

***Requesting information from any agency that requires the mandatory wearing of body armor for uniformed officers. We would like input about the problems you may have encountered. Any sort of resistance or support did you receive from the union or staff?***

Responses:

In all, 33 agencies responded to my request. 94% (31) made the wearing of body armor mandatory for uniformed officers assigned to the field. They also required non uniformed officers to wear body armor if performing field enforcement duties. 6% (2) had no requirement but it was strongly urged.

Of the 31 agencies who made it mandatory, 93% (29) had it as dept policy. 7% (2) had the language as part of an MOU.

Most of the agencies had exceptions to the mandatory body armor policy for uniformed officers in the station on administrative duties, ceremonies, and non uniformed officers (detectives). Some agencies had exceptions for medical reasons. Some agencies originally had an exception for the heat; however most have rescinded the heat exception because of "cool shirts" and advances in body armor technology.

All agencies report little or no resistance to the mandatory body armor policy. The chiefs feel it is a necessary part of an officer's safety equipment. The unions/officers agree and are supportive.

Redding Police Department