G4S Academy

THE USE OF BODY WORN CAMERAS

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1. INTRODUCTION

We live in a digitised world – that's hardly new to anyone. Just 15-20 years ago, it was a matter of chance if a person had a camera or video camera on them when something unexpected occurred. A traffic accident, a fire or perhaps a bank robbery.

Today, almost everybody has a camera on them – young and old alike. Not only that, a photo or video can be published online by a member of the public in a matter of seconds for the whole world to see.

This guide is about how professional Body Worn Cameras can help provide tangible proof of incidents and timestamp these events.

Body Worn Cameras (BWC) are video cameras worn on people's bodies. They can be worn on the torso, head or as glasses. They are called Body Worn Videos (BWV) or Body Worn Cameras (BWC).

2. LEGISLATION

Most countries in the world have established their own legislation and rules regarding the use of Body Worn Cameras.

However, there are two areas of legislation that have a direct connection with the use of this technology. The first is legislation concerning cameras, CCTV or video monitoring (depending on how it is named locally).

In addition, in Europe the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) protects the privacy of the people being filmed, as well as the use and storage of the material, whether it is audio or video.

Certain legislations even include who and who cannot use a Body Worn Camera and in which situations. In some countries, there is even a legal requirement for the user to verbally inform the person(s) being filmed that he or she will turn on the camera.

VIDEO

Body Worn Cameras are used to collect evidence or can be deployed during a training session, they are started and stopped by the person wearing the camera by pressing on the camera, as with a smartphone or an ordinary video camera. The recording is simply initiated based on the individual's assessment of the situation.

The processing of personal data is to be considered as the recorded data coming from the Body Worn Camera. Stringent legislation is applicable on this processing.

As an example, the European GDPR might state on recorded material:

- Recorded material must be protected against unauthorised disclosure or abuse.
- Recorded material must be erased no later than 30 days after the recording has been made.
- The person(s) who is/are the subject of the recordings must be notified of the dispute within the 30-day period.
- The recording must be disclosed to the person(s) involved in the dispute upon request.

All these requirements apply to the camera, which has internal memory, and, of course, to the data storage. Body Worn Cameras typically store videos on the cameras which then, after encryption, can be transferred to a Video Monitoring System (VMS) or an Evidence Management System (EMS).

SOUND

It's advisable that the Body Worn Cameras also record sound. GDPR legislation applies here, in the same way as recording video images.

THE POLICE AND OTHER PUBLIC AUTHORITIES

The police and other public security and safety providers obviously have broader authority to use the data than others. Depending on individual countries and their legislation, there are less specific requirements for the use of Body Worn Cameras by these authorities.

As a result, they have greater opportunities to use Body Worn Cameras than private security companies.

We see this happening in public places, where the police can use a Body Worn Camera, adhering to local restrictions. However, in most countries, using this technology is restricted for private security companies only and others.

CONCLUSION

In many ways, Body Worn Cameras are similar to smartphones because they are easy to operate, use similar technology and are quick to record real-life events on camera.

However, the use of Body Worn Cameras is becoming more regulated, partly due to the fact that the technology is becoming more widely used for securing people and their assets.

The legislation on the processing of personal data indirectly requires that the data in the camera is protected and that unauthorised disclosure of data is avoided.

Similarly, there should be a clear indication on the camera when it is recording – and this may be supplemented with a label, either on the uniform or camera (or both) or by verbal communication.

However, it's important to note that with technical developments, Body Worn Cameras have the potential to be activated remotely. In such situations, the Body Worn Cameras need to be considered as permanent video monitoring solutions, and as such, must adhere to related legislation, procedures and legal regulations.

Legislation regarding GDPR, use of body worn cameras, CCTV and general video laws are continuously evolving. The interpretation of GDPR and other relevant legislation should always be provided by a local legal adviser and/or a data protection authority.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING BODY WORN CAMERAS

If a Body Worn Camera is used to record incidents, which may later be used as evidence or documentation of the sequence of events, or as a support for training sessions, additional requirements apply:

- It must only be possible to remove the recordings from the camera under controlled conditions to protect the recordings. This may be a docking station or via Wi-Fi connection to a specified server. Preferably in an encrypted manner.
- It must be clear to everyone within the vicinity of the camera that it is recording. This can be in the form of, for example, a red light turning on or clear signage.
- The system should have an open architecture to be able to integrate the camera in different Management Systems.
- The camera should be adjusted to the same light-sensitivity as the human eye and have a satisfying resolution.
- The camera should be robust as it will often be used in demanding environments – and there should be enough battery power to operate up to 12 hours.
- The camera should have a pre-event buffer of at least 30 seconds, meaning the camera also saves recordings at least 90 seconds prior to activation.
- The camera should be extremely simple to activate and deactivate as it will often be used in stressful situations.
- The recordings must be time and date stamped just like recordings made using conventional video monitoring systems to prevent manipulation (editing) of the recordings.
- The recordings must be secured inside the camera itself to protect them from unauthorised disclosure or misuse. Servers and any associated software must be secured in the same way.

4. EXAMPLES AND IMPACT

What makes Body Worn Cameras unique is that they are worn on the torso, head or as glasses, leaving the person wearing them with free hands to do their jobs, such as:

- Protection and assistance investigating crimes documenting a crime scene self-defence
- Apprehending a suspect
- Observing in motion
- Extinguishing a fire
- Treating the wounded
- Interviewing people
- Searching for hidden narcotics in a vehicle
- Conducting healthcare

The chosen solution depends on the environment where the camera is to be used. Head-worn solutions are better at following the wearer's observations, but the images tend to be more unsteady.

Being able to document an incident has many positive aspects, in that it is possible to prove what was said and done at a later time. The impact for the police and security industry is a reduction of for example socio-economic costs due to:

- Situations not escalating to uncontrolled violence.
- Less violence and thereby fewer injuries to society and public servants, ultimately resulting in less absence due to sickness.
- Fewer (civil) arrests, resulting in fewer reports that must be investigated by the legal system's various bodies.
- Increased confidence in the police and security industry and strengthening of their reputation.

The recordings will often have a direct impact on occupational safety as well as on protecting the civil liberties of the implicated parties.

5. QUALITY ASSURANCE

Another area where use of Body Worn Cameras has had a positive impact is in quality assurance. In many situations, there is a genuine need to document an incident or a sequence of events – in part, to prove what happened and in part, to refute any erroneous allegations.

This is often possible with Body Worn Cameras, because they are mobile and present at the time of the incident.

It is important that the software used to handle Body Worn Camera recordings also enables efficient indexing and metadata tagging. Every person who uses the system must be registered in an incident log, not least to comply with laws for the processing of personal data.

In addition, you also have the quality of the services provided by the Private Security Officer, Police or others.

The images can be perfectly used during a training session to further enhance the capabilities of the people involved or to teach them the proper, correct methodology of actions in the situation in which they find themselves.

6. POSTSCRIPT

This guide "The use of Body Worn Cameras" was written by Yannick De Smet (yannick.desmet @ be.g4s.com) as the primary subject manager and Erik Deleersnyder (erik. deleersnyder@eu.g4s.com) with co-creation from the G4S Academy Specialists and other stakeholders.

The information in this guide is given in a summary format. Before acting on any information in this guide, you should consider the appropriateness of the information having regard to these matters.

This guide contains generic references to legislation, laws and similar. It is very important that the use of Body Worn Cameras is always approved and guided by local authorities.

In addition, this guide refers to the considerations around the use of body worn cameras by companies or organisations using security officers. It does not cover the application, use and/or regulation of body worn cameras in all possible environments (e.g. in UK-based prisons managed by G4S) and it is therefore advisable to always identify and follow local guidelines.

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Our integrated offering combines the best security professionals with cutting-edge technology and data analytics.

We operate in around 85+ countries around the world with 558,000 employees, providing our customers with unmatched global coverage.

THE G4S ACADEMY

The G4S Academy is a platform within G4S that allows us to work more collaboratively with our customers, suppliers, partners and other stakeholders to create knowledge and value together.

The G4S Academy's mission is to use our global knowledge and expertise to co-create industry-leading solutions, products and services that will improve how we provide safety, security and business value to our customers.

We define Value as the triple bottom line – environmental value, social value and economic value.

Security and safety has become a fundamental component of business operations. Many of our traditional customers are changing their focus from managing safety and security to fuelling business growth. This is one of the biggest challenges that executives in the security industry face today and this is forcing all of us to communicate our value in a completely new way.

Find out more about the G4S Academy at https://www.g4s.com/what-we-do/g4s-academy

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