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**NEVADA COUNTY  
SHERIFF'S OFFICE**



**KEITH ROYAL**  
SHERIFF / CORONER  
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATOR

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July 14, 2016

The Honorable Thomas M. Anderson  
Presiding Judge of the Grand Jury  
201 Church Street  
Nevada City, CA 95959

RE: Response to 2015-2016 Grand Jury Report on Body Worn Cameras

Dear Honorable Judge Anderson:

In response to the Grand Jury Report dated May 24, 2016 regarding Body Worn Cameras

**FINDINGS:**

1. Body Worn Cameras have been shown to improve officer-to-citizen interactions and safety.

**Agree**

2. Body Worn Cameras have been shown to reduce citizen complaints.

**Agree**

3. Body Worn Cameras provide more clarification of contested incidents between officer and civilian.

**Agree**

4. Body Worn Cameras appear to provide some measure of crowd control and mitigation.

**Agree**

5. Body Worn Cameras reduce time and legal expense in investigating complaints against officers.

**Agree**

8. The Nevada County Sheriff's Office has expressed a desire not to deploy Body Worn Cameras at this time.

**Agree**

9. Interagency communication concerning Body Worn Camera deployment, techniques, policies, and operating procedures has been shown to improve overall results.

**Agree**

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. The Nevada County Sheriff's Office should deploy and use Body Worn Cameras.

**The recommendation will not be implemented.**

While Body Worn Camera's (BWC's) can provide many potential benefits, they come at considerable financial cost. There is the initial purchase as well as the ongoing costs of infrastructure i.e., ongoing program administration, long-term maintenance and replacement costs, data storage technical support staff positions, data storage, backup and security costs, increased records staffing to process data requests as well as initial/continuing staff training. The Sheriff's Office has not received any funding for Body Worn Cameras for Fiscal Year 16/17.

There are no official guidelines in California regarding the use and data storage of BWC's. Of the almost 18,000 law enforcement agencies in the United States only a fraction currently use BWC's; most of those in urban or high crime areas. As a fledgling technology, the negative impacts of these programs has not been fully explored. While many of the agencies that have BWC programs report success, there has been little attention paid to possible drawbacks or legal ramifications.

Until legislation is in place that addresses data disclosure, privacy and general law enforcement policy questions, embarking on such a program would be a premature expenditure of public funds, staff time and resources. The Nevada County Sheriff's Office does use in-car video and audio recording and are satisfied with this equipment.

Additionally, the Nevada County Sheriff's Office has relatively few complaints regarding the interactions of our officers with the public. Complaints that are received are investigated and overwhelmingly determined to be unfounded.

2. The Nevada County Sheriff's Office should request funds from the Board of Supervisors for Body Worn Cameras and pursue other funds, grants and the like.

**The recommendation will not be implemented.**

The Nevada County Sheriff's Office budget for Fiscal Year 16-17 has already been approved. We feel it prudent to wait for state guidelines, analyze the experiences of similar law enforcement agencies regarding the benefits and drawbacks associated with the use of Body Worn Cameras before we make this a budget priority.

3. Nevada County law enforcement should include the community, policymakers, courts, oversight boards, unions, frontline officers and other stakeholders in the evolution of their Body Worn Camera Programs.

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**The recommendation will not be implemented.**

This will not be implemented on the part of the Nevada County Sheriff's Office as we do not foresee implementing a Body Worn Camera Program at this time.

The Sheriff's Office would like to thank the members of the 2015-2016 Grand Jury for their participation and effort in preparing their reports. We are committed to providing the highest level of safety and security to our employees, the public, and inmates.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Keith Royal', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Keith Royal  
Sheriff-Coroner