

Coming into focus:

What Philadelphia has learned about body worn cameras in police work

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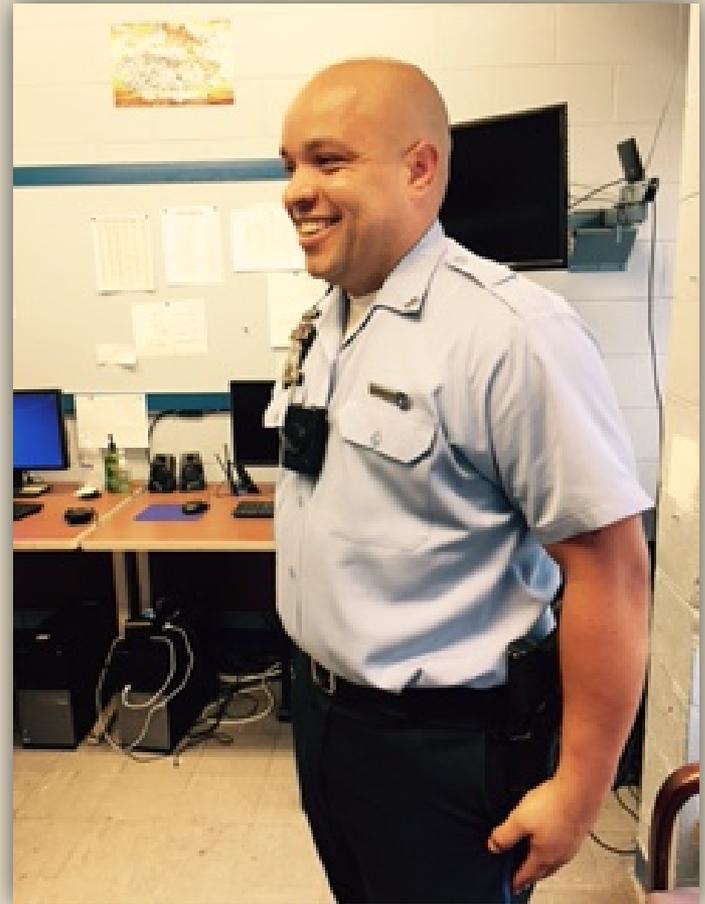
Philadelphia context

- 5th largest city
- 4th largest police department serving ~1.5 residents
- Roughly equal proportion of African American & white residents
- PPD active in national conversation on the future of policing
- Measured approach to BWC implementation using volunteers



Aims of BWC pilot study

1. Explore shifts in officer attitudes
 - Perceived downsides and benefits
2. Examine range of outcomes
 - Refine measures
3. Identify implementation issues prior to roll-out
 - Technology infrastructure
 - Acceptance
4. Isolate optimal design features
 - Front-end & back-end usability



Study design

- Dec. 1, 2014 to May 31, 2015
- 22nd district
- BWC working group
- 41 volunteers
- 7 camera models



Study design

Qualitative data	Quantitative data
<p>2 Pre-pilot focus groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish general issues related to usability & acceptance• Refine questions & measures on surveys <p>3 Post-pilot focus groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Experiences of wearing cameras• Perceptions of effects on the nature of police work• Challenges with pilot implementation & fidelity to study design	<p>3 survey instruments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Officer attitudes & perceptions (pre/post – all district officers)2. Usability of each camera (monthly – volunteers only)3. Daily (perceptions of effects on police work & citizen behavior & usability – volunteers only) <p>Outcomes analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use of force• Citizen complaints

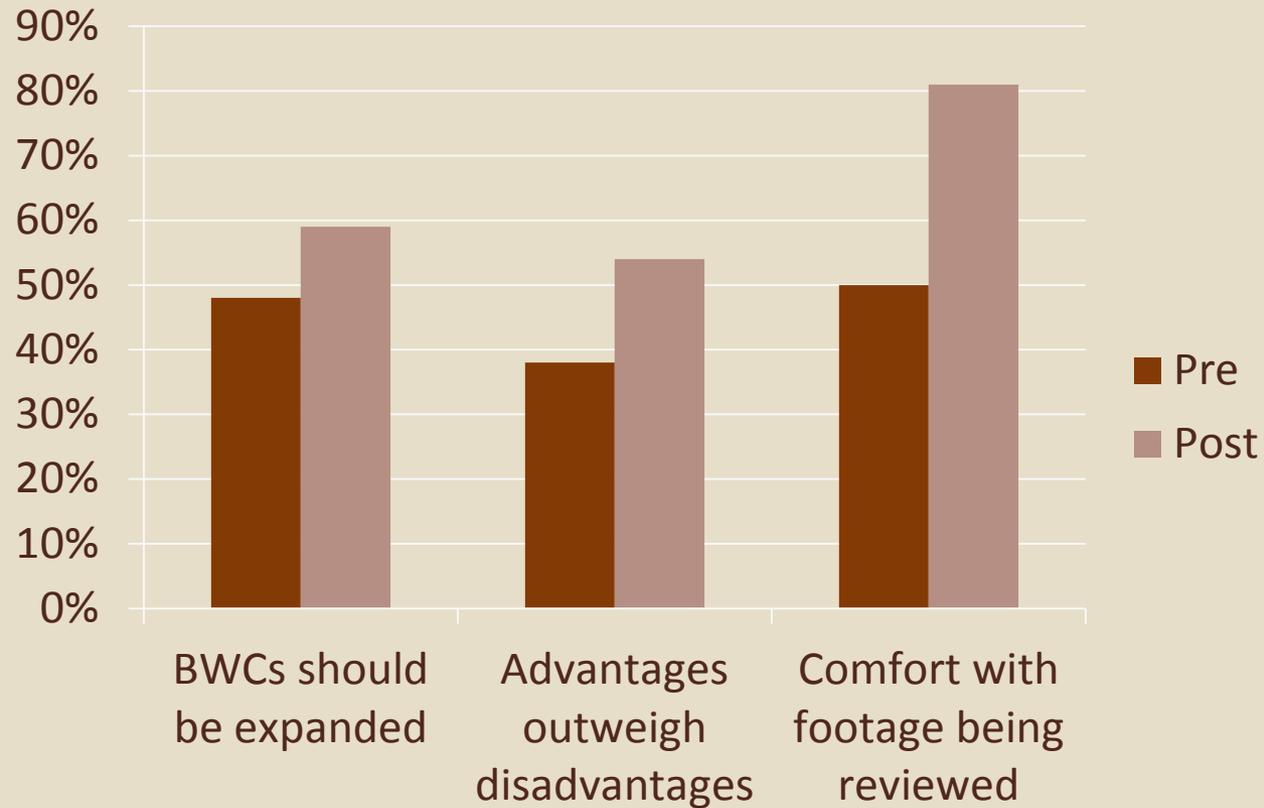
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Findings



Rise in acceptance



Critical design features

- Durability of camera
- Resiliency of docking station
- Strong clip
- Simplicity of on/off switch
- Video retrieval



Capacity to document police work

- Cameras as protective of officers
 - In cases of false or exaggerated complaints
 - Concerns with increased IAB investigations allayed
- Create documentaries of arrests
- Gather video and photographic evidence at crime scenes
- Capture conduct of unlawful protesters
- Record standard-setting with citizens
- Enhance quality of written reports



Not a panacea for police-community relations

- Potential influence on citizen & police behavior during particular encounters
- However, police-community relations run deep
- Information flow to police occurs often via phone
 - Where “snitching” is a concern, citizens may be more comfortable with BWCs turned off



Potential effects on discretion

- Chilling effect?
 - Formal vs. informal interventions?
 - Reducing interventions for minor criminal behavior?
 - Cameras lacking the “area knowledge” guiding discretion?



Implications

1. Practice

- Clear messaging on continued value of good discretion
- Use BWCs officers as messengers of benefits

2. Research

- Develop refined measures that capture potential chilling effects on discretion
- Measure district variation in BWCs' effects on police-community relations



For further inquiries...

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