

# THE VEST MAN

## Suggestions for Responding to Questions about Your Department's New Uniform Appearance

Here at The Vest Man we recognize and appreciate that changing to an outside vest carrier is a major change to your uniform look and policy. We also understand that there are concerns about the public's perception to this uniform change, especially in light of the sensitivity involving recent news stories about police departments nationwide. Here are some communication strategies that we have found to be successful in training your officers to be ready to properly deal with questions about their new uniform.

Our first suggestion is to have your PIO or city public affairs person consider pitching a story to local media about your new uniform and how it is helpful to the officers while saving the department money on workman comp claims and training etc. Click here

<http://thevestman.com/pdfs/TorringtonPoliceNewsArticleColor.JPG>

to see a sample article that Torrington Police Department successfully placed. This way you can get the word out about your new uniforms to your citizens in a positive light and you can start the conversation in a manner that best suits your needs.

When someone asks, "Why do you have that new uniform that looks more aggressive or tactical?" Our suggested response would include statements like:

1. This new uniform helps us to reduce lower back injury and heat relief. This will save the city money in workman comp claims and in training needs, while keeping your officers less tired and more alert.
2. This allows all officers but especially smaller officers to carry their equipment more easily while allowing every officer to reduce fatigue by taking his/her body armor and equipment off when in a safe environment.
3. We aren't carrying any additional equipment; the only thing that changed is that we have moved items about 4-6 inches higher than they were before. As a result the weight distribution is healthier for every officer.
4. This new uniform is more comfortable and offers the officer more options than just wearing it under the uniform. The result is that our officers will wear their vest carriers **MORE CONSISTENTLY** and they will be safer while working.