



**TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY**



STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

SUBJECT Mobile Video/Audio Recording Equipment		NO. OF PAGES: 2
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CALEA: 41.3.8	SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS/SUPERSEDES: N/A	ISSUING AUTH.: CHIEF OF POLICE

PURPOSE: To provide guidelines for the use of mobile video/audio recording equipment.

Mobile video/audio recording equipment has been demonstrated to be of value in the prosecution of traffic violations and related offenses, in evaluation of officer performance as well as in training. In order to maximize the utility of this equipment in these and related areas, officers shall follow the procedures for mobile audio/video recording equipment use as set forth in this policy.

A. Program Objectives:

1. This agency has adopted the use of in-car video/audio recording systems in order to accomplish several objectives, including:
 - a. Accurate documentation of events, actions, conditions, and statements made during arrests and critical incidents, so as to enhance officer reports, collection of evidence and testimony in court.
 - b. The enhancement of this agency's ability to review probable cause for arrest, arrest procedures, officer and suspect interaction and evidence for investigative purposes, as well as for officer evaluation and training.

B. Operating Procedure:

1. Officers will be trained in the use of the equipment prior to use.
2. Officers will be issued a body microphone to be worn during their duty shift.
3. Prior to each shift, officers will determine whether the mobile video/audio recording equipment and body microphone are working properly. Any problems with the equipment will immediately be reported to a supervisor.
4. Mobile video/audio recording equipment will automatically activate when the vehicle's emergency warning devices are in operation. The equipment may be manually deactivated during non-enforcement activities.
5. Officers will ensure that the equipment is operating in order to record traffic stops or other enforcement actions. In doing so they will ensure that:
 - a. The video camera is positioned and adjusted to record events.
 - b. The video/audio recorder is not deactivated until the enforcement action is completed.
 - c. The body microphone is activated in order to provide narration with the video recording.
6. When possible, officers should also use the video/audio recorder to document:
 - a. The actions of suspects if the recording would prove useful in later judicial proceedings.
 - b. The circumstances at crime and accident scenes or other events such as the confiscation and documentation of evidence or contraband.
7. Officers will not erase, reuse or in any manner alter video/audio recording tapes.
8. All used videotapes will be properly identified and labeled prior to being submitted as evidence or being submitted for storage.

9. Officers will inform a supervisor of any videotape sequence that may be of value for training purposes.
10. Officers will note in incident, arrest and related reports when video/audio recordings were made during the incident in question.
11. Only videotapes issued and approved by this agency will be used.

C. Tape Control and Management:

1. Video/audio tapes containing information that may be of value for case prosecution or in any criminal or civil proceeding shall be handled and safeguarded as other forms of evidence. These videotapes will:
 - a. Be subject to the same security restrictions and chain of evidence safeguards as detailed in this agency's evidence control procedure. (*We need to make this coincides with the mentioned policy*)
 - b. Not be released to another criminal justice agency for trial or other reasons without having a duplicate copy made and returned to safe storage.
 - c. Will not be released to other than bona fide criminal justice agencies without prior approval of the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
2. Videotapes not identified as evidence will be safeguarded and stored in a secured storage area for approximately 90 days.
3. All videotapes will be marked in a manner that allows efficient identification and retrieval. Videotapes will be marked with a vehicle number, start date and time and end date and time.
4. All videotape dubbing/duplication will be done by the evidence custodian.

D. Supervisor Responsibilities:

1. A supervisor will replace videotapes in the patrol vehicles with new videotapes on an as needed basis.
2. When a videotape needs to be removed from the in-vehicle video vault for evidence or for routine videotape replacement, supervisors may access the vault key located with the Patrol Lieutenant Commander.
3. At least once every 90 days, supervisors will review videotapes and recordings to assist in periodic assessment of officer performance, to determine whether video/audio recording equipment is being fully and properly used and to identify material that may be appropriate for training.
4. Supervisors will ensure that damaged or non-functional video/audio recording equipment is promptly reported to the procurement officer.

APPROVED:

Roger Byars
Chief of Police

Date