

Adopting and Implementing Body-Worn Cameras: Results from a National Survey

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Written By:

Grace Henry, M.S.

Jeff Rojek, Ph.D.

Nathan Cronin, M.A.

Jeremiah Schutter

Shellie E. Solomon, Ph.D.

Craig D. Uchida, Ph.D.



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Executive Summary

In just over two decades, body-worn cameras (BWCs) have transformed from an emerging technology aimed at increasing police accountability and transparency to a critical tool nearing saturation across law enforcement agencies in the United States. This growth has been supported by two programs funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA): the BWC Policy and Implementation Program (PIP) and the Small, Rural and Tribal BWC program (SRT). Justice & Security Strategies, Inc. (JSS) partners with Michigan State University (MSU) to provide direct support to agencies funded through BWC grants. To gain a current read on the state of BWC adoption, program elements, and challenges for direct support efforts, JSS commissioned MSU to conduct a national survey on BWC programs. The survey focuses on the experiences of small and rural agencies but includes larger and urban agencies in the sample for comparison.

Across the 699 responding agencies, 91.6% reported implementing BWCs. It is important to bear in mind that some caution must be exercised when comparing current results with past surveys, given the 28% response rate. Although the present survey invited agencies with and without BWCs to participate and expressed interest in those without BWC programs, it is possible that agencies with BWC programs were more inclined to respond.

Overall, this reflects considerable growth in the number of agencies with BWC programs over the past five years, most notably occurring among smaller departments. Of participating agencies reporting no BWCs, the cost of purchasing cameras and the cost of digital evidence management were the primary hurdles to implementation. Nonetheless, more than half of agencies without BWCs are considering adopting the technology in the next two years.

Survey responses from agencies with BWCs provide the following high-level observations:

- **Digital evidence management (DEM):** The majority of respondents (72.2%) use a third-party cloud-based service to house and manage digital evidence from BWCs. Smaller agencies have a higher tendency to rely on in-house storage and management solutions. Cost of storage services, as well as labor and cost associated with video redaction, are the most significant DEM challenges.
- **Data sharing with prosecutors:** Most agencies (81.5%) reported having written policies for sharing BWC footage with prosecutors. More than half of the responding agencies (68.5%) use electronic sharing via a cloud-based system to share this footage, yet 43.1% manually download and physically transfer digital evidence. Small agencies and departments using less prominent BWC vendors were more likely to use this arguably more cumbersome process to share footage with prosecutors.
- **Use of BWC footage for training:** Most agencies reported having some experience using BWC footage for training through officer mentoring, training new recruits, and in-service training. However, a much lower percentage reported incorporating BWC footage into training as regular practice.
- **Use of artificial intelligence (AI) in BWC programs:** AI platforms and software are emerging to assist agencies in reviewing the large volume of BWC footage to support supervisor audits, flag incidents, and evaluate officer performance. However, responses revealed that only a small portion of agencies (13.6%) have explored these programs, and an even smaller number have adopted them (3%, $n = 20$).

- **Support for BWC programs:** Respondents strongly agreed that BWCs protect officers from unwarranted complaints, provide valuable evidence, and help supervising officers. Moreover, there is high perceived support for agencies to retain their BWC programs among internal (e.g., officers/deputies) and external (e.g., public, prosecutors, and local political figures) stakeholders.
- **Sustainability concerns:** More than half of respondents expressed concern about their agency's ability to sustain existing BWC programs, particularly due to DEM and camera replacement costs. While the level of concern for DEM cost is similar across responding agencies, the concern for camera replacement cost is notably higher in smaller agencies.

Survey results can guide direct support strategies in BJA-funded BWC programs and inform broader practitioner and researcher efforts. Identifying cost-efficient strategies for DEM and evidence sharing with prosecutors, particularly for small agencies that comprise the bulk of law enforcement in the United States, is critical. Additionally, there is a need to evaluate how BWC footage is used in training and explore AI integration into BWC programs to identify best practices. Finally, while there appears to be broad support for BWC programs, attention should be given to vulnerabilities that may jeopardize an agency's ability to sustain its program, and potential solutions must be considered.



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Adopting and Implementing Body-Worn Cameras: Results from a National Survey

Introduction

In just over two decades, body-worn cameras (BWCs) have transformed from an emerging technology aimed at increasing police accountability and transparency to a critical tool nearing saturation across law enforcement agencies in the United States. In 2016, less than half (47%) of police departments in the U.S. had BWCs.¹ By 2020, that number had risen to 62%, with departments of all sizes reporting higher levels of BWC program implementation.² While change is often met with skepticism, law enforcement officers have come to appreciate the evidentiary value of BWCs, whether they are capturing footage that supports case outcomes or protecting officers from false citizen complaints.



The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) funds two grant programs that support BWC implementation in state and local law enforcement agencies. First, the BWC Policy and Implementation Program (PIP) provides funding for the purchase, deployment, and maintenance of camera systems and equipment, data storage, and the use of footage for training. Second, the Small, Rural, and Tribal BWC (SRT) grant program is dedicated to funding BWCs in small, rural, and tribal agencies. Justice & Security Strategies, Inc. (JSS) manages BJA direct support efforts to assist program implementation in agencies funded under the BWC grants. To provide agencies with effective training and resources, it is important to understand the critical issues and challenges departments face. Toward that end, JSS partnered with Michigan State University to conduct a national survey of law enforcement agencies' BWC programs that explores whether agencies have adopted BWCs and outlines reasons for non-adoption. For agencies with BWCs, experiences with digital evidence management, redaction, evidence sharing, use of footage in training, and use of artificial intelligence are examined. Additionally, the survey explores perceptions of BWC program utility, sustainability, and stakeholder support. Specifically, the survey examines the experiences of small and rural agencies, given their unique resource constraints, to inform direct support efforts in agencies funded through the BJA's SRT grant.

¹ Hyland, S. S. (2018, November). *Body-worn cameras in law enforcement agencies, 2016*. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/bwclea16.pdf>

² Goodison, S. E. (2023, November). *Local police departments, procedures, policies, and technology, 2020 – Statistical tables*. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/document/lpdpt20st.pdf>

Survey Methodology

The present sample of law enforcement agencies was selected from the National Directory of Law Enforcement Administrations (NDLEA) list of municipal police and county sheriff's departments.³ The primary interest of the survey was to explore small and rural law enforcement agency's experiences with BWCs and examine how they compare to large and urban departments. As a result, a disproportionate stratified sampling approach was used for sample selection to attain representation of law enforcement across different characteristics. Under the SRT BWC program, small agencies have 50 or fewer sworn personnel. The cleaned NDLEA dataset contained 12,126 agencies with 50 or fewer sworn personnel (84.7%) and 2,199 agencies with more than 50 officers (15.3%), which reflects the distribution of agencies found by the Bureau of Justice Statistics' Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics survey.⁴ A random sample of 500 departments was selected from the population of agencies with 51 or more officers, and 2,000 agencies were randomly selected from the population of agencies with 50 or fewer officers.

Before randomly selecting the 2,000 agencies with 50 or fewer officers, this group was further organized by jurisdiction type (i.e., urban or rural) and economic condition. Jurisdiction type is a key dimension of the SRT BWC program, which was defined using metropolitan statistical area (MSA) classification from the U.S. Census. Counties and municipalities were classified as urban if they were identified as part of an MSA, and rural if they did not have an MSA designation.⁵

Economic conditions may also affect the ability of agencies to afford BWCs. Because cameras can be expensive to establish and sustain, and jurisdictional resources such as tax base can influence agency budgets and their ability to afford programs economic disadvantage was weighed. Data from the 2022 American Community Survey were used (i.e., percent of families with children under 18 headed by females, percent of persons below poverty, median family income, and male unemployment rate).⁶ Agencies were then ranked on this disadvantage score to identify departments in the bottom quarter of the scale, which were classified as having a high economic disadvantage concentration relative to other agencies. While not a direct measure of regional adjusted budget, this served as proxy measures of

jurisdictional economic distress that may be associated with a lower tax base, and therefore, agency budget. Agencies were categorized by jurisdiction type and economic conditions, and equal number of agencies were randomly selected from each to form the small agency sample of 2,000.

Between late February and early June 2025, the 26-item survey was distributed in four waves via mail to the sample of 2,500 law enforcement agencies nationwide. Respondents had the option to respond online (49.1%) or by mail (50.5%). By August 2025, a total of 699 survey responses were received, representing a 28% response rate. Survey findings are presented below. It is important to bear in mind that some caution must be exercised when comparing current results with past surveys, given the 28% response rate. Although the present survey invited agencies with and without BWCs to participate and expressed interest in those without BWC programs, it is possible that agencies with BWC programs were more inclined to respond. While a large number of respondents were small agencies, an even larger number did not respond. This leaves open the possibility that they have not purchased BWCs and thus inflates the percentage of those who have implemented a BWC program. Additional analysis is planned to determine the differences between respondents and non-respondents.

The first section provides the characteristics of responding agencies, including the number of agencies reporting existing BWC programs and hurdles preventing BWC adoption. The remaining portion of the report outlines responses from agencies with BWC programs. Sub-analysis results are outlined by agency characteristics (e.g., agency size, jurisdictional type, vendor) when notable differences exist.

3 National Public Safety Information Bureau. (n.d.). National Directory of Law Enforcement Administrators. <https://www.safetysource.com/directories/index.cfm?fuseaction=displayReference&ReferenceID=1>

4 Goodison, S. (2022) Local Police Departments Personnel, 2000. U.S. Department of Justice: Bureau of Justice Statistics. Brooks, C. (2022) Sheriff's Offices Personnel, 2000. Department of Justice: Bureau of Justice Statistics. The LEMAS survey does use a different sampling approach that over samples larger agencies with 100 or more full time sworn employees then weights the responses for reporting distribution of agencies by size in the United States, see sample description at <https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/web/NACJD/studies/38651>.

5 US Census practice for defining rural areas case be found at https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2019/acs/ACS_rural_handbook_2019_ch01.pdf

6 McGarrell, E. F., Corsaro, N., Kroovand Hipple, N., & Bynum, T. S. (2010). Project Safe Neighborhoods and violent crime trends in US cities: Assessing violent crime impact. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 26(2), 165-190. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10940-010-9091-9>. This measure also commonly includes the percent of Black residents in each area. However, in the present sample, this may create geographic bias that ignores otherwise high economic disadvantage by other measures in areas that are predominantly White or Hispanic. As a result, percent of Black residents was not included in the calculation.

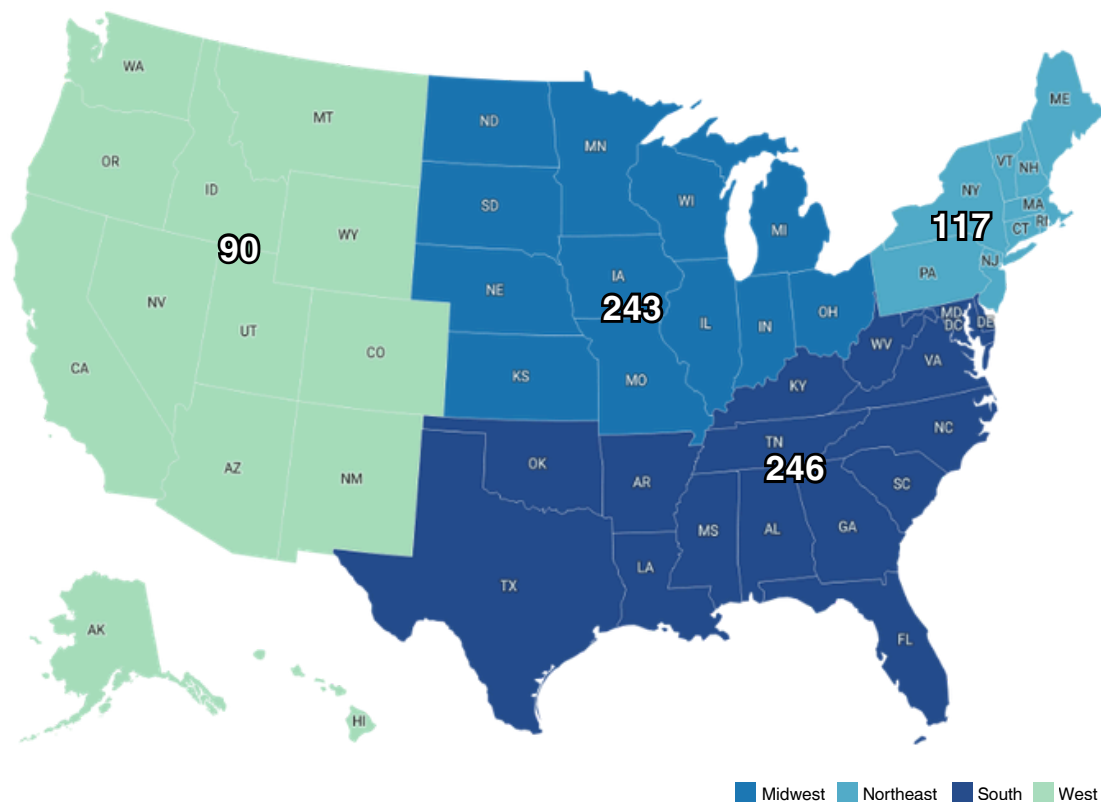
Characteristics of Responding Agencies

Agencies by Region and State

Of the 699 responding agencies, 246 (34.8%) were in the South, 243 (35.2%) were from the Midwest, 117 (16.7%) were in the Northeast, and 90 (12.9%) were from the West (Figure 1).⁷ Figure 2 indicates that Michigan produced the largest number of participants ($n = 49$), followed by Pennsylvania ($n = 43$), Ohio ($n = 40$), Illinois ($n = 36$), and California ($n = 28$). Notably, replies were received from every state except for Alaska, with the fewest responses from Hawaii ($n = 1$). Overrepresentation of Michigan agencies is likely the result of the survey being conducted by researchers at Michigan State University, which is widely engaged in the state and has an alumni base in Michigan law enforcement.

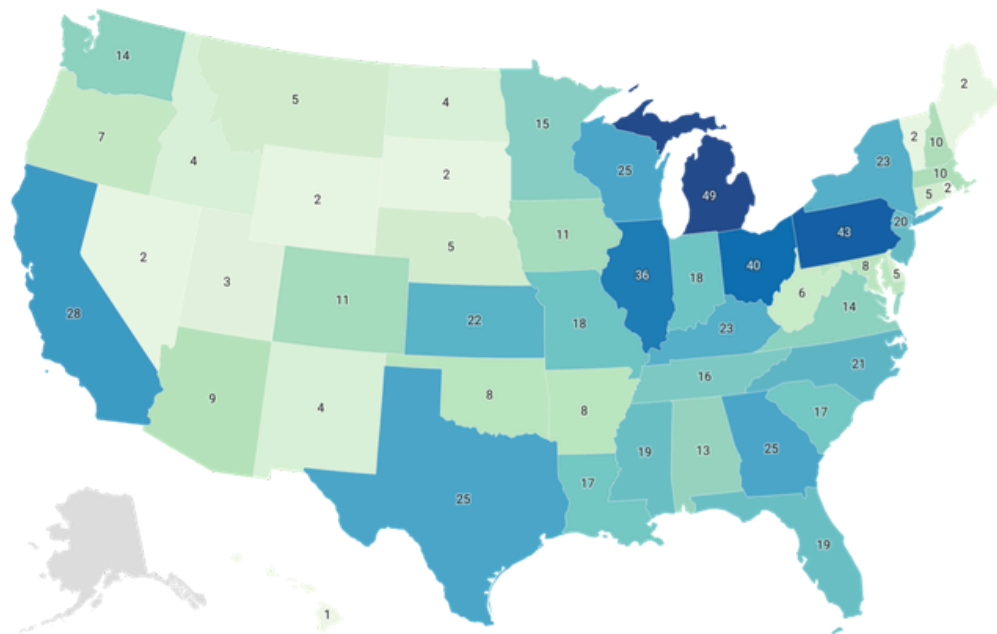


Figure 1. Count of Survey Respondent Distribution by Region



⁷ Three agencies did not provide state information.

Figure 2. Count of Survey Respondents by State

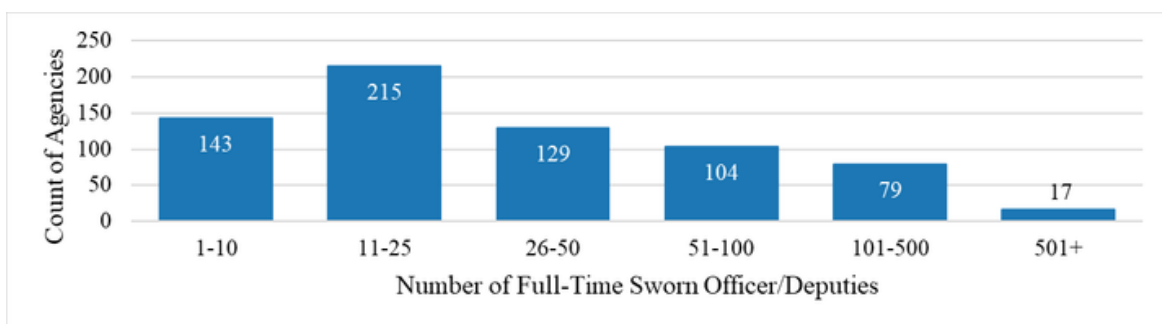


Full-Time Sworn Officers

Agencies were asked to report the number of full-time sworn officers or deputies in their department (Figure 3).⁸ The most common agency size was 11 to 25 sworn officers ($n = 215$, 30.8%), followed by agencies with between one and 10 officers ($n = 143$, 20.5%), those with 26 to 50 officers ($n = 129$, 18.5%), agencies with 51 to 100 officers ($n = 104$, 14.9%), and those with between 100 and 500 officers ($n = 79$, 11.3%). Only 2.4% of departments ($n = 17$) reported over 501 sworn officers or deputies. This overrepresentation of large agencies results from the sample discussed in the above methodology section and differential response rates.⁹



Figure 3. Count of Agencies by Number of Full-Time Sworn Officers/Deputies



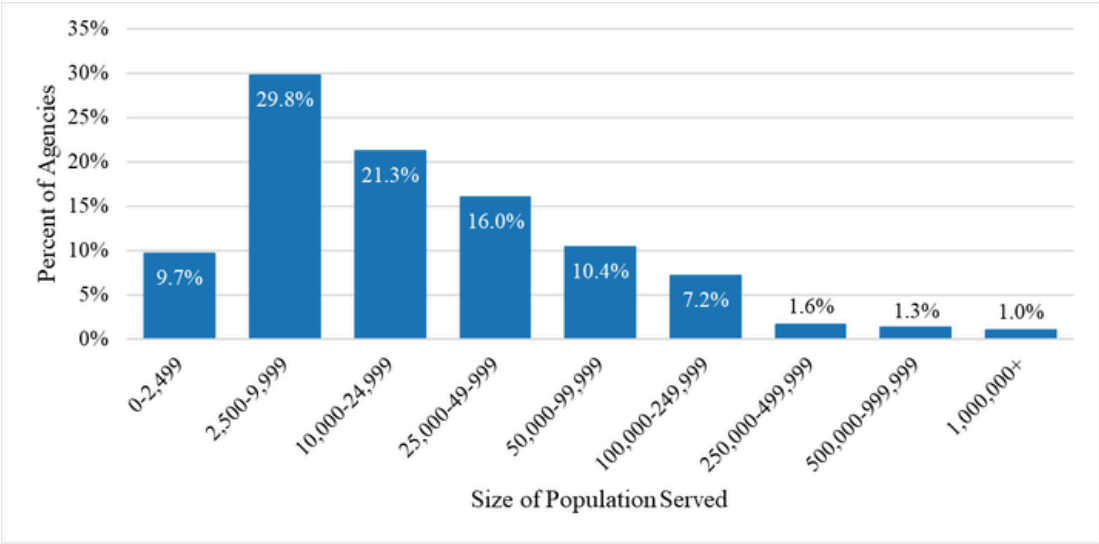
⁸ Twelve agencies did not provide their number of sworn personnel.

⁹ The 200 responding agencies with 51 or more officers (28% of the 699 respondents) reflects an overrepresentation given that these agencies represent 15.3% of the population of LE agencies.

Agencies by Population Served

Respondents were asked to describe the size of the population their agency serves. Figure 4 shows that nearly 30% of agencies ($n = 208$) served between 2,500 and 9,999 people, followed by 21.3% ($n = 149$) who served populations between 10,000 and 24,999 people, 16% of agencies ($n = 112$) who served populations of 25,000 to 49,999 people, and 10.4% ($n = 73$) who served 50,000 to 99,999 people. Less than 10% of respondents ($n = 143$) served populations fewer than 2,499, while 7.2% ($n = 50$) served 100,000 to 249,999 people. A combined 3.9% of departments ($n = 27$) served populations of over 250,000.

Figure 4. Percent of Agencies by Population Served

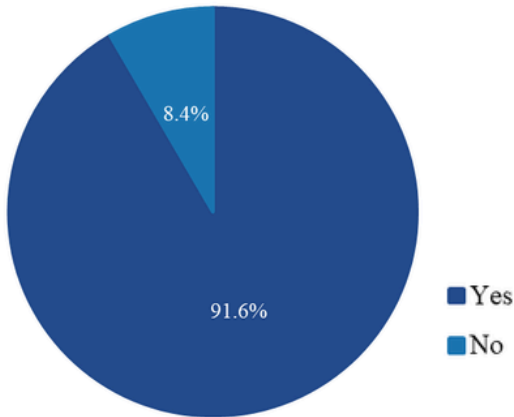


Body-Worn Camera Adoption

Frequency of Agencies with Body-Worn Cameras

The first survey question asked responding agencies whether they have BWCs (Figure 5). Among the responding agencies, 640 (91.6%) reported they have a BWC program, while just 59 (8.4%) did not. Of respondents with BWCs, only agencies with between one and 10 officers reported less than 90% implementation (Table 1). Agencies with 51 or more officers were most

Figure 5. Does your agency have body-worn cameras?



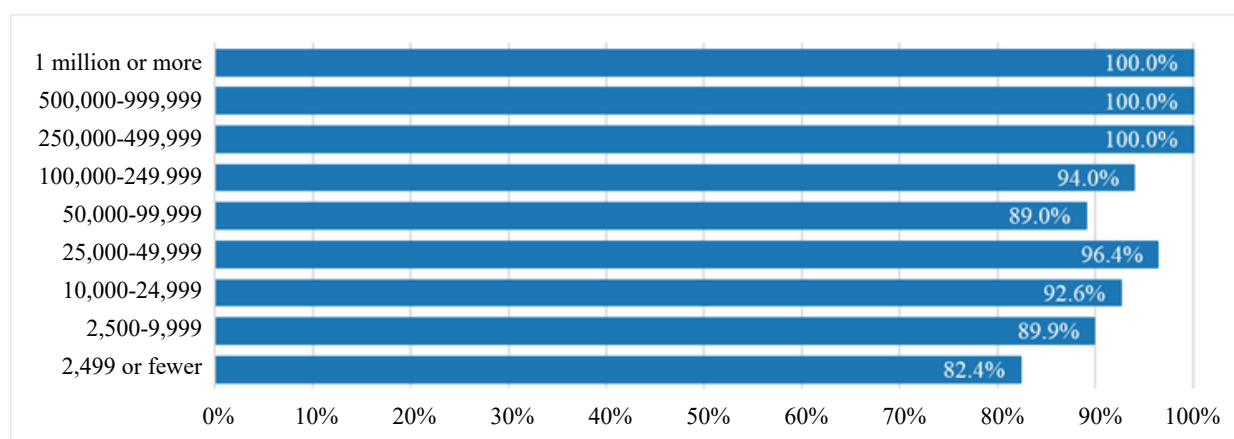
likely to report having BWCs, with at least a 95% adoption rate. Although urban departments (92.3%) were slightly more likely to report using BWCs than rural agencies (90.5%), both exceeded 90% implementation. This shows considerable growth in the adoption of BWCs in the past five years compared to the 2020 Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics (LEMAS) data, where 61.8% of agencies reported having BWC programs.¹⁰

¹⁰ Goodison, S. E. (2022, November). *Local police departments personnel, 2020*. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/media/68016/download>

Table 1. Percent of Agencies with Body-Worn Cameras Size and Jurisdiction Type

		Yes
		%
Agency Size	1-10 officers	84.6
	11-25 officers	90.2
	26-50 officers	93.8
	51-100 officers	95.2
	101+ officers	96.9
Jurisdiction Type	Rural	90.5
	Urban	92.3

Examining the existence of BWCs by the jurisdiction's population size shows where program growth has occurred. The 2020 LEMAS survey found 100% of agencies serving populations of 1 million or more had BWC programs and over 90% of agencies serving populations between 250,000 and 999,999 residents reporting having BWCs.¹¹ Results from the current survey presented in Figure 6, show that 100% of agencies serving populations of 250,000 or more reported having BWC programs. Further, the 2020 LEMAS survey found that more than 70% of agencies serving populations between 50,000 and 249,999 had BWCs. In the current survey, between 89% (50,000-99,999) and 94% (100,000-249,999) have BWCs. Agencies serving smaller populations saw an even more significant increase in implementation. In 2020, approximately 55-65% of agencies serving less than 50,000 people had BWCs. By 2025, BWC adoption in agencies of this size reached 82-96%.

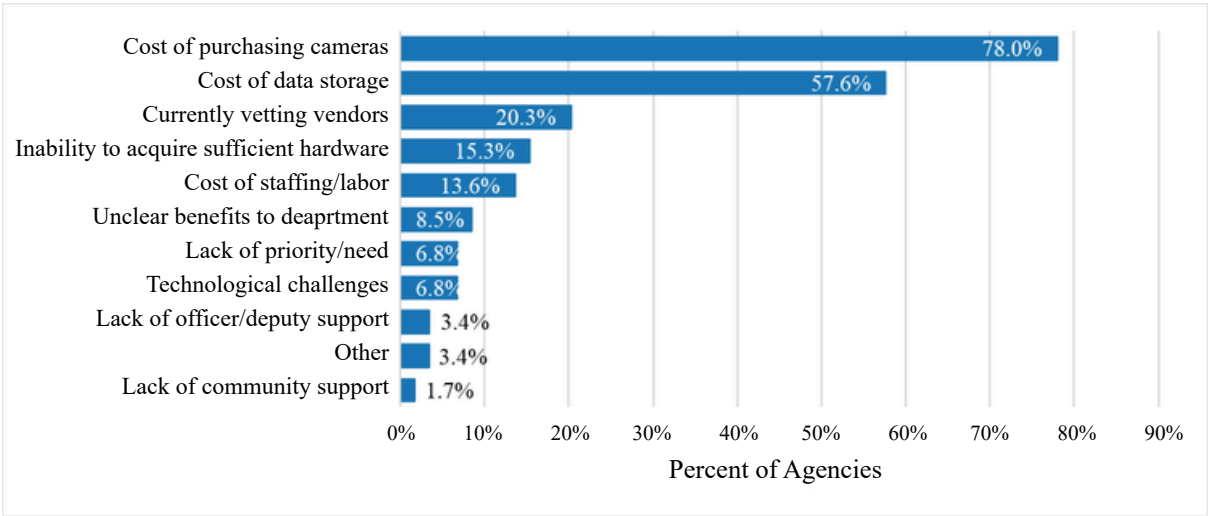
**Figure 6.** Percent of Agencies with Body-Worn Cameras by Population Served (2025)

¹¹ Goodison, S. E. (2022, November). *Local police departments personnel, 2020*. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/media/68016/download>

Hurdles to Body-Worn Camera Adoption

Agencies reporting that they have not adopted BWCs were additionally asked to select hurdles to implementation that prevented them from obtaining the technology. The cost of purchasing cameras (78%, *n* = 46) and the cost of data storage (57.6%, *n* = 34) were the most cited reasons (Figure 7). Additionally, 12 agencies (20.3%) reported that they were currently vetting vendors, indicating they are near implementation. Nine (15.3%) highlighted an inability to acquire sufficient funding, and nine more (13.6%) cited the prohibitive cost of staffing required to implement BWC programs. Only five agencies (8.5%) reported that they did not see a clear benefit to BWCs. Technological challenges and a lack of interest, need, or priority were cited by four agencies each (6.8%), while a combined 5.1% (*n* = 3) reported that a lack of officer or community support prevented them from getting cameras.

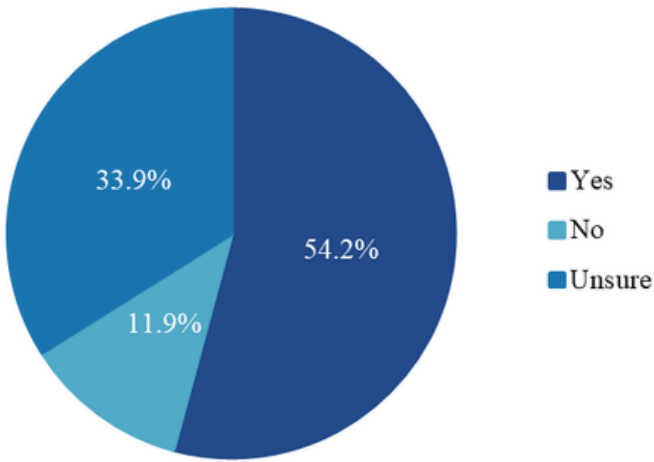
Figure 7. What prevented your agency from adopting body-worn cameras?



Note. Figure based only on agencies that reported that they did not have cameras.

Agencies without BWCs were also asked if they were considering implementing BWCs in the next two years. A slight majority at 54.2% (*n* = 32) are considering implementing the technology in the next two years, 33.9% of departments (*n* = 20) were unsure, and only 11.9% of agencies (*n* = 7) do not foresee implementation by 2027 (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Is your agency considering implementing body-worn cameras in the next two years?



Note. Figure based only on agencies that reported that they did not have cameras.



Body-Worn Camera Programs

The remaining sections present the responses for agencies that reported existing BWC programs. The first section provides the responses to a series of questions that focus on the technical elements of agency BWC programs (e.g., funding, year of adoption, camera characteristics, digital evidence management, and redaction). This is followed by sections focused on BWC use for training, sharing videos with prosecutors, and artificial intelligence. The final section examines the response to perspectives on the value of BWCs, sustainability challenges to these programs, and stakeholder support.

Figure 9. Did your agency receive grant funding to purchase body-worn cameras?

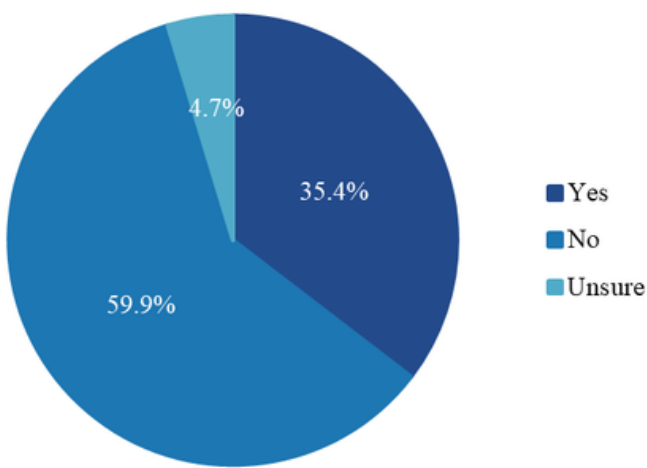
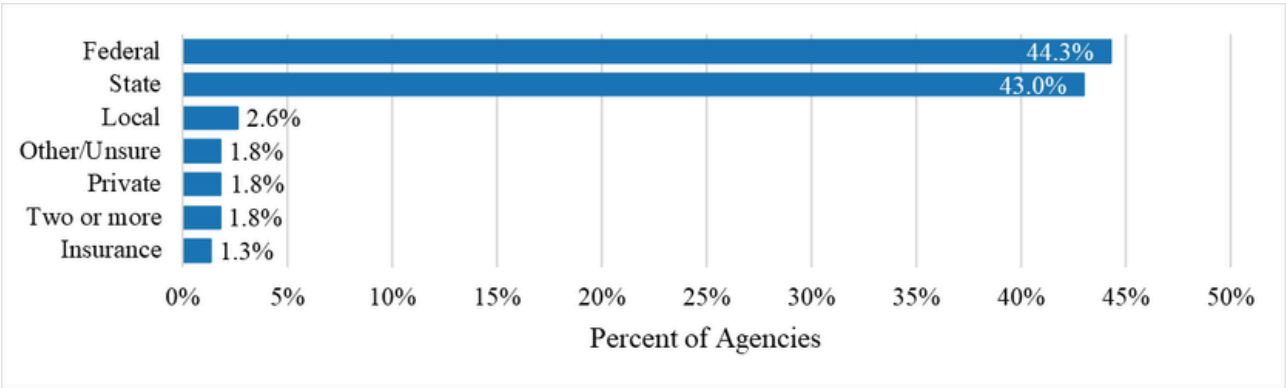


Figure 10. Percent of Grant Funding Sources by Agency



Body-Worn Camera Funding Sources

Agencies with BWC programs were first asked if they received financial support through grants to purchase cameras. Most respondents (59.9%, $n = 382$) did not receive grant funding to purchase BWCs (Figure 9). Of the 35.4% of agencies ($n = 226$) that used grants to support their BWC programs, most funding came from federal (44.3%) or state (43%) agencies (Figure 10). The remaining grants were local (2.6%), private (1.8%), insurance (1.8%), or from two or more sources (1.8%).

Body-Worn Camera Program Implementation Year

Figure 11 presents the cumulative percent of agencies with BWC programs by implementation year indicating that 91% of agencies have adopted BWCs by 2025.¹² The adoption over time is reflective of innovation adoption curves found in other fields,¹³ where there are a small number of early adopters, followed by rapid adoption and a subsequent implementation plateau. Some agencies report having BWCs as far back as 2001. While the attention nationally to BWCs emerged around 2012,¹⁴

12 Thirty-eight respondents did not report the year of adoption and one participant who reported 2028 implementation year.
13 Rogers, E. M. (1983). *Diffusions of innovations*. (3rd ed). The Free Press: A Division of Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc.
14 A Primer on Body-Worn Camera for Law Enforcement (2012). National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice.

there was experimentation and adoption within agencies prior to that time. Thus, these responses may represent early adopters, and there may also be some minor recall error on specific dates of program origin. Figure 12 reveals the progression of BWC program implementation by year. Spikes in camera adoption occurred between 2015 and 2016, and between 2020 and 2022. These dates coincide with the high-profile deaths of Michael Brown in 2014 and George Floyd in 2020 resulting from police use of force, which spurred public calls for increased police transparency and accountability via BWCs. This public outcry was coupled with the establishment of grant funding programs through the Bureau of Justice Assistance (PIP and SRT), along with other state level programs.



Figure 11. Cumulative Percent of Agency Body-Worn Camera Implementation Year

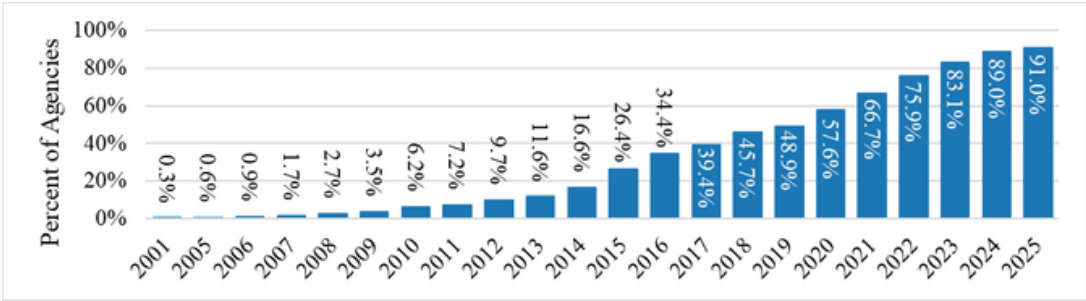
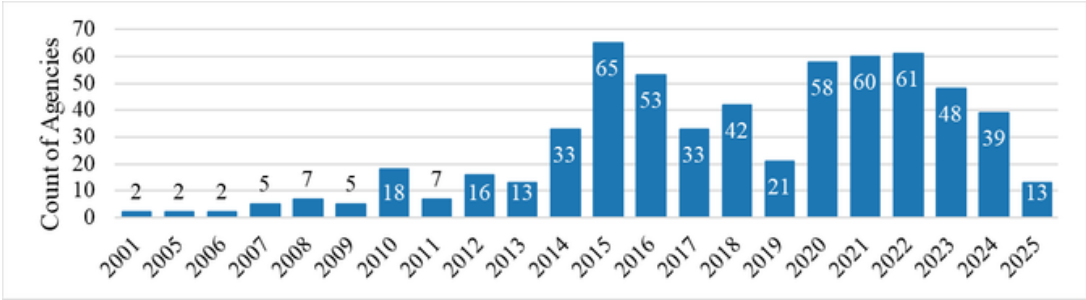


Figure 12. Count of Agency Body-Worn Camera Program Implementation Year

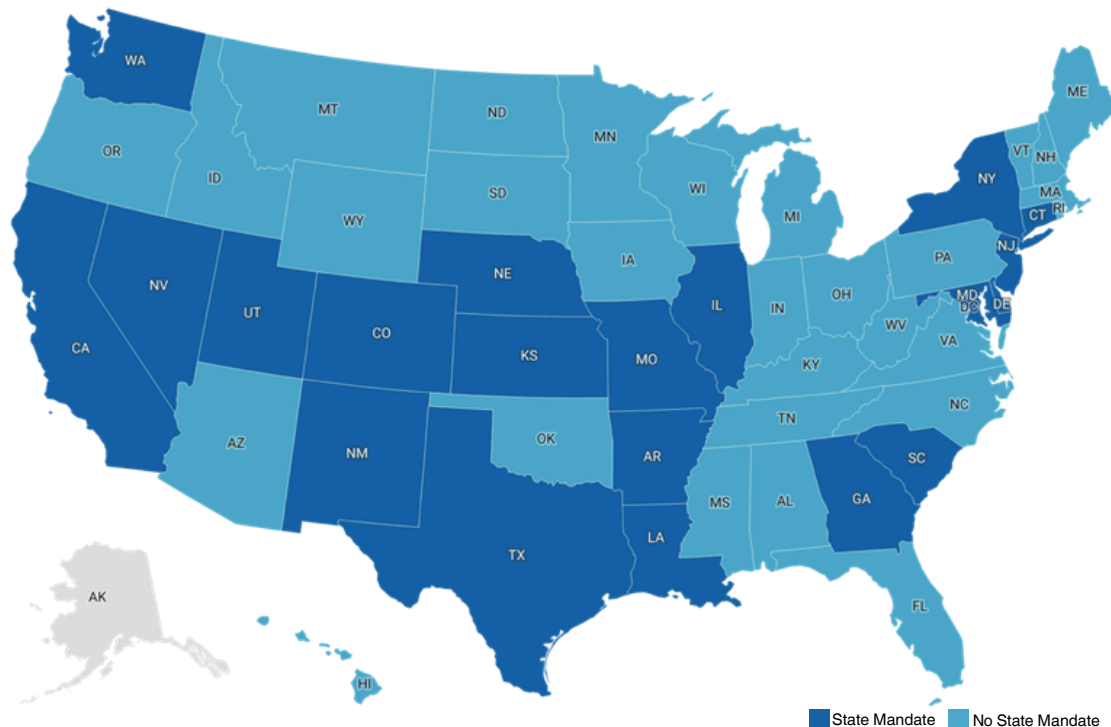


State Mandates for Body-Worn Camera Implementation

Participants were asked whether their state mandated BWC implementation and if so, what year adoption was required. Agencies within the same state consistently reported whether implementation was mandated. However, there were some small inconsistencies among

agencies within the same state on the date by which implementation was required, presumably due to recall error. As a result, Figure 13 presents the states that have legislative or other state mandates requiring the adoption of BWCs by a given point. According to the responding agencies, 20 states (40.1%) required law enforcement agencies to implement a BWC program.

Figure 13. Does your agency have a state mandate to implement body-worn cameras?

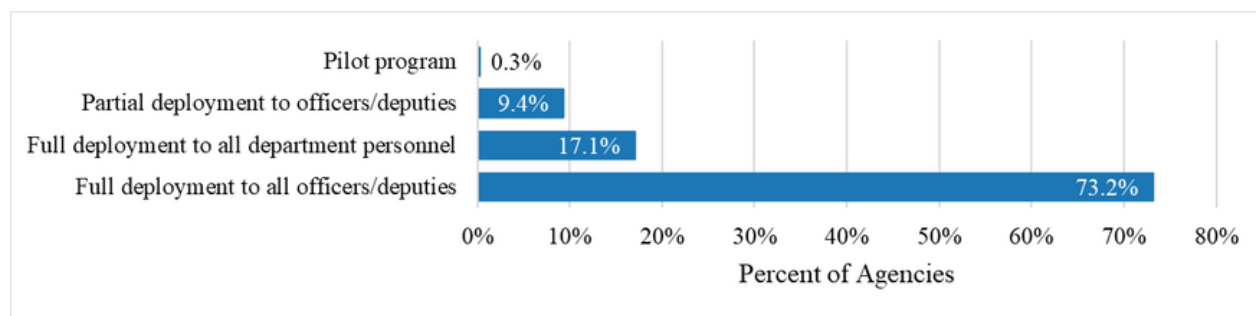


Level of Body-Worn Camera Deployment

BWC programs can operate with a degree of implementation that ranges from a pilot program which represents early stages of introducing the technology, to full-fledged adoption, where every sworn member of the department is equipped with a BWC. Such considerations can be informed by perceived areas of need and the cost of scaling implementation.

Of agencies that reported existing BWC programs, 73.2% ($n = 467$) reported they had fully deployed the technology to all officers or deputies (Figure 14). Comparatively, 17.1% of departments ($n = 109$) had deployed cameras to all department personnel, 9.4% ($n = 60$) had partially deployed the technology, and just two agencies (0.3%) were in the pilot phase at the time of the survey.

Figure 14. Percent of Body-Worn Camera Deployment Level by Agency



Body-Worn Camera Features

As BWCs evolve, they come with an increasing number of features designed to improve functionality and officer performance. To identify which of these features agencies prioritize, the survey asked respondents to identify all features present on their current BWCs. Officer event tagging (87.5%) and pre-event video buffers (85.3%) were the most frequently reported features present on agencies' BWC systems (Figure 15). Most agencies' cameras also had low-light recording (62.7%) and GPS capabilities (58.3%). Variable camera placement (21.4%) and officer-down alerts (14.4%) were less common. Only eight agencies reported that their cameras activated automatically with pre-set triggers (1.3%) and six had BWCs with the ability to live stream, (0.9%).

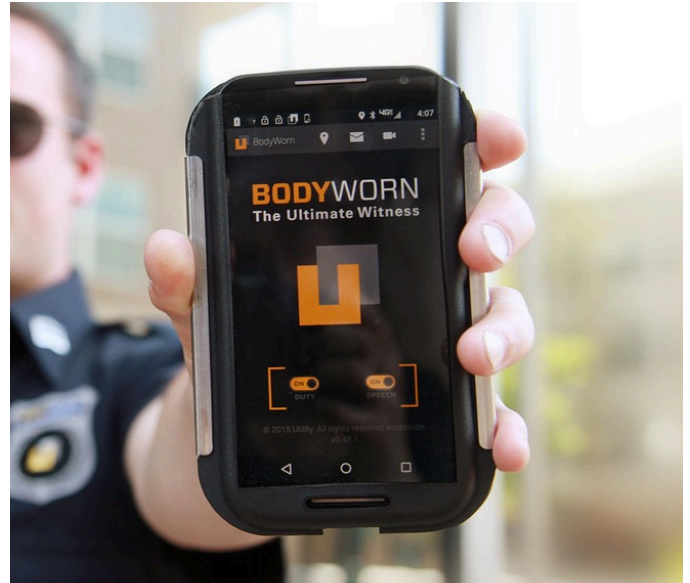
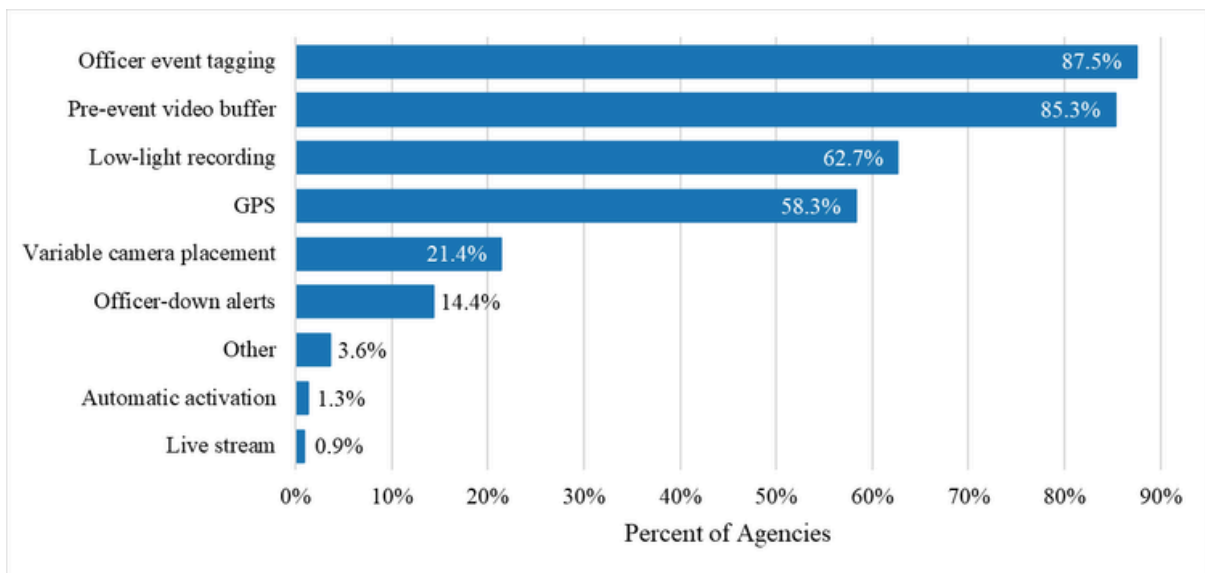


Figure 15. Percent of Body-Worn Camera Features by Agency



Officer event tagging and pre-event video buffer were the most reported BWC features across agency size (Table 2). Larger agencies were more likely to have most BWC features. However, low-light recording was most reported by agencies with 1-10 officers. Additionally, agencies with 10 or fewer officers were more likely than those with 11-25 officers to have BWCs with pre-event video buffer. Urban agencies were more likely than rural departments to have BWCs with every feature except for variable camera placement.



Table 2. Percent of Body-Worn Camera Features by Agency Size and Jurisdiction Type

	Agency Size*					Jurisdiction Type	
	1-10	11-25	26-50	51-100	101+	Rural	Urban
	%					%	
Officer event tagging	76.0	84.5	92.6	92.9	98.9	86.5	88.1
Pre-event video buffer	84.3	78.4	86.0	89.9	97.8	81.2	88.1
Low-light recording	69.4	61.3	56.2	61.6	64.5	62.0	63.1
GPS	46.3	50.5	60.3	63.6	79.6	53.4	61.5
Variable camera placement	25.6	22.2	12.4	17.2	32.3	17.7	24.3
Officer-down alerts	13.2	11.9	13.2	19.2	17.2	14.7	14.3

*Numbers in this category refer to count of officers.

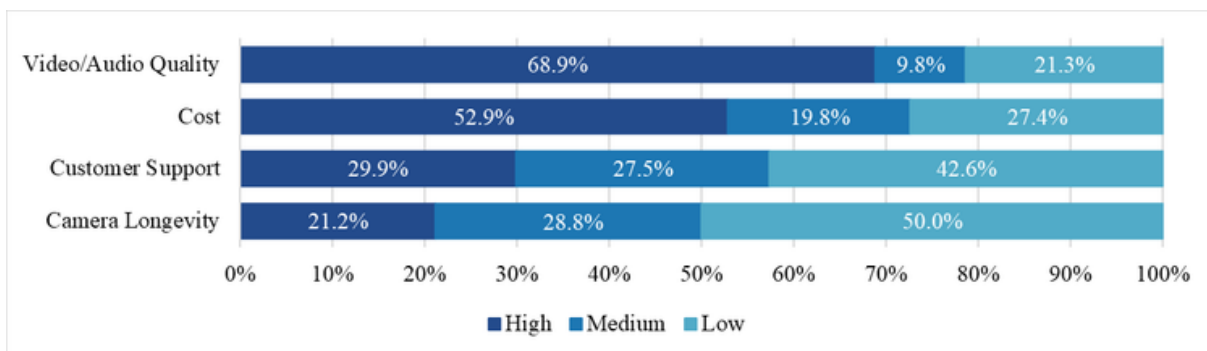


Body-Worn Camera Considerations

Respondents were asked to rank the level of importance they ascribed to various considerations when deciding to purchase a given BWC on a scale of one to five (Figure 16). Results aggregated rankings into categories of high, medium, and low importance (1 and 2 = high, 3 = medium, 4 and 5 = low). The survey identified four purchasing considerations (i.e., camera video and audio

quality, cost, vendor customer support, and camera longevity) and provided a fifth “Other” option for missing considerations. Agencies were most concerned about camera video and audio quality (67.8% highly important), followed by cost (52.1% highly important). Almost 30% of agencies reported that customer support was of high importance, while just 20.6% were highly concerned about camera longevity.

Figure 16. Ranked Importance of Body-Worn Camera Considerations



Body-Worn Camera Storage Systems

A significant component of BWC programs is how an agency will store camera footage, which is informed by cost, infrastructure, and accessibility considerations, among others. Figure 17 indicates the percent of BWC storage system types by agency. Third-party cloud-based storage was by far the most common type reported (72.6%), followed by internally managed systems (26.5%). Just 0.5% of agencies ($n = 3$) reported using some combination of external cloud-based and internal BWC storage systems. It is important to note that what constitutes an internally managed system can range from the use of large servers to computer or external hard drives, the latter presumably for smaller agencies with less data captured. Table 3 demonstrates that the larger an agency is, the more likely they are to use a third-party cloud-based storage system. While rural agencies were somewhat less likely to use third-party systems, both rural and urban agencies reported using third-party storage at a much higher rate than internal systems.

Figure 17. Percent of Body-Worn Camera Storage System Type by Agency

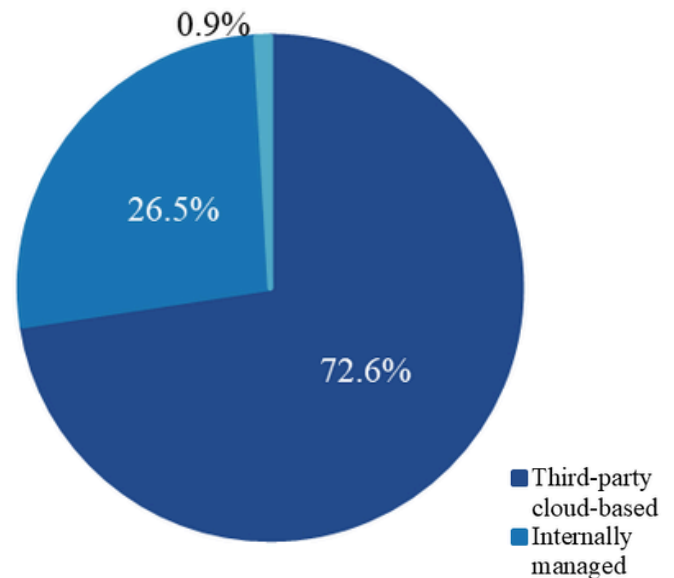


Table 3. Percent of Body-Worn Camera Storage System by Agency Size and Jurisdiction Type

		Third-Party Cloud-Based	Internal	Other
		%	%	%
Agency Size	1-10 officers	55.4	44.6	—
	11-25 officers	67.9	30.1	2.1
	26-50 officers	74.4	24.0	0.8
	51-100 officers	85.9	13.1	1.0
	101+ officers	88.2	10.8	—
Jurisdiction Type	Rural	65.8	33.1	1.1
	Urban	77.4	21.7	0.8

Body-Worn Camera Tagging and Retention

Successfully managing the volume of digital evidence that comes from BWC footage requires effective strategies for organizing these data. For example, do agencies have policies and practices for classifying data via tagging to facilitate future use for investigative or administrative purposes? Subsequently, is there a data retention policy or practice to ensure that the desired videos are preserved and other videos can be discarded to reduce digital evidence storage costs? The survey asked

responding agencies if officers are required to tag BWC video by incident type (Figure 18). Accordingly, the overwhelming majority responded they do require this practice (86.7%, $n = 552$). When asked whether their video tagging process was automatic or manual, 69.5% ($n = 442$) reported their process involved manually tagging footage (Figure 19). Only 6.4% of agencies ($n = 41$) use automatic tagging alone while 20.6% ($n = 131$) use a combination of manual and automatic tagging processes.

Figure 18. Are officers required to tag body-worn camera videos by incident type?

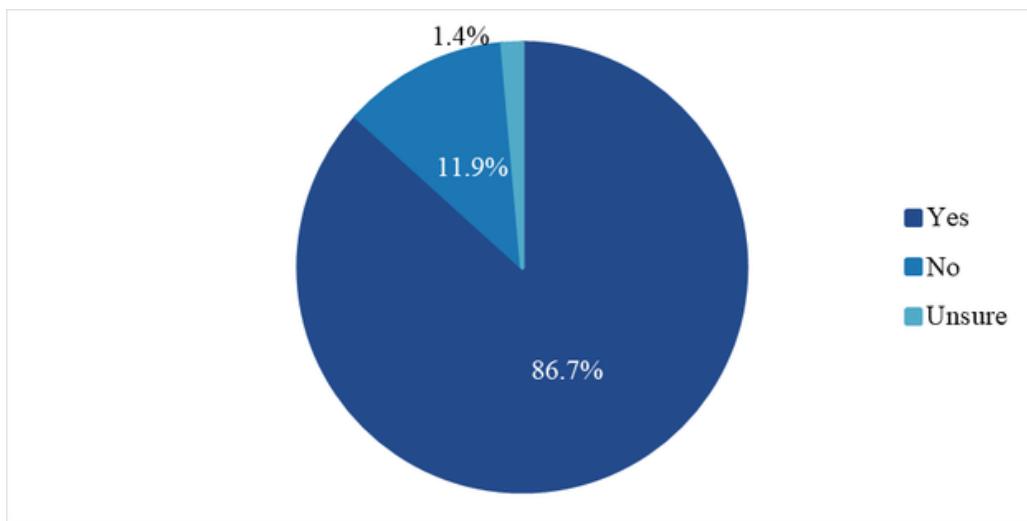
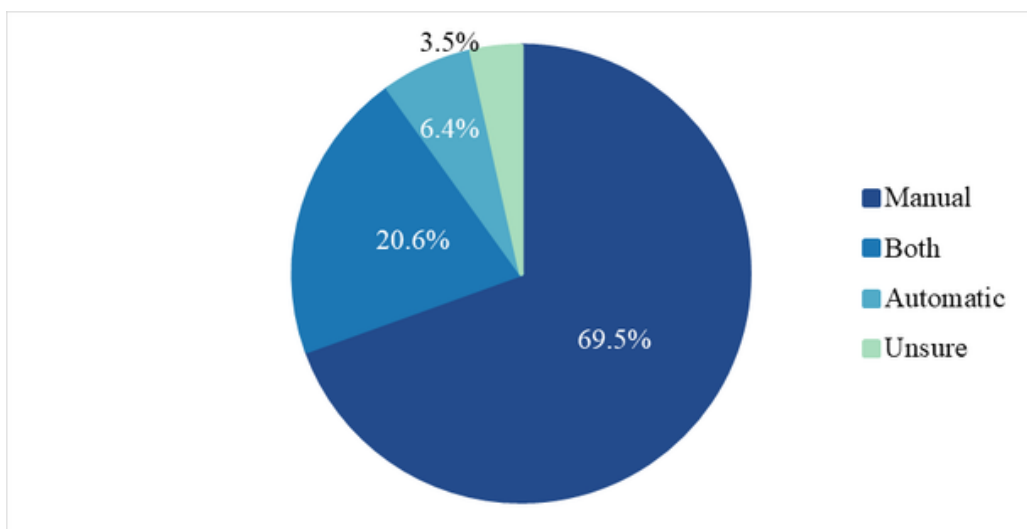


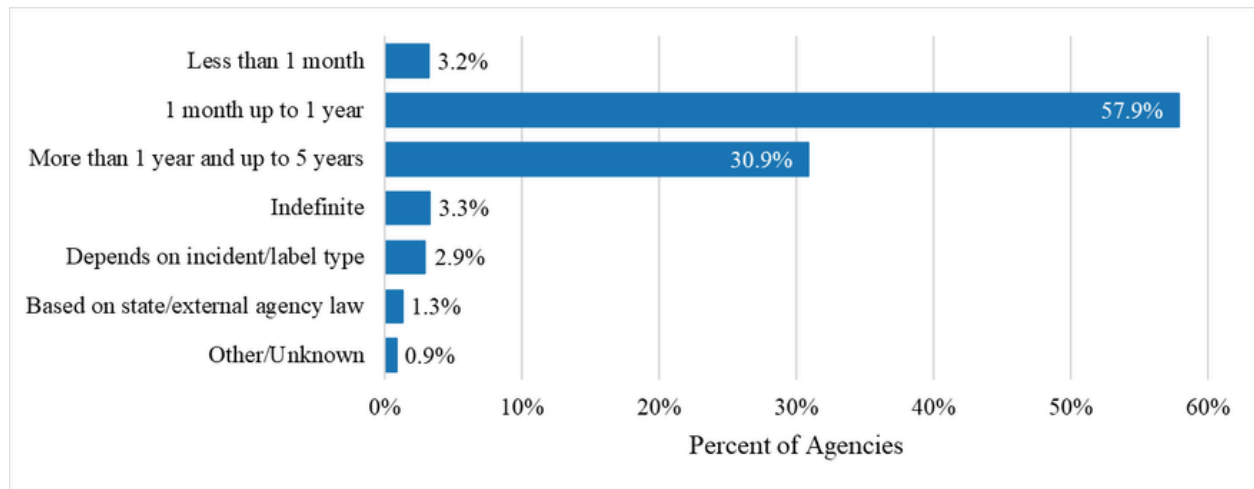
Figure 19. Percent of Body-Worn Camera Video Tagging Process by Agency



To gauge retention practices, the survey asked the respondents how long they would retain video from what could be considered a benign event with no arrests, complaints, or use of force: *An officer wearing a body-worn camera conducts a traffic stop investigation that concludes in a written warning.* This was intended to represent a case resulting in footage retained for a short

time to identify minimum retention periods for each agency. Most participants reported saving footage for between one month and one year (57.9%), followed by 30.9% who save the footage for over a year and up to five years (Figure 20). Notably, 3.3% of agencies ($n = 21$) would save the footage for an indefinite amount of time, and 3.2% ($n = 20$) would save it for less than one month.

Figure 20. How long do you retain traffic stop footage that concludes with a written warning?



Public Requests for Body-Worn Camera Video

BWC implementation requires a significant upfront financial commitment that includes an initial hardware purchase, followed by the cost of supporting infrastructure and labor to establish a digital evidence management (DEM) system. The labor required to respond to public requests for BWC footage, exemplify additional program costs. Managing public footage requests involves not only the retrieval and distribution of the video, but the redaction of identifiable information before public dissemination. To explore this element of BWC programs, the survey asked agencies to report the number of public requests for video

they receive in an average month (Figure 21). A total of 70.8% of respondents ($n = 424$) receive between zero and nine BWC video requests in a month, while 23.9% of agencies ($n = 143$) receive between 10 and 49 requests per month. Only a combined 5.4% of departments ($n = 32$) get 50 or more footage requests per month. Table 4 provides a breakdown of monthly requests by agency size and jurisdiction type. Unsurprisingly, the number of video requests an agency receives in a month increases as the agency size increases. Similarly, reflecting an overlap in agency size and likely volume of citizen contact, urban agencies receive higher numbers of video requests in a given month than rural agencies.

Figure 21. Average Monthly Public Requests for Body-Worn Camera Video by Agency

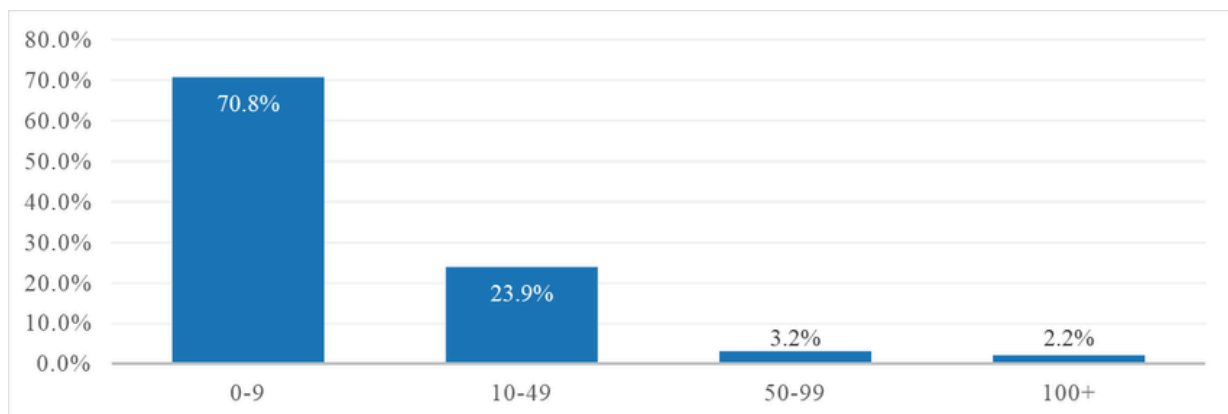


Table 4. Average Monthly Public Body-Worn Camera Video Requests by Agency Size and Jurisdiction Type

		0-9	10-49	50-99	100+
		%	%	%	%
Agency Size	1-10 officers	94.9	5.1	–	–
	11-25 officers	85.2	14.3	–	0.5
	26-50 officers	68.5	28.8	1.8	0.9
	51-100 officers	47.7	45.5	5.7	1.1
	101+ officers	28.9	44.6	14.5	12.0
Jurisdiction Type	Rural	79.8	18.2	1.2	0.8
	Urban	63.8	28.3	4.7	3.2

Like understanding retention practices, the time committed to redacting public requests for BWC footage is driven by circumstances. A complex event with multiple officers involved is more time-consuming than a traffic stop involving a single officer. Thus, to create a comparative situation, agencies were asked to describe how much staff time it would take to prepare BWC footage from the following scenario: *Two officers, each wearing a body-worn camera, conduct a 30-minute traffic stop investigation that concludes with a traffic citation.* Roughly 41% of agencies ($n = 262$) reported this process would take one to two hours, followed by 24.3% ($n = 154$) of agencies that would take three to four hours, and 15.4% ($n = 98$) that indicated the process would take less than one hour (Figure 22). A combined 9.1% of respondents ($n = 59$) reported spending five hours or more preparing footage for public requests for this scenario.

Considering these time-consuming efforts, some agencies have adopted software from different vendors that assist the redaction process through automatic identification of faces, audio, license plates, and object detection. Figure 23 illustrates whether participating agencies use automatic redaction software. Responses were somewhat evenly divided between 48.2% of agencies ($n = 307$) that do not have software that automatically redacts camera footage and 45.1% that do ($n = 287$).

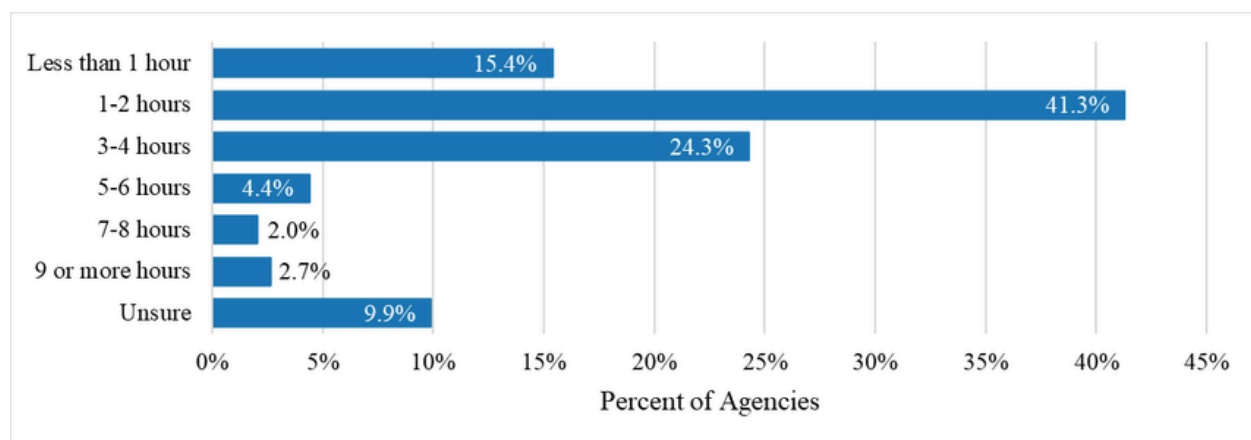
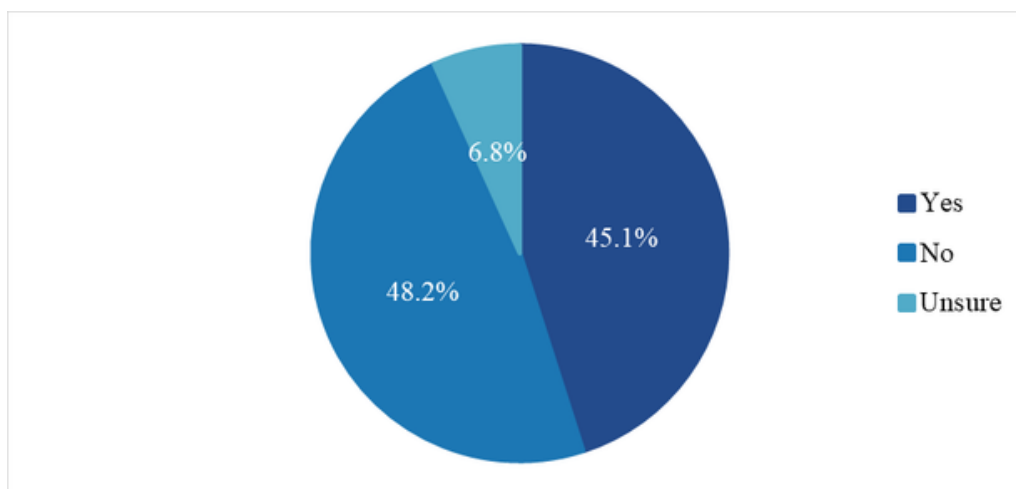
Figure 22. Percent of Staff Time Required to Prepare Body-Worn Camera Footage for Public Request

Figure 23. Is your agency using software that automatically redacts body-worn camera footage?



Body-Worn Camera Digital Evidence Management Challenges

Data storage, video tagging, redaction, hardware upkeep, and integration with other department systems are components of DEM that accompany the adoption of BWCs. To understand some of the key barriers or concerns to maintaining BWC DEM, the survey asked agencies to rate the level of challenge posed by these elements on a five-point scale (1 = low, 5 = significant). Results aggregated the scale to reflect low, moderate, and significant challenge (1 and 2 = low, 3 = moderate, and 4 and 5 = significant).

Figure 24 indicates that more than half of participants expressed significant concern about the cost of storage services (52.8%) and redaction (50.3%). Hardware replacement and management costs were of significant concern for 29% of agencies, followed by issues with evidence processing across multiple platforms (26.3%) and concern about a lack of BWC integration with existing CAD or RMS systems (26.3%). Less than 20% reported significant challenge from appropriately tagging recordings (19.9%) and difficulty organizing, managing, retrieving, or sharing data (16.1%). Departments of all sizes cited the cost of storage services and redaction as the most significant challenges to DEM (Table 5).

Figure 24. Level of Concern for Digital Evidence Management Challenges

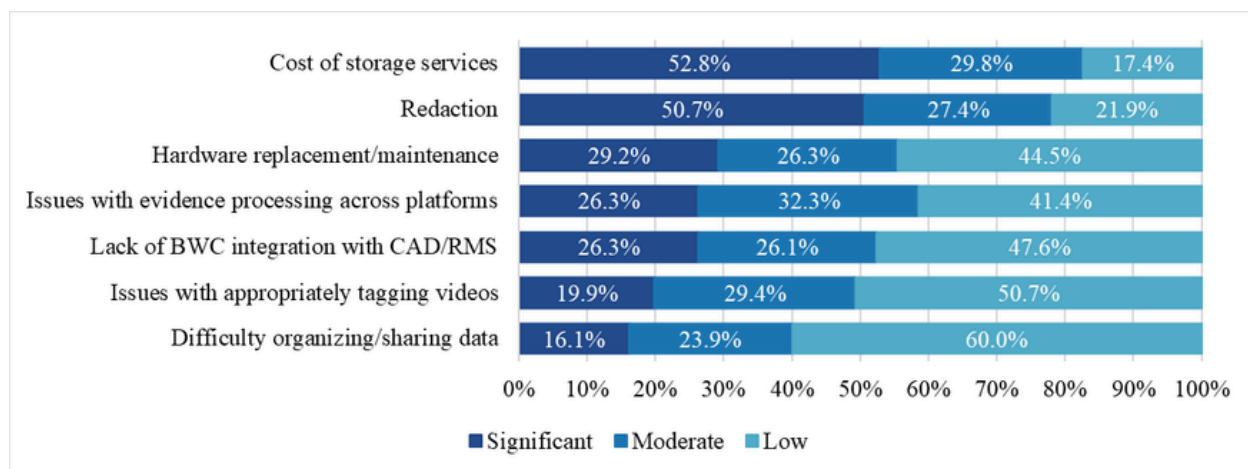


Table 5. Percent of Agencies Reporting Significant Challenge for Each Digital Evidence Management Component by Agency Size

	1-10*	11-25	26-50	51-100	101+
	%				
Cost of storage services	49.2	53.1	58.7	57.5	43.0
Redaction	43.7	48.1	57.1	56.6	51.1
Hardware replacement/maintenance	35.0	32.8	28.1	25.3	18.5
Issues with evidence processing across platforms	27.1	29.2	23.1	24.3	25.0
Lack of BWC integration with CAD/RMS	30.5	29.1	24.4	27.5	15.2
Issues with appropriately tagging videos	12.6	19.3	19.0	18.2	32.7
Difficulty organizing/sharing data	16.6	21.4	15.7	12.1	8.7

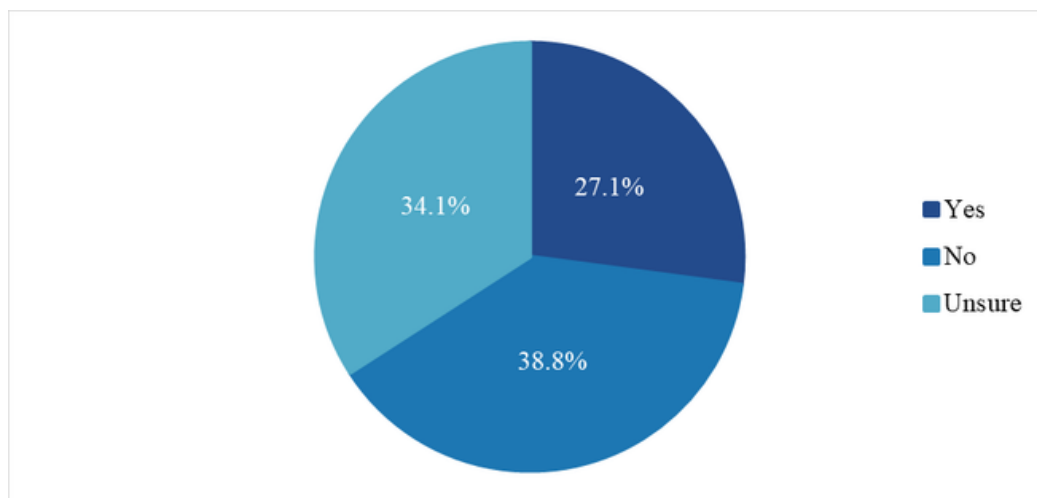
Use of Body-Worn Camera Footage in Training

BWCs initially emerged as a technology for transparency and accountability before they were recognized for their evidentiary value in criminal cases and protecting officers from unfounded citizen complaints. Using footage of officer performance in the field, BWCs are also a tool that can support training. The survey asked whether the academy attended by an agency's officers used BWC footage in the training curriculum. Recognizing that an agency's officers may attend an academy run by that agency or one external to the agency, an "Unsure" response option was provided. As Figure 25 highlights, only 27.1% of agencies ($n = 172$) reported that the training academy their officers attend integrates BWC footage into the curriculum. Comparatively, 38.8% of

agencies ($n = 246$) do not use footage in their training curriculum, and a similar 34.2% were unsure whether BWC footage was used in this way.

The survey then explored how frequently agencies use BWC footage for training in five formats that should fall within an agency's control (i.e., officer mentoring, in-house recruit/probationary training, as part of annual or regular in-person in-service training, beginning of shift roll call/muster briefings, or in online training). Recognizing that BWC footage may be used regularly in other formats, an additional "Other" category was provided. Survey instructions explained that this BWC video may come from within a respondent's agency or from another department via YouTube or another source. Responding agencies were asked to identify whether they frequently (e.g., regularly use), occasionally (e.g., ad hoc, handful of times), or never use BWC footage for a given format.

Figure 25. Does the training academy your officers attend integrate body-worn camera footage into the training curriculum?



When examining combined frequent or occasional use, a large portion of agencies reported using BWC footage for training in some format (Figure 26). Using footage for mentoring was the most common approach, with 83.1% of agencies reporting occasional or frequent use, and 74.3% of using footage for in-house recruit/probationary training. While not as prevalent, the use of BWC footage for training in the other listed formats was not trivial, with 64.6% reporting use for in-person in-service training, 45.9% using in the beginning of shift roll call briefings, and 35.9% using in online training. Several formats were listed in the “Other” response option, the most common of which was the use of BWC footage for training in post-incident reviews, particularly after critical incidents ($n = 9$). However, it is also important to acknowledge that if the response of “frequent” use is taken as an indicator of regular practice, the results in Figure 26 would suggest the BWC footage use is not broadly integral to training in the policing field at this point.

Settings, training opportunities, and resources vary across agencies, and can shape which training formats are used and where BWC footage can be incorporated.

For example, in larger agencies, officers may report to department headquarters or regional station to collect their equipment and start their shift, while officers in a small agency may take home vehicles and begin their shift as soon as they leave their homes. These differences influence whether beginning-of-shift roll call briefings occur in an agency. Additionally, a well-resourced agency may have a dedicated training space and a cadre of trainers that allow for in-service training, while agencies without these resources may rely on individual mentoring or online training.

Given these factors, Table 6 examines how often agencies of different sizes report regularly incorporating BWC footage in training. Officer mentoring and in-house recruit or probationary training are the most frequent uses of BWC footage across agency sizes. However, BWC footage is not widely used on a regular basis for training purposes. Even in agencies with at least 101 officers who use footage for officer mentoring, less than half of respondents (41.9%) reported doing so frequently.

Figure 26. Frequency of Body-Worn Camera Footage Use for Training

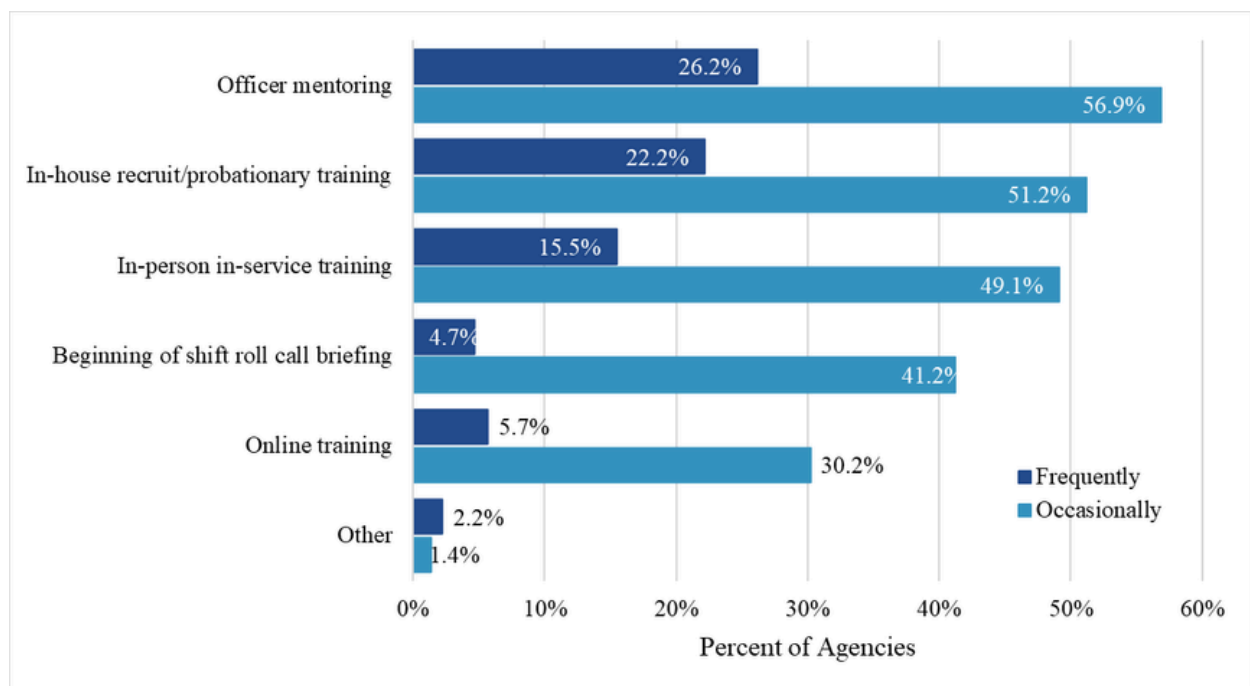


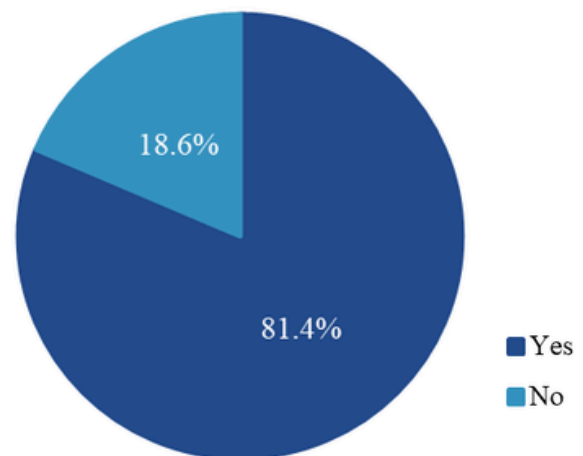
Table 6. Percent of Agencies Frequently Using Body-Worn Camera Footage for Training by Agency Size

	1-10*	11-25	26-50	51-100	101+
	%				
Officer mentoring	20.0	19.9	25.6	34.7	41.9
In-house recruit/probationary training	21.7	19.9	21.5	22.4	30.1
In-person in-service training	11.7	9.6	14.9	21.4	28.0
Beginning of shift/roll call briefing	0.8	1.1	6.6	11.2	8.6
Online training	8.3	2.6	9.1	6.1	4.3

*Numbers refer to count of officers in agency.

Prosecutor Body-Worn Camera Footage Sharing

Given that BWC footage can provide valuable evidence in criminal cases, an important component of BWC programs are practices for sharing this digital evidence with prosecutors. Figure 27 shows that 81.4% of agencies ($n = 517$) have written policies for sharing BWC footage with prosecutors, while 18.6% ($n = 118$) do not. Table 7 presents the percentage of agencies with written policies for prosecutor footage sharing by agency size and jurisdiction type. Except for agencies with 10 or fewer officers, more than 80% of agencies report having these policies. However, in departments with 10 or fewer officers, nearly 70% report having a policy. Rural agencies are less likely to have a written policy than urban agencies.

Figure 27. Does your agency have written policies for sharing body-worn camera footage with prosecutors?**Table 7.** Percent of Agencies that Share Footage with Prosecutors by Agency Size and Jurisdiction Type

		Yes
		%
Agency Size	1-10 officers	68.6
	11-25 officers	82.8
	26-50 officers	84.0
	51-100 officers	86.7
	101+ officers	84.9
Jurisdiction Type	Rural	78.4
	Urban	83.4

Method of Sharing Footage with Prosecutors

To understand how BWC footage is shared, agencies were asked to indicate the mechanism by which they share footage with prosecutors (Figure 28). Given that agencies may use multiple sharing methods, respondents were asked to select all applicable approaches. Most agencies use an electronic cloud-based footage sharing system (68.5%). The second most common sharing method was manual downloading and physical transfer (43.1%), which can include the use of USB drives or DVDs. The remaining approaches were less common with 20.5% reported using secure electronic file transfers, 13.9% using shared server or network drive, and 6.6% using an automated system that notifies prosecutors of new footage.

Electronic cloud-based footage sharing was the most common method across agency size, increasing as agency size increased (Table 8). Notably, for agencies with 10 or fewer officers, manual download and physical transfer were equally common (52.9%). This pattern was reflected in jurisdiction size, with urban agencies more likely to use electronic cloud-based sharing methods.



Figure 28. How does your agency typically share body-worn camera footage with prosecutors?

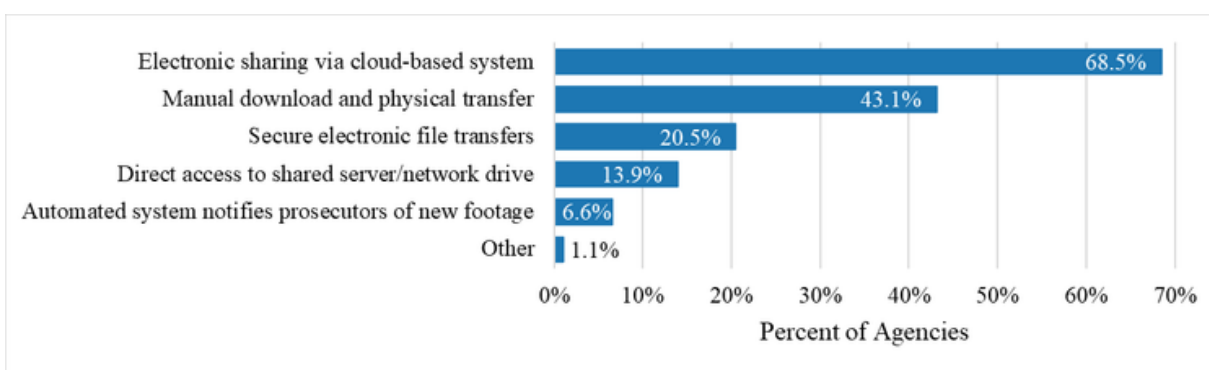


Table 8. Percent of Footage Sharing Method by Agency Size and Jurisdiction Type

	Agency Size*					Jurisdiction Type	
	1-10	11-25	26-50	51-100	101+	Rural	Urban
	%					%	
Electronic cloud-based sharing	52.9	63.4	71.7	79.6	86.0	60.5	74.5
Manual download and physical transfer	52.9	44.8	40.0	39.8	35.5	47.4	39.8
Secure electronic file transfer	19.0	20.1	21.7	22.4	20.4	19.9	21.1
Direct access to shared server/drive	5.0	13.4	16.7	14.3	22.6	13.5	14.1
Automated system notifies of new footage	3.3	6.7	6.7	7.1	9.7	4.9	7.9

*Numbers in this category refer to count of officers.

Artificial Intelligence

BWC programs produce a large volume of footage from all officer interactions that cannot be completely reviewed by department personnel, video by video, whether for administrative purposes, performance review, or to identify interaction patterns that would inform training needs. As a result, the review of BWC footage is narrowed to specific encounters of interest (e.g., use of force or incidents resulting in citizen complaint) or random audits of a handful of videos on a monthly or quarterly basis.

Recently, artificial intelligence (AI) software solutions directly developed for BWC footage have emerged on the market to address this restricted review capacity. One program translates audio from the encounter captured on the BWC to text and then analyzes that text for communication patterns. Another software program translates audio to text and analyzes video to identify different patterns of behavior. Both AI solutions create the potential capacity to review large volumes of video footage. The survey asked agencies if they have explored the use of this software. Those who responded that they have explored AI were then asked if they have adopted or are considering adopting this software to review their BWC footage.

Figure 29 provides the responses to the question of whether agencies have explored the use of AI software for their BWC programs. Only 13.7% of agencies have explored AI programs to review BWC footage. Table 9 further reveals that the likelihood of exploring AI increases with agency size and is more common in departments serving urban jurisdictions.

Figure 30 illustrates how many agencies have adopted or are considering adopting AI among the 87 agencies that reported they have explored AI. Only 20 agencies reported they have adopted AI software in relation to their BWC programs, but 43 agencies reported they are considering adopting AI software.



Figure 29. Has your agency explored artificial intelligence analytic programs to review body-worn camera footage?

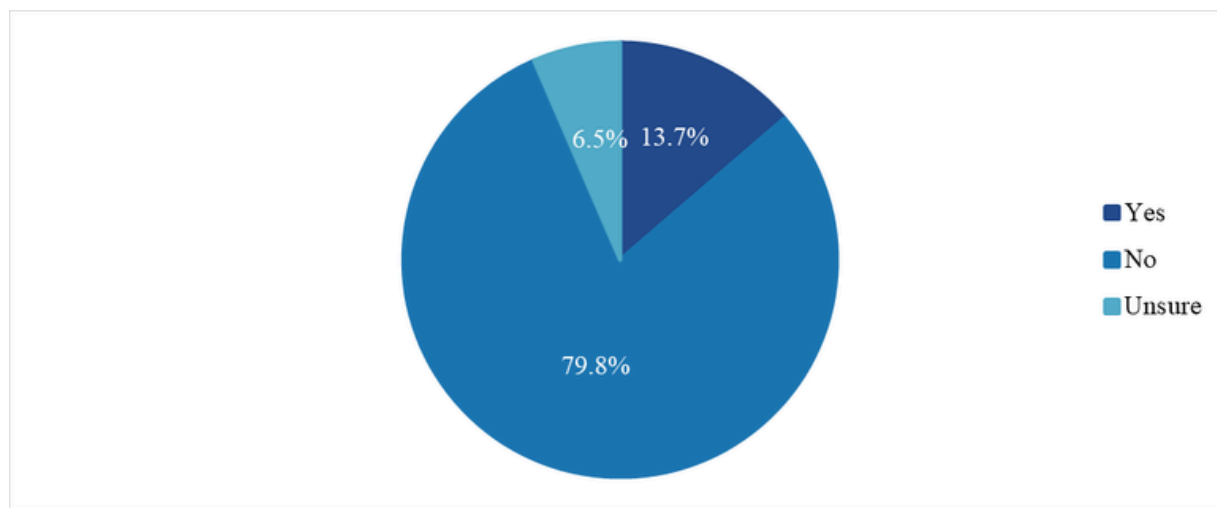
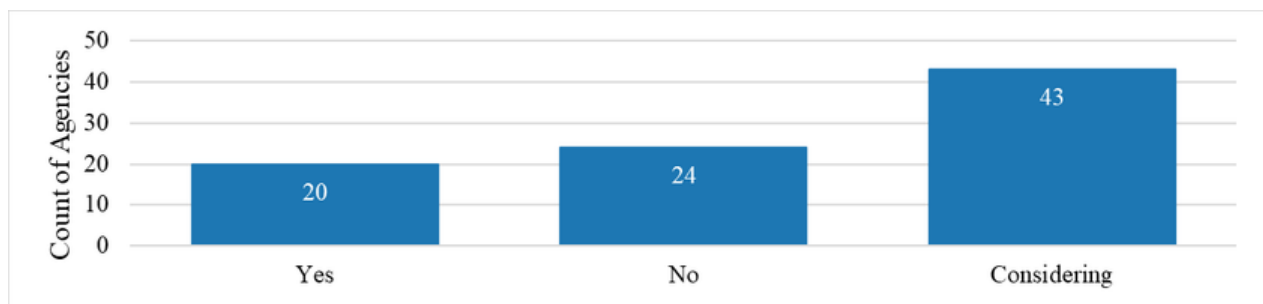


Table 9. Percent of Agencies that Have Explored Artificial Intelligence Analytic Programs to Review Body-Worn Camera Footage

		Yes
		%
Agency Size	1-10 officers	0.8
	11-25 officers	3.6
	26-50 officers	13.4
	51-100 officers	29.6
	101+ officers	35.9
Jurisdiction Type	Rural	6.8
	Urban	18.9

Figure 30. Has your agency adopted/considered adopting artificial intelligence analytic software?



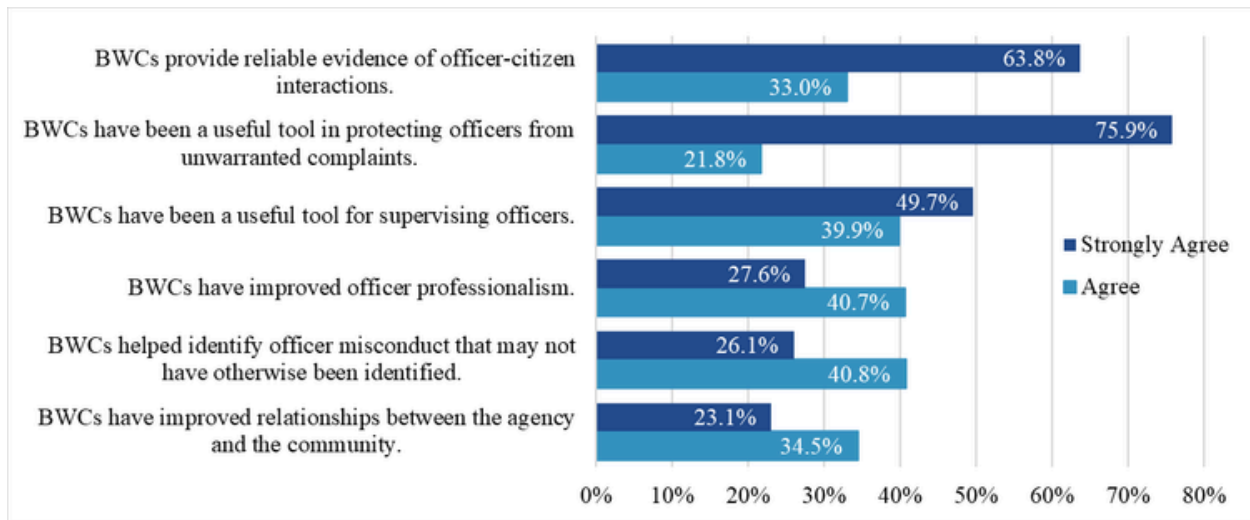
Note. Figure based only on 13.6% of agencies that reported that they have explored artificial intelligence analytic programs to review body-worn camera footage (Figure 30). Six missing responses.

Perceptions of Body-Worn Camera Utility and Sustainability

The final section of the survey explored perspectives on the value of BWC programs, challenges to sustainability, and stakeholder support. Arguments for implementing BWC programs in police departments range from identifying police misconduct to providing protection, to officers from unwarranted complaints, to providing reliable evidence from police-citizen interactions for prosecution. The survey asked responding agencies to rate their level of agreement with six statements about the potential value of BWCs, on a five-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree).

Overall, Figure 31 shows that there is agreement on the perceived value of BWCs to agencies across the six areas listed. When combining strongly agree and agree responses, nearly all respondents reported BWCs are a useful tool in protecting officers from unwarranted complaints (97.6%) and providing reliable evidence on officer-citizen interactions (96.8%). With a slightly lower level of support, 89.6% of the respondents agree or strongly agree with the statement that BWCs have been a useful tool for supervising officers. While the remaining three areas show smaller percentages, the majority are still supportive, with 68.3% agreeing or strongly agreeing that BWCs improve officers' professionalism, 66.9% that BWCs help identify instances of officer misconduct that may not have otherwise been identified, and 57.5% that BWCs have improved relationships with the community.

Figure 31. Frequency of Agreement with Body-Worn Camera Utility Statements



Body-Worn Camera Sustainability Concerns

As inferred from responses to the above survey questions, BWC programs are resource-intensive from purchasing cameras, to the cost of DEM, labor for redaction, and more. In addition to upfront costs to start a BWC program, recurring costs are required for program sustainability. Considering this, the survey incorporated questions that asked how concerned respondents are about the ability of their agency to sustain their BWC program on a five-point scale (1 = not concerned, 5 = very concerned). The first four considerations focus on cost-related issues. Figure 32 combines concerned and very concerned responses (scores of 4 and 5). Participants expressed the most concern about costs associated with DEM (70.0%), followed by costs associated with replacing cameras (62.5%), other upkeep and maintenance costs (50.2%), and costs associated with public requests/redaction (45.3%). Few respondents expressed concern for technical obstacles to implementation impacting the sustainability of their program (11.4%) and very few agencies reported that concerns related to a feeling that BWCs are not benefiting the agency as expected threaten program sustainability (4.1%).



Figure 32. Level of Concern for Body-Worn Camera Sustainability Factors

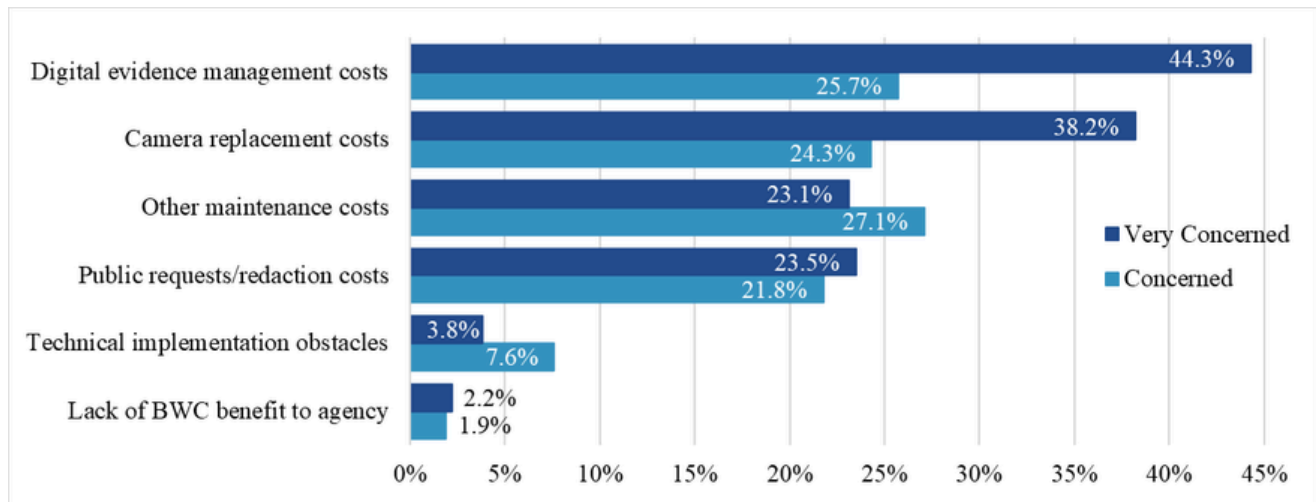


Table 10 provides responses on sustainability concerns by agency size. The table is based on those who responded with a five indicating that they are very concerned about the sustainability to their BWC program. Similar to what is illustrated in Figure 32, the greatest sustainability concern across agency size are costs associated with DEM, though this concern diminishes some as agency size increased. Across all presented considerations, smaller agencies are more likely to express being very concerned about the impact of a given issue on BWC program sustainability relative to larger agencies, with the exception of costs associated with public requests and redaction. Where only 20% of agencies with 10 or fewer officers reported being very

concerned about this issue in relation to program sustainability, in agencies with more than 100 officers, 30.1% expressed being very concerned. This is likely tied to the higher volume of public requests for BWC video that larger agencies manage as highlighted in Table 4.

The other notable observation is the much higher level of concern expressed by small agencies about the cost of replacing cameras. Nearly half of all agencies with 50 or fewer officers were very concerned about their ability to purchase replacement cameras, compared to 19.4% of agencies more than 100 officers.

Table 10. Percent of Agencies Very Concerned About Body-Worn Camera Program Sustainability Factors by Agency Size

	1-10*	11-25	26-50	51-100	101+
	%				
Digital evidence management costs	46.3	50.0	45.4	41.8	33.3
Camera replacement costs	47.9	49.7	37.8	20.4	19.4
Other maintenance costs	26.7	29.5	20.2	16.3	15.1
Public requests/redaction costs	20.0	22.0	26.1	22.4	30.1
Technical implementation obstacles	5.8	4.7	3.4	1.0	2.2
Lack of benefit to agency	1.7	3.7	1.7	—	2.2

*Numbers refer to count of officers in agency.

The final survey question asked respondents to identify the perceived level of support among stakeholders for their department's BWC program (i.e., from the public, officers/deputies, prosecutor's office, and local political figures). The respondents were asked to rank this perceived level of support on a five-point scale (1= low support, 5 = high support). Overall, the respondents perceived strong support across the four stakeholder groups. As Figure 33 illustrates, participating agencies perceived the highest level of support from the prosecutors' office (90.2% ranked 4 or 5), which was true regardless of agency size (Table 11). Officers were perceived as the second most supportive stakeholder (82.1% ranked 4 or 5), followed by public (74.3%) and local political figures (68.2%). Interestingly, agencies with more than 100 officers were more likely to perceive support across stakeholder group.



Figure 33. Level of Support for Body-Worn Camera Programs

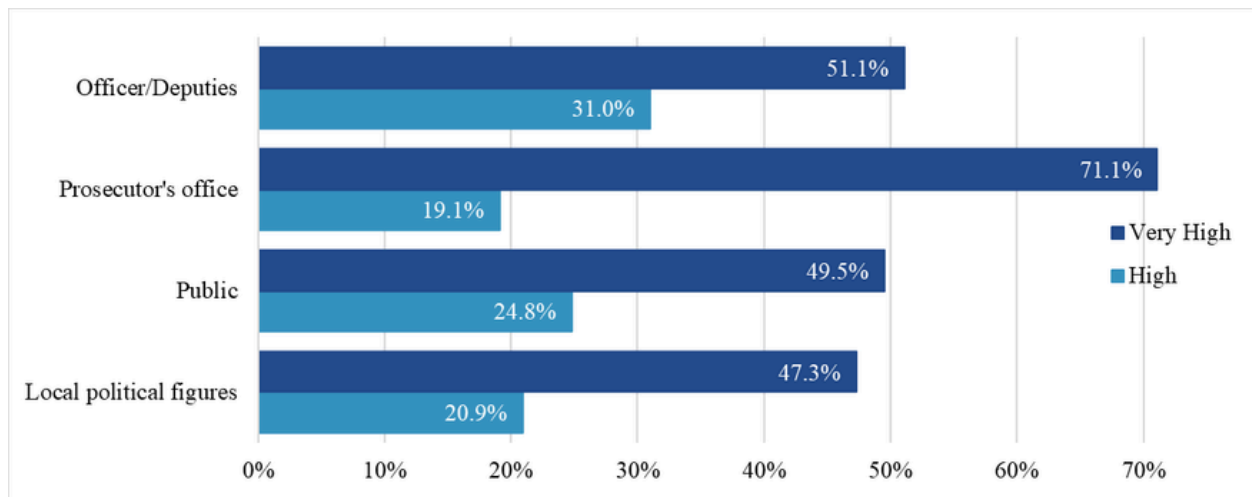


Table 11. Percent of Agencies Reporting High and Very High Support for Body-Worn Camera Programs by Agency Size

	1-10*	11-25	26-50	51-100	101+
	%				
Officers/Deputies	81.0	85.9	80.7	74.5	83.6
Prosecutor's office	90.0	88.6	88.2	87.7	97.8
Public	65.3	74.8	73.1	74.5	84.6
Local political figures	62.0	66.5	64.7	69.4	81.8

Conclusion

Since body-worn cameras (BWCs) were introduced in the early 2000s, they have evolved from a tool for police supervision and transparency to one that provides crucial evidence and protects officers from unwarranted complaints. The current survey shows the continued adoption of BWCs across law enforcement, with 91.6% of responding agencies reporting existing BWC programs, compared to just 47% in 2016¹⁵ and 61.8% in 2020.¹⁶ It is important to bear in mind that some caution must be exercised when comparing current results with past surveys, given the 28% response rate. Although the present survey invited agencies with and without BWCs to participate and expressed interest in those without BWC programs, it is possible that agencies with BWC programs were more inclined to respond. While a large number of respondents were small agencies, an even larger number did not respond. This leaves open the possibility that they have not purchased BWCs and thus inflates the percentage of those who have implemented a BWC program. Additional analysis is planned to determine the differences between respondents and non-respondents.

Nonetheless, the expansion of BWC implementation since the 2020 LEMAS survey has occurred especially in agencies serving communities with fewer than 50,000 residents. This may, in part, be influenced by an increasing number of states adopting policies that require BWC adoption by a given date and grant funds from initiatives like the BJA's Small, Rural, and Tribal BWC program. With this in mind, it is worth noting that the adoption growth observed in the present survey aligns with the trend from the 2016 and 2020 LEMAS surveys and continued efforts to support adoption.



Implementation of a BWC program does not end with purchasing cameras and distributing them to officers and deputies. One of the critical components of a BWC program is establishing an effective system for managing the digital evidence that results from the footage. Most agencies have policies that require officers to tag video by event type (87.5%). This is essential to successful digital evidence management (DEM) because it enables identification of data for the purpose of retention schedule classification, which impacts storage volume and cost.

Just over 70% of agencies use a third-party cloud-based service to store and manage digital evidence from BWCs, but this varies by agency size. Departments with more than 100 officers overwhelmingly use a cloud-based storage solution (88.2%), while small agencies were split more evenly between those using cloud-based and in-house storage. Relatedly, 52.5% of agencies identify the cost of storage as a significant challenge to DEM.

Agencies responding to the survey cited evidence of police-citizen interactions provided by BWC footage as one of the most valuable attributes of BWC programs. Further, 89.6% of responding agencies felt that their prosecutor's office was highly or very highly supportive of their agency retaining a BWC program. This support highlights the important working relationship between law enforcement agencies and prosecutors' offices in sharing digital evidence to maximize the evidentiary value of BWCs. A large majority of agencies reported having a written policy for sharing digital evidence from BWCs with prosecutors. The most common reported means for sharing this footage was through a cloud-based system, yet a sizable number of agencies use traditional, and arguably more cumbersome, manual download and physical transfer of video (e.g., USB drive, DVD). To support effective prosecution, additional attention is necessary to identify the practices and technologies that facilitate BWC evidence sharing between law enforcement and prosecutors.¹⁷

15 Hyland, S. S. (2018, November). *Body-worn cameras in law enforcement agencies, 2016*. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/bwclea16.pdf>

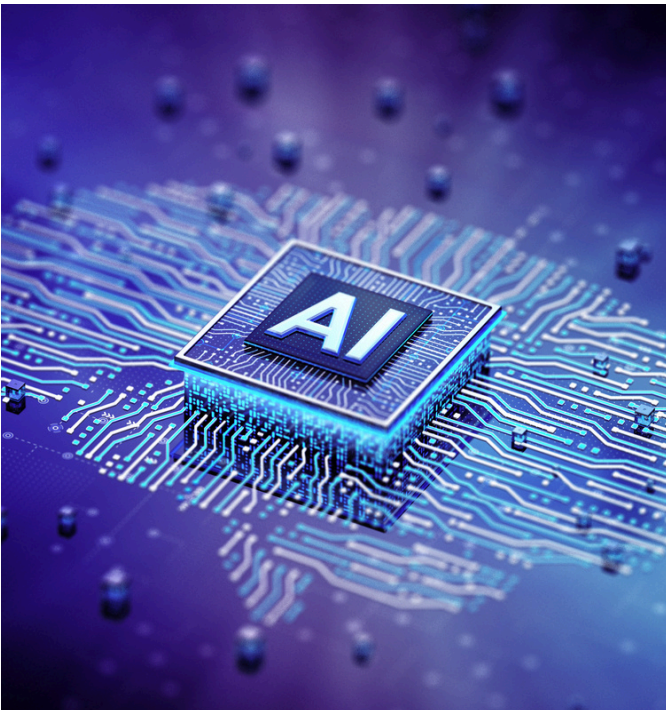
16 Goodison, S. E. (2023, November). *Local police departments, procedures, policies, and technology, 2020 – Statistical tables*. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/document/lpdpt20st.pdf>

17 Merola, L. M., Lum, C., Koper, C. S., and Scherer, A. (2016). *Body worn cameras and the courts: A national survey of state prosecutors*. Arnold Foundation. George Mason University, Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy. <https://cebcp.org/wp-content/technology/BWCPProsecutors.pdf>

The survey also explored emerging features of BWC programs, in particular, the use of BWC video for training and the integration of artificial intelligence (AI). Most agencies reported some experience using BWC footage in officer mentoring, training new recruits, and in-service training. However, a much lower percentage reported incorporating BWC footage into training as regular practice. Currently, there is limited evidence of models for integrating BWCs into training or the evaluation of the effectiveness of these approaches.¹⁸ This gap highlights a need for future program development and research to support the law enforcement community in this area. The last few years have seen the emergence of AI-supported software programs for drafting police reports from BWC footage of an incident,¹⁹ as well as programs for reviewing all department BWC footage to support supervisor audits, flag incidents, and evaluate officer performance.²⁰ When the survey asked agencies about AI programs to support comprehensive BWC footage review, only a small portion of agencies (13.6%) reported they have explored these programs, and even fewer have adopted them (3%, $n = 20$). More attention is needed to understand the implementation and impact of AI on BWC programs at this nascent stage.

As a final consideration, survey responses also point to the need to explore the long-term sustainability of BWC programs. In the last decade, BWC adoption has grown considerably across U.S. law enforcement agencies. Survey respondents perceive value in BWCs across different areas of utility and report high stakeholder support. However, the cost of implementing and maintaining BWC programs is substantial and requires both monetary and physical resources. Nearly 70% of responding agencies conveyed concern about the cost of DEM on their agency's ability to sustain a BWC program. Just over 60% were concerned about the cost associated with camera replacement. While the level of concern about DEM costs is similar across responding agencies, worry about hardware replacement costs is notably higher in smaller departments. This calls into question the assumption that BWCs are here to stay, at least for some agencies, and underscores the importance of exploring ways to support program sustainability across departments.

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- 18 See Wolfe, S. E., Rojek, J., McLean, K., & Alpert, G. (2020). Social interaction training to reduce police use of force. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 687(1), 124-145. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716219887366>
- 19 Adams, I. T., Barter, M., McLean, K., Boehme, H. M., & Geary, I. A. (2024). No man's hand: Artificial intelligence does not improve police report writing speed. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11292-024-09644-7>
- 20 Adams, I. T., & McLean, K., & Alpert, G. (2024). Improving police behavior through artificial intelligence: Pre-registered experimental results in two large US agencies. *CrimRxiv*. <https://doi.org/10.21428/cb6ab371.160e914f>





About the Organizations

Michigan State University (MSU)

The School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University (MSU) is a key partner in the BWC direct support program. MSU has a long and distinguished history of research-based direct support. This includes collaboration with law enforcement in the early days of community- and problem-solving policing and extends through current direct support initiatives addressing violent crime, crime analysis, data-driven problem solving, substance use disorder, and BWCs. Major efforts include providing direct support to Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), the Drug Market Intervention (DMI) program, and BJA's Smart Suite program. The MSU team brings extensive experience serving as action researchers and local research partners in a variety of communities, organizational settings, and various OJP-grant funded programs.

Justice & Security Strategies, Inc. (JSS)

is a minority- and woman-owned business that specializes in crime and public policy issues, with an emphasis on law enforcement. JSS has conducted 'applied research' for over 25 years. Dr. Craig D. Uchida is the President and Founder. Dr. Shellie E. Solomon is the Chief Executive Officer.

Since 2015, JSS has provided direct support services to assist Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) grantees with body-worn cameras (BWCs). This includes two national efforts – the BWC Policy Implementation Program (BWC PIP) and the Small, Rural, and Tribal BWC Program (SRT BWC).

BJA selected JSS to administer the SRT BWC grant program through a cooperative agreement in 2021. As a result, JSS has awarded grants to 850 small, rural and tribal agencies across the U.S. for over \$23.7 million. In addition to funding for BWCs, JSS provides assistance to implement BWC programs to those agencies. For more information go to:

<https://www.justicestrategies.com/small-and-rural-agency-body-worn-vi>



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About the Authors

Grace Henry, M.S. is a research specialist in the School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University. She primarily works on Project Safe Neighborhoods programs across Michigan, and the National and Small/Rural Body-Worn Camera grants. Her research focuses on patterns of crime, and police behavior and technology. Grace holds a master's degree in criminal justice from Michigan State University. Her recent work appeared in *Criminology & Public Policy* and *Policing: An International Journal*.

Nathan Cronin, M.A. is a doctoral student in the School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University and a partner within the Police Staffing Observatory. His research interests include police staffing, retention and morale, small/rural policing issues, specialized police units, and fostering researcher-practitioner partnerships. Nathan holds a master's degree from Sam Houston State University and a bachelor's degree from Chadron State College.

Jeremiah Schutter is a master's student in Criminal Justice at Michigan State University and holds a bachelor's degree from Michigan State University. His research focuses on policing strategies and technology in policing.

Jeff Rojek, Ph.D. is a tenured associate professor in the School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University. He has received research funding from federal, state, and local agencies to examine topics that include police practitioner-researcher partnerships, intelligence-led policing, law enforcement response to disasters, officer-involved traffic collisions, officer safety, use of body-worn camera video for training, and officer decision-making. Prior to his academic career, Dr. Rojek was an officer with the Los Angeles Police Department.

Shellie E. Solomon, Ph.D. is CEO of Justice & Security Strategies, Inc. She is the Executive Project Director for the BJA-funded Small, Rural, and Tribal Body-Worn Camera program. She leads efforts to assist law enforcement agencies with adopting technologies, using big data, and understanding AI. She has published articles on policing and is the co-author of *Community, Crime Control and Collective Efficacy: Neighborhoods and Crime in Miami*.

Craig D. Uchida, Ph.D. is President of Justice & Security Strategies, Inc. He is the Executive Project Director for the BJA-funded Body-Worn Camera Policy and Implementation direct support program. He has co-edited two books on drug enforcement and police innovation. His most recent book is *Policing the Streets of Los Angeles: Controversies, Change and Continuity*.

