



PROTECTING MUNICIPAL POLICE AND IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH THE COMMUNITY

The Municipal Police of Bordeaux comprises a force of around 120 officers. The agency oversees law enforcement in the sixth largest city in France with 252,000 residents, and across the Bordeaux Métropole area where 1,195,335 people live. Its remit includes preventing and tackling anti-social behaviour, parking enforcement, traffic violations, bar and restaurant license control and more.

"TASER de-escalates incidents: in over two years since deployment we've unholstered the device a total of 20 times without discharging it once. Defusing situations means we use less force, this protects both our officers, and suspects from harm, while improving community relations and helping to reduce the costs associated with injuries to officers and potential litigation against the force"

says Ulrich Lizé, chef de service à la police municipale de Bordeaux.

THE GOAL: INCREASE SAFETY FOR OFFICERS AND CITIZENS

The City of Bordeaux launched a study to look at the various tools that would improve the security of municipal police and their ability to protect citizens and better respond to incidents. The study examined the deterrents available (including TASER, telescopic sticks, and tear gas) and whether police should be armed. The Mayor's office concluded that his city's crime profile did not warrant the issuing of firearm but that officers policing known areas of trouble, should be equipped with TASER less lethal devices and body-worn cameras.

THE SOLUTION: COMBINING THE TASER PIE, AXON PEDESTRIAN CAMERAS AND EVIDENCE.COM SOFTWARE

The City of Bordeaux equipped its officers with the TASER X26P Conductive Electrical Device (CED). The primary goal was to help officers proceed with confidence and defuse incidents without resorting to force. And, after a review of available devices, the force opted to issue its officers with Axon Body 2 body-worn cameras.

The main reason for this was its intuitive operation. With the Body 2's big central button, officers can instinctively switch it to record when under stress without having to take their eyes off a situation. It's also simple to use when wearing gloves. Alongside ease of use, the robustness of the device, together with the strength of its attachments, were deemed superior to other models. With the Mayor's vision to protect officers in mind, the force equipped each one with a camera. It's one of a small number of agencies to do this in France.

THE RESULTS: ENHANCED SAFETY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

TASER is having a positive impact on policing in Bordeaux. Ulrich Lizé says: "Citizens tell us that they feel more protected and our officers are more confident in policing areas where there's more crime. In terms of de-escalation, the TASER can be used from up to 7 metres away. This allows officers to keep their distance from a suspect. This space reduces the chance of confrontation. Since deployment, the device has been unholstered 20 times but never used. It's a powerful deterrent."

The resolution of events without the use of force is a huge benefit. It both reduces the possibility of harm to officers and the potential of litigation against them for injuries caused during incidents.

Axon's Body 2 cameras are also helping to calm situations. Officers report that people adjust their behaviour when they know they're being filmed. With privacy a big issue in France, the public and officers were initially concerned about how the cameras might be used. But these concerns have been overcome. A publicity drive, including media coverage and posting information to the town's website, helped allay worries. Officers have also recognised the value of the cameras – especially the role they can play in building trust with the public – and have embraced them as an accepted and valued part of their equipment.

The fact that each agent has a camera is an important factor to consider when it comes to collecting a complete scene of an event. "If only one agent has a camera, it is incumbent on them to record

an incident, which is not always easy when an officer is under pressure," said Ulrich Lizé. "When everyone has a camera you're more likely to have a definitive recording of incidents. It's also helpful to have multiple angles especially for major incidents and if a deposition is ultimately needed or the footage is requested by the national police."

Each Axon camera comes with a license from Evidence.com, a cloud-based digital evidence management solution. Videos are unloaded and encrypted automatically through docking stations without officers having to intervene. Administrators using Evidence.com can add notes, categorize videos into files, watch multiple videos in sync if multiple cameras have been triggered at the same incident, or anonymize faces if videos are used for educational purposes. The system automatically deletes sequences after six months, in accordance with French legal requirements, and all activity is recorded in the software.

In the future, Evidence.com may also be used to more easily share evidence using secure electronic processes. For example, over 400 videos are requisitioned by the national police each year with each one requiring a laborious manual workflow that involves downloading data to CDs and sending these to the national force.

Ulrich Lizé concludes: "Axon provides a network of powerful technologies, connected to each other, to support the work of our agents. The equipment has won their trust. It allows them to better protect citizens, themselves, their colleagues and suspects. And it also changes the behavior of suspects who are less likely to resort to violence."