

Opinion: Body cameras on cops just the beginning

By C. Robert Gibson, Aljazeera America

The grass-roots push to equip police officers with body cameras has been effective: One-third of all police departments now have them, a significant increase since 2013, when the US Justice Department found that 75 percent of surveyed police departments didn't use the technology.

Recent incidents in Cincinnati and rural New Hampshire have shown that the cameras simultaneously hold trigger-happy cops accountable and exonerate police officers who only pulled the trigger when they had no other option. Now, it's time for local governments to start listening to and implementing further demands of the police-accountability movement.

Body cameras thus prove themselves to be indispensable. One officer who acted recklessly is facing murder charges, and two other officers who acted out of self-defense won't be charged. When a police officer is equipped with a body camera, he or she will be more likely to think before pulling the trigger, knowing that his or her actions will be under public scrutiny.

However, body cameras only scratch the surface of what it takes for police departments to become fully accountable to the communities they're meant to serve.

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