

A close-up photograph of a black body-worn camera. The camera has a prominent lens at the top and a circular array of red LED lights below it. The device is mounted on a black, textured strap. The background is a blurred, light-colored surface.

STPS Body Worn Camera

2021

Report Submitted by
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21 BWC Annual Report



Since January 1st of 2021 the St. Thomas Police Service were fully live with Axon BWC and Digital Evidence Management. 31 Body Worn Cameras were purchased and implemented into daily policing operations.

Policy PR-81 requires annual reporting of the Body Worn Camera program which include the following;

INTERNAL AUDITS OF ADHERENCE TO BWC POLICY

Under the direction of a Senior Officer, a supervisor will be tasked with completing an annual audit of the BWC program specifically to ensure:

- The Policy is current and being adhered to by all members.
- The BWC video is securely stored and retention periods are being maintained with the video being deleted only as regulated.
- BWC audit trails are being generated and there is no unauthorized access to the recordings.
- The supervisor tasked with the annual audit will be required to report their findings to the Senior Officer in narrative report form.

Review of Data

21

EVIDENCE AGGREGATE TOTALS

BWC Videos	Capture Images	Capture Statements	Citizen Submissions
24,177	6,863	1,407	557

TOTAL ITEMS 32,637

VIDEOS

Sample data was retrieved from a group of users to determine the average activation and usage rates of the BWC. 8 Users were selected from each of the 4 platoons. Officers were selected based upon the same range of experience level. This takes into account equal holiday time and ensures uniformity in this regard. This methodology was then used to great a median recording rate for BWC activation with front line officers. The date range selected was for the entire calendar year of 2021.

SAMPLE GROUP

• A PLATOON	968	• A PLATOON	550
• B PLATOON	687	• B PLATOON	418
• C PLATOON	716	• C PLATOON	555
• D PLATOON	562	• D PLATOON	585

**sample data indicates, a median recording rate of
630 BWC Videos per officer was obtained**

AXON CAPTURE IMAGES

6863 images were take and uploaded by St Thomas Police during 2021.

This is a feature that allows the responding officer to take scene photographs or video directly from their issued cell phone and upload immediately to axon. This is used for more common, lower grade offences such as mischief, theft and motor vehicle collisions to name a few.

AXON CAPTURE AUDIO

1407 audio recordings were made in 2021 using the Axon capture feature. This is an audio recording capability within the issued cellphone and Axon app. This allows officers to take statements at the scene and capture the best evidence. This is an efficient tool for the officers as it prevents the need for having people come to the police station for formal video interviews when it can be done at the scene.

AXON CITIZEN

557 citizen submissions were made to St. Thomas Police utilizing this feature. This is a mechanism that allows the officer to send a link via text message or email to the public. This is a link to a portal where the citizen is able to simply upload their photo or video for evidence for the officer to review and maintain. This is an extremely modern and timesaving tool. Within the 557 submissions, multiple images or videos were submitted during most submissions.



COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE POLICE AND THE USE OF BWC

OIPRD

Within 2021, 9 complaints were received through the Office of the Independent Police Review Director (OIPRD).

- 7 complaints were screened out by the OIPRD as not in the public interest.
- 2 complaints were referred back to the service for follow up.

Upon the review of BWC and consultation with the complainants, the last two complaints were withdrawn by the complainant. This was entirely based on the evidence provided by the BWC and prevented time consuming investigations from occurring. This was based on the evidence provided by the BWC. The assigned investigator was able to see an unbiased real-time version of events captured to determine the investigation outcome.

SIU

COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE POLICE AND THE USE OF BWC

Throughout 2021, 5 notifications were made to the Special Investigations Unit.

The SIU invoked their mandate 3 of these times and upon initial inquiry, which included BWC video.

- 2 were closed very quickly in the initial stage.
- 1 investigation remains active at this time, and BWC footage was again provided.

While the SIU investigation remains active at this time, an internal review under section 32 of the Police Services Act found the officers acted in accordance with policies and procedures.

REDACTION REQUIREMENTS

Provincial Offences Act (POA) Part 1 redactions – 135 hours of redacting time from July –December 31st, 2021. The provincial offence office will take carriage of all part III charges starting January 2022 and an increase in this area of redaction can reasonably be expected. The redactions are conducted by members assigned to the Alternate Response Unit resulting in no additional budgetary expense.

Criminal/Federal Charges : Redaction completed by crown's office

3 Requests submitted
Total hours on redaction : 90 hours

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Billed to Requester

QUARTERLY REPORTS

After a grace period with the implementation and training of the body worn cameras, quarterly platoon level audits were completed by front line supervisors.

This was done for the 3rd and 4th quarter of 2021.

The process for this audit is for the platoon NCO to pick a random shift throughout the quarter and analyze all calls for service to BWC recordings. The purpose of this is to ensure that the BWC is being activated in accordance with the policy and that all videos and associated evidence (audio statements, images) are being labelled with an incident number and categorized properly.

Any in-activations were identified and policy was applied to ensure there are no reoccurrences. As with any new equipment and becoming accustomed to new procedures, there will be a learning curve.

UNCATEGORIZED EVIDENCE

Uncategorized Evidence Reports are completed and logged monthly since the inception of the BWC program. Officers and Supervisors are up to date with the categorization of evidence and have done exceptionally well with this process. The categorization dictates the retention timelines of the video and is retained for disclosure with our local Crown Attorney's Office.



Axon Capture



Axon View



Axon Insider



Axon Events

CONCLUSION

The Body Worn Camera Program has been an absolute asset since its inception with the St Thomas Police Service. All officers have not only embraced this program but assisted in making it as successful as it is.

While the BWC is certainly an asset, so are the Digital Evidence Management tools which include the Axon Capture and Axon Citizen. The Axon/BWC program implemented within St Thomas Police is a true success and has proven nothing but benefits to the community and the service.