from officers shortly after their arrival without having attempted further crimes. The vehicle was ultimately determined to have been used in several vehicular hijackings other than the Bellwood incident.





On 4/7/2022, LPD officers received a LPR "hit" of a missing person from a LPR camera deployed at North Ave and Villa by the Villa Park Police Department. The "hit" indicated that the registered owner of the vehicle was a dementia patient out of Huntley, IL and had been reported missing after not returning home the day before. A LPD officer located the vehicle on North Ave near Main St. He conducted a traffic stop on the vehicle and made contact with the driver, who was disoriented and upset. The driver was safely reunited with family members a short time later.

CASE #3: MISSING ELDERLY DEMENTIA PATIENT

THREE EXAMPLES OF LPR SUCCESSES

FUTURE OF THE LPR PROGRAM

The LPR program allows the police department to perform its duties in an intelligent way that is more efficient and effective.

There are currently five cameras deployed in the Village with three additional planned.





The police department hopes to expand the program to other locations along major points of entry and exit to the Village. The cost is \$2500 per year per camera, which is low compared to other vendors at between \$30,000-\$5,000 each to purchase.

We are also working with our neighbors to share resources and costs in order to make our communities safer.

FUTURE OF THE LPR PROGRAM

POLICE DEPARTMENT DRONE TEAM UPDATE



POLICE DEPARTMENT DRONE TEAM



- DRONES WERE DELIVERED LAST WEEK OF NOVEMBER
- DRONE POLICY ADOPTED BY THE DEPARTMENT IN DECEMBER
- TRAINING BEGAN IN DECEMBER-CLASSES VERY LIMITED
- ONE PILOT CERTIFIED IN JANUARY
- ONE PILOT CERTIFIED IN MARCH
- FIRST FULL TEAM TRAINING HELD ON MARCH 25TH
- REMAINDER OF DRONE TEAM MEMBERS (11) COMPLETED TRAINING IN THE LAST WEEK OF APRIL
- DRONE TEAM WILL BE "LIVE" BY SECOND WEEK OF MAY

MARCH 25TH TEAM TRAINING



POLICE DEPARTMENT DRONE TEAM

- ONCE PROGRAM IS LIVE, DRONES WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR USE ON EACH SHIFT FOR THE FOLLOWING INCIDENTS PURSUANT TO ILLINOIS LAW:

1. TO COUNTER A HIGH RISK OF A TERRORIST ATTACK

2. PURSUANT TO A SEARCH WARRANT SIGNED BY A JUDGE TO FORESTALL THE IMMINENT ESCAPE OF A SUSPECT OR

3. TO DESTROY EVIDENCE.

4. TO LOCATE A MISSING PERSON AT A CRIME SCENE AND/OR TRAFFIC CRASH SCENE EVIDENCE

PHOTOGRAPHY

6. A DISASTER OR PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY



POLICE DEPARTMENT DRONE TEAM

IN ORDER TO ENSURE TRANSPARENCY, THE VILLAGE WILL BE COMMUNICATING DRONE DEPLOYMENTS TO THE PUBLIC. AN INFORMATIONAL PAGE EXPLAINING THE PROGRAM IS ALSO ON THE VILLAGE WEBSITE.



The Village of Lombard has adopted a Drone program to enhance response capabilities to a variety of incidents and events. The program was modeled based on the policies of other area agencies, that have established Drone programs, and follows industry standards as well as Federal Aviation Administration requirements.

The Police Department has obtained certifications, developed procedures, and purchased the equipment best suited for the department and the needs of the community. At this time, one staff member is trained and certified to operate drones as a government public safety agency, with an additional eight members currently in training.

The priorities established for the Police Department drone program are to:

- Provide cutting-edge traffic collision and crime-scene evidence documentation methods.
- Minimize risk to the public and officers by providing additional options to avoid violent encounters and utilize de-escalation tactics.
- Aid in the search and rescue of missing persons.
- Enhance response to bomb squad incidents, fire support, hazardous materials incidents and other critical incidents in which it would reduce the risk to personnel entering a hazardous environment.





QUESTIONS?