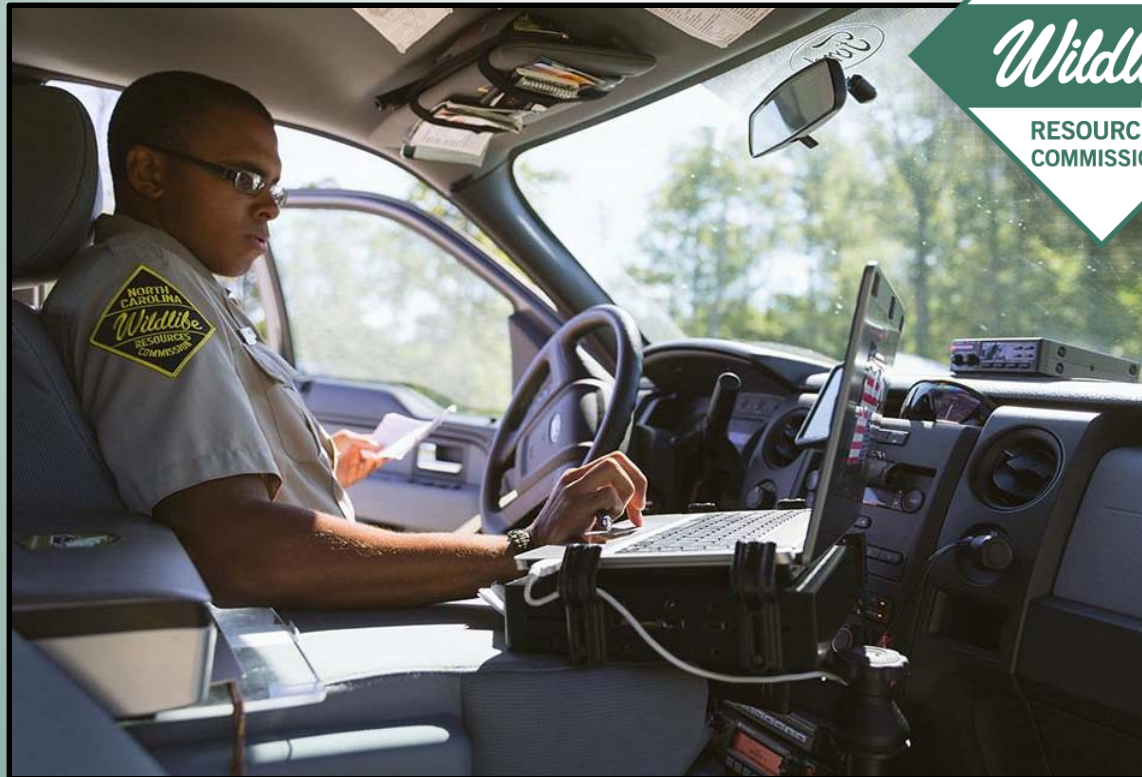


Body Worn Cameras for N.C. Wildlife Law Enforcement Officers



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Wildlife Resources Commission

JON EVANS, COLONEL
LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

NC Wildlife Law Enforcement

- The N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission's Law Enforcement Division is charged with enforcing the game, fish and boating laws of N.C., as established by the N.C. General Assembly and the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC).
- North Carolina's 217 Wildlife Law Enforcement Officers (WLEO's) are state law enforcement officers and each holds a general law enforcement certification through the N.C. Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission.
- In 2015 WLEO's contacted 85,577 sportsmen engaged in boating, fishing, hunting, and trapping activities.



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WLEO's conducted a "Testing and Evaluation" with body worn cameras made by TASER from August 8, 2014 through September 28, 2014 during the highest activity periods for boating, fishing, and hunting.

These cameras were tested by five officers in the coastal areas of North Carolina, including Hyde County, Carteret County, Onslow County.

WRC tested two different types of body worn cameras.

- **Head Mount:** This camera was worn affixed to a hat or sunglasses. This camera provides the view of what an officer is looking at. This system requires wiring from the camera to the receiver on the officer's belt. This system has external wiring and was fragile.
- **Body Mount:** This camera was affixed to the officer's uniform or duty belt. This camera captures whatever is straight in front of it, regardless of what the officer is viewing. This system is more cost effective and less likely to "fall off" during dynamic movements.



- North Carolina Wildlife Law Enforcement Officers work in many locations that are not accessible by patrol vehicles.
- NCWRC has never adopted in-car cameras due to the fact that very little of our compliance checks and law enforcement activity occurs in a close proximity to an officer's patrol vehicle.
- We spend a great deal of time on foot patrol while checking hunters, trappers, and anglers.
- We also spend a great deal of time conducting boat patrols on our state's public waterways.



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Law Enforcement off the Pavement



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- Benefits include:
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Evidence Collection
- Complaint Reduction
- Resolving officer-involved conflicts
- Training



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Professional Standards

- Responsible for multiple services, both internal and external.
- Accountability is vital for credibility in a division of law enforcement.
- Responsible for investigating internal and citizen-generated complaints of misconduct against employees.
- Constant review of policies and procedures, for current law and best practices, and then making policy adjustments.
- Analyze effectiveness of hiring practices, training styles, and the standard practices of officers.



Concerns with Body Worn Cameras

What if the officer is asked to turn the camera off by a member of the public?

- This is a consideration that may need to be addressed by statute or agency policy.
 - Accidents?
 - Victims?
 - Inside a residence?
 - Witness?
- Failing to turn the camera off may escalate a confrontation with a suspect, landowner, or homeowner.
- Turning the camera off may leave the impression that the officer turned the camera off to avoid capturing their actions on video.
- Failing to turn the camera off may reduce someone's willingness to provide information to law enforcement during an investigation.



Concerns with Body Worn Cameras

- Additional staff or dedicated staff to manage video and public information requests?
 - Video must be redacted. Agency must have the ability to perform redaction or hire outside assistance.
- Body worn cameras are more “administrative” duties for officers to charge, clean and maintain cameras. Additional administrative duties to go into the data storage and “tag” videos associated with criminal investigations and/or complaints for retention.
- Body worn cameras will fail due to malfunctions, environment, human error, loss, failure to charge, falls off during a dynamic confrontation, etc.



Program Costs



- \$781, 860 over 5 years
- 175 Body Cameras (automatic upgrade every 2.5 years)
- 175 Single Bay Docks
- 15 Standard Licenses (supervisor/administrative)
- 20 GB of storage per officer
- All functionality in cloud storage (Evidence.com)



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Data Storage

- Based on our Testing and Evaluation of body worn cameras from August 20, 2014 through September 28, 2014, we have estimated that our officers would require 7.2 GB of data per 60-day period.
- Any video not associated with a criminal investigation or a complaint will be deleted after 60 days.
- Misdemeanors must be retained for 3 years
- Felonies must be retained for 20 years.



Law Enforcement Plans

- We are currently testing four additional body worn cameras from Viewu. This test will continue through April 15, 2016. These cameras are currently being tested by four officers, who are stationed in New Hanover County, Hyde County, Wake County, and Lincoln County. We will evaluate results from this testing and evaluation period.
- Continue testing body worn cameras and data storage methods to determine if this is the best course of action for the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, Law Enforcement Division.
- Continue communicating with other agencies to learn what their experiences are with body worn cameras.





Thank You



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