



Champaign Police Department
City of Champaign, Illinois

Anthony Cobb
Chief of Police

April 23, 2019

Mrs. Jennifer Wooldridge
Manager of Operations and Special Projects
Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board
4500 S. 6th Street Road
Springfield, IL 62703

Subject: City of Champaign Police Department 2018 In-Car & Body Worn Camera Reports

Dear Mrs. Wooldridge,

The City of Champaign Police Department continued with our full deployment of Panasonic Arbitrator Mark 2 Body Worn Cameras (BWCs) for every sworn law enforcement officer in every division of our department. A total of 122 sworn law enforcement officers are currently assigned BWCs. Due to excessive technical issues with the BWCs, listed in our 2017 annual report, Panasonic replaced our BWCs with the latest generation BWC, the Arbitrator Mark 3, on April 11th, 2018. We have also continued to utilize 36 Panasonic Arbitrator 360 HD in-car video camera systems.

The following technology infrastructure issues were presented and resolved during the deployment of BWCs in 2018:

- We anticipated all sworn officers would need training in order to transition to the latest generation of the Panasonic Mark 3 cameras, to include a new vehicle mounted pairing dock. This was resolved by implementing further training, which seemed to resolve most of the transition issues within the first month.
- Officers continued to make errors related to properly classifying the videos for proper retention. We are attempting to resolve this with further training and supervisory oversight.
- Charging/syncing cables installed at every computer workstation and vehicles have continually failed due to normal wear and tear. This issue was resolved by purchasing more cables at a rate of approximately fifteen cords a month.

- Intermittent problems were reported regarding the BWCs not syncing with the video processing unit in the squad cars. This issue was resolved through Champaign Police staff troubleshooting the individual issues, along with Panasonic Arbitrator Support staff and the RMA warranty process.
- Several BWCs were identified as failing to successfully upload all the files contained on the camera's internal memory cards.
 - Champaign Police staff contacted Panasonic Arbitrator Support staff and were able to manually upload the videos on multiple occasions. Those BWCs were then put back into service and functioned as normal.
 - On multiple other occasions, metadata and video files were "stuck" on the camera's internal memory card. Most of these issues were resolved by Panasonic Arbitrator support staff. There were some videos which Panasonic technicians were only able to recover the audio and/or metadata files. These issues were resolved by the cameras being serviced or replaced at a Panasonic authorized service center prior to being redeployed.
- Officers reported infrequent incidents involving BWCs that fell off their uniforms. These incidents were usually caused by the BWCs being ripped away from the mounted location during a foot chase, a physical struggle, or by being caught on an object such as a seatbelt or doorway. Officers reported the magnetic mounting option was prone to separating when horizontal force was applied to the camera. Officers reported the clip mounts were susceptible to being dislodged by physical force, such as a struggle or getting the unit caught on an object such as a seatbelt or doorway. Panasonic addressed this issue by sending improved magnetic mounts, which proved to be a slight improvement from the previous mounting option.
- Officers reported sporadic, accidental activation and cessation of their BWC recordings, which seemed to be caused by the main recording button not being recessed enough to prevent such accidental operation. Panasonic has improved the design to reduce this problem on the latest generation of cameras.
- Officers reported various instances of BWCs failing to record when expected. Champaign Police staff conducted troubleshooting measures and concluded there were issues with user error, usually related to not syncing the camera correctly with the squad car, the Wi-Fi connection between the devices failed, and the officers reported being too far from their vehicle (out of Wi-Fi range) when the camera was activated. To remedy these instances, further training was provided to officers about how to sync and activate the devices and to be cognizant of Wi-Fi obstructions and being out of Wi-Fi range.
- Panasonic's software required updates in the squad cars to fully function with BWCs. At first, we had to manually install the updated software in each vehicle. Panasonic and our IT staff were eventually able to wirelessly implement the updates to the squad cars, which greatly increased efficiency.
- Technical limitations of sharing videos with City/State's Attorney's Offices were identified and several solutions were proposed. Information Technology staff chose to configure shared network folders to facilitate the video sharing. The State's Attorney's Office experienced difficulties with their network folder access, so we have transitioned to

providing videos on discs and portable hard drives until other solutions can be implemented.

- Officers have consistently noted technical issues when they classified their videos for a specific retention period and then entered data into the classification fields, such as a report number or computer aided dispatch (CAD) event number. Officers noticed that even though the correct procedures were performed, some of the classification tags and entered data did not appear on the videos once they were played back on the server. This issue was widespread and was confirmed multiple times. This issue was remedied by officers entering the information a second time. Further solutions are being pursued as we pursue a CAD data auto import feature, where data from CAD databases can be utilized to automatically apply the classification data to the videos after they are uploaded to the server.
- BWCs have constantly failed to properly sync to the Panasonic Arbitrator Front-End Client (the squad car program), which required countless troubleshooting sessions with department staff, IT staff, and various levels of Panasonic technicians. Panasonic temporarily resolved these issues with software updates and then proposed a permanent solution by instituting a “Tech Refresh Program.” Under the Tech Refresh Program, Panasonic replaced our entire inventory of BWCs with the next generation MARK 3 cameras. This was also resolved by uninstalling another Panasonic program from the squad car computers, since Panasonic confirmed it was interfering with the BWC syncing process.
- Having only four spare cameras has presented logistical issues with keeping functional spare cameras ready for deployment as technical difficulties were reported. After a problem was reported and initially assessed by staff and Panasonic Arbitrator Support, the camera was shipped to a service center with an average turnaround time of 1-2 weeks. In 2018, a total of 11 BWCs were shipped to the authorized service center in accordance with Panasonic Arbitrator Support procedures, resulting in functional BWCs being returned to the department. This problem will likely be remedied by Panasonic making improvements to how quickly spare cameras are shipped to customers.

After implementing the latest generation of Arbitrator Mark 3 BWCs, we also experienced the following technical issues in 2018:

- Dozens of BWCs failed to properly connect to the back-end server program and successfully upload videos stored on the BWCs memory card. These issues were resolved on a case by case basis by CPD staff and Panasonic Arbitrator Support staff. Typically, the solutions involved manually transferring the videos from the BWC to the server, then reconfiguring the cameras, formatting the memory cards, and testing the cameras prior to returning them to full service.
- Several instances occurred where the BWCs suddenly rebooted and failed to function as designed. These issues were resolved by reinstalling firmware, configuration files, and formatting the BWCs internal memory card. Some units had to be serviced and repaired/replaced at Panasonic’s authorized service center.

- Dozens of instances of BWCs failing to properly sync to the squad car's in-car camera systems were reported. These issues were resolved by troubleshooting pairing equipment (usb cords and pairing docks) and resolving unrelated computer issues that caused the problems.
- Several officers reported initiating a recording on their BWC, visibly confirming it was recording based on the visible red record light on the display, but then later learning no video recording or only a portion of a recording was produced. These issues were all reported to Panasonic Arbitrator Support and escalated support services were requested. In September 2018, Panasonic advised we needed to format the memory card inside of each camera. That process required us to physically handle each BWC. Just prior to the formatting process being completed, Panasonic then advised we also needed to update the BWCs firmware. This process also required us to handle each BWC. After that latest firmware and formatting, we have experienced far fewer issues in the first few months of 2019.
- We identified our main video server was running out of free space in August 2018 and implemented fixes to alleviate the storage capacity issues. Soon after, we identified the need to immediately purchase a larger server and back-up server. We began a competitive RFP process in November 2018 and are currently finalizing the purchase and implementation of the new servers.

To ensure proper use and functionality of the BWCs, we have the following supervisory review processes in place:

- Staff involved in implementing the BWC program randomly viewed videos to ensure the programmed settings and video and audio quality were configured to meet our expectations.
- All reports and accompanying BWC videos for encounters involving any Use of Force above normal handcuffing procedures are reviewed by multiple supervisors and a civilian review board. The videos and associated reports are typically viewed by a sergeant, then a lieutenant, and finally by a deputy chief and/or chief of police.
- Patrol Officers and Investigators must note in their police report if video was reviewed prior to typing their reports. Field training officers and supervisors are encouraged to review pertinent portions of those videos when reviewing police reports.
- Sergeants are encouraged to randomly review videos for each of their assigned officers. Sergeants are expected to use the video review process to ensure compliance with the department's policy and procedures.
- Videos are reviewed prior to conducting officer and supervisory level after-action debriefings.
- Videos are reviewed during complaint proceedings.
- Videos are reviewed during FOIA request and redaction processing.
- Videos that are classified as private, meaning an officer reported a video was accidentally recorded that was not required by law or policy and was recorded in a private setting (Ex:

an officer using the restroom), are reviewed by the Deputy Chief of Police of Operations. These videos are reviewed only to the point that confirms the video is private.

- Videos are routinely reviewed by the City of Champaign Legal Department, the Champaign County State's Attorney's Officer, and defense attorneys after being requested for legal proceedings.
- The video program manager, a City of Champaign Police Department Lieutenant, reviews random videos on a consistent basis to ensure compliance with the department's policy and procedures and state law.

The Champaign Police Department coordinated with the Champaign County State's Attorney's Office to ensure In-Car and BWC videos are efficiently shared when needed as evidence. Please refer to Enclosure #1 & #2 for a list of videos used in the prosecution process of criminal, conservation, traffic, or municipal ordinance violations.

Other information relevant to our BWC program includes the technical and financial issues involved in the retention of videos on a main server and the implementation of a back-up server. We initially purchased a 90 Terabyte main server in September 2016 and are currently purchasing and implementing a 350 Terabyte main server and a 350 Terabyte back-up server.

- In October 2018, we received \$250,000 of in-car and body worn camera grant funds from the State of Illinois.
- Peripheral costs (servers, redaction software, additional staff, etc.) are approximately equal to our initial purchase costs of the BWCs, accessories, training, warranties, and recurring licensing costs.
- The requirement to redact videos for FOIA requests continue to be extremely time consuming and costly. We have continued to employ an additional evidence technician to process in-car and BWC video requests. After trial and error with other time-consuming redaction software, we tested and purchased the Motion DSP Ikena redaction software. We have concluded that without more timely advances in affordable redaction technologies, the only timely relief should be through legislative changes that could limit the dire effects that BWC and In-Car video statutes and BWC FOIA laws have upon our programs. We have committed significant staff time interpreting FOIA, BWC, and In-Car video statutes, processing FOIA requests, and consulting with our city legal department for specific guidance.

I propose the following revisions to the BWC and In-Car video statutes and the associated FOIA statute, but the complexity of these issues will require in-person meetings with the Attorney General and State Legislators.

- Eliminate the FOIA requirement to release BWC and In-Car video for incidents that do not involve a Use of Force that caused great bodily harm and/or death.
- Eliminate the FOIA requirement to provide BWC and In-Car video for incidents where the arrested subject is the sole person captured on the video.
- Specifically allow BWC and In-Car videos to be clipped (shortened) and only mandate the release of the video portion(s) that include the portion of the incident in question (Ex:

Use of Force, only be mandated to release the minutes of video that include the actual shooting, tackling, chase, etc.)

- Limit requests made by the same person for records previously provided under the FOIA, including any requests made less than six months after the previous request.
- Eliminate any requirement to redact the identity of individuals that are displayed on a recording, but not a party to the requested law enforcement encounter, while in a public place where there is no reasonable expectation of privacy.
- Revise the reporting requirements outlined in Illinois Compiled Statutes 50 ILCS 707/15, 50 ILCS 707/20, & 50 ILCS 706/10-25 for consistency. Currently, all three statutes require varying annual data to be reported.
- Revisions to Illinois Compiled Statute 50 ILCS 707/15, which are noted on Enclosure #3.

In conclusion, our in-car and body worn camera program has been successful in achieving most of our goals. There are obstacles that have been overcome and many more that can be reduced or avoided with revisions to the BWC, In-Car video, and FOIA statutes. My department remains committed to overcoming those obstacles as we manage our ongoing in-car and BWC program. Please feel free to contact my office with any questions at (217) 403-6911.

Sincerely,



Anthony Cobb
Chief of Police

Enclosures: In-Car Video Evidence Report
Body Worn Video Evidence Report
50 ILCS 707/15 suggested revisions