BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Releasing BWC Footage: Critical Incidents and Communicating with the Public

- Laura McElroy, BWC TTA SME and Communication Strategist, McElroy Media Group
- Dr. Craig D. Uchida, BWC TTA Senior Advisor and President, JSS

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.

Meeting Logistics

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Muting
- Meeting is recorded
- Chat questions
- Edit you name
- Meeting and session evaluation

What Can We Learn From the Wave of Protests Against Police?

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Demonstrators kneel in a moment of silence outside the Long Beach Police Department on Sunday, May 31, 2020 (AP Photo/Ashley Landis) (Copyright 2020 The Associated Press. All rights reserved)
https://www.click2houston.com/news/national/2020/06/01/these-are-some-of-the-most-powerful-videos-coming-out-of-protests-across-the-us/

What Can We Learn From the Wave of Protests Against Police?

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

People overturn a police car as they protest police brutality in Salt Lake City on, Saturday, May 30, 2020. Ivy Ceballo, Deseret News https://www.deseret.com/utah/2020/6/5/21281537/woman-is-4th-person-arrested-in-riotous-destruction-of-salt-lake-city-police-car-protests

What Can We Learn From the Wave of Protests Against Police?

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Line of Fayetteville officers in riot gear kneel before protesters. Source: https://www.wral.com/line-of-fayetteville-officers-in-riot-gear-kneel-before-protesters/19125817/

People Want Their Voice to Count

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Recent headlines:

"CT faith leaders amplify support for police accountability bill," *The CT Mirror,* July 23, 2020.
https://ctmirror.org/2020/07/23/ct-faith-leaders-amplify-support-for-police-accountability-bill/

"Without transparency, police reform will fail," *NJ.com,* August 20, 2020.
https://www.nj.com/opinion/2020/08/without-transparency-police-reform-will-fail-opinion.html

"USA TODAY poll: Americans want major police reform, more focus on serious crime," *USA Today,* June 29, 2020.
https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2020/06/29/us-police-reform-poll-finds-support-more-training-transparency/3259628001/

People Want to Trust the Police

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

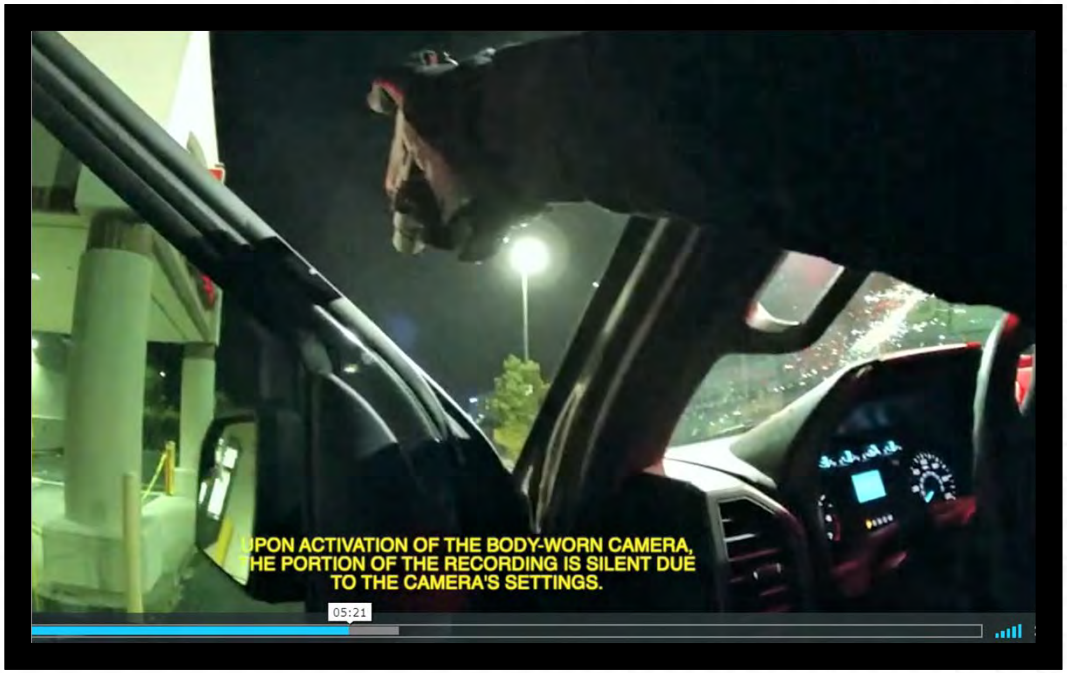
- If people feel the agency shares their values, concerns, and goals—and empathizes with community—it builds trust.
- Trust builds team approach
- Leads to information sharing

Source: West Memphis Police Department Facebook Page, https://www.facebook.com/westmemphispd/photos/a.1232299183465702/2747806298581642/?type=3

What Does Your BWC Video Release Policy Say about Your Agency?

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Does it set an open & accountable tone?
- Does it reflect the expectations of your community?
- How will it impact your public messaging during a critical incident?

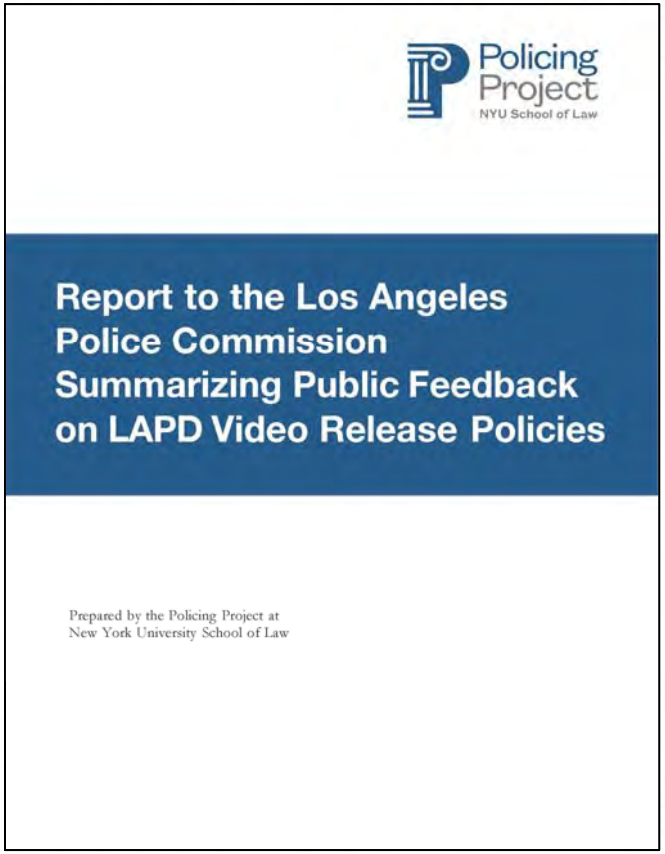


Officer Involved Shooting, June, 2, 2020. City of Vallejo. https://www.cityofvallejo.net/city_hall/departments___divisions/police/public_information/officer_involved_shooting__june_2__2020

Are You Including Your Community?

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

LAPD & NYU Policing Project



www.policingproject.org
http://lapd-assets.lapdonline.org/assets/pdf/public%20feedback%20project%20lapd%20video%20release.pdf

Are You Including Your Community?

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Policing Project
NYU School of Law

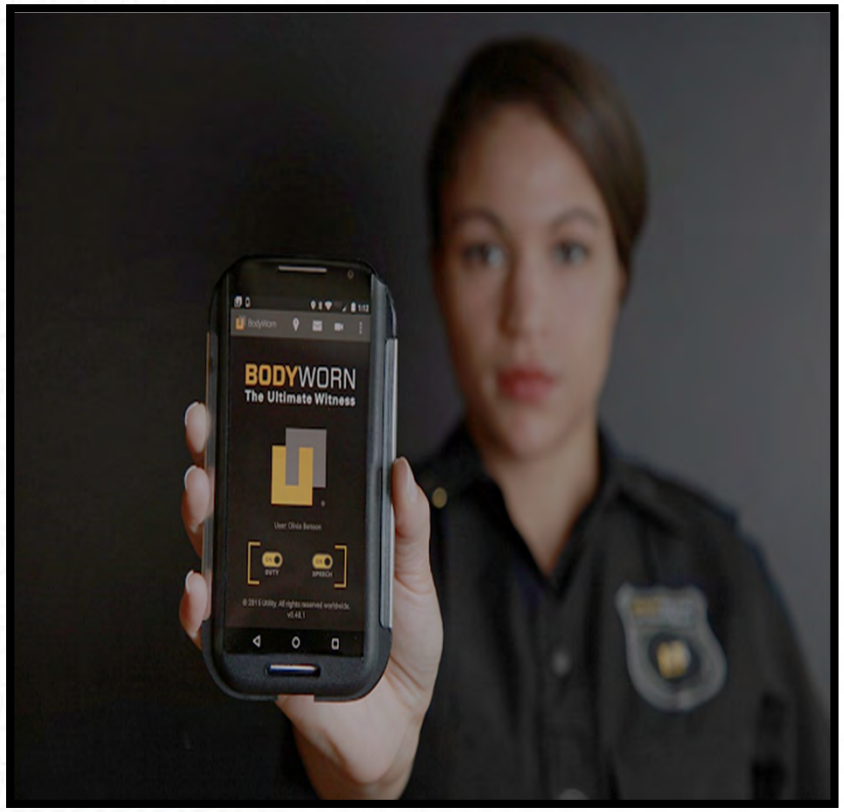
- 5 Community Forums
- 3200 Online & Paper Surveys
- 8 Officer Focus Groups
- 200 Groups Via Email
- Social Media Push
- Local Media Push
- Flyer Distribution

Officers & Citizens Supported Release of BWC Video

Officers	60 Days
Community	30 Days
Policy	45 Days

www.policingproject.org
http://lapd-assets.lapdonline.org/assets/pdf/public%20feedback%20project%20lapd%20video%20release.pdf

Public Attitudes & Expectations



Rapid Response

Officer Involved Shooting

Old: What are the facts?

New: How does your agency handle the facts?

- Do you release details quickly?
- Video?
- Fair investigation?
- Will officers be held accountable if policy or law is broken?

Handling Critical Incidents

"Police Release Video Of Deadly City Heights Officer-Involved Shooting," *KPBS,* July 10, 2020. https://www.kpbs.org/news/2020/jul/09/police-shooting-leaves-man-dead-city-heights/

Swift, strong, & proactive

- Earns trust & respect with citizens

Slow, disorganized, & reactive

- Inept
- Unethical
- Covering up

Releasing BWC Video

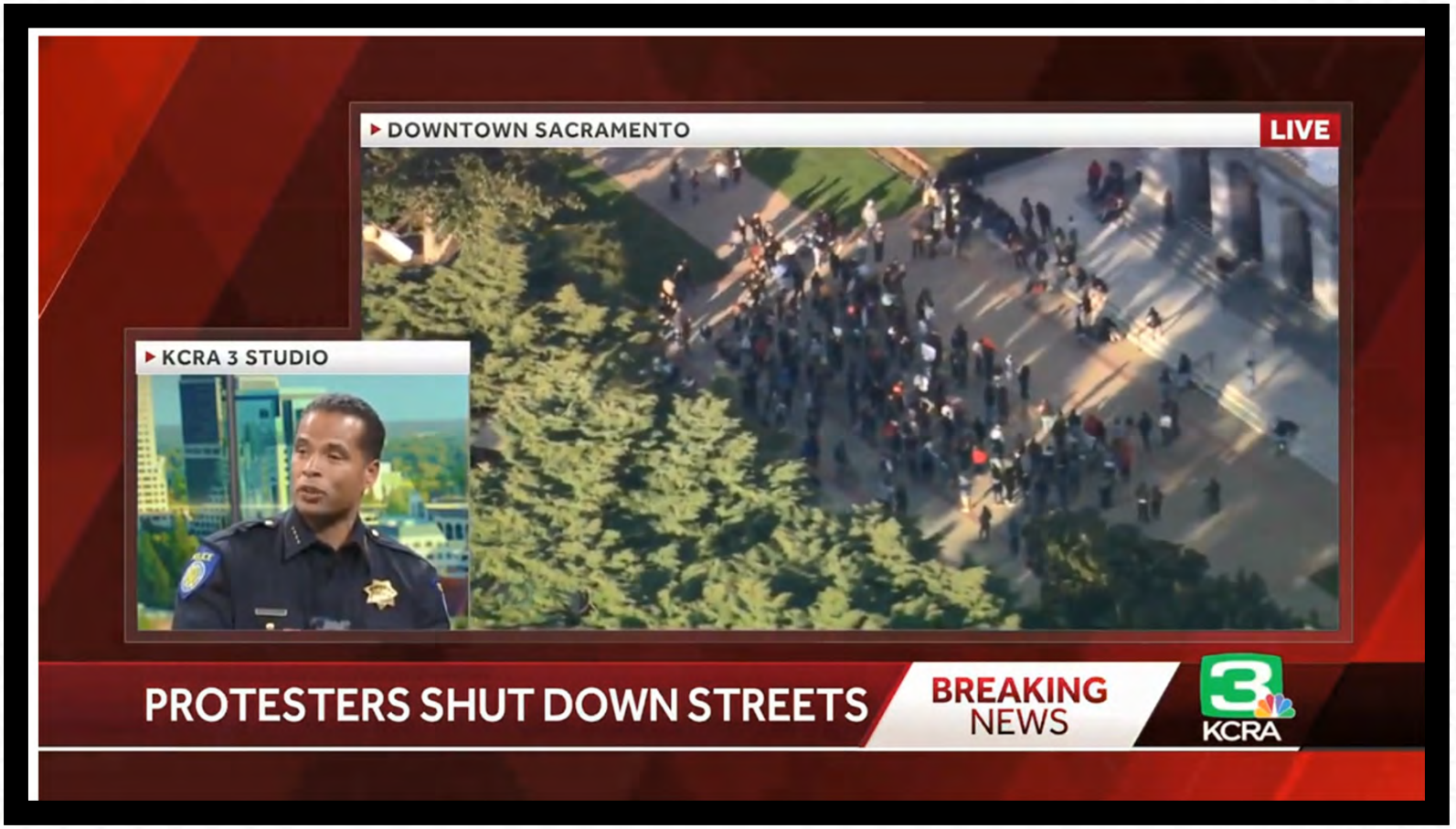
BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- When do you release video?
- Do you edit the video?
- How do you handle the subject's family?
- Do you involve special interest groups?
- Do you involve key stakeholders?

"Salt Lake City police release footage of shooting of hostage taker," *Toronto Sun,* August 11, 2020. https://torontosun.com/news/world/salt-lake-city-police-release-footage-of-shooting-of-hostage-taker

Sacramento OIS: Video Release Prompts More Protests

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



www.kcra.com

Sacramento OIS

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

"After Sacramento police muted body camera during Stephon Clark shooting, department mandates officers keep microphones on,"
***Tribune News Service,* April 11, 2018.**

(Renee C. Byer/Sacramento Bee/TNS)
https://www.sfexaminer.com/uncategorised/after-sacramento-police-muted-body-camera-during-stephon-clark-shooting-department-mandates-officers-keep-microphones-on/

Sacramento OIS

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

https://www.cnn.com/2018/03/25/us/sacramento-shooting-body-camera/index.html

Communication to Build Trust

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

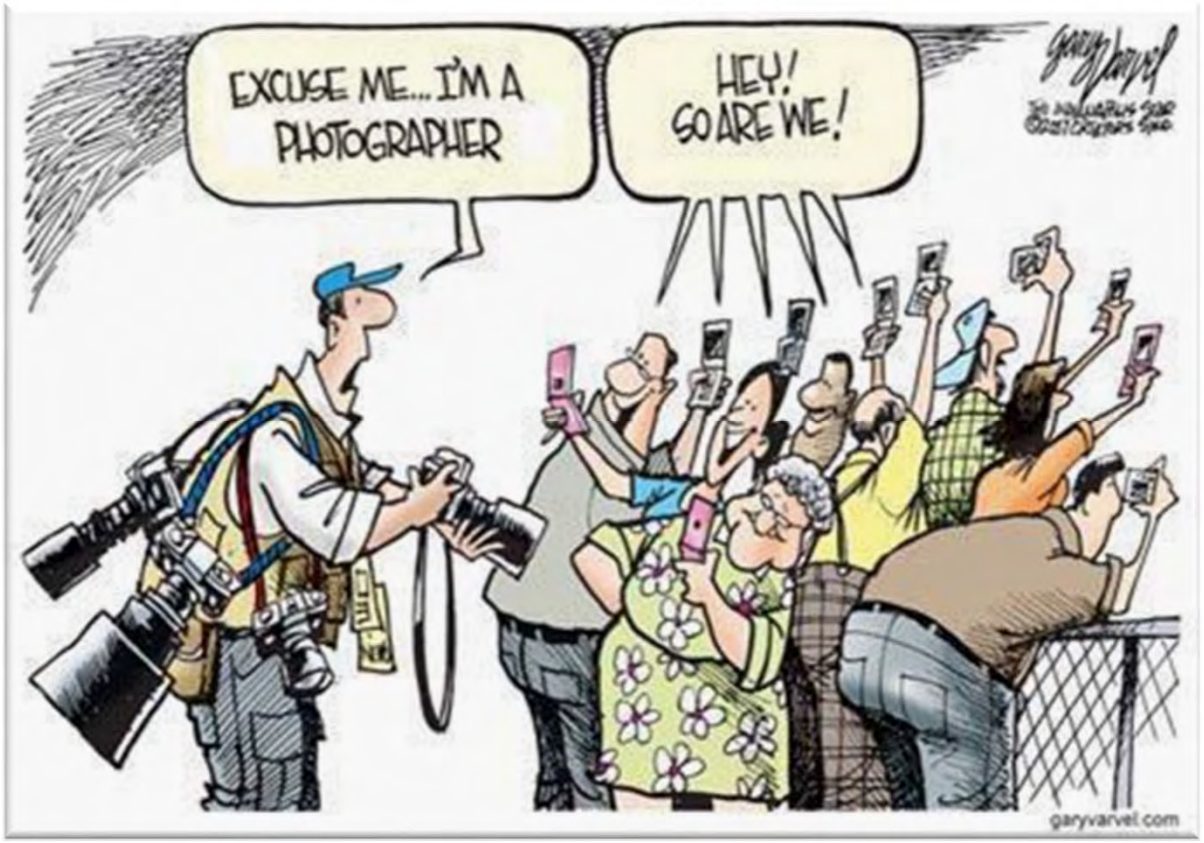
When Crisis Strikes

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- ✓ Public will expect to view video
- ✓ Be consistent when releasing video
- ✓ Offer family first viewing
- ✓ Contact community leaders to share information and to build support
- ✓ Monitor social media
- ✓ Establish your agency as the source of information
- ✓ Act quickly to prevent false narrative

Cell Phone Video Released

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



Cell Phone Video Released

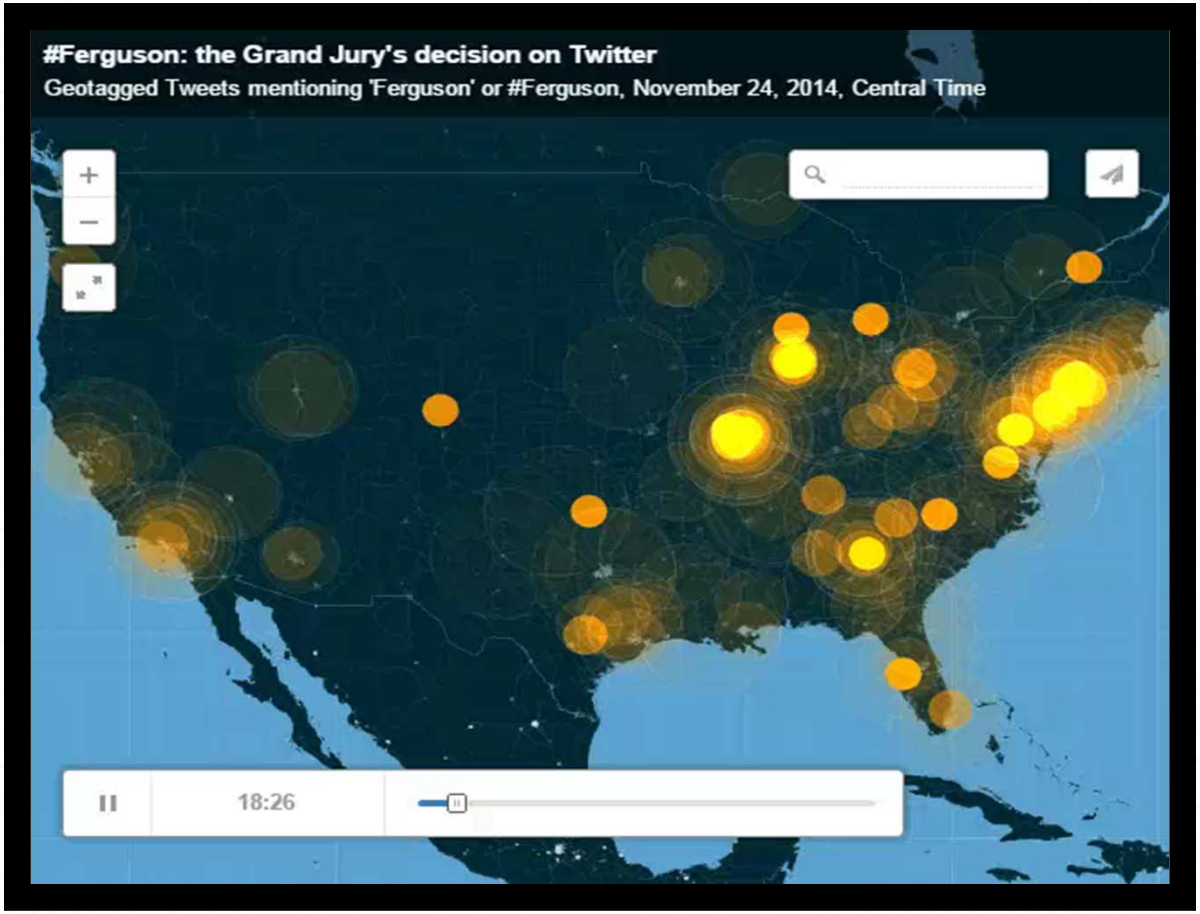
- Speed of information
- Unanswered information becomes new reality
- In the absence of facts, often get it wrong
- If you're not ready to release facts, explain the process

Witness Releases Video In Houston OIS

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Twitter Impacts Public Opinion

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



http://srogers.carto.com/viz/64f6c0f4-745d-11e4-b4e1-0e4fddd5de28/embed_map

Oversight of the Policy

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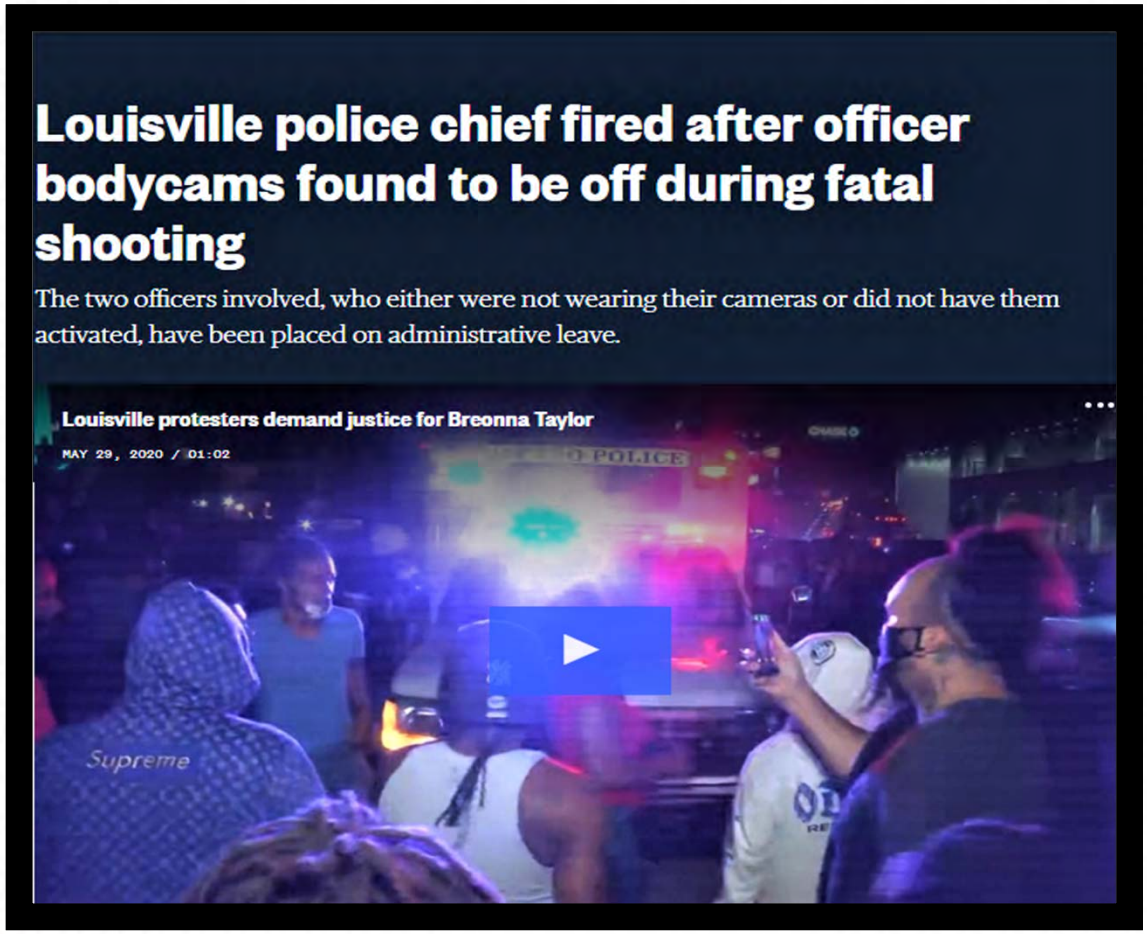
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



NBC News, June 1, 2020. https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/louisville-police-chief-fired-after-officer-bodycams-found-be-during-n1221351

Don’t Forget You Internal Audience

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Culture Eats Policy for Breakfast

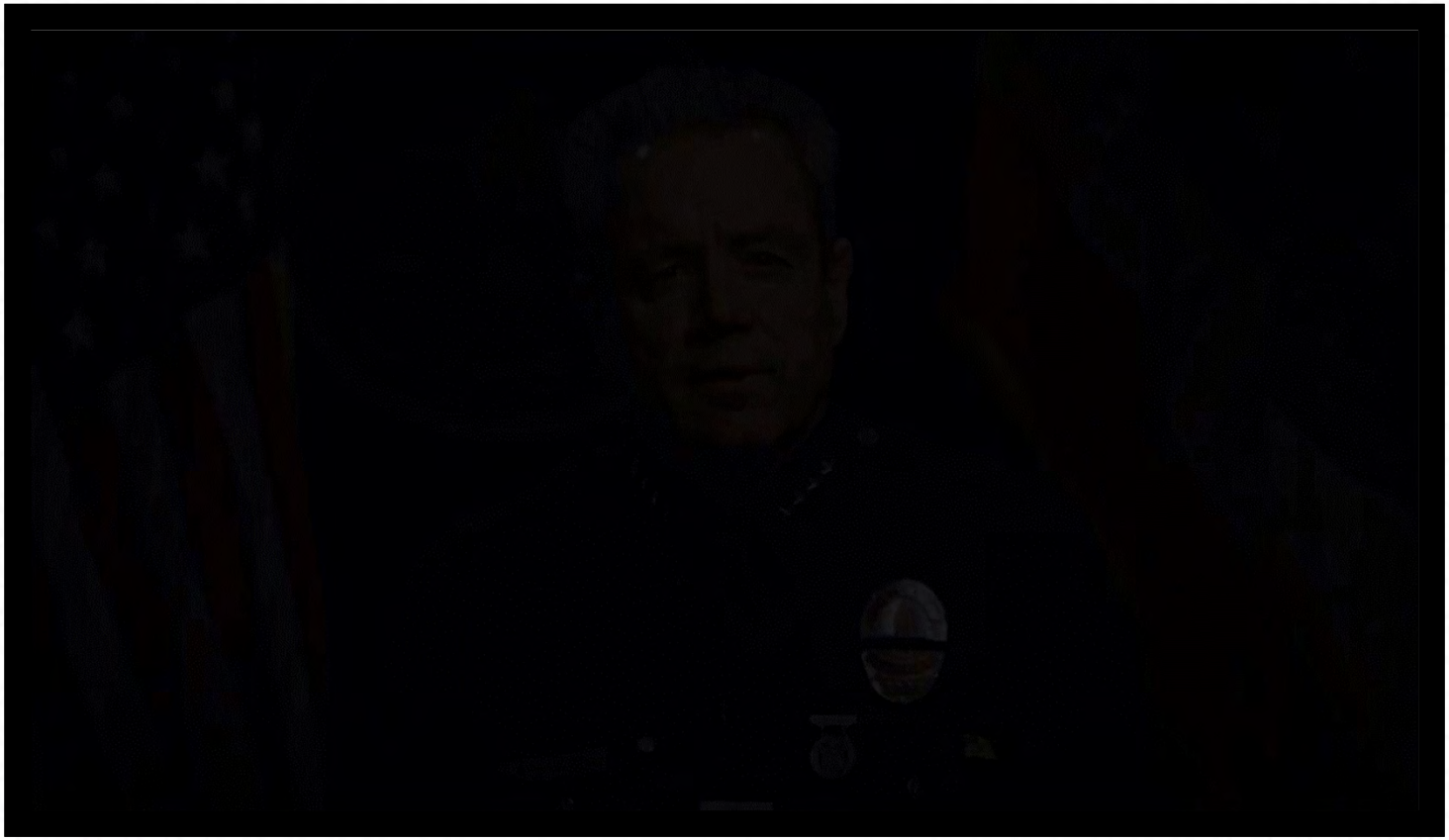
Different Approaches to Releasing BWC Footage

News Coverage Follows Policy

Well Produced Option: LAPD

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Cell Phone Video of Use of Force: LAPD



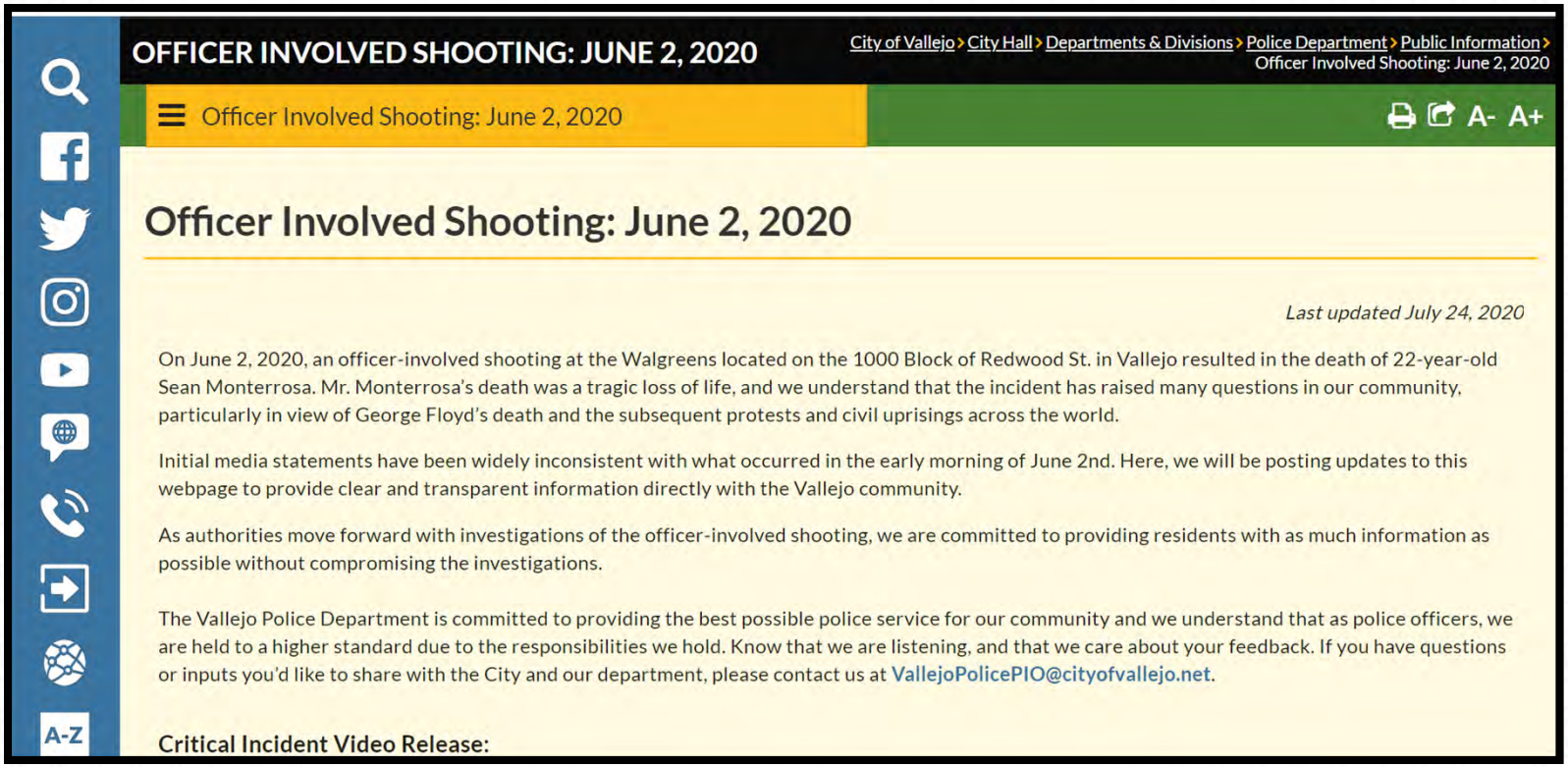
LAPD Breaks from Policy with One Week Release

Big Dog Theory

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Become the Official Source: Vallejo Police Department (CA)

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



OFFICER INVOLVED SHOOTING: JUNE 2, 2020

City of Vallejo › City Hall › Departments & Divisions › Police Department › Public Information › Officer Involved Shooting: June 2, 2020

Officer Involved Shooting: June 2, 2020

A- A+

Officer Involved Shooting: June 2, 2020

Last updated July 24, 2020

On June 2, 2020, an officer-involved shooting at the Walgreens located on the 1000 Block of Redwood St. in Vallejo resulted in the death of 22-year-old Sean Monterrosa. Mr. Monterrosa's death was a tragic loss of life, and we understand that the incident has raised many questions in our community, particularly in view of George Floyd's death and the subsequent protests and civil uprisings across the world.

Initial media statements have been widely inconsistent with what occurred in the early morning of June 2nd. Here, we will be posting updates to this webpage to provide clear and transparent information directly with the Vallejo community.

As authorities move forward with investigations of the officer-involved shooting, we are committed to providing residents with as much information as possible without compromising the investigations.

The Vallejo Police Department is committed to providing the best possible police service for our community and we understand that as police officers, we are held to a higher standard due to the responsibilities we hold. Know that we are listening, and that we care about your feedback. If you have questions or inputs you'd like to share with the City and our department, please contact us at VallejoPolicePIO@cityofvallejo.net.

Critical Incident Video Release:

https://www.cityofvallejo.net/city_hall/departments___divisions/police/public_information/officer_involved_shooting__june_2__2020

Become the Official Source: Vallejo Police Department (CA)

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Critical Incident Video Release:

VIEWER WARNING - The three (3) links below (issued 07-24-2020) contain graphic images and adult language. Viewer discretion is advised.

2020-07-24 - Body Worn Camera Footage #1 - Officer Involved Shooting: June 2, 2020

2020-07-24 - Body Worn Camera Footage #2 - Officer Involved Shooting: June 2, 2020

2020-07-24 - Body Worn Camera Footage #3 - Officer Involved Shooting: June 2, 2020

2020-07-24 - Walgreens Internal Camera Footage - May 31, 2020

2020-07-24 - Walgreens External Camera Footage - May 31, 2020

2020-07-24 - Walgreens Internal Camera Footage - June 2, 2020

2020-07-24 - Walgreens External Camera Footage - June 2, 2020 (Video File & Player)

Critical Incident Updates:

2020-07-17 - Press Release - CA State Attorney General to Conduct Investigation into Alleged Destruction of Evidence in June 2nd OIS

2020-07-17 - Press Release - City of Vallejo Calls on District Attorney to Complete Investigations

2020-07-15 - Press Release - City Seeking Criminal Investigation in Destruction of Evidence

Seattle: 24-Hour Release

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Releases all video within 24 hours
- BWC & surveillance footage
- 911 calls
- Photographs of any weapons recovered
- Basic facts

“Stand up, address it head on, tell the truth, share as much information as possible and be able to look yourself in the mirror at the end of the night.”

Kathleen O’Toole

Seattle: 24-Hour Release

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

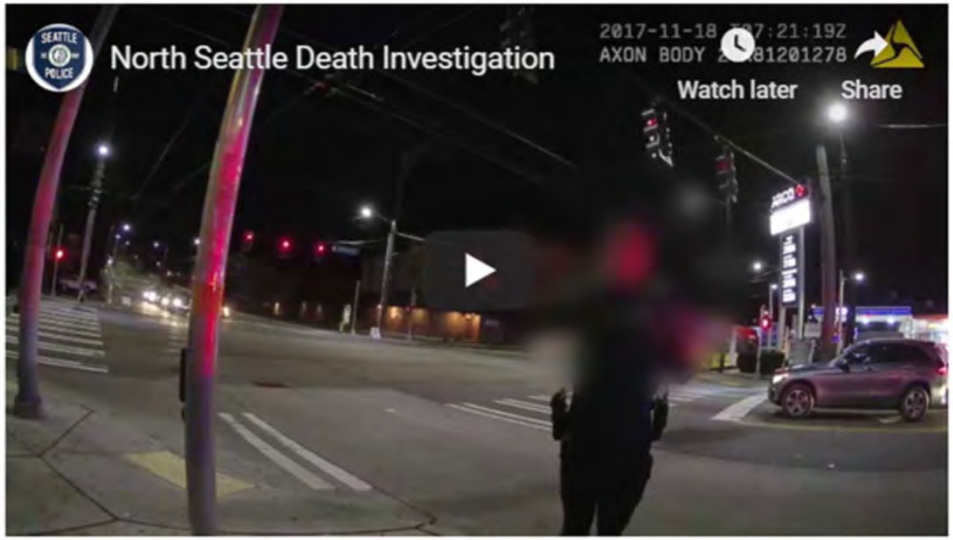
Seattle.gov

(UPDATED) Death Investigation in North Seattle

Written *by* Public Affairs *on* November 18, 2017 12:45 pm

UPDATE: In keeping with the Seattle Police Department's ongoing transparency efforts, SPD is releasing body cam video from this incident.

Portions of the video have been blurred or redacted to ensure nondisclosure of sensitive or personal information.

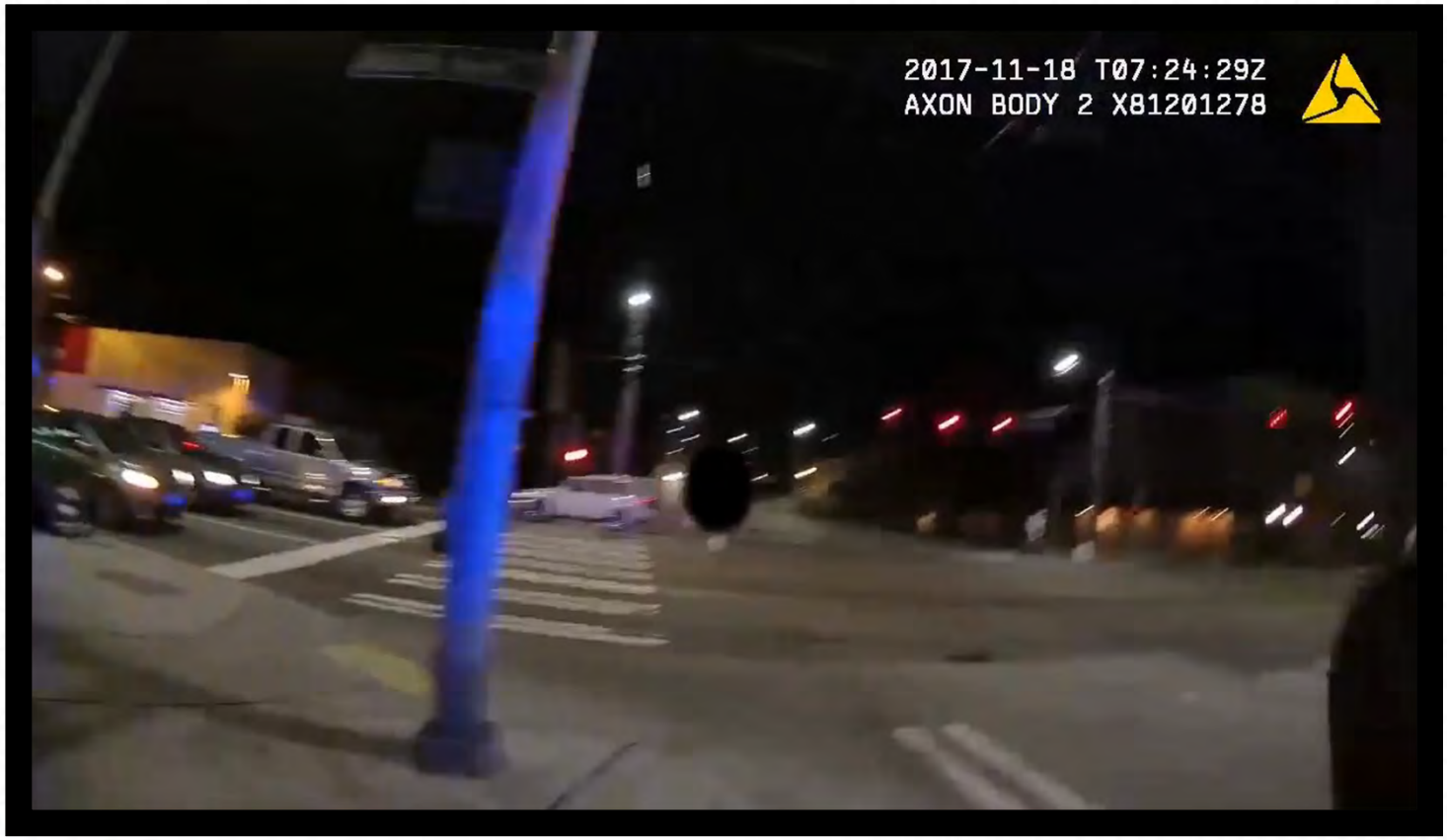


Detectives are investigating the death of a 53-year-old man last night in North Seattle.

https://spdblotter.seattle.gov/2017/11/18/death-investigation-in-north-seattle-2/

Seattle In-Custody Death

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department BWC Policy

- Welfare check in parking lot - stolen vehicle call
- News conference & release video three days after incident

July 18, 2017

LVMPD: Three-Day Turn Around Live Play by Play

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Summary

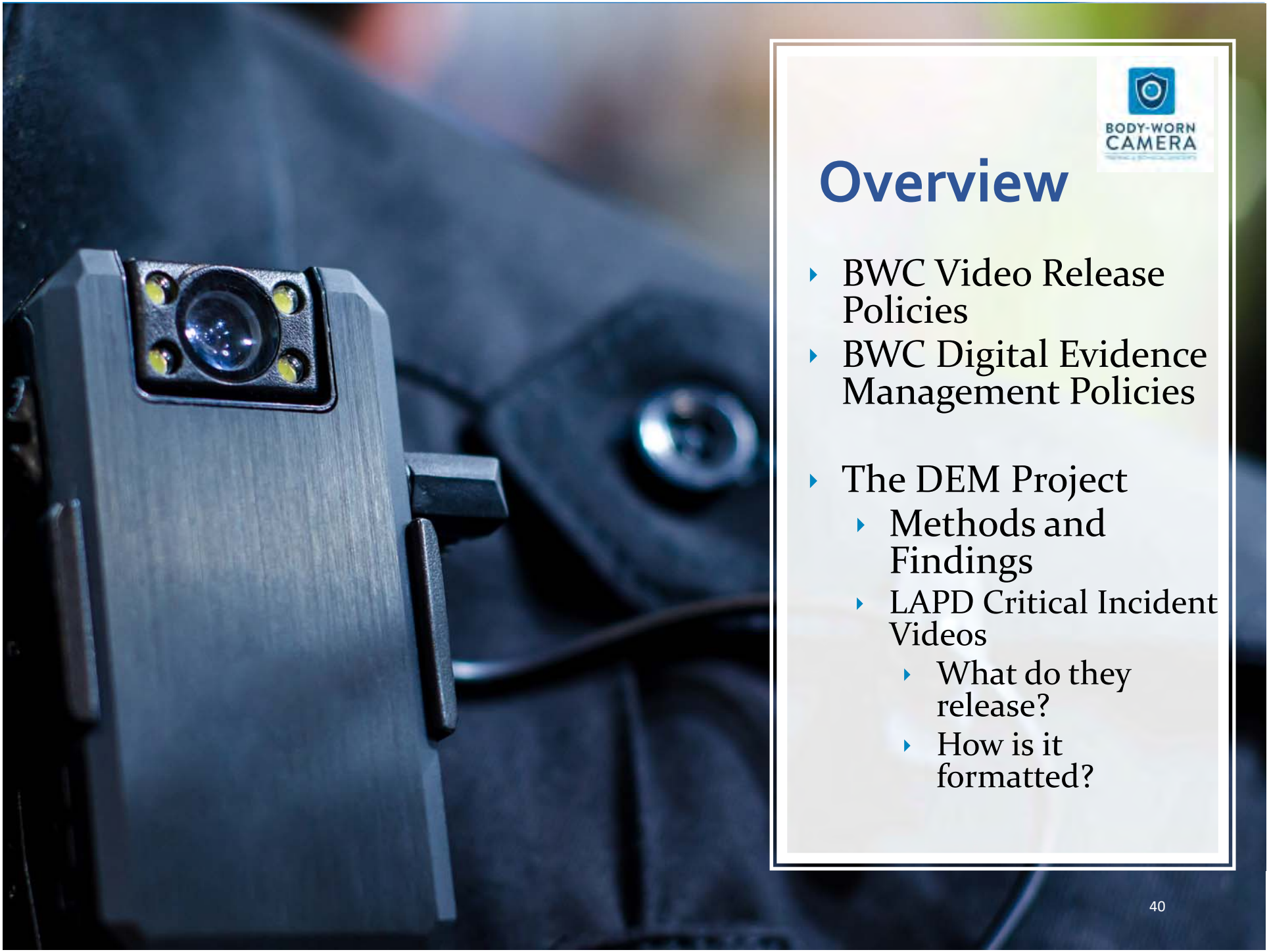
BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- ✓ Act quickly
- ✓ Establish your agency as the official source of information
- ✓ Refute false narratives
- ✓ Be consistent when releasing video

We're as strong as our relationship with the community

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Source: https://cops.usdoj.gov/



Overview

- BWC Video Release Policies
- BWC Digital Evidence Management Policies

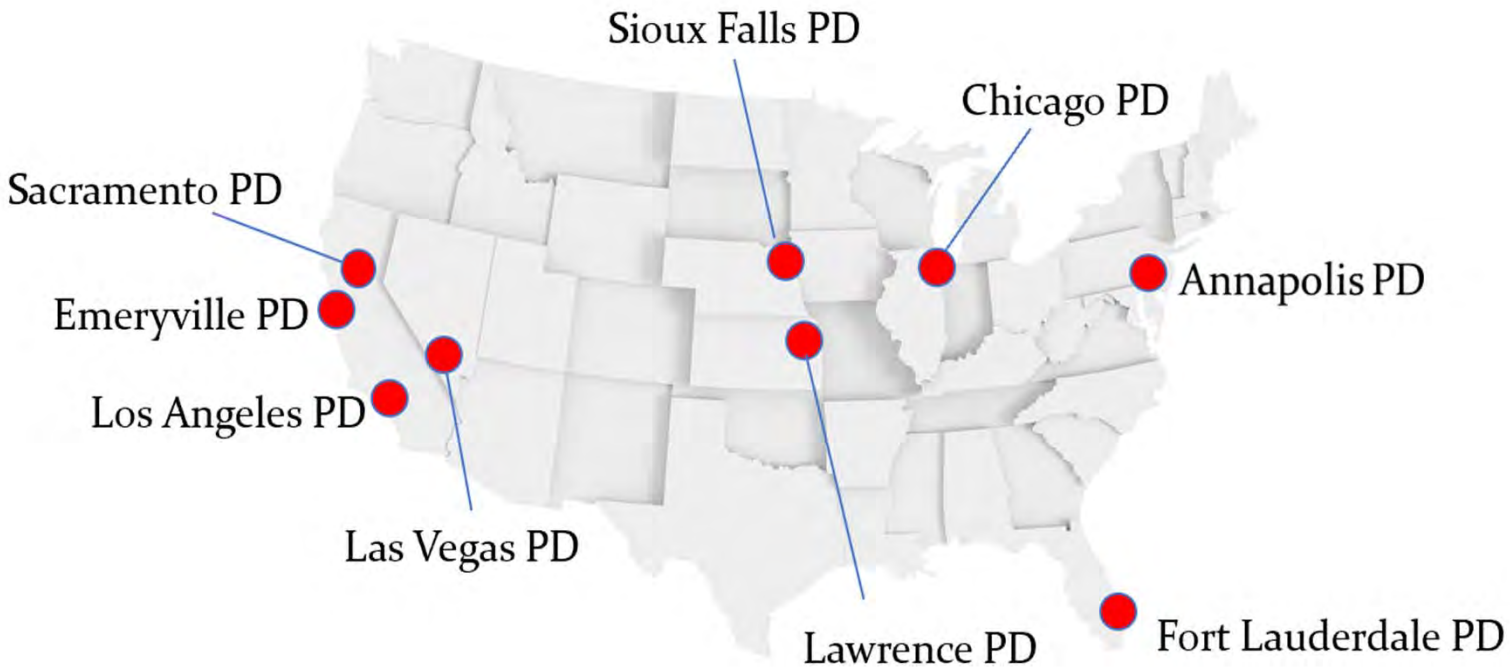
- The DEM Project
  - Methods and Findings
  - LAPD Critical Incident Videos
    - What do they release?
    - How is it formatted?

BWC Video Release Policy

- 47% of US agencies have BWCs
  - 54% have policies that covered public release

Data retrieved from 2016 LEMAS Survey, BJS*

BWC Policy regarding Critical Incidents



Sample of 9 agencies' critical incident BWC policies

BWC Policy – Critical Incidents

Ending the BWC Recording

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Supervisor Turns Off BWC (2)

- Los Angeles PD
- Sacramento PD

Not Explicitly Stated in BWC Policy (7)

- Chicago PD
- Emeryville PD
- Annapolis PD
- Sioux Falls PD
- Lawrence PD
- Las Vegas PD
- Fort Lauderdale PD

BWC Policy – Critical Incidents

Officer Footage Review

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Officer Can Review Footage Before Statement (6)

- Las Vegas PD
- Sacramento PD
- Lawrence PD
- Emeryville PD
- Los Angeles PD
  - Need FID Authorization
- Sioux Falls PD
  - Access may be restricted by COP

Not Explicitly Stated in BWC Policy (3)

- Chicago PD
- Annapolis PD
- Fort Lauderdale PD

BWC Policy – Critical Incidents

BWC Footage Security

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Supervisor Secures BWC & Ensures Upload (6)

- Annapolis PD
- Sacramento PD
- Los Angeles PD
- Emeryville PD
- Fort Lauderdale PD
- Las Vegas PD → FIT Personnel

Not Explicitly Stated in BWC Policy (3)

- Lawrence PD
- Sioux Falls PD
- Chicago PD

BWC Policy – Critical Incidents

Initial Video Review

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Specialized Unit Reviews BWC Footage (2)

- Las Vegas PD → FIT/CIRT/IAB
- Sioux Falls PD → Supervisor

Not Explicitly Stated in BWC Policy (7)

- Lawrence PD
- Los Angeles PD
- Chicago PD
- Sacramento PD
- Emeryville PD
- Annapolis PD
- Fort Lauderdale PD

BWC Policy – Critical Incidents

Non-Involved Personnel Can Review Footage

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

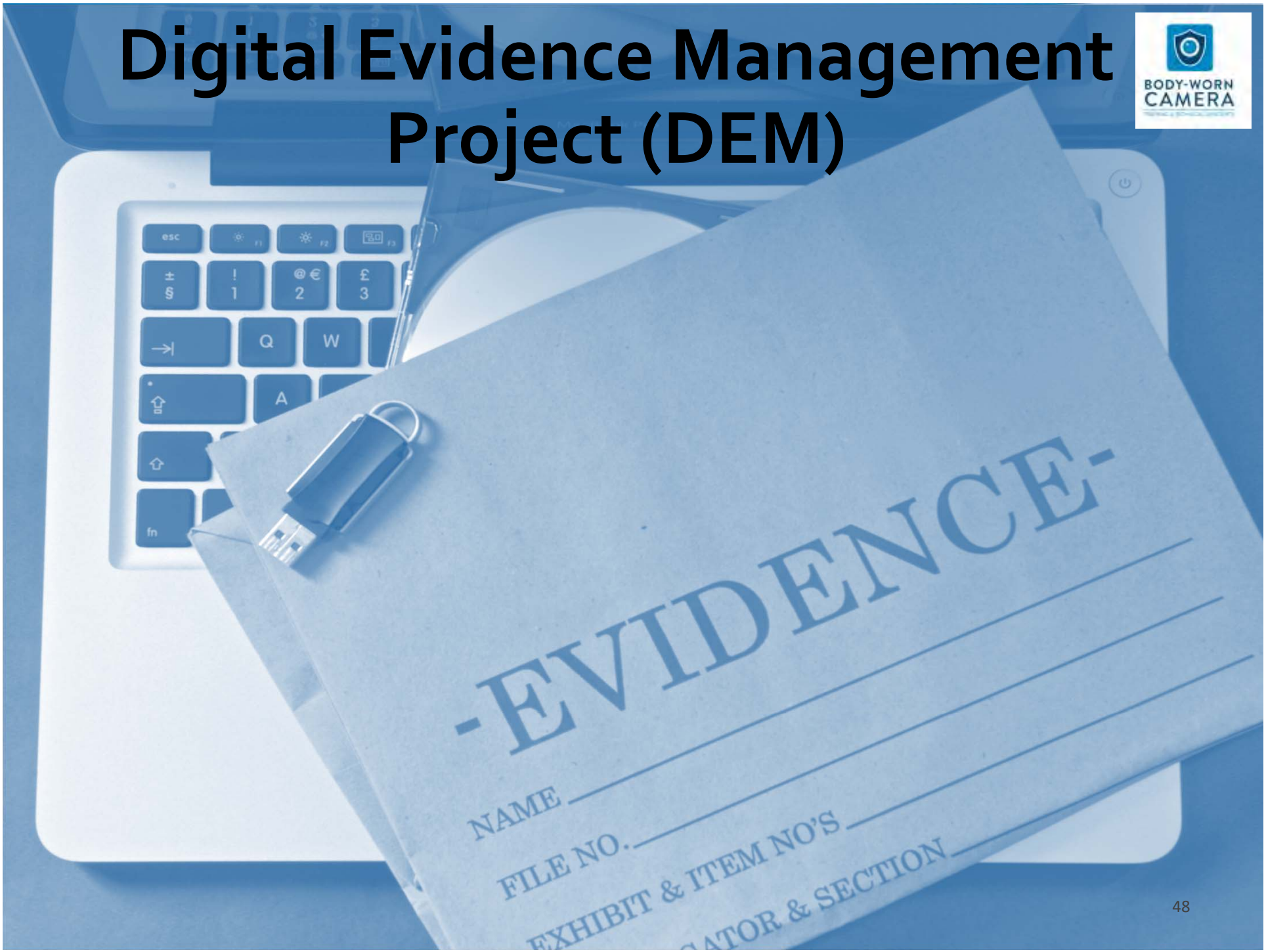
Can Review Footage (4)

- Annapolis PD → Supervisor
- Sioux Falls PD → High-Level Command Staff
- Sacramento PD → Employees with Authorization
- Los Angeles PD → Supervisors with FID Authorization

Not Explicitly Stated in BWC Policy (5)

- Lawrence PD
- Las Vegas PD
- Chicago PD
- Emeryville PD
- Fort Lauderdale PD

Digital Evidence Management Project (DEM)



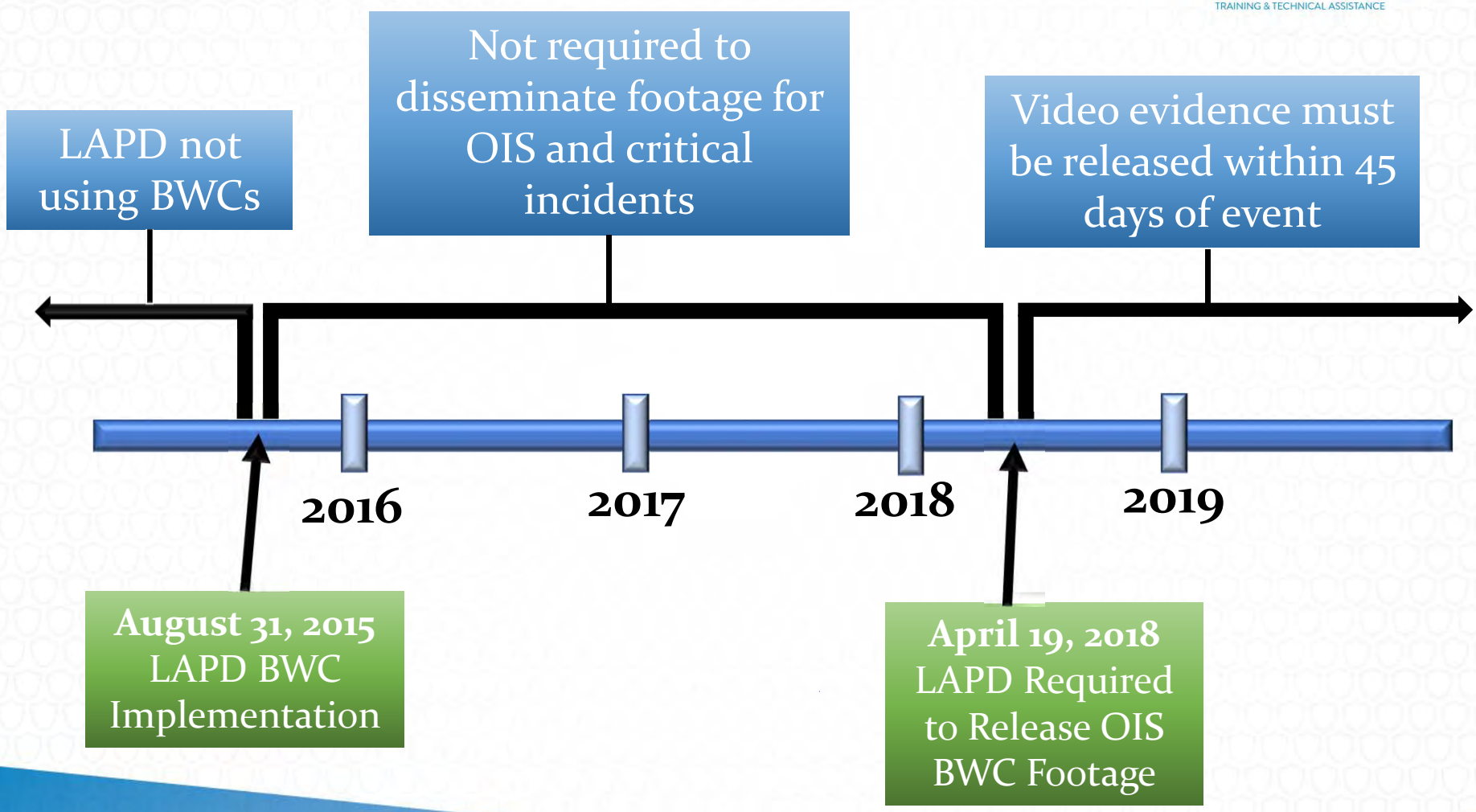
DEM Projects Methods

Review of LAPD Officer-Involved Shootings (OIS) and Critical Incidents (CI)

- Chief of Police Reports (n=52)
- Board of Police Commissioners (n=355)
- District Attorney Reports (n=32)

What are the differences between the reports?

LAPD Timeline of BWC Use

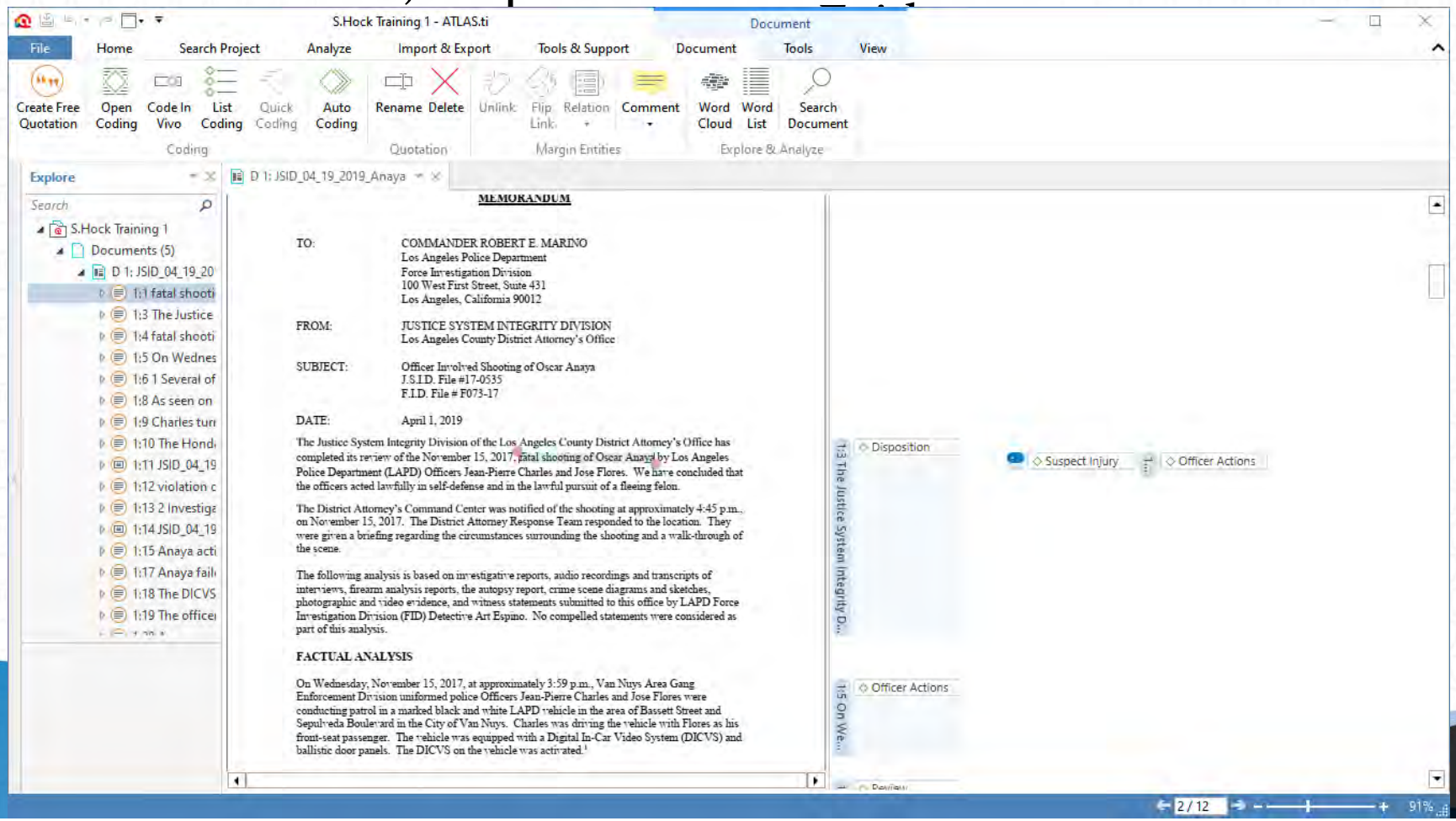


Document Coding - Line-by-Line

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Coding:

- BWC references
- Officer actions, suspect
- Officer injuries, suspect injuries



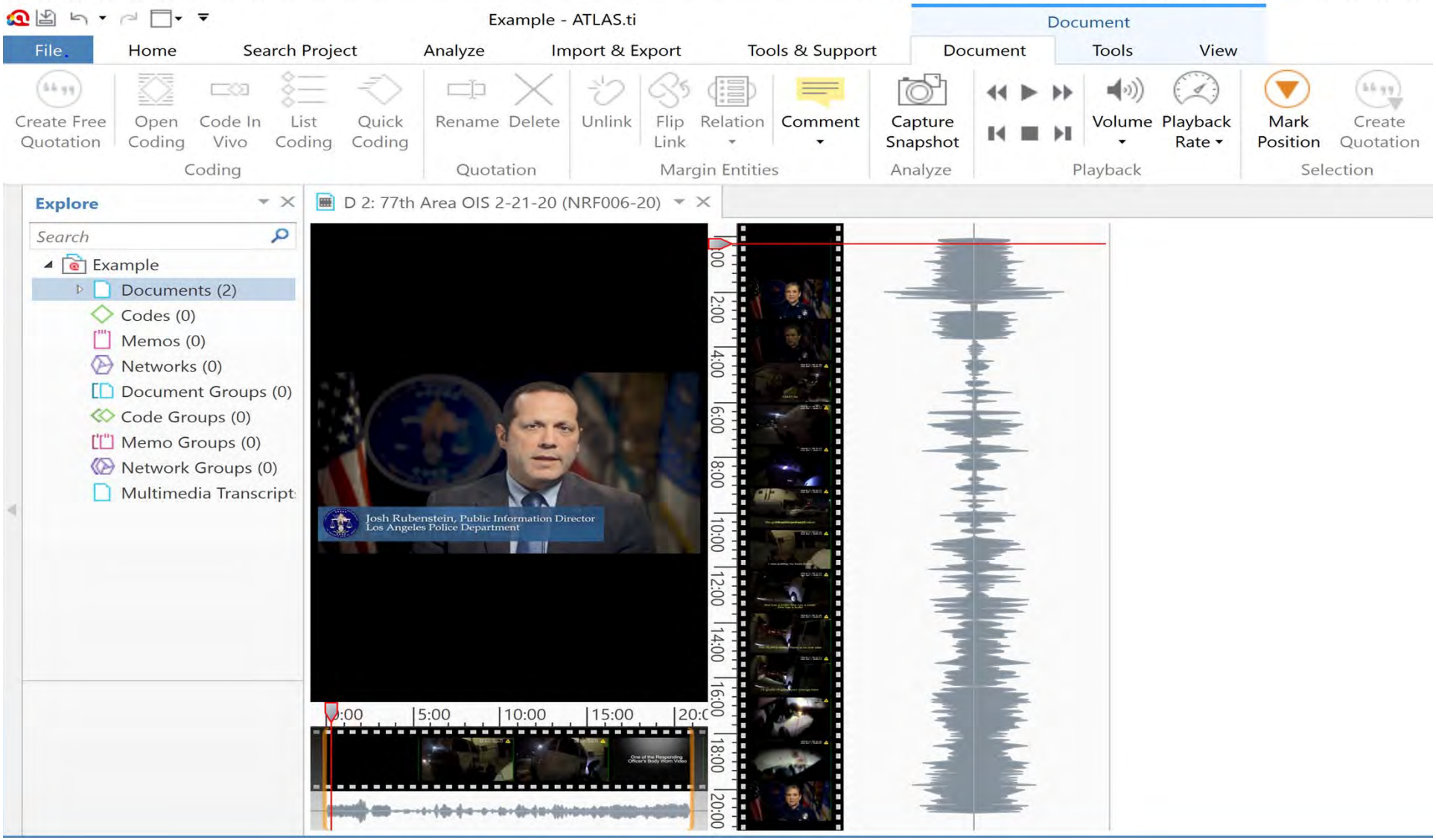
DEM Project Questions

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- How is BWC video released to the public?
  - What edits are made?
  - How is transparency achieved?
  - How is the incident explained?
- What transpires during an OIS/critical event?
  - What leads up to the event?

Video Coding – Analyzing 61 Videos – *Frame-by-Frame*

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



Preliminary Metrics

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

61 LAPD videos=
829 Minutes
of Total Video

457 Minutes
of BWC Video
(55%)

Preliminary Metrics

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Average LAPD Video Length: 13.6 minutes

Average LAPD BWC in Each Video: 7.5 minutes

Preliminary Metrics*

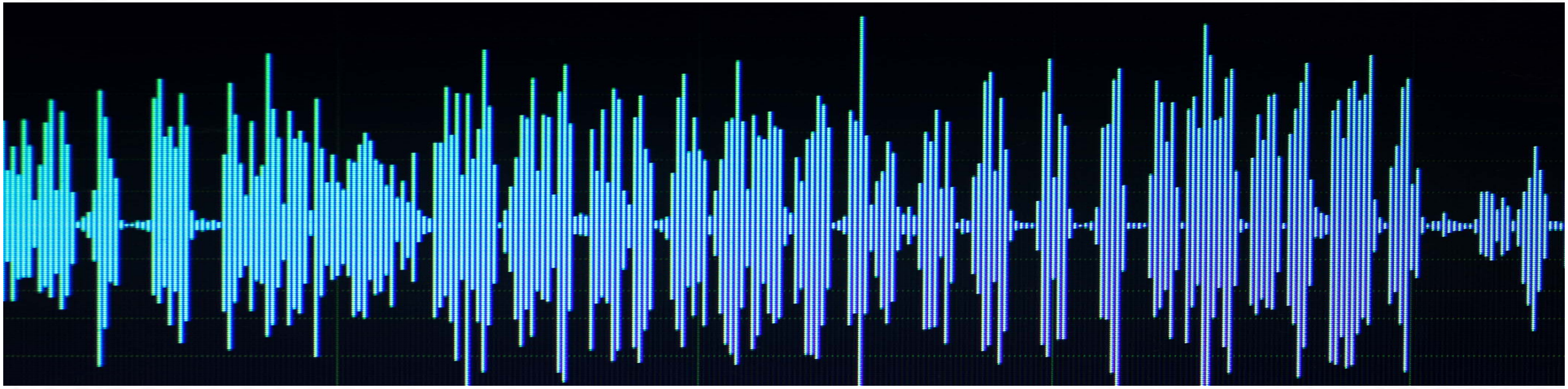
BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

To demonstrate details of the incident, approximately 10% of the video was displayed in slow motion

Preliminary Metrics*

BODY-WORN CAMERA
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Approximately 6% of the video included voiceover narration.



* Subset of 49 videos reviewed in more detail.

In Summary

- Just over half of departments have media release policies
- Policies related to critical incidents vary across departments, with many silent on key aspects.

- When releasing videos, a continuum of approaches exist, from raw footage release to edited and produced releases.

- Considering produced video releases of LAPD,
  - Just over-half (55%) of the produced LAPD video is actual BWC video.
  - The majority of the BWC video displayed is “as it occurred” and with the original audio.

Closing Thoughts

- Technical assistance, based on experience, is available to help your agency consider:
  - Digital Evidence Management Policies
  - Digital Evidence Release Policies