



A Report on MPD's Use of

Body-Worn Cameras

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GOVERNMENT OF THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

The *Body-Worn Camera Regulation and Reporting Requirements Act of 2015*, Title III, Subtitle A, of the *Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Support Act of 2015* (Sec. 3004; Act 21-0148), requires the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD, or the Department) to publish data on the Body-Worn Camera (BWC) program beginning October 1, 2015, and every six months thereafter. This report is provided in compliance with the Act.

Overview of MPD Body-Worn Camera Program

The use of body-worn cameras (BWCs) will benefit members of the community and the Department by improving police services, increasing accountability for individual interactions, and strengthening police-community relations. MPD launched Phase I of the body-worn camera program in October 2014, focusing on the selection of the best camera model for the members of the Department. MPD evaluated five models, with a total of 400 cameras. MPD selected Taser models, allowing officers to annotate video in the field, without taking officers off the street.

The Department launched Phase II of the BWC program on June 29, 2015. Two-hundred (200) cameras were distributed to the Fifth and Seventh Police Districts, each receiving 200 new cameras.¹ This deployment was designed by a team of national researchers who will analyze the impact of BWC's on such issues as citizen complaints, use of force, and other measurable outcomes. A majority of the data for the evaluation will be collected in subsequent BWC deployments. The lessons and findings of this evaluation will benefit District residents, the MPD, as well as law enforcement agencies and communities across the country that are also considering the use of body-worn cameras.

On March 15, 2016, MPD launched Phase III of the BWC program. By April 1, 2016, approximately 600 body-worn cameras will be deployed across the Department. By June 2016, the MPD will deploy cameras to half of the eligible members in all seven of the police districts. All remaining eligible patrol district members will receive BWC cameras by the end of 2016. As with phase II, this phase of deployment was designed by the researchers to support a rigorous evaluation model.

The U.S. Department of Justice awarded the District over \$1 million to support the expansion of its body-worn camera initiative, which will enhance the locally funded program. This will fund the deployment of approximately 500 BWCs to the MPD Training Academy. This deployment will support efforts to ensure that all graduating members are proficient with the cameras, as well as relevant policies and law.

The Department has received FOIA requests for body-worn camera videos since the program implementation. The agency was not able to redact four of five of these initial requests due to technical limitations. In December 2016, once the Council passed legislation confirming issues such as privacy and access, MPD was able to sufficiently define parameters to develop a request

¹ Cameras tested in Phase I were exchanged for four hundred (400) of the selected Taser model cameras.

for information (RFIs) to survey the industry and understand existing capabilities and cost models. As a temporary measure, the Department had engaged a redaction vendor to provide redactions on demand. However, this low bidder went out of business in March 2016.

Consequently, MPD is searching for multiple temporary vendors as a stop-gap solution. With the information gained from the RFI, the Department is developing a request for proposals in order to contract with multiple vendors to provide redaction services.

The body-worn camera program demonstrates Mayor Muriel Bowser, and Chief Cathy Lanier's, commitment to building trust between law enforcement and the communities we serve. The Metropolitan Police Department is pleased to be on the forefront of major city police departments deploying cameras.

Data

Response to Reporting Requirements for January 1 through December 31, 2015

Reporting Requirement	January 1 - June 29, 2015	June 30 - December 31, 2015
How many hours of BWC recordings were collected?	4,554 hours	25,021 hours
How many times did BWCs fail while officers were on shift and what were the reasons for the failures?	The reporting system that tracks technology issues indicates there were two BWC incidents that prevented regular functioning of the camera. Both reports indicated an issue with the docking station and the network connection, which interfered with the upload of videos to the video management system. This does not necessarily mean that the officer could not deploy the camera for the tour of duty.	The reporting system that tracks technology issues indicates there were 40 incidents reported that resulted in a BWC failure while an officer was on shift. The reasons for failures include broken hardware or cords, battery charging issues, and general hardware malfunction. With more than 25,000 hours of footage, this is a failure rate of less than 0.2 percent. Including the time when the cameras are deployed but not recording would result in an even lower failure rate.
How many times were internal investigations opened for a failure to turn on BWCs during interactions?	There were four internal investigations. The misconduct was sustained in three cases, and counseling or discipline was issued. The fourth case was found to be justified, within policy.	There were 23 internal investigations with the following dispositions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exonerated: 9 • Unfounded: 2 • Sustained: 12
How many times were BWC recordings used by MPD in internal affairs investigations?	1	83

Reporting Requirement	January 1 - June 29, 2015	June 30 - December 31, 2015
How many times were BWC recordings used by MPD to investigate complaints made by an individual or group?	0	7
How many body-worn cameras were assigned to each police district and police unit for the reporting period?	In Phase I, which is all that is covered in the reporting period, MPD was evaluating five different camera models. Therefore at any one time, only 18 cameras were deployed to each of the seven districts.	In Phase II, 200 BWC were deployed to 7D and 5D for a total of 400 BWC.
How many Freedom of Information Act requests did MPD receive for body-worn camera recordings during the reporting period? What was the outcome of each request, including any reasons for denial?	<p>Five FOIA requests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four were denied in full due to privacy (D.C. Official Code § 2-534(a)(2) and (a)(3)(C)) (Unable to redact) • One was closed (Deemed Withdrawn) for failure to furnish identification / authorization. The request for footage was part of a larger request for records of an individual implicating a privacy interest under D.C. Official Code § 2-534(a)(2) and (a)(3)(C). 	<p>Three new FOIA requests in this reporting period, all of which were denied as there were no responsive videos.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three of the five previously closed have been reopened and are being fulfilled. Two of these reopened requests are identical, with 41 responsive videos. As of March 22nd, 12 of these have been redacted. • The third reopened request has 35 responsive videos. As of March 22nd, none of these videos have been redacted. <p>MPD is communicating with these requestors as we try to find new redaction vendors after the closure of the one we had been using.</p>