

Law and Public Safety Committee: Body Worn Camera Presentation

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Presentation Overview

- **1. Review of previous Cincinnati Police Department body worn camera (BWC) initiatives**
 - ...what we have learned
- **2. Contemporary discussion of body worn camera deployments**
 - ..where we are right now
- **3. Projection for proceeding with deployment of body worn camera units**
 - ..where do we go from here

Previous BWC Initiatives

- **Cincinnati Police Department conducted a test and evaluation of the first generation TASER AXON Flex body worn camera (BWC) system in January, 2010**
- **CPD Information Technology personnel reviewed City IT capacity in late 2012 through early 2013: “stress test” of the network**
- **Determination: A Cloud-based BWC system would require an upgrade to City IT infrastructure**

2014 BWC Test and Evaluation

- **Inspections Unit was tasked to test and evaluate body worn camera (BWC) systems for potential deployment on May 5, 2014**
- **Two BWC systems were selected for testing:**
 - TASER AXON Body Camera (cloud based system)
 - VieVu LE3 Body Camera (local storage based system)
- **Inspections Unit requested a legal opinion from the City of Cincinnati Solicitor's Office**
 - Officers would not be required to ask for or have consent to record suspects or citizens if the recording takes place in public with no expectation of privacy

2014: BWC Test and Evaluation (cont.)

- **Inspections Unit requested a BWC temporary procedure from Planning Unit for use in a field trial**
 - Planning Unit published the Body Worn Camera Pilot Program Procedure in the Department Staff Notes on August 7, 2014
- **Inspections Unit requested a liaison from Technology & Systems Section to integrate these BWC units into the Department IT infrastructure**
- **Inspections Unit personnel conducted initial product testing of these competing BWC units**

2014: BWC Test and Evaluation (cont.)

- **Inspections Unit and Training Unit personnel conducted simulated use of force scenarios at the Police Academy using these BWC systems**
- **Inspections Unit researched academic peer reviewed literature regarding BWC systems**
- **Inspections Unit conducted a BWC field trial in District Three using second and power / third relief officers (August through November, 2014)**

The TASER AXON Body Camera



The TASER AXON Body Camera

- **Positive attributes:**

- Better low light / evening performance
- Wider viewing angle (130 degree field of view)
- Buffers 30 seconds of video before the officer activates the unit

- **Negative attributes:**

- Subpar overall audio and video performance
- Could not be worn with the CPD uniform tie or jacket
- Wider viewing angle at the expense of depth perception
- Officers found this BWC to be bulky and more difficult to turn on
- Cloud based system – slower to copy and review videos
- Would require external IT upgrade and more expensive (x3)

The VieVu LE3 Body Camera



The VieVu LE3 Body Camera

- **Positive attributes:**

- Better overall audio and video (HD) performance
- Greatly preferred by both officers and supervisors
- Local storage system – instant review and retrieval of videos
- CPD currently has IT framework in place to support locally stored BWC systems and is cheaper per unit (x1/3)

- **Negative attributes:**

- Poor low light / evening performance
- Narrow viewing angle (68 degrees)
- Does not buffer anything before the officer activates the unit

2014 BWC Project: Summary

- **The “perfect” BWC unit would be a combination of these two tested BWC systems**
 - These BWC systems were the best two available when the CPD BWC Project was conceived in May of 2014, but this technology was first released in Fall, 2013
- **Cincinnati Police Department officers positively embraced wearing BWC units**
 - Initial reluctance and animosity by CPD officers regarding BWC usage before the project trended positively when surveyed after the field test and exposure to BWC systems
 - Consistent with other police agencies polled (perception shift)

Contemporary Review of BWC Systems

- **BWC system technology has progressed significantly since the 2014 CPD BWC Project**
 - The BWC systems CPD reviewed in 2014 are now outdated
- **There is no contemporary consensus on the specifics of BWC deployments in the academic peer reviewed literature or professional publications (PERF, IACP)**
 - Statistical evidence of significant reductions in use of force (50-60%) and citizen complaints (60-80%) following BWC deployments
 - Literature recommends specific guidelines on BWC usage by officers and later review by supervisors
 - Financial costs to support BWC infrastructure after deployment may exceed the initial BWC purchase price

Contemporary Review of BWC Systems (cont.)

- **There is no contemporary consensus on releasing BWC recorded video to the media or public**
 - Redaction of faces, victim statements, juveniles, expectations of privacy in residences
 - Legal requirements and considerations
- **CPD cannot currently process BWC recorded videos after full deployment for 600+ officers absent additional resources**
 - Challenge of copying recorded videos to physical media
 - Other agencies have tasked sworn and non-sworn personnel to facilitate BWC recorded video vs. patrol supervisors
 - 600+ officers with potentially 1 – 2 hours of recorded video per day that will gradually increase over time

Contemporary Review of BWC Systems (cont.)

- **Managing Media and Public Expectations**
 - CPD cannot possibly review or release every BWC recorded video following a full deployment of BWC systems
 - Other police agencies have curtailed their interest or been forced to cancel existing BWC programs because of records requests for all police agency recorded BWC videos
- **BWC IT infrastructure concerns**
 - Local-storage BWC systems could be supported by existing IT infrastructure (DVR servers previously upgraded in 2014)
 - Cloud-based BWC systems would require an upgrade to the IT infrastructure (recurring costs and bandwidth concerns)

BWC Deployment Projections

- **New and pending BWC system technology**
 - BWC Specifications spreadsheet
 - Discussions of upcoming products with BWC vendors
 - IACP 2015 in Chicago, Illinois: October 24-27, 2015
- **Cloud-based vs. local-storage BWC systems**
 - Ideal solution would meet CPD BWC hardware specifications with integrated software that could facilitate virtual redaction and sharing of recorded videos in lieu of physical media
 - Most likely that the TASER Evidence.com cloud-based BWC system would include an integrated solution
 - Vendor conversations regarding local-storage software solutions

BWC Deployment Timeline - 2nd Quarter 2016

- **Operational planning recommendation:**
 - Cloud vs local-storage based systems (Budget and IT)
 - Compatible hardware and software platform (November 2015)
 - Select two – three BWC vendors (November 2015)
 - Field T&E of selected BWC systems (January – March, 2016)
- **Strategic planning recommendation:**
 - BWC policy and procedure (best practices consensus)
 - Release of BWC recorded video (records request policy)
 - BWC recorded video management (no physical media)
 - Anticipating and managing public expectations (training)

BWC Deployment Timeline - 2nd Quarter 2016 (cont).

Five Committees for the 2015 BWC Project:

- 1. Operations / When To Record**
- 2. Data Management / Access**
- 3. Officer Concerns / Buy In**
- 4. Equipment Specifications**
- 5. Public / Council / Mayor Expectations**