



# HAMILTON POLICE SERVICE

## RECOMMENDATION REPORT

<b>TO:</b>	Chair and Members Hamilton Police Services Board
<b>BOARD MEETING DATE:</b>	April 25, 2024
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Police Video Recording Technology Update & Recommendation – Body-Worn Cameras
<b>REPORT NUMBER:</b>	24-031
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	Frank Bergen, Chief of Police
<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	

### RECOMMENDATION(S)

- a) That the Hamilton Police Service invest in 650 body-worn cameras from Axon at a total program cost of \$15.5 million over five (5) years, including staffing.
- b) That the Hamilton Police Service hire an additional five (5) full time Digital Evidence Management Clerks, an additional full time Desktop & Mobile Support Technician, and an additional Sergeant to serve as Program Coordinator, with a cost that is factored into the \$15.5 million cost.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Since 2014, the Hamilton Police Service (HPS) has been reviewing the possibility of implementing body-worn camera (BWC) technology for its front-line patrol officers.
- In April 2023, after receiving a grant from the Province of Ontario, the HPS deployed 78 Axon Fleet 3 In-Car Camera (ICC) & Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) systems.
- A review of BWC benefits includes an acknowledgement that the technology provides an unbiased version of events and is recommended in inquests, including the recent Coroner's Inquest regarding the death of Sammy Yatim.
- An Axon BWC program in Hamilton, including 650 cameras and necessary support staff will cost \$15.5 million over five (5) years.
- This cost includes two sets of camera replacements at the 30- and 60-month phase of the contract and includes licensing for digital evidence management, which the Service is currently paying \$4.5 million over five (5) years for.

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## FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

### Financial:

Hardware / Software.....	\$11,748,451.40
Workstations (x 5) .....	\$25,000.00
Computers, Monitors & Telephones (x5).....	\$16,000.00
Full-time DEMS Clerk (x 5) <sup>1</sup> .....	\$2,261,575.00
Full-time Desktop & Mobile Support Technician.....	\$515,500.00
Technician Equipment.....	\$3,000.00
Program Coordinator (Sergeant) <sup>2</sup> .....	\$858,000.00
<b>Total Over Five (5) Years .....</b>	<b>\$15,427,526.40</b>
<b>Cost Breakdown (Year One).....</b>	<b>\$3,864,466.40</b>
<b>Cost Breakdown (Each of Years Two - Five) .....</b>	<b>\$2,890,765.00</b>

### Staffing:

- Five (5) Full-time DEMS Clerks
- Full-time Desktop & Mobile Support Technician
- Program Coordinator (Sergeant)

### Legal Implications:

- Impacts into privacy of HPS members and the public.
- Necessity to ensure strong policy regarding the technology.
- Necessity to ensure discussion occurs with local Crown Attorneys regarding use and disclosure of evidence gathered.

## INFORMATION

Since 2014, the Hamilton Police Service (HPS) has conducted a series of comprehensive examinations of body-worn camera programs. This inquiry has delved into the efficacy, costs, and potential benefits of implementing such technology within the Service, reviewing the experience of policing agencies as well as the academic literature.

Despite significant advancements in body-worn camera (BWC) technology over the past decade, the true impact of these devices remains a topic of debate. The Hamilton Police

<sup>1</sup> Five full-time DEMS Clerks are in addition to two existing positions that address In-Car Camera matters.

<sup>2</sup> Coordinator will also manage Digital Evidence Management, and In-Car Camera / Automated License Plate Reader programs.

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Service has repeatedly grappled with the decision, weighing the advantages against the substantial financial investment required. While research suggests a correlation between body-worn cameras and reduced use of force incidents and public complaints, the statistical significance of this relationship remains uncertain. Moreover, the associated costs extend beyond the initial purchase of cameras to include data storage, data management, and disclosure costs.

While the HPS has continued to review the impact a BWC program would have on the Service, it has deployed 78 In-Car Camera systems to its fleet. This has allowed the Service to get a better appreciation of how this technology affects service delivery to the public and the impact it has on efficiencies and processes within the Service. An early review of the statistics show that the technology is having a positive impact on transparency and evidence gathering.

At the February 2024 Hamilton Police Service Board meeting, the HPS was requested to provide an updated report on the impact of implementing a body-worn camera program. If the Board decides to move forward with a program, the HPS faces a substantial financial commitment over the next five years. A quote was received from Axon, the vendor supplying the Service's digital evidence management (DEMS) platform and In-Car Camera (ICC) hardware. With an estimated cost of \$15.5 million for an initial five-year contract, this investment encompasses not only the initial purchase of 650 units of the hardware, but also expenses related to data storage, data management, disclosure, and maintenance.

If the HPS wishes to continue with this program after the initial five-year contract, there will be an ongoing financial impact. The allocation of such a significant budget warrants careful consideration, especially given the evolving landscape of policing and the need for transparency and accountability. While proponents argue that body-worn cameras can enhance officer safety, improve public trust, and provide valuable evidence in investigations, critics emphasize the potential strain on resources and the need for rigorous policies to govern their use. Despite the cost, however, the HPS is recommending that the Service Board approve the acquisition of the 650 BWCs from Axon and move forward with the hiring of the necessary support staff as outlined in this report.

## ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

- a) That the Hamilton Police Service consider deploying a smaller number of body-worn camera units.
- b) That the Hamilton Police Service consider not deploying body-worn camera units and continue to review the technology on a yearly basis.
- c) That the Hamilton Police Service stop future consideration and research into body-worn camera technology.

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## APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix A – Recorded Video Technology Update

FB/S.Moore

- c: Ryan Diodati, Deputy Chief – Operations
- Paul Hamilton, Deputy Chief – Support
- Doris Ciardullo, Director – Fleet, Facilities & Procurement
- Sanela Dzaferi, Director – Finance

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