# Electronic eyes for crime-fighting

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**For law enforcement agencies, ALPR has proved to be a force multiplier, enabling them to do more with less**

Introducing innovative technology is a common practice among police and public security forces in their efforts to tackle crime. The most advanced modern systems, such as license plate readers installed on police vehicles, represent a valid support to surveillance and defense activities. Such tools function as tireless, scrutinizing eyes, capable of identifying wanted and ill-intentioned individuals.

A recent survey conducted by the American trade association, NetChoice, and involving more than 500 members of police forces, showed a decisive preference for license plate reading systems and confirmed the efficiency of using such technology.

To support police forces in their efforts, the Italian ITS company Tattile has launched a novel, new solution. Equipped with megapixel sensors, it is able to scan more than 100 license plates per second, front and rear, in any light conditions. One of the family of Tattile automatic license plate recognition (ALPR) products, it is a compact system featuring several components: camera, IR lighting and embedded OCR reader for ALPR. These instruments are able to read license plates from a constantly updated list, including plates from more than 80 countries.

Easy to install and with low energy consumption, the new system needs neither embedded processing units nor physical connection between the cameras and the vehicle's onboard computer/tablet. Recognition is performed on-board the cameras, which can be installed on the car's roof, hood or in the trunk. Plate numbers are transmitted via wi-fi.

## Need to know?

**A new license plate recognition solution is being embraced by police forces**

- Overall, the process of ALPR is complicated because factors such as dazzling lights can prevent the identification of plates at night
- Because it is such a challenging application, special cameras are required to conduct ALPR
- Cameras used in ALPR need to be designed for that purpose and developed with application-specific features

Installation is simple and fast, and the system is easily transported from one vehicle to another. As a consequence, costs are naturally reduced. The new solution is provided with sophisticated software that allows image acquisition both in greyscale and color. With an automatic multiple exposure, the sophisticated selection of acquisition criteria occurs automatically.

"The added value of our mobile ALPR resides in the fact that it enables users to monitor their roads constantly," explains Massimiliano Cominelli from Tattile. "It is an invaluable help for security forces.

"Moreover, these new-generation mobile systems ensure not only vehicle identification, but also a correct contextualization of the event, which is provided by content images or video," he adds. "Our embedded GPS gives the exact location of the event. Also, the transmitted images are of an extremely high definition."

## Control and access

The control console runs on PCs, tablets and Android-based smartphones, and enables data reception from several devices; data can be read as images or texts and can be viewed as blacklists and whitelists.

Access via the web interface is the easiest way to set up the camera and allows users to control and program the device, supervise what the machine is reading and update the software.

"It goes without saying that such instruments are useful not only for patrolling an area but also for juridical enquiries," Cominelli continues. "These systems allow police authorities to track and identify the journeys of blacklisted vehicles."

Statistical enquiries have been conducted in the field by specialized agencies in the Italian police force. Results show a positive response toward using ALPR technology for investigating crimes. As well as vehicular crime, these tools have been used to solve violent crimes, including murder, kidnapping, human trafficking and drug dealing.

There are countless cases of stolen cars that have been recovered via ALPR, but most important is the huge number of suspect individuals that have been tracked by these tireless electronic eyes.

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