



1350 Norris Road
Bakersfield, California 93308-2231

Via Email Only: karenhua@kget.com

October 12, 2020

Karen Hua, Reporter
KGET 17 News
978-289-7600

Re: Records / Information Request

Dear Ms. Hua:

The Kern County Sheriff's Office ("KCSO") is in receipt of your October 6, 2020, information and/or records request related to "Body Cam info."

In response to your request, the KCSO has compiled the requested information. Please see below for the KCSO's responses (listed in bold type) to your requests:

1. How many KCSO substations are there in total?

Fourteen (14).

2. How many KCSO substations are fully equipped with body cameras?

One (1), (Wasco), that is a contract city. The cameras utilized in Wasco were purchased by the City of Wasco as part of the contract.

3. Which KCSO substations have yet to receive body cameras?

Buttonwillow, Kern Valley, Boron, Tehachapi, Delano, Walker Basin, Ridgecrest, Frazier Park, Lamont, Rosamond, Glenville, Mojave and Taft.

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4. How much does 1 body camera cost?

The estimated cost for one BWC is approximately \$3,100 for the first year and approximately \$1,050 a year thereafter for storage. For additional information please refer to Axon's price list which can be accessed through the following link:

https://procurement.sc.gov/files/webfiles/Price%20List_Axon.pdf

In addition to the overall costs of the cameras, additional staffing will need to be hired for the Body Worn Camera program. Staffing includes personnel to process BWC requests (CPRA, District Attorney, Public Defender requests, etc...) and personnel for maintenance of the system (to fix malfunctioning cameras or arrange for replacement and to train new personnel on the functions of the system). Additional staffing will potentially add hundreds of thousands of dollars to the budget each year if staffed appropriately.

5. If there are 10 deputies in Mojave, would that mean they need 10 body cameras: 1 for each deputy?

Yes, we would need 10 cameras, plus approximately two additional cameras as back-ups in case of malfunctioning cameras.

6. In June, Sheriff Youngblood said each patrolman would be equipped with a body camera.
 - a. How many more body cameras would KCSO need to fulfill this promise?"

The goal of the Sheriff and the Sheriff's Office is to outfit all patrol assignments with BWCs. To accomplish this goal the Sheriff's Office will need approximately 200 additional BWCs; however, this number could increase if we are able to fill unfunded patrol deputy positions which are currently vacant.

- b. How many body cameras has Sheriff Youngblood put in a request for at this time?

Due to county budget guidelines, the Sheriff's Office has not made a supplemental budget request at this time. Quotes have been received and this is continuously evaluated for a potential supplemental budget request if the county budget improves. Grant opportunities are also being evaluated.

- c. I understand you said a shortage in funding caused this delay in bodycam distribution. What caused the shortage in funding?

The County just came out of a fiscal emergency. Following the fiscal emergency, the COVID-19 pandemic began. There has been an unknown fiscal impact to the County budget due to economic uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Long-term impacts to the budget are still unknown.

- d. If we could request the past 6 months of the KCSO budget so we could look at line items, that could help answer our questions as well.

The County and the Sheriff's Office operate on an annual budget not a monthly budget. To access the County budget, please refer to the Kern County Administrative Office ("CAO") website:


<https://www.kerncounty.com/government/county-administrative-office/cao/budget-and-finance/county-budget>

The CAO's website shows the 2020-21 Recommended Budget and adopted budgets for prior years. For the 2020-21 adopted budget, please contact the CAO's office.

If you have any questions you may contact me by email at: walshm@kernsheriff.org or you may contact the KCSO Public Information Officer via email at: sheriffpio@kernsheriff.org.

Sincerely,

DONNY YOUNGBLOOD,
Sheriff – Coroner, County of Kern County

By: 
MaryClaire Walsh
Civil Litigation Coordinator