

## MEMORANDUM

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**SUBJECT:** Nonsubstantive Changes to OMB #1121-0354, 2016 Body Worn Camera Supplement to the Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics Survey

**DATE:** February 18, 2015

The purpose of this memorandum is to inform the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) of the paper instrument that has been designed for the 2016 Body Worn Camera Supplement (BWCS) to the Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics (LEMAS) Survey. OMB clearance for the 2016 BWCS-LEMAS collection, ICR reference #201512-1121-005, was approved on February 2, 2016.

The 2016 BWCS survey is primarily a web-based administration. The instrument was originally submitted in the web format with associated programming. As described in the OMB package, a paper version of the survey will be sent out during non-response follow-up. The paper version was being formatted while the OMB package was under review. In designing the paper version of the survey, some questions needed to be added in order to aid in the skip patterns that were part of the web programming. These are not new questions; they reflect the embedded skip patterns. Additionally, some minor wording changes were made for both the web and paper surveys in order to ensure consistency throughout. Accounting for the changes to the instrumentation via paper and the opportunity to administer the survey, no change to the estimated burden (i.e., 1,884 hours for 5,063 responses) approved by OMB in the original clearance is necessary.

This project is supported through the Analytic Resource Center (ARC), which was competitively awarded to RTI International (RTI) (Award No. 2012-R2-CX-K011) in FY 2012. RTI will serve as the data collection agent.

### **Background**

A recent review of BJS programs by the National Research Council (NRC) recognized the crucial place of the LEMAS survey in the BJS statistical programs but criticized this program for its limited focus on administrative and managerial characteristics of law enforcement agencies (Groves and Cork, 2009). Noting the lengthy instrument and the irregular schedule of past LEMAS surveys, the NRC recommended that BJS adopt a “core and supplement” design for a regularly scheduled program of agency surveys. The NRC suggested the consistent use of a limited number of core items that would be integrated with

thematic supplements which would vary from wave to wave. As a step to meet this recommendation, the LEMAS has been reformulated to accommodate a supplement and core design. The 2016 Body-Worn Camera Supplement (BWCS) to the LEMAS is the first proposed supplemental instrument to the LEMAS.

The core LEMAS is a nationally-representative sample of approximately 3,500 state and local general purpose law enforcement agencies in the United States. LEMAS generates national estimates about the characteristics of the 12,500 state and local general purpose law enforcement agencies; the functions they perform; the resources available to them; the number, types, and working conditions of their employees; the automation of agency functions and their information systems; the extent to which weapons are authorized and used; the formal policies that guide and restrict the behavior of sworn personnel; and the organizational responses utilized by these agencies to address contemporary law enforcement challenges. The next core LEMAS will take place in fall 2016 after the BWCS.

The 2016 BWCS will examine the extent to which body-worn cameras have been considered, acquired, and/or implemented in state and local law enforcement agencies in the United States. The BWCS will examine reasons for acquiring cameras (or not), alternate means of documenting officer-citizen interaction, policies and procedures surrounding camera use and handling of the resulting video files, and any obstacles to camera acquisition and use. It will include items that are relevant to all law enforcement agencies – regardless of whether the responding agency has acquired or has considered acquiring body-worn cameras.

The 2016 BWCS survey will establish baseline data on the prevalence and use of body-worn cameras in law enforcement agencies. BJS will use these data to compare prevalence estimates on body-worn cameras from future data collection efforts, including a specific follow up BWCS in 2017 and estimates generated from the BJS core LEMAS survey. Data obtained from the 2016 BWCS will be linked to the 2016 core LEMAS in order to examine how BWC adoption varies by key law enforcement agency characteristics. In addition, this baseline information will be used by other Department of Justice agencies, such as the Bureau of Justice Assistance as that agency works to implement a body worn camera programs in LEAs across the country and the National Institute of Justice as it establishes research grants aimed at understanding the impact of BWCs on agency operations, budgets, and police-community relations.

### **Instrument Changes**

For the 2016 BWCS, BJS will use a multi-mode design in which respondents will be directed to the primary mode of data collection (i.e., the web) by providing them an email with instructions for submitting their data via the web. The instrument will be deployed via an online data collection system that will export survey data and paradata in BJS-specified formats. A paper version of the instrument will only be made available later in the data collection as an effort to increase response rate. During the development of the paper instrument, questions were added in order to aid respondents through the skip patterns. These skip patterns were originally embedded in the programming for the web version of the survey. These questions are not considered new but are reformatted versions of questions in the original web survey. Additionally, during the development of the paper version some inconsistencies in the instructions were noted in the web version that have been corrected. Furthermore, one item was reworded to provide clarity on what to record for full-time sworn officers. This memorandum includes versions of

the paper and web questionnaires in which each revision is shown (Attachments A & B) and final versions in which the changes have been made to the paper and web instruments (Attachment C&D).

### **Questions to Clarify Skip Patterns**

Additional questions were added to better explain the skip patterns to the respondent. The changes do not impact the substance of the questions. The following is a tracking of the changes made to the paper instrument as compared to the web version. All changes are noted on Attachments A and B:

- Q6 (web) was added into Q10 (paper) after ‘other event-recording equipment’. This is an open-ended text response that asks the respondent to clarify what other event-recording equipment the agency has.
- Q11 and Q12 from the web version were flipped as Q14 and Q15 on the paper version to simplify skip logic.
- Q18 (web) was moved up on the paper version (also Q18) in order to simplify skip logic.
- Two response categories (What events to record & Transfer, storage or disposal of video) were removed from Q17 (web), which is worded as ‘Select all the topics covered by your agency’s body-worn camera (or related) policy.’ These two response categories had follow-up questions associated with it. In order to link to the follow-up questions:
  - ‘What events to record’ was reformatted as Q21 (paper) as ‘Does your agency’s body-worn camera (or related) policy cover what events to record?’
  - ‘Transfer, storage or disposal of video’ was reformatted as Q23 (paper) as ‘Does your agency’s body-worn camera (or related) policy cover transfer, storage or disposal of video?’
- Q22 (web) acted as a flag for whether or not the respondent were given Q23-Q33 on the web.
  - First a screener question was added as Q27 (paper) to account for any deployment in order to address ‘N/A’ response on Q22 (web)
  - Response categories on Q22 (web) from ‘traditional patrol/vehicle-based patrols’ to ‘SWAT operations’ and ‘other’ were broken out into 12 individual questions. The corresponding questions on the paper version are: Q28, Q30, Q32, Q34, Q36, Q38, Q40, Q42, Q44, Q46, Q48, and Q50.
- Q45 and Q46 (web) were switched on the paper (Q62 and Q63) in order to aid with skip logic.

### **Instruction and Question Wording Adjustments**

In developing the paper survey, some general changes were recommended to provide consistency throughout both the paper and web versions. The following notes that changes that were made to both the paper and web versions. All changes are noted on Attachments A and B:

- Numbering for the initial screening questions on the web version was duplicative with the first part of the survey. Numbering was removed for ‘Agency Name’ through ‘Approximate number of full-time sworn officers with general arrest powers’
- On web survey cover page and Q8 (paper survey), item was originally worded as: ‘Approximate number of full-time equivalent (FTE) sworn officers’ This was changed to: ‘Approximate number of full-time officers with general arrest powers’.

- o The change was made for two reasons: 1) Agencies may employ limited sworn officers and may not know whether to include these in this count; and 2) FTE is calculated by BJS using the full-time general sworn and part-time general sworn counts asked of agencies.
- Questions 5, 7 and 46 of the web survey had the instructions embedded in the question and these were pulled out to match other questions in the survey, The same changes were made in the paper version:
  - o Q5 web/Q10 paper
    - Originally worded: Has your agency acquired any of the following tools to record officer-citizen interactions (select one response for each tool)?
    - Item changed to: Has your agency acquired any of the following tools to record officer-citizen interactions? *Please select one response for each tool.*
  - o Q7 web/Q11 paper
    - Originally worded: When did your agency first get body-worn cameras (provide estimate if exact month and year are unknown)?
    - Item changed to: When did your agency first get body-worn cameras? *Provide estimate if exact month and year are unknown.*
  - o Q46 web/Q62 paper
    - Originally worded: What factors will determine whether you explore body-worn cameras in the next year (select all that apply)?
    - Item changed to: What factors will determine whether you explore body-worn cameras in the next year? *Please check all that apply*
- Some inconsistencies in instructions were noted. For example, both ‘Please *check* all that apply’ and ‘Please *select* all that apply’ were used. Questions in which ‘Please *select* all that apply’ was used have been changed to ‘Please *check* all that apply’. Changes have been highlighted for both web and paper surveys.
- Instructions were added to Q17 (paper) to differentiate this question from Q16 (paper). ‘Please check only one’ was added.
- Q21 and Q23 (paper): these originally were embedded in Q17 (web) with ‘unsure’ as the response option. On the paper, ‘Don’t know’ was added after ‘unsure’ to keep consistency with other items.
- Additional instructions were added to the introduction of the section corresponding to agencies who do not have body-worn cameras on the paper survey. The additional sentence added was: *If your agency has already acquired body-worn cameras, skip to #67.* This helps reinforce that if the agency does have body-worn cameras they should not answer Q61-Q66.
- There was a skip in question numbering after question 49 to 54 on the web survey. Numbering was adjusted so it was consecutive. Question references in Q53 and Q55 were updated to reflect the new numbering on the web survey.
- The instruction for Q54.g was updated to reflect the modification made on the paper survey.
  - o Original wording web survey: Should equal sum of lines a through f, should also equal 58
  - o Changed to web survey: Sum of lines ‘a’ through ‘f’, should also equal number provided in question 54

- Changed to paper survey: Sum of lines 'a' through 'f', should also equal number provided in question 71

## **Attachments**

- Attachment A – 2016 BWCS Paper Survey with Changes Noted
- Attachment B – 2016 BWCS Web Survey with Changes Noted
- Attachment C – 2016 BWCS Paper Survey Clean
- Attachment D – 2016 BWCS Web Survey Clean