Assessment in Police Recruit Training Simulations

By

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the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

In

LEADERSHIP AND TRAINING

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

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Complex enterprises generate complex problems requiring equally complex solutions. Schooling is such an enterprise. Therefore solutions to problems must, inevitably, be complex.... The longing for simplicity in the face of essential complexity is likely to produce deceptive explanations that lead to ineffective solutions (McKnight et al., 1987, p. 51).

Acknowledgements

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

> The common complaint about traditional learners is that, although they may have scored high on examinations about theory, they are weak when it comes to actual application. The common compliant about experiential learners is that they can *do* (in a particular setting), but can't *explain* – because they haven't really mastered the general principals that would allow them to apply their learning in new settings or to discuss the concepts embodying those principles in an analytic way (Whittaker, 1989, p. 13).

The Issue

Like police in most countries, Canadian police officers have extraordinary powers and authorities in order to help maintain a civil society. These powers allow police to restrict personal freedoms, hold persons against their will, and use coercive force in certain circumstances. To ensure police are properly prepared to professionally exercise these special powers, recruits are required to undergo extensive cognitive development and physical training before being allowed to work as fully functioning police officers.

In any trade or profession-specific training program, especially one so dynamic as policing, there must be regular assessment of learning and performance. This is done to satisfy a number of groups including the learner, employer, instructional faculty and the training agency. In police training, assessment is used to demonstrate that the training sufficiently prepares learners for their future role as police officers. It is hoped that any assessment is done in a manner that is fair, valid, reliable, defensible and consistent.

Police training in North America has been the subject of a number of studies and reviews examining the form, nature and relevance of training (e.g.: Birzer & Tannehill, 2001; Bradford & Pynes, 1999; Brand & Peak, 1995; Bumgarner, 2001; Marion, 1998; Oppal, 1994) but none appear to have focused on how learning is assessed in the training of new police officers. Since many evaluations of training programs are conducted by

internal police academy faculty, one reason for the lack of literature on assessment may be the nature of the instructional faculty.

Anecdotal information suggests that the instructional faculty at the Police Academy, Justice Institute of British Columbia (JI), is similar in make up to that found in most North American police academies. That is, faculty is primarily made up of serving police officers seconded from the field and who most often lack any credentialed post-secondary learning as professional educators. Coupled with this, it is rare to find academic articles published by North American police academy faculty.

In British Columbia, this lack of expertise in adult education was publicly noted by Mr. Justice Wallace Oppal in his Commission of Inquiry into Policing in British Columbia when he noted that:

> While there is widespread approval of the training provided by the Police Academy, virtually everyone asked to comment on the training noted that the teaching methods were stale, dry and inappropriate. This evaluation may be due to the fact that all of the Academy's instructors are seconded police officers trained in the lecture-developmental method described in the Instructional Techniques Course offered by the Canadian Police College (Oppal, 1994).

Steps have been taken since 1994 to improve the quality of police instruction at the JI (Radford, 2001), including the incorporation of such approaches as problem-based learning, the expanded use of simulations and the addition of two civilian curriculum designers[1]. In addition, several recruit instructors are currently working towards undergraduate degrees and a few have recently completed graduate degrees[2]. To date however, the majority of Police Academy recruit faculty still lack formal training specifically as adult educators.

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[1] As a result of provincial government cutbacks to the Police Academy budget, both these civilian positions were eliminated in early 2002.
[2] While none of the police recruit faculty are completing a degree specific to education (e.g. B.Ed. M.Ed. or Ed.D.), several have recently completed the Royal Roads University MA in Justice and Public Safety Leadership and Training, while another has recently completed an MA in criminology, and two faculty who manage program areas outside of BC municipal police training hold M.Ed. degrees.

This lack of knowledge within the Police Academy includes specific expertise in learner needs assessment, curriculum development, and in particular - assessment of learning. To date, the various instruments used to assess police recruit learning and competencies have for the most part been developed by well-intentioned amateurs.

An immediate area of concern is the instrument being used to assess police recruits in simulations. The Police Academy Deputy Director and faculty have expressed doubts about the validity and usefulness of the current instrument. It is seen as being too vague, not measuring or recording enough data, being primarily reliant on subjective observations, and not being properly used by assessors. As a result, the development of an improved assessment instrument has been requested.

There has been no academic external validation of the recruit training program at the JI Police Academy. There is only anecdotal information to indicate that current recruit training in North America adequately prepares new police officers for work in the field (Speevak et al, 1996; Radford, 2001). A sub-set of this missing research relates to how knowledge and competencies are assessed. It is unclear whether current assessment methods enhance learning and future performance, or not, and if the proper approaches are being taken to both formative and summative evaluations.

The focus of this project is an examination of the assessment process in one sub-set of recruit police instruction at the JI Police Academy: simulations.

The Research Question

There are a number of groups with a vested interest (e.g.: student, employer, community, instructional faculty, Police Academy) in the validity and reliability of the assessment process and instrument used in recruit simulations at the JI Police Academy. Within the Police Academy, there is a belief that the needs of these stakeholder groups would be better met by the development of a new assessment instrument. Recognizing

that the current tool used to record and score recruits in simulations is inadequate, the Police Academy Deputy Director asked that a new tool be developed.

A more effective and efficient assessment process, that also assists learning, would take part in three stages:

1. completion of an assessment instrument that requires an assessor to observe and rate specific demonstrated knowledge and competencies in a number of different dimensions

2. submission by students of a factual police style written incident report articulating their observations and actions during the simulation (submitted a day after the simulation)

3. submission by students of a personal reflective writing assignment articulating what they learned from the simulation, and how this learning will inform their future actions in similar situations

For the purposes of this project however, my efforts will be restricted to the first stage: design, review and implementation of a new post-simulation assessment instrument. Due to time and logistical constraints, the proof of enhanced learning from the three-part simulation assessment process will have to wait for another day.

Therefore, the focus of this project is on the first of the three phases listed above: the enhanced assessment instrument. Following this, my research question is:

In the training of British Columbia municipal police recruits, what can be done to improve the current assessment instrument used in the assessment of demonstrated knowledge and competency in police recruit training simulations?

Upon examination, this is neither a simple nor straightforward question. It leads to other questions, including:

- What is being assessed?
- What is the most appropriate assessment instrument?
- Should assessment be formative or summative, or both?
- What is the appropriate blend, if any, of subjective and objective measures?
- What is the most appropriate and valid rubric for recording data?
- Whose needs are being met through assessment, and what are the needs of each (student, instructor, educational institution, employer, community)?

Whitaker writes: "To learn is to acquire knowledge or skill. To assess is to identify the level of knowledge or skill that has been acquired. ... It is particularly important to realize that assessment, undertaken creatively, promotes additional learning" (1989, p. 2). In the context of police recruit training, assessment benefits not only the students who learn from the feedback regarding their progress as learners, but also meets the needs of the employer, the community, instructional faculty and the Police Academy.

Employers need to know that their staff have met a prescribed level of competency and knowledge such that they can fulfill their duties in a safe, lawful and professional manner. The communities within which police recruits work need this same assurance. Instructors and the training institutions use learner assessment as part of an evaluation process identifying strengths and weaknesses in the training program.

To be effective, assessment must be valid - - that is, what is intended to be examined is in fact examined (Whittaker, 1989, p. 40). The current instrument used to assess knowledge and competency of recruits in simulations does not articulate specific objectives that the student is to meet (Appendix A). There is no formal structure for a post-simulation debriefing, nor any specific questions to guide reflective learning. The

same instrument is used for all recruit simulations, regardless of dimensions to be assessed or the particular knowledge and competencies to be demonstrated.

The current assessment instrument, titled the "Police Academy Recruit Training Program Simulation Evaluation Report" (see Appendix A) is two pages. The first page records names of those involved and the date, and explains the three rating criteria used in the simulation. The scoring is limited to 1 - Unacceptable, 2- Needs development, and 3 - Competent.

The second page of the instrument lists six categories in which the assessor is to score the recruit, using the previously noted scale of 1, 2 or 3. These are:

1. Dress and Deportment
2. Interpersonal Relations
3. Investigation and Patrol
4. Legal Studies Knowledge
5. Officer Safety Knowledge and Skills
6. Report Writing and Note Taking Skills

These categories broadly reflect the core instructional disciplines in recruit police training at the JI. However, it is interesting to note that none of these broad categories is broken down into more discrete competencies, tasks or knowledge domains. In short, it is left to the discretion of the assessor to determine what constitutes "competent" or "unacceptable" in each of the six categories.

While each of the six categories is scored separately, and no aggregate score is compiled, a closer examination of the categories suggests that perhaps some weighting or priority should be attached, otherwise, "dress and deportment" is seen to be as important as "legal studies knowledge."

Following the six categories, space is then provided to make narrative observations for the Contact Officer and Cover Officer[3], with a prompt to the assessor that he or she notes "strongest/weakest attributes" for both. Two lines are then allotted to general "Comments" relating to "general investigation and report writing." The assessor, contact officer and cover officer then sign the completed page.

Rather than have assessors note specific competencies or knowledge domains, the current instrument relies instead on generalized categories. Considering the abundance of studies such as Kaczmarek & Packer (1996) which identify eighty-seven different job activities for police, an assessment of police recruit students that only looks at six dimensions, with a score of 1, 2 or 3, seems inadequate at best.

In one review of assessment in police recruit training in the United States, Shaw supports the use of a tool that is a "checklist of tasks that must be successfully completed" (1992, p. 5). It is interesting to note that rather than look closer for demonstration of knowledge and competence, it is simply the performance of discrete tasks that Shaw advocates, similar in simplicity to the tool currently used at the JI Police Academy.

It is my intent to develop a new assessment instrument for use in JI Police Academy recruit simulations in order to determine if the needs of the various stakeholders might be better met. The instrument would require assessors to note demonstrated knowledge and competencies, assign weights to their observations, make narrative notations, and engage students in a structured post-simulation oral reflective learning event where assessors would pose designated open-ended questions to students.

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[3] The terms Contact and Cover Officer are used to differentiate between the officer who makes primary contact with those involved in the encounter, and the officer whose role it is to provide physical back-up to the Contact Officer should the situation become threatening and/or dangerous.

Significance of the Issue

We learn to walk, ride a bicycle, drive an automobile, and play the piano by trial and error: we act, observe the consequences of our actions and adjust (Senge, 1990, p. 313).

My research proposes to design a new post-simulation assessment instrument that will more effectively meet the needs of stakeholders. This instrument will record observations of competencies and demonstrated knowledge in areas specific to police recruit learning. The intent is to enhance the ability of the Police Academy to successfully meet the needs of various stakeholder groups through a method of assessment that is fair, valid and reliable. Building on Punch's assertion that evaluation research "aims to assess the effectiveness of different actions in meeting needs or solving problems" (1998, p. 143), my aim is to test the effectiveness of one action (a new assessment instrument) in meeting the needs of diverse stakeholder groups.

Failure to document knowledge and competencies in the training of a new police officer can have a negative impact on the learner, the instructor(s), the learning institution, the employer, and the communities served by the police officer. To properly meet the needs of all these stakeholders, any assessment must be thorough, purposeful, valid, fair and defensible.

At present, the assessment instrument used in police recruit simulations is inadequate in several respects. It does not record many of the dimensions one would hope to assess in a training simulation. Where it does allow for specific assessment, observations of the assessor are restricted to a narrow scoring margin that does not allow for gradations of competence, and some assessors are reluctant to award poor scores. This reluctance leads to the opposite concern that some assessors may be inflating scores.

At the Police Academy, recruit training takes place over eight hundred and fifty hours. The training is provided through lecture, small and large group discussion, problem based learning activities, and experiential learning events such as simulations. Currently, assessment of students is determined through a variety of techniques, including "traditional pen and paper test method, or other methods such as oral examination, simulation assessment, practical exercise, research project or academic paper" (Police Academy, 2002, p. 1).

The opportunity to examine post-simulation assessment at the Police Academy is significant for two primary reasons. First, the Academy has an explicit social contract with the communities served by its graduates: that the communities be policed by highly qualified, professional police officers. Second, the Police Academy at the JI is mandated under the BC *Police Act Regulations* (section 6 (2)) to provide a competency and skills based peace officers general training program. Pursuant to Section 1 of the *Police Act*, recruit police officers at the Police Academy "will acquire the knowledge, skills and understanding to function as peace officers in society." The significance of this is that the Academy has a statutory obligation to deliver training. Implied within this is that the training should be of a certain quality.

To determine quality and effectiveness of current assessment methods used in police recruit simulations, there must be an examination of current practices. This will help inform future practices. In this context, Palomba and Banta refer to such examination as 'assessment' and state that it "involves reviewing and reflecting on practice" (1999, p. 1). In the context of education, assessment focuses not only what is learned, but also how it is learned (Payne, 1997).

Failure to continuously assess and monitor police training and assessment of learning for effectiveness and success in meeting its goal of preparing new police officers to be successful 'in the field' could be viewed as negligence on the part of the training institution. The Police Academy has regularly taken steps to ensure it meets its goals

through continuous review of training materials and practices, making revisions where necessary (Radford, 2001). One part of this continuous improvement is an enhanced level of utilization of simulations.

Simulations are used in the belief that they are a valid educational pedagogy, an opportunity to enhance learning, and observe learned behaviour in stressful settings. This belief is supported by the literature; for example that experiences are the raw data out of which learning is created (Lederman & Kato, 1995). According to Preskill & Torres, "adults learn most effectively when there is an opportunity to apply what has been learned" (1999, p. 22).

While there is some existing literature on the validity of police academy training in general (Birzer & Tannehill, 2001; Bradford & Pynes, 1999; Bumgarner, 2001; Faulkner, 1994; McLellan, 1998) in North America, currently there is no data to demonstrate the validity and reliability of recruit level simulations as an educational strategy within police training in North America, or anywhere else.

The landmark Police in British Columbia Commission of Inquiry (Oppal, 1994) supported the view that the police training at the Police Academy should "make more use of case studies, simulations and role-playing" (p. E-38) in order to improve recruit learning.

According to Brozik, simulations are techniques which enable adult learners to obtain skills, knowledge, or behaviours similar to those in real life. They get "adult learners involved cognitively as well as emotionally" (1999, p. 20). Priestley writes that the primary value of the simulation is "its ability to predict, on the basis of simulated performance, how well a candidate will perform when placed in the real situation" (1982, p. 91). While these concepts are used as justification for simulation based training, they are views supported more by anecdotal than empirical data within the context of the JI Police Academy.

The current practice in police recruit simulations is that the student experiences the simulation in a series of stages. These are:

1. Brief pre-simulation briefing, usually in the form of a simulated police radio dispatch to an 'event'
2. Participation in the actual simulation event
3. Oral debriefing and written assessment by a senior police officer assessor[4]
4. Same day completion of a police occurrence report documenting the event and the actions of the officer(s) involved
5. Receipt of written feedback on the submitted occurrence report within one to two days of submission

A vital part of the simulation process is the post-event debriefing used to help participants make sense of what happened and to reflect on learning that may have taken place in the simulation. This is where learners 're-live' the experience and attempt to make personal sense of what took place, and what they learned from the experience.

Kolb (1984) suggested that learning takes place through a series of cyclical phases – doing – reflecting – thinking – deciding – re-doing. Schön (1987) refers also to the value of reflection on action and how this reflection is to be integrated into future action. In police recruit training at the JI, recruits take part in many simulations. Each simulation is followed by an oral debriefing, and most are also followed with the submission by each recruit of a police incident report on what took place. Thus, there is action – reflection – thinking – deciding on different approaches in the future – re-doing.

Lederman (1992) describes debriefing as a process in which learners who have had an experience are led through a purposeful guided discussion of that experience. It is through this reflective conversation that experience is transformed into learning (Baker & Jensen, 1997).

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[4] In this context, "senior" refers to length of service and patrol experience, not to rank. The majority of assessors are Constables, with a very few being Corporals or Sergeants.

Currently, at the Police Academy, debriefing of some type takes place at the end of every police recruit simulation. This can include the learners orally explaining their understanding of the experience and why they took specific actions and their perceived grounds for those actions, and the assessors articulating their views of the event and asking probing questions of the learner. Peers who observed the event and the actors involved may also provide their own observations and also ask questions of the learner. However, there is no formally prescribed process for debriefing at the Police Academy, and not all assessors ask questions or provide constructive feedback in the same way.

The current simulation assessment instrument does not capture details on specifically what actions the recruit(s) took, how well they applied cognitive of motor skills, and their reasons for applying law or force options. This lack of detail would suggest that enhanced record keeping of recruit performance in the simulation would be of benefit to the learner, instructors, Police Academy, and the employer.

A move to a new assessment instrument, with guidelines for post-simulation debriefing for police recruit simulations will mean a change in practice for the Police Academy faculty, support staff, and the large number of officers who volunteer their services as simulation assessors.

This new assessment instrument will provide richer feedback to students on their learning and performance. Instructors will be able to see where learners are weak, or where they excel, thus shaping future lesson delivery. Employers will have a more detailed level of documentation on their staff. Communities will be further reassured that new police officers patrolling their streets are indeed capable of meeting their duty to serve and protect.

Potential Causes

Traditionally, Police Academy faculty and managers at the JI have not been required to have any formal post-secondary education, or specialized training as educators. The extent of specialized training received by most Police Academy faculty to prepare them to be adult educators who work with newly hired police recruits has typically been a ten-day instructional techniques course at the Canadian Police College or a five-day JI Police Academy "Effective Presentations" course. A reasonable apprehension is that, in the absence of comprehensive training, faculty may revert to the instructional style and manner in which they initially learned as police recruits. This style and manner may not be effective.

At present, none of the Police Academy instructors involved in police recruit training has either an undergraduate or graduate degree specifically in education[5].

A contributing factor to the lack of Police Academy faculty focus on revising how learning is assessed, or enhancing learning opportunities for police recruits, are the 2002 budget cuts that resulted in the elimination of the two academy curriculum designer positions. At the same time, three recruit instructor positions were eliminated. The resulting effect is a faculty group that is overburdened with instructional duties and unable to respond to all but the most urgent of curriculum design issues.

At the same time, experienced police officers who come to the Police Academy to volunteer their services as simulation assessors are not formally trained as assessors. Added to this is the absence of any clearly articulated objectives which can be used to assess the demonstration of recruit knowledge or competencies in a training simulation.

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[5] At present, two recruit instructors and the Police Academy Deputy Director have completed Master of Arts degrees in Leadership and Training through Royal Roads University. A very small portion of this degree program is devoted to education and/or training. One other recruit faculty member holds an MA in Criminology.

Typically, the person observing and assessing all police recruit simulations at the JI Police Academy is an experienced officer with five or more years patrol experience. Some have more than twenty-five years policing experience. Some donate their time on their days off, others are loaned by their home agency to act as simulation assessors.[6] Many have been acting as simulation assessors for more than two years. While all have experience as police officers, there is no structured program or course for them to complete in order to learn how to be assessors. Instead, there is a reliance on the experience and personal judgment of individual officers.

Where problems arise is in the willingness of assessors to fully detail their observations in narrative form. Police Academy faculty anecdotally report many assessment forms are returned with no narrative notes, and with only the previously noted six categories scored on the 1, 2 or 3 scale. The problems continue as some assessors will take aside Police Academy faculty supervising the simulations and report that while they gave a student a score of "competent", they really should have been scored as "unacceptable" or "needs development." The reasons most often given for this inaccurate scoring is that the assessor didn't want to "destroy the confidence" of the student, or the assessor didn't want to "sink" the student with a bad score.

Such approaches to assessment bring the validity and reliability of the entire assessment process into doubt.

The Organization: Justice Institute of BC

Established in 1978, the Justice Institute of BC is an ISO 9001 registered public post-secondary learning institution, with a stated mission "to enhance the quality of life for all by educating and training those who make communities safer" (Justice Institute, 2002). The JI comprises ten separate divisions and academies: Centre for Conflict Resolution,

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[6] Each year, on average, the BC municipal police departments donate approximately $500,000 worth of staff time to assist with simulations and the Assessment Centre.

Centre for Leadership and Community Learning, Corrections and Community Justice Division, Courts Academy, Emergency Management Division, Fire and Safety Division, First Nations Programs and Services, Pacific Traffic Education Centre, Paramedic Academy, and the Police Academy.

As a public post-secondary institution, the JI is overseen by an appointed Board of Governors, pursuant to the *College and Institute Act* (R.S.B.C. 1996), and will have provided knowledge and skills based training to over 27,000 learners around the world in 2003.

At present, the JI has a staff of approximately three hundred (faculty and administration) and relies on roughly one thousand contract and volunteer instructors from the field to deliver courses and programs.

While the majority of learners attend classes at the primary JI campus in New Westminster, BC, JI instructors also travel all over Canada and to a wide variety of other countries. Among these are Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Vietnam, Singapore, Malaysia, People's Republic of China, the Philippines, Germany, Mexico, and the United States.

Core funding is provided to the JI by the BC Ministry of Advanced Education. Different JI divisions and academies receive funding either from their primary provincial ministry, fee-for-service courses, contract courses and projects, or a blend of all three.

The Police Academy

The Police Academy began in 1974 as the British Columbia Police College (Speevak, et al, 1996) and became a part of the JI four years later when the JI was created. The original intent of the Police Academy was to train newly hired BC municipal police recruits and provide advanced in-service police courses. Over time however, the

Police Academy has evolved such that it now encompasses a number of discrete business units, including:

- Administration (internal support)
- Advanced Programs (in-service advanced training for municipal police)
- Assessment Centre (pre-employment screening of municipal police applicants, and in-service screening of applicants for promotion)
- International Programs (cost-recovery delivery of programs and services to other countries, e.g.: United Arab Emirates, People's Republic of China)
- Law Enforcement and Regulatory Training Programs (cost-recovery courses, programs and services primarily in the areas of regulatory compliance/enforcement, security and contracted applied research projects for non-police including public and government)
- Recruit Police Training

Operationally, these units have been organized into three separate groups, each of which reports to the Police Academy Director[7]:

- International Programs
- Law Enforcement and Regulatory Training Programs
- Police Training (includes Assessment Centre, Recruit and Advanced Programs)

In turn, the Police Academy Director reports to the President of the JI, who in turn is accountable to the JI Board of Governors.

In Canada, the federal government is responsible for the creation of criminal legislation and the provinces are responsible for enforcement of these laws. In British Columbia, this is accomplished under the auspices of the *Police Act* (R.S.B.C. 1996). Flowing from this Act is the *Police Act: Rules Regarding Training, Certification and Registration of Municipal Constables Appointed Under Section 26 of the Police Act* (B.C. Reg. 109, 1981). It is this *Regulation* that creates the Police Academy (section 1)

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[7] This organizational structure took effect September, 2003.

and the statutory framework for the "peace officers basic training program" in section 2 (1).

In addition to creating the statutory framework for the training of new British Columbia municipal police officers, the *Regulation* also creates the post of Director of the Police Academy (section 1), and the Training Officers Advisory Committee (section 1) with which the Director is to act in consultation (section 6 (1)).

The Training Officers Advisory Committee comprises training officers from each of the eleven independent municipal police agencies in the province. Operationally, most members of the committee are Sergeants, Staff Sergeants or Inspectors. In addition to representatives from the municipal police agencies, as a matter of form the committee includes representatives from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Organized Crime Agency of British Columbia and that Stl'atl'imx Tribal Police. The committee meets every four months to discuss both recruit and advanced in-service police training issues.

The *Regulation* gives the Director of the Police Academy, in consultation with the Training Officers Advisory Committee, control over the curriculum within the police basic training program, and the duration of training. The *Regulation* however does specify the form in which training is to be delivered. Specifically, section 4 states that the training of newly hired municipal police officers is to be

> divided into 3 distinct periods of training, the first and third of which are the teaching at the academy of curriculum developed by the director in consultation with the training officers advisory committee with the second period being a practicum which is monitored by the director or his designate and during which the trainee works under the direct supervision of a field trainer.

Upon first arriving at the Police Academy, new recruits are provided a copy of the Academy *Academic and Performance Standards for Recruit Training* (2002). Under these, learners are required to attain a minimum 75% on "examinations/quizzes/written assignments/simulations" (2002, p. 2) in their first block training period. Failure of three

assessments in the same block of training results in the student being suspended from the Academy and being sent back to his or her police agency. If the employer "decides the student should be reinstated at the Academy" (2002, p. 3) written reasons are then supplied to the Academy Director. A fourth failure in the same block results in the student being terminated from the Academy. Under section 12 (a) of the *Police Act: Rules Regarding Training, Certification and Registration of Municipal Constables Appointed Under Section 26 of the Police Act* (B.C. Reg. 109, 1981), the Police Academy Director has the authority to terminate a student who "fails or refuses to meet the standards perquisite to the successful completion" of training. As completion of recruit training is a prerequisite to being allowed to work as a municipal police constable in BC, termination from training is most often the end of the student's police career.

Given the consequences attached to assessment in recruit police training, it is appropriate to examine the form and nature of student assessment. One aspect of assessment is related to the assessor.

Like many other divisions/academies within the JI, the Police Academy relies primarily on seconded police officers as instructors for recruit programs. These instructors usually have eight or more years of field experience. While a few guest instructors do come from outside, including some non-police persons, most recruit instruction is delivered by police officers who come to the JI for periods of two to four years. Again, similar to other parts of the JI, these instructors are selected based on their experience, professionalism and aptitude as instructors. However, it is rare that any have a formal background in adult education, curriculum design, assessment, or instruction.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Review of Organizational Documents

The bulk of relevant organizational documents, including the Justice Institute of BC mission statement, BC *Police Act*, the *Police Act Regulations, Rules Regarding Training, Certification and Registration of Municipal Constables Appointed Under Section 26 of the Police Act*, Justice Institute of BC Police Academy Calendar, and the current simulation assessment instrument are all covered in other sections of this report, where their review is most relevant.

Review of the Literature

This chapter reviews some of the literature as it relates to the domains of simulation, post-simulation debriefing, assessment, the role of police, and police training. It is useful to include the role of police, however briefly, so as to provide some context to the issue of assessment and simulation.

The broad domains of adult learning, knowledge and adult education are purposely not addressed for two reasons. The first is one of necessity: to properly address these subjects would require a research paper of epic size. The second is a desire to focus on the specific areas of learning and knowledge germane to this project.

Other areas that will not be covered in this research or literature review are the impact on the simulation caused by bias on the part of the simulation designer, the impact on learning caused by the abilities or bias of the person leading the debriefing, how memory works and how this relates to post-event debriefing and reflection, and the effects of stress and/or trauma on memory and cognition. Due to time constraints, the potential to develop an ability to manage arousal levels through participation in successively more

complex & stimulating simulations and how this relates to enhanced cognitive ability and accuracy of recall will also not be addressed.

Simulation

A simulation is an activity contrived to correspond to some aspect of reality (Thiagarajan & Stolovitch, 1978) and to provide an experiential context (Baker & Jensen, 1997) for learning that offers participants a tangible, reality based experience. To be effective, "training simulations must have physical and psychological fidelity with the real world situations" (Helsen & Starkes, 1999, p. 401) and be sufficiently complex so as to be credible (Cairns, 1995). One of the many reasons for using simulations as a learning tool is that they "promote individual discovery in learning from the learner's own perspective" (Dukes, 2001, p. 21).

The use of simulations as an instructional tool began with the Chinese game of Wei-Hai in 3000 B.C. as a method of teaching military strategy (Wilson, 1968, p. 1). Since that time, simulations have been used to train and to evaluate pilots, surgeons, blasters, management trainees, psychiatrists, physicians, and many others (Priestley, 1982, p. 29).

Simulations can be anything from simple events that take a few minutes, to multi-day events involving complex role-plays used to simulate a terrorist nuclear threat (CSIS, 1998). "A variety of simulators have been designed for specific training purposes, including skills development, decision making, and problem solving" (Goldstein & Ford, 2001, p. 236).

The theory of simulations posits that participants learn by doing. It is an active method of learning that recognizes "the importance of the experience – and reflection on that experience – as key parts of the learning process" (Wolfe & Crookall, 1998, p.8).

At the JI Police Academy, in recruit training, a simulation is a controlled recreation of an event that police officers might reasonably be expected to respond to in the course of their duties. It is a contrived episode used as one of several methods for training both new and experienced police officers, and to help develop and assess knowledge and skills in such areas as law, communication skills, use of force skills, police tactics, investigation skills and report writing.

These staged events involve actors who play roles loosely based on scripted scenarios and who interact with the learner police recruits. Simulations can replicate such events as a domestic disturbance, assault, theft, or the ubiquitous "suspicious person" complaint. In all of these simulations, the actions of the learner dictate how the event will evolve and unfold. In this way, learners "experience in real time the consequences of their actions" (Crego & Powell, 1995, p. 36) as the actors respond to the actions of the learner.

While "law enforcement is generally a task-oriented occupation" (Thermer, 1996, p. 4) it can require a police officer to synthesize concrete knowledge, complex motor skills, critical thinking and judgment and then apply all this on occasion in a split second when a hostile situation is encountered. To assist new police recruits in learning how to combine knowledge and skills, along with judgment and the confidence to take appropriate action, simulations are an integral part of training at the Police Academy.

In a police recruit simulation, recruit learners are required to synthesize knowledge and practical skills gained in the classroom and apply these to a concrete situation (Bloom, 1956). A simulation satisfies Bloom's assertion that "what is needed is some evidence that the students can do something with their knowledge, that is, that they can apply the information to new situations and problems" (p. 38, 1956). Written debriefing is the next step in the learning process "because people are again learning by doing" (Petranek, 2000, p. 110).

In police recruit simulations at the JI, all simulations are followed by an oral debriefing. In this reflective process, the recruits involved in the simulation first explain their course of action and the reasons behind the actions. The actors who played the citizens then discuss their view of what worked and why, and what did not work and why in the simulation. This is followed by constructive feedback and observations from classmates who witness the simulation. Lastly, the assessor provides constructive feedback and observations. In most simulations, the recruits are then required to complete a written factual police incident report of the simulation. This written assignment serves two purposes, the first being practice for the recruits in filling out police forms, and the second being another opportunity for the recruits to reflect on the experience and what they might have learned from it. This report is assessed as a part of the demonstration of knowledge and skills in the simulation by the same assessor who monitored the simulation. The feedback on this report provides yet one more learning opportunity for the recruits.

Andragogy, as suggested by Knowles, is "the art and science of helping adults learn" (1990, p. 54) and is an appropriate model for some aspects of police recruit training (Brankin, 1989). The pairing of simulation with debriefing fits this definition in that the simulation is the learning "event" coupled with the oral debriefing and reflective written activity. The two debriefing activities are what help the learner to construct his or her own learning from the event.

Meaning is also constructed from feedback, and one form of feedback is assessment.

In the first phase of recruit police training at the JI, referred to as Block I[8], the simulations are developmental exercises where formative assessment is utilized. These simulations are usually simple, brief events designed to give learners confidence in applying new knowledge and skills. In the second phase of in-class training, referred to as

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[8] Blocks I and III are each eleven weeks in length. In between these two classroom-based training periods is Block II, which is a field practicum. Block II can vary in length from thirteen to seventeen weeks.

Block III, whist the simulations are assessed, the assessment is not summative in nature. These simulations can from last from five to thirty minutes and require learners to apply a wide range of competencies and diverse knowledge domains.

The developmental approach to police recruit simulation complexity is based on the faculty belief that learning and skills are more likely to develop from simulation based training if the simulations start off as low-stress and relatively simple events and then over a period of months develop into more stressful and complex situations. This progression allows learners to develop confidence in their new learning as they progress through the recruit police training program.

This belief is borne out by the literature which states that learners develop an ability over time to manage their level of arousal such that it does not adversely impact on cognitive ability (Eysenck, 1984) or performance (Schmidt, 1991) (Singer, 1975). This management ability is, however, finite. In talking about the relationship between arousal and cognitive performance, Eysenck (1984) describes the two assumptions found within the Yerkes-Dodson (1908) Law:

1. There is an inverted-U relationship between the level of tension, arousal, or motivation, and the level of performance, with optimal performance efficiency occurring at a moderate level of arousal.
2. The optimal level of motivation or arousal is inversely related to task difficulty. (p. 331)

In an effort to determine if repeated exposure to simulated events would enhance cognitive and perceptual ability, Helsen & Starkes (1999) tested four different groups of moderately experienced Belgian police officers. Each group took part in one of four different ten-hour training programs on use of force in potentially dangerous situations. In testing prior to the experiment, officers on average took ten preventive actions to resolve a simulated dangerous situation. After the training, the group that took part in an interactive video simulation program averaged sixty preventative actions to resolve a simulated dangerous situation. The implications of this research are significant for police training. Simulations can demonstrably enhance cognitive and perceptual ability.

As an aside, it is interesting to note that Helsen & Starkes found that "all officers remained quite low in shooting efficiency" (p. 408) and that only 56% of shots fired actually hit their intended targets (p. 406). This finding replicates real-life police shooting accuracy in the United States (Alpert, 1989; Alpert & Dunham, 1995; Geller & Scott, 1992).

Post-simulation Debriefing

> In addition to an appropriate *balance* between theory and practice it is essential to leaven the mix with ample portions of *reflection* on it (Whitaker, 1989, p. 14).

While there is a great deal of literature on simulations as a training/educational strategy, comparatively few authors have written specifically about the debriefing that occurs post-simulation. Those authors who have chosen to focus on debriefing within the realm of simulations include Rall, Mansert & Howard (2000) Petranek (1992, 2000), Lederman (1984, 1992, 1995), Steinwachs (1992), Crego & Powell (1995), Thermer (1996), Baker & Jensen (1997) and Thiagarajan (1992).

In considering the value of debriefing, all generally agree that debriefing helps participants reflect on their earlier experiences as opportunities to transform experience into learning. Debriefing provides opportunities for learners to examine, in detail, the context in which they were called upon to apply their learning and skills. According to Berryman (2002) "context, in fact, gives meaning to learning." As a part of this constructive belief, debriefing provides the opportunity for the learner to "review the cause and effect" (Crego & Powell, 1995, p. 36) of how their choices and actions affect the evolution of the incident. Kriz builds on this by arguing that "debriefing offers a consolidation of the experiences made and therefore a chance to acquire important

knowledge that has theoretical as well as practical value...and achieve a transfer of the acquired knowledge for reality" (2003, p. 497).

In support of their belief that reflection is part of the learning process, the United States military has incorporated learning through reflection in a process they term After Action Review (Solon, 1993). These reviews take place after all training simulations and all real field events (Roth, 1999). As a part of the After Action Review process, Socratic questioning is used to evoke self-discovery in a manner that is not about assessing performance so much as it "is about how much an individual can learn" (Pascale & Milleman, 1997, p. 136). This approach to learning can be incorporated in any context.

Dewey (1938 as cited by Kreber, 2001, p. 218) wrote about the need for education to be both grounded in experience and reflected upon. It is through reflection on the experience that we begin to internalize and make sense of the learning. Kolb (1985) posits a learning cycle in which reflection is a pivotal point in a cyclic process. Kolb's learning theory of doing – reflecting – thinking – deciding – (re)doing – mirrors the process of simulation – reflection – meaning making – revision of approach/tactics/choices – simulation. "This learning cycle encompasses two significant areas: One covers action to reflection, and the other deals with the transition from concrete to abstract" (Rosenorn & Kofoed, 1998, p. 433).

Debriefing is a purposeful activity that forces learners to pause and take part in a reflective exercise. It is an exercise designed to help learners relive the activity, their actions and choices within it, to make sense of the experience, (Kamin, O'Sullivan, Younger and Deterding, 2001) and to construct their own meaning of what the events represent to them now, and in the future. Anecdotal and academic sources (Petranek, Corey and Black, 1992) report that this is where learning takes place. At the JI Police Academy, some recruit faculty report that the post-simulation debriefing is where the most time and energy should be focused as it is vital to the learning process, and this is where recruits self-report the most learning takes place.

Lederman suggests that the post-simulation debriefing process is based on two assumptions. "The first assumption is that the experience within the simulation has affected the learner in some way. The second assumption is that a post-event discussion is necessary to provide insight into the experience" (1992, p. 146). I would add one more critical assumption: that the person leading the debriefing is skilled and knowledgeable in the debriefing process.

In the context of medical training in fourteen European simulator centers, Rall, Mansert and Howard found that:

> Respondents claim that debriefing is the most important part of realistic simulator training. Debriefing is crucial for a successful learning process, but if performed badly can be the source of severe harm to the trainee. Debriefing can 'make or break' a simulator session and can be attributed as the 'heart and soul of simulator training'. Therefore, training of instructors in the art of debriefing should be emphasized (2000, p. 517)

Lederman agrees that the knowledge and skill level of the person leading both the simulation and the debriefing is pivotal when she suggests that educators using simulations must have six unique skills sets. These are: 1) tolerance for ambiguity, 2) ability to observe and interpret behaviour, 3) ability to form questions and listen to answers about behaviours, 4) ability to select appropriate directiveness and non-directiveness with working with students, 5) a sense of timing, and 6) sound judgment calls relating to appropriateness of directiveness and non-directiveness (1984).

Most often, post-simulation debriefing takes the form of one person who has observed the simulation posing a series of questions to the learner participants. Learners are asked to reflect on what took place and to explain their actions, thoughts and choices within the simulation. A guided discussion follows as to what was learned from the simulation and what might be done differently in the same situation next time.

While this traditional method of debriefing has utility, Petranek (1992 & 2000) argues that another reflective activity take place after the oral debriefing to further enhance learning. Petranek advocates a written activity that might take the form of a journal activity or prescribed written activity.

Writing, as opposed to a group oral debriefing exercise, is a solitary endeavour that requires learners to undertake a more deliberate reflection on the event, the sense they make of it and how it relates to their past, current and future activities. It requires a higher level of cognitive reflection than would take place in a brief discussion, which does not provide learners the time to properly gather their thoughts. At the same time, written debriefing provides a private, deliberating time to "make sense of it all" (Petranek, 2000, p. 109). The value of reflection through writing is supported by Osborn who wrote that "for the purpose of moving our minds, pencils can serve as crowbars" (1979, p. 202 as cited by Heuer, 1999, p. 88).

In written debriefing, the question for the educator/facilitator becomes what questions to ask, how and if the questions should be subjective, objective, or a blend? How does one draw out learning and personal insight in a post-experience reflective exercise? Learners could be asked to provide detailed answers to a series of questions, write a brief essay, or a combination of the two.

In a post-simulation written debriefing, the role of the facilitator is different from that of the facilitator who leads an oral debriefing. While the questions posed to learners in both forms of debriefing may be similar in structure and purpose, the facilitator who receives a written debriefing assignment is likely to read a much more intimate and personal account of what the simulation experience meant to the learner. This poses an issue of what feedback or evaluation should be provided by the educator to the learner. Evaluation could be either formative or summative. For the purposes of building confidence within the learner and providing guidance, one could suggest a formative style of evaluation is best. This would take the form of coaching and guidance to build

confidence. A summative evaluation would require the creation of objective rating criteria that lack objectivity, which may be difficult to achieve.

In the context of police recruit training, ideally the post-simulation written activity should not only enhance learning through reflection, but also assist students to understand not only what they did, and how well they did it, but why. This becomes important when an officer is called to testify in court and explain why he/she chose a particular course of action or level of force response. This ability to clearly articulate ones actions is critical to the success of a witness in court (Bellemare, 1985).

Assessment

> It is worth emphasizing: *assessment is not just the measurement of learning; it is in itself an integral part of learning*. Assessment is the first step in a continual learning cycle which includes measurement, feedback, reflection, and change. The purpose of assessment is not merely to gather information; the purpose of assessment is to foster improvement (Frye, 1999, p. 6).

At the Police Academy, one of the purposes of staging simulations in recruit training is to identify what students know and what they can do. To do this well requires, amongst other things, some understanding of terminology within the faculty group. At present, the very name of the current assessment instrument used in police recruit simulations, the *Police Academy Recruit Training Program Simulation Evaluation Report*, indicates confusion amongst staff as to terminology.

Evaluation is used to judge the effectiveness (Babbie, 2004; Kirkpatrick, 1959, 1998; Perry, 2001) of a program, like a police recruit training program. In education, assessment is used to describe a process used to "identify the level of knowledge or skill that has been acquired" (Whitaker, 1989, p. 2). In assessment, Palomba & Banta assert that "educators must be purposeful about the information they collect" (1999, p. 4). The

requirement for deliberation in data collection supports the need for a new assessment instrument in police recruit training simulations.

One sub-set of assessment is performance assessment, which can be described as "the direct, systematic observation of an actual student performance and the rating of that performance according to previously established performance criteria" (CRESST, 1996). While this definition appears to directly relate to the subject of this research project, performance assessment is a term used in a number of different professional disciplines and as such, there is no agreed upon taxonomy. In medicine, "performance-based assessment measures what doctors do in actual professional practice" (Rethans, et al, 2002, p. 902) and "competency-based assessment measures what doctors can do in controlled representations of professional practice" (p. 902). Rethans makes this distinction between performance in reality and simulation because "studies have shown both high and moderate as well as very low (-0.04) correlations between results of doctors performing examinations during tests and in actual practice" (p. 901).

This brings to light one of the many challenges in assessment – authenticity. How can we be sure that superior, or for that matter poor, performance in a simulation will translate into comparable performance out in the field?

Miller (1990, as cited by Rethans, et al, 2002) suggests a four-stage model of assessment: knows, knows how, shows how, and does (p. 906). This is similar to the progression of assessment currently employed in the Police Academy, where traditional paper and pen tests give way over time in the curriculum to the inclusion of progressively more complex simulations. Assessment in the simulations is both formative and summative. The idea being that formative assessment is used for development and performance improvement, while summative assessment is part of the accountability process in making a determination of whether the learner has or has not demonstrated knowledge and competency (Wholey, 1996, p. 145).

The problem is that Miller's model "implicitly assumes that competence predicts performance" (Rethans, et al, 2002, p. 906). In the training of recruit police officers in British Columbia, this challenge is addressed through assessment of student performance in Block II (field practicum of thirteen to seventeen weeks duration) and through assessment over the course of Block IV (post-graduation patrol/general duty work). In these two assessment periods, competence and performance are noted by Field Trainers and reported by the employer to the Police Academy.

One concern about assessment is validity. In the context of assessment, validity means that one is measuring what is intended (Whitaker, 1989). Specific to assessment in simulations, there is the concern about internal and external validity. Internal validity looks for improved performance at the conclusion of a simulation "as measured by a variety of tests or parameters" (Saunders & Gaston, 1996, p. 16) while external validity refers to the applicability of the simulation to the real world and the "transferability of skills, knowledge and attitudes" (p. 16). As police recruit simulations already replicate real world situations and improved performance coupled with transferability are some of the goals of the event, our focus is then on measuring what is intended. One method of ensuring validity is to assess based on specific criteria.

CRESST says that criteria are "guidelines, rules, characteristics, or dimensions that are used to judge the quality of student performance. Criteria indicate what we value in student responses, products, or performances" (1996). Clear criteria for performance and observation in a simulation can "provide consistency between raters, and with the same rater over time and across tasks" (Arter, 1998, p. 4).

In judging, a score is typically assigned according to a numeric or other form of scale. In the proposed Police Academy recruit training simulation assessment tool, a Likert scale of one to five is used.

There are of course, other metrics that can be used in scoring. These include:

- Likert scale of one to five, seven, or ten
- Not competent, Competent
- Pass, Fail
- Does not meet requirements, Meets requirements, N/A
- Unacceptable, Needs improvement, Professional, Superior
- Unsatisfactory, Fair, Satisfactory, Good, Excellent

Regardless of the scale used, the purpose of the assessment rubric in police training is the same – to record a determination, whether objective or subjective, based on observation of demonstrated knowledge and competencies.

Considering that police recruits are by their very nature learning a new career, it is questionable if they can be expected to be competent in a simulation. Chambers & Glassman (1997) argue that competency assumes learning progresses through stages, including novice, beginner and those who are finally competent (p. 651). They define competent as being "characterized by appropriate speed and freedom from errors, clinical judgment, understanding, and independence to begin unsupervised professional practice" (p. 664). Given this definition and the progressive nature of "Block" training of police at the JI, competency is not expected of Block I recruits, but can be expected of Block III recruits who take part in simulations only two weeks prior to graduation.

The Likert scale of one to five was chosen for the proposed Police Academy recruit training simulation assessment tool for the sake of simplicity. In Police Academy simulations, the assignment of a numerical weight is not based on highly detailed learning objectives or other criteria. Rather, it is left to the judgment of the assessor. The belief is that as all assessors have experienced similar training, and are themselves highly experienced police officers, they can relate the observed performance to the training received by the student and to the complexity and challenge level of the simulation, and

arrive at a score. It is recognized that to a large extent, any scoring is subjective in the absence of objective standards against which performance might be measured.

This subjective approach to assessment is a concern to some (Chambers & Glassman, 1997), but the courts have chosen not to "substitute their opinions for the judgment of educators in matters of education" (p. 660) so long as the assessment is neither arbitrary or capricious (p. 660)[9],[10].

There are of course other issues and challenges in assessment, especially in simulations. In a simulation, there is some objective data. Did a recruit perform a technique properly, or apply a specific point of law in the proper context? Assessment also relies on subjective observations. After all, assessment is to some degree a social construct. Where one assessor believes it appropriate for a recruit to be assertive in a particular simulation, another may believe that diplomacy and conflict resolution were called for. What is important to remember in assessment in the context of police recruit simulations is that assessment should examine core competencies and learning, otherwise, assessment checklists could run into dozens of pages and lose meaning.

The proposed assessment instrument for police recruit simulations limits observations to core knowledge and competencies. There is a blend of subjective and objective data collection. The length of the assessment is purposely limited as there is a concern that unduly lengthy and involved instruments will not be used, or not be used properly. The instrument is both formative, in that constructive feedback is provided and opportunities created for the student to learn from the experience, and summative in that a final overall score is assigned.

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[9] The US case is Horowitz v the Board of Curators of the University of Missouri, No. 74CV47-W-3, 1975.
[10] While there is no similar Canadian case, lawyers specializing in education law surmise that Canadian courts would render a decision similar to the US, with the additional caveat that assessment is not discriminatory. J. Clark (personal communication, September 5, 2003).

As the assessors at the Police Academy are all experienced police officers, there is a reliance in simulation assessment on two of the core competencies of a police officer – memory and observation skills (Kaczmarek, 1996). There is not an expectation that assessors will be noting all their observations in the assessment instrument during the simulation. Rather, through experience and training in observing an incident, and remembering key details, the assessor is better able to more accurately complete the post-simulation assessment instrument after the event.

Reliability of assessment is demonstrated if conclusions are consistent amongst raters (Chambers & Glassman, 1997). Similar to assessment in most kinds of simulation however, "assessment is based on observation and judgment" (Arter, 1998, p. 1). This reliance on personal observation and judgment brings reliability into question. To demonstrate the reliability of an assessment instrument such as the proposed new police recruit training simulation assessment instrument, one could rely on inter-rater reliability, or, one could infer reliability over time if the majority of assessors were scoring recruits at levels that closely approximate other assessors. This consistency could validate the instrument and the process of assessment.

In an effort to mitigate the potential for assessor bias to positively or negatively impact on any one student, recruits rotate through approximately twenty simulations during their training, and are observed by a number of different assessors[11].

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[11] Recruits will experience approximately twenty simulations over the course of Blocks I and III, either as participants or observers, and will be monitored by a similar number of assessors.

Recruit Police Training

The citizen expects the police officer to have the wisdom of Solomon, the courage of David, the strength of Samson, the patience of Job, the leadership of Moses, the kindness of the Good Samaritan, the strategical training of Alexander, the faith of Daniel, the diplomacy of Lincoln, the tolerance of the Carpenter of Nazareth, and finally, an ultimate knowledge of every branch of the natural biological, and social sciences. If he had all these, he might be a good policeman. (August Volmer, former Chief of Police, Berkeley, CA., quoted by Johnson, 1971, p. 405 as cited in Ness, 1991, pp. 181-182)

While it is debatable if Gilbert and Sullivan were right when they said in the Pirates of Penzance that "a policeman's lot is not a happy one" (Deems, 1932, p. 175), most would agree that the role of modern police is complex, challenging and unique.

Contrary to what most people might think about police work, its primary focus is not necessarily enforcement of laws. Rather, the work performed by police is most often more about keeping the peace and addressing issues of public order than outright law enforcement (Skolnick, 1966; Manning, 1978; Van Maanen, 1978b, Kelling & Coles, 1996). Thus, training needs to focus on a range of skills and judgments beyond the traditional topics of law and enforcement.

According the Canadian National Occupations Classification (6261), police officers:

- Patrol assigned areas to maintain public safety/order and to enforce laws/regulations and participate in crime prevention, public information, and safety programs
- Investigate crimes and accidents, secure evidence, interview witnesses, compile notes/reports, and provide testimony in court
- Arrest criminal suspects
- Provide emergency assistance to accident, crime and disaster victims

- Supervise and co-ordinate the work of other police officers (Human Resources Development Canada, undated)

Calls to police for service range from such things as neighbour disputes, cars parked for weeks on residential streets, incidents of domestic violence, missing children, shoplifters, bar fights, traffic accidents, fraudulent use of credit cards, and stolen mail. It is conceivable that one police officer might respond to all of these calls in one shift. Each of these situations requires differing skills and knowledge domains. In one instance the officer might have to be assertive, use a commanding presence and perhaps some level of force, while the next call might require the officer to be patient, empathetic and compassionate.

Preparing newly hired recruits to be fully functioning police officers requires the completion of a training program that by necessity includes both knowledge and physical skills. According to Birzer and Tannehill:

> There is an obvious need for police officers to acquire knowledge of the latest legal decisions, technological advances, and tactical developments in the field, and to remain proficient in a number of job-related skills. There is also an urgent need for police officers who are skilled communicators and decision makers, who are capable of helping citizens identify and solve problems in their communities, and who possess effective mediation and conflict-resolution skills (2001, p. 233).

This diversity of knowledge and competencies required of a police officer is reflected in a report from the Australian Centre for Police Research which lists eighty-seven specific job activities (Kaczmarek & Packer, 1996) for police who work as front-line patrol officers.

In British Columbia, to prepare new recruits to be fully functioning police officers, the Police Academy at the JI has developed over time a lengthy and comprehensive instructional program. However, there is an anecdotally reported ongoing debate whether what new police recruits experience at the Police Academy is education or training.

Knowles says that to be educated suggests a commitment to learning for its own sake, and to be educated is to possess a significant breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding (1990). Considering that police recruits are required to undergo training, and training is restricted to specific subjects at an introductory level, then the Police Academy experience is training as opposed to education. That does not necessarily mean that learning is absent from the process.

The online Encyclopedia Britannica defines learning as "the alteration of behaviour as a result of individual experience" while the online Merriam-Webster Dictionary says that learning is "to gain knowledge or understanding of or skill in by study, instruction or experience." Thomas (as cited by MacKeracher, 1996, p. 4) defines learning in two ways. He says that it is "an intangible possession that people work to acquire," and a "valuable process in itself, as something people do rather than as something they acquire" (1991, p. 3). Meanwhile, Goldstein & Ford define training "as the systematic acquisition of skills, rules, concepts, or attitudes that result in improved performance in another environment" (2001, p. 1).

Based on these definitions, new police recruits undergo training at the Police Academy, and from this training they learn how to be functioning police officers. The debate now shifts to the effectiveness of current police training.

In the United States, depending on the state, police training ranges in length from three hundred-twenty to one thousand thirty-two hours (Bradford & Pynes, 1999, p. 290) and may not fully prepare new recruits for their chosen career. According to Birzer and Tannehill, "police academies place an enormous emphasis on enforcement and the mechanical techniques of the job. The paradox here is that the reality is that police perform the crime-fighting function a relatively small percentage of their on-duty time" (2001, p. 236). Bradford & Pynes (citing Germann, 1969) report that "90% of police training was devoted to areas and activities in which police only spent 10% of their time"

(1999, p. 284). In a review of recruit training in four different police academies in Illinois, Ness found that while 57.1% of recruits reported that their training was adequate "to prepare them to perform entry-level police tasks" (1991, p. 190), training for 48% "of the 305 individual job tasks were rated as 'somewhat inadequate'" (p. 190). Ness reports that his findings are similar to that found in a similar study by Talley (1984) of police recruit training in another U.S. state, and those of Van Maanen (1978a). A review of the available academic literature could find no similar analysis of police recruit training in Canada.

It is likely that a current review of the majority of North American police academy training duration and curricula would find similar results. There are a number of reasons for this, one being that training is often viewed as a low budget priority and not always adequately staffed (Goldstein, 1977) with enough resources and faculty, or the right faculty. When referring to the lack of instructional expertise generally found in police training, one educator refers to prevalence of "training by folklore," meaning the use intensive use of so-called "war stories" as a learning tool (Davies, 2003).

Another reason is that there are "limited hours available and so much to cover, expediency rules: large numbers of facts are crammed into short periods of time; lectures are used in the belief that they maximize coverage; and one class is held after another, filling an eight-hour workday" (Goldstein, 1977, p. 273).

One reason for the lack of a coherent and unified approach to training police is that the act of "policing" involves hundreds of different tasks, requiring a depth and breadth of knowledge that is not easily taught in any one contained program. Rather, like many skilled trades and professions, one learns how to be a police officer through a combination of formal classroom training, simulations, and learning in the field during a period of semi-formal apprenticeship.

As is the case in British Columbia, the training of new police recruits in New South Wales, Australia, takes place in three phases: classroom, field practicum, classroom. The second phase is designed to provide recruits with the opportunity "to test the validity of their foundational studies; to test their capacity to observe, record, report, analyse (sic) and interpret; to raise questions and to recognize the relationship between knowing "*why*" (emphasis in original) and the extent of knowing "*how*" still to be learnt" (NSW Police Service, 1993, p. 44 as quoted in Chan et al, 2003, pp. 107-108). It is this need to be able to apply theoretical learning to practical applications that leads to a heavy reliance on simulation based training in so many police academies around the world (Whitcomb, 1999, Mason, 2001, Sampson & Maxwell, 2001, Barbian, 2002, Chan, et al 2003).

The use of simulations, which increase in complexity over the duration of training, in police academies supports the belief that experience is the requisite for expertise (Benner, p. 3). Experience is not the mere passage of time or longevity in position, rather, it is refinement of preconceived notions and theory through encounters with many actual situations that add nuance and shades of difference to theory (Benner, p. 36). Simulations combined with debriefing and post-event written activities help new police officers better understand how theory relates to practice.

The complexity of the position, the learning required, and the personal attributes and traits that are required of a police officer mean that not everyone who wants the job gets hired. Given the responsibility, risk and potential exposure to liability attached to policing, there is not surprisingly a lengthy and rigorous screening process that applicants go through before being hired as recruit police officers. Anecdotal reports suggest that only four to five percent of those who first submit an application form are actually hired as police officers in British Columbia.

Research in Australia has shown that there are forty-two psychological characteristics "required to carry out the core activities of the General Duty Constable" (Kaczmarek & Packer, 1996, p. 31). These characteristics can be placed into three

categories: "personal attributes (e.g., assertiveness, conscientiousness); general and specific cognitive abilities (e.g., reasoning ability, spatial skills); and interpersonal skills (e.g., communication skills, conflict resolution skills)" (p. 31-32).

What makes the Australian research so interesting is the identification of job activities (eighty-seven, including twenty-five core activities) that are tasks carried out by a general duty patrol Constable (1996, p. v). Identification of tasks, coupled with clarification of role and mandate, leads to the design of appropriate training and education.

In the ideal world, the clarification of mandates, roles and tasks would lead to the design and development of a purposeful training program that would prepare learners to meet the unique demands of a policing career. However, within police and academic circles "there is disagreement over the appropriate curriculum, form and instructors that comprise effective police training" (Marion, 1998, p. 54). Training content and duration, including pre-entry academic qualifications of students, varies from one province to another, and from one state to another.

In British Columbia, the training of all municipal police officers has been conducted through a public post-secondary learning institution, the Justice Institute of BC, for the past twenty-five years. The curriculum has evolved over the years, as have the learning resources used in the classroom, but the essential format of police recruit training has remained the same.

As previously mentioned, at the JI, police training takes the form of three 'blocks'. The first is eleven weeks and

> places a heavy emphasis on police skills (such as driver training, firearms, arrest and control, investigation and patrol techniques), legal studies, physical fitness, foot drill (dress and deportment), and an introduction to social sciences. The intent of Block I is to develop a relevant knowledge base for the Block II field training (Police Academy, 2003, p. 12)

The second phase, Block II is where the recruits return to their home police force for a period of thirteen to seventeen weeks (dependent on a number of scheduling factors, including proximity to Christmas vacation). During this time, the recruit works "under the guidance and continuous assistance of an experienced, specially trained constable (known as a field trainer). The field trainer is responsible for ensuring that the recruit receives a wide exposure to general police work (Police Academy, 2003, p. 12).

After completion of Block II, the recruits return to the JI Police Academy for their final phase of training. Similar to Block I, Block III is also eleven weeks long but the emphasis is no longer on the fundamentals. Now that the recruit has some limited field experience, the focus is on "preparing the recruit to function independently upon graduation" (Police Academy, 2003, p. 12). Thus, in Block III there is a heavy emphasis on problem solving, and advanced police tactics.

Upon completion of Block III, recruits graduate and become "Qualified Municipal Constables" under the *Police Act*.

While there is a Block IV, it does not take place at the JI. Rather, it consists of a supervisor's detailed evaluation twelve to eighteen months after completion of Block III. At this time, the recruit becomes a "Certified Municipal Constable" under the *Police Act*.

Police recruit training at the JI relies both on classroom (lecture/discussion) and experiential learning (simulation)[12]. The intent of simulations in this context is to provide a safe opportunity for students to practice applying new knowledge and skills. In this regard, simulations are an essential part of law enforcement training (LaLonde & Martin, 2003).

One example of a recruit police simulation, including the knowledge and competencies to be utilized, is a vehicle stop for a traffic infraction. In this simulation,

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[12] There is of course other experiential learning: officer safety/use of force, driving, drill, and shooting.

two recruits are partnered in a marked patrol car and must follow a suspect vehicle, signal it to stop, approach the vehicle, converse with the occupant(s), obtain documents, and issue a traffic violation notice. While this may sound simple enough to a non-police officer, the task of conducting a traffic stop is complex and requires the officer(s) to apply a number of tactics and call upon different knowledge sets. Each of these can be assessed in a simulation, either through observations made by an assessor in the post-simulation debriefing when the learner(s) explain their actions and underlying justifications, and where the assessor asks a combination of open and closed questions of the learner(s).

As a partial example, the process of conducting a traffic stop includes:

1. Observing and recognizing a traffic offence (assessed: knowledge of traffic law, essential elements of a specific offence, ability to apply knowledge to a real event)
2. Choosing a comparatively safe location to stop the offender (assessed: suitability of actual location and reason for choice of location)
3. Positioning of police vehicle (assessed: placing of police vehicle behind offender so as to shield officer from passing cars)
4. Use of police radio (assessed: notify dispatch of the stop, the reason and to request a check on the vehicle plate)
5. Approach by Contact and Cover officer (assessed: officer safety skills in approach, assessment of occupants and threat level)
6. Contact with driver (assessed: stance and positioning of Contact and Cover officer, dialogue, use of Tactical Communications).
7. etc.

At each point in this simple example, there is an opportunity to assess knowledge and tactical competencies. Each step in the encounter requires the student to call upon classroom training, readings and physical drills. As with any training program, the first few times learners take part is these simulations, they are slow, sometimes confused, and often unsure of themselves. The objectives of the simulation are to build confidence and

competence. Assessment, coupled with constructive feedback and oral debriefing, helps meet these objectives.

CHAPTER THREE: CONDUCT OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

This project is essentially an assessment of assessment – that is, the research focuses on an assessment of how best to assess learning and competency in police recruit training simulations. In considering how to conduct the actual research for this project, a number of options were examined: restriction to a substantial review of the literature, surveying user groups, or actively involving those who have a vested interest in police recruit simulations. The latter proved most applicable.

This action research approach combines action with research and outcomes (Dick, 1993) and draws the various stakeholder groups into the process of design and approval of an instrument that affects them directly. The cyclical nature of the project (draft instrument – group review – revise instrument – group review – revise instrument and implement) is indicative of an action research approach.

This research project arose from the author's involvement as a student in police simulations over twenty some years ago, a continuing fascination with the value and application of simulation as a learning tool, and how learning might best be assessed in simulations. As such, this is both a personal and academic quest for knowledge and understanding. According to Campbell, Daft & Hulin (1982), there are a number of factors that lead to significant research. These include:

1. the investigator is exposed to, or involved in, the subject being examined
2. there is a convergence of several activities or interests
3. the investigator seems guided by an intuitive belief in the importance of the subject
4. there is a goal to understand or explain an underlying theory
5. there is an applied nature to the research (pp. 97-100)

Conversely, "not-so-significant research tends to result from expedience, from method replacing theory as the goal of research, and from investigator motivation for such things as money or publication rather than new knowledge" (1982, p. 103).

It is hoped that my personal and professional interest in the subject of this research will make the results more significant than insignificant.

To ensure the validity of my research results, I chose to blend and integrate a variety of data and methods (Jick, 1979, p. 603) in the collection and analyses of data. For the purposes of triangulation, I relied on a review of the literature, data from other police academies, input from a focus group and from the entire Police Academy faculty. The purpose of this triangulation is to ensure the validity of my results. According to White (as cited in Palomba & Banta, 1999, p. 90), "Validity means honesty, that we are measuring what we say we are measuring and that we know and can show what it is we are measuring."

Research Methods

As this report looks at methods of assessment in police recruit training simulations to determine a method that best addresses validity and reliability, an evaluation research approach is favoured in combination with action research.

According to Punch "evaluation research aims to assess the effectiveness of different actions in meeting needs or solving problems" (1998, p. 143). In this project, the "problem" is framed as an opportunity, and that is to identify the most effective method (or "action") of assessment that enhances participant learning in the context of police recruit simulations.

Maxfield & Babbie state that "evaluation research is about a process of determining whether the intended result is produced" (1998, p. 311). It involves "comparing the goals of a program to its results" (p. 71). In the context of this project, the goal is an improved tool for assessment of learning within the context of a police recruit simulation.

In this blend of action and evaluation research, a number of methods have been employed to collect data. None of the methods precluded the time-honored approach of "sitting in the armchair" (Campbell, Daft & Hulin, 1982, p. 15) and considering just what all this data really means in the grand scheme of both life and police training.

Data Collection Methods

Data was collected, and the production of the final "product" of a new assessment instrument accomplished through a number of methods, including a review of the academic literature, internal documents, surveys, focus groups and pilot test of one version of the draft instrument. A deliberate effort was made to collect both qualitative and quantitative data in the belief that the research question was best answered with data gathered from a mix of methods.

The actual steps in the data collection process were:

1. Review of the available related literature
2. Review of current assessment practice and instrument used in the Police Academy
3. Analyze of how the literature relates to the context of the research
4. Distribute of first draft of assessment instrument to all Police Academy recruit faculty (N = 14), inviting feedback
5. Distribution of first draft of assessment instrument to external Police Academy simulation assessors (N = 15), inviting feedback

6. Conduct E-mail survey of other police academies (N =14) to determine best practices in assessment in other related jurisdictions

7. Develop a second draft of the assessment instrument based on feedback and external data

8. Review the second draft instrument through a focus group made up of key stakeholders

9. Revise second draft of instrument based on feedback

10. Pilot test third version of the instrument in actual Police Academy recruit simulations

11. Review third version of the instrument through discussion with key JI Police Academy recruit faculty, simulation assessors and administration

12. Create fourth and final version of instrument based on recruit faculty review

13. Implement new instrument

Research Methods Limitations

It was beyond the scope of this research to gather or examine the assessment instruments used in other police academies, the applicable legislative framework they work under, or to examine the style and manner of simulations used elsewhere to train police recruits.

Ethics in Research

To satisfy ethical research concerns, all participants were informed either in writing (Police Academy faculty, external police academies, simulation assessors and focus group participants) or orally of the fact that this is an academic research project, being conducted as part of my Master of Arts thesis for Royal Roads University. All participants were

promised anonymity, that participation was purely voluntary, and that those involved could choose to withdraw at any time.

The detailed ethical protocols, including invitation letters and e-mail/telephone survey script, were approved by the Director of Research, Royal Roads University prior to any data being collected. Following the research policies of Royal Roads University, the ethical research protocols took into account:

- Respect for human dignity
- Respect for free and informed consent
- Respect for vulnerable persons
- Respect for privacy and confidentiality
- Respect for inclusiveness
- Balancing harms and benefits
- Minimizing harm
- Maximizing benefit
- Conflict of interest
- Feedback to subjects

This research involved actively seeking out data from JI Police Academy faculty, management, recruit simulation assessors, and faculty from police academies in four countries. All persons who took part in this project did so as informed and voluntary participants.

The one group from whom data was not sought was the recruits themselves. There are several reasons for this: one being a matter of time and logistics, another being that recruits have not always been shown the completed form currently in use, and thus don't have a clear point of reference by which to make an informed comparison. At the same time, by their very position, police recruits do not have full understanding of what is expected of their performance in a training simulation. Given this, it was determined that

they could not make a meaningful contribution to a discussion on their own assessment. While this argument could hold true for recruits in Block I, the same could not be said for the more experienced recruits found in Block III. What does hold true for both is the power imbalance between a recruit and police academy faculty. Given the weight attached to assessment in police recruit training, how negative assessment could affect their employment, and the concern that some recruits might not feel comfortable or free to actively take part in a discussion about their own assessment, it was decided not to include the voice of recruit learners in this project.

Validity/Reliability

In research data collection, according to Treadwell & Grobler, "the four criteria for trustworthiness are: truth-value, applicability, consistency and neutrality" (2001, p. 477). Given the context of this research project, truth-value is assumed based on the fact that data is being collected from within a profession (policing) where a high value is placed on personal integrity and honesty (Crank & Caldero, 2000). The design of the survey instrument, coupled with the groups targeted (survey and focus group) ensured that all the collected data applied directly to the research question. Consistency was attained through constant vigilance to processes used and uniformity of message being conveyed to data sources. As none of the respondents to the survey or the focus group had a direct stake in the outcome of the research, it is believed that data received is neutral.

The use of multiple steps and processes used to gather data was meant to ensure that a sufficiently deep pool of external resources and opinions was accessed in order to minimize the impact of bias from any one source. As well, surveys were sent to a sufficiently diverse geographic group of police academies to ensure diverse, yet related, views on assessment of learning in police recruit training simulations was obtained. This process of triangulation (Babbie & Benaquisto, 2002) was used in the belief that no one

method of data collection would provide data as valid as that gathered from a number of sources and processes.

Study Conduct

The study began with an intensive review of the literature relating to simulation, post-simulation debriefing, assessment and police training. Included in this were many focused discussions on simulations and assessment with other JI faculty from both within the Police Academy and the other divisions/academies who use simulations.

Following this, a first draft of a new assessment instrument was developed. This was based on the general outline of police recruit training currently in place at the JI, discussion with Police Academy faculty, and the researcher's own prior experience as a BC municipal police officer. This first draft was then distributed for review and comment to Police Academy recruit faculty and outside police officers who act as recruit simulation assessors.

While the first draft of the assessment instrument was distributed to all Police Academy recruit faculty without prior notice, a different approach was taken with police officers who act as simulation assessors. Officers who act as assessors come from local police agencies for one or more days solely to act as assessors. They are operational officers with busy schedules. To obtain buy-in and ensure a higher rate of survey response, an e-mail was sent to all assessors (N = 15) explaining the purpose and conduct of the research and inviting them to participate by reviewing and commenting on the draft assessment tool. Those who responded by expressing an interest in reviewing the draft instrument (N = 11) received the first draft tool. Of those who received the draft tool, 73% responded with comments.

The survey of external police academies was preceded by an e-mail message sent to pre-existing faculty contacts (N = 10) in police academies in Canada, the United States, Australia and Northern Ireland. The message explained the purpose of the research, that it was part of a graduate thesis research project, a general description of the data being requested, and a follow-up e-mail survey of those persons who consented to participate would be sent. The initial e-mail contact stated that interested persons would receive a paper copy of the final report if they so desired.

At the conclusion of the e-mail survey, each respondent asked for one referral to another police academy. In this way, third party referrals were used in order to overcome the potential reluctance of some persons to be forthcoming with detailed information. Within two days of receiving the completed e-mail survey, an e-mail was sent thanking individuals for their time and assistance, and an offer to supply a paper copy of the final report was again included. The e-mail also asked that if individuals had any more relevant information to provide that had not been previously asked for, to please forward it to the researcher.

In total, twelve police academies responded to the first e-mail, all of which later responded to the actual survey (Appendix G), with only two not responding to the first e-mail query.

This process of multiple contacts with interview subjects, and the offer of a copy of the final research report, builds on the concept of social capital and its relation to the "total design method" (1978, p. 12) of conducting high-quality mail surveys first articulated by Dillman[13]. The belief behind this approach is that a higher rate of return is achieved, and the results have a higher rate of reliability.

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[13] Dillman has since revised and fine tuned the Total Design Method and created the Tailored Design Method (2000).

The deliberate use of multiple rounds of consultation review in order to gain consensus on the final instrument is a modified version of the Delphi Technique (Goodman, 1987 as cited by Crouch, Dale & Crow, 2002) in that discussion was generated and the opinions of subject matter experts were collected (Stewart, 2001) as one form of qualitative data collection. However, unlike the traditional Delphi technique, data gathered was not anonymous.

The use of a focus group, rather than a form based survey or other approach to data collection, was employed because of the numerous benefits it offers. Krueger (1988, p. 47) argues that advantages to focus groups include:

1. Socially oriented research method capturing real-life data in a social environment
2. Flexibility
3. High face value
4. Speedy results
5. Low in cost (as cited by Babbie, 2004, p. 303)

The focus group was made up a "purposive sample" (Palys, 1997, p. 156) from the various stakeholder groups, including Police Academy faculty and those who complete the instrument – assessors.

The involvement of JI Police Academy faculty at the onset, and throughout the project was meant to not only solicit ideas from a core stakeholder group, but also to encourage an internal staff sense of ownership over the assessment tool. This was done in the belief that early staff involvement will preclude any objections to the eventual use of a new instrument, and overcome any potential resistance to change. This builds on the belief of Bennis that change carries the threat of loss. When that threat is minimized or removed, people are much freer to identify with the adaptive process and much better

equipped to tolerate the high degree of ambiguity that accompanies change (Bennis, 2000, p. 218).

The deliberate inclusion of both Police Academy faculty and recruit simulation assessors at several points in the process of this research project was meant to accomplish a number of goals other than informed comment. These include an early orientation to and acceptance of a new instrument. Patton explains this by reporting that:

> Intended users are more likely to use evaluations if they understand and feel ownership of the evaluation process and findings; they are more likely to understand and feel ownership if they've been actively involved; by actively involving primary intended users, the evaluator is training users to use, preparing the groundwork for use, and reinforcing the intended utility of the evaluation every step along the way (2002, np).

As mentioned earlier, the fourteen e-mail surveys sent out, of which twelve were completed and returned. Responses were received from faculty within the following police academies:

- Calgary Police Service (Alberta, Canada)
- École nationale de police du Québec[14] (Quebec, Canada)
- Illinois State Police Academy (United States)
- Indiana State Police Academy (United States)
- Metropolitan Toronto Police Academy (Ontario, Canada)
- Michigan State Police Training Division (United States)
- New South Wales Police Academy (Australia)
- Ontario Police College (Canada)
- Police Service of Northern Ireland[15] (United Kingdom)
- Washington State Patrol Academy (United States)
- Western Australia Police Academy (Australia)
- Winnipeg Police Academy (Manitoba, Canada)

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[14] This is the government funded school which trains all municipal and provincial police in the province.
[15] Formerly the Royal Ulster Constabulary

An international representation of police academies was deliberately sought in the belief that such a purposive sample would provide a broader perspective than would be found within a single country.

In order to get a higher rate of response, the survey was purposely designed to be brief, and consisted of the following six questions:

1. Assessment of police recruit performance in training simulations is used primarily as a developmental tool. Yes/No.

2. Assessment of police recruit performance in training simulations is used primarily as either a Pass or a Fail exercise. Yes/No.

3. Assessment of police recruit performance in training simulations is primarily scored on a numerical scale (e.g. 1 to 5). Yes/No/Other.

4. Assessors in police recruit training simulations have clear direction on specific knowledge and competencies upon which recruits are to be assessed. Yes/No.

5. Assessors in police recruit training simulations make copious notes of their observations of recruit performance. Yes/No.

6. How does your Police Academy ensure the validity of scores/observations/assessments made by assessors in police recruit training simulations?

For the purpose of the survey, simulation was defined as "a learning experience that requires the learner to participate in a situation that simulates real life and is followed by discussion to consolidate and clarify the learning. Simulations may involve physical, face-to-face or computer-based activities" (Wilkinson, p. 23, 2003).

Based on the data gathered from JI Police Academy recruit faculty, external recruit simulation assessors and the survey responses from other police academies, a second draft simulation assessment tool was created. This draft actually involved two tools – one each

for Block I and III recruits. These were then shared with a focus group made up of recruit faculty and assessors (N = 5).

Based on the focus group discussion, the two tools were again blended into one, and tested during one day of police recruit simulations (one simulation, repeated eight times in one day, with one assessor and two recruits per simulation).

This latest version of the tool was then reviewed by select Police Academy recruit faculty and managers. Based on their comments, the final tool was developed.

Data Analysis

While a number of processes were used to gather data, the data can best be summarized as coming from the following sources:

- A review of the literature
- Qualitative feedback from those who reviewed the draft instruments
- Qualitative and quantitative data from survey responses
- Qualitative data from the focus group
- Qualitative data from informal conversations with Police Academy faculty and management.

As the majority of data gathered was qualitative, the analysis followed a process of comparing and contrasting the data found in the literature review with the themes which emerged through an analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data gathered through the latter stages of this research, and then attempting to apply what was learned from this to the context at hand: assessment in police recruit simulations at the JI Police Academy.

Processing qualitative data, let alone analyzing it, "is as much art as science" argues Babbie (2004, p. 375). In the context of this project, this process is further

challenged by the knowledge that data gathered from other organizations is coloured by the "processes and perspective" (Palys, 1997, p. 236) from which they originate. At the same time, it was acknowledged that there is no common taxonomy amongst police academies when discussing simulations or assessment. Event the term 'simulation' is not universal.

The goal of the data analysis process was to interpret all the data in an attempt to determine if general belief about assessment in police recruit simulations could be found. As part of this process, contradictions and inconsistencies (Babbie & Benaquisto, 2002, p. 293-294) were sought out and examined as part of the analytic process. By looking at both sides of the proverbial coin, it was believed that a clearer picture would emerge.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH STUDY RESULTS

Study Findings

The findings are presented and discussed in two distinct parts: those relating to the various versions of the draft instrument and those relating to assessment in police recruit simulations. Where appropriate and relevant, findings from one part will inform those in the other.

Part A – Responses to Versions of the Draft Assessment Instrument

The first draft of the simulation assessment instrument (Appendix B) distributed for feedback listed a number of different learning domains found within recruit police training at the JI Police Academy (e.g.: legal studies, investigations, officer safety). In total, there were nine major domains, each with two or more specific subject points to be rated. The intent of the draft instrument was to create a balance between objective assessment criteria (e.g.: knowledge of law, failure to find a concealed weapon when searching a suspect) and subjective observations (e.g.: interview technique, application of force option technique).

The feedback from all Police Academy faculty and simulation assessors was that the draft instrument was a great improvement over the one currently in use (Appendix A). They appreciated the greatly expanded number of domains being assessed, along with the sub-points under each domain. Comments from faculty and assessors reflected that the draft instrument was well laid out and easy to follow, and captured the main points to which a recruit and assessor should pay attention.

The nine domains in the draft instrument were not listed in any order of ranked hierarchy, nor were the points under each placed in any order of importance. These sub-points called for observation of demonstrated knowledge and skills as a recruit progressed through a simulation. This latter point drew much comment from recruit simulation assessors who reviewed and commented on the first draft of the instrument. Feedback consistently stated that the sub-points should follow a logical progression of steps. In policing, response to an incident most often follows a progressive series of actions, e.g.: approach, assessment, first contact, control, etc.

A very few comments were made suggesting that different instruments should be developed for each of the different simulations (e.g.: theft, assault, suspicious person, etc.) used in recruit police training. Suggestions were also made that Police Academy faculty should fill out the cover page of the instrument prior to it being given to the assessor. Neither of these suggestions were acted on as it was felt they would create an unnecessary amount of work for faculty.

The second draft incorporated all the suggested changes, lus one more. Based on the literature and a number of informal conversations with Police Academy faculty, the second draft of the instrument was created as two separate instruments for recruits in Block I and Block III. The reason for this change was the belief that the purposes of the simulations and assessment in Block I and III are different. In Block I, simulations are used to provide a formative learning experience, help develop learner confidence with using new skills and applying new knowledge to realistic scenarios, and to help develop confidence in responding to stressful and challenging incidents. In Block III, simulations most often take place a very few weeks prior to graduation. Upon graduation, recruits are lawfully allowed to work alone. As such, while simulations are still a learning and confidence building experience, they are meant more as a form of summative evaluation.

Based on this, two distinct scoring rubrics were used in the second draft (Appendix C). The Block I instrument continued to rely on a Likert scale of one to five,

with no final assessment given to overall performance in the simulation. The Block III instrument required the assessor to make a determination of "competent," "not competent" or "N/A" in each category. The instrument also required the assessor to make a final overall determination of competent or not on the cover page of the instrument.

The focus group that reviewed this second iteration of the instrument commented first that the overall size of it should be reduced and that it be printed in booklet format with staples in the center. This would allow an assessor to observe two pages at once. Discussion then shifted at some length to the form of scoring used.

All approved of the Likert scale, but none liked the use of the term 'competent'. The feeling was that it was too subjective and suggested that the recruit learner was expected to be competent as a police officer. If true, this finding would conflict with their status as a learner. This view is partially supported by Chambers and Glassman (1997, p. 651) who suggest that competence is the third stage of learning and is proceeded by novice and beginner stages. The authors state that competence should be arrived at just prior to graduation (p. 664). However, their research is in the context of a multi-year educational program for dentists. Police training takes place in a few months, and at the JI recruits are still subject to assessment for a period of a year after graduation. This post-training assessment would seem to suggest that competence is not fully expected at the point of formal graduation.

The focus group was uncomfortable with a terminal form of assessment for other reasons. Some felt there was potential for some assessors not to want to take responsibility for making a determination of 'not competent'. Others stated a hesitancy to note such a negative assessment on a document that could be used later in a civil suit should a recruit find him or her self being sued for an action, or inaction, that might be linked to training. This fear was found in the survey of other police academies to the extent that some academies employ an assessment process that simply notes pass/fail, and does not allow for any narrative comments from the assessor.

As the focus group included both faculty and assessors, a topic of some discussion was the added value to be found in such a detailed assessment instrument. Faculty especially were interested in how data from the instrument could be used to compare the progress of one class against another, one assessor against another, or compare students within a class. Such data could be used to determine strengths or weaknesses in instructional content and practices, inter-rater reliability of the instrument, and could be linked to historical data found in the studies of the JI Police Academy Assessment Centre (Tinsley, Plecas & MacDonald, 1997; Tinsley, 1998, 2000).

The third iteration (Appendix D) of the instrument took these comments into account and moved back to using only one instrument, and using the Likert scale for scoring of the recruit.

A consistent comment made of the first and second draft instrument was that space for assessor notes and comments should be included on each page. Along with some cosmetic changes, this was done in the third version of the instrument[16].

The third version of the instrument was pilot tested with a group of Block III recruits (N = 16) by one assessor, eight times in one day. While a substantially larger sample of assessors would have been preferred, this desire was balanced by the belief that at this point the various drafts of the instrument had been reviewed and commented on at length by both faculty and assessors.

The feedback by the assessor from this pilot phase was that the form was well thought out and provided a good format for an in-depth assessment record. The length was not cumbersome, nor was the number of assessed areas. The feedback from faculty who received the forms was equally positive.

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[16] During the conduct of this research, the JI adopted a new coat of arms and logo. The new logo, along with the new corporate standard type font, was incorporated into the third version of the instrument.

At this point in the research, discussions with Police Academy faculty and management went back to the essence of the project – why does assessment take place, and what value does it bring the learner, faculty, the learning institution, the employer? How meaningful is assessment in such a fluid and complex environment as a police recruit simulation? Aldrich echoes this frustration and puzzlement by arguing that the complexity of a simulation, coupled with the large number of variables, can make scoring arbitrary (2004, p. 191).

Discussion at this point in the research focused on the need for assessment to be valid and credible, with the realization that this required all assessors using the instrument to have a shared understanding and definition of terms used in the instrument, coupled with a shared understanding of the desired state of knowledge and skill of the learner at the time of assessment. For this to take place, there was consensus amongst all faculty and assessors that ideally all assessors should receive some standardized form of training and orientation to the new instrument. The majority felt that this training should form a part of a revised Field Trainers Course, and that only those who have completed the training be used as recruit simulation assessors.

Going back to the earlier discussion of the formative versus summative natures of Block I and III simulations, it was the belief of Police Academy management and some faculty that Block III simulations required some form of summary assessment at the conclusion of the simulation. Rather than use 'competent/not competent,' the terminology used on the front page of the fourth and final draft of the instrument (Appendix E) are: needs improvement, adequate, superior. Assessors will now be required to make a final determination of the knowledge and skills demonstrated in a simulation by a Block III recruit.

What was not identified as an issue by anyone was the requirement that one assessment instrument is used to document observations made of two learners. This

practice raises issues of learner confidentiality that may relate to provincial privacy legislation.

However, the post-simulation oral debriefing is not private, and includes the assessor, learners, actor(s) and observer students. This debriefing covers individual and team actions and is largely based on notes the assessor has made within the assessment instrument. Given this shared nature of assessment, it is felt that one instrument can be used to document observations made of both the cover and contact officer, so long as the assessor clearly identifies which written comments relate to either, or both officers.

In situations where a learner performs so far below expectations that significant comments are made, it is suggested that a separate assessment instrument be completed for both the cover and contact officer.

Part B – Survey Responses

While the twelve police academies (Appendix G) who responded to the survey agreed with each other on several points, they did differ greatly at times.

1) The data shows that 75% stated that their recruit simulations are primarily used as a developmental tool, with any assessment being formative in nature. What was interesting to observe at the same time were the multiplicity of purposes for using simulations as a device for training new police recruits[17].

While all academies used the simulations to provide recruits opportunities to practice applying new skills and knowledge in realistic situations, the simulations are also used to "inoculate" recruits to the stress they will encounter on the road. The idea is the first violent domestic situation a newly graduated officer attends on the street is, in fact,

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[17] Paragraph numbering corresponds to survey question numbers in Appendix F.

the 6th violent domestic situation they have dealt with (having already responded to five in realistic training mode). The same assumption applies to death notifications, stealing, violent offenders, etc.

Another use of the simulation is to see if recruits can actually integrate learning, tactics and motor skills (fine and gross) in stressful situations. A few police academies noted however that due to time and staff constraints, if a recruit is identified as having significant problems in the simulations, little opportunity exits to offer remedial training. What was not explored in the research is what happens to these students.

2) Fifty-eight percent of responding police academies reported that assessment in recruit simulations is scored simply on a pass/fail basis. Again, what was not explored is what happens to the students who fail. Others reported that recruits are scored as being either competent or not yet competent. A finding of 'not yet competent' would suggest that the assessor and school acknowledge that recruits progress through stages and work towards competence.

3) A few stated that depending on where the simulation fit into the progression of training, assessment may or may not take place, as some simulations are simply there as an opportunity to practice new skills. This is similar to the current practice at the JI Police Academy where simulations used in the Control Tactics portion of training are scored as either pass/fail, while in FATS®, no formal score or grade is awarded[18]. In FATS®, instructors place a heavy emphasis on post-simulation debriefing and report that recruits say they learn more through the debriefing than from the actual simulation.

4) The next question in the survey asked if assessors in police recruit training simulations have clear direction on specific knowledge and competencies upon which recruits are to be assessed. All twelve respondents said yes. Some report that simulations

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[18] FATS® is a "shoot – don't shoot" interactive video system that allows police an opportunity to practice tactics, knowledge of force continuum responses in hostile/threatening encounters, all the while testing their judgment in stressful situations.

are designed to test specific skill, knowledge sets or competencies. A few wrote about their detailed checklists that assessors use to guide their scoring. A very few reported that assessors do not always follow the prescribed scoring sheet.

To support a common level of knowledge amongst assessors, many academies stated that assessors must first attend a specified training program. Programs varied from a few hours to several days. While this is a laudable practice, in British Columbia, the JI Police Academy is reliant on local police forces to supply assessors for recruit simulations. Academy faculty report that, at times, these assessors are not clear on current law, practices and tactics. While most lead thorough and constructive post-simulation debriefings, a few do not. The feedback from surveyed assessors yielded many comments suggesting that officers not be used as assessors unless they have undergone some formal training program.

5) Academies were then asked if assessors make copious notes of their observations of recruit performance. Seventy-five percent said yes. Some qualified their answer by saying notes are very specific and only refer to observed behaviours. One response stated that concerns over disclosure of records in future civil lawsuits in relation to police actions have lead to a decision to now restrict use of note-taking by assessors. Another stated that only if a recruit fails to meet the prescribed standard for the simulation are notes made. The practice at the JI Police Academy is for assessors to make as many notes as possible. In fact, a consistent comment in relation to the first two draft instruments was that space be made on each page to allow for notes. The belief amongst assessors in British Columbia is that narrative notes support and add value to the Likert scale scoring.

6) The final question of the survey asked what was done to ensure the validity of scores/observations/assessments made by assessors in police recruit training simulations. Some academies reported the use of multiple assessors who must reach consensus in order to ensure inter-rater reliability. One reported in a telephone conversation that the use of

multiple assessors also reduces the potential impact of the halo effect. Another reported that assessors only document observed behavior, and avoid any personal opinions in assessment of performance. The purpose is to allow the action(s) of the recruit to be evaluated and not the opinion of the instructor to be evaluated.

Other academies reported poor performance in any one simulation would not seriously jeopardize a recruits final program score, and thus the academy did not pay particular attention to validating the simulation assessment process.

Finally, the survey data gathered for this project shows that many police academies struggle with assessment of recruit knowledge and performance in simulation. The data also shows that many academies struggle with the human element in simulations, specifically actors staying within guidelines, recruits in each class experiencing some degree of consistency in the simulations in which they take part, and assessors being clear on what they are to assess. Armstrong and Hobson wrote of these human challenges by saying that

> The presence of human players affords opportunities for the absurd and the irrational to dominate. Conditions of play will vary from exercise to exercise, not the least important variable being the personalities of the players (1975, p. 82).

It is this human element that continues to challenge all police academies which are interested in how best to assess recruits.

What was perhaps most interesting about the survey data was the number of respondents who report their mode and manner of assessment is currently under review. Three different police academies reported having onsite dedicated research units that focus solely on the training of police recruits. Each of these three are now striving to enhance their assessment processes, validity, and the value derived for learners, faculty, and employer. This may signal that police academy approaches to education and training are

maturing and moving towards an more effective pedagogical approach to training new police recruits.

Conclusions

Overall, the findings indicate that the JI Police Academy currently finds itself, like many other academies, grappling with how best to assess knowledge and skills in recruit simulations. The feedback from assessors in regards to the newly developed assessment instrument suggests the Police Academy is now on the right path. The data gathered from other police academies tends to support this conclusion.

However, what is still lacking in British Columbia is a model for training assessors, and the establishment of criteria for selecting assessors. This need for change includes time spent on formative versus summative evaluation, competency-based assessment, knowledge and competencies expected of recruits in the simulations, how best to debrief recruits, use of constructive feedback, and how to properly fill out the assessment instrument.

With regards to standards, data from survey respondents echoes that found in the literature: recruit simulation must be constructed and documented such that performance standards and competencies unique to each simulation are clearly stated. Without clearly prescribed standards, assessment loses meaning (Hager & Gonczi, 1994).

At the end of the day, it is likely not important what words are used to describe observed behaviours in police recruit simulations so much as how the assessment takes place, and by what articulated and prescribed standards learners are assessed.

In their daily work lives, police are expected to act within the bounds of expressed laws, regulations and rules. The boundaries are clearly laid out for all to see. Assessment in simulations should follow a similar practice.

The focus of this project was on the development of an instrument that is effective and efficient in assessing recruit police performance in training simulations. Following this, my research question was:

In the training of British Columbia municipal police recruits, what can be done to improve the current assessment instrument used in the assessment of demonstrated knowledge and competency in police recruit training simulations?

I believe that the final instrument developed (Appendix E) is currently the most effective and efficient instrument for assessing knowledge and competencies in police recruit simulations at the JI. My belief is supported by a lengthy consultation process with Police Academy faculty, recruit simulation assessors, a review of the literature, and data gathered from twelve other police academies spanning four countries.

CHAPTER FIVE: RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

Organizational Implications

The Police Academy at the JI sponsored this research project, as they have sponsored other projects that help improve academy practices and develop knowledge within the faculty group. Faculty knowledge and competencies relating to adult education have been identified in this and other reports (Oppal, 1994; Radford, 2001) as an issue. This report is one step, of many to come, in addressing this knowledge gap.

This research report is a public document, and will be shared with those police academies that responded to the survey. The public nature of this report, coupled with the will and desire of the Police Academy to seek out best practices, will help ensure changes do come about as a result of the research undertaken. However, any change in practices can have far reaching implications.

For the Police Academy, a change in how recruits are assessed should ideally include mandatory training for assessors. Such training has associated costs, including the stages of design, development and delivery. Local police agencies may be unwilling to send staff to additional training, especially at a time when most agencies are short staffed due to a surge in retirements as the Baby Boomer generation leaves the workforce. The Police Academy operates within the confines of a very tight budget, which is dictated by the provincial government. The budget may not allow for the training of assessors. Regardless, the new assessment instrument can be implemented, with current faculty being oriented to the use and purpose of the instrument in a short period of time.

The greater implication to the Police Academy is the need for recruit simulations to be designed and written such that faculty, assessors and learners alike understand which desired skills and knowledge sets are to be assessed, and at what level. To do so will

require a significant amount of staff time and expertise. Ideally, such a task would be undertaken by a faculty subject matter expert being partnered with a professional educator, with the resulting work reviewed by a group of faculty to ensure the finished product adequately addresses the various instructional domains currently taught within the recruit curriculum. Such a team approach would do a great deal to ensure the validity and usefulness of the finished product.

Recommendations to Police Academy

The recommendations made to the Police Academy at the JI arising from this research project are:

- The newly developed police recruit simulation assessment instrument be adopted for use in all Block I and III simulations.

- In completing the assessment instrument, assessors individually identify the behaviour of the contact and cover officer when completing the assessment instrument.

- Mandatory training for recruit simulation assessors be developed, and that the training focus on assessment, debriefing, knowledge and skills being assessed in simulations, and the proper use of the new assessment instrument.

- All recruit simulation assessors take part in the mandatory training.

- Police recruit simulations be designed such that they call on learners to apply specific skills and knowledge sets, and that such simulations be linked to specific learning objectives in the current recruit curriculum.

- Police recruit simulations, with accompanying learning outcomes, be designed in partnership by Police Academy subject matter experts and experienced adult educators.

- Police recruit learners be provided with details on the competencies they must attain in order to successfully complete Block I and III training, along with full details on how they will be assessed.

Future Research

There are several future research projects yet to be undertaken in police recruit training simulations. One relates directly to the new assessment instrument.

While the development process for the new simulation assessment instrument for police recruit simulations has shown that the dimensions to be assessed are valid, as is the manner of assessment, the instrument must still be proven to be reliable. To do this requires some research into inter rater reliability with a sufficient sample size of recruits.

Other future research questions relate to added benefits from participation in simulations. Specifically:

1. Does repeated participation in simulations provide police officers with the tools to better manage stress such that decision making is enhanced?
2. Does repeated participation in simulation provide police officers with the tools to better manage stress such that the ability to recall incident details is enhanced, thus leading to enhanced clarity and accuracy in post-incident reports and courtroom testimony?
3. Does participation in multiple simulations enable participants to develop an ability to manage the impact of stress on judgment and memory?

Simulations are, by their very nature, stressful. Learners are called upon to apply new learning to simulated real-world events. For many recruits, a simulation is their first exposure to a threatening and/or hostile event. At the same time, they are being observed and assessed. Eysenck (1984) argues that "an intermediate level of arousal is optimal for performance" (p. 329). What has yet to happen in police recruit simulations is research whereby monitoring is done of learner physiological states in training simulations, with an

examination of how these heightened states of arousal relate to the performance of competencies that are coupled with cognitive ability.

Given the potential for police to become involved in incredibly intense, stressful and demanding incidents where critical thought and sound judgment are required, such research could lead to the development of improved training methods which would assist in ensuring that police are better equipped to make the right choices under stress.

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APPENDIX A – CURRENT SIMULATION ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT

Current Police Recruit Simulation Assessment Tool: Police Academy Recruit Training Program Simulation Evaluation Report (2000). Reproduced with permission.
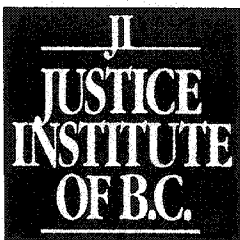
Police Academy
Recruit Training Program
Simulation Evaluation Report

SCENARIO: _____

Team/class number: _____

Contact officer: _____

Cover officer: _____

Observer(s): _____

Evaluator: _____

Date: _____

This evaluation report uses numerical scoring where "1" means "unacceptable", "2" means "needs development" and "3" means "competent". An unmarked category will indicate "did not experience". Circle the appropriate number on the checklist for each item. A column is provided for **contact** officer, **cover** officer and for the **overall** functioning of the team.

Unacceptable indicates the recruit has demonstrated major deficiencies in his / her abilities. Examples of deficiencies could include treating people with disrespect, inability to make decisions, and significant lack of understanding in regards to officer safety or legal knowledge. In this case, behaviours that have the potential to negatively affect the outcome of a policing situation should be noted.

Needs development indicates the recruit is likely to meet the "competent" standard with practice, research, study and / or coaching from peers or instructors.

Competent indicates the recruit's performance meets the Police Academy's standards of performance. The recruit has demonstrated appropriate knowledge and has responded correctly during the scenario.

POLICE RECRUIT SIMULATION EVALUATION REPORT

SUMMARY OF RECRUIT PERFORMANCE

Use this area to summarize the information from Categories 1 to 6. Any category scoring a "1" or a "2" shall be supported by comments in the appropriate area of this report. Contact officer, cover officer and evaluator sign off at the bottom of this form (print name, signature and PIN).

CATEGORY	CONTACT			COVER			OVERALL		
1. Dress and Deportment	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
2. Interpersonal Relations	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
3. Investigation and Patrol Skills	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
4. Legal Studies Knowledge	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
5. Officer Safety Knowledge and Skills	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
6. Report Writing and Note Taking Skills	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3

CONTACT OFFICER (strongest/weakest attributes)

COVER OFFICER (strongest/weakest attributes)

COMMENTS (general investigation and report writing)

Contact Officer (print, signature and PIN)	
Cover Officer (print, signature and PIN)	
Evaluator (print, signature and PIN)	

1 = Unacceptable   2 = Needs Development   3 = Competent

APPENDIX B – FIRST DRAFT OF PROPOSED SIMULATION ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT

This first draft of the proposed Police Recruit Simulation Assessment Instrument was distributed to all Police Academy faculty (N = 14) and to a group of external Police Academy simulation assessors (N = 9), inviting feedback within three weeks.

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Simulation Assessment Report

Simulated event: _____

Class number: _____

Block: Block 1 ☐ Block III ☐

Contact Officer: _____

Cover Officer: _____

Observer(s): _____

Assessor: _____ Date: _____

Scale for this assessment tool:

N/A = this area of assessment was not applicable to this specific simulation
1 = Very weak in this area (requires narrative comments explaining score)
2 = Needs improvement
3 = Competent
4 = Very good
5 = Exceptional (requires narrative comments explaining score)

Circle the most appropriate score based on your observations of the recruit student(s).

If a recruit student makes a significant mistake (e.g. misses a weapon when searching a suspect, did not identify the appropriate offence, fails to read Charter of Rights warning when appropriate/timely), you must note this in the final narrative portion on the last page.

As the assessor, we are relying on your thorough, objective, detailed and frank assessment of the competencies and knowledge of recruit students. Your honest and unbiased record is an essential part of the learning process for the recruit, the Police Academy, and the employer.

Legal Studies

Is there a federal/provincial offence in this simulation?   Yes ☐   No ☐

If "Yes", what is it? _____

Did the Recruit(s) recognize the offence?   Yes ☐   No ☐

If "Yes", was the Recruit(s) able to fully list the essential elements of the offence in the post-simulation oral debriefing?   Yes ☐   No ☐

Dress and Deportment

Recruit presented a professional image

N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit acted in a professional manner

N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit had all appropriate and functioning duty equipment

Yes ☐   No ☐

Approach to the Scene

Recruit assessed scene upon approach for safety and nature of event

N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit was able in post-simulation oral debriefing to articulate their approach tactics

N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit demonstrated proper officer safety tactics in their approach to the scene

N/A   1   2   3   4   5

N/A = this area of assessment was not applicable to this specific simulation. 1 = Very weak in this area. 2 = Needs improvement. 3 = Competent. 4 = Very good. 5 = Exceptional

Communication

Recruit used Tactical Communication skills and techniques

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit used empathetic listening skills

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit used appropriate radio skills and "10 Codes"

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit notes of investigation were detailed, complete and appropriate

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Investigation

Recruit asked appropriate investigative/fact finding questions to this event

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit was able to establish control of the scene

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit was able to establish control of the person(s) in the scene

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit located, seized and properly handled all exhibits/evidence

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit was able to fully and accurately articulate their investigation in a post-incident written report (submitted morning after)

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

N/A = this area of assessment was not applicable to this specific simulation. 1 = Very weak in this area. 2 = Needs improvement. 3 = Competent. 4 = Very good. 5 = Exceptional

Officer Safety

Recruit conducted a proper search of the suspect(s)

N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit found all hidden weapons on the suspect

N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit was able to establish control of the suspect

N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit used appropriate level of force in response to the situation

N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit properly applied the level of force

N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit handcuffed suspect(s)

N/A   1   2   3   4   5

N/A = this area of assessment was not applicable to this specific simulation. 1 = Very weak in this area. 2 = Needs improvement. 3 = Competent. 4 = Very good. 5 = Exceptional

Officer Safety in Vehicle Stops

<u>Code 5 Vehicle Stop</u>
Recruit properly conducted a Code 5 vehicle stop, including:

Patrol car positioning

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Verbal commands to suspect(s)

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Approach to suspect vehicle

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Removal of suspect(s) from vehicle

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Search of suspect(s)

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

<u>Routine Traffic Stop</u>
Recruit properly conducted a routine traffic stop, including:

Patrol car positioning

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Approach to suspect vehicle

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Post-simulation Incident Report

Written report fully and accurately articulates the investigation

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

N/A = this area of assessment was not applicable to this specific simulation. 1 = Very weak in this area. 2 = Needs improvement. 3 = Competent. 4 = Very good. 5 = Exceptional

Overall Assessment

Recruit used good judgment under pressure

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit demonstrated good observation skills

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit demonstrated personal initiative

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit demonstrated appropriate problem-solving

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Overall score for Recruit performance in this simulation

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Narrative Comments

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N/A = this area of assessment was not applicable to this specific simulation. 1 = Very weak in this area. 2 = Needs improvement. 3 = Competent. 4 = Very good. 5 = Exceptional

Assessor guidelines for post-simulation oral debriefing

The purpose of the oral debriefing is to provide a safe opportunity for students to review their actions, performance and learning. It is also the time when the Assessor offers constructive feedback, and offers suggestions on alternate ways of responding to the given situation.

Many recruits report that they learned more from the debriefing than from the actual simulation, so please take your time and ensure everyone is heard.

At the conclusion of the simulation, the debriefing is to take place in the following order:

1. Contact Officer(s)
2. Cover Officer(s)
3. Observing Officer(s)
4. Assessor

Questions for Contact Officer(s):

1. Tell us in your own words what you saw, what you did, and why. (*this allows for a free flow narrative, and for the student(s) to reflect on the event, their actions, and the justifications for those actions*)

2. What was the offence, and what are the essential elements of the offence?

3. Why did you choose the level of force that you did? What was your reasoning?

4. What would you do differently if you were to encounter this same situation again?

5. What did you learn from this simulation?

Questions for Cover Officer(s):

1. Repeat questions from Contact Officer(s)

Questions for Observing Officer(s):

1. Tell us in your own words what you saw.

2. What would you do differently if you were to encounter this same situation?

3. What did you learn from this simulation?

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Police Academy Recruit Training Program

Simulation Assessment Report

Contact Officer (*signature*): _____

Cover Officer (*signature*): _____

Assessor (*signature*): _____

Date: _____

The signatures of the Contact and Cover Officers signify that they have reviewed and understood the assessment. Should anyone disagree with any aspect of the assessment, they are to raise the matter in private with their Class Supervisor.

APPENDIX C – SECOND DRAFT OF PROPOSED SIMULATION ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS

This second draft instrument is based on data gathered from other police academies, comments on the first draft instrument provided by police faculty at the Justice Institute of BC and assessors used in JI recruit police simulations. As a result of this data collection, two new instruments were developed: one each for Block I and III simulations.

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Simulation Assessment Report – BLOCK I

Simulated event: _____

Class number: _____

Contact Officer: _____

Cover Officer: _____

Assessor: _____   Date: _____

Scale for this assessment tool:

    N/A = this area of assessment was not applicable to this specific simulation
    1 = Very weak in this area (requires narrative comments explaining score)
    2 = Needs improvement
    3 = Competent
    4 = Very good
    5 = Exceptional (requires narrative comments explaining score)

Circle the most appropriate score based on your observations of the recruit student(s).

If a recruit student makes a significant mistake (e.g. misses a weapon when searching a suspect, did not identify the appropriate offence, fails to read Charter of Rights warning when appropriate/timely), you must note this in the final narrative portion on the last page.

As the assessor, we are relying on your thorough, objective, detailed and frank assessment of the competencies and knowledge of recruit students. Your honest and unbiased record is an essential part of the learning process for the recruit, the Police Academy, and the employer.

In training, we strive to expose and expect on "Best Police" practices from the recruit.

Note: this form is to be used solely for Block I recruit simulations.

Legal Studies

Is there a federal/provincial offence in this simulation?   Yes ☐   No ☐

If "Yes", what is it? _____

Did the Recruit(s) recognize the offence?   Yes ☐   No ☐

If "Yes", was the Recruit(s) able to fully list the essential elements of the offence in the post-simulation oral debriefing?   Yes ☐   No ☐

Dress and Deportment

Recruit presented a professional image
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit acted in a professional manner
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit had all appropriate duty equipment   Yes ☐   No ☐

Approach to the Scene

Recruit assessed scene upon approach for safety and nature of event
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit demonstrated proper officer safety tactics in their approach to the scene
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit was able in post-simulation oral debriefing to articulate their approach tactics
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Communication

Recruit used Tactical Communication skills and techniques
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit used empathetic listening skills
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit used appropriate radio skills and "10 Codes"
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit notes of investigation were detailed, complete and appropriate
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

N/A = this area of assessment was not applicable to this specific simulation. 1 = Very weak in this area. 2 = Needs improvement. 3 = Competent. 4 = Very good. 5 = Exceptional

Investigation

Recruit was able to establish control of the scene

N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit was able to establish control of the person(s) in the scene

N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit asked appropriate investigative/fact finding questions to this event

N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit was able to fully and accurately articulate their investigation in a post-incident written report (submitted morning after)

N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Officer Safety/Control Tactics

Recruit used dialogue and presence effectively on first approach/contact.

N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit was able to establish control of the suspect

N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit used appropriate level of force in response to the situation

N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit properly applied the level of force

N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Handcuffing was done appropriately (if recruit handcuffed suspect(s))

N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit conducted a thorough search of the suspect(s) and found all hidden items (e.g.: identification, evidence, drugs, weapons) on the suspect

N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit was able to properly articulate their grounds for use of force, and why the particular force option was used

N/A   1   2   3   4   5

N/A = this area of assessment was not applicable to this specific simulation. 1 = Very weak in this area. 2 = Needs improvement. 3 = Competent. 4 = Very good. 5 = Exceptional

Officer Safety in Vehicle Stops

<u>Code 5 Vehicle Stop</u>
Recruit properly conducted a Code 5 vehicle stop, including:

Patrol car positioning
| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Verbal commands to suspect(s)
| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Approach to suspect vehicle
| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Control of suspect while removing suspect(s) from vehicle
| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Search of suspect(s)
| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

<u>Routine Traffic Stop</u>
Recruit properly conducted a routine traffic stop, including:

Patrol car positioning
| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Approach to suspect vehicle
| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Situational awareness (environment, driver actions during interview)
| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Post-simulation Incident Report

Notebook has all relevant details accurately noted
| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Written report fully and accurately articulates the investigation/event
| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

N/A = this area of assessment was not applicable to this specific simulation. 1 = Very weak in this area. 2 = Needs improvement. 3 = Competent. 4 = Very good. 5 = Exceptional

Overall Assessment

Recruit used good judgment

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit demonstrated good observation skills

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit demonstrated appropriate problem-solving

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Overall score for Recruit performance in this simulation

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Narrative Comments (please be specific)

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N/A = this area of assessment was not applicable to this specific simulation. 1 = Very weak in this area. 2 = Needs improvement. 3 = Competent. 4 = Very good. 5 = Exceptional

Assessor guidelines for post-simulation oral debriefing

The purpose of the oral debriefing is to provide a safe opportunity for students to review their actions, performance and learning. It is also the time when the Assessor offers constructive feedback, and offers suggestions on alternate ways of responding to the given situation.

Many recruits report that they learned more from the debriefing than from the actual simulation, so please take your time and ensure everyone is heard.

At the conclusion of the simulation, the debriefing is to take place in the following order:

1. Contact Officer(s)
2. Cover Officer(s)
3. Observing Officer(s)
4. Actors
5. Assessor

Questions for Contact Officer(s):

- Tell us in your own words what you saw, what you did, and why. (*this allows for a free flow narrative, and for the student(s) to reflect on the event, their actions, and the justifications for those actions*)

- What was the offence, and what are the essential elements of the offence?

- Why did you choose the level of force that you did? What was your reasoning?

- What would you do differently if you were to encounter this same situation again?

- What did you learn from this simulation?

Questions for Cover Officer(s):

- Repeat questions from Contact Officer(s)

Questions for Observing Officer(s):

- Tell us in your own words what you saw.

- What would you do differently if you were to encounter this same situation?

- What did you learn from this simulation?

Questions for the Actor(s)

- What is your view of how the officer(s) handled the event?

- In your view, what could the officer(s) have done differently?

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Simulation Assessment Report – BLOCK I

Note: no final score is awarded in Block I simulations as the event is used as part of the recruit's overall learning and development.

Contact Officer (*signature*): _____

Cover Officer (*signature*): _____

Assessor (*signature*): _____

Date: _____

The signatures of the Contact and Cover Officers signify that they have reviewed and understood the assessment. Should anyone disagree with any aspect of the assessment, they are to raise the matter in private with their Class Supervisor.

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Police Academy Recruit Training Program

Simulation Assessment Report – BLOCK III

Simulated event: _____

Class number: _____

Contact Officer: _____

Cover Officer: _____

Assessor: _____   Date: _____

Final score: Competent ☐   Not competent ☐

Scale for this assessment tool:

> **Competent** – knowledge and performance demonstrates ability to capably perform in the observed dimension. Met the standards required.
> **Not competent** – knowledge and performance did not meet required standards.

Select the most appropriate score based on your observations of the recruit student(s).

If a recruit student makes a significant mistake (e.g. misses a weapon when searching a suspect, did not identify the appropriate offence, fails to read Charter of Rights warning when appropriate/timely), you must note this in the final narrative portion on the last page.

As the assessor, we are relying on your thorough, objective, detailed and frank assessment of the competencies of recruit students. Your honest and unbiased record is an essential part of the learning process for the recruit, the Police Academy, and the employer.

In training, we strive to expose and expect on "Best Police" practices from the recruit.

Note: this form is to be used solely for Block III recruit simulations.

Legal Studies

Is there a federal/provincial offence in this simulation?　Yes ☐　　　No ☐

If "Yes", what is it? _____

Did the Recruit(s) recognize the offence?　　　　　Yes ☐　　　No ☐

If "Yes", was the Recruit(s) able to fully list the essential elements of the offence in the
post-simulation oral debriefing?　　　　　Yes ☐　　　No ☐

Dress and Deportment

Recruit presented a professional image
Competent ☐　　　　　Not competent ☐　　　　　N/A ☐

Recruit acted in a professional manner
Competent ☐　　　　　Not competent ☐　　　　　N/A ☐

Recruit had all appropriate duty equipment
Yes ☐　　　　　No ☐

Approach to the Scene

Recruit assessed scene upon approach for safety and nature of event
Competent ☐　　　　　Not competent ☐　　　　　N/A ☐

Recruit demonstrated proper officer safety tactics in their approach to the scene
Competent ☐　　　　　Not competent ☐　　　　　N/A ☐

Recruit was able in post-simulation oral debriefing to articulate their approach tactics
Competent ☐　　　　　Not competent ☐　　　　　N/A ☐

Communication

Recruit used Tactical Communication skills and techniques
Competent ☐　　　　　Not competent ☐　　　　　N/A ☐

Recruit used empathetic listening skills
Competent ☐　　　　　Not competent ☐　　　　　N/A ☐

Recruit used appropriate radio skills and "10 Codes"
Competent ☐　　　　　Not competent ☐　　　　　N/A ☐

Recruit notes of investigation were detailed, complete and appropriate
Competent ☐　　　　　Not competent ☐　　　　　N/A ☐

Investigation

Recruit was able to establish control of the scene
Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

Recruit was able to establish control of the person(s) in the scene
Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

Recruit asked appropriate investigative/fact finding questions to this event
Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

Recruit was able to fully and accurately articulate their investigation in a post-incident written report (submitted morning after)
Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

Officer Safety/Control Tactics

Recruit used dialogue and presence effectively on first approach/contact.
Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

Recruit was able to establish control of the suspect
Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

Recruit used appropriate level of force in response to the situation
Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

Recruit properly applied the level of force
Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

Handcuffing was done appropriately (if recruit handcuffed suspect(s))
Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

Recruit conducted a thorough search of the suspect(s) and found all hidden items (e.g.: identification, evidence, drugs, weapons) on the suspect
Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

Recruit was able to properly articulate their grounds for use of force, and why the particular force option was used
Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

Officer Safety in Vehicle Stops

Code 5 Vehicle Stop
Recruit properly conducted a Code 5 vehicle stop, including:

Patrol car positioning
Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

Verbal commands to suspect(s)
Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

Approach to suspect vehicle
Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

Control of suspect while removing suspect(s) from vehicle
Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

Search of suspect(s)
Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

Routine Traffic Stop
Recruit properly conducted a routine traffic stop, including:

Patrol car positioning
Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

Approach to suspect vehicle
Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

Situational awareness (environment, driver actions during interview)
Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

Post-simulation Incident Report

Notebook has all relevant details accurately noted
Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

Written report fully and accurately articulates the investigation/event
Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

Overall Assessment

    Recruit used good judgment
    Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

    Recruit demonstrated good observation skills
    Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

    Recruit demonstrated appropriate problem-solving
    Competent ☐   Not competent ☐   N/A ☐

    Overall score for Recruit performance in this simulation (note this assessment on page 1)
    Competent ☐   Not competent ☐

Narrative Comments (please be specific)

Assessor guidelines for post-simulation oral debriefing

The purpose of the oral debriefing is to provide a safe opportunity for students to review their actions, performance and learning. It is also the time when the Assessor offers constructive feedback, and offers suggestions on alternate ways of responding to the given situation.

Many recruits report that they learned more from the debriefing than from the actual simulation, so please take your time and ensure everyone is heard.

At the conclusion of the simulation, the debriefing is to take place in the following order:

1. Contact Officer(s)
2. Cover Officer(s)
3. Observing Officer(s)
4. Actors
5. Assessor

Questions for Contact Officer(s):

- Tell us in your own words what you saw, what you did, and why. (*this allows for a free flow narrative, and for the student(s) to reflect on the event, their actions, and the justifications for those actions*)

- What was the offence, and what are the essential elements of the offence?

- Why did you choose the level of force that you did? What was your reasoning?

- What would you do differently if you were to encounter this same situation again?

- What did you learn from this simulation?

Questions for Cover Officer(s):

- Repeat questions from Contact Officer(s)

Questions for Observing Officer(s):

- Tell us in your own words what you saw.

- What would you do differently if you were to encounter this same situation?

- What did you learn from this simulation?

Questions for the Actor(s)

- What is your view of how the officer(s) handled the event?

- In your view, what could the officer(s) have done differently?

JUSTICE INSTITUTE OF B.C. Police Academy Recruit Training Program

Simulation Assessment Report – BLOCK III

Contact Officer (*signature*): _____

Cover Officer (*signature*): _____

Assessor (*signature*): _____

Date: _____

The signatures of the Contact and Cover Officers signify that they have reviewed and understood the assessment. Should anyone disagree with any aspect of the assessment, they are to raise the matter in private with their Class Supervisor.

APPENDIX D – THIRD DRAFT OF PROPOSED SIMULATION ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT

This third draft instrument is based on data gathered in the focus group session, which resulted in a return to using only one instrument.

It should be noted that during the research of this project, the JI adopted a formal coat of arms and new crest. At the same time, Arial was adopted as the JI standard font for all communications. These changes took place as this third draft instrument was being developed, and were incorporated into this third version of the proposed simulation assessment instrument.

Police Academy Recruit Training Program

Simulation Assessment Report

JUSTICE
INSTITUTE
of
BRITISH
COLUMBIA

Simulated event: _____

Class number: _____

Block: Block 1 ☐   Block III ☐

Contact Officer: _____

Cover Officer: _____

Assessor: _____   Date: _____

Scale for this assessment tool:

    N/A = this area of assessment was not applicable to this specific simulation
    1 = Very weak in this area (please include narrative comments explaining score)
    2 = Needs improvement (please include narrative comments explaining score)
    3 = Competent
    4 = Very good
    5 = Exceptional

Circle the most appropriate score based on your observations of the recruit student(s).

If a recruit student makes a significant mistake (e.g. misses a weapon when searching a suspect, did not identify the appropriate offence, fails to read Charter of Rights warning when appropriate/timely), you must note this in the final narrative portion on the last page.

As the assessor, we are relying on your thorough, objective, detailed and frank assessment of the competencies and knowledge of recruit students. Your honest and unbiased record is an essential part of the learning process for the recruit, the Police Academy, and the employer.

In training, we strive to expose and expect on "Best Police" practices from the recruit.

Legal Studies

There is a federal/provincial offence in this simulation   Yes ☐   No ☐

If "Yes", please note offence _____

Recruit(s) recognized the offence   Yes ☐   No ☐

Recruit(s) acted on the offence   Yes ☐   No ☐

Actions of the Recruit were correct   Yes ☐   No ☐

Recruit(s) was able to fully list the essential elements of the offence in the post-simulation oral debriefing   Yes ☐
     No ☐

Assessor notes:

Dress and Deportment

Recruit presented a professional image
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit acted in a professional manner
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit had all appropriate duty equipment   Yes ☐   No ☐

Assessor notes:

Approach to the Scene

Recruit assessed scene upon approach for safety and nature of event
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit demonstrated proper officer safety tactics in their approach to the scene
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit was able in post-simulation oral debriefing to articulate their approach tactics
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Assessor notes:

Communication

Recruit used Tactical Communication skills and techniques
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit used empathetic listening skills
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit used appropriate radio skills and "10 Codes"
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit notes of investigation were detailed, complete and appropriate
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Assessor notes:

Investigation

Recruit was able to establish control of the scene
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit was able to establish control of the person(s) in the scene
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit asked appropriate investigative/fact finding questions to this event
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit obtained complete written statements from each person(s) involved in this event
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit was able to fully and accurately articulate their investigation in a post-incident written report (submitted morning after)
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Assessor notes:

Officer Safety/Control Tactics

Recruit conducted a safe approach to the suspect(s)
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit used dialogue and presence effectively on first approach/contact
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit was able to establish control of the suspect
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit used appropriate level of force in response to the situation
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit properly applied the level of force

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Handcuffing was done appropriately (if recruit handcuffed suspect(s))

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit conducted a thorough search of the suspect(s) and found all hidden items (e.g.: identification, evidence, drugs, weapons) on the suspect

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit was able to properly articulate their grounds for use of force, and why the particular force option was used

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Assessor notes:

Officer Safety in Vehicle Stops

Code 5 Vehicle Stop
Recruit properly conducted a Code 5 vehicle stop, including:

Patrol car positioning

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Verbal commands to suspect(s)

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Approach to suspect vehicle

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Control of suspect while removing suspect(s) from vehicle

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Search of suspect(s)

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Routine Traffic Stop
Recruit properly conducted a routine traffic stop, including:

Patrol car positioning

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Approach to suspect vehicle

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Situational awareness (environment, driver actions during interview)

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Assessor notes:

Post-simulation Incident Report

Notebook has all relevant details accurately noted
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Written report fully and accurately articulates the investigation/event
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Written report fully addresses PRIME General Occurrence report categories (e.g.: all Entities listed, proper Role Codes for all Entities, all required Text pages with correct Text Types, all required Details pages, property correctly listed in property system, Conclusion Block and text pages)
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Assessor notes:

Overall Assessment

Recruit used good judgment
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit demonstrated good observation skills
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit demonstrated appropriate problem-solving
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit demonstrated an ability to learn from this simulation (including debriefing)
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Overall score for Recruit performance in this simulation
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Final narrative comments (please be specific)

Assessor guidelines for post-simulation oral debriefing

The purpose of the oral debriefing is to provide a safe opportunity for students to review their actions, performance and learning. It is also the time when the Assessor offers constructive feedback, and offers suggestions on alternate ways of responding to the given situation.

Many recruits report that they learned more from the debriefing than from the actual simulation, so please take your time and ensure everyone is heard.

At the conclusion of the simulation, the debriefing is to take place in the following order:

5. Actor(s)
6. Observing Officer(s)
7. Cover Officer(s)
8. Contact Officer(s)
9. Assessor

Questions for Contact Officer(s):

6. Tell us in your own words what you saw, what you did, and why. (*this allows for a free flow narrative, and for the student(s) to reflect on the event, their actions, and the justifications for those actions*)

7. What was the offence, and what are the essential elements of the offence?

8. Why did you choose the level of force that you did? What was your reasoning?

9. What would you do differently if you were to encounter this same situation again?

10. What did you learn from this simulation?

Questions for Cover Officer(s):

2. Repeat questions from Contact Officer(s)

Questions for Observing Officer(s):

4. Tell us in your own words what you saw.

5. What would you do differently if you were to encounter this same situation?

6. What did you learn from this simulation?

Questions for the Actor(s)

1. What is your view of how the officer(s) handled the event?

2. In your view, what could the officer(s) have done differently?

JUSTICE INSTITUTE *of* **BRITISH COLUMBIA**

Police Academy Recruit Training Program

Simulation Assessment Report

Contact Officer (*signature*): _____

Cover Officer (*signature*): _____

Assessor (*signature*): _____

Date: _____

The signatures of the Contact and Cover Officers signify that they have reviewed and understood the assessment. Should anyone disagree with any aspect of the assessment, they are to raise the matter in private with their Class Supervisor.

Recruit Contact and Cover Officers are entitled to receive copies of the entire completed assessment upon request.

APPENDIX E – FINAL DRAFT OF PROPOSED SIMULATION ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT

Following is the fourth version of the assessment instrument, and the one that will now be used to monitor and assess Block I and III police recruits in JI Police Academy simulations.

JUSTICE INSTITUTE *of* **BRITISH COLUMBIA**

Police Academy Recruit Training Program

Simulation Assessment Report

Simulated event: _____

Class number: _____

Training Block: Block 1 ☐   Block III ☐

Block III Only: Needs Improvement ☐ Adequate ☐ Superior ☐

Contact Officer: _____

Cover Officer: _____

Assessor: _____   Date: _____

Scale for this assessment tool:

      N/A = this area of assessment was not applicable to this specific simulation
      1 = Very weak in this area (please include narrative comments explaining score)
      2 = Needs improvement (please include narrative comments explaining score)
      3 = Competent
      4 = Very good
      5 = Exceptional

Circle the most appropriate score based on your observations of the recruit student(s).

When noting narrative comments, please note which officer (Contact/Cover, or both) the comments refer to.

If a recruit student makes a significant mistake (e.g. misses a weapon when searching a suspect, did not identify the appropriate offence, fails to read Charter of Rights warning when appropriate/timely), you must note this in the final narrative portion on the last page.

As the assessor, we are relying on your thorough, objective, detailed and frank assessment of the competencies and knowledge of recruit students. Your honest and unbiased record is an essential part of the learning process for the recruit, the Police Academy, and the employer.

In training, we strive to expose and expect on "Best Police" practices from the recruit.

Legal Studies

There is a federal/provincial offence in this simulation   Yes ☐   No ☐

If "Yes", please note offence _____

Recruit(s) recognized the offence   Yes ☐   No ☐

Recruit(s) acted on the offence   Yes ☐   No ☐

Actions of the Recruit were correct   Yes ☐   No ☐

Recruit(s) was able to fully list the essential elements of the offence in the post-simulation oral debriefing   Yes ☐
        No ☐

Assessor notes:

Dress and Deportment

Recruit presented a professional image
N/A	1	2	3	4	5

Recruit acted in a professional manner
N/A	1	2	3	4	5

Recruit had all appropriate duty equipment   Yes ☐   No ☐

Assessor notes:

Approach to the Scene

Recruit assessed scene upon approach for safety and nature of event
N/A	1	2	3	4	5

Recruit demonstrated proper officer safety tactics in their approach to the scene
N/A	1	2	3	4	5

Recruit was able in post-simulation oral debriefing to articulate their approach tactics
N/A	1	2	3	4	5

Assessor notes:

Communication

Recruit used Tactical Communication skills and techniques

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit used empathetic listening skills

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit used appropriate radio skills and "10 Codes"

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit notes of investigation were detailed, complete and appropriate

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Assessor notes:

Investigation

Recruit was able to establish control of the scene

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit was able to establish control of the person(s) in the scene

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit asked appropriate investigative/fact finding questions to this event

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit obtained complete written statements from each person(s) involved in this event

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit was able to fully and accurately articulate their investigation in a post-incident written report (submitted morning after)

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Assessor notes:

Officer Safety/Control Tactics

Recruit conducted a safe approach to the suspect(s)

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit used dialogue and presence effectively on first approach/contact

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit was able to establish control of the suspect

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit used appropriate level of force in response to the situation

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit properly applied the level of force

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Handcuffing was done appropriately (if recruit handcuffed suspect(s))

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit conducted a thorough search of the suspect(s) and found all hidden items (e.g.: identification, evidence, drugs, weapons) on the suspect

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Recruit was able to properly articulate their grounds for use of force, and why the particular force option was used

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Assessor notes:

Officer Safety in Vehicle Stops

Code 5 Vehicle Stop
Recruit properly conducted a Code 5 vehicle stop, including:

Patrol car positioning

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Verbal commands to suspect(s)

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Approach to suspect vehicle

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Control of suspect while removing suspect(s) from vehicle

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Search of suspect(s)

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Routine Traffic Stop
Recruit properly conducted a routine traffic stop, including:

Patrol car positioning

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Approach to suspect vehicle

| N/A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Situational awareness (environment, driver actions during interview)

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Assessor notes:

Post-simulation Incident Report

Notebook has all relevant details accurately noted
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Written report fully and accurately articulates the investigation/event
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Written report fully addresses PRIME General Occurrence report categories (e.g.: all Entities listed, proper Role Codes for all Entities, all required Text pages with correct Text Types, all required Details pages, property correctly listed in property system, Conclusion Block and text pages)
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Assessor notes:

Overall Assessment

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Recruit demonstrated good observation skills
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit demonstrated appropriate problem-solving
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Recruit demonstrated an ability to learn from this simulation (including debriefing)
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Overall score for Recruit performance in this simulation
N/A   1   2   3   4   5

Final narrative comments (please be specific)

Assessor guidelines for post-simulation oral debriefing

The purpose of the oral debriefing is to provide a safe opportunity for students to review their actions, performance and learning. It is also the time when the Assessor offers constructive feedback, and offers suggestions on alternate ways of responding to the given situation.

Many recruits report that they learned more from the debriefing than from the actual simulation, so please take your time and ensure everyone is heard.

At the conclusion of the simulation, the debriefing is to take place in the following order:

1. Actor(s)
2. Observing Officer(s)
3. Cover Officer(s)
4. Contact Officer(s)
5. Assessor

Questions for Contact Officer(s):

- Tell us in your own words what you saw, what you did, and why. (*this allows for a free flow narrative, and for the student(s) to reflect on the event, their actions, and the justifications for those actions*)

- What was the offence, and what are the essential elements of the offence?

- Why did you choose the level of force that you did? What was your reasoning?

- What would you do differently if you were to encounter this same situation again?

- What did you learn from this simulation?

Questions for Cover Officer(s):

- Repeat questions from Contact Officer(s)

Questions for Observing Officer(s):

- Tell us in your own words what you saw.

- What would you do differently if you were to encounter this same situation?

- What did you learn from this simulation?

Questions for the Actor(s)

- What is your view of how the officer(s) handled the event?

- In your view, what could the officer(s) have done differently?

JUSTICE INSTITUTE *of* **BRITISH COLUMBIA**

**Police Academy
Recruit Training Program**

Simulation Assessment Report

Contact Officer (*signature*): _____

Cover Officer (*signature*): _____

Assessor (*signature*): _____

Date: _____

The signatures of the Contact and Cover Officers signify that they have reviewed and understood the assessment. Should anyone disagree with any aspect of the assessment, they are to raise the matter in private with their Class Supervisor.

Recruit Contact and Cover Officers are entitled to receive copies of the entire completed assessment upon request.

APPENDIX F – QUESTIONS POSED TO OTHER POLICE ACADEMIES

The first contact (all via e-mail) with each of the surveyed police academies was used to explain the nature of the research, that the research was being undertaken in partial completion of a graduate degree and participation was both voluntary and confidential. This first message also asked if the respondent would agree to participate. If the answer was "yes", then the following questions were sent:

1. Assessment of police recruit performance in training simulations is used primarily as a developmental tool. Yes/No.

2. Assessment of police recruit performance in training simulations is used primarily as either a Pass or a Fail exercise. Yes/No.

3. Assessment of police recruit performance in training simulations is primarily scored on a numerical scale (e.g. 1 to 5). Yes/No/Other.

4. Assessors in police recruit training simulations have clear direction on specific knowledge and competencies upon which recruits are to be assessed. Yes/No.

5. Assessors in police recruit training simulations make copious notes of their observations of recruit performance. Yes/No.

6. How does your Police Academy ensure the validity of scores/observations/assessments made by assessors in police recruit training simulations?

Police Academy contacts who volunteered to respond (N = 12) to the series of questions were also asked to provide one new point of contact at another police academy, who might in turn also respond to the questions. In this way, personal referrals were used as a means of ensuring a high rate of survey response.

APPENDIX G – POLICE ACADEMIES RESPONDING TO THE SURVEY

The following police academies responded to the e-mail survey:

- Calgary Police Service (Alberta, Canada)
- École nationale de police du Québec (Quebec, Canada)
- Illinois State Police Academy (United States)
- Indiana State Police Academy (United States)
- Metropolitan Toronto Police Academy (Ontario, Canada)
- Michigan State Police Training Division (United States)
- New South Wales Police Academy (Australia)
- Ontario Police College (Canada)
- Police Service of Northern Ireland[19] (United Kingdom)
- Washington State Patrol Academy (United States)
- Western Australia Police Academy (Australia)
- Winnipeg Police Academy (Manitoba, Canada)

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[19] Formerly the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

APPENDIX H – SURVEY RESULTS

Survey findings, including respondent responses from the twelve police academies are as follows:

1. Assessment of police recruit performance in training simulations is used primarily as a developmental tool. Yes/No.

   Yes = 75%

   No = 25%

   - It is formative evaluation meaning an evaluation for the purpose of contributing to the training of the candidate.

   - The assessment is considered to be a developmental tool, however little remedial opportunity exists if a student has demonstrated a real lack of skill or comprehension.

   - The main benefit of using simulations with professional actors is 'stress inoculation', meaning that the first violent domestic a newly graduated officer attends on the street is, in fact, the 6th violent domestic they have dealt with (5 in realistic training mode), the same for death notifications, stealing, violent offenders, etc.

   - In some cases recruits cope with the academic rigours of training but when put in a scenario or simulation mode cannot apply their underpinning knowledge to the task at hand.

2. Assessment of police recruit performance in training simulations is used primarily as either a Pass or a Fail exercise. Yes/No.

   Yes = 58%

   No = 42%

   - Students are assessed as either being competent, or not competent.

   - They are assessed as being either competent, or not yet competent.

3. Assessment of police recruit performance in training simulations is primarily scored on a numerical scale (e.g. 1 to 5). Yes/No/Other.

Yes = 17%

No / Other = 83%

- Instructor comments, not a scale
- Competent – No yet competent. Either they can or they can't do it!
- Met standard or failed to meet standard.
- Only the final summative evaluation is scored on a numerical scale. All preceding simulations are formative and thus devoid of formal scores.
- Assessment is scored on a pass/fail, for many scenarios or other means depending on the scenario. Example: First aid and Water Safety scenarios often look at if the action of the student would have caused further harm to the victim. A student may still pass even though standard procedures were not followed.
- Current research is underway to develop practicals that will be assessed using scoring rubrics.

4. Assessors in police recruit training simulations have clear direction on specific knowledge and competencies upon which recruits are to be assessed. Yes/No.

Yes = 100%

No = 0%

- Evaluation is based on defined criteria of which both the candidate and assessor are fully aware. This is so in both formative and summative assessments.
- The scenario is designed and controlled to test specific competencies.
- Most scenario's (simulations) involve a detailed check off sheet. The assessors are instructors in the area and know the objectives to successful completion of the scenario.
- Yes, but not always followed.

- Assessors are first certified at an **Assessor Certification School** prior to being used in exercises.

- They are certified at an **Assessor Certification School** prior to being used in summative exercises.

- Currently in the process of re-designing the instructor/trainer orientation to include aspects of teaching and examining protocols. Currently, assessment protocols are being developed to assess students' application during an integrated training simulation.

5. Assessors in police recruit training simulations make copious notes of their observations of recruit performance. Yes/No.

Yes = 75%

No = 25%

- Included on the assessment sheet.

- The word copious is probably too strong for what we use. Most assessors have a check off sheet where items are checked off and specific comments are made on the check off sheet. Typically all check off sheets will have a notes section at the bottom for the instructor. These sheets are then used to document performance on a Performance Appraisal that is given to the student, and their future worksite.

- While the assessment sheets are comprehensive, most of the debrief is peer review in nature, when we have a recruit that is not 'getting it' and it is a possibility that he/she may be dismissed we endeavour to video record their actions in the scenario.

- Concerns over disclosure of records in future civil lawsuits in relation to police actions have lead to a decision to now restrict use of note taking.

- Only if a recruit fails to meet the standard then notes are made.

- Checklists and narrative responses are used in skills training such as Defensive Tactics, Interactive Judgment Simulator and Police Vehicle

Orientations. Written assessments of student performance during integrated practical exercises in under development.

6. How does your Police Academy ensure the validity of scores/observations/assessments made by assessors in police recruit training simulations?

- First, recruits are provided with an outline of the competencies they will be observed on...this is a departure form previous years. The outline is provided as it is believed the recruits will be better focused, less stressed, and increase their learning in this fashion. In order to validate the observations a secondary observer participates. The evaluators are provided with specific observation issues to address. This is reviewed in a morning briefing. If further discussion is required the Instructor of Officer in charge of the exercise is available throughout the exercise.

- We use several instructors/observers who must reach consensus on observations.

- By having two assessors who compare notes.

- We thoroughly document <u>observed behavior</u> (emphasis by original author). We avoid any personal opinions in our assessment of performance. This allows for the <u>action</u> of the recruit to be evaluated and not the opinion of the instructor to be evaluated. The simulation document is the collaborated (sic) and if a <u>pattern of failure or unsafe behavior is observed</u>, the recruit will be subject to extended training, extended testing and possible dismissal if they are unable to perform at an acceptable standard.

- This is not a normal practice in our organization.

- Our personnel that are assessing performance are certified instructors in the specific areas being assessed. The validity is based upon their expertise and training received.

- Recruits are given multiple opportunities, a single bad experience is not critical, where there are significant issues an independent assessor is used

to evaluate the performance. Any final decision is based on a holistic assessment of activities, not a single performance.

- Students are assessed by a number of trainers in a number of diverse situations. All trainers are qualified in assessment, almost all through national externally accredited qualifications. Trainer assessments are subject to internal verification by Training Development Officers. Students may challenge assessments.

- Assessors are certified on specific exercises, and these assessors are periodically supervised by Academy staff to ensure inter-rater reliability.

- We are still in the process of building a database of all evaluations in all courses by all instructors. Eventually, we will be able to assess the individual assessors rating tendencies as well as compare class performances against each other. Until this database is fully operational candidates are subjected to numerous evaluators in the course of their training and individual assessment is measured by comparison to other assessors'. Should a marked discrepancy be noticed in individual ratings, the question is addressed on a case by case basis where a consensus among evaluators is sought before the stage of summative evaluation is reached.

- Inter-rater reliability is being studied as a part of Academy development of performance-based assessments.