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Canadian Law Enforcement Forum 2011 Annual Report

Current Members

Co-Chairs: Michael Federico, Deputy Chief, Toronto Police Service
Hugh Stevenson, Superintendent, Ontario Provincial Police

Members: Marco Carrier, Inspector, Montreal Police
Dr. Christine Hall, MD, Canadian Police Research Centre
Joel Johnston, Sergeant, Vancouver Police Department
Jay Judin, Staff Sergeant, Force Review Officer, Calgary Police
Chris Lawrence, Ontario Police College
Steve Palmer, Executive Director, Canadian Police Research Centre
Lisa Sabourin, Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services
Pierre Savard, Commandant, Montreal Police
Bruce Stuart, Sergeant, Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Mike Tillotson, Staff Sergeant, Calgary Police Service
Dave Walsh, Superintendent, Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Observers: Vesna Knezevic, Public Safety Canada
Donna Woods, Defence Research and Development Canada

Introduction

Committee Name

In 2010, the CACP established a subcommittee, the Canadian Law Enforcement Forum (CLEF), to provide advice and counsel on matters related to police use-of-force. Its mandate includes the consideration of use-of-force technology and use-of-force modalities (e.g. techniques, policies, procedures and practices).

In August 2011 the President of the CACP established a Special Purpose Committee (SPC) to review the mandates and activities of all CACP committees to ensure that they continued to add value and to ensure that there was no duplication of effort among them. In their review the SPC questioned whether name *Canadian Law Enforcement Forum* (CLEF) conveyed sufficient information about its purpose/mandate. So in this context members of CLEF agreed to reconsider their committee's name.

Accordingly, in light of the Special Purpose Committee's observation about the ambiguity surrounding the name *Canadian Law Enforcement Forum*, members proposed

to rename the committee the *Use-of-Force Advisory Committee* (UFAC). This name was forwarded to the CACP Executive for approval.

In August, the CACP Executive requested that the committee consider incorporating a term to emphasize that the CACP only considers the “judicious” use of force in fulfilling police responsibilities. The committee will consider the request at its next meeting in September 2012.

Accomplishments

Use-of-Force Reporting

During 2011 and 2012 the committee explored the feasibility of developing a national use-of-force reporting process. It was agreed that in order to help the CACP develop consistent use-of-force reporting the committee could review and identify common traits or distinguishing features that are present in use-of-force reports across Canada. To do so the committee will make this subject a standing agenda item.

Training

The committee also reviewed police training and skills retention/perishability. Members were advised that the Police Sector Council literature review is close to completion and publication. Of interest is that the RCMP is considering moving from live fire training to simulation training. Preliminary studies suggest there is no loss in competence in those trained and there are savings associated to the reduction in range supervisors required and ammunition consumed. The RCMP is also researching whether yearly/annual recertification is necessary based on empirical data. The Federal Law Enforcement Training Centre in the USA is also reviewing live fire practice. The committee will continue to watch these developments in future meetings.

National Approach for Selecting Police Use-of-Force Technology

For some time the policing community has been examining ways to develop a common, defensible approval processes for the introduction of new use-of-force technologies (particularly less lethal technologies) into their inventory. During 2011 the committee continued to help develop a national approach. Members reviewed one proposal developed by the Canadian Police Research Centre (CPRC) and Defence Research and Development Canada (DRDC) in collaboration with policing stakeholders. Of particular focus was the development of a Statement of Requirement (SOR) document that would be the first step in assessing any technology or equipment.

Members noted that since the process starts with the identification of a *capability gap*, some agencies may need help in developing an analytical capacity. Members recognized, however, that many agencies have procurement processes that can help assess the need for equipment or weapons. It was agreed that the DRDC would help develop criteria that agencies can use to help them identify any capability gap.

Members also recognized that when using the process proposed by DRDC and CPRC they will need to access subject matter experts (SME). For example, in order to assess the health risks to the operator, subject, and bystanders associated to a particular weapon or technology access to medical experts will be required. Members reviewed developments that have occurred in the United Kingdom that might help here. In the UK the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) (comparable to the CACP) took the lead and established the need for a medical advisory panel. It then persuaded the government to invest. Currently, the UK government funds the panel. While no comparable developments have occurred in Canada, members agreed that the model has relevance for the Canadian experience.

It was agreed that the committee would recommend to the CACP that it receive a presentation on the proposed approval process. As a result, on Saturday August 18, 2012, Ms. Vesna Knezevic, Manager Firearms and Operational Policing Policy Division, Public Safety Canada, Ms. Donna Wood, Project Manager, Conducted Energy Weapons Strategic Initiative (CEWSI), Defense Research and Development Canada Centre for Security Science, and committee chair, Deputy Chief Mike Federico, Toronto Police Service, participated in a conference call with the CACP Executive. The objective of the call was to:

- provide an overview of the work Public Safety Canada has been leading, in collaboration with Federal/Provincial/Territorial (FPT) Governments, to address how Less Lethal Weapons (LLWs) are approved for use by law enforcement in Canada, the context for that work, and the benefits to stakeholders;
- update CACP on the status of a collaborative research project between PS and Defense Research Development Canada (DRDC) to develop a Less Lethal Weapons (LLWs) approval process that could be applied to emerging less lethal technologies; and
- seek feedback on the approach recommended by DRDC, the role proposed for police services and the role that could be played by CACP in supporting implementation

While no decisions were needed, the CACP is now up-to-date with the progress of the LLW approval process and most of the issues that need to be faced.

Next Steps

The committee continues to focus on the agenda established in 2010, specifically:

- 1) Effective communication strategies that reflect the realities of operational police use of force – in particular highlighting what we do well.
- 2) Developing a national use of force reporting guideline. This item is considered a high priority because the development of consistent reporting criteria and methodology will help police officers articulate

and justify their use of force; and a greater degree of national consistency around the relevant data collection can benefit research, training, policy, accountability, supervision, governance, and public trust.

- 3) Use of force training - in particular issues of knowledge and skills perishability and the development of evidence based curriculum.
- 4) Studying the organizational impacts of the introduction of new training/techniques/technologies, particularly on police operations, budgets and infrastructure.
- 5) Police encounters with persons who are emotionally disturbed or suffering from mental illness.
- 6) Threat analysis related to officer/public safety on emerging or existing technology (e.g. lasers used against the public, and other new unlawful weapons).

Submitted by:

Co-Chairs

Superintendent Hugh Stevenson and Deputy Chief Mike Federico