

New York police to buy 1,000 body cameras

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The New York Police Department, the largest city police force in the United States, has agreed to buy 1,000 body cameras, officials confirmed Friday.

The move is part of a nationwide push to equip more police with the technology in response to a national outcry over the deaths of unarmed—often African American—men at the hands of police in disputed circumstances.

An official at the New York's mayor's office confirmed to AFP that the [police department](#) had agreed to order 1,000 body cameras from Seattle-based Viewu LLC.

The city of more than 8.5 million people has around 34,500 uniformed police officers.

"The department worked very closely with all the concerned parties in the selection process. We are looking forward to the implementation of the program," a police spokeswoman said in a statement.

The Daily News newspaper said the planned purchase was part of a five-year, \$6.42 million contract that police hope to start rolling out in 20 precincts by the start of 2017.

New York police began a body-camera pilot program in December 2014, six months after the death of father-of-six Eric Garner in a police chokehold that sparked nationwide protests.

The tiny, flat cameras look like pagers and can be clipped onto uniforms to record police interactions and activities in real time.

The devices, which are far cheaper than dashboard cameras, are a relatively recent innovation in the United States but the New York agreement is likely to increase chances they will become standard equipment in coming years.

A 2012 study by the Rialto Police Department in California found that for officers using the cameras, complaints from the public dropped almost 90 percent and uses of force went down nearly 60 percent.

A series of killings of unarmed black men by mostly white police officers since August 2014 has sparked protests, charges of racism and revived the debate about excessive use of police force.

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