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NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 31, 2018

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TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO, COMMISSIONER O'NEILL ANNOUNCE ALL OFFICERS ON PATROL TO WEAR BODY CAMERAS BY END OF 2018

Police Commissioner James P. O'Neill: Good afternoon everyone. Thanks for being here. Today we're announcing the next phase of the NYPD's body-worn camera – and it's well underway actually. It's about a year ahead of schedule. Every police officer in our patrol precincts, our housing commands, and transit districts will be using a body-worn camera by the end of this year.

In a moment you will hear from Mayor de Blasio then you'll hear from Ben Tucker, our First Deputy Commissioner. And Ben will get into more details about the number of cops and cameras that we're talking about.

Then you'll hear from Council Speaker Corey Johnson and Eric Adams the Brooklyn Borough President, Donovan Richards the Public Safety Committee Chair, and then Robert Cornegy. And then we'll take your questions on topic and then we'll do police off-topic.

So we looked at research, we looked at policies around the country, we weighed all the benefits, and we did our due diligence. And I've been a cop for almost 30 – well, more than 35 years now and I know that in some situations these cameras have a great potential to de-escalate rather than to escalate. And I know that the footage that's captured overwhelmingly benefits everyone.

We've seen that already in the thousands of interactions these cameras record every day in New York City and we've certainly seen in it in the camera footage we've released to the public so far.

That's why I wanted to expedite the process here to get every cop on the street, in our housing developments, and in our subway system wearing them as soon as possible. Everything we do at the NYPD including recording our encounters with members of the public is geared toward keeping people safe including our cops.

It's about supporting our ability to drive down crime and to keep people safe in a way that builds trust with the people we serve because it's certainly not enough just to keep people safe, we have to make sure people feel safe too.

And part of that building trust is letting people know exactly how difficult the job of being a New York City Police Officer can be, what kind of split second, often life-altering, decisions have to be made.

I want to thank Charlie Minch. Charlie's the Deputy Inspector – he's the CO here of the 7-9 – for hosting us, whose officers have been using the cameras since phase one of the program.

I want to thank all the hardworking men and women of the NYPD, helping move us forward in this beneficial process. With that, I'd like to turn it over to the Mayor. Mr. Mayor –

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Thank you very much, Commissioner. And Commissioner, again, congratulations to you and your team for another big step forward for this city and for this department. I want to, in addition to acknowledging the Commissioner and the senior leaders, that there's some unsung heroes here who have been really integral to our efforts to build out the use of body cameras and who really worked hard to get us ahead of schedule.

And I want to note how important it is that today we're announcing something you don't see often enough in government. We're actually moving up the schedule by a year because the good people I'm going to mention and a lot of others worked hard to make sure we can get body cameras out there even earlier.

I want to thank Assistant Chief Matt Pontillo, our Deputy Commissioner Jessica Tisch, Deputy Commissioner Vinny Grippio, Assistant Deputy Commissioner Nancy Hoppock, and Deputy Chief Kerry Sweet. All of them played a crucial role in bringing us to this day.

Now, four years ago we set out to prove something very basic that you did not have to trade safety for fairness that they both could walk hand in hand in this city. And we believe that that would also lead to the ability to drive down crime further. It was crucial to not just talk about this but to prove it.

And in the year 2017, we saw the ultimate proof that neighborhood policing works that crime goes down when our officers and our neighborhood residents get closer in their dialogue and in their partnership.

We saw last year numbers that we just could not have imagined – under 300 homicides, under 800 shootings. I like to cite the fact, and I think it's one of those things that really makes you stop and think, that the last time we had this few homicides in New York City the Dodgers were still playing in Brooklyn at Ebbets Field in 1951. It really puts in perspective what the men and women of the NYPD achieved working with community partners.

So, that is something that we feel very, very good about but something that we're honest about at the same time is that we're still trying to heal the wounds of the past. We see that. We understand that. We're eyes wide open about it. Many, many decades of disconnect and pain don't go away overnight. More has to be done to address the injustices of the past and to bring police and community even closer together on a very, very human level.

And we know that it takes clear action that people can see and that they can believe in. So, our announcement today is that as part of the preliminary budget that will be presented on Thursday, we will include this expansion of body cameras one year ahead of schedule.

And I think it's something that's going to give people a little more faith that there's going to be more and more transparency, that there's going to be more and more ability to know exactly what's going on. That's the kind of thing that really helps people buy into the changes that we're making and to the incredible work our officers are doing on the ground.

So, this will include outfitting and training 18,000 officers and obviously in this environment, the largest and most complex city in America, a lot went into this, a lot of work had to be done to get ready for this day when we could say with clarity, with conviction that we could move this a full year earlier. But that hard work was done.

We understand that body cameras change lives for the better, right now. We wanted people to start experiencing that right away. They ensure community members feel the power of transparency. They build trust through transparency. Also better for our officers who get a clear and definitive record of what happened at any encounter.

At what we know is our officers have been trained more intensely than any time in the history of the NYPD. And our officers really honor that training. And you can see, and you have seen in some of the instances that have already been captured on body cameras and put out publically and there will be more in the future. You see how extraordinary the work of our officers is, taking their training putting it into action, even in the most adverse and difficult circumstances. When people get to see that, when they get to see it actually play out it instills confidence and obviously if anything were to go wrong at any point having that record is crucial and the fact that we will be transparent with that record is something that also builds trust and confidence.

So one of the things we have learned is that training is the key to so many changes, giving our officers the tools they often weren't given in the past but now it is really a focus of so much we do. We know at the time the presence of the body camera is another way to orient our officers. You know that you are going to be wearing that body camera, your actions are going to be seen by all, it's a good reminder of how to approach situations, again no matter how difficult they are.

This conforms with a bigger vision we've had of reform and change in this city and in this department. Obviously it started with the radical reduction of stop and frisk. At the same time recognizing we could bring arrests down while achieving great safety. And I want to remind everyone, compared to four years previous – in 2017 we saw a 100,000 fewer arrests and we saw a lot more safety at the same time. We saw crime go down intensely while the use of arrest went down as well. That's a powerful, powerful fact.

2,000 more officers on patrol made all this work, made it possible, made neighborhood policing come to life. And again I want thank all my colleagues from the City Council, they led the way on adding those 2,000 officers and they deserve a lot of credit for that.

And obviously the training which includes training in de-escalation and now coming online, the implicit bias training which helps our officers to handle every situation the right way. These are the changes we are making.

And when you add it all up it's something I heard Chief Terry Monahan say as he was being sworn in as Chief of Department and it really grabbed me. He said here in New York City we are inventing an entirely new type of policing and the greatest police force in the country is exactly the place where the trail blazing happens just like it did years ago with CompStat, now with neighborhood policing and all the strategic approaches that go with it and the use of body cameras together, this is a new type of policing that is showing tremendous impact and tremendous promise for the future in terms of driving down crime even more.

So it's a very exciting day for the city and I will tell you something – it's been a real honor over four years plus now, working with my colleagues around me and seeing the leadership of the NYPD, seeing what the way people think, what they strive for – they have felt from the beginning that this city could become safer and fairer they have believed from the beginning those two concepts go together and our job is to make sure that reaches every neighborhood, every block of this city.

I'm going to say a few words quickly in Spanish.

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that my pleasure to turn to another person who's been a leader in this effort to bring body camera's on line and particularly to do it ahead of schedule. Our First Deputy Commissioner Ben Tucker.

NYPD, First Deputy Commissioner Benjamin Tucker: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. So as Commissioner O'Neill mentioned we're here in the 7-9 and 7-9 came on line with our body one camera deployment in August of last year. And 66 of the officers on the third platoon have been wearing their body one cameras, whenever they turn out since that time on the four to 12 tour. Let me give you a sense of where we are with respect to the roll out. It's in two phases. Phase one is the court ordered pilot. That you may recall is the result of the Floyd case at the judge in that case ordered among others things around remedial measures. The department to engage in a pilot, 1000 camera roll out pilot that we are now engaged in. And phase two which I'll talk about as well, as the larger roll out that the Mayor alluded to in his comments briefly around body one camera deployment going forward.

So phase one began in April of last year. And from April through November we rolled out 1,453 cameras to officers working on the four to 12 tour in 20 commands. This phase satisfies the requirement of the Floyd case in which the – as I mentioned the court ordered us to assess the effectiveness of body one cameras reducing unconstitutional stops. These precincts, the 20 precincts that I mentioned are part of the randomized controlled experiment that was established and set up by the monitors researcher in which 20 treatment precincts, and 7-9 is one of those 20

will be compared with 20 other precincts that similarly situated, called the control group which have not received body one cameras.

The objective is to examine a series of metrics to gauge the effectiveness caused by the use of these cameras in a variety of ways. Whether we're looking at civilian complains, or we're looking at the use of force activities. Looking at the benefits of being increasingly more transparent by using the footage to get out to the public the way these cameras are deployed and what they reveal as part of encounters between our officers who are wearing them and the public.

Phase two, which involves deployment to precincts outside the body one camera pilot study. So we can't taint the 20 precincts who have the cameras, or the 20 control commands. So the study will be confined to those 40 areas. But phase two beyond that we will include a roll out of body one cameras to every officer on all shifts throughout the departments precinct's transit districts and PSA's, police service areas. This phase began in December with a roll out to all precincts, to all officers working in the 2-3 Precinct. The roll out is ongoing and currently one transit district housing PSA and it's coming online. So far we have 1,020 cameras have been deployed.

By April we'll increase the deployment to three precincts a week for an average of about 500 officers per week during that period. And then by the end of 2018 as was mentioned every police officer on patrol in each precinct, transit district and PSA will be equipped with a body one camera.

Completing our planned roll out one year, as the Mayor mentioned. One year ahead of time. We saw the benefits, we see the benefits continually and as a result we were able to prioritize the rollout because of those benefits. This summer in addition we'll roll out, we'll begin rolling out to recruit in the academy, they'll be trained and they'll be using body one cameras, and issued cameras upon their graduation from the academy. So to sum up, I mean we are phase one, 1,453 cameras participating in the pilot to date. And as part of phase two, 1,020 cameras have been rolled out. And phase two at its completion will roughly have 17,100 officers equipped with body one cameras.

Mayor: Thank you very much.

[...]

Mayor: Thank you very much Councilmember. And now we are going to take questions about this announcement and then we will take other police questions, then we will do a little quick reset, and take off topic questions, yes Maura.

Question: Two questions about this topic – just so we are clear, how many officers are actually wearing body cameras right now?

Commissioner O'Neill: 2,200.

Question: Thank you. And then this is a question both for the Mayor, you've seen the video at this point and for the Commissioner and other police commissioners here. What have you all

learned from reviewing the footage from the Ravi Ragbir protest on January 11th in which two councilmen were arrested. Obviously, Councilmember, Speaker, excuse me, Johnson was there and expressed concern –

Commissioner O’Neill: That’s kind of on topic, off topic.

Question: Well it’s related to body camera footage.

Commissioner O’Neill: We didn’t have body camera footage, we had this other video footage there but –

Mayor: Why don’t we do this and we will come right back to that, we’ll give you a reservation for that. On the body camera issue?

Question: Yes, when will you be releasing an official policy on guidelines for releasing footage to the public? Is there a draft policy underway? What can you say about making that a consistent and relatively open process?

Commissioner O’Neill: So far we have released body worn camera footage on three shootings if I’m not mistaken. We had a shooting that was captured on body worn cameras last night in the 48 precinct up on Prospect Avenue. We should end up releasing that – can’t give you a definite time period, I have to talk to Darcell, work with the DA’s office to do that but Ben or Nancy, I don’t know if you want to take about an official policy here?

Assistant Deputy Commissioner Nancy Hoppock:: So much of what we are doing –

Question: Can you just identify yourself?

Assistant Deputy Commissioner Hoppock: Sure, Nancy Hoppock, I’m in risk management. So, so much of what we are doing of what we are doing right now is a pilot and so I don’t think we wanted to come out of the gate saying we can release videos in 30 days or 60 days because there is a parallel criminal investigation going on. I think the longest we have taken is 32 to 35 days to release a video. These have been somewhat straight forward cases. So I think we just want to make an informed decision but the Police Commissioner has demonstrated a very, and the Mayor, a very strong instinct for transparency – we’ve had three, we’ve released three and it sounds like we are going to release a fourth.

Question: But you don’t envision actually drafting a policy that would guide the process going forward –

Assistant Deputy Commissioner Hoppock: I don’t think we –

Question: It’ll just be case by case?

Assistant Deputy Commissioner Hoppock: I don’t know that we can say that. I think what we are trying to do is gather the experience to inform that policy.

Commissioner O’Neill: Tony.

Question: Commissioner, this is an acceleration of the program, where is the money coming from and what will this cost in terms of revenue stream?

Commissioner O’Neill: Money figures, I have got to get from Commissioner Grippio, the money is coming from the city budget. But this is something that we are going into our budget process, I think we have a preliminary budget hearing in March – I think this is such an important topic, this is such an important thing for New York City, that it was important that we accelerated the process. I think that as you can see the videos that have been released so far, it’s important that New Yorkers know NYPD cops do every day.

Mayor: And just to clarify in terms of budget and this is something we were planning on, it was in the budget – we are moving the money forward, that certainly has impact but it was an expense we were already counting on going forward one way or another.

Question: Will it all carry over into the next fiscal year, city fiscal year?

Mayor: We will speed things up in other words when the money is spent will now be faster, but the total amount of money will be the same – so more money will be moved into the next fiscal year to allow for this quicker implementation.

Commissioner O’Neill: Ashley.

Question: I have several questions but I’ll start with this one. Last year the plan was to do 5,000 officers this year and now you are saying 18,000 – what’s changed that makes you think that you can accomplish in this short amount of time?

Commissioner O’Neill: We made it a priority.

Question: That’s it?

Commissioner O’Neill: Yes, short and sweet.

[Laughter]

Go ahead. What are the other questions?

Question: There are a number of unresolved policy issues, the PBA has sued over these issues and there are still some you are working on in Floyd, I mean where does the process stand? I think Nancy was trying to touch on this, but I mean, it doesn’t seem sustainable now it’s taking a month for you to release videos when there are just 1,300 officers or so wearing the cameras – is there a priority on putting together a policy or do you really need to see how it works out, do you really need to see a full year of a pilot to come up with a good policy?

Commissioner O'Neill: This is – Nancy, you can pick up on this – but the policy, it's a living policy here. This is technology that's been around for a number of years and there's a number of police departments throughout the United States that have the policies and we've worked with a lot of them to figure out how we're going to move forward here.

So, I don't want to wait to have a final policy before we start getting these cameras out as witnessed by the last – we captured the last four out of five officer-involved shootings on body-worn camera footage.

So, I think it's important to get that out there and in the meantime we're working on the policy. Nancy, I don't know if you want to add anything to that.

Assistant Deputy Commissioner Hoppock: I'm happy to if you have further questions. Do you?

Question: Yeah, have any changes been made since the draft policy was released a year ago?

Assistant Deputy Commissioner Hoppock: Minor tweaks mostly informed by training, the presentation of the information in the policy to facilitate training. And so far, I would defer to Chief Pontillo on this one but I think we're pretty satisfied with the content of our policy.

Question: What are penalty – I mean in the legal defense community they've noted problems with officers not turning the cameras on or wearing them properly. What about penalties for officers who aren't abiding by the rules for using the cameras?

First Deputy Commissioner Tucker: Let me, I can do it.

Commissioner O'Neill: Okay, thanks. Thanks, Ben.

First Deputy Commissioner Tucker: So, you want to be careful. I mean, I think – the way to think about this. This is a pilot. We're rolling them out. And as we've rolled them out, we've learned some things. But when it comes to new officers, they get the training up front but the fact that they haven't turned their camera off or turned it on when they should is not something you want to jump to punishment for. You want to make sure – what we're trying to do is inculcate this notion of using cameras, getting used to using cameras, and using them properly without first giving the officers a chance to – if you don't give them a chance to get acclimated and you punish them upfront then that will dissuade them from, or give them some challenges going forward in confidence in using the cameras.

So, what we've seen is – and if you look at the videos that we've released – those videos, the officers are – one of the things that's encouraging there is that the officers were doing most of the things that they did if not all correctly.

And you see their actions on the video immediately following the event, their conduct during the event, and so forth. And so what we would like them to do is turn the cameras off when the incidents are over.

Some of them don't do that but they're getting used to it and the sergeants are helping them along with that. So, I guess I'm giving you this explanation as a caution that it is a work in progress so what you want to do as we do with so many of our other policies, we've done it with our use of force policy in the new [inaudible] reports as well which is give people the chance to begin to use the new tools and use them properly before we start to hold them accountable if somehow they make a mistake or forget.

Mayor: Let me just frame this big picture, Ashley, to your original point. Where are you? You're out there.

Commissioner O'Neill: Right there.

Mayor: I can see you. Ashley, it is sustainable based on everything we're seeing. As you heard, four out of the five incidents that was most important to be able to publically portray were already captured just in this early stage.

I think we're confident that we can create a sustainable system, that this is something we need to do, and we're going to figure out the best way to do it through this expanded pilot. There will be a policy ultimately that becomes the final word on this but we're in the phase of trying to make sense of it through real life experience.

But I got to tell you, everything I'm seeing so far I'm really impressed by how it's working because imagine – think about in terms of culture change, this is still a relatively new thing but officers have taken to it very quickly and what we're seeing now is far superior to the kind of information we used to have in the past.

So I think we're on a good trajectory. In the not too distant future, we'll have that final policy we'll be able to put out and then everyone will be working from the same ideas.

Question: I just wonder though if you have anything to say about the PBA's contention that these videos are essentially personnel records that should not be [inaudible] –

Mayor: We disagree.

Commissioner O'Neill: Yeah, we disagree. I mean the PBA's position, I think, the advantages far outweigh any disadvantages. It helps us – Eric said, it helps build trust and confidence, it's a de-escalator, complaints are quickly resolved, officer safety is an issue here, we can use it for training purposes. And one thing I like the most out of this is that people get to see the reality of police work.

Question: Just one last thing [inaudible] –

Mayor: Hold on, Ashley, you had too many. We're going to go to someone else.

Question: Perhaps Commissioner Tucker can answer this. You talk about metrics during this pilot program period. When are we going to see an assessment and tangible evidence of the metrics and the measuring and what they may show us? There's anecdotal evidence, I'm sure. We've heard about it a number of times –

First Deputy Commissioner Tucker: Sure.

Question: But when are we going to see that?

First Deputy Commissioner Tucker: Usually, typically with these randomized studies what you end up with is – this is a year-project so we bring in these 20 precincts online and the evaluators will look at for that one year period once the officers are all up online and do that for a full year. They will evaluate as they go and measure whatever the metrics are that they've laid out and what they're interested in looking at and what they might have an impact on. That's when we'll know.

So, they'll do a report and make an assessment of the efficacy of the study to give us a sense of what impact the cameras have had in the commands – the 20 that have the cameras for the pilot project and against those, measured against those comparable commands that did not.

Question: So, it's very easy to talk about transparency and accountability when the recording is released to the public but in situations where the officer doesn't turn on the camera or doesn't turn in the camera if it's been recorded or if the department might withhold the camera recording – those incidents run the risk, I would think maybe you disagree, of heightening tension between police and communities. Similar to what happened in Chicago with the squad car camera – the withholding of a record or the inability or the mistaken negligence of not making a record can create a greater tension –

Mayor: I'm just going to parse really quickly – withholding and not having it are two very, very different realities and I think some of the tensions and controversies elsewhere have been around withholding. If it's not turned on that's a different reality and we're obviously trying to train people to turn it on. We've seen good results so far.

Question: [Inaudible] that these recordings will never be withheld by the police [inaudible]?

Mayor: Again, I think you're apples and oranges and then I'll turn to the Commissioner. You're apples and oranges here because purposeful withholding or withholding for untoward reasons is an entirely different concept than when you have a legitimate legal or other –

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: I'm just making a point.

Commissioner O'Neill: And we do this in conjunction with the District Attorney's Office. You know, the one in the 3-0, I had to talk to Cy Vance's people and Darcel's people up in the Bronx. But I've stated, and this isn't the first time I've said this, good, bad, or inconclusive, we're

looking to release this footage. So, not every shooting is going to be a good shooting. There's 36,000 cops. There's 8.5 million people. I know that. I understand that but I think it's important for people to see that by-and-large we do what we're trained to do, and there are going to be mistakes, there's going to be problems even beyond mistakes and I understand that but this is why we're doing this right now and this why we sped the process up.

Question: [Inaudible] withholding issue but what happens when the police officer doesn't have the camera on or for some reason is not operating it correctly? The public has an expectation that the officer will be recording everything. If it doesn't happen there's no –

Commissioner O'Neill: Well, there's going to be – can I interrupt? So, there's going to be times when people don't have the opportunity to turn the cameras on. Sometimes things happen in a split second. So, what are you going to do first? Are you going to turn your camera on and then whatever weapon you're going to use do you draw?

And those times are going to be minimal and there might be some times when cameras aren't turned on intentionally and we have to be able to figure out the difference there. So, this is technology that's been around for a while, new to the NYPD and as we move forward, we'll deal with these issues as they come up.

First Deputy Commissioner Tucker: And we are – we are auditing the process. It's not as if we're just letting this process go on without the auditing. So, this is the camera, you remember what it looks like. So the turning it on and turning it off is pretty simple, it's up and down. But what you have to understand is the process.

Every officer that wears these cameras, when they finish their tour, they then come back to the station house and they upload – they plug it in to the deck to upload the video into the cloud where it's stored.

And when then – if they make an arrest or they take some action while the cameras were on as you've seen in the footage that's been released, they will then tag the footage. So, they mark it in effect so that that footage can be retained. You know we have a one-year retention rate except for those – the footage of the videos that must be retained because of prosecution as the Commissioner says, if there's an arrest or some incident. That all gets retained and tagged. And it can't be altered.

Question: What is the –

Mayor: Okay, let's just finish on this one, Henry. We're getting into debate club here. There's clearly going to be penalties if a camera is not used when it's supposed to be used. Ben, will you hold it up and do off and on for people one more time.

First Deputy Commissioner Tucker: Oh, yeah. So, real simple.

Mayor: One more time. Do it so they can get all their cameras in. Thank you very much.

Question: What's the policy for officers who use these body cameras and then have to give a statement on the use of force? Would they be allowed to view the video before they give their statements or –

Commissioner O'Neill: Nancy or Matt, want to take that?

Assistant Deputy Commissioner Hoppock: Currently, an officer who is going to be compelled to give a statement is permitted to see his or her video before making a compelled statement.

Question: What does that mean? A compelled statement.

Assistant Deputy Commissioner Hoppock: So, my colleagues may be able to provide more information either now or perhaps offline but when there's a use of force investigation it's an investigation that's conducted both with internal investigation in the police department and with the DA. And if Commissioner Tisch and I responded to an incident – it was a use of force incident and I had to discharge my weapon, it was my gun that caused the death of the individual, I would probably be the last person that they talk to. They would talk to witnesses, other officers, but these interviews were compelled. You don't have a choice. You don't have a Fifth Amendment right. You must speak. So, the people who are subjected to compelled interviews have an opportunity to see their body camera just like they have an opportunity to consult their memo book entry or any other police report. They get to see it before we compel a statement from them.

Question: So you made a distinction when you said the type of officers that will be wearing these [Inaudible] beat cops [inaudible] –

Mayor: Patrol officers.

Question: Patrol officers –

Commissioner O'Neill: It's beat cops. A lot of times people talk about people on foot but this people in cars, these are people in housing developments, these are people riding subways down in the transit bureau. So, anybody in uniform on patrol and we will expand it out from there.

Question: And secondly, just quickly, the process that it would be – when someone would use a body camera. When would that be initiated? Why would they then turn it on, turn it off? What's the process [inaudible]?

Commissioner O'Neill: Nancy you want to talk about that or Ben?

Mayor: Ben –

First Deputy Commissioner Tucker: Well, typically, it's any enforcement action that you're taking not administrative duties. So, generally any enforcement action. If I'm responding to a 9-1-1 call, responding to the incidents that just recently occurred, you're responding to that job,

you would turn the cameras before you arrive at that job. The cameras record 30 seconds before it's on and operating.

And so, that's really the standard. We have a whole list – a litany, a menu of when they're on and when they're off. People can ask us – we go into people's homes all the time and not always for enforcement activities. Sometimes, if people ask us to turn the camera off and not videotape it, we're there on an aided case, then the officer has discretion to turn the camera off.

So, it depends on the circumstances. But generally we want the officers to record particularly those cases where they are taking action, where they are responding to an event where they may take law enforcement action, we want all of that recorded.

Sometimes going into hospitals – hospitals because of their HIPPA laws prohibit recording. But if an officer is in with a prisoner and taking that prisoner into the hospital, the officers will have that camera on. We've taken that as a matter of – made that decision as a matter of policy notwithstanding any objections that we get from the personnel in the hospitals.

Mayor: And again just an overview point, this is technology that's working all over the country and is contributing to greater confidence in our police all over the country. So it's not – some of the questions, I think, are suggesting a certain novelty. It's not a new thing in this nation. It's new being applied in such a big place in such a complex place but I want to commend the Commissioner and the First Deputy Commissioner and everyone here.

We've already set the pace here with the disclosures that you've seen of these last serious incidents. The people of this city now already have experienced seeing from the perspective of the body camera, very sensitive matters, and there's now that expectation.

And we're going to live up to that expectation on a consistent basis. I think that's building some confidence already because people are experiencing it and I think honestly they prefer to see this kind of information as soon as it can be made available.

Let's see if there's anything else on this?

Question: This is an administration that prides itself on being guided by data evidence. You have this very thorough study ongoing that's going to take a year to analyze. I wonder – so is this study guiding this acceleration at all? Is there preliminary evaluation of the data or is it really this acceleration is happening based on –

Mayor: Let me speak as the layman and then go to the experts. I want to do the common sense answer. We already know that body cameras are going to contribute a lot and we saw it literally in these first incidents how helpful they were. We want to go faster. Now there's still a lot to learn about how to perfect the use and the policies around it.

So, this is a case where we can achieve two things at once. We want to get that capacity out there. We know it's going to make a big impact on police and community relations but we also

have a lot of fine tuning to do. We don't see any contradiction between those two ideas. Do you want to add anything?

First Deputy Commissioner Tucker: Just one final point on that and that is simply that the study is being conducted, just to remind you by the monitor so he has a researcher on his team who designed the randomized study and is actually conducting and following the research. We provide a whole host of data and information to them but the study is in effect being driven by the researcher.

Question: [Inaudible] time table –

First Deputy Commissioner Tucker: No, no. It's not related. They're not connected.

Question: Is there [inaudible] what you say about, beyond sort of vague anecdotal observation about how it's working [inaudible] give us a few more concrete specifics on what you've observed other than it's working [inaudible] –

First Deputy Commissioner Tucker: Well, it depends on how you want you want to define working. I think that the fact the officers have embraced the notion of using cameras and in many instances that we see are using them properly. They have been an enormous benefit with respect to training and retraining officers but also giving officers a glimpse into what they do and how they do it and reminding them why cameras are really important.

So there are lots of – they are anecdotal but I don't think anecdotes are insignificant when you're talking about the kind of new technology and the way we're rolling it out. And so we'll wait and see what the metrics tell us when the study gets published but in the interim we have seen enough to know that this has been beneficial.

And that certainly is true with respect to the issue of transparency and the fact that the public gets to take a look inside of the work that we do in ways that they would otherwise not be able to do without these.

Question: [Inaudible] independent and external and will be publicly released when it's –

First Deputy Commissioner Tucker: Oh yeah, we will.

Question: Who is doing it?

First Deputy Commissioner Tucker: The federal monitor. Peter Zimroth is the federal monitor. It's been a study that's been commissioned in effect by the monitor on behalf of the federal court.

Mayor: Okay, we're going to do a few more on the body cameras. Go ahead.

Question: There has been talk about transparency today and as you all know NY-1 sued to get access to a lot of those videos [inaudible] –

Mayor: From the body cameras?

Question: From the body cameras. How do you reconcile that?

Commissioner O'Neill: Chief Sweet, do you want to talk about that?

Deputy Chief Kerry Sweet, NYPD: Sure. That case is ongoing. There is a balance to be struck between privacy and transparency. This is brand new technology. We're trying to figure out where that sweet spot is where we can protect the privacy rights of the citizens of the City of New York while being transparent with these disclosures. We're actively litigating the case and we're hoping to get some guidance from the court on where we can draw that line going forward.

Question: Is there any evidence that the presence of a body camera whether it's turned on or off is – has caused informants to clam up and if so what's being done to mitigate that [inaudible] camera on and is talking to an informant. Has that been a problem at all?

Commissioner O'Neill: Alright, I'll jump in. If we're talking to CIs, we're not going to have the camera on. In the back row?

Question: You mentioned that civilians may ask police officers to turn them on when they come into their homes. Can a civilian ask an officer to turn it on, on the street?

Commissioner O'Neill: Ben, do you want to get that?

First Deputy Commissioner Tucker: Can you repeat the question? Do I want –

Question: [Inaudible] civilians will be able to ask officers when they come into a home –

Mayor: Turn them off when they come into their – I think the original [inaudible] clarity –

First Deputy Commissioner Tucker: Off not on.

Mayor: If someone is coming into your home – if the officer is coming into your home where it's obviously your home, you get to say, "Would it be possible to turn it off?"

First Deputy Commissioner Tucker: And people can always ask the officer to turn it off. The officers following the policy probably will not if they're involved in a situation where they're taking action on the streets as an example. So, no.

Question: [Inaudible] turn them on.

First Deputy Commissioner Tucker: Well, we –

Question: [Inaudible]

First Deputy Commissioner Tucker: When we – when an officer – the rules are right now under the policy, if I were to stop you in your car or approach you on the street, for whatever the reason might be, I will tell you that I'm recording you. We ask the officers unless it's unsafe for the officer to do so but we will tell you, we will give you notice that you're on camera.

Mayor: Let's see if there's any other questions on the cameras.

Question: So the availability of these videos – so [inaudible] you, Commissioner, and the DA figuring out whether the video should be released within the time frame of what 32 - 35 days depending upon if it's an ongoing investigation –

Commissioner O'Neill: Yeah, we didn't give a number of days and it would be my final decision but I do have to – I'm working in conjunction with the DAs.

Question: And what if the victim's family member – what if my brother was killed and I want to see that video –

Commissioner O'Neill: We do. You want to see the video – Nancy you want to talk about that?

Hoppock: Yes I mean this is part of what we are trying to balance, you know the process of if we have a shooting and we believe – so if the DA convenes a grand jury within a week of a shooting, because of it's a shooting unlike the ones we've seen up until now, there are serious consequences if we release that video because if we release that video on the 32nd day, the 35th day and the grand jury is going to vote on the 36th day and they just watched all of you put your experts on the evening news and talk about bullet trajectories and blood splatters, is that grand jury going to be a fair proceeding?

This what we are trying to sort out. We are trying to balance your right to know with someone's right to a fair trial. And that is why we didn't come out of the gate with rules. That is why the Police Commissioner and the Mayor have spoken to our law enforcement partners, the DAs and that's what we are trying – so there's no to date, there's no magic date yet. So far we have released video within 35 days because the nature of the investigations permitted that.

Mayor: Okay, last call on the cameras, yes.

Question: Speaking of the right to a fair trial – in a couple of boroughs, the DAs have a no plea negotiation policy and the police department's current policy is only to turn over video to defense lawyers once an indictment has been made. But in those no plea boroughs the indictment is usually deferred.

And I'm wondering what is the police department's reason that it cannot provide defense lawyers with body camera video that's relevant in their case, in the defendant's case, before the discovery process is completed, or is opened?

Commissioner O'Neill: Nancy?

Hoppock: So if I understood you correctly what you said could not happen unless the defendant and the defense attorney agreed to it. So an accused has a right to be charged if it's a misdemeanor we have an obligation with a short period of time to convert that charge – I'm getting into the weeds and I'm sorry but convert the accusatory instrument to a none hearsay document within a certain amount of time or the person gets out of jail and then it gets dismissed.

Same thing with the felony clock. We have 180.80 days so the defendant has to wave this or we have got to get into the grand jury and once we get into the grand jury he's entitled to that video within 15 days. So it's got to take two courses, either we are meeting our deadlines and they are getting their video or we are negotiating a plea and then the defense attorney can say well then I need to see the video. So I'm not aware that there's this wholesale deprivation of this kind of discovery to the defense bar, no one has said that.

Question: There is I mean Queens has had a policy for more than 20 years where the defense attorney does not negotiate until – only does negotiations before an indictment and then after that, a defendant doesn't have any –

Question: After the indictment that's when the discovery process begins but before that the defendant doesn't have a right to discovery. It's up to the police department to release that footage.

Deputy Commissioner for Legal Matters Lawrence Byrne, NYPD: So we are aware of that issue and we've been getting so ordered subpoenas from judges and we have been responding to those requests in court with the body worn camera footage.

Question: How are you responding?

Deputy Commissioner Byrne: With our attorneys showing up and discussing the case with the DA's office involved and the judge involved and the interest of justice and if necessary we will turn that video over.

Mayor: Okay last call on cameras before going to other police matters, okay other police matters, Maura.

Question: Okay thanks, I'll try this again. Commissioner what have you learned from reviewing the footage of the January 11th protest in which two Councilmembers were arrested [inaudible] Speaker Johnson has expressed concern [inaudible] Mr. Mayor have you reviewed that footage involved?

Commissioner O'Neill: Yes, I did look at, I looked at some of the footage, I know that Cy Vance has the case with these two City Councilmen with Jumaane and Ydanis. We have an ongoing internal investigation, we are in the process of interviewing eight officers that were at the scene and we have already transferred someone out of the Strategic Response Group back to patrol. So it's an ongoing investigation.

Question: And Mr. Mayor.

Mayor: So I've looked at the footage, I want to see the results of the investigation and then we'll be able to speak about how we will handle things going forward based on those specifics.

But let me speak about some broader points that I think we know already – one, in situations going forward involving ICE, we are going to make sure that decisions about how to handle any city encounters with ICE, meaning whether its NYPD, FDNY, any other city officials is going to be made by a senior person.

You remember when we put out the policy banning ICE from going on to public school property. We said that was the clear, consistent policy. If ICE wanted to make a request otherwise it would have to be taken to a very senior person and there would have to be lawyers got, that would become involved, have a legal conversation to demand any explanation of why that would possibly be necessary. The point is the answer is no unless somehow they can prove a legal argument otherwise.

Think the parallel here is that – and it's very consistent with City policy well before President Trump by the way, is our police officers, our firefighters, our teachers, our public health employees, no one is participating or working with ICE in any way, shape or form unless it conforms with city law which means when we are dealing with someone convicted of one of the 170 serious and violent offenses.

So any situation that might be grey, for example where's there's the concern they may be a pressing public safety problem, that will be decided at a senior level in the NYPD before any action is taken unless it's an urgent emergency.

But I want to emphasize also this – I think there was a lot of misunderstanding after this very, very problematic incident and it happened out of nowhere as you know, Mr. Ragbir was originally told he was just coming in for an interview, no one expected a deportation. My personal view is that ICE took a very purposeful and provocative action which is consistent with some of what we've seen of them around the country, and really created a crisis.

And there was a lot of confusion but I think some of the folks who very earnestly are trying to protect the rights of immigrants, somehow got the misimpression that there would ever be a situation where the NYPD or FDNY would purposefully become involved in a deportation proceeding. That is false except for cases that fall under those 170 offenses under our law. We are not going to be working with ICE in any other circumstances.

And people need to see after over a year of us encountering the reality of the Trump Administration, we have a very powerful history of the NYPD and all other agencies having drawn that line. We don't ask documentation status, that's abundantly clear. And we do not participate with ICE in the kinds of random deportations we've seen from them unfortunately increasingly often. So we need to find out exactly what happened here it could inform additional actions, but I want to really set that predicate, I think it is so important for people to remember because we have seen with our own eyes how city agencies comport themselves with ICE.

Question: You said, I'm sorry, so you've seen the video?

Mayor: Yes.

Question: Based on what you saw do you find anything concerning on the video other than, do you find anything concerning about the actions of some NYPD officials?

Mayor: I am concerned about what I think is the original sin here, that ICE from everything I can see – provoked a crisis that left everyone confused.

Question: So you think the NYPD acted appropriately?

Mayor: No I want to see the whole investigation I'm not, I don't conjecture. You know by now, until the investigation is over I'm not going to conjecture. What I can say, because I think its self-evident and has nothing to do with investigation is this was either, accidental but I think much more likely a purposeful provocation by ICE and it created tremendous confusion for everyone involved because they thought this was a situation where an individual, a very renowned individual was simply coming in for an interview and suddenly turned into an attempt to deport.

Question: Okay, excuse me, Commissioner you mentioned that one of the members of the Strategic Response Group has been moved to patrol? Is that a demotion?

Commissioner O'Neill: It's a taken out of a specialized unit and IAB is also working in conjuncture with CCRB to resolve some of the complaints.

Mayor: Jillian.

Question: Mayor, I wanted to ask you about some of the coverage in the Daily News by my colleagues about a Detective Rice, member of the Queens Detective Squad who had been found to have made up names of witnesses and made up addresses, not actually investigating cases and closing them out without resolving them.

Councilman Richards recently said that he you know, thinks there ought to be an investigation, either perhaps by CCRB or by DOI. Do you think that this needs to be investigated either the specific circumstances surrounding Detective Rice who is still employed by the NYPD as a detective or into whether this might have been more widespread?

Mayor: I'll say what I know and obviously the Commissioner will add if there are any other issues. In terms, first of all if such a thing were to happen on our watch as you know this happened before all of us where in these particular roles – if such a thing were to happen on our watch, the consequences would be very, very serious. I find it hard to understand how there wasn't a more serious consequence for these kind of actions.

That being said there was due process and we have to respect due process whatever year it occurred, we have to respect it. I am not an attorney, I don't know if there is anything else district attorneys might look at in this case but from my prospective the biggest lesson here is that it would be handled very differently if anything like this, God forbid were to happen again.

Commissioner O'Neill: So if this was the case that was presented to me there's a good chance Mr. Rice, police officer –Detective Rice would not be a police officer anymore, would not be a member of the service. So. being that you brought that up, I'd like Bob Boyce to come up here and talk about the safeguards we have in place.

Chief of Detectives Robert Boyce, NYPD: So good afternoon everybody. This – several years ago, my prior administration when I was not chief of detectives but what we did afterwards I think what people want to know that could happen again and what are the safeguards put forward. And there are quite a few. So when I became chief of detectives, we looked at the chief of detective's Investigation Unit so it was commanded by a captain. We changed that, we took that captain, transferred him and not on this case, they didn't know about this case they just wanted someone of more experience.

We brought an inspector in from Internal Affairs Bureau. We also doubled the amount of investigators into that. So that's some of the things we did. One also things we've done as well is training. We've expanded our training unit, almost tripled it. Where I believe that each detective and each supervisor just as importantly, has to be – has to know exactly what's expected of them and to understand that investigative steps can't be skirted, which is what happened here. Doubly so, Mr. Rice then covered it up with nonsense, with false information.

We hired detective bosses to do that. I'm confident that they're doing it now. Do I think that each – that some are better than others? Yeah. Detectives are better. I think what's the problem with this article is that it casts a bad dispersion on detectives now. That's a long time ago and you look at the proof in the pudding. The detectives now are producing results for this city. We're up 14 percent in arrests in index crimes. Those same crimes that we talked about, grand larceny from auto, grand larceny, are – the arrests are up over 2,300, with a 14 percent rise in the last four years.

So, I'm confident. We looked at a lot of things in that. If this still happens, and I don't think it is, but we have to stay vigilant at all times.

Question: [Inaudible] public remain confident if someone could do that and remain a detective?

Commissioner O'Neill: I'll repeat what I just said. If this happened under my watch, he would no longer be a detective. He'd no longer be employed by the New York City Police Department

Mayor: Hold on. Hold on. Hold on.

Commissioner O'Neill: Graham.

Mayor: You got them?

Commissioner O’Neill: Yeah.

Question: I’m just wondering if you’re going to pull every case that he touched before the misconduct and after, especially when he was a –

Commissioner O’Neill: We’re going to take a look –

Question: – domestic violence officer in the 6-0.

Commissioner O’Neill: Right, we’re going to take a look at his body of work. We’re going to take a look at the supervision. And I was a chief in the detective bureau back then, as you stated in your article, and I under – I know Chief Pulaski, I know the checks and balances he had in place. So we’re just going to take a look at the whole system, how this ended up where it did. It’s concerning to me.

Question: So [inaudible] go to DOI?

Commissioner O’Neill: We’re going to take a look at it, and whatever determination we make after the investigation is complete then we’ll discuss it then.

Question: And you think finally, I’m sorry –

Commissioner O’Neill: It’s okay Graham, no problem.

Question: Do you think there is an issue –

Commissioner O’Neill: I was expecting this.

Question: Do you think there is an issue with the fact that there’s no written procedure on getting controls in the patrol guide?

Commissioner O’Neill: Yeah that was a – that was of great concern to me. So that’s something we’re going to look at also.

Chief Boyce: Yeah Graham, I just want to jump in on that. Over here. When I found in the investigative – internal investigative guide there is a procedure which mandates [inaudible] So, you were asking me about that the other day. This is advanced investigative work. It’s not patrol guide stuff, it’s patrol, and I said there was and I found it. I’ll give it to you in the break if you like. I’ll give it to you in the break.

Mayor: Okay go ahead.

Question: How dangerous are buy and busts for undercover officers who are doing them?

Commissioner O'Neill: So there's – when I was a precinct commander there were police officers that used to come into my office looking for recommendations to go to places, to many places and most times it would not be an issue for me to sign that recommendation. The only two times that I would really sit down and have an extended conversation was that if anybody wanted to go to either being an undercover or to go to the bomb squad, so that's how dangerous it is. And we have to make sure that we employ the proper tactics and we take care of our undercovers and try not to put them into dangerous situations.

Question: How do you protect them in those really dangerous –

Commissioner O'Neill: I'm not going to go into our tactics but they are protected, they're well protected each and every time they go out. Tony?

Question: About a week or so ago there was a shooting in Midtown, about 31st Street –

Commissioner O'Neill: Yeah, Bob's got that.

Chief Boyce: Sure.

Question: [Inaudible] a development –

Chief Boyce: There is a – hi Tony, how are you? There's a development in that case. We arrested Makhtar Diouf this morning in Atlanta. We got him down in Fulton County, Atlanta. He's arrested now for the triple shooting in Midtown on 31st Street. So at some point we'll bring him back to New York.

Question: How was he located?

Chief Boyce: Not gonna tell you.

[Laughter]

Mayor: Yes.

Question: For Commissioner O'Neill and also for Deputy Commissioner Miller, who I see standing over there, on the Prospect Park rape case, we were told that you guys planned on releasing the results of the DNA testing and you were going to issue an apology to the victim at that time. Is that true or not? If it is true, have you told – why didn't that happen? Have you apologized to the victim? And I wonder if Deputy Commissioner Miller can tell us today what actually transpired between him and Mike McAlary back then.

Commissioner O'Neill: Hey John, you want to talk about that?

Deputy Commissioner of Intelligence and Counterterrorism John Miller, NYPD: So I issued apology to the victim through her lawyer, Martin Garbus, who's an extraordinarily decent man. Left it up to him and her whether to make that public. They elected to make it public so it

was widely publicized. And as for any interactions between myself, Mike McAlary of the Daily News, that was the subject of a civil case some twenty something years ago. And there is an extensive record, which I invite you to read, where all of that is described. In that civil case, the Daily News was sued, Mike McAlary was named, I was not, I was a witness.

Mayor: Okay, who else? Who else?

Commissioner O'Neill: Hold on – I just – Mr. Mayor. What I stated at the press conference was that I know that she was victimized twice, John apologized on behalf of himself and for the NYPD and I apologized also. So there's no reason for that to happen, and I really, truly from the bottom of my heart wish her all the best and I'm sorry that happened to her.

Question: Can I quickly follow up with this?

Mayor: Yes.

Question: A relatively small number of people in the LGBT community who've said that Deputy Commissioner Miller should be fired. They seem to believe that he's implicated in McAlary's story. I guess I know what the answer's going to be, but what do you think about that?

Commissioner O'Neill: This is a case that happened 20, 23 years ago. We are – none of us are perfect in our lives and I think if you look at the body of John's work and what he's doing to keep the city safe, I'm not looking to ask John to leave. Yes sir?

Question: With regard to last night's officer involved shooting, have you reviewed the body camera footage from that? Are you satisfied with the use of force?

Commissioner O'Neill: Yeah, I had the opportunity to – Rodney's going to speak about it a little bit. I did see one of the body worn camera footage. From start to finish it was about 14 seconds and I am satisfied and I'm glad that the police officers walked away from that encounter safely. It was a violent encounter. Rodney, you want to add to that?

Chief of Patrol Rodney Harrison, NYPD: Yes, so real quickly, the subject did attack the landlord that was at 2131 Prospect Avenue. The victim ended up having a cut on his shoulder. The incident ended up going outside and that's when the officers assigned to the 40th Precinct engaged the individual, asked him several times to drop the knife at which time he lunged at the officers and officers discharged their firearms at him.

Mayor: Okay, coming over here yeah.

Commissioner O'Neill: I – sorry. I'm sorry.

Mayor: No worries.

Question: One question about a car stop made in upstate New York and police – State police pulled over a suspect in a Queens homicide over the weekend.

Chief Boyce: I got that boss.

Commissioner O'Neill: Bob you got that?

Chief Boyce: Yeah. So yesterday we effected the arrest of an individual, Neville Brown. He has 21 prior collars. He's actually – John, he's wanted for two homicides. Alright, him and another. We are seeking the other now. One happened on December 19th of last year. Happened in the 102 Precinct where an individual was murdered. And again on January 16th. How we tied these two together? We were able to get ballistic evidence, matching – the gun matched and we were able to do video on license plate readers that lead us to Neville Brown. So we arrested him. We put out a BOLO alert on the car and up in Fishkill, New York, a New York State trooper pulled him over and arrested him and held him for us. We went up there, we brought him back, he immediately requested an attorney, and we have now charged him with both murders. Case is not over. We're looking for someone else who's involved.

Question: One other question, I guess there were some pictures of some daredevils on top of the Bloomberg building over the weekend.

Chief Boyce: Yeah, I think someone else has that investigation.

Commissioner O'Neill: John's got that.

Deputy Commissioner Miller: Just after 6:00 am this morning we effected the arrest of Amo J Tibbo for criminal trespass and reckless endangerment in that case for going to the top of the residential portion of the Bloomberg Tower and then climbing to the top of an antenna there which was captured on video by CBS.

Question: [Inaudible]

Deputy Commissioner Miller: Excuse me?

Question: Where did you find him and how?

Deputy Commissioner Miller: He was at home on Quincy Street, not far from where we are now.

Mayor: Okay. Okay.

Question: [Inaudible]

Commissioner O'Neill: We don't give that out John.

Mayor: I don't think we're going to go into that right now.

Commissioner O'Neill: Yes, thank you.

Mayor: Let's go on to other – Willie?

Question: [Inaudible] understand on the police response to the protest Jumaane Williams and Ydanis Rodriguez. Could you tell us more, identify the individual who's assignment was changed. Would you describe that as a – would you describe that as a disciplinary action, and what did that individual do to deserve that reassignment?

Commissioner O'Neill: Willie, we're going to wait until the end of the investigation and we'll give you a briefing on it.

Question: But would you call this a disciplinary action, because if it was –

Commissioner O'Neill: He's – he's – alright, listen. He was removed from a specialized unit to patrol. You've been sitting in that chair long enough to know what that is.

Question: And just to follow up, at the scene at the time, Cory Johnson approached one of the officers in charge and said 'your people are out of control', you've seen the video. How do you respond to that –

Commissioner O'Neill: Listen this was a – this was a day none of us expected. There were – emotions were running high on both sides. The police officers were trying to get a man who they thought was possibly having a heart attack in an FDNY ambulance to the hospital. So they were doing their best to protect his life and that's what their motivation was. This is an ongoing investigation and we'll have more as the investigation concludes.

Mayor: Okay, I saw Marcia.

Question: Mr. Mayor, there was a woman – or Commissioner actually, there was a woman who was punched at the 42nd Street subway when she was at the turnstile. I wonder if you have anything on that?

Commissioner O'Neill: Bob, do you have that?

Chief Boyce: Yes, so we put out a video, I'm sorry an image of the video of the perpetrator on that. That is out to the DCPI who put that out. She – that's – so we hope that someone in the area knows that – I have Crime Stoppers van up top right now seeking this individual. It looks to be unprovoked punch at this point. As you know we track these things that happen in the subway so that's what we're looking at now, see if we can identify – public can help us identify the person.

Question: So you're asking the public for help?

Chief Boyce: Yes we are.

Mayor: Okay.

Chief Boyce: That also went to our facial recognition but we're also asking the public as well.

Mayor: Good

Chief Boyce: Does facial recognition help you in any way?

Chief Boyce: Always helps us. But it doesn't always work, but it does help us make these identifications.

Question: [Inaudible]

Chief Boyce: I don't know yet.

Mayor: Okay, go ahead.

Question: [Inaudible] the name of the man who was shot and killed last night in the Bronx? The knife wielding man? Do we have a name?

Unknown: [Inaudible] released that yet?

Mayor: No.

Commissioner O'Neill: I'll have to get it for you. I'm sorry about that.

Question: Okay, can we get some details on the [inaudible] died in police custody [inaudible]

Commissioner O'Neill: On Sunday night in the 5-0?

Question: Yes.

Commissioner O'Neill: Right now we're waiting on the final determination on the cause of death from the OCME's office. I know that our Force Investigation Division is working with the Bronx DA's Office and the New York State Attorney General to see who's going to follow up on the case. So, I think we released some initial description of the event and if you want we can get that back to you. Alright?

Mayor: Okay, anything else on police? Yes?

Question: On the 5-0 death in custody, were any of those officers, did any of them have critical incident training? And in that case and in the 4-8, do you have a plan to identify the officers who were involved?

Commissioner O'Neill: CIT training, does anybody have that?

Chief Harrison: They were both CIT trained in the 5-0.

Question: I'm sorry?

Chief Harrison: They were both trained, CIT trained in the 5-0 Precinct. And the officers last night in the 4-8 Precinct were both CIT trained as well.

Commissioner O'Neill: In the 4-8, that job did not come over as an emotionally disturbed person, that job came over as a person stabbed.

Question: Right I – was with regards to the 4-8, I was asking about the officers' identities, but I'd like to go back to you Chief, in the 5-0, I just want to check, there were a total of eight officers who responded and you just mentioned two?

Chief Harrison: The two initial officers were CIT trained but as well as the sergeant and the other officers that arrived there, all of them were CIT trained as well.

Question: So all eight?

Chief Harrison: Yes ma'am.

Question: Okay. And then, the second question was just about whether you plan to identify the officers who were involved in both of those deaths in custody?

Commissioner O'Neill: Yes at some –

Chief Harrison: I can tell you that the officers, one had two years on the job, the other had three and a half years with the police department.

Commissioner O'Neill: We will be releasing the names at some point.

Mayor: Okay last call on police matters. Police matters going once, twice, okay we're going to do a transition. I've got a brief update I want to give on folks signing up for the Affordable Care Act for health insurance. But let me see if anyone needs to go, this is the right time to go.

We good over there? Good to go? Okay, let me just give you a quick statement on the deadline tomorrow for all New Yorkers who don't have health insurance to sign up. And I want to just remind my fellow New Yorkers, you still have a chance to sign up for health insurance that's affordable, that will give you peace of mind, and will give you help when you need it. You know, despite all of the efforts by President Trump and Republican Congress to destroy the Affordable Care Act, it reminds – it remains alive and well.

So I want to remind people, I think there's been a lot of misinformation out there. The Affordable Care Act continues to be in effect. Available insurance, inexpensive insurance is available to all New Yorkers, in fact what we're seeing is a surge in sign-ups, not only in New York but all around the country. So, people have until tomorrow night at midnight, so Wednesday, January 31st midnight is the deadline.

Now I want to let everyone know, you can sign up very quickly. We've really streamlined the process, it's easy, it's straightforward, you can do it in the same day as you start. So you can start today and be signed up, you can even start tomorrow and still get signed up by midnight tomorrow. And I want to remind people, it's very simple, call 3-1-1 or go to our website nyc.gov/aca, you can get all the information you need.

I have been there when our outreach team is talking to someone who doesn't have insurance, I've seen how quickly they can gather together the pertinent information, and put the application in. So if you get your application in by midnight tomorrow night you have health insurance for 2018, it's as simple as that. If you miss the deadline, you don't. Really want to encourage people to strike while the iron is hot. Just a few words in Spanish.

[The Mayor speaks in Spanish]

Just see if there's any question on health insurance before we go to all other topics. Just want to see if anything on that. Please, I'm just asking everyone as a public service, get that reminder out that people have until Wednesday, tomorrow midnight.

Okay, let's go to other topics. Yes, Marica?

Question: Mr. Mayor, there's a new study on congestion pricing by the Tristate Transportation Committee, and it finds that the bulk of metropolitan area drivers actually wouldn't pay a congestion fee because they don't come – either they take mass transit or they don't drive into the central business district. Does that make you look more favorably on the idea of congestion pricing as a way to raise money to fix the subway?

Mayor: Sure. I would say, I want to put the horse before the cart. First and foremost, I believe the millionaire's tax is the best way to do it. I believe it's the most reliable, it believe it's the most fair approach to bringing in the resources we need for the MTA, and by the way the millionaire's tax proposal comes with the fair fare which means the half price MetroCards for low-income New Yorkers.

But this new proposal which has an exclusion zone in Midtown Manhattan is clearly better than the previous proposals we saw. Here's the missing link though, we don't know if this comes with a guarantee, with a lockbox, that money will be used in New York City for our subways and buses. You will forgive me Marcia if I'm a little skeptical given the history of many decades of Albany not always being responsive to the needs of New York City. I can't endorse a plan like that until I see those kind of guarantees. I do think the plan is a step in the right direction.

Question: [Inaudible] box and you were convinced this would actually go for mass transit, could you get behind this proposal now knowing that the bulk of you constituents and also people who live in the suburbs wouldn't be paying that tax but it would raise money to fix the subways, could you get behind it?

Mayor: I'm not going to do a hypothetical on purpose because I think there's still a lot of details we need to know. And you know it's going to go through a full legislative process. What I'm

very comfortable saying is, it's clearly improvement over previous proposals. It does answer something I cared about a lot which was the impact on Brooklyn and Queens. By not charging people to cross the East River bridges is clearly superior to previous proposals. But, I want to see real guarantees and I want to see a lot of other answers. There's the question of what happens to people who live in that part of Midtown Manhattan, how often are they going to be charged. Their rights matter here too. So, let me simply say, it's a step in the right direction but we got to see a lot more detail before I could feel comfortable.

Okay, what else? Yes?

Question: How do you explain Emma Wolfe's involvement in the Harendra Singh lease renewal? Why was she involved in that? Is that normal for her to be involved in that type of negotiation?

Mayor: I want to be really clear, everything we did on that matter and everything else we've done in this administration was legal, was appropriate, we hold ourselves to high ethical standards, we already have – we have talked about these matters exhaustively. They've been looked at exhaustively. I really have nothing else to say.

Question: It's never really been explained why she was –

Mayor: Again, I have nothing else to say on it. Please?

Question: Mr. Mayor, the federal government, in fact the US Justice Department under President Barack Obama, pointed specifically in the court papers that were unsealed to the July 30th meeting between Emma Wolfe and City Hall and Harendra Singh, regarding the negotiation over DCAS and his contract. The federal government concluded that the meeting was in an effort to pressure the agency that is DCAS to make the proposed settlement terms more favorable to Singh. The federal government found this of particular interest in evidence in their case. So tell us what your role was in getting Emma involved and how the decision was made?

Mayor: Again, we've covered these matters many times over. They've been looked at –

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: Sorry we have. Got nothing more to say on it.

Please?

Question: Mayor, just to kind of follow up on a little bit, I mean they – the federal government is saying that regarding the meeting with Emma Wolfe, DCAS staff was telling the federal government that they felt that they were pressured by City Hall to treat Singh favorably, and Singh is saying that he was intending these donations to you for favorable treatment. That's three different entities –

Mayor: The federal government looked at this exhaustively. I've got nothing else to say about it. We handled things in the appropriate manner.

Okay, new topics. Go ahead.

Question: Mayor do you think the Supreme Court ...

Question: Mayor, do you think the Supreme Court's [inaudible] decision helped you with that case [inaudible] –

Mayor: I am not a lawyer, I don't know. Let me see if anyone else wants to get in. Okay, Willie.

Question: Do you think that the Harendra bribery plea is fake news?

Mayor: I've got nothing more to say about it. Gloria.

Question: Mr. Mayor, there is a proposal in Albany that would increase the height of the [inaudible] in the city that would allow the city to build more affordable housing.

Mayor: I am sorry, say this again. The proposal to increase the height?

Question: Yes.

Mayor: I have not heard about this. That's a zoning matter. I don't know how there would be a proposal in Albany. Tell me what you know.

Question: I just know that they're proposing to have a bill that would help increase the height of some buildings.

Mayor: Okay, I am really not familiar with it. Show me what it is, we'll certainly comment. But I have not heard that. Please.

Question: Last year you said that if you were re-elected you would look into reforming the property tax system and also start a task force to make the system more equal. Since you've been re-elected – I mean what have you been doing to reform the property tax system? And do you still plan on creating this task force? If so, when?

Mayor: Yeah, we will have much more to say on the property tax issue in the next few weeks. It's clearly a big priority for the second term. It's going to be a big complex undertaking. I've said – you know I've been asked this at many, many town hall meetings, including on Staten Island. And I always say the same thing, there is going to be a massive undertaking. It will require changes in city, and state law. We will I believe fundamentally, we'll end up with a more straight forward, more transparent, more consistent property tax system for home owners, and co-op owners, and condo owners. But we have to ultimately be revenue neutral in terms of its impact on the whole city. And you know those are the ground rules that I will proceed with. But we're definitely going to have much more to say quite soon on this.

Question: [Inaudible] task force? Are you still planning to [inaudible]?

Mayor: Again, I don't want to jump ahead. But you're going to hear some very specific actions soon.

Question: Mr. Mayor, in the whole corruption investigation plea, prosecutors said that they felt you violated the spirit of the law. I wonder how you interpret that, mean that you were totally cleared?

Mayor: I will say again, I know that my administration acted legally, ethically, and everything we do we make decision based on the merits. We did in the first term; we're doing that in the second term. I have nothing else to say. Who hasn't gone? Okay, go ahead.

Question: Mayor, I am not asking for specifics on what's going to be in the preliminary budget but can you discuss the implications of the rather dismal state of federal budgeting. What the city is going to do?

Mayor: [Inaudible]

Question: What the impact of that would be?

Mayor: A lot of uncertainty. One of the things you'll see on Thursday is we're doing with a whole host of unknowns. And the only tangible specific we know is that the state budget proposal cuts hundreds of millions of dollars, and we'll go through that. And there is going to be a real fight over that. But we have to worry a lot about what is happening on the state level. The federal level is extraordinarily gray. We don't know if there is even going to be a continuing resolution on February 8th. We don't know if there is ever going to be an annual budget any time soon. We don't know what the effect of the tax bill – you're talking about 1.5 trillion less federal revenue. Our deep fear is not only does that kill any chance of a real infrastructure bill but it will start to pollute the reality with social security, Medicare, Medicaid. If that federal tax legislation that was a giveaway to the wealthy and corporations end up leading to Medicaid cuts, which is a very real possibility. That's going to hurt the city, it's going to hurt our people, and it's going to hurt health and hospitals. So there is a lot of unknowns you'll see some real sober, careful approaches in the preliminary budget.

Unknown: We have time for two more.

Mayor: Yeah.

Question: Mr. Mayor, after the gentleman was settled with who attacked police officers with a machete. You ordered the law department to take a closer look at those cases and stop settling as much. Can you update us on that effort?

Mayor: I can get the law department to update you. We were very serious about – and I don't want to refer to the specific incident. I want to generalize this. We knew there were a lot of

situations where lawyers were I think very cynically trying to initiate cases because I thought they can get an easy settlement. And that was unfair to our officers, and that was unfair to our tax-payer. We made a very clear point of that fact that we would put money into the budget to beef up our legal capacity to defend against those, I think scurrilous lawsuits. I think it's helping; I think it's reducing the number of those lawsuits. But I'll have the law department get you the details. Yeah.

Question: So Fox 5 has been following the NYCHA situation very closely. We went to a couple of the senior housing buildings. And they said that we don't have running water, we don't have heat. And then we went and spoke to other individuals within NYCHA saying about the lead issue. And I know the number two guy, Michael Kelly he resigned. There is going to be another person coming in. The New York City Public Advocate Tish James has said hey listen, we have to have a whole new crew at NCYHA. And my question to you is a lot of people are asking for Shola to resign. At what point, what will it take for a new chair to step in and quite possibility make NYCHA better for those people.

Mayor: I respect the question. But I think it's a mistaken question honestly. First of all, the person who is coming in Vito Mustaciuolo has done an outstanding job, very well known around this city by elected officials and community leaders. He has been an extraordinary public servant, and I think he's going to make a big impact as the new general manager. But I said it a lot of times publically and I'll say it again. My job is to make sure that the 400,000 people who live in public housing get the support and the help they need. And I have watched for four years now as Shola has moved that agency in the right direction. She took a near bankrupt agency and freighted its physical situation. She worked with us to create a whole host of new investments in NYCHA that the city had never done before. And we had confidence in her vision and her leadership. The next generation NYCHA plan which I urge everyone to look at. Was a blue print that we never had before that really created confidence we could change the organization. She got rid of a lot of excessive administrative personnel, took that money, put it into front lines services for residents. She sped up repairs, she increased public safety working with the NYPD there is lot of evidence of that progress. A whole host of other things I could mention that show real specific tangible improvements on a steady basis. The same way we ask the NYPD show us numbers, show us consistent progress. I can show you any number metrics that really have huge ramifications for the human being who lives in NYCHA, where NYCHA has been moving forward on her watch. There are a couple of areas where things didn't happen the way they should, do doubt. And some of that was people who below her did the wrong thing and they're not there anymore. But I am convinced she is the person that can move us forward. And I am – you know, as George W. Bush once famously said “I'm the decider.” Hold me responsible for the decision. I am convinced she is the right person to lead.

Thanks, everyone.

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