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A.S.P. Tactical Baton Assessment

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TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

Submitted by
Vancouver Police Department

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NOTE: Further information
about this report can be
obtained by calling the
CPRC information number
(613) 996-6343

A.S.P. Tactical Baton Assessment

In the summer of 1990, 25 officers of the Vancouver Police Department were issued with an A.S.P. 21 inch Tactical Baton for the purpose of conducting a practical field assessment of the product and comparison with the currently issued baton for a period of 90 days.

Officers were to make an assessment based on the following factors; use, portability, convenience, effectiveness, usability, psychological impact, and any special circumstances that might occur during the assessment period.

Officers were given additional information with respect to the operation of the A.S.P. Baton. All of the officers previous training with the straight baton was equally applicable to the A.S.P. Baton.

The officers involved varied in terms of size, strength, physical abilities, gender, and assignments within the Department. These included officers of the Patrol Division, Traffic, Dog Squad, Plainclothes (Crime Unit and Detective), and E.R.T.

At the end of the summer months, all participating officers received a comprehensive survey regarding the use of the A.S.P. Baton vs. the Straight Baton.

The following is collective summary of those surveys:

1) Were the officers actually carrying the baton with them?

- 95% carried the A.S.P. Baton always and 5% carried it sometimes
- 10% carried the Straight Baton always, 65% carrying it sometimes, and 25% never carrying it

2) **Portability:**

- the A.S.P. Baton was rated vastly superior to the Straight Baton by a 95% margin

3) **Effectiveness:**

- 30% rated the A.S.P. Baton superior, 65% rated them equally, and 5% rated the Straight Baton as superior

4) **Usability:**

- The A.S.P. Baton was rated superior by 70% and rated equally by 30%

5) **Psychological Impact:**

- . The A.S.P. Baton was rated 80% superior and rated equally by 20%

6) Members were asked specifically if the **act of extending the ASP. Baton was sufficient to de-escalate any situation.**

- 60% responded affirmatively with some of officers citing several incidents

7) Officers **were asked if they** would like to see the ASP. Baton become the new 'issued' baton?

- . 100% agreed

8) Officers participating in the survey were given a section in which they might add any comments, the following is a summary of that section:

- "Having the A.S.P. Baton gave me security and peace of mind."
- "The most effective piece of equipment I have seen yet."
- "The A.S.P. was always on my belt and ready if needed."
- "The A.S.P. is non-threatening looking until it is actually extended."
- "People don't even notice the A.S.P. on your belt."
- "Excellent for plainclothes duties."
- "The A.S.P. is easily concealed in the hand and ready to use at a moments notice."
- "I always carried the A.S.P., I usually left my other baton in the car."
- "Excellent for Traffic and Dog Squad officers."
- "The feel of the A.S.P. instills confidence in the holder."
- "I have not seen any piece of equipment as practical as this one."
- "The handle is easy to grip, and easier to use for a smaller person."
- "The A.S.P. is excellent for beat-work, it gave me a tactical and psychological advantage."
- "I have been in numerous foot chases and the A.S.P. never fell out of the holder, whereas in the past, my straight baton has interfered with my ability to pursue and control suspects."

The A.S.P. Baton is held in very high regard by those who have had the opportunity to test them and compare them to the current straight baton. Most officers who were involved in this assessment do not want to part with it.