

BODY-WORN VIDEO IN POLICING

About us

About CoPaCC

CoPaCC was established shortly after the first PCC elections in November 2012 to monitor policing governance in England and Wales. CoPaCC now has a portfolio of services, working together to help organisations meet their governance and management challenges and opportunities.

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Cover image: Metropolitan Police

Contributor quotes

'We are able to close down many complaints, and very quickly – this includes serious complaints that would usually go to the IPCC'

Inspector Tim Coombe, Avon and Somerset Police

'A verbal reminder at the start of an encounter nudges everyone to think about their actions more consciously'

Dr Barak Ariel, criminologist at the University of Cambridge

'A public opinion survey reported that there was an overwhelmingly positive attitude towards police use of cameras'

Emmeline Taylor, Co-Director of the Surveillance Studies Network at the University of Surrey

"There was no significant difference between officers wearing BWV or not in their levels of assault. This mirrors the results for arrests for all violent crime"

College of Policing

'We are only just beginning to understand the ramifications of applying this technology on the frontline of policing'

Alex Sutherland, Research leader at RAND Europe

'Nothing prevents mental health trusts and their police forces sitting down to discuss body-worn video'

Insp Michael Brown, Mental Health Cop Blog

'The key technical challenges are about managing the large quantity of data while ensuring that it meets data protection requirements'

Superintendent Ian Wylie, Avon and Somerset Police

'The cameras were viewed as a tactical tool with the potential for increasing the number of guilty pleas'

Gary Mason, Policing Insight contributor

'Forces now have more choice – if they want to go cheap, there's choice there but also if you want the best and want to be future proof, that's available too'

Rini Chacko, Reveal Media

'The acquisition, cost and deployment of body-worn cameras is far from being given a solid tick of approval and further scrutiny of the use of the technology is needed'

Renate Sampson, Big Brotherwatch

About the authors

Policing Insight team

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Contributors



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Kevin Donoghue is the Solicitor Director of Donoghue Solicitors. He specialises in civil actions against the police and is a supporter of the police's use of body-worn cameras.

Special thanks also to policing, government, academic and industry experts who made time for our team

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Foreword

A game-changer for policing

Body-worn video offers improved detection rates, better quality evidence and more early guilty pleas, but the legislation, infrastructure and training must be in place to make best use of the technology, writes **Bernard Rix**



Bernard Rix
Chief Executive of CoPaCC

Since its establishment in late 2012, CoPaCC has published a number of Thematic reports focusing on key topics in policing. Amongst our most recent Thematics, we have provided early insight on the likely implications of Brexit for policing and security; taken a detailed look at police and fire collaboration, with a particular focus on PCCs taking on fire governance; and examined the potential impact of drones on policing. This latest CoPaCC Thematic takes a detailed look at UK policing's use of body-worn video.

Body-worn video (BWV) is already a vital tool in the fight against crime. Improved detection rates, better evidence and more early guilty pleas are all persuasive arguments for investment in BWV, but any such investment in technology needs to be accompanied by appropriate adjustments to policing process; clear training in the use of BWV; and the adherence to principles governing their proper use.

This CoPaCC Thematic provides an independent examination of body worn video. It brings together key information on the technology and its use, providing a reference document for practitioners and researchers alike. The Thematic consists of 21 articles looking at each relevant aspect of BWV use, including its impact on professional standards and public intervention, as well as the challenges that this technology provides for procurement and implementation.

Gary Mason begins by summarising police use of BWV and how it has affected interactions with the public. This leads into Tina Orr-Munro's examination

of what has fast established itself as a vital tool for officers, and for good reason. Despite their burgeoning popularity, there is currently no legislation directly regulating BWV use, instead police forces must negotiate a dizzying array of laws and codes of practice that guide officers on the best use of the technology, so Tina has delved into the details to provide the necessary clarity.

Meanwhile, Graham Jarvis explores the ethical questions posed by BWV and finds that officers must show due regard to their ethical use to preserve the current level of public support for their use.

A special thanks to our guest authors

I'd like here to record my thanks to all those who have written, or provided input for, the articles in this Thematic. These authors include external subject matter authorities as well as regular Policing Insight contributors and members of the wider CoPaCC team. In addition, I'd like to record my particular thanks for an outstanding job to Ian Barrett, who has project managed this CoPaCC Thematic from start to finish.

CoPaCC has two further Thematics currently in production: on OPCC Transparency, and on Police ICT. In addition, we will shortly be starting work on two further Thematics to be published early in the New Year. I and my CoPaCC colleagues are always open to suggestions on what topics we should address: please feel free to contact any one of us to let us have your views.

In the meantime, I am confident that you will find this BWV Thematic useful. Do also contact me or any of my colleagues with any comment or feedback you might have. ❖

Introduction

Developing picture: Police use of BWV

British police force trials of body-worn videos systems have assessed how they affect police work and interactions with the public – these efforts have exposed as many questions as they answered



Gary Mason
Policing Insight contributor

The first large-scale use of body-worn video cameras within UK policing took place in 2007 in Plymouth with a small-scale Home Office project using 50 bulky camera kits.

Devon & Cornwall Constabulary conducted a six-month pilot on the use of the devices primarily in the business, evening and night time economy areas of central Plymouth.

The pilot involved the use of 50 cameras by 300 trained officers during day and night patrols.

The pilot focused on the cameras' effect on violence related incidents including alcohol related violence, violence in public places and domestic violence.

'The cameras were viewed as a tactical tool with the potential for increasing the number of guilty pleas'

The camera units were mounted on a headband and linked by wire to a hard drive. The head cameras were clearly visible and officers carried a small screen, the size of a small camera or mobile phone, on which they could review recorded footage.

The trials were monitored by the Home Office and researchers from the University of Portsmouth. Results from this initial pilot were mixed. On the positive side members of the public surveyed said they had noticed a reduction in disorder and anti-social behaviour in Plymouth during the trials.

However the feedback from officers was less positive. Users of the equipment found it bulky and officers chosen to test the cameras reported side-effects including "nausea after prolonged use".

Tactical tool

But despite these drawbacks the potential of the cameras to capture evidence – particularly in relation to domestic violence incidents when information gathered at the scene of first police contact with both the victim and the alleged perpetrator of an assault can be significant – was picked up by other police forces who would become the early adopters of the technology.

The opportunity to improve police accountability and public confidence in the police service was also noted. The cameras were also viewed as a tactical tool with the potential for increasing the number of guilty pleas and reducing the number of malicious complaints against officers if their actions during encounters with suspect were routinely recorded. These early adopter forces included Hampshire, Sussex, Derbyshire, Leicestershire, two Scottish forces – Strathclyde and Grampian Police

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– and the British Transport Police in Scotland. By 2010, body-worn video systems were being used in some 40 police force areas either in pilots or as procured systems. But this was an anarchic period with forces trialling/procuring cameras ad hoc with little thought to standards, specification, interoperability, data storage, user policy, ethics or training.

Admissible evidence

There were a number of questions that were unanswered about the technology not least of which was would the camera footage be admissible as evidence for a criminal prosecution?

This question was answered in October 2010 when the British Transport Police in Strathclyde became the first force to obtain permission to submit visual and audio evidence taken by the cameras to the public prosecutor following a successful pilot on Glasgow's subway.

Meanwhile the technology was also being adopted by police forces internationally – most notably in the US and Australia – where public demand for greater accountability involving the police use of force against ethnic minority suspects had become a critical issue. In 2014 President Obama promised to spend \$263

'Their hesitation to implement a written policy was due to a lack of guidance on what the policies should include'

million in Federal funds on body-worn video in an attempt to restore public trust in the wake of the killing of several unarmed black men by police in different parts of the US.

But despite the perceived need for the technology its adoption and use was just as chaotic. A survey of US police agencies conducted by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) in 2013 showed that of the 63 agencies that reported using body-worn cameras,

nearly one-third did not have a written policy governing body-worn camera usage. Many police executives reported that their hesitation to implement a written policy was due to a lack of guidance on what the policies should include.

The study highlighted the important issues surrounding officer discretion when using body-worn video. The decision on when and when not to record

'We want our officers to go out, get out of their cars, and talk to the public to establish an informal relationship'

was highlighted by agencies outside the US including the UK's Metropolitan Police where the then commissioner Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe called for more clarity on the issue.

Under pressure

The Met had come under strong pressure in January 2014 to introduce BWV technology for all officers following an inquest into the death of Mark Duggan who was shot dead by firearms officers in August 2011 in Tottenham, North London. The inquest verdict that Mr Duggan had been unlawfully killed provoked widespread community anger.

The commissioner announced a BWV pilot straight after the verdict but his misgivings about officer discretion and more practical issues, such as whether the equipment should be worn by covert armed teams, continued.

At the time of the PERF research Sir Bernard said: "In London we have CCTV, which is quite extensive and becoming even more so, but the distinction is that those cameras don't listen to your conversations. They observe behaviour and see what people do and cover public space, so you can see if there is a crime being committed. But CCTVs don't generally seek out individuals. So I think there is an important distinction there."

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This issue of officer discretion and accountability became crucial and other senior chief constables in the UK waded into the argument. Sir Peter Fahy, then chief constable of Greater Manchester Police commented: "We want our officers to go out, get out of their cars, and talk to the public about football or whatever it may be to establish an informal relationship. That's how you build partnerships and persuade people to give you information about crime in their area.

"I think if we say that every single interaction is going to be recorded, the danger is that it will lead to a more officious relationship. Maybe the public will get used to it, just as in our country they've gotten used to cameras on the streets. But as we start off, I think there's a danger that every interaction will become a formal interaction, and the informal relationships may be eroded."

'There was a fear that body-worn cameras would erode the trust between officers and management'

There was also the fear that body-worn cameras would erode the trust between officers and management. Concerns included that some officers would view the cameras as a signal that their supervisors and managers did not trust them, and worries that supervisors would use the cameras to track and scrutinise their every move.

In the early days of camera adoption some police forces allowed periodic monitoring to help proactively identify problems and hold officers accountable for their performance. Other agencies permitted periodic monitoring only in certain circumstances, such as when an officer was still in a probationary period or after an officer has received a certain number of complaints.

Greater Manchester Police, for example, encouraged supervisors to randomly review camera footage in order to "hold officers accountable and give them incentive to record."

Crucial questions

These crucial officer discretion issues and other vital questions about technical standards and retention and storage of footage were only seriously addressed with the establishment of the national police user group for BWV headed up by Inspector Stephen Goodier of Hampshire Police. At the same time credible academic research into the results of a number of live trials of BWV both in the UK and internationally by the Rand Corporation and Cambridge University, would go on to provide telling evidence of its effectiveness.

The group which liaised closely with the Home Office's Centre for Applied Science and Technology (CAST) was responsible for setting up technical standards relating to image quality, the storage of data, editing for evidentiary purposes and interoperability.

Speaking at a police technology conference organised by Taser International (later to change its name to Axon) in London in May 2015 Insp. Goodier had a realistic message of the progress UK policing had made in meeting those requirements. He said: "We can capture the video, we can bring it into our organisation but then it all gets a bit clunky. We are burning to a disc in most cases so we are not really yet seeing the full benefits of this technology. That is what I see as my main goal."

Milestones

The user group helped established two significant milestone documents.

In 2014, CAST published [technical guidelines](#) for body-worn video which set out minimum requirements that all BWV devices should be able to provide simultaneous and time synched video and audio recordings with files that can be exported without damage to the data quality.

They also stipulated that devices do not allow files to be deleted or edited and that recordings should be time and date stamped.

Since the first trials of bulky and mostly head mounted cameras the technology had matured by this time. In the UK at least, the cameras had devel-

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oped into small self-contained palm-size units that clipped on to police uniforms. The cameras had an outward-facing screen, so it's clear to the suspect or witness that they are being filmed. They were also simple to operate, with the flick of a switch and once filmed nothing could be deleted from the unit and the information is fully encrypted.

But adopter forces were also realising that the back office data storage and data management part of the BWV process was at least, if not more than, important and cost loaded as the hardware. In August of the same year the College of Policing published long awaited [guidelines for the police use of body-worn video](#). Among the key points was that BWV must always be overtly used and the continuous non-specific use of the technology was not allowed.

Officer discretion

Police officers are instructed to make incident-specific decisions about when to record, although there should be a tendency towards recording incidents, particularly when conducting a stop and search and when attending domestic abuse incidents. Non-evidential recordings must be destroyed after 31 days.

The College of Policing's guidelines suggest that BWV material should be used to corroborate and support, rather than replace traditional forms of evidence such as written statements or interview. Work is in progress to look at the use of BWV in suspect interviews outside of custody. However, it remains unclear how the increasing availability of BWV evidence will affect perceptions of traditional forms of evidence, and if BWV evidence will be given more weight in court. For example, DNA and other types of forensic evidence are typically viewed by jurors as more accurate and persuasive, which has been termed the 'CSI effect'.

But perhaps the biggest legitimiser of the technology to date has been the extensive trials of BWV conducted by police forces within the last three years including the Essex Police Domestic Violence study in the first part of 2014 and the Hampshire Constabulary Isle of Wight Study from 2013-14.

The first study examining the use of police BWV to be published in a scientific journal was conducted in Rialto California, in the US in 2014. This examined the impact of BWV by measuring the number of incidents of police use-of-force and complaints made by the public over a 12-month period for one police force.

The largest in the UK was the 2015 trial in the Metropolitan Police which led to its £3.4 million invest-

'Perhaps the biggest legitimiser of the technology to date has been the extensive trials of BWV conducted by police forces within the last three years'

ment in cameras with the support of the London Mayor's Office. During the controlled trial a detailed study was made of approximately 500 police officers who were randomly assigned to wearing a camera whilst on duty against 750 officers who did not wear a camera whilst on duty across 10 London boroughs. The pilot was audited and reviewed by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime and the College of Policing.

Fewer malicious complaints

College of Policing research into the pilot showed that malicious complaints against the police fell sharply. Where officers were wearing cameras, there was a 33 per cent reduction in allegations against them according to Nerys Thomas, head of research at the College.

The trial led to the award in 2015 of a contract to Axon for what was claimed to be the largest rollout of body worn cameras by police anywhere in the world. In a phased roll-out starting in October last year 22,000 cameras will be operated by the Met. London Mayor Sadiq Khan, said: "Body-worn video is a huge step forward in bringing our capital's police force into the 21st century and encouraging trust and confidence in community policing." ❖

Using body-worn video

Body-worn video: A vital tool for policing

Improved detection rates, better evidence and more early guilty pleas are all convincing reasons to invest in body-worn video (BWV), but these cannot be realised without adhering to certain principles that regulate their proper use



Tina Orr-Munro
Associate editor, Policing Insight

BWV is now considered a vital tool in the fight against crime. It has been seen to improve detection rates, improve the quality of evidence, increase the number of early pleas, reduce the number of police complaints or resolve them more quickly and provide better support for victims and witnesses.

Generally, officers are now expected to wear BWV to any incident where they are likely to gather evidence. Any recording can be used as evidence even if it appears that this is unlikely. Ultimately, the decision to film an incident remains with the officer who is guided by a number of factors such as the nature of the incident itself and whether filming it is proportionate, legitimate, necessary and justifiable. Officers should record the incident even if there are other officers present who also have BWV and, if they don't, they should be prepared to explain themselves in court.

Seven principles

Officers cannot just go out and record entire duties or patrols. To help them, seven guiding principles are laid out in the Body Worn Guidance published in 2014 by the College of Policing. Principle three outlines how to use BWV in the following situations: domestic abuse incidents, stop and search, recording scenes and searches of premises, using BWV in private dwell-

ings, first witness accounts, domestic abuse incidents and patrolling the night time economy.

BWV has been used very effectively in domestic abuse incident, demonstrating the power of the technology early on in its implementation. A 2014 trial by Essex police showed BWV could increase the proportion of detections that were criminal charges. In what is often a highly-charged and chaotic situation,

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The seven principles

- Police use of body-worn video is lawful.
- Data will be processed and managed in line with Code of Practice on the Management of Police Information, APP on Information Management and the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998.
- The normal use of BWV will be overt.
- The operational use of BWV must be proportionate, legitimate and necessary.
- Use of BWV will be incident specific. Officers will use common sense and sound judgement in support of the principles of best evidence.
- BWV does not replace conventional forms of evidence gathering, it supports them.
- Forces will consult locally on the use of BWV.

CLICK HERE

Guidance
College of Policing
Body-Worn Video (2014)
college.police.uk



Using body-worn video

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BWV provides an immediate and exact record of the incident throughout including the emotional effect on the victim, their family and other witnesses.

Similarly, BWV is used to film the night-time economy, including offences such as violence and anti-social behaviour centred around licensed premises. Again, it allows officers to capture the whole event including the behaviour of those concerned whose own perceptions maybe distorted through alcohol.

Crime scenes

Crime scenes and searching premises also lend themselves well to BWV. In particular, they are regularly used in road traffic collisions because it provides an accurate, visual record of items such as debris following a collision. As well as showing the exact location of items whether that is on a high-way or during a search, it also shows the manner in which that search was carried out, enhancing openness and transparency.

'BWV provides an immediate and exact record of the incident throughout, including the emotional effect on the victim and other witnesses'

Unsurprisingly, BWV is used as a training aid, allowing forces to review their handling of incidents and, where necessary, improve their approach. It can be a powerful tool to influence behavioural change and promote improvement and professionalism, but it is entirely up to forces if they use BWV in this way.

BWV is also used in more controversial settings such as Stop and Search. There is nothing in PACE codes that allows an officer to photograph or film a person stopped, but equally, there is no power prohibiting it either. Despite this, and given the sensitivities around Stop and Search in terms of the negative

Training

The success of BWV relies on the ability of its operator to ensure it is used correctly. It is down to a force to decide which of its frontline will be trained to use BWV. Typically, but not exclusively, they may include response and neighbourhood policing teams, CID and safeguarding teams.

Officers and staff must be trained before the kit is issued to them and it is the forces' responsibility to ensure the training equips the officers to use the kit as outlined in national and force guidance. The training can vary from force to force, but most offer a mix of e-learning and practical demonstration. Training is also given in DEMS (Digital Evidence Management System) software which is used to upload and handle footage as well as provide the evidential trail.

Generally, staff complete an online learning package which they can access through the force's intranet system. This may cover the theory and legislative aspects of using BWV. This is then followed up by a practical training session which might cover photographic principles, functionality, editing and benefits from an operational perspective. Most forces have a Specific Point of Contact (SPOC) who oversees the use of BWV post training, in the field. A key individual, their role is to ensure users continue to comply with legislation and policy. The SPOC may also ensure new officers, such as transferees, are trained to use the device. They may also be briefed on changes which they disseminate to frontline users. Some forces also have a 'champion' at district level who has enhanced use and understanding of BWV and is available to guide and support colleagues.

impact it can have on communities, there are clear recommendations governing its use. It cannot be used for the express purpose of identifying a person and it does not replace a written record. If a person asks an officer to stop filming them, the officer must

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Using body-worn video

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consider the necessity and proportionality of their actions when deciding whether to continue.

Filming in private dwellings, although allowed, can also be highly contentious. Article 8 of the ECHR protects people's right to privacy and filming can be considered intrusive. Consequently, there must be a clear policing need for filming to take place. It must be relevant to the incident and necessary for gathering evidence.

First-hand accounts

BWV is also used to film first-hand accounts of victims or witnesses. However, there are caveats to this. The NPCC advises that it should not always be used to capture the first-hand account in cases that do not require an immediate response.

The officer must gain the victim or witness' permission if the crime is serious or involves children or

vulnerable adults. This is because vulnerable adults and children have the right to anonymity and can opt out of being visually recorded to protect their identity in court.

Again, filming does not replace a written statement, but it can be used as supporting evidence.

There are a range of circumstances where BWV must not be used. Initial accounts of rape or serious assault should not be recorded, neither should inti-

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Guidance
College of Policing
Body-Worn Video (2014)
college.police.uk



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Guidance
Independent Police Complaints Commission
Body worn video - IPCC position
and recommendations
ipcc.gov.uk



Best practice in securing evidence

All forces issue guidance on best practice use of BWV. Ultimately, the aim is to capture as much evidence as possible and, while this isn't intended replace written evidence, it can provide powerful supporting evidence.

Officers should start recording at the beginning of an incident, but ensure the recording is confined to the areas and the people necessary to obtain evidence and intelligence related to the incident, avoiding what is known as collateral intrusion.

If it is practical, officers need to announce to those present that their BWV is turned on. They also need to say what the date, time and location is so it is audibly captured by their BWV. Officers can give a running commentary if it includes salient details such a strong smell of cannabis that cannot be caught on film.

Ideally, the recording must continue uninterrupted from the moment it starts until a little time after the end of the incident. If possible, the officer should tell everyone present that the recording is about to end.

They should again include the date, time and location, and reason for ending the recording again. As the recorded data becomes police information and is subject to the Code of Practice on the Management of Police Information it must not be deleted.

However, it is possible that an officer may decide to suspend a recording, maybe because of the sensitive nature of the incident. This is called selective capture and, if practical, the decision and rationale behind interrupting filming should be audibly recorded. It is likely that BWV users will encounter victims, offenders and witnesses as well as recording the visual evidence at the scene itself.

Bookmarking refers to suspending film to separate footage. It enables the user to separate these different encounters to allow for easier disclosure at a later date.

Officers must announce they are doing this, including giving the reason. This decision also needs to be recorded in a PNB or similar log. The footage is then uploaded to the server.

Using body-worn video

'Users must also respect legal privilege and not record material that is subject to such protections'

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Guidance
College of Policing
Body-Worn Video (2014)
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Guidance
National Police Chiefs' Council
Using Body Worn Video for recording initial contact with victims, witnesses and suspects
npcc.police.uk



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mate searches or any instances where a person is in a state of undress. Users must also respect legal privilege and not record material that is, or is likely to be, subject to such protections. When recording in areas where individuals would have a strong expectation of privacy, clear justification is required for using BWV.

BWV should not be used for formal investigations nor can BWV currently be used for interviewing suspects as it contravenes PACE Code C. It is also currently unsuitable for recording interviews with vulnerable or intimidated witnesses and victims. Officers also need to be beware of situations that might cause serious offence, for example, during religious worship. ❖

Interviewing victims, witnesses and suspects

The decision to film a victim or a witness rests with the officer and depends on a number of important factors. Initial or first accounts from adult victims should only be recorded if the officer considers it practical and appropriate. Any initial disclosure from a witness or victim recorded by BWV should be treated as evidential recording and submitted to the investigating officer.

Witnesses or victims giving their first account of a crime can be recorded using BWV, but this needs to be decided upon within the context of the offence reported. For example, there are issues around using BWV if the alleged offence involves a child under 18 or a vulnerable adult. Children and vulnerable adults have the right not to be identified and, as evidence, BWV is subject to disclosure to the defence.

In serious sexual offences, the victim must give explicit and informed consent before their account is recorded. If the person doesn't want to be filmed, the officer could move the camera lens and record the audio only. However, the officer would still need explicit consent to do this. If the victim is unsure or uncomfortable the advice is not to film them. In cases where it isn't clear what the allegation is and the officer has already switched their BWV on, they must

tell the victims and witnesses that they are being recorded. These initial accounts should not usually be recorded by the BWV other than at the scene of an incident or alleged offence.

Recording witness first accounts does not replace the need for formal written statements from victims or witness, but can be used as supporting evidence.

Suspects

During a planned arrest, BWV should be used to record everything that is said and done by the suspect at point of arrest and caution to ensure an accurate and reliable record. If an officer doesn't turn on their BWV, they will have to justify their reasons. Where an arrest is unplanned, officers are advised to have their BWV switched on.

However, BWV should not be used to record interview of suspects under caution which occur at a police station. It may be used to record interviews which take place other than a police station. Again, a written statement would still be required.

Please note: as this thematic went to press, a consultation period on using BWV for interviews with suspects away from the police station was underway. See Body-Worn Video and the Law (page 15) for more details.

Using body-worn video

Body-worn video and the law

Currently, there is no legislation directly regulating the use of body-worn video, instead police forces have to negotiate a dizzying array of laws and codes of practice that guide officers on the best use of the technology



Tina Orr-Munro
Associate editor, Policing Insight

There is currently no legislation directly relating to the lawful use of body-worn video by police officers. Instead, there is what appears, on the surface, to be an almost dizzying array of legislation and codes of practice that covers its usage. This includes:

- Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984
- Data Protection Act 1998
- The European Convention on Human Rights
- Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 as amended by the 2016 Act
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- The Surveillance Camera Code of Practice

The issue is whether or not the current plethora of legislation and guidance enables police officers to make the best use of body-worn video (BWV) or should the legislation be changed to better reflect this modern police technique?

For many in the police service, the answer is yes. BWV is now prevalent throughout policing and there is a growing sense that police practice needs to make the most of modern technology. There is a belief that the use of BWV could and should be extended, especially to enable suspects to be interviewed away from the police station which would save officers an enormous amount of time.

Consequently, the Home Office has now published a six-week [consultation](#) on changes to PACE Codes of Practice which include clarifying the occasions when officers are able to record suspect interviews visually and orally away from the police station, which includes the use of BWV.

Significant changes to the content and format of Codes E and F are proposed which introduce an up to date approach to the audio (Code E) and visual recording (Code F) of suspect interviews. The aim, says the Home Office is to provide 'clarity, consistency and more effective and efficient recording of interviews, with improved safeguards for suspects and the police'.

Using BWV to record interviews

Under the proposals and provided the BWV is deemed a suitably compliant authorised recording device, it could now be used for the recording of any suspect interview, irrespective of the type of offence and whether or not the suspect has been arrested, provided certain conditions are fulfilled.

Circumstances allowing a written interview record to be made remain and are re-defined. A 'relevant' officer (such as the custody officer, a sergeant or the interviewing officer) is created who has the responsibility for determining that such a device is not available or cannot be used and that the interview should not be delayed until such time that it can be audio recorded.

For Code F, the changes to Code E are mirrored by

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Using body-worn video

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setting out the requirements that apply for the purposes of making a visual recording with sound. The aim of this approach is to:

- make it clear that a visual recording with sound comprises an audio recording made in accordance with Code E together with a simultaneous visual recording;
- avoid replication of the full Code E provisions that apply to all audio recorded interviews; and
- clarify and extend the circumstances under which police may make a visual recording to include the use of 'BWV' equipment.

'A written statement will always be necessary as someone will always have to prove the integrity of the recording ... My question would be, why not just include everything?'

The Home Office is quick to point out that the new plans set out in full suspects' rights and entitlements and also include an all-encompassing definition of vulnerability, so that it is clear when interviews must be conducted with independent support for the suspect from an appropriate adult and, if one is requested, a solicitor.

Timely proposals

The proposals are well overdue, specifically the re-defined approach to the interviewing of suspects away from the police station. The ability to make use of the BWV as a suitable compliant recording device has been requested for some time and Code E is specific about how that can be used.

Under Code F Para 2.2 there continues to be no statutory requirement to visually record an interview with a suspect but that is now qualified where the relevant

officer feels one is advisable eg where the suspect is 'vulnerable'. Sadly for practical and logistical reasons BWV is not able to be used to visually record a suspect interview in accordance with Code F. These will have to continue for now in a properly equipped suite.

The introduction of a relevant officer, classification of offences and associated decision-making processes immediately identifies training needs for those officers concerned.

Significant changes

These changes to the PACE Codes are significant and will ensure that the BWV is used more effectively, specifically in the recording of suspect interviews. However the demands will continue for BWVs in general to replace the current principles of evidence gathering and presentation within the criminal justice system. Is that possible without compromising the integrity of that legal process?

Nigel Hughes is the former head of the Police National Legal Database (PNLD), a legal database that all forces currently subscribe to which offers the most up-to-date legislation and guidance to law enforcement officers.

He says, "I think we have to remember why BWV was originally introduced. It was to provide the basis for recording of live evidence to which both witnesses and police officers and users could later refer either when making their own statements or when interviewing suspects at police stations.

"I would love to see the day when film footage is presented as the only evidence at court and accepted as a true record of everything that occurred. It seems an obvious route to take. The lesser cases are already dealt with using a brief summary from the officer in the case with the knowledge that the video is available should it be required.

"However, a written statement will always be necessary as someone will always have to prove the integrity of the recording and that needs a statement for continuity purposes. My question would be, why not just include everything?"

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Using body-worn video

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Mr Hughes says the issue also calls into question the best evidence rule which has its roots in 18th century law and is a legal principle that holds an original copy of a document as superior evidence. The rule specifies that secondary evidence, such as a copy or facsimile, will be not admissible if an original document exists and can be obtained.

He believes this also applies to body-worn video which means that there is unlikely to be time when film footage can replace written statements as the best evidence available.

He says: "In terms of changing the law to smooth process or replace traditional forms of evidence gathering, the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984 as we have most recently seen, is continually being amended to accommodate changes in technology and society, reflecting differing views. PACE can and will continue to be amended in order to help officers acquire evidence so there is no need for additional legislation."

Proof and acquisition

Mr Hughes adds: "However, acquiring evidence is different to proving evidence. This is where the best evidence rule, which has guided us for 200 years, comes into play. To replace written statements with body worn video would effectively be dissolving this rule. It may appear to the lay person that camera footage offers concrete evidence of something happening, but any defence lawyer as well as the CPS will attest that it is not incontrovertible. Any decent defence lawyer will be able to dismantle evidence offered by body-worn video footage.

"As the officer, you make the decision to turn that camera on. It is down to you to put that film footage into context. That is why written statements will always be needed to provide context to the incident. body-worn video can only support this. It can never replace it."

"There is also a Human Rights aspect to this in that officers will always have to be clear and precise about turning the camera on otherwise this evidence will be

tainted. As soon as the officer makes the decision to turn the camera on the chain of continuity of evidence begins. Evidentially the value of body-worn video lies in that it paints a picture of what happened. It is a part of the case, but not the whole case. It may even swing the pendulum in the favour of the prosecution, but you will always have to build on it."

"I understand the desire to streamline the criminal justice system, but to create what would be changing a fundamental principle which doesn't infringe the right to a fair trial or the best evidence rule is probably a step too far."

Training need

Mr Hughes believes that the focus should be on training officers to understand the implications of BWV rather than seeking legislative changes.

"It's a training issue. Officers need to understand early on that they are responsible for the footage. It is not a case of job done when you've turned the camera off, but understanding that it goes through a process for which they hold an element of responsibility."

In terms of managing the data, Mr Hughes says that the rules governing CCTV (CCTV Code of Practice) which were formulated 35 years ago more than suffice for BWV. The CCTV Code of Practice sets out the Information Commissioner's recommendations on how organisations can process personal data within the legal requirements of the Data Protection Act when using these technologies.

Further guidance was issued by the Home Office in 2016 on safeguarding data from BWV and the College of Policing in 2014. An Authorised Professional Practice on BWV is due. ❖

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Guidance
Information Commissioner's Office
A data protection code of practice for surveillance cameras and personal information
ico.org.uk



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Guidance
Centre for Applied Science and Technology
Safeguarding Body Worn Video (BWV) Data
gov.uk



Using body-worn video

Preserving ethics, privacy and human rights

The public's overwhelming support for body-worn video in policing cannot be taken for granted. Officers must show due regard to their ethical use to preserve this goodwill – adhering to a code of practice is therefore vital



Graham Jarvis
Policing Insight contributor

Every profession needs to have a code of practice, outlining the ethics that everyone working within it should ideally follow. Police forces aren't immune to this need. Having a [code of ethics](#) for the use and implementation of [body-worn video](#) (BWV) cameras, for example, protects both the officers using them during incidents that they deem require their use, and the rights of the subjects of any footage they take. The cameras themselves have their benefits too. They increase the likelihood of someone involved in

'A public opinion survey reported that there was an overwhelmingly positive attitude towards police use of cameras'

crime and charged with an offence pleading guilty, and they reduce the number of complaints against individual forces and police officers. The cameras are also supported by the public.

Emmeline Taylor, Co-Director of the Surveillance Studies Network at the University of Surrey, says the

findings of a public opinion survey that took place on the Isle of Wight around 2015 reported that there was an "overwhelmingly positive public attitude towards police use of cameras, premised on the belief that they could assist with the gathering of evidence, identifying criminals, increasing convictions, improving training, and improving disciplinary procedures." Although the details of the source aren't given, the most surveys find that the public is very much behind the BWV cameras.

Ethical use

Mick Kelly, Head of Communications to the Surveillance Camera Commissioner at Home Office Science, which is part of the Home Office, then explains how forces are ensuring that they use body-worn video ethically. He says police forces "are required to comply with the [Surveillance Camera Code of Practice](#), which was created under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012." He adds that police forces are "relevant forces" under Section 33(5) of the Act, and as such they "must show due regard to complying with the code."

Working hard

He claims that the Surveillance Camera Commissioner has worked hard with police forces in England and Wales whenever they have been rolling out BWV cameras to ensure that they comply with its

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Using body-worn video



WEST MIDLANDS POLICE/FLICOR (CREATIVE COMMONS)

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12 guiding principles. A key stricture of the code requires BWV cameras to be used effectively, transparently and proportionally. To support the work to ensure that forces are compliant, a third-party certification scheme is operating. Forces that comply with the code, like The Met and Greater Manchester Police have, receive a certification mark to show their compliance. "The full certification lasts 5 years from the data the certification mark is issued," he states.

Quality mark

The concept behind the mark is similar to a British Standards Institute kite mark or to a European Union CE quality mark. To achieve full certification, each force's use of BWV cameras must be audited by a certification body. A March 2017 press release by accreditation body, the Security Systems Alarms Inspection Board (SSAIB), cites Sam Harvey – the Metropolitan Police's Policy Lead, Digital Policing – who notes: "Achieving full certification has been a vital aspect of our assurance to the public that body-worn video is being used effectively in the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)."

He adds in the release: "The Surveillance Camera Commissioner's comprehensive guiding principles

'Achieving full certification has been a vital aspect of our assurance to the public that body-worn video is being used effectively'

have been invaluable for our BWV policy and rollout of the world's largest deployment of BWV. Independent accreditation for compliance has been a rewarding and enjoyable experience, both during document audits and on-site visits at key police stations in London. We anticipate that the MPS will continue to use the SCC framework in annual reviews and will work closely with the SCC in continuing to recognise the implications of BWV and maintaining this lead in best practice."

Forces such as Bedfordshire Police and Cambridgeshire Police are actively set out to create policy documents too, with the determination to comply with the code and to ensure that BWV camera best practice is followed by all of its officers. In January 2016, the London Policing Panel – which was chaired by Lord Carlile of Berriew CBE, QC – also produced a report after the

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Using body-worn video

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panel was established by former London Mayor, Boris Johnson to “provide ethical advice on policing issues that may impact on public confidence.” To achieve this, the panel recommended that the Metropolitan Police “accompany its roll-out of BWV with a strong public information programme to explain in plain language, why and how the new technology is being introduced. Amongst other things it suggests: “The MPS should consider what clearer guidance might be given to officers in regard to the proportionate use of BWV.”

Data protection

Yet proportionality isn't the only ethical concern. Data protection and privacy are just as important. “Data collected about individuals is covered by the Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998, but it is problematic as the

'Many forces require the deletion of footage in 30 days unless it is tagged as evidence, but citizens have 12 months to lodge a complaint'

vast array of scenarios and organisations that it has to cover makes it rather vague in places,” explains Taylor. Schedule 1 to the Data Protection Act outlines 8 principles, one of which, she says is:

“Personal data shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose or purposes for which they are processed.”

She then explains that there is a dilemma to face with regards to the interpretation of this principle: “How do we define ‘excessive’? What might be considered excessive by one individual might be regarded as reasonable by another. It is subjective and open to ambiguity.” The other principle she cites stresses that “Personal data shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.”

Subject access requests

Individuals that have been caught on BWV camera footage, or written about in police reports, can gain access to them under the DPA by making a subject access request for a small fee by contacting the data controller of the force involved with making and storing their data. “The force should then release the footage or data they have on the individual – although there are exemptions in the Data Protection Act which don't require them to do so,” explains Kelly. Yet after more than 30 days most forces delete any material on an individual unless that footage is deemed as evidence to support a case against some for court and Crown Prosecution purposes.

This policy, however, highlights a key problem. The main reason why footage and other data might be removed from a force's servers after this period is the cost of storage. Compliance is another reason. Dr. Alex Sutherland, Research Leader for Communities, Safety and Justice at RAND Europe, explains why this can be problematic: “Many forces are implementing data retention policies that require the deletion of footage in 30 days unless it is tagged as evidence, but citizens have 12 months to lodge a complaint – so the footage might not exist by the time the complaint is made unless an officer has tagged it.”

Kelly also mentions the Data Protection Bill, which is “being introduced to parliament as it was announced in the Queen's Speech, and there is a law enforcement directive that will be applicable to police forces.”

According to Kelly, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 covers the request for access to BWV policies of each force and to things such as their privacy assessments.

Privacy compliance

Police forces also have to comply with the Human Rights Act 1998 and the European Convention on Human Rights, Article 8. This states that individuals have a right to privacy and family life. It also stipulates: “There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society

Using body-worn video

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in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.”

Software: Protecting privacy

Regarding privacy, Sutherland comments: “Some forces are considering using software that automatically blurs faces recorded, meaning that suspects’ faces have to be ‘unblurred’ on request. Our proposal to keep cameras on poses challenges for privacy, but that was not something we were focused on because in our view

‘Studies have shown that jerky images present a misrepresentative depiction of a person’s behaviour, making the filmed individual appear erratic or agitated’

the first order question was whether cameras can actually be effective. As the cameras are attached to police officers, my question would be: Where is the distinction between “privacy” when a police officer can see or hear something, and where a camera attached to an officer can do the same?” The difference is perhaps that video footage can be played back.

From a privacy perspective, keeping a camera on – recording no matter what – is considered to be bad

practice as it could amount to a breach of privacy and be defined as disproportionate usage. Officers are therefore advised to warn people when they are about to turn on their BWV cameras, and only do so whenever it is necessary.

Taylor concludes by describing several other issues that warrant consideration. There’s the problem of BWV camera view bias where “observers of the footage are inclined to adopt the viewpoint of the persons whose perspective it captures.”

In other words, the viewer will tend to see the footage from the officer’s viewpoint, and she says there have been studies that have shown that jerky images present a misrepresentative depiction of a person’s behaviour, making the filmed individual “appear erratic or agitated, or even as though they are swaying as a result of inebriation.”

Issues to consider

So, whenever forces consider the ethics of BWV camera usage, they should not just think about following any best practice guidelines and assume that is all that’s necessary. They also need to consider how they can ensure that any footage taken is fair, accurate and contemporaneous.

Remember too, the Surveillance Code of Practice is just good practice advice. It isn’t law, but it’s worth following to demonstrate that your force is ethical and transparent – thereby achieving best practice compliance and full certification. ❖

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Guidance
College of Policing
Code of Ethics (2014)

college.police.uk



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Guidance
Surveillance Camera Commissioner
Surveillance camera code of practice

gov.uk



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Guidance
Surveillance Camera Commissioner
Code of practice: A guide to the 12 principles

gov.uk



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Research
University of Portsmouth
Evaluation of the Introduction of Body-Worn Video Cameras on the Isle of Wight

port.ac.uk



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Guidance
College of Policing
Body-Worn Video (2014)

college.police.uk



Professional standards

Reducing complaints

Body-worn video cameras have precipitated a significant drop in complaints against officers – while also exposing some of the bad ones



Gary Mason
Policing Insight contributor

One of the main drivers for body-worn video is the positive impact it would have in reducing complaints against the police. Results from a year-long study published in September last year of almost 2,000 officers across UK and US forces showed that wearable camera use led to a 93% drop in complaints made against police by the public.

The research led by the University of Cambridge's Institute of Criminology, took place across seven sites during 2014 and early 2015, including police from areas in the UK Midlands and the Californian coast in the US, and encompassing 1,429,868 officer hours across 4,264 shifts in jurisdictions that cover a total population of two million citizens.

"Cooling down potentially volatile police-public interactions to the point where official grievances against the police have virtually vanished may well lead to the conclusion that the use of body-worn cameras represents a turning point in policing," said Cambridge criminologist and lead author Dr Barak Ariel.

Dr Ariel worked with RAND Europe and six different police forces: West Midlands, Cambridgeshire, West Yorkshire, the Police Service of Northern Ireland, and Rialto and Ventura in California, to conduct the research. Across all seven trial sites during the 12 months preceding the study, a total of 1,539 complaints were lodged against police, amounting to 1.2 complaints per officer. By the end of the experiment, complaints had dropped to 113 across all sites – just 0.08 complaints per officer – a total reduction of 93%.

The police department in Rialto, California, was one of the agencies that took part in the University of Cambridge Institute of Criminology research. Over the

course of one year, it randomly assigned body-worn cameras to various frontline officers across 988 shifts. The study found that there was a 60% reduction in officer use of force incidents following camera deployment, and during the experiment, the shifts without cameras experienced twice as many use of force incidents as shifts with cameras. The study also noted an 88% reduction in the number of citizen complaints between the year prior to camera implementation and the year following deployment. Chief of Police William Farrar of Rialto, who oversaw the study, said: "Whether the reduced number of complaints was because of the officers behaving better or the citizens behaving better – well, it was probably a little bit of both."

'The study noted an 88% reduction in the number of citizen complaints'

A separate study conducted in Mesa, Arizona in 2012, also found that body-worn cameras were associated with a reduction in complaints. The Arizona State University study involved 100 officers, half of which were equipped with body-worn cameras. It found that during the first eight months of deployment, officers who did not have body-worn cameras had almost three times as many complaints as those who wore them. The study also found that the officers with cameras had 40% fewer total complaints and 75% fewer use of force complaints during the pilot program than they did during the prior year when they were not wearing cameras.

Drop in malicious complaints

Many agencies have found that having video footage of an encounter discourages people from filing

Professional standards

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unfounded complaints against officers. Several police departments included in research by the University of Cambridge's Institute of Criminology, including those in Daytona Beach, Florida, and Greenville, North Carolina, are finding that officers with a history of complaints are now actively requesting to wear cameras. For officers who behave properly but generate complaints because they have high levels of activity or frequent contacts with criminal suspects, cameras can be seen as beneficial. "We all have our small percentage of officers with a history of complaints," said Chief of Police Hassan Aden of Greenville. "Internal Affairs has told me that these officers have come in to request BWV cameras so that they can be protected."

Camera interference

This works both ways. The chief of Police in Daytona Beach requested that the officers with a history of complaints be among the first to be outfitted with body-worn cameras. Although he found that usually the videos demonstrated that "the majority of the officers are hardworking, good police," he has also seen how body-worn cameras can help an agency address discipline problems.

He added: "We had an officer who had several questionable incidents in the past, so we outfitted him with a camera. Right in the middle of an encounter with a subject, the camera goes blank, and then it comes back on when the incident is over. He said that the camera malfunctioned, so we gave him another one. A week later he goes to arrest a woman, and again, the camera goes blank just before the encounter. He claimed again that the camera had malfunctioned. So we conducted a forensic review of the camera, which determined that the officer had intentionally hit the power button right before the camera shut off. Our policy says that if you turn it off, you're done. He resigned the next day."

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Research
University of Cambridge
Use of body-worn cameras sees complaints against police 'virtually vanish', study finds
cam.ac.uk/research



Oversight agencies

The usefulness of BWV in helping to resolve complaints satisfactorily is now recognised by the oversight agencies responsible with dealing with these issues. The [Independent Police Complaints Commission](#) (IPCC) for example notes that "studies, albeit limited in scope, have shown that where police officers use BWV, complaints reduce significantly. Other results have shown a reduction in the use of force by police officers where BWV was being used."

But it also notes that "from a complaints handling and investigation perspective, initial written accounts are useful because they have the potential to record much more detail including the officer's perception of the event and how that informed their actions. This

'There was a 60% reduction in officer use of force incidents following camera deployment'

information can be pivotal in assessing whether an action was reasonable."

Police agencies in the US have also found that implementing a body-worn camera program can be useful when facing consent decrees and external investigations.

Roy Austin, deputy assistant attorney general for the Civil Rights Division at the US Department of Justice, said, "We want to get police departments out from under consent decrees as soon as possible. What is important is whether you can show that your officers are engaged in constitutional policing on a regular basis. Although it isn't an official Department of Justice policy, the Civil Rights Division believes that body-worn cameras can be useful for doing that." ❖

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Guidance
Independent Police Complaints Commission
Body worn video - IPCC position and recommendations
ipcc.gov.uk



Professional standards

Improved officer professionalism

Having a camera recording your actions increases officers' adherence to best practice while also exposing areas where training would be beneficial



Gary Mason
Policing Insight contributor

Research compiled in the US by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), with support from the US Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) 2014, conducted a detailed study of 500 police departments who are using the technology.

The research also included a special one-day conference held in Washington where 200 police chiefs, justice agencies and other stakeholders gathered to discuss the operational, technical and cultural challenges of using the technology on a daily basis.

The research also cast its net outside the US to include important insight from policing agencies who are testing or using the technology in similar ways, notably Greater Manchester Police and London's Metropolitan Police in the UK and New South Wales Police in Australia.

The report found that many police managers report that wearing cameras has helped improve professionalism among their officers. Chief Superintendent Cullen of New South Wales said, "After testing out body-worn cameras, the overwhelming response from officers was that the cameras increased their professionalism because they knew that everything they said and did was being recorded."

Many police officials that PERF consulted said that body-worn cameras have allowed them to identify potential weaknesses within their agencies and to develop solutions for improvement, such as offering new training programs or revising their departmental policies and protocols.

The survey found that one of the primary concerns among agencies is the fear that body-worn cameras will erode the trust between officers and the chief and top managers of the department. Some officers may view the cameras as a signal that their supervisors and managers do not trust them, and they worry that supervisors would use the cameras to track and scrutinize their every move. There is some debate over whether supervisors should also periodically and randomly review videos to monitor officer performance. Some agencies allow periodic monitoring to help proactively identify problems and hold officers accountable for their performance. Other agencies permit periodic monitoring only in certain circumstances, such as when an officer is still in a probationary period or after an officer has received a certain number of complaints. Some agencies prohibit random monitoring altogether because they believe doing so is unnecessary if supervisors conduct reviews when an incident occurs.

In Greater Manchester, Inspector Danny Inglis encourages supervisors to randomly review camera footage. "We use random review as a teaching tool, not just a supervision tool," he said. "Supervisors might not get a lot of face time with officers, so reviewing the video is a good way for supervisors to appraise officers and provide feedback. It also helps hold officers accountable and gives them incentive to record."

Other agencies expressly prohibit supervisors from randomly monitoring body-worn camera footage. ❖

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Research
Police Executive Research Forum
Citizen Perceptions of Body-Worn Cameras: A
Randomized Controlled Trial
perf.memberclicks.net



Police/public interaction

Stop-and-search

Body-worn video may encourage officers to conduct stop and searches in a more procedurally just manner when dealing with people of black and ethnic minority heritage – while also providing proof of their actions



Gary Mason
Policing Insight contributor

Statistics have repeatedly demonstrated that black and minority ethnic (BME) individuals are stopped at a disproportionately higher rate than white individuals. Qualitative research has also consistently shown that the quality of stop-and-search interactions between the public and the police has been poor, with many individuals believing they have been stopped in the absence of reasonable suspicion, and on the basis of stereotypes instead.

Research carried out by the [University of Warwick](#) in collaboration with West Midlands Police is testing the hypothesis that BWV can provide greater visibility of stop-and-search encounters, thereby providing an opportunity to reduce some of the problems associated with stop and search.

Civil behaviour

It is suggested that the civilising effect which BWV may have, may encourage officers to conduct stop and searches in a more procedurally just manner, thereby potentially strengthening public confidence in the police and police legitimacy. It will also consider whether BWV can increase transparency and strengthen accountability through greater visibility, recording and monitoring provisions. The impact on officer self-legitimacy will also be considered.

This research is also supported by the results of the [College of Policing 10 London Boroughs study](#). It found that while use of BWV does not decrease the

rate of stop-and-search arrests as a result of a search are slightly less likely when officers are in a BWV team, indicating a potential difference in decision making.

It also found that officers are likely to feel more supported, less vulnerable to complaints, more confident and officers are more likely to report better interactions with the public and follow expected process

US law enforcement agencies are also finding that BWV can improve the quality of encounters with ethnic

'When it comes to collecting data, the raw numbers don't always fully capture the true scope of a problem'

minority groups. Chief of Police William Lansdowne of San Diego said that one reason his department is implementing body-worn cameras is to improve its understanding of incidents involving claims of racial profiling. "When it comes to collecting data, the raw numbers don't always fully capture the true scope of a problem," he said. "But by capturing an audio and video account of an encounter, cameras provide an objective record of whether racial profiling took place, what patterns of officer behavior are present, and how often the problem occurs." ❖

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Research
College of Policing
The impact of body worn video (BWV) on stop and search in England and Wales
whatworks.college.police.uk



Police/public interaction

Conflict resolution

Officers have reported that the evidence collected by body-worn cameras helps to resolve issues sooner without affecting the quality of policing they provide and affording them greater confidence in their work



Gary Mason
Policing Insight contributor

The University of Cambridge/RAND research has shown that the way cameras are deployed during an encounter can have a critical impact on their positive outcome. Researchers found that behaviour changes rely on cameras recording entire encounters, and officers issuing an early warning that the camera is on – reminding all parties that the ‘digital witness’ is in play right from the start, and triggering the observer effect.

In fact, results from the same experiment, [published earlier in 2016](#) suggest that police use-of-force and assaults on officers actually increase if a camera is switched on in the middle of an interaction, as this can be taken as an escalation of the situation by both officer and suspect.

Increasing awareness

“The jolt of issuing a verbal reminder of filming at the start of an encounter nudges everyone to think about their actions more consciously. This might mean that officers begin encounters with more awareness of rules of conduct, and members of the public are less inclined to respond aggressively,” explained Ariel.

A [trial by the UK College of Policing](#) within 10 London Boroughs in 2015 found that wearing the cameras meant that officers were more likely to follow policy and process. It also found that witnesses were more likely to co-operate, because of the availability of independent evidence. Researchers also found that both the public

and officers were likely to improve their behavior and members of the public were less likely to make unsubstantiated complaints against officers because of the availability of independent research.

‘A verbal reminder at the start of an encounter nudges everyone to think about their actions more consciously’

The cameras were found to help collect evidence and officers reported it resolved issues sooner. They did not alter the quality of policing and offered officers greater confidence if challenged, as well as footage to support their decision-making for example during stop and search and in domestic abuse cases.

Nerys Thomas, Knowledge, Research and Practice Lead at the College of Policing, said: “This has been the largest trial of body-worn video cameras anywhere in the world and has found the equipment reduced allegations against officers in the trial by a third.❖

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Research
European Journal of Criminology
Wearing body cameras increases assaults against officers and does not reduce police use of force
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Research
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Police, Camera, Evidence: London's cluster randomised controlled trial of BWV
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Police/public interaction

Officer safety

Statistical evidence from a College of Policing study suggests cameras offer no benefit to officers' safety while on patrol, yet officers maintain they help defuse situations that otherwise might turn violent



Gary Mason
Policing Insight contributor

Can a widespread use of BWV increase officer safety and reduce the number of violent encounters in which officers are injured? Statistical data produced by the [College of Policing 10 London Boroughs study](#) suggests that there is little or no impact.

It states: "Incidents in which an officer was a victim of a violent assault were analysed of particular interest as this crime type is the most likely to be recorded on BWV. There was no significant difference between

'There was no significant difference between officers wearing BWV or not in their levels of assault. This mirrors the results for arrests for all violent crime'

officers wearing BWV or not in their levels of assault. This mirrors the results for arrests for all violent crime where no difference was seen."

By analysing officer injuries data the research also showed that the proportion of officers that had incurred an injury whilst arresting or restraining a member of the public were no different between those who were wearing BWV and those who were not.

However, anecdotal evidence collected during the course of the study paints a slightly different picture.

One officer said: "We stopped a moped in a back alleyway by a local drug dealer and probably within seconds were surrounded by about 15, 20 youths all quite hostile, just two of us ... within seconds they all realised they were on camera and it was like the effect of having an extra 10 PCs here. Everybody realised I'm on camera, I better watch what I say here, I could get arrested either now or at a later date and its effect was really quite impressive."

More concrete evidence of the affect of BWV on officer safety is available in a [detailed evaluation](#) of the deployment of cameras by Hampshire Police on the Isle of Wight, which was published in 2015 (see [port.ac.uk](#)).

The research of the Operation Hyperion trial by the University of Portsmouth Institute of Criminal Justice Studies, showed there was a 36 per cent reduction of assaults on officers in the time the cameras were being tested. The research states: "The crime types that showed the most significant decreases after one year of personal issue BWV cameras were: threats to kill (44%), assault on police (36%), weapons offences (31%), public order (27%), and assault (17%). It seems that BWV cameras' impact may be most likely with these types of offences which are most likely to be in public or semi-public spaces and where awareness of, and warnings about camera use are most likely in frontline policing." ❖

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Research
University of Portsmouth
Evaluation of the Introduction of Body-Worn
Video Cameras on the Isle of Wight
[port.ac.uk](#)



The technology

Technology challenges of body-worn video

Many forces want the benefits of BWV, yet procurement is not a simple process. Each department has specific needs that must be met in terms of quality, cost, storage and future-proofing – one size does not fit all



Graham Jarvis
Policing Insight contributor

Most police forces across England and Wales are at some stage of either deploying or trialling body-worn video (BWV) cameras to assist their frontline officers. “It’s happened quite fast over 3 years, but the original interest in them dates back to 2006 when the first pilot trials were held,” explains Toby Northcliffe, Technical Lead on Body-Worn Video at the Home Office. Moving on to today, he thinks that the forces currently have 60,000 BWV cameras.

11 years is a long time to complete a roll-out, but he rightly points out that it takes time to train officers and “to get cameras into the system.” To top this each force has to struggle with their own local issues, but the end result should still be the same – and that’s even though there are different ways of going about a roll-out of the equipment. In other words, some forces give preference to the personal issuance of the BWV cameras, while other forces tend to manage them by pooling them.

Freedom to choose

Each force also has the freedom to buy the equipment and related IT solutions from a vendor of their own preference. No force is required to buy from any particular manufacturer, but they do tend to purchase them from the main players: e.g. Reveal Media, Axon, Edesix, Pinnacle and B-CAM. “There are many other

manufacturers out there, and many of the forces are going to the US market,” adds Northcliffe who then comments: “All of these companies don’t just provide the cameras, they also provide the software to manage the data from the cameras.”

Inspector Stephen Goodier worked on the national BWV project between 2015 and 2016. He also spent 15 years at the Hampshire Constabulary before joining the National Police Chief’s Council in July 2016 as a Business Liaison Officer for Digital First. During his time on the national BWV campaign the expectation was that 55,000 BWV cameras would be in operation in England and Wales by the end of 2016, and the Metropolitan Police – the largest force in the country had also forecast that they’d have 20,000 cameras.

In comparison, Avon and Somerset Police has 2,200 BWV cameras in operation on a personal issue basis for use by patrol and neighbourhood officers as well as for its PCSOs. Other departments, such as CID and licensing teams within the force can access the cameras on a pooling basis.

There are 300 BWV cameras available in this force for their more infrequent use. Inspector Tim Coombe and Superintendent Ian Wylie says this enables the forces and the officers to gain the best value from the cameras according to the purpose of usage and how frequently they need to use them.

“Some forces are issuing the cameras to all of their operational staff on a personal issue basis, while

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others are pooling them and some forces are only issuing them to selected departments or roles such as firearms or Taser officers,” he explains.

Encouraging acceptance

Kent and Essex police forces are pooling their resources and in December 2014 they upgraded their BWV cameras to use B-CAM once they won the Home Office’s Innovation Fund. Temporary Chief Superintendent Trevor Roe of Essex Police, says his force’s old Motorola devices “were cumbersome and not that effective, with less than 100 cameras scattered around the force.”

The challenge the old BWC cameras created led to their replacement because many of these BWV cameras were either thrown away or left in a drawer unused. “We had to run an audit in 2012, so that we could run a trial on BWV to capture evidence of do-

‘The key technical challenges are about managing the large quantity of data while ensuring that it meets data protection requirements’

mestic abuse, with the aim of achieving positive outcomes, and so the cameras were given to patrol and response officers,” he explains. The trial, he reveals, created “a 9% uplift in outcomes using the old cameras, showing a positive inclination to better outcomes because if you can catch crimes in action, it’s going to be better for the courts”.

This trial demonstrated the value of the cameras, and overcame the resistance to using them by demonstrating their effectiveness. “Kent and Essex, together, designed the back-office software, storage, security and all the rest of the specifications based upon our experiences with the old cameras.” So it wasn’t just an award that both forces won together,

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following their collaboration, they also managed to increase their stock of BWV cameras in use today. Essex now has 1,300 cameras and Kent Police says it has more than 2,000 in use by frontline officers.

Other forces can learn from their experiences too. Their findings from the trial are contained in a report, which is published on the College of Policing’s website. He also says that Essex manages its BWV cameras as personal issue, but there are pooling options to cater for the operational requirements of small, specialist teams.

“We have just landed 150 Armed Firearms Officer (AFO) Cameras, which are helmet mounted, so that wherever an officer looks, the camera follows – and there have been trials of BWV cameras for firearms officers across the UK to work out the best option,” he explains. He adds that most forces “will be acquiring cameras for AFOs, following national guidelines that recommend it as a requirement following various police shootings.”

Lightening the load

In terms of the practicalities of the new cameras, he comments: “You then have the ability to have a camera on a helmet that can download via Bluetooth to a memory chip, but the issue is size and weight because everything a firearms officer carries creates an issue. A memory chip is therefore a minimal addition to an officer’s kit as it’s very lightweight”. This is in stark contrast to the old cameras they previously deployed, and so the issue of the equipment being cumbersome has been overcome.

Technical challenges

Yet the size of the equipment isn’t the only challenge that forces face. “The key technical challenges are about managing and storing the large quantity of data while ensuring that it meets the requirements

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of the data protection commissioner," says Wylie. In his force, Avon and Somerset, a hard drive is used, but it is also exploring cloud-based storage options to "provide a broader, more cost-effective and sustainable platform."

He also suggests that BWV cameras are going to be augmented by the use of dashcams in police vehicles, and by mobile phone video recordings of the incidents that are attended by officers. The latter must be submitted by the public in a timely manner, and if done so they can provide a broader view of serious incidents. Avon and Somerset are therefore developing technologies to support this kind of public engagement in collating evidence.

"We are looking at having a web-based portal to allow the public to provide footage for crime analysis, but while this is under development we expect it to be ready this year," says Coombe. This links into the

'We can offload and upload our material on to the cloud, so we don't have to worry about infrastructure issues around storage'

storage capacity conundrum, because the more video or photographic material they gain, the greater the need for ever larger amounts of storage. However, the internal servers are just tasked to store video footage. There is a whole raft of other kinds of data storage by them, or in the cloud.

Avon and Somerset stores the data in a datacentre. "There is a cloud-based solution that we are looking to move to, which may make it easier to share video footage with our partner agencies, but some forces are looking at Network Attached Storage systems – standalone storage that isn't necessarily interlinked," adds Coombe. He adds that rural forces find that network capacity is very much limited. Even so he thinks the more forces adopt cloud-based solutions, the

easier it will be to share and provide secure remote access to video footage than it is today.

Fay Washington, Police Constable for The Metropolitan Police who's working on the BWV project team, adds that the scale of deployment is a key challenge: "The scale of deployment is a challenge because of the very large roll-out, and so we must have our infrastructure. The procurement end – we can offload and upload our material onto the cloud, so we don't have to worry about infrastructure issues around storage. It's challenging but we are doing quite well I think."

Commenting on the deal with Microsoft to implement and use Microsoft Azure, she adds that it helps her force to secure the data with the added benefit of being able to gain from the flexibility of cloud storage. It will also provide the force with the necessary infrastructure to not only store video data, but to share it too.

The trouble is that some forces' infrastructure, or even the infrastructure of some partner agencies, has to catch up. Nortcliffe rightly says there is a need for the right infrastructure to support the sharing of large amounts of data – including video footage, but the IT policies of the courts, for example, can make this problematic: "One officer records the video footage, and another wants to share it to use in court, but it's often an IT challenge as government networks often don't allow you to stream video. Apart from this, there are also network bandwidth and security issues to resolve."

Video data security

Roe comments: "Our original philosophy was that we were concerned about data security. If the systems are internal everything is backed up and you have control of it. The cost of cloud can be greater than having your own, and there is a risk around the security issue. There are different approaches. There is not one clear vision of what's right. We are looking externally at options such as the cloud, which has become cheaper over time. Forces will come for what's most secure and the cheapest solution.

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These are questions that senior officers and heads of IT will have to answer going forward and there are technological unknowns at the moment around what the future will look like. ESN is owned by the Home Office, and so it's not just restricted to the police."

Camera specifications

In terms of the BWV camera specifications, are the forces using the correct ones? Ian Davies, Chief Information Officer for North Wales Police – like other commentators – points out that the [Centre for Applied Science and Technology](#) (CAST) has created some guidelines: *Technical guidance for Body-worn video (BWV) devices: CAST, 2016*. CAST's advisors helped BWV camera suppliers to develop recommended minimal standards based on the initial trials. Coombe claims that most vendors are satisfying CAST and the Surveillance Camera Commissioner's office by complying with their recommendations.

Nortcliffe recommends working with the BWV camera manufacturers too, but says there is nothing mandated by CAST despite the publication of its technical guidance. "The cameras need to be made with specific functions, and to a certain standard," he emphasises. In addition to satisfying the guidelines, each force's procurement department will often want something specific.

With this comes some cost implications for the manufacturers to create large camera product ranges, but there is much competition in the market. So, the question is about whether a force wants a camera equivalent to a Mercedes or one that more akin to a Ford Focus. "Each supplier will negotiate terms when it comes to prices, but you also have to consider what can be saved," suggest Coombe. This includes officers and victims of crime having to spend less time in court proceedings, and BWV camera footage can help to resolve cases more quickly because it encourages more people to confess and to plead guilty when they're shown to be caught in the act of a criminal activity.

Savings are gained in other ways too. Avon and Somerset Police have seen a 50% reduction in complaints

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Centre for Applied Science and Technology
Technical guidance for Body-worn video (BWV)
devices: CAST, 2016
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because of their use of body-worn video. "We are able to close down many complaints, and very quickly – this includes serious complaints that would usually go to the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) whom can be satisfied that the processes have been followed correctly because of the evidence provided of BWV," he explains. Roe adds that the cameras cost between £600-700 each, and so benefits arguably outweigh the costs of investing in them.

Mounting evidence

The quality of the evidence can depend on how a camera is mounted, and how a camera is mounted always depends on the context in which it is used. "Chest-mounting is the best, but firearms officers head-mount them because the camera can be obscured when the officers bring their arms to fire," explains Goodier. He doesn't think that there is a case for multiple cameras to be used.

Nortcliffe agrees, stating: "You don't want to be gathering loads of video data, so having multiple cameras on a single officer is not encouraged – I've not seen any use for mounting a camera on a weapon." He doesn't feel that there is any benefit gained by two cameras recording at the same time, and claims that the chances of missing anything with each officer having one BWV camera are slim.

Battery and storage

However, it is important to consider battery standby time and how long a battery will last during each shift. While there is some degree of relativity involved, most commentators said that the cameras their forces use today last for a shift. With personal issuance, it is the responsibility of each officer to ensure that their camera is ready and able to operate for entire shift, and they must make sure that they upload the footage at the end of their shift to the appropriate evidence system.

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If an officer's camera were to stop working due to a battery running out of power during an incident, disciplinary action could follow. With pooling, officers should dock their cameras to charge them. While they are docked the data is uploaded to the server. The

'We are able to close down many complaints, and very quickly – this includes serious complaints that would usually go to the IPCC'

footage is then wiped, but the uploaded data is stored – unless it is needed as evidence in a trial or case – for a period of 31 days. That aside, batteries are, getting much better and the cameras are becoming more power efficient.

Washington says the Metropolitan Police has gone for the AXON 2 camera, which has 12 hours of recording time, and which offers a 143 degree field of view. "A

body-worn video camera has a different field of view, and the field of view for Flex 2 – used by out firearms officers has a 120 degree field of view," she adds.

The storage capacity that the force has opted equates to 64GB, but each force may wish to opt for different amounts of storage capacity in their BWV cameras. She claims that 64GB is sufficient for her force's requirements because its officers don't wear the camera for weeks on end. They are docked at the end of each shift, charged and the data is uploaded before being deleted from each camera. Axon Body 2 is also the latest camera, but she expects it to have more storage in the future. That's not a surprise as the size of video data is huge unless it is compressed.

Data compression

Goodier comments: "Compression technology is now impressive and all manufacturers compress the video onto the device. It's an MP4 that we get, but what they actually do with it internally – you need to speak with the vendors. Video quality is high definition (720p or 1080p). I think there needs to be 4 hours minimum of storage." Nortcliffe adds that video is always

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compressed to some degree. "That's the nature of video files, and this comes back to data management because you have to be able to play it back on a computer." This may be in standard definition, which is adequate for most tasks, or in high definition. With modern cameras, you can choose between the two, but forces need to bear in mind that one of their biggest costs will always be data storage.

It's vital to ensure that the cameras also have the right amount of internal memory to complete the daily tasks. "For external memory, forces just need to do the investigative work around that, knowing what they

'The cameras aren't surveillance tool; they need to capture a conversation between people who are standing relatively close to each other'

want their officers to record and they need to consider data retention," advises Coombe. He also says: "Trials have shown that on average 30% of footage would be considered as evidential. We are currently running at about 42% of evidential footage that is recorded, but this does fluctuate. That's what we want to keep."

Data security guidance

Nortcliffe says he's written some [guidance on video data security](#) too, which he advises forces to read. This is important because even memory stick can go missing, and there may be more secure ways to store the data because it can't reside on the camera for ever as the cameras must be re-useable many times over. The way forward will be to enable the devices to store as much data as possible in the cloud from point of recording. This may not be introduced soon, and the use of the cloud in this way can also pose some difficulties if the connectivity between the cloud

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and the device is not sufficient to allow this kind of 'iCloud' storage directly from each camera.

Audio performance

"Audio performance is trickier; you have to be able to record a conversation and have noise-cancelling," says Goodier. "The cameras aren't surveillance tool; they need to capture a conversation between people who are standing relatively close to each other."

Generally, the feeling is that the audio performance on BWV cameras is very good enough for the job in hand. Apart from this interoperability is said to be good, but there is no live-streaming capability at present.

BWV and its future

Roe concludes: "I think BWV is positive for the service. It modifies officer behaviour. It makes sure they do everything right, improves professionalism. Officers originally feared they would get into trouble. It also has a really positive outcome for victims, producing more guilty pleas.

"With regards to police complaints you have the footage on camera, reducing the number of falsified or malicious complaints. It has also reduced the number of assaults on the police."

As for the future of BWV, Goodier predicts: "The technology will come with more integration to command and control when connectivity improves. The ability to upload via private WI-FI will happen sooner rather than later.

Longer term, the technology will lend itself to facial recognition capabilities. There are a number of policy and legislative issues that need to be overcome, and so we aren't ready for this yet." For now, as Washington says about ruggedization, the cameras have to be fit the job, and this will only be demonstrated by undertaking trials and by seeing how they perform on the beat. ❖

The technology

DEMS and DAMS: Managing the evidence

Recording footage is the easy step, what comes next is much harder. All that data must be securely stored and managed – that's where digital asset and evidence management systems come into play



Stephen Roberts
Director of Vigilant Research

In 2016, the Digital Policing Review interviewed police technology leaders at length, covering every aspect of their ambitions and their concerns, including in-depth discussion of body-worn video (BWV) and the platforms for storing and managing captured footage. From talking to forces in research for this article, we've seen the context for discussion of digital asset and evidence management systems (DAMS and DEMS) move on considerably – in fact, it's the most significant change in police force IT approaches in 2017.

Last year, much of the service appeared to be sleepwalking into DEMS dependence on systems provided by the leading BWV camera vendors. They had good reasons to pursue this approach. The BWV explosion saw forces struggling to cope with increases in data volumes and, more importantly, with the evidential integrity and data protection challenges posed by dealing with BWV footage. The decision to invest in BWV was often made by operational policing leads, leaving technology departments to solve information management challenges on the hoof.

Secure storage

One northern force became notorious for investing in cheap cameras and then dropping footage, unencrypted, into the office productivity suite. Some CIOs pushed back, and refused to allow widespread BWV

adoption until they were satisfied that sound processes could be adopted for secure, MoPI-compliant, audited management of all footage, whether retained or unretained.

Reveal DEMS and Axon's Evidence.Com offered reassurance, partly through safety in numbers. With plenty of forces going the Reveal camera route, and the might of the Met behind Evidence.Com and cloud storage, there was ample scope for good practice to develop

'One force became notorious for investing in cheap cameras and then dropping footage, unencrypted, into the office productivity suite'

collectively, and for confidence that the evolving Digital First programme's requirements would be straightforward to integrate with the market leaders. So this was how the market seemed to be shaping up, and for many, the strategy worked: the CIOs who were holding back on BWV investment until they had seen DEMS

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teething problems ironed out elsewhere, have now rolled out cameras.

But the service is now looking beyond reliance on the BWV specialists. Why? Partly, the issue is one of vendor lock-in. Device technology and price points change rapidly, as do preferences for where on an officer – or on other assets, such as drones – the camera may be mounted. An evidence platform, by contrast, is a long term commitment. Technology chiefs fear that a single provider for both will not allow enough flexibility. And there's a parallel concern with cloud services; forces which seemed satisfied last year with Axon's fast, scalable solution to a deluge of footage now fret about the long-term commercial risks of buying evidence storage and management as a service without complete clarity over future financial terms.

A wider view

Meanwhile, forces which may once have seen DEMS investment through a BWV lens are now taking a wider view. The pressure to manage video hasn't gone away, rather the reverse: forces tend to progress from using BWV for evidential purposes to relying on it to ward off unfounded complaints, retaining far more footage as a result, and a huge increase in citizen-submitted footage can be expected as various digital public contact platforms roll out. But forces are increasingly keen on platforms that will be future-proofed against rapid evolution not just in the devices attached to officers, but in the types of evidence that may require management in the near future.

And so DEMS and DAMS have moved fast up the agenda. Avon & Somerset has invested heavily in Capita's development of the EvidenceWorks platform to integrate with Reveal DEMS, meaning that it has a one-stop shop for BWV footage, CCTV, digital interview recordings and crime scene information. Wiltshire is signing up separately to this. Merseyside is understood to be working on a proof of concept with Israeli intelligence and evidence management specialist NICE, which should be of interest to the many forces which look to the Liverpoolians for exper-

tise in getting the most from Niche. New entrants to the market, such as the data visualisation specialists at Hitachi, have developed products tailored to UK policing and are discussing them with multiple forces and alliances. A procurement for DAMS under way at Kent is exciting plenty of attention, largely because it secured formal interest from Athena counterparties and other neighbouring forces as part of its successful Police Innovation Fund bid.

Planning incentives

Kent's procurement is instructive because it pinpoints the additional incentives at work when forces plan for a unified DEMS. The fundamental design principle is to do as much as possible in the DAMS, with audit, control, storage, retention and workflow management all delivered from a single place.

The plan for a universal evidential production process serves two purposes: it aids specialist forensics teams, and also enables straightforward collation and presentation of digital evidence to be done by an investigating officer, without any need to chase colleagues. This is vitally important to realising two of the principal benefits: improved speed of resolution and fast case preparation.

Simply put, a single DEMS which puts digital evidence collation in the hands of the investigating officer makes it much more likely that an early guilty plea can be secured before the bail clock runs out. That's a promise that gets attention at chief officer level. It promises far more in efficiency and in serving the public than could ever be won by reducing the costs and hassle of CD-Rom production, or tightening processes in the digital forensics unit. And it explains why forces like Kent are so keen on attractive, intuitive user interfaces: ideally, investigating officers need do no more than fill a shopping cart with the evidence they need to confront a suspect, and "check out" when a swift resolution requires no more than a streamlined case file.

But what looks simple and attractive in a demo may not be so in reality. Forces which have done the hard

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work of marrying up the evidential control processes and metadata sets for multiple evidence types are rather suspicious of solutions which offer an attractive front end, but under the skin are no more than federated search systems. Their preference is for systems that are painstakingly engineered to ensure that there is commonality in parameters for reviewing, retention and disposal, the security and audit functions which ensure integrity, and the master data management supporting subject access requests and data protection compliance. After all, a one-stop shop needs to be just that. Unfortunately, this sort of robust engineering to support multiple types of evidence is resource-intensive, particularly as all the classes of evidence need particular functionality, from support for multiple codecs with citizen-submitted video and CCTV, through to transcriber support in the digital interview module.

An ideal solution

The ideal solution would be one which offers a streamlined, user-friendly and feature-rich environment for any class of evidence, a smooth front end for grabbing disparate sources of evidence with which to confront a suspect, seamless integration with the Records Management System (RMS), case file preparation, and the forthcoming Digital Evidence Transfer System (DETS) service, absolute assurance over evidential integrity – and a modular approach, so that new classes of evidence and asset can be added to the DAMS environment as and when a force wants. Sadly, the general consensus is that the offerings out there are promising, but the market is still immature.

So police forces which want to reach this happy state will either need to do a lot of pump priming themselves, or wait for off-the-shelf solutions to emerge. All eyes may be on Kent, but the drawback of Home Office funding is that it comes with tough strictures about when it can be spent, meaning that the winning vendor will have to come up with something which more-or-less meets the objectives in a painfully short period of time. It's moot whether this will be achieved.

It's difficult to be patient when there's an opportunity to reduce bail-to-return, to obtain more early guilty pleas and to reduce demand on the specialist evidence units and criminal justice departments. It's even tougher for forces with urgent BWV storage issues to address. But there are some important consolations for forces which are allowing the DEMS market to evolve and mature for a little longer.

One of the most important is the growing tendency for tightly controlled permissions management to be supplanted by a more relaxed regime. Many forces lock down access to crime scene photos, to interview recordings and other media similarly vulnerable to curiosity and leakage. This makes life tough for proponents of the "one stop shop" DEMS, who want

'The ideal solution would be one which offers a streamlined, user-friendly and feature-rich environment for any class of evidence'

the investigating officer to have unfettered, immediate access to evidence.

The new platform looks like a "back door" into the other evidence stores, jeopardising the permissions and approvals processes. The alternative approach, followed by an increasing number of forces, is to allow officers and staff to see the vast majority of material, while making it clear that access without good reason is absolutely unacceptable. Forces of this kind have no concern about providing an alternative view onto the evidence stores.

While each approach is ultimately down to the instincts and judgement of the chief officer team, a factor that can tip the balance is the robustness of audit – the open approach rarely relies on trust alone! Newer technologies for keystroke logging are as easy to integrate with commercial off the shelf systems (COTS) as they are with home grown systems. As this capability

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matures, it may become easier to change permissions cultures to professionalism cultures, making transition to an integrated DEMS that much easier.

Another consideration is the gradual improvement in facial recognition technology. Using current policing technology, BWV metadata is essentially textual. But there's real ambition among some police technologists to develop "ANPR for faces," offering rich correlations of persons and places – and this means that searching and indexing video footage could ultimately rely on codified facial characteristics. That chimes with the time-consuming but vital process of BWV redaction. The current state of the art is for BWV-ingesting

'It's difficult to be patient when there's an opportunity to reduce bail-to-return, to obtain more early guilty pleas and reduce demand on the specialist evidence units'

DEMS suites to offer redaction modules which allow backgrounds, foregrounds, individuals or portions of video to be obscured before footage is released. But this could be more user-friendly still, with specific faces recognised and obscured throughout a piece of footage, and eventually all redaction to be manageable as an automated process. Some forces are pushing DEMS vendors in this direction, and if they succeed, the DAMS will be central to strategies for video analytics.

Hurdles to overcome

There are technology and legitimacy hurdles to overcome before facial analytics is ubiquitous. But even if this particular area moves slowly, the transition from BWV repositories to integrated DEMS to fully-fledged DAMS means that there is a huge opportunity to interrogate the rich store of data. This is why the

intelligence and data visualisation experts are moving into this market.

There's some tension between the optimistic visions of vendors and the pragmatic focus of police technology buyers: one of the former hopes that "investigation will be completely transformed ... when searching and correlating in the DEMS becomes second nature," while one of the latter is adamant that "the business benefit is case preparation alone".

But even the time-pressured DAMS team at Kent are ensuring that mapping capabilities are built into the early proof-of-concept, despite the paucity of location information on BWV footage and other digital evidence. That suggests seriousness about doing more with the platform.

Higher priority

BWV has pushed DEMS investment up the agenda to the point where it has outgrown BWV considerations and become a platform for radical improvement in evidence-handling, with a real payback when the bail clock is regularly beaten and early guilty pleas are reached. There are some additional reasons why this demand has evolved at speed. It's now much clearer, for instance, where the NPCC-sponsored DETS service will be used to corral evidence intended for the courts, and where forces will need to make their own arrangements to support internal processes and partners.

Meanwhile, many forces have moved towards the end game of implementing their integrated case, custody, incident and intelligence systems, meaning that DEMS and DAMS can interface with robust POLE schemas. What's clear, though, is that the circumstances where BWV usage is commonplace will continue to expand at speed, as will video capture from other police assets.

This means that crises of scale in storage and management will continue to afflict the service. Dedicated video storage platforms – especially when cloud-based – will continue to be essential for many forces over the next few years while they get their DEMS strategy right. ❖

The technology

Examining best practice in BWV systems procurement

In recent years, police procurement has largely changed for the better, focusing on the overall solution, not just the cameras. Though the mindset has changed, the process is still far from perfect



Graham Jarvis
Policing Insight contributor

Not long ago joint police procurement was viewed as a challenge, and one that hasn't been helped by Government policy. Sara Thornton, formerly Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police, writes in her 3rd April article for [The Guardian](#) that "Devolved structure and Home Office Policy have contributed to difficulties in joint buying, but change is afoot."

In her opinion, the National Audit Office was right at the time to comment that there were at the time "many opportunities for more effective police procurement" and many of them remained unexploited for two reasons. The first is the structure of the police organisations, and she says the second is created by policy that has been adopted "by the Home Office in recent years."

She then explains: "The structure of policing in this country is highly devolved. Every force has developed differently, partly out of a desire to be highly responsive to the needs of the local community, partly out of local pride and a sense of identity. This means that any desire to procure jointly often requires a compromise and change."

Thames Valley Police, for example, worked with the south-east region "to agree a common patrol uniform and we have already saved a significant amount of money. However, we have just started to procure uniform shirts with the Yorkshire forces. The shirt collars are large and uncomfortable – I hate wearing these

new shirts." With body-worn video (BWV) procurement, the same issues could also arise. However, the view is that things have moved – joint procurement practices has improved.

Speaking about body-worn video procurement, Jeremy Habberley, UK and Ireland Country Manager for Axon UK, comments: "I think police forces in England are buying pretty well as much has changed over the last couple of years. They are focused on the overall solution rather than just on the cameras." He finds that there has been a change in mindset, but adds that not everything is perfect yet.

The overall solution

"When I say it's not perfect, some forces have focused on the camera rather than what to do after you've captured the footage, and I would say that 80% from the conversations I'm having are focused on the overall solution," he explains. He adds that The Metropolitan Police, which has purchased Axon Body 2 and Axon Flex 2 cameras, is but one of the forces that is forces that has taken the decision to buy an entire Digital Evidence Management Solution (DEMS).

Along with the body-worn video cameras, the force has bought into Axon's Evidence.com, because he says The Met is "looking to use BWV for the camera and an evidence depository". In Habberley's mind this is an example of how positively the forces are making their procurement decisions.

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Rini Chacko, Marketing Programmes Manager at Reveal Media supports this view, that procurement practices in most police forces have changed for the good. In the early days of body-worn video procurement to make off-the-shelf purchases. She explains that police forces soon learnt that these body-worn video products and solutions don't always meet their

'Forces are taking the time to consider their needs available offerings'

requirements: "Police forces are now definitely taking the time to consider their needs and use cases, and are taking the time to evaluate available offerings, looking for evidence management and body cameras that are most suitable for their policing requirements."

Speaking with regards to off-the-shelf consumer body-worn video, Toby Nortcliffe, Technical Lead of Body-Worn Video at the Home Office, comments: "While off-the-shelf consumer products such as action cameras could be used by police, few if any have all the built-in features described above. So they would require additional safeguards to ensure compliance."

He adds: "Furthermore, unlike dedicated BWV devices these off-the-shelf products do not come with the necessary ancillary products to enable full deployment. These ancillary products include; a wide range of suitable mounting options, docking stations and digital evidence management software that all ensure a secure and straightforward end to end process from recording to review to presentation in court."

"As far as I am aware all the BWV devices used by UK police forces are designed specifically for law enforcement," he says before adding: "In other words they have built-in features that satisfy not only police technical and operational requirements but also aid compliance with data protection laws. For example, these BWV devices have internal memory and encryption to protect the data, a visible forward-facing indicator to show recording is activated and a Klick Fast connector

that enables secure docking to police clothing."

Ian Cunningham, Principal Technologist at the Metropolitan Police, reflects on the procurement process and on the framework agreements, such as the East Midlands Strategic Commercial Unit (EMSCU) and what amounts to good procurement practice for BWV: "Any procurement process followed must, depending on value, must be in accordance with EU, UK and local purchasing regulations. Utilising existing frameworks gives police authorities access to leading suppliers without necessarily needing to advertise in Official Journal of the European Union."

Chacko adds: "It's important to understand how we came about some of the existing frameworks. In 2014 and 2015, many UK police forces gained innovation funding from the Home Office to spend on Body Worn Cameras (BWCs) and Digital Evidence Management Software (DEMS)." Despite this funding, there wasn't in her view "an easy route to market and procurement was a laborious process." This led to the establishment of specialist BWV procurement units and frameworks.

Framework benefits

EMSCU, which was first established in July 2012, created a body-worn video unit and framework. Since its introduction, the procurement framework for body-worn video has made the procurement process of procuring the cameras and solutions more thorough and effective. "It follows and sets the standard for good procurement practice for BWV," she explains before adding: "Its benefits are twofold – achieving economies of scale through the clear understanding of needs and requirements and setting a benchmark in BWV procurement."

To achieve good BWV procurement practice, she believes that there is no need to re-invent the wheel. "Taking advantage of an established framework allows forces to evaluate their own needs and requirements," he says. Furthermore, he warns that body-worn video isn't a temporary fix because he believes that body-worn video has "the potential to transform

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modern policing, so following established practices such as trials is paramount.”

She also advises: “Forces should be encouraged to get their hands on as many different types of kit as possible, and stakeholders across the board ranging from end-users to IT to management should all evaluate the usability of kits, of both the camera and software. They should explore what functionality and feature sets they actually need, rather than just box checking off a list.”

Many forces are using the EMSCU framework to make their BWV purchases. The Met and British Transport Police have opted to buy Axon’s cameras and evidence management solution. [Avon and Somerset Police](#) have in contrast opted to buy RS2-X2L cameras and Reveal DEMS from Reveal Media. It’s not clear whether or not EMSCU was used, but the [force’s website](#) says: “Reveal Media was chosen following a market review of suppliers followed by further evaluation and more extensive testing of two final suppliers. Reveal Media already supplies over 20 police forces with the cameras.”

Regarding The Met, Habberley comments: “The Met went through EMSCU as a tender. The framework means that much of the due diligence has been done already, and the pricing has been negotiated to the extent that it is fixed for a period.

“They also have a comparative framework that offers them the flexibility to offer mini-tenders within the framework. Technically, all of the English police forces would have to buy BWV off EMSCU as it’s the Home Office framework.”

Data management

Cunningham emphasises that police authorities “must have a clear and defined Statement of Requirement and a clear vision of how they want BWV delivered, taking into account how they want to store the vast volumes of digital data that will be collected to successfully complete a BWV procurement.”

Neil Chivers, Business Development Director at Capita Secure Digital Solutions also warns: “Body-

worn video (BWV) is just one part of this digital landscape, albeit a very important one. But forces are in danger of considering this evidence, and the way it is recorded, analysed and stored, in complete isolation as opposed to being one vital aspect of new policing technologies. This approach not only impacts the effectiveness of their procurement but also has the potential to impact operational procedures and investigations once implemented.”

He adds: “There is also a tendency to focus on deploying cameras to the front line quickly without also considering how the resulting media is captured, stored and secured and how this should fit in with

‘Forces should be encouraged to get their hands on as many different types of kit as possible’

other types of digital evidence, how the technology might evolve, and how forces may need to share evidence in the future.”

He explains that there have been a number of “examples in recent years of funding being provided to deploy the latest technology without due consideration of its impact and capabilities”. This has often led to “further programmes to upgrade or replace once a more considered review has taken place.”

He also points out not all of the data is going to be the same. It shouldn’t therefore be handled in the same way. So, he thinks the process for managing BWV files and the associated data will differ from the data created during an evidential interview. He rightly advises forces that the sheer volume of evidential data must be addressed too.

DEMS needs to be able to ingest data from a wide variety of sources – not just from BWV cameras. Footage may, for example, come from dashcam cameras, CCTV and from members of the public using their smartphones to capture incidents. They will need to

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deal with still images too, and with various types of documents such as PDF reports.

Holistic procurement

"We recommend that forces look beyond each individual piece of technology and instead focus on enterprise digital evidence management (DEM) systems which can cope with multiple sources of evidence, different formats, and evolving technology," he explains while warn that unless a holistic approach is taken, forces will find that they will not able to deliver the full business benefit from an investment a "component technology, such as BWV". He advises that forces also need to source a solution that is capable

'It's a challenge because it's not what they've done in the past, requiring a change of mindset and process'

of meeting the changing business and policing needs that lie ahead of them. From a DEMS perspective, this may mean considering the flexibility of a cloud-based software-as-a-service solution (SaaS), rather than one that requires an upfront capital investment.

Contract length

While agreeing with Chivers about the need to ensure that DEMS can handle different kinds of data from different data sources, Habberley says police forces would like to see more flexible contractual arrangements with EMSCU. At the moment, he thinks they are required to sign up to a three-year contract. Subsequently, he thinks that many forces would like this contractual arrangement to be more flexible in terms of contract length.

In other words, he finds that some forces would like to agree longer contracts to enable them to make the most of the benefits of the procurement framework. These benefits include the ability to achieve economies of scale

to reduce and fix BWV camera and solution pricing. They also know that the due diligence has already been done to the extent that they can be assured that the equipment is suitable for the police market.

Software-as-a-service

He also comments, in support of the SaaS model for DEMS, that forces need to move away from making capital purchases. "This poses a challenge for some police forces, and it's a challenge because it's not what they've done in the past, requiring a change of mindset and process." Beyond this, he believes that "Each force will have to follow its own governance and policy, but we are here as a supplier to enable them to meet the changes in policy and legislation that may be coming."

Market competition

In terms of market competition, former Chief Superintendent Trevor Roe of Essex Police, who's now left the force, says: "It would be fair to say there is lots of competition, as I had many approaches from sales people from different companies." Generally speaking, the overall opinion from the police forces and vendors Policing Insight interviewed for this article is that the market and competition within it is very healthy. Cunningham therefore believes that new entrants should be encouraged: "There are probably half a dozen leading suppliers in the BWV field operating in the UK, but new entrants to the market should always be encouraged to provide further competition. This would hopefully result in the reduction in costs for police authorities." He also reveals that Essex and Kent police forces have purchased their BWV cameras from B-Cam.

Chacko adds: "Naturally, increased number of suppliers means pricing is constantly being challenged. But increased take up in the market brings volume and economies of scale which allows for movement of pricing. Back in the day, it used to be about 20 cameras per force, it's a very different story now. Forces now have more choice – if they want to go cheap, there's choice there but also if you want the best and want to be future proof, that's available too."

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Vendor types

Habberley reveals that there are many types of companies operating within the market too. These vendors offer cameras, associated accessories and solutions. "There are out and out companies that make BWV; some sell an evidence management solution with it, and there are some that make cameras that aren't for the police market." Those that aren't specifically for the police market only offer a very basic file management solution. So he thinks that a company such as Go-Pro may have great cameras, but they

'Forces now have more choice – if they want to go cheap, there's choice there but also if you want the best and want to be future proof, that's available too'

aren't the best ones for police forces to purchase.

He adds: "The solution we do is SaaS, and it's reliant on the forces' network. This is reliant on the relationships that the forces have with, for example, the likes of companies such as BT. They have their own relationships with them. For some solutions there may be a need for systems integrators, but for us – less so."

Procurement protection

With any purchase, there is the danger of something going awry. So, are forces protected from any unforeseen expenditure? "The level of protection forces receive will depend on the contract they let. Normally forces will ensure that contracts contain appropriate warranties. Whether or not a force has the infrastructure to deal with the volumes of BWV will vary from force to force," responds Cunningham.

Chacko says forces are becoming more knowledgeable; they are understanding their needs better. Forces nevertheless need to choose vendors that will

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Guidance
Centre for Applied Science and Technology
Safeguarding Body Worn Video (BWV) Data
gov.uk



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Guidance
Surveillance Camera Commissioner
Passport to compliance
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work closely with them to avoid being burnt. Buying the cheapest kit on the market can lead to this occurrence, resulting in the procurement of poor kit.

"It's about being open and honest so we can ensure they understand the infrastructure and commitment needed," she comments. In experience, forces are also putting in the place the required infrastructure, and they understand that the amount of data is growing every year. However, some rural forces do struggle with network connectivity. This still needs to be addressed, and the right questions need to be asked as well as answered by BWV vendors and the forces they sell their wares to. This is simply because BWV cameras and evidence management solutions, for example, won't be used if they don't have the right infrastructure and functionalities in place. So, Habberley advises that any BWV contract should cover the total cost of ownership, any new functionalities that may be required, and they should consider the infrastructure of each force.

Check guidance

Stephen Grieve, Lead Assessor at security system certification body, SSAIB, concludes by referring forces to a report that has been recently published by the Surveillance Camera Commissioner. He says the commissioner's **Passport To Compliance** replaces the "older Home Office Operational Requirement for CCTV and... this includes specific guidance for procurement".

While you might think the mention of CCTV as being odd, this guidance also relates to BWV procurement. So, Policing Insight recommends it too – as well as the 'Technical guidance for body-worn video (BWV) devices' that is available from **CAST**. These reports may enable your force to make savvy procurement decisions. ❖

The technology

Managing BWV implementation

With the introduction of body-worn cameras many officers did not like having the critical eyes of their superiors overlooking them at all times, yet this reluctance has been slowly changing to a more accepting attitude



Graham Jarvis
Policing Insight contributor

The implementation of new technologies and ways of working usually causes several reactions, ranging from suspicion and a thereby a reluctance to embrace change. With the introduction of body-worn video (BWV), some officers felt that having to wear BWV cameras was a too much like Big Brother. In essence that could be translated as having the critical eyes of their superiors overlooking them at all times. With thousands over BWV cameras having been implemented across many of the UK's police forces, the reluctance to embrace them is changing.

With training and experience officers now realise that the transparency they offer is as much about protecting them as it is about ensuring legal and ethical compliance whenever they film subjects involved at an incident. For example, several forces state that BWV footage has increased the number of suspects pleading guilty, and it has dramatically reduced the number of complaints made by those caught on camera against the officers and their forces.

Promoting use

Temporary Chief Superintendent Trevor Roe, Essex Police (which is collaborating with Kent Police), offers an example of resistance to using the BWV cameras has been overcome: "In December 2014, we moved to BCAM, once we won the innovation funds. We built

the specification around the police officers operational needs. They asked what our operational requirements were. The cameras before December 2014 were the old technology cameras, but I don't know the make of them. I think they were old Motorola ones, which were cumbersome and not that effective with less than one hundred scattered across the force. Many of them were not serviced and thrown into drawers."

To overcome the resistance presented to them by their own officers, he says an audit had to be run and this involved running a BWV camera trial to capture evidence of domestic abuse. Positive outcomes were recorded, and the details of the trial can be found on the [College of Police's](#) website. During the trial the cameras were given to response and patrol officers, and one of the positive outcomes arising from it was a 9% uplift in the use of the old cameras. "If you can catch crimes in action, it's going to be better for the courts. So the trial demonstrated the BWV cameras' effectiveness to win the bid for the Home Office's Innovation Fund," he says.

Kent Police and Essex Police won the award in January 2014 after designing the specifications for the back-office software, storage, security and everything else that's required based on their experience with

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Research
College of Policing
The impact of Body Worn Video on criminal justice outcomes of domestic abuse incidents
whatworks.college.police.uk



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the old cameras. Today, Essex Police have 1,300 BWV cameras, and he thinks that Kent have 1,900 of them in operation. So, arguably the audit not only enabled both forces to win the award, it also permitted them to win over their officers by demonstrating the benefits of BWV cameras in action. Yes they can still be used against an officer, but that won't happen if good policing practices and ethics are followed while they apply the law. In this case that Big Brother might actually back up an officer whenever a complaint is made by someone involved in an incident.

Expensive deployment

Inspector Stephen Goodier of Hampshire Police, who worked as a staff officer to Chief Constable Andy Marsh on national BWV between 2015 and 2016, talks about the main issues that challenge chief police officers and police management face with BWV

'Body-worn footage that might seem immaterial at the time could prove vital at a later date'

cameras: "The main issues include the expense of the whole solution – not just of the cameras, but also of the storage and management. BWV is an expensive tool to deploy, but the operational benefits can be realised if deployed and used correctly." He adds: "The forces' IT infrastructure is very important: Can it support the BWV technology – particularly the need to transfer large video files across a network? From a chief officer's point of view, if they aren't issuing BWV to their officers now when most forces are, why aren't they issuing BWV? BWV is becoming standard procedure for most police forces."

As several police forces have mentioned the limiting challenge of decent network bandwidth, David Trossell – CEO and CTO of data acceleration company Bridgeworks offers his thoughts on how things could be

improved: "The backroom functions tend to be forgotten or detail planning skipped. With all the data and evidence coming in each day, and as in all data projects that use electronic data, there is always a massive underestimation of just how much data will be generated."

He says there needs to be some consideration about how the data is going to be stored and protected. "I cannot see that each station large and small are going to manage this on site, and whilst the police forces are experts in managing physical evidence of the crime, digital evidence is completely different." He then rightly points out that CCTV coverage has helped to solve crime by offering invaluable evidence in the same way that BWV cameras can.

"Yet body-worn footage that might seem immaterial at the time could prove vital at a later date. So, how do we store this data off site for safe keeping? Are police forces considering a secure cloud, but more importantly, how can we retrieve it speedily when we need it?" he asks before adding: "Many of today's techniques for moving data offsite rely on compression techniques, but video is already compressed – if the data is encrypted before transmission, this just exacerbates the situation even further." In his opinion, new technologies such as data acceleration solution PORTrockIT can enable police forces to accelerate video data transmission "irrespective of compression or encryption."

Processes and compliance

Toby Nortcliffe, Technical Lead for Body-Worn Video at the Home Office outlines the main issues from his perspective, and says: "All full-scale deployments of BWV are complex affairs for any police force, but the four below are probably the most significant issues."

- Legal compliance over the management, storage and processing of data, but also an efficient process for BWV users to transfer data into the force evidence management system from where evidential continuity can then be automated.
- An effective end to end process that allows officers to quickly review videos, replay them in custody, share

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with CJS partners and ultimately present them in a court.

- General compliance with any national codes of practice, data retention policies and internal Standard Operating Procedures
- Commencing community engagement prior to deploying BWV particularly in more sensitive neighbourhood. Such engagement should include communicating when and why BWV devices will be used.

Goodier adds that it's important to designate certain officers as change agents: "Change agents are deployed or locally known as SPOC's (Specific Points of Contact). Identified officers show colleagues how to use the cameras, and to help to resolve any basic technical issues. SPOCS, are identified within each station and are given extra guidance on the use and management. They are the advocates, promoting their use. I think resistance to the cameras is left in the past, and the sceptics are in a minority. Most officers see them as adding legitimacy to their actions, as they act as their silent independent witness."

Essential training

With regards to the widespread roll-out of BWV cameras, Nortcliffe comments: "This is the biggest roll out of a new technology (since the radio) that UK police forces have ever experienced, so training is essential to ensure a smooth and relatively pain free transformation. The logistics of rolling out training to thousands of officers over a short time period is no mean feat in itself."

"Training would include how to operate the device, when to activate or activate recording, how to tag the video recordings and learning data management protocols. It's also necessary to train officers who may not be BWV users, but who routinely review BWV or those that manage the BWV Users," he explains.

"Staff training is vitally important for policies and procedures that need to be adhered to, and this ensures compliance with the law and it protects the rights of the individual. The training is split between how to manage the device, the technology and the policies and procedures as well as training in the legalities of use," comments Goodier. He adds that the

training enables forces to overcome any resistance to using the BWV cameras, and to identify any issues. He also points out that change management isn't a one-off issue. The cameras are renewed on a three-year cycle, and so he believes there is "an iteration of equipment and a need to continued training."

Cultural change

Nortcliffe and Goodier believe it's too early to tell as to whether BWC cameras are creating a cultural change. It's nevertheless felt that this aspect of the technology warrants further research. Goodier comments: "It's a piece of equipment that officers should have as

'It's also necessary to train officers who may not be BWV users, but who routinely review BWV footage'

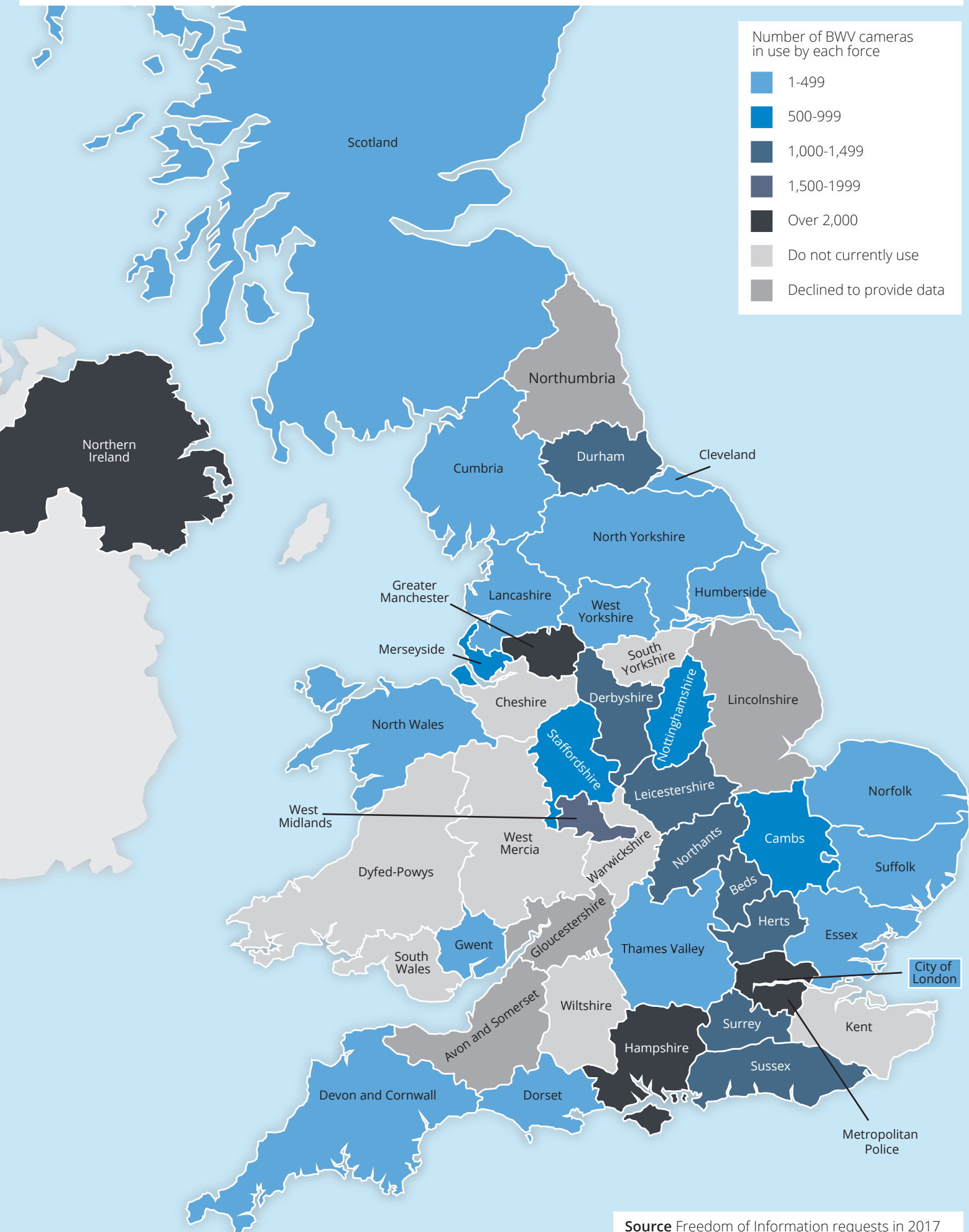
part of their frontline utility. Are officers being more considered about their behaviour and attitude? Are the officers being more professional and polite? The cameras can be used for compliance. This not just with regards to reducing complaints but assists in developing best practice and operational learning."

Dr Alex Sutherland, Research Leader for Communities, Safety & Justice at RAND Europe concludes with his insights into how the cameras should be used:

"In terms of implementation, we think the evidence to date supports the view that officers should be required to keep cameras on, or at least switch them on prior to attending or intervening, and issue a verbal warning. With the latter, it is not clear how many forces are pursuing that approach as standard."

In fact, as ethics and good practice need to be considered with most implementations, the forces that Policing Insight interviewed say that the cameras are only on when officers deem that their usage is fair, accurate and proportionate. Legal and ethical compliance must therefore be the bedrock of implementing BWV cameras. ❖

POLICE BODY-WORN VIDEO USE IN THE UK



Source Freedom of Information requests in 2017 to 45 police forces by Big Brother Watch (bigbrotherwatch.org.uk). Four forces failed to provide information to the requests

Comment and analysis

Shooting video: BWV for firearms

Firearms police units require a more nuanced approach to body-worn video than their unarmed colleagues. From camera positioning to reviewing sensitive footage, questions about their ideal and fair use persist



Gary Mason
Policing Insight contributor



METROPOLITAN POLICE

While body-worn video (BWV) equipment and policy has been quickly and easily incorporated into the day-to-day business of most aspects of policing, two specialist areas of police operations – firearms and public order – have proven a lot harder to resolve.

There have been two main issues to address by the national body-worn video user group that started within Hampshire Constabulary, the National Police Chiefs Council and the various tactical stakeholder bodies involved in firearms operations. The first is the robustness and positioning of the cameras for roles which are fast moving, physically strenuous and traumatic. The second and more controversial issue is the question of when a firearms officer involved in a shooting should be allowed to view the camera footage of the incident when all such incidents, in the UK at least, automatically trigger an independent investigation into the firearms officer's actions. Further down the line, if the incident also triggers criminal proceedings or a public inquiry, months or years after the shooting occurred, will any differences between the officer's written testimony and the camera footage, however minor or innocently arrived at, be exploited unfairly to their legal detriment?

To an extent this second issue is still not fully resolved. On the one hand, from a governance and accountability point of view, the development of reliable BWV for firearms officers, provides investigators and the public with a reassurance and access to evidence that hitherto was not available. Yet the maxim that the

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“camera cannot lie” takes no account of the traumatic effects that shooting incidents have on officer recall immediately after an incident has occurred.

Research undertaken in the US for example, where all officers are armed and police shootings are much more common, has shown that experienced officers involved in shootings often make significant errors of memory in their recall of an incident. This includes the number of shots fired and the number of people in the vicinity of the incident in question. Of course, there are significant differences in police firearms use in the UK where the role is far more specialist and scenario-based training and handling of weapons is a routine part of everyday practice. Nonetheless, the issue of post incident trauma and the effect it has on officer testimony, remains a difficult one.

Legality and ethics

The development of a legal and ethical consensus on these issues is ongoing but on the equipment side of the equation, best practice is now becoming established. The question of whether cameras should be head mounted or chest mounted, for example, has been informed by precedent and live incident reviews. The plans for head-mounted cameras for UK firearms officers were first suggested by former Metropolitan Police commissioner Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe in 2014 in the wake of the death of 29-year-old Mark Duggan.

Duggan was shot and killed by a Met firearms officer on August 4, 2011 during a “hard stop” of a vehicle he was traveling in. An inquest jury found Mr Duggan had been lawfully killed but the shooting sparked widespread community anger and disorder in Tottenham, north London. Despite Sir Bernard’s recommendations the initial BWV equipment worn by UK firearms officers tended to be chest mounted as it is now in general policing roles. But a number of high profile incidents has changed this approach.

In October 2015 the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) described the chest-mounted position of body-worn cameras (BWV) given to firearms officers as “unfit-for-purpose” and recommended alter-

native camera mounting systems should be introduced at the earliest opportunity.

The IPCC issued what it referred to as “quick-time learning recommendations” to the Metropolitan Police (MPS) concerning the use of BWV by firearms officers as part of the investigation into the non-fatal shooting of Nathaniel Brophy, 34, in south Clapham on 21 August, 2015. IPCC investigators obtained and analysed footage from cameras worn by some officers during the incident. Following the investigation the IPCC raised concerns with the Met about the technical positioning of the cameras on officers’ bodies and how this impacts on the visual quality of footage available to the IPCC investigator. The IPCC has also noted that

‘The IPCC described the chest-mounted position of body-worn cameras given to firearms officers as “unfit-for-purpose”

while Authorised Firearms Officers (AFOs) at that time were routinely equipped with BWV, Specialist Firearms Officers (SFOs) were not. The IPCC recommended that when they are deployed to overt armed response incidents, like the south Clapham shooting, they should be equipped with BWV at the earliest opportunity.

Similar issues regarding the positioning of BWV were also identified in the fatal shooting of James Fox in Enfield, however further video footage was available in that instance. Following that advice the MPS changed tack on BWV equipment for firearms teams. Last month, as part of the rollout of body-worn video to all its officers, the Met announced the issue of head mounted cameras to overt firearm officers.

The cameras were issued to all on the Armed Response Units in the force’s Firearms Command, allowing them to wear the new technology on their baseball caps and ballistic helmets.

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The Firearms Command will receive around 1,000 Axon Flex 2 cameras to encompass the additional firearms officers recruited as part of Operation Hercules.

More than 17,500 BWV cameras have been rolled out so far in London with the MPS continuing to be a global lead in what is thought to be the largest rollout of body worn cameras by police in the world.

The cameras have already been issued to frontline officers in 30 of the 32 boroughs, to officers from the Roads and Transport Policing Command, the Territorial Support Group and the Dog Support Unit.

Commander Matt Twist, in charge of the Firearms Command, said: "Officers who carry an overt firearm as part of their role very much welcome the use of body-worn video. It provides a documented and accurate account of the threats officers face and the split second decisions they make. The cameras also offer greater transparency for those in front of the camera as well as those behind it."

Reducing complaints

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said: "This technology is helping to drive down complaints against officers across London and will make a real difference to those carrying firearms, increasing accountability and helping to gather better evidence for swifter justice."

Since September 2016, officers have recorded almost 785,000 videos of which 460,000 have auto-deleted from the system as per the MPS policy on retention of footage. The MPS is the only UK police force digitally sharing BWV with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), with officers now routinely submitting more than 3,000 clips a month, leading to speedier justice and saving on time and cost of officers burning and safely distributing around 6,000 discs.

The deployment of 22,000 cameras includes specialist units – some of whom also carry firearms – such as Royalty and Specialist Protection, Parliamentary and Diplomatic Protection and Specialist Crime Units which include Trident and the Homicide and Major Crime Command.

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Guidance
Independent Police Complaints Commission
Body worn video - IPCC position
and recommendations
ipcc.gov.uk



Other forces have followed suit. In May of this year firearms officers across Dorset and Devon and Cornwall were equipped with cameras following a successful trial and public consultation. All 270 authorised firearms officers across the two forces will use the equipment. Alliance specialist operations Superintendent Nikki Leaper said: "For too long our equipment has lagged behind the technology almost everyone has in their pockets to capture events as they unfold.

"This technology enables our firearms officers to be able to record the very challenging circumstances they are asked to deal with on a daily basis and then demonstrate, more effectively, the reality of policing."

While the equipment is being used by firearms teams extensively, how the evidence it records is handled post incident and who it can be viewed by and when, remains a contentious issue.

The IPCC guidelines on this issue are unequivocal. It says that from a Complaints Handling and Investigation perspective, initial written accounts are useful because they have the potential to record much more detail, including the officer's perception of the event and how that informed their actions. "This information can be pivotal in assessing whether an action was reasonable," it says. "If officers routinely view BWV footage before giving their initial written account there is a risk that statements present merely a commentary on the footage rather than the officer's own perceptions and thought processes. Additionally, there is a risk that watching BWV footage may affect an officer's recollections of an event, consciously or unconsciously"

The IPCC guidelines on police use of BWV evidence also state that If a complaint is made against an officer and BWV footage is available, but they have not yet viewed it, they should not view it until the investigating officer or person locally resolving the complaint is satisfied that they have a sufficient account of the officer's view of what happened. This allows the officer to give

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an account that is untainted by what they may see on the BWV footage. The officer should only view the footage before providing their initial account if there is a good policing reason for this – and this reason should be recorded clearly.

Meanwhile the Police Federation has issued a note of caution. It says: “Work is still ongoing into the difficulties that can arise from the use of BWV, such as the cameras not always being turned on, what happens to the footage in the aftermath of incidents and also an officer’s right to refuse to wear a camera. Another issue is access to footage for officers following a death or serious incident after police contact, as it could have a bearing on investigations by the IPCC.”

Rank-and-file officers claim the IPCC policy on getting a legally binding written statement before an officer has viewed the footage is unfair because “memory can make mistakes” about split-second actions and leave officers “in a difficult position” during a subsequent inquiry. The MPS is also concerned and wants the rules, which also cover “serious injury” incidents, to be relaxed. The issue was highlighted by Sue Palmer, head of the Metropolitan Police Federation’s Constables Branch, at a conference on the future of policing in London last year.

Prior access

She said BWVs could “greatly assist” any investigation into alleged misconduct but that officers “must be allowed to view the footage prior to making their notes”.

“It is a fact that if an officer is involved in a serious incident their memory can be impaired by the stress of the situation,” she said. “Should their account in any way differ from what is recorded by the camera, that officer is left in a difficult position should any subsequent investigation take place.”

She added: “The footage is fact and cannot be changed. So for an officer to be deprived of an opportunity to view that footage cannot be fair. Officers frequently have to make split-second decisions, based on what the officer sees, hears and believes in the moment. A camera will not record peripheral vision or how that officer was feeling or thinking.”

Meanwhile, the camera technology designed for officers who carry firearms continues to develop at a pace and has opened up the possibility of multiple cameras automatically recording an incident when a weapon is drawn. For example in the US, Axon has developed what it says is the first wireless sensor to alert Axon body worn cameras when a firearm is removed from an officer’s holster.

The Signal Sidearm attaches to an officer’s existing firearm holster without interfering with normal operation, the developers claim. The device is wireless and does not risk cables and wires getting in the way of officers when on duty. Once a firearm is drawn, the sensor is triggered and alerts all Axon cameras within a

‘Officers frequently have to make split-second decisions, based on what the officer sees, hears and believes in the moment. A camera will not record how that officer was feeling or thinking’

30-foot range to begin recording. The signal communicates with the full line of Axon cameras including Axon Body 2, Axon Flex 2, and Axon Fleet in-car cameras.

The coin cell battery that operates the device lasts approximately 1.5 years and automatically alerts the user via the Axon network if the battery is low.

The device was launched on the US policing market at the end of last year. “When law enforcement officers must draw a weapon, the last thing they should worry about is their technology,” said TASER CEO and Co-Founder, Rick Smith. “The Signal Sidearm will give officers the same confidence in their technology that already exists in encounters involving Smart Weapons that use our Signal technology. It’s an important step in extending the reach of the Axon network to connect other devices.” ❖

Comment and analysis

An obsession with memory: Body-worn video and the criminal justice system

Much has been written on body-worn video and its potential to reduce complaints and enhance police legitimacy. Former Senior Investigating Officer Andy Griffiths argues that BWV also challenges the criminal justice system's reliance on memory – and that it should encourage us to look again at what problems the current system is set up to solve.



Andy Griffiths
Associate tutor at the College of Policing

The introduction of body-worn video cameras (BWV) as part of modern policing in both the US and UK has also initiated a debate about whether officers should be allowed to view footage from their own BWV before writing a statement about an incident.

In the UK, the Independent Police Complaints Commission issued a statement in January 2016 saying: “there is a risk that watching BWV footage may affect an officer’s recollections of an event, consciously or unconsciously.”

In the US, authorities in Seattle have been contesting the issue through the courts, with one side maintaining that viewing BWV footage would result in a situation where “officers may get an inappropriate opportunity to ‘get their story straight’”.

The whole situation puts me in mind of a scene in the film *Moneyball*. Bear with me, and I will explain both the film and the comparison. *Moneyball* tells the story of US World Series baseball team, the Oakland As, who were continually forced to sell their best players through lack of financial power compared to other

teams. There is a scene in the film where Brad Pitt – playing the team’s General Manager – is listening to his panel of scouts giving their opinions on choosing replacements for the latest departed players, arguing the strengths and weaknesses of each possible recruit. Pitt stops the debate by asking “What’s the problem?” and then telling the scouts that the problem is not about replacing individual players – it is a fundamental issue about budget.

He then proceeds to tell the scouts that solving the problem requires a different perspective and outlines a completely new way of building a successful team.

What’s the problem?

And this is why I think of that scene in *Moneyball* when considering the debate about whether or not officer should watch their own BWV before making a statement. Because the officer watching the footage is not the problem.

The criminal justice process is not about the accuracy of memory, it is about finding out what happened in an incident, apportioning blame where evidence exists beyond any reasonable doubt, and punishing the wrongdoer.

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The use of witnesses' memory through written statements and verbal evidence has been a necessary but unsatisfactory part of this system because the system originates from a time when there was no technology. It is a now proven and inescapable fact that human memory is frail and unreliable, but it was all that was available until very recently. Even when public place CCTV made an appearance in the 1980s it was low resolution, devoid of sound, generally long range, and severely restricted by the processes required to copy and the re-use it for investigative purposes.

The BWV being distributed now to officers is high resolution, sound and pictures and easily accessed for review and evidential use. The 'problem' now is how best to combine the primary evidence of the footage (where it exists) with the necessary memory and sensory evidence of relevant matters not captured to produce a coherent account of an incident, not about how to supplement an antiquated witness statement with video evidence as secondary material.

New perspective

Solving the problem requires looking at the issue from a new perspective and not seeking an incremental change to an inherently flawed system, with the overriding intention of staying as close to the original as possible.

The use of a written statement in situations where an officer has BWV should be restricted to commentary on matters not captured on film or requiring explanation. The footage actually represents the officers untainted and objective first account – completely free of contamination from other sources or accepted memory issues of encoding or retrieval.

The dangers of not adopting this approach have been reinforced only this week by the words of a British police officer involved in a shooting investigated by the IPCC, who said: "I got hung out to dry because my statement was different to the video. The human brain does not store information like a hard drive."

This is an insightful comment borne from the experience of being investigated, tried and acquitted for

murder on the basis of inaccurate recall. No-one can negate the footage, therefore the focus of any investigation should be on adding context to what is recorded, and then assessing its meaning, whether this be wrongdoing of an officer or member of the public.

Transformational change

To give added context to this article, it is worth mentioning that the criminal justice system does not have a good record of transformational change, especially where technology is concerned.

For example, the UK led the world in 1984 when mandating the audio recording of interviews in 1984. Yet, only recently have these recordings been played as part of trials.

For thirty years after the change, judges routinely directed that a transcript of the interview was read out during trial, most often with the prosecuting barrister reading the police officer's questions and the police officer (who asked the questions) reading the suspect's responses.

In a further example from the UK, legislation that allowed the live evidence of vulnerable witnesses (including children) in sexual assault trials to be replaced by a video recording of that evidence was passed in 1999; yet for many years afterwards I saw numerous examples of tearful and frightened witnesses still having to give live evidence – ostensibly in the interests of justice – so that their recall could be tested under examination and cross examination.

This, even though the trial was usually more than a year after the event and the video recording was made days after the event. Go figure the logic in that.

Over the issue of BWV, the criminal justice system, yet again, seems to demonstrate its antiquated mentality in favouring an obsession with human memory and tradition, when the modern world has provided an ability to use high quality video footage as primary evidence in criminal investigations, through a distinct lack of a willingness to ask itself: 'What's the problem?' ❖

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Comment and analysis

Building the case for BWV: Savings in complaints and case building?

British police chiefs are enthusiastic about the benefits of body-worn cameras, so how do they reconcile the cost of adoption and maintenance with the other budgetary pressures they are facing?



Ian Wiggett
Policing Insight contributor

Body-worn video (BWV) has quickly gained widespread support among both frontline officers and police and crime commissioners. PCCs are attracted by the prospect of improved interactions with the public leading to fewer complaints. Frontline cops, contending with a sea of camera phones filming their every encounter, want protection against unfounded allegations and the potential to secure better evidence. It looks like a win-win deal all round.

With levels of scrutiny showing no sign of abating, British police forces have become some of the most enthusiastic adopters of BWV in the world. Yet other jurisdictions still question why BWV is needed and whether it represents good value.

International concerns

Many have concerns about privacy, of course. Officers in some US forces view BWV as restricting their own freedom – a view I've not encountered in the UK. Others fear that police testimony will no longer be trusted without video.

But chief constables in the UK still have to build a business case to justify the investment in BWV.

That's not to say chief constables are against BWV. Who could argue against the prospect of fewer complaints, more convictions, fewer contested cases, and improved officer confidence? But all this kit has to be bought. If money is spent on BWV, less is available for other items, such as Taser. And there is also likely to be an impact on the budget available for staffing.

'Who could argue against the prospect of fewer complaints, more convictions, fewer contested cases, and improved officer confidence?'

The Metropolitan Police is spending £3.5million on 22,000 body cameras for its frontline staff. Greater Manchester Police have set aside £1.9million to purchase 4,000 cameras and also run the system over five years. Forces do not just have to consider the initial purchase costs of the cameras. They will need to buy chargers and fittings for the cameras to be worn,

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systems to download and store footage, and allow for maintenance and replacement of lost or broken cameras. Someone will need to take on the work (or a supplier contracted) to manage the kit and process. After three to five years, the equipment will start reaching the end of its lifespan, and replacements will need to be purchased.

'Many PCCs have made commitments about police numbers, and may expect an investment in BWV to produce at least some cashable benefits'

These are significant sums. While the costs of purchasing cameras can be taken from capital, there are also revenue costs. Many PCCs have made commitments about police numbers, and may expect an investment in BWV to produce at least some cashable benefits. How much will BWV save financially? Will BWV pay for itself through the benefits it brings? And if not, what other expenditure will be sacrificed?

It's about more than money

Greater Manchester Police accepted there was no business case: BWV brought benefits, some potentially cashable, but none sufficient to cover the cost of the investment. Other forces have decided to roll out BWV without a clear expectation of cash savings.

The business benefits of BWV are largely built around fewer complaints and more convictions.

A study of seven forces from the UK and US by Cambridge University, published in "Criminal Justice and Behaviour" found a 93% drop in complaints against officers. Trials in Essex and West Midlands have also shown large reductions in complaints, albeit the sample sizes were small.

Complaints take up a lot of resource time and cause

CLICK HERE

Research University of Cambridge

Use of body-worn cameras sees complaints against police 'virtually vanish', study finds
cam.ac.uk/research



considerable stress for all involved. It is difficult to put a cost on the complaints process. There were 55,000 complaints against police in England & Wales in 2016, with most being classed as 'minor' and suitable for 'local resolution'.

The cost of complaints

Forces spent a total of £104million on officers and staff in professional standards departments, who generally deal with the more serious cases. A complaint also takes up time for local officers, for example taking initial reports, and conducting an initial investigation. Officers subject to complaint may still face months of anguish awaiting the outcome.

This takes a toll on health, and there may also be duty restrictions. Compensation may have to be paid if the force is at fault.

A reduction in complaints has to be seen as an important business benefit. It's not yet clear why BWV achieves this. It may encourage better interactions with the public, leading to fewer situations where the public are unhappy. Or it may help prevent false allegations being made. Either way, translating it into a cash saving may be difficult.

Much of the resource time and effort is taken up with protracted and complex cases where BWV is less relevant. It's too early to tell whether the Cambridge findings will be replicated at larger scale, and whether workloads of professional standards units will fall. An absence of BWV may well open up a new line of complaints, and make it harder for forces to contest claims for damages without video evidence to the contrary. As BWV extends across the country, we are likely to see new trends and patterns emerge.

If time is to be saved, forces will need to make sure they can use BWV promptly. Does the operating system allow the BWV to be viewed quickly? Do force policies allow quick decisions to be made about cases

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Reveal Media's RS2-X2
body-worn camera



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where BWV is available? The IPCC and College of Policing have issued guidance on BWV, but this tends to focus on use of BWV operationally, rather than in relation to complaints resolution. Forces will have to make sure that the process for handling complaints recognises the role that BWV can play.

Prompt review of BWV also has an important role in learning and coaching for staff, and helping deal with situations attracting adverse media coverage. As we have seen with the recent terror attacks, prompt release of CCTV helps explain events and control speculation. Such things are invaluable – yet so hard to cost.

The other major element of building a business case has rested on improved conviction rates, through earlier admissions of guilt and fewer contested cases. Video evidence, whether from CCTV or BWV is hugely influential. There are risks that cameras can provide misleading impressions of an incident, but in general

'Footage of the immediate aftermath of a domestic assault can help ensure the offender is dealt with the way they deserve. That has to be worth the investment'

being able to see and hear an incident play out is a great advantage for any investigator. Footage of the immediate aftermath of a domestic assault can help ensure the offender is dealt with the way they deserve. That has to be worth the investment. But can it translate into a cash saving?

If arrested offenders are more willing to accept guilt as a result of BWV, we should expect to see some reduction in time prisoners spend in police custody,

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and a reduced use of bail to complete further investigations. Preparing a case file for a guilty plea requires less work than for a not guilty plea, and this also provides a cost saving for the CPS.

Inconclusive trials

However, the BWV trials to date have not provided conclusive evidence of the overall impact on police custody and case building workloads. It is likely that the cases where BWV makes most difference are those such as public order and minor assault, where there is already much use of penalty notices and overall workload savings may not be that significant –

'The cases where BWV makes most difference are those such as public order and minor assault, where there is already much use of penalty notices and overall workload savings may not be that significant'

BWV may just provide additional support for the case disposal decision.

BWV will only be relevant in cases where officers are involved in the incident and can capture relevant evidence, of course.

As BWV becomes more commonplace, we will develop a better picture of how it affects the investigation and prosecution workloads. It would be unwise at this stage to place too much store on improved conviction rates or more early guilty pleas providing a cashable saving. There are bigger opportunities for the future, though. Digital justice is hailed as the way to transform the CJS – not just to save money, but also to improve outcomes and the experience for

victims. Video hearings are becoming more common, and more case files are being shared online. Yet we know sadly that IT capability across the CJS is patchy at best. Replaying video footage to CPS prosecutors is already difficult, especially if there is a need for a quick decision out of hours. The system generally relies on DVDs being burnt and couriered between sites. Courts often lack the means to view video footage, as technical standards continue to change – leading to disputes about who should pick up the cost of purchasing new IT. Adding BWV into the case file mix provides yet more technical challenge.

And as officers and staff become more comfortable with BWV, we are likely to see it being used in more inventive ways. Why take statements to record what you have seen, when you can just film it? Why write down a witness statement when you can just ask the witness to tell you what they saw?

Online platforms

There are solutions being developed, of course. Online platforms where files, documents, images, and video footage can be uploaded – from which users can view what they need to. But while the theory is sound, delivering this in practice still presents major technical challenges and requires leadership across all those involved in the CJS process.

This is why BWV is really not about hardware and cameras. The bigger implication for forces is the process of handling, managing and using the footage. Administration can be expensive and burdensome, and poorly integrated systems may lead to further costs later – especially if personal information is misused or ends up in the wrong place.

BWV can be a powerful tool in improving public contact, and officer skills and confidence – but only if it is used well and looked upon as a learning tool rather than just a means of scrutiny.

Of course, a business case is not just about money. There are risks with BWV, but the operational benefits look convincing. But don't expect those benefits to translate into cash savings – and maybe weigh up what will not be funded in order to buy BWV. ❖

Comment and analysis

Can police officers have too much discretion?

Body-worn cameras work well for police officers or could potentially backfire on them if they are given too much discretion in when they are allowed to switch them on and off



Alex Sutherland
Research leader at RAND Europe

Research on body-worn cameras has shown mixed results. On the one hand, complaints against police officers dropped spectacularly when the cameras were used; but on the other, rates of assault against officers during arrest were actually higher. Dr Alex Sutherland of RAND Europe examines police discretion as part of the explanation for these different outcomes.

The effectiveness of body-worn cameras in police forces presents a mixed picture – [our research](#) shows this. On the one hand, complaints dropped against police officers by around 90 per cent following the cameras' introduction in several forces, which alone is a large enough effect to perhaps justify the costs of the cameras in the short term.

On the other hand, rates of assault against officers during arrest were higher on shifts when body-worn cameras were in use, compared to shifts where cameras were not present.

Finally, the overall rate of use-of-force did not differ between shifts where officers wore cameras and those where they did not. However, we found that this varied by how much discretion the officers used in turning cameras on and off.

In light of these findings, RAND Europe and the [University of Cambridge](#) sought to understand why body-worn cameras might escalate encounters

between police officers and members of the public, and to think about how much police discretion should be allowed when using body-worn cameras.

Police discretion is a pillar of modern policing, particularly in the UK. However, regarding body-worn cameras, we believe there is a hazard in giving police officers broad discretionary powers. Indeed, providing too much discretion to police officers over their use of body-worn cameras is described by [our latest paper](#) as a 'slippery slope'.

Sticking to protocol

Our own [previous research](#) supports this assertion. Police officers sticking closer to the protocol of body-worn cameras being on all the time led to use-of-force falling by 37 per cent, whereas use-of-force was higher when officers used their discretion. In essence, when police officers used their discretion, the use of body-worn cameras appeared to backfire on them.

In our latest paper we present and discuss what we call the 'deterrence spectrum', in an attempt to build an explanation of why body-worn cameras work well for police officers or could potentially backfire on them.

A big part of the 'deterrence spectrum' is linked to police discretion – in the case of body-worn cameras whether or not police officers should be able to turn their cameras on and off (and how they use them more generally. (Note it is a different matter when considering how the cameras might affect arrestees.)

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The deterrence spectrum presents a range of idealised scenarios linked to the amount of discretion that police officers might have. At one end of the spectrum is 'minimal deterrence', which is linked to strong police discretion. For body-worn cameras, this means that police officers have complete discretion as to when and how they use the devices.

Examples of 'minimal deterrence' could be police officers making the decision about when to turn the body-worn cameras on or off, or whether they announce that they are recording an encounter with the public. It is likely that departments with this sort of policy will not hold police officers accountable for neglecting to use body-worn cameras on a continuous basis.

Towards the other end of the deterrence spectrum, there is 'maximum deterrence', which is linked to weak discretion because the police officer is not in a position to override a rule.

In the context of body-worn cameras, this means making the use of devices mandatory, providing a clear protocol for their use and not giving officers the power to decide when the device is turned on.

However, the deterrence spectrum gets more complicated with effects in between and even outside of 'minimal' and 'maximum deterrence'.

Goldilocks scenario

A potential, slightly perverse, effect of body-worn cameras could be what we call 'over-deterrence'. This is where police officers not only apply body-worn camera rules, but also apply other rules of engagement with the public in a regimented approach, because they fear reprisals by their superiors.

Some police officers might fear that their actions will be viewed as lenient or ill-advised, so will simply ticket or arrest everyone as required by law, instead of providing leeway and understanding on an individual basis.

In other words, the loss of discretion with the body-worn cameras 'spills over', and fears about being monitored for compliance make police officers risk

averse, resulting in them applying rules rigidly across the board.

Another effect is 'inertia', which is perhaps most relevant to our finding of assaults against police officers who wear body-worn cameras. When dealing with particularly aggressive members of the public, police officers will have to apply more force; however, the presence of body-worn cameras might make police officers reluctant to engage due to the fear of being disciplined, if they are deemed to have applied too much force or acted 'too aggressively'.

'Examples of 'minimal deterrence' could be police officers making the decision about when to turn the body-worn cameras on or off, or whether they announce that they are recording an encounter with the public'

In certain cases, the reluctance to apply force could make police officers more vulnerable to assault in aggressive situations.

Finally, there is the elusive middle-ground, the 'Goldilocks' scenario where everything is 'just right', which is known as 'optimal deterrence'. This is where officers can apply discretion in how they respond and interact with the public, are conscious of the body-worn cameras (and so alter their behaviour), but are not stymied in performing their normal duties.

Striking the right balance is a real operational challenge for police forces everywhere, but we think that current evidence is clear, police officers should: have cameras turned on all the time – certainly before responding to calls for service – and let the public know they are being filmed as soon as possible. ♦

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Comment and analysis

Will body-worn cameras change how forces deal with police misconduct?

A case involving a wrongful arrest highlights how an officer's account of an incident can differ from the events in video footage and lead to allegations of misconduct – how the force reacts will shape future public opinion



Kevin Donoghue
Solicitor Director of Donoghue Solicitors

I am a solicitor who specialises in civil actions against the police. Lawyers like me fulfil a vital function in society. We hold the State (via its agents: the police) to account. As you might expect, I am a supporter of the police's use of body-worn cameras. My client Paul Smith's case shows why. (Mr Smith gave me permission to use his details.)

Arrest following traffic violation

Sussex Police paid Mr Smith £25,000 compensation for his wrongful arrest, false imprisonment, and police assault claim. Paul was an American who had lived in the UK for five years. He was a man of good character and, before his false arrest, had no previous dealings with the police. Mr Smith went to his local Argos store in Hastings, East Sussex to pick up a birthday present for his son. He thought that this would only take a couple of minutes so took a chance and parked illegally near the store.

When Mr Smith came back to his car he found a female Special Constable and male Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) checking it. The female officer asked Paul for his details. He realised she was going to give him a parking ticket. Paul tried to "sweet talk" the police officer into letting him off. The officer

refused and, in Paul's opinion, took a long time to deal with her enquiries and issue the ticket.

Mr Smith became upset. He was on a short break, which had been agreed by his boss. He worried that being late back at work would put his job at risk. Paul had been redundant for nearly a year before getting the job and knew it was vital for his family to keep it. He asked the officers to give him the ticket and to let him go. They seemed unsympathetic.

Paul repeatedly gave his name and details to try to hurry things along. The Special Constable told him to slow down. Although not all Americans live up to the stereotype, on this occasion Paul did. He talked in a loud voice and used some colourful language. The female officer (wrongly) interpreted this as aggressive behaviour and called for backup.

Three police officers, two men and one woman (PC S), arrived at speed using emergency lights and sirens. The lead police officer, PC C, got out of the car with his colleagues and went straight up to Mr Smith. Paul recalled that PC C was wearing a short-sleeve shirt and, despite the warm August weather, leather gloves. He looked like a doorman or enforcer and, to Paul, was "instantly aggressive".

Paul said the officer verbally abused him and tried to provoke him. Despite this, he stayed calm. Matters escalated and PC C arrested Paul for "a breach of the peace".

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The officers forced Paul to the ground, sprayed him with PAVA spray, and put a spit hood over his head.

The police arrested Mr Smith for “obstructing the police in the execution of their duty, resisting arrest, and breaching the Public Order Act”. They took Paul to Hastings police station. PC C, the arresting officer, provided the incident account to the custody officer. The police held Paul for over four hours to pursue further investigations and conduct an interview. Mr Smith said he was offered a caution, which he refused. They then let Paul go without interview, telling him that no further action would be taken.

Body Worn Camera Evidence Review

During Paul’s detention a supervisor and colleague reviewed the body-worn video from two officers, including PC C. PC C knew his camera was recording. Despite this, he gave an account to the custody officer, and later in a Criminal Justice Act statement, which differed from the video evidence. Compare the following:

1 PC C’s oral and written version of events

PC C said that when he arrived at the scene Paul was shouting, “Does giving a ticket take 40 minutes? I’ve got to go. Hurry up”.

He claimed that Mr Smith appeared agitated with both hands in his pockets. He shouted at any officer that asked him a question and failed to listen to any directions given. The officer said, “From his gestures and pacing around, I took his stance as being hostile and aggressive.”

PC C said that Mr Smith was “asked on several occasions (sic) to stop shouting, relax and calm down,” but he appeared to ignore this advice.

The officer continued, “I explained that his actions were liable to make him arrestable to prevent a Breach of the Peace as the area in which we were stood was very busy with members of the public. I would estimate approximately 25–30 persons were in listening distance of the male. I...told him that if he continued to shout he would be arrested. I then explained that the best advice I could give him was to

not talk and only answer questions when asked. This appeared to agitate him further where he then began to verbally abuse me directly saying something similar to ‘Oh you’re the big man/cop’.

He then continued to shout where I took hold of his right arm and explained that he was now under arrest for a breach of the peace.”

The officers then arrested Mr Smith.

2 First supervisor’s notes on reviewing body-worn camera video

“The ... officers arrive at scene ... at approximately 16:30 hours.

The footage at this point records PC C opening the conversation with Mr Smith, saying “hello mate” and “how are we doing” to which Mr Smith replies “I’m just trying to get my ticket and get back to work”.

‘PC C knew his camera was recording. Despite this, he gave an account to the custody officer, and later in a Criminal Justice Act statement, which differed from the video evidence’

PC C asks why he’s being aggressive to which Mr Smith replies “I haven’t been aggressive” and remains standing still with his hands in his pockets. Please note that Mr Smith maintains this non-confrontational stance throughout the incident until he (sic) taken to the ground later.

The situation deteriorates from this point as PC C becomes increasingly confrontational and continues to accuse Mr Smith of being aggressive. It can be seen from the body language that PC C is getting irritated because Mr Smith is remaining passive and refuses to be provoked into joining the confrontation. PC C then

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accuses Mr Smith of not answering his questions although in fact he has not asked him anything. He then calls Mr Smith “a dick” at which point Mr Smith remonstrates with him asking why it is okay for (police) to say that sort of thing? PC C then arrested Mr Smith for breach of the peace and for section 5 POA.

Although Mr Smith remained non-confrontational throughout the incident, repeating that he was being calm and that he wasn't being aggressive, PC S then tells Mr Smith not to be obnoxious; at this point he is taken to the ground and PC S deploys her captor spray. Then Mr Smith can be heard asking for water as he is “burning up”.

PC S can be seen in the BWV footage to kneel on Mr Smith's lower back although he is not struggling. PC C accuses Mr Smith of spitting at him so he is placed in a spit hood. We established later that Mr Smith was trying to clear his airway from the effects of the spray.

The most obvious issue with this incident is in fact there was no necessity to arrest Mr Smith. He did not commit a breach of the peace; he did not breach public order and he did not resist arrest. The entire incident was escalated by the officers attending.

A more courteous and good humorous approach would have no doubt resolved the matter. When I viewed the CCTV footage my immediate concern was that the officers' use of force was excessive in the circumstances – I could not see the necessity to take Mr Smith to the ground and then also captor spray him. I also felt that the officers failed to treat Mr Smith fairly or appropriately by refusing to listen to his side of the story. PC C's conduct deteriorated into orally abusing Mr Smith and then arresting him for offences he had not committed.

I would say that PC C on this occasion breached the police code of conduct and such behaviour brings the police into disrepute.”

3 Second supervisor's notes on reviewing video evidence

“From viewing the BWV it was my opinion that as soon as PC C got out of his police car his attitude was

‘bullish’ and continued throughout the remainder of the incident. Prior to him being restrained, Mr Smith's hands were in his pockets the whole time, he was never rude to the police officers and was polite to them, he was not shouting and I felt that PC's C and S did not respect the fact he was American and their accent is sometimes louder than other accents. PC C was extremely unprofessional by calling Mr Smith a ‘dick’, it undermined everything else PC C did during the remainder of his contact with Mr Smith, especially as he later threatened to arrest him for swearing, when PC C did exactly the same.

I felt that the situation was dealt with very poorly. As police officers we are employed to display excellent communication skills at all times – this was not displayed by either PC C or PC S at any point, they did not take the time to listen to Mr Smith to establish why he was upset and then try to resolve the situation, they just kept telling him to ‘calm down and ‘be quiet’.

In my opinion they were not working in line with ... police values, they did not show any compassion towards Mr Smith by taking the time to listen to his point of view, they were just content on trying to keep him quiet and seem to get annoyed when he continued to talk which he is perfectly entitled to do. Police officers are meant to have patience to deal with difficult customers and situations but as soon as Mr Smith suggested to PC C that he didn't have any crime to deal with PC C seemed to lose his patience and arrest him for breach of the peace which Mr Smith had not done. I do not feel that they treated Mr Smith fairly and certainly did not do the right thing.”

Misconduct Investigation

Paul reported the incident to the Independent Police Complaints Commission. It referred the matter to Sussex Police. Its Professional Standards Department (PSD) reviewed the body-worn video. The officers involved gave statements. The investigating officer concluded that:

- No breach of the peace occurred

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Comment and analysis

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- The arrest was unlawful and unnecessary
- Any and all force used was unlawful.

But, he considered the amount of force was not excessive. Paul's complaint was upheld but PC C's sanction for this incident was merely "management advice". The force identified a "training need ... to improve his knowledge" about the law on breach of the peace.

Paul was unhappy with the outcome of the complaint investigation. It's easy to see why. Sussex Police missed an opportunity to enhance its reputation with

'The parties negotiated knowing that the court would see the painful, distressing, and humiliating evidence of arrest. This led to a more pragmatic approach'

stronger misconduct penalties. The video evidence was conclusive. It proved the officers' signed Criminal Justice Act statements were not "true to the best of my knowledge and belief".

The consequences of this misconduct could have been life-changing. Without the body-worn video, my client would have been charged, prosecuted and, if the magistrates had been deceived at trial, wrongly convicted. Despite this, the force concluded misconduct proceedings with (what a superintendent described as) "the lowest possible formal sanction".

The officers involved did not apologise. PC C was unrepentant. He said: "If I was to do this again I would do it exactly the same way. In my mind nothing was done wrong."

Compensation claim

The police body camera evidence benefitted both Sussex Police and Paul Smith. It helped the supervisory officers at Hastings police station carry out a swift review. With it they saw not only an unlawful

arrest but also excessive use of force. They realised that Paul was an innocent victim of police misconduct. They dismissed PC C's false allegations and released Paul without charge. The £25,000 compensation Mr Smith received was significant. But it would have been far more had he been wrongly convicted and later won his claim.

And the body-worn video footage helped resolve the compensation claim more quickly and without a public trial. The parties negotiated knowing that the court would see the painful, distressing, and humiliating evidence of arrest. This led to a more pragmatic approach from the Chief Constable, which helped both sides agree terms.

Future for body worn camera evidence

For the police and public, body worn camera evidence is invaluable. It helps forces deal with complaints and compensation claims efficiently at lower cost. It enables them to hasten misconduct investigations. It can help preserve, and even enhance, force reputations when they take robust action. But as Paul Smith's case shows, police officers and their forces must adapt to the new reality. False allegations supported by incorrect witness statements deserve more than weak disciplinary action.

Recommendation

Forces must focus on the use of body worn camera evidence throughout the process:

- Officers must make sure cameras are recording at the earliest opportunity.
- Supervisors should check footage as soon as possible after arrest (as in Paul Smith's case).
- Unedited video from all cameras, including body worn, CCTV etc., must be downloaded and given to defence/ claimant solicitors quickly. The police should hand over edited versions and metadata at the same time.

Failing to take these steps in every case undermines the many benefits of body-worn video. Breaches should be met with firm disciplinary sanctions to encourage compliance. ❖

Comment and analysis

Using BWV when dealing with people with mental health issues

Recording incidents involving people with mental health problems can be especially challenging, so police forces would be advised to sit down with local mental health trusts to discuss the issues and agree best practice



Insp Michael Brown
Author of Mental Health Cop Blog

Body-worn cameras are becoming the new normal in policing, but when it comes to attending incidents involving those with mental health problems, officers need to be aware of the challenges. Police Inspector Michael Brown, author of Mental Health Cop Blog, explores the issues.

The police have been rolling out body-worn video (BWV) for many years now. You will notice, if you look at 999 response officers on patrol, many of them have two devices hanging from the upper portion of their protective vests: one of them is usually their police radio, the other, slightly smaller device, is usually one of several types of camera.

This gives a fish-eye view, with audio, of what is in front of that officer at that time and offers considerable insight into the incidents they police. I remember when I first joined, most police custody suites did not routinely have comprehensive CCTV throughout and that, when this was first introduced, there was an amount of disquiet about the surveillance and scrutiny officers would be subjected to both whilst attending to their duties and whilst in between.

However, once rolled out, most custody sergeants – and I was one of them! – took the view that it merely assisted in showing some of the outrageous things

people do to the police, the support staff (including healthcare staff) and to themselves whilst detained and that we were, in the main, working hard to ensure we handled people professionally.

Recordings from police custody have been used to assist in convicting people of murder and to acquit officers of wrongdoing when accused of misconduct or assault, perhaps far more quickly than they otherwise

'Force policies often stipulate that any entry to a building conducted under the terms of a court warrant, where entry is, by its very definition, opposed by the occupants, should be recorded'

would have been. Of course, a few managed to show the opposite, but it greatly assisted in holding the officers to account.

When I was posted as an intelligence and offender manager inspector in 2007, I was given the responsibility for trialling some BWV equipment that had been

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secured for the area. The devices weren't especially reliable. There were all manner of problems from downloading the captured images to IT systems; issues around data storage as well as keeping clear audit trails for evidential purposes that would allow their use in court or complaints processes.

An audit trail

In particular, it was especially difficult to present the material in a way that kept the audit trail of how 'edited' the footage had been. Some may say, 'Why edit the footage at all?' Well, an officer may have attended an incident and been there for half an hour, but only 90 seconds of it recorded anything of evidential value. Even allowing another 90 seconds either side of that segment, you'd need five or six minutes of footage, not the full thirty minutes. So, should the CPS and Courts just be given unedited footage and told to work it out for themselves? That would cost a lot of time. Officers also occasionally use the toilet during their working hours and none of us wants to see that!

The basics of this are that devices record when the officer turns them on and starts recording. The device will store the last X-minutes of footage before starting to record over itself – 30 minutes held on camera and when it starts to record minute 31, you lose minute 1 unless you've instructed the device to preserve it. Officers could press the button early on to preserve an extended period and if they don't, you'll lose minute one of the footage as soon as you've started recording minute 31, for example.

Upon completion of their shift, they download that content to a secure IT system. If they do wish to edit the footage to highlight the two five-minute clips of value, they can create the smaller, shorter files without losing the longer ones. On my iPhone – I've been on holiday in France, filming my son jumping into a swimming pool – when I trimmed the clips to upload for his grandparents' delight, Apple gave me the option of trimming the old clip and making it shorter or creating a new shorter clip in addition to retaining the old one. The police software for BWV doesn't give

the option of trimming the original; it only creates a new file of the shorter version so that all can be subsequently seen by courts, Professional Standards Departments or the IPCC. You can see the College of Policing's [interim guidance on BWV](#), subsequently incorporated into all guidance for the service, which still represents a decent summary of all the issues, should you want detail.

Inevitably, we've started to see BWV issues in the context of mental health incidents and it's causing discussion. The College's guidance document doesn't mention mental health and, of course, officers responding to 999 calls or other situations may well turn on their cameras en route to an incident without

'The operation of BWV is something which is for the officer to justify and the legal advice is that they have a common law power to do so where they judge it reasonable and proportionate'

knowing what the incident is and, having dealt with it, may instruct the device to preserve that evidence of the interaction for a range of reasons. For spontaneous incidents, I think we all understand that some filming of vulnerable people is inevitable and, indeed, some may think it helpful in terms of being able to see how officers handled things should there be a complaint or dispute – it preserves the rights of people to ensure accountability.

Sensitive situations

But, what happens in other, more sensitive and pre-planned situations? The three I've recently received questions about are:

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- BWV whilst executing a warrant under s135(1) MHA – an intervention in someone's private home that may involve a Mental Health Act assessment taking place there.
- Continued use of BWV in a health-based Place of Safety where NHS staff requested officers turn off the video and a conflict occurred when the officers refused.
- Police attendance at an inpatient mental health unit following a request by NHS staff that they help with a patient who had become violent towards staff and other patients.

Using powers

One objective of BWV is to record the actions of officers when they are using police powers and especially when they are potentially coercing other people under those powers. Accordingly, force policies often stipulate that any entry to a building that is conducted under the terms of a court warrant where entry is, by its very definition, opposed by the occupants should be recorded.

In one police force, I read a policy that made it absolutely clear: this was mandatory and not up for debate. The filming should not only extend to the entry by force, but also to the time spent on the premises as trespassers right through to the point of leaving. Granted, the authors of the policy may well have been considering drugs raids, searches for firearms of stolen property. If they had missed out mental health act warrants in their considerations, they wouldn't be the first or last police officers to do so.

Mental health specifics

That said, are Mental Health Act warrants any different from the perspective of what we're asking BWV to capture? Did officers make reasonable attempts to enter without smashing the door off? Did they use proportionate force in gaining entry? Did they use proportionate and dignified methods to search the premises for the person sought and secure the premises? What discussion took place by the officers about their

decision-making, for example, about whether to remove the person to a health-based Place of Safety for assessment under the Act or for the AMHP and DR(s) to undertake that assessment in the premises? In many respects, it's little different. Although some may argue there are different things at stake given the nature of the warrant, this pre-supposed that crime warrants are not especially sensitive, capable of intruding on third-parties who live at the same address etc.

Common sense

It gives rise to an important question, doesn't it? Can an AMHP, the patient or anyone else (like NHS ward staff) demand that the camera be turned off?

No, they can't.

'Nothing prevents mental health trusts and their police forces sitting down to discuss BWV and agreeing to refine any joint operating protocol'

The operation of BWV is something which is for the officer to justify and the legal advice is that they have a common law power to do so where they judge it reasonable and proportionate. The guidance is generally that BWV should not be used in private dwellings, but that this can be done where justified, just not as a routine record of proceedings. It should be considered only where officers reasonably believe they will be making written records of events because of the use or potential use of police powers.

Although it is unmentioned in the guidance, one can imagine this would extend to NHS premises – nothing prevents staff asking for videos to be turned off, but where officers feel this cannot be done they should explain the reasons why. Of course, depending on the legal situation in hand, nothing prevents the AMHP or NHS staff preferring that officers leave a situation

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rather than it be recorded, if the officers are not prepared to turn it off.

Finally, principle 3 of the document outlines how 'common sense' should prevail – hence the point officers should be considering BWV only where they anticipate making written records for legal reasons. If a section 136 detention on camera had led to someone being removed to a Place of Safety and any resistance, fear or volatility at the point of detention had abated and everyone is just sitting around waiting for assessment, what would the point be?

If the wait involved continued circumstances which justified the use of it, then it can continue for as long as officers remain.

Discussing joint protocols

Nothing prevents mental health trusts and their police forces sitting down to discuss BWV and agreeing to refine any joint operating protocols – indeed, there is a duty on the police (principle 7 in the College's guidance document) to consult about the use of BWV.

Accepting that officers retain the right to use the equipment notwithstanding views that it should not be deployed, they are required to justify their use of it by outlining what they thought they'd be gaining against that which they were risking. So, we need to be talking to people if we're asked about it and not just saying, "No, it's my decision."

Of course, it's also worth remembering, any footage in any incident which is not required for a criminal investigation or prosecution

Forces should consult with mental health trusts about when it is appropriate to press record



will remain securely stored in a police data warehouse until data protection policies see it deleted – this stuff isn't going to end up on YouTube without a specific reason for putting it there!

'It must be borne in mind that some of the most controversial incidents in all of policing's history have been deaths in custody involving vulnerable people in mental health crisis'

The new normal

Body-worn video is part of the new normal. It must be borne in mind that some of the most controversial incidents in all of policing's history have been deaths in custody involving vulnerable people in mental health crisis. We can see all around us campaigns from families and friends demanding justice and accountability for the death of their loved one – something I sure we can all empathise with were it ever to happen to our loved ones.

BWV will go some distance to ensuring that where officers have stuffed up, they are able to be held to account.

That said, I'm perhaps bound to observe that where officers are dealing with the complexities and sensitivities I write about on this blog, they're getting it right in difficult circumstances more often than not, and body-worn video is potentially crucial in showing the difficulties we face to those mechanisms that hold us to account. ❖

Previously published on Policing Insight 17 August 2017. Republished with kind permission, this article first appeared on the [Mental Health Cop Blog](#).

Comment and analysis

Police body-worn cameras: More to it than what you see

The notion that body-worn cameras are good for policing is not so simple in reality and the ramifications of the technology are still not completely understood – some accounts suggest a rise in violence against officers



Alex Sutherland
Research leader at RAND Europe

Body-worn cameras for police officers are being rolled out globally, but until recently, limited evidence was available as to their effects. In one of the largest randomised-controlled trials in criminal justice history, the University of Cambridge and RAND Europe have recently published several papers looking at the new technology – with some surprising results. Alex Sutherland of RAND Europe outlines the findings and their implications.

Billions of dollars are being spent worldwide on the roll-out of body-worn cameras for police officers. With so much at stake, there is an urgent need to understand whether body-cameras are helping police officers and members of the public, and under what conditions they work best.

Body-worn cameras should, in theory, help both police officers and the public they serve. The basic notion is that awareness of being filmed should help to curb inappropriate behaviour by police and/or suspects, keeping situations calmer.

Evidence from a range of sources shows both humans and animals alter their behaviour if they know they are being watched.

The camera's effects are not limited to the street. Footage from body cameras should aid prosecutions and help improve police accountability.

However, the idea that body-worn cameras are inherently 'good for policing', or can do all that is claimed of them is more complicated in reality.

Our research finds plenty of areas around their use that need to be considered. It concludes that we are only just beginning to understand the full ramifications of applying this technology on the frontline of policing.

One of the largest trials in history

In one of the largest randomised-controlled trials in criminal justice history, the University of Cambridge and RAND Europe have published [several studies](#) looking at body-worn cameras' use in law enforcement.

This research, led by Dr. Barak Ariel at the University of Cambridge, included eight UK and U.S. police forces, 2,122 participating officers, a total population of two million citizens, and encompassed two million hours across 4,264 shifts. The studies focused on assaults against officers, use-of-force by officers and complaints against police by the public. The findings from the first study are perhaps surprising. Rates of assault against officers during arrest were 15 per cent higher when body-worn cameras were in use, compared to shifts where cameras were not present.

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Research
University of Cambridge
Use of body-worn cameras sees complaints against police 'virtually vanish', study finds
cam.ac.uk/research



Comment and analysis

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We think there are two plausible explanations for this finding. First, police officers might feel more able and equipped to report assaults against them once they are captured on camera, even if the officer does not sustain visible injuries. This footage can provide officers with the confidence and impetus to report assaults. Secondly, there is an argument that the video monitoring might make police officers less assertive and more vulnerable to assault, meaning that the actual rate of assaults increases.

Whatever explanation is correct, it is important to understand this in more detail. On the one hand, improved reporting of assaults means officers could receive more support and recognition. On the other hand, if cameras genuinely increase the risk of assaults then we need to understand why this is happening.

Use of force

The findings from the second study on the rate of use-of-force by police on suspects during arrest were also contrary to our expectations. The rate remained unchanged by the presence of body-worn cameras on average, but further analysis showed that this result depended on whether or not officers used their discretion about when to turn cameras on.

During the research, officers were instructed to record all stages of police-public interactions and issue a verbal warning of filming at the outset.

However, many officers preferred to use their discretion, activating cameras depending on the situation. This is important, as police officers sticking closer to the protocol led to use-of-force falling by 37 per cent, whereas use-of-force increased when officers used their discretion.

Drop in complaints

More recently, the third study found a 93 per cent drop in complaints made against police forces following the introduction of cameras.

There are two possible reasons for this steep fall. The presence of the cameras could mean that police officers are behaving more appropriately in encoun-

ters with suspects and, as a result, fewer complaints are made against them.

On the other hand, it could be that the footage from the body cameras provides evidence of encounters between police officers and members of the public, so inaccurate complaints are less likely to be made.

What was interesting is that we saw an across-the-board decrease in complaints, both in situations where officers were wearing cameras and where they were not. We called this 'contagious accountability', as we think the 'civilising effect' of wearing cameras on some shifts 'spilt over' to when officers were not wearing cameras.

'We are only just beginning to understand the ramifications of applying this technology on the frontline of policing'

Further research

Complaints against police are costly, both financially and in terms of public trust. In the US, complaints can be hugely expensive, with some resulting in multimillion-dollar lawsuits (just one of these can wipe out the budget for a small to medium sized police force). Meanwhile, in the UK last year, [data from the Independent Police Complaints Commission](#) showed a continuous rise in complaints across the majority of forces, with each requiring investigation (and thus cost).

Further research continues to be carried out that looks at the use of body-worn cameras within police forces. This is important in explaining the reasons behind these findings and gathering further evidence for what works in policing regarding the use of body-cameras. In the meantime, more training and engagement with police officers could help to ensure they are confident in the decisions they make while wearing cameras, and are safe in their job. ❖

Previously published on Policing Insight 10 October 2016

Comment and analysis

Don't believe the hype

Almost 48,000 body worn cameras have been purchased by police forces, yet despite such widespread use, neither the police nor the CPS could say how often footage from these devices has been used in court



Renate Sampson
Chief Executive of Big Brother Watch

Body-worn cameras are the new kid on the policing block. Deemed to be crucial in reducing violence against officers, improving transparency in police/public relations, assisting in obtaining guilty pleas, and as an essential tool in speeding up justice when footage is used as evidence in court, the technology is seen as the go to tool to benefit police and public alike.

Whilst Big Brother Watch are keen to support the roll out of new technologies which can improve the safety of UK citizens, we wanted to ensure the benefits – as outlined above and championed by police and politicians alike – lived up to the hype.

Freedom of information

Using freedom of information laws, we asked the police how many body worn cameras have been bought and are being used, and whether a trial of the technology had taken place before roll out. We also asked the police and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to tell us how many convictions, successful or otherwise, have involved evidence from a body worn camera. We published our findings in August 2017.

The report 'Smile you're on body worn camera Part II – Police' revealed that almost 48,000 body worn cameras have been purchased by 71% of UK police forces, to the tune of almost £23 million. Yet despite such widespread use, and such vast sums of money spent, neither the police nor the CPS could show us how often the technology is used in court.

After the fanfare and convincing narrative from senior police officers, politicians, and the CPS, stating that

'The failure to show how often the technology is used in court or as a source of evidence is of very real concern'

the technology would improve sentencing or lead to improvements in guilty pleas, we couldn't believe that such data is not collated and could not be presented to prove the perceived benefits to be true. The failure to show how often the technology is used in court or as a source of evidence is of very real concern.

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Comment and analysis

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When we investigated the police's own findings from the trials of the cameras we learned that a wealth of problems exist, from technology not working, to problems with use, right through to concerns over their value as a policing tool. Yet despite these inconclusive findings the police continued to spend vast sums of money on the technology, presumably in the hope that the problems would iron themselves out over time.

Further research

Furthermore, the claims that the cameras reduce attacks against the police and improve police/public engagement and relations appear to have a number of question marks hanging over them. The famous Rialto Study undertaken by academics at Cambridge University in conjunction with Rialto Police department in California is often cited as one key factor behind support for the technology, due to its findings that use of force by officers against individuals dropped by 59% and complaints against officers fell by 87%. Yet the academics behind the study are continuing their research and have shown in later studies that the findings are not as clear cut, and that if the turning on of the camera is not made clear there is a 15% increase in the risk of force towards an officer.

Combined, these three elements showed us that the acquisition, cost and deployment of body worn cameras is far from being given a solid tick of approval and that further scrutiny of the use of the technology is clearly needed.

Freedom of information

Whilst Big Brother Watch are all for improvements in policing, we urge caution across society in placing trust in technology as the solution, particularly where there is little or no proof of its credibility. Time and again the public have been told that technology will improve our safety. For years the public have been told that CCTV will make the streets safer, yet the reality is that CCTV is a tool used to investigate crime – after the event. Whilst that clearly has a benefit, it is a far cry from the promises that being watched 24/7

would make us all safer and rid the streets of criminals and crime.

Although body worn cameras offer different solutions to CCTV, our findings, particularly in relation to the use of footage as evidence, demonstrate the complete failure to adequately prove and show what benefits the roll out of the cameras actually bring in terms of improving policing.

Whilst we welcome the attempts to improve transparency in policing, and to establish trust and improved engagement between the police and the

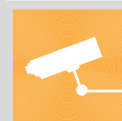
'The acquisition, cost and deployment of body-worn cameras is far from being given a solid tick of approval and further scrutiny of the use of the technology is clearly needed'

public, it is not enough for the police to just tell the public of the benefits, they must be prepared to offer conclusive proof of them and on a regular basis. They must go to greater lengths to establish auditing processes which show exactly when a technology is used to investigate a crime, where the source of evidence has come from and what outcome – good or bad – was established following the use of a body worn camera.

Technology may be inevitable, but its usefulness is not. Ongoing proof of use and proof of value are essential throughout the use and lifespan of any technical tool. If neither of those points can be proven, and the benefits remain inconclusive, police forces should not be afraid to halt its use immediately. ❖

CLICK HERE

Research
Big Brother Watch
Smile you're on body-worn camera
Part II - Police
bigbrotherwatch.org.uk



Appendix

UK police use of BWV

With the exception of six forces who have yet to embrace it, BWV technology has been broadly embraced by UK policing. Most use local servers to store the data, though cloud solutions are also used

Police force	Permanent (P) or trial (T) use of BWV	Total spend	Number of cameras	Model	Manufacturer	Minimum number of days footage is retained	Location where video footage is stored
Avon and Somerset	P						
Bedfordshire	P	£668,525	1,412	RS2-X2	Reveal	31	Local server
Cambridgeshire	P	£442,370	917	RS2	Reveal	31	Local server
Cheshire							
City of London	P	£101,000	170	Body 2	Axon	As long as necessary	Cloud
Cleveland	P	£57,000	100	RS3-SX	Reveal	In accordance with MOPI rules	Local server
Cumbria	P	£90,000	250	PR5	Pinnacle	31	Local disks
Derbyshire	P	£387,236	1,292	RS2-X2 and RS2-X3	Reveal	30	Local server
Dorset / Devon and Cornwall	T*	£0	100	PR5	Pinnacle	31	Local server
Durham	P	£49,500	1,100	Muvi Pro VCC-003	Veho	In accordance with MOPI rules	
Dyfed Powys							
Essex	P	£209,610	411	A5	B-Cam		Local server
Gloucestershire							
Greater Manchester	P		3,148		Axon	30	
Gwent	P	£164,405	360	RS2	Reveal	31	Local server
Hampshire	P		2,800	RS2-X2	Reveal		
Hertfordshire	P	£614,000	1,298	RX2	Reveal	31	
Humberside		£143,000	92		Reveal	31	
Kent							
Lancashire	P	£200,000	250	RX3	Reveal	30	Local server



Information not supplied



Does not use BWV

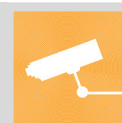
T*: preparing trial

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Source Freedom of Information requests in 2017 to 45 police forces by Big Brother Watch (bigbrotherwatch.org.uk). Four forces failed to provide information to the requests

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Appendix

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Police force	Permanent (P) or trial (T) use of BWV	Total spend	Number of cameras	Model	Manufacturer	Minimum number of days footage is retained	Location where video footage is stored
Leicestershire	P	£765,000	1,400	RS3-SX and RS2-X2	Reveal	30	Local server
Lincolnshire	P						
Merseyside	P		850	PVR-PRO 2	Viewu and Edesix	31	Local server
Metropolitan Police	P	£15,500,000	22,000	Body 2 and Flex 2	Axon	31	Cloud
Norfolk / Suffolk	T		>20		Reveal		
North Wales	P	£232,940	120	RS2	Reveal	30	Local server
North Yorkshire	P		38				
Northamptonshire	P	£682,000	1,271			31	
Northumbria							
Nottinghamshire	P	£291,670	550	RS2-X2	Reveal	31	
Police Scotland	P		434			31	
Police Service of Northern Ireland	P	£730,000	2,100	VB-320	Edesix	31	
South Wales	P						
South Yorkshire	P						
Staffordshire	P	£370,551	550	RS3	Reveal	31	
Surrey	T*	£600,000	1,220	RS2-X2	Reveal		
Sussex	P	£496,000	<1,000	RS2	Reveal	30	
Thames Valley	P		380	RS3-SX	Reveal	31	
Warwickshire	P						
West Mercia	P						
West Midlands	P*	£565,426	1,617	Body 2	Axon	In accordance with MOPI rules	Cloud
West Yorkshire	P		70				
Wiltshire	P*			RS2-X2	Reveal		



Information not supplied



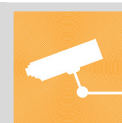
Does not use BWV

P*: preparing permanent roll-out T*: preparing trial

Source Freedom of Information requests in 2017 to 45 police forces by Big Brother Watch (bigbrotherwatch.org.uk). Four forces failed to provide information to the requests

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 Part II - Police
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Appendix

Top BWV users and suppliers to UK policing

Four manufacturers dominate the marketplace with Reveal equipment most widely used, yet Axon has supplied more units overall

Data supplied by **Big Brother Watch**

Police forces with the most body-worn cameras

Police force	Number of cameras
Metropolitan	22,000
Greater Manchester	3,148
Hampshire	2,800
Police Service of Northern Ireland	2,100
West Midlands	1,617
Bedfordshire	1,412
Leicestershire	1,400
Derbyshire	1,354
Hertfordshire	1,298
Northamptonshire	1,271

Supplier with most cameras units in use in UK policing

Police force	Number of cameras
Axon	26,935
Reveal	14,363
Edesix	2,100
Veho	1,100
Pinnacle	350

Highest spending police forces

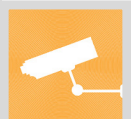
Police force	Total spent
Metropolitan	£15,500,000
Leicestershire	£765,000
Police Service of Northern Ireland	£730,000
Northamptonshire	£682,000
Bedfordshire	£668,525
Hertfordshire	£614,000
Surrey	£600,000
West Midlands	£565,426
Sussex	£496,000
Cambridgeshire	£442,370

Supplier most often chosen by UK police forces

Police force	Number of forces supplied
Reveal	19
Axon	4
Edesix	2
Pinnacle	2
B-Cam	1
Veho	1
Vievu	1

Source Freedom of Information requests in 2017 to 45 police forces by Big Brother Watch (bigbrotherwatch.org.uk). Four forces failed to provide information to the requests

CLICK HERE
Research
Big Brother Watch
Smile you're on body-worn camera
Part II - Police
bigbrotherwatch.org.uk



Appendix

Useful links

Selected links to guidance and research on body-worn video

Guidance COLLEGE OF POLICING [Body-worn video guidance](#)

Published August 2014

This guidance updates and replaces Home Office (2007) Guidance for the Police Use of Body-Worn Video Devices. It explains the relevant legal framework under which forces in England and Wales should operate BWV. It also provides consistency in operating procedures and information management processes for the practical use of BWV. The guidance follows the structure of the key principles for the overt use of BWV. The procedures should be considered a minimum standard for using BWV devices. They should be used as a basis for force operating procedures or standing orders relating to the use of this equipment. This guidance must be read in conjunction with Digital Imaging Procedure, Police Use of Digital Images, Code of Practice on the Management of Police Information and Surveillance Camera Code of Practice.

HOME OFFICE/CAST [Technical guidance for Body Worn Video \(BWV\) devices: CAST, 2016](#)

Published 4 November 2016

Technical guidance for police forces when procuring and deploying Body Worn Video (BWV) devices.

[Safeguarding Bodyworn video data](#)

Published 6 February 2017

Understanding the types of data captured by Body Worn Video (BWV) devices and how to safeguard against loss.

NATIONAL POLICE CHIEFS COUNCIL (NPCC)

Published 22 September 2015

[National Policing Position Statement: Using Body Worn Video for recording initial contact with victims, witnesses and suspects](#)

INDEPENDENT POLICE COMPLAINTS COMMISSION (IPCC)

[Body worn video - IPCC position and recommendations](#)

INFORMATION COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE (ICO)

[Guide to data protection](#)

[Law enforcement use of BWV](#)

SURVEILLANCE CAMERA COMMISSIONER

[Surveillance Camera Code of Practice](#)

[Body worn video: perspectives from the Surveillance Camera Commissioner](#)

PNLD

[Body worn video \(BWV\) icons](#)

A selection of icons to indicate the presence of body worn video (BWV) devices.

Research COLLEGE OF POLICING

[The impact of response officers wearing body worn video in the Metropolitan Police](#)

[Assessing the benefits of body-worn video on officer and subject behaviour](#)

[The impact of Body Worn Video \(BWV\) cameras on criminal justice outcomes in domestic abuse incidents](#)

[The impact of body worn video \(BWV\) on stop and search in England and Wales](#)

[Testing the effect of BWV in the WMP: An RCT](#)

[Police, Camera, Evidence: London's cluster randomised controlled trial of Body Worn Video](#)

RAND EUROPE/CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY

[Use of body-worn cameras sees complaints against police 'virtually vanish', study finds](#)

[The Effect of Police Body-Worn Cameras on Use of Force and Citizens' Complaints Against the Police: A Randomized Controlled Trial](#)

Appendix

[Investigating the Effects of Body-worn Police Cameras](#)

[Body-worn cameras associated with increased assaults against police, and increase in use-of-force if officers choose when to activate cameras](#)

[Wearing body cameras increases assaults against officers and does not reduce police use of force: Results from a global multi-site experiment](#)

UNIVERSITY OF PORTSMOUTH

[Evaluation of the introduction of Personal Issue Body Worn Video Cameras \(Operation Hyperion\) on the Isle of Wight](#)

BEACHAM RESEARCH

[Wearable Technology in Public Safety - The Dominant Role of Bodyworn Cameras](#)

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

[Lights, Camera, Redaction... Police Body-Worn Cameras: Autonomy, Discretion and Accountability](#)

METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON DC / LAB DC

[Randomized Controlled Trial of the Metropolitan Police Department Body-worn Camera Program](#)

In the media

Police body-worn video media links

Selected links to news, opinion, analysis and reports from mainstream and specialist media to provide context and insight

Links exported from Policing Insight's [Media Monitoring service](#)

Report

Bobbies on the net: A police workforce for the digital age

As crime changes, police forces must respond. Not only are more of people's lives spent online, but new technology, such as the Internet of Things and artificial intelligence, will entrench society's reliance on digital infrastructure. [PDF]

Reform Think Tank, 23/8/2017

Trialling body-worn video cameras for City of London Police: Officer perceptions and justice outcomes

London Metropolitan University, 15/8/2017

Smile you're on body worn camera Part II – Police

The use of body worn cameras by UK police forces [PDF]

Big Brother Watch, 15/8/2017

Language from police body camera footage shows racial disparities in officer respect

Police officers speak significantly less respectfully to black than to white community members in everyday traffic stops, even after controlling for officer race, infraction severity, stop location, and stop outcome. This paper presents a systematic analysis of officer body-worn camera footage, using computational linguistic techniques to automatically measure the respect level that officers display to community members. This work demonstrates that body camera footage can be used as a rich source of data rather than merely archival evidence, and paves the way for developing powerful language-based tools for studying and potentially improving police-community relations.

PNAS, 30/5/2017

National surveillance camera strategy for England and Wales

This strategy contains information about the Surveillance Camera Commissioner's objectives and plans

gov.uk, 14/3/2017

Custody images: Review of their use and retention

This document sets out the findings of our review into how police forces use, store and delete custody photographs. Custody images are a standard feature of everyday policing. The review proposes giving individuals the facility (if they have not been convicted) to apply to chief officers of police forces to have their custody image deleted.

Home Office, 24/2/2017

"Contagious accountability": The effect of police body-worn cameras on citizens' complaints against the police

A global multisite randomized controlled trial on the effect of police body-worn cameras on citizens' complaints against the police by University of Cambridge

Criminal Justice and Behaviour, 29/9/2016

Wearable Technology in Public Safety – The Dominant Role of Bodyworn Cameras

In the market of wearable devices, body-worn cameras are gaining momentum in several areas. The impact of wearable devices in enterprises and governments is becoming increasingly evident. This attention is striking in public safety. For the purpose of this study, we have divided the market into two macro groups: police body-worn cameras (BWC) and beyond police body-worn cameras (BWC). This study explores the former and provides an understanding of the level of adoption and challenges to adoption of BWC in police forces. There is also consideration of the role of BWC in applications beyond police use and the market potential.

Beacham Research - Subscription at source, 17/6/2016

Wearing body cameras increases assaults against officers and does not reduce police use of force

Wearing body cameras increases assaults against officers and does not reduce police use of force: Results from a global multi-site experiment. Police use of force is at the forefront of public awareness in many countries. Body-worn videos (BWVs) have

In the media

been proposed as a new way of reducing police use of force, as well as assaults against officers. To date, only a handful of peer-reviewed randomised trials have looked at the effectiveness of BWVs, primarily focusing on use of force and complaints. We sought to replicate these studies, adding assaults against police officers as an additional outcome.

European Journal of Criminology - Subscription at source, 17/5/2016

Analysis

[Police body cams were meant to keep us safer. Are they working?](#)

Equipping police officers with body-worn cameras was intended to defuse tense situations, but footage of brutal incidents keeps going viral.

New Scientist - Subscription at source, 18/10/2017

[International Women's Day – Bodyworn police cameras helping domestic abuse prosecutions](#)

Video cameras worn by police are providing vital new evidence to help the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) convict domestic abusers.

Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), 8/3/2017

[How mobile video is changing the way we witness crime](#)

Mobile video is changing the way we witness crime, from live footage of a mentally disabled man tortured by four assailants, to a recording that led to the manslaughter conviction of an Israeli soldier, to the body cameras designed to keep police accountable.

AP The Big Story, 6/1/2017

[Five lessons from the rise of bodycams](#)

How not to respond to the next police surveillance technology

Slate, 29/11/2016

[Paying for police tech](#)

Police Market Report, 28/11/2016

[The long lens of the law](#)

Fitting officers with cameras is good for the public and the police alike. *The Economist, 20/10/2016*

[Behavioural Insights Team: Update report 2015-16](#)

Most aspects of Home Affairs policy are ultimately about human behaviour. And those studies that have been conducted, such as our work with Avon and Somerset Constabulary on increasing diversity in police recruitment, seem to show that – in some but by no means all cases – relatively small changes can have big impacts.[PDF]

Behavioural Insights, 16/9/2016

[Do police body cameras really work?](#)

Boston Globe, 10/9/2016

[How the police's body-worn camera technology is changing the justice system](#)

The Independent, 4/3/2016

Opinion

[Live streaming body-worn cameras: Essential for officer safety](#)

Existing technology could be upgraded to safeguard personnel, argues Marie Clutterbuck

Police Oracle - Subscription at source, 29/9/2017

[Leader comment: Cameras a vital tool for police](#)

The use by police officers of video cameras attached to their uniforms has been long proved as an effective tool in convicting wrong-doers.

The Scotsman, 26/4/2017

[A new 'business as usual'](#)

It is now just over a year since I became the Chief. It is natural at this point to reflect on where I have got to on the commitments I set out to you and what the next year holds.

CC Dave Thompson's Blog, 3/3/2017

[If cops don't turn on their body cameras, courts should instruct juries to think twice about their testimony](#)

American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), 5/12/2016

[Reducing crime through innovation: The role of PCCs – a view from Jane Kennedy](#)

Merseyside PCC Police Foundation, 14/10/2016

[Body Worn Cameras are the police's possibility to turn transparency into trust and social capital](#)

LinkedIn, 7/8/2016

News

[MPs pressed on mental health bill](#)

Parliament must back proposals to make police wear body cameras when restraining mental health patients to avoid the excessive use of force, 29 leading experts and charities have said.

The Times - Subscription at source, 30/10/2017

[England and Wales police custody deaths report out after 15-month delay](#)

Report expected to recommend reforms to police, justice system and health service, with special groups to deal with fallout. *The Guardian, 30/10/2017*

In the media

Police officers with body-mounted cameras may be allowed to tape interviews with suspects at the scene to save time and money

Police may soon be allowed to interview suspects at crime scenes using body-worn video cameras. New plans would mean officers could record interviews on lightweight cameras. They can already use evidence captured on the tiny devices.

Mail Online, 26/10/2017

New police powers to interview suspects on body-cams welcomed

West Mercia's police and crime commissioner has welcomed new regulations that would allow police to use body-worn video cameras to interview suspects at scenes of crimes.

Shropshire Star, 26/10/2017

Home Office consults on using body-worn video for police interviews

Changes will mean suspects are interviewed at the scene of a crime, saving officers time and freeing them up for other duties.

Home Office, 25/10/2017

Study says body cameras don't always change police behavior

In theory, body cameras are supposed to not only catch police abuses of power, but deter them: officers will be on their best behavior knowing that they could be hauled in. As Washington, DC researchers have learned, though, that isn't guaranteed. They've published a study showing that body cameras didn't significantly affect officers' use of force or the number of civilian complaints in either direction.

Yahoo!, 21/10/2017

Caught on camera: Police videos could assist abuse prosecutions

Evidence from police body-worn videos could help to secure more prosecutions for domestic abuse, the Crown Prosecution Service said today, after its latest report on violence against women and girls highlighted a fall in the number of police referrals.

The Law Society Gazette, 10/10/2017

Body cams issued to all West Mercia frontline police in £1 million project

All frontline police officers and staff in the region are now equipped with body worn video cameras as part of a £1 million project.

Shropshire Star, 3/10/2017

Armed Bedfordshire police officers equipped with body worn video cameras to increase transparency

Police officers toting weapons across the county will now be fitted with body worn video cameras to help corroborate evidence in relation to incidents attended by firearms officers.

Bedfordshire on Sunday, 25/9/2017

All frontline police officers will be kitted out with body cameras

PCC Keith Hunter has agreed to fund the equipment following a successful trial

Hull Daily Mail, 25/9/2017

Number of complaints against police fall in Nottinghamshire

Police believe that one of the reasons for the fall is the use of body worn cameras

Nottingham Post, 19/9/2017

Watchdog warns over police database of millions of facial images

Biometrics commissioner says 20m photos held despite retention of images of innocent people being unlawful

The Guardian, 13/9/2017

British Transport Police in England, Scotland and Wales to be equipped with body worn cameras

All frontline officers with the British Transport Police will soon be equipped with body worn cameras.

News Shopper, 7/9/2017

Police hold more than 20 million facial recognition images

Criticism mounts over government delays in bringing the "privacy intruding" surveillance technology under legal control.

Sky News, 24/8/2017

Covert body worn video system 'needs thorough explanation'

Met is trialling use of cameras for undercover officers.

Police Oracle - Subscription at source, 21/8/2017

Criminals' malicious accusations against police slashed since introduction of bodycams

Serial complainers have been put off since North Wales Police officers started wearing the equipment

Daily Post (Wales), 17/8/2017

Surrey Police has spent £600,000 on body-worn cameras, but 'benefits yet to be proved' according to civil liberties group

A Freedom of Information request revealed that Surrey Police is the seventh highest spender when it comes to body-worn cameras

Get Surrey, 17/8/2017

BWV study verdict: Two-year trial 'empowers' officers and 'calms' confrontations

Frontline officers are applauding the explosion of body-worn video camera (BWV) use as criminology experts praise the

In the media

"significant role" they play in improving police legitimacy and public safety.

Police Professional, 16/8/2017

Privacy campaigners want proof of body worn camera footage benefits

Group says it is impossible to assess equipment's value because forces can't provide data relating to the use of footage in criminal proceedings.

Police Oracle - Subscription at source, 16/8/2017

Police officers are overwhelmingly supportive of body cameras, study shows

Criminologists at London Metropolitan University conducted research for City of London Police.

London Metropolitan University, 15/8/2017

Body cameras for police have little impact on crime

Police forces have spent nearly £23 million on body cameras even though trials have raised questions about their effectiveness and suggested that they do little to reduce crime, according to a report published today.

The Times - Subscription at source, 15/8/2017

PSNI splashed out £700k on body cameras

Police in Northern Ireland spent more than £700,000 on body-worn cameras - but can't state how many times their footage has been used in court. *Belfast Telegraph, 15/8/2017*

71% of police forces use body worn cameras but cannot show when footage is used in court - A Big Brother Watch Report

A report published by civil liberties and privacy campaign group Big Brother Watch reveals that 71% of UK police forces have spent £22,703,235 on 47,922 body worn cameras but are unable to show how many guilty pleas or convictions have been obtained based on footage from the technology.

Big Brother Watch, 15/8/2017

GMP has the greatest number of officers wearing body cams outside London

Greater Manchester Police officers wear the largest number of body cams of any force outside London according to latest figures. The personal data pressure group Big Brother Watch says GMP has more than 3,000 staff equipped with video recording devices. *ITV News, 15/8/2017*

Firearms officers 'absolutely sold' on body-worn cameras

Chief Superintendent overseeing the roll-out says his officers are very keen to start using their new head-gear

Police Oracle, 14/8/2017

Armed Met Police officers to wear head-mounted cameras

Armed officers are to be issued with head-mounted cameras in a effort to provide "greater transparency" in police shootings, the Met Police says.

BBC, 14/8/2017

Body cameras could be rolled out to all North Yorkshire Police officers

All frontline officers with North Yorkshire Police could be issued with body worn cameras by next year.

The Press (York), 8/8/2017

Real-time facial recognition via body-worn cameras is the 'future'

Traditional BWV could soon be left behind by streaming innovation

Police Oracle - Subscription at source, 1/8/2017

Maverick chief constable builds 'villains' file with body cameras

Police are using body cameras to compile image databases of repeat offenders and known "villains" in order to help track them down in future investigations, The Times has learnt.

The Times - Subscription at source, 15/7/2017

Panel advances body cam video transparency bill

The Latest on California legislation on police body camera video
Mail Online, 12/7/2017

Belfast International Airport police get body-worn video cameras

It is hoped the highly visible camera units will serve as a deterrent.

Belfast Live, 10/7/2017

Who needs body cameras? Police testing cellphone cameras

A solution for police officers searching for more accessible and inexpensive body cameras may have been in their pockets all along.

USA Today, 26/6/2017

The RCMP ignored their own study by refusing to give body-worn cameras to their officers

An internal study conducted by Canada's federal police force recommended rolling out body-worn cameras for its officers on a case-by-case basis while the force worked out kinks in the technology. But instead of doing that, the RCMP opted to stop the rollout of the technology "indefinitely."

Vice, 12/6/2017

In the media

[Moonlighting police leave body cameras behind](#)

When police officers in America's cities put on their uniforms and grab their weapons before moonlighting in security jobs at nightclubs, hospitals, and ballparks, there's one piece of equipment they often leave behind - their body camera.
Mail Online, 11/6/2017

[Racial 'disparity' in police respect](#)

California police officers speak less respectfully to members of the public who are black than to those who are white, researchers studying body camera footage say.
BBC, 5/6/2017

[Police post heroic films to improve image](#)

A body camera on a police officer in Connecticut showed how he saved a resident from leaping over the sixth-floor balcony of a nursing home
The Times - Subscription at source, 3/6/2017

[Body-worn cameras to be rolled out to police officers in Suffolk and Norfolk](#)

It is expected all frontline police officers in Suffolk will have body-worn cameras by the end of the year
Ipswich Star, 2/6/2017

[IoM police to trial body cameras from TT festival week](#)

Body cameras will be worn by police officers for a six-month trial from TT week. Twelve credit card-sized cameras will be used for the first time to record incidents as part of a £1.5m "digital transformation" of the Manx force.
BBC, 22/5/2017

[Legalising cannabis will raise £1bn a year in tax, say Lib Dems](#)

The Liberal Democrats would legalise cannabis to raise a billion pounds in tax and ban diesel cars, under plans set out in the party's manifesto yesterday.
The Times - Subscription at source, 18/5/2017

[Dorset firearms officers issued with Body Worn Video cameras to capture evidence](#)

The change has been rolled out following a trial and a public consultation on the cameras' usage
Somerset Live, 17/5/2017

[Firearms officers in Cornwall to wear video cameras](#)

Firearms officers in Cornwall are going to wear video cameras. The deployment of Body Worn Video is being issued to 270 Authorised Firearms Officers, across Devon and Cornwall Police and Dorset Police.
Pirate FM, 17/5/2017

[Police force to roll-out body cameras](#)

Body worn video cameras are to be rolled out to South Wales Police officers.
ITV News, 17/5/2017

[Streaming bodyworn footage with facial recognition will 'change policing in a big way'](#)

Firm behind the real-time anti-terror software has begun discussions with forces about introducing the new technology.
Police Oracle - Subscription at source, 8/5/2017

[London anti-terror raid police criticised for not wearing body cameras](#)

Lawyer for woman shot in Willesden operation voices concern that counter-terrorism unit did not record it on video
The Guardian, 4/5/2017

[More Wiltshire Police officers are set to receive Taser training](#)

Wiltshire Police will train more officers to use Taser stun guns as violent crime in the county rises, the chief constable has announced.
Salisbury Journal, 3/5/2017

[Issues with police body-worn camera system revealed](#)

Faults with Police Scotland's body-worn video camera system are increasing at a time when the force is considering a national rollout, the BBC understands
BBC, 28/4/2017

[NYC police department launches 1st phase of bodycam program](#)

Starting with a roll call Thursday at an uptown Manhattan police station, the New York Police Department launched a program to boost accountability by equipping its patrol force with body cameras.
Mail Online, 27/4/2017

[Plans to fit all Scottish police officers with body cameras](#)

Body cameras could soon be worn by all of Scotland's police officers under plans being considered by the national force, The Scotsman can reveal.
The Scotsman, 26/4/2017

[New York police body camera program needs changes -civil rights lawyers](#)

Civil rights lawyers on Wednesday demanded changes to a pilot program for New York City police to wear body cameras, saying it does not ensure that officers are held properly accountable for how they treat people.
Mail Online, 20/4/2017

In the media

Malvern police officers receive first batch of Axon body cameras in West Mercia

Some 46 officers in Malvern have been given the cameras this week as part of West Mercia Police's £1m investment in 2,200 devices. *Malvern Gazette*, 6/4/2017

Taser changes name in shift to software, police services

Taser International Inc, maker of the eponymous device used by police to stun and incapacitate a person temporarily, is changing its name to Axon as it pushes further into the software business. *Investing.com*, 5/4/2017

Dyfed-Powys Police begins body camera rollout for officers

A police force has begun the rollout of body cameras for 800 officers and community support officers. Dyfed-Powys Police said training would begin on Wednesday ahead of them being deployed on the streets. *BBC*, 29/3/2017

UK public faces mass invasion of privacy as big data and surveillance merge

The privacy of the public is at risk of being invaded on a mass scale without its consent as the collection of big data meshes with proliferation of video surveillance, the government's CCTV watchdog has warned. *The Guardian*, 14/3/2017

New holster forces all nearby body cams to start recording when gun is pulled

Axon, the body cam division of Taser International, has announced Signal Sidearm, a gun holster sensor that detects when a weapon has been removed from a holster and automatically prompts all nearby body cams to start recording. *ars technica*, 28/2/2017

Government publishes Custody Image Review

The review sets out the government's view on the use and retention of custody images by the police. *Home Office*, 24/2/2017

SSAIB announces implementation of body-worn technology by police forces meets

Surveillance Camera Code of Practice SSAIB, the UK and Ireland's security, fire and telecare certification body, announces that two police forces have pioneered the introduction of body-worn video (BWV) technology in accordance with the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice. Following certification to the code, completed by SSAIB auditors, the Greater Manchester Police and Metropolitan Police Service are now using devices for a variety of innovative and beneficial applications. *SourceSecurity.com*, 24/2/2017

New York City police to wear body cameras under labor settlement

New York City and its largest police union settled on a tentative five-year labor contract on Tuesday that includes salary increases while also agreeing that all patrol officers will wear body cameras by the end of 2019. *Mail Online*, 1/2/2017

Frontline police officers in Norfolk and Suffolk to be wearing body cameras by June

People committing crime in Norfolk could be caught on film by police officers wearing cameras by the summer, it has emerged. *Eastern Daily Press*, 1/2/2017

Body worn cameras will 'undoubtedly' improve policing says Met chief inspector

Chief inspector Neil Sawyer was speaking at a demonstration of new body worn kit being distributed to Met TSG officers. *Police Oracle - Subscription at source*, 25/1/2017

Chest mounted video cameras issued to EVERY frontline North Wales Police officer

Daily Post (Wales), 21/1/2017

Body cameras for Sidmouth police?

Sergeant Andy Squires this week revealed that Devon and Cornwall Police is awaiting the results of a trial in Dorset before it considers investing in the technology, which is aimed at making officers more accountable. *Sidmouth Herald*, 16/1/2017

Force receives award for body worn video compliance

GMP demonstrated it follows the principles in the surveillance camera code. *Police Oracle - Subscription at source*, 14/1/2017

Greater Manchester Police awarded for use of camera technology

Greater Manchester Police has become one of the first police forces to be awarded by the Government for its use of body worn cameras. *Rochdale Online*, 9/1/2017

M62 shooting: Why weren't armed police wearing body cameras?

Campaign group Just Yorkshire demand answers over death of Mohammed Yassar Yaqub *The Huddersfield Daily Examiner*, 4/1/2017

Houston police chief wants body cameras that automatically record

HPD Chief Art Acevedo says change would increase transparency and trust, and make officers' work easier *Chron (Texas)*, 16/12/2016

In the media

Body cams too fragile for Canadian Mounties – so they won't be used

Kit dumped after fears over battery life and durability
The Register, 8/12/2016

Frontline police officers to wear bodycams

Police in Warwickshire will wear body cameras from next year.
Stratford-upon-Avon Herald, 7/12/2016

Shropshire police officers to get body cameras in £1 million move

Police officers in Shropshire will be wearing body cameras on the beat next year thanks to a £1 million investment in the technology, it has been revealed.
Shropshire Star, 7/12/2016

Met Police Service partners with Azure to store body cam footage

Partnership between police force and Microsoft will see footage from body cameras stored in Azure CloudPro, 1/12/2016

The Met nabs Microsoft for its UK data-centres

Metropolitan Police Service to store body-worn video content from its Evidence.com site in Microsoft's UK data-centres on the Azure platform
Government Computing, 1/12/2016

Met Police chooses Microsoft's UK data centres to host body worn camera data

Met Police superintendent Adrian Hutchinson touts benefits of deal to force, and UK tax payers
V3.co.uk, 1/12/2016

Police in Belfast to wear body cameras while on duty

Police officers in Belfast will wear body cameras while on duty from Wednesday. Four hundred devices have been purchased, at a cost of £1.5m.
BBC, 17/11/2016

Truce in sight as MPS calls for relaxation of IPCC rules on viewing body worn camera evidence?

Top-level talks are aiming to settle a dispute between Britain's biggest force and the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) over fatal shootings evidence from body worn video cameras (BWVs).
Police Professional, 10/11/2016

Met Police who fatally shoot suspects 'must have access to bodycam film'

A dispute has broken out between Scotland Yard and the police complaints watchdog over whether officers involved in fatal

shootings should be able to view footage from their body-worn cameras before giving evidence to investigators.
Evening Standard, 8/11/2016

Police body cameras must come in

Police officers across South Worcestershire could soon be wearing body cameras after West Mercia's Police and Crime Commissioner said he wants it to be introduced 'as soon as possible.' John Campion made the comments after visiting the Metropolitan Police to see the technology being used in action.
Worcester Observer, 2/11/2016

Hundreds of West Midlands police officers given body cameras

More than 1,300 frontline police officers have been issued with body cameras after a trial saw officer use of force slashed by more than half and complaints plummet.
Birmingham Mail, 1/11/2016

How police body cameras became a budget battlefield

When it comes to body cameras, Taser has been the dominant player. But there's a lowcost rival making some noise. Taser thought it had the New York Police Department's business in the bag. The company, best known for its stun guns, also controls 80 percent of the market for police-worn body cameras. It seemed like a foregone conclusion that the nation's largest police force -- by far, with about 35,000 officers -- would go the same way as so many other police departments. Which is why it was a shocker that the NYPD instead chose a startup called Viewu. Then you look at the deal, and you see a pretty obvious reason: Viewu's \$6.4 million bid was roughly half the price of Taser's contract, which came in at about \$12 million.
CNET, 25/10/2016

Body-worn cameras roll out planned for 2017

Norfolk and Suffolk Police are announcing a phased roll-out of body worn cameras for frontline officers which is planned to begin in 2017. *Suffolk Constabulary, 19/10/2016*

PCC announces roll-out of body worn cameras for police

Norfolk OPCC, 19/10/2016

Body worn cameras change face of Staffordshire policing

The use of Body Worn Video by police and closer scrutiny of officers have, together changed the face of policing in Staffordshire according to the Police and Crime Commissioner.
ITV News, 19/10/2016

Met Police issues 22,000 body-worn cameras to frontline officers

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) has rolled out 22,000

In the media

body-worn cameras to frontline officers as part of a £3.4m deal.
V3.co.uk, 18/10/2016

MPS introduce body-worn video to over 22,000 officers

In the coming months, officers across all 32 boroughs in London will be equipped with cameras to attach onto their uniforms.
Police Professional, 17/10/2016

Body-worn cameras rolled out to thousands of Met Police officers

Thousands of Met Police officers will today start wearing cameras at crime scenes, in patrols and during interviews in a bid to ensure "greater transparency" in London's policing.
Evening Standard, 17/10/2016

22,000 Met Police officers to use body-worn cameras

It is believed to be the largest roll-out of its kind anywhere in the world. *LBC, 17/10/2016*

Met Police begins world's biggest body worn camera rollout

MayorWatch, 17/10/2016

Rollout of body-worn cameras

Metropolitan Police Service, 17/10/2016

Introducing Taser's new arch enemy, VieVu

Here's what we know about the privately held company that swiped TASER's NYPD contract last week.
The Motley Fool, 13/10/2016

Police body cameras capture hours and hours of footage with no national consensus on how to release it

PBS (US Public Broadcasting Service), 12/10/2016

Not one New York police officer has a body camera

New York Times, 4/10/2016

Complaints against police 'almost disappear' with body worn cameras

Extensive study found a 93% drop in the number of public complaints. *Police Oracle - Subscription at source, 30/9/2016*

Bodycams on way, vows West Mercia Police boss

West Mercia Police will introduce body cameras for its officers, the force's crime commissioner said today.
Shropshire Star, 30/9/2016

Police bosses put off investing in body-worn cameras

Police in North Yorkshire must make do with fewer than 40 body-worn cameras - despite new evidence showing their use improves behaviour of officers and the public.

The Press (York), 30/9/2016

Use of body-worn cameras sees complaints against police 'virtually vanish', study finds

Year-long study of almost 2,000 officers across UK and US forces shows introduction of wearable cameras led to a 93% drop in complaints made against police by the public - suggesting the cameras result in behavioural changes that 'cool down' potentially volatile encounters.
University of Cambridge, 29/9/2016

Police body cameras 'cut complaints against officers'

BBC, 29/9/2016

North Carolina not alone: Other US states blocking access to police body camera footage

Just because an officer videotapes a controversial encounter doesn't necessarily mean you'll ever get to see it. *CNN, 27/9/2016*

Justice Department to spend \$20m on police body cameras after Terence Crutcher and Keith Scott deaths

The US Justice Department has announced it will give \$20 million to law enforcement agencies across the country to buy and enhance their use of body cameras.
The Independent, 26/9/2016

Boston police department's body camera program launches after delays

The pilot program began after the city's largest police union tried to stall with an injunction claiming the commissioner breached volunteer agreement terms. *The Guardian, 12/9/2016*

Kodiak police stop using body cameras, start database of developmentally disabled

Alaska Dispatch News, 7/9/2016

BWVs: Survey draws UK map of forces with 'separate policies across arbitrary borders'

Police forces have been criticised after a piecemeal picture of inconsistency emerged on whether officers armed with Tasers should wear body cameras. *Police Professional, 3/9/2016*

West Yorkshire Police to use body-worn video cameras for whole force

Video cameras attached to officers' uniforms are to be worn by a police force after a trial was deemed a success. *BBC, 8/8/2016*

Officer body cameras set for launch by Avon and Somerset police by end of the year

Police in Avon and Somerset will soon be equipped with innovative body cameras when working in the field.
Gazette (Gloucestershire), 19/7/2016

In the media

[College of Policing might have to be forced to take procurement role](#)

MPs say organisation could recommend particular models of body worn video device or custodian helmet to forces.

Police Oracle - Subscription at source, 11/7/2016

[Body-worn cameras gain global appeal says Beecham Research report](#)

US and UK lead adoption for policing while other applications begin to emerge. *Security News Desk, 30/6/2016*

[Police force first in Wales to issue body cameras to all on-duty officers](#)

North Wales Police is to become the first force in Wales to hand body-worn video equipment to all on-duty officers.

Wales Online, 27/6/2016

[Police ICT Company head: Eat your cloud, cops, it's good for you](#)

A national strategy which considers the use of public cloud services such as AWS and Azure is needed if the police are to cope with the increasing weight of unstructured data storage, the head of the Police ICT Company has said.

The Register, 22/6/2016

[British cops will have 59,000 body-worn cameras by end of 2016](#)

Police forces are rapidly adopting body worn video (BWV) cameras with as many as 59,000 expected to be in use by the end of 2016/17 – according to chair of the police BWV user group Stephen Goodier. *The Register, 25/5/2016*

[GMP start issuing body cameras to 3,000 police officers](#)

Greater Manchester Police has started issuing 3,000 body-worn high-definition cameras to frontline officers following a successful trial. *Manchester Evening News, 17/5/2016*

[Police 'more likely to suffer assaults' if they wear body-worn cameras](#)

Police officers may be more likely to suffer assaults if they are wearing body-worn cameras, a new study suggests.

Belfast Telegraph, 17/5/2016

[Police officers with body worn cameras are more likely to be assaulted](#)

Wearing body mounted cameras can place police officers at more risk of being assaulted, a study has shown.

The Telegraph - Subscription at source, 17/5/2016

[Taser wins Met body worn camera contract](#)

Police Oracle - Subscription at source, 25/11/2015

[Body worn camera technology to be rolled out after £1.8 million funding announced](#)

Ann Barnes says the technology will pay for itself within around two years. *Kent News, 22/9/2015*

[Police body cameras may solve one problem but create others](#)

WASHINGTON (AP) — The use of police body cameras is spreading to keep officers honest about using force against citizens. But how and when the public gets to see the footage is up for debate. *Mail Online, 11/9/2015*

