


<b>LEESBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT REGULATIONS AND GENERAL ORDERS MANUAL</b>		
General Order Number: 227	Section: OPERATIONS	Effective Date: MARCH 2023
Title: <b>IN- CAR CAMERAS</b>		
Accreditation Standards: OPR.01.11		
Review Date: JANUARY 2024	Total Pages: 3	Chief of Police: 

I. Policy

It is the policy of this Department to deploy video recorders, whether mobile in specified patrol vehicles or personal, in order to create an audio visual record of patrol activity for use in both criminal and non-criminal investigations as well as to support training and critical incident responses.

II. Equipment

A. The Watch Guard 4RE MVR (Mobile Video Recorder) is the approved device for capturing vehicle based audio visual records.

1. Components of the Watch Guard 4RE MVR include:
  - a. Front and rear cameras
  - b. Monitor
  - c. Control Panel
  - d. Digital Video Recorder
  - e. Body Worn Camera (BWC)
2. Each MVR is assigned and installed to a specific patrol vehicle for daily use.
3. A video database is maintained on a local server which may be accessed through the Department's computers. Videos may be viewed in this manner or saved to a DVD for external viewing and evidence retrieval.

III. Procedure

A. Training

1. All officers shall receive training and demonstrate proper use of the MVR to include related equipment.
2. Initial training will be provided to the Field Training Officers who will then provide the initial instruction to their respective patrol teams. Supplemental training will be done in the same manner.
3. Training will include:
  - a. A review of this policy.
  - b. A review of the MVR components, its function, and activation requirements.
  - c. A practical application of the MVR to include accessing and labeling the recorded video.

B. Field Use

1. Care must be exercised at all times when using the equipment. Any damage or malfunction of the drive must be reported immediately to the officer's supervisor who will in-turn notify the digital video recording coordinator.
2. MVR
  - a. At the beginning of every tour of duty each officer using a patrol vehicle equipped with an MVR shall inspect the equipment to ensure that it is in working order. This includes:
    - (1) Remote Audio Transmitter(s):
      - (a) Power source
      - (b) Recording equipment connection
      - (c) Remote activation of the system by the transmitter

- (2) Cameras
  - (a) Camera lens free of debris; if not it shall be cleaned only with approved materials
  - (b) Cameras function properly
- (3) Recording System Check
  - (a) The officer(s) assigned to the vehicle equipped with the MVR will sync their BWC with the MVR.
  - (b) The officer will then ensure that the MVR plays back both audio and visual tracks from both cameras
- 3. If the battery of the MVR equipped vehicle has lost its charge, the officer shall notify a supervisor to ensure that the MVR power source (located in the trunk of the vehicle) is disconnected prior to attempting to jump start the vehicle. Failure to do so may result in permanent damage to components of the MVR.
- 4. Anytime a vehicle equipped with an in-car camera system is taken out of service, left for maintenance, or towed, the operator shall notify a supervisor and ensure that prior to surrendering control of the vehicle the power source is disconnected. The officer shall also check the in-car camera warning box on the Vehicle Repair Report. If the vehicle operator is incapable of doing this, the responsibility shall fall on the on duty supervisor/officer in charge. Supervisors shall notify the Information Services Commander for directions or assistance with disconnecting the power source.
- 5. Officers shall activate the MVR during all of the following:
  - a. All Traffic Stops and Field Interviews- including those for which the officer is a secondary or back up officer.
  - b. Pursuits
  - c. Anytime the back seat of the vehicle is used to temporarily house or transport any person not employed by this Department.
  - d. Any code response or incident in which the vehicle's emergency equipment is used
  - e. Response to all crimes in progress.
  - f. Any other situation in which the officer determines that an audio and/or video recording is necessary.
- 6. Once activated, the officer(s) shall ensure that audio transmitter(s) is also activated. Only a supervisor may authorize an officer to cease recording while still on scene of an incident. It will be the supervisor's responsibility to document in an IBR supplemental report the reason(s) for authorizing the stoppage of such recording.
- 7. At the conclusion of each recording the officer shall classify the type of incident when stopping the MVR recording.
- 8. When multiple vehicles are on a scene all cameras should be in operation to provide the best coverage.
- 9. Due to its operating range, officers are encouraged to use the audio transmitter independent of the general MVR guidelines to capture audio recordings of interviews or narrate incidents away from their vehicle.
- 10. Upon returning to HQ, the MVR will automatically initiate the wireless file transfer to its designated server. Once the transfer is complete, the audio visual file is available for review by the officer.
- 11. If a wireless transfer of the file is not possible, the officer shall immediately inform their supervisor who will contact in Information Service Commander.
- 12. In the event of a serious incident requiring the immediate recovery of any recordings from the MVR an officer holding the rank of Sergeant/OIC or above shall contact the Information Service Commander in order to retrieve the recorded information remotely and secure it in accordance with GO 114: Property and Evidence Control. A serious incident is defined as:
  - g. As a major crime scene,
  - h. Police involved shootings,
  - i. Crashes involving police vehicles,
  - j. Any incident in which the officer deploying the MVR is incapable or has a conflict or interest in maintaining custody for the recordings,
  - k. Any other incident at the direction of the Chief of Police or his designee.

#### IV. Administration

- A. All officers shall have controlled access to the audio visual recording database storing MVR files. Officers will only be able to view files created by them. Supervisors and above will have access to all files stored in the database.

- B. Any test of the camera equipment shall be labeled as '0' in the case number field to facilitate identification of nonessential recordings for mass deletion.
- C. Ownership and Display of Recordings
  - 1. Recordings generated on agency equipment are the property of the Leesburg Police Department.
  - 2. Recorded files, which are potentially subject to continuing judicial review, including the appeals process, shall continue to be stored as evidence by the Police Department.
  - 3. Review of a recording's content shall be limited to agency members and those specifically designated by the prosecutor or appropriate agency member.
  - 4. All audio/video captured by MVRs is the property of the Leesburg Police Department. Dissemination outside of the agency, except for appropriate evidentiary purposes, lawful compliance with FOIA requests, and judicial orders is strictly prohibited without the specific authorization of the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
- D. Mandatory Retention
  - 1. All MVR recordings shall be retained in accordance with the guidelines listed in the Library of Virginia, Records and Retention Schedule, GS-17, Law Enforcement. See GO 232 for details.
- E. Failure to utilize the camera system or improper use of the system may result in disciplinary action.