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TM-02-91 ***Evaluation of Telescopic Baton***

By Cpl. D. Kelly

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

Submitted by
Halifax Police Department

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EVALUATION OF TELESCOPIC BATON

The study completed on the telescopic baton was at the request of the C.I.D. Section, as they were seeking an alternative to the baton presently being used by this Department. The evaluation concluded that the baton was useful for plainclothes members as well as specialized teams such as E.R.T.

This baton was evaluated for uniform use. It was felt that the scabbard was unsafe and the lack of a strap on the handle made it hard for weapon retention. The cost factor was also a concern expressed by the evaluator during this testing.

Two concerns emerged; first, there is no general agreement among members about which is the best baton for use by patrol members, and the second concern is training in the use of batons.

Most members, if given an opportunity would be carrying any number of different types of batons, all based on personal taste, some requiring very little training to those requiring extensive training. There was a general concern about training in the use of the batons presently being carried. Some members have been without any updated baton training and cite this as the reason for not carrying or utilizing the weapon they are presently issued.

The telescopic baton appears from the evaluations performed to be a possible item for purchase for plainclothes and special units. The baton in use presently appears to be meeting the needs of our members as it requires limited training.

The main point still outstanding is the training question, whether it be in the use of a new baton or in the updating of training for batons presently being used.

Over the last several weeks, the writer has had an opportunity to field test the ASP Expandable Baton with positive results. The unit is approximately 7.5 inches in length with extension to almost 21 inches, which make it easy to hide on your person. There was a leather carrier provided for it; however, the writer carried the unit in his pants pocket or in his jacket pocket. The writer feels that the mesh type holder may be better for use in the field because of its long wearing properties. The unit is easy to use regardless of the user's strength, and no problem can be expected in extending the unit when necessary.

The writer made many people aware of its use by way of simple demonstrations at the police station and in the briefing areas of the building. The writer showed the baton to the C.I.D. supervisors who realized its potential for use by plainclothes and Drug Squad members.

The baton is currently in use at the Toronto Metropolitan Police Department by their special units, and the informal reports on its effectiveness are very good. The writer feels that for our special units, including the E.R. Team, this baton will go a long way to improve personal safety for our members.

The writer spoke to members of the Crown Prosecutor's office and was told that the baton's use by our members may come under use of force, Section 92(1)(b) of the Criminal Code of Canada. It was their opinion, that this baton would fall under the same restriction as any other item modified for use by the police. At this time, there is no case law in the Criminal Code in relation to its use or misuse by the police or others in this country.

The unit retails for approximately \$75.00 with extra cost for the carrier. However, it is possible that with a large order discounting may reduce the cost per unit.

