

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS (Professionalism in Law Enforcement) Operational Level Requirements

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1. INTRODUCTION

Traffic policing has changed considerably over the last few years and is poised to change even more drastically over the next few years. Traffic officers will have to be subjected to a program of structured training to equip them with the immense task to re-establish (traffic) order in the society. Officers in this country are generally not trained to render professional traffic policing services in an effective and efficient manner.

The transformation that this country is undergoing will exacerbate the demands placed on officers.

Apart from the traditional traffic orientated functions, officers will be confronted with wider policing aspects, ie municipal/metropolitan police services. The responsible authorities in conjunction with the private sector and NGO's should become more involved with the training of traffic officers.

The following extract from a web-page "*10 Reasons Cops are Different*" reflects this aspect:

"Perhaps it weighs only 2 ounces overall. Large ones may run to 4 ounces. But when that badge is pinned on, there is a weight unknown to most law enforcement officers. The true weight of the badge is not overcome by muscle, not found in the gym, not measured on a scale. This weight requires a strength and conditioning for which few officers are trained. The badge is not just pinned on a chest, it is pinned on a lifestyle. The heaviness of the badge makes the law enforcement officer different from other professionals." (www.thethinblueline.org).

Law enforcement officers are seen as figures of authority. People deal with them differently and treat them differently, even when they are not working. When a problem occurs, everyone looks to the officer to 'take charge' to 'solve the problem'." They can only do this if they are trained to do so, in a manner which will strengthen the trust between the public and the police.

The quasi-military environment in which they work, and the fact that they are highly visible, subjects their every move to scrutiny by affected members of society. Recent negative criticism leveled against the policing fraternity in general should serve as a wake-up call to all of us.

2. CAPACITY BUILDING

“Capacity refers to the power, ability or faculty for doing some particular thing. Within the context of systemic reform, capacity is the ability of the policing system to help officers meet more challenging standards. Logically, if the capacity of a system is insufficient for accomplishing a desired goal, that capacity may be increased in a variety of ways:

- *by enhancing the capabilities and improving the performance of officers;*
- *by adding additional resources to the policing system (personnel, materials and/or technology);*
- *by restructuring the ways in which work is organized; and*
- *by restructuring the ways in which services are delivered” (Capacity Building and Systematic Reform).*

2.1 WHAT THEN IS CAPACITY BUILDING?

Capacity building is more than training and includes the following:

- Human resource development – the process of equipping officers with the understanding, skills and access to information, knowledge and training that enables them to perform effectively.
- Organizational development – the elaboration of management structures, processes and procedures, not only within organizations, but also management of the relationships between the different organizations and sectors (public, private and community).
- Institutional and legal framework development – making legal and regulatory changes to enable organizations, institutions and agencies at all levels and in all sectors to enhance officers’ capacities.

2.2 WHY IS CAPACITY BUILDING NEEDED?

- The issue of capacity is critical and the scale of need is enormous, but appreciation of the problem is low.
- The link between needs and supply is weak.
- There is a lack of realistic funding.
- There is a need for support for change.
- Training institutions are isolated – communications are poor.

- Development of training materials is ineffective.
- Alternative ways of capacity building are not adequately recognized (Understanding Capacity Building: <http://www.nsd.an.ac.in/capacity>).

3. **STATUS QUO**

The training of traffic officers in South Africa is totally inadequate and fragmented.

4. **STATUTORY TRAINING**

The Road Traffic Act, 1989 (Act 29 of 1989) prescribes as follows:

“(2) No person shall be appointed in terms of subsection (1) as an authorized officer unless he has been registered in terms of section 5: Provided that any person who is not so registered may be appointed once on probation as an authorized officer for a period not exceeding 12 months or for such further period as the Administrator may approve, providing it is a condition of appointment that such person shall during such period of probation comply with the competence and registration requirements prescribed for the specific category of appointment.

(3) Any person appointed under subsection (1) as an authorized officer, shall upon his appointment be issued with a certificate of appointment by the Administrator, local authority, person or authority concerned, appointing him.”

There is a number of accredited traffic training academies in South Africa. An approved curriculum is presented over a 7 –month period. This training complies with the requirements for municipal/metropolitan police services.

Very little if any, refresher courses in respect of the road traffic legislation is offered. This means that an officer who completes his basic compulsory training may thereafter not receive any training for years. The constant changes in traffic legislation may therefore never reach such officers with the resultant insecurity and poor performance.

Follow-up training is normally provided by the training units at the larger traffic departments, and is in most cases not structured and/or available to the smaller agencies.

The following acts affect or will affect the work performance of traffic officers:

- The Constitution of South Africa Act, Act 108 of 1996
- The Road Traffic Act, Act 29 of 1989
- The National Road Traffic Act, Act 93 of 1996
- The National Roads Act, Act 54 of 1971
- The National Road Safety Act, Act 9 of 1972
- The Road Traffic Laws Rationalization Act, Act 47 of 1998
- The Cross Border Road Transport Act, Act 4 of 1998
- The Urban Transport Act, Act 78 of 1977
- The Road Transportation Act, Act 74 of 1977

- The South African Roads Boards Act, Act 74 of 1988
- Gauteng Interim Minibus Taxi-type Services Act, Act 11 of 1997
- The Criminal Procedures Act, Act 51 of 1977
- The Administrative Adjudication of Road Traffic Offences Act, Act 46 of 1998
- The Road Traffic Management Corporation Act, Act 20 of 1999
- The South African Police Services Act, Act 68 of 1995
- The Municipal Structures Act, Act 117 of 1998
- The Municipal Systems Bill, 2000
- The Magistrates Court Act, Act 32 of 1944
- The Explosives Act, Act 26 of 1956
- The Arms and Ammunition Act, Act 117 of 1992
- The Dangerous Weapons Act, Act 71 of 1968
- The Domestic Violence Act, Act 116 of 1998
- The Liquor Act, Act 27 of 1989
- The Prevention of Organized Crime Act, Act 121 of 1998
- The Labour Relations Act, Act 66 of 1995
- The Basic Conditions of Employment Act, Act 75 of 1997
- The Regulation of Gatherings Act, Act 205 of 1993
- The Sheriffs Act, Act 90 of 1986
- The Civil Protection Act, Act 67 of 1977
- The Disaster Management Bill
- The Promotion of Access to Information Act, No 2 of 2000
- The Prevention of Illegal Eviction From and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act, No 19 of 1998
- By-laws

5. DISTANCE LEARNING

There are three (3) major institutions that provide distance training courses related to traffic policing, ie:

- University of South Africa (UNISA): BA (Police Science)

The UNISA BA (Police Science) degree is not specifically aimed at traffic officers although the policing principles are generic and applicable to traffic policing.

- Institute of Traffic and Municipal Police Officers: ITMPO-Diploma

The ITMPO –diploma is the officially recognized qualification of the Institute and has been developed and adapted to satisfy the needs of traffic and municipal police officers.

- Pretoria Technikon: Diploma in Traffic Management

The Technikon diploma is more specifically directed towards the traffic safety system, one component of which is traffic policing (enforcement).

All of the above courses are theoretical and do not address the practical issues that officers are confronted with.

6. OTHER INSTITUTIONS

A small number of “private” institutions are involved in traffic policing training albeit in a very restricted sense.

- The South African Road Federation (SARF)
 - ◆ Courses for Senior Traffic Management.
- TMT provide the following courses:
 - ◆ Effective Overloading Control of Heavy Vehicles
 - ◆ Transportation of Dangerous Goods
 - ◆ Charging and Court Prosecution Procedure
 - ◆ Drunken Driving
 - ◆ Speed Law Enforcement
- Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR):
 - ◆ A number of short specialized courses were presented by the CSIR over the last few years.

7. THE INSTITUTE OF TRAFFIC AND MUNICIPAL POLICE OFFICERS

The Institute of Traffic and Municipal Police Officers (ITMPO) has recently resolved in principle to introduce short specialized courses to address specific needs that are being experienced in the traffic policing milieu. This will be done in a partnership basis.

8. OPERATIONAL TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

The work of traffic administrators and officers is wide-ranging and the following merely reflects on a number of the training courses which are required:

Supervisory Functions

- Managerial training programs
- Supervision of traffic personnel
- Traffic administration
- Budget preparation for the law enforcement executive
- Community policing
- Discipline and disciplinary procedures

Specialist Operations

- Internal affairs and procedures
- Prosecutorial functions
- Interview and interrogation techniques
- Forensic interviewing
- Crime investigation
- Accident investigation
- Evidence in court
- Crime scene protection
- Crime prevention by environmental design

Support / Logistical Operations

- Managing the information bureau (crime and accident data)
- Police-media relations
- Statistical methods
- Principles of policing
- Selection and appointment of personnel
- Productivity measurement/Performance management
- Labour relations
- Road safety audits
- Computer literacy

Field Operations

- Patrol operations
- Field training operations
- Accident analysis techniques
- Incident management
- Statements/Completion of dossiers
- SAPS –accident report forms
- Traffic engineering
- Speed enforcement tactics
- DWI –enforcement tactics

Officer Safety

- Firearm training
- Special weapons and tactics
- Roadblock procedures
- Vehicle driver training
- Vehicle pursuit tactics
- Tonfa PR24 (baton) training
- Crowd control
- Stress control

Traffic officers who attended the South African Road Federation's management training courses have identified the following courses which require urgent attention:

- Refresher course: Road Traffic Act, Act 29 of 1989
- Accident investigation
- Court procedures
- Communication skills
- Driving whilst intoxicated (DWI)
- Roads: Technical aspects
- Managerial courses
- Arrest procedures
- Constitution of South Africa Act, Act 108 of 1996
- Hazardous materials
- Incident management
- Stop and search procedures
- Speed enforcement
- Community policing
- Motivational training
- Report writing skills
- Roadblock procedures

9. STRUCTURED TRAINING

It is suggested that training be structured as follows:

9.1 ACCREDITED TRAINING ACADEMIES

The accredited training academies should remain primarily responsible for all training prescribed in the Road Traffic Act, other relevant legislation and legislation refresher courses. (This includes the Traffic Academy proposed by the National Department of Transport.)

9.2 DISTANCE LEARNING

Distance learning institutions such as those referred to in this paper, should remain responsible for the theoretical training of training officers.

9.3 SPECIALIZED TRAINING

Specialized traffic training should be provided by specialist institutions in a partnership with the traffic fraternity.

10. RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI)

Training programs is an investment in an organization's human capital and should not be perceived merely as expenditure.

The financial benefits of training cannot be measured in terms of learner reactions, or the amount of learning that has been achieved, not even the extent to which

behavior may have changed. The real benefits come from improved performance. The major categories of benefits are as follows:

10.1 LABOUR SAVINGS

Trained officers will be able to perform more independently; ie less effort (human resources) will be required to achieve current levels of output. Duplication of effort will be reduced, less time spent on correcting errors, faster access to information, etc.

10.2 INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY

Productivity (the ratio between input and output) will increase as a result of improved methodologies, higher levels of skill leading to faster work and higher levels of motivation. (Assessing the ROI of training: info@iitt.org.uk).

Professional police work will establish mutual trust between our clients and the (traffic) police.

11. CONCLUSION

Traffic officers in my department have admitted that they are often too scared to stop and apprehend criminals, particularly at night. This appalling state of affairs cannot be tolerated and will have to be addressed through practical training, particularly SWAT, vehicle pursuit and firearm training.

The following is an example of poor performance:

“Today, Monday 22 May 2000 approximately 15:00 an accident occurred in Germiston at the corner of Jack and President Streets. There were 3 vehicles and 1 pedestrian involved. Immediately after the accident occurred a traffic vehicle drove past without stopping. Approximately 5 – 10 minutes later there was still no medical or traffic assistance, but as a matter of fact 3 towing vehicles. A while later another traffic vehicle passed without stopping.

Now I would like to know: who is to blame for the dismay that usually arises when the so-called ‘vultures’ are first on the scene of an accident? Is it possible for Mr van Rooyen, Director Public Safety, to answer this question?

I hope that the pedestrian who was involved in the accident is busy recovering after the ‘speedy response’ of the Germiston Traffic Department.

The community’s attention is continually focused on Arrive Alive but the question is: how are we supposed to arrive safely at our destinations if the necessary assistance is not rendered during accidents? In this case the innocent pedestrian was run over by a speed maniac that exceeded the general speed limit of 60km/h whilst the pedestrian had the right of way and the motorist failed to obey a red traffic light.

Next time; don’t blame the ‘vultures’ when they’re first on the scene of an accident.

The Directorate Public Safety replied as follows:

“This Directorate instituted an investigation in an endeavor to determine the identity of the concerned traffic officers that allegedly refused to stop and render assistance at the scene of the accident.

It is totally unacceptable if the complaint is justified and the concerned officers do not have acceptable reasons for their unprofessional and unethical behavior. Any traffic officer will be severely disciplined should they refuse to assist road users in the event of any motor vehicle accident.

It will be appreciated if any person who is in the position to supply me with the registration number of the mentioned traffic officers. It will assist and ease the investigation.

Due to the difficult nature to investigate a complaint pertaining to the misconduct of a traffic officer, it is important that a registration number and/or name of the concerned officer be forwarded due to the fact that there are more than 140 traffic officers in uniform. Traffic vehicles being driven by mechanics of the Transportation Department of the Council during the testing of such vehicles after servicing, etc furthermore aggravate this problem.

I would like to apologize to any individual that was affected by this incident.”

A traffic administrator must constantly monitor and assess the training deficiencies in his organisation and to remedy them by subjecting his officers to appropriate training courses. It is therefore evident that training should be readily available and cost effective. The imminent establishment of metropolitan councils will realize the impact of economy of scale. It is expected that metropolitan public safety departments will establish training academies and more inter-agency cooperation will result therefrom.

Training is the single most important issue which need to be addressed to transform our officers from mere “onlookers” to professional traffic practitioners. The luxury of time is not on our side.

If one looks at the extent of traffic and police training in industrialized countries, and compares it with the South African scenario, it is not difficult to assess why our policing systems are in such a predicament.

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1. Road Traffic Act, 1989 (Act 29 of 1989)
2. Assessing the ROI of training: www.info@iitt.org.uk
3. Understanding Capacity Building: <http://www.nsd.an.ac.in/capacity>
4. Capacity Building and Systematic Reform
5. 10 Reasons Cops are Different: www.thethinblueline.org

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EMPLOYMENT

Director Public Safety April 1997 – Current
Greater Germiston Council

The Directorate Public Safety has 6 Divisions:

- Human Resource Services and Administration
- City and Traffic Policing Services
- Communications and Disaster Management
- Technical Services
- Emergency Services
- Licensing Services

EDUCATION

Honours BA (Police Science) 1986
University of South Africa (UNISA)

Internal Affairs 1993
Police Applicant Background Investigation
Accident Homicide Investigation
Traffic Accident Reconstruction
Advanced Accident Investigation
*Institute of Police Technology and Management at the University of North Florida,
Jacksonville, USA*

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION

Fellow-Member and Elected Member of the Executive Committee of the Institute of Traffic and Municipal Police Officers of Southern Africa (ITMPO).

Moderator of ITMPO/Lyceum (1996 – present)

PAPERS DELIVERED REGARDING TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

Traffic Law Enforcement as a Component of the Traffic Safety System -*National Traffic Congress, 1988*

A Quantitative Analysis of the Work of Traffic Officers and the Use of Manpower Resources - *10th Annual Transport Convention, 1990*

Goal Matrix Management with specific reference to Productivity, Offences and Collisions - *13th Annual Transport Convention, 1993*

Policing in South Africa - *Law Enforcement Executives of North East Florida (USA), 1993*

Law Enforcement: The Actual Problems being experienced, specifically regarding Speed Checking and Overloading of Vehicles - *International Congress of the South African Road Federation, 1995*

The Establishment of a City Police Department
Greater Germiston Council Crime Summit, 1997