

The Preservation of Perishable Skills

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Abstract

How law enforcement officers react during stressful encounters and the results of those encounters can create widespread media stories with long-reaching and long-lasting impacts. Law enforcement agencies should continuously evaluate use-of-force training to see what degree this type of training prepares law enforcement officers for stressful encounters. A survey of several Sheriff's offices and municipal police departments around Florida are included in this study to get a glimpse of where we are today.

Introduction

In most cases, police officers begin their formal training in the police academy, where they learn a lot of technical skills. These skills allow them to navigate through everyday conflicts, such as neighbor disputes and family disturbances and help them to survive potentially deadly incidents. When learning these skills, officers are told during training sessions to continually practice because the skills they are learning are perishable. This demand to maintain essential skills brings forth many questions. How well are police academies teaching recruits, and how well are their new skills being evaluated? What role does each officer have to maintain these skills throughout their career? What role does each law enforcement agency have to ensure officers are maintaining perishable skills? How do we know if our current in-service training programs are working? Are agencies trying to maintain minimum standards to meet accreditation requirements or focusing on the actual training needs of their officers? What is the cost of maintaining the status quo of our current training programs?

There will be several areas of high liability training discussed, but a focus will be on officer use-of-force. Over the past decade, there have been many controversial use-of-force incidents highlighted by the media, that suggest to the public there is room for improvement with the way police officers respond to resistance. Officer experiences suggest there is a need to improve how law enforcement training is implemented in the future. How many times have police officers been in situations where they could not quickly remember what to do to handle a particular problem? How often do officers feel like they "sort of understand" what to do when thinking about specific scenarios, and wished they had more training on a given topic? When these questions arise, it may be an indication that the training officers previously received was not retained. It also means that the demand to maintain necessary perishable skills is not being met. Although there have been several articles written, there has not been much scientific research on the effectiveness and retention of law enforcement training. This research paper is intended to discover what next steps agencies should consider taking from here. This paper will

build on the information currently available and hopefully inspire additional research to seek answers to these many questions.

Literature Review

One of the first budget items on the cutting board, when budgets are under constraint, is the training budget. Agencies tend to fall back to minimum state and federal requirements for training. This tendency is considered short-sighted. It does not take into consideration the possible negative legal and safety ramifications. Additionally, defense attorneys have access to studies showing the necessity for continued training to combat the loss of perishable skills. This data will undoubtedly be used against law enforcement agencies in court. Aside from the financial toll, the personal and emotional cost when losing a fellow officer in the line of duty or having an employee leave the job due to permanent disability, all need to be considered. (Rose, 2004)

One aspect of being a professional is to practice repeatedly and practice correctly. This effort will allow officers to become skilled and prepared in all components of the job. Skills such as those needed in the use of firearms do not come to us naturally. Different methods of training should be implemented, such as one-on-one training and scenario-based training. Combining these with the use of technology can provide safe, efficient, and practical training opportunities. In the end, superior skills that can only be obtained by repetitive training can be the difference between life and death. (Knight, 2007)

Even skills that may appear to be simple can be very complex and require routine practice. Examples of this are building entry and building searches. In these cases, officers need to be both tactical and methodical. They may appear to be routine tasks but have many aspects to be considered. How to approach a corner, room and hallway lighting, how to approach and enter a room, where to go once they enter a room, what to do when they contact someone inside, how to search a room, where could a person hide, how many officers should they have for a task, speed of movement, what noises to be aware of, are just some of the issues officers need to be concerned with when completing these tasks. Only by repetitive training will an officer become good at these responsibilities. (Oldham, 2006)

Another important perishable skill is the skill used in emergency driving. Emergency driving is one of the most dangerous actions that police officers make daily. Many traffic fatalities are the result of poor decisions and a lack of knowledge in emergency driving skills. Officers experience much stress during high-speed and emergency driving, which can diminish an officer's capabilities. The driving environment is something that changes during a pursuit or emergency response, such as traffic and pedestrian volume, road conditions, speeds, and weather. One thing that can help officers to overcome these issues is regular training. Regular training will allow officers to become more capable of making the right decisions based on the circumstances they face. The use of simulators can enhance the training immensely and provide the "rush" that officers can feel in real-life situations. Agency liability is another factor that one needs to consider. One of the first items that an attorney will want to see in a lawsuit stemming from emergency driving is the officers' training records. Complete and routine training

will help an agency to lessen its liability and provide for a safer situation for all involved, to include the officer and the public. (Schembra, 2002)

Use-of-force and defensive tactics are essential areas of training that requires much attention. One reason for this is because use-of-force is rarely needed. An IACP study showed on average, only 3 out of 10,000 calls for service will require some type of use-of-force (Sanow, 2001). Physical force is used 85% of the time in place of intermediate or lethal weapons. If officers are not using physical force on the streets regularly but will mostly rely on physical force when force is needed, the only way for officers to become proficient is by repetitive training. Despite this need, the typical amount of in-service training that agencies dedicate to use-of-force is low. The lack of training with this perishable skill can lead to improper application of force. (Sanow, 2001)

One major component in determining whether an officer survives a lethal threat is the personal capabilities of an officer. Three primary capabilities involve an officer's thinking process, the ability to maintain control over his/her emotions, and the capacity in which an officer understands use-of-force tactics. Standard training in these areas is typically geared towards training groups of officers, and there is no effort made to vary training to match an individual's capabilities. Even officers that excel in defensive tactics will not have a complete grasp of every concept. (Baratta, 1998)

A moderate amount of stress to the sympathetic nervous system can provide enhanced perceptions in individual senses and increase an officer's level of awareness. However, a more significant amount of stress, such as that experienced by officers in use-of-force incidents, can impair cognitive function and even cause distortions of perception. One example of this involves an officer's vision. During high-stress situations, vision can be compromised by up to 70%. Adverse reactions, such as loss of vision, can be very problematic when making use-of-force decisions. However, with repetitive training, officers can be provided stress reduction techniques. In time, officers can reduce the adverse effects that high levels of stress have on their abilities. Integrating training that is focused on enhancing resilience with existing use-of-force training should be cost-effective and provide more desired results. (Andersen, 2016)

There are several other factors associated with use-of-force incidents that highlight the importance of repetitive training. Use-of-force incidences happen without prior notice, can be life-threatening, happens in close quarters, the offender has the advantage of knowing they are going to attack and an officer then has to take time to comprehend the action and react, leaving no time to think about options. These situations create a high degree of stress for the officer. Many other factors can adversely affect an officer's likelihood of overcoming a use-of-force situation. Age of the offender, visibility, the number of suspects, and an officer may be distracted by something else that is taking place during a call. It takes regular preparation to be ready to engage and survive a use-of-force situation. (Baratta, 1998)

Officer complacency can appear after years of working as an officer. Some veteran officers, especially those with 20-years or more, can develop a mentality that there is nothing new that they can learn about law enforcement. Of course, anyone who understands that learning is a lifelong process knows this mindset is false. Complacent officers may, unfortunately, learn the same when faced with a use-of-force situation where uncertainty and hesitation can creep in because they have not experienced it in a while. Also aging can be a factor in skill retention and reaction. It also affects hearing, sight,

muscle response, and perception. It takes ongoing training to overcome these deficits. Regular training allows for officers to modify their tactics as needed based on their abilities. The officers that are high performers throughout their entire career are oftentimes those who are willing to learn continually and train continually. (Olson, 2016)

Controversial arrests also highlight the importance of use-of-force training. The New York Police Department outlined a new training program after an incident involving a man named Eric Garner, that broke down relations between the police department and the minority community. A review of the incident brought forward the fact that physical and verbal actions used by police officers are perishable. Relying on officers to maintain police academy training in the use-of-force throughout their careers is insufficient. New NYPD training programs will incorporate expanded police academy training and ongoing annual training for its officers. (Bruinius, 2014)

Legal costs significantly increased for law enforcement after 2010 from police-misconduct cases, which also led to an increased distrust in law enforcement by the general public. Of the ten largest police agencies in the United States, legal costs in these cases increased 48% from 2010-2015. During that timeframe, those cities paid out \$1.02 billion. The expectation is that better training will result in a reduction in future legal fees. (Andersen, 2016)

Law enforcement training begins at the police academy and continues until officers are ready to work on the streets. An average police department in the United States will spend approximately \$100,000 during this preparation time, and there is much information that recruits need to learn and retain. Police departments are spending a lot to prepare officers for the streets. How well is this training working, and how much is being retained? Research has indicated police officers may not be as ready as previously believed. Challenges that police officers face today are not the same that officers faced in the year's past, and agencies have to modify training to meet the needs of today's officers using training techniques that work best for adult learners. (Lewinski, 2019a)

Use-of-force by a police officer is typically applied when they are effecting an arrest. It also happens when they or another person is being assaulted or battered. Most of those who resist police officers are under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Whether impaired or not, they are under some degree of emotional stress. Officers need to recognize and be aware of these factors and know how to mitigate a threat with problem-solving abilities, communication, and other de-escalation techniques. Police officers need to have a broader skillset than most other professions and know when and how to apply them properly. During most police academy training programs, recruits are never exposed to the type of intense conflict that they will eventually encounter on the street. This lack of exposure is unique to law enforcement. Other professions will use real-life simulations or on-the-job training before graduating. A professional pilot will have flown many hours and under all types of conditions before being certified and firefighters train with scenarios that use actual fires. (Lewinski, 2019b)

The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing provided some recommendations to improve law enforcement training to include changing the culture of police academy programs and providing federal funding to work with academies to bring consistency to training standards across the country. It also looked at ways to lower training costs for agencies by providing training that does not require officers to travel away from their home agency by using technology such as web-based learning and

independent learning software. It also discusses agency field training programs and the use of the 45-year-old San Jose field training model that is still being used by many departments. This field training model does not use current adult learning methods or encourage problem-based learning. (Presidential Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015)

For many years, police trainers have been seeking a thorough evaluation of training methodology to find efficient and cost-effective ways to conduct training while maintaining the integrity of the training techniques. In the past, most evaluations of training programs consisted of the overall feeling of instructors and whether or not they think a training program is working, not on empirical data. It was not until 2016 that a large-scale objective experiment was conducted to evaluate training methods. (O'Neill, 2019)

Police departments have identified the need for training that focuses on decision-making skills. It is believed that an officers' inability to use decision-making skills properly has led to over a billion-dollar loss in civil cases. Most police departments use block style training in part due to budgetary restraints. Block style training has been identified as a critical weakness in police training. This is due to a rapid loss in any type of perishable skill that is taught using block training. Many police academies use some type of evaluation of skills that are taught; however, these evaluations are typically subjective and often completed in group settings. The academy instruction is so crucial because many officers (two-thirds) will not have a field training program after they graduate from a police academy. Then an insufficient amount of in-service training will be provided after that. (Lewinski, 2019c)

An analysis conducted at three regional police academies within the U.S. took a close look at learning and performance. Three separate experiments were conducted using these three regional academies and three different types of training. These training types were compared to see what lessons could be learned. (O'Neill, 2019)

After conducting a study of block style training, it was observed after instruction the ability for a student to repeat a complex skill accurately was at an average of 71% (range from 21%-88%) and after four weeks, the average decreased to 59% (range of 8% to 81%). After eight weeks, officers were able to complete the critical step of a simple skill 29% of the time. Despite the officers being unable to master these skills, they reported feeling "somewhat" to "very" confident in their abilities. Similar studies were completed, also resulting in a documented loss of retention in essential skills. Despite these concerning results, a positive finding in the studies showed that the instructors were well prepared and skilled. It appeared if the same instructors were allowed to use modern and scientific training techniques for learning; the results will improve. (Lewinski, 2019c)

Both society and the law enforcement profession have high expectations when it comes to training. It is crucial to analyze how the profession is doing. It is the goal to find the best training programs that will provide officers with the tools and skills that they need. The method of teaching that has been completed in the past not only has a low retention rate, but it also does not prepare officers for real-life conditions and scenarios. Most training scenarios are foreseeable, and an officer can predict what is going to happen. In real-life situations, a suspect's actions are unpredictable, and the environment can change rapidly. Finding a way to combine the block style instruction with a simulation

that can provide dynamic and changing environments is ideal. It is also vital to incorporate values, ethics, and legal parameters in every training situation. (Lewinski, 2019d)

After spending much time analyzing types of law enforcement training, the outcome shows that scenario-based training is nearest to real-life experience. Scenario-based training can be enhanced with the use of actors who can become more realistic characters. Anything that can be done to immerse recruits into the real world of law enforcement is encouraged. (Lewinski, 2019e)

Police agencies regularly list recruitment and retention at the top of their priority lists. However, some of these agencies seem to miss the correlation that training has with that priority. Providing employees with quality training helps them to feel appreciated and allows them to feel challenged. These are attributes that employees are looking for when determining where to work and whether they want to stay after being hired. Training can also lead to employee advancement and provides an opportunity for them to earn more income. It may also provide them with additional ways to contribute to an organization. (Fantozzi, 2018)

Methods

In seeking to identify how Florida law enforcement agencies are preventing the deterioration of important, and at times, life-saving perishable skills, data was collected through the dissemination of surveys to several Florida law enforcement organizations. Surveys were sent to a random selection of 14 law enforcement agencies consisting of 2 agencies from within 7 Florida regions. The regions were identified by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE), which breaks up the state into 7 regions. One municipal police department and one sheriff's office were selected from each region. The number of sworn officers at each agency varied and ranged from eleven to 1,382 sworn officers/deputies. Combined, these agencies are responsible for training and maintain the perishable skills of 2,524 sworn law enforcement employees.

Region 1

Havana Police Department (13 sworn)

Suwannee County Sheriff's Office (48 sworn)

Region 2

Jacksonville Beach Police Department (64 sworn)

Baker County Sheriff's Office (52 sworn)

Region 3

Port Richey Police Department (18 sworn)

Sumter County Sheriff's Office (127 sworn)

Region 4

Umatilla Police Department (11 sworn)

Volusia County Sheriff's Office (433 sworn)

Region 5

Aventura Police Department (88 sworn)
Broward County Sheriff's Office (1,382 sworn)

Region 6

Glades County Sheriff's Office (31 sworn)
Palmetto Police Department (39 sworn)

Region 7

Gulf Breeze Police Department (29 sworn)
Santa Rosa County Sheriff's Office (189 sworn)

The survey questions are designed to identify the frequency of use-of-force training, how the frequency is determined, what, if any, evaluation methods are used to determine if the current training methods are adequate, and when changes to training curriculum or training methods need to be made. The survey also examines if agencies incorporate stress awareness and stress mediation techniques within their curriculums. Do agencies use scenario-based training incorporating decision-making skills, or do they use classroom block style of training? Finally, the survey asks to what degree their training goals are restricted due to budget constraints and the percentage of their agency's operations budget dedicated to training expenses.

There were some weaknesses identified in this survey. The random selection of agencies involved separating all agencies into their assigned regions and determine whether they were classified as municipal police departments or county sheriff's offices. This selection process provides an excellent statewide representation of law enforcement but does not include state agencies, school board police departments, or University police departments. The survey did not request the responders to provide their names in order to elicit more accurate responses. However, due to some of the agencies only having one person involved in training management, true anonymity was impossible to establish.

Results

Of the 14 law enforcement agencies that received the survey, I received nine responses, for a response rate of 64%. Within the returned surveys, some of the respondents skipped questions. The agencies that responded are responsible for training a total of 1,007 sworn Florida law enforcement personnel. The survey consisted of 15 questions.

QUESTIONS 1-4:

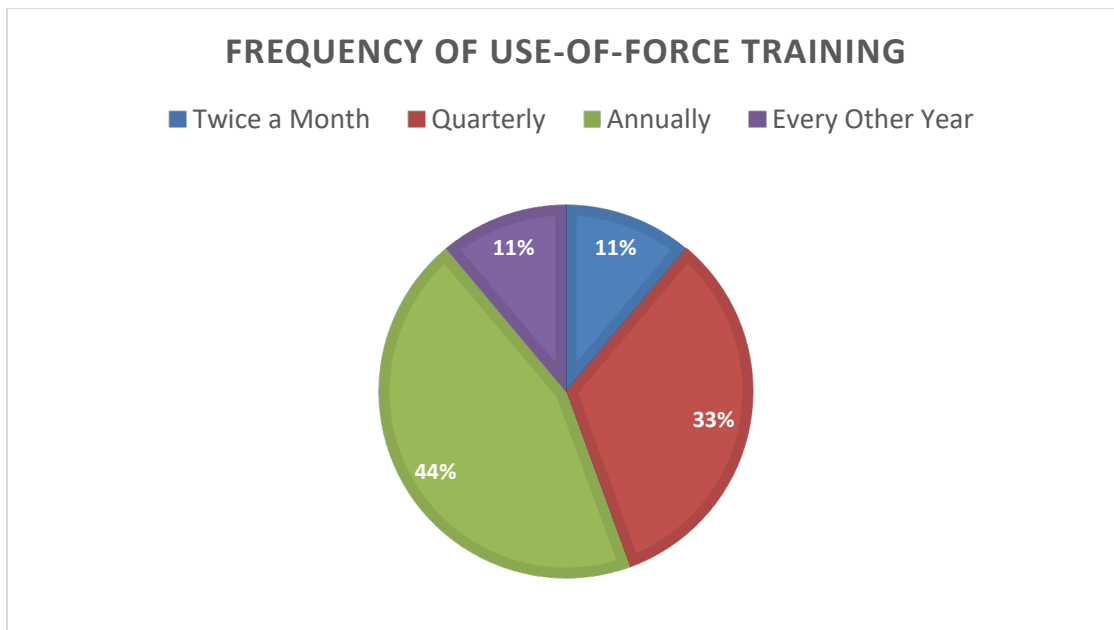
All of the respondents have oversight responsibilities over their agency's training units. One of the questions requested the respondent to identify their rank, and the responses ranged from Sergeant to Chief of Police. Another question asked them to identify whether they worked for a municipal police department or a sheriff's office. Five (56%) were from municipal police departments, and four (44%) were from sheriff's offices.

I also asked about the geographical locations they served, and four (44%) described their communities as rural, whereas five (56%) described their communities as urban/suburban.

The next question asked about the region within the State of Florida their agency is located, and six (67%) replied they are in central Florida, two (22%) responded they are in northeast Florida, and one (11%) answered they are in southeast Florida.

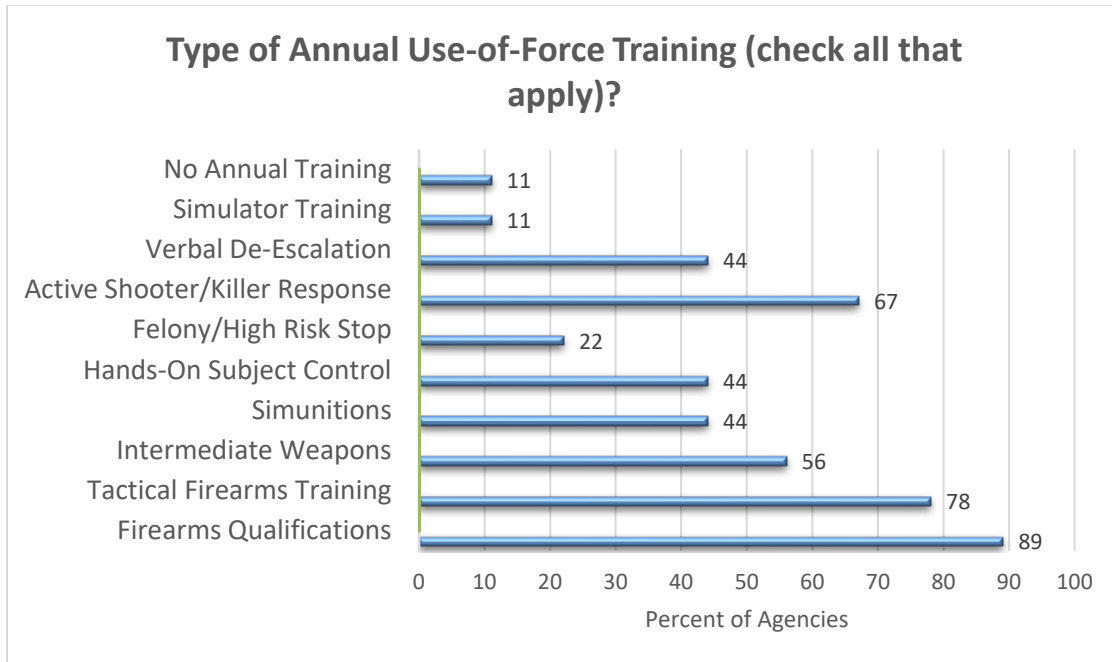
QUESTION 5:

After the geographical and personal questions were complete, questions went into training related to use-of-force. The first of those questions inquired as to how often the agencies hold any type of use-of-force training. One (11%) responded they train twice a month, three (33%) replied they train quarterly, four (45%) of the respondents reported they train annually, and one (11%) reported they train every other year.



QUESTION 6:

The next question asks what type of use-of-force training they participate in at least once annually. Eight (89%) of the agencies conduct annual firearms qualifications, seven (78%) have tactical firearms training, five (55%) train using intermediate weapons, four (44%) use simunitions training, four (44%) have hands-on subject control training, two (22%) conduct felony/high-risk stop training, six (67%) have active killer/shooter training, four (44%) train in verbal de-escalation, one (11%) use simulators during training, and one (11%) does not conduct annual use-of-force training.



QUESTION 7:

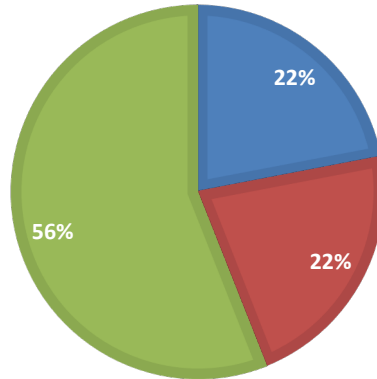
When asked about the training style that their agencies mostly incorporate into their use-of-force training (used more than 50% of the time), seven (78%) reported using scenario-based or decision-making training, and two (22%) reported using online training. Respondents could have selected "other" and filled in the blank with any other type of training style used; however, this option was not selected. Respondents could also select all options that applied.

QUESTION 8:

Next, agencies were asked when they provide use-of-force training to their employees. Two (22%) agencies responded they conduct training during their employees typically assigned workday. Two (22%) stated they use a separate workday, specifically used for training, and five (56%) reported using a combination of regular works days and separate training days. Respondents could have selected "other" and filled in the blank; however, this option was not selected.

ON WHAT DAYS DO YOU TRAIN?

■ During a Normal Shift ■ A Separate Training Day is Used ■ A Combination

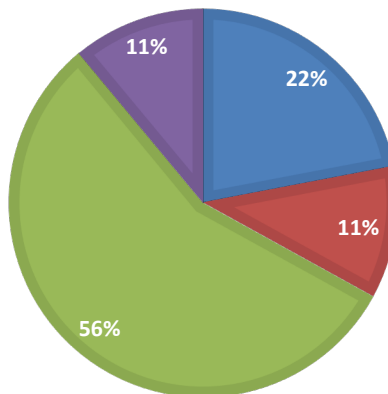


QUESTION 9:

Agencies were asked how often they evaluate the effectiveness of their training programs. Five (56%) say they evaluate once annually, one (11%) evaluate semi-annually, one (11%) evaluates every other year, and two (22%) do not evaluate at all.

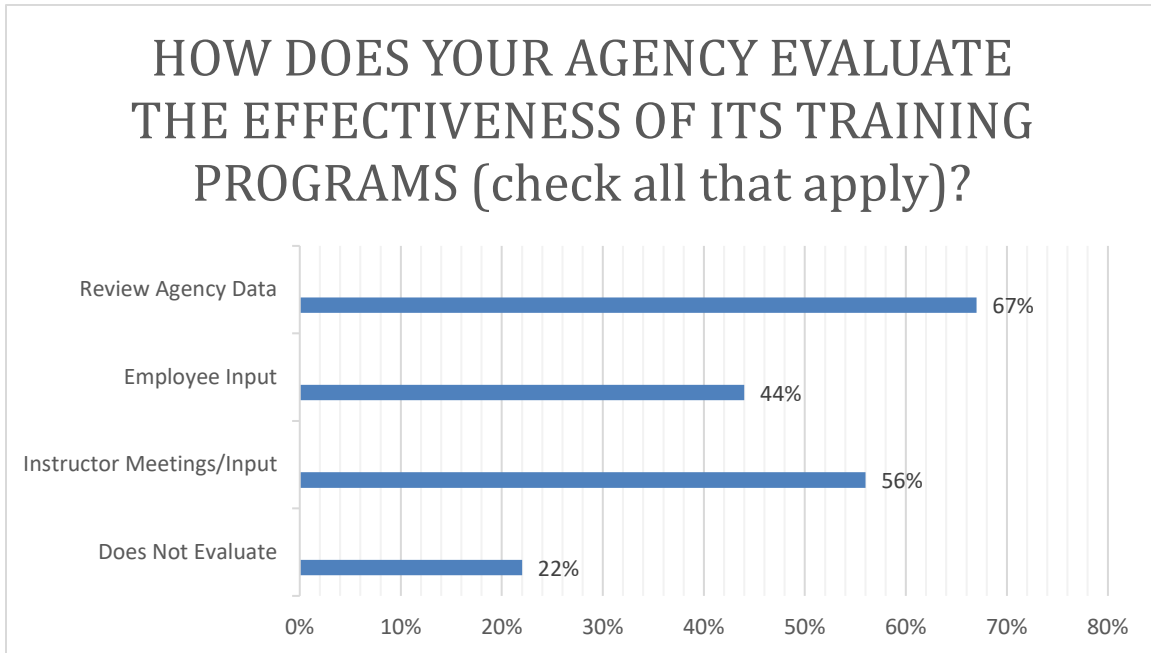
HOW OFTEN DOES YOUR AGENCY EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUR TRAINING PROGRAM?

■ Does Not Evaluate ■ Semi-Annually ■ Annually ■ Every Other Year



QUESTION 10:

The next question looks at how agencies evaluate the effectiveness of their training programs. Two (22%) do not evaluate, and five (56%) rely on instructor meetings and input. Four (44%) use employee input, six (67%) review agency data, such as levels of resistance reports, agency complaints, etc., and respondents could have selected "other" and filled in the blank; however, this option was not selected. Respondents could also select all options that applied.



QUESTION 11:

Respondents were asked to state whether they made any changes to their training curriculum based on these evaluations, and three (33%) responded they had. The changes were:

- 1) "Yes, increased scenario-based training."
- 2) "Training to reflect current case law / current events / legal decisions. Just recently took out "sleeper hold" for use of force but only on life or death situation (based on current events)."
- 3) "Yes. Many programs have been implemented due to officers' requests or needs."

Respondents could have selected "other" and filled in the blank; however, this option was not selected.

QUESTION 12:

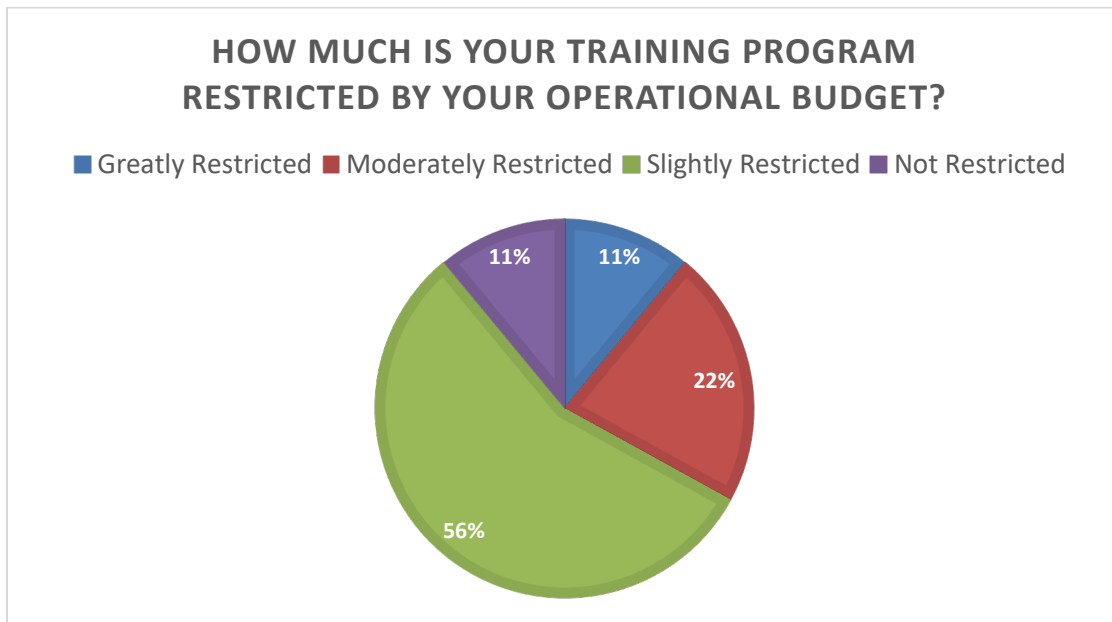
Respondents were asked whether their agency incorporates stress management methods during training, and seven (78%) responded yes, while two (22%) responded no.

QUESTION 13:

The next question was whether or not the agencies incorporated mental health wellness during training, such as PTSD; however, this training did not need to be in conjunction with use-of-force training. Seven (78%) responded yes, and two (22%) said no. Even though the numbers were the same for the number of agencies that implement stress management and mental health wellness, some agencies answered yes for one and no for the other.

QUESTION 14:

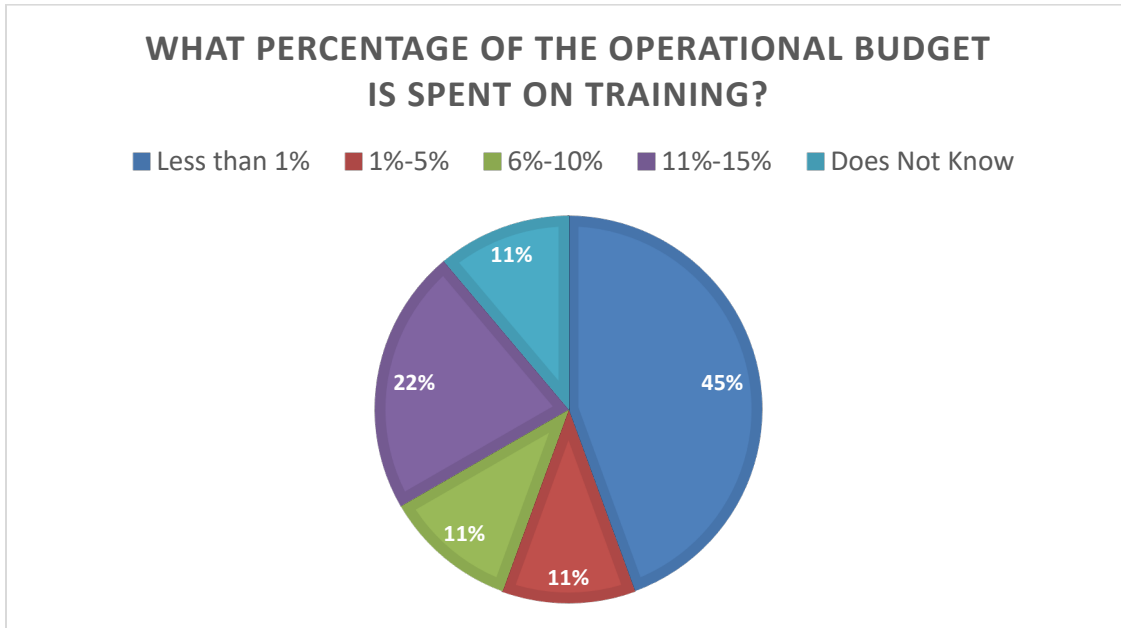
Respondents were asked how much of their training program is restricted by their agency's operational budget. Five (56%) felt the training program is slightly restricted, two (22%) thought it is moderately restricted, one (11%) thought it is greatly restricted, and one (11%) felt it is not restricted at all.



QUESTION 15:

The final question asked what percentage of the agency's overall operational budget is allocated for training. This question restricted the answer to law enforcement training only for sheriff's offices. Four (45%) responded their agency spends less than 1% of the operational budget, one (11%) responded they spend between 1%-5%, one

(11%) responded they spend between 6% - 10% of their budget, two (22%) responded spending between 11%-15%. Initially, two did not answer the survey question because they did not know what percentage of their operating budget is spent on training. However, after calling and speaking directly to one of the respondents, they could determine they spent less than 1%, and this is incorporated in the final number (four or 44%). That left one (11%) that did not know the answer to this question.



Discussion

Although I hoped for a higher response rate than 64%, and there appeared to be a higher volume of responses from agencies that consider themselves from central Florida (67%), I did receive a response from at least one agency from all 7 FDLE designated regions of the state. Also, the couple of questions that respondents skipped did not appear to have an overly adverse effect on the results. For example, one respondent skipped the question requesting they provide a return email address.

Sometimes, in reviewing answers, it created more questions and helped identify potential weaknesses in the original question. For example, one agency stated they hold use-of-force training twice a month. Does this mean they train each officer twice a month or do they have some form of use-of-force training within their facility, but it may not be for the same officers? Despite having a few additional questions, the results provide a good glimpse into how Florida law enforcement training prioritizes these forms of training.

As it relates to the different types of use-of-force training, a couple of crucial points include 11% of the respondents who do not provide any kind of annual use-of-force training. The most common type of training provided to officers was firearms qualifications (89%). Although it has been argued at accreditation conferences that firearms qualifications should not be considered training because it is merely a

demonstration of proficiency and not a training program. The Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation, Inc still considers firearms qualifications as proof of training, so I included it in this survey. Only 44% of the agencies train annually in verbal de-escalation and only 44% train annually in hands-on subject control techniques. This is in spite of the fact, according to Sanow (2001), that physical force is used 85% of the time when subjects resist officers. A fair amount of the law enforcement incidents that have exploded with media coverage, which in part has created some citizen outrage in the past couple of years, have involved some aspect of those skill sets being used. (Commission, 2020)

Another interesting aspect is that 67% of the agencies evaluate the effectiveness of their use-of-force programs at least once a year. 78% evaluate them at least once every other year; however only 33% of the agencies reported that they had made any changes to their use-of-force curriculums after conducting these evaluations.

The majority of agencies (78%) reported incorporating stress management techniques or mental health wellness within their overall agency training programs. This use was nice to see, but these programs' incorporation does not appear to have been associated with use-of-force training.

Finally, the review of training budgets was interesting because the most significant number of respondents (44%) reported spending less than 1% of their operational budget on training; however, 67% of the respondents felt their budget is not restricting their training program at all or only restricts it slightly. Many agencies have been trending towards in-house training where officers are sent to instructor school and can train others within their agency, which dramatically limits travel expenditures. 78% of the agencies reported they conduct training on either their typical working day or use a combination of regular working days and separate training days, which likely limits overtime. Despite these efforts, I question whether or not using less than 1% of the budget gives their training the prioritization that it deserves. Some of these same agencies state within their annual reports that providing training for their officers is one of their agency's top priorities. Does spending less than 1% reflect the level of importance that is publicly portrayed? An example from one of the agencies surveyed is that they have an operational budget of \$1,345,965 in the fiscal year 2020; however, they have a training budget of \$5,000. That equates to 0.4% of their operating budget. There is no known answer to the question of, how much should we spend, because each agencies has its own training needs and objectives. However, if spending less than 1% of the operational budget has been considered adequate by those who oversee training, I wonder what they could accomplish if they increased the spending to 5% or more. What additional opportunities would be discovered, and could those opportunities create a safer environment for the officers when encountering stressful incidents where use-of-force is implemented?

Recommendations

I recommend agencies review their training needs and priorities, and then determine if their actions, whether in budgeting or modifying curriculums, meet those needs. Lewinski (2019c) documented that two-thirds of officers in the U.S. will not have the benefit of participating in a field training program. It seems imperative that in-service training is implemented in a way that both provides appropriate training, but also evaluates the skill level of officers. It is easy to watch current events around us and see its effect on morale, community trust, local economies, and so on, but what are we doing within our agencies to limit the chances of being the City or the agency on display. Sometimes it is beyond the control of an agency to prevent when political ideologies override facts and data.

Many agencies listed recruitment and retention as top priorities. Having a robust training program will likely assist with those goals as well. Training reinforces professional behavior and appearance, and as discussed by Fantozzi (2018), this creates an environment where employees feel they are appreciated. Agencies that invest in training are also investing in their employees. Employees who do not feel adequately trained are more likely to be unsure of themselves when patrolling the streets and acting in stressful situations. One way to alleviate that anxiety is to move to an agency that provides essential training and demonstrates their desire to keep their employees safe.

The two areas of use-of-force training that law enforcement seems to be doing consistently well are firearms and active killer responses. Those are areas that were highly reviewed after major national incidents and rightfully so. However, the remaining topics, such as verbal de-escalation and hands-on subject control skills, could be used daily, but are rarely covered in training. Even intermediate weapons use is only covered by just over half of the agencies surveyed (55%). Knowing how to use proper techniques and equipment in high-stress circumstances will likely increase the officer's ability to control a person or circumstances while lowering the possibility of injury to the officer or a criminal suspect with who they are in contact.

Based on these results, some agencies will need to either start training more in use-of-force, outside of firearms and active killer response, or begin a better documentation process. Surely some of these conversations (training) are taking place during daily briefings, or they should be if not. Reviewing a video of a case and discussing the various options related to de-escalation, selecting intermediate weapons, and thinking about other possibilities that could lead to a better outcome are forms of training. Unfortunately, not all of these training opportunities are adequately documented. Some agencies may report they do not train in these areas because they do not have a roster sheet and lesson plan, but they actually do.

Lieutenant Andy Leisenring began his 20-year law enforcement career in March 2001, serving the citizens of Michigan. In 2007, he became a police officer for the City of Venice in Florida. He transferred to the Detective Bureau in 2009 and served there for five years. In 2015, his promotion to Sergeant returned him to the Patrol Division. He transferred back to the Detective Bureau in 2017 to serve as the Detective Sergeant and, for three months, also served as the Acting Support Services Division Commander. In 2018, he returned to the Patrol Division due to his promotion to Lieutenant. He currently serves as the Special Operations Commander. Lieutenant Leisenring earned a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice from Ferris State University in Michigan and a Master's Degree in Criminal Justice from Boston University.

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Appendix A

Survey Questions

Introduction:

I am Lieutenant Andy Leisenring from the Venice Police Department and have developed this survey as part of a research project for the Florida Department of Law Enforcement Senior Leadership Program. The purpose of this survey is to examine the style and frequency of Florida law enforcement's use of force training. Your participation in this survey is greatly appreciated.

If you are working for a Sheriff's Office, please consider law enforcement training only when responding to these questions.

Background Information:

1) What type of agency are you employed with?

Municipal Police Department
County Sheriff's Office

2) What type of geographical area is the community you serve in (select the best answer)?

Urban/Suburban
Rural

3) What is your rank and current assignment?

Your answer

4) What region of Florida is your agency located?

Northwest
Northeast
Central
Southwest
Southeast

Use-of-Force Questions:

5) How often does your agency conduct use-of-force related training (select the one that is the closest match)?

- Twice a Month
- Monthly
- Quarterly
- Annually
- Every other Year
- Does not conduct training

6) What type of use-of-force training does your agency conduct, at least annually (check all that apply)?

- Firearms Qualifications
- Tactical Firearms Training
- Intermediate Weapons
- Force-on-Force (Simunitions)
- Hands-On Subject Control
- Felony/High Risk Stops
- Active Shooter/Killer Response
- Verbal De-Escalation
- Other:

7) What style of use-of-force training does your agency primarily use (the selected style is used more than 50% of the time)?

- Block Style Classroom Training
- Scenario Based/Decision Making Training
- Online Training
- Other:

8) How does your agency conduct use of force training?

- When employees are working a normal shift.
- A separate training day is used.
- Both

General Training Questions:

9) How often does your agency evaluate the effectiveness of your training programs?

- Does not Evaluate
- Semi-Annually
- Annually
- Every Other Year
- Other:

10)How does your agency evaluate the effectiveness of your training programs (Check all that apply)?

- Does not Evaluate
- Instructor Meetings/Input
- Employee Input
- Review Agency Data (use-of-force, complaints, etc.)
- Other:

11)Have you made any changes to your training curriculum based on formal evaluations, and if so, what changes (please write your response below)?

Your answer

12)Does your agency incorporate stress management methods during training? This training does not need to be in conjunction with use of force training.

- Yes
- No

13)Does your agency incorporate mental health wellness during training (PTSD, etc.)? This training does not need to be in conjunction with use of force training.

- Yes
- No

14)How much is your training program restricted by your agency's operational budget?

- Greatly Restricted
- Moderately Restricted
- Slightly Restricted
- Not Restricted

15)What percentage of your agency's overall operational budget is allocated for training? This is for law enforcement training only, please exclude corrections training for Sheriff's Office personnel.

Less than 1%

1%-5%

6%-10%

11%-15%

16%-20%

Over 20%