

# METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT – CITY OF ST. LOUIS

## Intra-Department Report and Correspondence Sheet

**Date:** February 24, 2016

**To:** Col. D. Samuel Dotson  
Commissioner of Police

**From:** Will Werner  
Police Planner

**Subject:** BWC Group 3, Week 2 Survey Results

**Copies:** Assistant Chief, LTC Lawrence O'Toole  
BoE Commander, LTC Jerry Leyshock

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Sir,

The purpose of this memo is to update you on the results of the Group Three, Week Two Surveys regarding BWCs. At 7:00am Wednesday, Feb 24, 62.5% 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	1
303	2
304	3
305	1
306	2
340	3
341	0

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 3, Week 2 Average	Group 2, Week 4 Average	Group 1, Week 4 Average
I spend less time completing paperwork with a BWC	4.07	3.79	3.6
My accounts of incidents are more accurate with a BWC	3.27	2.89	2.8
Evidence quality is better with a BWC	3.07	2.58	2.67
I would voluntarily wear a BWC even if it was not mandatory	3.47	3.84	3.93
BWC's make my job easier	3.80	3.58	3.47
BWC's make it easier to work with the CAO during warrant application	3.13	3.11	3.07
Citizens are more cooperative when they know I wear a BWC	3.60	3.37	3.07
Citizens are more respectful when they know I wear a BWC	3.40	3.53	3.4
Suspects resist arrest MORE when they know I wear a BWC	2.93	3.32	3.2
Suspects are generally MORE AGGRESSIVE when they know I wear a BWC	2.87	3.21	3.13
BWC's hurt 'police-community' relations	3.13	3.26	3
Cameras will increase citizen complaints against officers	3.47	3.53	3.2
Officers will be less likely to give warnings while wearing a BWC	3.00	2.63	2.47
Officers will have fewer contacts with citizens	2.40	2.16	2.07
Officers will feel like they have less discretion	2.40	2.26	2.27
Officers will be more cautious in making decisions	2.13	2.26	2.13
Officers will act more professionally	2.80	2.74	2.93
BWC's affect an officer's decision to use force	2.47	2.42	2.13
It is easy to locate and retrieve video for a specific event	3.13	2.11	2.53
BWC Equipment is easy to use	2.87	2.53	2.93
BWC Equipment is comfortable to wear	3.27	3.26	3.67

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Battery life of the camera is adequate	2.47	2.05	2.53
Video is easy to download data at the end of shift	2.27	2.00	2.2
The SO is easy to understand	2.87	2.63	2.67
The SO is too restrictive; officers are required to record too much	3.07	2.84	2.87
The SO is too detailed	2.80	3.16	3.13
Body cameras are well received by coworkers	3.80	4.26	4.47
Police benefit more from body cameras than citizens	3.20	3.00	3.13
Wearing a BWC improves officers' job satisfaction	4.00	3.95	4.2
Cameras improve officer training	3.27	2.89	3.07
Cameras improve overall job performance	3.80	3.47	3.53
Cameras tend to increase office safety	3.87	3.58	3.73
Cameras should be expanded to other police departments	3.53	3.42	3.53
Cameras should be worn by all sworn officers in all Police Departments	3.93	3.95	3.93
Advantages of body cameras outweigh the disadvantages	3.47	3.21	3.73
The training I received on the technology was adequate	2.67	2.37	2.87
The training I received on the SO was adequate	3.47	2.47	3

Responses for questions requiring a written response are listed below.

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

- *They can possibly discredit false complaints by citizens.*
- *The video images can be used as evidence against the suspect. The arresting Officer's actions and statements can not be disputed when a credibility issues are raised by the defense attorney.*
- *Citizens seem to be less likely to complain about officers when I am present with the BWC.*
- *it cuts down on complaints*
- *Video recording is undisputable*
- *Video of suspects making confessions*
- *It records some of the incident*
- *It is nice that a person does not have to get the footage from another location. Download times vary. I think the best one was about 7 minutes on today's date. It may have been sooner.*
- *Evidence when a citizen makes a bogus complaint against the police.*
- *Protection for Officer.*
- *fairly accurate portrayal of events on a scene*
- *investigations into police misconduct or false complaints*
- *Citizens will not be able to lie about what an officer did or said*
- *It may help in disproving a complaint.*

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

- *I often forget to turn it on when exiting the vehicle quickly and it is uncomfortable and gets in the way.*
- *Officers will second guess themselves when in a situation where force is justified and needed. This is an officer safety hazard.*
- *The one I have is a pain in the ...*
- *Not made taking into consideration our uniform and both male and female wearers.*
- *I don't think the video is clear enough when filmed during the hours of darken*
- *Body cameras do not capture everything. On my 2/17/16 video I removed a 2 foot machete from a table and handed it to an officer none of which showed up. Camera was worn in pen pocket. Also the victim who was ten feet in front of me and laying on the floor was also not visible.*
- *I have made it clear that my camera doesn't work! it is in the South Patrol Bunker if anyone cares to inspect it. The red light (booting up mode stays on steady red and never changes) all attempts to record incidents have failed. Tomorrow Sgt. Alphonso Neal comes back to work and I will have him help me with trouble shooting as he had this system before me. This camera did not work during the training class requiring me to stay after class while Taser reps worked on it. It was given back to supposed to be in working order. However I have never been able to get it out of the Boot up mode. I wear the external ballistic vest cover. I have yet to find the best location to mount the square unit. I use the shoulder mount on my right shoulder.*
- *I have no weaknesses to mention.*
- *Having to wear the camera, cumbersome, makes you second guess at times.*
- *Second guessing your decisions*
- *Based on the recent training scenario, the flex option is not a viable camera when one need to don a gas mask.*
- *Causing an officer to second guess which costs valuable time*
- *The use of the Body Camera has created situations where I wanted to correct or speak with an officer on scene, but felt hindered to put that on video. The use of the camera definitely interrupts normal communications between officers and suspects.*
- *Forgetting to turn it on.*
- *Just one more piece of expensive equipment that will distract me from doing my job.*

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

- *The first two days of wearing it, it was very hard to get to work. Mainly because I thought it would be fully charged when I received it and it wasn't.*
- *The equipment is not easy to wear with the long cords.*
- *It won't stay where it's supposed to stay. I wish I could have the other model.*
- *The more I wear it the more comfortable I become. It's still not perfect yet.*
- *Neutral*
- *So far its been uneventful. Officers seem to avoid me at all costs.*
- *Total failure. I will be going off for five days shortly. It is possible that as this trial period ends I will have made zero video recordings. I guess Taser has allowed for some equipment failures during this period.*
- *In my short period of wearing the BWC, I feel that it will change both officer's and citizens actions for the better and that the BWC is part of the uniform.*
- *Always adjusting the shoulder mount, so far the citizens seem less friendly once they learn they are being recorded.*
- *Camera is cumbersome, citizens overall are not receptive of being recorded.*
- *based on my job description, I have no had the opportunity to utilize it very often. It really shouldn't be utilized by undercover officers or supervisors based on the sensitive nature of our duties and interactions.*

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- *Only suspect that I dealt with was very combative and even called me a racial slur. The camera did not matter to her*
- *The body camera is a lot more comfortable than the FLEX and is more convenient. However, it is easy to forget you have a camera with you when it is clipped to your uniform vs strapped to your head.*
- *Good system.*
- *It is a chore trying to find incidents to record.*

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

- *More use of discretion when wearing it and that the camera is not to be used for punishment.*
- *I would take out the part in which it says victims of sex crimes/child abuse, witnesses, parents will not be recorded. They should be recorded. Lineups should be recorded. Investigations in hospitals should be recorded. Peaceful demonstrations should be recorded, always. All demonstrations should always be recorded.*
- *So far nothing other than I feel a specific section should be in place for the wearers of the camera to be able to request a video/generate a report so they have some assurance that if a commander or politician is caught on camera doing something out of line they will know that they have a recourse to securing the evidence before it disappears.*
- *I have no information to use to answer this question.*
- *I have no changes to mention.*
- *Officers need more discretion.*
- *less restrictive*
- *More detailed information needs to be added in regards to specialized units usage.*
- *Get rid of it*
- *I would leave when to record up to the officers discretion. I find it is easy to forget you have a body camera with you and often don't remember to activate it until 30-40 seconds into a stop. I wouldn't want someone to be reprimanded for simply forgetting to activate their camera. When I prepare to stop someone I am assessing the stop and preparing myself to respond tactically if necessary. I am not focusing on turning a camera on.*
- *Don't understand why a body worn camera needs to be on while conveying a prisoner; unless it was being used to capture spontaneous statements.*

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

- *Hard to peel the body camera from the plastic carrier*
- *Officers want AR rifles, a raise, and better guns and have even offered to buy their own in respect to the guns, but the Department cries poor and says we don't need this or that, yet we have money for cameras. So the guns officers want to feel safe and level the playing field are too expensive/not feasible but this camera and storage is. That's a tough sell to the officers and only adds to the resistance we are going to get should this come to be mandatory for the officers.*
- *I believe the program is sound and solid. I would use it willingly. Every complaint that has ever been made against me was a lie. A body camera would have eliminated a very uncomfortable process with Internal Affairs if a video recording had existed.*
- *I do not believe I have seen an impact on having the cameras affecting community relations as of yet.*
- *The pick list in Evidence.com used to categorize each video needs to be expanded to include a much broader range of incidents.*
- *The training could be a little better. Options to try both cameras might be good too.*

