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The Implementation Of Body Worn Cameras: Lessons Learned The Case Of Detroit Police Department

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THE IMPLEMENTATION OF BODY WORN CAMERAS: LESSONS LEARNED

THE CASE OF DETROIT POLICE DEPARTMENT

by

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DEDICATION

To my mother who never got the chance to achieve all her educational dreams, but who kept praying for and supporting mine.

To my children Tori and Jada who are the reason I did this, so they will always know what is truly possible.

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

The nature of interactions between the police and citizens range from civil professional encounters to very explosive ones (Alpert et al., 2004). While the majority are very civil and characterized by a business-like and transactional or service-driven approach, some have been known to descend into verbal and or physical confrontations. Events that have pervaded the public sphere in recent months, including the death of citizens at the hands of the police and the killings of officers in the line of duty, have once again brought the issue of police-citizen interactions to the forefront of public narrative. When these interactions digress into confrontations, officers are usually entrusted with the role of 'truth advocates' of the state. As a truth advocate, officers are expected to present a very objective and honest account of the events. Over time, this reliance on police accounts has eroded. Police recounting of events are now treated with a heightened degree of skepticism, and sometimes challenged or dismissed outright. This skepticism is sometimes deeply rooted, in large parts, to the way communities have experienced the police in previous encounters.

The majority of communities across the United States enjoy a good relationship with police. For example, according to a 2016 Gallup poll, police ranked only behind the military and small business in terms of American's confidence in social institutions (Gallup, 2016). And, while global assessment of confidence in police is generally high, there are some segments of society that hold a very different opinion of police on some issues. In particular, compared to Whites, Blacks report significantly lower levels of confidence in police to treat Black and White citizens equally (Jones-Brown, 2014). These fractured and adverse relationships that tend to unfold at times, are the result of a very long and torrid history of suspicious and mistrustful behavior that have existed between the two groups. Unfortunately, this suspicion has shown little sign of

relenting. In some communities, history has taught that the police will not treat its citizens fairly. However, police also perceive unfair treatment. Experiences have taught them that some communities are not very fond of the way they "serve and protect." Following uprisings and civil unrest in numerous cities during the 1960s, the National Commission on Civil Disorders (1967), found that "deep hostility between the police and ghetto communities" was "a major source of grievance, tension and ultimately disorder" (Kerner Commission, 1968 p. 299).

Yet, some researchers have concluded that police behavior is determined by suspect demeanor (Worden and Shepard, 1996; Lundman, 1976, 1994). This paradoxical connection between the police and citizens has led to increasing mistrust between the two groups. To further aggravate this complicated relationship between police and citizens, the information age is presenting new challenges. Increasingly, citizens are finding a means and in some cases, the voice to register their mistrust of the police. The openness and anonymity of social media provides the perfect cover for citizens to speak with little censure and act with few consequences. As such, social media platforms deliver the perfect opportunity for citizens to record, criticize, lobby against and even instigate widespread condemnation and protest of police actions deemed excessive or problematic on any level.

The issue of mistrust has featured prominently in recent publicized police citizen interactions. Public trust in the police can enhance police effectiveness and the legitimacy of police actions (Lea and Young, 1984; Lyons, 2002; Sunshine and Taylor, 2003; Goldsmith, 2005). However, when this is called into question, there is increasing doubt in the actions of both citizens and the police. The changes brought on by the information age have emphasized the need for a strengthening of police -citizen trust because citizens not only have numerous platforms to voice their mistrust of the police, but with modern cellphones they have the tools to record challenges to

officers' version of an event. Subsequent to the captured footage, police -citizen interactions quickly become characterized by claims and counter-claims and the rest of the viewing public is left to piece together the mystery of what really happened. Yet, even in cases where there is no video footage, suspicion that was previously planted in the minds of citizens have led to serious challenges to accounts given by the police (e.g., the Michael Brown incident).

In the summer of 2014, Michael Brown went to Ferguson Missouri to visit his grandmother. Nearing the end his trip, he was involved in a police encounter that ended with his death. Reports indicate that Officer Darren Wilson was first to confront the teenager and when other officers arrived on the scene, Brown was dead (Brown, 2014). Authorities maintain that Brown attacked the officer in his car and tried to take his gun (McLaughlin, 2014), but without video footage of the incident that claim was difficult to substantiate. Moreover, it conflicted with eyewitness accounts of the event. For example, Dorian Johnson, who was with Brown at the time, said Officer Wilson grabbed Brown by the neck and while Brown was trying to pull away, he was shot (McLaughlin, 2014). Another eyewitness, Tiffany Mitchell, corroborated Johnson's story, telling reporters she observed Brown and the officer "tussling through the window," at which point she tried to video record the incident but the sound of shots forced her to seek cover (McLauglin, 2014). Other eyewitnesses said Brown had his hands up in surrender mode when he was shot by Wilson (Barajas, 2014).

Adding to the confusion and controversy are two contradictory autopsy reports. The official autopsy on Brown's death states foreign matter "consistent with products that are discharged from the barrel of a firearm" were found on his thumb wound (Barajas, 2014). Yet, a report from a private autopsy convened by the family and conducted by the former chief medical examiner for the City of New York, Dr. Michael M. Baden, found that "one of the bullets entered the top of

Brown's skull, suggesting his head was bent forward when the bullet struck him" (Robles and Bosman, 2014, para. 2). Dr. Baden further details that "Brown was also shot four times in his right arm and the bullets did not appear to have been shot from very close range because no gunpowder was present on his body" (Robles and Bosman, 2014, para. 3).

To say the claims made by witnesses and the police in Ferguson are disparate is a gross understatement. The inconsistencies laced with various arguments and counter-arguments are further compounded by different interpretations of the science involved, making it difficult to determine what really happened. The same is true in many of the other cases of alleged police abuse that have been brought to the public's attention. They have been characterized by numerous claims and counterclaims and it is sometimes hard to ascertain the truth. Although the truth is sometimes elusive, it is vitally important because encounters like these erode the trust communities have in the police and the police's ability to speak honestly about events. Trust, through its presumption of benevolence, dedication and a shared ethical framework enable police legitimacy (Alpert, 2014). When the public views police as legitimate, trustworthy or believable, they are much more likely to co-operate with the police and believe the reports made by the police. Yet, as has been seen in recent months, because of the mistrust that surrounds incidents like that in Ferguson, citizens are not ready to believe police' accounts of interactions.

The suspicion and lack of credibility that characterizes police citizen relations have reached new heights and have become so entrenched in police-citizen interactions that even former President Barack Obama had to suggest a compromise. In the Winter of 2014, after a three-month review of the events in Ferguson and several meetings with civil rights leaders, Cabinet members and law enforcement officials, the president proposed a three-year $263 million spending package that was aimed at "bridging the gap between law enforcement and the public" (Pickler, 2014, para.

5). This package included the purchase of body worn cameras subsidized by the federal government in an attempt to increase transparency and provide concrete evidence of police-citizen interactions.

President Obama's call for officers to be outfitted with body-worn cameras was met with enthusiasm in many areas. Some officers in Ferguson were immediately issued cameras, and other departments across the country quickly followed suit. In September of 2014, the New York Police Department became the largest department to launch a pilot program. Subsequent to that, other large municipal departments and even smaller ones started to procure and subsequently implement the adoption of body worn cameras in their locales. Shortly after body-worn cameras were deployed, researchers began to explore the potential benefits the technology might produce in policing. Indeed, studies were published in 2015 reporting that the adoption of body-worn cameras were associated with a reduction in use of force (Jennings, Lynch, & Fridell, 2015), citizen complaints, and stop-question-frisks (Ready & Young, 2015). Undoubtedly, these finding seems to suggest that body-worn cameras are fulfilling the role they were met to fulfil, that of increased transparency and ultimately improved police citizen relationships.

However, as police departments and other stakeholders seek to assess the impact of body-worn cameras on, among other things, citizens' interactions, it is also important to consider implementation issues. Mears (2010: 132) opines that implementation is an essential, if not the most important, aspect of a policy since it "documents whether a policy delivers the appropriate amount and type of operations, decisions, services and activities to intended targets in a high-quality manner". Additionally, the implementation phase of a project is a very critical stage in the life of the project, because if the program is not implemented properly, it is difficult, if not impossible, to accurately or effectively assess its impact. Specific to body-worn cameras, a careful

analysis of the implementation phase provides an understanding of the activities associated with specific policies and practices and the extent to which the amount and quality of implementation accords with ideals set forth in protocols, standards or policy descriptions (Mears, 2010). Undoubtedly, this phase is an integral one, and, so, it is important that any attempt to understand the effects of this new technology first consider the implementation phase.   The aim of this study is to employ the use of a mixed methodology in assessing the implementation of body worn cameras at the Detroit Police Department, with analysis of the challenges, victories and lessons learnt during this phase.

CHAPTER 2: Literature Review

Public Administration has had no shortage of attention over the years. In fact, most scholarly attempts at understanding public programs coalesce around considerations that relate to the functioning of public administration bodies (Elmore, 1978; Bovens, Schillemans & Hart, 2008; Linder & Peter, 1987). Despite this attention to public administration, the nuances of policy implementation have largely remained a background issue (Lester et al., 1987; Berman, 1998; O'Toole, 2000; Berman, 2006). Yet, like all other aspects of public administration, policy implementation is an important facet of policy adoption. Quality implementation is a very important feature associated with achieving program outcomes. Additionally, sound policy implementation removes barriers between goals and outcomes and can identify areas of disconnect between the two. It is important to note that "even the most sensible and appealing plans require significant leadership, commitment and hard work to be implemented thoroughly and with fidelity" (Maguire & King, 2013, p. 358)

Policy implementation as an explicit field of study, has had periods of popularity over the last century. The field gained traction in the early 1960s when Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) conducted an investigation of the Economic Development Administration and highlighted the implementation difficulties they faced while trying to institute a training program in Oakland, California (see also; Lester, Bowman, Goggin & O'Toole, 1978). The field remained somewhat dormant until a flare up in attention came after the Great Society programs launched by President Lyndon B. Johnson in the late 1960s was being evaluated in the early 1970s, and the subsequent postmortem of welfare and budgetary crises (O'Toole, 2000).

As policy makers and other practitioners continued to grapple with the disappointment of numerous program initiatives during the 1960s and 1970s, policy implementation began to emerge

as an important staple in the consciousness of scholars and practitioners alike. Subsequently, a consensus seemed to emerge between scholars, practitioners and other stakeholders that policy implementation is an important part of public management and ought to be treated as such (Lester et al., 1978; Bovens, Schillemans & Hart, 2008; Blomberg & Waldo, 2002; Gasco, 2003). This mandate by stakeholders orchestrated a recognition that policies cannot be understood in isolation from the means of their execution (Elmore, 1978). This is especially true as case studies point to the idea that public programs are usually characterized by the "same basic patterns: grand pretensions, faulty executions and puny results" (Elmore, 1978, p. 186). Increasingly, policy analysts are becoming concerned with the process by which policies are translated into administrative action and more specifically the process of implementation. Lester and Goggin (1998) purport that as experiences continue to emerge in the public sector and "the development of several shifts in governmental relationship" continue to show signs of being problematic, it seems clear that the practical world is now just as much in need of valid knowledge about policy implementation as it has ever been (p. 3-4).

The 1990s saw the interest in program implementation wane. This was due, in large part, to the reality that implementation issues are inclined to regress from the headlines as the policy agenda becomes preoccupied with cutbacks, decentralization and holding the line (O'Toole, 2000). Mears (2010) was among the orchestrators of a revolution in policy implementation literature, pointing to the need for increased vigilance in the scholarly community as it relates to program implementation. He believes that it is especially important against the backdrop of governmentally-sponsored programs that seldom achieve their objectives (see, for example, Derrick, 1972; Pressman & Wildavsky, 1973, Murphy, 1973, Bardach, 1977, Lester et al., 1987, O'Toole, 2000, Berman, 2006). Many of these programs failed, in large part, as a result of

overlooking the basic ingredients. Mears postulates that, while there is hardly a prescriptive approach for describing policy, the "organizational plan, the service-utilization and the impact theory" are the basic ingredients of any policy. Ultimately, each is necessary for a well-thought out policy and the implementation of said policy.

The popularity, or lack thereof, surrounding policy implementation is related to an understanding of what constitutes policy implementation. Early implementation literature focused on case studies that provided "detailed accounts of how a single authoritative decision was carried out at a single location or multiple locations" (Lester at al.,1987, p. 201). As a result of the case-study nature of early policy implementation studies, it was difficult to offer any generalizations in the field. So, even as public programs continued to show signs of a disconnect between goals and outcomes, there was little knowledge available to assist the implementation process. Conversely, only a few scholars even agreed on the need to understand why implementation failed or succeeded, which led to very few chances at amelioration (Yin, 1982).

Early attempts to understand why policy implementation remained an understudied area of public administration was also compounded by "theoretical pluralism" (Lester et al., 1987, p. 200). The lack of precise specifications had haunting effects on policy implementation. Thankfully, over the years, scholars have managed to bring some level of precision to the field, citing policy implementation as "what develops between the establishment of an apparent intention on the part of government to do something, or to stop doing something, and the ultimate impact in the world of action" (O'Toole, 2000, p. 266). Mazmanian and Sabatier (1987) extended this definition even further to include both the "assembly of policy actors and action, on one hand, and the cause-effect relationship between their efforts and ultimate outcomes" (p. 266).

Policy implementation forms an integral part of governmental agencies, especially against the backdrop that these agencies are willing to adopt new technologies in order to remain viable and facilitate product and process improvement. However, these benefits can often be elusive. Organizations have the tendency to develop routines around the use of existing technologies, giving rise to a self-reinforcing cycle that is sometimes very hard to penetrate (Orlikowski, 2000). Conversely, routines in task-performing groups tend to continue, even in the face of outside stimuli that overtly beg for a new course of action (Gersick & Hackman, 1990).

As the need for new innovations become more apparent, both technological and organizational features can serve as impediments to the adoption of these innovations. As public agencies embark on implementing new innovations, they have often been criticized for being blind to the need for a clear technological strategy and plan (Edmondson, Bohmer & Pisano, 2001), paralyzed by users' attitudes and experiences or their current competencies (Levitt & March, 1998; Christensen, 1997) and handicapped by the rigidities of organizational culture (Cohen & Levinthal, 1992, Mirvis, Sales & Hackett, 1998). These inadequacies all work together to influence the failure to adopt external innovations. It is important to note that this failure to adopt innovations pursuant to protocols directly inhibits the ability to construct knowledge as it relates to the policy's true effectiveness.

This failure to adopt external innovations according to plan is of critical importance to current public discourse. As cases of police use of force continue to be cloaked by claims and counter claims of police impropriety and suspect resistance, tools that enable transparency are of utmost urgency. As a result of ongoing and increasing advances in video recording capabilities, including portability, ease of access and video quality, cameras have emerged as a viable addition to policing, and a meaningful tool in the quest to improve citizens' trust in the police. Increasingly,

body worn cameras are seen as the solution to control instances of improper police behavior and as a means of restoring the credibility of police officers (Coudert et al., 2015). In fact, Former President Barack Obama, in responding to calls for transparency in police and citizen interactions, showed his support for the adoption of the technology, by proposing a $75 million investment to purchase 50,000 body worn cameras for law enforcement agencies (Jennings, 2015). As the government moves to invest handsomely in this policy initiative, the need to defuse another policy disaster becomes important. Mears (2010:93) points out that it is important to consider the implementation phase of any policy since "flaws in policy implementation amounts to cracks in a building's foundation – they undermine the policy and its effectiveness."

Police departments across the county are no strangers to implementing technology. Technologies such as in-car cameras (IACP, 2003) and GPS technology (Hughes & Burton), have all been added to the policing arsenal in recent years. In-car cameras were touted for their ability "to improve the behavior of both police officer and community members in an encounter (Jennings et al.2014). Some results indicate that in-car cameras have substantial benefits, including enhancing officer safety, improving agency accountability, simplifying incident reviews and reducing agency liability (IACP, 2004). Studies that surveyed officers' perceptions of in-car cameras both before and after use found that a third of officers reported that they believed they were safer after they had the in-car cameras (IACP, 2003). However, approximately 70% reported that the in-car cameras had little to no impact on their behavior, while 88% said in -car cameras had no effect on the way they handled incidents or their use of force (IACP, 2003). Findings like this raise serious questions about the disconnect between goals and outcomes. Additionally, it speaks to the need for input about the implementation phase. Policy holders acknowledge in-car cameras as a tool for improving the behavior of both officers and the community, yet the data show

that an overwhelming majority of officers said it had no effect on their handling of incidents. Is the difference between the plan and the achieved outcome a result of the way the plan was implemented, or was it a result of some other factor?

These are some of the considerations that have become crucial as agencies embark on implementing body-worn cameras. Already, numerous studies have emerged that attempt to explain the impact of body-worn cameras on officer behavior and/or citizen reactions. Further, these studies have provided evidence as it relates to the meaningfulness of body worn cameras (Ariel et al., 2014; Jennings et al., 2014; Coudert et al., 2016). In the first peer reviewed study of body-worn cameras in Rialto, California, the study showed that not only had citizens' complaints gone down by 88%, but use of force incidents declined by 60% (Ariel et al, 2014). Hedberg et al (2016) also found that "the mere presence of a body-worn camera has an impact on the number of complaints made against officers, with the likelihood of a complaint being reduced by about 62%" (Hedberg et al., 2016, p. 18). While these findings are important, they only speak to potential outcomes that are possible after the technology has been deployed. However, as we celebrate the efficiencies of body-worn cameras, it is imperative that departments understand the process of getting to these results. Too often, missing in studies that focus on body-worn cameras is a discussion of the implementation process and associated issues.

Narrowly focusing on the outcome undermines attempts to understand whether this new policy initiative was implemented in an effective way and the issues that arose during the execution process. In order to fully understand the current outcomes that are being generated by body-worn cameras, there are nuances that must be considered and accommodated. Additionally, it is important to understand the implementation phase in an attempt to document issues associated with adopting the technology. These issues surround agency infrastructure, officers' resistance,

policy changes and other imperatives like time-frame for implementation, and cost considerations, among others. Focusing on the nuances of the implementation phase fills a major gap in the literature and also provides a basis for scholars to fully measure the efficacy of this technology as well as the deliberations that must be thought out in order to effectively implement this technology.

Ready and Young (2015: 450) examined the relationship between body-worn camera policy and police initiated stops and arrests among 50 officers over a 10-month period. However, half way through the study, the agency changed the parameters of their policy from the "mandatory" activation of their devices as soon as they "approached the scene of the call or at the point of initiation," to one monitored only based on discretion. Subsequently, the study found that officers who wore the cameras were more likely to report their incidents of arrests (Ready & Young, 2015). With changes like these that may occur midway during implementation, it is important that agencies factor possible eventualities into its implementation time, budget and overall impact.

Implementation specific information can serve as a tool for understanding the structural and social framework that must be present in order that body-worn cameras can achieve the outcome originally envisioned. This study attempts to consider the nuances of the implementation phase, considering the input of officers and other stakeholders that were intimately involved in the process and the lessons they learned during the process. "If body-worn cameras are valuable as some claim, it is important that the process of adoption within the police department be as effective as possible" (Jennings, 2014, p. 549).

CHAPTER 3: Methods

Research location

The Detroit Police Department (DPD) served as the research site for this study. DPD ranks among the 50 largest police agencies in the country (Reeves, 2011), and employs 2,371 members responsible for providing policing services to the City of Detroit. Currently, the City of Detroit has a population of just over 670,000 residents across its 139 square miles of geography (US Census Bureau, 2015). Detroit's population is very diverse, as residents living within the city are overwhelmingly minority (82.7% African American, 10.6% white and 6.8% Hispanic; US Census Bureau, 2015). Detroit, like many other urban communities in the US, faces many social problems. The City of Detroit has approximately 38% of its residents living below the poverty line (US Census Bureau, 2015), and it continues to rank among the most dangerous cities in the US (Fisher, 2013). Consequently, DPD has had to face the constant demands of a city with some of the most violent crime rates in the country. The issue of violent crime is further exacerbated by the large volume of social decay that has plagued the once vibrant city.

The City of Detroit and DPD were, until recently, confined by the terms of two consent decrees that were entered into with the United States Department of Justice. The decrees dealt exclusively with use of force, arrest, witness detention, and the conditions of confinement in holding facilities (Burns, 2014). The 11-year agreement came in response to various constitutional violations that were cited by the U.S Justice Department (Baldas, 2016). However, in 2014, the government determined the city was compliant with the conditions set, and lifted the consent decrees. As a result, the Detroit Police Department presents a unique opportunity for scholars to explore the effects of implementing cameras during the thrust of a second chance at an independent restart.

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The current study investigates the policy and implementation phase of body-worn camera adoption in the Detroit Police Department using a mixed methodological approach and multiple data sources. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2008: p. 15) propose that while both quantitative and qualitative research are useful, and the goal of mixed methodology is not to replace them, the approach surely, "allows methodologists to describe and develop techniques that are closer to what researchers actually use in practice." A mixed methodological approach was selected for this study because it facilitates the increasingly complex and dynamic nature of research (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie 2008). The current study focuses on perceptions of body-worn cameras and their usefulness in law enforcement applications. The study also attempts to understand how perceptions of usefulness influence implementation from a variety of participants' perspectives.

Research participants

Participants in this study included both officers and other key stakeholders. Because of the diverse group of participants, two different sampling techniques were used. The sampling technique used for officers is different from that of key stakeholders. The researcher employed both random and snowball sampling to recruit participants for this study. Marshall (1996) maintains that sample choice is one of the most important steps in any research project because it is rarely ever practical to study the population. Additionally, using a simple random sampling strategy gives an equal chance to all members of the group and decreases the odds of bias (Bachman & Schutt, 2014). Snowballing was chosen as a viable technique based on the nature of the sample. The major stakeholders involved in the decision-making process were not easily identifiable. Because of this, the most viable option was to communicate with individual stakeholders to determine other persons who were involved with the process and who should be contacted. With regard to snowball sampling, Atkinson and Flint (2001) suggest it is a very useful

technique because it allows researchers to recruit respondents where they are few in number or where a high degree of trust is required to initiate contact.

<u>Detroit police officers</u>

Detroit police officers served as research subjects for two components of this study, and thus were selected for inclusion using different methods. First, with regard to officers participating in focus groups (method described below), DPD provided a list of all officers in the four platoons of the precincts that pilot tested body-worn cameras. The pilot precincts were chosen because they were the first within the department to be exposed to the technology, and officers would be able to discuss their perceptions of body-worn cameras based on their experiences. Each platoon had between fifteen and twenty officers. Using the four-platoon distinction, each of the officers' names were placed into a box. Names were randomly pulled from the box, one-by-one, until the desired number of participants was achieved. Specifically, five officers were chosen from each platoon for a total of 20 participants, which represented one-third of all officers who participated in the pilot test of the cameras. Focus groups were conducted with officers during the Precinct's monthly (e.g., January) training day because most officers are obligated to attend except in the cases of furlough, illness, or other major occurrences.

Officer surveys (method described below) collected under a different research endeavor serve as the second component of this study. DPD along with the WSU research team used a matched pair design to select two precincts for a pre/posttest survey exploring officers' perceptions of BWCs. The two precincts were chosen based on their comparability in terms of coverage area, socio-economic status of its residents as well as similarities in arrests and citizen complaint data. Surveys were administered to all the officers in these two precincts who would eventually wear the technology. This included all patrol officers and supervisors (i.e., lieutenants and sergeants).

<u>City of Detroit representatives and DPD Command Staff</u>

In order to tap into key stakeholders' perceptions about body-worn cameras, a snowball sampling procedure was used as the most viable tool for finding participants to interview. The planning team for the body worn cameras consisted of individuals spread across multiple City of Detroit divisions (e.g., Mayor's office, IT), as well as higher-ranking officials throughout DPD. As a result, it was not possible to obtain a sampling frame from which participants could be randomly selected. Moreover, given the unique perspective of each, it was important that a representative from each entity be included in the data collection process. Thus, a snowball sampling procedure was used to identify the most meaningful stakeholders who were involved in the process of selection, adoption, and implementation of body-worn cameras.

Methodology

In an effort to obtain a holistic understanding of implementation issues DPD experienced during the selection, adoption, and implementation phases of its body-worn camera program, data were gathered from personnel in the Mayor's Office, City of Detroit employees, DPD Command Staff, and DPD line-level officers. Each group has a unique perspective to offer and valuable information to contribute. Due to the diversity in participants' roles, it was important to capture the most nuanced as possible responses from each group. In order to facilitate this, both qualitative and quantitative data collection efforts were used. Specifically, data were generated through semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and surveys.

<u>Semi-structured interviews</u>

Semi-structured interviews were selected because it allows for the exploration of personal experiences, relationship building and allows the interviewer to understand and appreciate signs of confusion, reticence, discomfort or distress that may arise based on the enquiry (Irvine et al.,

2012). Additionally, because of the nature of semi-structured interviews this method provides an avenue for interviewees to elaborate and discuss areas that are of importance to them. As Weiss (1994) maintains, semi-structured interviews allow for the establishment of rapport, deeper trust and helps to develop detailed descriptions, integrate numerous perspectives, or procedures.

The semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders took approximately 30 minutes to complete and were recorded and transcribed to capture the entirety of their responses. The questions asked of key stakeholders focused on five distinct themes: a) the decision to adopt body-worn cameras, b) cost considerations, c) what worked, d) what did not, and e) their advice to both themselves and to other agencies contemplating the adoption of the technology (see Appendix A). Participants' answered ten (10) questions related to these areas of interest. All interviews were conducted in the participant's office or a meeting room within the building of their office location. As such, the interviews were conducted in a quiet setting, free from all major interruptions and one that allowed for the easy and clear recording of the interviews. Upon completing an interview, the researcher downloaded the audio file to a password-protected computer and transcribed the responses. Transcription was performed on the same day as the interview.

Focus groups

Focus Groups were also used as a means of telling the story of nuance encountered during the implementation phase of body-camera adoption. While semi-structured interviews do give the researcher the opportunity to exert control over the interviewees and the type of information he or she shares, focus groups do have their place. Krueger and Casey (2015, p. 14) maintain that focus groups are a special kind of group that "promotes self-disclosure among participants." In this particular context, the purpose of the focus groups was to ensure that the research team understood the terminology used by police officers when describing body-worn cameras and to get a general

idea of issues of concern to the officers regarding the new technology. Additionally, the focus groups present a unique opportunity to see not only how the officers interact with the technology, but also allowed for the organic unfolding of ideas and perspectives instead of the very structured, question and answer format of other methods.

The Precinct Captain determined the conditions under which the focus groups with officers took place. It was a training day, in their regular roll-call room, which was rather exclusive and provided the opportunity for officers to speak freely and candidly. For the focus groups, the researcher gave officers numbered cards and referred to them by those numbers to differentiate respondents' responses during transcription, while still maintaining confidentiality. Once the focus groups were completed, the researcher downloaded the audio files to a password-protected computer for the purpose of transcription. Additionally, the researcher completed the transcription of each focus group on the same day of the data collection to ensure that it was still easy to remember the interaction, as well as to find key words and phrases that were used during the exchange.

Each focus group took approximately 30 minutes to complete and elicited information centered on four key areas: a) the implementation phase, b) the level of communication during this phase, c) perceptions about the interactions with the technology, d) the advantages and disadvantages they experienced. Officers responded to ten questions that, after analysis, fell under four major themes.

Surveys

Quite similar to the focus group setting held with officers from the pilot precincts, the precinct captains provided a list of all the officers on the four platoons in the precinct. The captain also provided listings of training days that would allow for the majority of officers present in the

precinct in order to maximize response rates. On training day, half of the officers went on patrol for the first half of their eight-hour day, while the other half stayed in-house for training. Training was done in four (4) hour increments on each shift. As such, the researcher was present to administer surveys to officers at the start of each training session. Each officer was handed a survey accompanied by a consent form that detailed the terms of their involvement in the study, as well as confidentiality agreements. Once surveys were completed, officers were asked to drop them in a locked box which was later transported to a locked cabinet behind a locked door before analysis.

Participant protection

The protection of data is a very important aspect of this research. For a very sensitive group, like that of police officers, the ability to ensure the integrity of their responses is paramount. As such, the researcher adhered to several guidelines. First, after officers were randomly selected, each was given a unique number to de-identify their identities. The master list of officers' names and numbers was maintained by the researcher, but safeguarded on a password-protected computer that was only accessible by the researcher. During the focus groups, officers were referred to by their unique number, and no reference to names were used. Prior to participating in the focus groups, officers were provided with a consent form that contained information about the purpose of the study, the risks and benefits, information pertinent to the recording of the exchange, and the voluntary nature of the research. The document also detailed their right to cease involvement at any time, and the steps that were taken to protect their confidentiality. Additionally, the researcher used the first five minutes of the focus group to discuss and take questions about the informed consent agreement, taking care to ensure that officers were aware of the implications of their involvement in the study

Great care was also taken with the data collected from stakeholders. First, interviews were held individually, so that other members of the decision-making body would not have access to the thoughts and perspectives of their fellow colleagues. Stakeholders, too, were provided with a consent agreement that detailed the terms of their involvement in the study. Confidentiality was also discussed and stakeholders were assured of best effort attempts on the part of the researcher to maintain the integrity and security of the data. All audio-recordings were downloaded to a password-protected computer in a locked office. Transcriptions were only available to the researcher and only aggregate data was provided about audio-recording.

Data analysis strategies

The data analysis portion of the study consists of data derived from interviews, focus groups, and surveys. With regard to the qualitative data, information gathered from the focus groups and interviews will provide insight into the thoughts, beliefs and processes encountered by officers and stakeholders engaged in the process. The interviews and focus group data were coded to identify emerging themes that characterize officers and stakeholders' perspectives. In order to gather these codes, the transcripts were reviewed extensively and then open coded to elicit emerging themes. Open coding provides the means necessary to summarize what was stated and then label it with the appropriate and meaningful codes. This technique is an integral part of qualitative research methodology since it aids in the assigning of an overall meaning to a segment of written or visual data (Saldana, 2009). After open coding the first three interviews, the researcher decided on preliminary codes. The coding of the additional transcripts was then conducted using the assigned codes and adding new codes when necessary. Once all transcripts had been coded, the researcher then examined all data within a particular code. Some codes were

inevitably combined during this process, whereas others were split into subcategories. Finally, the

researcher examined the final codes to organize them into a hierarchical structure where possible.

CHAPTER 4: Survey Results

Previous chapters have proven helpful in establishing the need for sound policy implementation techniques in order to ensure an honest and meaningful examination of the policy outputs. The same is true in the case of body-worn cameras. In order to facilitate future analysis and understanding of the impact of body-worn cameras in increasing police legitimacy and transparency, it is imperative to have a clear understanding of what was involved in the implementation phase.

As previously mentioned, the Detroit Police Department embarked on the onerous task of implementing body worn cameras in the summer of 2016. In an attempt to understand the way officers perceive body worn cameras prior to their exposure to the technology, surveys were administered to all officers in two of the twelve precincts in Detroit. Importantly, assessing officers' perceptions of BWCs prior to departmental implementation of the technology will highlight any preconceived ideas about BWCs that might influence how officers interact with the technology.

Thus, the surveys that were administered provide a meaningful opportunity to understand officers' perceptions of the technology before they were exposed to the devices. While the focus groups highlighted in the subsequent chapter detail officers' perception once there was exposure to the technology, prior perception provides meaningful hints that can strengthen the effectiveness of the implementation process. Not only do prior perceptions provide clues about the implementation process but they it helps to give a clear understanding of some hurdles, challenges and possible target areas that other agencies hoping to adopt the technology might want to consider when determining the most effective adoption process for their department.

The two precincts were chosen based on their similarities in service area as well as the frequencies of the following outcomes:

- Citizen complaints
- Use of force incidents
- Suspect injuries
- Officer injuries
- Assaults on officers

A basic pretest-posttest design was adopted, and while the post-test surveys have not been administered, the preliminary results of the pretest have begun to elicit an understanding of officers' perception of the technology prior to use. Two precincts were selected for the pretest-posttest design, and all the officers in both precincts, who would be made to wear a body camera, were offered a survey. The precinct detective unit (PDU) officers as well as officers assigned to desk duties within the precinct were eliminated from this study because they will not be assigned a BWC. Surveys were administered to all patrol officers who would be the primary recipients of the technology as well as their supervisors who respond to calls for further assistance from those on patrol.

Both precincts have a total of one hundred and seventy-nine officers who were scheduled to wear the cameras. Of the one hundred and seventy-nine officers in both precincts, one hundred and fifty-seven completed the survey in its entirety (157/179), resulting in a response rate of 88%. This included officers on four platoons, as well as those assigned to various special operations units within the precinct (e.g., gang unit, homicide unit, sex crime unit). Officers who were included on the precinct roster but who were assigned out to various bureaus outside of the precinct were excluded from the survey sample.   Among the officers surveyed, the racial makeup included 47% black or African American officers, 32% white officers and 11% of officers from other racial groups. There was an additional 10% of officer surveyed who chose not to give their racial identity.

These officers all patrol and service a predominantly African American population which encompasses twenty-four scout car areas. The officers' years of service to the department varied substantially, ranging from 1 day with the department to a high of 42 years on the force.

When asked "What are your perceptions about the DPD's decision to adopt body cameras?", with options ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, 56% of respondents indicated that they supported the decision to adopt the cameras for frontline officers. Conversely, 23% neither agreed nor disagreed and 21% did not agree with the decision to adopt the technology. This perception forms an important basis for understanding the way officers may interpret and respond to the technology. Having this knowledge prior to implementation can serve as a useful guide to inform the introduction of the technology to officers. It may also provide suggestions on how to handle the length and type of training officers may need. Additionally, it may provide context for the kind of communication administration engages in with officers throughout the process.

The question of individual perception of the camera to their agency was further broadened to include policing on a whole. Respondents were asked the following open-ended question: "What are your general perceptions about the impact of body cameras in policing". As might be expected, comments aligned with positive, neutral, and negative sentiments regarding the technology. The majority of officers were excited that the cameras will tell their side of the story and potentially add credibility and legitimacy back to their profession. The following include responses exemplifying positive perceptions of the technology:

Participant: Body cameras will shed light on the dangers of policing.
…
Participant: I believe they (are) needed to provide a level of protection for the officers against false accusations from the public.
…

Participant: Body cameras will be an unbiased explanation of the events that took place.
…
Participant: Better for everyone.
…

The aforementioned comments provide a useful glimpse into the perceptions of some officers in this regard. They show that some officers believe that the cameras present a unique opportunity to portray a more accurate representation of policing, thereby providing an opportunity to rebuild trust with citizens and enhance the department's legitimacy.

Some officers, having not been exposed to the technology, thought it was too early to give a fair and honest perspective on the camera. Instead they hinted at the need for exposure before any honest judgement calls could be made. Their comments were somewhat on the periphery, suggesting they held neutral attitudes about DPD's decision to adopt BWCs. Below are examples expressing a neutral viewpoint of the technology:

Participant: Neither agree or disagree at this point.
…
Participant: Will have to see to find out.
…

For these officers, it was somewhat difficult to interpret whether they simply wanted to interact with the technology before making a judgement on the technology's potential to impact policing outcomes, or if they just did not have enough schematic information to justify coming to a firm conclusion. Regardless of the reasons, they thought it fair to reserve their judgments until after exposure.

On the other hand, there were some officers who simply did not see the benefits of the cameras. Their comments intimated BWCs would affect their quality of work, because they would be distracted by what the camera is capturing, instead of focusing on the business of service to the citizenry. The comments below detail some of the perspectives behind their negative perceptions.

Participant: Real police work will cease to exist. Decrease in intel gathering from suspects. Decrease in citizen contacts.

…

Participant: To further dehumanize police officers because this is basically to keep tabs to maintain us as robots and peons.

…

Participant: Waste of city money.

…

Participant: They are not useful because they cannot accurately quantify all that an officer sees and feel just what the field of the camera captures.

Despite the variation in comments and perceptions, the majority of respondents (56%) agreed with the decision to implement the technology. The fact that more than half of the respondents support the adoption of the technology, a tool that is being aimed at increasing transparency and accountability, would seem to suggest that there is a willingness on the part of most officers to increase their level of accountability to the public. It could also mean that officers think the technology will help them.

Summary/conclusion

The importance of an officers' perception in the adoption of any new technology cannot be minimized. Information gathered during the surveys provide a rich understanding of the perceptions officers have of the technology prior to their exposure. While a majority of officers supported the department's decision to adopt BWCs, a fifth of them were not supportive at all and a quarter were undecided. Comments by these officers highlight the need for meaningful communication to allay fears and misconceptions about the technology. Moreover, it can be gleaned from some officers' comments that there is a misunderstanding about the cameras utility. The idea that the cameras may adversely impact policing was reflected by 21% of respondents who disagreed with their adoption. More specifically, from the officers' perspective, they think body cameras will dehumanize officers and remove their ability to use discretion. This is clearly

a difference some officers share from other key stakeholders. However, the fact that knowledge of this difference is garnered prior to implementation provides a meaningful indication of issues that need to be addressed during training and subsequent communication. Thus, it seems an important first step toward adopting BWCs is to ensure all officers understand why the technology is being considered and all its potential benefits to officers and the agency.

Most importantly, agencies should stress how accountability and transparency during interactions is an essential element to policing. Moreover, in addition to enhancing accountability and transparency, BWCs are designed to protect officers from frivolous accusations, and this must be communicated to officers early in the adoption planning. Communicating this information (as well as other critical points) provides a great starting point for the shared interest of the constituents that will be necessary to start and continue the labor-intensive implementation of body cameras. The majority (56%) of officers surveyed want this transparency and accountability to be restored. Most officers see this restoration as having the potential to impact DPD and by extension, policing in general.

CHAPTER 5: Focus Groups' Results

In the summer of 2016, having received an approved $5.2 million dollars from the Detroit City Council, the police department started to equip the city's 1,500 officers with body-worn cameras (Guillen, 2016). The first twenty-five (25) of the 1,500 cameras were disseminated under a pilot project to two precincts in the city. WatchGuard Video was awarded the contract and the task of training and equipping all officers plus the 450 cars assigned to the DPD's patrol fleet. The department decided to go with WatchGuard's Vista Wearable body worn camera. This included integrating both the body cameras and the in-car cameras. In looking back at the process undertaken by the City of Detroit, the patrolmen's comments centered on four major themes. While some of the themes have multiple layers to them, the comments are subsets of the four major themes. Figure 5.1 provides a graphic representation of the themes and their corresponding subset. Every respondent 23/23 (100%) commented on aspects of the technology itself that factored both negatively and positively during implementation. Another 86% of the participants commented on the issues related to training. Concerns relating to communication were referenced by 91% of participants, while another 86% commented on issues pertinent to policy.

The additional data pertinent to the four themes highlighted by patrolmen were drawn from focus groups held with twenty-three (23) officers from all three shifts from two precincts. The participating officers had already been exposed to, and were using, the technology for just over four months. The focus groups specifically focused on patrol officers and their immediate supervisors, because they had already been using the technology and had intimate working knowledge of the cameras.

It was important to not only understand if officers' perceptions might have changed after exposure, but also to get a more detailed account of their interaction through dialogue. The focus

groups sought to unearth some of the subtle, often overlooked, lessons encountered during the process. Additionally, the focus groups were thought to add depth to the responses captured on the surveys. The comments captured during the focus groups were analyzed to determine themes. These themes serve as an important tool for directing attention towards issues that need to be addressed and considered to make for an effective implementation of body-worn cameras.

Already, the surveys have uncovered the extent to which officers agreed with the decision to implement the cameras. Those perceptions captured during the survey were given more details in the focus groups. The following is an example of the kind of comments that were captured from the officers. They provide some context for understanding the extent to which this random sampling of officers hold both positive and negative perceptions of the decision to adopt BWCs.

> **Participant**: It is a great de-escalation tool. Even if the battery is dead and it's not on, I've had a couple of incidents where somebody wasn't combative but was also not cooperative, and I would point at the camera and all I would tell them is whatever charges you have that could be determined in a court by a judge or jury, that's between prosecutors and lawyers and you are going to be arrested…we have to arrest you, but additional charges, I am going to have evidence. I am going to record you with me trying to arrest you, if you don't do what I tell you to do it's going to be recorded and there will be additional charges, so just cooperate and there doesn't need to be any additional charges, and with video evidence, it's definitely hard to beat. You may win your case and I am ok with that, I am not a judge or prosecutor, you may win your case, matter of fact good luck, but this one you are not, you are going to be charged with a felony if you resist and obstruct so let's just go through with our process, and it works, it works.

However, while some officers see a lot of value in BWCs and perceive them an important tool for law enforcement, others are not so welcoming of the new technology to DPD's arsenal. As detailed below, some officers believe they were already equipped with the requisite tools for dealing with racial and other use of force issues that may arise. Accordingly, they disagree with the decision to implement, because some are of the impression that the department had more urgent needs.

> **Participant**: I didn't think Detroit Police Department needed that much transparency especially when compared to some of the higher paid municipalities. I think the diversity

in our city and diversity in our department far outweighs our suburban counterparts. With all the stuff going on around the country with police shooting and this, that and the other. As ghetto as the outside world may see us, I think we are far more better trained in racial tolerance if you will, so I think that money could have been better spent on things like tasers instead of cameras.

Yet, amidst the talk of whether the cameras were needed or could have been forgone, the officers commented on some very relevant themes that can only serve as a meaningful guide for those going through or about to go through the process.

Figure 5.1 Considerations During Implementation
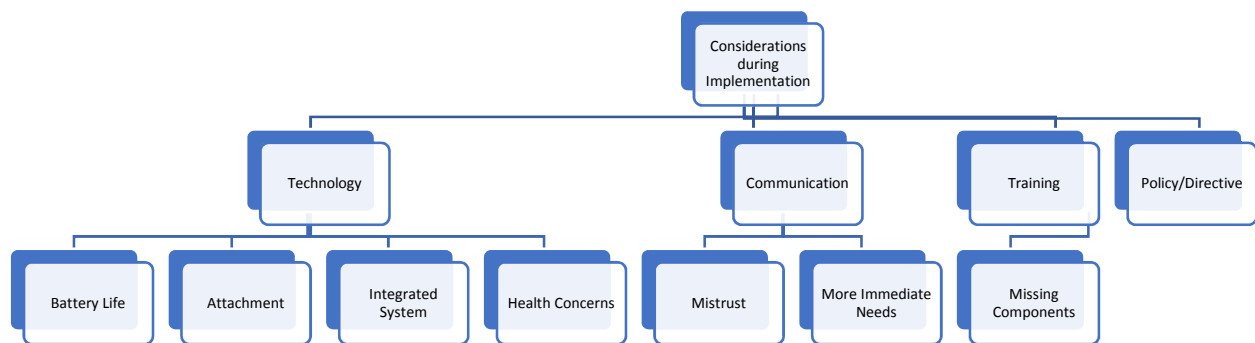
Technology

Criticism and praise for the technology were featured very prominently during the focus groups. All the participants (100%) expressed some concern about the battery life of the cameras. Not only were the camera batteries not lasting the full extent of officers' shifts, in some cases, the battery would die without warning within an hour of officers starting an eight-hour shift. Issues surrounding attachment was yet another concern. The attachment clips were cited as both causing

damage to officers' uniforms as well as being inadequate to withstand the pressure from foot chases and other scuffles. Officers repeatedly expressed concerns about cameras becoming dislodged from their uniforms under certain conditions.

Another concern stemmed from the integrative in-car cameras. Specifically, officers were concerned about the number of days cars were out of service during the process of integrating cars with body cameras. Undoubtedly, WatchGuard's integrative system offers some unique features that the department welcomes. Nonetheless, a good number of DPD's limited cars were out of duty and not able to service the public during the installation process.

Some subthemes were elicited from the by the patrol officers' comments and discussed in greater detail below. It is important to note that many of the concerns raised by officers were acknowledged during the conversation with other stakeholders involved in the process, which will be discussed in subsequent sections.

Battery Life

Every patrol officer in the focus groups (100%) concurred that the battery life was a major concern in their interaction with the technology. The officers commented that the battery life of the camera was one of the major impediments during implementation. Officers reported that sometimes the battery would die would no warning. This led to situations where they were faced with the dilemma of whether they should answer a call for service or go back to the precinct and check out a new camera to capture the events of their citizen-interactions. These situations were compounded by the fact that officers reported that their superiors would become suspicious when they were not able to capture citizen-interactions.

Moderator: How long is the camera battery lasting?

Participant: Depends, camera to camera varies, sometimes it will last the entire day and then sometimes it will last about six hours.

Participant: Usually when we are out on patrol, and we work for a pretty big precinct and a pretty big city, we like to service the citizens as quickly as we can possibly service them, but then the battery dies and then we have policy…well I don't know if we have policy but if the battery dies we come to the station and get another one, well that's fifteen or twenty minutes by the time I drive to the station, an officer finds a supervisor to let them into the office.

Moderator: Because they are stored by the supervisor in a specific area?

Participant: Yes, to go in there and reassign them a camera and find one that the battery is working and send them back out. That can seriously affect an officer's response time.

The above comments point to a technical issue with the devices that hinder officers' ability to function well. However, some officers interpret the technical deficiencies experienced in a different way. Some officers believe that the problem of battery life could be largely attributed, not to technological defects, but more so to the number of cameras they were allotted. During the implementation phase, only twenty-five (25) cameras were given to each of the two pilot precincts. Officers on each shift were made to use each other's camera. At the end of a shift, footage would be downloaded to the main server and then that same camera would be used on the next shift. All this, because the system would sometimes automatically choose to assign that same camera to the next officer in queue. As a result, there was not enough time to fully charge the cameras, and in some cases, there were not enough cameras to serve all officers working on a shift. The following exchange between participants and the moderator suggest that this was problematic.

Moderator: Someone earlier mentioned the battery life of the camera.

Participant: Again, we have so many cameras, we do occasionally have different cameras that are broken and set aside, depends on what day it is and how much manpower you have, there is time like, they start 8-4, my guys start 6 -2, they start 9-5, I have guys coming in at 7 and 9-3 in the morning. So, depends on when they put them in, depends on when they are being charged, how fast they are being charged, how many people are working. Like yesterday for example, we might have had a full house, because when we went downstairs to get me and the corporal I was having work with me, there was only one camera left so of course he got it. And of course, it wasn't fully charged.

Participant: They have given us enough to get by since this is a trial program.

While battery life was a commonly mentioned problem by officers, focus group participants also expressed concern about how BWCs are attached to their uniform.

Attachment Issues

The issue of where and how to attach the cameras to the officer's person was yet another major concern among officers. Exactly 18 out of the 23 (78%) made at least one comment in this regard. The issues with attachability were two-fold. First, attachability issues centered on identifying the best place on the officer's uniform to attach the device. This included whether to attach it to one of the three designated places: the chest, waist or lapel. Secondly, there were concerns about the ability of the camera to stay on an officer's person safely and securely.

Attachment to the officer's person

Officers can choose one of three places to wear the device. However, as the officers pointed out in the following exchange, while attaching it to the belt and lapel were options, attaching it to their jacket was the best option for them. Attaching the device to the belt obscured the face in many encounters and was hardly useful. They also pointed out that the weight of the device was a little too much for the lapel, so some resorted to wearing their device on the chest. To wear it on the chest, the device is attached using a magnet on both sides of the shirt or jacket, and the magnet does press down on the shirt. In addition to the magnet, there is a latch that pushes against officers' shirts to secure the camera. This constant pressing against the shirt raised concerns for officers. They worried that over time the magnetic attachment would cause damages to their jacket and the cost would not be covered by the department. This is especially problematic for officers in Detroit where the cold winter months require the use of a jacket.

Moderator: What do you think about the camera itself?

Participant: They have three different styles that we have, we have the one for the belt, the second one that can either go on the belt or the shirt and the third one that actually attaches to the jacket or the shirt. So now, that being said, two of the three, if you attach it to the belt when the officers are sitting in the car, I review the video, so now when they are sitting in the car for whatever reason, could be a traffic stop, the lights are activated its synced the body camera is working and you also have the other camera working, so now when the officers are just sitting in the car, you are seeing pictures of their legs, thighs, knees, side door, you gotta now depend on the car camera to capture it, it's only going to capture what's in front of it…

Participant: In my opinion, the magnet one is the nicest one. The only problem is, these guys are going out and spending couple hundred dollars, like me, I spent $240 on my winter jacket, you really think I am going to poke holes in my new jacket when this department is just going to say, Oh, sorry about that…

Participant: I don't like it, I think it's too heavy, I think it needs to be smaller, if you look at it, it weighs about, say maybe half a pound, its large, its gaudy, it doesn't stay clipped when you are involved in an altercation, it falls off…

Moderator: You wear the clip?

Participant: Yes, I wear the clip

Moderator: Have you ever tried the one with the magnet

Participant: Yes, I have but I don't like it, I don't like the way it fits on my uniform it feels like something is protruding out of me and I did wear the waist one for a short period of time but they are all broken, all the clips are broken so I have gone back to this clip…

Participant: I think the biggest issue is attachability because we are fighting over clips.

In addition to expressing concern over the methods of attachability, officers lamented on how securely cameras were attached to their person.

Secure attachment

The device's ability to withstand pressure during chases and/or scuffles with suspects was also a concern of officers. Fifteen participants (69%) raised concerns about either already losing cameras or knowing someone else whose camera had fallen off during altercations or foot chases. In many instances those cameras were recovered, nonetheless, this is an inconvenient experience and might compromise officer safety if they become distracted when a camera detaches from their uniform. Additionally, in instances like these, officers may be unable to capture footage.

Participant: One officer, on three different occasion, he is a traffic officer, handling accidents, doing what he has to do, his cameras popped off, fortunately, all three times

we have been able to find the camera. Can you imagine if we hear, lose a camera $500 out of your check…
Participant: I don't know how many times this has just slid right off and that's another point if you are fighting and you are responsible for this clip what if it falls off and I didn't see where it went and it went down a sewer or something?

Even though officers have not acknowledged being explicitly told that they are liable for cameras, the thought of losing a camera was of concern to the participants. Especially since this integrative system is a costly one.

Integrating the System

WatchGuard purports to operate one of the most advanced body worn systems in the country. This is at the heart of the reason the DPD decided to contract with this vendor. Among their repertoire is the ability to sync the cameras in the car with officers' BWCs. Once the car door opens or the in-car lights go on, the officer's BWC immediately activates. However, the time it takes for cars to go out of service during the implementation phase to install this system is a major consideration, especially in situations where manpower and resources are meager.

> **Participant**: When the camera first started being installed whoever was doing the installation of the vehicle camera they were slow. I mean, it would take them up to three weeks just to do one vehicle. So now, again with us being a large sized city you started losing vehicles and then you had this happening and then the guys started driving the older cars.
> **Moderator**: And the older cars don't sync or have cameras?
> **Participant**: Not all cars, I believe they went with the policy of 2013 and above. I don't know if our 2011s have them or not but the 13s, the 14s, the 15s do.

Undoubtedly, the cameras have a lot of features that make them very sophisticated. However, as sophisticated as they are, they do provide some concerns for officers' well-being.

Health Concerns

A somewhat overlooked and to some extent unanticipated subtheme that emerged during the focus groups was the health concerns associated with the body worn cameras. The device was

in the early stages of implementation about the same time that people were put on alert, nationally, due to numerous Samsung cellphones spontaneously exploding under certain conditions. According to a majority of the officers the cameras would get very hot to the touch and that increased fears about whether the device could explode while attached to their uniforms.

> **Participant**: One of the things they didn't give us a heads up on during training was that the lens I guess, acts as a conductor to let the heat out of the camera, so we were touching the lens and they were feeling kind of hot or kind of warm and everyone thought something was going wrong.
> **Participant**: The heat was a concern, cause we didn't know, there was a concern of it being near the heart or the organs, people were worried about that, and it's just on our bodies like that.

The department had to buy a supply of thermometers so that officers could measure the amount of heat emanating from the cameras. This helped to allay fears that the cameras would have any detrimental impact on their health, but it was a concern. This need to purchase thermometers came out of communications between patrol officers and leadership, and speaks directly to the need for communication on both sides during implementation.

Communication

Communication, or the lack thereof, emerged as a major theme that affected officers during the implementation phase. All but two participants, 21/23 (91%), claimed to have heard that the department was adopting cameras from someone other than their superiors. As such, they believed it was thrust upon them. The exchanges below detail the various ways in which officers said they were made aware of the adoption of BWCs. Undoubtedly, the lack of communication, real or perceived, affected some of their attitudes towards the technology itself, and in some cases, gave rise to a level of mistrust in both the technology and by extension, the department. This left some of the officers feeling disenfranchised from the process.

Moderator: How were you made aware that Detroit Police Department was implementing body-worn cameras?

Participant 1: They just showed up. The first time I heard it was the media actually released it. (Channel) 2, 4 and 7 they did an article about it saying the Detroit Police Department would be implementing body worn cameras. We never had any kind of announcement or heard about it in any kind of way, roll call or any kind of official memo was released to us.

Participant 2: I heard about it through my friends honestly asking me "Are you guys going to be wearing cameras, there is something out about you guys are going to be wearing cameras, and we hear stuff like that all the time, oh you guys getting taser, you guys getting cameras so I was like nah, that's never going to happen, then I showed up and they were here…

Participant: It was basically hey here, these are new, wear them, make sure you turn them on, things of that nature…

Participant: We just got here one day and they said, hey WatchGuard's coming and we are going to be laying out a pilot program…

Participant: I think what they should have done is had a little more input from street officers. Because to me, whoever did the decision, I talked to couple of them, flew up to California, flew down to Texas, they are not out patrolling they are behind the desk their needs aren't going to be the same as ours…

Moderator: If they had talked to patrol officers before, what do you think they would have heard?

Participant: I think you would have had a little better understanding and then with the officers having an input they're going to accept it a little bit easier. Where they're giving it to you it's almost like they are forcing you like Big Brother, here you go, if you like it or not you have it.

The need to communicate is an important facet when introducing new technologies. This communication has as much to do with the way in which the information is disseminated to officers, as does it with the content of what is disseminated. This communication becomes even more critical when subordinates were adamant that the department has more urgent needs.

Needs of the department

In discussing concerns over the Department's lack of communication with officers regarding the adoption of BWCs, another subtheme emerged, which centered on the actual needs of the department. Officers felt disconnected from the decision-making process and felt that their voices would have echoed other more pressing sentiments. As a result, there were numerous comments about ways in which the money invested in cameras could have been better spent. In

one exchange, the officer used sarcasm to make the point that the department had more pressing needs.

> **Participant**: Well, I would like to tell the powers that be thank you for giving us body cameras and not tasers.

Other officers did not employ the same style in registering their disapproval of the department's ability to prioritize in this instance, but they were equally forthright and in agreement that the department had more immediate needs**.** So, in support of his colleagues use of sarcasm to call for tasers instead of body-worn cameras, another officer made the following comment.

> **Participant**: I second and third that notion. I believe that we are the only department in the nation that doesn't have them, why don't we have tasers, but we got equipped with body cameras, I don't understand it, but it is what it is.
> **Participant**: We are screaming for things like tasers and I don't understand why it's taking so long for them to get them. Whereas I am sure these are much more expensive than tasers, so let's talk about that. Let's put that on the table.
> **Moderator**: Why do you think the department would benefit more from the tasers?
> **Participant**: Tasers are like shotguns in a crowd, they hear the rattling and it gets people's attention without ever acquiring a target, It's just the sound effect. A taser is a non-lethal weapon, it's a good thing especially on a Friday night when you have two officers working a ten-mile radius and the citizens don't know, or you may have two cars in this whole precinct.

As became obvious during interactions with the participants, the need of the department can be wide-ranging. It can range from more urgently needed technologies, to merely solid training on whichever technology happens to arrive first.

Training

The extent and quality of the training received was yet another theme captured during the focus groups. Of the focus group participants, 86% commented on the nature of the training. Of that 86%, 73% thought the training was missing some key components, while only 27% thought it covered all the necessary elements. Most officers admitted that the cameras were easy to operate

in terms of turning it on and off, but certain nuances like that of categorizing the video was a lot less easy to grasp. Additionally, some of the officers reported the need for more interaction with the device before the first day of use. Patrol officers and their supervisors were subjected to a mandatory training that, in some cases, happened days or even hours before the cameras arrived. However, in the case of newly assigned officers to the precinct, something that happens often, some were not exposed to any prior training at all. Conversely, there were other new recruits who reported that the camera vendor made trips to the academy while they were there, to familiarize them with the technology.

<u>Missing Components</u>

The training was a four-hour long web-based training characterized by things to read, questions to answer and the ability to view the device on screen. Only a few officers thought the training was sufficient because it is a relatively simple device. These individuals intimated anything more than the training they received would have been unnecessary.

> **Moderator**: Do you remember how long before the cameras showed up you did the training?
> **Participant.** No, I don't remember, but it was good training. I mean, it gave us an overall on how it worked.

However, other officers thought the training was decent but lacked some essential components. Some mentioned that they thought a little more training would be useful, while others thought maybe a device on hand to touch and interface with during the process, would have been helpful.

> **Moderator**: What did you think about the training?
> **Participant**: It was Ok, but thrust on us too quickly to get them out there. But these things have a way of working themselves out anyway so you don't have to be a rocket scientist to figure them out, but usually, when we get new stuff its thrust on us and we are expected to know all the ins and out.
> **Moderator**: Was the training adequate?
> **Participant**: It was inadequate. It was basically here, learn how to work it. Basically, they gave us a little, I think it was on a computer system, they gave us a brief little read

> this, watch this, answer these questions, carry this, this is how you turn it on, this is how you turn it off.
> **Moderator**: (Specifically to one of the new recruits) So you just started using it today, did you go through some sort of training as it relates to how the camera operates?
> **Participant 1**: Yea, little bit, they showed me how it works this morning.
> **Participant 2**: This is like his first day so he never used it at all. He hasn't even done the introduction yet.

The above exchange, which was offered in a very nonchalant way, highlights the general attitude towards the training itself. The fact that it also includes an exchange with a relatively new officer who had started on the day of the focus group also gives a glimpse into the way new officers may be exposed to the technology.

The extent of the training featured prominently in the interactions with officers, not so much because officers wanted to spend an extended amount of time in training, but because they hoped the training would have done more to cover two essential components. First, officers wanted more assistance with the categorization of video. When officers record an interaction with citizens, they can save the footage under different categories. Some available options are traffic stops and arrests, among others. However, there are some traffic stops that result in an arrest, and then the question becomes, how should that video be categorize? Secondly, officers suggested that they were looking to the training to provide reassurance that their private, privileged conversations with their partner would not be later open to public scrutiny. The conversations below highlight some of the comments from officers who went through the training, but thought it was missing some key elements.

> **Participant**: I don't think the officers are really utilizing the category button, whatever you have, you are supposed to have the button to hit on the side to record citizen contact, I don't think they are using that.
> **Participant**: There should have been a little bit more training because a lot of guys are hesitant, they think that the camera system is another extension of big brother.

The need for clearly defined rules of engagement is also essential to officers. They claimed to have wanted, not only adequate training, but clear rules to govern their behavior.

Policy

While the comments from officers focused a lot on the technology itself, communication and training, policy was also a major theme. Specifically, 20/23 (86%) of the participants made substantive comments about the BWC policy. Of those 56% were concerned that they had not been exposed to a clear policy on how to operate the body-worn cameras. The remaining 44%, though not sure, made claims that the same rules surrounding body microphones applied to the cameras. It is important to note that during the pilot testing stage, the department did not have a final policy measure in place. The department did release a directive that served as a guide until a final policy was formulated. From the perspective of officers, some expressed concern that the directive from their immediate supervisors in the precinct seemed to change quite often throughout the initial stages.

> **Moderator**: Are you aware of the directives surrounding the use of body-worn cameras?
> **Participant**: They released something, I think it was a teletype, an administrative message, there was some kind of document that said any citizen contact turn it on.
> **Participant**: The strength was that if you had a major incident you use to be able to go back and view the video, and that way you can give an accurate report and detail on what occurred. But now they don't even allow us to look at the videos anymore. So, it was like, why would you take that benefit away from us because if we go to court to testify on something I don't want the defense attorney to be like, well we saw a video and you said something different. Then I have to be like, I didn't mean to say that, I thought I said something else. Whereas if I was able to look at my video right after the event like I was when we just started then I think that would be a benefit.
> **Moderator**: To back track a bit, you said when you just got the camera you were able to view the footage on a daily basis?
> **Participant**: Yea, when we first started wearing them, I had a couple of use of force incidents where I had physical contact with somebody. At the end of the day, once I put the cameras back on the machine and upload the video, I was able to go back and look at that video from the start and was able to write an accurate report. Just recently, I had another incident, just two days ago, I had another incident and I tried to go on the

computer and look at the incident again and they said only administration was available to view it.

Section Summary

The importance of understanding and highlighting the narrative gleaned from the focus groups is of paramount importance. Not only does it provide the scope for understanding whether officers' perceptions changed once they were exposed to the technology, but it also provided more details on the implementation phase as seen through the officers' eyes. Four distinct themes emerged surrounding 1) the technology itself, 2) the training, 3) communication and that of 4) the policy. These themes provide an understanding of some of the things that must be considered when agencies plan to implement BWCs.

While the survey results detailed in chapter 4 indicated that most of the officers agreed with the decision to implement the cameras, the focus group results suggested officers' have concerns regarding different aspects of the technology. For example, all the officers (100%) cited technological issues with the cameras, ranging from battery life to attachment issues.

The length of time cars remain out of service was yet another factor that officers cited that needs consideration during implementation. As detailed by officers, this becomes especially problematic in smaller departments, or in departments that have high demand and limited resources. While sophistication and value for money are paramount and seem to be part of the package offered by WatchGuard, the time cars were out of service during the installation of the technology, is problematic. It is especially problematic for departments like DPD that already struggle with heavy call volumes and response times.

The issue of the health of officers is another area that must be addressed and considered by departments attempting to adopt this technology. This concern becomes especially important in

demonstrating to officers that their well-being is a major concern and priority of the department. The need to allay fears that the cameras would explode and cause injury to the officers is worth addressing. Even from a more general sense, providing as much information about a device that will be strapped to the body is simply an important conversation. Whether officers express concerns, the right thing to do is to provide information.

Many participants indicated the need for increased communication throughout the implementation of projects like that of the BWCs. In reference to this particular theme, 91% of participants had concerns about the way the decision to adopt BWCs was communicated to them. Officers reported that their knowledge of the decision ranged from conversations with friends to the media. Some also reported that the nature of the communication led to some resentment on the part of officers.

The training component of the body worn camera implementation emerged as a major theme among officers during the focus group. Officers acknowledged that the training did not require a lengthy or elaborate process. However, they did report that there were some missing components in the training. Specifically, 73% of the participants thought the training missed some key components. Among those components was the need for help with some of the operational nuances of the cameras as well as providing clarity on issues of concerns to them. Some officers reported that they wanted to be fully aware of the true extent of the cameras ability to record. Specifically, they wanted to be assured that their private conversations with would not somehow be used against them in criminal proceedings. Therefore, while the training adequately covered certain basics like how to power on and off the device, more was needed.

The comments and concerns raised by officers who were exposed to the technology provide insight into some of the important considerations that should be thought out prior to

implementation. Drawing attention to concerns surrounding the technology, training, communication and policy provides somewhat of a cautionary guide to other departments planning to adopt this technology. This list is by no means exhaustive, but an important list nonetheless.

Despite the many and varied criticisms of BWCs and their implementation, many officers view the technology as a great de-escalation tool and valuable resource for law enforcement. This revelation adds validity to the belief held by those in leadership, one that is detailed in the next chapter, that the BWCs are a meaningful addition to officers' repertoire.

CHAPTER 6: Stakeholder Interviews Results

It is not uncommon that those in charge of implementation and those that are on the receiving end may have different perspectives of the same event, which is the case with DPD's adoption of BWCs. Because there were so many stakeholders involved in the process, there are various interpretations and opinions regarding the steps taken to adopt BWCs. In previous chapters, data from patrol officers were detailed, providing an understanding of how they perceive the technology and the implementation processes. However, there are numerous other perspectives and interpretations that require consideration. In addition to officers' perspectives, it is important to capture information from other key stakeholders in the process, such as the vendor chosen by the department, the project's management team, representation from the police leadership and representation from the city mayor's office, among others who were integrally involved in the process. To this end, semi-structured interviews were conducted with representatives from each of the aforementioned groups, and their inputs are recorded below.

It is important to note that some of the concerns raised by officers in the previous section were addressed by some of the stakeholders during their interviews. In addition, stakeholders raised other concerns that are worthy of noting, which are listed in Figure 6.1 and include the need for a risk mitigation period, the infrastructural and legacy cost that should be considered, vendor selection and the need to communicate.

Vendor Selection

The vendor that an agency partners with is a major theme reiterated by all stakeholders. Every person interviewed 5/5 (100%) had at least one substantive comment about the need for a vendor who is available and willing to work with the department throughout the process. As

Figure 6.1
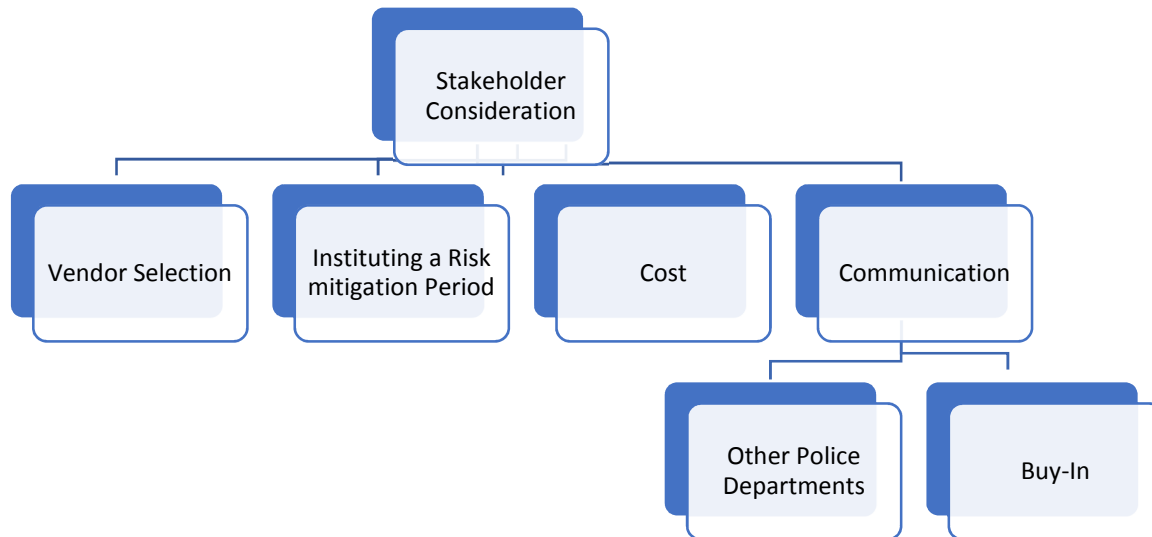
detailed in the responses below, the vendor selection process requires a careful look at not only

what the vendor offers but also the extent to which the vendor is invested in the agency's success.

In the case of this department, the vendor assigned an engineer to stay in the city for the entire

process so that they were on hand to answer and resolve issues that arose in a timely manner. This

was identified as just one of the ways the vendor invested in the agency's success.

> **Participant**: I can tell you, having worked with many vendors over the years, they (the vendor) have been very attentive, they have been very responsive.
> **Participant**: The testing phase concluded in mid to late December, the company had to show that the system was functional. They were able to do that and one of the reasons they were able to do that is because they stayed very involved and on-site and were able to work through some of the technical things that happens when you put a big project on like this. So they were very responsive in that way.

Another aspect of the responsiveness of the vendor is their willingness to respond to criticism and

address concerns in a timely and efficient manner. The stakeholders commented on an array of

problems that arose during the implementation phase, some previously mentioned by officers, that were addressed with some degree of alacrity by the vendor.

> **Participant**: Battery life was certainly one of the things we looked at with the vendor. What we realized, again this being the pilot, there were a certain number of cameras we anticipated needing. Initially there were just twenty-five cameras but that would be adequate based on the number of officers that would be deployed on a regular basis, but what we found is, one of the reasons we were having certain issues with the battery life was the cameras weren't having enough time to remain in the transfer station where they were being charged before the next platoon was taking it out on patrol so we adjusted those numbers and now we have more cameras available.

Not only did the vendor and their team adjust the number, they also changed the way the system operated. Prior to the change, the system was designed so that when an officer came to get a camera, the system would randomly choose an available camera. Officers complained that at times, they would be looking at a camera that had more charge than the one they had been assigned but they were forced to go with the less charged one that the system assigned. The vendor heeded the calls to change this inefficiency and the result is detailed below.

> **Participant**: The new system is designed so that the system will detect the camera with the strongest battery life, with the most charge that has the most amount of storage space and that's the one that is checked out.

The vendor also responded to other issues that arose during the implementation phase, including needs surrounding when the camera is turned on. When the cameras are turned on but not set to record, they are automatically triggered to record when car's siren and lights are turned on, if the car goes above a certain speed or the car's door opens. However, in instances where officers may already be outside the vehicle and may have forgotten to turn on the camera no proactive measures were built in to automatically set the camera to record. Once this deficiency was recognized, there was a system created to facilitate the automatic recording.

Participant: We now have a pre-event. Where certain events if you don't start your camera on time, and you start it now, it can actually go back actually in our case, 30 seconds.

Another important accommodating fix made by the vendor includes installing a double-tap feature on the cameras. Cameras would sometimes unintentionally turn off. That had the potential to be very problematic.

Participant: We were able to put our arms around some issues, the most recent one would be the double-tap to turn the camera off, that's definitely a lesson learned. We found out, probably the hard way that in a tussle or a fall the camera with one tap can be turned off when you really don't mean to nor want to.

The vendor's importance was also highlighted when determining the needs of the department. When the department went to the market to find a vendor, they anticipated needing only a camera solution, one that would involve what most people were already familiar with, a camera to be worn on the chest of an officer. However, once they did their due diligence in the market, they realized that there were other options available that would better suit the needs of their department. Instead of a single camera solution, they chose to go with an integrated system that could sync both in-car camera, officer camera and a portal in the precinct.

Participant: One of the things I really like about ours is the way the body worn cameras and the in-car cameras integrate, that's really innovative and I think cutting edge and we are really excited about that and I think it's working well so far.
Participant: Another unique aspect of the system is that when you have events that are recorded on the car camera, they will be downloaded to the servers and it happens automatically and wirelessly when the car comes back into the precincts parking spot.
Moderator: You mentioned that the cars automatically upload wirelessly when they hit that hot zone, the cameras are not wireless they have to be docked, is that what you are saying?
Participant: Yes, the cars will automatically upload the events to the server wirelessly, the cameras themselves they have to be docked in the transfer station and once they are docked there, they eventually start to upload.
Participant: It's still pretty mind blowing that we can have in vehicle, two views, back seat forward view, two officers all capture video from multiple angles be saved to one file.

Even with the obvious advanced capabilities of the technology, its ability to function properly is paramount. That is the reason that the decision made by the vendor and the department to implement a risk mitigation period was so important.

Instituting a Risk Mitigation Period

The idea that there should be 60 days of full functionality before a contract was signed was a compromise the department arrived at with the vendor. It is also an important theme that both vendor and stakeholders agree was a good and important step in the partnership. From August to late December, the department and the vendor were engaged in this risk mitigation period that gave the department time to be fully persuaded that the vendor could offer the services they proposed. The 60 days risk mitigation period was not necessarily 60 consecutive days, but 60 days of full functionality. It provided an opportunity for the department to see if the resources were enough to meet their needs. Both parties agreed that the department was at full liberty to withdraw their interest at any time during the 60 days. The following are exchanges about the lessons learnt during that phase, their significance and importance.

Participant: There were things that needed to be worked out, and the 60 days, we called it the risk mitigation period and what the vendor had to do was show that there was full functionality for 60 days before the contract actually became official.
Moderator: You talked about the 60 days risk mitigation period and I know that that has gone on for a little bit longer than 60 days, is there a reason?
Participant: Yea, absolutely, the idea was to get sixty days of fully functional use. Of course, all projects like this has its problems. [The vendor's] solution is unique in the marketplace because the in-car video system and the body camera are tightly integrated with one another and so that to the extent that they do that, they are the only vendor doing it at the level that they do it, all, believe it or not, to make life easier for the officer. So out of the gate there were some things we fully expected we would hit and certainly during the first one month we certainly had some days that we agreed were not functional and we wanted to make some changes. Towards the end, I think we were forty or fifty days back to back to back with only day to day things that we worked through from the service side. So the 60 days wasn't 60 perfect days it was really designed to show that this solution works and to do that we are going to get to 60 functional days, and that's why over a calendar it takes a little bit longer than 60 days to do that…

Cost

To say the implementation of body-worn cameras comes at a huge cost is a gross understatement. This claim was echoed by all stakeholders involved in the process. It is especially costly because buying the cameras is just a relatively minor feat when compared to infrastructural and legacy costs. The following comments detail some of the often-overlooked costs associated with operating a BWC system that are important for agencies to consider when contemplating the adoption of such technology.

> **Moderator**: Cost consideration, what does that look like and what would be your advice
> to other departments as it relates to cost?
> **Participant**: It can be very costly currently most departments that have it are getting
> federal funding but that's not always going to be the case so I think that you have to look
> at, is it something our department needs.
> **Participant**: Certainly, it's not cheap.

Obviously, the cost to purchase the device is quite expensive, but the other sometimes unforeseen costs can be much more than anticipated. In the case of this department, clips used to mount the cameras to officers' uniforms turned out to be an unexpected cost that quickly added up. Due to their fragility, as mentioned in focus groups with officers, the department was required to purchase additional mounting clips so officers could continue to use the cameras. This is just one example of unforeseen costs that can creep in.

> **Participant**: You have to track, track, track everything and by that, I mean the body
> worn cameras, all of the equipment that goes along with it and by that I mean the mounts.
> There are various mounts that this camera can use so you need to keep up with all those
> things otherwise they may walk away if you don't keep up with these things. Already
> some officers have gone through three or four clips and the cost does add up.

Sometimes, these unforeseen costs seem to have very little to do with BWCs. Detroit chose to purchase thermometers, an item that seems very far removed from BWCs. With the camera lens getting hot and officers getting worried, thermometers were brought in to help alleviate these fears.

Participant: For about a week, two weeks we were taking temperatures of them, they implemented something where we had to take the temperature of the lens.

The temperature test continued long enough for the officers to be convinced that the heat was not such that would cause any damage to their organs or to their uniforms.

The need for substantial infrastructural considerations was an important factor that emerged in the interviews. Like many departments, DPD has an in-car camera system that had been operational for at least a decade, so they already had some infrastructure in place to accommodate the storage of footage. However, they still had to increase capacity to accommodate the daily influx of video footage, as well as determine how long to keep footage and how to get it to the prosecutor's office.

Moderator: Did you learn anything about infrastructural needs?
Participant: The amount of storage space that you need to be able to handle the volume of events that are uploaded is huge. There is a lot of stress on the server. From a policy standpoint, we have had to look at how long you maintain events that were not involved in a warrant, those are things that you have to consider. Then you have to think do you need a cloud solution versus some of the other agencies where you had to physically put something on a disk and go to a certain central spot to look at it and then transport it back. In our case, the way it is set up the PDU within the precinct can pull that information up on their computer.
Participant: One of the main challenges I anticipate is on the technical side, storage and working with the prosecutor's office making sure that when there is video available that it is included in warrant packages and they are able to download it. So far, that has worked out pretty well but I see there will be challenges in the future along those lines. On a more ground level just making sure the officers use the cameras properly and I give you one example. There is a feature in the camera where the officers after the incident is recorded they have to categorize the event and I believe there are 11 categories and they are not always doing that, so we have to figure out a way to make sure that they do that because it makes the storage process and the retrieval process easier if it is categorized properly. If they don't categorize it, it goes to a default which is like a general folder and it's much more difficult to find and retrieve video. Like if it's an arrest and it's not categorized as an arrest, it makes it harder to find. The extra time that it will take for the department to sort through and categorize the footage has the potential to impose an unanticipated cost that the department will be forced to bear.

Legacy costs are also an important piece to consider. While the department was in its infancy with the cameras, it was somewhat difficult to assess the true legacy cost. However, signs were already emerging that the upkeep and maintenance of various systems will impose substantial, long-term costs on the department.

> **Participant**: Certainly, in anticipation of those cost there are maintenance contracts and extended warranties that are available through the vendor and that we have secured or will likely take advantage of as far as the hardware is concerned.

While these costs could not be assigned an exact dollar amount in the interim, participants seemed unanimous that communication and documentation by all stakeholders involved in the process is paramount so that the true cost could be accurately calculated and determined.

Communication

The need to communicate was another theme that surfaced in interviews with the stakeholders. Undoubtedly, communication in this regard, has the potential to create a level of trust that will prove beneficial to the survival of this undertaking. Good communication among all stakeholders forms the basis for a successful implementation of BWC systems. This communication is two-fold, as it involves communication with the locale, but also with other agencies or departments that have already implemented the cameras.

> **Moderator**: If an agency came to you and said we want to implement body worn cameras, what would be the top three things you would tell them to do in order to make it a smooth implementation?
> **Participant**: Communication. In most project that's important, but I think in this particular project, communication with the citizens and with the officers.
> **Participant**: I have heard this from some of the technical assistants that we get, and there is a newsletter that we get regularly from our technical assistance partners, the body worn cameras are not for every department. Some departments that are small and don't have a lot of use of force issues probably don't need it.
> **Participant**: Go slow, we did a site visit and we went and looked at three other departments before we made our final decision and it's definitely a lesson learnt that they told us. One community, and I will leave everybody's name out of it, but one major city

that we went to visit, they had a whole closet full of a thousand cameras that they hadn't deployed yet because it was just too many. They purchased a thousand they constantly had to update the software but they just didn't have the capacity nor the plan to deploy them citywide.

Effective communication among stakeholders and officers also provides yet another advantage. It allows all groups to become equally invested in the quest to make the BWCs a success.

Buy-In

This communication transcends just notifying officers and citizens, it extends to the need to get buy-in from them as well. This buy-in is a major subtheme when looking at the need for communication in all facets of this project.

> **Participant**: This project requires making sure you go nice and slow and have buy-in and you are addressing the concerns and so it's not just something that's been forced on them without any buy-in and without the ability to pull it off successfully.

Sharing and receiving information from external sources is also a major aspect of the successful completion of a project of this magnitude. It is also a subtheme that was quite dominant and useful to many stakeholders during the process

> **Participant**: We share with other departments and we take advantage of webinars that the DOJ offers because we are grant recipients to learn because the pooling of the cameras, the deployment, should be like a zero entry in a pool instead of jumping off the deep end.
> **Participant**: It's all about sharing information. I can't even begin to stress the importance of buy-in and the information sharing and the constant dialogue with command staff, officers and addressing concerns immediately because that can get out of control even if the perception is there and not really built in reality, then you are constantly dealing with that.

Section Summary

The importance of understanding the various nuances that may arise during implementation should not be underestimated. As agencies embark on implementing BWCs, there is sometimes

the disillusion that it is simply placing a camera on the officers' chests, collar or belt. The information garnered through the semi-structured interviews corroborates the surveys and focus group data, and provides meaningful information to the contrary. The exchanges above were from various entities involved in the process, including officers, the vendor, city leadership and the police hierarchy. This wide-ranging insight provided meaningful themes through different lenses. It became obvious that while there were some themes that overlapped among each group, the different groups were concerned or could shed light on different aspects of the process.

The stakeholders saw communication as a major theme, but their themes focused a lot on the bigger issues, such as vendor selection and what that entails and then the overall cost. Thus, in some ways, stakeholders raised slightly different concerns than officers. For example, stakeholders seemingly felt confident that they had buy-in from officers, however, 91% of the officers reported having heard about the cameras from someone other than the department or felt it was thrust upon them in some way. These sentiments are echoed in numerous excerpts from the focus groups with officers.

Promisingly enough, implementation issues cited by the officers can be remediated with training and communication. As the stakeholders also mentioned, this is a slow process that has to be modified continuously to identify the best path forward. Therefore, there is hope that modifications to the level of communication and the emphasis placed on training going forward will provide the officers with the requisite tools to make the body worn camera project a success.

CHAPTER 7: Conclusion

The need for sound implementation strategies is an important facet of any venture. While the strategies herein applies directly to the implementation of BWCs, the same is true for any project the size and magnitude of the BWC undertaking. It requires a commitment to details, effective communication and a team that is responsive to constructive criticism and willing to make changes where necessary.

The adoption of BWCs is a substantial undertaking. It is a task that many police departments across the country, and the world, will be forced to undergo in the very near future. Since it is inevitable, it behooves departments and stakeholders to understand the process as much as possible. While the surveys, focus groups and semi-structured interviews detailed in previous chapters expose the fact that each side involved in the adoption has their own narrative, there was consensus on a few issues: effective implementation requires commitment to details, transparency and communication.

The data pertinent to this study were collected over an eight-month period. During that time, surveys were administered to two precincts that had not been exposed to the technology. Then, focus groups were administered to officer from two precincts after they were exposed to BWCs. Finally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders. It was important to gather data on the perceptions of the officers prior to and after implementation to understand any potential preconceived ideas they might have had about the technology or the Department's intent for the technology. Of the officers surveyed, 56% were supportive of the decision to adopt BWCs.

Unfortunately, mid-way through the implementation, two officers were shot in the line of duty. In the second incident, body camera footage was available to retell the story of what really happened. Whilst the researcher did not re-measure perceptions of the cameras among officers who had already completed a survey, officers (those not yet surveyed) were more willing to respond to the survey after this event. Experiencing a historical event like this during data collection is certainly problematic because, in this instance, it appeared to serve as a catalyst for officers completing surveys. Importantly, however, the event serves as a reminder of the dangers of policing. The officer-involved shooting captured on film demonstrated the importance BWCs can play in protecting and supporting officers' actions in the line of duty. From a policy perspective, this grim reality provides a platform from which agencies may dedicate time explaining to officers the benefits of BWCs using real life examples of instances where the cameras have managed to preserve an officer's story during times of uncertainty.

It is also important to focus on commonalities expressed by officers and stakeholders that should be considered key to effective implementation. The first involves the need to focus on the right technology for the department. Second, was the need for effective communication. The third encompasses the training that is needed to complete the process. Lastly, cost emerged as a major area of focus that must be addressed in the initial stages of implementation.

The Need for Sound Technology

The technology itself forms the core of this venture. It is the tool many are looking to restore accountability and transparency in the policing institution. It means that the technology must meet the needs of the officers wearing them. As such, it requires a vendor that truly understands these needs and has the tools necessary to meet those needs. In the case of DPD, they wanted technology that could do much more than simply record and capture images. They wanted

something that would integrate with the other technologies already in use in the department. DPD found that in a vendor who worked collaboratively with the department to ensure full functionality.

The functionality of the technology is also of paramount importance. The cameras, even with the most sophisticated system, are useless if it does not work well. DPD encountered problems with the cameras' battery life during implementation. The key stakeholders and even some officers concluded that this was due, in large part, to some technical issues on the part of the vendor, but more so, to the number of cameras that were in use during the initial stages. Then there were also issues surrounding attachment. Officers complained that some attachment methods not only caused damages to their uniforms, but were not as secure as they would have liked. Because some of the clips have not been able to securely fasten to the officers' person, the Department is forced to endure the cost associated with replacing these clips. Unfortunately, that amount adds up quite quickly.

Health Risks

As the type of device and its functionality are considered, the larger issues of officer concerns with health and safety must also be included. The perceived health risks posed a challenge during implementation. DPD was forced to address this issue once officers started to complain about the heat emanating from the device. Officers became increasingly concerned about radiation, among other things, when the cameras started to heat up, and feel hot to the touch. Once this issue was raised by officers, the vendor took time to explain the reason for the heat, including the fact that this was a built-in feature that sought to keep the heat off the officers' person. Moreover, the situation was addressed with the introduction of thermometers that measured the heat and reported that it was not problematic from a health perspective. Nonetheless, it was an unanticipated problem that initially caused a lot of fear and suspicion among officers. This issue that can be avoided by

other departments adopting such technology by prophylactically educating officers on what to expect when BWCs are attached to their person and recording events.

Communication

A second commonly mentioned theme emphasized the importance of effective communication between the agency and its officers. Moreover, this communication should be multifaceted, including discussions regarding what other departments have gone through during their adoption process with BWCs. It also includes effectively communicating with the other stakeholders involved in the process, the vendor, the management team, police representatives, the mayor's office as well as citizens and any other stakeholders that should have an input in any part of this venture. Communication is necessary for an effort that seeks to ensure that all contributors are kept abreast of what is happening, but more importantly, that all stakeholders understand and appreciate the need for the technology and buy-in for the concept. Communication is also vital in simply ensuring that there is an understanding among all, as it relates to the cost and infrastructural considerations that are needed to make the implementation a success.

Effective communication is as much about how things are communicated as it is the content of what is communicated. The onus is on the leadership of DPD to ensure that officers are not just told that the cameras are coming and the when, there is also an obligation to engage officers on the benefits of this venture. The communication should include detailed interactions, where the department could lay out their reason for wanting to adopt the technology, followed by input and feedback from the officers. Therefore, conversations surrounding the department's commitment to transparency and accountability should have been included in this dialogue. Officers should have been kept abreast of the information related to vendor selection and why, the timeline for the outfitting of precincts with the technology, findings from the pilot phase and all other aspects of

the implementation. Including officers in this way aids in fostering the kind of dialogue that lends itself to true interest and a willingness to ensure that the project is successful, because all stakeholders are involved in decision-making and have a stake in the project's success.

Cost considerations

This leads to the final and overarching theme that emerged from the findings of the qualitative and quantitative data. One of the major reasons the adoption of BWCs is such a huge undertaking is the cost that goes along with it. Undoubtedly, the number of devices and the related price tag to equip all officers is a huge part of the cost. Those are the obvious costs, but then, there are the not so obvious costs associated with BWCs. This includes legacy and infrastructural costs that involve software upkeep, storage, replacement parts, and camera replacement as well as the cost associated with a data management system responsible for transferring data to and from the prosecutorial desk. One of the early unanticipated costs DPD experienced was the replacement of the clips used to attach the cameras, and this cost was quickly adding up according to some stakeholders. Minor instances, such as this have the potential to be huge costs and are sometimes unforeseen and in some ways unpredictable. Nonetheless, they exist, and must be anticipated by agencies considering the adoption of BWCs.

Recommendations

Using a mixed methodology approach in understanding the implementation of BWCs provides significant benefits. Not only does it allow for a richer and deeper understanding of the potential issues to expect when considering adoption, it allows for this exploration in more than one way. Additionally, it allows for the generation of ideas that can be explored in greater detail and form the basis of future hypotheses to be tested. Some of the ideas expressed by stakeholders

in this study provide key points that also have implications for policy makers and those considering adopting the cameras.

This study has identified significant considerations for agencies to deliberate before embarking on the mission of adopting BWCs. First, ventures like this call for a vendor who is willing to work with the department and make certain provisions to make the relationship worthwhile. In the case of DPD, they worked with a vendor who was willing to institute a risk mitigation period which included showing that their equipment could work for sixty days without any problems and at no cost to the department. This strategic move, that was agreed to by the department and the vendor, allowed for a useful partnership. The offerings of the vendor are also key. It requires a vendor who has the technology that best suits the needs of that individual department. While there needs to be collaboration between department and vendor, it is important to note that different departments have different needs and this must be acknowledged during the process. Meaning, there is not a one size fits all approach to implanting BWCs, and agencies and vendors, alike, must recognize this and approach adoption processes in a tailored fashion. As such, when one considers the device itself, there is little room to follow blindly behind another department's protocol because the device needs may be different for each. In the case of DPD, they had in-car cameras for over a decade prior to implementing BWCs, and for them, it was important to have a system that integrated both. Once the vendor has been chosen, issues surrounding communication are necessary to consider.

Secondly, policymakers must consider the type of and level of communication they will engage in with all the stakeholders who are a part of the process, including those who are most affected by the technology (i.e., officers). The communication that is involved in the process may be among the single most decisive issue that can strengthen or threaten the survival of the project.

This communication must be honest and include not just leadership informing officers of what is coming, but should include feedback from officers and incorporating those suggestions in future decisions. Departments must also communicate with other departments and agencies that are attune to the nuances of implementation. With good communication in place, other considerations like that of solidifying a policy that guides officer behavior become necessary.

A clear policy is necessary, and the timing of this policy is also crucial. Departments can benefit from having a clear policy in place prior to the implementation of BWCs. Retroactively instituting a policy runs the risk of officers "learning" how to use the technology in ways that are in violation of agency protocol. Thus, it is vitally important agencies have a written policy in place prior to outfitting officers with BWCs so that users of the technology can be properly trained on agency guidelines and expectations regarding when cameras must be on, who has access to footage, among other pressing concerns. There is also the need for policy that dictates what happens in cases where complains made against officers are unsubstantiated. Importantly, in pursuit of transparency, policies should be a well-known fact that is detailed for officers and citizens alike. Additionally, the policy should dictate clear parameters as it relates to what constitutes officers' private conversation and what does not. Based on the focus groups with officers, there was a shared reality that DPD did not provide enough policy directives prior to issuing BWCs, and this led to officer uncertainty surrounding several important issues.

Another key recommendation centers on ensuring officers' well-being serves as a prominent feature of training protocols for BWCs. Officers' well-being must be assured and that includes ensuring that any potential health concerns are anticipated and or addressed with alacrity when they arise. The need to address concerns upfront and with urgency allows for the quick resolution of conflicts or concerns that, if left untreated, can have major implications for stability

and normalcy with the technology. Health concerns associated with the technology should be covered in officer training in an attempt to mitigate officers' concerns over how the technology might be affecting their bodies' functioning.

Policy makers must also consider the type and quality of training offered to officers. The timing and quality of training must be seriously considered so that the training can be effective. Training that comes too soon or too late can defeat the intended purpose, so the timing must be carefully considered. The training should also encompass some major tenets. Not only should it tell how the technology works, but it should allay fears about the capabilities of the technology. It should detail the intimate workings of the camera and expose officers to all it functionalities. Additionally, it should answer question about what can be recorded and when and provide some amount to reassurance to officers that they will not be constantly watched when the cameras are off.

Finally, policy makers must consider the cost that it will take to embark on this endeavor. The cost of purchasing and maintaining the cameras is a huge one. One that very soon may be covered by tax payer dollars. Before engaging in this venture, departments must have the base to sustain it. While some funding may come from the federal government, the long-term effects will be felt by tax paying citizens. The venture goes far beyond the cost to purchase the device. It includes a multitude of incidentals and a commitment to funding the infrastructural and legacy costs that will accompany this venture. Departments must be prepared for same. Importantly, these costs must be weighed against the potential benefits derived from BWCs. The nascent literature to date suggests BWC systems have the potential to produce several benefits for officers and departments, however, agencies are urged to steer clear of blindly adopting this technology without understanding their needs, budgetary constraints, and some of the other aforementioned

considerations. Otherwise, more departments might have closets full of unused cameras, which is a waste of precious resources during a time when they are becoming increasingly scarce.

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ABSTRACT

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF BODY WORN CAMERAS, LESSON LEARNED – THE CASE OF DETROIT POLICE DEPARTMENT

by

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The level of mistrust between citizens and the police continues to have serious implications for police legitimacy. Police legitimacy is an important phenomenon that must be preserved, since it forms the very foundation of police authority. The intricates surrounding police/citizen mistrust is further compounded in this era of citizen journalism, where the increasing availability of cellphones and varying social media platforms, have given rise to the ability to share the captured footages with a wider audience. In 2014, then president, Barack Obama proposed a compromise to bridge the gap between citizens and the police. This compromise came in the form of body worn cameras. The advent of BWCs continues to be explored by scholars in an attempt to assess its impact on various outcomes. This paper digresses from attempts to explore outcomes and instead, looks at the implementation process. After all, the soundest policies, if not implemented properly will have serious negative consequences. Using a mixed methodological approach, this paper explores some of the nuances of the implementation phase that department must consider before adopting the technology. The study uncovered a plethora of nuances that departments looking to adopt the technology must consider, if for no other reason, to assist in creating their own implementation design. These include the need for effective communication with all stakeholders prior to and during the process, the need

to institute a risk mitigation period, the importance of sound policy related to the usage of BWCs

prior to rolling out the technology, the importance of serious consideration as it relates to both

short-term and legacy cost, as well as the need to offer a very robust training on the technology.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

Toycia Collins is a Jamaican who completed her undergraduate work in Broadcast Journalism in the United States. Her interest in the intersection of crime and the media influenced her decision to pursue a masters in Criminal Justice. Upon completion of her master, she was accepted to Sam Houston University to pursue her doctoral studies in Criminal Justice and Criminology.