FAIRFAX COUNTY
VIRGINIA



Fairfax County Police Department

Automated License Plate Reader Program (ALPR)

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Language - English

History and Background

- ALPR has been in use for over 20 years in the NCR.
- Fairfax County began using ALPR in 2008.
- The technology exists in both mobile and fixed products.
- Numerous cases have been decided through state and federal courts with rulings that support the continued and lawful use of ALPR.
    - Including *Neal v. Fairfax County* in 2015 that went to the Virginia Supreme Court.
- Following the conclusion of the *Neal* case in October 2020, Fairfax County set to modernize its ALPR program.
- In 2021, FCPD conducted an evaluation of its current equipment.
- In 2022, the FCPD met with community stakeholders to begin its transition to a new program.

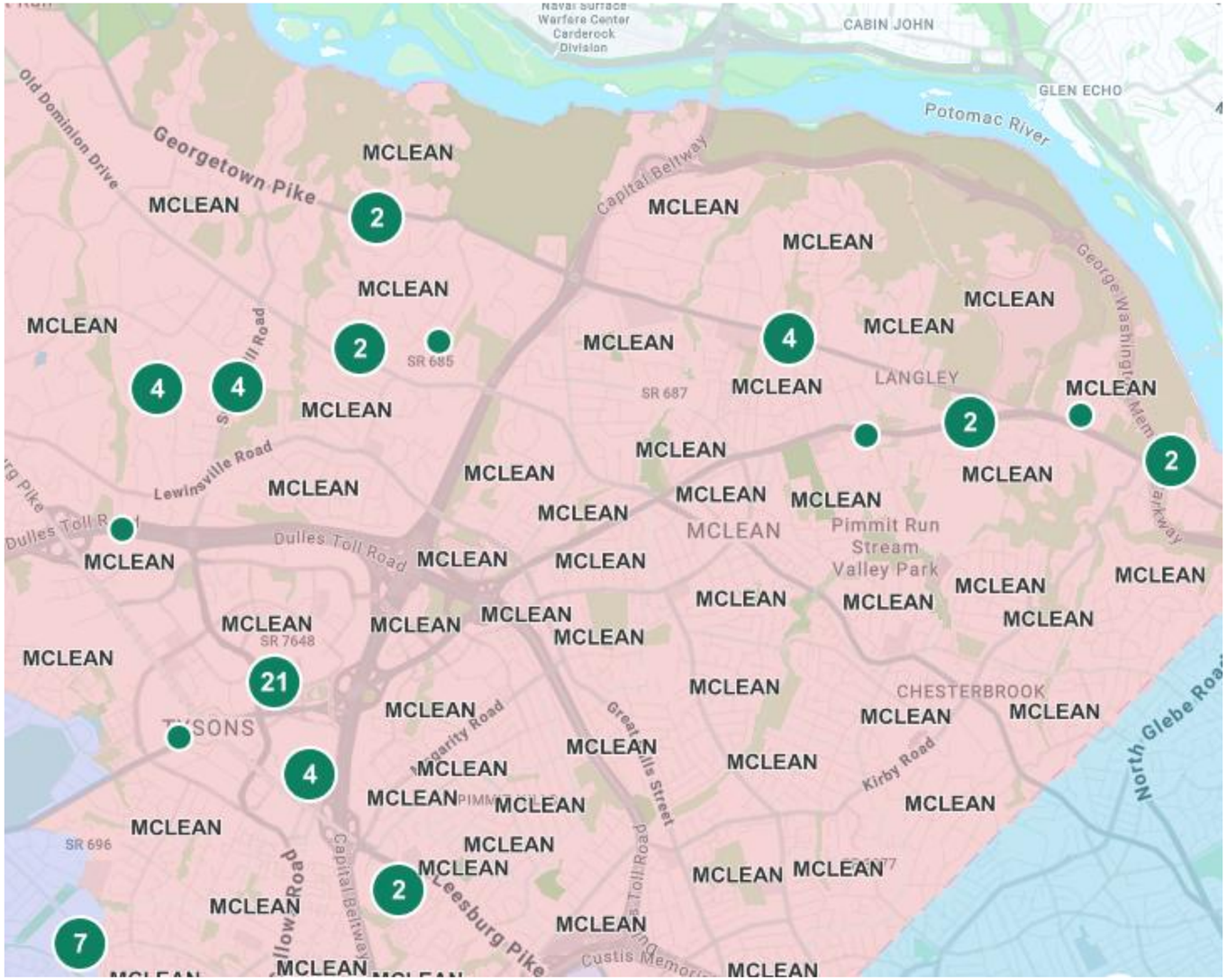


FCPD Community Based ALPR Program

- Meetings with stakeholders began establishment of new FCPD procedures including reduction in data retention period from 1 year to 30 days (now 21).
- Private communities using ALPR technology were already providing evidence to FCPD that solved crimes.
  - Communities in the Dranesville Magisterial District first owned Flock Safety ALPR and were successful in identifying burglary suspect vehicles.
- Several new steps were taken to establish a new ALPR program that included,
  - new mandatory in person training, three step process developed
  - commander oversight and auditing
  - data informed camera placement
  - community education and presentations
  - updated ALPR policy within FCPD
  - increased communication through PAB.

FCPD Community Based ALPR Program

There are 10 FCPD ALPR cameras in the McLean District, specifically in the Tysons area.



There are 48 privately owned ALPR cameras in the McLean Police District, mostly in the Dranesville Magisterial District, owned by HOA's and commercial centers.

FCPD Use of Flock Safety and Axon ALPR

- At the end of 2022 and into 2023 FCPD began use of both Flock Safety and Axon ALPR.
- In February 2023, just four months into the first use of the ALPR cameras, FCPD reported major successes in the recovery of stolen vehicles, locating missing persons, the seizure of fentanyl, and solving dozens of crimes.
- Using crime data, the FCPD expanded its ALPR program into all eight district stations and updated all patrol cruisers to Axon Fleet 3 ALPR systems.



Flock Safety ALPR Camera

84 operated by FCPD
120 privately owned

Axon Fleet 3 ALPR Camera

714 operated by FCPD



FCPD ALPR Data

- FCPD owns all ALPR data collected by the cameras.
- Data is stored in AWS Gov Cloud systems and approved for use by Fairfax County DIT Architectural Review Board.
- The data cannot be sold to third parties.
- FCPD controls who can access the data.
- All Flock Safety products are procured through Insight Public Sector, utilizing the OMNIA Partners contract.
- Virginia Code Section 2.2-5517 restricted sharing of ALPR data outside the Commonwealth of Virginia effective July 1, 2025.
- Vendors have increased their data security practices, FCPD has conducted proactive evaluations of its own internal procedures.
- Flock Safety has never had a contract with ICE.
- Private ALPR owners cannot access FCPD data.

Data Security

- AWS cloud storage systems have been in use by Fairfax County for many years
- Public Safety uses include Body-Worn Camera storage, Digital Evidence Storage, Emergency Call-Taking, and Records Management
- Other County entities use it as well, primarily for vendor-hosted solutions
- All technology solutions go through a rigorous vetting program managed by the Department of Information Technology
- Includes representatives from across DIT that perform an in-depth analysis of the solution and its architecture to ensure data is accessed and stored in a secure environment and is protected from loss and unauthorized access
- Includes requirement that vendor meets an industry compliance standard (SOC 2)

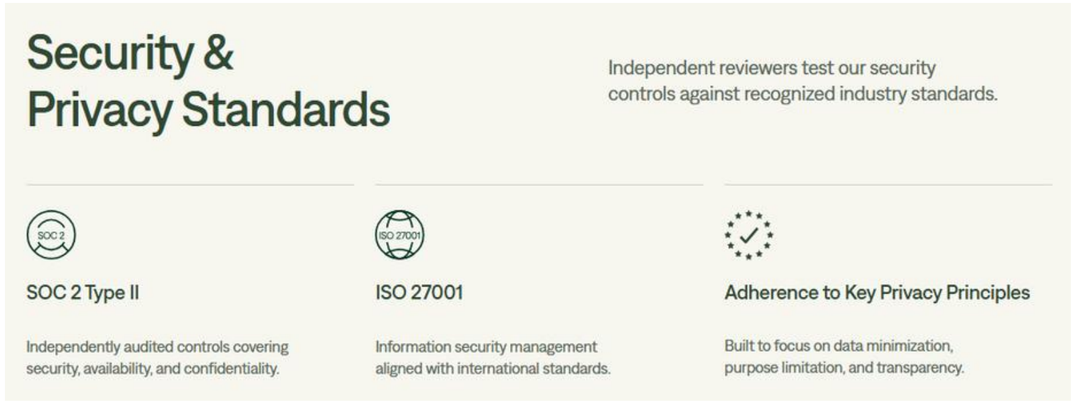
Data Security

Flock is committed to the strongest security program in the industry. This year we retained Bishop Fox, a leading independent security firm, to conduct a thorough review of our products and capabilities. We will publish its summary of findings and our remediations in September.

We're also launching a Coordinated Vulnerability Disclosure program (CVD). Flock's CVD gives security researchers a safe, credited path to report and disclose their work while receiving recognition. Researchers can disclose issues at vulnerability.disclosure@flocksafety.com.

At the beginning of this month, we also made multi-factor authentication (MFA) mandatory for anyone logging into Flock, increasing our security standards for all customers.

Security is an ongoing responsibility. We will continue testing, improving, and updating our controls.



Continued Oversight and Changes

- The FCPD continually evaluates its program to ensure that we are leading with national best practices, and that community safety and public trust remain hallmarks of our operational technology programs.
- FCPD was one of the first agencies nationwide to use an automated AI auditing tool which surfaces certain ALPR searches for review.
  - FCPD provided developmental input for this tools design.
- FCPD reduced the number of users who can conduct ALPR searches from 821 to 296.
- No personnel above the rank of Major have Flock Safety ALPR access, and the RTCC Major is prohibited from conducting searches due to their oversight role.
- RTCC Transparency webpage contains information about the ALPR program including frequently asked questions and is updated monthly.

ALPR Impact on Tysons Corner Center

- *“ We use ALPR in almost every single major case at the shopping center.” - Tysons Urban Team*
- Use of the cameras and network sharing showed reductions in crime at the location.

CALLS FOR SERVICE	2024 – 2026 YTD Decrease : 16.6%
SHOPLIFTING	2024 – 2026 YTD Decrease: 46.4%
ROBBERY	2024 – 2026 YTD Decrease: 70%
MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT	2024 – 2026 YTD Total Decrease from 2024 : 50%

ALPR Impact on Tysons Corner Center



Armed robbery suspects getaway vehicle identified using ALPR. Another ALPR alerted to their vehicle fleeing the area. Officers located the vehicle, arrested the offenders, and recovered the gun used in the robbery.



Tens of thousands of dollars of stolen clothing recovered after investigation was solved using ALPR.



Missing persons located, one of whom was preparing to harm themselves and was stopped by officers with only minutes to spare.

Lessons Learned from the DC Sniper Case

ALPR infrastructure must be in place before tragedy strikes—not after

"…Yet investigators had received an important clue much earlier in the investigation. On the second day of the shootings, there was a report of a dark four-door Chevy Caprice parked along the 7800 block of Georgia Avenue in Washington, D.C., near the scene of a shooting. With today's automated license plate reader (ALPR) technology, investigators could have identified the one vehicle that appeared at the scene of more than one shooting location and tracked its movements across jurisdictional boundaries. In other words, technology that could quickly link a single vehicle to multiple crime scenes could have given investigators a decisive lead in hours—not weeks—potentially saving many lives.

Case in point: In the December 2025 shooting at Brown University that killed two students, also reviewed by PERF, neither the public nor the police were able to identify the shooter or his car from video footage. The investigation accelerated dramatically, however, after police received two tips describing a small, gray car with Florida license plates. By plugging that limited information into the ALPR database, investigators narrowed a universe of thousands of vehicles in the area to just two within minutes. They ruled out one vehicle and determined the other belonged to the shooter…

Simply put, what took 22 days and led investigators down the wrong path in the 2002 Beltway Sniper case took minutes to pinpoint accurately in 2025. In active investigations where the lives of innocent people lie in the balance, getting accurate real-time information can literally mean the difference between life and death."

-Police Executive Research Forum (PERF)

ALPR Overall Statistics Since November 1, 2022

1,647 Cases as of October 12, 2026

573 Stolen Vehicles Recovered

67 Guns Recovered

60 Missing People Located

2,672 Total Arrest Charges

161 Cases with Narcotics

938 Arrested Persons

Over $9 million in stolen vehicle recovery value

Over $790,000 in stolen property recovered (other than vehicles)

ALPR Captures Exposure Suspect On School Property

- Detectives had been investigating reports of a man who drove onto school property while children were outside for recess or physical education class and exposing himself to the children.
- A suspect was developed; mobile ALPR was placed outside the entrance to two area schools where reports had been received.
- An ALPR alerted to the suspect vehicle entering school property, officers and the SRO responded but could not locate the vehicle.
- A second ALPR alert for the vehicle was received at the other nearby school; the SRO and officers responded and located the vehicle.
- The suspect was caught in the act on school grounds and within view of children, he was arrested.

*“While walking up to vehicle I observed ** . **** with his pants down to his knees and his …”*
-Arresting Officer





ALPR Used to Identify and Locate Child Abduction Suspect

- A man drove to a bus stop and attempted to coax two children into his car.
- The older of the two children recognized the danger and told the younger child to run. Both children ran to adults down the road.
- One of the adults took a picture of the vehicle, but a tag could not be seen.
- RTCC used ALPR on the street to identify the vehicle license plate based on the picture taken by the adult.
- ALPR was then used to determine the vehicle may be a few miles away near another populated community with mulitple bus stops.
- Officers immediately responded to the area, located the vehicle and offender, and detectives arrested the suspect.





Homicide Suspect Located While Trying to Flee Fatal Shooting

- A man shot and killed a former partner outside her workplace before fleeing in a vehicle.
- The vehicle license plate number was given to police by a witness.
- ALPR was used to get the direction that the suspect could be headed.
- Lookouts were given to nearby jurisdictions who set up along the likely path of travel.
- FCPD voiced an ALPR alert for the vehicle about to enter a nearby jurisdiction.
- Just minutes after the alert, the suspect vehicle was located and a stop was conducted.
- The suspect was arrested and a firearm was recovered.

Man in Custody Following Domestic-Related Fatal Shooting

By FCPD Public Affairs Bureau · March 16, 2024

Officers arrived on scene and discovered [redacted] suffering from multiple gunshot wounds. She was transported to the hospital where she was pronounced deceased. Officers quickly identified the vehicle Jennings fled in and provided a lookout to surrounding jurisdictions. The vehicle alerted on a License Plate Reader heading towards Maryland. Officers with the Prince George's County Police Department quickly set up to anticipate Jennings's path and safely took him into custody in Maryland. A firearm was recovered inside his vehicle.

Detectives have charged Jennings with Second Degree Murder, Use of a Firearm in the Commission of a Felony, Abduction, and Protective Order Violation. He is being held at the Prince George's County Correctional Center without bond as he awaits extradition back to Fairfax County. There is no mugshot available at this time.

ALPR Alert Quickly Recovered Missing Couple Lost for Over 12 Hours

- An elderly couple from a neighboring jurisdiction left their home for a doctor's appointment in the afternoon.
- The couple became confused and lost, driving around northern Virginia for over 12 hours.
- In the morning, a lookout was broadcast by the neighboring jurisdiction, the vehicle was entered into FCPD ALPR.
- Soon after, an ALPR alert as received for the vehicle in the Mount Vernon Police District.
- Two minutes later, a patrol officer spotted the vehicle, stopped the couple at a nearby shopping center, and confirmed they were the missing persons.
- FCPD contacted the family who drove to the location to pick them up.

License Plate Reader Technology Helps Locate 50 Missing Persons Since November 2022

By FCPD Public Affairs Bureau · December 22, 2025

FCPD Uses License Plate Readers to Find Four Missing People

By FCPD Public Affairs Bureau · April 11, 2023

Real Time Crime Center Helps Locate Missing Elderly Couple in North Carolina

By FCPD Public Affairs Bureau · November 5, 2025

Armed Carjacking Suspects Stopped While Looking For Next Victim

- Armed group responsible for multiple armed robberies and carjackings throughout the DMV over several days.
- An alert on ALPR was received for their vehicle entering a neighborhood in Fairfax County. They were located and arrested; five guns were recovered. They were in the area to find a new vehicle to steal.
- It was learned the group may have been seeking a new vehicle to steal in order to continue their crime spree.
- Additional weapons were located after search warrants were obtained for their residences.
- Multiple cases were closed.

Mount Vernon Police District – Two Alexandria men were arrested and multiple firearms recovered after a pursuit that led into Maryland and struck multiple FCPD cruisers.

At 5:21 p.m. yesterday, a license plate reader alerted officers to a stolen BMW 535 involved in a carjacking involving multiple armed suspects. FCPD Officers found the BMW and attempted a traffic stop near the 7500 block of Richmond Highway. The driver drove away and intentionally struck multiple cruisers. Officers pursued the suspects into Prince George's County where they were able to bring the vehicle to a stop.



Program Options Moving Forward

- **Option 1** - Maintain the current ALPR program. Continue to evaluate other vendors and data sharing practices.
- *No additional costs.*

- **Option 2** – Maintain the current ALPR program while testing and evaluation of other ALPR vendors who can maintain compliance with *2.2-5517* and FCPD General Order 424.
- *Costs associated with testing and evaluation*

- **Option 3** - Become a closed network ALPR system with no data sharing outside Fairfax County while maintaining access to privately owned ALPR cameras. Evaluate the closed network option in one year.
- *Closed network will lessen our ability to solve crimes between jurisdictional boundaries.*