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Going equipped

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Editorial

Superintendent Katy Barrow-Grint ♦ Thames Valley Police

I am thrilled to introduce the second issue of 'Going equipped', a publication written for policing, by policing. This issue comes more than a year after the first COVID-19 lockdown began. The pandemic has affected policing in many ways, but our officers and staff continue to work tirelessly for the communities we serve. 'Going equipped' is here to share the good work you are doing, both locally in forces and nationally with your colleagues. We hope that it will help us all to learn from each other and to better understand what works in policing.

This issue has a host of excellent articles. One of our long reads gives an overview of the practical problems involved in policing modern slavery, as well as the ethical dilemmas that often surround long-term investigations into this type of crime. Our other long read takes a look at the fascinating topic of silence during suspect interviews, specifically the pressure this may place on the interviewer.

We also have two interesting articles that focus on community engagement. One encourages us to consider the idea of hyper-localism



within policing, by engaging the community not only to identify problems, but also to help us solve them. The other article, on police summer camps, focuses on activity to ensure prevention. It is fantastic to read about how this approach has continued and developed even in light of the pandemic.

After suggestions following the first issue, we have introduced a book review. Our first review is of 'Crossing the Line' by John Sutherland, who you

may know as [@PoliceCommander](#) on Twitter. This review of his second book gives you a real flavour of the tricky narrative that he challenges, especially in terms of the question: what should the police actually do?

I hope you enjoy reading this issue as much as I have. We believe

that the value of 'Going equipped' is evident, but we need your contributions to ensure that we have articles going forward! If you would like to submit an article or send any feedback, please do get in touch at Goingequipped@college.pnn.police.uk



PRACTICE NOTE

Summer camp

Police Constables Gary Weedon, Safer Schools Officer and Holly Breakwell, Volunteer Police Cadets Coordinator
 ♦ **Metropolitan Police Service**

Five years ago, we were discussing safeguarding challenges relating to students who live in Brent, and the risk that they may become involved in criminal activity. We worked with Danny Coyle, the head teacher of Newman Catholic College, which is in an area known to have issues with gangs, to organise a summer camp. The camp has run each year since and around 500 children have participated. Our aim is clear: to protect our students from the pull of gang culture and from criminal activity throughout the holiday period and beyond.

We knew that many of the families had difficulties in supplying food and entertainment for their children during the holidays, so we agreed with the school that this would be an incentive for getting students and parents involved in the camp.



We approached local businesses in Harlesden who provided free food and drinks, with some businesses kindly bringing hot meals to the school each day. Some businesses also went on to offer apprenticeship schemes to the students, which have been excellent in building continued rapport with the school.

The summer camp has also provided free day trips into London. Many of the students have never been into central London and these

exciting trips offer fun days out, as well as an educational element and an opportunity to build closer relationships. Some of the free activities over the past five years have included: trips to the London Eye, Madame Tussauds and the West End theatres; sports, such as golf, rugby, football and cricket (some delivered by ex-professionals); life skills, including cooking and nutrition; and providing free refurbished bikes from seized property.

We were unable to provide our usual trips in 2020, due to COVID-19 restrictions. Instead, we ran fun activities based at the school. Students also received visits from specialist police units, such as the territorial support group and dog units. We facilitated guest speakers who tackled issues such as stop and search, providing students with an opportunity to discuss matters that they found concerning. One session was even covered by the radio station, Capital London. Students took the role of a police officer and executed stop and searches on participating officers. This learning experience for students – and for officers – provided some perspective on the problems that can arise in the execution of an officer's duties, and also offered some good entertainment for all.

The role of the schools officer is crucial and depends on attending the school, almost on a daily basis, to build rapport with the school and

students. The schools officer also regularly fronts health days and lessons covering safeguarding, and shares information on gangs, drugs and personal safety. Having an office in the school means that students can pop in to ask questions about local incidents and policing, or even to ridicule the weekend's football results! Discussions with the school take place regularly. It is preferred that we are in plain clothes while engaging with the students, but wear uniform when dealing with official policing matters. Students continually ask us when the next camp will be run and preparation has already begun to introduce new holiday camps in 2021.

The summer camps have enabled us to break down the 'us' and 'them' barriers, and have reduced the stigma around approaching police officers. Through these interactions, we have provided an enjoyable safe place for the students to meet and interact, while diverting them away from criminal activity. Newman Catholic College has received an Outstanding Contribution Award for its community work from the Violent Crime Prevention Board, reflecting the hard work of students, police, the local community and the school.

This article was peer reviewed
by Detective Constable Flaminia
Romita, Bedfordshire Police.

What I learned from...

A recent experience in custody

Custody Sergeant Chris Milburn ♦ Durham Constabulary

Here's a little story of how police custody can be turned into a positive experience.

At 5am on a Friday morning, a homeless young man was arrested and brought to me. His arrest was appropriate and his detention was authorised. But this is about more than crime.

This man was polite, respectful and hungry. He was in need of a shower, medical care and – most of all – kindness and humanity. He had psoriasis. It was sore and dirty, and covered his body. It was made worse by the cold, his clothes and poor hygiene, and may well have been infected. So what did we do?

We arranged medical care for him. We gave him food, hot chocolate, blankets and clean clothes. We made arrangements for him to get a shower, with appropriate shower gels so as not to inflame his skin. We were humane and we treated each other with respect, while adhering to COVID-19 guidelines.

I could have sent him to a cell, and he could have thrown abuse at me because of his arrest. But because we talked and were both honest, decent and fair, we were able to help each other. He reminded me of what policing



is about, and I hope I made a difference to him.

We need more conversations like this. We must remember that just because someone is arrested, homeless or in need, they are not to be dehumanised. Be kind. It makes a difference.

I like to see custody as an opportunity to make things better and to help those who need it. Granted, that won't always be the case – such is policing – but we must all relish, seize, share and learn from the occasions when it is.

Every contact leaves a trace.

This article was peer reviewed by Detective Sergeant Catherine Parfitt, Thames Valley Police.

Five things about... Romance fraud

**Lucy Cumming, Senior Analyst,
National Fraud Intelligence
Bureau ♦ City of London Police**

1 Romance fraud is one of eight high-priority crime types assessed by the City of London Police's National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) as having a significant impact on UK citizens. Reports to Action Fraud have increased by 26% in the last year, with victims losing £10,000 on average.

2 Criminals use fake online profiles to form relationships with victims and make them think they've met their perfect partner, in order to get their money or personal information. This occurs on dating sites and other platforms that have a messaging function, such as Facebook, Instagram, and gaming sites and apps.

3 Red flags include the person making excuses why they can't meet or video chat, and the person claiming to be working overseas in a respectable profession, such as the military or an international charity. Romance fraudsters will talk to the victim for weeks, or even months, to build up their trust before creating a time-critical emergency that requires the victim's help. This is



usually something emotive that pulls at their heartstrings, for example, paying an urgent medical bill for a sick family member.

4 Romance fraudsters don't just ask for money. They can also ask for:

- access to the victim's bank accounts
- loans to be taken out, or investments made, on their behalf
- copies of the victim's personal documents, such as a passport or driving licence
- gift card codes
- the victim to receive and/or send parcels

5 A lot of romance fraudsters are based abroad, and investigations into suspects can be difficult. As the national policing lead for fraud, the City of

London Police has set up a number of ways for police forces to disrupt romance fraud activity. Forces are able to alert money transfer services to suspect customer accounts. Forces can also now send intelligence referrals to the Ghanaian authorities where they have identified suspects who are based in Ghana.

This article was peer reviewed by Emma Potts, Strategic Protect and Prevent Fraud Lead, Greater Manchester Police.

For more information, please visit the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau website [actionfraud.police.uk/what-is-national-fraud-intelligence-bureau](https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/what-is-national-fraud-intelligence-bureau) or contact NFIB-IDT@city-of-london.pnn.police.uk

Find out more about tactics used in romance fraud by reading [**A Guide to Spotting Romance Fraudsters | Thames Valley Police**](#)

Staying Safe from ROMANCE FRAUD

A practical guide highlighting common tactics used in romance fraud. Safeguarding through knowledge and empowerment.



Developed with forensic linguist and criminologist
Dr Elisabeth Carter, University of Roehampton

Spotlight on a role

Senior Forensic Practitioner

Ruth Buckley ♦ Metropolitan Police Service

As a senior forensic practitioner in frontline crime scene examination, my role is to attend crime scenes to recover forensic and fingerprint evidence, and to conduct evidential photography. I mostly attend serious and complex scenes, where I ensure that the forensic strategy is sound and I manage resources and personnel.

My role as a leader is split. From Monday to Friday, I lead a team of 22 in West London during the day. When I'm on late turn duty, at nights and at the weekend, I am responsible for a pan-London resource of up to 20 people. I ensure the competence of my team, including their compliance with forensic regulation, which is crucial as we are working towards gaining accreditation with ISO 17020.

I enjoy the challenges, problem solving and variety involved in my role. Every day is different. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been especially challenging for us to continue attending scenes in the presence of others. We've adapted our methods to include enhanced triage over the phone, and we explain how we're working so that people know what to expect.



This has better enabled social distancing at scenes without the loss of information from face-to-face conversation. In other ways, we were already prepared. Scene examiners are experienced forensic practitioners who routinely work in PPE and employ contamination avoidance measures.

Examining crime scenes requires an inquisitive mind. You have to consider not only what you can see, but also what you cannot. For example, some types of evidence require enhancement with imaging and chemical techniques, to name a few. You need to obtain and process information from a variety of sources to define your strategy, then select the techniques you will employ – and in which order – to maximise the opportunities.

In my 20 years of service, I've seen some amazing developments.

At the start of my career, you needed a large visible blood stain to get a DNA profile. Now, this can be achieved even when blood is not visible to the naked eye. Similarly, the forensic and evidential potential of a mobile phone has changed significantly over time, in part because of the volume of data it can now yield.

Forensics is interdisciplinary and has expanded so much since I began my career. I wonder how the sector will evolve and what new techniques will become commonplace in the next 20 years.

For anyone at the beginning of their career, my advice would be

to take every opportunity to learn. There is a wealth of knowledge and experience out there, so ask questions and be proactive in your learning and development.

Everyone in policing plays their role – from having a positive impact on a victim of crime, to presenting evidence at court. Irrespective of your rank or role, never underestimate the part you play, your contribution and the value you bring to your organisation.

This article was peer reviewed by
Superintendent Kate Anderson,
Cambridgeshire Constabulary



HANDOVER NOTES

Changing roles: PCSO to PC

Police Constable Ahmed Dada ♦ Leicestershire Police

After I finished college, I decided to follow in my dad's footsteps and join him as a PCSO, working in the diverse area of Leicester's West End. Although expectations of PCSOs changed during my five years in the role, the core tasks remained the same. Community engagement and high-visibility patrols were central to our duties.

Four years ago, I became a PC. The main difference is that as a PC, I am more involved in investigations and arrests, now that I've 'got the power'! What I miss about being a PCSO is the community engagement with people who often saw PCSOs as their first link to the police. The conversations I had with members of the public were different to those I have as a PC. It also took me a while to get used to the fact that I would be the one arresting the suspect, as that was something I never did as a PCSO.

The skills I gained from being a PCSO have been paramount in assisting me to be a PC. As a PCSO, the only tools I had were my communication skills and these have unquestionably been the best tools any PC could have. As a new PC, I've drawn on these skills when



dealing with an extremely violent GBH suspect. I was able to talk him down and keep the situation calm without having to use any of my PPE.

As a PCSO, I worked with PCs on a daily basis, which gave me insight into the organisational culture, as well as in-depth knowledge about what the role of PC required. I think that encouraging PCSOs to become PCs may have benefits for retention of officers. I certainly feel that it was the best route into policing for me.

This article was peer reviewed by Detective Constable Dom Yelling, Surrey Police.

Shift in the life of...

A communications officer

Janice Stanford-Eyre ♦ Essex Police

The alarm goes off at 4am. I don't feel ready for this – it's dark and cold, and I want to sleep! Duty pulls me out of bed and I go about the morning routine in a fog of tiredness. I make the familiar journey to Chelmsford and the control room, and find my desk for the day. I log in and check the emails to see what has occurred in my absence.

It's now 6am. We wait for Essex to wake up, which usually takes a couple of hours. Some people ring in to enquire why they haven't been contacted about the incident they reported last night. One lady calls to say that police attended an incident in her road last night and she's found a police hat on the pavement. There's no name on it but it'll need to be collected, or the officer may have some explaining to do!

Essex starts to wake up. We have a couple of calls from people who have realised they were broken into during the night: 'We never heard a thing, the dog didn't even bark!' It was a shock for them to discover first thing in the morning, and they feel violated and unsafe ('we were in the house!').

As the rush hour begins, so do the RTCs. There are two car crashes on the M11 – one car looks like a write-

off, but luckily there are no injuries. Our traffic unit is dispatched on an emergency response. It's also been raining heavily in the night and we have further calls about flooding in the road, so we ring Highways to inform them. I have a little smile to myself as I remember a call in the summer about cars stopping on the M11 because a mother duck and her ducklings were crossing the road.

Lunchtime looms. I'm feeling hungry, but that disappears when I take a call from a 16-year-old male, who tells me that he can't cope any more. He has cut himself with a knife but he doesn't want to die. His sister has just had a baby. This goes on an





emergency straight away, and officers are dispatched within three minutes. I have to talk to him about anything I can to distract him from his misery – luckily, I am good at small talk! Officers arrive and I feel relief as I can hang up the phone.

COVID-19 has really affected Essex this year. People are low and weary. You can hear it in their voices. The number of mental health incidents has gone through the roof, and even the force control room team is quieter. Due to the onset of lockdown restrictions, more calls are coming in from the public reporting their neighbours for flouting the rules: ‘We’re following the rules, why don’t they? What makes them think they are special?’ Gone are the past calls about drunken people leaving the pub. Instead, we have members of the public who are tired of being tied to the house and

resentful of those who ignore the restrictions.

After lunch, we receive a flurry of calls. There’s a domestic, involving a woman who tells me that ‘he didn’t mean to hit me, he loves me’. I spend time with this caller. There are three horses in the road. A driver has hit a dog and is upset, so I reassure him it wasn’t his fault. It gets busier. Essex is up and running but I am not. I feel tired but this is my job, so I make sure that nobody will hear it in my voice.

Finally, it’s time to go home and hang up the headset for another day. I tend not to reflect on my day too much, so I can have some time to myself. There is no typical day in the control room!

This article was peer reviewed
by Nichola Rew, Analyst,
City of London Police.

PRACTICE NOTE

Emergency trauma packs

Dr Jonathan Townsend, Emergency Medicine Doctor, Special Inspector and Special Operations Medical Advisor ♦ Kent Police

The 7/7 bombings, Manchester Arena, and the 2017 and 2019 London Bridge attacks are just four of the many major incidents that have occurred over the last 20 years. Despite being separated by time and circumstance, all of them – and many more – share commonly identified areas for improvement. One of these is the reported absence of basic medical equipment and training that could save lives.

Reviews have shown that the desire to act and help is strong in critical incidents. Those who want to help may be on- or off-duty emergency service workers, venue staff or willing bystanders, who form a core of spontaneous responders. In such incidents, getting appropriate resources into the scene presents its own complications, including ongoing risks, capacity, capability and safety zoning, to name a few.

This results in what is termed the ‘therapeutic vacuum’, where getting medical assistance to casualties is delayed. Evidence indicates that the therapeutic vacuum can cause worsening of injuries, and in some cases deaths. Having created the



therapeutic vacuum, how do we help to fill it? This is a complex and multi-factorial issue. But one game-changer is to empower the police, as well as spontaneous responders who may be able to help, while they wait for specialist teams to get to the incident.

Within Kent and Medway, we have done this by developing the Emergency Trauma Pack (ETP) project. These are small packs specifically designed to initiate treatment of injuries responsible for the major causes of preventable death encountered in these

situations. They include:

- trauma dressings
- specially impregnated (haemostatic) gauze and tourniquets for massive bleeding
- chest seals for chest and lung injuries
- a prompt leaflet designed for quick-time or crisis mindsets

While knife crime and terrorism arguably pose the most obvious threats, the kits address the basic priorities arising from trauma in everyday life, such as non-crime accidents, animal bites and road traffic collisions.

The ETP builds on a scheme by the City of London Police, developing it to fit the diverse geographic and social make-up of Kent and Medway's health trust area. It targets high-footfall and higher-risk areas, as identified by our Violence Reduction Unit. The aim is to equip, train and prepare those likely to be first on scene to save lives. To achieve this, we have trained every warranted officer, including special constables and PCSOs, and we have made kits available in all marked police vehicles.

Original funding came from Kent Police and an additional 500 kits were sponsored by the Police and Crime Commissioner and made widely accessible in towns and shopping hubs, iconic sites, venues, businesses, community sites and schools, with

staff able to use the kits. Training has also been given to our Kent Police Cadets, and to emergency service and third-sector partners. This has been complemented with a series of publicly available how-to videos to support the prompt leaflets and written guides. Our aim has been to make the equipment and knowledge accessible and to demystify emergency aid, by doing what's intuitive in those vital first minutes to save a life. Businesses can purchase additional kit and contents at a minimal outlay. The cost of a mini ETP is around £40 and a full ETP is £400.

Since the roll out of ETPs, they have been used on multiple occasions throughout the course of routine policing duties, preventing deterioration of critical casualties prior to the ambulance arriving. They have been warmly received by frontline staff, with officers reporting that they feel better equipped and more empowered to save lives, as the contents are a significant advancement over previous standard first aid kits.

A simple and cost-effective intervention, the introduction of ETPs has already benefitted the population of Kent and Medway. Just one life saved would have made this project completely worthwhile.

This article was peer reviewed by Superintendent Kate Anderson, Cambridgeshire Constabulary.

LONG READ

The silent treatment

Acting/Detective Inspector Dan McCarthy ♦ Sussex Police

Introduction

From the early days of my probation, bringing suspects to the cell block at Brighton Police station, I was drawn to the complexity of the discourse of suspect interviews. I recall watching the detectives come and go from interviews with suspects of serious crime, and I decided that was what I wanted to do.

I became a detective in 2004. Since then, I've been an Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) interviewer, a Tier 3 interviewer for complex and serious crimes and a Tier 5 interview coordinator. These deployments have given me some of the highlights of my career and remain an aspect of policing that I'm very passionate about.

Suspect interviews form a crucial element of police investigations. They can direct the focus of an enquiry, elicit admissions of guilt or provide exonerating alibis to the innocent. Suspect interviewing is a complex and challenging task that calls on a range of cognitive functions. Interviewers must simultaneously formulate questions and mentally digest lengthy accounts, all while maintaining an inscrutable expression.



I've always been fascinated by the fine-grain interactions, verbal and otherwise, that take place between suspects and investigators – and even solicitors – during suspect interviews. I was interested in why some investigators seemed to relish the opportunity to interview suspects and fought to lead on high-stakes serious crime interviews, while others – despite their length of service and experience – appeared to do whatever they could to avoid the interview room. The negative experience of those reluctant investigators seemed to be exacerbated when suspects remained silent or made no comment. In 2017, as part of my undergraduate degree, I had the opportunity to research why this might be.

Literature review

My early hypothesis was that, in order to develop interviewers, more attention must be paid to the needs of each individual. A greater understanding of the interviewer's subjective experience of the interview environment was required. Their interaction with the interviewee was the most significant aspect of this experience.

Through my research, I first explored the experiences of pressure, stress and anxiety by interviewers in silent or no-comment suspect interviews. I then sought to establish whether there was any correlation between the pressure experienced and other identified influencers: age, gender, role, prior interviewing experience, length of service and self-efficacy (confidence in role, confidence as an interviewer).

Before undertaking the study, I conducted a thorough literature review, to gain insight into the following areas:

- previous studies of police officer behaviour in no-comment or silent suspect interviews
- the impact of silence in conversation and human interaction
- the effects of a silent interviewee in other fields
- the relationship between silence, pressure, stress and anxiety

The literature review revealed that extensive research has been undertaken in the field of investigative interviewing over the last 35 years. In that time, researchers have demonstrated a series of improvements in the standards and sophistication of interview strategy and techniques. This is partly as a result of legislative changes driven by public pressure, but most significantly due to higher standards of education and training.

During my research, I found that multiple studies had already examined the impact of oppressive silence, albeit at the hands of police interviewers. However, these studies didn't consider that silence is not just a tool at the disposal of the interviewer. Quite the contrary, it is more readily available to the interviewee, who has no obligation in law to utter a sound. The interviewee may choose to manipulate, control and intimidate an ill-prepared interviewer without uttering a single word. Shepherd (1993) refers to the silence of an interviewee as 'conversation-blocking behaviour, a form of resistance most dreaded by officers in interviews with suspected offenders'.

The 'silent treatment' is a recognised form of ostracism, where a lack of communicative engagement is used to express disapproval and punishment. Humans are highly receptive to the signs of social exclusion, making us particularly

sensitive to the effects of silence. An unexpected silence signals that the normal conventions of communication have been violated, creating a sense of vulnerability.

In order to gain insight into the impact of silence on stress levels, I had to understand the relationship between those constructs. For Lazarus and Folkman (1984), psycho-social stress is an imbalance between a person and the environment that is too taxing or exceeds the individual's cognitive resources. My study postulated that the interview room can create such an environment, where the interviewer may experience situational stress.

Kuhlmann and others (2005) identified that when people were subjected to low-level stress, they demonstrated a notable reduction in their ability to recall information. Similarly, a study conducted by Schwabe and others (2007) revealed that low levels of stress can simplify learning patterns at the expense of cognitive flexibility, making it harder to apply knowledge to new situations. These findings support my research. In a suspect interview setting, it is crucial that the interviewer remains cognitively flexible, in order to adapt their interview style, strategies and communicative approach in response to the interviewee's behaviour.

Attentional control theory suggests that anxiety disrupts the operation of working memory, reducing cognitive

performance during complex tasks (Calvo and Carreiras, 1993). This was highly relevant to my study, as police interviews are complex tasks that require simultaneous cognitive processes, placing a high demand for cognitive resources on the interviewer.

My literature review demonstrated that factors such as silence, anxiety, stress and low self-efficacy can cause even the most skilled individuals to lose their ability to perform basic functions, including their ability to remember, adapt or even speak.

The study

Initially, I took a qualitative approach to establish the structure and wording of the survey statements, by conducting focus group discussions with Tier 3 interviewers. The purpose of these discussions was to establish rich descriptive language that most appropriately described the feelings experienced by interviewers during a no-comment or silent interview.

Having identified descriptive statements, I set seven dependent questions that contained indicators of the concepts of pressure, stress and anxiety. By using the words identified through the focus group discussions, I was able to avoid technical psychological references and use language that was familiar to police interviewers.

I sought to establish the effects of the pressure, stress and anxiety experienced by a police interviewer

in no-comment or silent suspect interviews using a quantitative approach, in the form of a Likert-style survey. Sussex Police granted access to all Professionalising Investigation Programme (PIP) 1 and PIP 2 interviewers in the force. A total of 380 interviewers responded, including a mixture of police officers and crime investigators who regularly interviewed suspects as part of their duties.

The survey sought to establish:

- whether an interviewer experiences pressure when a suspect answers 'no comment' or remains silent in interview
- if pressure is experienced by the interviewer, whether there is any correlation between the level of pressure experienced and the following variables:
 - age
 - gender
 - role
 - prior interviewing experience
 - length of service
 - self-efficacy (confidence in role, confidence as an interviewer)
- confidence in ability to conduct a good no-comment or silent interview
- the belief that the interviewer had received sufficient training to deal with a no-comment or silent interviewee

Results

Of these participants, 78% reported that they experienced pressure in silent or no-comment interviews to some degree. The research question that attracted the highest indication of stress, with 71% of participants agreeing to some degree, was: 'I sometimes forget to ask questions when a suspect answers no-comment or remains silent in interview'. This result supports the theory that anxiety consumes cognitive resources within the limited memory system (Derakshan and Eysenck, 2009).

The most significant result was the relationship between self-efficacy and pressure experienced. The results revealed that self-efficacious interviewers would perceive the demands presented by a no-comment or silent interviewee as less threatening or demanding than those who doubt their interviewing skills and abilities. For those lacking in confidence, the silent or no-comment interview causes significant levels of stress or pressure. This is supported by observations from Yeschke (1997), who commented that 'for anxious interviewers who lack self-confidence, a brief period of silence may seem almost endless'.

When pressure levels were compared with the aforementioned independent variables, there was a weak correlation between pressure experienced and the age and length

of service of the interviewer. There was no correlation between pressure experienced and gender, role or prior interviewing experience.

Conclusions

My research revealed that interviewers do experience pressure in a suspect interview when a suspect answers 'no comment' or remains silent. The research also showed that the greatest factor affecting the pressure experienced by an interviewer in a no-comment or silent interview is their level of self-efficacy regarding this specific skill set. This presents Sussex Police and the wider interviewing community with an opportunity to refine interview training with the goal of increasing interviewer's self-efficacy levels, which will benefit their interviewing skills. The study also suggested that findings from other fields of study – such as psychoanalysis, relationship management and psychotherapy – were particularly relevant to the dynamics of the police interview environment. The results that have emerged from the study will hopefully expand the horizons of current research into suspect interviewing practices.

Implications and recommendations

Bandura (1986) postulated that repeated performance accomplishment is a pre-condition

to enhanced self-efficacy. Bandura proposed that self-efficacy can be enhanced through vicarious experience – in other words, by watching others carry out the model behaviour. The most significant predictor of enhanced self-efficacy levels comes from mastery of the task being measured (Bandura and others, 1977).

These self-efficacy enhancing strategies can be applied to the interviewer through the following three simple adaptations to the interview training agenda.

- 1 Affording trainee interviewers the opportunity to develop vicarious experience by reviewing footage of 'real life' no-comment or silent interviews.
- 2 Practical performance experience in a no-comment or silent interview scenario, as both an interviewer and an interviewee.
- 3 Mastery of the task being measured is achieved most powerfully through a direct experience of mastery. An opportunity to conduct a no-comment or silent interview successfully will enhance self-belief, even if this success is experienced in a training scenario.

In order to build resilience in terms of self-efficacy, the individual must overcome challenges and persevere in the face of adversity. For many interviewers, the Tier 1 interview course will be the last interview training they receive in their career. If newly trained interviewers leave their initial training course with low self-efficacy levels, they may never build those levels up. If the interviewers leave the course feeling confident in their abilities, with a clear model in mind of what they seek to achieve, mastery will be far more achievable.

This study has established a strong foundation for further research in the experiences of the interviewer, and into which factors regularly affect the interviewer's performance in the interview environment. This study has also demonstrated that, for the police service, learning is not restricted to an inward view. By considering the wealth of research, studies and theories in parallel fields of study, we can learn a great deal about the interactions between police and suspects.

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This article was peer reviewed by Detective Constable Simon Yearsley, Hampshire Constabulary.

MY IDEA

Hyper-local problem solving: 40 wards, 40 problems, 40 solutions

Superintendent Ian Brown and Detective Chief Superintendent Richard Tucker ♦ Metropolitan Police Service

Community Matters is a new concept of hyper-local problem-solving that seeks to improve trust and confidence in the local police.

The community in each ward is given the opportunity to nominate a single priority, for example, visible drug taking on the street. This is done through ward panels and online engagement platforms, such as [Nextdoor](#). The community then own the problem and work in partnership with the police to identify a longer-term solution.

This is a total partnership approach, involving all internal and external partners, including CID, Neighbourhood Teams, Safer Neighbourhood Boards, safeguarding, emergency response, schools, ward panels, local authorities and charitable organisations.

The dedicated ward officer for each ward is responsible for being the public face of the work. They build legitimacy by engaging with the community, resolving local problems, and establishing themselves as someone who the community can trust.

The police and its partners dedicate resources to focusing on the issue for one week. Once a solution is identified,

feedback is given directly to the local community about the nature of the problem solving, its success and any follow-up work that is needed.

Community Matters is scalable for smaller or larger forces. Smaller forces could focus on one ward's problem each week, moving around the force area in a rolling plan. In larger forces that have greater access to resources, all wards could undertake this activity in the same week.

Through its focus on hyper-local problem-solving and ongoing community evaluation, this quarterly cycle of Community Matters can:

- increase police legitimacy
- reduce demand for service
- build in continuous improvement
- ensure community ownership
- highlight and supplement core policing activity around vulnerability
- drive trust and confidence (and allow for measurable improvement through surveys and community feedback)

This article was peer reviewed by Inspector James Hoyes, Lincolnshire Police.

PRACTICE NOTE

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) specials

Special Constable Rachel Stringfellow and Detective Chief Inspector Peter Quinn ♦ Nottinghamshire Police

Rachel Stringfellow (RS) works as a special constable in the CSE team alongside her day job as a personal assistant for a construction company.

DCI Pete Quinn (PQ) is the lead for child protection within Nottinghamshire Police's Public Protection department.

PQ: Our Child Sexual Exploitation Disruption Team (CSEDt) draws on the skills and expertise of special constables to create a localised response to CSE. We established this at a time when the organisation was struggling to recruit and retain special constables in the numbers we once had. Feedback indicated that we were missing out on recruiting talented people who did not want to serve their communities in the ways typically associated with specials (night-time economy, sporting events). Some specials who were already serving felt stifled by a lack of opportunity to develop and use their skills in different areas.

RS: The team is looked after by Public Protection. When we arrive on duty,



we receive our briefing from the detective sergeant. Tasks range from visiting vulnerable children, issuing Child Abduction Warning Notices (CAWNs), visiting offenders who are on the sex offenders register and

checking bail condition compliance. We also do a lot of proactive disruption work, which includes visiting CSE hotspots, such as car parks, train stations, cinemas, parks, nature reserves and hotels.

PQ: As specialist investigative teams are often centralised, it's easy to forget the importance of a local response to child safeguarding. This is a key benefit of the CSEDt. Over time, the team have become well known within communities and among local businesses. Through this continued engagement, trust and confidence has grown, providing opportunities to intervene much earlier, prevent crime and keep children safe.

RS: Our role is proactive. We go out on shift and find ways to disrupt offenders. For example, we had intelligence that someone was crossing the border, picking up children and using them to run drugs for him. At that time, we didn't have enough evidence to charge him. We visited him at all hours of the day. He pulled up in a car that wasn't his, so we seized the car. Simple police work, but it took him off the roads for a while, which stopped him picking up children and making them run drugs.

PQ: By empowering the team and giving them responsibility, those volunteering have developed a more rounded skill set. I had not anticipated how many would go on to successfully apply for full-time positions as police officers. The team has become a real

recruitment ground, aiding better representation and inspiring others to consider volunteering as a pathway into the service.

RS: I always wanted to be in the police, but life took a different turn and I chose to become a personal assistant. I love my day job so I thought, why not have the best of both worlds? I applied to become a special. It's very satisfying knowing that I might have made a difference to someone. It's an exciting and interesting job – by being proactive, we create our own work. We have to constantly think outside the box, about how we can disrupt people. It's a very rewarding job when you know you have helped a child or family.

PQ: I'm really pleased with how the model has developed into other areas. Since the introduction of the CSEDt, similar teams have been formed to address the challenges of burglary and rural crime. Our Operational Support Department have also recruited specials to support their specialist search and public order capability. I would encourage everyone to challenge their thinking and be creative when deciding how volunteers in the Special Constabulary are deployed in their area.

This article was peer reviewed by Special Superintendent Russell Morrison, Hampshire Constabulary.

Q&A



Detective Constable Ahsan Anderson ♦ Cambridgeshire Constabulary



Retired Detective Chief Superintendent Dave Gee, MBE ♦ Derbyshire Constabulary

During lockdown, new Detective Constable Ahsan Anderson asked retired Detective Chief Superintendent Dave Gee, MBE, some questions.

First arrest... A preacher in Derby city centre. I asked him to move on and said that it was 'my patch'. He replied that it was 'actually God's patch'. He was in the road and all the shoppers were stopping to listen. Fresh from training school, I arrested him for obstruction of the highway. He was convicted at magistrate's court and appealed, then was convicted on appeal at crown court.

Most proud of... Two things: establishing the guidance and standards for rape investigations, and my part in developing a blueprint for Sexual Assault Referral Centres, so that they provided a common minimum standard to rape victims.

I'd describe myself as...

A trouble-shooter.

Biggest investigative breakthrough...

There was a series of seven stranger rapes in Derby in the 1980s. As part of my general role of checking alibis for elimination purposes, I interviewed all of the suspect's previous girlfriends. One of his exes, who was his main alibi, had divided loyalties and decided to tell the truth. Once she had retracted her alibi, he pleaded guilty at crown court and was sentenced to life imprisonment.

Tip for a new detective... Listen. Ask questions. Be open-minded. And listen!

Tip for Head of CID... Don't think you know it all. Take the ego out of investigations. Put those with current operational skills and credibility in a position where they can assist you in decision-making and carry out

key roles like high-profile interviews. There's no doubt about it, the people who know best are the front line.

Worst thing ever said to me...

Protect the reputation of the force above everything else.

Best interview tip... Listen properly to answers and be flexible about your agenda. If you are planning your next question before the interviewee has finished speaking, you are not hearing them fully. Preparation cannot be overstated.

Hardest memory of policing...

Responding to the sudden death of a young child early one morning in 1983, when I had a child of the same age. As the on-call detective constable, I had to seize all of the clothing and bedding, and take a statement from the mother about all of the background information. I was then tasked with taking the child's body for a post mortem and returning him to the local mortuary, in my own car. While travelling across the Peak District, I got stuck in the snow and got help from a farmhouse before reaching the mortuary. I did all of it on my own – there were no specialists, just me.

After a bad day at work, I used to...

Have a pint.

Biggest cultural change during my career... The 'Gender Agenda', a 2002 positive action initiative, was a catalyst for me to look more closely at women in policing. As a detective superintendent, I called a meeting of all of the female detectives and

was, for the first time, the only man in the room. I felt really uncomfortable and couldn't get my words out. This was a total reversal of usual practice and made me think of all the ways in which women had been excluded.

Most worried about... The potential for officers becoming desensitised owing to overexposure to crime, particularly in specialist units, where officers deal with the same types of cases all of the time.

Greatest achievement... Establishing a charity for children in India who didn't have access to schooling. I fundraised to build seven rural schools and support students through to, and after, university. This changed my life, by waking me up to inequality and putting my get-up-and-go into action.

Best police force in the world is...

The UK, because it is constantly seeking to improve. It has standards and oversight, and is the most scrutinised police agency in the world in terms of integrity and ethics.

Sum up your career in one sentence...

I would do it all again in a heartbeat – I'd love my warrant card back!

Ahsan and Dave have kept in touch and continue to talk about policing.

This article was peer reviewed by Detective Constable Simon Yearsley, Hampshire Constabulary and Detective Sergeant Michael Jimenez, Greater Manchester Police.

LONG READ

The challenges of policing modern slavery

Superintendent Mark Edgington ♦ Avon and Somerset Police

Superintendent Mark Edgington is currently the Head of Operations in Avon and Somerset Constabulary. He was previously the Thematic Lead for Modern Slavery.



Introduction

I recall it vividly. In 2014, as a new detective inspector in Somerset, I received a phone call from the force incident manager. A lorry had been stopped by the Roads Policing Team. In the back were 15 African nationals, including children, who they suspected had been smuggled into the country. Thankfully, they were all alive and healthy. Compare this with the tragic Essex lorry deaths in 2019 – involving 39 trafficked men, women and children – and the potential significance is clear. We treated the incident as a suspected human trafficking investigation. It was my first experience of how difficult and time-consuming such investigations could be and, I admit, it was intimidating.

Following that incident, I became interested in modern slavery. As a chief inspector, I took on the thematic lead role for the force. It was a privilege to lead our force response to

slavery and, in doing so, to work with such inspirational police officers and staff, partners and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Although slavery has existed throughout history, the term ‘modern slavery’ is relatively new. It reflects the changing nature of exploitation, mainly due to advances in the internet, globalisation and more affordable world travel. Today, slavery typically takes the form of a number of exploitation types, including forced labour, sexual exploitation, domestic servitude and criminal exploitation (Cooper and others, 2017). Although the level of sophistication varies, we know that modern slavery is intrinsically linked to organised crime groups.

In 2019, I was awarded a master’s degree from Portsmouth University.

My research dissertation was on the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (MSA). At the time, there was political pressure on forces to act. The narrative was that forces were not identifying victims, nor investigating crimes, effectively. A 2017 HMICFRS report, 'Stolen Freedom', provided qualitative evidence for this, following the inspection of 10 forces on their effectiveness of tackling modern slavery within the UK. The findings included poor and inconsistent investigations, a lack of proactivity in identifying and responding to incidents, and victims being continually let down (HMICFRS, 2017). Despite this, there appears to have been no evaluation of the practicalities of investigating cases under the MSA. I wanted to explore this further by conducting an exploratory study of forces within South West England. My aims were to:

- examine the current methodologies and variation in police effectiveness in investigating modern slavery
- critically explore the challenges and resource implications of investigating cases under the MSA
- identify implications for practice to improve the effectiveness of investigating cases under the MSA

Background and political context

In 2016, the then Prime Minister Theresa May pledged that tough action would be taken against perpetrators of

modern slavery, which she described as the 'great human rights crisis of our time' (May, 2016). Three years earlier, the Centre for Social Justice Slavery Working Group had produced an influential report, 'It Happens Here' (2013). The report highlighted the growth of modern slavery within the UK, with a conservative estimation of 13,000 victims. It criticised Westminster leadership, the confused legislative framework and fragmented partnership approaches.

The report's recommendations led to new legislation, which placed a duty on law enforcement to investigate every case of modern slavery, and to not prosecute victims who are exploited and forced to commit offences. The role of Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner (IASC) was created to lead and drive change across law enforcement, while also holding it accountable. The expectations of the IASC were clear and unambiguous:

'The new legislation that has been introduced across the UK has given law enforcement and prosecutors the tools they need; it is essential that they now use these tools to their full effect.'

IASC, 2015

This quotation suggests that the previous absence of such legislation was a significant prohibitive factor. Yet it does not recognise the practicalities of implementation, particularly given

the complexity of this crime type and the financial impacts of austerity on law enforcement.

Research methodology

I used a mixed methods approach for my research, conducting eight semi-structured interviews with police investigators who had experience of investigating modern slavery cases. Using a snowball sampling approach, I engaged with subject-matter experts within the relevant forces, who were able to direct me to other investigators with relevant experience. My quantitative data analysis consisted mainly of examining prosecution and conviction data under the MSA, as well as the number of victims identified as part of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), the government's support pathway for possible victims. The benefit of a mixed methods approach was that I could contrast the investigators' lived experiences with the quantitative data.

Research findings

As the interviews and analysis were conducted in the spring and summer of 2019, the findings relate to this time period. Despite all four participating forces stating that modern slavery was a strategic priority, none had any dedicated resources for investigating cases. Although this has been cited as best practice by HMICFRS, the impact of austerity and an increase in investigative demand continued to

limit their ability to investigate cases effectively. All participants supported the strategic approach taken to modern slavery, a 'business as usual' methodology with most cases falling to mainstream investigative teams. However, they felt that their workforce's lack of expertise and experience in investigating cases limited their ability to prosecute cases successfully. These issues were compounded by the ongoing national detective shortage. While all participants felt confident in their own ability to investigate modern slavery cases, this was due to their 'trial and error' experience, rather than any formal modern slavery training they received which supports the 'The Modern Slavery Act review' by QC Caroline Haughey (2016).

The research also found that many inexperienced investigators had an inherent fear of modern slavery investigations. There are benefits in ensuring that these investigators not only receive effective modern slavery training, but are then mentored by officers with direct experience of modern slavery investigations.

Victimless prosecutions

The participants were also asked why they felt there was such a disparity between the number of potential victims being identified and referred into the NRM, compared to the number of prosecutions and convictions under the MSA.

Table 1. Modern slavery NRM, prosecutions and conviction data (Field and others, 2018).

	2014	2015	2016	2017
NRM referrals	2,338	3,262	3,804	5,143
No. of prosecutions under MSA	–	12	51	130
No. of convictions under MSA	–	–	1	37

Most participants believed that there was still an over-reliance on victims supporting prosecutions, and that this had a direct causal link with positive outcomes. Victims of modern slavery are vulnerable, with many having complex needs due to the physical and psychological abuse suffered (Martin and Sumner, 2011). Some victims, particularly foreign nationals, may not trust the authorities. This research identified similar findings, with some participants describing how modern slavery investigations were concluding when the victims decline to prosecute. This is exacerbated when those who are exploited do not identify themselves as victims.

‘It’s very, very difficult dealing with people that don’t necessarily see themselves as being victims of slavery.’

One SIO who had secured a conviction under the MSA described significant challenges in keeping the victims engaged throughout the investigation. This not only jeopardised the investigation at multiple points, but also led to pressure from supervisors to conclude the investigation.

‘I mean, it was a long investigation, two years, but I had three different DCIs in that time that all told me to get rid of that job and to, you know, bring it to an end, it wasn’t going to end up as a prosecution, we weren’t going to win the case and you have to be, you know, have the courage of your convictions.’

This demonstrates not only the time and complexity involved in

some cases, but also the inherent risks in basing a modern slavery investigation solely within a victim-focused, rather than offender-focused, paradigm. Taking an offender-based approach, as with other types of organised crime, may be beneficial.

‘So I know we’re victim-based, but you save one victim, ignore the offender, that offender is still going to go out and find another victim, and so both victim and suspect need to be looked at, and I think we’re focusing, not un-rightly, we should be focusing on the victim but I think we’re missing the suspect.’

Modern Slavery Act – unintended consequences

Most participants felt that the MSA was helpful in consolidating and simplifying older legislation, but the findings also revealed unintended consequences. Three participants provided anecdotal evidence that investigations into modern slavery and human trafficking are often linked with other forms of exploitation and criminality, such as drug supply. On first appearance, this is not surprising when considering the links to organised crime. However, as a direct result, some suspects charged with offences under the

MSA were pleading guilty to other ‘lesser’ offences to avoid a slavery or trafficking conviction.

Some participants believed that the stigma of being labelled a ‘human trafficker’, along with the significant sentences that can be issued under the legislation, could be causal factors in defendants pleading to other offences. It can be argued, then, that the legislation is having a positive effect, but as a deterrent rather than a means of prosecution. However, there is currently no retrievable data upon which to test this hypothesis, and further research is required. This issue is not for the police alone to wrestle with. The CPS and courts will hold relevant data and will need to have further insight on this issue, in order to understand its scale and whether the criminal justice system as a whole is taking the right approach to modern slavery cases.

Section 45 of the MSA was enacted to protect victims of modern slavery who are compelled to commit crimes as part of their exploitation. Many participants were concerned that perpetrators of modern slavery were using this inappropriately to avoid justice. Despite this being recognised nationally (HM Government, 2019), supporting evidence is still anecdotal and lacking in substance. Careful consideration is required when investigators are differentiating between victims and offenders. Again, further research is needed.

Conclusion

Modern slavery investigations consist of complex factors that make investigation and prosecution inherently difficult. Exploitation is often conducted by organised criminals against vulnerable people who may not even identify as victims. As with domestic abuse, we know that victimless prosecutions are more difficult. They require us to challenge our thinking and possibly change our investigative approach, in order to secure additional evidence and overcome the hurdles required for successful outcomes.

Despite these challenges, my research has shown – alongside high-profile cases – that we have the skills and abilities to support victims and prosecute offenders under this legislation. Thinking differently about how we structure our investigation, with a greater focus on offenders, may present opportunities to secure more convictions and safeguard more victims.

As we enter another period of financial uncertainty and start to observe the impact of COVID-19 on job markets, we will inevitably see more vulnerable people at risk of slavery. We need to ensure that we have the capacity and capability within our organisations to give these cases the focus they deserve, while balancing other demands. We will continue to learn from each investigation

and gather more insight into the issues described. When officers next encounter potentially exploited men, women and children, I hope they will have the confidence and skills to support these vulnerable people and bring more perpetrators to justice.

Recommendations

- 1 Forces should consider not just the quality of modern slavery training for investigators, but also the importance of mentoring and support from investigators with modern slavery case experience.
- 2 Further data collection and research is required to understand the unintended consequences of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, specifically its deterrent effect, the increase in early pleas for other offences, and the inappropriate use of the section 45 defence by offenders.
- 3 As the police have a duty to bring offenders to justice and protect further victims, forces should consider adopting a proactive, offender-based approach to investigations – rather than an over-reliance on victim support – while recognising the increase in complexity and timelines of such investigations.

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This article was peer reviewed by Detective Chief Inspector Lewis Prescott-Mayling, Thames Valley Police.

BOOK REVIEW

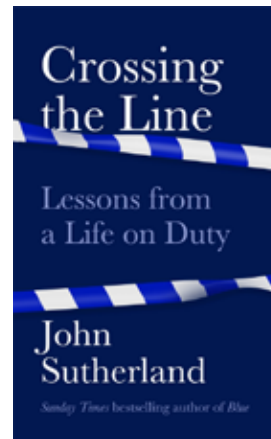
Crossing the Line: Lessons from a Life on Duty by John Sutherland

Detective Inspector Krista Thompson ♦ Thames Valley Police

‘Crossing the Line’ is the natural successor to John Sutherland’s Sunday Times bestseller, ‘Blue’. The book is divided into ten chapters, each of which provides an insight into a key area of modern policing and holds up a mirror to society itself. The author’s experiences will be familiar to those involved in policing and fascinating to those who are not. Themes throughout the book include frustration with society’s response, the need for long-term partnership solutions and the devastating psychological impact of these issues on the public and the police.

At the core of the book is the idea that ‘we need to ask what we actually want the Police service to be’ (p 253). As the author explores the ten key issues, he challenges the reader to consider this in light of finite police resources. How do the police deal with knife crime when they are abstracted to police protests and demonstrations? What takes priority? How do we move forwards?

In response, the book engages with these issues in relation to society and, through Peelian



principles, the police. After all, ‘The police are the public and the public are the police’ (p 124). The narrative on the responsibility of individuals, politicians,

partner agencies and the police to tackle these issues via a long-term holistic plan is re-enforced in the accounts of the lives of Erwin James and Victoria Climbié. In each case, a number of agencies failed to provide a joined-up response that could have set both children’s futures on different courses.

In ‘Blue’, the author explored the personal psychological toll of policing. In ‘Crossing the Line’, the emotional impact is ever present, from the author’s first arrest of the ‘man who had fallen out of the bottom of life’ (p 7), to the stories of PC James Seymour, who was shot on duty, and Eleanor, a repeat victim of horrifying domestic abuse who was too frightened to sign an evidential statement. Readers new to policing will be enlightened, while

those with experience will recognise the cumulative toll of exposure to a life on duty.

‘Crossing the Line’ provides a clear account of modern policing, the key challenges, our responsibility to address these issues and the need for a long-term, independent partnership approach to policing and reform unencumbered by politics. The lessons are clear – we can only hope that they are heard and learned from.

Crossing the Line: Lessons from a Life on Duty by John Sutherland is now available to in the [National Police Library](#) and can be purchased from booksellers.

This article was peer reviewed by Acting/Sergeant Steve Sweeney, Metropolitan Police Service.



With thanks to

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