



2006

Use Of Force Review





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview	2
Nature and Scope of "Force"	3
Control Tactics Report Forms	4
Firearm Deployments.....	6
Conducted Energy Device (CED) Deployments	9
Oleoresin Capsicum (O.C.) Deployments	12
Baton Deployments.....	14
Physical Control Techniques.....	15
Canine Deployments.....	17
Summary Of Recommendations/Conclusion	19

OVERVIEW

RECOMMENDATION:

That the contents of this report be received by the Edmonton Police Commission for information.

INTRODUCTION:

As per the Edmonton Police Service Use of Force Policy, summaries of statistical information trends and issues related to the Use of Force during 2006 are contained in this report.

BACKGROUND:

When an incident occurs and an officer uses force, a Control Tactics Report must be completed. In the event more than one officer uses force during a specific incident, each officer involved would submit a separate Control Tactics Report, detailing their perception of the incident and the type of force utilized. This may result in several submissions of Control Tactics Reports for any one incident. These reports provide a provincial-wide standardized method for the collection of data.

In Edmonton, the standard for force response options is prescribed by the Criminal Code of Canada and the Alberta Association of Chiefs of Police (AACP). These models provide law enforcement with a continuum which outlines appropriate levels of force responses.

Upon the submission of a Control Tactics Report by an officer, the immediate supervisor will review the Control Tactics Report to ensure that the appropriate force response has been used and articulated accurately. The Control Tactics Report will then be copied and forwarded to the Officer Safety Unit and the following will occur:

- a. the report will be reviewed, confirming whether or not a proper force response was implemented
- b. all captured data recorded on the Control Tactics Report will be entered into a database
- c. the Control Tactics Report will be stored (hard copy) in the event it needs to be canvassed at a later date
- d. issues or concerns resulting from an incident are documented, with current training methods being evaluated

The Officer Safety Unit compiles the data collected from the Control Tactics Reports and uses this information in an attempt to establish trends and identify problems that may be corrected or improved through training or other administrative procedures.

This report will provide an analysis using statistics extracted from the Control Tactics Report Forms submitted for 2006. Other resources include Statistics Canada, Court Services Section and other specialized areas within the Edmonton Police Service.



THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF “FORCE”

Use of the term “use of force” is generally meant to mean a type or level of force that triggers a Control Tactics Report according to Edmonton Police Service policy. Thus, while simple restraints and handcuffs are physical forms of force in a literal sense, they are not considered or referred to here as such because this form of force does not reach the threshold required to trigger the filing of a Control Tactics Report. As a result, reference to force throughout this analysis generally involves force above and beyond open/empty hand control and excludes handcuffing. Once an officer initiates any type of open/empty hand “technique” (wrist-lock, arm-bar takedown), this would now be considered to have crossed the threshold where a Control Tactics Report would have to be submitted.

Members are required to submit a “Control Tactics Report” when any one of the following circumstances are present:

Policy - Part 1, Chapter B, Section 3

1. Injury resulting to any person, or;
2. Use of control tactics such as stunning techniques, direct mechanical techniques, chemical agents, aerosol agents, conducted energy device (CED), control instruments, impact weapons, special impact munitions, firearm drawn, displayed, or displayed at low ready, pointed, or;
3. In the opinion of the investigating member and/or supervisor, unusual circumstances exist that necessitate the submission of the report”.

CONTROL TACTICS REPORT FORMS

Year	Total Number of Incidents where a File # was Generated	Total Incidents Requiring Use of Force	% of Incidents Requiring Use of Force	Total Received Control Tactics Reports for the Year in Question
2006	238,162	1,922	0.8%	2,934
2005	233,160	1,260	0.54%	1,448
2004	219,304	1,023	0.47%	1,183
2003	210,650	874	0.42%	991
2002	213,829	704	0.33%	911

It should be noted that all aforementioned data presented is a compilation of all information submitted to the Officer Safety Unit via a Control Tactics Report form, including statistical data provided by Communications Section.

ANALYSIS:

There has been a gradual increase from 2002 to 2006 in the amount of Control Tactics Reports being submitted by officers. Listed below are several contributing factors for the increase in the reported Use of Force:

- From 2001 to 2006, Edmonton has been the 4th fastest growing city in the nation (10.4% increase during this timeframe)
- An increase in the number of calls (see above data)
- The average number of operational officers assigned to Patrol in 2002 was approximately 535. In 2007, with the delivery of MPP, Patrol has approximately 645 operational officers (21% frontline increase)
- A more consistent reporting protocol has been incorporated when a Control Tactics Report should be submitted.
- In previous years, only one Control Tactics Report was submitted by the investigating officer (inconsistent application of prescribed protocol)

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Officer Safety Unit will research and develop a plan to introduce an electronic reporting system that will assist front line officers in the submission of Control Tactics Reports. This will:

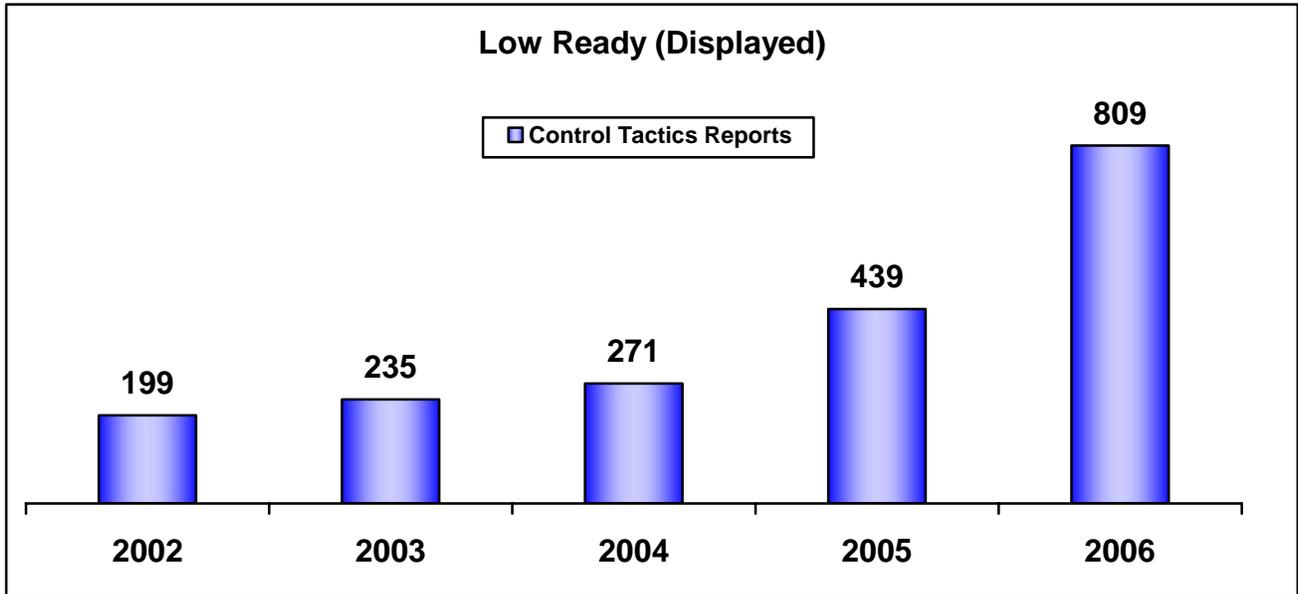
- eliminate the delay for entering information into the databank
- eliminate data re-entry errors
- prevent loss of forms
- ensure that the information on the form is linked to the occurrence report so that any discrepancies can be quickly recognized and corrected
- allow for tracking multiple force response incidents that may occur during a single incident
- allow for the proper analysis and dissemination of information

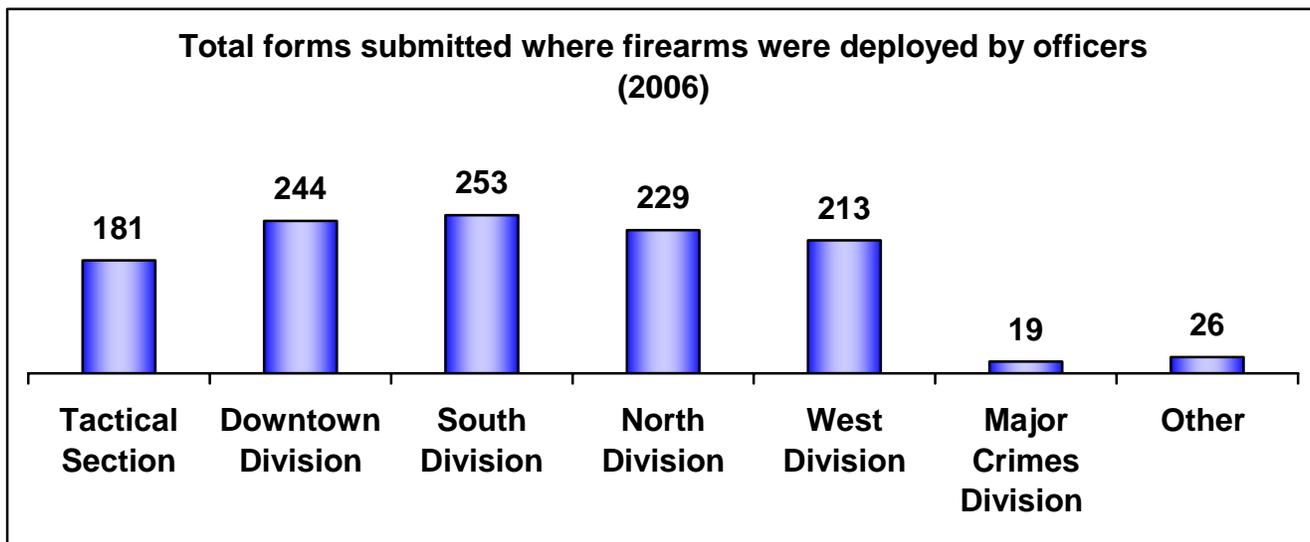
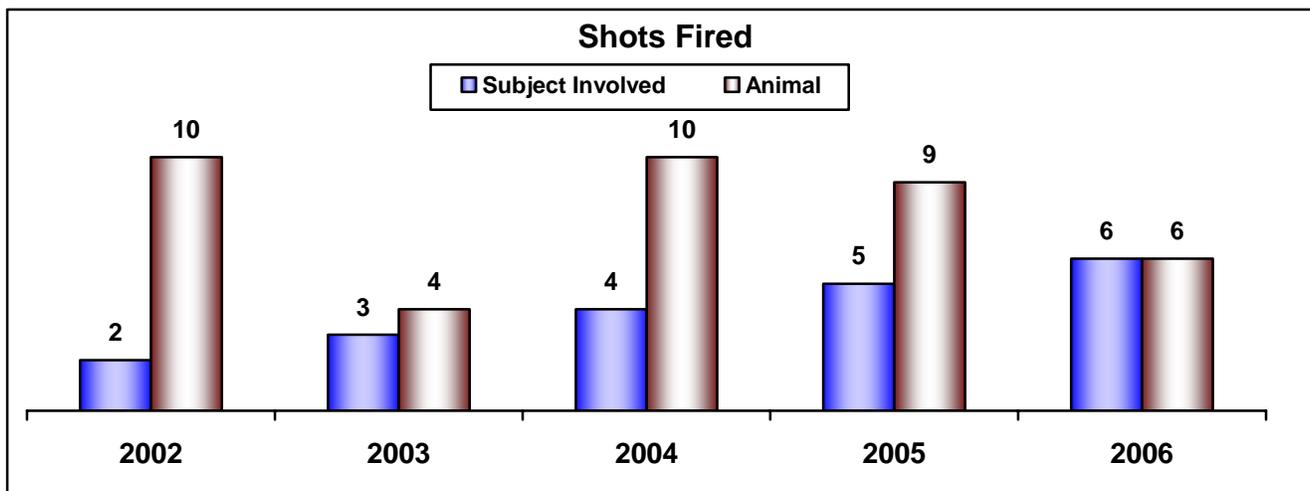


FIREARM DEPLOYMENTS

“Firearm” encompasses the following Police issued weapons: Glock 22 Handgun, Sig-sauer 9mm Handgun, M15 Carbine, 12 Gauge Shotgun and MP5 Assault Weapon.

“Incidents” refers to one specific situation where officers responded and utilized their firearm in one of the following methods: low ready position, pointed or fired.





“Other” represents all areas within the Edmonton Police Service which are not represented under the aforementioned categories.

“Firearms” is classified as a Lethal Force Weapon (AACP Use of Force Model) to be utilized within the Grievous Bodily Harm or Death subject category.

- In 2005, a total of **539** Control Tactics Reports were submitted by officers during **476** separate incidents. In 2006, a total of **1,165** Control Tactics Reports were submitted by officers during **786** separate incidents. The result is a 65% increase in the amount of incidents where officers deployed their firearms.
- In 2006 officers deployed their firearms in the following fashions: **809** officers drew to the low ready position, **377** officers drew and pointed their firearms, and **12** officers fired their firearms.

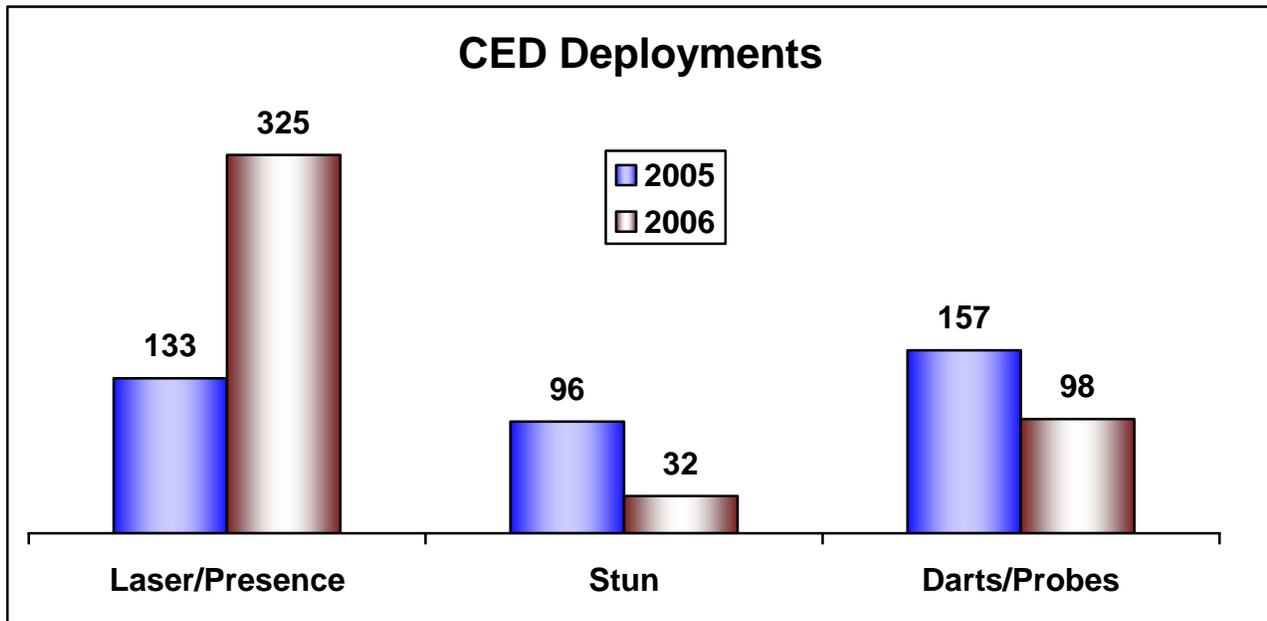
ANALYSIS:

Listed below are several contributing factors that are related to the increase in firearm deployments:

- Gang activity in the City of Edmonton has increased. The following statistics were generated by the Metro Edmonton Gang Unit:
 - in 2006 there were 232 known gang members arrested, compared to 187 in 2005
 - in 2006 there were 51 firearms (298 rounds of ammunition) seized from known gang members, compared to 28 firearms in 2005
 - a total of 77 weapons other than firearms were seized from known gang members in 2006, up from 25 weapons in 2005
 - of the 36 homicides in 2006, 11 were gang-related (31%)
- In 2006, the manner in which Control Tactics Reports were tracked and documented by Officer Safety Unit was vastly improved due to additional personnel, with more efficient protocols in place, which translates into enhanced information collection



CONDUCTED ENERGY DEVICE (CED) DEPLOYMENTS

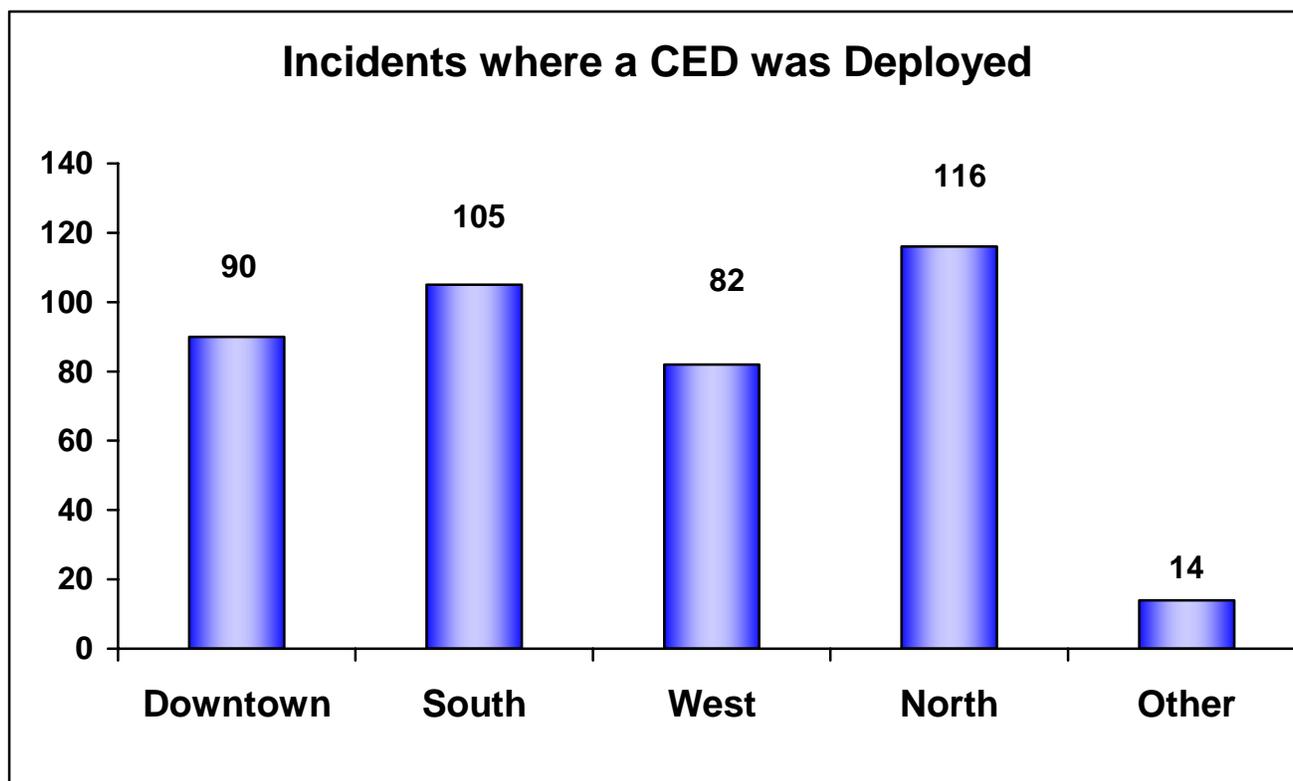


“CED” refers to the following model of CED that the Edmonton Police Service carries: Taser X26. CED is classified as an Intermediate Weapon (AACP Use of Force Model) to be utilized within the Active Resister subject category or higher.

“Darts/Probes” refers to when a cartridge attached to the CED is deployed, with 2 barbed probes discharged from the cartridge at a suspect.

“Stun” refers to when the cartridge is removed from the CED, and the unit is deployed directly against the subject as pain compliance.

“Laser/Presence” refers to when the CED is removed from the holster and displayed either by mere presence, or with the laser sight activated and pointed at a subject (no actual deployment of the weapon occurs in this fashion).



“Incidents” refers to one specific occurrence where a CED was deployed. This also encompasses a situation where there is more than one deployment (Presence is ineffective, with Darts subsequently deployed).

“Other” represents **the** following sections: Tactical Section, Major Crimes Division, Special Investigations and Traffic Section.

ANALYSIS:

The Edmonton Police Service CED Program was implemented in 2000. The current model utilizes the Taser X26. Since 2000, the Edmonton Police Service has made great strides with respect to developing a program that is open and accountable.

In February of 2006, new policy was created regarding CED downloads. When a police officer deploys their CED (stun mode or darts), a watch commander or duty officer must attend the scene and a download will be completed immediately. This new direction was implemented due to the high number of deployments in the “Darts/Probes” category.

With respect to the above data, the following conclusion may be drawn:

- In 2005, there were **386** CED deployments, compared to **455** CED deployments in 2006 (an increase of 18%).
- The total number of actual deployments (probe or stun mode) in 2005 was **253**, and in 2006, the actual number of deployments was **130** (a reduction of 49%).

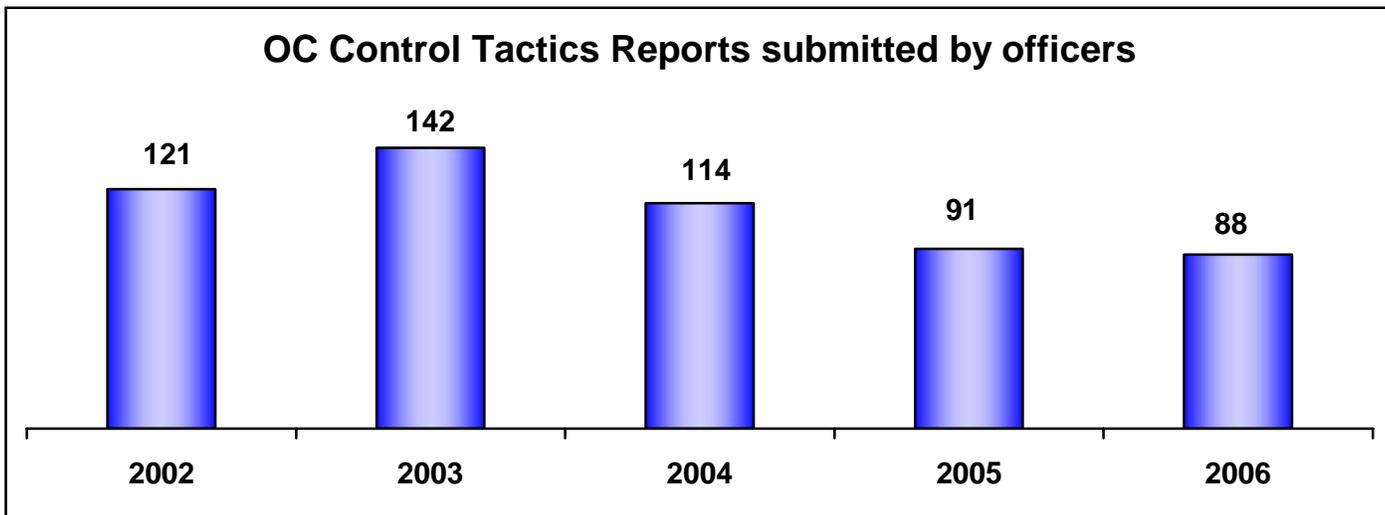


RECOMMENDATIONS:

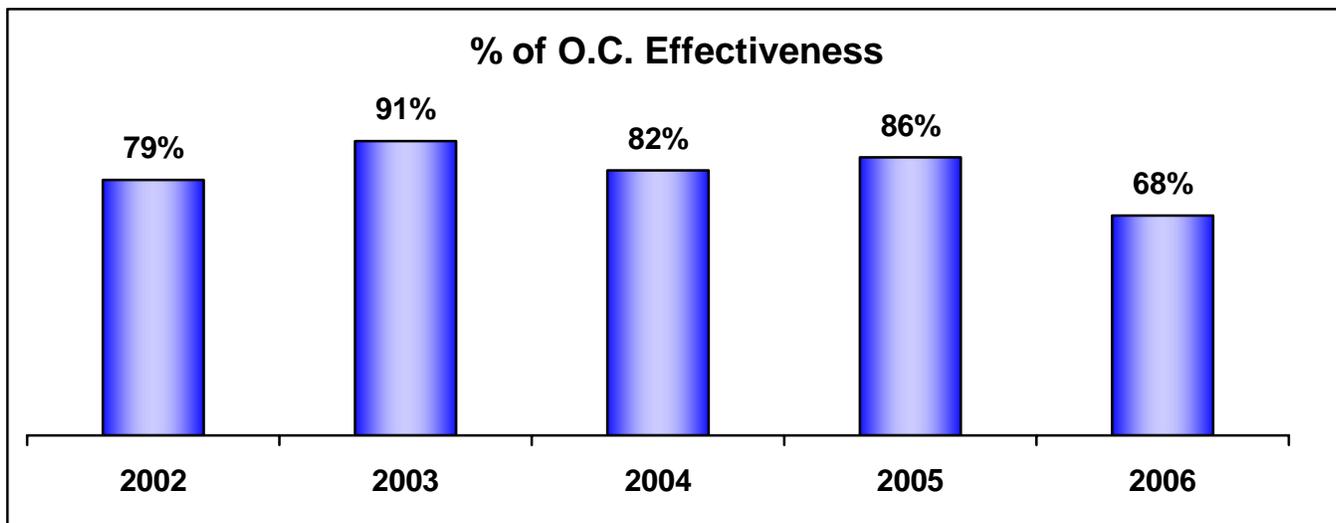
- Officer Safety Unit will research the viability of deploying CEDs with video recording capabilities
- Supervisory review by Watch Commanders or Duty Officers will continue
- Officer Safety Unit will continue to work with the Canadian Police Research Centre with regard to the dissemination of current news events, medical trials and technological developments



OLEORESIN CAPSICUM (O.C.) DEPLOYMENTS



“O.C.” refers to the following weapons utilized by the Edmonton Police Service: Sabre Red MK-3 (1.8oz), Sabre Red MK-9 (16oz). O.C. Spray is classified as an Intermediate Weapon (AACP Use of Force Model) to be utilized within the Active Resister subject category or higher.



“Effectiveness” refers to each incident where O.C. was deployed, and was deemed effective (where compliance was gained from the subject(s) exposed to O.C.).

- In 2005, there were **91** deployments of O.C. Spray, **78** of which were considered to be effective (86%). In 2006, there were **88** deployments of O.C. Spray, with **60** considered to be effective (68%).

**ANALYSIS:**

In 2004, Officer Safety Unit included a 2nd pepper spray product called Sabre Red. This product possesses a higher Scolville Heat Unit (S.H.U.) rating, enhancing the sensation of the spray in order to achieve greater effectiveness. In 2005, Officer Safety Unit switched the entire service inventory over to Sabre Red spray. This spray also contains orange coloring, which allows officers to see where the spray is making contact.

Since 2003, the deployments of O.C. Spray have been on the decline (a drop of 38%). This decline can be attributed to the following factors:

- In 2006, the effectiveness rate dropped to 68%, down from 86% in 2005. The documentation of this statistic is based on the subjects reaction immediately following the deployment of the O.C. Spray. O.C. Spray affects individuals differently (works extremely well on some, with little to no affect on others). It is also possible to build up a tolerance to an O.C. exposure.
- With the introduction of the CED in 2000, weapon selection for officers has now expanded (both O.C. and the CED are categorized in the Active Resister level under Intermediate Weapons). Inventories of CED units available to the frontline have been increased making these units viable choices. Based on training and the availability of these weapons, officers have the discretion to make the decision as to when and what weapon system should be utilized. Our findings indicate that officers are selecting a CED more often than O.C.



BATON DEPLOYMENTS



"Baton" refers to the following weapon utilized by the Edmonton Police Service: Manadnock 22inch baton. Baton is classified as an Intermediate Weapon (AACP Use of Force Model) to be utilized within the Assaultive subject category or higher.

- In 2006, there was a 94% increase in baton deployments

ANALYSIS:

The baton is classified as an impact weapon and is designed to establish control by applying mechanical impact to an assailant. When using a baton, reasonable care must be taken to avoid striking an individual on the head, neck, spine or groin areas. The primary target areas are to the arms or legs of the subject.

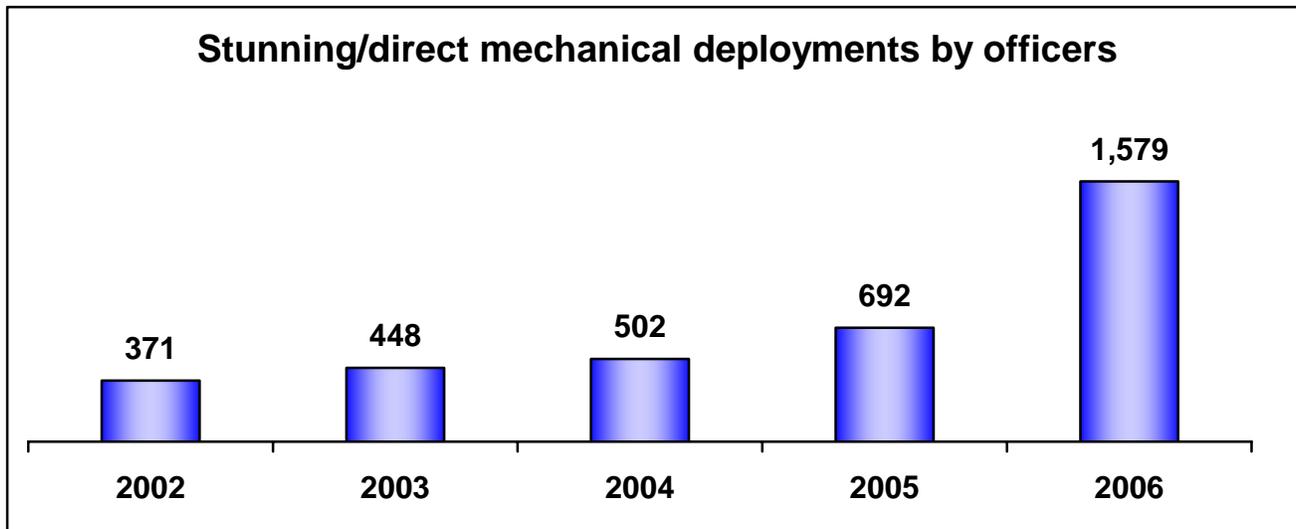
Batons are utilized in a small percentage of officer related force response incidents (2%). The following information provides details for this trend:

- When utilized, a baton can cause severe damage to a subject
- Due to the length of the baton (22 inches) officers realize that the potential for this weapon system to be taken away by a subject.
- In the past, officers have been subjected to injuries caused by a secondary officer administering a baton strike to an assaultive subject during physical altercation (officer misses his/her intended target and makes contact with an officer instead).

The rise in baton deployments may be as a result of the reduction of CED use. Further analysis is required to determine the underlying causes of this trend.

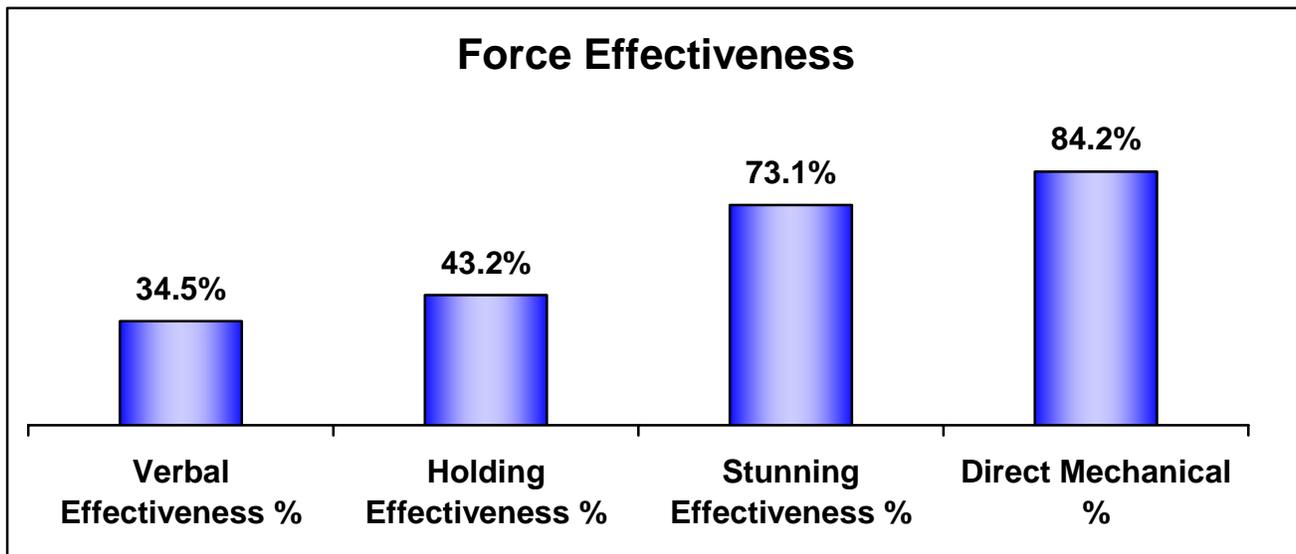


PHYSICAL CONTROL TECHNIQUES



“Stunning” refers to a technique that temporarily distracts a suspect during the attempt of gaining physical control; open hand strike and a knee strike.

“Direct Mechanical” refers to the following delivery systems: punch, kick, elbow and knee strikes.



“Force Effectiveness” refers to when one of the aforementioned techniques are employed, with a percentage associated to the rate of effectiveness for each technique.



- “**Stunning**” and “**Direct Mechanical**” techniques (AACP Use of Force Model) are located throughout the continuum in various forms depending upon the subject category and situational factors
- There is a constant increase from 2002 to 2005 with respect to the amount of incidents where officers are utilizing a Stunning or Direct Mechanical technique (an increase of 87%)
- In 2006, there is a dramatic increase of 128% in the amount of incidents where officers utilized one of these techniques (Stanley Cup Disturbances – Whyte Avenue)
- It should also be noted that when the total number of Stunning/Direct Mechanical technique deployments are compared to the total number of Control Tactics Reports submitted by officers, the percentages are as follows. In 2005, there were **1,448** Control Tactics Reports submitted, with **692** recorded Stunning/Direct Mechanical deployments (48%). In 2006, there were **2,934** Control Tactics Reports submitted, with **1,579** recorded Stunning/Direct Mechanical deployments (54%); a total increase of only 6%.

ANALYSIS:

In any situation where an officer makes the decision to affect a lawful arrest or detention and police presence or verbal control attempts are not successful, physical control must be the next step.

Physical Control techniques are applications of defused pressure, delivered against a subject, to assist in overcoming resistance. The desired result would include a temporary psychological distraction, temporary motor dysfunction, or inhibition of respiration (diaphragm stun).

The rise in stunning/direct mechanical deployments may be related to the reduction of CED deployments.

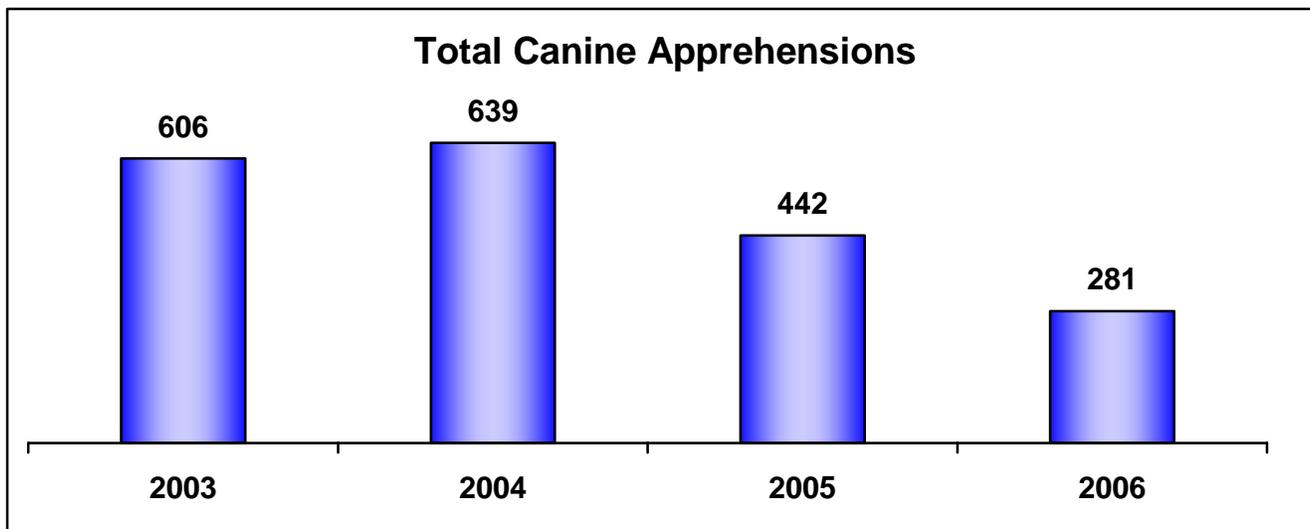
Currently the Service is continuing with Tactical Communication (verbal judo) training of all sworn members. To date, over 340 members have completed the training.

RECOMMENDATION:

- The continuation of Tactical Communication (Verbal judo) training of all sworn members and future recruit classes.

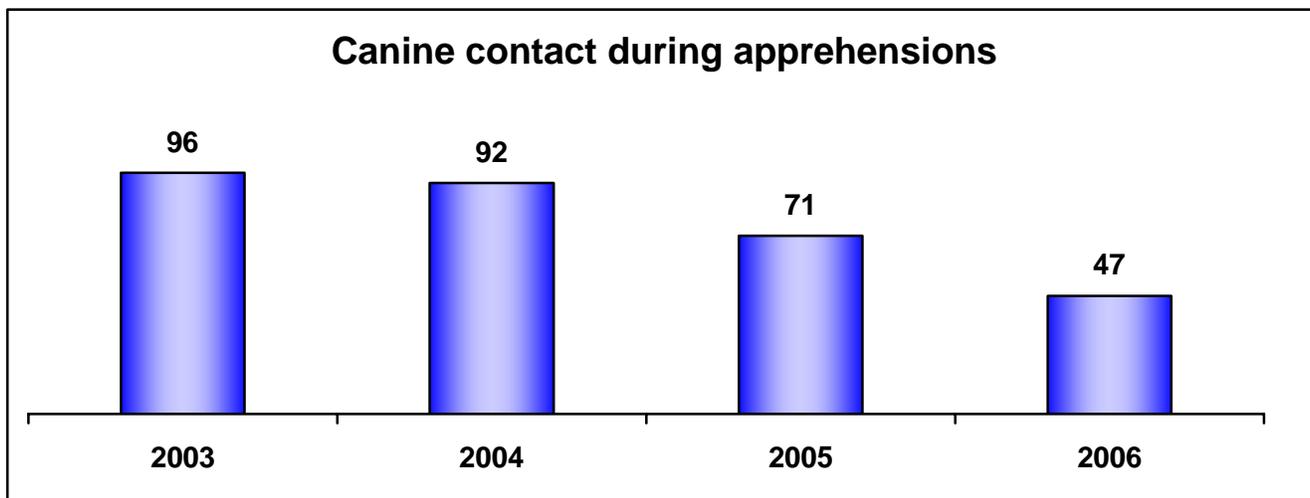


CANINE DEPLOYMENTS



“Canine” refers to all Edmonton Police Service approved handler/dog partnerships that are deployed at the street-level. Canine is classified as an Intermediate Weapon (AACP Use of Force Model) to be utilized within the Active Resister subject category or higher.

“Apprehensions” refers to when a Canine Unit successfully apprehends a suspect, by either physical control, or by mere presence where the suspect’s actions alter to a cooperative state.



“Contact” refers to when a Canine Unit successfully apprehends a suspect using physical force by the dog.

- In 2006, Canine Unit was operational utilizing **11** Canine partnerships. From 2003 to 2005 Canine Unit deployed **10** Canine partnerships.

**ANALYSIS:**

The Edmonton Police Service Canine Unit was officially formed in 1967. The 11 dogs currently in the unit are general purpose dogs, of which three are cross trained for narcotic detection, and one is a specialty explosives detection dog.

Members of the Canine Unit respond to calls that involve tracking, criminal apprehension, area / building searches, evidence searches, and narcotic / explosive detection.

The primary function of the Canine Unit is to provide support to the Patrol Officers on the street. The following information provides details regarding Canine Unit statistics:

- From 2004 to 2006 there has been a constant decrease (56%) in the amount of apprehensions by Canine Unit. Reasons for this decline are related to the following:
 - more Patrol members deployed at the front-line, which translates into quicker response times
 - the addition of Air-1 (2001)
 - each contact made is reviewed by both the S/Sgt and Sgt i/c of Canine Unit. One to one meetings are subsequently conducted to ensure proper procedures and protocols are adhered to
 - more advanced training provided regarding the force response continuum and decision-making scenarios
 - reduction of the Canine Unit by one.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Officer Safety Unit will research and develop a plan to introduce an electronic reporting system that will assist front line officers in the submission of Control Tactics Reports. This will:
 - eliminate the delay for entering information into the databank
 - eliminate data re-entry errors
 - prevent loss of forms
 - ensure that the information on the form is linked to the occurrence report so that any discrepancies can be quickly recognized and corrected
 - allow for tracking multiple force response incidents that may occur during a single incident
 - allow for the proper analysis and dissemination of information
2. Officer Safety Unit will research the viability of deploying CEDs with video recording capabilities.
3. Supervisory review by Watch Commanders or Duty Officers will continue when the deployment of CEDs (stun mode or darts) occurs to ensure current policy has been followed.
4. Officer Safety Unit will continue to work with the Canadian Police Research Centre with regard to the dissemination of current news events, medical trials and technological developments.
5. The continuation of Tactical Communication (verbal judo) training of all sworn members and future recruit classes.

CONCLUSION

During 2005, various categories in the Control Tactics Report form were changed. Several form fields were added or dropped, making some direct comparisons with previous years' data difficult. Changes to force response articulation began in the spring of 2006 and a standardized form that includes those fields necessary for force response analysis will be in place by the latter part of 2007.

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