

Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs)

An Overview of the Technology and Strategy Behind its Use in the City of Altoona with Evidence Based Results

Prepared by: Lieutenant Steve Harris

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Summary:

This document will discuss how automated license plate readers (ALPR) are used by the Altoona Police Department, and law enforcement agencies in general. Automated Traffic Enforcement (ATE) units use License Plate Reader technology but are used in a fundamentally different way than stand-alone ALPRs regularly used for gathering intelligence (intel). All License Plate Reader (LPR) technology should not be lumped into the same group. The term ALPR in this document refers to the stand-alone automated license plate reader devices used for gathering intelligence, which can be used in many ways to identify vehicles and suspects associated with criminal activity, locate missing and/or endangered persons, and alert law enforcement to vehicles that were found to be associated with safety threats or criminal activity on a prior occasion.

Automated License Plate Reader: A device placed in a fixed location or mounted on a vehicle that captures images of vehicles in public areas and documents the time and location of the photo.

ALPR is a proven technology that is used across the United States and around the world. It has been used since the 1970s and the data collected with ALPR technology are anonymous. It does not identify any individual and has NO personal identifiable information (PII). Law enforcement can use that information to remove the anonymity from the ALPR record, but only if the user has access to other databases regularly used by law enforcement. Access to those records are already controlled by the Drivers Privacy Protection Act (DPPA). Law enforcement is well versed in what is acceptable and not acceptable when accessing records with PII. Law enforcement personnel are required to have a legitimate law enforcement-related reason to access PII sensitive databases.

ALPR use has been tested over and over through the State and Federal court systems, which have determined that ALPR usage does not violate citizens' Constitutional rights. It has been determined that:

- There is no expectation of privacy on a license plate (United States v. Diaz Castaneda, United States v. Wilcox, State v. Chambers).

- There is no expectation of privacy on license plates on a public street, and LPR is not electronic trespassing or tracking (United States v. Yang).
- LPR technology is not active surveillance or a law enforcement information system, and it is also recognized that LPR technology contains no PII (Neal v. Fairfax County).
- Scientific enhancement of manual process raises no issues, meaning if a person can stand in a public area and photograph vehicles as they drive by, then automation of that process is no different (United States v. Knotts).
- ALPR data is considered reliable evidence (People v. Mark Serrano)
- LPR Technology is verifiable and acceptable (United States v. White).

What ALPRs Are: Fixed ALPR devices are set up to capture images of the rear and side of vehicles that are driving in a public roadway. Mobile ALPR devices are typically mounted to vehicles that photograph vehicles driving or parked in a location open to the public. Those images with associated time/date stamps and plate information are stored in a database that can be queried to identify specific vehicles associated with criminal activity or persons who are a safety risk to the public or themselves. This system can only be used for official police business by policy and results are not public information. ALPRs can also be used to give nearly real-time alerts (approximately 30 seconds typically) to law enforcement if a vehicle of interest is detected.

What ALPRs Are Not: ALPRs ARE NOT Traffic Enforcement Devices, such as speed cameras and red-light cameras. Automated traffic citations ARE NOT associated with ALPR usage. ALPRs are set up to purposefully NOT capture driver images, but rather vehicle information. They DO NOT zoom in to see what is inside a vehicle. They DO NOT capture any audio or private conversations. ALPR vendors do not list any information related to a registered owner of the vehicle unless there is a warrant, but details of the warrant and person associated with the vehicle are not available through ALPR vendors. Information associated with the warrant and vehicle must be looked up independently by an officer or civilian with NCIC (the National Crime Information Center) credentials. ALPR data is not shared with anyone that is not a customer or outside of law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies. ALPRs ARE NOT used for traffic enforcement of any kind.

How ALPR data is collected: As vehicles or objects with visible letters and numbers pass in front of an ALPR, the device is triggered to take a photograph. That photograph along with an associated time, date, and location goes into a database retained by the proprietary vender that owns the ALPR device or is compatible with an ALPR sold to the agency. ALPR data is generated by law enforcement ALPR partners and also generated by commercial entities such as repossession and financial institutions' asset tracking tow trucks and scout cars. ALPR units can be mobile on vehicles, fixed units, rapid deployments such as trailers, and mobile devices.

How ALPR data is Accessed: ALPR databases can be accessed by law enforcement only for official police business per Altoona Police Policy 424. Policy also requires that any law enforcement personnel using ALPR systems must complete department approved training

related to ALPR technology. Prior to any access to the database, a justified specific reason including case number, if available, must be logged by the officer. All use of ALPR systems can be audited. Any concerns of abuse of the system will be investigated and if it is determined that someone used the system inappropriately or illegally, the situation will be handled with appropriate applicable discipline and/or criminal charges. This is consistent with any other abuse of law enforcement resources by personnel.

Enforcement action resulting from ALPR alerts: Prior to any enforcement action on an ALPR alert, the officer shall verify an ALPR response by visually verifying the following:

- All letters and numbers in the license plate detection are correct and consistent with the associated vehicle.
- The State in the license plate detection is correct and consistent with the associated vehicle.
- Independently run the correct license plate information through NCIC (the National Crime Information Center) to view current information and confirm the status of any hits associated with the registration.

How ALPR data is retained: The retention schedule is set, retained and stored by the ALPR vendor. Flock data is retrievable for 30 days following the collection of a photograph. Vigilant (Motorola) data can be retrieved based on the entity who captured the photograph. Because the Altoona Police Department does not own Vigilant ALPRs, we do not set a retention schedule for photos to be purged. The Altoona police Department has no control over the retention schedule of ALPR data that we receive. Once an ALPR record is determined to be of importance for intel or evidence in a crime, then the record is downloaded, secured, and retained in a consistent manner as with any other intel or digital evidence.

Purpose of ALPR Technology Proof of Concept related to the City of Altoona

It was hypothesized that ALPRs would help to combat a re-occurring issue that is universal amongst most, if not all, suburban police departments in the Des Moines Metro area. An overwhelming majority of all arrests by the Altoona Police Department are of people that do not live in Altoona. For instance, 82% of the total arrests for the last five years were of people that are not Altoona residents. These are only the suspects that we could identify. There is no doubt that number would be higher if we were able to identify non-local suspects more effectively at a higher rate.

Identifying suspects associated with criminal activity is difficult when officers are not familiar with the overwhelming majority of our suspects, who live elsewhere. This is not due to profiling or favoring suspects from Altoona. This is because most reported offenses are being perpetrated by persons from outside of Altoona. Altoona specifically is right off of Interstate 80

and highway 65, in close proximity to Interstate 35, and adjacent to the East Side of Des Moines. 42% of all Altoona arrests in the past five years were Des Moines residents, and 14% were specifically from area code 50317, or the east side of Des Moines.

Altoona is a regional destination with attractions such as Adventureland Resort, Prairie Meadows Casino, The Outlets of Des Moines, Flying J truck stop, and many hotels and motels that draw a significant amount of people from surrounding areas. The daily population of Altoona is much higher than the reported census population. This dynamic creates a significant problem for law enforcement in identifying suspects associated with criminal activity.

The hypothesis was that the use of ALPRs would increase our availability of resources to connect specific vehicles with criminal activity. If specific vehicles could be identified accurately, then the ability to find an associated suspect from the vehicle information drastically increases our solvability of crimes perpetrated in the City of Altoona. Law enforcement officers frequently investigate crimes where a basic suspect vehicle image is visible without plate information. Law enforcement officers also regularly investigate crimes where there are images of the suspect, but no other way to identify who that person is.

ALPR information can be queried and reviewed much like surveillance video to identify specific vehicles used by suspects to develop investigative leads. It was hypothesized that increasing our solvability rate would help to better serve the citizens of Altoona who become victims of crime. Initially detectives were trained on the system to use it in an investigatory manner to solve crimes that have already been perpetrated, but later expanded to involve patrol officers as well. This drastically expanded the capabilities for actionable responses by patrol to intercept vehicles of concern through NCIC and Custom Hot List Hit alerts as vehicles entered the City of Altoona. This also significantly increased situational awareness for officers in the field.

Two Different ALPR Platforms

Initially, Requests For Quotes (RFQs) were sent out regarding the predominant ALPR companies, Flock and Vigilant (owned by Motorola). After many meetings, demonstrations, and quotes, it was determined that Flock would be the better choice for ALPR installation within the City of Altoona. Flock was being utilized by other metro law enforcement agencies. Flock also had a minimal set up fee, installed the equipment, submitted permits themselves, and provided a 45-day trial with the option of taking down any cameras that we did not want to keep at no cost. Flock was easier to test with the least upfront costs to setup and trial. Flock leases their equipment to agencies at a predictable flat rate per camera each year, which can be budgeted for by an agency. Vigilant required much more capital up front because the department would have to purchase cameras and would pay for installation prior to activation and use.

Vigilant did, however, grant us access to their LEARN software that allowed us to query license plate data that they retained. Both systems had significant differences, and each offered unique solutions regarding actionable reactive and proactive plans to identify and locate criminal element within the City of Altoona and beyond. This would be accomplished using data captured by both our and other ALPRs throughout the Metro, Iowa, and the United States. Each system worked independently, and could not be integrated together, but users can access each system independently in attempt to generate investigative leads.

Flock ALPRs and software would be used primarily for local and metro-wide vehicle identification related to illegal activity, where Motorola's LEARN software would be used more as a multi-regional intelligence gathering platform to identify criminality, and pro-actively seek out organized narcotics/weapons trafficking that is connected to the City of Altoona and Interstate/highways that are adjacent to Altoona. LEARN has an extensive Commercial database, which is generated from tow companies and other private companies' scans. This information is generated when towing companies scan parking lots, public streets, and privately owned streets for vehicles that have been listed as repossessed. Every single vehicle with a license plate is entered into the database. Accessing the information generated by law enforcement scans and commercial data can be used to generate investigative leads associated with criminal suspect pattern of life.

Proof of Concept

It was decided that the Altoona Police Department would have Flock install cameras in strategic locations around the City of Altoona. There were 9 locations, (18 ALPRs total) submitted for the pilot 45-day pilot project that is estimated to start in early to mid-January 2022. The concept was to capture as much vehicle information entering and exiting Altoona as possible with an emphasis on the western, northern, and southern areas of town due to the proximity to the metro, I-80 and Highway 163. This would basically create an outer ring around the city to capture most of the vehicles coming and going on the city's highest volume arterial roadways. It was hypothesized that criminal suspects would most likely drive through the selected arterial roadways that were specifically targeted to capture the highest volume of vehicles or capture the most criminal element that would flow in and out of the city.

Following a free 45-day pilot project that was offered by Flock, we would evaluate what cameras we wanted to eliminate or move to maximize our effectiveness moving forward. We would scale down to approximately 10 cameras, and then pay for a 16-month period out of our asset forfeitures account that would maintain service through July 2023. While drafting the budget for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, we would evaluate the usefulness and success of the cameras. We would then use the results (if effective) as proof of concept to move forward in requesting an annual budget to maintain the system in a long-term capacity.

Evolving Plans

In May of 2022 we began to very cautiously and conservatively use the system to test its functionality. Initially, the system was used primarily as an investigative tool to develop leads on crime that had already been reported. Some agencies using this system restrict the usage to an investigatory capacity only. This is due to the significant increase in high-risk traffic stops that can be generated by real-time alerts from the NCIC database that is integrated into the Flock system. Initially, as a department, we decided not to pursue NCIC Hits/alerts regarding stolen vehicles and wanted persons. This decision was made strategically to mitigate liability associated with officers responding to an increased number of high-risk traffic stops due to the efficiency in detecting high-risk targets in The City of Altoona.

Policy was put into place and a training regimen was developed for all users. The decision was then made that the Altoona Police Department was going to use Flock to its fullest potential and allow patrol to access the system and receive real-time Flock alerts. All staff were trained on Flock prior to being able to access the system. Best practices on how to respond to Flock alerts were developed and trained prior to use. This helped to mitigate the chaos that ensues following frequent NCIC and Custom Hot List alerts that occur.

Multiple issues significantly delayed the installation of all of the cameras and initiation of the 45-day trial period. MidAmerican has allowed us to install Flock cameras on their light poles, but that decision took several months to resolve. In mid-July, it was discovered that there was an internal issue with the permitting department at Flock, and permits had not been submitted to the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) and Polk County for installation of six remaining cameras. The issue was identified and resolved by Flock.

With significant success in the distinct functionality of both the inbound and outbound traffic, it was decided to keep all cameras installed for future use. Inbound ALPRs have been used primarily as alerts for NCIC or Custom Hot List entries, and outbound ALPRs have been used primarily to identify vehicles associated with criminal activity as they left town. Therefore, all 18 cameras continued to be used.

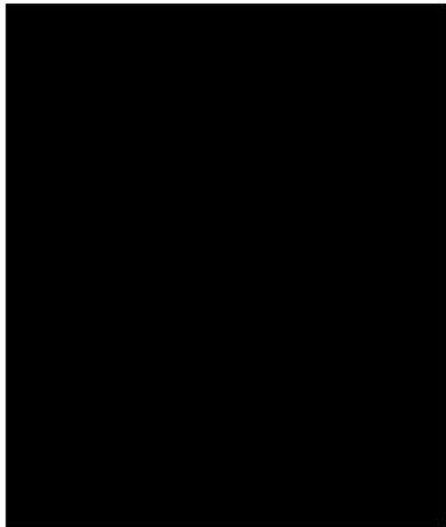
In the future, the Altoona Police Department anticipates receiving newly released quick-deploy cameras developed and issued by Motorola free of charge to test in the field. There are also plans to test new ALPRs by Flock for use on the Interstate free of charge. More traditional video cameras are also being installed in strategic intersections to supplement the system. This helps to be able to track where vehicles move through town near the time a crime was committed, providing more potential leads for identification of suspects.

Currently there are 18 devices in the City of Altoona with an expected addition of approximately 34 devices for a total of 52 ALPRs.

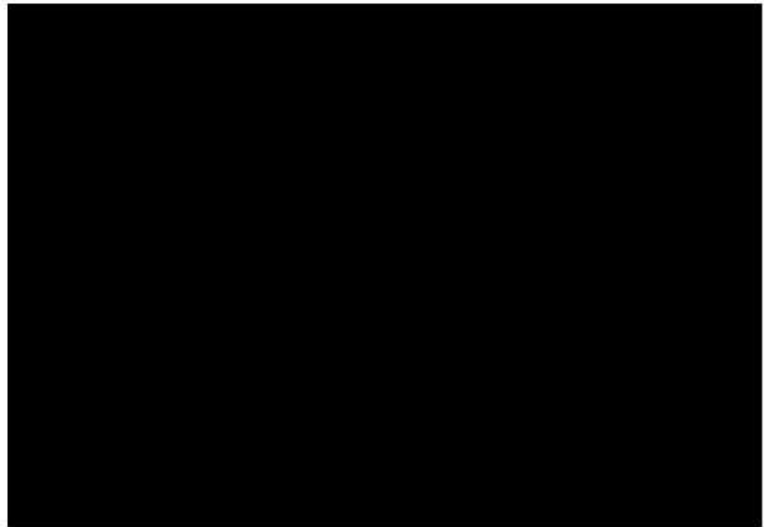
Initial Implementation and Usage

In April of 2022 three cameras were installed, but access to the system and training did not occur until May of 2022. The first time we accessed Flock, we solved a theft from the Altoona Public Library. It took approximately five minutes to identify a specific vehicle that was consistent with a grainy image of the suspect leaving the library in his vehicle. The registered owner was identified as the person who stole the laptop. The laptop was seized from the suspect and returned to the owner.

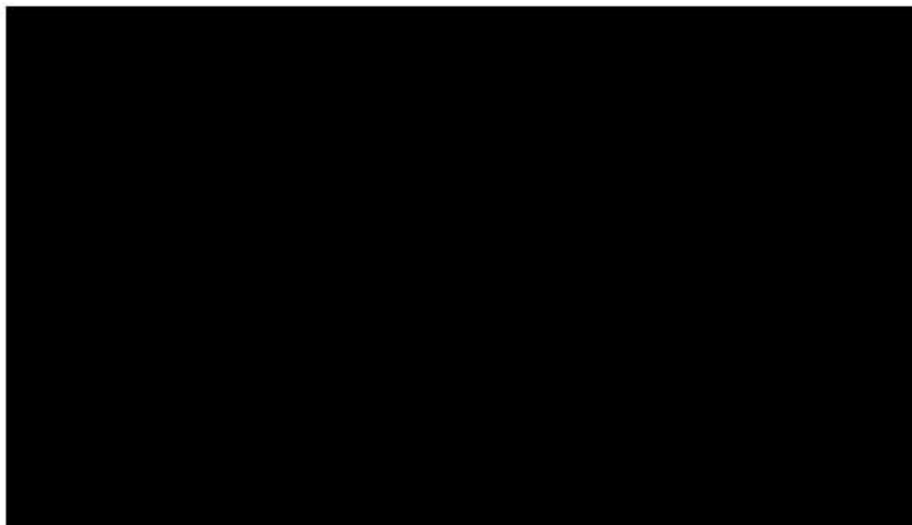
Suspect:



Suspect Vehicle Image from Surveillance:



Specific Vehicle Identified Through Flock:



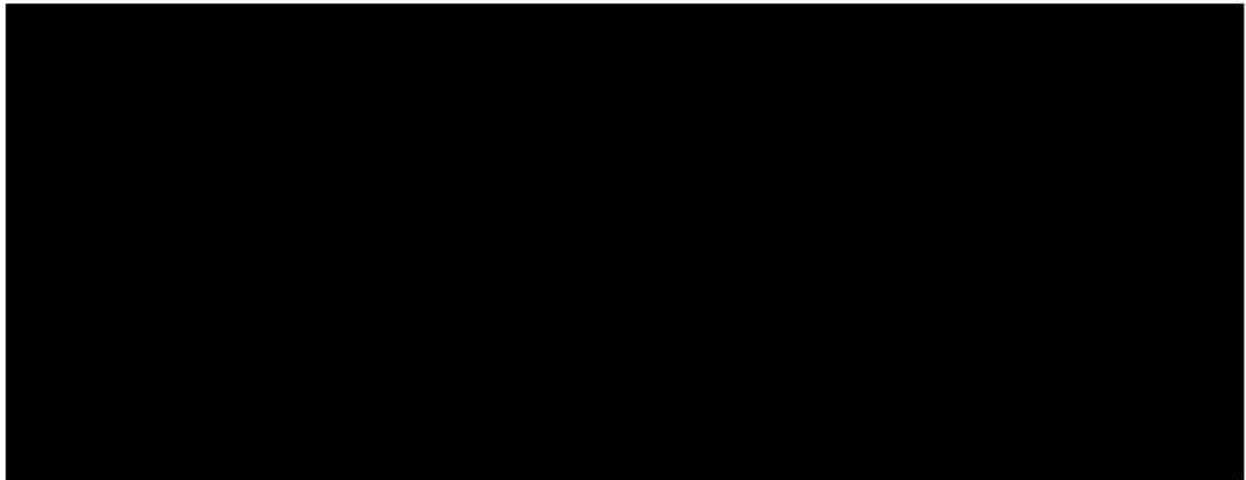
Automated License Plate Reader Use Cases:

Armed Robbery Suspects Located and Identified

Flock was utilized to quickly identify a license plate associated with a getaway vehicle following an armed robbery involving an assault rifle and another firearm. That information led to the immediate location of the vehicle, apprehension of the driver, and identification of the two other armed suspects that committed the forcible felony.

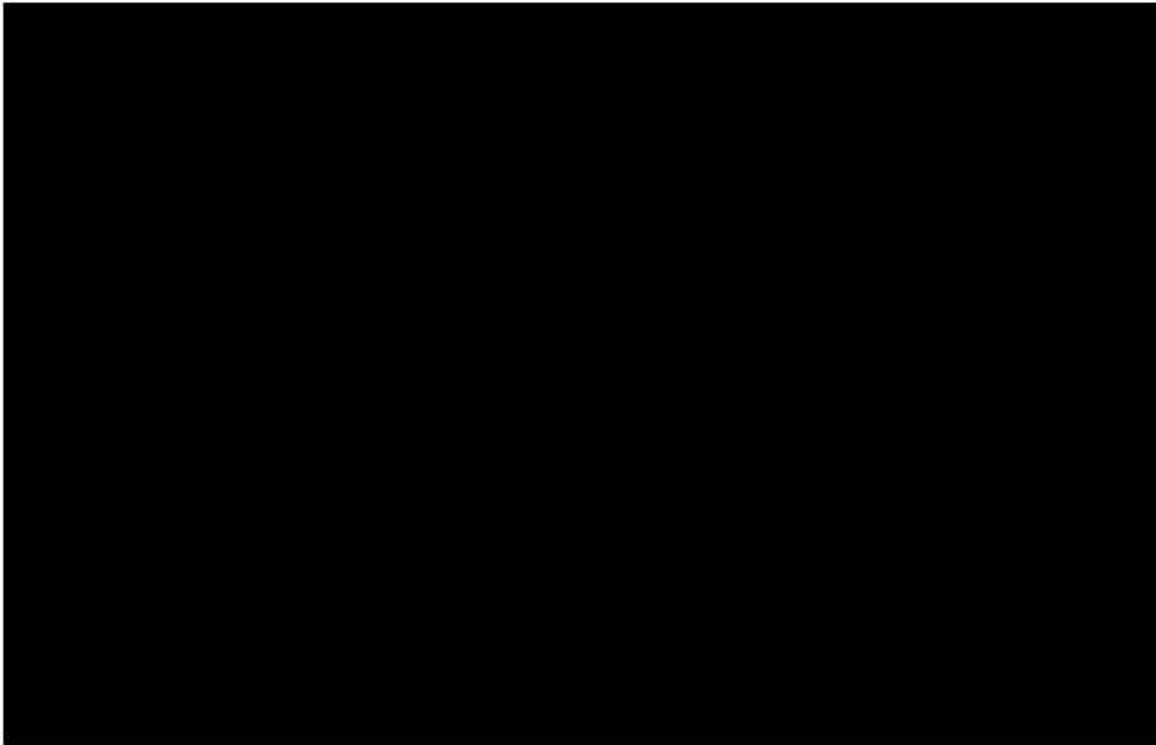
Surveillance Video:

ALPR Photo:



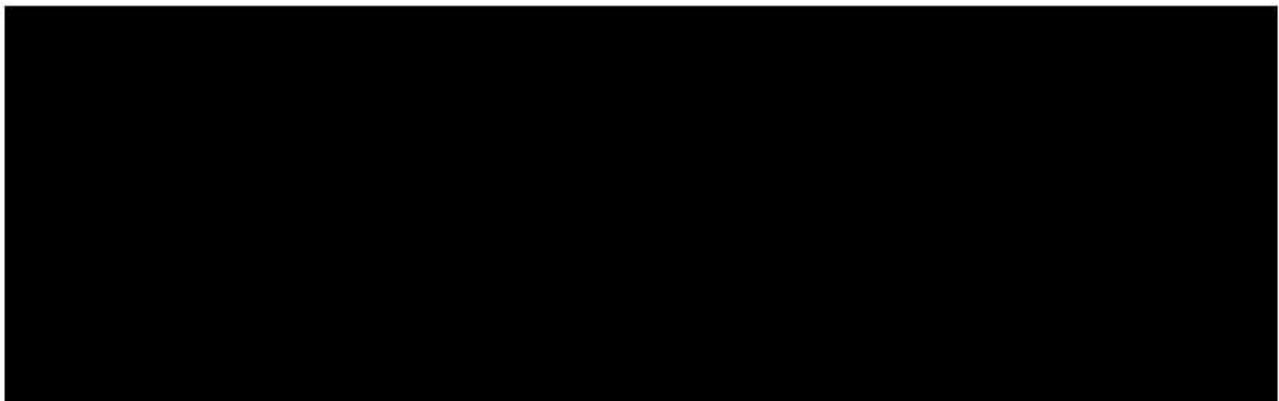
Custom Hit Locates Suspect Attempting to Leave the City/State/Country

A suspect destroyed a local victim's apartment out of spite because the victim broke up with him. It was estimated that approximately \$4,000 worth of damage was caused, and he also stole a handgun and laptop. The suspect was from out of state and had left the apartment in his personal vehicle with Kansas license plate [REDACTED]. A Custom Hit was created to locate the vehicle because if the suspect left the state, then he would likely never be extradited to Polk County to face local charges. The suspect was located and taken into custody following a Custom Flock Hit. The vehicle was also searched, and the suspect stated that he was planning on leaving the country to do work in Puerto Rico that he had lined up.



Vehicles are Sometimes Identified Based on Description Despite having no Plates

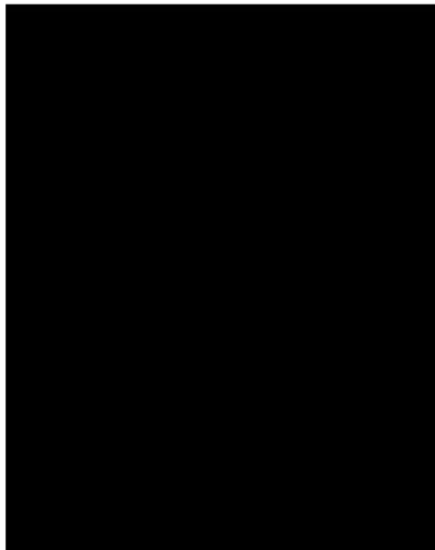
Suspect Vehicle Identified: Vehicle with multiple correlating
specific
features observed locally on a prior date:



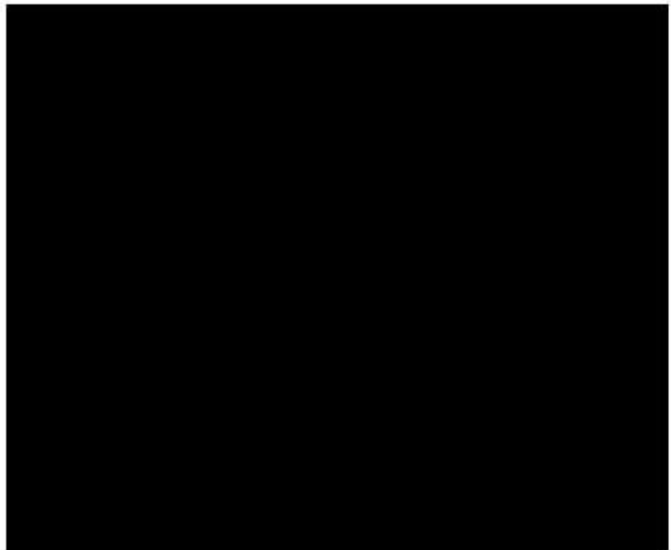
A local construction company was reporting multiple copper thefts where copper worth tens of thousands of dollars and specialty tools were stolen on multiple occasions. The suspect vehicle was observed by security staff and a photo of the vehicle without a plate was obtained prior to the vehicle fleeing the area. ALPR data was used to look for the suspect vehicle on a prior date. The suspect truck was located, having multiple correlating specific features unique to the suspect vehicle. This time the plate was visible on the vehicle. After running the suspect vehicle plate, it was determined that the registered owner had worked on the construction site

at one time but was no longer with the company and lived in Kansas City, Missouri. It was also discovered that the same vehicle and suspect had committed multiple similar thefts and burglaries to the same construction company in the Kansas City area.

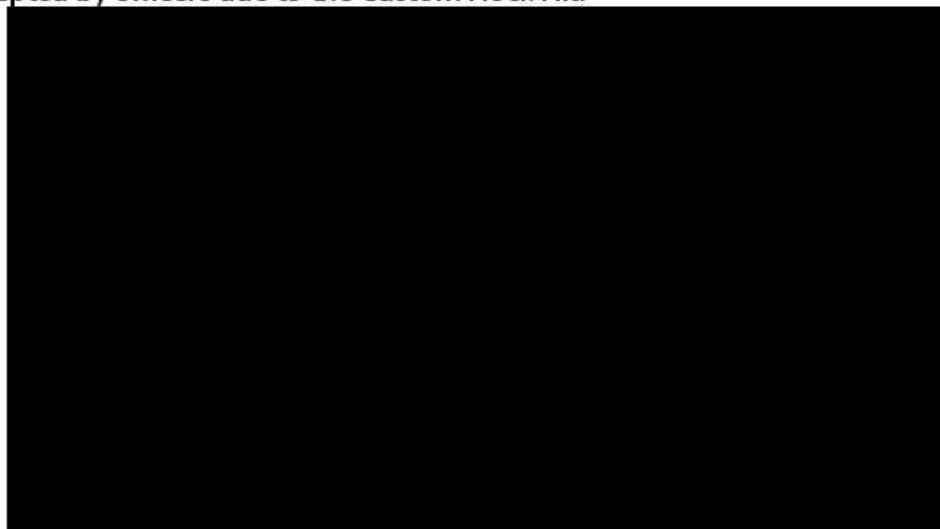
Intelligence Bulletin
Generated for Patrol:



Custom Flock Hit Alerted Patrol as
our Suspect Entered Altoona again:



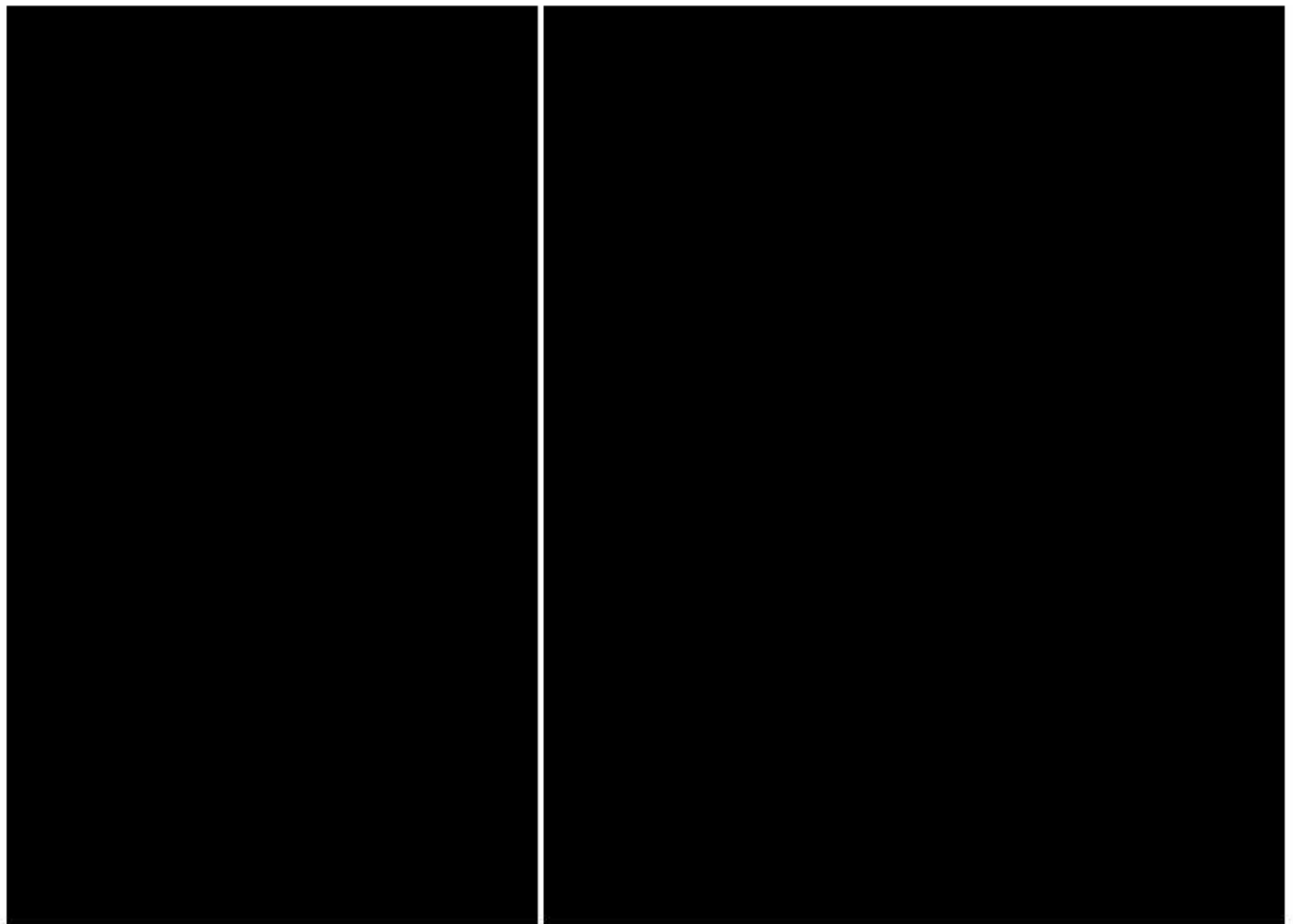
Intel was pushed out to patrol, and the vehicle was placed in Flock for situational awareness. When the vehicle entered town, officers responded immediately and stopped the vehicle. The suspect was removed from the vehicle and officers were able to confirm it was the correct vehicle. Detectives were able to obtain valuable evidence including stolen property belonging to the construction company and the suspect's phone. Not only was the suspect arrested and charged with his crimes in Altoona and later in Kansas City, but his plan to commit another theft was intercepted by officers due to the Custom Flock Hit.



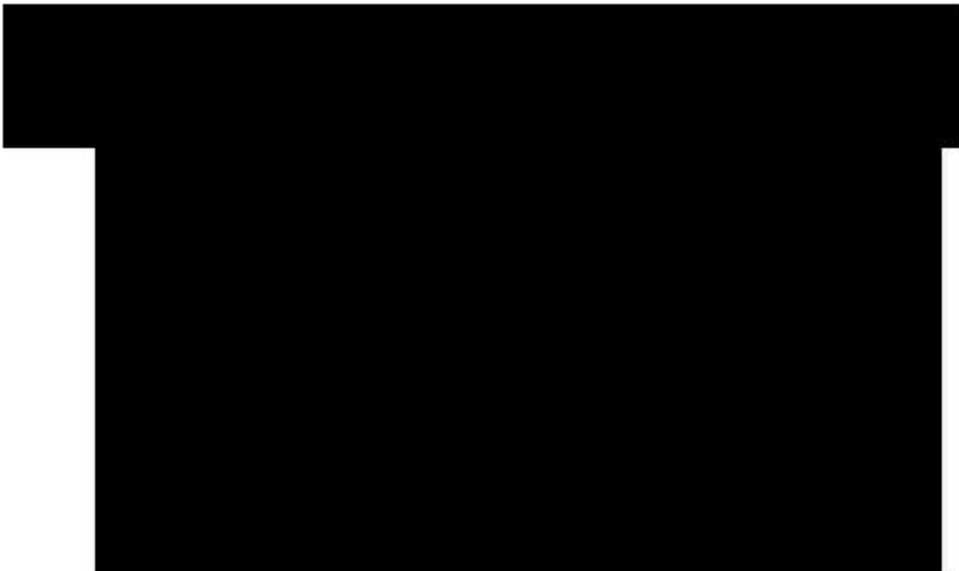
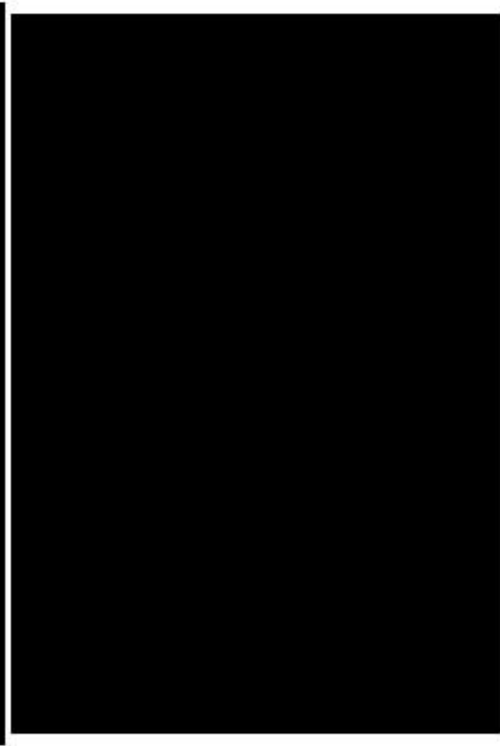
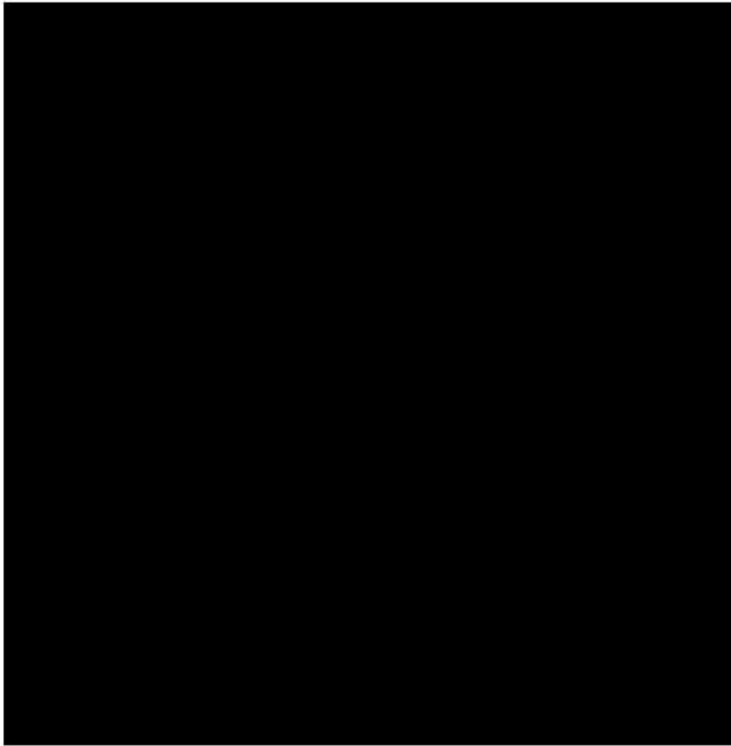
Missing Person Updates

Multiple people listed as suicidal and/or missing have generated NCIC Hits as their vehicles entered town or were detected nearby using Flock or LEARN. We have been able to update agencies in Utah, New York, as well as more local agencies such as Knoxville PD, Des Moines PD, and Johnson County Sheriff Office regarding missing persons' whereabouts.

An example of a missing person call for service:



Amber Alert



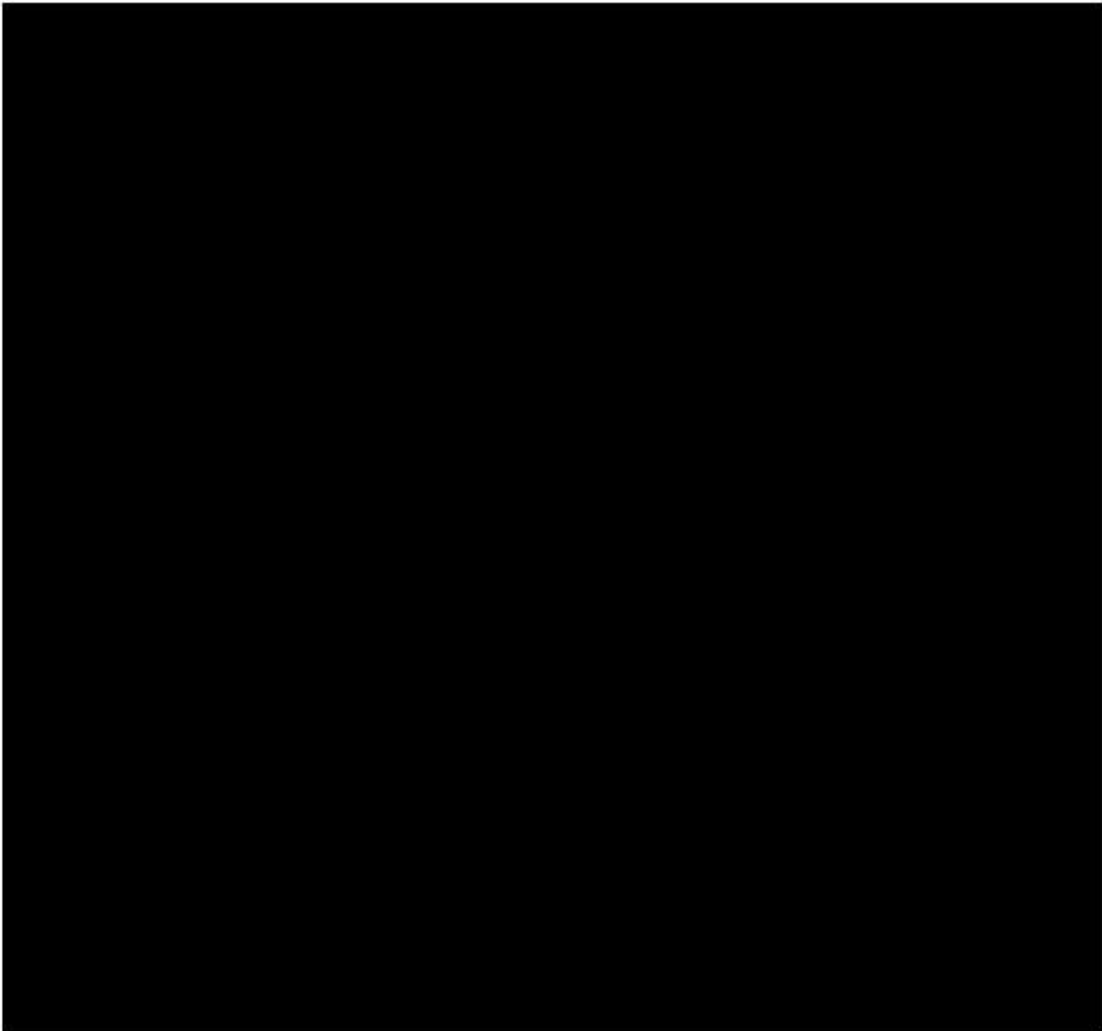
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



Flock Helps to Determine the Complete Out-of-State Plate on Suspect Vehicle Used in DMACC Campus Shooting

Using Flock, it was discovered that the type of plate on the vehicle was likely a turquoise dealer plate from Illinois based on other observed similar plates. That information coupled with a partial plate observed at the scene led to the discovery that a specific Illinois Dealer Plate was stolen from a specific dealership and was likely on the suspect vehicle at the time of the shooting.

"We did determine Tuesday into Wednesday that the plate is a dealer plate. Two plates were stolen in Illinois recently, [edited]. The CC plate was turned in to police and we are awaiting information about how that all went down, but the CB plate appears to still be logged as stolen...

We appreciate the work you have put in on this and look forward to what Flock may be able to provide."



Crime Analysis Administrator,
Des Moines Police Department

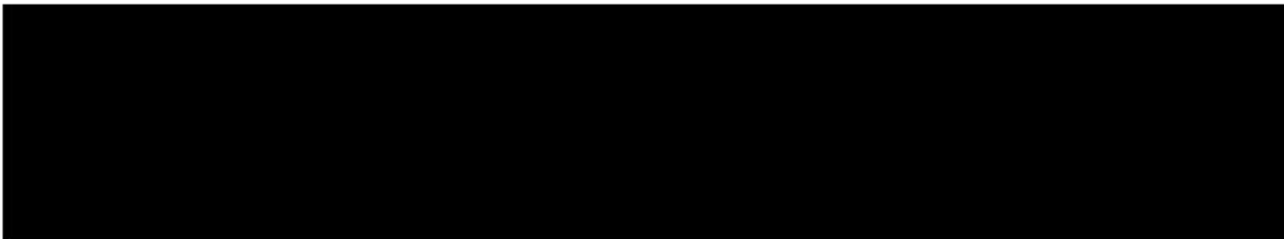
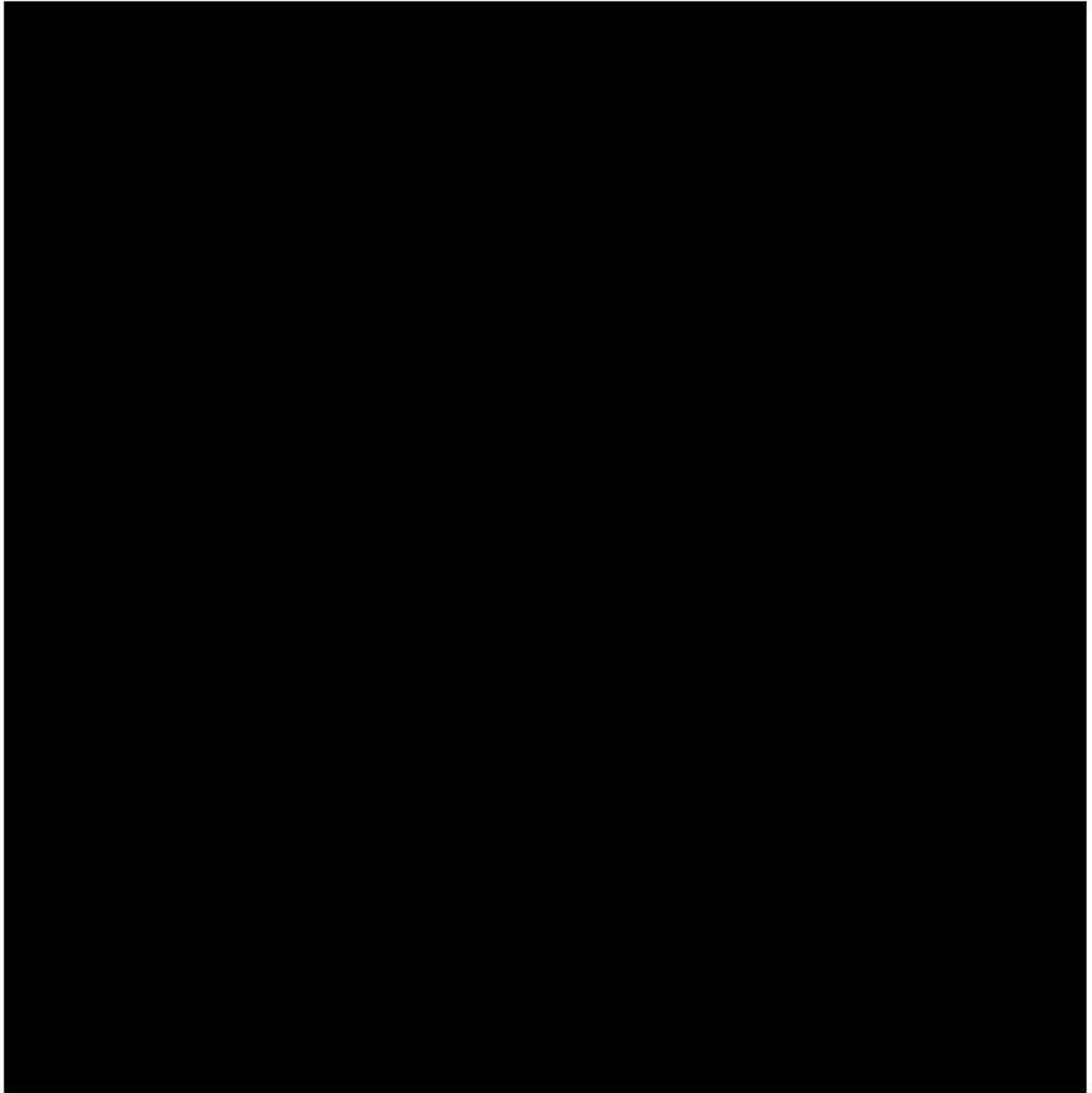
Custom Hot List Entries can be Used to Alert Law Enforcement of Vehicle(s) Entering or Exiting Altoona for Many Different Reasons

Sometimes officers need to know when a vehicle is coming into town or leaving town. Once a plate is known, it takes a few seconds to enter the information into a Custom Hot List, which can be done in a squad in the field or in the office. Being able to create Custom Hot List entries is a quick, efficient, and effective way to be notified if a particular vehicle of interest is in the area. Custom Hot List entries can be for many reasons, sometimes for officers to stop the vehicle, and sometimes just to be aware that they are in the area. These Custom Hot List entries can also be entered with an expiration so that they don't remain in the system any longer than necessary. The following are examples of vehicles that may be entered in a Custom Hot List:

- Recent be on the look out (BOLO) broadcasts from dispatch that are not in NCIC.
- Possible safety threats Including: violation of a no contact order, stalking suspects, suicidal subjects, homicidal subjects, road rage incidents, or persons who just threatened to cause harm to someone.
- Recently stolen vehicles not yet entered into NCIC.
- Active charges on a suspect associated with a specific vehicle.
- Driver of vehicle needs to be identified or contacted.
- Vehicles known by law enforcement to be associated with criminal activity, such as burglaries, thefts, etc.

- Recent reckless driver complaints.

An example of Custom Hot List entry for a safety threat:





NCIC Hit Arrests Related to Sex Crimes

On three separate occasions arrests were made for Sex Abuse warrants or Probation Violation warrants related to Sex Offender Registry (SOR) Violations. All were no-bond warrants, and none of the suspects lived in Altoona. One offender was discovered loitering in the Sam Wise Youth Sports Complex prior to being arrested.

Burglary Lead that Resulted in Wanted Person Arrest and Stolen Property Recovery

A pair of suspects worked together to distract a victim and commit a burglary of the victim's vehicle, stealing purse, money, and electronics. Flock was utilized to find the suspects' vehicle leaving town. It was discovered that the plate on the vehicle did not match the vehicle description, and the plate was stolen from a different vehicle, but not discovered or reported yet.

An intelligence bulletin was issued that day to Altoona PD personnel describing the suspects, vehicle used, plate on the vehicle, and a description of the stolen property. The plate was entered into Flock as a Custom Hit, so that if the vehicle was detected, officers would receive a real-time alert and information regarding the hit.

The next day, the vehicle was located following a Flock alert as it entered town. Officers tried to stop the suspect, but he recklessly eluded officers westbound on 8th St. SW. A short pursuit was initiated, and officers lost sight of the vehicle as it left town. A short time later, several witnesses called 911, saying a male subject ditched the car in Des Moines and broke into a house. DMPD, Polk County Sheriff Deputies, and Altoona officers all converged and searched for the suspect. An Altoona K9 (Zeke) tracked the suspect, and he was taken into custody without incident.

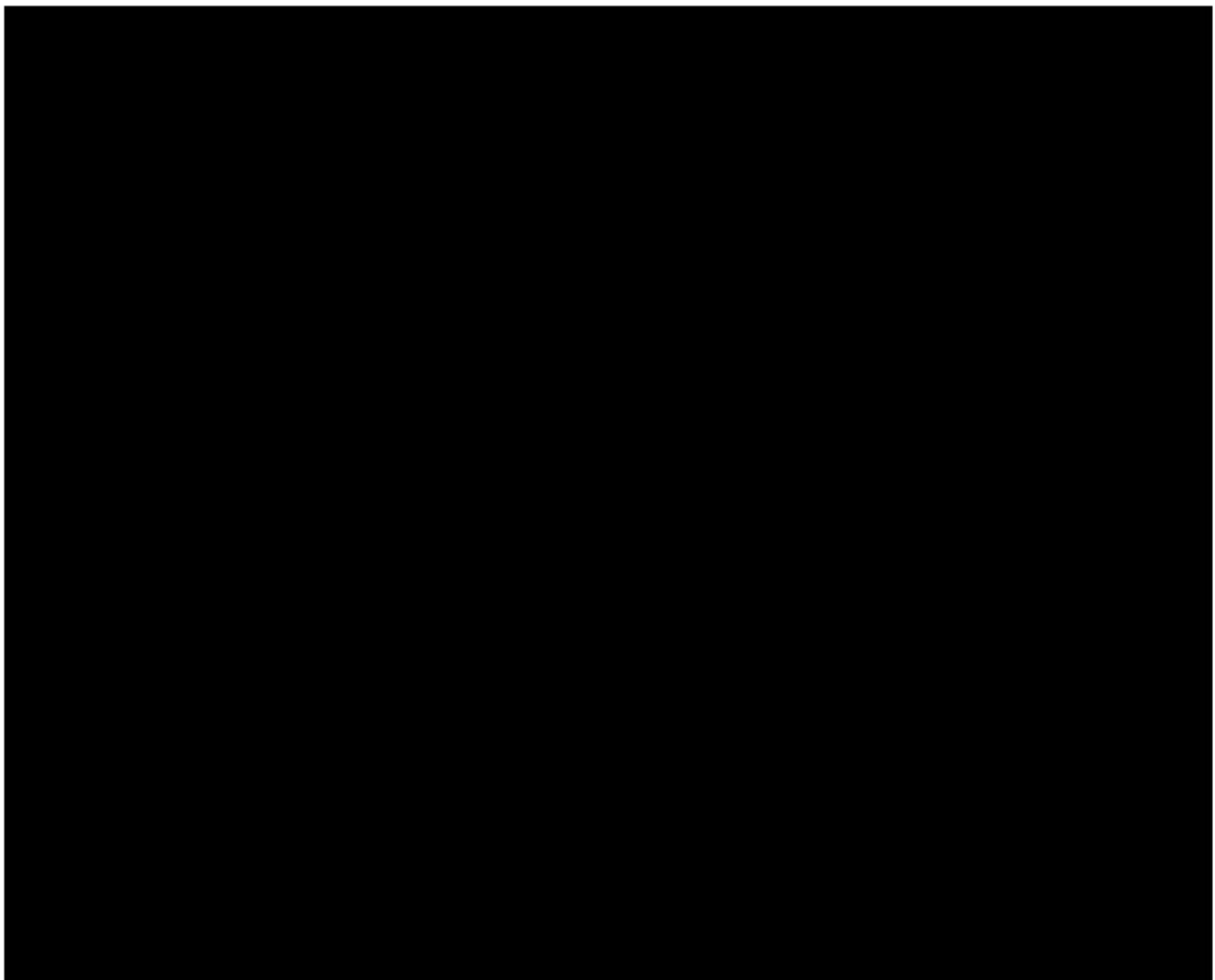
A search of the vehicle was performed, and officers located several stolen items mentioned in the Flock Custom Hit, which were later returned to the owner. The vehicle was also determined to be stolen out of West Des Moines and towed from the scene.

Discovery of Suspect Vehicle attributes:

Suspect Tail Lights:



Suspect vehicle Discovered Leaving Town Immediately Following the Burglary:



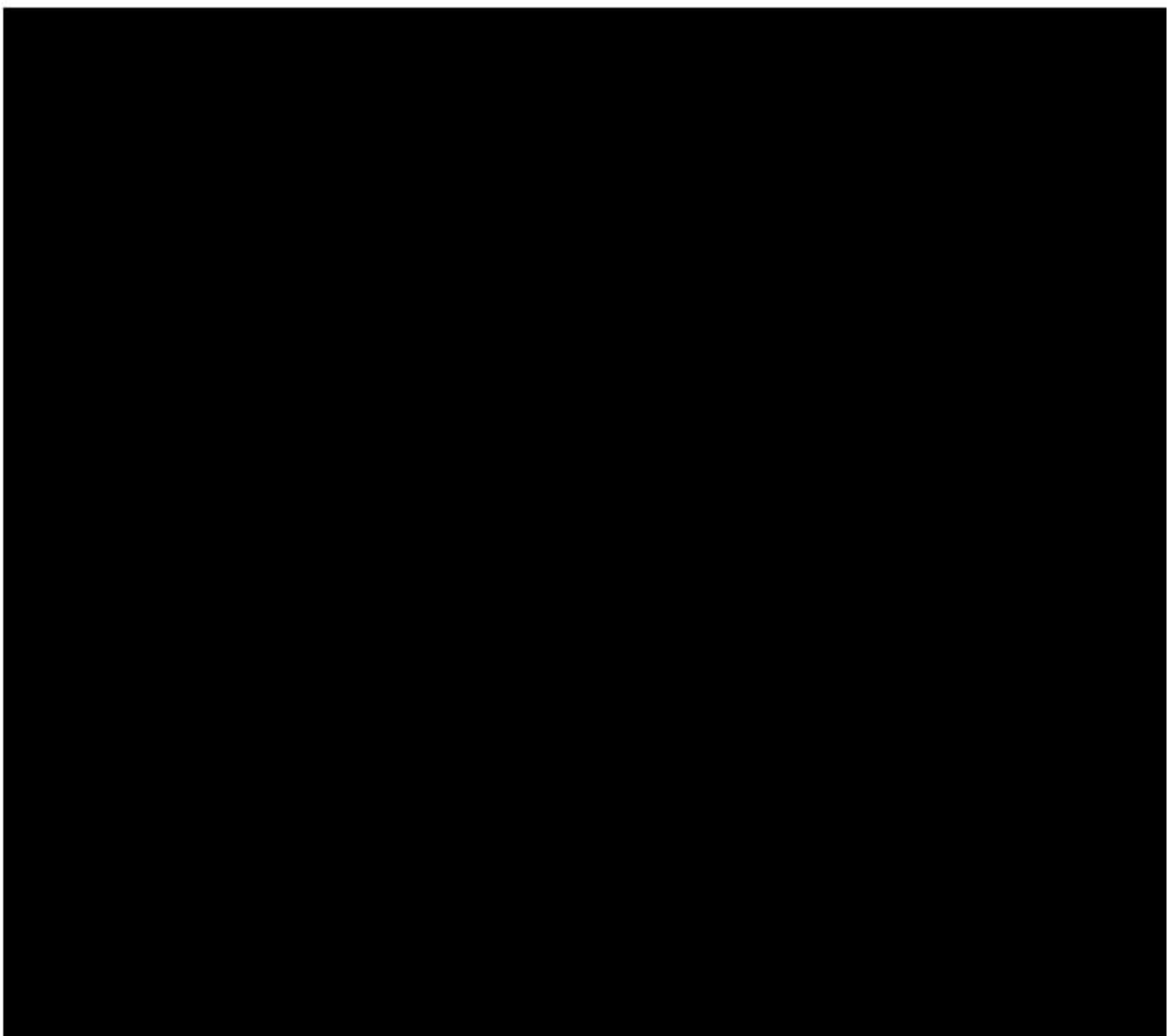
Flock Custom Hot List Entry Made and
Intelligence Bulletin Generated for Patrol:



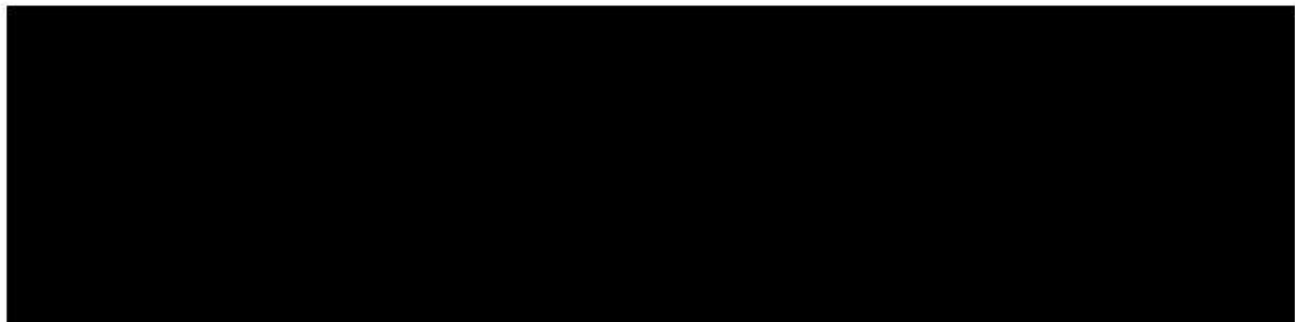
Flock Custom Hit alerted patrol as our suspect entered Altoona (this photo is actually the second Flock Hit Alert created as the suspect fled westbound out of town following contact with officers):

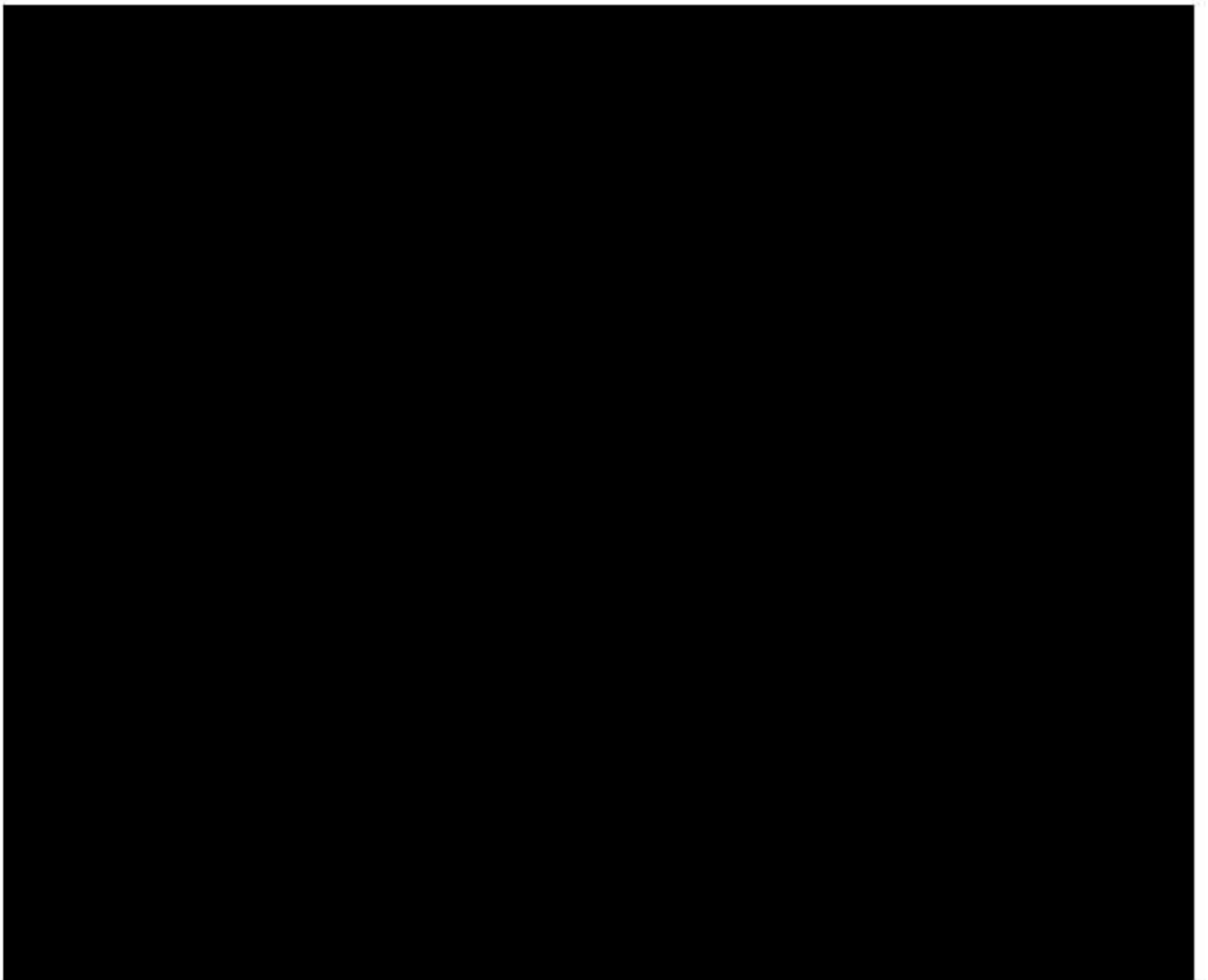
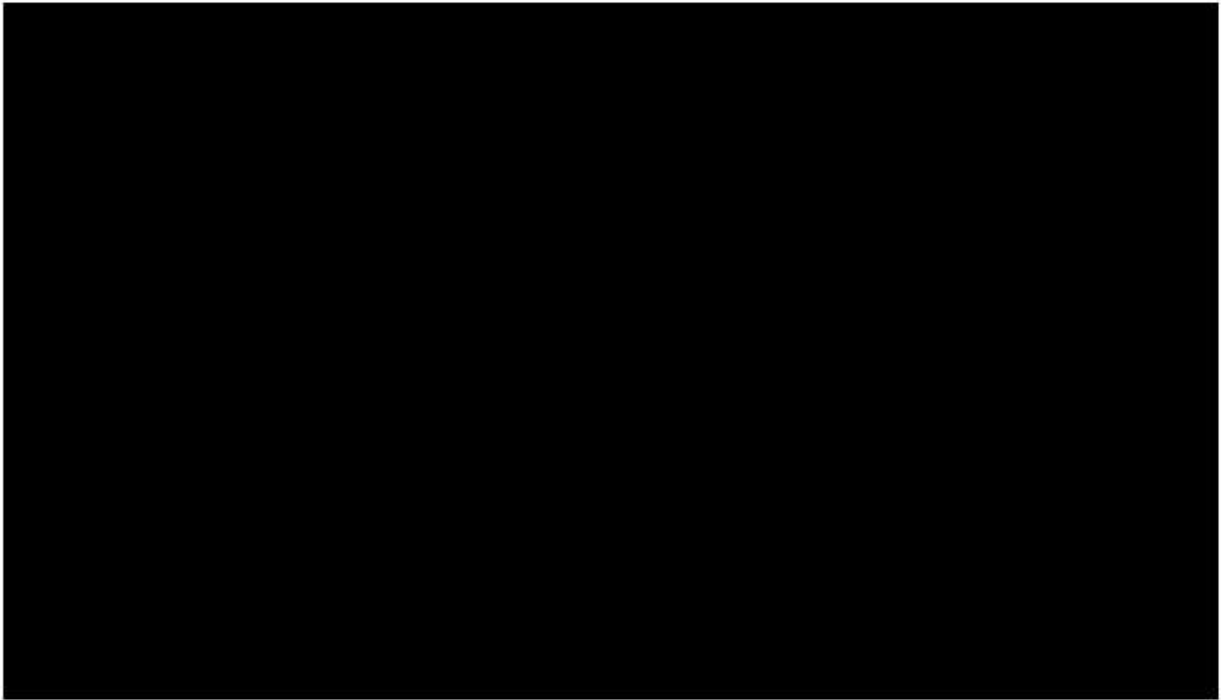


Suspect is Arrested and Stolen Property Recovered:



Murder and Armed Burglary Suspect Identified and Arrested







Motorola Commercial Data:



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

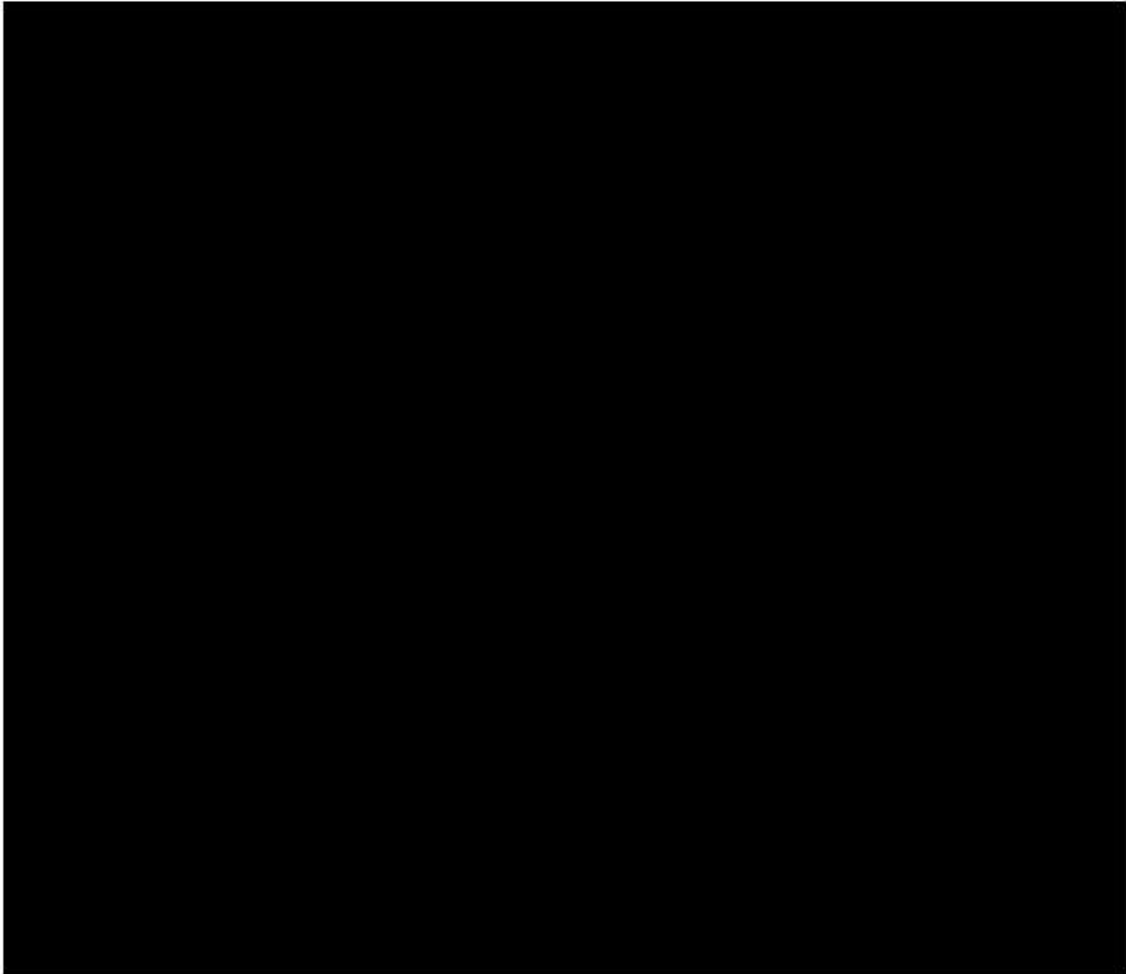
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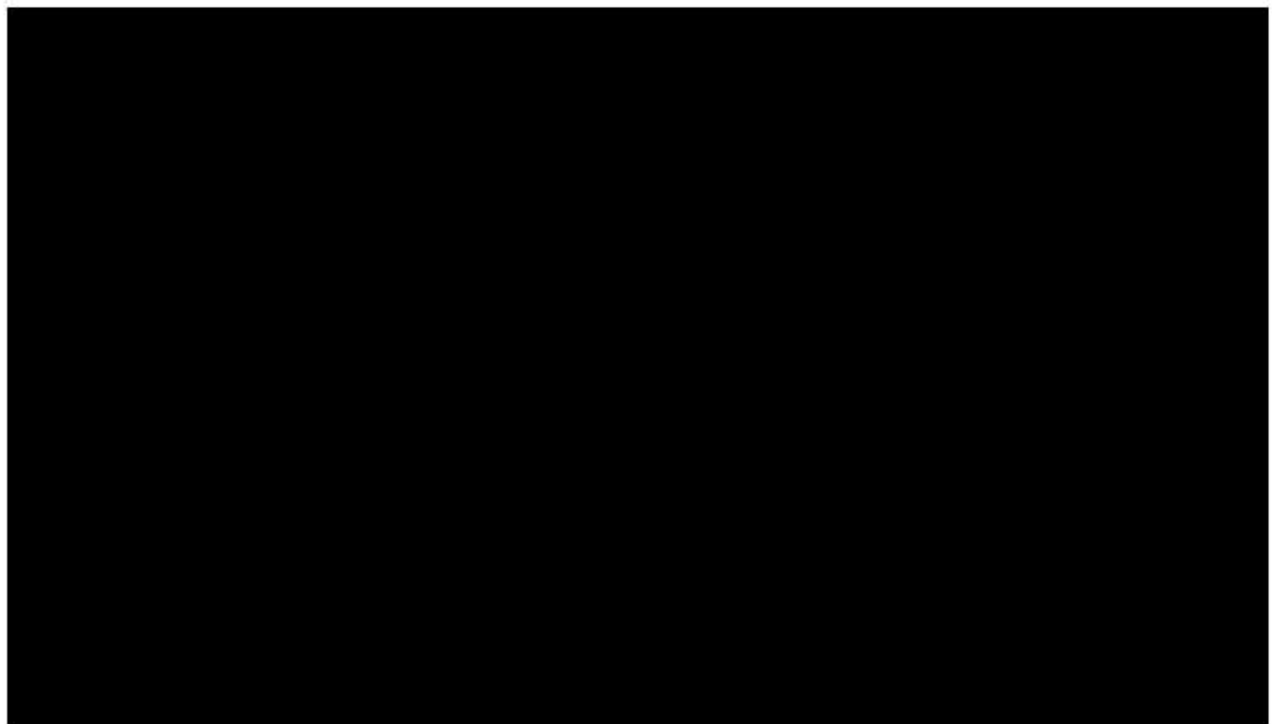
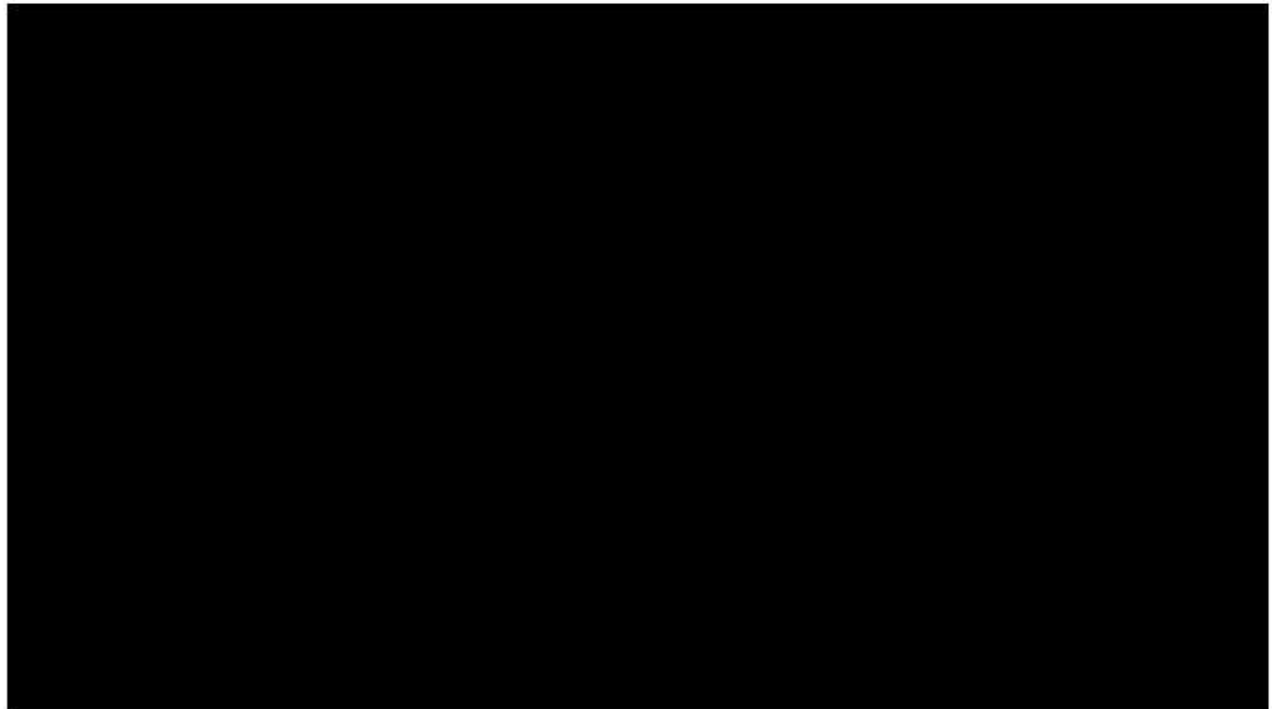
[REDACTED] Burglary Ring Suspects Apprehended in Altoona

The Bettendorf Police Department relayed through intel that they had multiple burglaries committed by the same group of suspects that had been targeting [REDACTED] business owners in their community. The suspects were driving an SUV with known Georgia plates. An intel analyst with the Altoona Police Department received that information and began to search Flock for the plate and found that it had entered town the night before.

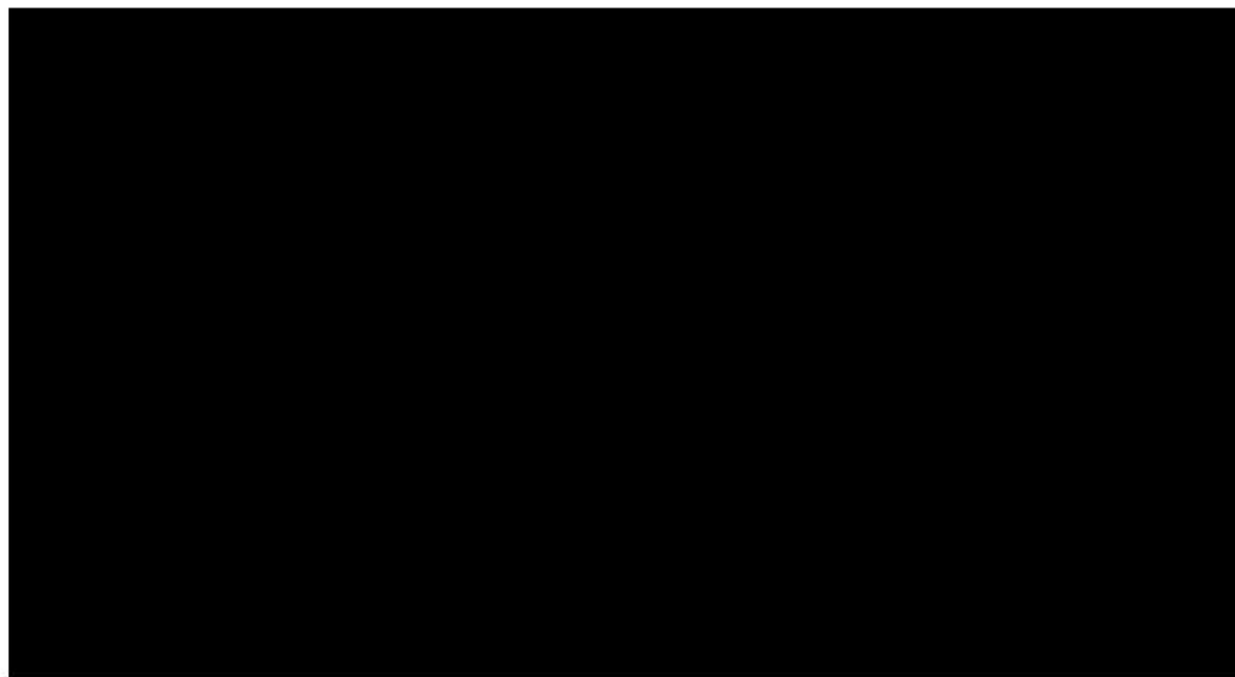
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

City resources were used to establish where the vehicle went when it entered Altoona and information was passed on to patrol. The vehicle was quickly spotted at a local hotel. The Altoona Police Department took all three males into custody a short time later without incident. Search warrants were conducted, and evidence was seized linking the suspects to the recent burglaries.



The suspects were found to possess false identification documents. Other evidence was located that indicated there were other specific locations that had been researched and the group had planned to victimize in other Iowa and Nebraska cities.



Basic Stats Regarding Altoona PD ALPR Usage from May 2022 (as of February 9th, 2024)

227	Investigative Leads Developed
252	Suspects Identified
171	Felony Charges
235	Misdemeanor Charges

The Altoona PD is sharing information locally with Clive PD, Johnston PD, Pleasant Hill PD, Urbandale PD, West Des Moines PD, Polk County Conservation, and with Ankeny PD. Multiple other local police departments are currently researching ALPR technology and have requested information regarding the system. Des Moines PD will soon begin to install dashcams with LPR capabilities that will be accessible through Motorola's LEARN software. Prairie Meadows Casino also currently uses Avigilon ALPRs, which is also compatible with the LEARN system. The Altoona Police Department will soon be installing dashcams with LPR capabilities that will be accessible through Flock.

The Altoona PD has assisted multiple agencies in investigations using Flock and LEARN information, including:

Des Moines PD, Clive PD, West Des Moines PD, Johnston PD, Mitchellville PD, Windsor Heights PD, Knoxville PD, Iowa State Patrol, US Marshalls, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Ottumwa PD, LEIN, DEA, Polk County Attorney's Office, Polk Co Sheriff's Office, HSI, Johnson County Sheriff's Office, South East Iowa Inter-Agency Drug Task Force, Bettendorff PD, McHenry County Sheriff's Office in Illinois, Spencer Co Sheriff's Office, Racine PD in Wisconsin, and North Dakota State Police.

Conclusion:

ALPRs are a proven technology and effective tool for law enforcement. The use of ALPR technology by law enforcement has stood up to repeated Constitutional scrutiny, which is supported by case law (see above). ALPR technology use, just as all law enforcement tools, must be used ethically and appropriately as guided by case law, sound policy, and procedures.

ALPR technology has drastically improved the efficiency and effectiveness of the Altoona Police department in identifying and making contact with safety threats and persons associated with criminal activity in the City of Altoona. The Flock system also increases law enforcement's situational awareness by alerting officers of vehicles of interest as they enter and/or exit the city. The technology has provided leads in many cases where there would not have been any other means to solve the case. The two aforementioned ALPR data systems have also drastically increased the Altoona Police Department's ability to develop investigative leads and assist in other agencies investigations and vice versa to help solve crime not just locally, but regionally, and across the United States.

Many stolen vehicles have been recovered, missing and endangered persons located, and persons with active warrants have been taken into custody before they commit another crime in the City of Altoona. As more agencies in the Des Moines Metro use the Flock and Motorola ALPR systems, it becomes more powerful for Metro area agencies.

It is anticipated that the ALPR systems will prove to be a crime deterrent as the reputation of the Altoona Police Department's efficiency in detecting criminals and criminal behavior becomes more well known. This will likely deter some criminals from coming to Altoona to victimize our residents and visitors.

Allowing Patrol to use the Flock system for real-time alerts significantly increased the potential and effectiveness of the system to generate actionable results by law enforcement. However, allowing Patrol to act on NCIC and Custom Hot List Hits drastically increased the frequency of high-risk traffic stops. It was extremely important to come up with a plan regarding the best way to respond to Flock Hits ahead of implementation between Command Staff, Patrol

Supervisors, and Investigators. Training individual users on best practices, required communication, policy, and optimal system usage prior to access is essential in contributing to the ethical use and success of the program.

For more information regarding automated license plate readers, please contact:

Lieutenant Steve Harris
Altoona Police Department
900 Venbury Dr., Suite B
Altoona, IA 50009

Phone: 515-967-5132 [REDACTED]
Fax: 515-967-5133
Email: [REDACTED]