

BWC AUDIT REPORT 24TH DISTRICT JANUARY, 2025



Auditing, Policy, and
Research Division

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OVERVIEW

Body Worn Cameras (BWCs) are systems that capture audio and/or video signals and are individually worn by police officers. These devices provide audio and video recording of events that officers encounter. Body Worn Cameras are useful to both law enforcement and the public for preserving factual representations of officer-citizen interactions.

CPOC wanted to learn more about how the Philadelphia Police Department used their BWC in practice as well as the Directive 4.21 (Body Worn Cameras) which outlines procedures for proper BWC operation. Using the guidelines outlined in Directive 4.21 as a guide, CPOC developed an audit project to assess whether a BWC recording was done so following the protocols established by the police department.

CPOCs Auditing, Policy, and Research Division conducted an audit of a random sample of all 75-48s involving vehicle stops from the 24th district generated in January of 2025.

Note: A 75-48 is a report completed by police to establish and maintain a permanent written record of all founded offenses, arrests, complaints, particular incidents, and services requiring police action. Different incident types can result in the preparation of different 75-48s (See PPD Directive 12.11)

For this audit (75) 75-48s were randomly selected to be audited. Of those 75-48s, (64) contained instances that were recorded via BWC resulting in (119) total BWC videos being audited for this report (many instances were recorded by more than 1 officer). 9 of these reports did not include BWC recordings.

Note: 2 of the 75-48s in our random sample were not shared with CPOC. As such, CPOC did not include these 75-48s in our data bringing the random sample size to (73) 75-48s.

A summary of our audit process as well as a statistical analysis of our findings are detailed in the following portions of this report.

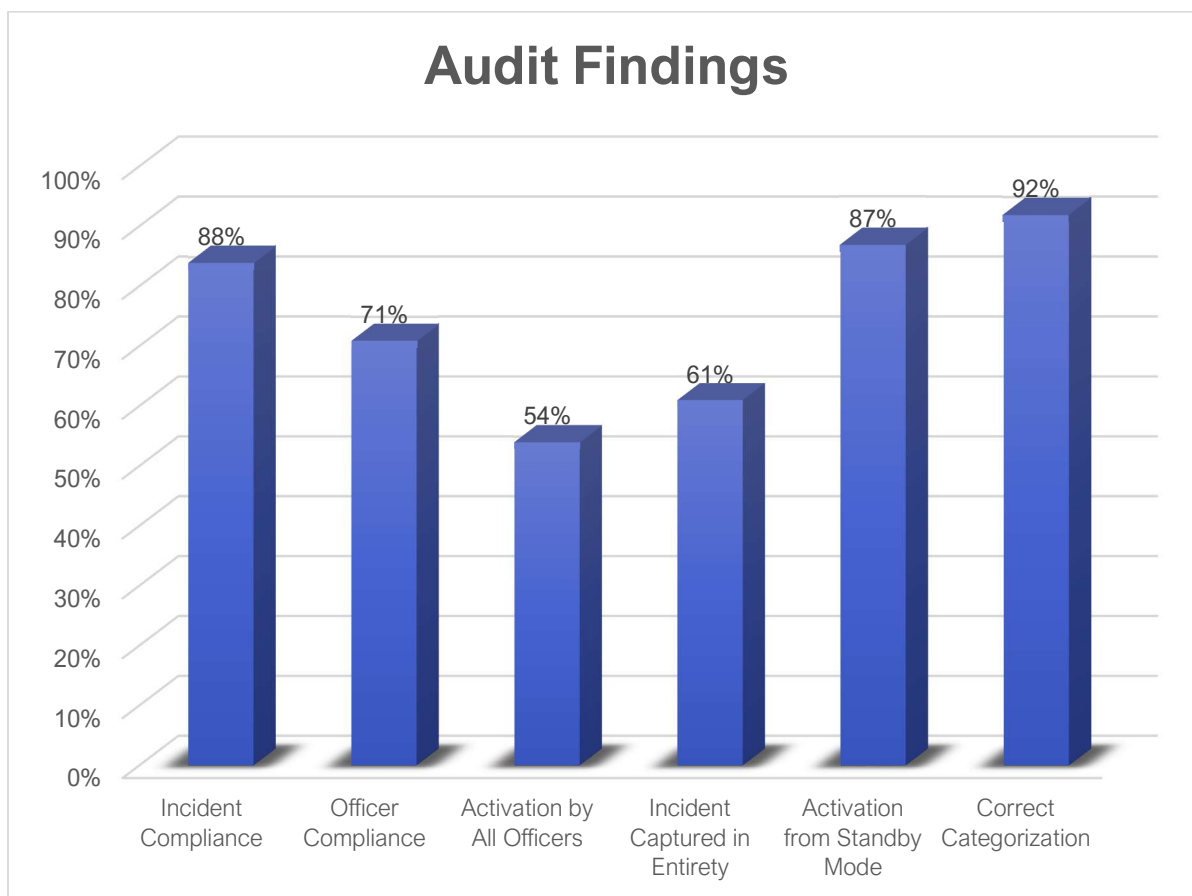


AUDIT PROCESS:

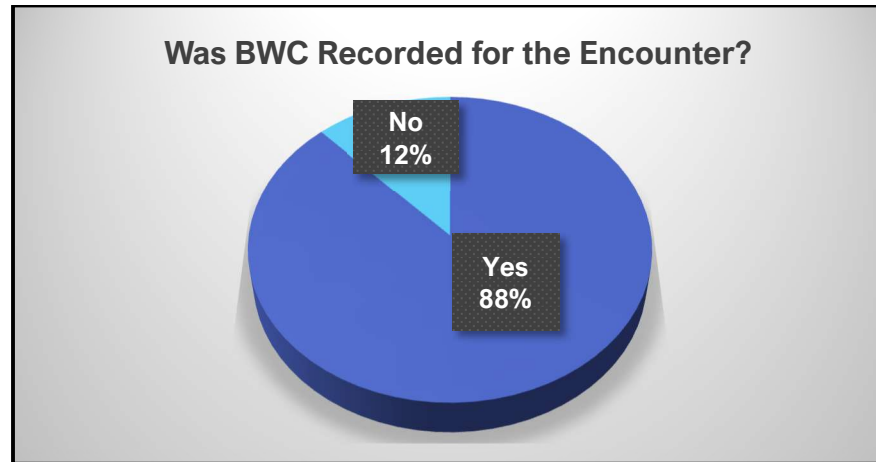
CPOC used the following criteria to audit the BWC videos in the random sample. The criteria were developed using PPD Directive 4.21 which outlines the rules for proper BWC usage. If an incident had multiple videos from multiple officers, all videos were reviewed. The questions used in the survey are listed below.

- Did a search / review of PPD's digital evidence management system produce any notable errors in the titling, naming, or categorizing of the BWC video by the officer?
- Was the BWC video categorized?
- Was the BWC video categorized correctly according to the nature of the encounter?
- What was the BWC video categorized with?
- What should the BWC video be categorized with?
- Was the officers BWC on for the duration of the encounter?
 - If no, did it... (select all that apply)
 - Start Late
 - End Early
- Did the BWC video include the entire 60 second buffering period?
- Did the Officer state why they were turning off their BWC before doing so?
- Did the Officer articulate that they were shutting off their BWC for any of the following permissible reasons?
 - Gruesome images or exposed private areas of the human body without a legitimate reason to capture such images.
 - Officer(s) entering a religious institution during services.
 - BWC would capture officer(s) entering a hospital room or private patient area in the hospital.
 - A crime scene has been established, and officer(s) have been placed on post to safeguard the scene.
- Was the officer's BWC used to record any of the following prohibited activities/behaviors?
 - Non-work-related personal activities / conversations.
 - Places where a reasonable expectation of privacy exists (i.e., locker rooms, dressing rooms or restrooms).
 - Conversations with confidential informants and undercover officers.
 - Strip searches.
 - Operational strategies or tactics.
 - Conversations of fellow employees or supervisors during routine administrative activities not related to those incidents or events described in Section 3-A.
 - Media captured on a BWC to another recording device i.e., cell phone.
- Were there other officers on the scene who did not record BWC footage but did have the capacity to do so?

VISUAL DATA



VISUAL DATA



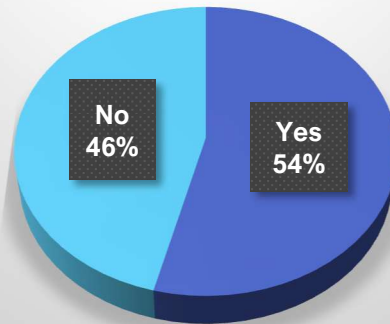
(73) 75-48s out of the random sample of 73 total 75-48s should have had BWC footage attached. PPDs Digital Media Evidence Unit provided BWC videos for 61 75-48s and a review of the hard copies produced BWC for 3 additional 75-48s (88%). The 75-48s that should have had BWC footage were shared with the 24th district accordingly.



Of the 179 total officers with BWC present for the incidents observed in the random sample, 127 (71%) of these officers recorded BWC for the incident. Of all the recording officers in the sample, 53% operated their BWC within departmental guidelines (*captured full incident, BWC activated from standby mode, did not record anything prohibited*).

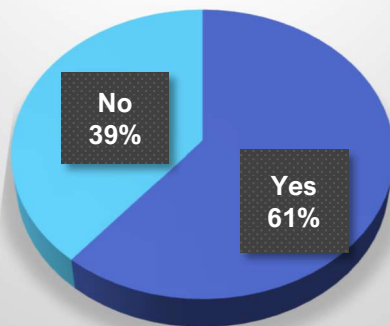
VISUAL DATA

**Was BWC Activated by All Available Officers
with BWC on Scene?**



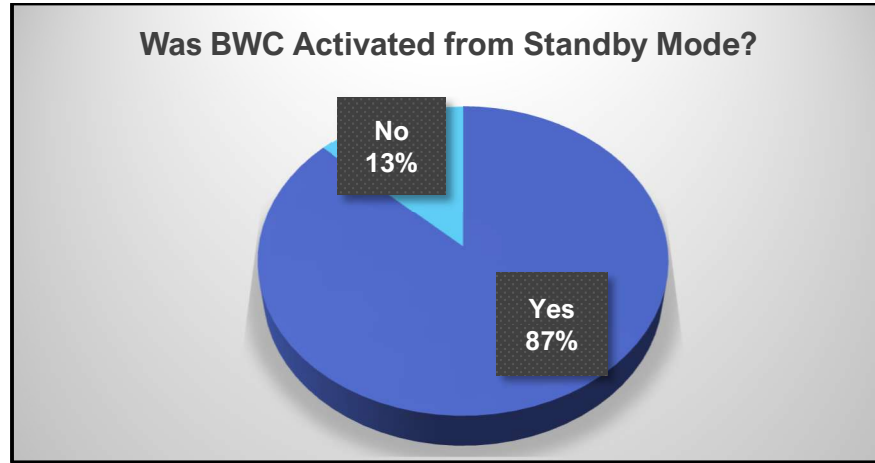
Of the **119** total BWC videos audited by CPOC, **64 (54%)** depicted incidents in which all officers equipped with BWC recorded the incident. The 75-48s that included officers who did not use their BWC to record were shared with the 24th district accordingly.

**Did BWC Footage Capture the Duration of
the Encounter?**

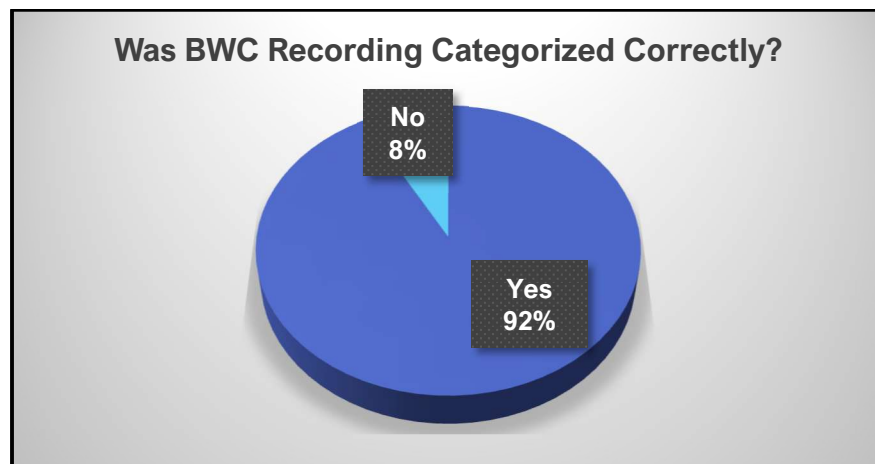


Of the **119** total BWC videos audited, **73 (61%)** of these instances were captured in their entirety by the recording officer. The 75-48s that did not capture the entire encounter were shared with the 24th district accordingly.

VISUAL DATA



Of the **119** total BWC videos audited, **104 (87%)** of these recordings were activated from standby mode. This indicates that the recording officers had their cameras properly turned on prior to activation. The instances in which the officer(s) BWCs were completely shut off prior to the incident were shared with the 24th district accordingly.



Of the **119** total BWC videos reviewed by CPOC, **109 (92%)** were categorized appropriately according to the nature of the incident and the information provided on the 75-48s. Proper categorizing is critical for evidence preservation and locating relevant BWC footage within the digital evidence management system. The BWC videos that were not categorized correctly were shared with the 24th district accordingly.

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

Did a search / review of PPD's digital evidence management system produce any notable errors in the titling, naming, or categorizing of the BWC video by the officer?

84 /119 (71%) of BWC videos audited did not contain any notable errors in the titling, naming, or categorization of the BWC video, 35/119 (29%) contained at least one of these errors.

BWC videos activated in compliance with Directive 4.21 (captured full incident, BWC activated from standby mode, did not record anything prohibited).

63 /119 (53%) of BWC videos audited captured the entire incident, were activated from standby mode, and did not record anything prohibited (as defined in Directive 4.21), 56/119 (47%) did not meet these conditions.

Did BWC footage capture the duration of the encounter? (Did the BWC video start late? End early?)

46/119 (39%) of the BWC videos audited were not captured in their entirety. 33 of the BWC videos ended early and 19 of the BWC videos started late (6 videos fit into both categories).

Did the officer state why they were turning their BWC off before doing so?

33 BWC videos in the sample were deactivated before the end of the incident (which would require the officer to state out loud the reason for deactivation per Directive 4.21).

2/33 (6%) of these BWC videos depicted an instance in which an officer stated why they were shutting off their BWC before doing so. In 31/33 (94%) BWC videos audited, the officer did not provide a reason for the deactivation of their BWC device.

Was the officer's BWC used to record any of the following prohibited activities/behaviors?

(Non-work-related personal activities / conversations, Places where a reasonable expectation of privacy exists (i.e., locker rooms, dressing rooms or restrooms), Conversations with confidential informants and undercover officers., Strip searches, Operational strategies or tactics, Conversations of fellow employees or supervisors during routine administrative activities not related to those incidents or events described in Section 3-A., Media captured on a BWC to another recording device i.e., cell phone)

No officers (0/119) in this sample were observed using their BWC to record any of the above listed prohibited activities/ behaviors.

ACTION STEPS

CPOC recommends the following actions steps to improve compliance with Directive 4.21.

Action Step 1: During roll call prior to the start of each shift supervisors should remind officers to activate their BWC while providing backup during calls for service. Officers should be instructed that BWCs should be activated prior to responding to all calls for service, during all law enforcement related encounters, and during all activities involving the general public.

Action Step 2: During roll call prior to the start of each shift supervisors should reiterate the importance of using BWC to capture the entire encounter between officers and members of the public. Officers should be reminded to activate the BWC before they exit their vehicle for car stops, before they interact with a civilian during pedestrian stops, and prior to contact with civilians when the situation allows them to do so safely. Officers should be instructed to deactivate their BWC after the incident is over, they have cleared the scene and are available for radio calls.

Action Step 3: During roll call prior to the start of each shift supervisors should ensure that officers are aware of standby mode procedures outlined in Directive 4.21. While assisting officers on the street supervisors should check to make sure that officers are patrolling with their BWC in standby mode and ready to record.

Action Step 4: CPOC had been previously advised that there is an officer assigned to tag and label BWC videos in this district. When tagging and labeling, the assigned officer should check the contents of the BWC video and refer to the written copies of the 75-48 to ensure that information concerning the encounter is correctly entered into PPD's digital evidence management system.

CONCLUSION

CPOC is sharing the results of this audit with the understanding that BWC usage is a relatively new function for a number of officers within the Philadelphia Police Department. As such, minor BWC infractions can be the result of many different variables and may not necessarily meet the criteria for an officer to receive discipline. Thus, CPOC hopes this report can be used to assist the Philadelphia Police Department in maintaining consistent compliance with Directive 4.21, increasing public trust, and enhancing officer safety.

