

Commercial, Historical LPR Data Aids Texas Agency in Homicide Investigation

LIVERMORE, CALIFORNIA (May 7, 2015) – Vigilant Solutions announces today that its commercial license plate reader (LPR) data was used by a Texas law enforcement agency to help refute the alibis of suspects in a homicide investigation, resulting in an arrest. Because the case is still pending, the agency has requested to remain anonymous and have certain aspects of the case obscured.

The officer explains, “I received a call from our Detective in Homicide. He asked me if I would search a plate related to some potential suspects in a homicide investigation through the LPR database, which is not an uncommon occurrence. I grabbed my computer and searched the plate in LEARN.”

“I called him back and gave him the most recent LPR detections for the vehicle and asked him if he would like any of the information emailed to him. He was especially interested in the detection for the day of the homicide, at approximately 0800. The Detective said the suspects claimed to be at their home in the south side of the City all day watching movies together. The LPR image of a vehicle they were known to drive was captured southbound on the interstate headed toward another town. I emailed the detection data to him, complete with color pictures of the vehicle. Armed with this new information, the Detective began questioning one of the suspects who – when confronted with the information – ultimately broke down and confessed to the shooting and admitted that they had left the City after the crime.”

“This is a great example of the value of commercial and historical LPR data. Many times in a major crime investigation, it takes some amount of investigation – and time – to get to a list of potential suspects. As I know there is legislation around the country attempting to limit retention of historical LPR data, especially when the detection is not immediately related to a crime, we felt it important to get this story out there. This is a great example where this plate was not of interest to anyone when it was scanned, but only became of interest months later after other investigative work led us to these suspects. This one license plate detection in a database of over 3 billion saved countless man hours and also helped us make an arrest and take two dangerous individuals off the street – preventing future crimes, and perhaps even saving a life.”

Tom Joyce, Vice President of Product Development for Vigilant Solutions and Retired Cold Case Commander for the New York City Police Department, comments, “With all of the conversation about LPR and privacy, it is important to note that this detection alone did not refute the alibi of the suspects. Why? Because LPR only identifies vehicles and has no way of determining who is driving a vehicle. The burden to place an individual in a vehicle still rests on the shoulders of law enforcement. LPR merely provides leads for these dedicated investigators and detectives to follow. We are thankful in this case that this lead was enough to help place these two dangerous individuals behind bars before they could perpetrate another crime and potentially bring harm to others.”

About Vigilant Solutions:

Based in Livermore, California, Vigilant Solutions is an industry-leading pioneer of innovative intelligence solutions that help law enforcement protect officers, families and communities. For additional information, visit www.vigilantsolutions.com.

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