



# The Role of Police Body-Worn Cameras in Recent Public Protests: Small Agency Perspectives

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October 29, 2020

Dr. Michael White, Co-Director, BWC TTA

Captain Wes Milam, Fort Smith, Arkansas, Police Department

Assistant Chief Lynn Waterworth, Jonesboro, Arkansas,  
Police Department

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# Introduction

Dr. James “Chip” Coldren,  
Project Director, BWC TTA,  
CNA





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# Webinar Introduction

- **Introduction** – Dr. Chip Coldren, BWC TTA Project Director, CNA
- **Results of TTA Site Survey** – Dr. Michael White, ASU
- **Jurisdiction Experience** – Captain Wes Milam, Fort Smith Police Department
- **Jurisdiction Experience** – Assistant Chief Lynn Waterworth, Jonesboro Police Department
- **Questions** – Dr. Chip Coldren, BWC TTA Project Director, CNA
- **Closing Remarks** – Dr. Chip Coldren, BWC TTA Project Director, CNA



# Webinar Overview and Logistics



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- Webinar is recorded
- Questions
- Webinar evaluation
- Resources

# Results of TTA Site Survey

Dr. Michael White, Co-  
Director of BWC TTA and  
Professor, Arizona State  
University



# The ASU “BWC and Protests” Survey



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- Survey link emailed to 426 current and former TTA sites
  - Sent out June 11, 2020
  - Reminders - June 18, June 25
- 53 returned email addresses (373)
- 100 completed surveys returned
  - Response rate = 23.5% (100/426) or 26.8% (100/373)
- 61 from agencies less than 100 sworn (small)
- 21 from agencies with 100-499 sworn (medium)
- 18 from agencies with more than 500 sworn (large)





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# The ASU Survey – Topics

- Prevalence of protests (since May 25, 2020)
- Civility of protests
- BWC presence
- Activation/live-streaming
- Problems/issues with BWCs (battery life/recording capacity)
- Usefulness of BWCs
- Complaints against officers (BWCs present)

# Results

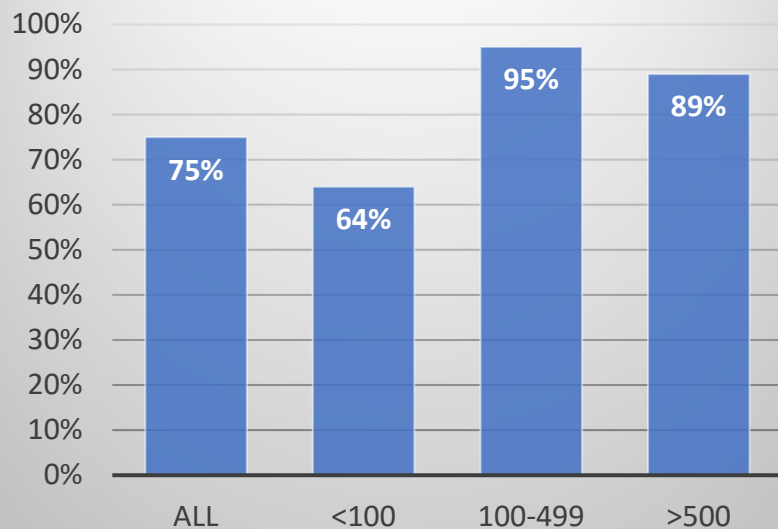


# Prevalence of Protests (and BWCs)

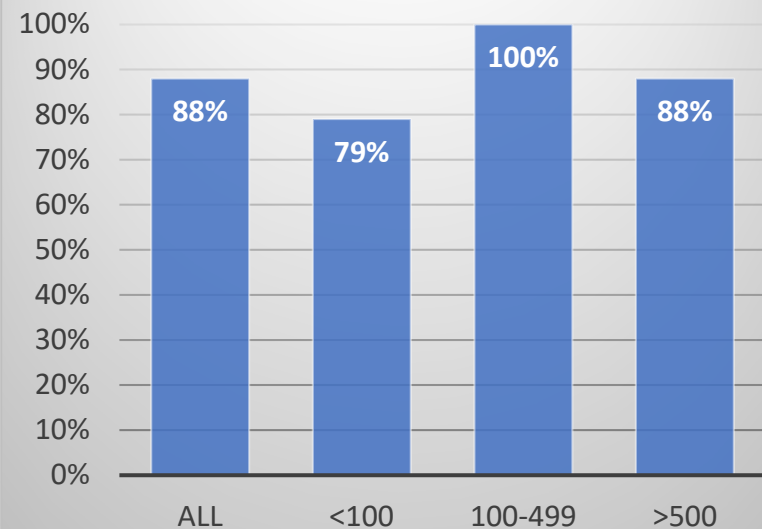


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## Recent Protests

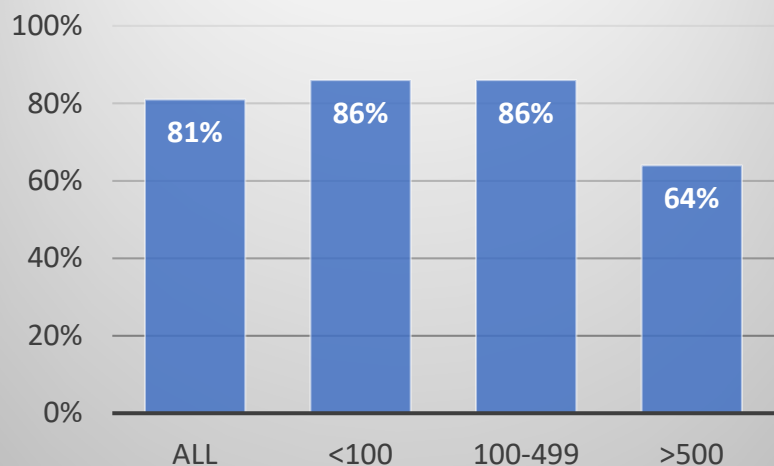


## Officers with BWCs

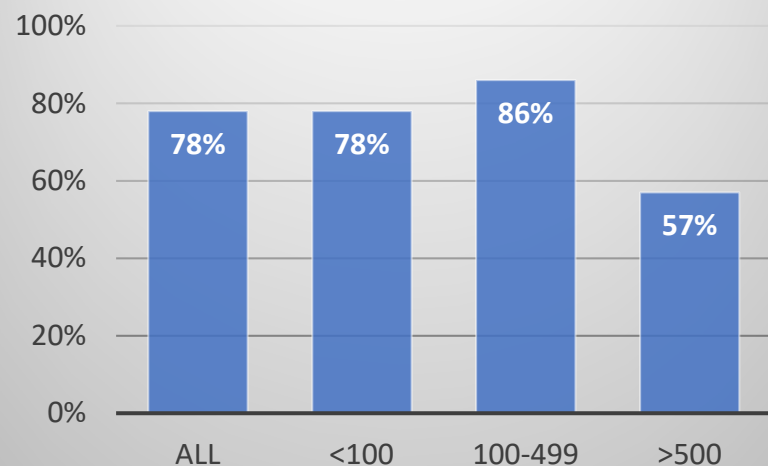


# BWC Performance at Protests

## Battery and Recording Capacity Sufficient



## No Other Technical Issues/Problems



# The Civility of Protests: 1 (very peaceful) - 10 (very violent)



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All	3.84
Small agencies <100	2.91
Medium-sized agencies 100-499	4.13
Large agencies >500	5.94





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# Are BWCs useful at protests?

- 81% say “yes”
  - Small agencies: 59%
  - Medium-sized agencies: 77%
  - Large agencies: 85%
- Most commonly identified benefits
  - Evidentiary/documentation (75%)
    - Small agencies: 63%
    - Medium-sized agencies: 80%
    - Large agencies: 77%
  - Just as useful as for everyday activities (15%)
    - Small agencies: 16%
    - Medium-sized agencies: 20%
    - Large agencies: 8%



# Other Findings of Interest

- 50% sent officers to protests in other jurisdictions
  - Small agencies: 52%
  - Medium-sized agencies: 52%
  - Large agencies: 39%
- 81% require activation of BWC at protests
  - Small agencies: 86%
  - Medium-sized agencies: 69%
  - Large agencies: 71%
- Live-streaming was rare (3% overall)
- 18% reported having complaints filed against officers
  - Small agencies: 0%
  - Medium-sized agencies: 22%
  - Large agencies: 67%

# Summary



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- Most have had recent protests (75%)
  - Protests more common (95%) and more violent in medium-sized agency jurisdictions.
  - Complaints against officers also more common (22% v. 0%).
- Most had BWCs present at those protests (88%)
  - All medium-sized; 79% small agencies
- Most require activation of BWCs at protests (81%)
  - Less common among medium-sized agencies (69%)
- Most reported no problems with their BWCs (80%)
- Most reported BWCs are useful at protests (81%)
  - Less common among small agencies (59%)



# Jurisdiction Experience

Captain Wes Milam, Fort  
Smith, Arkansas, Police  
Department





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# Jurisdiction Experience

Assistant Chief Lynn  
Waterworth, Jonesboro,  
Arkansas, Police Department



# The Events



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2020-05-31 T21:08:19Z  
AXON BODY 2 X81370843







2020-06-01 T01:39:03Z  
AXON BODY 2 X81371179





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2020-06-02 T23:17:43Z  
AXON BODY 2 X81369977



Johnson\_Protest\_20-04601



# Issues



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2020-05-31 T21:03:37Z  
AXON BODY 2 X81369352





2020-05-31 T21:02:55Z  
AXON BODY 2 X81369352







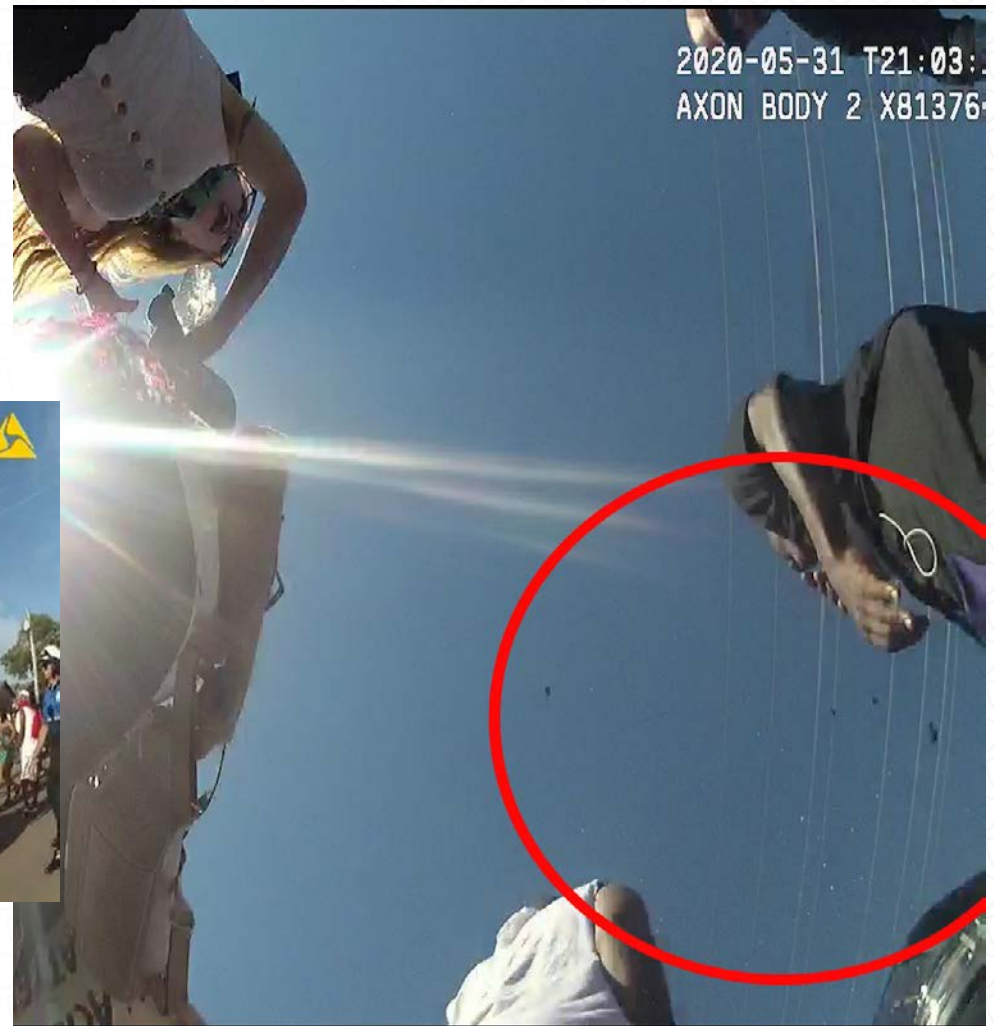
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# Benefits



# Community Policing



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Photo Credit:  
James Bickham



# Questions & Answers

Please let us know your  
thoughts.

# Closing Remarks

Dr. James “Chip” Coldren,  
Project Director, BWC TTA,  
CNA







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# Resources

- BJA Body-Worn Camera Toolkit (<https://www.bja.gov/bwc>)
- BWC TTA website ([www.bwctta.com](http://www.bwctta.com))
- Getting started guide (<https://www.bja.gov/bwc/topics-gettingstarted.html>)
- BWC subject matter experts (<https://bwctta.com/Ask%20a%20BWC%20Expert>)
- TTA email address ([BWCTTA@cna.org](mailto:BWCTTA@cna.org))