



# *Law Enforcement Use of Automatic License Plate Recognition (ALPR) Update*

**January 2026**

# MEMBERS OF THE CRIME COMMISSION

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*\*Delegate C. Todd Gilbert resigned as a member of the House of Delegates in July 2025. The Crime Commission currently has one vacancy from the House of Delegates.*

# LAW ENFORCEMENT USE OF AUTOMATIC LICENSE PLATE RECOGNITION (ALPR) UPDATE

As a result of the Crime Commission's 2024 study of automatic license plate recognition (ALPR),<sup>1</sup> the General Assembly enacted legislation during the 2025 Regular Session establishing statewide standards for law enforcement use of ALPR in Virginia.<sup>2</sup> Prior to this legislation taking effect on July 1, 2025, no statewide statutory or regulatory framework existed to govern law enforcement use of ALPR in Virginia. As such, Virginia law enforcement agencies could use ALPR without any statewide limitations on its use, data retention, or data sharing prior to this effective date.<sup>3</sup>

The legislation also directs the Crime Commission to continue its ALPR study and report on related data and survey findings by (i) the first day of the 2026 Regular Session, (ii) November 1, 2026, and (iii) July 1, 2027, and July 1 of each year for the following five years.<sup>4</sup>

Based on the responses to the Crime Commission's 2025 Law Enforcement ALPR Use Survey, some Virginia law enforcement agencies are not using ALPR in accordance with the new statute. In addition, almost one-third of law enforcement agencies did not respond to the survey; therefore, their ALPR use is unknown. Measures will be taken this year to address these issues.

## OVERVIEW OF 2025 ALPR LEGISLATION

As of July 1, 2025, law enforcement agencies in Virginia may only use ALPR for:

- Criminal violations under the Virginia Code or any county, city, or town ordinance;
- Active investigations into a missing or endangered person or a person associated with human trafficking; and,
- Notifications related to a missing or endangered person, a person with an outstanding warrant, a person associated with human trafficking, a stolen vehicle, or a stolen license plate.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Virginia State Crime Commission. (2025). *2024 annual report: Law enforcement use of automatic license plate recognition (ALPR)*. <https://vscc.virginia.gov/Annual%20Reports/2024%20VSCC%20Annual%20Report%20-Law%20Enforcement%20Use%20of%20ALPR.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> 2025 Va. Acts ch. 720. See House Bill 2724 at <https://lis.virginia.gov/bill-details/20251/HB2724>.

<sup>3</sup> 2025 Va. Acts ch. 720, enactment clause 5. See House Bill 2724 at <https://lis.virginia.gov/bill-details/20251/HB2724>. See also Falayi, K. Virginia Center for Investigative Journalism. (2025, September 16). *One sleepy Virginia town. Nearly 7 million hits on its surveillance network*. <https://vcij.org/stories/state-of-surveillance>. This news report published in

September 2025 raised concerns with how ALPR data from Virginia was being shared and searched across the country; however, that report was based on information from June 2024 to June 2025 before the 2025 ALPR legislation took effect.

<sup>4</sup> 2025 Va. Acts ch. 720, enactment clauses 11 and 13. See House Bill 2724 at <https://lis.virginia.gov/bill-details/20251/HB2724>.

<sup>5</sup> VA. CODE ANN. § 2.2-5517(D) (2025).

In addition, ALPR data must be purged after 21 days, unless such data is needed for an ongoing investigation, prosecution, or civil action.<sup>6</sup> Finally, law enforcement agencies may only share ALPR data:

- with other Virginia law enforcement agencies, Commonwealth's Attorneys, a criminal defendant or their counsel, or their ALPR vendor;
- pursuant to a court order or court-issued subpoena duces tecum; or,
- to alert the public to an emergency situation, a missing or endangered person, a person associated with human trafficking, or a person with an outstanding warrant.<sup>7</sup>

## IMPLEMENTATION OF 2025 ALPR LEGISLATION

The 2025 legislation directed several state agencies to take action on the following requirements related to ALPR:

### ***1. VSP Developed and Publicly Posted a Model ALPR Policy***

The 2025 legislation required the Virginia State Police (VSP) to develop and publicly post a model ALPR policy.<sup>8</sup> VSP developed and posted this model policy to their website as directed.<sup>9</sup>

### ***2. VDOT Retroactively Issued 215 Land Use Permits for ALPR Devices on State Highway Right-of-Ways***

The 2025 legislation authorized the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to retroactively issue land use permits for ALPR devices installed on state highway right-of-ways prior to the law's July 1, 2025, effective date.<sup>10</sup> As a result, VDOT retroactively issued 215 land use permits for such ALPR devices, including 18 permits to VSP and 197 permits to localities.<sup>11</sup>

### ***3. Crime Commission Did Not Consider Legislation to Reenact State Highway Right-of-Way Permitting for the 2026 Regular Session***

The 2025 legislation included a provision authorizing VDOT to issue land use permits for ALPR devices not previously installed on state highway right-of-ways.<sup>12</sup> That provision must be reenacted during the 2026 Regular Session of the General Assembly to take effect.<sup>13</sup> The Crime Commission did not consider whether to endorse legislation to reenact this provision.

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<sup>6</sup> VA. CODE ANN. § 2.2-5517(E) (2025).

<sup>7</sup> VA. CODE ANN. § 2.2-5517(F) (2025).

<sup>8</sup> 2025 Va. Acts ch. 720, enactment clause 6. See House Bill 2724 at <https://lis.virginia.gov/bill-details/20251/HB2724>.

<sup>9</sup> Virginia State Police. (2025, July 9). *Commonwealth of Virginia automatic license plate recognition system model policy*. <https://vsp.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/VSP-ALPR-POLICY-FINAL-Rev-07092025.pdf>.

<sup>10</sup> 2025 Va. Acts ch. 720, enactment clause 10. See House Bill 2724 at <https://lis.virginia.gov/bill-details/20251/HB2724>.

<sup>11</sup> Virginia Department of Transportation (personal communication, December 23, 2025).

<sup>12</sup> 2025 Va. Acts ch. 720. See subsection Q of Va. Code § 2.2-5517 of House Bill 2724 at <https://lis.virginia.gov/bill-details/20251/HB2724>.

<sup>13</sup> 2025 Va. Acts ch. 720, enactment clause 14. See House Bill 2724 at <https://lis.virginia.gov/bill-details/20251/HB2724>.

#### **4. DGS Approved Eight (8) ALPR Systems for Use in Virginia**

The 2025 legislation requires the Division of Purchases and Supply within the Virginia Department of General Services (DGS), in consultation with the Virginia Information Technologies Agency, to approve ALPR systems for use by law enforcement agencies in the Commonwealth.<sup>14</sup> DGS was required to post a list of approved ALPR systems to its website by January 1, 2026.<sup>15</sup> Thus far, DGS has approved eight (8) ALPR systems.<sup>16</sup> The list of approved ALPR systems will continuously be updated as ALPR systems are added or removed. Law enforcement agencies must begin using approved ALPR systems by July 1, 2026.<sup>17</sup>

#### **5. VSP Updated the Virginia Community Policing Act System to Capture Data from Traffic Stops Based on ALPR Notifications**

The 2025 legislation amended the Virginia Community Policing Act to require law enforcement agencies to report whether a traffic stop was prompted by an ALPR notification, and, if so, to provide the reason for the notification.<sup>18</sup> This amendment had a delayed effective date of January 1, 2026, to allow sufficient time for VSP to reprogram its community policing data collection and reporting system.<sup>19</sup> VSP advised that it must receive 2025 data reports from law enforcement agencies (due by January 15, 2026) before the system can be updated.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, the system will be updated on February 1, 2026, and law enforcement agencies must report their January 2026 data by February 15, 2026.<sup>21</sup>

#### **6. Crime Commission Surveyed Virginia Law Enforcement Agencies on ALPR Use**

Pursuant to the 2025 legislation, staff disseminated surveys to all 361 Virginia law enforcement agencies in November 2025 on their use of ALPR.<sup>22</sup> The survey had a response rate of 70% (251 of 361). Based on the responses to the Crime Commission's 2025 Law Enforcement ALPR Use Survey, some Virginia law enforcement agencies are not using ALPR in accordance with the new statute. In addition, almost one-third of law enforcement agencies did not respond to the survey; therefore, their ALPR use is unknown. Detailed survey findings are discussed in the next section.

## **2025 LAW ENFORCEMENT ALPR USE SURVEY FINDINGS**

In November 2025, Crime Commission staff conducted a survey of all Virginia law enforcement agencies on their use of ALPR. The survey consisted of 19 questions relating to the following:

<sup>14</sup> VA. CODE ANN. § 2.2-5517(B) (2025).

<sup>15</sup> 2025 Va. Acts ch. 720, enactment clause 4. See House Bill 2724 at <https://lis.virginia.gov/bill-details/20251/HB2724>.

<sup>16</sup> Virginia Department of General Services. (2026, January 21). *Automatic license plate recognition systems*. <https://dgs.virginia.gov/procurement/resources/standards-specifications>.

<sup>17</sup> 2025 Va. Acts ch. 720, enactment clause 2. See House Bill 2724 at <https://lis.virginia.gov/bill-details/20251/HB2724>.

<sup>18</sup> VA. CODE ANN. § 52.30.2(C) (2026).

<sup>19</sup> 2025 Va. Acts ch. 720, enactment clause 3. See House Bill 2724 at <https://lis.virginia.gov/bill-details/20251/HB2724>.

<sup>20</sup> Virginia State Police (personal communication, January 7, 2026).

<sup>21</sup> Virginia State Police (personal communication, January 7, 2026).

<sup>22</sup> 2025 Va. Acts ch. 720, enactment clause 13. See House Bill 2724 at <https://lis.virginia.gov/bill-details/20251/HB2724>.

- Whether their agency is using ALPR;
- Manner(s) in which their agency is using ALPR;
- ALPR vendors;
- Funding source(s) for ALPR;
- Number of ALPR cameras owned/leased (fixed, mobile, and/or portable);
- Retention period of ALPR data (fixed, mobile, and/or portable);
- Public awareness measures relating to ALPR use;
- ALPR data sharing (continuous access and individualized requests); and,
- Whether their agency has a policy relating to ALPR use.

Surveys were disseminated in November 2025 to capture law enforcement use after the ALPR legislation took effect on July 1, 2025. Agency responses reflect agency practices in place at the time of survey completion. Agencies who reported having an ALPR policy were asked to submit a copy. Due to time limitations, an ALPR policy analysis was not conducted. The key survey findings are enumerated below.

### ***1. Two-Thirds of Virginia Law Enforcement Agencies Responded to the Survey***

The survey was sent to all 361 Virginia law enforcement agencies, including city police departments, college/university police departments, county police departments, other law enforcement agencies,<sup>23</sup> other state law enforcement agencies, primary Sheriff's offices, secondary Sheriff's offices, town police departments, and the Virginia State Police. The survey had a response rate of 70% (251 of 361). Table 1 illustrates the response rate by type of agency.

**Table 1: Survey Response Rate by Type of Agency**

Type of Agency	Total Agencies	Total Responding Agencies	% Responding Agencies
City Police Departments	38	29	76%
College/University Police Departments	41	29	71%
County Police Departments	9	7	78%
Other Law Enforcement	20	13	65%
Other State Law Enforcement	9	5	56%
Primary Sheriff's Offices	86	67	78%
Secondary Sheriff's Offices	37	20	54%
Town Police Departments	120	80	67%
Virginia State Police	1	1	100%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>70%</b>

Source: Virginia State Crime Commission. Staff analysis of its 2025 Law Enforcement ALPR Use Survey.

<sup>23</sup> Other law enforcement includes agencies such as airport police, railway police, and private police.

## 2. Nearly Two-Thirds of Responding Agencies Reported Using ALPR

Of the responding agencies, 63% (159 of 251) indicated that their agency is using ALPR. As seen in Table 2, a large majority of the responding city/county police departments, primary sheriff's offices, and town police departments reported using ALPR.

**Table 2: ALPR Use by Type of Agency**

Type of Agency	Total Responding Agencies	Total Responding Agencies Using ALPR	% Responding Agencies Using ALPR
City Police Departments	29	25	86%
College/University Police Departments	29	11	38%
County Police Departments	7	7	100%
Other Law Enforcement	13	2	15%
Other State Law Enforcement	5	1	20%
Primary Sheriff's Offices	67	53	79%
Secondary Sheriff's Offices	20	3	15%
Town Police Departments	80	56	70%
Virginia State Police	1	1	100%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>63%</b>

Source: Virginia State Crime Commission. Staff analysis of its 2025 Law Enforcement ALPR Use Survey.

Responding agencies reporting ALPR use were also asked to indicate the manner(s) in which their agency is using such technology, including whether the agency:

- owns ALPR system equipment/hardware and contracts with a vendor to access ALPR system software;
- contracts with a vendor for both ALPR system equipment/hardware and system software;
- accesses an ALPR system through a subscription with a vendor; and/or,
- is authorized to access another law enforcement agency's ALPR system.

The manner in which responding agencies are using ALPR varied. Further, it was not uncommon for an agency to report using ALPR in more than one manner. Specifically, 41% (65 of 159) of responding agencies indicated two or more manners of ALPR use.

Agencies reported ALPR use as follows:<sup>24</sup>

- 98 agencies indicated that their agency contracts with a vendor for both ALPR system equipment/hardware and system software;
- 64 agencies indicated that their agency owns ALPR system equipment/hardware and contracts with a vendor to access ALPR system software;
- 60 agencies indicated that their agency is authorized to access another law enforcement agency's ALPR system; and,

<sup>24</sup> Figures add up to more than 159 because some responding agencies reported more than one manner of ALPR use.

- 42 agencies indicated that their agency accesses an ALPR system through a subscription with a vendor.

While 159 law enforcement agencies indicated ALPR use at the time of the survey, news reports from December 2025 indicate that at least two localities (Charlottesville and Staunton) are ending their use of ALPR.<sup>25</sup>

### 3. Most Agencies Reported Using Flock Safety as Their ALPR Vendor

Agencies were asked to indicate which ALPR vendors their agency has a contract and/or subscription with. The large majority of responding agencies, 86% (137 of 159), reported Flock Safety as their ALPR vendor. About 30% (47 of 159) of responding agencies reported having two or more ALPR vendors. Table 3 provides a list of ALPR vendors, along with the total number of responding agencies who have a contract and/or subscription with those vendors.<sup>26</sup>

**Table 3: Agency Contracts and/or Subscriptions with ALPR Vendors**

ALPR Vendor	Total Agencies
Axon	35
Flock Safety	137
Leonardo	12
Motorola	12
Thomson Reuters/CLEAR LPR	6
Other ALPR Vendors	12

Source: Virginia State Crime Commission. Staff analysis of its 2025 Law Enforcement ALPR Use Survey.

### 4. Most Agencies Using ALPR Reported Having a Policy

The 2025 legislation requires law enforcement agencies using ALPR to have a policy on such use.<sup>27</sup> Agencies were asked to indicate whether they have a policy or policies relating to their agency's use of ALPR. Of responding agencies using ALPR:

- 70% (112 of 159) reported having a policy;
- 16% (26 of 159) reported not having a policy;
- 9% (14 of 159) reported being in the process of implementing a policy; and,
- 4% (7 of 159) did not answer the question.<sup>28</sup>

Of the 112 agencies that reported having an ALPR policy, 107 provided a copy of their agency's policy or policies. Table 4 illustrates the ALPR policy status by type of agency.

<sup>25</sup> See Hart, J. CVILLE Right Now. (2025, December 16). *City ends Flock pilot program over federal data base concerns*. <https://cvillerrightnow.com/news/208802-city-ends-flock-pilot-program-over-federal-data-base-concerns/>. See also Staunton Virginia Newsroom. (2025, December 19). *City to terminate contract with Flock Safety for license plate readers*. <https://www.ci.staunton.va.us/Home/Components/News/News/2564/71>.

<sup>26</sup> Figures add up to more than 159 because some responding agencies reported more than one ALPR vendor.

<sup>27</sup> VA. CODE ANN. § 2.2-5517(H) (2025).

<sup>28</sup> Figures do not sum to 100% due to rounding.



**Table 4: ALPR Policy Status by Type of Agency**

Type of Agency	Total Agencies Using ALPR	Has a Policy	No Policy	Policy in Progress	No Response to Question
City Police Departments	25	24	---	---	1
College/University Police Departments	11	5	4	2	---
County Police Departments	7	7	---	---	---
Other Law Enforcement	2	2	---	---	---
Other State Law Enforcement	1	1	---	---	---
Primary Sheriff's Offices	53	36	7	8	2
Secondary Sheriff's Offices	3	---	3	---	---
Town Police Departments	56	36	12	4	4
Virginia State Police	1	1	---	---	---
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>

Source: Virginia State Crime Commission. Staff analysis of its 2025 Law Enforcement ALPR Use Survey.

### 5. Agencies Reported a Variety of Funding Sources for ALPR

Agencies were asked to indicate which sources fund (or have funded) the ALPR system(s) their agency currently owns, leases, and/or subscribes. The most common funding sources reported by responding agencies included the following:

- 60% (95 of 159) indicated the Virginia State Police's *Help Eliminate Auto Theft (HEAT)* grant as a funding source;
- 43% (68 of 159) indicated internal agency funding as a source; and,
- 31% (50 of 159) indicated locality funds as a source.

Other ALPR funding sources included local grants, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services grant funding, other state grants, and federal grants. Furthermore, 53% (85 of 159) of responding agencies indicated two or more funding sources.

### 6. The Type and Number of ALPR Cameras Being Used Varies Widely Across Agencies

ALPR camera use varied significantly across responding agencies:

- 90% (143 of 159) of agencies reported fixed ALPR camera use.<sup>29</sup>
  - Number of fixed cameras ranged from 1 to 176.
- 31% (50 of 159) of agencies reported mobile ALPR camera use.<sup>30</sup>
  - Number of mobile cameras ranged from 1 to 1,066.
- 23% (37 of 159) of agencies reported portable ALPR camera use.<sup>31</sup>
  - Number of portable cameras ranged from 1 to 15.

<sup>29</sup> Fixed ALPR cameras refer to devices mounted in a stationary location.

<sup>30</sup> Mobile ALPR cameras refer to devices mounted in a patrol vehicle.

<sup>31</sup> Portable ALPR cameras refer to devices that are movable for use in multiple locations.

- 36% (57 of 159) of agencies reported using 2 or more types of ALPR cameras.
- 11% (17 of 159) of agencies reported using all 3 types of ALPR cameras.

## 7. Most Agencies Reported ALPR Data Retention Periods of 21 Days or Less

Agencies were asked to indicate the data retention periods for the ALPR cameras their agency owns and/or leases. As seen in Table 5, most responding agencies reported data retention periods of 21 days or less:

- 74% (106 of 143) reported 21 days or less for data from fixed ALPR cameras;<sup>32</sup>
- 94% (47 of 50) reported 21 days or less for data from mobile ALPR cameras;<sup>33</sup> and,
- 84% (31 of 37) reported 21 days or less for data from portable ALPR cameras.<sup>34</sup>

**Table 5: Data Retention Periods by Type of ALPR Camera**

Data Retention Period	Fixed ALPR Camera	Mobile ALPR Camera	Portable ALPR Camera
21 Days or Less	106	47	31
Over 21 Days	31	3	4
Did Not Report	6	0	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>37</b>

Source: Virginia State Crime Commission. Staff analysis of its 2025 Law Enforcement ALPR Use Survey.

For agencies that reported ALPR data retention periods over 21 days, the data retention periods varied by the type of ALPR camera as follows:

- Fixed ALPR cameras: ranged from 22 days to 60 days;
- Mobile ALPR cameras: ranged from 30 days to 180 days; and,
- Portable ALPR cameras: all reported the same retention period of 30 days.

Staff determined that there were 33 *unique* agencies reporting a data retention period over 21 days across all types of ALPR cameras.<sup>35</sup> Specifically, 21% (33 of 159) of responding agencies reported a data retention period over 21 days. Table 6 illustrates the number of agencies reporting data retention periods over 21 days by type of agency.

<sup>32</sup> 96 of these agencies reported a data retention of 21 days and 10 of these agencies reported a data retention time of *less than 21 days*.

<sup>33</sup> 42 of these agencies reported a data retention of 21 days and 5 of these agencies reported a data retention time of *less than 21 days*.

<sup>34</sup> 28 of these agencies reported a data retention of 21 days and 3 of these agencies reported a data retention time of *less than 21 days*.

<sup>35</sup> 5 agencies reported a data retention period of over 21 days for more than one type of ALPR camera (fixed, mobile, or portable).

**Table 6: Agencies Reporting ALPR Data Retention Period Over 21 Days**

Type of Agency	ALPR Data Retention Over 21 Days
City Police Departments	2
College/University Police Departments	3
Primary Sheriff's Offices	13
Town Police Departments	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>33</b>

Source: Virginia State Crime Commission. Staff analysis of its 2025 Law Enforcement ALPR Use Survey.

### **8. *Two-Thirds of Agencies Reported Engaging in Various Public Awareness Measures Relating to ALPR Use***

Law enforcement agencies are required to promote public awareness of ALPR use prior to implementing its use.<sup>36</sup> However, if an agency previously implemented ALPR and did not promote public awareness, the agency was required to promote such awareness by September 1, 2025.<sup>37</sup> Agencies were asked to indicate which types of public awareness measures they had undertaken relating to their agency's use of ALPR.

A total of 64% (102 of 159) of responding agencies indicated they had undertaken *at least* one public awareness measure relating to their agency's use of ALPR. Additionally, 40% (63 of 159) of agencies reported engaging in two or more public awareness measures, while 24% (38 of 159) of agencies reported engaging in three or more measures. Agencies reported engaging in the following public awareness measures:<sup>38</sup>

- 39% (62 of 159) presentations at local government meetings;
- 33% (53 of 159) posting information on their website;
- 26% (42 of 159) meetings with community stakeholders;
- 18% (29 of 159) social media;
- 17% (27 of 159) media interviews;
- 16% (26 of 159) press releases; and,
- 6% (10 of 159) other measures, such as news reports, Flock Safety transparency web portal, posting information on town websites, or informing community college students and visitors as they enter the campus.

However, 35% (55 of 159) of responding agencies reported taking no public awareness measures relating to ALPR use. Table 7 illustrates the total number of agencies reporting that their agency had not conducted any public awareness measures.

<sup>36</sup> VA. CODE ANN. § 2.2-5517(R) (2025).

<sup>37</sup> 2025 Va. Acts ch. 720, enactment clause 12. See House Bill 2724 at <https://lis.virginia.gov/bill-details/20251/HB2724>.

<sup>38</sup> Figures add up to more than 159 because some responding agencies reported more than one ALPR public awareness measure.

**Table 7: Agencies Reporting No Public Awareness Measures for ALPR Use**

Type of Agency	Total Agencies Reporting No Public Awareness Measures for ALPR Use
City Police Departments	4
College/University Police Departments	4
Other Law Enforcement	2
Primary Sheriff's Offices	22
Secondary Sheriff's Offices	3
Town Police Departments	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>55</b>

Source: Virginia State Crime Commission. Staff analysis of its 2025 Law Enforcement ALPR Use Survey.

### **9. Most Agencies Reported Providing Other Law Enforcement Agencies With Some Type of Continuous Access to Their ALPR System Data**

Respondents were asked if any other law enforcement agencies had continuous access to data from the ALPR system that their agency owns and/or leases. Continuous access was defined as another agency being able to access and search ALPR system data without making an individualized request to the agency for each search.

- 43% (69 of 159) of agencies reported that other law enforcement agencies have continuous access, but only to data gathered pursuant to the agency's contract with an ALPR vendor(s);
- 22% (35 of 159) of agencies reported continuous access, but only to data from agency-owned ALPR system(s);
- 16% (25 of 159) of agencies reported that their agency does not provide continuous access to ALPR system data from cameras that the agency owns or leases;
- 13% (21 of 159) of agencies reported continuous access to both agency-owned ALPR system data and the data gathered pursuant to their agency's contract with an ALPR vendor(s); and,
- 6% (9 of 159) of agencies reported other responses relating to the types of Virginia law enforcement agencies that have continuous access to their ALPR system data.

### **10. Some Agencies Reported Providing Continuous Access to ALPR Data to Out-Of-State or Federal Law Enforcement Agencies**

Agencies were also asked to indicate what types of law enforcement agencies have continuous access to data from the ALPR system that their agency owns and/or leases.

- 77% (123 of 159) of agencies reported that other Virginia local law enforcement agencies have continuous access;
- 59% (94 of 159) of agencies reported that other Virginia state law enforcement agencies have continuous access;

- 44% (70 of 159) of agencies reported that Virginia campus law enforcement agencies have continuous access;
- 16% (25 of 159) of agencies reported that their agency does not provide continuous access to the ALPR system data from cameras owned and/or leased;
- 13% (20 of 159) of agencies reported that law enforcement agencies in other states have continuous access;
- 8% (12 of 159) of agencies reported that Virginia private law enforcement agencies have continuous access;
- 6% (9 of 159) of agencies reported that federal law enforcement agencies have continuous access; and,
- 3% (5 of 159) of agencies reported other responses such as access granted to agencies only upon request, access granted through a vendor, and general agency access to cameras.

The new ALPR statute does not allow Virginia law enforcement agencies to share ALPR data with out-of-state or federal law enforcement agencies (LEAs).<sup>39</sup> Table 8 illustrates the number of agencies reporting that their agency provides continuous access to out-of-state or federal LEAs by type of agency.

**Table 8: Agencies Reporting Continuous Access to Out-Of-State or Federal LEAs by Type of Agency**

Type of Agency	Continuous Access to Out-of-State LEAs	Continuous Access to Federal LEAs
City Police Departments	1	1
College/University Police Departments	---	1
County Police Department	---	1
Primary Sheriff's Offices	7	2
Town Police Departments	12	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>9</b>

Source: Virginia State Crime Commission. Staff analysis of its 2025 Law Enforcement ALPR Use Survey.

### ***11. Individualized Requests for ALPR System Data are Commonly Made by Other Law Enforcement Agencies***

Respondents were asked to report on individualized requests for ALPR system data received from entities that do not have continuous access to their agency's ALPR system. The 159 responding agencies reported on individualized requests as follows:

- 44% (70 of 159) of agencies indicated that no other entity had made an individualized request;

<sup>39</sup> VA. CODE ANN. § 2.2-5517(F) (2025). Note that subsection A of the statute cross-references the definition of "law-enforcement agency" in VA. CODE ANN. § 9.1-101, which is limited to Virginia law enforcement agencies.

- 40% (63 of 159) of agencies indicated that Virginia local law enforcement agencies had made an individualized request; and,
- 22% (35 of 159) of agencies indicated that other Virginia state law enforcement agencies had made an individualized request.

The reasons for these other law enforcement agencies making individualized requests were reported as follows:

- 45% (71 of 159) related to criminal investigations;
- 18% (28 of 159) related to stolen vehicle(s);
- 17% (27 of 159) related to missing or endangered person(s);
- 11% (18 of 159) related to person(s) with an outstanding warrant;
- 9% (14 of 159) related to stolen license plate(s); and,
- 6% (10 of 159) related to person(s) associated with human trafficking.

### ***12. Most Agencies Have Not Received FOIA Requests for ALPR Data***

Respondents were asked whether their agency received a FOIA request for ALPR data since the legislation took effect on July 1, 2025:

- 76% (121 of 159) had not received any FOIA requests;
- 22% (35 of 159) received at least one FOIA request; and,
- 2% (3 of 159) did not answer the question.

### ***13. Most Agencies Have Not Denied Requests for ALPR Data***

Respondents were asked whether their agency denied any continuous access requests, individualized requests, and/or FOIA requests since July 1, 2025:

- 77% (123 of 159) did not deny any requests for continuous access, individualized requests, and/or FOIA requests for agency ALPR system data;
- 21% (33 of 159) denied a request; and,
- 2% (3 of 159) did not answer the question.

Of those agencies that reported denying such requests, the reasons for denial included that the request was from an out-of-state or federal law enforcement agency, a private individual, or an attorney without a subpoena, or was related to an ongoing investigation.

## **OTHER REPORTS ON LAW ENFORCEMENT USE OF ALPR IN VIRGINIA**

In addition to the Crime Commission's 2025 Law Enforcement Use of ALPR study, two other governmental entities reported on law enforcement use of ALPR during 2025. The following is a summary of those two reports.

## ALPR was Used as Part of Ceasefire Virginia

The preliminary report on Ceasefire Virginia indicates that funding from the American Rescue Plan Act was used for law enforcement equipment and technology, such as ALPR, in Ceasefire localities.<sup>40</sup> Law enforcement agencies reported that the use of technology, including ALPR, had a tremendous impact on addressing violent crime in their communities.<sup>41</sup> The report also included an ALPR Return on Investment analysis.<sup>42</sup>

## DCJS Conducted a Survey on Law Enforcement Use of Surveillance Technology

The Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) conducted a survey to facilitate law enforcement agency reporting of surveillance technology as required by the Virginia Code.<sup>43</sup> State and local law enforcement agencies and sheriff's departments must annually report all surveillance technology used, accessed, or procured to DCJS; however, private and campus police departments are not subject to these reporting requirements.<sup>44</sup> DCJS provided a presentation of its survey findings at the December 2025 Crime Commission meeting.<sup>45</sup> DCJS surveyed 335 law enforcement agencies in September 2025 and received an 81% response rate (272 responses).<sup>46</sup> Of those responding agencies, 48% reported ALPR use, 7% indicated ALPR access, and 11% advised that their agency procured ALPR.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, 85 respondents (31%) reported that they used, accessed, or procured a third-party service or subscription for ALPR, such as through Flock Safety or Axon.<sup>48</sup> The responses to the DCJS survey cannot be compared to the Crime Commission survey due to the timing of each survey, as well as private and campus police departments not being included in the DCJS survey.

## CONCLUSION

Legislation establishing statewide standards for law enforcement use of ALPR in Virginia took effect on July 1, 2025.<sup>49</sup> Prior to that date, Virginia had no statewide statutory or regulatory framework governing law enforcement use of ALPR. Based on the responses to the Crime Commission's 2025 Law Enforcement ALPR Use Survey, some Virginia law enforcement agencies are not using ALPR in accordance with the new statute. In addition, almost one-third of law enforcement agencies did not

<sup>40</sup> VCU Center for Public Policy. (September 2025). *Ceasefire Virginia: Preliminary report*. <https://cpp.wilder.vcu.edu/our-work-in-action-posts/ceasefire-virginia-preliminary-report.html>.

<sup>41</sup> *Id.*

<sup>42</sup> *Id.*

<sup>43</sup> VA. CODE ANN. § 9.1-116.10 (2025).

<sup>44</sup> VA. CODE ANN. § 9.1-116.10(B) (2025).

<sup>45</sup> Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services. (2025, December 2). *Surveillance technology equipment reporting by Virginia law enforcement agencies*. <https://vscc.virginia.gov/2025/Dec2VSCCMtg/DCJS%202025%20Surveillance%20Tech%20Equipment%20Reporting%20PowerPoint.pdf>.

<sup>46</sup> *Id.*

<sup>47</sup> *Id.*

<sup>48</sup> *Id.*

<sup>49</sup> 2025 Va. Acts ch. 720. See House Bill 2724 at <https://lis.virginia.gov/bill-details/20251/HB2724>.

respond to the survey; therefore, their ALPR use is unknown. Measures will be taken this year to address these issues.

The Chair of the Crime Commission, Delegate Charniele Herring, plans to send letters to law enforcement agencies whose survey responses indicate that their current practices are not consistent with the new statutory requirements for ALPR use. The Chair will also send letters to non-responding law enforcement agencies to advise them of the new ALPR statute and request that they respond to the next Crime Commission ALPR use survey which is planned for later this year.

Crime Commission staff will work to educate law enforcement agencies about the requirements of the new ALPR law. Staff plans to provide presentations on ALPR at the upcoming conferences of the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police and Virginia Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators, as well as the Virginia Sheriffs' Association. In addition, pursuant to the 2025 legislation, the Crime Commission will also continue monitoring and reporting on law enforcement ALPR use.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> 2025 Va. Acts ch. 720, enactment clauses 11 and 13. See House Bill 2724 at <https://lis.virginia.gov/bill-details/20251/HB2724>.