

Transcript: Body-Worn Camera Programs— Technology Perspective

Maggie Goodrich, Chief Information Officer, LAPD: From my perspective as CIO, to determine what was important to officers and our agency in terms of the technology, we looked for, really, three things. We wanted a system that was secure, that was reliable, and was easy to use—and easy to use not only from the standpoint of the camera itself, but also the video management solution and after the fact, in terms of reviewing video, sharing video with the district attorney, and that sort of thing. The other thing that was very important in the selection of the technology was input from sworn officers throughout the entire selection process, so that we understood the operational needs and understood what was important to the officers who would be ultimately wearing the cameras.

When selecting the technology, the most important features to consider are not only features that pertain to the camera itself, but also, I think almost more importantly, would be the features of the back office video management solution, looking at things like chain of custody, audit logs, access to video, the ability to restrict or control that access, the ability to share video and evidence with prosecutors, public defenders, and the ability to access that video for both administrative investigations as well as criminal prosecutions. The most important feature of the camera itself, I would say, for us at the LAPD, was the ability to capture pre-event buffer. The solution we selected allows for a 30-second pre-event buffer to be captured so that we have video before the officer actually activates the camera. And that's important because officer safety comes first, obviously, when it comes to patrol and enforcement activities, and we don't always expect an officer to press record first. We expect them to think about officer safety and public safety first, and then activate that camera. And so the pre-event buffer went a long way toward allowing us to capture an entire event.

So I think the introduction of body-worn cameras introduced some new policy discussions for us, in that this technology required us to think about things like the recording in a person's private residence, the privacy rights that come along with treatment in medical healthcare facilities, the interviews of victims of serious crimes, including victims of sexual assault. And I think it caused us to think through those privacy concerns in a way that maybe some other technologies had not previously.

I think when weighing cost versus features, when it comes to body-worn video, I think you have to consider both, but cost certainly can't be the driving factor. Features have to be a strong consideration. Making sure that we had a system that was secure, reliable, and easy to use was of the utmost importance.