

TO: Chief Solórzano, Captain Brown and Lt. Schivley

FROM: Officer Rodney Dickerson

RE: External Vest Carrier

**SITUATION:**

CSU Long Beach, like many other California Police Departments utilizes a “hip” dominate carry system (i.e. Sam Browne belt) that has evolved into what it is today through ad hoc methodology. Current Law Enforcement needs are far different than that of hundreds of years ago, we know so much more now than we knew then and research into different load bearing equipment has led me to the *Vest Man* (VM) over the uniform solution.

This project will outline the steps that CSULB PD will need to complete to have a successful deployment of the VM style over the uniform carry device.

**PURPOSE:**

- Reduction of the weight carried on the hips.
- Increased mobility with LE items over a larger surface area.
- Interchangeable vest that can be used for a variety of department needs (tactical, bicycle, special assignments, etc.).
- Increased continuity with weapon systems between varied assignments (i.e. muscle memory).
- Professional appearance, over the traditional vest.
- Removal of vest when in low impact “safe” environments (i.e. secured station).
- Reduces future worker’s compensation claims related to wearing the Sam Browne belt.
- Increase comfort for officers, encouraging them to wear their vests, which leads to officers being safer in the field.
- Wearing the EVC will reduce heat exhaustion and fatigue by providing a barrier from the traditional vest under the uniform shirt. The EVC does not trap heat.

**PROCESS:**

- Research the number of injuries related to Sam Browne wear. (if necessary)
- Already received a vest for field testing.
- Conduct an analysis of the success or failure of the field testing.
- Determine department interest in the deployment of the vest.
- Receive CSULB Administration approval.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

Currently we allow officers to wear suspenders/weight bearing support harnesses. This looks unprofessional and poses a danger to the officer (i.e. suspects assume officer maybe hurt or protecting an injury).

There are 16 California LE Departments who allow their officers, detectives, and special units to purchase and use the External Vest Carrier in various capacities throughout their respective organization.

Utilizing the EVC will reduce back complaints, wear and tear on the patrol vehicle seats, and officers will be able to utilize and carry more tools (i.e. handcuffs, taser cartridge, ASP baton, etc...).

The biggest plus for EVC has been that it distributes weight onto the shoulders, in a more natural way. The EVC are removable when at the station, and easily made ready in case of emergency.

If this project is approved, CSULB officers will be allowed to wear a VM EVC over the uniform vest which meets the department specifications of law enforcement agencies worldwide.

If department sponsored, it will be advantageous to complete this project well ahead of the end of this fiscal year to allow time to purchase the EVC's for officers.

If not, please consider officers to purchase their own EVC's.

## **CONCERNS:**

Cost: If not department sponsored, officers can purchase their own EVC.

Public Perception: If there is concern that the look of the EVC is more tactical than the traditional uniform look, we can put out a press release to the university faculty educating them on the reasons for the change and encourage them to support us in our efforts.

## **SUMMARY:**

Allowing officers to wear the EVC will help in several areas, as stated above. It will put our department ahead of the curve in protecting officer safety, comfort and functionality to protect officer's bodies by eliminating current or future back/ hip injuries by improving ergonomics.

The EVC carrier should not be mandatory, but an option for officers due to the fact that some officers may prefer the traditional look.

The following California agencies that use the External Vest Carrier are:

1. Los Angeles Police Department
2. LA County Sheriff's
3. Pasadena Police Department
4. Redondo Police Department
5. Chico Police Department
6. Stockton Police Department
7. Concord Police Department
8. East Bay Regional Parks Police Department
9. Manhattan Beach Police Department
10. Oceanside Police Department
11. San Diego County Sheriff's Department
12. Hawthorne Police Department
13. Santa Monica Police Department
14. Sacramento County Sheriff's Department
15. Orange County Sheriff's Department
16. Kern County Sheriff's Department