
Mobile Audio/Video

417.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The South Beloit Police Department has equipped marked patrol cars with Mobile Audio and Video (MAV) recording systems to provide records of events and assist uniformed officers in the performance of their duties by providing a visual and/or audio record of patrol-related activities when permitted by law (720 ILCS 5/14-3(h)). This policy provides guidance on the use of these systems.

417.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Activate - Any process that causes the MAV system to transmit or store video or audio data in an active mode.

In-car video and Mobile Audio Video (MAV) system -Synonymous terms which refer to any system that captures audio and video signals, that is capable of installation in a vehicle, and that includes at minimum, a camera, microphone, recorder and monitor.

MAV technician - Personnel certified or trained in the operational use and repair of MAVs, duplicating methods, storage and retrieval methods and procedures, and who have a working knowledge of video forensics and evidentiary procedures.

Recorded media - Audio-video signals recorded or digitally stored on a storage device or portable media.

417.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the South Beloit Police Department to use mobile audio and video technology to more effectively fulfill the department's mission and to ensure these systems are used securely and efficiently.

417.3 OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

Prior to going into service, each officer will properly equip him/herself to record audio and video in the field. At the end of the shift, each officer will follow the established procedures for providing to the Department any recordings or used media and any other related equipment. Each officer should have adequate recording media for the entire duty assignment. In the event an officer works at a remote location and reports in only periodically, additional recording media may be issued. Only South Beloit Police Department identified and labeled media with tracking numbers are to be used.

At the start of each shift, officers should ensure the MAV system is operating in accordance with manufacturer specifications and department operating procedures and training.

System documentation is accomplished by the officer recording his/her name electronically within the MAV system at the start of each shift. At the end of each shift, the officer shall electronically

South Beloit Police Department

Policy Manual

Mobile Audio/Video

log-off his/her name from the MAV system. If the system is malfunctioning, the officer shall notify a supervisor.

417.4 ACTIVATION OF THE MAV

The MAV system is designed to turn on whenever the unit's emergency lights are activated. The system remains on until it is turned off manually. When audio is being recorded, the video will also record.

417.4.1 REQUIRED ACTIVATION OF MAV

This policy is not intended to describe every possible situation in which the MAV system may be used, although there are many situations where its use is appropriate. An officer may activate the system any time the officer believes it would be appropriate or valuable to document an incident.

In some circumstances it is not possible to capture images of the incident, due to conditions or the location of the camera. However, the audio portion can be valuable evidence and is subject to the same activation requirements as the MAV. The MAV system should be activated as soon as practicable in any of the following situations:

- (a) All field contacts involving actual or potential criminal conduct, within video or audio range:
 - 1. Traffic stops (to include, but not limited to, traffic violations, stranded motorist assistance and all crime interdiction stops)
 - 2. Priority responses
 - 3. Vehicle pursuits
 - 4. Suspicious vehicles
 - 5. Arrests
 - 6. Vehicle searches
 - 7. Physical or verbal confrontations or use of force
 - 8. Pedestrian stops
 - 9. DUI investigations including field sobriety tests
 - 10. Crimes in progress
 - 11. Responding to an in-progress call
- (b) All self-initiated activity in which an officer would normally notify Dispatch
- (c) Any call for service involving a crime where the recorder may aid in the apprehension and/or prosecution of a suspect:
 - 1. Domestic violence calls
 - 2. Disturbance of peace calls
 - 3. Offenses involving violence or weapons

South Beloit Police Department

Policy Manual

Mobile Audio/Video

- (d) Any other contact that becomes adversarial after the initial contact, in a situation that would not otherwise require recording
- (e) Any other circumstance where the officer believes that a recording of an incident would be appropriate

417.4.2 CESSATION OF RECORDING

Once activated, the MAV system should remain on until the incident has concluded. For purposes of this section, conclusion of an incident has occurred when all arrests have been made, arrestees have been transported and all witnesses and victims have been interviewed.

417.4.3 WHEN ACTIVATION IS NOT REQUIRED

Activation of the MAV system is not required when exchanging information with other officers or during breaks, lunch periods, when not in service or actively on patrol.

No member of this department may surreptitiously record a conversation of any other member of this department except with a court order or when lawfully authorized by the Chief of Police or the authorized designee for the purpose of conducting a criminal or administrative investigation.

417.5 REVIEW OF MAV RECORDINGS

All recording media, recorded images and audio recordings are the property of the Department. Dissemination outside of the agency is strictly prohibited, except to the extent permitted or required by law.

To prevent damage to, or alteration of, the original recorded media, it shall not be copied, viewed or otherwise inserted into any device not approved by the department MAV technician or forensic media staff. When reasonably possible, a copy of the original media shall be used for viewing (unless otherwise directed by the courts) to preserve the original media.

Recordings may be reviewed in any of the following situations:

- (a) For use when preparing reports or statements
- (b) By a supervisor investigating a specific act of officer conduct
- (c) By a supervisor to assess officer performance
- (d) To assess proper functioning of MAV systems
- (e) By a department investigator who is participating in an official investigation, such as a personnel complaint, administrative inquiry or a criminal investigation
- (f) By department personnel who request to review recordings
- (g) By an officer who is captured on or referenced in the video or audio data and reviews and uses such data for any purpose relating to his/her employment
- (h) By court personnel through proper process or with permission of the Chief of Police or the authorized designee
- (i) By the media through proper process or with permission of the Chief of Police or the authorized designee

South Beloit Police Department

Policy Manual

Mobile Audio/Video

- (j) To assess possible training value
- (k) Recordings may be shown for training purposes. If an involved officer objects to showing a recording, his/her objection will be submitted to the staff to determine if the training value outweighs the officer's objection

In no event shall any recording be used or shown for the purpose of ridiculing or embarrassing any employee.

417.6 DOCUMENTING MAV USE

If any incident is recorded with either the video or audio system, the existence of that recording shall be documented in the officer's report. If a citation is issued, the officer shall make a notation on the department's copy.

417.7 RECORDING MEDIA STORAGE AND INTEGRITY

Once submitted for storage, all recording media will be labeled and stored in a designated secure area. All recording media that is not booked as evidence will be retained for a minimum of 90 days and disposed of in compliance with the established records retention schedules (720 ILCS 5/14-3(h-15)).

417.7.1 COPIES OF ORIGINAL RECORDING MEDIA

Original recording media shall not be used for any purpose other than for initial review by a supervisor. Upon proper request, a copy of the original recording media will be made for use as authorized in this policy.

Original recording media may only be released in response to a court order or upon approval by the Chief of Police or the authorized designee. In the event that an original recording is released to a court, a copy shall be made and placed in storage until the original is returned.

417.7.2 MAV RECORDINGS AS EVIDENCE

Officers who reasonably believe that a MAV recording is likely to contain evidence relevant to a criminal offense, potential claim against the officer or against the South Beloit Police Department should indicate this in an appropriate report. Officers should ensure relevant recordings are preserved.

417.7.3 RECORDING RETENTION REQUIREMENTS

Notwithstanding the 90 day retention period in 720 ILCS 5/14-3(h-15), if the Department receives funds under the Illinois Law Enforcement Camera Grant Act, MAV video records must be stored for no less than two years (50 ILCS 707/15).

417.8 SYSTEM OPERATIONAL STANDARDS

South Beloit Police Department

Policy Manual

Mobile Audio/Video

- (a) MAV system vehicle installations should be based on officer safety requirements and the vehicle and device manufacturer's recommendations.
- (b) The MAV system should be configured to minimally record for 30 seconds prior to an event.
- (c) The MAV system may not be configured to record audio data occurring prior to activation.
- (d) Officers using digital transmitters that are synchronized to their individual MAV shall activate both audio and video recordings when responding in a support capacity. This is to obtain additional perspectives of the incident scene.
- (e) Officers shall not erase, alter, reuse, modify or tamper with MAV recordings. Only a supervisor, MAV technician or other authorized designee may erase and reissue previous recordings and may only do so pursuant to the provisions of this policy.
- (f) To prevent damage, original recordings shall not be viewed on any equipment other than the equipment issued or authorized by the MAV technician.

417.9 TRAINING

All members who are authorized to use the MAV system shall successfully complete an approved course of instruction prior to its use.

417.10 ACTIVATION OF THE MAV

The MAV system shall be on continuously throughout the officer's shift (50 ILCS 707/15). This does not mean the entire shift shall be recorded, rather the MAV shall be on and ready to record when activated.

417.11 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Supervisors should determine if vehicles with non-functioning MAV systems should be placed into service. If these vehicles are placed into service, the appropriate documentation should be made.

At reasonable intervals, supervisors should validate:

- (a) Beginning and end-of-shift recording procedures are followed.
- (b) The MAV is functioning properly.
- (c) The hard drive and/or flash drive is not full.

When an incident arises that requires the immediate retrieval of the recorded media (e.g., serious crime scenes, officer-involved shootings, department-involved collisions), a supervisor, MAV technician or crime scene investigator properly retrieves the recorded media. The media may need to be treated as evidence and should be handled in accordance with current evidence procedures for recorded media.