



HOW AXON'S ECOSYSTEM HELPS WEST MIDLANDS POLICE DO MORE WITH LESS

West Midlands Police



West Midlands Police in the UK oversees a regional population of 2.9 million people and an area of 348 square miles. It's a large region for a force of 7,000 officers, who have leveraged technology to ensure the population's safety. WMP invested in Axon's advanced ecosystem of policing technology to create a more efficient, better-equipped force. They've built a network of interconnected devices, including



4,350

Axon Body 3 cameras



1,250

TASER 7 and X2 devices

THE CHALLENGE

West Midlands Police, or WMP, services a large area, and the ever-present demand for officers has challenged them to make each officer as efficient as possible. WMP needed more than compartmentalised tools; the force wanted to implement a single ecosystem of devices that put interoperability at the forefront of their functionality while ensuring that officers and the community were kept safe.

"Efficiency" became the motif of WMP's transformation. The force wanted a set of tools that it could use to capture, transfer and review evidence, while also allowing for input from the public. The public-facing element is important to WMP, with the department collecting in-depth feedback about using body-worn video cameras (BWV) in interactions with the public.

WMP evaluated how Axon's devices could make evidence collection and public transparency far easier and more transparent. With Axon Signal technology, the Axon Body 3 can automatically record as soon as a TASER device is drawn. "[TASER deployments are] one of the most highly scrutinised things we do at the moment," said Chief Superintendent Ian Green. "If we didn't have body-worn video at the time officers [deployed a TASER], it would be really catastrophic for us as a force. Officers need to rely on the fact that technology does it for them."

THE SOLUTION

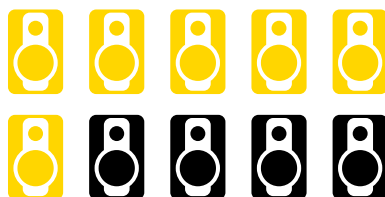
"Our chief was [driving] us to be the most technologically advanced force," said Green. "With our partnership with Axon, we're getting there very quickly." With Axon, West Midlands Police was able to bridge its technology into a single ecosystem to improve their operational responses and accomplish their goal of making officers more efficient. In so doing, they led the way as the first force in Europe to roll out [Axon Respond](#), with live alerts and streaming through Axon Body 3 cameras for faster and more effective responses.

With Axon Body 3 and Axon Respond command staff can evaluate whether they need to travel to a location, or whether they can remotely give the responding officer advice on how to proceed by viewing the live stream, saving time and resources.



WMP conducted a thorough pilot evaluation of Axon Respond, assessing the experience both for camera-wearers and live stream viewers.

60% OF CAMERA-WEARERS FELT SAFER IMMEDIATELY



60% of the camera-wearers felt immediately safer as a camera-wearer with a Respond-enabled body-worn camera on their chest, and the force observed improvements in officer productivity and performance across the board as Respond provided them additional confidence and support.

90% OF LIVE STREAM VIEWERS RECOMMEND



90% of the livestream viewers would recommend Respond to a colleague to boost the welfare and safety of their staff, and felt that the capability assisted in making effective decisions.

Once they decided to roll out Axon Respond, WMP found that Axon technology could touch each part of an incident response and help them achieve their goals of transparency and efficiency. For example, an officer can arrive on scene and begin live streaming, allowing command staff to view the footage through the Respond app and determine whether or not backup is necessary. Meanwhile, the situation on-scene may evolve, and the responding officer may draw their TASER 7 to de-escalate it. Command staff calls for backup while the officer focuses on managing the situation. Backup arrives, and together the officers successfully apprehend the suspect.

Later, WMP uses the [Axon Community Request](#) app, formerly known as Axon Citizen, to receive secure submissions from civilians that may have recorded the incident. The application allows them to receive digital evidence from devices like mobile phones, CCTV cameras or Ring Doorbell cameras, which may reveal additional details about how a police interaction transpired and create a well-rounded picture of an incident, without needing to confiscate devices from the public.

Axon's digital evidence management system (DEMS), Axon Evidence, then provides WMP an easy way to manage everything the force captured and received during the incident. The force uses Axon Evidence to handle evidence – from their body-worn camera footage to Community Request evidence to TASER logs – more efficiently and seamlessly share it with the relevant stakeholders, such as the Crown Prosecution Service.



THE RESULTS

Together, each component of the Axon ecosystem has helped WMP become a more effective police force. The force has used surveys to gauge the benefits in the eyes of the public, and their results have shown promise.



92% of the West Midlands community supported the use of live streaming technology on body-worn cameras.

WMP leveraged Axon's ecosystem to collect more data, video and otherwise, to become even more efficient at policing, which is crucial for such a massive territory.

Hadley pointed to a specific incident the department encountered, in which Axon Respond's live streaming and GPS features helped resolve more efficiently than the department previously could: "We [used Respond] at a siege incident where somebody was having a mental health crisis [around] a number of other people. Really early on in the incident, we managed to set a good command structure in place... whereas historically, we [would have been] taking time for supervisors to travel to the scene. Our staff is really engaged, and they're activating the cameras really early." By establishing the command structure without needing to travel to the scene, WMP personnel were able to safely resolve the situation and bring the individual into care, ending in an ideal result and freeing them up for other duties.



We're seeing a reduction of complaints, we've seen early supervision [of incident responses], we [have] that ability to debrief incidents afterward and learn from it."

Jack Hadley
SUPERINTENDENT,
West Midlands Police

West Midlands Police's mission is to become the most technologically advanced force possible — to effectively police a large area, keep officers and community members safe, and remain transparent with their operations. The force is well on their way to achieving this. Now, its command staff can monitor several situations at once, while BWV footage ensures they never miss a moment. With new technology and more ways to engage the community, WMP operates far beyond its previous capabilities.

If you want to see how Axon can help your force do the same, [contact us](#) today.

