

METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT – CITY OF ST. LOUIS

Intra-Department Report and Correspondence Sheet

Date: January 20, 2016
To: Col. D. Samuel Dotson
Commissioner of Police
From: Will Werner
Police Planner
Subject: BWC Group Two, Week One Survey Results

Copies:

Sir,

The purpose of this memo is to update you on the results of the Group Two, Week One Surveys regarding BWCs. At 7am Wednesday, January 20, 83.3% of Sergeants wearing issued BWCs had completed the survey. The numbers of surveys completed by Assignment Code are as follows:

Assignment	Number of Responses
301	3
302	3
303	2
304	3
305	3
306	2
340	2
341	2

Attached are the results of the survey.

If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know.

Respectfully,

Will Werner

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The below table is a list of questions with the average response from the officers that completed the survey. A rating of 3 is neutral. The higher the score the more officers DISAGREED with the statement. The LOWER the score the more they AGREED.

The rating scale is as follows:

1=Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3=Neutral 4=Disagree 5=Strongly Disagree

Question	Group 2, Week 1 Average	Group 1, Week 4 Average
I spend less time completing paperwork with a BWC	3.75	3.6
My accounts of incidents are more accurate with a BWC	2.7	2.8
Evidence quality is better with a BWC	2.6	2.67
I would voluntarily wear a BWC even if it was not mandatory	4	3.93
BWC's make my job easier	3.8	3.47
BWC's make it easier to work with the CAO during warrant application	2.9	3.07
Citizens are more cooperative when they know I wear a BWC	3.2	3.07
Citizens are more respectful when they know I wear a BWC	3.2	3.4
Suspects resist arrest MORE when they know I wear a BWC	2.95	3.2
Suspects are generally MORE AGGRESSIVE when they know I wear a BWC	3	3.13
BWC's hurt 'police-community' relations	4.1	3
Cameras will increase citizen complaints against officers	3.2	3.2
Officers will be less likely to give warnings while wearing a BWC	2.7	2.47
Officers will have fewer contacts with citizens	2.45	2.07
Officers will feel like they have less discretion	2.05	2.27
Officers will be more cautious in making decisions	2.15	2.13
Officers will act more professionally	2.5	2.93
BWC's affect an officer's decision to use force	1.85	2.13
It is easy to locate and retrieve video for a specific event	2.75	2.53
BWC Equipment is easy to use	2.85	2.93
BWC Equipment is comfortable to wear	3.9	3.67
Battery life of the camera is adequate	2	2.53
Video is easy to download data at the end of shift	2.2	2.2

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The SO is easy to understand	2.8	2.67
The SO is too restrictive; officers are required to record too much	2.95	2.87
The SO is too detailed	3.1	3.13
Body cameras are well received by coworkers	4.4	4.47
Police benefit more from body cameras than citizens	3.15	3.13
Wearing a BWC improves officers' job satisfaction	3.9	4.2
Cameras improve officer training	2.8	3.07
Cameras improve overall job performance	3.2	3.53
Cameras tend to increase office safety	3.5	3.73
Cameras should be expanded to other police departments	3.3	3.53
Cameras should be worn by all sworn officers in all Police Departments	3.85	3.93
Advantages of body cameras outweigh the disadvantages	3.35	3.73
The training I received on the technology was adequate	2.3	2.87
The training I received on the SO was adequate	3.1	3

Responses for questions requiring a written response are listed below.

Please indicate what you believe to be the STRENGTHS of wearing a BWC.

- *video footage*
- *Provides protection for the Officers involved and if activated in a timely manner.*
- *Complete transparency*
- *one strength of the BWC could be to vindicate an officer during a complaint investigation.*
- *The camera if worn correctly is a good tool. It enhances the account of an incident*
- *The camera may assist the Officer in proving that he was treating a citizen fairly.*
- *Suspects will not be able to tell lies about what officers did*
- *It helps with evidence*
- *Evidence, accountability*
- *I have only worn the camera for less than 1 week so I can't fully answer some of these questions due to the lack of time I have worn the camera.*
- *Warrant application, and evidence at a criminal trial. Training video when Officers encounter use of force incident when making an arrest.*
- *They can provide 1 point of view of an incident that may otherwise not have been available.*
- *They can prove a citizen is lying about an incident involving an officer.*
- *BWC is a plus and it ensures fair treatment to all and the credibility of the officer. The feds can only indict on video and audio evidence which should be the standard for all to ensure fair ethical treatment of all.*
- *Good for acquiring evidence if able to use in court. Citizens seem to realize they are being recorded and do not try to provoke Officers as much,.*
- *I believe a strength of a body camera would be to help an officer write a more detailed report describing the place of the incident. If there is an arrest the circuit attorneys would be more likely to believe us (the police).*
- *A) Being able to review a situation.*

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- *B) The ONLY positive I see, is proving a citizen to be lying when making a complaint.*
- *proper documentation of events*
- *It is good for documenting incidents and obtaining evidence during interviews of subjects. It also can help an officer remember statements of victims, witnesses and offenders.*

Please indicate what you believe to be the WEAKNESSES of wearing a BWC.

- *reduces police discretion*
- *Sergeants wearing the camera is not reflective of the potential of the camera as Sergeants are typically the last to arrive on the scene and therefore the event is not completely recorded.*
- *Were becoming actors*
- *The Flex camera system is a true pain to wear. While there are a variety of ways to wear the camera, they are all terrible when dealing with coats or without looking like an idiot with a camera mounted to your head, I don't like wearing the camera but if it was mandatory, I'd rather have the other style.*
- *The BWC I am wearing is the flex. There isn't any good way for me to wear it. The video I am taking are of poor quality.*
- *The camera will likely cause an Officer to hesitate during a deadly force encounter.*
- *They will make officers hesitant in decision making*
- *Makes other officers stay away from me knowing that I have a BWC*
- *I have realized that I often make sure that the camera is straight and facing forward (not crooked) so when I turn it on it is in optimal position. This could effect officer safety.*
- *evidence at summary board hearing and evidence in a civil trial. Sergeants may be called to testify against Officers when the camera doesn't capture some aspects of the incident.*
- *Citizens don't want to talk to you once they find out you have a camera on.*
- *Officers do not trust the intentions of the camera system(s).*
- *The weaknees and lack of officer's understanding does call one to hesitate causing the officer's to get hurt or second guess themselves.*
- *Officers feel that the BWC will be used against them.*
- *The weakness is "the gift of mistrust" is getting bigger.*
- *The time I spend making sure it's on and where it can record (not covered by a coat etc)*
- *Awkward - falls off- unable to secure*
- *It is awkward and sometimes difficult to obtain quality videos because you don't really know what the camera is capturing at the time of recording. We used it to record an individual performing Field Sobriety tests and it didn't capture the suspects feet.*

Please generally describe your experience wearing the BWC during the pilot period.

- *still getting use to it*
- *I find it obtrusive and makes the Officers uncertain of what can and can not be discussed while the camera is on.*
- *My Officers and I became very apprehensive when an event was being recorded.*
- *I don't think the camera makes sense for supervisors. By the time a supervisor arrives on scene, the officers already completed most actions that would be useful to record. Also, The officers are now conferring with their supervisor on procedures and figuring out how to proceed forward. These are conversation that should not be recorded, however it is usually all the "action " a supervisor sees on a call.*
- *So far I have not taken a video I felt would be helpful or worth the money for needed to store it.*
- *not pleasant*
- *It is ok*

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- *my experience with the camera has been minimal. Future use with the camera will provide a better answer*
- *I have only worn the camera for less than 1 week so I can't fully answer some of these questions due to the lack of time I have worn the camera.*
- *I have not worn the camera yet.*
- *So far, after the training my first day I had it in the bunker to charge and do an initial download of the camera. I was on rec for three days after that. I have only had the opportunity to wear it once and have not recorded anything yet.*
- *It allows me to protect myself against phony accusations.*
- *The battery is fully charged everyday green light. When I'm out on the street for an 8 hour shift, the battery doesn't last that long and it starts blinking red after two hours.*
- *Have not had the chance to use it enough in the field yet to have an opinion.*
- *I did a few tests. One or two did not take because I was not pressing down the part on the middle of the camera correctly. I finally got it right. I am waiting for the second one to download. I did one during the day and one at night. I would like to see how clear the picture is with street lights on and street lights off. I wanted to be sure I had a clear understanding of the basic operation of the camera so it would work correctly.*
- *I have only worn it for one shift as I write this, however, I am preparing for my shift now and will be wearing it for the second time tonight. I will say that I am happy that I have the camera only and not the one with all of the accessories.*
- *so far awkward, falls off, unable to secure*
- *It is cumbersome and gets in the way while wearing a seatbelt or jacket. It also makes me feel a little more self conscious while wearing it.*

Please list any changes to the proposed policy/SO you would make.

- *Make body cameras optional*
- *Some direction should be given to when a recording is made and another unit adopts the case. Who is responsible for requesting the evidence be seized? Can other units view your video to see if there is pertinent information.*
- *I have not worn the camera yet, but the Sergeants don't arrive on scene until the incident has ended.*
- *Nothing as of yet. The only change I would like to see are more attachments for different types of sunglasses. I have used the same sunglasses for 19 years. It would be helpful to be able to attach the camera mount to them instead of having to use a different pair of sunglasses. I would also like to see them be available, at the officer's discretion, to be able to use them while working secondary. There are times when I think they would be useful, especially in documenting an incident since frequently the incidents involve suspects who are drinking.*
- *The SO should allow the wearer to narrate what he or she intends to display on the camera as it will show officer's intent and actions, because crimes and convictions are based on intent versus mistakes.*
- *I need more experience with the camera to discuss my experiences more.*
- *Can this survey be done in more than one sitting? I did not see a "save for later button at the bottom. If I have to sign off the computer before hitting the submit button, will I lose the information?*
- *Smaller. Different ways to attach it to the clothing.*

Please list any other information you believe is relevant to this pilot program.

- *Everyone should have the opportunity to use different models. This way the users could possibly find a BWC they felt comfortable with.*
- *It has only been one week, so as this pilot program continues I will be able to answer more questions*

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- *Currently Sergeants are responsible for viewing video. There should be a unit responsible for maintaining the video.*
- *I would like to see someone take the fitness test two times with the body camera on. There would be one time during the day and another time at night with only their flashlight. (I will volunteer if I get paid the \$1200 each time in addition to my fitness test of my birth month)*
- *You've asked about the use of discretion.....The way I look at it, as do many officers/sgts I've spoken with, is, if we let a white person go with a warning but arrest or summons a black person, we will be made out as a racist. So as far as I'm concerned, NO breaks. Period.*
- *A federal or state mandate protected by law that any recorded incident can never be used as evidence in criminal or civil proceedings against an Officer*

