

BC Provincial Policing Standards Compliance Evaluation Focused on Select Use-of-Force Standards

REPORT TO THE DIRECTOR OF POLICE SERVICES

January 2022

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Glossary of Abbreviations

| | |
|-------------|--|
| AED | Automated External Defibrillator |
| APD | Abbotsford Police Department |
| BBSG | Beanbag Shotgun |
| BC | British Columbia |
| BCPA | British Columbia Police Academy |
| BCPPS | British Columbia Provincial Policing Standards |
| CC | Chief Constable |
| CEW | Conducted Energy Weapon |
| CID | Crisis Intervention and De-Escalation |
| CPKN | Canadian Police Knowledge Network |
| CSPS | Central Saanich Police Service |
| CTS | Course Training Standard |
| CUFIC | Certified Use-of-Force Instructor Course |
| CV | Curriculum Vitae |
| DPD | Delta Police Department |
| EDP | Emotionally Disturbed Person |
| EPP | Effective Presentation Program |
| ERIW | Extended Range Impact Weapon |
| ETU | Education Training Unit |
| FOTU | Force Options Training Unit |
| FPI | Foundations of Police Instruction |
| FROIC | Force Response Options Instructor Course |
| GVERT | Greater Victoria Emergency Response Team |
| HRMIS | Human Resource Management Information System |
| IARD | Immediate Action Rapid Deployment |
| IPDMA | Purpose-built software |
| IRD | Immediate Rapid Deployment |
| ISW | Instructional Skills Workshop |
| JIBC | Justice Institute of British Columbia |
| KEIW | Kinetic Energy Impact Weapon |
| LMD ERT | Lower Mainland District Emergency Response Team |
| MOU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| MVTP | Metro Vancouver Transit Police |
| NCO | Reality-Based Training |
| NPD | Nelson Police Department |
| NWPD | New Westminster Police Department |
| NUFF BC CID | National Use of Force Framework British Columbia Crisis Intervention De-Escalation |

| | |
|-------|---|
| OBPD | Oak Bay Police Department |
| OC | Oleoresin Capsicum |
| OSU | Operational Skills Unit |
| PMPD | Port Moody Police Department |
| PRTC | Pacific Regional Training Centre |
| PSB | Policing and Security Branch |
| PSS | Professional Standards Section |
| PSU | Professional Standards Unit |
| RBT | Reality-Based Training |
| RCMP | Royal Canadian Mounted Police |
| SBOR | Subject Behaviour Officer Response |
| SPC | Special Provincial Constable |
| SPD | Saanich Police Department |
| STPS | Stl'atl'imx Tribal Police Service |
| SUFIC | Standardized Use-of-Force Instructor Course |
| TSERT | Tactical Skills Enhancement & Re-Certification Training |
| TTC | Tactical Training Center |
| UCO | Under Cover Operator |
| VICPD | Victoria Police Department |
| VNR | Vascular Neck Restraint |
| VPD | Vancouver Police Department |
| WVPD | West Vancouver Police Department |

Provincial Summary

Background

Various BC Provincial Policing Standards (BCPPS) related to use-of-force training have been in effect since 2012. Many of these were developed as a result of recommendations from the Braidwood Commission on Conducted Energy Weapon Use (2009)¹.

Under Section 40 of the *Police Act*, the Director of Police Services has the authority to evaluate police agency compliance with the BCPPS. Between January and October 2020, Policing and Security Branch (PSB) staff conducted a compliance evaluation focussed on the BCPPS related to use-of-force training. Specifically, these included:

- BCPPS 1.1.2 Firearms Training and Qualification (Standards (1) – (9)) [\[see End Note i\]](#)
- BCPPS 1.2.2 Intermediate Weapons (Standards (3)-(5)) [\[see End Note ii\]](#)
- BCPPS 3.2.1 CEW Training (Standards (1) – (4), (7)) [\[see End Note iii\]](#)
- BCPPS 3.2.2 CID Training (Standards ((1)-(3)) [\[see End Note iv\]](#)
- BCPPS 3.2.3 Use-of-Force Instructor Training (Standards (2)-(9)) [\[see End Note v\]](#)

It is worth noting that during the course of the evaluation, these standards were temporarily suspended due to the challenges associated with safely maintaining in-person training during the COVID-19 pandemic. The suspension took effect on March 21, 2020 and as of the time of writing this report, it continues to be in place. Aside from delaying some of the site visits, the suspension did not significantly impact the evaluation methodology or the findings.

Approach and Methodology

The evaluation process included two parts:

1. An advance questionnaire, to provide an overview of agency policies, practices and programs related to these standards. The questionnaires

¹ Braidwood, T.R. (2009), Restoring public confidence: Restricting the use of conducted energy weapons, Braidwood Commission of Inquiry on Conducted Energy Weapon Use (B.C.), The Braidwood Commission of Inquiry on Conducted Energy Weapon Use, Vancouver, BC

were completed by agencies and returned to the PSB for analysis prior to site visits; and

2. Site visits, where PSB staff (the evaluation team) met with agency personnel who provided access to relevant training records for inspection. The site visits also provided an opportunity for the evaluation team to clarify questionnaire responses as needed.

Advance Questionnaire

The evaluation team sent the advance questionnaire to the eleven BC municipal police agencies, Metro Vancouver Transit Police (MVTP), Stl'atl'imx Tribal Police Service (STPS), and RCMP beginning in January 2020. The questionnaire requested the following information:

- Relevant policies and procedures;
- Description of processes used by police agencies to ensure that officers requalify in pistols, other firearms, intermediate weapons, and Crisis Intervention and De-Escalation (CID) training as required by the standards;
- The date and results of the agency's most recent internal audit for compliance with requalification/qualification requirements, and what steps were taken to address any significant variance discovered;
- Information related to BCPPS 1.1.2 Firearms Training and Qualification (Standards (1)-(9))ⁱ, including an inventory of firearms approved for use by the chief constable, chief officer, or commissioner, and a description of the agency firearms training program;
- Information related to BCPPS 1.2.2 Intermediate Weapons (Standards (3)-(5))ⁱⁱ, including an inventory of intermediate weapons approved for use by the chief constable, chief officer, or commissioner, and a description of the training provided for each type of intermediate weapon;
- Information related to BCPPS 3.2.1 Conducted Energy Weapon (CEW) Operator Training (Standards (1)-(4), (7))ⁱⁱⁱ, including an inventory of CEWs used by the agency, and a description of their agency's selection criteria for CEW operators and CEW training program;
- Information related to BCPPS 3.2.2 Crisis Intervention De-escalation (CID) Training (Standards (1)-(3))^{iv}, and what process is in place to identify officers who may need to requalify prior to their next scheduled requalification date, including officers whose ability to effectively utilize CID techniques is not sufficient; and
- Information related to BCPPS 3.2.3 Use-of-Force Instructor Training (Standards (2)-(9))^v, including what course(s) the agency uses to fulfill the

instructional skills training requirement, and if the agency has difficulty identifying potential or retaining certified use-of-force instructors.

The evaluation team used the questionnaire responses to assess whether agency policy was in compliance with the standards, as well as to assist in preparing for the compliance evaluation of training records during the site visits.

On-Site Inspection Methodology

Between March and August 2020, the evaluation team attended each municipal police department, MVTP and STPS, and were provided access to the agency's training records.² For agencies with 100 or fewer officers, the evaluation team inspected the training records for all police officers. For agencies with more than 100 officers, the evaluation team inspected the training records of a random sample of 100 officers.

The RCMP has over 6,000 officers working in BC, with considerable movement of officers between different policing jurisdictions. This requires a complex and centralized system of maintaining training records and delivering training. As a result, the evaluation team took a different approach with the RCMP. The evaluation team did not inspect the training records of individual officers. Rather, staff at Pacific Regional Training Centre (PRTC) provided reports generated from their records management software detailing the number of officers required to requalify in each discipline and the corresponding numbers of officers who had completed the requalification, and the number who had not, on the date the reports were prepared. The RCMP reports provided the evaluation team with 'point-in-time' information to assess the level of compliance with the standards.

Findings

Compliance with the BCPPS

Overall, the evaluation demonstrated that agencies are meeting the use-of-force training requirements set out in the BCPPS.

The evaluation team found that police agency policies and procedures incorporated the direction regarding use-of-force training from the BCPPS as either directly required by the BCPPS or to support awareness of and compliance

² The timing of some of the site visits was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

with the BCPPS by the police agency. Where gaps were noted, they were minor and identified to the agency contact for attention as well as noted in the agency-level reports. Gaps noted in more than one jurisdiction included:

- Policy not reflecting the full range of requirements under the BCPPS to maintain CID qualification (in particular, as a prerequisite to annual firearm certification);
- Policy not reflecting the requirements in the BCPPS related to lethal force articulation and practice training (tactics, decision-making and shooting at distances greater than 25 metres);
- Not describing the agency's CEW operator selection criteria in written policy;
- Not having policy governing the requirements for use-of-force instructors;
- Not having updated a policy following the introduction or amendment of a relevant BCPPS.

Generally, self-audits indicated high compliance with requalification requirements for firearms, CEWs, intermediate weapons and CID, and these findings were consistent with the evaluation team's examination of training records during site visits. In a few cases, compliance rates below 95% were noted either for a specific type of requalification within a municipal or designated police agency that otherwise had high compliance (3 police agencies), or across multiple types of requalifications within a police agency (2 police agencies). Where compliance rates below 95% were noted, in all but one case the police agency was able to provide an explanation that mitigated the finding to the satisfaction of the evaluation team (e.g., delays in updating some officers' training records upon training completion, limitations of the record keeping system that prevented them from excluding officers who were away from active duty due to injury or other leave, or officers re-assigned to a different role which no longer required a specific requalification). In the remaining case, follow-up evaluation is required to better understand the role that gaps in record-keeping may have played in the observations. In all cases, police agencies had taken corrective action to address the non-compliance (e.g., officers had since been registered for and completed outstanding training).

As noted above, for the RCMP, the evaluation team reviewed reports generated from their records management software rather than individual officers' training records. This review also indicated high compliance, though some variance was evident. The RCMP advised that officers found to be behind schedule on any requirement on the day the report was generated would be scheduled for

training/requalification in the near future, which would bring them in compliance with the BCPPS.

The evaluation team made recommendations to police agencies regarding training and record-keeping as appropriate.

While all police agencies were found to be maintaining records of training, the methods used varied considerably. Examples include:

- Excel spreadsheets
- Electronic folders containing training documents (Word, PowerPoint, etc.)
- Paper files
- Purpose-built software programs.

The evaluation team found that purpose-built software programs offered the greatest efficiencies for training units/coordinators in tracking and scheduling training for officers as well as for auditing/evaluating compliance with the BCPPS.

Use-of-force instructor requirements under BCPPS 3.2.3 include not only completion of the Standardized Use-of-Force instructor Course (SUFIC) or other provincially-approved training for use-of-force instructors, instructional skills training, but also non-training requirements such as delivering at least 30 hours of use-of-force instruction each year and not having any substantiated use-of-force complaints within the previous 5 years. When BCPPS 3.2.3 was introduced in 2017, it was understood that it was intended to cover instruction in less-lethal force options. One of the key considerations was that standardized training for firearms instructors was not readily available and would need to be developed. While this scope is not clearly stated in the standard, in practice this continues to be how the standard is being interpreted and applied and the evaluation team observed high compliance with BCPPS 3.2.3 for less lethal use-of-force instructors.

The site visits also provided an opportunity for the evaluation team to discuss challenges or gaps with the BCPPS. There was consensus that the absence of prerequisites or training standards for firearms instructors is an important gap to address in the BCPPS moving forward. As a lethal force option, it is critical that training is consistent and relevant to the BC policing context, and that training on the technical aspects of firearms also incorporate information related to decision-making and crisis intervention de-escalation. The evaluation team is aware that a new pistol instructors' course is being developed for municipal police

and recently reviewed and observed the training to assist in determining the viability of developing a BCPPS for firearms instructors.

Overall, while all police agencies were found to be in compliance with the BCPPS, some agencies appeared better positioned to meet and exceed the standards and fulfill other responsibilities of the training function not explicitly required by the BCPPS. For example,

- Agencies with more than one staff member assigned to training units on a full-time basis appeared to more easily manage both the administrative and operational aspects of a training function. These agencies typically had more advanced record-keeping capabilities (Excel or purpose-built software programs), staff to assist with robust course development (course training standards, lesson plans, and related reference documents) and were able to have more instructors, role players, and support staff on hand for all training sessions.
- Many police agencies require requalification on intermediate weapons every year. This exceeds the requirements of the BCPPS, which mandate requalification at minimum every three years.

Related Challenges Described to the Evaluation Team

Training personnel spoken to during the course of this evaluation identified three common challenges: facilities, staffing and funding.

1. FACILITIES:

To conduct use-of-force training as required by the BCPPS and/or local agency policies, agencies need access to firearms ranges (for firearm requalifications and practice), reality-based training facilities (for practical components and scenario-based exercises), classrooms (for theoretical components and computer-based learning) and gymnasiums (for hands-on components that require space and protective equipment such as mats). Currently, the only agencies with all of these facilities are the RCMP (Pacific Region Training Centre) and Vancouver Police Department (Tactical Training Centre). Few of the remaining agencies have ready access to designated training facilities and instead rely on renting community-based or private facilities. A partnership has also been formed between the Delta, New Westminster, Port Moody, West Vancouver, and Metro Vancouver Transit police departments who have collaborated on developing the

Regional Municipal Training Centre. Although this facility does not have a live-fire firearms range, the centre includes a state-of-the-art virtual reality training simulator, a classroom, and a full mat room for practicing physical control techniques.

The lack of readily available full training venues for all agencies creates challenges and risks associated with cost (rentals and in some cases, significant travel to and from the facility), availability and reliability as police agencies compete for time with other user groups who have priority, privacy from the public during training exercises, the suitability of the facility as a learning environment, and the health and safety of officers, particularly where abandoned and derelict buildings are used for reality-based training venues. The lack of designated training facilities makes the delivery of training and compliance with the BCPPS challenging.

2. STAFFING:

The size and staffing model for training functions varies. Some small and mid-sized agencies have one, full-time use-of-force instructor who is responsible for both delivering all use-of-force training as well as administrative functions such as creating defensible training documents, record-keeping, scheduling the required training facilities and equipment, as well as managing the budget. Not only can this be an unsafe practice (e.g., high learner to instructor ratios creates risks), but it also limits the training function to skill maintenance versus continuing to advance the skills of officers throughout their careers.

In other agencies, training is a part-time responsibility on top of other job duties. Like their full-time counterparts described above, part-time trainers are responsible for administrative functions in addition to delivering training. This part-time job becomes full-time in practice and trainers described being criticized for neglecting their primary job functions for the training portfolio.

Larger agencies with full-time training staff are better positioned to deliver a robust training function. That said, training staff in these agencies stated that they too struggle on occasion to ensure that, depending on the training topic, they have sufficient staff available to ensure safe and effective training. In some of the agencies with full-time trainers, these personnel focus solely on the delivery of training. They have staff to book outside facilities or have ready access to in-house facilities, create defensible training documents, manage the budget, etc.

To ensure they are able to comply with the BCPPS related to Conducted Energy Weapons, most police agencies have created a CEW Coordinator position. Agencies with full-time training sections are better positioned to dedicate this role to an individual who can manage all aspects of the associated BCPPS. Agencies with part-time training staff most often had a part-time trainer take on this position, adding further to the challenges faced by part-time trainers described above.

Lastly, the evaluation team also noted that small and large training sections alike lacked succession planning to support them in quickly replacing certified use-of-force instructors when they are lost due to turnover or re-assignment.

3. FUNDING:

Training is an essential function of a police agency. It is also expensive. A consistent theme in discussions with training personnel was a concern that training is underfunded. This was closely tied to challenges noted above related to facilities and staffing. For example, some use-of-force trainers observed that a large portion of the training budget is spent on renting firearms ranges. While they agreed that the yearly requirement to qualify on firearms is necessary to avoid skills decay and potential liability, these rental costs often mean that other areas of training, such as skill enhancement, are minimized or deleted from programs. For example, instructors stated that departments are reluctant to bring additional training staff (full or part-time) in on overtime to assist with training sessions or to pay for facility rentals when doing advanced training such as Immediate Rapid Deployment (IRD).

Limited budgets also mean that instructor development is often limited as training staff are not attending conferences or workshops designed to promote knowledge of emerging trends and best practices and further develop instructor skills.

Put another way, while use-of-force training budgets may be generally sufficient for complying with the training and requalification requirements set out in the BCPPS, it can be challenging to fund training that goes beyond those mandatory, minimum requirements within existing budgets.

Limited budgets also leave little contingency funding for unanticipated costs.

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Table 1: Findings

| | Standard Met | Standard Met In Practice |
|---|---|---|
| BCPPS 1.1.2 Firearms Training and Qualification (Standards (1) – (9)) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APD • DPD • MVTP • NWPD • SPD • VPD • VicPD • WVPD | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSPA • NPD • PMPD • STPS • RCMP |
| BCPPS 1.2.2 Intermediate Weapons (Standards (3)-(5)) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APD • DPD • MVTP • NWPD • PMPD • SPD • VPD • VicPD • WVPD • RCMP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSPA • NPD • STPS |
| BCPPS 3.2.1 CEW Training (Standards (1)-(4), (7)) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APD • MVTP • NWPD • PMPD • SPD • VPD • VicPD • WVPD • RCMP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSPA • DPD • NPD • STPS |
| BCPPS 3.2.2 CID Training (Standards (1)-(3)) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APD • DPD • MVTP • NWPD • SPD • VPD • VicPD • WVPD • RCMP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSPA • NPD • STPS • PMPD |
| BCPPS 3.2.3 Use-of-Force Instructor Training (Standards (2)-(9)) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APD • DPD • MVTP • NWPD • VicPD • WVPD | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSPA • NPD • OBPD • PMPD • SPD • STPS • VPD • RCMP |
| <p>NOTE: After the findings of this evaluation were shared with police agencies, the CC of OBPD expressed concerns with the completeness and accuracy of the information provided to the evaluation team. The evaluation team will conduct a follow-up evaluation and will update this report to incorporate findings related to OBPD after the follow-up evaluation is completed.</p> | | |

Table 2: Overview of Recommendations

| Recommendations | Agencies |
|--|---|
| Recommendations related to amending, developing, or reviewing written policies and procedures to ensure full compliance with the BCPPS. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Saanich PS • Delta PD • Nelson PD • Oak Bay PD • Port Moody PD • Saanich PD • Stl'at'imx Tribal PS • Vancouver PD • Victoria PD • RCMP |
| Recommendations related to amending policies and procedures to ensure alignment with related legislation or best practices. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Saanich PS • Victoria PD |
| Recommendations related to refining record keeping to better support tracking and compliance monitoring. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Westminster PD • Oak Bay PD • Vancouver Police Department |
| Recommendations related to ensuring members found to be behind on training / requalification have since completed the training / requalification. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nelson PD • Port Moody PD |
| Recommendations related to providing information to the Director of Police Services. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oak Bay PD • Stl'at'imx Tribal PS • RCMP |
| No recommendations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abbotsford PD • Metro Vancouver Transit Police • West Vancouver Police Department |

Next Steps

Each agency has received a report summarizing the findings and recommendations related to their agency. PSB will follow up with agencies regarding the recommendations in 6 months of report distribution.

The evaluation team will conduct a follow-up evaluation with OBPD and update this report to incorporate findings related to OBPD once completed.

The evaluation revealed considerable support for bringing firearms instructors into the scope of the BCPPS governing use-of-force instructors. PSB will continue to monitor the development of pistol instructor training and will explore the development of a BCPPS specific to firearms instructors.

End Notes

ⁱ BCPPS 1.1.2 – Firearms Training and Qualification requires the chief constable/chief officer/commissioner to ensure that officers successfully complete initial training and annual qualification for each type of firearm they are authorized to carry and use. This includes duty pistols and any special purpose firearms authorized by the chief constable/chief officer/commissioner. For duty pistols, a standardized course of fire (BC Pistol Qualification, attached to the Standard) must be completed. For other firearms, the qualification is determined by the chief constable/chief officer/commissioner. The Standard also requires officers equipped with firearms to comply with the CID training requirements set out in BCPPS 3.2.2 (see below), and to, at least once every three years, articulate the grounds for lethal force to a use-of-force instructor and complete practice training regarding firearms and use-of-force decision-making. The Standard also requires that written records of firearms training and testing be maintained, and that written policies and procedures are consistent with the Standards.

ⁱⁱ BCPPS 1.2.2 – Intermediate Weapons requires the chief constable/chief officer/commissioner to ensure that police officers successfully complete initial training and requalify at least once every three years on any intermediate weapon they are authorized to carry and use.

ⁱⁱⁱ BCPPS 3.2.1 – CEW Training requires the chief constable/chief officer/commissioner to ensure that any officer authorized to carry and use a CEW has successfully completed BC's CEW Operator Training course, or other provincially-approved training for CEW operators. Officers must also qualify on CEW annually, by reviewing provincially-approved training and completing a Provincially-approved assessment. Re-qualification is also required any time a police agency determines that an officer has not operated a CEW in accordance with any of the BC Provincial Policing Standards. Officers equipped with CEWs must also comply with the CID training requirements set out in BCPPS 3.2.2 (see below) and meet the selection criteria established by the police agency for CEW operator training. The Standard also requires that written records of CEW operator certification and requalification be maintained.

^{iv} BCPPS 3.2.2 CID Training requires the chief constable/chief officer/commissioner to ensure that all front-line police officers and supervisors, and recruits graduating from the police recruit training program have completed BC's Crisis Intervention and De-escalation (CID) Training course, or other provincially-approved CID training. Officers must also update their CID skills by completing provincially-approved training at least once every three years. Completion of the training is also required for any front-line police officer deemed by their police agency as unable to effectively utilize CID techniques. The Standard also requires that written records of CID training and requalification be maintained.

^v BCPPS 3.2.3 Use-of-Force Instructor Training requires the chief constable/chief officer/commissioner to ensure that use-of-force instructors have successfully completed a provincially-approved instructional skills course, and BC's Standardized Use-of-Force Instructor Course (SUFIC) or other provincially-approved training. These initial training requirements may be waived for persons who were authorized to act as use-of-force instructors in a BC police force prior to 1 April 2013. All use-of-force instructors (including those who are exempt from the initial training requirement) must also satisfy and maintain compliance with other prerequisites listed in the Standard, related to their service history and record. Qualification must be maintained by providing a minimum of 30 hours of use-of-force instruction each year and participating in professional workshops or courses at least once every two years. The Standard also provides guidance re. lapses in qualification and requires that written records of instructor qualification be maintained.