Body-Worn Camera Training and Technical Assistance
SFPD-Robert Moser

Michael Roosa: Hello, I'm Michael Roosa, senior policy advisor for the Bureau of Justice
                 Assistance's Policy Office. I'm responsible for the Body-Worn Camera
                 Team. Today, I'm speaking with Commander Robert Moser, from the San
                 Francisco Police Department. Welcome, sir.

Robert Moser: Hi Mike, thanks for having me, today.

Michael Roosa: Commander Moser (as) a 22 year veteran of the San Francisco Police
                 Department, he currently serves as the commander of the Metro Division for
                 the SFPD, which consists of half the city's patrol force.

                 Commander Moser has previously served in the (Negotiations) Bureau, where
                 he oversaw the SFPD's Major Crimes Unit, Special Victim's Unit and the
                 Special Investigations Detail.   He has also served as the Captain of Mission
                 police, and as the Officer-in-Charge of the Internal Affairs Division.

                 He's recently served as the lead on the San Francisco Police Department's
                 Body Camera Policy Working Group. Commander Moser has a Masters
                 degree in Public Administration from the University of San Francisco, and is a
                 graduate of the FBI National Academy, as well as from the Police Executive
                 Research Forum, Senior Management Institute for police.

                 Thank you again for being here, and that background you have is really
                 important for this topic, and I can see why they selected you for this. Thanks
                 for speaking with me today, Commander.

                 So, let me just get right into the first question, and I'll ask some follow-ups,
                 occasionally, but most of the time it will be just straightforward. So first is
                 really, what is leading, and what has led San Francisco to implement BWC's?

Robert Moser: Well, what led San Francisco to implement a Body-Worn Camera Program is
                 much like what drives other agencies to implement BWC programs. And, that
                 really is (that) BWC's are an essential tool for 21st century policing. We, at
                 the SFPD, saw body cameras not just as a powerful evidentiary tool, but we

also saw them as an opportunity to demonstrate the department's commitment to transparency, and to increase the public stress (on) our officers.

We also saw them as a tool to allow us to ensure accountability of our officers, while at the same time helping to protect our officers from unjustified complaints of misconduct. In addition, we recognize that there's tremendous officer safety benefits and training potential that comes from body-worn cameras.

Michael Roosa: So, definitely with the police officers and the community, two important sides we hear often, now. That's great to hear those echoed. So, let me ask you a two-part follow-up question, then.

It's basically while you were developing your policy, could you describe how you performed outreach to the officers? And then maybe follow up with the community? And given the strong advocacy in your communities, that must have been a challenge, in some ways?

Robert Moser: Well, it was. And we had a unique situation here in San Francisco. Our Police Commission had placed a very aggressive timeline in which to develop a draft policy. So, we had basically 90 days to form a working group, review best practices, and come up with a draft policy.

And, while doing that, we also had to be transparent about the process to ensure accountability and really maintain the public's trust in the process. So to do that, we first formed a working group of key stakeholders. And, within that group of key stakeholders, we included individuals and representatives from within the department and from outside the department.

So, our stakeholder group consisted of members of the command staff, representatives from our police union, and our various PEG groups, including our Latino Peace Officers Association, African-American Peace Officers Association, Asian Peace Officers Association, our LGBT Officers Association and our Women's Police Officers Group. Then, we also had representatives from our Offices of Citizens Complaints, which oversees the civilian complaint process against officers here in San Francisco.

We had a representative from our Public Defender's office, from the San Francisco Bar Association, from the Human Rights Commission, our department — City Department of Human Resources — and as well as a community member with the group. We also extended an invitation to ACLU, as well, to be a member of our working group.

So, once we established the working group and set our timelines of meetings, we made all of our meetings open, public meetings. So, all of our meetings were open to the public, they were recorded, the press was allowed to attend should they want to, and then we took all of our materials, all of our notes, draft policies and posted them on the web for people to see as we went along during our process.

After we came up with an actual draft policy, we also had working groups — or, excuse me I should say — Community Information Meetings in various neighborhoods throughout San Francisco, where we actually went out to the neighborhoods and presented the policy process, and took questions and comments from members of the community.

Ultimately, we were able to come up with our draft policy, and submit it to the police commission within those 90 days. So, to answer the second part of your question is really, I think, the outreach to the community is pretty self-explanatory, in the fact that we were committed to such a transparent process. And, at the same time it was transparent to the officers, as well

I think having members from union representatives and members of the various PEG groups involved in the process, and the fact that it was such an open process, really allowed for a lot of communication during the policy formation, and there wasn't really any mystery about it.

Michael Roosa: I can't believe it actually was in 90 days. That just sounds like quite a pace, and even for the community to keep up. But, the fact that you've documented it, and you've made it available is just such a great resource. I will mention — and I don't believe it's there right now, but I'll infer — that there's a link to your link, or to your page with that on the BWC TTA.com - - the TTA website - - for that.

Because, that just sounds like a great resource, and it's great to hear about it, and we look forward to getting it out there for others to take advantage of – – mostly, the process. So, obviously, a very broad, a lot of discussions happened. What would you say were the key discussion points for policies?

Robert Moser: Well, probably the biggest discussion point that we had was over whether or not to allow officers to view footage prior to writing routine police (reports), and making statements.

There were members of the group, and as you would imagine having just (such) a wide variety of stakeholders that were involved that had differing opinions on this topic. Some members of the group felt that by not allowing it, and that we shouldn't allow officers to view the footage prior to writing police reports or making routine statements.

And they felt that by not allowing them to view the footage, they would in fact obtain a pure, quote- unquote, "pure" statement from the officer about he or she, how he or she perceived an incident. Others felt that it was essential for officers to view the video prior to writing a police report or making a statement, as the video was quite often the best evidence that an officer has, and is crucial for putting the best case together.

There was also an argument that by not allowing officers to view the footage prior to making a statement — excuse me — prior to making a statement, or writing a police report, that there could create an unintended kind of a "gotcha situation" for an officer in court, where their recollection for minor details might differ slightly from what's on the video, and this could be keyed upon by a defense to attack an officer's credibility, even though it was a minor detail.

Ultimately, the Police Commission voted to allow officers to be allowed to view video prior to writing routine police reports and making statements.

Michael Roosa: Thank you, that's - - as many agencies as I work with, it seems to be about a 50-50 split, particularly in cases of use of force, even, to allow officers to view. So, it's good to have a documented reason and the discussions there, to see it come forward.

If I can, let me shift gears into more of the technology, because the technology has to meet the need that policy dictates, such as the example you just gave. The policy — or I should say the technology — you select now has to allow for officer review. So, that would go into your procurement process, I would assume. So, what — without leading you into that answer — but, what were the key considerations when you were evaluating your solutions?

Robert Moser: Sure. So, during the (RFP) process, really there were two major issues, and those were cost and storage, and they kind of go hand-in-hand. Really, we had to have a system that was going to be cost effective in the long run.

As we piled on more and more videos, we had to - - it had to be workable, in terms of the cost. And then, also, it had to be secure. So, we had to make sure that whatever we were, we ended up eventually choosing – – whatever system we eventually chose – – had to meet (SIGIS) standards.

Michael Roosa: So those are probably the primary concerns that we hear, particularly on the technology selections. So, a last question, because we do have to keep these within a reasonable timeframe. What advice would you give another law (allege) agencies that are looking at implementing BWC's?

Robert Moser: Well, there's a couple of pieces of advice that I would give. First of all, take advantage of the resources that are out there. At the outset, the formation, the idea of a formation of a body-worn camera policy can be very daunting. However, there are a lot of great resources out there, starting with the DOJ, and all the resources that come with the Body-Worn Camera Toolkit.

There's a lot of good policies out there to look at — a lot of model policies — and certainly take advantage of that. Do your homework, see what bits of those policies work for your particular agency, as you're moving forward. That's number one. Number two is I would get the stakeholders — including those who may be critical of your organization — in early on the policy formation discussions.

For us, having a variety of people in our group really brought different perspectives. And although we didn't always come to consensus on every

issue, everybody had a voice and was part of the process. And, at the end of that process, we all came together and agreed on that draft policy, and we did it together and everybody had a voice. And that was really important.

Michael Roosa: Great, great. Great advice. And it's nice to know we have homework. Commander, thank you so much for your time. We're grateful that you could speak to us today on this important topic.

Robert Moser: Thanks for having me, Mike, it's been a pleasure.

Michael Roosa: So, we encourage law enforcement, justice, public safety leaders whose agencies are interested in learning more about the implementation of body-worn camera programs to visit the Body-Worn Camera Toolkit, www.bja.gov/bwc.

This toolkit offers a variety of resources that agencies can use to help with adoption and use for community engagement, policy development, data collection, officer training and educational purposes. We also encourage listeners to share and promote these resources with their colleagues and staff.

Lastly, all of these resources — especially the Body-Worn Camera Toolkit — have been designed as a national resource, your resource. Please submit your ideas for new content, through the BWC support link at the bottom of the homepage. This is Mike Roosa, the Bureau of Justice Assistance's Body-Worn Camera Team signing off.

Thank you to our listeners for joining us, today.

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