

Abingdon Police Department

General Order Number: 7-009	Subject: Body Worn Video/Audio Recording Devices
Effective Date: 12/08/2011	
Amends/Supersedes:	CALEA Standards:
Review Date: 12/08/2012	

I. Purpose:

The purpose of this general order is to establish guidelines for the Abingdon Police Department for the proper use and maintenance of the video and audio recording devices worn on the officer uniform.

II. Policy:

It shall be the policy of the Abingdon Police Department to equip, when practical and available, each officer with a body worn visual/audio camcorders (BWC) to provide an accurate unbiased audio/visual record of enforcement related and non-criminal incidents that will enhance criminal prosecutions and limit civil liabilities.

III. Procedure:

A. General Guidelines

1. The BWC is intended to supplement reports and investigations and ultimately aid in prosecution of offenses, improve officer performance through training, and promote officer safety.
2. The BWC is to be used to document events, actions, or statements made during arrests, interviews, and critical incidents in order to enhance report preparation and investigation.

B. Equipment Inspections

1. Prior to the beginning of their tour of duty, officers who have been equipped with a BWC shall inspect the device to ensure it is in proper working order and no damage exists.
 - a. The inspection will include the following:
 - 1) Ensuring that the battery in the device is fully charged
 - 2) Ensuring that the memory card is installed correctly.
 - 3) Ensuring that the lens is free of dust and debris and has a clear unobstructed view.

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4) That the device is securely attached to the uniform.

b. Any deficiencies shall be immediately reported to a supervisor who will then determine the proper course of action to resolve the problem(s).

C. BWC Operations

1. The BWC shall be turned on and operational whenever the officer is conducting patrol activities.
2. The BWC will be activated to record in any of the following ways:
 - a. Manually, by pressing the record button on the device.
 - b. Automatically, by activating the “VOX” feature of the device.
3. In order to terminate the recording, the officer must press the stop button.

D. Recording Procedures

1. Events that shall be recorded include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Call for service.
 - b. Traffic stops when the in-car video system is not working correctly or the officer wishes to obtain a second camera view.
 - c. During any other time the officer feels as though a video or audio recording would be of importance at a later date.
2. Once the recording of an incident has been initiated, the recording shall continue until the incident is concluded. If for any reason the recording is discontinued, the reason will be audibly documented.
3. Officers will not attempt to impede or circumvent the recording of any audio or video in order to alter or circumvent the true recording of voices, sounds, and images.

E. Prohibitions

1. Any use of the BWC for any purpose other than official law enforcement business is a violation of this general order. Non-law enforcement business can include, but is not limited to:
 - a. Covertly recording other law enforcement personnel.
 - b. Recording a conversation with a supervisor, council member, or other government employee.
 - c. Personal use of the BWC.

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- d. Recording a conversation that the officer is not party to, unless the officer is handling a law enforcement incident and is in a lawful position when the taping occurs.
2. Officers shall not use the BWC to record a particular person based solely on the person's race, color, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, creed religion, ancestry, national origin, or physical disability.

F. Data Management

1. BWC recordings shall only be downloaded to computers operated and maintained by the Town of Abingdon. Any downloading, or uploading, of any recording to any other computer, server, media device, etc which is not owned or maintained by the Town of Abingdon must be approved by the Chief of Police or his designee.
2. Before going off-duty, officers will download all recording to a designated folder on the designated server.
3. If the recording directly relates to a reportable incident then the recording will be downloaded to the server through the use of the RMS by means of the "File Attachment" function of the related incident report.
4. If the recording does not directly relate to an incident report then the officer will download the recordings to the "BWC Videos" folder of the department server.
 - a. Once downloaded, the file name of the recording will be changed to represent the date of the recording (with an underscore between the year, month and day), their badge number, and a number to differentiate from other recordings during the day, such as "1," "2," "3," etc. following a dash.

Example (first recording): 2011_12_01PD1-1

Example (second recording): 2011_12_01PD1-2

5. In order to maintain adequate memory space for future recordings the officer should delete the files from the camera memory once all of the files have been downloaded as a file attachment on the incident report or to the BWC Videos folder. Before completing the deletion process the officer should check that all files were transferred to the proper location successfully.
6. The officer will contact the Investigative Lieutenant to request a copy be created if the recording is deemed to be of evidentiary value. This copy will be entered into evidence by either the Investigative Lieutenant or the officer.
7. Copies of recordings will not be released to another criminal justice agency for trial or other reasons without having a duplicate copy made and returned to safe storage.
8. Recordings will not be released to any outside non-criminal justice entity, regardless of content, without explicit authority from the Chief of Police or their designee.

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9. The recordings will be retained for one year or until the case is resolved or evidence is released, whichever is longer, and then the media storage device or its contents shall be destroyed.
10. Digital copies for purposes not associated with the investigation or prosecution of a violation of law will only be made and or created subject to one of the following:
 - a. Permission from the Chief of Police or his designee; or
 - b. Required by a court order.

By Order of

(original signed)

Chief of Police