

**HPD – Body Worn Camera (BWC) Program
Questions & Answers
Updated - November 9, 2015**

1. What is the plan to deploy BWCs?

- HPD will procure a total of 4,500 BWCs. 4,100 will be assigned to officers, and the remaining 400 will be spares for replacement purposes.

2. When will the BWCs be deployed, and how long will it take to fully deploy?

- BWCs will be rolled out division by division, starting with Central Patrol
- The total rollout will take approximately 12 to 18 months

3. Who will be assigned the BWCs?

- All patrol and supervisory first responders
- All Investigative First Responders (IFR) up to the lieutenant level
- All Crime Reduction Units (CRU) up to the lieutenant level
- All officers on uniformed extra job assignments

4. What are the camera's technical specifications?

- Each camera will be uniquely, internally registered to a specific officer
- The cameras offer high definition resolution
- All videos are recorded in color with a 16:9 aspect ratio
- Audio is also recorded with the video
- They also have the following features:
 - o Record Activation (Standby) Button & One-Touch On/Off Record
 - o Industry standard output files (MPEG)
 - o Lens with a 130 degree, wide-angle field of view
 - o Date and time stamps on all videos
 - o Record 9 hours @ 720P; 10.5 @ 480P (SD) on single battery charge
 - o Internal memory capacity to accommodate all of the record times
 - o Battery will last up to 19 hours in standby mode
 - o Battery will record up to 10.5 hours of video in standard mode and 9 hours in high-def mode
 - o Memory card will hold 12 hours of video at 720P resolution, and 30 hours at 480P
 - o The cameras can mount on an officer's shirt, vest or jacket, to the right or left of the lapel
 - o The cameras have tilt lenses to adjust for officers of different heights
 - o Cameras will automatically download video/audio when docked and will recharge while docked
 - o With a 2016 update, the cameras will have GPS which will record where the unit is.

5. What responses were received from the issuance of the RFP?

A total of 372 prospective bidders downloaded the solicitation from the City's e-bidding website. The BWC Evaluation Team received proposals from twelve vendors that provided a broad spectrum of quality technical solutions.

The RFP set a very high standard designed to ensure the best vendors and solutions were identified. The RFP also made it clear that:

- *"It is the City's intent to commence final negotiation with the Proposer(s) deemed most advantageous to the City. The City reserves the right to conduct post-Proposal discussions with any Proposer(s)." (Page 3 – 8.1)*

and

- *"The specifications and product references herein are intended to be descriptive rather than restrictive." (Page 11 – 6.1)*

The camera and the firm selected offer a solution that is most advantageous to the City of Houston – technically and financially.

6. How will the camera work while on the officer?

- a) At the beginning of shift the officer will attach it to the uniform, as prescribed. When starting their patrol shift it will be activated – i.e., turned on, which places it in standby mode. It will remain in standby unless put in record mode to capture an event, or turned completely off at end of shift
- b) In the event an officer interacts with a citizen, the officer will push the button to record. The unit is no longer in standby mode, everything recorded will be permanently retained, and the 30 seconds of video captured in the camera's buffer immediately prior to the press of the "record" button will be added to the beginning of the recording. This allows a "look-back" as to the 30 second period immediately preceding the moment the officer started the recording.
- c) When the officer wants to stop recording, the Record On/Off is pushed again.
- d) At that point, the officer will determine how the video just recorded will be classified and will push the corresponding button. The choices are:
 1. Type I Crime
 2. Type II Crime
 3. Traffic
 4. Information

It is estimated the above selection process will take approximately 5 seconds. This classification step is vital to determine the retention periods of the videos, and the amount of storage needed for videos. Over 80% of videos taken have no review or other value and permanent storage would unnecessarily consume costly resources. Retention protocols would be:

1. **Type I Crime** - 5 years or until Statute of Limitations expire; indefinite if homicides or other crimes with no Statute of Limitation
2. **Type II Crime** - 180 days (unless appealed)
3. **Traffic** -180 days (unless appealed)
4. **Information** -180 days

During the 180 day period, any video can be marked for extended retention, as necessary.

- e) At the end of shift, the officer places the camera in a docking port at the police station. The unit will download its video content and will erase the camera storage when the download is confirmed to be correct. The officer then takes the camera so it is ready for the next day – or can leave it at the station for pick-up at the beginning of their next shift
- f) There is nothing further for the officer to do since each video has already been classified as to type, and the camera already has the officers' unique identification number. The system then does all recording/classification processes for purposes of officer ID, record retention periods and records management
- g) If the officer needs the camera for an extra job, he/she can wait for the download to complete, or can take the camera to the EJ and download all the stored video at start of shift the next day
- h) If the officer needs to view one of the videos to supplement a written report, the video may be viewed at the station once the download is complete. The videos cannot be altered, deleted, edited or modified in any way by the person wearing the camera.

7. Will this process cause an increase in officer OT?

Based upon the technology offered by this vendor, and tested by HPD, it is not anticipated that an increase in officer overtime will occur.

8. If the officer determines how to classify the video, isn't the officer making a determination as to what is evidence and what isn't?

Yes. It is an officer's duty to find, collect and preserve evidence – ALL evidence, inclusive of digital still images and videos. This is fundamental to the duties of a police officer – and, as stipulated in its General Orders, it is the policy of the Houston Police Department with respect to classifying evidence. Officers routinely identify evidence and, by law, HPD must ensure a clear chain of custody. HPD has been collecting video evidence for decades at crime scenes, DWI arrests, interrogations, etc. To date, there are:

- millions of items in the property room;
- over a million photos in DataWorks repository;
- approximately 100,000 body camera and car camera videos that officers have collected and classified over the last five years;

- hundreds, if not thousands, of illegal dumping videos, interview room videos, bait car videos, citizen recorded videos, private store camera videos and other sources of information--all of which are routinely and repeatedly reviewed for their evidentiary value and are marked as such by police officers.

The collection of this evidence demonstrates that evidentiary decisions have been made and will continue to be made by officers in the future.

9. Where will the videos be stored?

Videos downloaded from the BWCs will be transferred to the HPD data center and stored on servers. Retention periods for the videos will conform to the protocols discussed above in 6(d). A duplicate copy will be stored and secured in the City's Disaster Recovery Center – a data center separate and apart from the HPD data center.

10. How much will this VEMS/BWC project cost?

Total project cost is \$7,963,360 for five years. These are all capital costs. Two RCAs will be presented, as follows:

- One RCA in the amount of \$6,332,747 will be the contract with the vendor for the BWCs, VEMS, accessories, software, maintenance, repair, training, etc.
- A second RCA will be for servers, storage and related items at a cost of \$1,394,503.82. Total storage will be 1.5 petabytes (1 PB = 1,000 terabytes) plus 1.5 petabytes more for 100% backup. Unit cost is \$.47 per gigabyte.
- HPD will purchase different servers directly from DIR for \$236,109 using Asset Forfeiture funds. These servers are for the VEMS operating system.

11. Do we have funding for this project?

Yes. At this time \$6,572,414 has already been approved for the project. Of that:

- \$1,000,000 is a donation from the District Attorney
- \$1,660,064 will be from HPD's Asset Forfeiture funds
- \$3,912,350 will be from CIP/EAF funds – already approved by Council and in the CIP plan.
- The remaining \$1,390,946 will be requested in an off-cycle PBJ.

12. Will there be an increase in operating costs to HPD?

No. HPD will support this operation without any budget increases.

13. Why not use cloud storage?

In our configuration, it is much more expensive. Also, there appear to be misperceptions about cloud storage:

- First, the “cloud” is nothing more than regular data storage that is operated by a commercial organization at a remote location. This type of operation does not mean the commercial organization “owns” or takes responsibility for the **contents** stored by its customers. It does not; it simply rents data storage space. For the reasons discussed above, HPD still has full responsibility for stored videos and cannot relinquish that. No other party can take ownership of the videos.
- Cloud storage is more than twice as expensive as the proposed solution and is functionally equivalent to the HPD hosted storage solution. In response to HPD’s RFP, some vendors offered a cloud solution, and their bids ranged from \$13 to \$16 million plus ongoing operating costs – far greater than the proposed \$7.9 million plan. Further, they generally had fewer cameras and lower rated equipment. To further illustrate the cost disparity, San Antonio PD just announced plans for a cloud based system: 2,200 BWCs with a cost of \$16 million; and Baltimore PD announced its cloud based system with 1,135 BWCs at a cost of \$7.1 million.

14. Who would want to use a cloud based system?

Answer: Organizations that do not have the necessary technical infrastructure to support their needs – such as BWC video storage, control, management and retrieval. Because HPD has its own IT operations, it already has the necessary technical and managerial infrastructure – including a data center, a backup data center, the telecommunication networks, and the associated staff and management. HPD will not incur additional operating costs. The HPD proposed solution leverages the infrastructure in place and this contributes to the low cost compared to a cloud solution.

15. What assurances do we have that someone in HPD won’t make unauthorized changes to the stored video? Wouldn’t cloud storage provide greater security?

- Storage in the cloud provides no advantages from a technical or security viewpoint, and is no different than in-house storage – it’s just at a remote location. In both instances HPD has to control and administer this evidence as it does all other evidentiary material in its care. Control over data access is already addressed within the context of HPD’s existing policies, procedures, practices and control systems. HPD manages untold amounts of evidence and consistently maintains data and property integrity, and the chain of custody. There are rigorous controls in place along with audit trails to assure the integrity of stored evidence. HPD complies with all requirements for data management and controls as promulgated by the FBI and codified in the CJIS standards. HPD’s operations are audited routinely by the FBI and CJIS to ensure compliance. An addendum to these Q&A’s provide more specific detail regarding HPD’s control policies and procedures for digital images and videos.

- Cloud storage raises different security questions because an outside commercial organization would manage the operations and data center in which HPD evidence would reside – and this could be problematic since some security breaches have been known to happen.
- HPD’s standard operating procedures mandate that all files/evidence simultaneously exist in two different data center locations – both of which adhere to the highest standards for data center protection. This is to ensure 100% backup of data in the event one data center is lost. A cloud solution would be required to also provide backup, but how it is done and control standards & operations to do so would be unknown and outside of HPD’s management control.

16. But wouldn’t it still be worth spending the extra money for remote cloud storage to address the perception of independence?

Compared to in-house data storage, cloud storage would have an incremental cost of \$7.6 million over the 5 year term. It provides benefits whatever other than, perhaps, the perceived (but not actual) notion of independence. HPD believes these funds could be better utilized to hire more cadets or acquire police vehicles.

Further – the city would have to enter a separate contract with the organization that manages the cloud operation.

17. Will HPD develop the Video Evidence Management System – and are any difficulties expected?

No. The vendor will deploy their existing video evidence management system that is already widely used.

No, HPD does not expect any difficulties.

It is important to emphasize that HPD has its own IT division that designs, develops and operates very large and complex police-based systems. These systems control information and evidence used in the criminal justice processes and they must meet the highest standards of reliability and security as mandated by the DOJ and CJIS. Further, they routinely undergo rigorous scrutiny and audits from the DOJ and the FBI. HPD operates these systems behind a firewall that precludes access by anyone not authorized. Houston Information Technology Services (HITS) is not responsible for any of these police-based systems nor does it have access to these systems – although they do support the network currently in place.

HPD has an excellent track record of bringing new systems on-line. As an example, HPD’s Records Management System, quite likely the largest, most complex and ambitious system ever developed in the City of Houston, was delivered on-time and \$2 million under budget. It went live on June 10, 2014 and has operated successfully ever since. It is an evidence

management system that routinely controls millions of records and manages evidence tracking across the entirety of HPD.

18. Will there be a performance bond?

Yes. The vendor is bonding their performance under the contract. Performance bonds are a commonly used tool to provide the city with financial recourse should the prime contractor be unable to perform its contractual obligations to complete the project.

19. Will there be any testing prior to payments?

Yes. The vendor will demonstrate that they can load their video evidence management system with one million videos and still operate within normal response times. In addition, the vendor has to demonstrate that they can download two hours of video simultaneously from 64 individual BWCs within our standards.

20. How did the evaluation process work and were officers actively involved?

Pilot Program: In December, 2013 a one year BWC pilot program was begun with **100 officers participating**. They wore BWCs daily. At the end of the one year program, a comprehensive evaluation was completed with all 100 officers providing feedback on the BWC pilot – good and bad. These cameras are still in use today.

The Request for Proposal – January, 2015: The process of evaluating responses to the RFP was driven by **46 HPD classifieds**, up to the rank of Executive Assistant Chief. They evaluated and scored the vendors and were supplemented by 5 qualified HPD civilians.

Following is a chronology of key dates in the evaluation process:

- January 23, 2015 – SPD issued the RFP on its web-site
- 372 prospective bidders downloaded the RFP
- March 16, 2015 – SPD delivered to HPD 12 proposals that responded to the RFP
- March 23, 2015 – the evaluation of the 12 proposals began, as follows:
 - **The Technical/Functional Evaluation Committee** consisted of 4 classifieds (one of whom was in the Pilot testing phase and another officer already experienced in DWI video processing and control) and 4 HPD civilian technicians. This committee reviewed and scored the 12 responses to the RFP into a predetermined matrix. This determined the ability of the respondents to meet the technical requirements of the RFP. Pricing in the responses was not considered in this scoring.
 - A second committee, **The Executive Committee**, was comprised of five Assistant Chiefs of Police. This committee conducted a management review of the entirety of all 12 proposals to ascertain if they met the needs of HPD. This included validation of references and a

comprehensive financial review. The committee also used an empirical scoring system to rate the responders.

- Based on the consolidated scores provided by the independent committees, a ranking was established. The four top ranked proposals were substantially higher than the remainder and were selected for field testing of the proposed equipment and systems.
- Testing of submitted BWCs/VEMS – was conducted and evaluated by 46 HPD classifieds from various ranks, up to EACs, and 5 HPD civilian technical staff.
 - Controlled testing was conducted under constant conditions (lighting, temperature, etc.)
 - Field testing of the cameras was done by 23 officers – one week test per camera, per officer
 - Evaluations and scoring were conducted by each officer for every camera tested
 - Video quality of the cameras and usefulness of the vendor software was evaluated and scored by five HPD captains. This included resolution, functionality, ease of use, etc.
 - The EAC Evaluation Committee reviewed all other prior committee evaluation reports, responses to the RFP and related videos. The EACs completed a report to the Chief of Police with their recommendation as to the best respondent
 - The Chief of Police made his recommendation to SPD.

21. Did HPD solicit commentary from the public and receive input on its draft BWC policy?

Yes. HPD held multiple meetings with the public that were beneficial and productive. A listing of those meetings is provided in the attached BWC timeline.

The BWC policy was posted on the HPD website along with instructions on how to submit comments and suggestions. Further, HPD solicited feedback from other sources, such as Facebook, and received a great number of positive responses in support of the policy, along with suggestions for consideration. Altogether, HPD has compiled approximately 56 pages of material.

The Chief of Police has committed that the BWC policy will always be a public document that will be posted on the HPD website. It is a living document and subject to ongoing review and revision, based on input from the public and police officers. It is HPD's desire that this policy reflects best practices and policing policies.

Addendum I

HPD Policies

Controls & System/Software Restrictions to Access of Original Videos

1. The policy will have language to the effect: No original videos will be modified or deleted unless directed by court order or in accordance with HPD's approved retention schedule.
2. There will be a system administrator and backup who will have the "keys" to our storage; these are the same two people who currently have access to all of HPD's stored evidence. No other civilian or classified person has or will have access in the case of body camera videos.
3. If a decision is made to use "cloud storage," HPD will still have the same two people authorized to access the storage of videos. Additionally, the vendor providing the storage for HPD will have multiple people possessing keys giving them access to the videos. HPD would be required to encrypt all videos to neutralize vendor managers from accessing the videos.
4. In both #3 and #4, the Video Evidence Management System (VEMS) provides an audit trail should the primary or backup person access the videos in storage. Even if either person was smart enough to circumvent them, there is an additional audit trail that is built into the Microsoft programming of our computers used to attempt accessing the videos.
5. Any attempt to access the VEMS is governed by a person's employee number and a password. So while one might attempt to use someone else's employee number, they would also have to have the matching password.
6. HPD has a redundant storage system. That means there are two exact copies of every video stored and each copy is stored at a separate location.
7. No redaction software can be used to modify an original video. A person cannot extract the original video from storage and use the redaction software to modify a video; it just simply isn't possible. Redaction software is always applied after a copy of the original video is made. Even citizens who request videos will never receive the original, it will always be a copy, redacted if necessary, and the original will always remain in storage untouched.
8. Original videos are "watermarked" to distinguish them from copies of original videos.

Body Worn Cameras – Project Timeline

August, 2013	First BWC Proposal - \$8,294,587
January, 2014	COP announces pilot of 100 BWCs
March, 2014	HPD submits BWC PBJ - \$8,553,575
October, 2014	HPD submits new PBJ - 3,676 BWCs - \$6,649,648
November, 2014	Mayor Parker approves PBJ & project
December, 2014	COP – Mayor’s report on BWCs & VEMS
January, 2015	DA Anderson donates \$1 million – cams only
January, 2015	RFP issued on City website January 23 rd
March, 2015	Vendor responses received
March – October, 2015	Evaluation of proposals, Field Testing, No Contact/Quiet Period
October, 2015	Final configuration & pricing: 4,500 BWCs at \$7,963,360 – all-in for 5 years
October 6, 2015	HPD presentation to PSHS Committee – BWC Draft Policy
October 15, 2015	Public Meeting at Moody Park Community Center – BWC Draft Policy
October 27, 2015	Public Meeting - Involved Citizens Houston Community Forum – BWC Draft Policy
November 3, 2015	Public Meeting – Houston Community College – Social Science Center – BWC Draft Policy
November 4, 2015	Public Meeting – Open Carry Informational Meeting – BWC Draft Policy
November 6, 2015	Two RCAs to 1) enter contact with vendor; 2) procure computer storage devices publicly released for Council Agenda of November 10, 2015. Quiet Period concluded
November 10, 2015	City Council consideration of RCAs