



What Research is Telling Us about Body Worn Camera Practice

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An Examination of the Prevalence and Predictors of Police Body-Worn Camera Activation

Jessie Huff

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Impetus for adopting BWCs

- Widespread calls for police reform
- Implementation of BWCs to increase transparency and accountability
- Early evidence of BWC effectiveness



Challenges realizing the promise of BWCs



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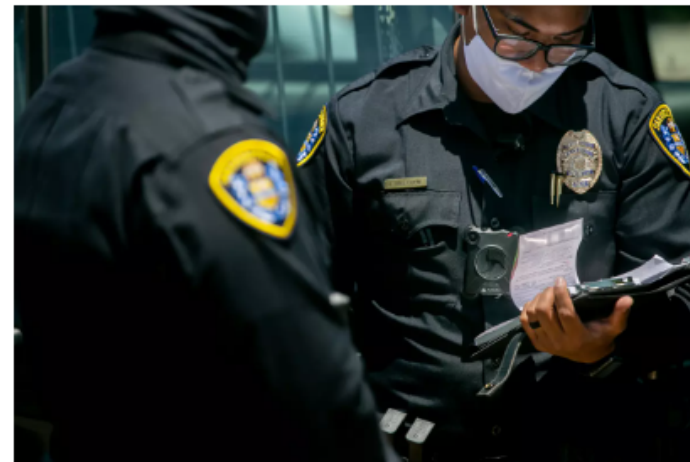
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- Officer failure to activate
- Results in:
 - Loss of evidence
 - Undermines “civilizing effect”
 - Public concerns
- Is an implementation failure

The San Diego Union-Tribune

PUBLIC SAFETY

Many San Diego police officers didn't activate body-worn cameras when they were supposed to, report finds



San Diego Police Department officers outfitted with body cameras make a traffic stop along El Cajon Boulevard. (Sam Hodgson / The San Diego Union-Tribune)

Between 15 and 40 percent of officers sent to enforcement encounters failed to press the record button from October 2020 through September 2021

BY LINDSAY WINKLEY
JULY 20, 2022 9:21 PM PT

BREAKING >

WEATHER

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Aug. 28, 2023

NATION-WORLD

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Police: 2 arrested after handgun thrown into San Diego Bay during pursuit
Aug. 27, 2023

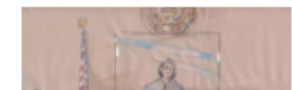
PUBLIC SAFETY

Pedestrian struck by pickup, seriously injured in Redwood Village
Aug. 27, 2023

PUBLIC SAFETY

Motorcyclist dies in Escondido crash after pursuit
Aug. 27, 2023

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Prior research examining BWC activation



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Article

Activation of Body-Worn Cameras: Variation by Officer, Over Time, and by Policing Activity

Criminal Justice Review
2019, Vol. 44(3) 339-355
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DOI: 10.1177/0734016819846228
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Daniel S. Lawrence¹, David McClure², Aili Malm³, Mathew Lynch⁴, and Nancy La Vigne¹

Abstract
This study assessed the early (BWC) program in 2015 by time, and how different police with correlational analyses a activation of the BWCs am from 0% to 72%. Average a proportionately activated the for other categories were sig from 0.148 to 0.663. The arti limits the potential benefits o to activate their BWCs, law their officers but also audit a

Activate Compliance: A Multilevel Study of Factors Associated With Activation of Body-Worn Cameras

Criminal Justice Review
2022, Vol. 47(1) 103-118
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Rémi Boivin^{1,2}, Brigitte Poirier^{1,2}, and Maurizio D'Elia³

Abstract
Body-worn cameras (BWCs) have the capacity concerns, cameras must b concerns that officers wou that an intervention wou excessive use of force—pc activation trends during a mental policies over time : situations where, based or linear mixed models, came civilian encounters and of suspicions of voluntary n relations, this article conc

Keywords
police, body-worn cameras, l

Police departments' use of bo years. Despite being a relative BWCs, prompted in large pa transparency, as well as sizabl the fastest technologies adopt identifying how to best implen

JUSTICE QUARTERLY
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<https://doi.org/10.1080/07418825.2022.2071325>



Check for updates

The Achilles Heel of Police Body-Worn Cameras: Understanding the Factors That Influence Variation in Body-Worn Camera Activation

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¹Center for Violence Prevention and Community Safety, School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, Arizona State University, Phoenix, AZ, USA; ²School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, University of Nebraska at Omaha, Omaha, NE, USA

ABSTRACT
While body-worn cameras (BWCs) are increasingly becoming commonplace in police organizations, researchers and policymakers still know little about their implementation in the field and the factors related to their actual use. Using data collected from 146,601 incidents in Phoenix, Arizona, the present study examines the prevalence and correlates of BWC activation. In doing so, we examine the impact of incident level factors, officer characteristics, neighborhood context, and changes in BWC activation policy on whether an officer who is assigned to wear a BWC activates their camera during a police-citizen contact. Cross-classified models are used to simultaneously assess the influence of factors at multiple levels of explanation. Our analysis suggests that a wide variety of individual, situational, organizational, and neighborhood factors are related to an officer's decision to activate their camera. BWC policy that confines, structures, and checks officer activation has a robust impact on an officer's decision to activate their BWC.

ARTICLE HISTORY
Received 26 September 2021
Accepted 22 April 2022

KEYWORDS
Police; body-worn camera; BWC; activation; compliance

- Examined activation at the incident level
- Found higher odds of activation during violent incidents
- Male officers more likely to activate
- Variation in officer-level activation rates, ranging from 0-72% in Anaheim

Prior activation research suggests that incident-level factors matter

Prior activation research suggests that incident-level factors matter

But we do not know whether officer characteristics influence activation rates

Current study

Research questions



Is there notable variation in officer-level BWC activation rates across:

- Officer characteristics (sex, race, education)?
- Features of officers' assignments (years of service, precinct, shift)?
- Other indicators of police performance (proactivity, arrests, complaints, use of force)?

Data



- Phoenix Police Department data from an 18-month study of BWCs
 - BWC activation meta-data
 - Demographic information
 - Assignment information
 - Calls-for-service data
 - Arrest reports
 - Complaints
 - Use of force reports

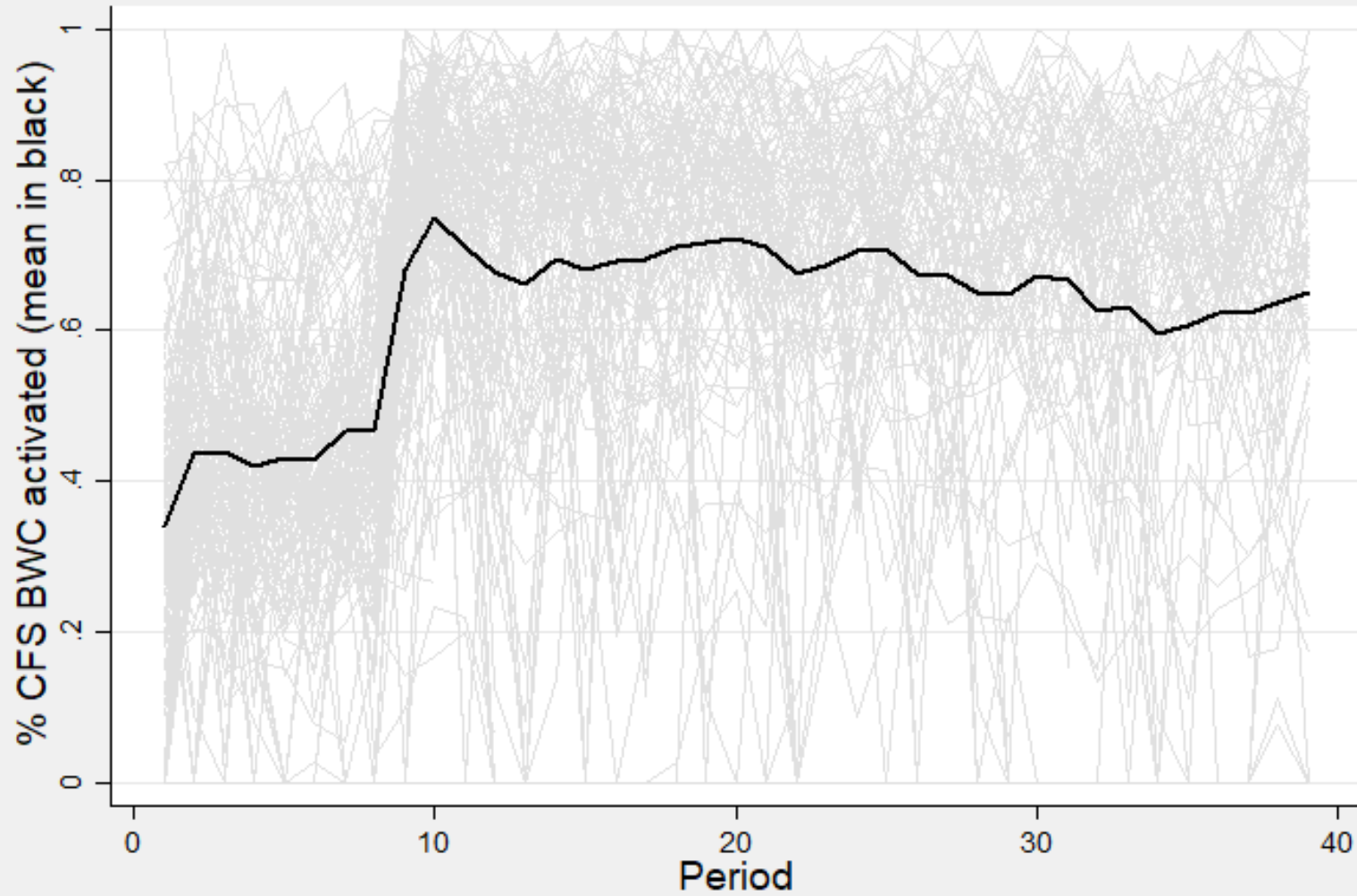


Outcomes of interest

- The number of times an officer activated their BWC
 - Mean = 63.0% of all calls for service
- Trends in officer activation over time
 - Decreased activation (29.5%)
 - No change (49.7%)
 - Increased activation (20.8%)

Results

Officer-level BWC activation over time (n=149)





Predicting activation counts

- Officer demographics
 - Men have higher activation counts (IRR=1.53; $p < 0.05$)
- Officer job-related characteristics
 - No significant relationships
- Officer performance
 - No significant relationships
- Full model
 - Officers in Central City have lower activation (IRR=0.56; $p < 0.05$)

Officer activation over time (n = 149)

Starting activation rate	Ending activation rate		
	Low	Average	High
Low (13.4%)	4.0%	6.0%	3.4%
Average (71.2%)			
High (15.4%)			

Officer activation over time (n = 149)

Starting activation rate	Ending activation rate		
	Low	Average	High
Low (13.4%)	4.0%	6.0%	3.4%
Average (71.2%)	16.8%	43.0%	11.4%
High (15.4%)			

Officer activation over time (n = 149)

Starting activation rate	Ending activation rate		
	Low	Average	High
Low (13.4%)	4.0%	6.0%	3.4%
Average (71.2%)	16.8%	43.0%	11.4%
High (15.4%)	4.0%	8.7%	2.7%



Predicting change in activation

- Officer demographics
 - No significant relationships, though men more likely to increase than decrease (RRR=7.67)
- Officer job-related characteristics
 - South Mountain (RRR=0.10; $p<0.05$) and swing shift (RRR=0.24; $p<0.05$) officers less likely to increase than decrease
- Officer performance
 - Those with more arrests more likely to increase (RRR=1.01; $p<0.05$) than decrease
- Full model
 - South Mountain still less likely to increase (RRR=0.11; $p<0.05$) than decrease over time

Discussion



Limited influence of officer factors

- It doesn't matter:
 - Who the officer is
 - Where they work
 - What other behaviors they engage in

Activation as a response to incident characteristics



- Consistent with prior research
- Suggests activation depends on what is happening in the moment

Recommendations for increasing activation

- Focus on incidents resulting in low compliance

Thank you!

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The Impact Of Body-worn Cameras On Police Accountability & Adjudication Of Citizen Complaints

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Stockton University, NJ



Why police use BWCs?

- Documenting evidence
- Training Officers
- Improving Citizen & Officer Behavior
- Strengthening Accountability and Transparency
- Reducing & Resolving Complaints
- Providing an independent view on events
- Protecting officers from frivolous complaints

Adjudication of Citizen Complaints

RESEARCH # 1

The Effect of Body-Worn Cameras on the Adjudication of Citizen Complaints of Police Misconduct

Suat Cubukcu, Nusret Sahin, Erdal Tekin & Volkan Topalli(2023)

Justice Quarterly,DOI:[10.1080/07418825.2023.2222789](https://doi.org/10.1080/07418825.2023.2222789)

Adjudication of Citizen Complaints



Table 2. Estimates of the effect of Body Worn Cameras on complaint outcomes.

	Not Sustained	Sustained
Panel A		
BWC	-0.055 (0.054)	0.099* (0.052)
Panel B		
1 quarter post BWC	0.015 (0.099)	-0.046 (0.098)
2 quarters post BWC	-0.122* (0.069)	0.210** (0.090)
3 quarters post BWC	-0.169*** (0.050)	0.151* (0.085)
4 quarters post BWC	-0.001 (0.074)	0.202** (0.076)
5 or more quarters post BWC	-0.112* (0.063)	0.098 (0.077)
Number of Observations	2,117	2,117

Notes: Robust standard errors clustered at the district level are in parentheses.

*, **, and *** indicate statistical significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% levels, respectively.

Table 3. Estimates of the effect of Body Worn Cameras on complaint outcomes by race and ethnicity.

Variable	Not Sustained	Sustained
BWC	0.071 (0.092)	0.125 (0.102)
Black Complainant	0.165*** (0.051)	-0.112*** (0.037)
Hispanic Complainant	0.156** (0.068)	-0.087* (0.047)
BWC*Black Complainant	-0.162* (0.088)	-0.005 (0.078)
BWC*Hispanic Complainant	-0.165 (0.125)	-0.067 (0.101)
Number of Observations	2,117	2,117

Notes: Robust standard errors clustered at the district level are in parentheses. *, **, and *** indicate statistical significance at the 10%, 5%, and 1% levels, respectively.

D ATA :

- Citizen complaint data from the Chicago Police Department and Civilian Office of Police Accountability filed between 2013-2020
- Staggered deployment of cameras in 22 districts in 2016 and 2017 to estimate the effect

FINDINGS:

- Providing evidence of misconduct
- Fewer dismissals of complaints against officers
- More disciplinary action
- Reduction in disparity in complaint outcomes across racial groups
- Remedy racial disparities in complaint resolution outcomes
 - Complaints by Black citizens were taken as seriously as those by Whites.

Strengthening Accountability and Transparency

RESEARCH # 2

The Impact of BWCs on Enhancing Transparency and Accountability in Policing: The EPJETS Model

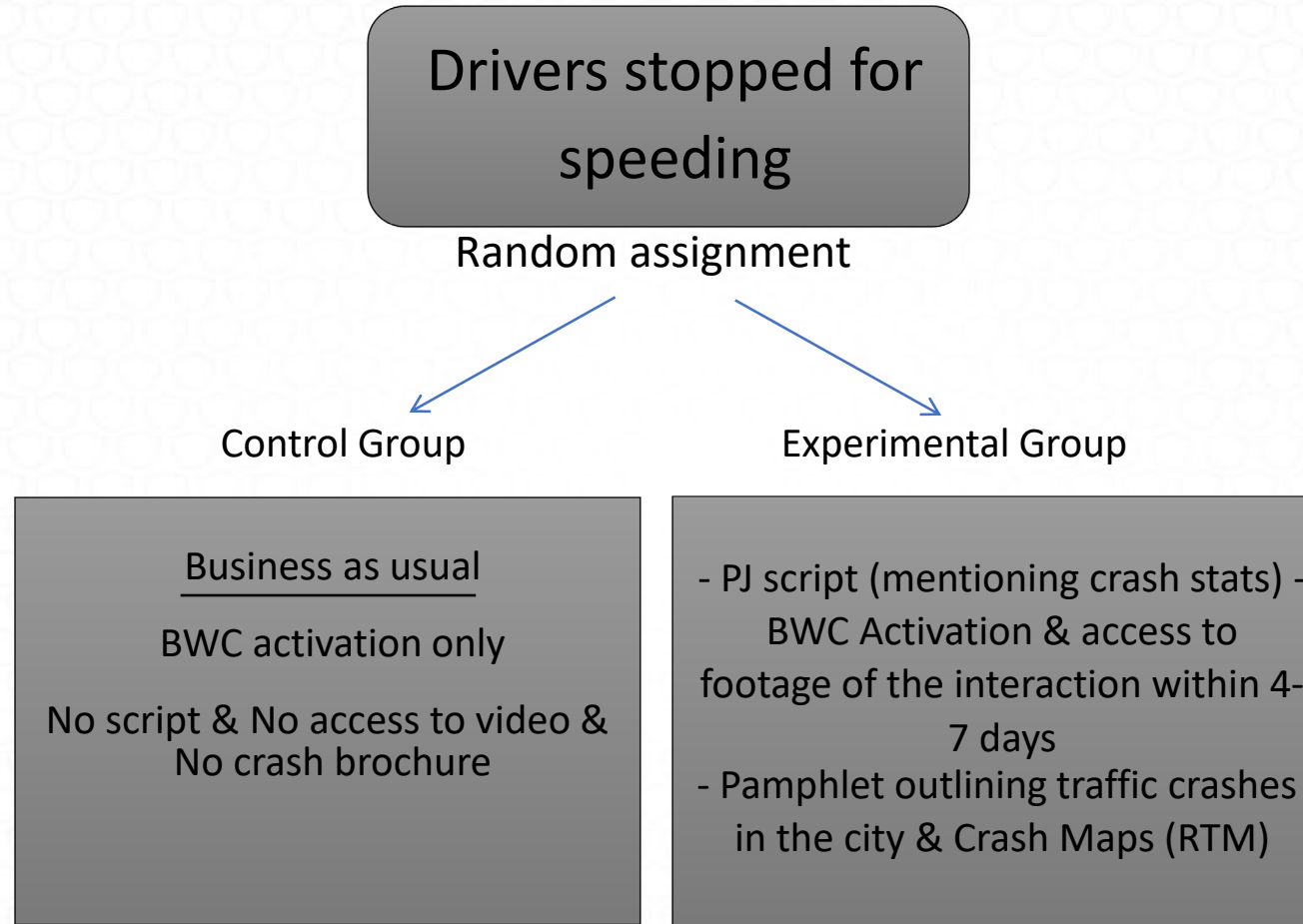


Nusret M. Sahin, Principal Investigator

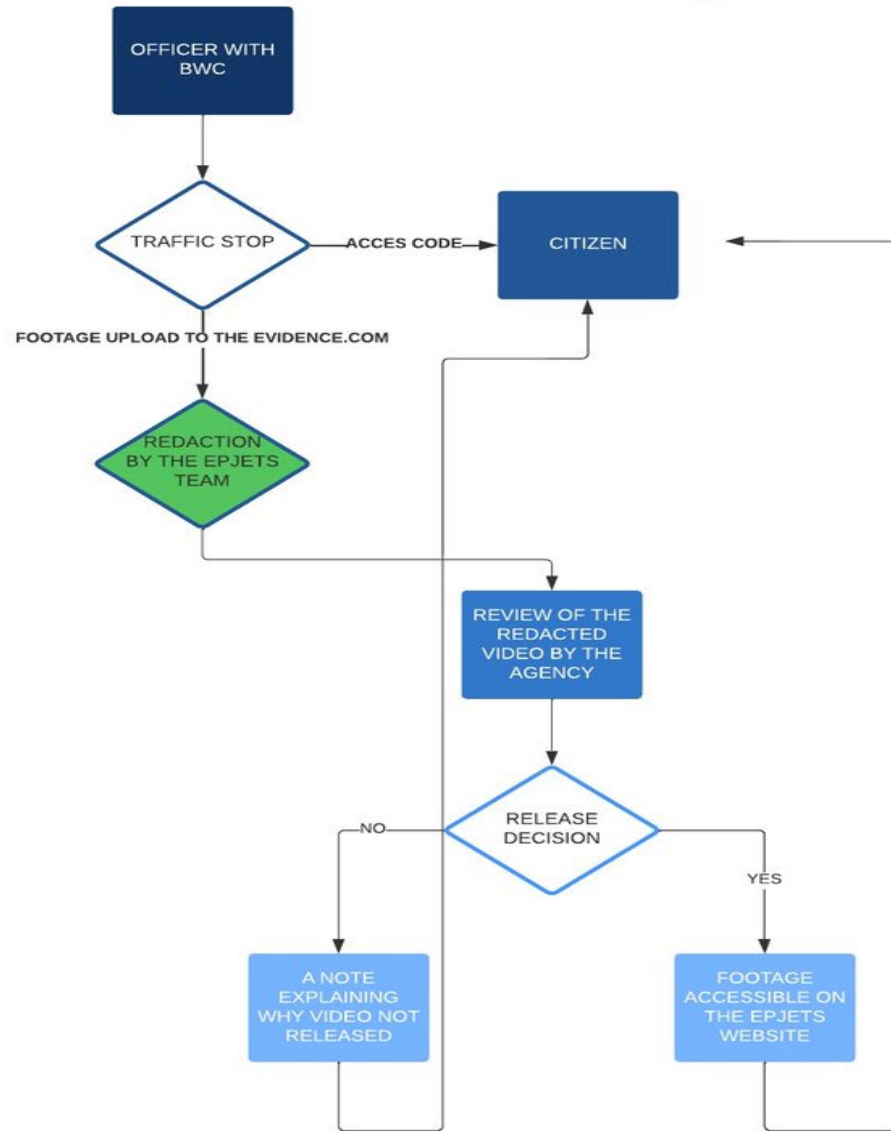
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The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations presented are those of the presenter and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Justice.

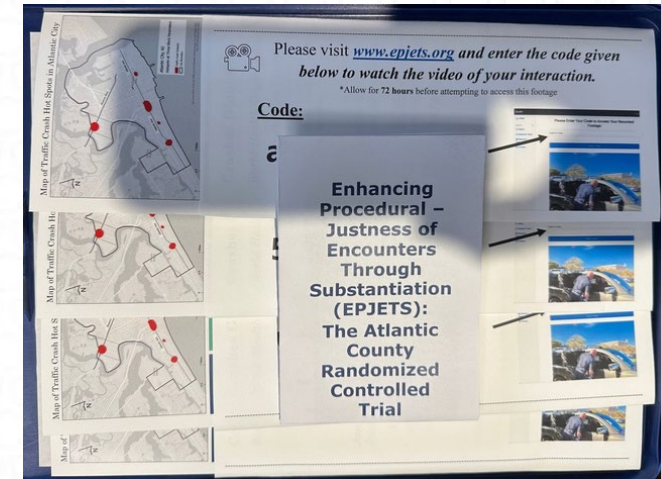
The Impact of Body-Worn Cameras on Police Accountability: Citizen Perceptions



Combining the best of procedural justice practices with use of BWC/release of footage



- A code and website address is given to the driver
- The research team redacts the video to protect the privacy of bystanders, blurs faces/plate numbers (if needed)
- Video is sent to the ACPD and PPD for their approval
- The video is uploaded onto the project's website



The Impact of Body-Worn Cameras on Police Accountability



Findings

Variables		T-test	Mean (Exp./Cont.)
DV: Overall perceptions of police professionalism, attributed to the BWC usage by officers. IV: Experimental Condition (N=349)	Significance (p)	S (<0.001)	Exp: 1.35 Cont: 1.69
DV: Encounter specific perceptions of police professionalism, attributed to the BWC usage by officers. IV: Experimental Condition (N=350)	Significance (p)	S (<0.001)	Exp: 1.88 Cont: 2.31

Comparison of Experimental and Control Responses

- Stronger Perceptions of Police Professionalism when drivers are informed about the recording & access to footage

- Overall Perceptions of BWC Professionalism Question:

“I believe police officers with body worn cameras act more professionally.”

- Encounter Specific Perceptions of BWC Professionalism Question:

“I think police officer that I interacted with today acted more professionally because he/she was wearing a body camera.”

*Likert scale used. The lowest score (1) indicate highest level of agreement with the given statement.



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**THANK
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What Research is Telling Us About Body-Worn Camera Practice

Results from the Anaheim and Milwaukee Police Departments
and the Loudoun County Adult Detention Center

Dan Lawrence, Senior Research Scientist, CNA

This material was supported by Grant No. 2019-BC-BX-K001 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA). BJA is a component of the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs. Points of view or opinions contained herein do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.



Three Studies

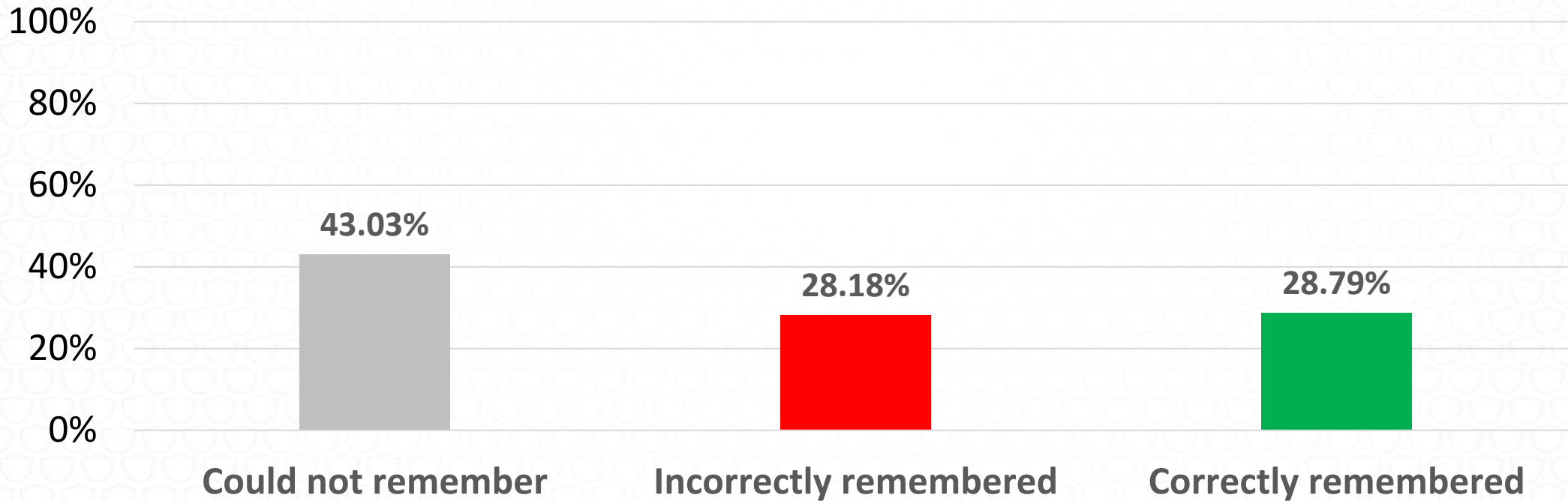
- Anaheim Police Department
 - 2015–2017
 - Pilot BWC program: Random Controlled Trial (RCT) of 60 officers, 40 of whom received BWCs
- Milwaukee Police Department
 - 2015–2019
 - Large RCT with 504 officers, quasi-experimental with 1,100 officers
- Loudoun County Adult Detention Center
 - 2019–2023
 - First RCT of BWCs in a correctional facility (12 units)



Anaheim Study: BWC Recall

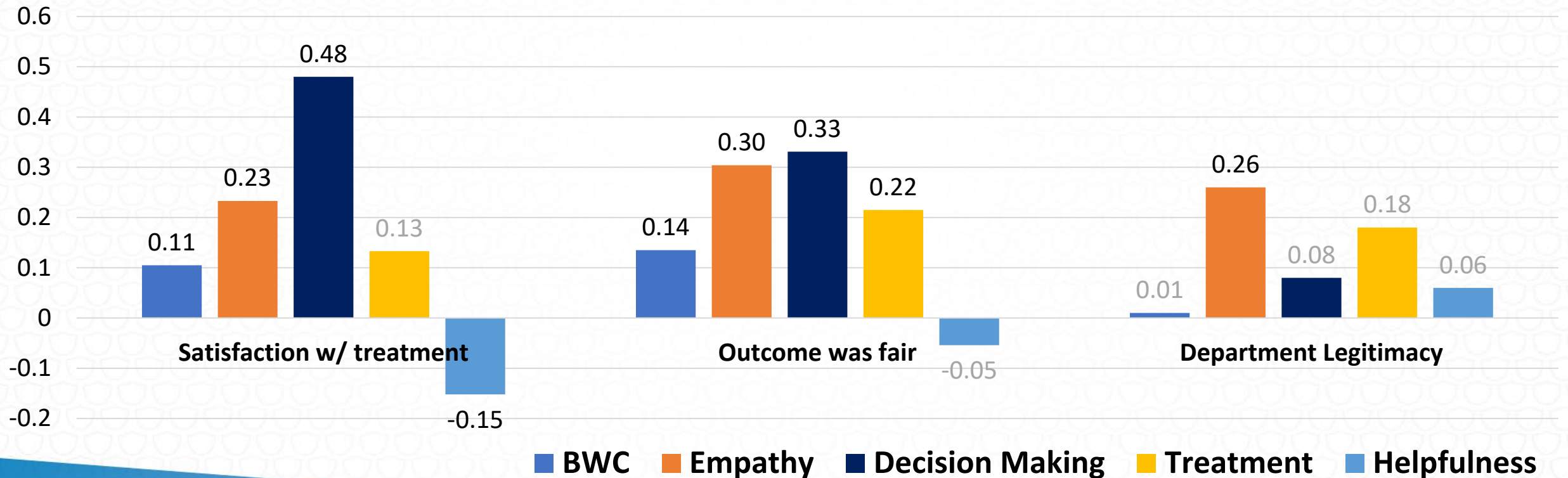
- Community members do not accurately recall the presence of a BWC

Do you remember if the officer was wearing a body camera? (n=384)



Anaheim Study: Procedural Justice

- BWCs help perceptions of the interaction, but procedural justice behaviors are more important



Anaheim Study: BWC Activation

- BWC activation varies by officer, policing event, and over time

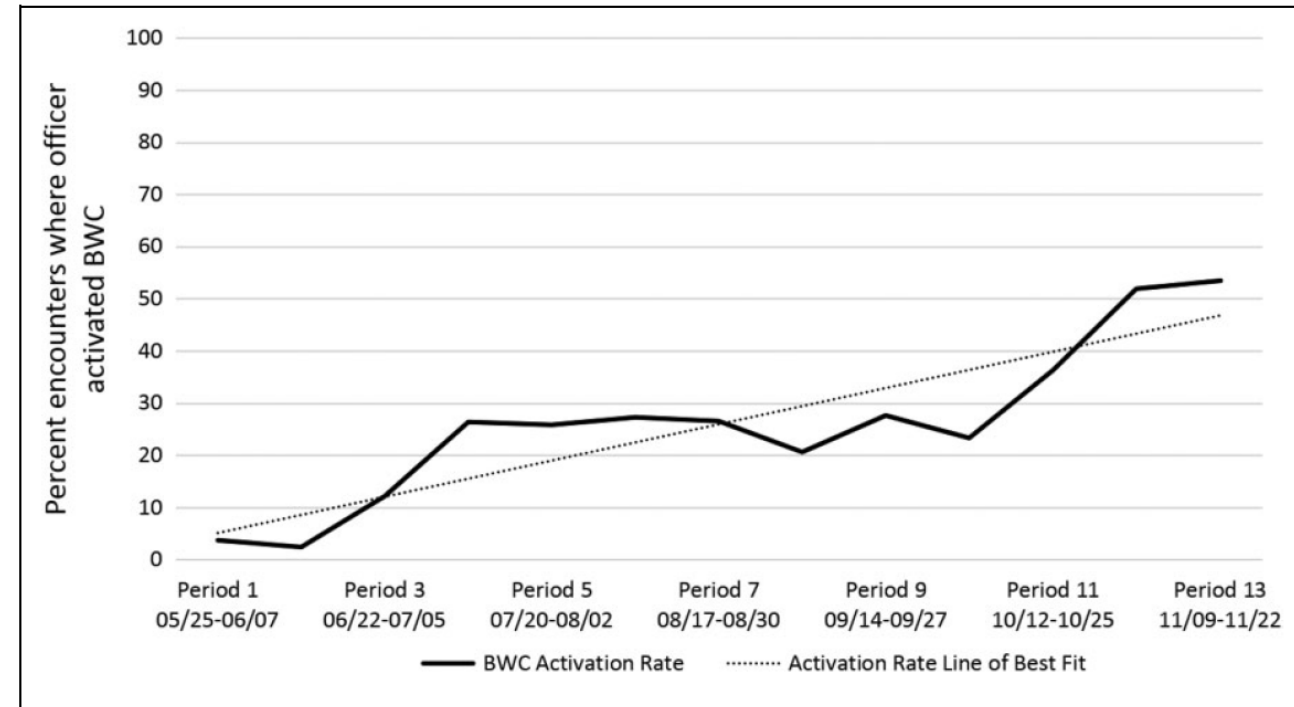
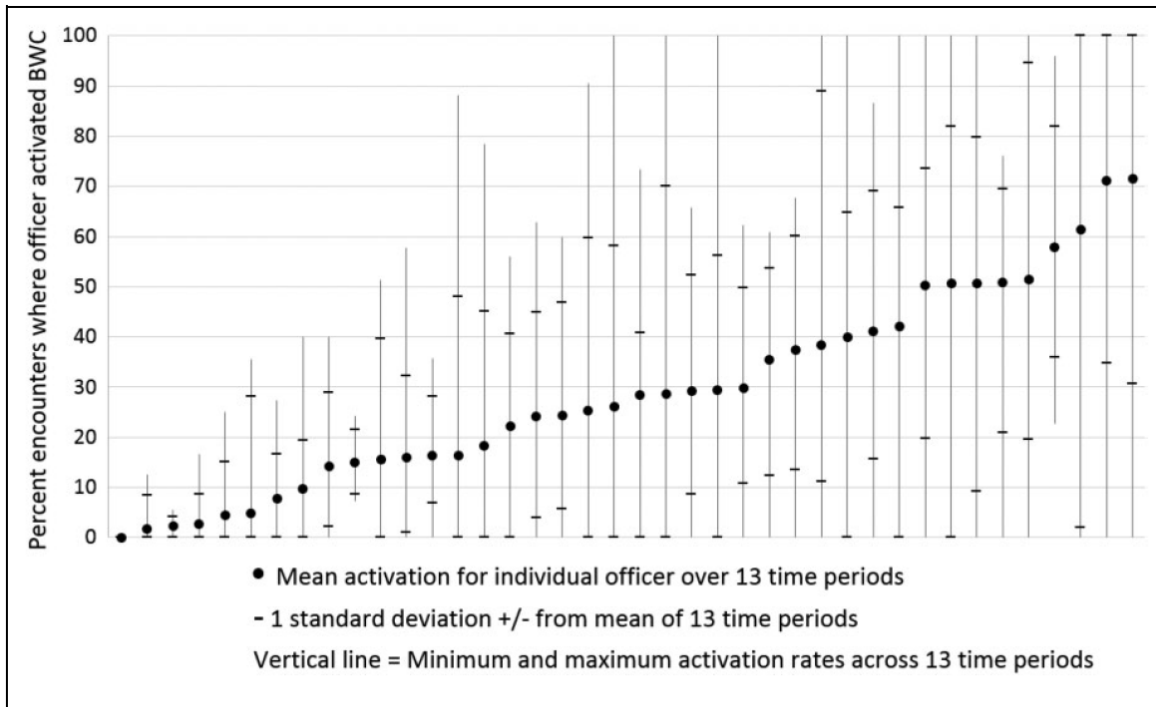


Figure 1. Officer mean body-worn camera activation rates, with time period variation.

Figure 2. Time period group mean body-worn camera activation rates.



Milwaukee Study: Impact

- Proactive Activities
 - No change to total amount of these activities, traffic stops, or business checks
 - 8% fewer subject stops, 23% more park and walks
- Complaints
 - Among RCT officers (n=504): 51% fewer complaints ($p < .10$)
 - Among all officers (n=1,100): 29% fewer complaints overall, each additional month that an officer is equipped with a camera results in a 6% reduction in their number of monthly complaints
- Use of force
 - Among RCT officers (n=504): No change
 - Among all officers (n=1,100): No change overall. Officers had 15% fewer uses of force in the month after receiving a BWC but then engaged in 2% more use of force incidents for each subsequent month they had a camera

Milwaukee Study: Community Perspectives



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- Three waves of community surveys (n=2,035)
- Knowledge of BWC program increased over time from 36% to 76%
- Knowledge of BWC program increased views of department legitimacy
- Knowledge of BWC program does not relate to support for the BWCs
- Views of department legitimacy increased views of support for BWCs

Loudoun Study: Impact



- First RCT of BWCs in a correctional facility
- Responses to Resistance (RTR)
 - The amount of RTR events was 40% lower in unit-months with BWCs
 - No change in amount of RTRs involving passive or aggressive resistance; however, 52% fewer RTRs involving active resistance
 - No change in amount of RTRs involving restraint or weapon controls; however, 37% fewer RTRs involving physical controls
- Injuries
 - Injury rate among RTR was 19% (18 of the 97 RTRs)
 - The amount of injuries during RTR events was 58% lower in unit-months with BWCs

Loudoun Study: Deputy Perspectives

- 3 waves of surveys with deputies (n=117, 84, 87)

Table 5. Change in deputy perspectives

Domains	# Items	Scale Alpha	Means			Mean Differences		
			Pre	Mid	Post	Pre-Mid	Mid-Post	Pre-Post
Efficiency and Accuracy	8	.89	2.99	2.95	3.00	-0.04	0.05	0.01
Resident Civilizing Effect	3	.94	2.61	2.38	2.61	-0.23	0.23	0.00
Work disruptions	5	.69	2.77	2.85	2.70	0.08	-0.15	-0.07
Resident-deputy relationships	5	.81	3.69	3.31	3.44	-0.37 *	0.12	-0.25 *

Notes: All scales and items used a 5-point Likert response scale, where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree. * $p < .01$

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Thank You

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