



Funding for Body-Worn Cameras

Situation Assessment

In 2015 the Federal government announced Federal funding for law enforcement agencies to purchase body-worn cameras and improve training. Federal funding, which would need to be matched by state and local police, could purchase 50,000 body-worn cameras.

Background

The local municipal Police Departments across the country join the Federal Government in seeking solutions to protests across the country such as in Ferguson, Mo. and numerous similar cases which have led to Police mistrust. These cases have raised questions about how police treat minority communities. Distrust between local communities and law enforcement agencies is at an all-time high. Body cameras have significantly improved that transparency that is needed for public trust.

The funding for cameras and training would be used by the federal government to match up to 50% spending by state and local police departments on body-worn cameras and storage for the equipment. The storage of the footage is the most challenging because of the amount of data space it would require. The retention period for this footage is also a determining cost factor because minimum retention periods would require additional data space as well. The White House estimates that aspect of the program, which would cost \$75 million, would help fund the purchase of 50,000 body-worn cameras only. This does not include the data storage. In 2014 the Laredo Police Department had at least four (4) Officer Involved Shootings. The advantage of having more readily available camera angles to help in investigations involving deadly use of force offers a unique perspective into the point of view from the officer's perspective and also gives various, dependable alternative looks at officer's immediate threat and reaction which would greatly assist in diffusing public doubts of Police actions.

Solution

Funding consideration should be given to the significant costs associated with maintaining and storing all the footage of body cams. Some departments have initiated entire divisions to handle the immense work load associated with these new police body cams.

Target Agency

U.S. Department of Justice

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