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Evaluating the Impact of Police Officer Body-Worn Cameras

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Spotlight Report

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Smart Policing: Research Snapshot

A number of highly publicized deaths of citizens at the hands of the police have sparked a national debate over police accountability—with body-worn cameras (BWCs) at the center of the debate. BWCs enjoy support from many law enforcement agencies, citizen advocacy groups, civil rights organizations, politicians, and the federal government. Though there has been wide-ranging speculation over the potential impact and consequences of BWCs, few rigorous examinations of the technology have been conducted, and many questions remain unanswered.

The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), through the Smart Policing Initiative (SPI), funded the Phoenix Police Department to purchase, deploy, and evaluate police body-worn cameras. In the study, the Phoenix SPI team deployed 56 BWCs to officers in one of the two Maryvale Precinct squad areas. All officers assigned to the target area were issued BWCs, and officers in the adjacent squad area served as a comparison group. Cameras were deployed in the field in April 2013, and the study period covered approximately 30 months (15 months pre-deployment; 15 months post-deployment).

The evaluation of BWCs, led by the research partners at Arizona State University, focused on six critical areas: (1) officer camera activation compliance, (2) officer perceptions of the wearability and utility of body-worn cameras, (3) impact on officers' job performance, (4) impact on public compliance and cooperation, (5) impact on officer accountability, and (6) impact on domestic violence case processing and outcomes.

The study found the following: (1) Officer compliance with the activation of BWCs was generally low (under 30 percent), varying by call type (between 6 percent and 48 percent). (2) Police perceptions of BWCs changed notably over time, as officers reported increased comfort and ease as well as greater recognition of the benefits of the technology. (3) BWCs appeared to increase arrest activity. (4) BWCs did not seem to change citizen behavior, based on resisting-arrest charges. (5) BWCs appeared to significantly reduce complaints against officers (23 percent drop) when compared with officers in the other squad area (10 percent increase). (6) Finally, BWCs improved the processing of domestic violence incidents, as cases with video were more likely to be charged and successfully prosecuted, although BWCs did result in longer case processing times.

The Phoenix SPI study produced a number of important lessons learned. The decision to deploy BWCs represents an enormous investment in resources and manpower. It is important for police managers to be strategic, deliberate, and collaborative in planning their BWC program. Coordination with the Prosecutor's Office is absolutely critical.

Training, policy development, and transparency with line officers also are essential for a successful BWC program. The perceived benefits of BWCs hinge on their use and proper operation in accordance with departmental policy. That is, the benefits of BWCs can be realized only if officers appropriately activate the cameras during police-citizen encounters.

Line officers should become educated consumers regarding BWCs, and both line officers and police managers should be realistic about the potential impact of the technology on police operations, encounters with citizens, and community perceptions of police legitimacy.

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PHOENIX, ARIZONA, SMART POLICING INITIATIVE: EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF POLICE OFFICER BODY-WORN CAMERAS

CHARLES M. KATZ, MIKE KURTENBACH, DAVID E. CHOATE, AND MICHAEL D. WHITE

INTRODUCTION

Police officer body-worn cameras (BWCs) are one of the most widely discussed technological developments in policing today. The BWC captures and records activity, creating a permanent digital video/audio recording of police encounters with citizens. Though interest in BWCs dates back several years, civilian deaths at the hands of police, perhaps most notably the tragic deaths of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and Eric Garner in New York City in summer 2014, sparked a national debate over police use of force against citizens and police accountability —with BWCs at the center of the debate. Public outrage over police accountability again boiled over in April 2015 with the death of Freddie Gray while in the custody of the Baltimore (Maryland) Police Department.

The discourse over police use of force, accountability, and the potential role of BWCs led to the creation of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing. It also led to a White House–sponsored *Body-Worn Camera Partnership Program* that will provide $75 million to police departments across the country to help purchase BWCs (managed by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, BJA), and the development of BJA's *National Body-Worn Camera Toolkit.* [1] Though there are few good estimates of the number of law enforcement agencies currently deploying the technology, some experts estimate that by March 2015 as many as 4,000–6,000 agencies had already adopted or were planning to adopt BWCs.[2]

There has been wide-ranging speculation over the potential impact of BWCs. Advocates claim that the technology can demonstrate transparency, increase accountability, reduce citizen complaints and officer use of force, and facilitate both investigation of citizen complaints and prosecution of criminal cases through its evidentiary value. [3] Critics have raised questions about the technology's impact on citizen and officer privacy and about the significant cost and resources required

[1] See http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/policingtaskforce and https://www.bja.gov/bwc/.

[2] http://www.wsj.com/articles/los-angeles-police-kill-man-in-struggle-captured-on-video-1425302531

[3] L. Miller, J. Toliver, and Police Executive Research Forum. 2014. *Implementing a Body-Worn Camera Program: Recommendations and Lessons Learned.* Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services; B. Ariel, W. A. Farrar, and A. Sutherland. Forthcoming. "The Effect of Police Body-Worn Cameras on Use of Force and Citizens' Complaints Against the Police: A Randomized Controlled Trial." *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*. DOI 10.1007/s10940-014-9236-3

to successfully manage a BWC program.[4] Unfortunately, there have been few comprehensive discussions of BWCs and very little research on the technology. As a result, many questions remain about what to expect when officers begin wearing BWCs. [5] The Phoenix *Smart Policing Initiative* (SPI) sought to answer some of these questions.

I. Phoenix Smart Policing Initiative Study[6]

BJA awarded funding in 2011 to the Phoenix (Arizona) Police Department (PPD) and its research partners at Arizona State University (ASU) to purchase, deploy, and evaluate BWCs. The Phoenix SPI team sought to test a number of perceived benefits of BWCs:

- The technology might deter officers from engaging in unprofessional behavior or misconduct; it may deter members of the public from inappropriate, aggressive, or resistant behavior; and it may defuse potentially violent interactions between the police and the community—that is, BWCs may generate a "civilizing effect."[7]
- The technology has the potential to record misconduct, use of force, and other problem behavior or unprofessional conduct; and conversely, it has the potential to be used by an officer to disprove an allegation of misbehavior.
- The technology has the potential to increase the effectiveness of the police response to crime in general and domestic violence specifically (e.g., evidentiary value) by improving recollection of an incident when the officer is completing his or her field report, as well as later during court proceedings. The video also can be entered into evidence, which may lead to higher rates of arrest, charging, prosecution, and conviction.

Setting for the Study

The PPD is a large municipal police agency with more than 3,000 authorized sworn personnel. The department serves a community of more than 1.5 million people, making it the sixth largest city in the United States. The Maryvale Precinct, one of eight precincts in Phoenix, is approximately 15 square miles and is

[4] M. D. White. 2014. *Police Officer Body-Worn Cameras: Assessing the Evidence*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs Diagnostic Center and the COPS Office.

[5] In May 2015, the Bureau of Justice Assistance launched the *National Body-Worn Camera Toolkit*, as an online information warehouse for agencies interested in adopting the technology (https://www.bja.gov/bwc/).

[6] For a complete description of the Phoenix *Smart Policing Initiative* see: C. M. Katz, D. E. Choate, J. R. Ready, L. Nuño, M. Kurtenbach, and K. Johnson. 2014, December. *Evaluating the Impact of Officer Worn Body Cameras in the Phoenix Police Department*. Phoenix, AZ: Center for Violence Prevention & Community Safety, Arizona State University. Available at http://cvpcs.asu.edu/sites/default/files/content/products/PPD_SPI_Final_Report%204_28_15.pdf.

[7] M. D. White. 2014. *Police Officer Body-Worn Cameras: Assessing the Evidence*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs Diagnostic Center and the COPS Office.

operationally and geographically divided into two similarly sized patrol areas (called Area 81 and Area 82). Each of the two areas is assigned six patrol squads to provide first response coverage to calls for service 24 hours a day, seven days a week. While small changes in staffing occurred throughout the SPI study period, generally there were between 100 and 110 patrol officers equally divided between Area 81 and Area 82.

The Maryvale Precinct has a population of about 105,000, primarily Hispanic residents who are poorer and more likely to be unemployed than residents living in other areas in the city. Relative to other areas in the city, Maryvale historically has been and continues to be a location noted for a high volume of police activity and calls for service and for high rates of crime, particularly violent crime. In 2010, the Uniform Crime Report violent crime rate for Maryvale was approximately 85 crimes per 10,000 residents, compared with 55 crimes per 10,000 residents for the rest of Phoenix. Domestic violence is also a recurring problem in this precinct. In the Maryvale Precinct in 2010, there were more than 3,300 calls for service that initially were dispatched as domestic violence incidents.

Overview of the Study

The design and implementation of the Phoenix SPI study included the purchase of 56 VIEVU™ body-worn camera systems. PPD deployed these BWCs on all officers in Area 82 of the Maryvale Precinct, which served as the *target* group for the study; officers in Area 81 were not deployed BWCs and served as the study's *comparison* group.[8] The BWC program provided coverage seven days a week, during all three shifts, and allowed for all officers to download camera data prior to their next shift. All officers in the target area also received training in the use and maintenance of the BWCs through a coordinated effort led by the precinct commander and VIEVU.

The cameras were deployed in the field on April 15, 2013. The study period covered about 134 total weeks, or 67 weeks pre–camera deployment and 67 weeks post–camera deployment (generally truncated to 15 months pre and post for analysis purposes). That is, the study data period ran from January 1, 2012, through July 31, 2014, comparing officers who were assigned to wear BWCs (Area 82) with officers who were not assigned to wear BWCs (Area 81).

[8] The SPI team did identify some demographic and socioeconomic differences between the two squad areas. Target Area 82 was slightly smaller than comparison Area 81 in population (56,630 vs. 71,676), had a larger percentage of Hispanic residents (82.5 percent vs. 71.1 percent), and a lower mean household income ($44,895 vs. $53,646). The areas were very similar in terms of crime.

Study Methodology

Data collected for the evaluation included stakeholder interviews, project planning documents, camera metadata generated by camera activation, officer self-report surveys, [9] official police computer-aided dispatch and record management system (CAD/RMS) data, official complaints and claims of misconduct reported to the PPD, and official case processing data from the PPD and the City of Phoenix Prosecutor's Office.

The Phoenix SPI team examined the effect of BWCs in six critical areas:

1. Officer camera activation compliance
2. Officer perceptions of the utility and use of body-worn cameras
3. Impact on officers' job performance
4. Impact on public compliance and cooperation
5. Impact on officer accountability
6. Impact on domestic violence case processing and outcomes.

II. Study Results

1. Officers' Activation Compliance

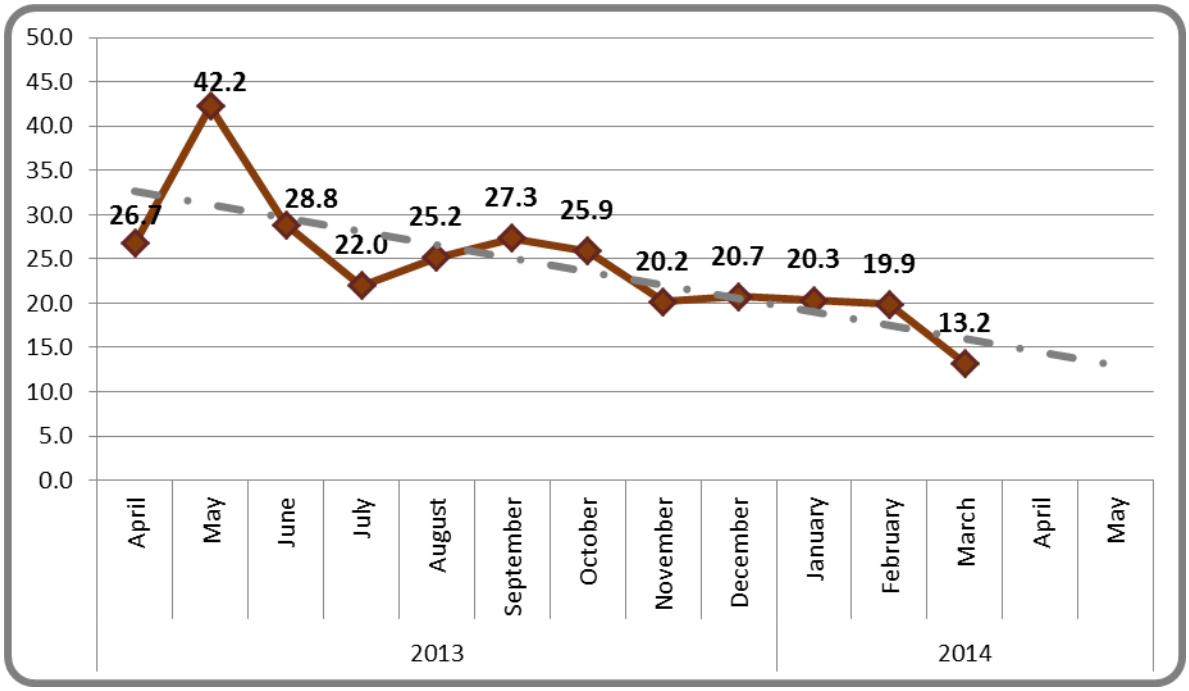
The Phoenix SPI team analyzed camera metadata to assess the activation characteristics of the video files produced and the data associated with each file. Their analysis relied on 15,519 individual video files created over 11 months, beginning with the first day of active deployment, April 15, 2013, through March 12, 2014, the most recent date that video was available at the time of request. [10] The average length of the videos examined was approximately 9.5 minutes. The average number of activations for the camera-wearing officers over the entire study period was 415, although activation varied tremendously by officer—from a low of 21 activations to a high of 1,079 activations.

The Phoenix SPI team assessed activation compliance by comparing the camera metadata with CAD/RMS data for all incidents (i.e., dispatched and officer initiated) attributed to Area 82 Maryvale officers during the post-deployment study period. That is, the analysis compared the number of cases that *should* have BWC video versus cases that actually *had* BWC video. Figure 1 shows that activation compliance was low over the study period. In May 2013, one month after deployment, 42.2 percent of all incidents that should have been recorded with a BWC were, and compliance declined over time, to 13.2 percent in March 2014. Generally, about 20 to 29 percent of eligible incidents each month were recorded.

[9] The surveys were administered to both the target officers (Area 82) and the comparison officers (Area 81). Officers were surveyed during briefings immediately prior to the start of their shift. Officers were surveyed only if available on the selected day, during the briefing; officers who were absent were not surveyed that time. Response rates were high throughout the data collection period—98.3 percent overall—ranging from 96.5 to 100.0 percent across the eight survey administrations.

[10] The analysis excluded approximately 1,500 video files that were accidental recordings, test activations, duplicate files, or malfunctions.

Figure 1. Proportion of Incidents with Video



Note: The gray line represents the trend line.

Figure 2. Camera Activation Compliance by Incident Type

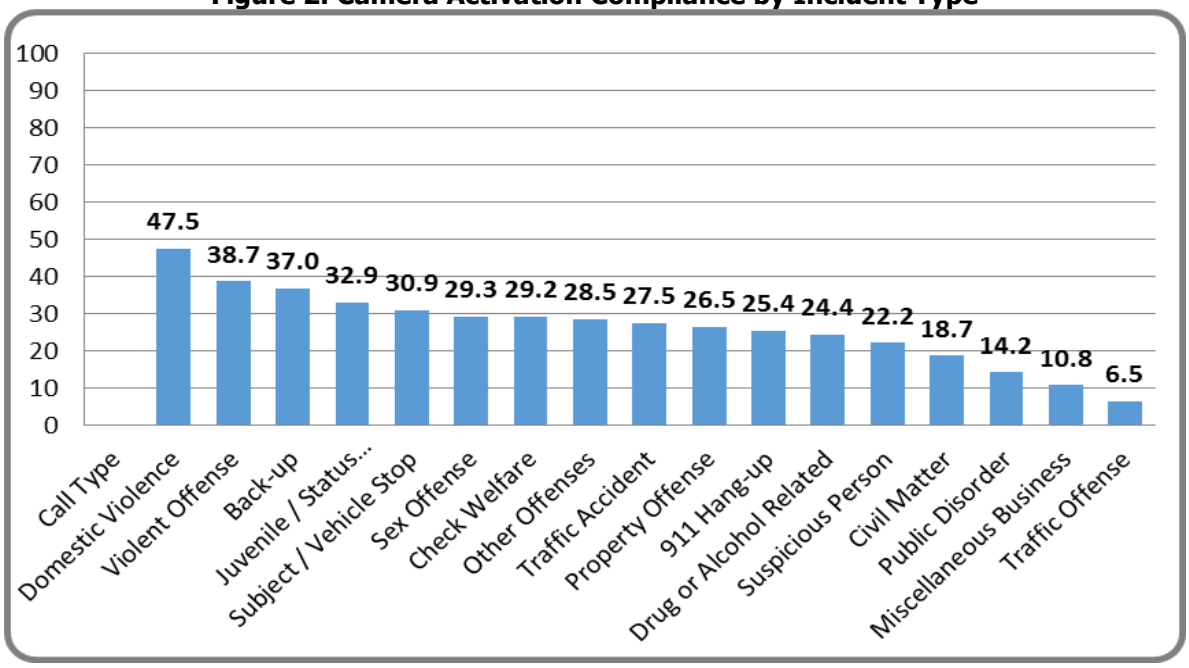


Figure 2 displays camera activation compliance by incident type, using radio code entries from the incident data for the Maryvale Precinct. Compliance was most frequent in calls involving domestic violence (47.5 percent), followed by violent offenses (38.7 percent) and when officers responded as back-up to another officer (37.0 percent). Only 6.5 percent of traffic stops were recorded.

2. Officers' Perceptions

In order to determine officers' perceptions of the wearability and utility of BWCs, the Phoenix SPI team administered surveys that asked about (1) comfort, (2) completion of incident reports, (3) evidence in court, (4) citizen behavior, (5) police officer behavior, and (6) other benefits and limitations to use of BWCs. Officers completed the survey four times prior to camera deployment and four times after camera deployment. Table 1 shows selected findings from the first survey, administered in October 2012, and the last survey, administered in June 2014.

Several themes emerged from the analysis. First, officers clearly became better acquainted with the equipment, as assessments of ease and comfort increased notably over time (e.g., "easy to use" increased from 17.4 percent to 61.8 percent). Second, the officers became increasingly skeptical about the evidentiary value of BWCs and how video would affect prosecution (e.g., "Easier to work with Prosecutor's Office" declined by

Table 1. Selected Findings from Officer Perception Surveys (October 2012 vs. June 2014)

Officer Perception of BWCs	Pre-Deployment (first survey)	Post-Deployment (last survey)
Equipment is easy to use	17.4%	61.8%
Equipment is comfortable to wear	8.3%	57.6%
Improves quality of evidence	64.7%	52.9%
Easier to work with Prosecutor's Office	41.2%	20.6%
Easier to prosecute domestic violence offenders	52.8%	32.4%
Citizens will be more respectful	33.3%	28.6%
Cameras hurt "police-community" relations	29.4%	17.6%
Cameras will increase citizen complaints against officers	20.6%	8.6%
Officers will have fewer contacts with citizens	62.9%	37.1%
Affects an officer's decision to use force	60.0%	45.7%
Body cameras are well-received by coworkers	0.0%	14.3%
Cameras should be adopted throughout the city	18.8%	32.9%
Advantages of body cameras outweigh the disadvantages	12.5%	35.3%

half, from 41.2 percent to 20.6 percent). Conversely, the officers' concern that the technology would negatively affect their job decreased, as assessments about possible adverse impacts on police-community relations, citizen complaints, citizen contacts, and use of force all dropped notably (e.g., "Cameras hurt 'police-community' relations" declined from 29.4 percent to 17.6 percent).[11]

Last, officers increasingly embraced BWCs, illustrated by large increases in the percentage who thought the technology was well-received by coworkers (from 0.0 to 14.3 percent), that BWCs should be adopted citywide (18.8 to 32.9 percent), and that the advantages of BWCs outweigh the disadvantages (12.5 to 35.3 percent).

3. Officers' Job Performance

To assess the impact of BWCs on officers' job performance, the Phoenix SPI team compared arrest activity among both camera-wearing and comparison officers. The team tracked all officers who at any time during the course of the study were assigned to Area 81 or 82. This procedure allowed the team to calculate the number of arrests on any given day in the study period when a camera would or would not have been present. They then calculated an average daily arrest rate for the pre-deployment and post-deployment periods, for camera-wearing officers and comparison officers separately.

[11] For a complete review of the officer perception results, see Katz et al. (2014).

Those calculations show that the average daily arrest rate increased slightly for the comparison officers, from approximately 0.11 in the pre-deployment period to 0.12 in the post-deployment period—an increase of 9 percent. However, the daily arrest rate of the camera-wearing officers saw a much larger increase, from 0.08 in the pre-deployment period to 0.12 in the post-deployment period. Put another way, the camera-wearing officers increased their average daily arrest activity by 42.6 percent, which is nearly triple the increase among comparison group officers of 14.9 percent. This difference in arrest activity is statistically significant and suggests that BWCs did increase officer arrest activity.

4. Public Compliance and Cooperation

To measure citizen reactions to BWCs, the Phoenix SPI team examined trends in resisting-arrest charges resulting from encounters with both camera-wearing and comparison officers. If there is merit to the hypothesized "civilizing effect" of cameras, there should be fewer instances of resisting arrest among citizens who interact with camera-wearing officers.

For this analysis, the team examined the arrest charges for each of the encounters, identifying those that involved passive or forceful resistance, escape or flight, or assault against the officer. Subsequently, incidents of these types were re-coded into an "any form of resistance" category.

The analysis showed that resistance in

any form was very rare. In the pre-deployment period, the mean number of resisting-arrest incidents per day was 0.002 for the camera-wearing officers and 0.003 for the comparison officers. For both groups of officers, the number of encounters resulting in resisting-arrest charges substantially increased in the post-deployment period—to 0.005 for the camera-wearing officers and 0.007 for the comparison officers. These increases were in large part the result of increases in arrests for passive resistance. Notably, the post-deployment differences between camera and non-camera officers were not statistically significant. That is, there is no evidence to suggest that BWCs affected citizen behavior.

5. Officer Accountability

Officer accountability was measured with official police complaint data obtained from the PPD's Professional Standards Bureau (PSB). These data included all reports of misconduct, regardless of source (e.g., citizen calls, supervisor initiated, direct contact to PSB/Chief's Office), during the 15-month study pre- and post-camera deployment periods.

The analysis found that from pre- to post-deployment, camera-wearing officers experienced a 22.5 percent decline in officially recorded complaints, whereas comparison officers experienced a 10.6 percent increase. Over the same time, PPD saw a 45.1 percent increase in complaints across all other precincts. As shown in Table 2, these results were statistically significant both pre/post within all groups (i.e., target, comparison, and citywide) and among the groups.

This reduction in citizen complaints for camera-wearing officers is consistent with results from other studies (Rialto, California; Mesa, Arizona) and highlights one of the most powerful positive effects of this technology. The exact cause of these large reductions remains unclear. Some portion of the reduction may be explained by changes in the types of information available to supervisors and the department's PSB, which is responsible for investigating complaints against the police.

In fact, the Phoenix SPI team's data showed that those officers who wore cameras and received a complaint were significantly more likely to have the complaint judged unfounded than were the comparison group or patrol officers throughout the PPD. This suggests that even if a complaint was made against a camera-wearing officer, the video file was likely to support the officer. The extent to which the drop in citizen complaints is a result of a "civilizing effect" or of improved behavior by officers, citizens, or both is not known.

Table 2. Citizen Complaints, by Officer Group (January 2012–July 2014)

	Pre-Deployment Complaints	Post-Deployment Complaints	Pre/Post	Pre-Deployment Complaints
Group	**N**	**N**	**%**	**N**
Target	40	31	–22.5*	71
Comparison	66	73	10.6*	139
Citywide Patrol	627	910	45.1*	1,537
Total	733	1,014	38.3	1,747

* t-test significant at $p < .05$

Table 3. Domestic Violence Cases: Case Flow, by Officer Group (April 2013–July 2014)

	Post-Deployment			
	Target Group (BWC Video)		Comparison Group (No Video)	
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**
Number of Domestic Violence–Related Contacts	252	100.0	933	100.0
Cases Initiated	103	40.9	320	34.3
Charges Filed	90	37.7	243	26.0
Case Furthered (Not Dismissed)	32	12.7	58	6.2
Pled Guilty	11	4.4	11	1.2
Guilty at Trial	11	4.4	9	0.9

6. Domestic Violence Cases

The Phoenix SPI team examined the impact of BWCs on processing and outcomes of domestic violence cases, including the disposition of cases and the length of time required to process cases. The PPD requires officers to complete a brief, specialized field interview (FI) card for all incidents involving domestic violence, regardless of whether an arrest is made.

The team examined all domestic violence card data during the 15-month study period—a total of 1,185 unique incidents. Analyses were case-based and conducted by comparing the processing of cases generated by the target and comparison officer groups post-deployment.[12]

As shown in Table 3 (above), BWCs improved the processing of domestic violence cases. When compared with non-camera cases, cases with BWC video were more likely to be initiated by the Prosecutor's Office (40.9 vs. 34.3 percent), have charges filed (37.7 vs. 26.0 percent), have cases furthered (12.7 vs. 6.2 percent), result in a guilty plea (4.4 vs. 1.2 percent), and result in a guilty verdict at trial (4.4 vs. 0.9 percent).

The impact of BWCs on case processing time was less clear. The Phoenix SPI team examined the average number of days to process domestic violence cases to completion, comparing the pre-deployment period with the post-deployment period. Table 4 shows that the average case processing time declined significantly from pre-deployment (95.8 days) to post-deployment (78.1 days for camera-wearing officer cases; 43.5 days for comparison officer cases).

However, the pre/post analysis likely is confounded by a shift in the PPD's approach to case processing. Shortly after BWCs were deployed, the police department assigned a detective as a dedicated court liaison officer to help process cases, particularly those with video evidence, from the police department to the Prosecutor's Office. This administrative change alone may have accounted for the overall pre/post declines in processing times.

It is also clear from Table 4 that cases with camera video took significantly longer to process than did cases without camera video. The extra time likely is a natural consequence of the additional effort required by prosecutors to review the video evidence. Though processing time is down substantially from pre-deployment, the additional days (34.6 days on average) could be viewed as a negative side effect of BWCs. The Phoenix SPI team, however, believe that the extra time is more than offset by the improved outcomes shown in Table 3. Moreover, the assignment of the court liaison officer likely will lead to shorter case processing times in the future.

[12] The Phoenix SPI team also compared the processing of domestic violence cases pre-deployment versus post-deployment. For details of that analysis, see Katz et al. (2014).

Table 4. Domestic Violence Cases: Days to Process, by Time Period and Officer Group (January 2012–July 2014)

	Pre-Deployment		Post-Deployment			
			Target Group (BWC Video)		Comparison Group (No Video)	
	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N
All Completed Cases (N=792)	95.8	369	78.1	103	43.5	320
SD	(124.3)		(105.10)		(77.50)	

III. Lessons Learned

Summary

The Phoenix SPI study examined the deployment of police officer BWCs to approximately 56 officers in the Maryvale Precinct in the city of Phoenix, Arizona. The Phoenix SPI team carried out an extensive process and impact evaluation that focused on core questions surrounding the implications and consequences of the technology. Several notable findings emerged:

1. Compliance with camera activation policy was generally low (20–29 percent), but varied by offense type; it was most common for domestic violence and violent offense calls.
2. Officer perceptions of the technology changed notably over time. Most of those changes were positive, such as greater perceived ease and comfort and greater recognition of BWC benefits (e.g., better police-community relations, advantages outweigh disadvantages). However, officers were increasingly concerned about evidentiary value and collaboration with the Prosecutor's Office.
3. Formal arrest activity increased notably among the camera-wearing officers compared with the non-camera officers.
4. Analysis of resisting-arrest charges showed no evidence that the cameras changed citizen behavior during encounters with police.
5. Citizen complaints decreased significantly (23 percent) among camera-wearing officers. This is notable, given that complaints increased more than 10 percent among the comparison officers and 45 percent citywide over the study period.
6. The cameras improved the processing of domestic violence incidents, as cases were more likely to be filed and successfully prosecuted. Cases with video evidence generated by BWCs took longer to process.

The Phoenix SPI also produced a number of "lessons learned" for police managers and line officers.

Lessons Learned for the Police Manager

Be Strategic in Planning a BWC Program: The decision to start a BWC program represents an enormous investment of money, manpower, and resources. There are the up-front costs of buying the hardware and training officers; the real costs, however, come on the back end in managing the vast amount of data generated by the cameras. The video data must be stored securely; in some cases, for years.

A BWC program affects all units in the police department, as well as numerous outside stakeholders including prosecutors and defense attorneys. Any police chief who is contemplating the creation of a BWC program should carefully consider its resource implications. Many resources are available to assist chiefs in planning and implementing such a program, most notably BJA's *National Body-Worn Camera Toolkit.*[13]

Moreover, a chief should create an Advisory Group of relevant stakeholders, both internal and external to the department, at the beginning of the planning process. Internal participants should include union representatives, patrol officers and commanders, technology staff, Internal Affairs, Investigations, and legal advisors. External participants should include representatives from the city and county Prosecutor's Office, public defender and defense bar, city leadership, and community leaders.

By engaging all relevant stakeholders up front, the department can gather input, hear concerns, answer questions, and make modifications during planning and implementation as needed. In Phoenix, for example, the ongoing involvement of department and city technology experts facilitated the development of a secure local data storage solution. The work done up front by an Advisory Group will greatly reduce the potential for resistance from those stakeholders later on, after the technology is deployed in the field.

Develop an Ongoing Partnership with the Prosecutor: Police officer BWCs have a tremendous impact on the city and county Prosecutor's Offices. Each video of an arrest encounter represents an additional piece of evidence that must be reviewed by the Prosecutor, and, if charges are filed, disclosed to the Defense. Depending on the size and scope of a police department's BWC program, the video can translate into hundreds of hours of additional work for prosecutors each month. The results from the Phoenix SPI study demonstrate that BWCs have real evidentiary value, particularly for domestic violence cases, but that case processing times increased.

[13] https://www.bja.gov/bwc/

Training and Policy Are Critically Important: It should come as no surprise that effective training and policy are essential for a successful BWC program. Officers may have many concerns regarding BWCs, from the goals of the program to operational and logistical issues. Common line officer questions include these: When do I have to turn it on? When can I turn it off? Do I have to tell a citizen that I am recording? What should I do if a citizen asks me to turn it off? Will I get into trouble if I forget to turn it on? Can my supervisor review my footage to look for policy violations?

Police managers need to be absolutely transparent with their officers about the goals of the program, and they should work hard to address all concerns and questions before officers are required to wear BWCs. The administrative policy governing the BWC program must be clear on a wide range of topics—from activation, video downloading, citizen notification, and other operational issues, to logistical issues such as equipment maintenance, and the degree of officer discretion and consequences for policy violations. Again, Chiefs have numerous resources available to them on this, through the *National Body-Worn Camera Toolkit*.

Correspondingly, officers require BWC training that addresses those same operational, logistical, and administrative issues. Moreover, the training should be continuous, with refreshers on critical components at least annually—recognizing that many aspects of a BWC program may change as a consequence of new laws, court rulings (e.g., privacy issues), and technological developments.

Lessons Learned for the Line Officer

Be an Educated Consumer: Police officers are often skeptical of new technologies, particularly those advertised as having the potential to "revolutionize" police work. In some cases, new technologies do in fact become widely diffused in law enforcement (e.g., the TASER); but in many cases, they do not (e.g., impact munitions). BWCs very clearly fall into the former category. Thousands of police departments across the United States currently are deploying or planning to deploy BWCs. The technology has widespread support from law enforcement, civil rights groups, citizen advocates, and the federal government. Millions of dollars in funding have been made available by the White House and U.S. Department of Justice to facilitate the purchase of BWCs. And preliminary research, including the Phoenix SPI study, suggests that the technology delivers on many of its perceived benefits.

In short, BWCs are here to stay, and much like the TASER, they likely will become a routine tool in police work within a few years. As a result, line officers should accept that BWCs will soon be just another gadget on their uniform, and they should make a thoughtful effort to understand the technology and how it affects their day-to-day business. Officers should reach out to colleagues in their own and other departments. Officers

should gather and share information about the benefits and challenges associated with BWCs.

In particular, officers should take advantage of opportunities to advise department leadership on issues of training, policy, and operation. Given the relative newness of BWCs and the speed at which the technology is diffusing through law enforcement, line officers are well-positioned to guide and inform the adoption of BWCs, as well as identify and short-circuit problems before they occur. Line officers are quickly gathering a wealth of information on the impact and consequences of BWCs, and they should seek out avenues to share what they know.

Benefits of BWCs Can Be Realized Only If the Camera Is Activated: Advocates of BWCs argue that the technology can generate numerous benefits, and early research supports some of these claims. Regardless, none of the perceived benefits of BWCs can be realized if officers do not embrace the technology. If BWCs, in fact, can generate a "civilizing effect," that effect can only be produced if the camera is turned on. If BWCs can facilitate the resolution of citizen complaints and the prosecution of criminal cases, that facilitation can occur only if the camera is turned on. If BWCs can increase the trust citizens have in police and enhance their perceptions of police legitimacy, that enhanced trust can occur only if the camera is turned on. The bottom line: Realizing any of the potential benefits of BWCs hinges on officers consistently activating the technology during law enforcement encounters with citizens.

For Both the Police Manager and Line Officer

Be Realistic About Impact: The perceived benefits of BWCs are significant, and the technology clearly has the potential to positively redefine police encounters with citizens. Nevertheless, there are limits to what a BWC program can achieve—especially in communities such as Ferguson and Baltimore where the police-citizen relationship is one of longstanding anger and distrust. BWCs on their own cannot alter that relationship. Expectations for the impact of BWCs must be reasonable, and police departments should convey that message.

Still, a well-planned and well-implemented body-worn camera program can represent a starting point for police to demonstrate transparency and a willingness to engage with citizens. Police should convey that message, too. This first step is especially important in places such as Ferguson and Baltimore, where police officers are seen as enemies and threats, rather than as public servants, guardians, and problem solvers.

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